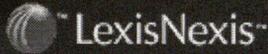


Anaya, Rudolfo - "Bless me Ultima" - Censorship - Banned Books



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Rocky Mountain News (Denver, CO)

February 9, 2005 Wednesday Final Edition

**SECTION:** NEWS; Pg. 7A

**LENGTH:** 796 words

**HEADLINE:** BOOK FLAP ANOTHER SIGN OF OUR SAD TIMES

**BYLINE:** Bill Johnson, Rocky Mountain News

**BODY:**

I haven't read **Bless Me, Ultima**, either. In fact, all I know about the book is that the last place I'd order it thrown is in the trash.

I don't care what it was Bob Conder heard. Using his reasoning, this nation's landfills should overflow mightily from the works of Ann Coulter.

Listen, knucklehead, the last thing any school superintendent should ever encourage is the trashing or burning of ANY book.

I will let this go in a minute.

After all, Bob Conder last week did apologize to Norwood students, parents, staff and residents for his pulling from a freshman reading class the critically acclaimed novel by Rudolfo Anaya about a young boy's coming of age in Chicano culture.

Give the man credit for having the guts to admit his mistake, acknowledging as he did that he hadn't fully read the book and had overreacted to the ranting of one parent over its supposed "filthy" language, a chorus joined by a couple of other alarmists, who threw about two dozen copies of the book into the trash.

It takes a big and a thinking man to admit when he is wrong; the Norwood superintendent is to be congratulated. Why it took the better part of a week for him to wake up, well, this is another story.

The story of Bob Conder and **Bless Me, Ultima** is as illustrative a metaphor for the sad times we live in as any.

It is all fear.

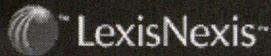
A Durango judge actually awarded a woman nearly \$900 to pay for medical treatment she insists was forced upon her after two teenage girls, wanting only to do good, knocked on her door at 10:30 p.m. one evening last July and left cookies and a very sweet note on her porch.

The woman said the girls' actions brought on a panic attack that required hospitalization. Well, the judge later ruled, it was pretty late at night for them to be out.

Say what?

Scores of public broadcasting stations refused to broadcast an episode of the children's show Postcards from

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