

A User's Guide to All the Banned Books in Texas

Discussions of race or sex, or just the wrong vibes, seem to be all it takes to number a book among the 801 bannings in Texas this year.

EDITOR'S NOTE: *An excerpt of A User's Guide... published by Texas Monthly follows that will lead Voz readers to the entire article and links on the banned books frenzy happening nationwide that is being documented by groups such as PEN America.*

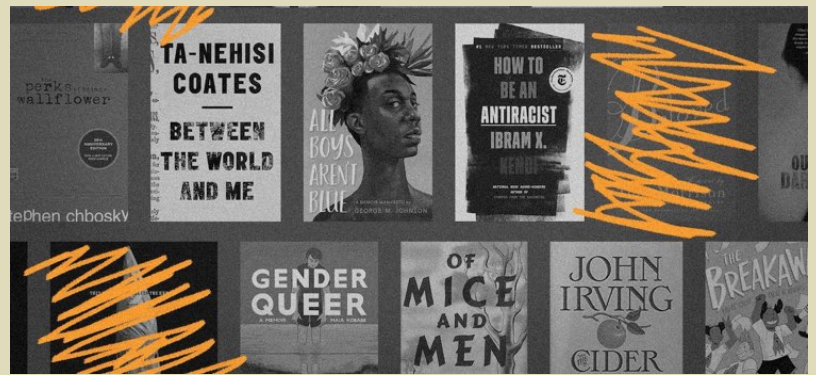
By Dan Solomon, Texas Monthly, September 20, 2022

Over the past year, schools and libraries around the country have been banning a whole lot of books. And while this is a nationwide phenomenon, no state's schools have embraced the practice of declaring certain stories and perspectives forbidden to their young people the way that Texas's have. According to a list compiled by the literature and human rights nonprofit PEN America [<https://pen.org/report/banned-usa-growing-movement-to-censor-books-in-schools/>], between July 1 of last year and June 30, Texas has seen 801 bannings. That's a huge number! Compare that with, say, Alaska or South Carolina, which have banned one book each. (In both instances, it's Maia Kobabe's award-winning comic book memoir *Gender Queer*, which has also been banned in nine districts in Texas.)

That figure—801 banned books—refers not to individual titles but rather to the number of times any school district has issued a ban. Some titles, such as *Gender Queer*, appear multiple times, having been banned from Canutillo (fifteen miles northwest of downtown El Paso) to Clear Creek, 785 miles to its east. Others, such as Brent Sherrard's *Final Takedown*—a slim, out-of-print volume from a small Canadian publisher about a

kid who faces time in juvenile detention—appear but once (in San Antonio's North East Independent School District, the most avid banner of books in the state). Some are banned in school libraries, others in classrooms. Some have been removed pending an investigation that the school district may or may not have the time and resources to conduct in a timely manner. Most have been banned by administrators, while others are the result of a formal challenge from a parent or other community member. In any event, the guiding principle remains the same: to ensure that students are not exposed to ideas that their elders do not want them to consider, by making it increasingly difficult to access the volumes in which those ideas are contained...

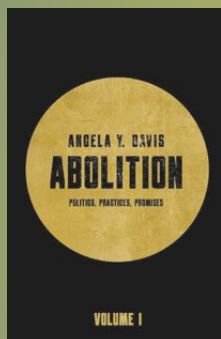
To read the entire article that also addresses trends in book banning go to: bit.ly/tm-banned-books



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