

0. CHERISHED RIGHTS - Story Preface
1. WHY FREE EXPRESSION?
2. FREE EXPRESSION IN BOOKS
3. THE DIAMOND SUTRA
4. THE LINDISFARNE GOSPELS
5. THE PRECIOUS MANUSCRIPTS
6. JOHN WYCLIFFE'S BOOKS
7. JOHN HUS BURNS
8. TYNDALE WRITES, THEN BURNS
9. LUTHER'S TRANSLATIONS ARE BURNED
10. THE PRINTING PRESS
11. BOOKS BURN IN THE NEW WORLD
12. CENSORSHIP CONTINUES
13. BURNING CONTINUES
- 14. CHERISHED RIGHTS**
15. MORE COOL LINKS

Since writing was invented in about 3000 BC, people have expressed their thoughts in written form. The battle with censors has been ongoing.

From the death of Socrates, in 399 BC (for teaching the youth of Athens to think for themselves) to the 1981 burning of the New Living Bible in Gastonia, North Carolina (because it is "a perverted commentary of the King James Version" of the Bible), history is filled with stories about secular and ecclesiastical authorities who tried to kill the product of free thought.

Some of the people who created those ideas were executed. But in America, the First Amendment guarantees cherished legal rights and protects both the process and the people.

Is there censorship in America?

- Mark Twain's famous book - the *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* - featuring Huck and his pals, Jim (a slave) and Tom Sawyer, is still popular (and taught) but has been banned countless times since it was first published on February 18, 1885. (Follow this link to look at the first edition's 174 illustrations.)
- Then, in 2011, a publisher - following the advice of a Twain scholar - decided to change the author's words, making about 200 edits in the popular work. A raging debate immediately followed, with censorship accusations flying anew.
- The *Diary of Anne Frank* - written by a young Jewish teenager, forced to hide with her family in a vacant area of her father's Amsterdam business until they were betrayed and sent to Nazi concentration camps (where Anne died of typhus at Bergen Belsen) - was also recommended for rejection in 1983 because ... it is a "real downer."

America has censorship. That is why first amendment protection of free thought and expression is as important today as it was when the Bill of Rights was first written.

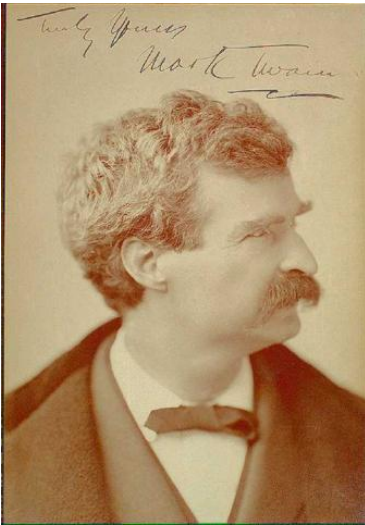
See Alignments to State and Common Core standards for this story online at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicAlignment/CHERISHED-RIGHTS-Book-Burning-and-Censorship>

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Media Stream

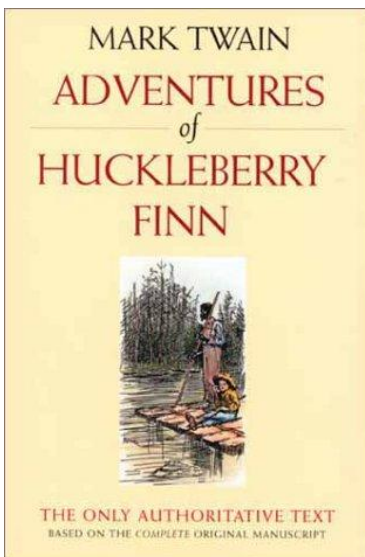


Mark Twain

Online, courtesy U.S. National Archives.

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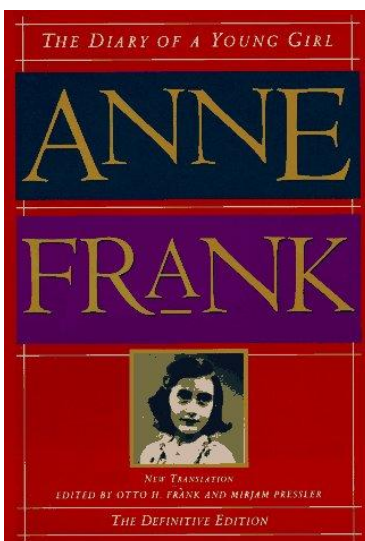


Adventures of Huckleberry Finn - by Mark Twain

Image online, courtesy Amazon.

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Diary of Anne Frank

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