

## Banned and Challenged Adult Fiction Books

Author	Title	First Published	Details
Margaret <b>Atwood</b>	The Handmaid's Tale	1985	<b>Story:</b> Set in a future America that has turned into an anti-feminist fascist state, Kate is a handmaid who lives a life of sexual servitude but falls in love with a man who is not her assigned partner. <b>Reasons:</b> Profanity, sexually explicit, religious view point <b>Author comment:</b> "I made a rule for myself: I would not include anything that human beings had not already done in some other place or time, or for which the technology did not already exist."[
Dan <b>Brown</b>	The Da Vinci Code	2003	<b>Story:</b> A mystery-detective novel that explores an alternative religious history. <b>Reason:</b> Religious view point <b>Reviewer comment:</b> "The most flagrant aspect... is not that Dan Brown disagrees with Christianity but that he utterly warps it in order to disagree with it."
Mikhail <b>Bulgakov</b>	The Master and Margarita	1967	<b>Story:</b> Satan appears at the Patriarch Ponds in Moscow in the guise of "Professor" Woland, a mysterious gentleman "magician" of uncertain origin. <b>Reason:</b> Political <b>Reviewer comment:</b> "...a lovely, hysterical, and amazing story."
Bret Easton <b>Ellis</b>	American Psycho	1991	<b>Story:</b> Set in Manhattan during the Wall Street boom of the late 1980s, American Psycho follows the life of wealthy young investment banker and serial killer Patrick Bateman. <b>Reason:</b> Violence <b>Author comment:</b> "During the years I worked on the book, I did not know how violent it would become."
Nadine <b>Gordimer</b>	July's People	1981	<b>Story:</b> In an apocalyptic, futuristic South Africa where racial tension has developed into full civil war, a white family is forced to seek sanctuary in the home of their black former servant. <b>Reason:</b> Racist <b>Author comment:</b> "To be called a racist as a white South African and as someone who stayed here through all of the worst time and as someone who identified closely with the struggle - that is just very insulting."
Mark <b>Haddon</b>	The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time	2003	<b>Story:</b> Christopher Boone is a 15-year-old with an Autism spectrum condition. When he finds a neighbour's dog murdered, he sets out on a journey which will turn his world upside down <b>Reasons:</b> Offensive language, profanity, atheism <b>Author comment:</b> "I'm always entertained when it gets banned somewhere or causes a huge row. But I never really feel that I have to stand up for it. It's like a sturdy 25-year-old who can pick a fight and look after itself"
Khaled <b>Hosseini</b>	The Kite Runner	2003	<b>Story:</b> The unlikely friendship between a wealthy boy and the son of his father's servant, set in a country that is in the process of being destroyed <b>Reasons:</b> Offensive language, violence, sexually explicit <b>Author comment:</b> "They never say I am speaking about things that are untrue. Their beef is, 'Why do you have to talk about these things and embarrass us? Don't you love your country?'"[
E. L. <b>James</b>	Fifty Shades of Grey	2011	<b>Story:</b> The deepening relationship between a college graduate, Anastasia Steele, and a young business magnate, Christian Grey. It is notable for its explicitly erotic scenes <b>Reason:</b> Sexually explicit <b>Reviewer comment:</b> "poorly written", "concerns that a group of teenagers will want to try it"

Milan <b>Kundera</b>	The Unbearable Lightness of Being	1984	<b>Story:</b> Two women, two men, a dog and their lives in the 1968 Prague Spring period of Czechoslovak history. <b>Reason:</b> Political <b>Reviewer comment:</b> "Kundera's novel seems as relevant now as it did when it was first published."
John <b>McGahern</b>	The Dark	1965	<b>Story:</b> Set in isolated rural Ireland and dealing with the consequences of parental and clerical child abuse. <b>Reasons:</b> Obscenity <b>Author comment:</b> "I was secretly ashamed. Not because of the book, but because this was our country and we were making bloody fools of ourselves."
Toni <b>Morrison</b>	Beloved	1987	<b>Story:</b> Sethe and her daughter Denver attempt to escape from slavery in a Kentucky plantation. <b>Reasons:</b> Sexual material, violence, bestiality, language, and other "inappropriate topics" <b>Reviewer comment:</b> "I sometimes wonder if attempts to have books like this banned is as much about not wanting to face the brutal truth as it is about the objections given."
Edna <b>O'Brien</b>	The Country Girls	1960	<b>Story:</b> An exploration of the trials and tribulations of two friends set against the backdrop of 1950s Ireland. <b>Reasons:</b> Sexual content <b>Reviewer comment:</b> "As a contraceptive, it was far more effective than stern lectures."
Jodi <b>Picoult</b>	My Sister's Keeper	2004	<b>Story:</b> 13-year-old Anna sues her parents for medical emancipation when she is expected to donate a kidney to her sister Kate, who is dying from leukaemia. <b>Reasons:</b> Homosexuality, offensive language, religious view point, sexism, sexually explicit, violence <b>Reviewer comment:</b> Picoult has depicted the harrowing decisions and predicaments faced by families like this with great sensitivity
Philip <b>Pullman</b>	His Dark Materials (trilogy)	1995, 1997, 2000	<b>Story:</b> The coming of age of two children, Lyra Belacqua and Will Parry, as they wander through a series of parallel universes. <b>Reasons:</b> Political view point, religious view point, violence <b>Reviewer comment:</b> "the stuff of nightmares", "worthy of the bonfire".
J.K. <b>Rowling</b>	Harry Potter (series)	1997 onwards	<b>Story:</b> Chronicling the life of a young wizard, Harry Potter, and his friends Hermione Granger and Ron Weasley, all of whom are students at Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry. <b>Reasons:</b> Occult/Satanism, violence <b>Reviewer comment:</b> "Regardless of how magic is portrayed in the series, we need to remember that witchcraft in real life can and does lead to death—the forever and ever kind."
Salman <b>Rushdie</b>	The Satanic Verses	1988	<b>Story:</b> A hijacked aeroplane blows apart high above the English Channel and two figures tumble towards the sea: Gibreel Farishta, India's legendary movie star, and Saladin Chamcha, the man of a thousand voices. <b>Reason:</b> Religious view point <b>Author comment:</b> "Living as we do in a world of many faiths, this experience has served to remind us that we must all be conscious of the sensibilities of others."
Alice <b>Sebold</b>	The Lovely Bones	2002	<b>Story:</b> A fourteen-year-old girl tells the story of her life and death. The girl, Susie Salmon, is now in heaven as she watches down on her world as everyone copes with her death. <b>Reason:</b> Violence, religious view point, dubious morals <b>Author comment:</b> "I was motivated to write about violence because I believe it's not unusual."
Craig <b>Thompson</b>	Habibi	2011	<b>Story:</b> Based on a Middle Eastern fable, this is the story of Dodola, who escapes being sold into slavery and rescues an abandoned baby she names Zam. <b>Reasons:</b> Nudity, sexually explicit <b>Reviewer comment:</b> "Our heroine spends an awful lot of time being naked, and there is a lot of sex in this book"
Brian K. <b>Vaughan</b>	Saga	2012	<b>Story:</b> An epic space opera/fantasy comic book depicting a husband and wife, Alana and Marko, from long-warring extra-terrestrial races, fleeing authorities from both sides of a galactic war. <b>Reasons:</b> Anti-Family, nudity, offensive language, sexually explicit <b>Author comment:</b> "I wanted to do something that was way too expensive to be TV and too dirty and grown-up to be a four-quadrant blockbuster."
Nurmuhammet <b>Yasin</b>	Wild Pigeon	2006 (online)	<b>Story:</b> A princely bird is captured by humans and caged. He longs for freedom and, in the end, prefers to die rather than live in captivity. <b>Reason:</b> Political <b>Author comment:</b> "It is time for Uighur authors to be able to enjoy the right to express themselves without having to fear being prosecuted for supposed calls for violence or opposition to Chinese sovereignty."

## Banned and Challenged Children's and Young Adult Books from the Last 30 Years

Author	Title	First Published	Details
<b><i>Pre-Teen Fiction and Non-Fiction</i></b>			
Babette Cole	Mummy Laid an Egg	1994	<p><b>Story:</b> Mum and Dad decide it's time they told the children about the facts of life. But it turns out it's up to the children to put them right on a few things.</p> <p><b>Reasons:</b> Images of genitals and explanation of reproduction</p> <p><b>Reviewer comment:</b> "I am surprised by how many reviewers here oppose the sex theory in favour of the stork theory. Apparently, they never knew people needed to have sex to have babies. Do these people blindfold their children when it's bath time?"</p>
Joanna Cole	Asking About Sex and Growing Up	1988	<p><b>Topic:</b> A question-and-answer format offers straightforward information on a wide variety of subjects related to sex and puberty for pre-teens</p> <p><b>Reasons:</b> Sexual themes, homosexuality</p> <p><b>Customer review on Amazon:</b> "This book should be burned"</p>
Roald Dahl	Matilda	1988	<p><b>Story:</b> Matilda is unloved at home but is bright and an avid reader and comes to the attention of her caring teacher, Ms Honey. But can they survive the terrifying Miss Trunchbull?</p> <p><b>Reasons:</b> Child neglect, disrespect for authority, abuse from teacher</p> <p><b>Reviewer comment:</b> "I'm not surprised that there is a contingent of folks who would like to see it banned because there are always going to be people who think they know what's best for everyone else"</p>
Martin Handford	Where's Wally?	1987	<p><b>Story:</b> There isn't one. Just find the character hidden in the crowd</p> <p><b>Reasons:</b> One U.S. school district removed the book from classrooms due to one mother's complaint about a topless sunbather pictured on the beach page. A swimsuit was then added in a later edition</p> <p><b>Reviewer comment:</b> "Seriously. Yes. In this hot mess of a book that's supposed to make it difficult for you to find anything, someone managed to pick out an errant side boob in the beach scene. Because, per usual, women's bodies—even the cartoon ones—ruin everything and start wars and stuff. Avert your eyes forever"</p>
Robie H. Harris	Let's talk about where babies come from: a book about eggs, sperm, birth, babies and families	1999	<p><b>Topic:</b> Several of this author's books have been challenged or banned. This title, like many of her others, deal honestly and unambiguously with issues around sex and sexuality</p> <p><b>Reasons:</b> sex, sexuality, images of genitals</p> <p><b>Author comment:</b> "So why do I keep on writing even though some of my books have been banned? My answer is that children, even our very young children, do not live in bubbles. They live in the real world. They observe, think, wonder, and question—just as all of us do"</p>
Dav Pilkey	The Adventures of Captain Underpants [series]	1997	<p><b>Story:</b> George and Harold create this superhero in their home-made comic book and accidentally bring him to life</p> <p><b>Reason:</b> Offensive language, characters in underwear, disobeying authority</p> <p><b>Author comment:</b> "As grown-ups, we need to respect our children's rights to choose what they want to read. Kids who have fun reading are making a connection in their brains that reading is valuable and rewarding. That very connection is what turns ordinary kids into lifelong readers"</p>
Philip Pullman	His Dark Materials [series]	1995	<p><b>Story:</b> A trilogy of fantasy novels follows the coming of age of two children, Lyra Belacqua and Will Parry, as they wander through a series of parallel universes</p> <p><b>Reasons:</b> atheism, anti-Christian, sexual awakening</p> <p><b>Author comment:</b> "I am very glad to be back in the top 10 banned books. Of course it's a worry when anybody takes it upon themselves to dictate what people should or should not read. The power of organised religion is very strong in the US, and getting stronger because of the internet"</p>

Justin <b>Richardson</b>	And Tango Makes Three	2005	<p><b>Story:</b> The true story of two gay penguins in the Central Park zoo in New York who raise a chick, Tango</p> <p><b>Reasons:</b> Promotes same-sex relationships and non-standard family structures</p> <p><b>Author comment:</b> "We wrote the book to help parents teach children about same-sex parent families. It's no more an argument in favour of human gay relationships than it is a call for children to swallow their fish whole or sleep on rocks""</p>
J. K. <b>Rowling</b>	Harry Potter [series]	1997	<p><b>Story:</b> young wizard Harry battles against Voldemort to defeat the forces of evil</p> <p><b>Reason:</b> promotion of witchcraft, anti-Christian</p> <p><b>Comment:</b> A former speechwriter for US President George Bush alleged that he had refused to grant J.K. Rowling the Presidential Medal of Freedom because her writing "encouraged witchcraft"</p>
Louis <b>Sachar</b>	The Boy Who Lost His Face	1989	<p><b>Story:</b> David's gang play a prank on an old lady who places a curse on him ... and things start to go wrong.</p> <p><b>Reasons:</b> obscene gestures, profanity, bullying, occult</p> <p><b>Reviewer comment:</b> "Banning books would make me want to read the book even more!"</p>
<b>Teen Fiction</b>			
Sherman <b>Alexie</b>	The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian	2007	<p><b>Story:</b> A native American boy from a dysfunctional family attends an all-white school away from the reservation</p> <p><b>Reasons:</b> anti-family, cultural insensitivity, addiction, gambling, offensive language, sexually explicit, violence, bullying, racism</p> <p><b>Reviewer comment:</b> "If Arnold can overcome generations of poverty and bigotry, if he can lose his best friend over his decision to better himself and forgive a drunk driver for the death of his grandmother, then surely we can accept the use of the word 'fuck' every so often"</p>
Jay <b>Asher</b>	Thirteen Reasons Why	2007	<p><b>Story:</b> Clay returns home to find a box containing 13 cassette tapes recorded by his classmate, Hannah, who committed. Hannah explains that there are 13 reasons why she did what she did, and Clay is one of them</p> <p><b>Reasons:</b> Drugs/alcohol/smoking, sexually explicit, suicide</p> <p><b>Author comment:</b> "The very day I found out 'Thirteen Reasons Why' was the third most-challenged book, I received an e-mail from a reader claiming my book kept her from committing suicide. I dare any censor to tell that girl it was inappropriate for her to read my book"</p>
Francesca Lia <b>Block</b>	Psyche in a dress	2006	<p><b>Story:</b> A retelling of the classical love story about Psyche and Eros. Modern day Psyche is a teenage girl who stars in the films her father makes. When her love Eros leaves her, she ventures out on an odyssey of self-discovery</p> <p><b>Reasons:</b> Drug use, rape, abuse</p> <p><b>Interviewer:</b> "Early on in your career, did you anticipate any challenges would arise against your books in classrooms, schools, and/or libraries?"</p> <p><b>Author comment:</b> "I didn't think much about it. I just wanted to write stories and leave it up to publishers, teachers, parents, librarians and kids to decide if the books are right for them or not"</p>
Melvin <b>Burgess</b>	Junk	1996	<p><b>Story:</b> Two runaway teens in Bristol join a group of squatters, where they fall into heroin addiction and embrace anarchism</p> <p><b>Reasons:</b> Drug use, sex, prostitution, teen pregnancy</p> <p><b>Interviewer:</b> "Have you ever seen a book banned for an absurd reason?"</p> <p><b>Author comment:</b> "Every single time a book gets banned is absurd. The only dangerous book is one that has a bomb in it, in my opinion. Junk wasn't even the first book to be open minded about drugs, but it perhaps was the first where the characters made such bad choices and left it up to the reader to judge them"</p>
Stephen <b>Chbosky</b>	The Perks of Being a Wallflower	1999	<p><b>Story:</b> The story of a teenager, "Charlie" who writes a series of letters to an anonymous friend, going to great lengths to describe his introversion, teenage sexuality, abuse, and his drug use</p> <p><b>Reasons:</b> gay sexual content, drug use, rape</p> <p><b>Reviewer comment:</b> "Many students do not have the complete support [they] should have. Most importantly, Perks serves as an unparalleled aid for students dealing with depression, mental illness, or suicidal thoughts"</p>

Emily M. <b>Danforth</b>	The Miseducation of Cameron Post	2012	<p><b>Story:</b> Cameron Post is a 12-year-old girl realising she is gay. After her parents die in a car crash, she is sent to live with her conservative aunt. She develops a relationship with her best friend and is sent to a "de-gaying" camp</p> <p><b>Reasons:</b> offensive language, drug/ alcohol use, gay sex</p> <p><b>Author comment:</b> "My experience of researching this conversion therapy was often upsetting and always baffling. There's absolutely zero credible scientific evidence to suggest that such "therapies" are effective at changing attraction or desire or identity in the least. In fact, there is much evidence that such "therapies" cause all kinds of harm to those who partake in them"</p>
John <b>Green</b>	The Fault in Our Stars	2012	<p><b>Story:</b> Two teens, with cancer, Grace and Augustus, meet at a support group. After reading each other's favourite novel, they endeavour to find out the fate of one of the characters in Grace's choice.</p> <p><b>Reasons:</b> death due to cancer, offensive language, sex</p> <p><b>Author comment:</b> "The thing that bothered me about The Daily Mail piece was that it was a bit condescending to teenagers. I'm tired of adults telling teenagers that they aren't smart, that they can't read critically, that they aren't thoughtful"</p>
Mark <b>Haddon</b>	The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time	2003	<p><b>Story:</b> Christopher Boone is a 15 year-old with Asperger's syndrome. When he finds a neighbour's dog murdered, he sets out on a journey which will turn his whole world upside down</p> <p><b>Reason:</b> offensive language, profanity</p> <p><b>Author comment:</b> "I'm always entertained when it gets banned somewhere or causes a huge row. But I never really feel that I have to stand up for it. It's like a sturdy 25-year-old who can pick a fight and look after itself"</p>
David <b>Levithan</b>	Two Boys Kissing	2013	<p><b>Story:</b> Along with others, Craig and Harry are hoping to set the world record for the longest kiss. They're not a couple, but they used to be. As the marathon progresses, the boys, their friends and families evaluate the changing nature of feelings, behaviour and this crazy thing called love</p> <p><b>Reasons:</b> homosexuality, condoning public displays of affection</p> <p><b>Author comment:</b> "Young adult novels that grapple with hard subjects are usually too easily dismissed - partially because, quite frankly, truth-telling makes a lot of people very nervous"</p>
Stephenie <b>Meyer</b>	Twilight [series]	2005	<p><b>Story:</b> Bella develops a relationship with vampire Edward and is soon involved not just in a conflict with a rival vampire gang but in a conflict between mortality and immortality</p> <p><b>Reasons:</b> Sexually explicit, attitude to religion</p> <p><b>Reviewer comment:</b> "Here is a top five list of the reasons that I think people wanting to ban these books are absolutely crazy: nothing naughty happens, they're make-believe characters, the books champion not having sex before marriage, they provide an excellent platform to discuss faith issues and they get kids reading"</p>