**St Benedict’s Library (Updated Sept 2021)**

**Banned Books List 2021**

(NB – The US itself can’t ban books due to the First Amendment, protecting freedom of speech and the press. Instead of a national law, specific school boards are frequently involved in banning books.)

**Banned Books in the Middle School Book Room**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Author** | **Title** | **Where & when banned** | **Reason banned** |
| Baum, Frank L. | **The Wizard of Oz** | US / 1928 + 1957-72 | Promoting witchcraft, and for "depicting women in strong leadership roles" |
| Blyton, Enid | **The Famous Five series** | UK | BBC banned the series for 30 years for being produced by a "second rater" and lacking "literary value.  More recently – Racism and sexism |
| Card, Orson Scott | **Ender’s Game** | US | Offensive language, violence, unsuited to age group |
| Carroll, Lewis | **Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland (1865)** | US / Repeatedly  China / 1931 | *US in 1900* - expletives and alluded to sexual fantasies as well as diminished the statures of certain authority figures.  *US in 1950s/60s* - encouraged the evolving drug culture with its “overt” allusions to hallucinogenic drug usage.  *China* - portrayal of anthropomorphized animals acting on the same level of complexity as human beings. |
| Dahl, Roald | **James and the Giant Peach** | US | Offensive language (ass), advocates communism, unsuited to age group (too scary), promotes disobedience. |
| Dahl, Roald | **The Witches** | US / repeatedly | Unsuited to age group, focus on witchcraft and the way in which it "devalues the lives of children." Plus, “being too sophisticated” and “not teaching moral values.”  It has also been criticised by feminist groups for its negative portrayal of women. |
| Dickens, Charles | **Oliver Twist (1839)** | Germany | Prohibited by Nazi Germany for featuring Jewish characters. |
| Collins, Suzanne | **The Hunger Games trilogy** | US / 2013 | Offensive language, religious viewpoint, violence, anti-ethnic, anti-family, insensitivity, unsuited to age group |
| Dessen, Sarah | **Just Listen** | US | Offensive language, sexual content, alcohol, and eating disorders. |
| Frank, Anne | **Anne Frank: The Diary of a Young Girl (1947)** | US / repeatedly | Sexual content, LGBT+ |
| Golding, Willian | **Lord of the Flies (1954)** | US / repeatedly | Unsuited to age group, profanity, extreme violence and sexism, with statements defamatory to women. |
| Green, John | **The Fault in Our Stars** | US | Profanity, sexual content, unsuited to age group |
| Green, John | **Looking for Alaska** | US / 2016 | Profanity, sexual content, undermining religious beliefs, unsuited to age group |
| Grimm, Jacob and Wilhelm | **The Complete Fairy Tales of The Brothers Grimm (1812)** | US  Germany | The tales have raised objections over sexism, violence and the gruesome nature of punishments metered out to villains. |
| Lewis, CS | **The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe (1950)** | US | “Graphic violence, mysticism and gore.” |
| Lowry, Louis | **The Giver (1993)** | US / 2003 | Violence, infanticide, euthanasia, sexual content, unsuited to age group, “twisted” and “lewd” content |
| Meyer, Stephenie | **Twilight series** | US / 2009 | Religious viewpoint, sexual content, unsuited to age group |
| Paterson, Katherine | **Bridge to Terabithia** | US / 2003 | Offensive language, religious viewpoint |
| Pilkey, Dav | **Captain Underpants series** | US / 2013 | Offensive language, violence, encouraging disobedience, unsuited to age group |
| Pullman, Phillip | **His Dark Materials trilogy** | US / 2008 | Political viewpoint, religious viewpoint, violence |
| Rowling, JK | **Harry Potter series** | US / Repeatedly | Religious viewpoint – referring to magic and witchcraft, for containing actual curses and spells, and for characters that use “nefarious means” to attain goals. |
| Satrapi, Marjane | **Persepolis (Graphic Novel)** | US / 2014 | Offensive language, political viewpoint, gambling. Additionally, “politically, racially, and socially offensive,” “graphic depictions”. |
| Tamaki, Mariko | **This One Summer (Graphic Novel)** | US / 2016 | LGBT+ characters, sexual content, offensive language, drug use, unsuited to age group |
| Telgemier, Rania | **Drama (Graphic Novel)** | US / 2016 | LGBT+ characters, sexual content, political viewpoint, unsuited to age group |
| Thomas, Angie | **The Hate U Give** | US / Repeatedly | Offensive language, anti-police message, drug use.  In Texas, although a petition started by a teenager saw the book reinstated in schools, youngsters still have to get parental permission to check it out. |
| Twain, Mark | **The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn (1885)** | US / Repeatedly | Racism |

**Banned Books in the Main Library Fiction**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Author** | **Title** | **Where and when banned** | **Reason Banned** |
|  | **The Dictionary** | US (California) / 2010 | Merriam Webster's 10th edition of the dictionary was removed from many classes in California in 2010, after parents complained of sexual content. |
| Asher, Jay | **Thirteen Reasons Why** | US / 2017 | Addressing teen suicide |
| Atwood, Margaret | **The Handmaid’s Tale** | US / 2019 | Profanity, political viewpoint and for “vulgarity and sexual overtones” |
| Blume, Judy | **Forever** | US / 2005 | Offensive language, sexual content |
| Bradbury, Ray | **Fahrenheit 451 (1953)** | US / Several times | Political viewpoint. Challenged on the basis of “questionable themes” (censorship, repression and religion, to name a few) |
| Brown, Dan | **The Da Vinci Code** | Lebanon / 2004 | Catholic leaders deemed it offensive to Christianity. |
| Chang, Jung | **Wild Swans (1993)** | China | Political viewpoint. Banned from publication in the People’s Republic of China for its depiction of Mao Tse-tung |
| Chaucer | **The Canterbury Tales (late fourteenth century)** | US | Sexual content. Banned from US mail under the Federal Anti-Obscenity Act (Comstock Law) of 1873, which banned the sending or receiving of works containing “obscene,” or “inappropriate” material. U.S. obscenity laws were overturned in 1959. |
| Chbosky, Stephen | **The Perks of Being a Wallflower** | US / repeatedly | Offensive language, sexual content, homosexuality, drugs taking, unsuited to age group |
| Coelho, Paulo | **The Alchemist** | Iran / 2011 | Political reasons - no official reason was given, some blame a video from 2009 showing Coelho's Iranian editor, Arash Hejazi, trying to save the life of a young woman who was shot in Tehran during post-election demonstrations. |
| De Beauvoir, Simone | **The Second Sex (1949)** | Spain | Banned in Francoist Spain for its advocacy of feminism. |
| Doyle, Arthur Conan | **A Study in Scarlet (1887)** | US (Virginia) | Negative portrayal of Mormons. |
| Ellis, Bret Easton | **American Psycho** | Australia  New Zealand  Germany 1990s | Graphic violence. |
| Flaubert, Gustav | **Madame Bovary (1856)** | France | After appearing as a successful serial in the Revue de Paris Gustave Flaubert’s Madame Bovary went on trial in France on January 30, 1857, for “offenses against public morals”, but did not succeed in court. |
| Hemingway, Ernest | **A Farewell to Arms (1929)** | Ireland  Italy  US (Boston) | Political viewpoint.  *Ireland –* Suppressed in the Irish Free State  *Italy –* Banned in Fascist Italy for depicting the Italian Army’s defeat at the Battle of Caporetto.  *US –* Banned at Boston newsstands for its sexual, “vulgar” content. |
| Hemingway, Ernest | **To Whom the Bell Tolls (1940)** | Spain | Political viewpoint. For being pro-Communist and pro-Republican. |
| Hitler, Adolf | **Mein Kampf (1925)** | Austria  Germany  Poland / until 1992  Russia | Political viewpoint.  *Austria –* the Verbotsgesetz 1947 prohibits the printing of the book. It is illegal to own or distribute existing copies.  *Germany –* In 2016, following the expiration of the copyright, Mein Kampf was republished in Germany for the first time since 1945. |
| Hosseini, Khaled | **The Kite Runner** | US / repeatedly | Sexual violence and was thought to “lead to terrorism” and “promote Islam.” |
| Huxley, Aldous | **Brave New World (1932)** | US / 2011  Australia / 1932-37  Ireland / 1932 | Religious viewpoint, political viewpoint, sexual content, insensitivity, nudity, racism |
| Joyce, James | **Ulysses (1922)** | UK / until 1936  US  Spain / until 1962  Australia | *UK –* sexual content and graphic depiction of bodily functions.  *US –* banned for 11 years, branded radical and obscene.  *Spain –* The complete 1945 Spanish-language translation of Ulysses was suppressed by the Spanish authorities until 1962. |
| King, Stephen | **Carrie** | US | Violence, inappropriate language, sexual content and negative view of religion. |
| Kyi, Aung San Suu | **Letters From Burma (1997)** | Burma | Political viewpoint, pro-democracy |
| Lawrence, DH | **Lady Chatterley’s Lover (1928)** | UK / until 1960  Australia 1929-65  China 1936 | *UK -* Temporarily banned for violation of obscenity laws; the ban was lifted in 1960. |
| Lee, Harper | **To Kill a Mockingbird (1960)** | US / repeatedly | Racism, featuring a “white saviour” character |
| Mandela, Nelson | **The Struggle Is My Life (1978)** | South Africa | Political viewpoint. Banned in Apartheid South Africa until 1990. |
| Marx, Karl | **The Communist Manifesto (1848)** | Austria /1933-45  Germany / 1933-45  Russia | Political viewpoint. Prohibited during Nazi Germany for being subversive - promotion of Communist theories. |
| Nabokov, Vladimir | **Lolita (1955)** | UK  US  Argentina  Canada  France  Belgium  New Zealand  South Africa | Obscenity |
| Orwell, George | **Animal Farm (1945)** | Russia  United Arab Emirates / 2002 | Political viewpoint. Completed in 1943, Orwell found that no publisher would print the book, due to its criticism of the USSR, an important ally of Britain in the War. Once published, the book was banned in the USSR and other communist countries.  *UAE* - In 2002, the novel was banned in UAE schools, because it contained text or images that go against Islamic values, most notably an anthropomorphic, talking pig. However, the ban has subsequently been lifted. |
| Orwell, George | **Nineteen Eighty-Four (1949)** | Russia / 1950-90  US  Vietnam | Political viewpoint. Banned by the Soviet Union in 1950, for being anti-communist, as Stalin understood that it was a satire based on his leadership. It was not until 1990 that the Soviet Union legalised the book and it was re-released after editing.  *US -* factions from opposite ends of the political spectrum both wanted it banned—some claiming that it was pro-communism while others claiming that it was anti-government. |
| Pasternak, Boris | **Doctor Zhivago (1957)** | Russia / until 1988 | Political viewpoint. Banned in the Soviet Union until 1988 for criticizing life in Russia after the Russian Revolution. When its author, Boris Pasternak, won the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1958 he was forced to reject it under government pressure. |
| Remarque, Erich Maria | **All Quiet on The Western Front (1928)** | Germany / 1933-45 | Political viewpoint. Banned and burned under the Nazi regime in Germany |
| Rowell Rainbow | **Eleanor & Park** | US / 2016 | Offensive language |
| Rushdie, Salman | **The Satanic Verses (1988)** | Bangladesh  Egypt  India  Indonesia  Iran  Kenya  Kuwait  Liberia  Malaysia  Pakistan  Papua New Guinea  Senegal  Singapore  Sri Lanka  Tanzania  Thailand | Blasphemy against Islam |
| Salinger, JD | **The Cather in the Rye (1951)** | US / repeatedly | “Excess of vulgar language, sexual scenes, and things concerning moral issues." |
| Shelley, Mary | **Frankenstein (1818)** | South Africa / 1955  US | Obscenity and “indecent material”  Religious viewpoint – references to God. |
| Steinbeck, John | **The Grapes of Wrath (1939)** | US (California) | Political viewpoint. In the state of California in which it was partially set, it was banned for 2 years for depicting "communist sympathies" and "exaggerating" poor conditions in migrant labour camps. |
| Steinbeck, John | **Of Mice and Men (1937)** | US / repeatedly | Offensive language, violence, racism |
| Taylor, Mildred D. | **Roll of Thunder, Hear my Cry** | US / 2002 | Offensive language |
| Walker, Alice | **The Color Purple (1982)** | US / repeatedly | Offensive language, graphic violence, LGBT+, plus "troubling ideas about race relations, man's relationship to God, African history and human sexuality." |
| Malcolm X | **The Autobiography of Malcolm X (1965)** | South Africa | Political viewpoint. Banned in Apartheid South Africa for criticism of white supremacy. |

**Useful Banned Books Links**

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_books_banned_by_governments>

<https://www.britannica.com/list/international-literary-tour-10-places-every-lit-lover-should-see>

<https://www.stylist.co.uk/life/50-books-that-were-banned/47882>

<https://redtri.com/kids-books-and-childrens-books-that-are-banned-books/slide/21>

<https://www.readbrightly.com/15-banned-books-every-tween-teen-read/>

<https://www.ala.org/advocacy/bbooks/frequentlychallengedbooks/YAbooks>

<https://www.islington.gov.uk/~/media/sharepoint-lists/public-records/leisureandculture/information/factsheets/20202021/20200609bannedbooksya.pdf>

<https://www.ala.org/advocacy/bbooks/frequentlychallengedbooks/top10>

<https://www.dw.com/en/13-books-you-perhaps-didnt-know-were-once-banned/a-40677432>