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Book Banning in Texas: Citizens are Calling for a Variety of Books to be Removed from the Shelves

BY ALEXANDRIA GOSEN

CURRENTLY, PARENTS, Texas officials, and various citizens are going to war and attempting to remove books containing what they deem to be inappropriate content from shelves. Most of the books under question are books containing topics like LGBTQ+, racism, and similar topics. Many are not in favor of this law. It brings censorship issues into question, and it removes different voices from the narrative. However, several parents believe it is their right to control what their students have access to. There have been many conversations regarding censorship below the bible belt. Florida is issuing their "Parental Rights in Education" bill, also known as the "Don't Say Gay" bill, is planned to go into effect July, 1ST 2022 if it is passed. Regarding Texas's book ban, there has not been a statewide ban in place. It is merely a myriad of requests flowing in.

However, schools are still removing a variety of books from their shelves, NBC'S Mike Hixenbaugh made a list of 50 books on this new banned list. Here is a condensed version of that list. Hixenbaugh also gives parental reasons for banning.

1. "When Wilma Rudolph Played Basketball," by Mark Weakland (Capstone)

A parent in Prosper, a Dallas suburb, said this illustrated children's book, which touches on the racism that Olympian Wilma Rudolph experienced growing up in Tennessee in the 1940s, should be removed from school libraries because "it opines prejudice based on race."

2. "Lawn Boy," by Jonathan Evison (Algonquin Books)

A parent in Plano said this coming-of-age novel about a Mexican American character's journey to understanding his own sexuality and ethnic identity should be banned because it contains "profanity, pornography, gambling, [and] homosexuality." The parent claimed the book encourages "admiring people with low morals and values, and hate of other people."

3. "Better Nate Than Ever," by Tim Federle (Simon and Schuster)

A parent in Leander, an Austin suburb, asked for this book, which features a subplot about a teenager who's starting to notice his attraction to other boys, to be removed because the parent didn't believe "books should discuss sensitive/controversial topics such as gender [and] sexuality."

4. "The Bluest Eye," by Toni Morrison (Vintage International)

This classic novel by Nobel Prize-winning author Toni Morrison should be banned from schools, according to a parent in the Fort Worth suburb of Birdville, because it includes a graphic description of rape.

5. "Ghost Boys," by Jewell Parker Rhodes (Little Brown and Co)

According to a Houston parent, reading this novel about a Black boy killed by police might cause white children who attend the Spring Branch Independent School District to "feel ashamed based on the color of their skin."

6. "White Bird: A Wonder Story," by R.J. Palacio (Knopf Books)

A parent in the Spring Branch ISD said this graphic novel, which is about a Jewish teen living in France after Nazis seized power, should be banned because it's "biased" and could lead to the "skewing of a young child's mind."

7. "Ground Zero: A Novel of 9/11," by Alan Gratz (Scholastic Press)

A parent in Prosper said this novel, which tells the story of 9/11 and its aftermath from the dueling perspectives of an American boy and an Afghan girl, should be removed from schools because it "depicts American soldiers as callous, evil and terrorists" and because the author mentions the racial or ethnic identities of every character.

8. "Fun Home: A Family Tragicomic," by Alison Bechdel (Mariner Books)

This illustrated memoir, which recounts the author's coming of age as a lesbian, is unsuitable for schools, according to a parent in Birdville, because it includes graphic descriptions of sexual violence.

9. "All Boys Aren't Blue," by George M. Johnson (Farrar, Straus and Giroux)

This memoir by a queer Black author was flagged for removal by a group of Katy parents because it includes descriptions of molestation and sex between men.

10. "The Perks of Being a Wallflower," by Stephen Chbosky (MTV Books Pocket Books)

A parent in McKinney asked the district to remove this coming-of-age novel because it includes descriptions of homosexuality, date rape, and masturbation.

11. "Michelle Obama: Political Icon," by Heather E. Schwartz (Lerner Publications)

A Katy parent asked to have this children's biography of the former first lady banned at every grade level because, the parent said, it unfairly depicts former President Donald Trump as a bully and because Obama's reflections on race gave the impression that "if you sound like a white girl you should be ashamed of yourself."