[SELECTION AND CENSORSHIP: SAME SIDE OF THE SAME COIN?](http://blogs.ubc.ca/inquiryseminar/2014/12/11/selection-and-censorship-same-side-of-the-same-coin/)

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Question:  
For my inquiry project I am going to focus on the selection of novels in the English classroom and why some novels are selected and some are not. My first inquiry question is,is selection a form of censorship? I would argue that there is not one teacher in the education system that would agree to censor a students learning, however is the process of selecting one novel over another a form of censorship? The second part of my inquiry question is how do teachers select the novels they teach in the classroom? I would like to focus more on new teachers because new teachers do not have premade lesson plans; they have to make everything up from scratch.

Context:  
When a teacher is preparing their lesson plan they need to decide what they want to teach their students and then they need to decide which texts will be most beneficial in teaching their students. This process is the process of selection, however selection could be viewed as the same side of the censorship coin. Kelly and Small’s article titled ‘Censorship or Selection focuses on, “Representing the views of persons from a variety of fields including parents, educators, authors, librarians, and publishers, the papers in this journal issue explore the fine line between censorship (with an eye toward silencing ideas) and selection (with the recognition that just as literature can enlighten it can also degrade)” (Kelly and Small, 1986). I have shifted my inquiry project to looking at the selection process of new English teachers. All of us are going to be new teachers in a few months and book selection is something we are going to have to think about very wisely. We are all unique and we all bring something different to our practice which was demonstrated when I asked you to come up with five titles that you would want to teach in a classroom.

Methodology  
“We should always look at a whole book – the theme and the author’s intentions…before we judge it” (Hentoff, 1982, p. 35). Reading a book cover to cover is key to determining its value in a classroom. Books that are banned from schools are banned because of a scene taken out of the pages and taken out of context. Jenkinson describes the process of selection as, ‘[they] begin with a list of negatives or “no-no’s” and then seeks to identify whether any of these “taboo” words, subjects themes or attitudes are present in an item.” (22, 2002) This process does not take into account the entire novel and the underlying message of the novel. My research is going to be reading articles and reading “Perks of Being a Wallflower” by Stephen Chbosky. I want to focus on PBW because it will help focus my project and because this is the most recently banned novel. Students in a classroom in the United States requested this novel and it was described to have inappropriate content, so it could not be taught in the classroom. The school administrator told the teacher, “that such a book would cause an uproar among students, parents and community members.” (Curwood 2009).  
Which brings me to what I am going to do for my project, I am going to write a script and film a movie. The movie is going to be about a judge, gender, race, ethnicity is not important, this person is meant to signify the judge, jury and executioner of novels wanting to be selected for high school. The opening scene is the judge tossing books into a bin of not approved for selection. These books are going to be from my research, actual books that have been banned and the judge will be mumbling the reasons for denying the novels to herself. Then all of a sudden the judge is going to stop because she has come across a book, “Perks of Being a Wallflower” and the scene breaks up into a dream-like sequence. Then the characters from the novel walk into the courtroom and make their case on why their book should be taught in schools. Their case is so compelling the judge allows the book to be taught and the judge’s whole perspective on selecting books changes. The judge promises to read the whole book and consider the message before making a decision.

Working bibliography/Research:

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