

BANNED

What are you allowed to learn?

Thousands of books are banned worldwide, often with reasons which can't be understood. Mostly those "dangerous" books are forbidden because somebody thinks they are obscene, dangerous for children or that they include an opinion that mustn't appear in public. Churches, campaigns like Scientology, public libraries, schools and parents who think that their children might learn the wrong things are the main groups of interest which want to ban books.

Although there are freedom of speech and writing in Germany, some books are forbidden. For example "Mein Kampf" from Adolf Hitler mustn't be sold like almost every lecture about the Second World War. But there's a difference: Only the books where the author wants to force a wrong opinion about this war are banned. Non-fictional texts are, of course, allowed.

Ursula von der Leyen wanted to ban a book for children, "Wo bitte geht's zu Gott?", fragte das kleine Ferkel", because it includes "opinions which are dangerous for children". Von der Leyen said that it was against Jews and it would attack some religions too much – in the end, no banning was told.



Below you see a table with some popular books which are banned in some countries.

- Read the reasons and write down your opinion. What do you think? Is it okay to ban those books? Are the reasons understandable?

What?	By? / In?	Why?
"Alice's Adventures in Wonderland" by Lewis Carroll	by the Governor of Hunan Province, China (1933)	Animals should not use human language, and that it was disastrous to put animals and human beings on the same level.
"Frankenstein" by Mary Shelley	by South-Africa's Apartheid-regime (1955)	Banned as "indecent, objectionable, and obscene ¹ ".
"The Diary of Anne Frank" by Anne Frank	in Lebanon	Banned, because it "portray[s] Jews, Israel or Zionism favourably ² ".
"The Da Vinci Code" by Dan Brown	in Egypt	Banned, because it "insults ³ any religion".

¹ indecent, objectionable and obscene = unschicklich, anstößig und obszön

² favourably = positiv, angemessen

³ (to) insult = jdn./etw. beleidigen