

LIT PICKS

A curated selection of the Web's literary tidbits

"Lit Picks" is our DC Public Library insider's guide to the literary pieces we're reading, liking and sharing. We hope you enjoy our look at some of the best and most interesting items the Web has to offer on books, reading and life.

Violence and Nudity and Drugs, Oh My: A Banned Books Week Syllabus



Imagine a childhood devoid of Dr. Seuss or adolescent angst without relatable, existential characters like Holden Caulfield.

Every fall, along with libraries and other educational institutions across the country, DC Public Library celebrates Banned Books Week and the freedom to read, create and express. *Electric Literature* has compiled a comprehensive list of [the most feared books of all time](#) to remind us that some of our most beloved reads were not always widely accepted or accessible.

[Green Eggs and Ham](#) was banned in China from 1965 - 1991 for its portrayal of Marxist values. Despite over 60 obscenity lawsuits in the U.S., the US Supreme Court declared Henry Miller's [Tropic of Cancer](#) "non-obscene" in 1964. The list ranges from [The Bible](#) to [Fifty Shades of Grey](#), both of which were banned in Florida, and many classic titles like [The Catcher in the Rye](#), [Harry Potter](#), [Lolita](#) and [Lord of the Flies](#). [Slaughterhouse Five](#) was called "Just Plain Filthy" when it was banned in 1975.

Celebrate these scandalous reads with the DC Public Library at [Uncensored: The Cocktail Party](#) on Friday, September 30 at 7 PM at the MLK Library. This year's party will include -

- Literary-themed cocktails by bartenders from our favorite D.C. restaurants and bars like Petworth Citizen, 2 Birds 1 Stone, Columbia Room and Zaytinya;
- Live performances from Feedel Band, DJ Ayes Cold and one more special musical guest;
- A pop-up market in the Popular Library featuring local retailers and a DCPL Fab Lab station for crafting;
- Designs by Kim Burke and Katie Parker, the creators of the [Miracle on Seventh Street](#) Christmas pop-up at Mockingbird Hill;
- And so much more!

Be sure to visit the MLK Library after September 3rd to see local artist [Adrienne Gaither's](#) large-scale Banned Books Week mural displayed on the 9th and G corner of the building. Her exhibition, *And Now The World Knows*, will also be on display at the MLK Library throughout the month of September.

A Place for Bookworms, Students and Artists Alike

Smithsonian.com recently published a piece about [innovative library programs](#) designed to meet 21st Century needs. For example, Dallas Public Library launched a community journalism program for high schoolers, pairing students with local reporters and training them on how to use library resources to inform their stories.



The DC Public Library Foundation has also established innovative programs, with a particular focus on encouraging the next generation of artists and makers to take advantage of the free resources at the library. For the past year, DCPL Foundation has partnered with *A Creative DC* to provide monthly co-working space and tours of The Labs at DCPL to D.C. artists. Anthology is a project that evolved from these co-working days at the MLK Library and highlights the work artists are doing to support and inspire arts in D.C. [Browse the Anthology photo gallery to meet D.C.'s creative contributors.](#)

DCPL Foundation, with support from the Friends of Tenley Library, has also sponsored a year-long residency at The Labs at DCPL for makers Billy Friebele and Michael Iacovone, otherwise known as Freespace Collective. Using the free technology in the Fab Lab, the two artists have created a series of works on display at Flashpoint Gallery. Their exhibition, titled [City of Ghosts](#), features visualizations of the city's rapid change through 3D printed sculpture, maps, video, an interactive drawing machine and more.

Quick Picks

Read Like POTUS, Groove Like POTUS

What does the President of the United States have in common with librarians? They are both curators of content and culture. [Obama's 2016 summer reading list](#) includes popular reads like [The Girl on the Train](#) and [H is for Hawk](#). In addition to reading like a leader, you can now groove to the President's favorite songs of summer. His [summer nighttime playlist](#) includes sultry numbers from D'Angelo, Aaron Neville and Janet Jackson.



The Other Kind of Mobile Library

Here in the U.S., a mobile library typically refers to a van transporting shelves with books throughout a city or town. In the rural Gobi desert region, it refers to a camelback library. [Flavorwire](#) shares a list of [10 Unusual Libraries Around the World](#) while [Curbed DC](#) compiles a list of the [Most Beautiful Libraries in Washington](#) - which includes some of our very own DCPL locations! Visit the Shaw Neighborhood Library and the Francis Gregory Neighborhood Library to

experience DCPL's award-winning libraries.

Timed E-Reads for NYC Subway Rides

Attention WMATA: ease the pain of SafeTrack delays by taking a cue from NYC's MTA. NYC commuters can now download free excerpts and short stories specific to the length of their commute. NYC Transit has teamed up with Penguin Random House to promote Wi-Fi service on the NYC subway system by offering free, downloadable reads of varying lengths. The program, [Subway Reads](#), will only last eight weeks but the Wi-Fi service will remain.



SAVE THESE DATES!

- [Lunch at The Labs: Laser Cut Cross-Stitched Jewelry](#)

- o Friday, **September 2**, 1:00 p.m. at MLK Library

- Students will learn both the basics of cross-stitching on wooden jewelry pieces and the basics of jewelry assembly. The class

is limited to 10 registrants. [Click Here to register.](#)

- **Fringe Music in the Library: Kino Musica**

- Friday, **September 9**, 12:00 p.m. at MLK Library

- Experience the soulful sounds of East Africa, Cuba and Cape Verde with this live performance by Kino Musica. All ages are welcome for this lunch time performance.

- **Sing, Talk & Read Family Festival**

- Saturday, **September 10**, 11:00 a.m. at MLK Library

- Bring the kids for a fun, educational day. Learn how singing, talking and reading with your baby now can help your child later in school. The event will include live entertainment, free books, fun workshops and more.

- **Fringe Music in the Library: Abbinet Berhanu**

- Saturday, **September 17**, 2:00 p.m. at Shepherd Park Library

- Abbinet Berhanu is a D.C.-based drummer and composer with a focus on creating music inspired by his upbringing in Ethiopia.

- **Uncensored: Books & Bars Book Club**

- Wednesday, **September 21**, 7:00 p.m. at Gordon Biersch

- In celebration of Banned Books Week, the Books & Bars Book Club will meet to discuss the iconic anti-war novel, *Catch-22* by Joseph Heller.

- **Rayceen's Reading Room: Reading, Regalness, Realness!**

- Monday, **September 26**, 6:00 p.m. at MLK Library

- Rayceen Pendarvis and Team Rayceen are kicking off Banned Book Week at DCPL. Join us for an event filled with author talks, poetry readings, dramatic monologues and other entertaining performances to highlight self-expression, cultural diversity, and freedom of speech.

Follow us on Twitter and Instagram @dcpl_literati.