

## Rights, Responsibilities & Reactions

### Intellectual Freedom Newsletter – January 2026

---

#### IFC Book Recommendation:

[On Book Banning](#) by Ira Wells, part of the [Field Notes series](#), offers a compact but dynamic look at censorship. Wells ties together ancient history to present times with the underlying desire of social control by those in power. Thoughtful and provocative through the exploration of free speech and the harm of censorship, while bringing forth the need to embrace ambiguity and curiosity.

---

#### Intellectual Freedom News

Authors Alliance provides an insightful look at the [Book Removal Law](#) in Utah and the related lawsuit brought on by students and authors (11 min). On a positive note, an [educator was reinstated](#) after being fired for reading a book about butts to students (New York Times, 4 min). **censorship, first amendment, legislation**

[The American Sunlight Project](#) just [released a dataset](#) that captures the rampant and varied censorship by the current administration of the U.S. government. **censorship**

Libraries remain at risk while democracy is under threat, see this call for [funding of libraries](#) (Organizing My Thoughts, 12 min) and an [interview of a critical cataloger](#) on the need for activism within libraries (Lower Eastside Librarian, 11 min). **democracy**

This [opinion piece](#) examines the erosion of privacy in the public sphere –drawing from [Strangers and Intimates](#) by Tiffany Jenkins (9 min). **privacy**

Check out these tips for supporting privacy literacy: [Teaching Practical Privacy: Notes from a Librarian](#) (4 min). Dig deeper with [Civics of Technology's recent talks](#) from their Data Privacy Week, including links to resources. Find more tips for the National Cybersecurity Alliance's [Data Privacy Week page](#). Also, the State of Oregon announced the [new universal opt-out program](#). **privacy**

Take a deep dive into the [technical and access aspects of the Internet Archive](#) as a keeper of information (Hacker Noon, 25 min). **access**

Big Think offers a look into [historic forgeries](#) to uncover ties to the current wave of fake news (8 min). **disinformation**

Electronic Frontier Foundation created a [series of articles on copyright](#) as part of Copyright Week, pulling in the concepts of censorship, AI and policy. For copyright nerds, the Authors Alliance is [unpacking the Copyright Act](#) in a series of blog posts to celebrate 50 years of the law (3 min). **copyright**

## AI Spotlight

In Oregon, lawmakers [propose to regulate AI chatbots](#) to protect kids' mental health (Oregonian, 5 min). **legislation, access**

Popular Science reports on the [myriad of issues that AI brings to library workers](#) (3 min). Related, hungry [AI companies gobble up books](#) and impact authors (Washington Post, 9 min). **information literacy, disinformation, access**

Infophilia looks at the [entanglement of intellectual freedom and information health](#), as it relates to AI and self-censorship -calling for critical reflection within the library profession on the impact of ongoing changes (22 min). Related, Tech Policy calls out the need for a critical approach to AI: [We Need to Talk About How We Talk About 'AI'](#) (8 min). **information literacy**

MIT Technology Review spotlights [AI Chatbots](#) and [AI Data Centers](#) in their Breakthrough Technologies for 2026. Speaking of data centers, [communities close to them](#) are "overwhelmingly" non-white (Capital B News, 9 min). On the flipside, The American Prospect reports on an [increase of moratorium on datacenters](#) (10 min). **information literacy**

This article from the Atlantic expounds on the limits of AI: [AI's Memorization Crisis](#) (12 min). **information literacy**

**Disinformation** continues to be bolstered by AI:

- The Verge on [AI-generated headlines](#) (7 min)
- The Conversation on [advancements with deepfakes](#) (4 min), people getting their [news from AI](#) (5 min), threat of [manipulation through ads](#) (7 min)
- The Guardian on the impact of [misleading health information](#) from AI (5 min)

**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](mailto:lib.ifc@multco.us).

- Journal of Democracy looks at how [autocrats weaponize AI](#) (12 min)

This article from Nature highlights the [issues between privacy and access](#) with using AI. For more on privacy, see this [explainer from the Washington Post](#) on Google's quest to personalize your email and photos with AI (4 min). See also, this article from Wired about an [AI-generated browsing](#) feature released by Google (4 min). And [AI data leaks](#) -more to worry about from 404 Media (5 min). **privacy**

All Tech Is Human released [a report on AI Companions](#) that includes insights on use and recommendations for governance, policy and others involved in tech regulation and creation (50 min). Related, The Conversation examines reports of [of 'AI psychosis'](#) (5 min) and The [New York Times covers the issue](#) as well (10 min). **information literacy**

The Baffler delves into how [AI slop can be a list](#) displacing the care and labor that goes into a beloved book list (20 min). **disinformation**

## 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.

***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](mailto:lib.ifc@multco.us).