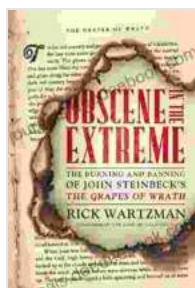


The Burning and Banning of John Steinbeck's 'The Grapes of Wrath': A Case Study in Censorship

John Steinbeck's Pulitzer Prize-winning novel 'The Grapes of Wrath' has been the subject of censorship attempts since its publication in 1939. This article provides a case study of the burning and banning of the book and explores the reasons why it has been targeted by censors.

The Burning of 'The Grapes of Wrath'

The first known burning of 'The Grapes of Wrath' occurred in Kern County, California, in April 1939. A group of farmers and businessmen burned copies of the book in protest of its portrayal of the Dust Bowl and the plight of migrant workers. The burning was widely reported in the press and sparked a national debate about the book's content.



Obscene in the Extreme: The Burning and Banning of John Steinbeck's The Grapes of Wrath by Rick Wartzman

★★★★☆ 4.9 out of 5

Language	: English
File size	: 2634 KB
Text-to-Speech	: Enabled
Screen Reader	: Supported
Enhanced typesetting	: Enabled
Word Wise	: Enabled
Print length	: 322 pages

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In the months that followed, 'The Grapes of Wrath' was burned in several other communities, including Salinas, California; Bakersfield, California; and Fresno, California. In each case, the burnings were organized by local groups of farmers and businessmen who objected to the book's portrayal of their communities.

The burnings of 'The Grapes of Wrath' were not isolated incidents. In the 1930s and 1940s, there were a number of other books that were burned by censors, including 'All Quiet on the Western Front' by Erich Maria Remarque and 'Brave New World' by Aldous Huxley.

The Banning of 'The Grapes of Wrath'

In addition to being burned, 'The Grapes of Wrath' was also banned in a number of communities. The first known banning of the book occurred in Kern County, California, in April 1939. The Kern County Board of Supervisors voted to ban the book from all public libraries in the county. The ban was later upheld by the California Supreme Court.

The banning of 'The Grapes of Wrath' was not limited to California. The book was also banned in a number of other states, including Oklahoma, Texas, and Kansas. In each case, the book was banned by local school boards or library boards. The bans were often based on the book's use of profanity, its portrayal of violence, and its criticism of the American government.

The banning of 'The Grapes of Wrath' was a major victory for censors. It showed that they were able to use their power to suppress books that they found objectionable. The banning of the book also had a chilling effect on other writers, who were afraid to write about controversial topics.

The Reasons for Censorship

There are a number of reasons why censors have targeted 'The Grapes of Wrath.' Some censors objected to the book's use of profanity and its portrayal of violence. Others objected to the book's criticism of the American government. Still others objected to the book's portrayal of migrant workers.

The censors who burned and banned 'The Grapes of Wrath' were motivated by a variety of factors. Some were motivated by a fear of communism. Others were motivated by a desire to protect the status quo. Still others were motivated by a simple dislike of the book's content.

The Impact of Censorship

The burning and banning of 'The Grapes of Wrath' had a significant impact on the book's readership. The book was effectively banned from public libraries and schools for many years. As a result, many people were unable to read the book.

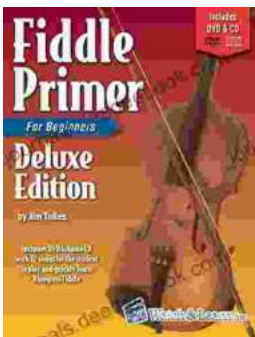
The banning of 'The Grapes of Wrath' also had a chilling effect on other writers. Writers were afraid to write about controversial topics, for fear that their books would be banned. As a result, the American literary landscape was impoverished.

The burning and banning of 'The Grapes of Wrath' is a reminder of the dangers of censorship. Censorship can suppress important voices and prevent people from access

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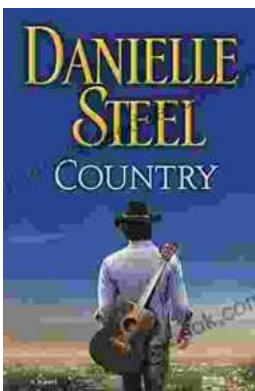


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