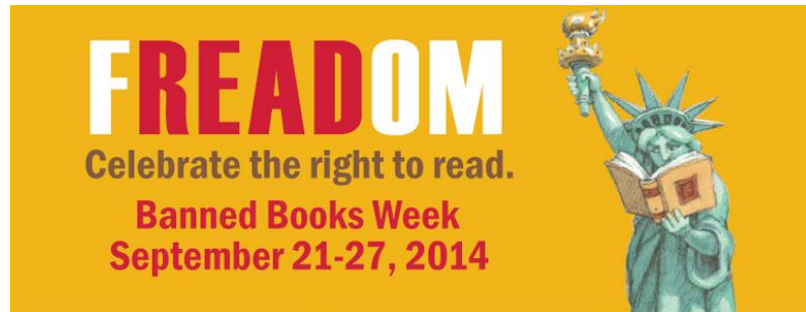




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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Hartford Public Library Hosts Performance and Author Talk During Banned Books Week



Author David Hadju will discuss Hartford's role in the campaign to suppress comics during the 1950s at the Banned Book; Comedy troupe Sea Tea Improv will perform.

HARTFORD, Connecticut (September 11, 2014) – An evening of comic books, graphic novels and improv comedy will mark Banned Books Week on Sept. 23 at Hartford Public Library.

The public is invited to the interactive event, sponsored by the Library and the American Civil Liberties Union of Connecticut. It will be celebrated with a performance by the Sea Tea Improv comedy company followed by a discussion between performer and writer Julia Pistell and author David Hajdu about Hartford's role in the campaign to suppress comic books during the 1950s.

The theme corresponds to the focus of this year's Banned Books Week on comics and graphic novels. The national week-long observance, which runs September 21 – 27, is sponsored and supported by library groups, booksellers and other advocates for the right to read freely.

"We were impressed by the [American Library Association \(ALA\)](#) bringing emphasis and attention this year to the graphic novel for Banned Books Week, and we realize the boundary-bending nature of the graphic novel which is why we chose the genre for our One Book One Hartford program this fall," said Matthew K. Poland, the Hartford Public Library Chief Executive Officer. "Here at the Library, we address the needs of many kinds of learners and many kinds of readers, and the graphic novel itself – which addresses all the themes and problems posed by more traditional literature – is a celebrated part of our collection. The graphic novel, born in controversy, is a natural focus for us for our Banned Books program and we look forward to the creative force of Sea Tea Improv and Dave Hajdu in exploring issues of censorship around this graphic medium."

Hajdu, author of *The Ten-Cent Plague: The Great Comic Book Scare and How It Changed America*, will talk about how The Hartford Courant and its series "Depravity for Children" was central to the events that led to Senate hearings on comics and a crackdown on the comics industry. Hajdu is also the music critic for The New Republic and a professor at the Columbia University Graduate School of Journalism.

Sea Tea Improv is a Hartford-based professional improv comedy company whose members have trained at the country's premier comedy schools. Julia Pistell, a Hartford resident, is a member of the troupe, a writer, improviser, teacher and public relations consultant.

The event, which is free and open to the public, will begin with a reception at 5:30 p.m. followed by the performance at 6 p.m. in the atrium of the Downtown Library at 500 Main Street in Hartford.

ABOUT [HARTFORD PUBLIC LIBRARY](#)

As a finalist for the 2014 National Medal from the Institute for Museum and Library Services, Hartford Public Library has been recognized as national leader in redefining the urban public library in the 21st century as an innovative and stimulating place where people can learn and discover, explore their passions, and find a rich array of resources that contribute to a full life. Hartford Public Library provides free resources that inspire reading, guide learning, and encourage individual exploration. Serving the residents of Hartford and beyond at its nine branches and Downtown location, Hartford Public Library receives more than 860,000 visits per year from adults, children and families seeking early literacy opportunities, work skills training, civic engagement, arts enrichment, and so much more. Visit hplct.org.

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