

Rights, Responsibilities & Reactions

Intellectual Freedom Newsletter – January 2025

BookRiot offers some tips on talking about censorship: [How To Explain Book Bans to Those Who Want to Understand](#) (BookRiot, 18 min). Related, a review of [pro-censorship and anti-library bills](#) (Well Sourced, 20 min). (**censorship, legislation**)

The Hill reports on how the new [Department of Education dismissed complaints](#) about book bans (1 min). See the responses against the shift from [ALA](#), [NCAC](#), [GLAAD](#), and the [Author's Guild](#), which note the harm, affront to civil rights, the baseless claims rooted in disinformation, and the set back against fighting censorship. (**censorship**)

Willamette Week reports on [an organization](#) based in Tigard that is focused on parental rights, following the lead of Moms for Liberty (3 min). (**first amendment, censorship**)

Meta announced a [shift away from fact-checking of posts](#) by outside partners towards relying on users to provide notes (NY Times, 10 min). The decision has greater implications, see [Meta's fact-checking partners were 'Blindsided'](#) (WIRED, 8 min), [The danger of Meta's big fact-checking changes](#) (Vox, 9 min), [Meta's changes will lead to clash with EU and UK](#) (The Guardian, 6 min) and [Meta goes MAGA](#) (Popular Information, 8 min). (**disinformation**)

Politico investigates how the [disinformation field is in disarray](#) and how rhetoric underpins the current political climate (12 min). Here is a short thought piece on [addressing disinformation claims](#) with positive counterclaims, including an infographic (Substack, 4 min). For a deeper dive, a recent study in [Science](#) examines the appeal of disinformation (for key points, see this [press release from Northwestern](#) (4 min)). (**disinformation**)

More disinformation news: As natural disasters unfold, disinformation is being spread as a way to explain what is happening. Mother Jones [dives into the phenomena](#) (7 min). To dispel the onslaught of disinformation, the state of California [launched a website to fight misinformation about California's fires](#) (10 News, 4 min). GovTech looks at other [steps states are taking](#) and the limitations in combating disinformation (7 min). Related, [Disinformation over deportations is spreading](#) (CBS Minnesota, 3min). (**disinformation**)

The New York Times' Book Review delves into the concept of [plagiarism as a plot in fiction](#), which brings forth the fine line between influence and appropriation (11 min). (**copyright**)

The Library of Congress provides a [brief explainer of copyright in relation to public domain](#) and showcases new entries (12 min). Internet Archive [celebrated items entering the public domain](#) in 2025, including [The Skeleton Dance](#) (1 min) and [Popeye](#) (7 min). A look beyond the public domain: [A Few of Jessamyn West's Favorite Things](#) highlights works that are without copyright restriction (Library Futures, 3 min). (**copyright**)

The US Supreme Court upheld a law [banning TikTok](#), although an executive order delayed the ban (Austin-American Statesman, 7 min). The Verge [reports](#) (8 min) on the free speech and privacy implications of the ban, and Georgetown University's Free Speech Project has a [comprehensive collection](#) of articles and opinions on the topic. (**first amendment, privacy**)

NPR's 1A podcast looks at [the movement to restrict minors' social media use](#) (11 min). Marketplace examines on an [executive order on online free speech could upend content moderation](#) (10 min). (**first amendment, access**)

The Electronic Frontier Foundation offers some [social media privacy tips](#) (9 min). (**privacy**)

[UK library releases Holocaust archive online](#) ; explore the [digital archive](#) (Vanguard News, 2 min). The Guardian reports on the [return of banned books to shelves](#) after the end of a dictatorship in Syria (5 min). The New York Times provides [an interactive quiz](#) that examines controversies with books that are considered classics (5 min). (**access, censorship**)

AI Spotlight

The Washington Post reports on how [AI is getting in the way of consumers' access](#) to accurate information and offer tips on finding relevant info (6 min). (**information literacy**)

Futurism's The Byte reports on [more copyright issues with OpenAI](#) (3 min). (**copyright**)

The Conversation calls out [risks with the promises of AI Agents](#) to improve your life (Conversation, 7 min). New research on the [impact of AI](#) in the workplace indicates it impacts critical thinking (Societies, 67 min). (**privacy, information literacy**)

Rights, Responsibilities & Reactions is a monthly roundup of Intellectual Freedom News compiled by the Multnomah County Library Intellectual Freedom Committee. We welcome suggestions at lib.ifc@multco.us.

Additional Resources

ALA Intellectual Freedom Blog: <https://www.oif.ala.org> A blog dedicated to intellectual freedom issues, and includes the [Intellectual Freedom News](#) –a weekly roundup of IF related articles

Oregon Library Association's [Intellectual Freedom Toolkit](#) (published February 8, 2022). A range of tools and resources relating to IF challenges and policies created by the OLA Intellectual Freedom Committee.

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