

# Censorship Beyond Books

Library Resources and Services Under Fire

Kristin Pekoll - [kpekoll@ala.org](mailto:kpekoll@ala.org)



# CENSORSHIP

BY THE NUMBERS

# 531

**Total materials  
affected in censorship  
attempts in 2018**

(including magazines, films, databases)



OFFICE FOR  
*Intellectual Freedom*  
American Library Association



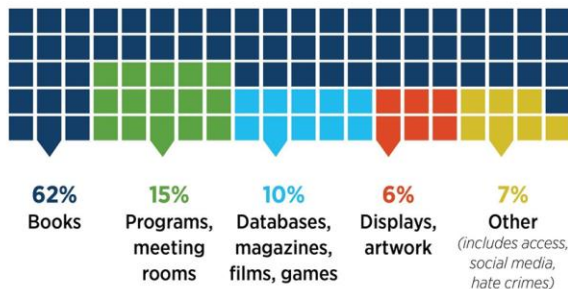
# CENSORSHIP

BY THE NUMBERS

## BEYOND BOOKS

The American Library Association has noticed an increase in attempts to censor drag queen story hours and LGBTQIA+ programming, as well as challenges to remove access to databases.

The American Library Association's Office for Intellectual Freedom tracked **347 challenges** in 2018. Here's the breakdown:



OFFICE FOR  
*Intellectual Freedom*  
American Library Association

# TOP 11 CHALLENGED BOOKS OF 2018



The American Library Association tracked **347 challenges** to library, school, and university materials and services in 2018. Of the 483 books that were challenged or banned in 2018, here are the top 11 most challenged:



## 1 | *George* by Alex Gino

Banned, challenged, and relocated because it was believed to encourage children to clear browser history and change their bodies using hormones, and for mentioning "dirty magazines," describing male anatomy, "creating confusion," and including a transgender character



## 2 | *A Day in the Life of Marlon Bundo* by Jill Twiss, illustrated by EG Keller

Banned and challenged for including LGBTQIA+ content, and for political and religious viewpoints



## 3 | *Captain Underpants series* written and illustrated by Dav Pilkey

Series was challenged because it was perceived as encouraging disruptive behavior, while *Captain Underpants and the Sensational Saga of Sir Stinks-A-Lot* was challenged for including a same-sex couple



## 4 | *The Hate U Give* by Angie Thomas

Banned and challenged because it was deemed "anti-cop," and for profanity, drug use, and sexual references



## 5 | *Drama* written and illustrated by Raina Telgemeier

Banned and challenged for including LGBTQIA+ characters and themes



## 6 | *Thirteen Reasons Why* by Jay Asher

Banned, challenged, and restricted for addressing teen suicide



## 7 | *This One Summer* by Mariko Tamaki, illustrated by Jillian Tamaki

Banned and challenged for profanity, sexual references, and certain illustrations



## 8 | *Skippyjon Jones series* written and illustrated by Judy Schachner

Challenged for depicting stereotypes of Mexican culture



## 9 | *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian* by Sherman Alexie

Banned and challenged for sexual references, profanity, violence, gambling, and underage drinking, and for its religious viewpoint



## 10 | *This Day in June* by Gayle E. Pitman, illustrated by Kristyna Litten

Challenged and burned for including LGBTQIA+ content



## 11 | *Two Boys Kissing* by David Levithan

Challenged, burned, and hidden for including LGBTQIA+ content

# Programs & Meeting Rooms

- Drag Queen Story Hours
- Author Visits
- Immigration Rights, Voter Suppression, Affordable Housing, and Police Brutality
- Yoga
- Holiday Celebrations
- Campus Speakers

# Programs & Meeting Rooms

Poll: Do you understand the difference between programs and meeting rooms in a First Amendment context?

# Programs & Meeting Rooms SUPPORT

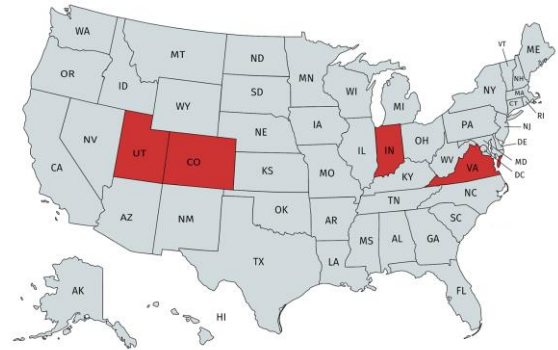
## Meeting Rooms, Exhibit Spaces, and Programs Resource Page

- Meeting Rooms: An Interpretation of the *Library Bill of Rights*
- Meeting Rooms Q&A
- Library-Initiated Programs and Displays as a Resource: An Interpretation of the *Library Bill of Rights*
- Responding to and Preparing for Controversial Programs and Speakers Q&A

# Databases & Streaming Services



INFORMATION SERVICES



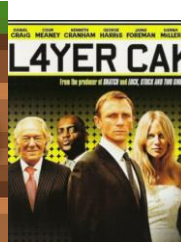


# Databases & Streaming Services SUPPORT

- Access to Digital Resources and Services: An Interpretation of the *Library Bill of Rights*

“Digital resources and services allow libraries to significantly expand the scope of information available to users. Like all resources and services provided by the library, provision of access to digital resources and services should follow the principles outlined in the Library Bill of Rights to ensure equitable access regardless of content or platform.”

# Films, Newspapers, Magazines, Games



# Films, Newspapers, Magazines, Games **SUPPORT**

- Restricted Access to Library Materials: An Interpretation of the *Library Bill of Rights*

“Libraries are a traditional forum for the open exchange of information. Restricting access to library materials violates the basic tenets of the American Library Association’s Library Bill of Rights.”

# Displays & Artwork

Montclair Public Library, New Jersey



Artist: Gwenn Seemel

# Displays & Artwork

King County Library, Washington



George Washington High School,  
California

# Displays & Artwork



# Displays & Artwork

Rumford Public Library, Maine



# Displays & Artwork SUPPORT

- Visual and Performing Arts in Libraries: An Interpretation of the *Library Bill of Rights*
- Library-Initiated Programs and Displays as a Resource: An Interpretation of the *Library Bill of Rights*
- User-Initiated Exhibits, Displays, and Bulletin Boards: An Interpretation of the *Library Bill of Rights*



# Key Takeaways



- Update policies
- Educate trustees, staff and colleagues
- Raise awareness of the harms of censorship
- Support is available

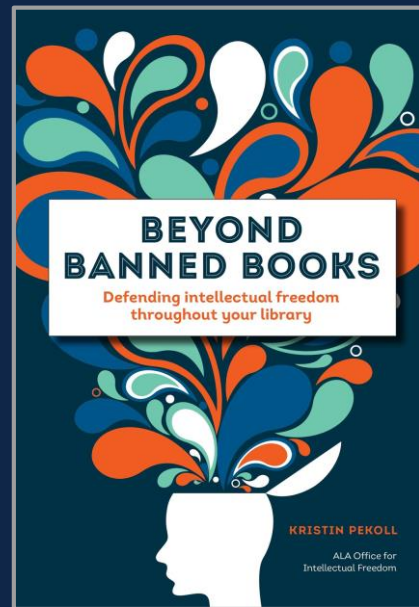


Poll: Have you ever been asked to remove a resource or cancel a service in your library?

- spotlights case studies drawn from public libraries, schools, universities, and government agencies dealing with library displays, artwork, programs, bookmarks and reading lists, social media, and databases;
- summarizes possible complaints and controversies related to each area;
- draws connections between the intellectual freedom principles involved and associated legal issues, with relevant court opinions when possible;
- shares questions to consider when strengthening a library's defenses against censorship;
- discusses the importance of reporting challenges to OIF, and the professional and institutional support that OIF can provide when challenges arise; and
- includes key ALA policies on intellectual freedom as appendices.

This guide will ensure that libraries are prepared to protect diverse voices from censorship while fostering more inclusive institutions that represent and welcome all people and ideas.

<http://bit.do/pekoll>



# Report

## Report Censorship

Defend the  
Public's Freedoms



[www.ala.org/  
challengereporting](http://www.ala.org/challengereporting)

# Questions?

ALA Office for Intellectual Freedom  
Kristin Pekoll  
kpekoll@ala.org