

1997 NJ

Removed from the summer reading list for the Clark School District's seventh-graders because of detailed descriptions of sexual intercourse. A group called Parents Against Pornographic Adult Literature was formed to ensure reading lists are correctly oriented and reviewed for Clark students.

Source: 12, Mar. 1985, p. 45; Nov. 1997, p. 169.

1058

**Lawson, Robert.**  
*They Were Strong and Good.*

1940

Published

1941

Caldecott Medal

1991 OR

Challenged because the novel "glorifies slavery and racism," but retained at the Multnomah County Library.

Source: 12, Jan. 1992, p. 6.

1059

**Le Guin, Ursula K.**  
*A Fisherman of the Inland Sea.*

1994

Published

2006 TX

Removed from the West Brazos Junior High School library in Brazoria because of inappropriate language. Books on "sensitive topics such as death, suicide, physical or sexual abuse, and teenage dating relationships" were moved to a restricted "young-adult" section from which students can borrow only with written parental permission.

Source: 12, Nov. 2006, pp. 289-90.

1060

**Le Guin, Ursula K.**  
*Lathe of Heaven.*

1971

Published

1984 WA

Challenged on a Washougal High School reading list because it contained "profuse profanity."

Source: 12, Sept. 1984, p. 157.

1061

**Leach, Maria.**  
*Whistle in the Graveyard: Folktales to Chill Your Bones.*

1974

Published

1992 AZ

Challenged at the Neely Elementary School in Gilbert because the book shows the dark side of religion through the occult, the devil, and satanism.

Source: 12, May 1992, p. 78; July 1992, p. 124.

1062

**Lebert, Benjamin.**  
*Crazy.*

2000

Published

2001

Best Books for Young Adults

2003 TX

Removed from the Canyon Vista Middle School in Round Rock by the principal who decided a parent was correct in being concerned about the book's availability. The parent called the book "vulgar; it talked about parts of the body." There was free use of the 'F-word' and several 'C-words.' The book was taken off the shelf at the district's other junior high school library.

Source: 12, Nov. 2003, p. 229.

1063

**Lederer, William J., and Eugene Burdick.**  
*The Ugly American.*

1958

Published

1958

Immediately after the novel's 1958 publication, it was temporarily censored by George A. Allen, director of the U.S. Information Agency, the federal agency responsible for U.S. overseas libraries, because the book "would not be in the interest of the United States."

In December 1958, Allen changed his mind. Senator J. W. Fullbright criticized the novel from the Senate floor in 1959. He was upset by the

portrayal of Americans overseas as "boobs or worse," while Russian diplomats were portrayed as "talented, dedicated servants of communism."

1963 WI

In a 1963 survey by the Wisconsin English department chairpersons and school administrators, a Wisconsin teacher and a group of parents objected to the novel because of its critical pictures of Americans abroad. Others have been critical of the novel based on its "filthy language and reference to sex."

Source: 9, pp. 180-81.

1064

**Lee, Harper.**  
*To Kill a Mockingbird.*

1960

Published

1961

Pulitzer Prize for Fiction

1963 OH

A delegation of Columbus citizens, representing the Franklin County, East Side and South Side Anti-communist Study Groups and the local chapter of the Women's Christian Temperance Union, asked the Columbus school board to ban the novel as "indiscreet and unfit for high school students." The school superintendent and the school board refused the request and expressed confidence in the ability of their teachers and librarians to choose reading material for the school system.

1977 MN

Challenged in Eden Valley and temporarily banned due to the words "damn" and "whore lady" used in the novel.

1980 NY

Challenged in the Vernon-Verona-Sherill School District as a "filthy, trashy novel."

1981 IN

Challenged at the Warren Township schools because the book does "psychological damage to the positive integration process" and "represents institutionalized racism under the guise of 'good literature.'"

After failing to ban Lee's novel, three black parents resigned from the township human relations advisory council.

1984 IL

Challenged in the Waukegan School District because the novel uses the word "nigger."

1985 AZ

Retained on a supplemental eighth-grade reading list in the Casa Grande Elementary School District, despite the protests by black parents and the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People who charged the book was unfit for junior high use.

1985 MO

Challenged in the Kansas City junior high schools.

1985 MO

Challenged at the Park Hill Junior High School because the novel "contains profanity and racial slurs."

1995 CA

Challenged at the Santa Cruz Schools because of its racial themes.

1995 LA

Removed from the Southwood High School library in Caddo Parish because the book's language and content were objectionable.

1996 MS

Challenged at the Moss Point School District because the novel contains a racial epithet.

1996 TX

Banned from the Lindale Advanced Placement English reading list because the book "conflicted with the values of the community."

2001 GA

Challenged by a Glynn County School Board member because of profanity. The novel was retained.

2001 OK

Returned to the freshmen reading list at Muskogee High School despite complaints over the years from black students and parents about racial slurs in the text.

**2004 IL**

Challenged, but retained in the Normal Community High School sophomore literature class despite concerns the novel is degrading to African Americans.

**2004 NC**

Challenged at the Stanford Middle School in Durham because the novel uses the word “nigger.”

**2006 TN**

Challenged at the Brentwood Middle School because the book contains “profanity” and “contains adult themes such as sexual intercourse, rape, and incest.” The complainants also contend that the book’s use of racial slurs promotes “racial hatred, racial division, racial separation, and promotes white supremacy.”

**2007 NJ**

Retained in the English curriculum by the Cherry Hill Board of Education. A resident had objected to the novel’s depiction of how blacks are treated by members of a racist white community in an Alabama town during the Depression. The resident feared the book would upset black children reading it.

**2009**

Removed from the St. Edmund Campion Secondary School classrooms in Brampton, Ontario, Canada, because a parent objected to language used in the novel, including the word “nigger.”

**2016 VA**

Retained in the Accomack County Public Schools. A parent objected to racial slurs in the book. After being temporarily removed on November 29, 2016, the book was reinstated on December 6 by the school board. While the novel won the Pulitzer Prize and the film version is an award-winning icon of American films, the book’s racial slurs, profanity, and frank discussion of rape have led people to challenge its appropriateness in libraries and classrooms across the United States since the mid-1970s.

Source: 7, Winter 2017, pp. 32–33; 9, p. 483; 12, Mar. 1978, p. 31; May 1980, p. 62; Mar. 1982, p. 47; July 1984, p. 105; May 1985, p. 80; July 1985, p. 134; Mar. 1986, pp. 57–58; May 1995, p. 68; Nov. 1995, p. 183; Nov. 1996, pp. 196–97, 199; Nov. 2001, pp. 277–78; Jan. 2002, p. 50; Jan. 2004, p. 11; May 2004, pp. 98–99; Mar. 2006, p. 74; Mar. 2008, p. 80; May 2008, pp. 117–18; Nov. 2009, pp. 203–4.

**1065**

**Lee, Joanna.**  
*I Want to Keep My Baby.*

**1977**

Published

**1994 NC**

Removed from the Morehead High School library in Rockingham County because of “anti-religious sentiments—the girl’s comment that her boyfriend was ‘her God’—and sexual situations.” After a three-hour public debate, the Rockingham County School Board later reversed its previous ban against the book.

Source: 12, Sept. 1994, p. 148; Nov. 1994, p. 201.

**1066**

**Legman, Gershon, ed.**  
*The Limerick: 1,700 Examples with Notes, Variants and Index.*

**1969**

Published

**1991 IL**

Challenged at the Oak Lawn Public Library because the book contains bawdy limericks with explicit sexual references.

Source: 12, Nov. 1991, p. 209; Jan. 1992, p. 26.

**1067**

**Lehrman, Robert.**  
*Juggling.*

**1982**

Published

**1982**

Best Books for Young Adults

**1990 MN**

Challenged at Woodbury Library. The book is about the life and sexual encounters of a teenage soccer player.

Source: 12, July 1990, p. 145.

**1068**

**Lelyveld, Joseph.**  
*Great Soul: Mahatma Gandhi and His Struggle with India.*

**2011**

Published

**2011**

Banned in parts of India.

**2011 CA**

A Santa Cruz educational organization, Foundation for Excellence, canceled an event planned in honor of the Pulitzer Prize-winning author. The foundation provides scholarships for students in India and canceled the event after the biography hinted a homosexual relationship between Gandhi and a German named Hermann Kallenbach. The foundation “didn’t want to be involved with any controversy.”

Source: 12, July 2011, pp. 141–42.

**1069**

**L’Engle, Madeleine C.**  
*Many Waters.*

**1986**

Published

**1987**

Best Books for Young Adults

**1991 OH**

Challenged at the Hubbard Library because the book alters the story of Noah’s Ark, making it secular and confusing to children.

Source: 12, Sept. 1991, p. 153.

**1070**

**L’Engle, Madeleine C.**  
*A Wrinkle in Time.*

**1962**

Published

**1963**

Newbery Medal

**1985 FL**

Challenged, but retained on the media center shelves of the Polk City Elementary School. A student’s parent filed the complaint, contending the story promoted witchcraft, crystal balls, and demons.

**1990 AL**

Challenged in the Anniston schools because the book sends a mixed signal to children about good and evil. The complainant also objected to listing the name of Jesus Christ together with the names of great artists, philosophers, scientists, and religious leaders when referring to defenders of Earth against evil.

**1996 NC**

Challenged, but retained by the Catawba County School Board in

Newton. A parent requested the book be pulled from the school libraries because it allegedly undermines religious beliefs.

Source: 12, July 1985, p. 133; Mar. 1991, p. 62; May 1996, pp. 97–98.

**1071**

**Lenin, Vladimir I.**  
*The State and Revolution.*

**1917**

Published

**1927**

Seized as subversive in Hungary.

**1927 MA**

Seized as obscene in Boston.

**1933**

Burned in Munich, Germany, by the Nazi government.

**1940 OK**

In Oklahoma City a vigilante group raided a bookstore owned by Robert Wood, who was also the state secretary of the Communist Party. They seized copies of the book along with other Communist literature, various works of fiction, books on economics, and copies of the U.S. Constitution and the Declaration of Independence. Mr. and Mrs. Wood, along with several other people who happened to be in the store, were arrested on charges of “criminal syndicalism” and held incommunicado. Six people including the Woods were sentenced to ten years in prison. A court of appeals overturned the convictions in 1943.

**1954 RI**

Seized by Providence postal authorities attempting to withhold from delivery to Brown University seventy-five copies of this “subversive” title.

**1989**

Banned in Grenada along with eighty-five other titles.

Source: 4, p. 60; 8, pp. 461–63.

**1072**

**Letts, Billie.**  
*Where the Heart Is.*

**1995**

Published

***Banned Books: Defending Our Freedom to Read*** is an essential reference for all who read, write, and work with books.

Librarians, educators, students, and parents, along with publishers, booksellers, writers, and readers interested in the current state of literary censorship in America—especially in our libraries and schools—will find this volume indispensable. Published every third year since 1982, this new edition of **Banned Books** by noted First Amendment advocate **Robert P. Doyle** details incidents of book bannings from 387 BC to 2017.

***Banned Books: Defending Our Freedom to Read*** provides a framework for understanding censorship and the protections guaranteed to us through the First Amendment. Interpretations of the uniquely American notion of freedom of expression—and our freedom to read what we choose—are supplemented by straightforward, easily accessible information that will inspire further exploration.

This updated and expanded 2017 edition features a new, streamlined design that will make this an essential reference you'll return to time and again. Contents include:

- Challenges: Who, Why, & How Often
- Freedom of Expression:  
The Courts Set Precedent  
The Library Community Takes a Stand  
Publishers Step Up
- Inviting the Public to Add Their Voices:  
The Birth of Banned Books Week
- Get Involved! How You Can Help  
Protect the Right to Read
- Challenged Books: A Reading List, which includes the ten most challenged books of 2016 plus a list of almost 2,000 titles listed alphabetically by author and in title, topical, and geographic indices.
- A list of influential First Amendment court cases

# Banned Books Defending Our Freedom to Read

Robert P. Doyle