

Aiken Amber-period 5

December 5

Censorship has been used all throughout history to keep people under wraps, it is defined as the suppression or prohibition of any parts of books, films, news, etc. that are considered obscene, politically unacceptable, or a threat to security.<sup>1</sup> The index of forbidden books, or the index of Librorum, Prohibitorum was a collection of books that were deemed detrimental to christians by the catholic church and; therefore, banned. The banning books thing was pretty blatant, now our governments still use censorship, but in a more discrete fashion. Censorship is an effective way to keep not just the underlings but a whole organization complacent.

In 1563 at The Council of Trent the catholic church determined that a series of literary works were unorthodox and dissenting pertaining to the christian beliefs.<sup>2</sup> The literary works in question were: Philip II, King of Spain. Index Librorum Prohibitorum. Antwerp: Ex officina Christophori Plantini, 1570, Ricchini, Tommaso Agostino. Index Librorum Prohibitorum. Rome: Ex typographia rev. Cameræ apostolicæ, 1758, France, Anatole. Le Crime de Sylvestre Bonnard: Membre de l'Institut. Paris: Calmann-Levy, ca. 1906, Stendhal. Le Rouge et le Noir: Chronique du XIXe Siècle. Paris: G. Crès, 1922, and Flaubert, Gustave. Madame Bovary. Garden City, N.Y.: International Collectors Library, 1949.<sup>3</sup> “The Council of Trent (1545-1563) was the first comprehensive effort by the Catholic Church to respond to the challenge raised by the Protestant Reformation (1517-1648). The Council effectively began what is known as the Counter-Reformation

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<sup>1</sup> <https://languages.oup.com/google-dictionary-en/>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.worldhistory.org/article/2018/index-of-prohibited-books/>

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<https://exhibits.library.villanova.edu/archive/falvey-history/case8#:~:text=%E2%80%9CThe%20Index%20of%20Prohibited%20Books,contrary%20to%20faith%20or%20morals%E2%80%A6>

(also the Catholic Reformation, 1545 to c. 1700), which reestablished the authority of the Catholic Church. The Council of Trent decreed the Vulgate translation of the Bible as the only authoritative scripture, reformed abuses within the Church, clearly defined terms such as 'justification', 'sacraments' and 'penance', and condemned the Protestant Reformation as heresy. The council met a total of 25 times between 1545 and 1563, and in the last sessions, they wrote the Index, which was ratified by the pope in 1564. Its purpose was to stop the spread of heresy and further challenges to the Church's authority by preventing the laity from reading, or hearing read, any work not expressly approved by the Church. The printing and dissemination of Martin Luther's 95 Theses was only the beginning of an onslaught of publications challenging the authority and validity of the Church. Between 1517, when he issued the 95 Theses, and 1522, Luther had produced and published many works attacking the Church, and these were followed by those of Huldrych Zwingli (l. 1484-1531), John Calvin (l. 1509-1564), and others. By 1545, when the Council of Trent convened, women – whose literary efforts had been effectively suppressed before – had published works under their own names and by their own authority. Argula von Grumbach (l. 1490 to c. 1564), Katharina Zell (l. 1497-1562), and Marie Dentière (l. c. 1495-1561), among others, had published works critical of the Catholic Church or openly hostile to its claims, policies, and teachings.”<sup>4</sup> People started preaching protestant values and that messed with the church's power. Like now these writers were pushing for change. They were insulting the church, there were even female writers.

Today's censorship is the same concept, just evolved. Our governments manage us by controlling the media we consume. We have the internet to share things on which

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<sup>4</sup> <https://www.worldhistory.org/article/2018/index-of-prohibited-books/>

makes it more difficult to filter through everything, most media on the internet is protected by the first amendment. “ In theory, new technologies make it more difficult, and ultimately impossible, for governments to control the flow of information. Some have argued that the birth of the internet foreshadowed the death of censorship. In 1993, John Gilmore, an internet pioneer, told Time, “The Net interprets censorship as damage and routes around it.”<sup>5</sup> We have lots of social media apps that are designed to trap us on our phones and feed us what we want to see, but in creating such an algorithm there is also the ability to plant things in users' minds. For example if Dave likes to watch funny animal videos on tik tok it would be very easy to slip in a few of those sad animal shelter psa's which would be more effective in that situation than on Sam's who watches craft videos. The algorithms are more used to identify and separate different groups of people. In an attempt to avoid conflict and in doing this also sheltering the different groups from each other on the social platform. “ Content moderation is how social platforms undertake the necessary work of trying to address harassment, abuse, hate speech, child abuse images, and so on. In doing so, they can seek to create a space in which, in theory, women, LGBT people, people of color, people with disabilities, and so on can exist and participate. Content moderation, as Langvardt says, “makes the Internet's ‘vast democratic forums’ usable” (Langvardt 2018: 1363).”<sup>6</sup>

By censoring propaganda that does not sit well with a leaders image they can keep peace with its followers. While in the 1500s the church was the power who was purposefully censoring protestants, now most of the censorship is automated. The

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<sup>5</sup> [https://archives.cjr.org/cover\\_story/21st\\_century\\_censorship.php](https://archives.cjr.org/cover_story/21st_century_censorship.php)

<sup>6</sup> <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s13347-020-00429-0>

church had to justify banning the books and in the 21st century we don't even notice the censorship but there are so many things that we like to see, why should we?