

Mary Baldwin College Alumnae/i Book Club

August 2006

What we are reading in
2006:

Jan 3: *No. 1 Ladies
Detective Agency* by
Alexander McCall Smith

Feb 2: *Hard Times* by
Charles Dickens*

Mar 2: *The Poisonwood Bible*
by Barbara Kingsolver*

Apr 6: *Angry Housewives
Eating Bon Bons* by Lorna
Landvik

May 4: *Life of Pi* by Yann
Martel

June 1: *Secret Life of Bees*
by Sue Monk Kidd

July 6: *The Red Tent* by
Anita Diamant

Aug 3: *My Sister's Keeper*
by Jodi Picoult

Sept 7: *Girl With a Pearl
Earring* by Tracy Chevalier

Oct 5: *The Time Traveler's
Wife* by Audrey Niffenegger

Nov 2: To be announced

Dec 7: To be announced

*These are selections from
the MBC Reading Group for
faculty and staff on campus.



Summer is almost over! School will start
before we know it.

In addition to the notebooks, calculators, computers, pens, pencils and new clothes that students need at the beginning of a new school year, students also need to purchase their required reading for the year. Did you know that some of the books students are required to read may have once been banned? Here is a list of the top 10 banned classics.

- 1) [Ulysses](#) - by James Joyce. Published in 1918, this book was banned on sexual grounds. In 1922, 500 copies of the book were burned by the United States Department of the Post Office.
- 2) [Adventures of Huckleberry Finn](#) - by Mark Twain. Published in 1884, "The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn" has been banned on social grounds. Concord Public Library called the book "trash suitable only for the slums," when it first banned the novel in 1885.
- 3) [Madame Bovary](#) - by Gustave Flaubert. Published in 1857, "Madame Bovary" was banned on sexual grounds. In the trial, Imperial Advocate Ernest Pinard said, "No gauze for him, no veils--he gives us nature in all her nudity and crudity."
- 4) [The Scarlet Letter](#) - by Nathaniel Hawthorne. Published in 1850, "The Scarlet Letter" was censored on social grounds. The book has been challenged under claims that it is "pornographic and obscene."
- 5) [Uncle Tom's Cabin](#) - by Harriet Beecher Stowe. Published in 1852, "Uncle Tom's Cabin" was controversial. When President Lincoln saw Stowe, he purportedly said, "So you're the little woman who wrote the book that made this great war." The novel has been banned for language concerns.
- 6) [Of Mice and Men](#) - by John Steinbeck. Published in 1937, Steinbeck's "Of Mice and Men" has been frequently banned on social grounds. The book has been called "offensive" and "vulgar" because of the language and characterization.
- 7) [Brave New World](#) - by Aldous Huxley. Published in 1932, "Brave New World" has been banned with complaints about the language used, as well morality issues. "Brave New World" is a satirical novel, with a stringent division of the classes, drugs, and free love.
- 8) [Lady Chatterley's Lover](#) - by D.H. Lawrence. Published in 1928, "Lady Chatterley's Lover" has been banned for its sexually explicit nature. Lawrence wrote three versions of the the novel.
- 9) [Moll Flanders](#) - by Daniel Defoe. Published in 1722, "Moll Flanders" was one of the earliest novels. The book dramatically depicts the life and misadventures of a young girl, who becomes a prostitute. The book has been challenged on sexual grounds...
- 10) [Candide](#) - by Voltaire. Published in 1759, "Candide" was banned by the Catholic Church. Bishop Etienne Antoine wrote: "We prohibit, under canonical law, the printing or sale of these books..."

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Tell us a little bit about yourself.

When did you graduate from Baldwin? What program were you in while at Baldwin.....Traditional, PEG, ADP, etc? What is your favorite memory from Baldwin? Where are you living now? What do you do for a living?

We are on the MBC website!!
www.mbc.edu/alumnae

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/MBCAlumBookClub>

If you are in the Richmond, VA area we would love for you to join us! All meeting times are 7pm and last approximately 1 hour.

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact Theresa Cash Lewis '99 at tlewis41203@yahoo.com or the Alumnae/i office at 1-800-763-7359.



Your Guide to the Classics: *Brave New World*

In a futuristic society based on pleasure without moral repercussions, Aldous Huxley places a few oddball characters to stir up the plot. With eugenics at its core, this novel harkens back to Shakespeare's *The Tempest*, where Miranda says, "O brave new world, that hath such people in it."

The Basics: *Brave New World*

Aldous Huxley published *Brave New World* in 1932. He was already established as a drama critic and novelist of such books as *Crome Yellow* (1921), *Point Counter Point* (1928), and *Do What You Will* (1929). He also was well-known to many of the other great writers of his day, including the members of the Bloomsbury Group (Virginia Woolf, E.M. Forster, etc.) and D.H. Lawrence.

Even though *Brave New World* is now considered a classic, the book was criticized for a weak plot and characterization when it was first published. One review even said, "Nothing can bring it alive." Along with the poor and mediocre review, Huxley's book has also become one of the most frequently banned books in literary history. Book banners have cited "negative activities" (undoubtedly referring to the sex and drugs) in the book as reason enough to prevent students from reading the book.

What World is This? - *Brave New World*

This Utopian/dystopian future offers soma and other carnal pleasures, while manipulating the people into mind-numbing dependence. Huxley explores the evils of a seemingly satisfied and successful society, because that stability is only derived from the loss of freedom and personal responsibility. None of the people challenge the caste system, believing they all work together for the common good.

Part of what has made this book so controversial is the very thing that has made it so successful. We want to believe that technology has the power to save us, but Huxley shows the dangers as well.

John claims the "right to be unhappy." Mustapha says it's also "the right to grow old and ugly and impotent; the right to have syphilis and cancer; the right to have too little to eat; the right to be lousy; the right to live in constant apprehension of what might happen tomorrow..."

By getting rid of all of the most unpleasant things, the society also rid itself of many of the true pleasures in life. There's no real passion. Remembering Shakespeare, Savage/John says: "You got rid of them. Yes, that's just like you. Getting rid of everything unpleasant instead of learning to put up with it. Whether 'tis better in the mind to suffer the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune, or to take arms against a sea of troubles and by opposing end them... But you don't do either."

Savage/John thinks of his mother, Linda, and he says: "What you need... is something with tears for a change. Nothing costs enough here."

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