

# EDUCATION

## LOCAL COLLEGES IN THE NEWS



## Revered and Reviled

### *Holyoke Community College display celebrates banned books*

**HOLYOKE** – The list includes some of the most revered works in literary history – and some of the most reviled.

All too often, they are one and the same: books like Harper Lee’s **To Kill a Mockingbird**, John Steinbeck’s **Of Mice and Men**, Toni Morrison’s **Beloved**, Joseph Heller’s **Catch-22**, J.R.R. Tolkien’s **Lord of the Rings**, and Alex Haley’s **Autobiography of Malcolm X**, to name a few.

And all of them, more than 200, remain banned in 2022 by one or more school districts in the U.S.

“Most of them are classics, which is interesting,” says Sara Avery, manager of the Holyoke Community College bookstore.

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“It’s been really successful,” Avery said. “It’s been a topic of con-

versation for a lot of people. Some of the books we even pulled off the shelves for our display because they’re used in classes here at HCC.”

Not only have people been buying

the books, she said, the display itself has generated a lot of questions from students about why they are banned and by whom.

The answers can be found on a

spreadsheet list that complements the display – seven pages of book titles, along with the authors’ names, the states where they are banned, and the reasons, including:

**I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings**, by Maya Angelou (Maryland, “likely to corrupt minors”).

**The Other Wes Moore: One Name, Two Fates**, by Wes Moore (Springfield, Mass., “drug and alcohol use”)

**Romeo and Juliet**, by William Shakespeare (Washington, “vulgar language and sexual innuendo”)

**The Complete Maus: A Survivor’s Tale**, by Art Spiegelman (Tennessee, “swear words and nude figures”)

Avery said she does not intend to remove the display any time soon.

“We’ve had it up for the whole month, and as long as people are still interested in it, we’ll keep it up,” she said. ■