

Quotes About Banned Books

1. “If this nation is to be wise as well as strong, if we are to achieve our destiny, then we need more new ideas for more wise men reading more good books in more public libraries. These libraries should be open to all—except the censor. We must know all the facts and hear all the alternatives and listen to all the criticisms. Let us welcome controversial books and controversial authors. For the Bill of Rights is the guardian of our security as well as our liberty.
[Response to questionnaire in Saturday Review, October 29 1960]”
– **John F. Kennedy**
2. “What is freedom of expression? Without the freedom to offend, it ceases to exist.”
– **Salman Rushdie**
3. “A word to the unwise.
Torch every book.
Char every page.
Burn every word to ash.
Ideas are incombustible.
And therein lies your real fear.”
– **Ellen Hopkins**
4. “Censorship is the child of fear and the father of ignorance.”
– **Laurie Halse Anderson, Speak**
5. “If there's one American belief I hold above all others, it's that those who would set themselves up in judgment on matters of what is "right" and what is "best" should be given no rest; that they should have to defend their behavior most stringently. ... As a nation, we've been through too many fights to preserve our rights of free thought to let them go just because some prude with a highlighter doesn't approve of them.”
[Bangor Daily News, Guest Column of March 20, 1992]”
– **Stephen King**

6. “The important task of literature is to free man, not to censor him, and that is why Puritanism was the most destructive and evil force which ever oppressed people and their literature: it created hypocrisy, perversion, fears, sterility.”
– **Anaïs Nin, The Diary of Anaïs Nin, Vol. 4: 1944-1947**

7. “Something will be offensive to someone in every book, so you've got to fight it.”
– **Judy Blume**

8. “Yes, books are dangerous. They should be dangerous - they contain ideas.”
– **Pete Hautman**

9. “The fact is that censorship always defeats its own purpose, for it creates, in the end, the kind of society that is incapable of exercising real discretion. In the long run it will create a generation incapable of appreciating the difference between independence of thought and subservience.”
– **Henry Steele Commager**

10. “Banning books gives us silence when we need speech. It closes our ears when we need to listen. It makes us blind when we need sight.”
– **Stephen Chbosky**

11. “Although there are those who wish to ban my books because I have used language that is painful, I have chosen to use the language that was spoken during the period, for I refuse to whitewash history. The language was painful and life was painful for many African Americans, including my family. I remember the pain.”
– **Mildred D. Taylor, The Land**

12. “I hate it that Americans are taught to fear some books and some ideas as though they were diseases.”
– **Kurt Vonnegut**

13. “In this age of censorship, I mourn the loss of books that will never be written, I mourn the voices that will be silenced-writers' voices, teachers' voices, students'

voices-and all because of fear.”

– **Judy Blume, *Places I Never Meant To Be: Original Stories by Censored Writers***

14. “A dangerous book will always be in danger from those it threatens with the demand that they question their assumptions. They'd rather hang on to the assumptions and ban the book.”

– **Ursula K. Le Guin, *The Wave in the Mind: Talks & Essays on the Writer, the Reader & the Imagination***

15. “Banning books is just another form of bullying. It's all about fear and an assumption of power. The key is to address the fear and deny the power.”

– **James Howe**

16. “Having the freedom to read and the freedom to choose is one of the best gifts my parents ever gave me.”

– **Judy Blume**

17. “Because all books are forbidden when a country turns to terror. The scaffolds on the corners, the list of things you may not read. These things always go together.”

– **Philippa Gregory, *The Queen's Fool***

18. “Some read to remember the home they had left behind, others to forget the hell that surrounded them. Books uplifted their weary souls and energized their minds...books had the power to sooth an aching heart, renew hope for the future, and provide a respite when there was no other escape.”

– **Molly Gupstill Manning**

19. “I do not believe that any book should be denied to the man who possesses the wisdom to understand it, Bruno, but that does not mean I am confused about where truth lies.”

– **S.J. Parris, *Heresy***

20. “You have to be mad in the language you're mad in.”

– **Chris Crutcher, *Angry Management***

21. “Calling a book “Young Adult” is just a fancy way of saying the book is censored.”

– **Oliver Markus**

22. “Censorship and the suppression of reading materials are rarely about family values and almost always about control about who is snapping the whip, who is saying no, and who is saying go. Censorship's bottom line is this: if the novel *Christine* offends me, I don't want just to make sure it's kept from my kid; I want to make sure it's kept from your kid, as well, and all the kids. This bit of intellectual arrogance, undemocratic and as old as time, is best expressed this way: “If it's bad for me and my family, it's bad for everyone's family.”

“Yet when books are run out of school classrooms and even out of school libraries as a result of this idea, I'm never much disturbed not as a citizen, not as a writer, not even as a schoolteacher . . . which I used to be. What I tell kids is, Don't get mad, get even. Don't spend time waving signs or carrying petitions around the neighborhood. Instead, run, don't walk, to the nearest non-school library or to the local bookstore and get whatever it was that they banned. Read whatever they're trying to keep out of your eyes and your brain, because that's exactly what you need to know.”

– **Stephen King**

23. ““Whenever a soldier needed an escape, the antidote to anxiety, relief from boredom, a bit of laughter, inspiration, or hope, he cracked open a book and drank in the words that would transport him elsewhere.”

– **Molly Guptill Manning**

24. “Some children were lucky enough to have their Potter novels banned by witch-hunting school boards and micromanaging ministers. Is there any greater job

than a book you're not allowed to read, a book you could go to hell for reading?”
– **Ann Patchett**

25. “[Censors] rake through the entrails of many an old good author, with a violation worse than any could be offered to his tomb.”
– **John Milton**

26. “If a novelist were so uncouth and possessed of so little moral sense that he should write of illicit love, his book would be barred from the public libraries and he would be ostracized by society.”
– **Clyde Brion Davis, *The Great American Novel***