



**[The Year They Burned the Books](#) by Nancy Garden**

Farrar, Straus and Giroux, Macmillan Publishers, 1999

ISBN: 9780374386672

\*Age Range: 12-18 years

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### BOOK SYNOPSIS

When Wilson High Telegraph editor Jamie Crawford writes an opinion piece in support of the new sex-ed curriculum, which includes making condoms available to high school students, she has no idea that a huge controversy is brewing. Lisa Buel, a school board member, is trying to get rid of the health program, which she considers morally flawed, from its textbooks to its recommendations for outside reading. The newspaper staff find themselves in the center of the storm, and things are complicated by the fact that Jamie is in the process of coming to terms with being gay, and her best friend, Terry, also gay, has fallen in love with a boy whose parents are anti-homosexual. As Jamie's and Terry's sexual orientation becomes more obvious to other students, it looks as if the paper they're fighting to keep alive and honest is going to be taken away from them. Nancy Garden has depicted a contemporary battleground in a novel that probes deep into issues of censorship, prejudice, and ethics.

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### REVIEWS AND PRAISE

“High school senior Jamie Crawford has attained her dream of being editor-in-chief of her school newspaper, but when she writes an editorial in favor of a new health curriculum that includes the distribution of condoms and frank discussion of homosexuality, she finds herself embroiled in a controversy that is polarizing her small New England community...An important book that deserves a wide readership.” —*Booklist*

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### AWARDS AND ACCOLADES

- Booklist Top 10 Gay and Lesbian Books for Youth

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### MEDIA AND RESOURCES

- [Boston Globe Obituary](#)
- [Author Interview](#)

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### RESPONSE TO CHALLENGES

- Reference to Nancy Garden's other works in PEN America [banned books in Florida list](#)

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### \*A NOTE ON AGE RANGES

Updated 10.5.2025

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A publisher-suggested age range covers the gamut of readers that publishers envision using the book, whether for independent reading, family sharing, group study, or in other ways. Educators have the best sense of the appropriate age range for the diverse learners they work with and understand these ranges vary depending on a book's intended use.

**Updated 10.5.2025**

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