

**1** Which author's books were banned most often from public schools in the U.S. during the 2024–25 academic year?

**D) Stephen King.** PEN America tallied 206 bans of the horror writer's books in the 2024-25 school year. Districts typically cite LGBTQ+ themes and depictions of violence, drug use, and/or sexuality as reasons for removing books. The single most banned book of the school year was "A Clockwork Orange," a dystopian fantasy by Anthony Burgess. Another frequently banned book was "Sold" by Patricia McCormick, about a young teen in Nepal sold into prostitution.

**2** Which state Constitution contained the groundbreaking language that inspired key elements of the U.S. Constitution?

**A) Massachusetts.** The Massachusetts Constitution, drafted primarily by John Adams, embodied the importance of checks and balances. Many other state Constitutions put most power in the hands of an elected House of Representatives. Adams created a bicameral legislature, an independent judiciary, and a governor with veto power. The Massachusetts Declaration of Rights also guaranteed freedom of the press, freedom from unreasonable search and seizure, and other fundamental rights. Voters approved the Massachusetts Constitution in 1780.

**3** What year did the first same-sex couple apply for a marriage license in the United States?

**C) 1970.** Jack Baker and Michael McConnell applied for a marriage license in Minnesota in May 1970. The clerk denied their application. Supported by the ACLU of Minnesota, they took their case all the way to the Supreme Court, which declined to hear it. In 2015, the Supreme Court finally established same-sex marriage as a constitutional right nationwide.

**4** Where is the original copy of the Constitution located?

**A) National Archives Museum.** The National Archives Museum in Washington, D.C., houses original copies of the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution, and the Bill of Rights.

**5** In 1938, the ACLU of Massachusetts helped defend Life magazine in a controversy over the publication of:

**B) Photos showing the birth of a baby.** Life magazine reproduced photos from a film that detailed the stages of pregnancy and birth as a means of educating women about childbirth and reducing deaths. Although Life notified its 650,000 subscribers in advance, the feature caused a national outcry and triggered bans and lawsuits alleging indecency. The ACLU of Massachusetts pushed back against the Boston police commissioner's efforts to ban the magazine.

**6** Which of these rights is not explicitly listed in the Bill of Rights?

**D) Travel.** The Bill of Rights enumerates many fundamental rights, including freedom of speech, freedom of religion, and the right to petition the government. It does not explicitly include the right to travel. However, the Ninth Amendment makes clear that the list of rights is not comprehensive: "The enumeration in the Constitution, of certain rights, shall not be construed to deny or disparage others retained by the people."

**7** When did women get the right to vote across the United States? (Bonus question: Which constitutional amendment granted this right?)

**C) 1920.** Single women who owned property in New Jersey had the right to vote for a few years in the early 1800s, but after a local paper reported that female turnout had hit "alarming heights" in 1807, the state put an end to that experiment. Women in the U.S. finally got the right to vote in 1920 with the ratification of the 19th Amendment. Even then, access to the ballot box was mostly limited to white women. Many states continued to use discriminatory policies to block people of color from the ballot box for decades. Native Americans were not even eligible for American citizenship until the Snyder Act of 1924.

**8** Which case famously established the right to counsel for criminal defendants in state courts?

**A) Gideon v. Wainwright.** The 1963 ruling in Gideon v. Wainwright held that the Sixth Amendment required states to provide counsel to criminal defendants who could not afford their own lawyers. The other cases listed are also important Supreme Court decisions establishing key rights for criminal suspects or defendants.

**9** What form of student protest triggered the landmark case Tinker v. Des Moines, which led to a Supreme Court ruling that students do not "shed their constitutional rights to freedom of speech or expression at the schoolhouse gate?"

**D) Black armbands.** The ACLU represented Mary Beth Tinker and several other students who were suspended for wearing black armbands to junior high in 1965 to protest the Vietnam War. After four years of litigation, the Supreme Court issued its historic ruling in 1969, finding that school officials could not censor student speech unless it disrupted the educational process.

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**10** The free speech case *Smith v. Collin* was precipitated when a group of neo-Nazis sought to:

**A) March through a predominately Jewish community.**

The case originated in 1977 when the town of Skokie, Illinois, sought to block a neo-Nazi march using several city ordinances. The ACLU argued that even hateful and repugnant speech is protected by the First Amendment and that allowing the government to censor ideas would set a dangerous precedent. The Seventh Circuit Court of Appeals agreed, and the Supreme Court declined to hear the case.

In 1954, the Supreme Court overturned the doctrine of “separate but equal” and mandated the desegregation of schools in what case?

**11** **A) *Brown v. Board of Education*.** Often referred to as one of nation’s most important decisions, *Brown v. Board of Education* officially declared racially segregated schools unconstitutional. This case overturned *Plessy v. Ferguson* (1896), a case in which the Supreme Court upheld the principle of “separate but equal,” allowing legal segregation based on race. *Brown v. Board of Education* marked the end of legal segregation based on race in American schools and was a pivotal moment in the fight for equal rights and racial equality.

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Which of the following cities has not been a capital of the United States?

**12** **D) Boston.** Since 1776, nine different locales have served as the nation’s capital. While an important city in the nation’s early fight for independence, Boston has never been the nation’s official capital.

A scandalous Broadway play that helped establish the ACLU’s reputation in 1936 for fighting censorship in literature and art involved a plot about:

**13** **D) A relationship between two women.** Lillian Hellman’s play *The Children’s Hour* told of an unhappy student who falsely accuses two headmistresses at her boarding school of being lovers. The play saw success on Broadway but met with resistance from Boston’s mayor, who threatened censorship for “lesbianism” if the production opened in the city. The ACLU worked with the play’s producer to sue the mayor and city. The judge sided with the mayor on the grounds that he had not outright banned the play, and the producer withdrew from Boston.

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**14** What did the Virginia Racial Integrity Act of 1924 ban?

**B) Interracial marriage.** In 1924, Virginia passed the Virginia Racial Integrity Act to ban interracial marriage. In 1967, the Supreme Court overturned the law and ruled state bans on interracial marriage unconstitutional in *Loving v. Virginia*. In that case, the ACLU represented Mildred Jeter and Richard Loving, an interracial couple who were married in Washington, D.C., and arrested when they returned home to Virginia.

**15** In *Abington School District v. Schempp*, the Supreme Court ruled that a Pennsylvania law requiring public schools to begin each school day with a reading from the Bible violated what amendment?

**D) First Amendment.** The First Amendment protects the freedom of religion and establishes the separation between church and state. In the 1963 decision *Abington School District v. Schempp*, the Supreme Court ruled that public schools cannot require religious exercise, as this violates students’ First Amendment rights.

**16** The landmark case of *Griswold v. Connecticut* granted married couples access to what?

**A) Contraception.** In the 1965 decision *Griswold v. Connecticut*, the Supreme Court struck down a Connecticut law that prohibited married couples from using contraception. The decision established a right to privacy, which prohibited states from restricting married couples’ access to contraception. While the Constitution does not explicitly outline a general right to privacy, the majority opinion explained that the First, Third, Fourth, and Ninth Amendments together establish this right. The Court extended the right to privacy and access to conception to unmarried people in 1972.

**17** The 14th Amendment to the Constitution guarantees citizenship to all people born in the United States. It also guarantees due process and equal protection of the laws. The amendment has some less well-known provisions as well. Which of these is also part of the 14th Amendment?

**A) Insurrection.** In 2023, residents of Colorado invoked this clause of the 14th Amendment in seeking to remove Donald Trump from the presidential ballot because of his role in the January 6th insurrection. Their efforts failed. In *Trump v. Anderson*, the Supreme Court ruled that states could not bar people from serving in federal office under this clause.

**18** Who said, “This is your democracy. Make it. Protect it. Pass it on.”

**B) Thurgood Marshall.** While delivering the commencement address at the University of Virginia in May 1978, Thurgood Marshall explained that every person can work to make this country a more democratic place. He said: “Where you see wrong or inequality or injustice, speak out, because this is your country. This is your democracy. Make it. Protect it. Pass it on.”