

Free the Books: University of Victoria celebrates Freedom to Read Week

By Susan Henderson.

This year's [Freedom to Read Week](#) at the University of Victoria was organized jointly by the University of Victoria Libraries and the University Bookstore.

To celebrate the 26th anniversary of FTRW, 26 campus representatives released 26 challenged books on campus or around our region to spread the word about book challenges and book bannings. The released books will be tracked on the [BookCrossing](#) website as they are picked up and read and left again in public places to continue their journey. Some books will have a head start in their travels: *The Handmaid's Tale* has been mailed by one participant to a friend in New Zealand to read and release "down under" while another was left in the Calgary Airport.

The wonderful part about our event was the cross section of participating campus representatives: students, faculty, university staff and senior members of the university administration, including President David Turpin. Penny Draper, winner of the Bolen Books Children's Book Prize and Carla Funk-Hesketh, Victoria's first Poet Laureate were participants who represented the writing community. Marnie Swanson our University Librarian also participated—hers was the book left in the Calgary Airport.



Photo of Marnie Swanson, Joel Friesen, Mark Roman from *The Ring*, February 2010. Photo credit Don Pierce, University of Victoria.

Thank you!

Our thanks go to the following campus representatives for championing intellectual freedom in Canada: John Barton, Krista Boehnert, Jamie Cassels, Simon Devereaux, Penny Draper, Joel Friesen, Anthony Goerzen, Carla Funk-Hesketh, Dianne George, Megan Hyska, Bruce Kilpatrick, Daniel Kilpatrick, Leslie MacDonald, Catherine Mateer, Heather McRae, Courtenay Nielsen, Michael Prince, Andrew Rippen, Mark Roman, Dan Scott, Gino Shifrin, Maddie Smith, Marnie Swanson, David Turpin, Lynne van Luven, Leanne Wiltsie.



Photo of John Barton from *The Ring*, March 2010. Photo credit Robie Liscomb, University of Victoria.

Publications

Our campus news publication, [The Ring](#), featured our FTRW event in the February issue and there is a follow up Op-Ed piece in the [March issue](#). John Barton, the editor of the [Malahat Review](#) wrote the Op/Ed based on his personal experience releasing *Daddy's Roommate*. Our student newspaper, the [Martlet](#) also ran a feature article and display photo.

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