



# Scales on Censorship: Real Life Lessons from School Library Journal

*Pat R. Scales*

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Pat Scales has been a passionate advocate for intellectual freedom long before she launched the “Scales on Censorship” column with *School Library Journal* in 2006. Decades of experience as a school librarian informs her ongoing work on these important and often volatile issues, as did her tenure in leadership roles on the American Library Association’s Intellectual Freedom Committee and at the Freedom To Read Foundation. It also earned her a place among the inaugural list of *Library Journal*’s Movers & Shakers in 2002. Since her first column for *SLJ* she has been in an ongoing conversation of sorts with librarians, teachers, and parents—a much needed conversation.

This collection of the wide-ranging questions from readers and Scales’ informative answers are gathered in broad thematic groups to help readers explore the all-too daily reality of confronting efforts to censor, ban, or otherwise limit open and ready access to materials in our schools and libraries. They were all written in response to active book challenges or questions of intellectual freedom and library ethics. These columns have a ripped from the headlines immediacy even as they reflect the core values and policies of librarianship. They are organized by topic and each is framed with a brief new introductory essay.

Scales’ powerful reputation and practical ethically-based solutions has made her a key spokesperson and support for librarians working under a censorship siege. Her passionate, unwavering voice provides valuable strategic and tactical approaches to censorship, fine-tuned insight into individual books often challenged, and critical moral support for managing trying conversations. Scales is focused throughout on fostering a culture that embraces and understands the importance of intellectual freedom, and the tools to make it a reality every day in our libraries, schools, and communities. Learn from her to build a background in the ethics involved in defending intellectual freedom and lean on her for insights into real-life situations.

*Scales on Censorship* is an essential ally in the ongoing fight.

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