John Steinbeck’s *The Grapes of Wrath* inspired many readers and received both praise and criticism from literary critics when it was published in April 1939. People all over the country were reading, discussing, and evaluating Steinbeck’s famous novel, which centered on a migrant family traveling from Oklahoma to California in search of a better living during the Great Depression. *The Grapes of Wrath* is a work of fiction, inspired by first-hand accounts of the experiences of thousands of migrants traveling from the Midwest to California, which in the eyes of migrants was the golden state of opportunity. It portrays the brutal realities and toil faced by migrant families who risked everything to seek a fresh start in a completely new world. Literary critics praised the novel for its honesty and vivid detail, and in 1940, one year after the novel was published, *The Grapes of Wrath* won the Pulitzer Prize, elevating Steinbeck’s career.¹

Steinbeck sought to make a statement with this novel, and it created a wave of hatred and fear in one southern California county. The Associated Farmers of Kern County, California, responded with such negativity to the novel that the Board of Supervisors, many of whom were part of the Associated Farmers, immediately banned the novel from public libraries and schools in Kern. The Associated Farmers also

publicly spoke against the novel, as it painted a grim picture of Californians and farmers.

Several authors have written about the censorship of novels, specifically the ban of *The Grapes of Wrath* in Kern County. Rick Wartzman published *Obscene in the Extreme: The Burning and Banning of John Steinbeck’s The Grapes of Wrath* in 2008, giving a behind-the-scenes account of the days leading up to the Kern County Board of Supervisors’ vote on banning *The Grapes of Wrath* from public libraries and schools. He provides an in-depth look and writes a clear narrative about the lives of several persuasive individuals who carried out the ban and the events that heightened tensions in Kern County regarding Steinbeck’s novel. Wartzman argues that censorship, when placed in the hands of powerful people, poses a threat to ordinary individuals. In “Forbidden Fruit: The Banning of *The Grapes of Wrath* in the Kern County Free Library,” Marci Lingo gives a detailed description of the economic, social, and political conditions of Kern County in the 1930s. Lingo argues that each of these conditions shaped the banning of Steinbeck’s work. In this research paper, I refer heavily to Lingo’s and Wartzman’s research, as well as a number of newspaper articles published during the summer of 1939 from the *New York Times* and the *Los Angeles Times*.

The Kern County Board of Supervisors banned *The Grapes of Wrath* because of Steinbeck’s mostly accurate representation of conditions in California for migrant families. Farmers in Kern County did not appreciate the negative light in which they and their home were cast and argued that Steinbeck had written many falsehoods. The Associated Farmers of Kern County, an influential organization, used its power to shape the minds of the people of Kern County and ultimately used its influence to persuade the Board of Supervisors to ban *The Grapes of Wrath*. However, after tensions decreased in Kern County, many people began to question whether the board had overstepped its bounds, and the board lifted the ban after a year and a half. Presently, Kern County celebrates and praises John Steinbeck as a meaningful writer in American literature. John Steinbeck gave readers a look into the lives of fellow Americans who were forced off their land, compelled to leave their homes in search of something better. In the words of one critic, the book would lead the reader to “plunder his store of values, jerk him a little way out of himself and force him to think upon the
lives of people heretofore unknown to him perhaps, lives foreign to his own, but no less significant, no less real.” I argue in this research paper that the Associated Farmers of Kern County, many of whom served on the Board of Supervisors in Kern, banned the novel due to their disgust and how Steinbeck portrayed Kern County as unforgiving in the wake of the migrant crisis during the Great Depression.

1939: On the Brink of War and Submerged in an Economic Depression

The Grapes of Wrath was published during a turbulent time in American history, one that put Americans on edge. In 1939 the United States was experiencing one of the worst economic disasters in history. The United States was in the middle of the “Great Depression, a looming world war, political upheaval from the left and right side of politics, around the world and in the United States.”

While the worst of the Great Depression was over, families still suffered from a weak economy. People living in the Midwest also struggled through an extreme drought that caused dust storms to arise, destroying their farms and livestock. In addition to economic and political issues at home, global instability and the rise of new and potentially threatening political ideologies in Europe threatened the United States’ security and stability. On the continent of Europe, “Hitler’s troops were amassed along the fifteen-hundred-mile German-Polish border. The Soviets and Japanese clashed along Mongolia’s Khalkha River. And Franco was ruthlessly consolidating his power in Spain.”

Business leaders and elites in the United States viewed the changing political ideologies of western and eastern Europe and Asia as frightening and worried about the possibility of similar movements that could potentially threaten an existing order that had been in place for decades.

Steinbeck’s Inspiration for The Grapes of Wrath

The Grapes of Wrath took years of dedication and determination for

1Harold Bloom, John Steinbeck.
Steinbeck to create. Steinbeck was born and raised in the Salinas Valley of California and was passionate about the events occurring in his hometown. The 1936 Salinas lettuce strike helped fuel Steinbeck’s anger toward California’s big agricultural interests. Steinbeck understood his responsibility to give migrant families a voice and conducted thorough research in order to sustain an accurate image of migrant families and their experiences. In order to create *The Grapes of Wrath*, he traveled up and down California to gather first-hand accounts of migrant experiences. Steinbeck traveled “among the valley’s farmworkers, earning their trust, taking in their stories, and, eventually, feeling their anger and making it his own.” Tom Collins assisted Steinbeck on his journey through California. Collins “ran the federal government’s migrant labor camp in Arvin, just outside Bakersfield, compiled copious information that Steinbeck put to good use in his novel.” Steinbeck included such accurate portrayals that “whole scenes in the book appear to have been formed from Collins’s sketches of the Arvin camp.” One camp that Steinbeck and Collins visited was the Kern Migratory Labor Camp. This labor camp was described as “an absolute sanctuary compared with the Hoovervilles . . . where residents were treated with respect.” Alongside Tom Collins, a photographer was employed to take photos of migrant families and the camps where they were located that later appeared as a “pictorial record in *Life* magazine” in order to demonstrate that the novel did not exaggerate. These photographs taken by the photographer provided Steinbeck the necessary means to create a novel that was true to life, although a work of fiction.

**National Reception of *The Grapes of Wrath***

*The Grapes of Wrath* was published on April 14, 1939. Upon publication, John Steinbeck’s novel received critical acclamation. By the end of 1939, it “would become a true commercial phenomenon with Steinbeck on

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5 Wartzman, *Obscene in the Extreme*, 89.
6 Wartzman, *Obscene in the Extreme*, 75.
7 Wartzman, *Obscene in the Extreme*, 82.
8 Wartzman, *Obscene in the Extreme*, 82.
11 Bloom, *John Steinbeck*.
pace to sell 430,000 copies.” After publication, swift efforts were made to adapt the novel to the big screen. The film version of *The Grapes of Wrath* was released in 1940 and earned several Oscar nominations and won Best Picture, Best Director, and Best Supporting Actress.

*The Grapes of Wrath* was praised by literary critics because it gave a voice to migrant families. Literary critic Louise Long said that Steinbeck “has written the lives of a lonely, lost, homeless people. People who belong to America, who are a part of the land, wanderers now over the face of the continent, sick and bewildered: migrants: Americans.” Long would go on to say that Steinbeck created protagonists that possessed courage, kindness, toughness, and resiliency.

Joseph Henry Jackson, the literary editor for the *San Francisco Chronicle* in 1939, wrote in an introduction to a 1940 edition of *The Grapes of Wrath* that Steinbeck forged a “magnificent piece of special pleading, a novel that moved its readers—to pity, to disgust, to rage, but always moved them—and the most discussed, most significant work of fiction this year, perhaps of its decade.” Other critics took note of Steinbeck’s bleak, sharp stance on the struggle of migrants. Peter Monro Jack argued that this “story reads like the news from Nazi Germany.” He stated that *The Grapes of Wrath* “is as pitiful and angry a novel ever to be written about America.” For Jack, the novel presented America in a different light than before: vulnerable and weak.

Steinbeck’s novel became an instant classic and provoked conversations about the plight of migrants. *The Grapes of Wrath* made readers question whether the experiences of the protagonist family, the Joads,
were true. Were conditions truly this harsh and was the government of California doing nothing to aid the migrant families? Steinbeck’s novel “touched off within California a controversy which quickly became national. Were the Joads . . . typical of the Oklahoma new-poor? Were the Joads’ experiences typical? Was California as a whole the callous, brutal, exploiting State that the Joads found in Steinbeck’s story?” Americans living on the opposite end of the nation could not relate to the migrant families traveling across the US and relied on Steinbeck’s narrative to inform their understanding of the migrants’ plight. While many readers questioned the authenticity and frankness of Steinbeck’s writing, book sales skyrocketed in 1939. With the announcement of a motion picture of *The Grapes of Wrath*, more people were introduced to the novel, creating a larger audience. *The Grapes of Wrath* and Steinbeck “were dinner-table topics from one end of the country to the other.” What Steinbeck had set out to accomplish when he wrote *The Grapes of Wrath* was to get Americans discussing the migrant crisis—exactly what people all over the country were doing. Eleanor Roosevelt, the First Lady of the United States in 1939, described her experience reading *The Grapes of Wrath* as “an unforgettable experience. . . . There are 500,000 Americans that live in the covers of that book.” Whether or not readers agreed with Steinbeck and his portrayal of the migrant crisis in California, people could not deny the profound impact Steinbeck’s novel established in the minds of Americans.

Multiple organizations were devoted to raising money for the migrants and designed relief concerts and parties to raise awareness. Some held “‘Grapes of Wrath’ parties looking to raise money to aid the migrants.” National organizations such as the United Cannery, Agricultural, Packing and Allied Workers of America “recruited five young Broadway actors to tour the West and Southwest, with ticket sales going into UCAPAWA’s coffers. The troupe’s name: The Grapes of Wrath Players.” Woody Guthrie, an influential folk singer, “played at a ‘Grapes of Wrath Evening’ at the Forrest Theater in New York to

21 Neary, “‘Grapes of Wrath’ and the Politics of Book Burning.”
22 Neary, “‘Grapes of Wrath’ and the Politics of Book Burning.”
23 Neary, “‘Grapes of Wrath’ and the Politics of Book Burning.”
benefit agricultural laborers.”

Reactions to *The Grapes of Wrath* were not uniformly positive. Migrants feared that they were being stereotyped as “white trash—a stigma that they were having a hard-enough time shaking.” Migrant families were forced off their homeland. They loaded trucks and cars with everything they could carry and traveled across thousands of miles, often times with hardly enough to eat, the hot sun baking their scorched skin. These travelers were then forced to beg for food or water in order to stay alive; they did not appreciate how Steinbeck “demeaned them, how it made them seem dirty and bawdy and uncouth.” As a result, migrants attained a negative stereotype in the eyes of people who viewed this kind of behavior as shameful and immoral.

Negative stereotypes of migrants endured in Kern County as well. The community of migrants was “branded as being full of ‘drunks, chiselers, exploiters and social leeches.” In Kern County, the origins of the stereotype for migrants came from “local businessmen, health officers, and Associated Farmers officials who had been the ones to stereotype the Okies in the first place.” These people did not want the image of their town to be associated with the depiction of immoral migrants filling up their city looking for work. For them, keeping Kern County pure and respected was a priority. Anything that came to ruin that image, including Steinbeck’s *The Grapes of Wrath*, would not be welcome.

**Wrathful Responses from Kern County**

Kern County, located in Southern California, twenty miles outside Bakersfield, was one of the settings for Steinbeck’s novel. The San Joaquin Valley, an area that encompasses most of Kern County, was an area where migrant families first arrived when searching for work. The influx of people searching for work was so great that Kern County and the state of California could not provide enough support for the migrant families. The solution of where to house, feed, give medical relief to, and care for the migrant families weighed heavily upon local

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government officials. The financial burdens due to the increasing number of people coming into California destabilized state and local politics. Californians “protested that they are assuming an unfair proportion of the nation’s relief load because rainbow-chasing indigents, who would otherwise be supported by their home States, have poured into California and become public charges.” The influx of migrants also resulted in economic and social concerns for local citizens. Kern County officials specifically complained that it “felt the pinch as hordes of Dust Bowl refugees glutted the San Joaquin labor market.” Other planters blasted the influx of migrant families as an “invasion! They’re worse than a plague of locusts!” This atmosphere influenced Kern County farmers’ negative reception of the novel.

The driving force behind censoring The Grapes of Wrath was the Associated Farmers of Kern County. Through the California Farm Bureau Federation and California’s Chamber of Commerce, this group of farmers first formed in 1933. Associated Farmers was backed by powerful corporations such as Bank of America, Pacific Gas and Electric, Standard Oil, Southern Pacific Railroad, and the Canners League. This was a conservative-minded group of farmers, and it effectively blocked California’s attempts to create a system of camps for workers and denied any legislation being passed by Governor Culbert Olson, who was a liberal Democrat. In this strained political atmosphere and with the assistance of wealthy corporations, the Associated Farmers organization was able to push its conservative agenda onto the Board of Supervisors in order to ban Steinbeck’s novel.

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34 “War on Steinbeck Book,” 24.
When Steinbeck’s prose arrived in Kern County, farmers had been un-impressed with his work and most of their arguments drew from their frustration with how they had been portrayed in the novel. Farmers of the San Joaquin Valley argued that Steinbeck characterized them as “tyrannical oppressors.” Kern was their home, and people argued that Steinbeck, not even a resident of Kern, had no right in thrusting his view in the novel. Stanley Abel, a member of the Board of Supervisors, was one of the first people to voice his concerns about *The Grapes of Wrath*. He complained about Steinbeck’s depiction of “public officials, law enforcement officers and civil administrates, businessmen, farmers and ordinary citizens as inhumane vigilantes, breathing class hatred and divested of sympathy or human decency or understanding toward a great, and to us unwelcome, economic problem brought about by an astounding influx of refugees, indigent farmers, who were dusted or tractored or foreclosed out of Oklahoma, Kansas, Nebraska, Arkansas, Missouri, Texas and others of our sister states.”

W. B. Camp, president of the Associated Farmers of Kern County and a member of the Kern County Board of Supervisors, explained that because of the “sensationalism in the book not only Kern county but all of agriculture and California have received a black eye.” The Associated Farmers presumed that Steinbeck was a “hazard to the existing order” of operations in Kern County. The Associated Farmers stopped at nothing in order to make it known that Steinbeck’s novel was not accepted by California farmers and that, according to them, it misrepresented them entirely.

One particular issue the farmers were upset with was that Steinbeck implied they were exploiting migrants for their labor and paying them low wages. W. B. Camp commented that “Steinbeck was wrong to put forward that growers are exploiting this labor and hiring them for a few cents per day. . . . California farmers pay their labor more than twice as much as most of these migrants received back home.” Camp insisted that agricultural wages were high and that Steinbeck picked

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“isolated cases . . . and twisted such cases to fit into the picture he wanted to paint.”42 The Associated Farmers needed to disprove Steinbeck’s representation of migrants in order for their organization to maintain a beneficial image.

Another major issue was Steinbeck’s accusation that both the farmers and the local government were failing to help the migrants. Despite the unwelcome attitudes quickly forming in Kern County, some work was being done to assist the thousands of people entering California. Kern County “increased its already heavy tax load to care for the uninvited guests” in order to increase human mercy and public health.43 Farmers and residents argued that free medical care was given to migrants, with Kern spending “$6.20 per capita on migrant relief.”44 The fact of the matter is that the migrant crisis was putting a strain on California’s welfare system, which appeared to be in need of reform. Notwithstanding the minimal effort being made by Kern County in the wake of the migrant crisis, Steinbeck implied that no efforts were being made on behalf of the migrant community.

The Associated Farmers and other Kern citizens were quick to criticize Steinbeck’s portrayal. A controversial scene at the end of The Grapes of Wrath occurs when one member of the Joad family, Rose of Sharon, gives birth to her baby in an abandoned streetcar with the help of her mother and a stranger the family had just met. One Kern County resident explained this scene as false because “she must have been purposely hiding from the staff of field nurses deployed throughout Kern County who administered health care to the migrants.”45 Stanley Abel attacked Steinbeck, saying that he “chose to ignore the education, recreation, hospitalization, welfare and relief services, unexcelled by any other political subdivision in the United States, made available by Kern County to every resident in Kern County.”46 Meanwhile, Gretchen Knief, head librarian at the Kern County Public Library, stated that the citizens of Kern County “do not minimize the plight of the migrants, but that they do object to Mr. Steinbeck’s accusations of

42 Wartzman, Obscene in the Extreme, 22.
44 Wartzman, Obscene in the Extreme, 28.
45 Wartzman, Obscene in the Extreme, 42.
46 Wartzman, Obscene in the Extreme, 8.
community negligence in caring for them.” The Associated Farmers defiantly attacked Steinbeck’s novel and the asserted misrepresentation of their community.

The Associated Farmers also accused Steinbeck of denigrating the migrants in his description of them and their daily lives. Speaking at a radio station in Los Angeles, the KFI, W. B. Camp stated that “these migrants as a class are the finest kind of people . . . yet this book pictures them as being very mean and of the lowest class of humanity.” Stanley Abel stated that Steinbeck’s prose “offended our citizenry by falsely implying that many of our fine people are low, ignorant, profane and blasphemous type living in a vicious and filthy manner.” Camp went to great lengths to use this criticism to project a sense of unity between the farmers and migrants. A California news article published during the summer of 1939 described the efforts of the Associated Farmers to ban Steinbeck’s novel and included a photo of W. B. Camp, a farm laborer identified as a migrant, and another farmer burning his copy of The Grapes of Wrath.

The Associated Farmers and citizens of Kern County were not alone in protesting the novel. State-wide and national groups also joined in the fray. The national organization Pro-America, consisting mainly of Republican-voting women, joined the voices of the Associated Farmers in their loathing of Steinbeck and his book. Speakers at a special statewide meeting of Pro-America “denounced a recent book dealing with California’s migrant problem” and labeled Steinbeck’s novel as “smear literature and deliberately destructive propaganda.” The purpose of the meeting was to “refute the pictures of migrant conditions as portrayed in John Steinbeck’s ‘Grapes of Wrath.’” The chorus of

48 Wartzman, Obscene in the Extreme, 23.
49 Wartzman, Obscene in the Extreme, 8.
52 Wartzman, Obscene in the Extreme, 93.
disapproval joined together in a collective voice to ban the novel.\textsuperscript{53} Indeed, in the coming days, the Kern County Board of Supervisors voted that the only way forward was to censor the novel.

**Banning the Novel**

The social and financial fears created by the influx of migrants to California disturbed local farmers, and Steinbeck’s novel created a charged political cloud that fueled the Kern County Board of Supervisors’ decision to ban *The Grapes of Wrath*. Of the voices who publicly denounced the book, farmers made up the majority. The Board of Supervisors voted in favor of banning the novel on August 21, 1939, and the book was immediately taken off the shelves of the public library in Kern as well as in public schools. Officially, the Kern County Board of Supervisors based their decision to ban the novel on what it characterized as its obscene and misleading propaganda and the fact that the supervisors believed Steinbeck’s work downplayed the aid Kern County was giving to migrant workers. One member of the board called the novel a “libel and a lie.”\textsuperscript{54} Another key factor in banning *The Grapes of Wrath* was the fact that two members of the Associated Farmers, Stanley Abel and W. B. Camp, the latter the president of the organization, were instrumental in imposing their opinions and outrage regarding Steinbeck’s novel and could use their power in implementing the ban in Kern County.

The Board of Supervisors was also able to point to a number of other controversies surrounding the novel in order to justify the ban. Other controversial subjects *The Grapes of Wrath* introduced were socialism and the frequent occurrence of swear words. Kern County board members were afraid that the reference to socialism in the novel and its “breathing class hatred” would ignite a political upheaval in Kern County.\textsuperscript{55} America was a capitalist society that feared the growing acceptance of socialism across the Atlantic. At the same time, Steinbeck included many swear and taboo words in his novel. The Kern County

\textsuperscript{53} For Marci Lingo, the ban represented the “ambivalent attitudes about the Okies, illustrate[d] the power of governing boards to censor public libraries, and underscore[d] the precarious nature of intellectual freedom in libraries.” Lingo, “Forbidden Fruit,” 360.

\textsuperscript{54} Steinbeck, *The Grapes of Wrath*, vii.

\textsuperscript{55} Wartzman, *Obscene in the Extreme*, 55.
Board of Supervisors classified this language as “lewd, foul, and obscene language . . . and unfit for use in American homes.” Inappropriate language used included “bastard, bitch, shitheel, ass, tit, dong, pecker, nuts, and fingering’ hisself.” Steinbeck’s novel was not viewed as pure enough or socially acceptable to publicly shelve in libraries and schools.

**Responses to the Ban**

There were two main groups of organizations that voiced their opposition to the board’s decision to ban the book: civil liberties groups and pro-labor factions. The American Civil Liberties Union, or the ACLU, worried about the “legality of the ban.” Even the Kern chapter of the American Civil Liberties Union cited the ban as “illegal censorship.” Not just organizations but individual citizens who were “unconnected with either contingent also spoke out against the board’s action, including local clergy, county health workers and private citizens.” At the core of the protests, people were concerned with the authority of the board to censor any books whatsoever. This opinion, however, was small and had little influence in comparison to the wrath of the Associated Farmers.

Not everyone in Kern County argued for or even agreed with the ban. Ordinary citizens of Kern County voiced their opposition to the Board of Supervisors’ decision. Raymond Henderson, a prosecutor from Bakersfield attacked the Board of Supervisors. Henderson spoke out against the power exercised by government officials, stating that “this is the philosophy of fuehrers and dictators. . . That is what they do over in Italy and Germany and Russia and Japan.” Residents of Kern County had reportedly made “zero” complaints about *The Grapes of Wrath.* Some believed the burning of Steinbeck’s novel by a migrant worker was a publicity stunt. Yet, when county supervisor and Associated Farmers’ member Stanley Abel was asked by a reporter if “the

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57 Wartzman, *Obscene in the Extreme,* 56.
60 Lingo, “Forbidden Fruit,” 369.
action of the supervisors in banning *The Grapes of Wrath* was in response to popular demand,” Abel replied with “I should say so, yes.” The self-serving interest of the Board of Supervisors and the Associated Farmers of Kern County focused on correcting the inaccuracies written about farmers and Kern County in *The Grapes of Wrath*. Thus, the novel was banned in response to their own personal opinion rather than the popular opinion of Kern County.

The Associated Farmers continued their crusade against the novel even after it was banned. W. B. Camp worked closely with the Kern Chapter of Commerce to produce a “three-reel color film that would showcase just how generous the locals had been toward the migrants in providing food, clothing, schooling, hospitalization, and employment called ‘The Plums of Plenty.’” This production sows doubt about the motives behind the decision to ban the novel. The action of censorship, in the words of Wartzman, could have been an “attempt to shift the spotlight off of themselves so that, once back in the shadows, they could continue to subjugate their workers and tamp down their wages. . . . W. B. Camp and others firmly believed that society was in danger of disintegrating.” The suspicious nature of the actions behind banning the novel were addressed in the years to come as board members began rethinking the ban.

**Reevaluating the Ban**

When the Board of Supervisors voted to ban *The Grapes of Wrath* from public libraries and schools, there was no mandate for how long the ban would remain in effect. In the event, censorship of the novel lasted for a year and a half, by which time tensions had cooled off in Kern County. Some continued to challenge the legality of the ban. More important, judgments changed as people in Kern began thinking the board had overstepped its bounds. There was a growing sense that Kern County was overreacting to the novel and that the harsh ban was unnecessary. The Associated Farmers backtracked its steps in April

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1940, stating that the ban was “orchestrated to help Steinbeck deliver his message.”67 Today, dramatic change has taken place regarding the county’s opinion on The Grapes of Wrath. Kern County residents now celebrate the novel. The Board of Supervisors, “the same body that had voted to ban the book, now has passed a resolution praising it.”68 In October of 2002, the Kern Board of Supervisors voted to enact October as “Reading The Grapes of Wrath month.”69

Conclusion

John Steinbeck’s The Grapes of Wrath garnered esteem and outrage upon publication in April 1939. Literary critics praised Steinbeck’s novel for bringing forth worthy discussions of the migrant crisis in California. The Grapes of Wrath angered farmers in Kern County, California, for its brutally honest and real depiction of the conditions experienced by migrant families traveling across the United States. The Kern County Board of Supervisors and the Associated Farmers of Kern County attacked not only the novel for its apparent crude language but Steinbeck himself for debasing Kern County and the agricultural industry in California. As a result, the Board of Supervisors voted to ban the novel from public schools and libraries in Kern. Protests erupted over the authority of the board for censoring the novel. As the political climate of Kern cooled off and tensions over The Grapes of Wrath and Steinbeck lessened, many residents, including members of the Board of Supervisors, began reevaluating the ban. But just a year and a half later, the ban was lifted. Today, Kern County praises the novel as great American literature and celebrates John Steinbeck’s work. The incident demonstrated the extent to which censorship practices could be embraced in a politically charged time. The sense that censorship should not be implemented by government officials on the state or national level, which emerged during this debate, holds strong in Kern County today.

68 Driscoll, “John Steinbeck’s ‘The Grapes of Wrath.’”
69 Wartzman, Obscene in the Extreme, 228.
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