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Notes & Comments

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The dangers of “safety”

On the regulation of children's books by the Consumer Product Safety Improvement Act of 2008.

Of course, you needn't complain that a book is unfair to Muslims to prevent it getting around. The house of political correctness has many mansions. Consider, for example, the lunatic provisions of something called the “Consumer Product Safety Improvement Act of 2008.” Never heard of it? You will. As the Manhattan Institute's Walter Olson points out in “The New Book Banning” (available on the *City Journal* website), this latest effort to protect us from ourselves stipulates that

children's books published before 1985 should not be considered safe and may in many cases be unlawful to sell or distribute. Merchants, thrift stores, and booksellers may be at risk if they sell older volumes, or even give them away, without first subjecting them to testing—at prohibitive expense. Many used-book sellers, consignment stores, Goodwill outlets, and the like have accordingly begun ...

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