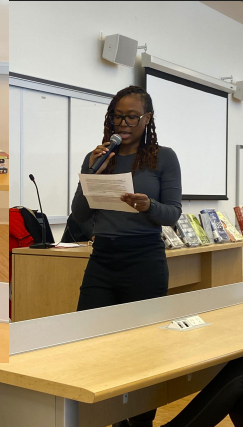


City Tech Celebrates

Banned Black Books

To combat the continued assault on Black history and culture, and especially books by Black authors, the African American Studies Department (AFR) and the Library hosted a Banned Black Book Month event for Black History Month 2024. We also solicited book titles by Black authors that have been banned in any capacity (regionally, educationally, etc.) from the City Tech Community. A selection of these submissions is featured, here.





Banned Black Books Panel

Panelists: I-r

Dr. Bennett (AFR)

Dr. Biswas (AFR)

Dr. Banks (AFR)

Dr. Richards (ENG)

Prof. Abdul-Wasi (AFR)

Dr. Sylvester (ENG)

Moderator: Dr. Evangelista (AFR)

Host: Dr. Ferdinand (Chair, AFR)

Thank You For Contributing



The City Tech Community and students in Professor Abdul-Wasi, Dr. Biswas ("Black Theater", AFR 1321, sections 042 and 044) & Dr. Craig's courses.

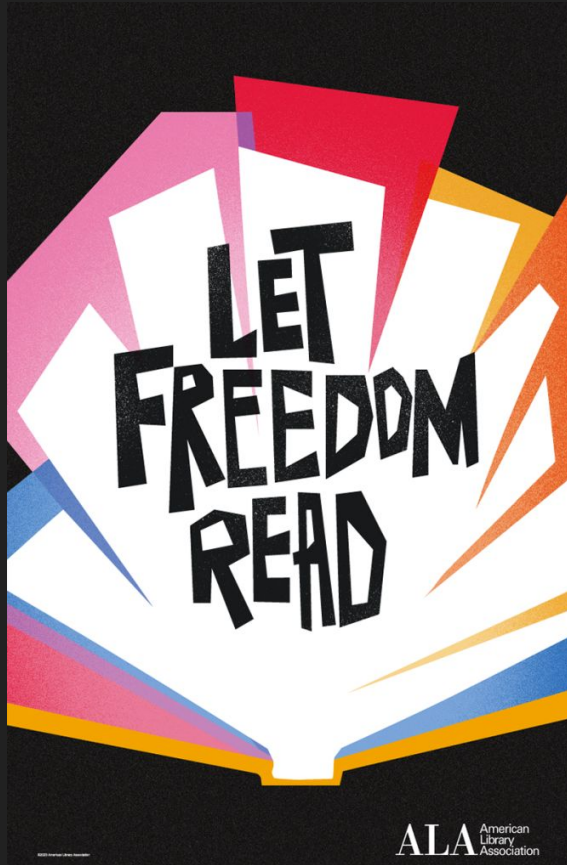
What is the difference between a challenge or banning?

A challenge is an attempt to remove or restrict materials, based upon the objections of a person or group. A banning is the removal of those materials. Challenges do not simply involve a person expressing a point of view; rather, they are an attempt to remove material from the curriculum or library, thereby restricting the access of others. Due to the commitment of librarians, teachers, parents, students and other concerned citizens, most challenges are unsuccessful and most materials are retained in the school curriculum or library collection.

Via- <https://www.ala.org/advocacy/bbooks/banned-books-qa>



Why are books challenged?



Often challenges are motivated by a desire to protect children from “inappropriate” sexual content or “offensive” language. The following were the top three reasons cited for challenging materials as reported to the Office of Intellectual Freedom:

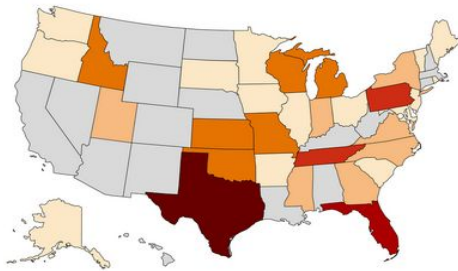
1. the material was considered to be "sexually explicit"
2. the material contained "offensive language"
3. the materials was "unsuited to any age group"

Although this is a commendable motivation, Access to Library Resources and Services for Minors, an interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights (ALA's basic policy concerning access to information) states that, “Librarians and governing bodies should maintain that parents—and only parents—have the right and the responsibility to restrict the access of their children—and only their children—to library resources.” Censorship by librarians of constitutionally protected speech, whether for protection or for any other reason, violates the First Amendment.

Via- <https://www.ala.org/advocacy/bbooks/banned-books-qa>

School Book Bans by State

July 1, 2021-June 30, 2022



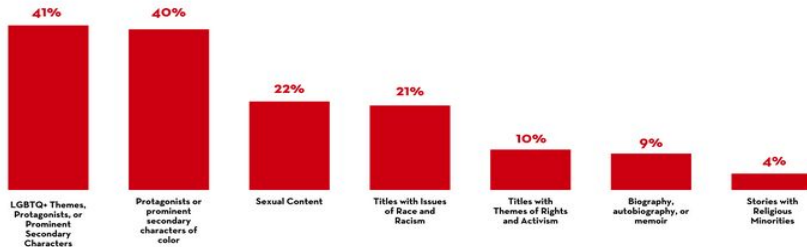
Data from PEN America Index of School Book Bans, July 1, 2021-June 30, 2022.

*There are no states with 51-250 bans

Subject Matter of Banned Content

By Percentage of Unique Banned Titles, July 1, 2021-June 30, 2022

Note: many titles contain more than one type of content.



Data from PEN America Index of School Book Bans, July 1, 2021-June 30, 2022.

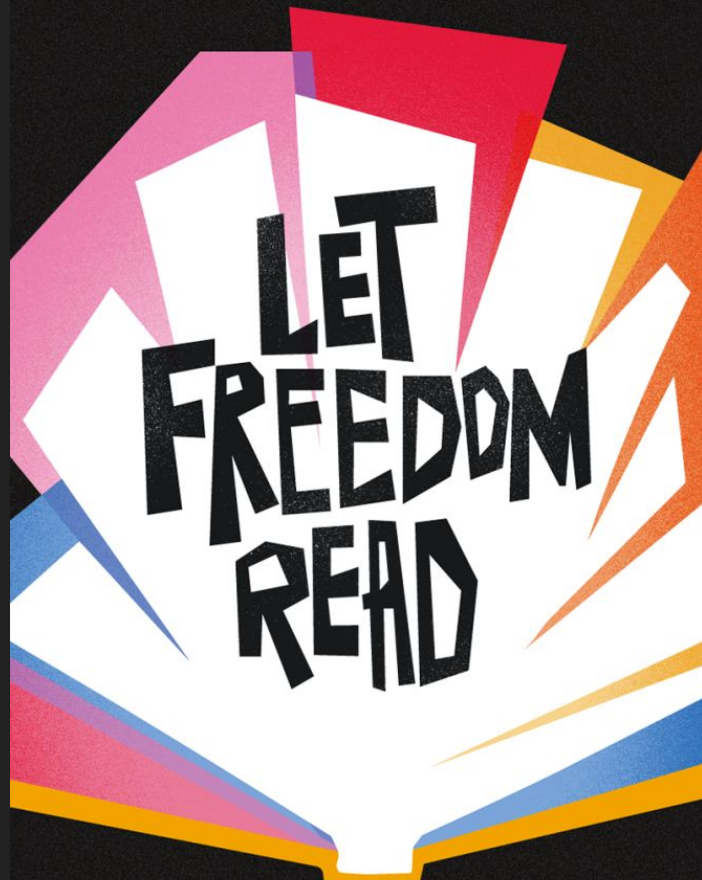
Among the 1,648 unique banned book titles in the Index,

- **674 banned book titles** (41 percent) explicitly address LGBTQ+ themes or have protagonists or prominent secondary characters who are LGBTQ+ (this includes a specific subset of titles for transgender characters or stories—145 titles, or 9 percent);
- **659 banned book titles** (40 percent) contain protagonists or prominent secondary characters of color;
- 338 banned book titles (21 percent) directly address issues of race and racism;
- **357 banned book titles** (22 percent) contain sexual content of varying kinds, including novels with some level of description of sexual experiences of teenagers, stories about teen pregnancy, sexual assault and abortion as well as informational books about puberty, sex, or relationships;
- **161 banned book titles** (10 percent) have themes related to rights and activism;
- **141 banned book titles** (9 percent) are either biography, autobiography, or memoir; and
- **64 banned book titles** (4 percent) include characters and stories that reflect religious minorities, such as Jewish, Muslim and other faith traditions.

TDP 13

MOST CHALLENGED BOOKS OF 2022

The American Library Association tracked **1,269 challenges** to library, school, and university materials and services in 2022. Of the **2,671 unique titles** that were challenged or banned in 2022, here are the top 13 most challenged.



1



GENDER QUEER
by Maia Kobabe
REASONS: LGBTQIA+ content, claimed to be sexually explicit

2



ALL BOYS AREN'T BLUE
by George M. Johnson
REASONS: LGBTQIA+ content, claimed to be sexually explicit

3



THE BLUEST EYE
by Toni Morrison
REASONS: rape, incest, claimed to be sexually explicit, EDI content

4



FLAMER
by Mike Curato
REASONS: LGBTQIA+ content, claimed to be sexually explicit

5



LOOKING FOR ALASKA
by John Green
REASONS: claimed to be sexually explicit, LGBTQIA+ content



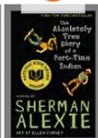
THE PERKS OF BEING A WALLFLOWER
by Stephen Chbosky
REASONS: claimed to be sexually explicit, LGBTQIA+ content, rape, drugs, profanity

7



LAWN BOY
by Jonathan Evison
REASONS: LGBTQIA+ content, claimed to be sexually explicit

8



THE ABSOLUTELY TRUE DIARY OF A PART-TIME INDIAN
by Sherman Alexie
REASONS: claimed to be sexually explicit, profanity

9

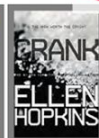


OUT OF DARKNESS
by Ashley Hope Perez
REASON: claimed to be sexually explicit

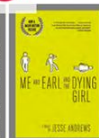
10



A COURT OF MIST AND FURY
by Sarah J. Maas
REASON: claimed to be sexually explicit



CRANK
by Ellen Hopkins
REASONS: claimed to be sexually explicit, drugs



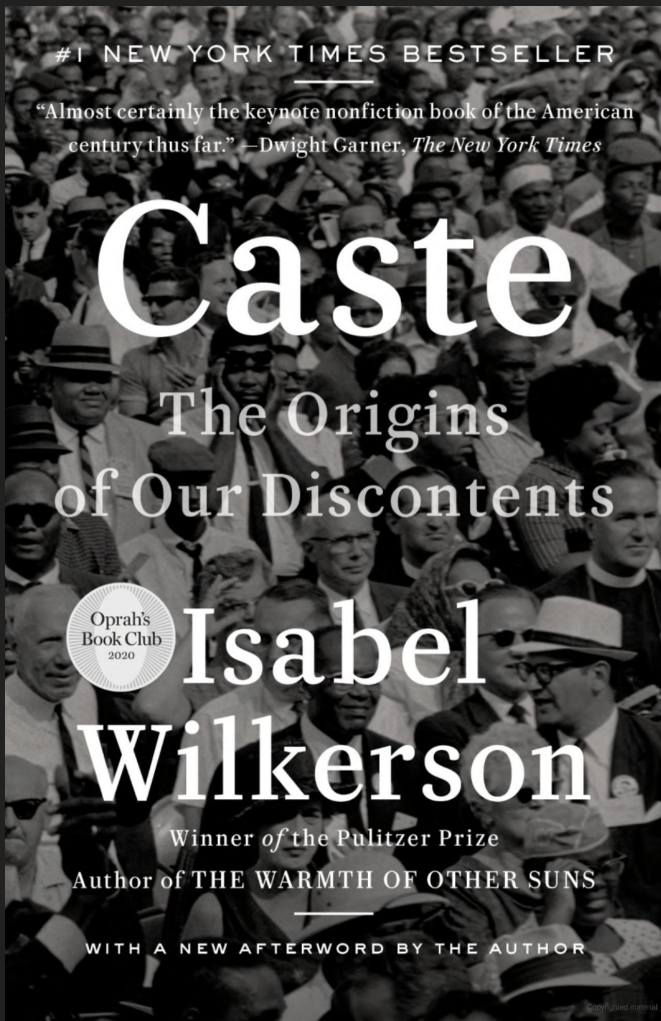
ME AND EARL AND THE DYING GIRL
by Jesse Andrews
REASONS: claimed to be sexually explicit, profanity



THIS BOOK IS GAY
by Juno Dawson
REASONS: LGBTQIA+ content, sex education, claimed to be sexually explicit



OFFICE FOR
Intellectual Freedom
American Library Association



As we go about our daily lives, caste is the wordless usher in a darkened theater, flashlight cast down in the aisles, guiding us to our assigned seats for a performance. The hierarchy of caste is not about feelings or morality. It is about power—which groups have it and which do not. It is about resources—which caste is seen as worthy of them and which are not, who gets to acquire and control them and who does not. It is about respect, authority, and assumptions of competence—who is accorded these and who is not.

Submitted by: Dr. Banks- AFR

TA-NEHISI COATES

BETWEEN THE WORLD AND ME

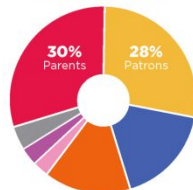
CENSORSHIP

BY THE NUMBERS

In 2022, the American Library Association tracked the highest number of attempted book bans since ALA began compiling data about censorship in libraries more than 20 years ago; 2,571 unique titles were challenged last year, up from 1,858 in 2021. [Learn more at ala.org/bbooks](https://ala.org/bbooks)



WHO INITIATES CHALLENGES?



- 17% Political/religious groups
- 15% Board/administration
- 3% Librarians/teachers
- 3% Elected officials
- 4% Other (Includes non-custodial relatives, nonresidents, community members without library cards, etc.)

Statistics based on 1,207 cases with known initiators.

WHERE DO CHALLENGES TAKE PLACE?



48%
Public libraries



41%
School libraries



10%
Schools

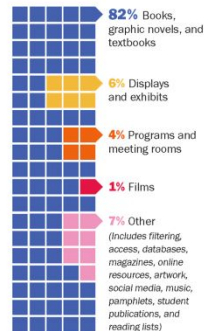


1%
Higher education libraries and other institutions

Statistics based on 1,264 cases with known locations.

BOOKS AND BEYOND

ALA's Office for Intellectual Freedom tracked **1,269 challenges** in 2022. Here's the breakdown:



CENSORSHIP ON THE RISE

The unparalleled number of reported book challenges in 2022 nearly doubled the number reported in 2021. The number of unique titles targeted marked a 38% increase over 2021.

NUMBER OF UNIQUE TITLES CHALLENGED BY YEAR



CENSORSHIP STATISTICS COMPILED BY: OFFICE FOR Intellectual Freedom American Library Association

#1 *NEW YORK TIMES* bestseller

A NEW ORIGIN STORY

The 1619 Project

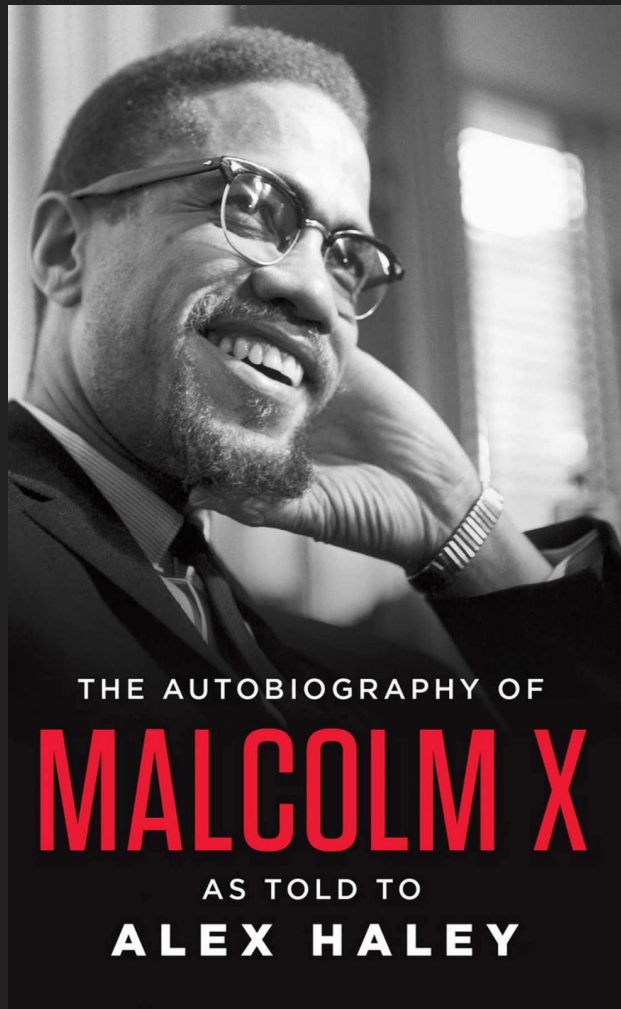
Created by NIKOLE HANNAH-JONES

Winner of the Pulitzer Prize

& *THE NEW YORK TIMES* MAGAZINE

The 19 essays and 36 poems and fiction of 1619 Project took me on a literary journey which challenged the dominant epistemologies of the founding of our nation by positioning slavery at the center of the American experience. I was amazed at how slavery and the 250 years of forced free labor that it afforded this country, underpinned the successful growth and development of our country's economy, all our institutions and our culture. I become riveted, by the book's argument that racism in the United States is not an aberration. Rather, it is structural, systemic, and institutionalized; deeply interwoven into every facet of the American fabric. Our systems of symbols, beliefs, and values, indeed our culture are all defined by racism. I finally understood the idea of interest convergence - that is the dominant race benefits from racism and sees no real reason to dismantle the racist structures that determine the existence of minoritized people. I was heartbroken at how much the Black race has given, how much we have lost and how little we have gained.

Submitted by: Dr. Richards - ENG

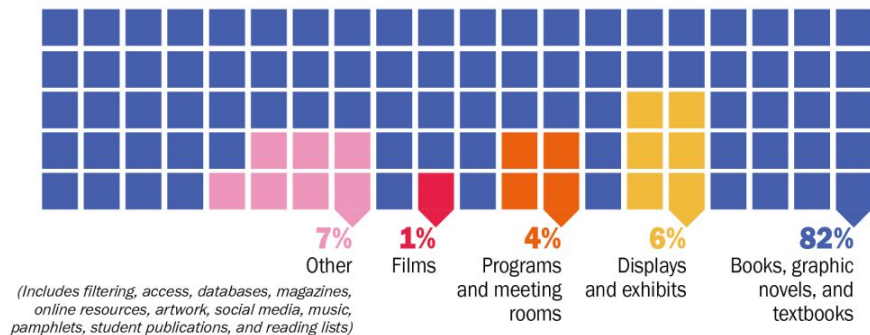


CENSORSHIP BY THE NUMBERS



BOOKS AND BEYOND

ALA's Office for Intellectual Freedom tracked 1,269 challenges in 2022. Here's the breakdown:



ALA.ORG/BBOOKS

A NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER

ALL
BOYS
AREN'T
BLUE

A MEMOIR-MANIFESTO
GEORGE M. JOHNSON

#2

MOST CHALLENGED
BOOK OF 2022

FOR LGBTQIA+ CONTENT,
CLAIMED TO BE SEXUALLY EXPLICIT

ALA.ORG/BBOOKS
ALAAmericanLibraryAssociation

A NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER

ALL
BOYS
AREN'T
BLUE

A MEMOIR-MANIFESTO
GEORGE M. JOHNSON



JANUARY 1 – AUGUST 31, 2023

695

ATTEMPTS TO
BAN OR RESTRICT
LIBRARY MATERIALS
AND SERVICES



OFFICE FOR
Intellectual Freedom
American Library Association


NEW YORK TIMES Bestseller

"This book is an act of fierce love and advocacy, and it is urgently necessary."

—SAMANTHA IRBY, author of *Wow, No Thank You*

HOOD

FEMINISM

NOTES FROM 

THE WOMEN THAT

A MOVEMENT FORGOT

MIKKI KENDALL

CENSORSHIP BY THE NUMBERS



WHERE DO CHALLENGES TAKE PLACE?

In 2022, nearly 51% of the demands to censor books targeted books, programs, displays, and other materials in school libraries and schools; 48% of book challenges targeted materials in public libraries.



48%

Public libraries



41%

School libraries



10%

Schools



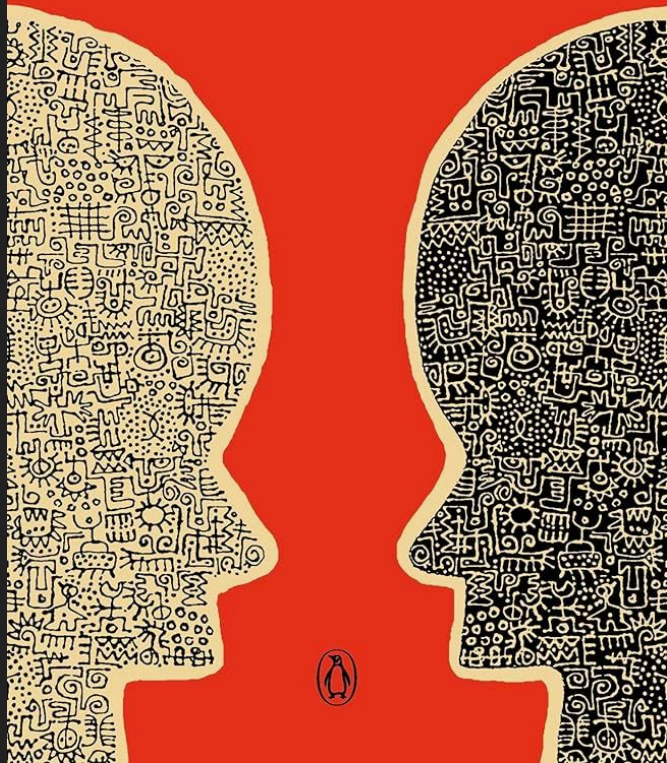
1%

Higher education libraries
and other institutions

Statistics based on 1,264 cases with known locations.

ALA.ORG/BBOOKS

Chinua Achebe
THINGS FALL APART



JANUARY 1 – AUGUST 31, 2023

1,915

UNIQUE TITLES
TARGETED FOR
CENSORSHIP



OFFICE FOR
Intellectual Freedom
American Library Association

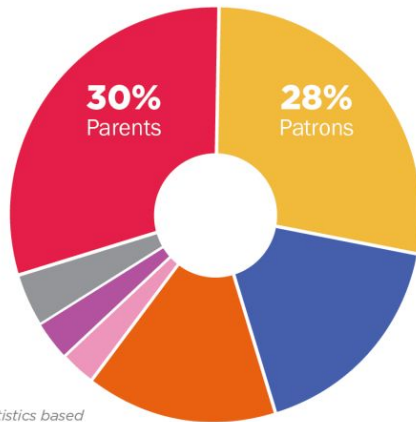
Maya Angelou
*I Know
Why the
Caged Bird
Sings*

Foreword by
Oprah Winfrey

CENSORSHIP BY THE NUMBERS



In 2022, 90% of reported challenge attempts targeted multiple titles, the work of a well-organized movement that distributes book lists used to initiate mass challenges that can empty the shelves of a library.



Statistics based on 1,207 cases with known initiators.

WHO INITIATES CHALLENGES?

17% Political/religious groups

15% Board/administration

3% Librarians/teachers

3% Elected officials

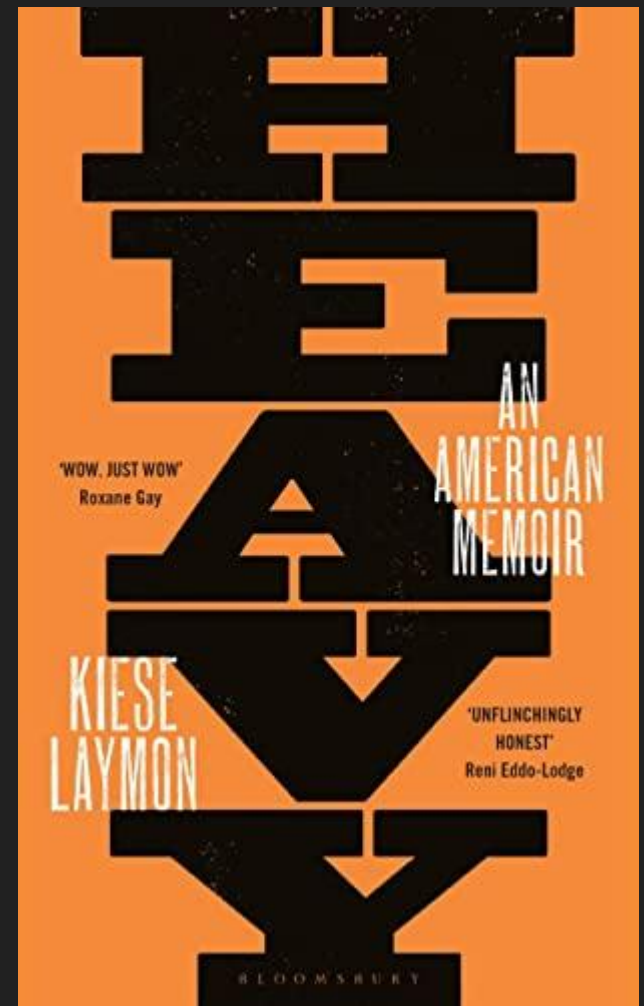
4% Other

(Includes non-custodial relatives, nonresidents, community members without library cards, etc.)

ALA.ORG/BBOOKS

Important quote: “I will love myself enough to be honest when I fail at loving. I will accept that black children will not recover from economic inequality, housing discrimination, sexual violence, heteropatriarchy, mass incarceration, mass evictions, and parental abuse. I will accept that black children are all worthy of the most abundant, patient, responsible kind of love and liberation this world has ever created.”

Submitted by: Dr. Biswas - AFR



Winner of the Pulitzer Prize and the National Book Award

Alice Walker

The Color Purple



ZORA NEALE HURSTON



THEIR EYES WERE
WATCHING GOD

"There is no book more important to me than this one." — Alice Walker

**invisible
man
ralph
ellison**

MORE THAN 100 TITLES CHALLENGED IN:

JANUARY 1 – AUGUST 31, 2023

**COLORADO
CONNECTICUT
FLORIDA
IDAHO
MISSOURI
NORTH CAROLINA**

**OHIO
PENNSYLVANIA
TENNESSEE
TEXAS
VIRGINIA**



OFFICE FOR
Intellectual Freedom
American Library Association

The
Bluest
Eye

A novel by
Toni Morrison
WINNER OF THE NOBEL PRIZE

WITH A FOREWORD BY THE AUTHOR

#3

**MOST CHALLENGED
BOOK OF 2022**

FOR DEPICTION OF SEXUAL ABUSE,
EDI CONTENT, CLAIMED TO BE
SEXUALLY EXPLICIT

ALA.ORG/BBOOKS
ALAAmericanLibraryAssociation

The
Bluest
Eye

A novel by
Toni Morrison
WINNER OF THE NOBEL PRIZE

WITH A FOREWORD BY THE AUTHOR

RICHARD WRIGHT



THE RESTORED TEXT ESTABLISHED BY THE LIBRARY OF AMERICA

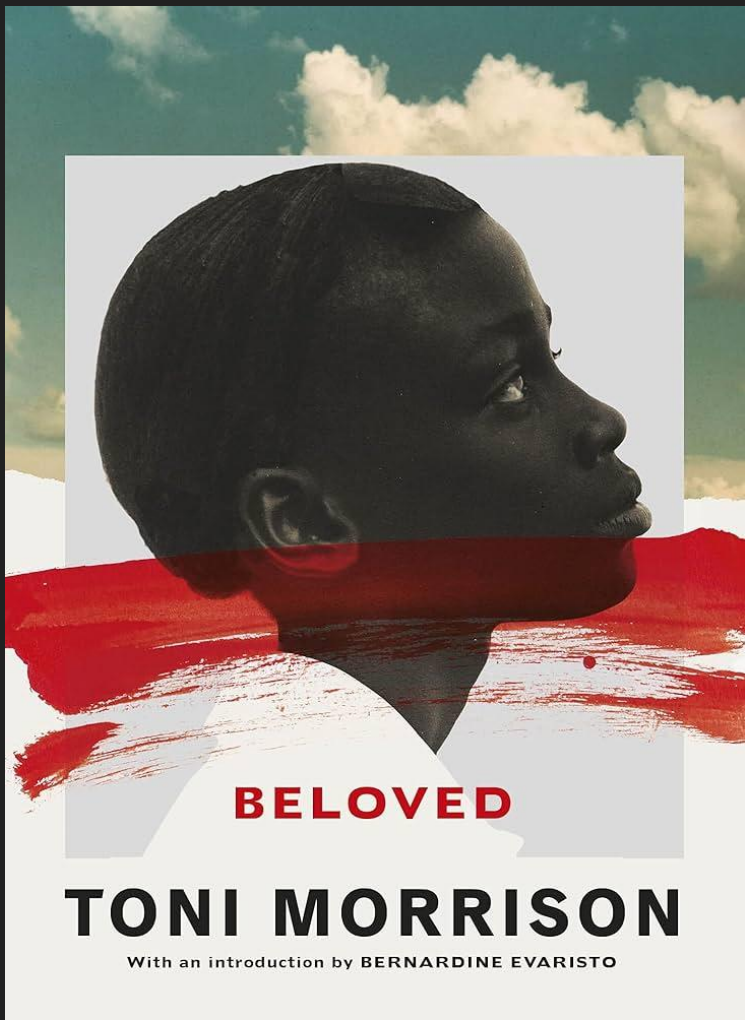
BLACK BOY

"A poignant meditation on one girl's struggle to find her way in a new world."
— Nicola Yoon, #1 New York Times bestselling author of *Everything, Everything*

IBI ZOBOI



**AMERICAN
STREET**



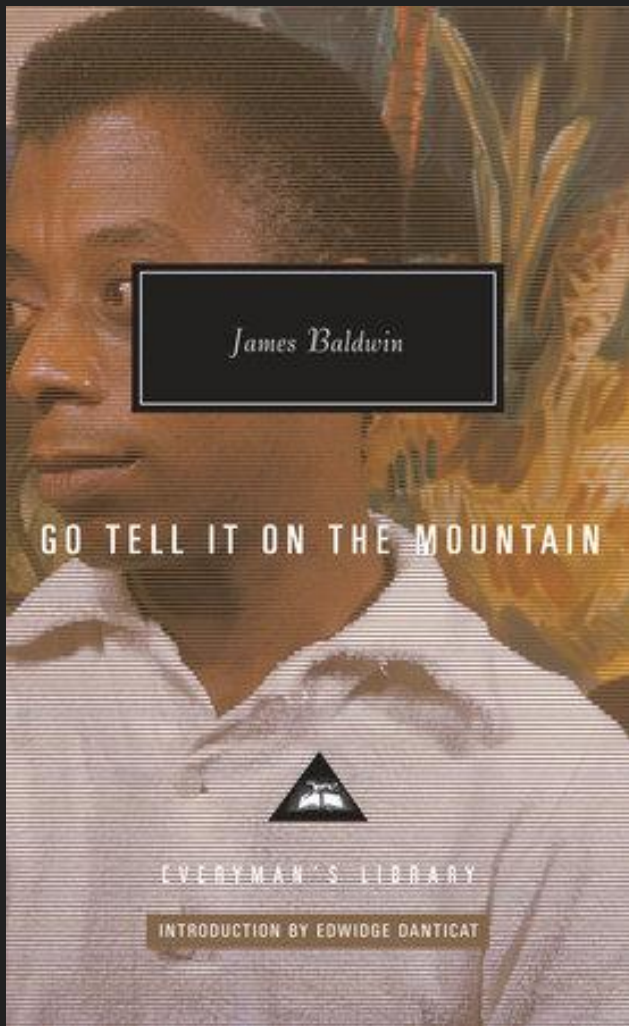
2023

JANUARY 1 – AUGUST 31

2023 Preliminary Data Shows Record Surge of Challenges in Public Libraries

Between January 1 and August 31, 2023, OIF reported **695 attempts to censor library materials and services and documented challenges to 1,915 unique titles** - a 20% increase from the same reporting period in 2022, which saw the highest number of book challenges since ALA began compiling the data more than 20 years ago. The vast majority of challenges were to books written by or about a person of color or a member of the LGBTQIA+ community.

Via- <https://www.ala.org/advocacy/bbooks/book-ban-data>



JANUARY 1 – AUGUST 31, 2023

3,923

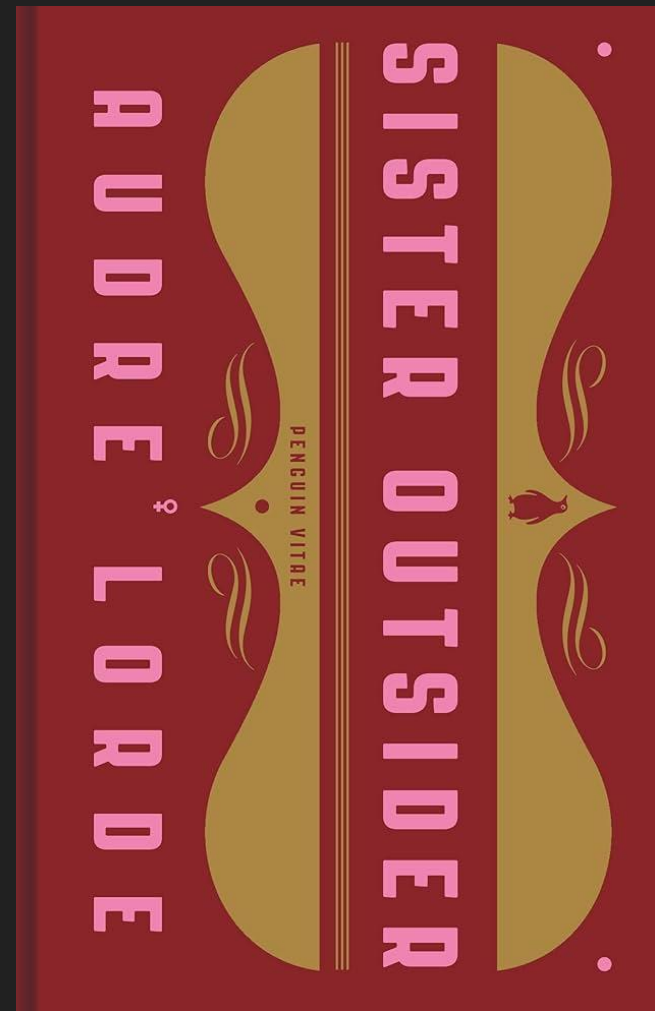
TOTAL TITLES
TARGETED FOR CENSORSHIP



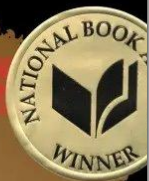
OFFICE FOR
Intellectual Freedom
American Library Association

Important quote: “Those of us who stand outside the circle of this society’s definition of acceptable women; those of us who have been forged in the crucibles of difference - those of us who are poor, who are lesbians, who are Black, who are older - know that *survival is not an academic skill*. It is learning how to stand alone, unpopular and sometimes reviled, and how to make common cause with those others identified as outside the structures in order to define and seek a world in which we can all flourish. It is learning how to take our differences and make them strengths. *For the master’s tools will never dismantle the master’s house*. They may allow us temporarily to beat him at his own game, but they will never enable us to bring about genuine change. And this fact is only threatening to those women who still define the master’s house as their only source of support.” - from “The Master’s Tools Will Never Dismantle the Master’s House” a talk delivered at a conference in 1979 and collected in *Sister Outsider: Essays and Speeches* by Audre Lorde (Note: emphasis in the original)

Submitted by: Dr. Biswas - AFR



NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER



STAMPED FROM THE BEGINNING

*The Definitive History
of Racist Ideas in America*

Ibram X. Kendi

author of HOW TO BE AN ANTIRACIST

THE #1 NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER

**JASON
REYNOLDS** **IBRAM
KENDI**

STAMPED

RACISM, ANTIRACISM, AND YOU

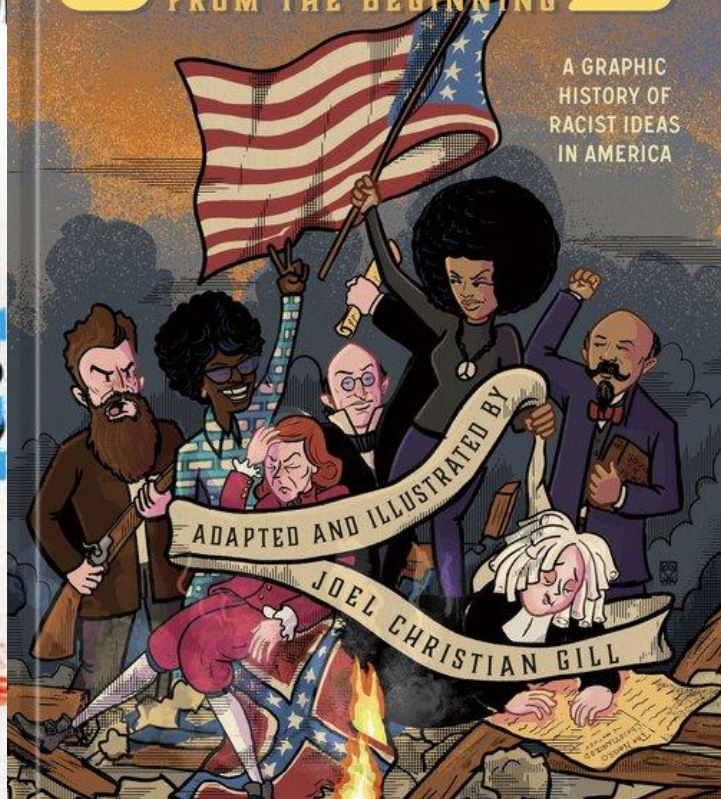
A **REMIX** of the National Book Award-winning
STAMPED FROM THE BEGINNING

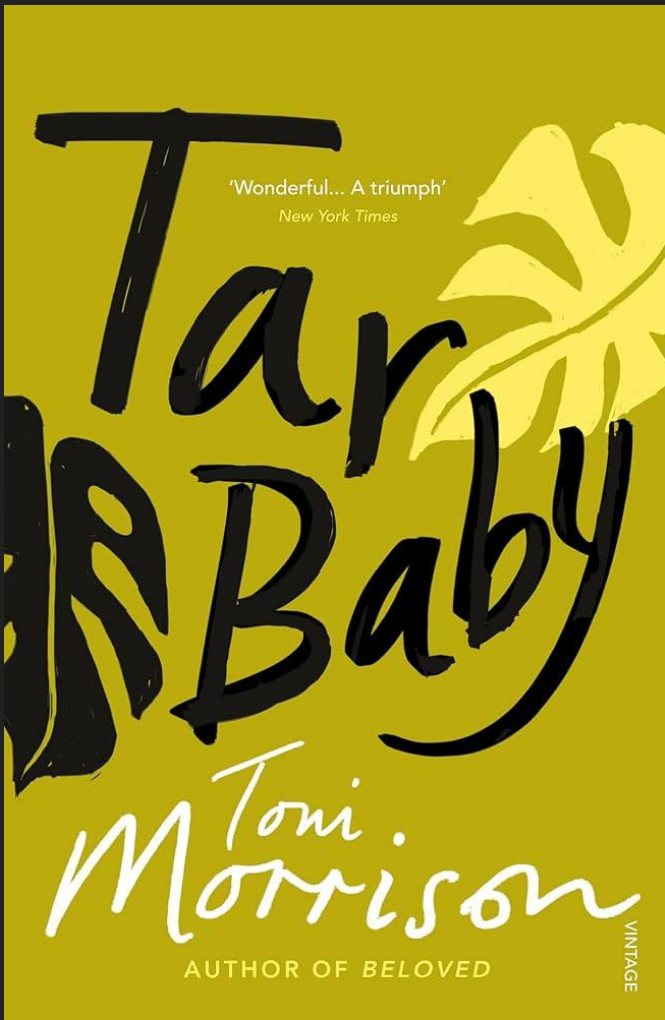
IBRAM X. KENDI

STAMPED

FROM THE BEGINNING

A GRAPHIC
HISTORY OF
RACIST IDEAS
IN AMERICA



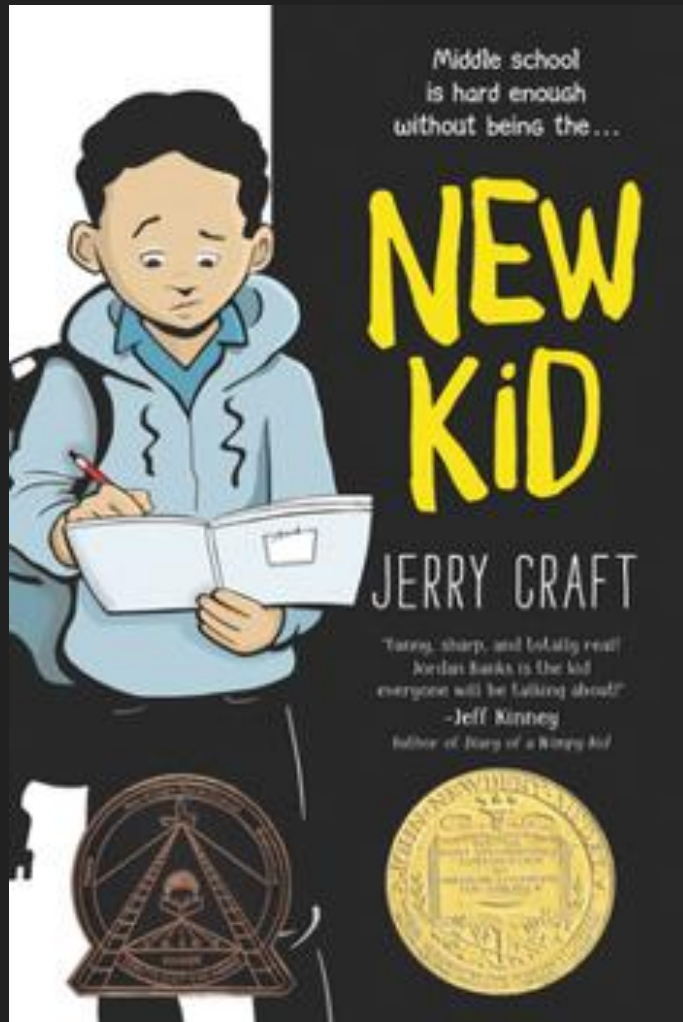


Titles Challenged Between January 1 and August 31, 2023 (preliminary data)

Attempts to censor books during this period: 531. Total titles challenged in those attempts: 3923.

A challenge may result in access being retained, restricted, or revoked at a school or public library.

Via- <https://www.ala.org/advocacy/bbooks/book-ban-data>

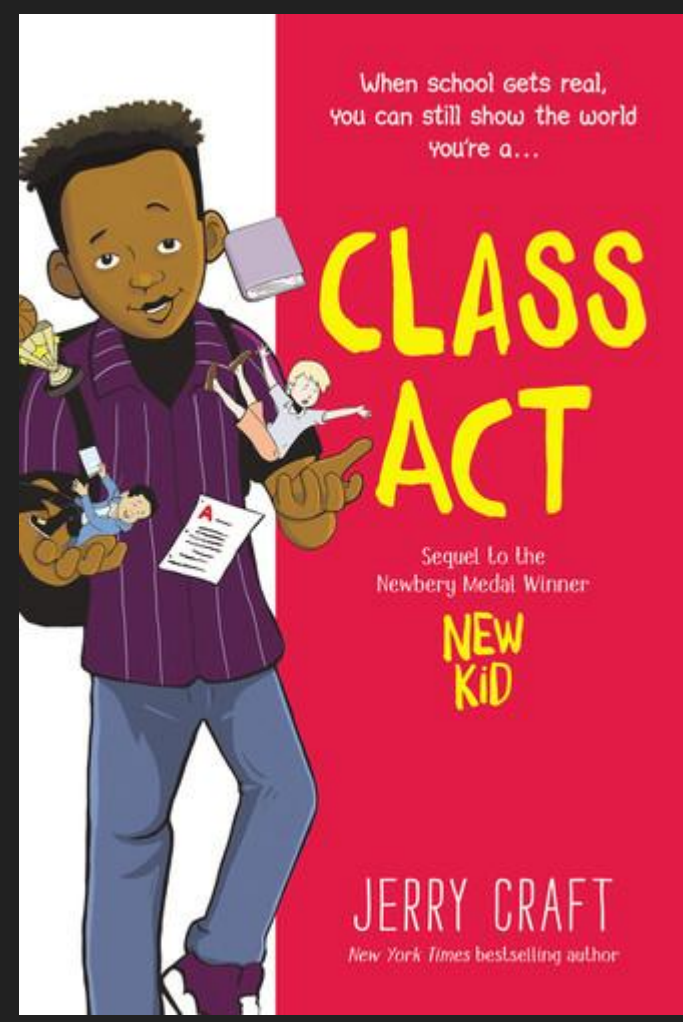


Middle school
is hard enough
without being the...

NEW KID

JERRY CRAFT

"Funny, sharp, and totally real!
Jordan Banks is the kid
everyone will be talking about!"
-Jeff Kinney
Author of Diary of a Wimpy Kid



When school gets real,
you can still show the world
you're a...

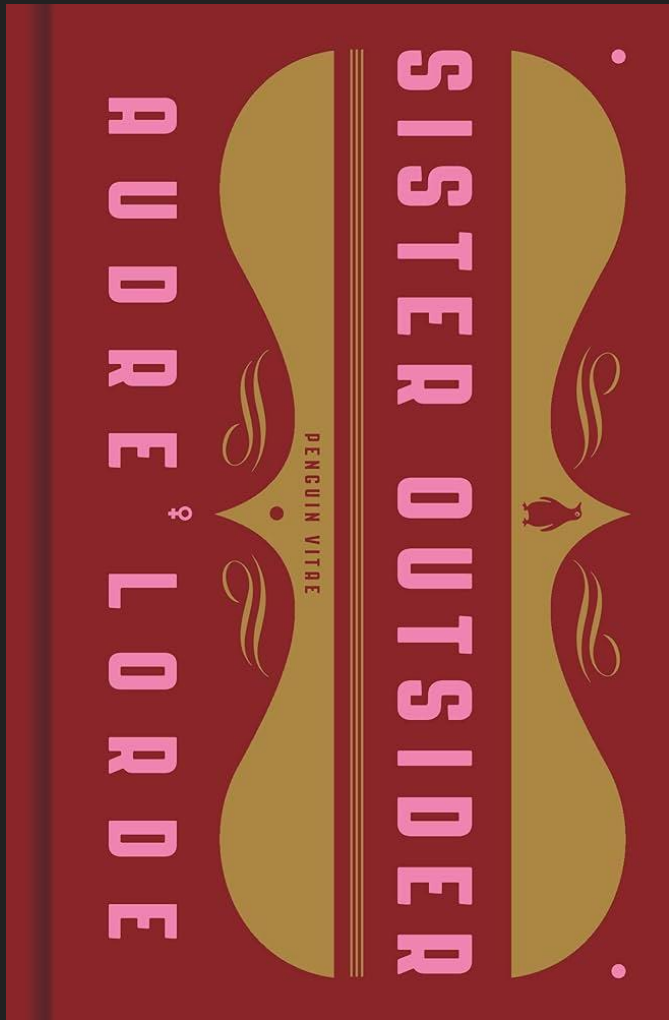
CLASS ACT

Sequel to the
Newbery Medal Winner

NEW
KID

JERRY CRAFT

New York Times bestselling author



This collection of fifteen powerful essays and speeches written between 1976 and 1984 by Black lesbian poet and feminist writer, Audre Lorde, has been banned by administrators in Tennessee because of its LGBTQ-related content. These essays and speeches showcase Lorde’s incisive and unflinching analysis of the issues that frame Black women’s lives: racism, sexism, homophobia, and class-based discrimination. Lorde centers the importance of disidentifying with the “master’s tools” that turn “difference into deviance” and “define the good in terms of profit.” Instead, Lorde encourages Black women to redefine their relationship to each other and the world by harnessing the power of the deepest knowledge that resides in their own bodies and histories.

Submitted by: Dr. Biswas - AFR

THE WRETCHED OF THE EARTH BY FRANTZ FANON

THE HANDBOOK FOR THE BLACK REVOLUTION
THAT IS CHANGING THE SHAPE OF THE WORLD



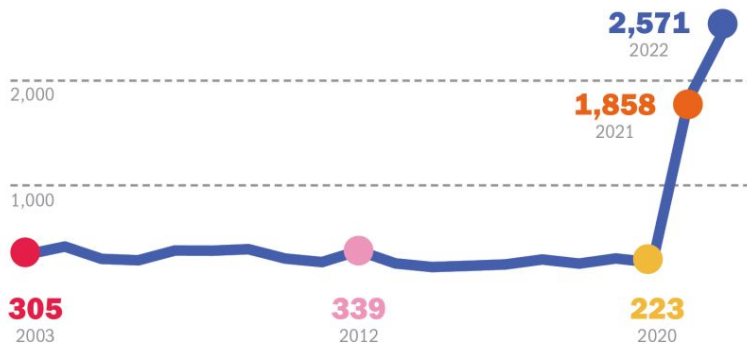
CENSORSHIP BY THE NUMBERS



CENSORSHIP ON THE RISE

The unparalleled number of reported book challenges in 2022 nearly doubled the number reported in 2021. The number of unique titles targeted marked a 38% increase over 2021.

NUMBER OF UNIQUE TITLES CHALLENGED
BY YEAR



ALA.ORG/BBOOKS

"Absolutely riveting!"
JASON REYNOLDS

"Stunning."
JOHN GREEN



ANGIE THOMAS

WHERE

CENSORSHIP OCCURRED

JANUARY 1 – AUGUST 31, 2023



220
SCHOOL
DISTRICTS



208
PUBLIC
LIBRARIES



OFFICE FOR
Intellectual Freedom
American Library Association

Banned because of “inappropriate content” and “offensive language,” Kiese Laymon’s, *Heavy: An American Memoir*, is a lyrical and honest exploration of the unbearable heaviness (literal and metaphorical) of growing up as a Black boy in Mississippi. Laymon grapples with the legacies of intergenerational trauma and disenfranchisement as he delves into deeply embedded personal wounds. Ultimately, Laymon exorcises the secrets and lies he and his mother spent a lifetime avoiding, and beseeches his own self, his mother, his nation, and us to “confront the terrifying possibility that few in this nation actually know how to responsibly love, and even fewer want to live under the weight of actually becoming free.”

Submitted by: Dr. Biswas - AFR

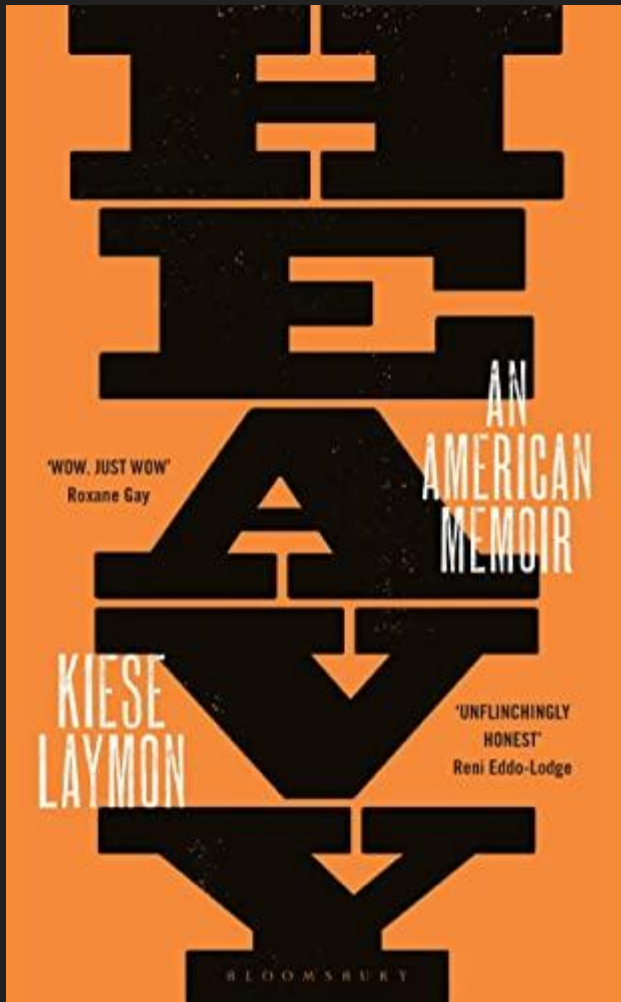


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Photographer Leroy Lucas,
Growing Up Black
- Color Art Prints -
Jean-Michel Basquiat



WORDS HAVE
POWER
READ A
BANNED BOOK



ALA.ORG/BBOOKS



Scan for City Tech's
Banned Black Books Collection



Professor Clyde
Ursula Schwerin Library
NYCCT – Spring 2024