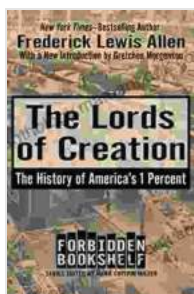


# The History of America's Percent Forbidden Bookshelf: A Journey through Censorship and Intellectual Freedom

## : The Birth of a Censorship Archive

Nestled within the vast halls of the University of Iowa Library, a unique and enigmatic collection resides: the Percent Forbidden Bookshelf. Established in 1970 by Professor Herbert S. Bailey Jr., this archive holds a mirror to the shifting tides of censorship in the United States, housing books that have faced suppression, bans, and challenges across the nation. The Percent Forbidden Bookshelf is a testament to the intricate interplay between free expression, societal norms, and the power of literature to provoke and inspire.



## The Lords of Creation: The History of America's 1 Percent (Forbidden Bookshelf) by Frederick Lewis Allen

★★★★☆ 4.5 out of 5

Language	: English
File size	: 4343 KB
Text-to-Speech	: Enabled
Screen Reader	: Supported
Enhanced typesetting	: Enabled
X-Ray	: Enabled
Word Wise	: Enabled
Print length	: 321 pages
Lending	: Enabled



## The Antecedents: Roots of Censorship in America

The roots of censorship in America can be traced back to the colonial era, where religious authorities wielded significant influence over the dissemination of ideas. The infamous Salem witch trials, for instance, were fueled by a climate of fear and superstition, leading to the silencing of dissenting voices. As the nation expanded westward, so too did the reach of censorship, with local governments and private organizations seeking to control access to materials deemed morally hazardous or politically subversive.

### **The Rise and Fall of McCarthyism: A Chilling Effect on Dissent**

The era of McCarthyism in the 1950s cast a long shadow over American society, marking a period of intense political repression and fear. Senator Joseph McCarthy's unsubstantiated accusations of communist infiltration led to a nationwide witch hunt, targeting suspected "un-American" individuals and organizations. Libraries and schools became battlegrounds for the control of information, with books by authors such as Langston Hughes and Dashiell Hammett removed from circulation. The chilling effect of McCarthyism stifled intellectual discourse and left an enduring legacy of self-censorship.

### **The Percent Forbidden Bookshelf: A Symbol of Resistance and Reclaiming**

In the wake of McCarthyism, a growing movement emerged to challenge censorship and defend intellectual freedom. The Percent Forbidden Bookshelf, founded in 1970, became a symbol of this resistance, containing books that had been banned in at least 20% of American libraries. By gathering these censored works in one place, the Percent Forbidden Bookshelf served as a reminder of the fragility of free speech and the need for vigilance against attempts to suppress ideas.

## **Notable Books on the Percent Forbidden Bookshelf:**

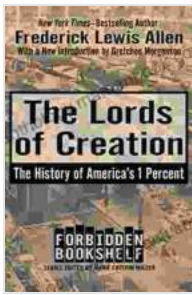
- **The Catcher in the Rye** by J.D. Salinger: This coming-of-age classic has faced bans for its portrayal of teenage rebellion and profanity.
- **The Color Purple** by Alice Walker: This Pulitzer Prize-winning novel explores themes of race, gender, and sexuality, leading to challenges due to its frank depiction of violence and incest.
- **Beloved** by Toni Morrison: Another Pulitzer Prize-winning work, this novel delves into the horrors of slavery and its aftermath, resulting in bans for its disturbing subject matter.

## **Challenges and Continued Relevance:**

The Percent Forbidden Bookshelf has faced its own challenges over the years, including attempts to remove or relocate it. However, it remains a powerful testament to the ongoing struggle for intellectual freedom. The books on this shelf serve as a reminder that censorship is never truly defeated and that constant vigilance is necessary to protect our right to read, think, and express ourselves freely.

## **: A Legacy of Free Speech and Intellectual Exploration**

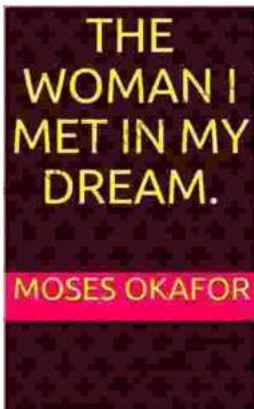
The history of America's Percent Forbidden Bookshelf is a complex and ever-evolving narrative that reflects the tensions between free expression and societal pressures. As new challenges arise in the digital age, such as internet censorship and the spread of misinformation, the Percent Forbidden Bookshelf stands as a timeless symbol of the importance of protecting intellectual freedom. By preserving censored literature, it empowers us to engage with diverse perspectives, challenge established norms, and foster a society where open and informed dialogue can flourish.



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