The medium of writing has been around since ancient times. However, writing was a lot harder to do back then. There was no printing press in ancient times. Ideas and thoughts had to be copied by hand. These ideas had a much harder time getting into the light of the general public because of that. But that was then, and this is now. Today we are in the information age. Where anyone can get information about the most obscure of topics. Everyone has the ability to put there say into the public. This includes ideas that people don’t want to see the light of day. With more and more ideas surfacing, censorship becomes more commonplace as both a concept and a practice. However, censorship of ideas and thoughts is not a new concept. Emperors, Kings, and many leaders would censor vast amounts of content deemed unacceptable. But now, schools seem to be imitating those leaders because, they too are censoring content.

What is censorship? According to Oxford English Dictionary censorship is “the suppression or prohibition of any parts of books, films, news, etc. that are considered obscene, politically unacceptable, or a threat to security.” Ok, so what’s all of the hullabaloo about censorship? Certain schools have started to ban certain books such as Harper Lee’s *To Kill a Mockingbird* and *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* by Mark Twain. These two books are enshrined as classic important American literature. So, when a few schools asserted that they did not want to teach these books due to the offensive nature of the topics, it turned some heads(Saney 2002). But, the reason that this turned heads was not because schools weren’t teaching it. The reason this turned heads was the part about ‘offensive subjectivity.’ If the these books were not going to be taught due to the teachers’ personal choice, no one would have bat an eye. However, not teaching the books because of what they were about is a different matter entirely. Selection is different to censorship. In this case, not teaching *To Kill a Mockingbird* or *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* due to the subject matter is censorship, and because of that, censorship pertaining to schools was viewed negatively.

But,is censorship inherently bad? Well, I would say no. Censorship is used by people everyday. Every time a person deliberately chooses to suppress something about themselves or others, censorship is used. For example, I don’t want my mom to know about my sex life. I censor that part of my life from my mother. There are times were censorship is very necessary. But how would schools justify the use of censorship? After all isn’t the point of school to learn? Learning is an integral part of schools, but schools are not solely for the purpose of learning. School also teaches social skills, and is generally a very social environment. Censorships purpose for the social aspect of schools is to help maintain a level of civility between students. Censorship of swear words or racial slurs can create a more friendly environment. It helps students respect others(Spring 2016) However, Censorship, as stated by the definition, can also
be used to help eliminate threats of security. Every school wants to be a safe place for students to learn. If censorship helps to achieve that goal, then why would the school not censor?

Censorship has a place in schools, but it should have a very small place for very small instances. Take *To Kill a Mockingbird* or *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*. These books are centered around the topic of race set in the Jim Crow Laws era of America. They tell a story that is hard to swallow. They deal with the oppression of African Americans in a very vivid way. The oppression is partly illustrated by some usage of hate speech. However, hate speech is one of the few topics that schools want to censor. I understand the point of view of not wanting their kids to be hateful bigoted people. But, these two books are trying to exclaim the atrocities, absurdity, and foolishness of racism while at the same time presenting the readers with explicit hate speech. Censoring these books by banning them defeats the purpose of the book, and leaves the students ignorant.

To me, the censorship of topics that involve controversial abhorrent concepts is moronic. It promotes viewpoints that are extremely narrow and closed minded. This is especially harmful in education. Education is all about learning. To shield the students from any topic at all is an injustice. Even though censorship shelters students from awful and terrible concepts, this inhibits student’s learning. How can a student even know of the existence of such evils if they are never talked about. Schools have a duty to teach children, and doing the opposite by banning and censoring material is self-destructive.
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