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THE STATE OF AMERICA'S LIBRARIES

2019

A report
from the
American
Library
Association

Top 11 Most Challenged Books p. 18

About the Report

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The following ALA divisions and offices also contributed to this report.

- American Association of School Librarians
- *American Libraries* magazine
- Association for Library Service to Children
- Association of College and Research Libraries
- Communications and Marketing Office
- Office for Accreditation
- Office for Diversity, Literacy, and Outreach Services
- Office for Intellectual Freedom
- Office for Research and Education
- Public Library Association
- Public Policy and Advocacy Office
- Young Adult Library Services Association

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ABOUT ALA

The American Library Association (ALA) is the foremost national organization providing resources to inspire library and information professionals to transform their communities through essential programs and services. For more than 140 years, the ALA has been the trusted voice of libraries, advocating for the profession and the library's role in enhancing learning and ensuring access to information for all. For more information, visit ala.org.

ALA President Loida Garcia-Febo leads a Libraries = Strong Communities rally at Cambridge (Mass.) Public Library.

THE STATE OF

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EDITED BY Kathy Rosa

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THE STATE OF
AMERICA'S LIBRARIES
2019

A report from the American Library Association | **EDITED BY** Kathy Rosa

The theme of <u>National Library Week</u> in 2019 is "<u>Libraries = Strong Communities.</u>" During the week of April 7–13, Americans take some time to celebrate the libraries and library workers who connect us with the resources we need. Libraries provide free access to books, online resources, and family programming. Library business centers help support entrepreneurship and worker retraining. Attendance at free public programs in libraries is up. Libraries offer opportunities for everyone and, in many cases, a safe place to be.

Access and challenges

Most challenges to library resources in 2018 focused on materials and programs associated with issues of concern to those in the gay, lesbian, transgender, and queer communities, most notably drag queen story hours and books affirming transgender youth, like Alex Gino's *George.*

Top Eleven Most Challenged Books in 2018.

In 2018, the ALA Office for Intellectual Freedom (OIF) tracked 347 challenges to library, school, and university materials and services. Of the 483 books that were challenged or banned in 2018, the following are the top 11 most frequently challenged:

1. *George,* by Alex Gino

2. *A Day in the Life of Marlon Bundo,* by Jill Twiss, illustrated by E. G. Keller

3. **Captain Underpants** series, written and illustrated by Dav Pilkey

4. *The Hate U Give,* by Angie Thomas

5. *Drama,* written and illustrated by Raina Telgemeier

6. *Thirteen Reasons Why,* by Jay Asher

7. *This One Summer,* by Mariko Tamaki, illustrated by Jillian Tamaki

8. **Skippyjon Jones** series, written and illustrated by Judy Schachner

9. *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian,* by Sherman Alexie

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

11. *Two Boys Kissing,* by David Levithan

Eleven books were chosen this year instead of the usual 10, because numbers 10 and 11 in the list were tied for the final position. Both books were burned by a religious activist in Orange City, Iowa, in October to protest the city's OC Pride event. OIF expanded the list to include both, in order to spotlight the repressive intolerance exemplified by the act of book burning and to remember that "he who destroys a good book, kills reason itself" (John Milton, *Areopagitica*). For the list of reasons why these books were challenged, see p. 18–19.

Issues and trends

Libraries are community partners and respond to community needs. Today's libraries provide resources and expert guidance to help parents and caregivers advance children's literacy and boost early learning, which have extensive academic and economic impacts.

Inclusion. In many areas, the library is the only place that is truly accessible and inclusive for all. In 2018, libraries of all types worked diligently on programming to ensure that people of all types felt welcome and recognized. A new ALA grant initiative sparked reading and conversation about race and equity in libraries and schools across the country. Offered with support from the W. K. Kellogg Foundation, ALA's Great Stories Club series on "Truth, Racial Healing, and Transformation" invited library workers to connect with underserved teens to read books that explore questions of race, identity, history, and social justice.

Homelessness and drug addiction. Libraries are in the midst of responding to two difficult societal issues affecting many of their communities.

The US Department of Housing and Urban Development serves more than 1 million people through emergency, transitional, and permanent housing programs each year. But the total number of people experiencing homelessness could be as high as 2 million. Homeless people rely on the public library for books, computer and internet access, and warmth. Staff at public libraries interact with almost as many homeless individuals as those at shelters do.

Homeless shelter director Ryan J. Dowd and film actor and director Emilio Estevez both have a mission to bring awareness to the public of the impact of homelessness and addiction on communities.

Dowd is executive director of Hesed House, a homeless shelter in Aurora, Illinois. His book, *The Librarian's Guide to Homelessness: An Empathy-Driven Approach to Solving Problems, Preventing Conflict, and Serving Everyone* (ALA Editions, 2018), provides guidance that will help public library staff understand and better serve the homeless population. The book:

- Includes facts about homelessness that every librarian should know.
- Debunks widespread myths about these individuals, explaining how they see themselves, what issues they struggle with, and how libraries can shift towards supporting them.
- Shares deescalation techniques like showing respect, ways to avoid making things personal, and using proper body language.
- Walks readers through dealing with common issues like a sleeping patron, questionable hygiene, offensive behavior, and asking a patron to leave.
- Advises on how to provide backup to a colleague and when to call the police.

Did you know?

The Library of Congress is the largest library in the world, with more than 167 million items on approximately 838 miles of bookshelves, which would span roughly the distance from Washington, D.C., to Cape Canaveral, Florida.

A growing body of evidence suggests that students' academic success is linked to library usage, including improved student retention and an enhanced academic experience.

Librarians have long championed their community members' right to access information privately, and serve as an essential refuge where everyone can check out materials or browse the internet without their information being shared.

Libraries are a smart investment. A recent study shows that for every dollar spent on Ohio public libraries, Ohioans received $5.48 in economic value.

Americans go to public libraries (1.35 billion visits) more often than they go to the movies (1.24 billion admissions).

Libraries play a critical role in the happiness of Americans. Communities that spend more on libraries, parks, and highways are shown to support the well-being of community members.

Emilio Estevez (center) in his 2018 film *The Public.*

Estevez's 2018 film *The Public* tells the story of Stuart Goodson (played by Estevez himself), a city librarian who interacts with the homeless on a daily basis. Goodson supports the patrons in their takeover of the library when shelters are full and the temperature outside is freezing.

Every day, more than 130 people in the United States die from an opioid overdose. Addiction to opioids is a serious national crisis that affects public health as well as the social and economic welfare of American citizens. As its impact is felt in communities across the country, many public libraries are jumping in to respond.

Federal issues. Funding for the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) was not only renewed but increased by $11 million over the past two years, despite being targeted for elimination by the president in his proposed FY2018 and FY2019 budgets. The Museum and Library Services Act was reauthorized by Congress through 2025, sending a strong signal of support for libraries at the federal level and including improvements that give tribal libraries and those offering disaster preparation and recovery assistance greater access to IMLS funding.

Congress adopted the Marrakesh Treaty, making thousands of print and digital materials available across international borders to visually impaired persons and others with print disabilities.

Public access to government information increased with the passage of the OPEN Government Data Act, requiring federal agencies to publish government data in machine-readable and open formats and use open licenses. A more library-friendly version of the Music Modernization Act was passed, shortening copyright terms and extending federal protections to pre-1972 sound recordings.

Other major library trends. Since 2008, an increasing number of academic libraries are offering leaves of absence or sabbaticals to their professional staff on the same basis as other faculty. This benefit is available at 61.3% of associate-degree granting institutions, 31.5% of baccalaureate schools, 43.7% at comprehensive universities, and 46.6% doctoral/research institutions.

There are 90,400 public and private schools for grades kindergarten through high school in the US. Of those, 82,300 (91%) have school libraries, but only 56,000 (61%) have full-time librarians. However, schools with both a strong school library program and a certified school librarian ensure that their students have the best chances to succeed.

The 2020 Census, for the first time in US history, will be conducted primarily online. With guidance from the American Library Association (ALA) and its Public Library Association (PLA) division, public libraries will play an essential role in helping their communities get counted accurately. PLA and ALA are partnering with the US Census Bureau and other stakeholders to ensure that libraries are informed and represented in policy discussions and planning processes. For the 2010 Census, more than 6,000 library locations hosted Census Bureau outreach activities; even more are expected to do so in 2020.

Public Libraries

Public libraries have experienced significant growth in programming since 2012. The number of public programs offered per capita has jumped 27.5% while the number of programs attended per capita has risen 16.9%. The Public Library Association (PLA) is responding to this trend by offering relevant initiatives designed to help public libraries offer targeted programs around issues that matter most to patrons. These include locating reliable health information, learning the skills needed to thrive in today's digital economy, helping children and families succeed in school and life, and purchasing affordable health insurance.

Involvement with the 2020 Census

The 2020 Census, for the first time in US history, will be conducted primarily online. With guidance from PLA and the American Library Association (ALA), public libraries will play an essential role in helping their communities be counted. PLA and ALA are engaging with the US Census Bureau and other stakeholders to ensure that libraries are informed and represented in policy discussions and planning processes. For the 2010 Census, more than 6,000 library locations hosted Census Bureau outreach activities, and even more are expected to do so for 2020.

Homelessness and addiction

Homelessness and addiction are two of the most difficult issues facing communities today. They often go hand in hand. The US Department of Housing and Urban Development serves more than 1 million people through emergency, transitional, and permanent housing programs each year. But the total number of people experiencing homelessness could be as high as 2 million.

Every day, more than 130 people in the United States die from an opioid overdose. Addiction to opioids is a serious national crisis that affects public health as well as the social and economic welfare of American citizens. As its impact is felt in communities across the country, many public libraries are jumping in to respond. For example, Blount County (Tenn.) Public Library offers life-skills training through the county's Recovery Court program to nonviolent offenders who have a history of drug and alcohol abuse.

Participants in the Nutrition Module of Recovery Court prepare a meal in the staff lounge of the Blount County (Tenn.) Public Library.

Gates Public Library of Rochester, New York, hosts public forums to educate the community about opioid addiction and overdose. To further highlight this important work, PLA is working with OCLC to produce eight case studies of communities in which the public library is playing a role in responding to the opioid problem.

Photo: K.C. Williams

Opioids include prescription pain relievers, heroin, and synthetics such as fentanyl. One anti-opioid overdose drug, Narcan Nasal Spray (naloxone), is being used at some libraries to save lives. Michelle Jeske, Denver Public Library (DPL) city librarian and member of the PLA board of directors, says the library began training staff to use Narcan at the beginning of 2017. DPL administered Narcan 14 times that year and a handful of times in 2018. "Those are lives we saved," she says. "These things can and do happen at libraries because libraries are very public places." Emergent BioSolutions, a biopharmaceutical company headquartered in Gaithersburg, Maryland, announced in October that it is offering two free doses of the nasal spray version of the anti-overdose drug Narcan to the nearly 17,000 public library locations in the United States.

Equity, diversity, inclusion, and social justice

Across the US, public library workers are joining racial justice leaders and library scholars who have long argued for "critical race discourse" in library education and practice. For example, Madison (Wis.) Public Library has applied racial equity assessment tools to multiple policies and programs and to the library's strategic direction. This assessment has informed the library card registration process for school children, meeting room policies, library placement and staffing, and hiring processes. This example and others, which have been captured in the Government Alliance on Race and Equity's report on public libraries, are

Nika Cunanan from Waipahu (Hawaii) Public Library (left) and Samantha Martinez from Anythink Libraries (Adams County, Colo.) work together on a project as part of PLA's Inclusive Internship Initiative.

helping PLA teach all public libraries what they can do to address equity and social justice.

While the populations being served by public libraries are steadily becoming more and more diverse, the library workforce remains predominantly white and female. In response to this, PLA has developed an Inclusive Internship Initiative that aims to introduce high school students from diverse backgrounds to a career in librarianship through a paid summer internship at their local public libraries. By the end of summer 2019, 150 students will have completed this landmark program.

Photo: Tori Soper

Did you know?

In 2016, there were 1.4 billion in-person visits to public libraries across the US, the equivalent of about 4 million visits each day. That's roughly 2,664 per minute.

There are more public libraries (16,568) than Starbucks cafés (14,606) in the US—a total of 16,568, including branches. Nearly 100% of public libraries provide Wi-Fi and have no-fee access to computers.

There were 113 million attendees at public library programs in 2016, more than all Major League Baseball, National Football League, and National Basketball Association games combined. That's also 16.5 million more attendees than in 2013.

LIBRARIES TRANSFORM

Public libraries strengthen local economies.

84% of libraries offer technology training to patrons in computer software use.

77% provide online health resources.

60% offer programs to help Americans identify health insurance resources and get better informed on health topics.

73% provide programs that assist individuals to apply for jobs, create résumés, and prepare for interviews.

97% help people complete online government forms.

Public libraries create healthier communities.

59% of libraries provide programs on finding health insurance.

58% provide programs to help people find and evaluate health information.

23% offer fitness classes.

Public library access equals opportunity.

100% of public libraries offer access to the internet.

98% offer free Wi-Fi.

90% help patrons with basic internet skills.

97% help people complete online government forms.

90% offer access to ebooks.

Public libraries are the place for lifelong learning.

95% of libraries provide online homework assistance.

95% offer summer reading programs for children.

Data for this list was retrieved from the 2014 Digital Inclusion Survey. For more information about sources and citations, contact the ALA Library and Research Center at alalibrary@ala.org. Learn more at the Libraries Transform web page.

Academic Libraries

The American Library Association's Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL) division conducts an annual survey of staffing, collections, expenditures, operations, and initiatives for all academic libraries in the United States. The statistics in this section are taken from the most recent data set in 2017.

Staffing trends

Expenditures for salaries and wages accounted for 56.3% of total library expenditures on average. Salaries and wages constituted 65.8% of library expenditures for associate-degree granting institutions, 64.9% for baccalaureates, 66.6% for comprehensive universities, and 53% for doctoral/research institutions.

The number of librarians serving students increases with the level of the institution. Associate-degree granting institutions had an average of 4.98 FTE librarians per 10,690 students; baccalaureate schools had an average of 5.44 FTE librarians per 2,787 students; comprehensive universities had an average of 7.89 FTE librarians per 6,427 students;

and doctoral/research institutions had 30.68 FTE librarians per 18,028 students.

Academic librarians are expected to hold advanced degrees beyond the master's degree in library and information science (MLIS) at 9% of associate and baccalaureate-degree granting institutions, 15.4% of comprehensive universities, and 13% of doctoral/research institutions.

Faculty status

Fewer academic librarians have faculty status—meaning that they are promoted through the ranks based on their professional proficiency and effectiveness through a peer-review system of standards consistent with other

Did you know?

Everyone in a college benefits from the college library, yet libraries receive fewer than two cents of every dollar spent on higher education.
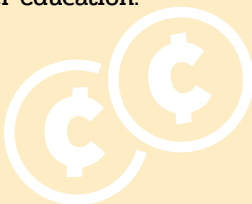
Academic libraries have almost 2.5 billion physical and electronic items in their collections available for use.

Digital media titles in US academic libraries have increased by 50% since 2014.

Academic librarians provide information services for almost 38 million people each year, some 4 million more people than those attending men's college basketball games.

The "AskSLU" concierge service at St. Louis University's Pius XII Memorial Library features walk-up information desks where patrons can receive technical support from both students and faculty.

faculty—than at the start of the Great Recession in 2008. Faculty status for academic librarians at associate-degree granting institutions has slipped 8.7% (from 35% to 26.3%). At baccalaureate schools the percentage of institutions where librarians have faculty status declined by 13.7% (from 29.1% to 15.4%). Comprehensive universities experienced a 13.2% decline (from 37.7% to 24.5%), and doctoral/research institutions saw a decline from 38.4% to 26.2%.

Since 2008, more academic libraries now offer leaves of absence or sabbaticals on the same basis as other faculty. This benefit is available at 61.3% of associate-degree granting institutions, 31.5% of baccalaureate schools, 43.7% at comprehensive universities, and 46.6% doctoral/research institutions.

More academic librarians are eligible for membership in the faculty governing body and have the same degree of representation as other academic units in institutional governing bodies and committees than in 2008. The participation of academic librarians in faculty governance is institutionalized at 61% of associate-degree granting institutions, 38.5% of baccalaureate schools, 57.3% of comprehensive universities, and 54% of doctoral/research universities.

Services

Academic library staff provided instructional sessions (face-to-face as well as electronic) to almost 7 million students per year. Almost 44% of the instructional sessions were digital.

Doctoral degree–granting institutions averaged the most reference transactions and consultations per year (more

than 17,500), followed by community colleges (more than 8,500), comprehensive universities (more than 5,800), and baccalaureate schools (more than 2,700).

Access

Libraries in doctoral degree–granting institutions were open an average 110.25 hours per week, followed by comprehensive university libraries at 90.92 hours per week and baccalaureate libraries at 88.69 hours per week. Community college libraries were open an average of 64.49 hours per week.

Collections

Academic library expenditures for collection materials averaged $5,372,492 for doctoral degree–granting institutions, $689,091 for comprehensive degree–granting institutions, $486,470 for baccalaureate schools, and $468,337 for associate degree–granting institutions.

On average, doctoral degree–granting institutions spent 76.3% of their materials budgets on ongoing commitments to subscriptions in 2017. Comprehensive schools spent an average of 81.1%, baccalaureate schools spent an average 76.6%, and associate degree–granting institutions spent an average of 32.4%. On average, academic libraries spent 73.8% of their materials budget on journal subscriptions.

School Libraries

There are 90,400 public and private schools for grades kindergarten through high school in the United States. Of those, 82,300 (91%) have underlined school libraries and only 56,000 (61%) have full-time librarians. However, schools with a strong school library program and a certified school librarian ensure their students have the best chance to succeed. More than 60 education and library research studies have produced clear evidence that school library programs staffed by qualified school librarians have a positive impact on student academic achievement. These studies clearly demonstrate that strong school library programs help all students do better academically, even when other school variables are considered:

- School libraries offer a safe and nurturing climate during the day, as well as before and after school. They are often the only place open to all students, where a school librarian can support them across grade levels and subject matter.
- School librarians connect other educators to current trends and resources for teaching and learning. They are essential partners for all teachers, providing print and digital materials that meet diverse needs and offering opportunities to deepen student learning.
- School library programs foster critical thinking, providing students with the skills they need to analyze, form, and communicate ideas in compelling ways.
- School libraries are learning hubs and homework help centers where students can use technology to find the best information resources. Strong school library programs instill confidence in reading, which is fundamental to learning, personal growth, and enjoyment.

Did you know?

Cutbacks in school librarians may be yielding unintended consequences. According to a recent study by Stanford University, more than 80% of middle schoolers cannot tell the difference between sponsored content and a real news article.

Students in high-poverty schools are almost twice as likely to graduate when the school library is staffed with a certified school librarian.

School libraries give students a unique opportunity for self-directed inquiry. Four out of five Americans agree that libraries help spark creativity among young people.

Lower-income students are especially at risk of falling behind in math and reading when school is out. Public libraries help narrow the achievement gap by offering summer learning opportunities to students of all backgrounds.

Issues and Trends

Intellectual freedom

As libraries work to become centers of tolerance and inclusion—providing information, resources, and programming for those who are underrepresented or marginalized in their communities—the American Library Association's Office for Intellectual Freedom (OIF) has noticed a repressive pushback by those who believe that a more diverse and just society poses a threat to their beliefs and their way of life. As a result, most challenges to library resources in 2018 focused on materials and programs addressing issues of concern to those in the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex, asexual, and related (LGBTQIA+) communities, most notably drag queen story hours and books affirming transgender youth, like Alex Gino's *George*. Also challenged were materials that candidly portrayed the injustices and inequality experienced by persons of color, such as Angie Thomas's *The Hate U Give*.

Closely allied to challenges to LGBTQIA+ materials were challenges to books, programs, and resources containing profanity or sexual themes and images. While familiar works of literature like Alison Bechdel's *Fun Home* and John Green's *Looking for Alaska* were targeted for removal because they were deemed offensive or inappropriate, the most notable challenge to supposedly offensive library materials came from well-organized pressure groups intent on banning the use of online research databases provided by EBSCO Information Services for classrooms and libraries, based on the belief that some articles and images from the mainstream journals and periodicals contained in those databases are pornographic.

A new, worrisome trend is the use of extreme tactics by would-be censors and pressure groups. These tactics range from an actual book burning in Iowa that targeted LGBTQIA+ books to lawsuits filed to halt libraries' drag queen story hours and to end community access to curated and authoritative research databases. While these tactics have been given short shrift by the public and the courts, these strategies have often proven successful in chilling

Drag Queen Story Hour at West Hollywood (Calif.) Library.

the willingness of schools and libraries to provide access to diverse information and ideas.

This year's Banned Books Week theme, "Censorship Leaves Us in the Dark: Keep the Light On," urges everyone to draw attention to censorship in order to keep the light of learning alive.

Library users' privacy rights are another urgent issue. In the wake of disclosures about the unauthorized collection and misuse of individuals' personal information by social media platforms and providers of internet-capable devices, libraries have assumed a greater role in protecting and advocating for library users' right to privacy. Training and educational programs like NYC Digital Safety gave librarians and library users practical knowledge and tools for protecting personal privacy, while librarians began to thoughtfully consider the increasing use of big data practices and learning analytics in libraries and educational institutions, fearing that the use of these tools and practices will threaten users' privacy and intellectual freedom.

CENSORSHIP
BY THE NUMBERS

Censorship leaves us in the dark. Keep the light on by standing up to censorship when you see it happening, and exploring a challenged or banned book. Learn more at **ala.org/bbooks.**

BEYOND BOOKS

Libraries are not only about books. They are continually transforming to meet community needs and provide new platforms, programs, and services. 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:

62% Books

15% Programs, meeting rooms

10% Databases, magazines, films, games

6% Displays, artwork

7% Other *(includes access, social media, hate crimes)*
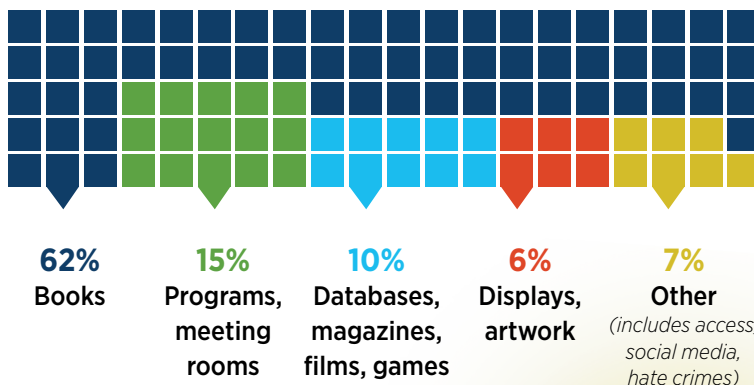
FIVE TYPES OF BOOK CENSORSHIP IN 2018

| Vandalizing pages | Hiding resources | Requiring parental permission to access content | Removing materials | Burning books |

200+
Books donated to Orange City (Iowa) Public Library after four LGBTQIA+ library books were burned by a religious activist

CHALLENGE

Attempt to remove or restrict materials or services based on content

BAN

Removal of materials or cancellation of services based on content

531

Total materials affected in censorship attempts in 2018

(including magazines, films, databases)

WHO INITIATES CHALLENGES

32% Parents

33% Patrons

13% Board/administration

10% Librarians/teachers

6% Political/religious groups

3% Elected officials

3% Students
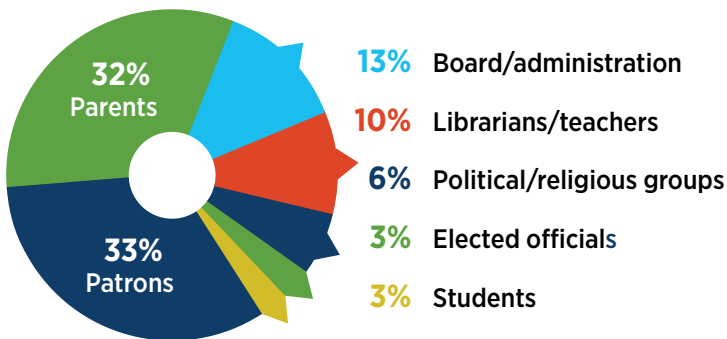
Statistics based on 335 responses

REASONS FOR BOOK CHALLENGES

GENDER NON CONFORMITY
OBSCENITY PROFANITY
POLITICAL VIEWPOINT
RELIGIOUS VIEWPOINT
OCCULT SATANISM
DIRTY MAGAZINES
DRUGS ALCOHOL SMOKING
TEEN SUICIDE
RACISM
PORNOGRAPHIC
GLORIFIES CRIMINALS
LGBTQIA+
CULTURAL INSENSITIVITY
VIOLENCE
NUDITY
SEXUALLY EXPLICIT
LANGUAGE
SEX EDUCATION
TRANSGENDER CHARACTERS LIBERAL PROPAGANDA CONFUSES CHILDREN
ANTI-COP
SAME SEX MARRIED COUPLE WHITE SUPREMACY

WHERE CHALLENGES TAKE PLACE

59% Public libraries

23% School libraries

14% Schools

3% Academic libraries

1% Special/prison libraries

Statistics based on 347 responses

CENSORSHIP STATISTICS COMPILED BY:

OFFICE FOR *Intellectual Freedom*
American Library Association

"Inclusive Privacy: Closing the Gap" is the theme for the 2019 Choose Privacy Week. The activities for this year's observance, May 1–7, will encourage libraries to adopt policies and create programs that make privacy equal, open, and inclusive. The focus will be on helping librarians understand the privacy inequities imposed on vulnerable and historically underrepresented populations, and what they can do to address those inequities through programming, instruction, and advocacy.

INCLUSIVE PRIVACY
CLOSING THE GAP

Top 11 Most Challenged Books in 2018. OIF tracked 347 challenges to library, school, and university materials and services in 2018. Overall, 483 books were targeted.

Eleven books were chosen this year instead of the usual 10, because numbers 10 and 11 in the list were tied for the final position. Both books were burned by a religious activist in Orange City, Iowa, in October to protest the city's OC Pride event. OIF expanded the list to include both, in order to spotlight the repressive intolerance exemplified by the act of book burning and to remember that "he who destroys a good book kills reason itself" (John Milton, *Areopagitica*).

Here are the "Top 11 Most Challenged Books in 2018":

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
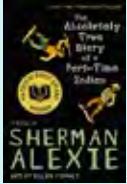Banned, challenged, and restricted for addressing teen suicide

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

Youth and teen services

Libraries are key players in family engagement and early learning. They provide resources and expert guidance to help parents and caregivers advance children's literacy and boost early learning, which have extensive academic and economic impacts.

Librarians have become especially innovative in this area, addressing the unique needs of their users and going far beyond such customary youth services activities as storytimes and readers' advisory. Libraries today provide distinctive and purposeful programming, resources, and services, both inside the library and out, that enrich and strengthen the fabric of their communities.

Here are some stories that reflect the influence libraries have and the contributions they make within cities, rural areas, and neighborhoods, particularly through services to youth and families.

■ In an effort to reach out to immigrant and non-English-speaking populations in their community, youth services staff members from Alexandria (Va.) Library began making regular visits to a local doctor's office that was eager to partner with them. One librarian, a native Spanish speaker, talked with adults about the many relevant resources the library offers, such as ESL classes and Spanish-language materials, while her colleague entertained and engaged with children, making use of books that fit a variety of interests and language abilities, singalongs, and nursery rhymes—all determined by the ages of the children present.

■ The Bay Area Discovery Museum's Center for Childhood Creativity in California, in collaboration with the California State Library's Early Learning with Families (ELF) initiative, carried out a multiyear project to publish a toolkit to help libraries provide evidenced-based school readiness programming in their communities for families with children birth to age 8. The free Reimagining School Readiness Toolkit includes examples of promising practices, case studies, and Pinterest boards, plus promotional materials available in several languages.

■ Four Girl Scout cadettes, working towards their Silver Award, reached out to the Chinn Park Regional branch of the Prince William (Va.) Public Library with the idea of hosting a stuffed-animal sleepover for children—to promote literacy and the importance of libraries to their community. The library answered, happy to support the girls in earning their award. Staff members provided the four scouts with guidance to ensure they followed library system standards and, after months of planning, the girls
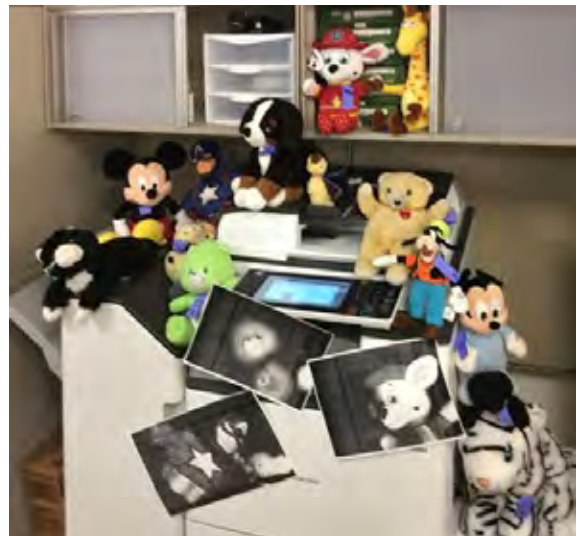
Stuffed animals have some fun with the copier during Library Bedtime Adventure at Chinn Park Regional branch of the Prince William (Va.) Public Library.

Photo: Prince William (Va.) Public Library

successfully hosted Library Bedtime Adventure to the delight of young program attendees. The children enjoyed crafts, stories, and songs, led by the Girl Scouts, before leaving their stuffed-animal friends at the library in the scouts' care for a night of "reading, fun, and games."

■ Missoula (Mont.) Public Library (MPL) collaborated with the Missoula Food Bank, the University of Montana (UM) spectrUM Discovery Area, and the latter's parent organization the UM Broader Impacts Group, to create EmPower Place at the Missoula Food Bank's facility. The learning center is designed to enhance the quality of life for Missoula's children, offering science exhibits, books for children and young adults, and literacy and STEM programming. MPL provides books for the space's own private library, a Books and Babies program held twice a week, and twice-monthly visits from its Web on Wheels Bus.

Library programs

As communities across the country struggle with the challenging political divides of our time, libraries remain a space where people come together for learning, conversation, and connection. In many areas, the library is the only place that is truly accessible and inclusive for all.

In 2018, libraries of all types worked diligently to offer programming that would ensure that people of all types felt welcome and recognized. Here are a few of their stories of equity, diversity, and inclusion.

Missoula (Mont.) Public Library provides books and programming for Missoula Food Bank's EmPower Place.

Book clubs provide a place for tough discussions. The "R.A.D.A.–Read. Awareness. Dialogue. Action." book discussion series hosted by the Denver Public Library (DPL) provides a safe space to hold conversations on timely issues with respect and compassion. Its first meeting took place in 2015—a difficult time, recalled Adult Services Librarian James Allen Davis, in which residents were struggling with the deaths of African Americans Trayvon Martin, Michael Brown, Sandra Bland, and others.

"People would come into the library and say, 'Oh my goodness, did you see what just happened to this young black kid?'" Davis said. "We thought: Our library has to be more relevant. What can we do to provide a place where people can have an open discussion and process what is happening in their communities?" Since then, DPL has held 13 R.A.D.A. conversations in nine branches focusing on books that cover immigration (*Americanah* by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie), gentrification (*How to Kill a City: Gentrification, Inequality, and the Fight for the Neighborhood* by Peter Moskowitz) and racism and the legacy of oppression (*White Rage: The Unspoken Truth of Our Racial Divide* by Carol Anderson).

R.A.D.A. has affected how the library listens to its community. "In our conversation about *White Rage,* a few people said they weren't sure how they would respond if they were bystanders to people experiencing racism or microaggressions," said librarian Hadiya Evans. "So we created a workshop, with scenarios, to help give them those tools. We're listening, and we're continuing to be responsive."

Teaching social justice and history through American Girl dolls. Oak Park (Ill.) Public Library, which serves a community of 52,000 residents in west suburban Chicago, wanted to create a kids' program about history and social justice that would draw upon the library's popular collection of American Girl dolls. Staff created a program linking the dolls to another library collection of multicultural artifacts from all over the world. One Monday afternoon during the school district's spring break, families toured various doll stations.

Kids explored art appreciation through the doll Kaya, from the Nez Perce tribal nation, and a sample of Nez Perce beadwork. The doll Melody Ellison, portraying an African American girl growing up in Detroit in the mid-1960s, helped kids explore books and make buttons about the civil rights movement. Several dolls that hailed from other

Photo: Missoula (Mont.) Public Library

A Great Stories Club participant takes part in a book discussion at Zion–Benton Township High School in Zion, Illinois.

countries sparked activities about immigrants and refugees. "We had pieces of cardstock to act as suitcases, and we gave the kids Post-it Notes and asked them to think of 10 things they would want to take with them if they were leaving their homes and could never go back," librarians Jennifer Jackson, Naomi Priddy, and Shelley Harris recalled. "We had them write the items on the Post-its and stick them to their 'suitcases.' Then we narrowed down the list to seven things, then five, and so on, until we got to one thing—or none, for some people. It was powerful to watch."

ALA's Great Stories Club series on Truth, Racial Healing, and Transformation. An ALA grant initiative sparked reading and conversation about race and equity in libraries and schools across the country. Offered with support from the W. K. Kellogg Foundation, the ALA Great Stories Club series on Truth, Racial Healing, and Transformation invited library workers to connect with underserved teens to read books that explore questions of race, identity, history, and social justice. Many of the participating libraries worked in collaboration with alternative schools, juvenile justice facilities, and other organizations to reach the young people that need the programming most. Participating teens read books like *March: Book*

One by John Lewis, Andrew Aydin, and Nate Powell; and *Ms. Marvel Volume 1: No Normal* by G. Willow Wilson and Adrian Alphona, and then shared their personal experiences with race and identity.

In her position at the Zion–Benton Township High School in Zion, Illinois, Deborah Will worked with the township's supervisor's office to create a unique Great Stories Club—one that involved a group of 14- to 16-year-olds who were employed in the township's summer work program. With the support of the township administration, reading the club's books became part of the students' work day. Soon enough, some of the township employees began reading the books, too. Discussions began naturally. But when it came time to read *The Hate U Give,* Angie Thomas's novel about a teen girl who witnesses the shooting of a black boy by a white police officer, the town's leadership became nervous.

"Some of the adults thought the kids weren't mature enough," Will said. "But I told them that these students were living this experience, and the book gives them an avenue to discuss these feelings without having to discuss particulars of their own lives." The township got on board,

Young patrons at Santa Ana (Calif.) Public Library participate in a computational thinking activity at the library's Coding Playground event in April 2018.

and as the students read the book, so did the mayor, a council member, and the chief of police. They all came to the book club for the discussion and were impressed with the students' thoughts and ideas that stemmed from the book.

"Then it got bigger," Will said. The city council member saw a trailer for the movie based on the book and announced that he was starting a movie club. He took all 450 students in the freshman class to see the movie and personally paid for any student who could not afford the trip. "They all realized the kids were mature enough for all of this," Will said. "Instead of walking away from what students experience, they walked toward it, met them in the middle, and said, 'Let's figure out how to make it a better tomorrow.'"

Respectful protest for drag queen story hours.
2018 saw a surge of interest in drag queen story hours, all-ages storytime programs where performance artists read stories with messages of love and acceptance. These events—many organized by the nonprofit Drag Queen Story Hour group—popped up not just in libraries, but also schools, summer camps, and community spaces, attracting the attention of news outlets and protesters around the country. Port Jefferson (N.Y.) Free Library Library Director Thomas Donlon said his library's drag

queen story hour was suggested by a patron. "It was our largest turnout ever for storytime," Donlon said. "We capped registration at 35, but we hit that after four days, so we made a wait list."

Port Jefferson's program also attracted opposition, but the library was prepared—and they were committed to preserving the rights of not only their attendees, but their detractors. "We wanted to make sure, first, that the people coming into the program didn't feel threatened or violated. At the same time the people protesting—they have a right to protest," Donlon said. "So when we heard there would be protesters, we reached out to our local constables and the police department and said, 'We think this is going to happen, we just want everything to be civil.' We put more security guards on duty to make sure everything went well, and we let the protesters do their thing."

Libraries Ready to Code
According to *Forbes* magazine, learning to code can help increase your chances of getting a technology-related job and improve your problem-solving and logic skills. Libraries are providing opportunities to learn coding. ALA's

Libraries Ready to Code initiative, sponsored by Google, awarded 250 school and public libraries with $500 each in microfunding to help plan and implement coding activities during Computer Science Education Week (CSEdWeek), December 3–9, 2018.

The CSEdWeek microfunding comes from a collaboration of ALA with Grow with Google that includes the launch of the Libraries Ready to Code website, the expansion of Google's in-person workshops for job seekers and small businesses to libraries in all 50 states, and an additional $1 million investment in funding to libraries. Libraries across the US will be able to access the pool of Libraries Lead with Digital Funds through ALA to implement digital skills programming for their users. ALA will collaborate with the Public Library Association, a division of ALA, to administer the new digital skills initiative. Funding becomes available when the Grow With Google tour comes to a particular state.

ALA President Loida Garcia-Febo said, "We are thrilled by the announcement of Grow with Google's new initiative to enhance the role of libraries as digital community centers. It is exciting to see what started three years ago as a collaborative exploration has grown into a broad range of investments in America's libraries that promote computational thinking, fuel innovation, and advance our nation's workforce."

Libraries and the law

Of the 13,556 bills that were introduced during the 115th US Congress, only 443 became law. Five of these are of interest to libraries and the communities they serve:

- Funding for the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) was not only renewed but increased by $11 million over the past two years, despite being targeted for elimination by the president in his proposed FY2018 and FY2019 budgets.
- The Museum and Library Services Act was reauthorized by Congress through 2025, sending a strong signal of support for libraries at the federal level and including improvements that give tribal libraries and those offering disaster preparation and recovery assistance greater access to IMLS funding.
- The Marrakesh Treaty was signed into law, making thousands of print and digital materials available across international borders to people with print disabilities.
- Public access to government information increased with the passage of the OPEN Government Data Act.

- A more library-friendly version of the Music Modernization Act was passed, shortening copyright terms and extending federal protections to pre-1972 sound recordings.

Accreditation of library programs

There are approximately 140,000 librarians in the United States. As part of their credentialing, many librarians graduate from an ALA-accredited program in library and information science.

Accreditation ensures that higher education institutions and their units, schools, or programs meet appropriate standards of quality and integrity. The American Library Association (ALA) accredits 65 programs at 60 institutions in the United States, Canada, and Puerto Rico. The process entails the assessment of educational quality and the continued enhancement of educational operations through the development and validation of standards. The credential indicates to the public that an institution and its programs are fulfilling their commitment to educational quality.

To become a school librarian, the following options are available:

- Earn a master's degree from a program accredited by ALA.
- Earn a master's degree with a specialty in school librarianship from a program recognized by the American Association of School Librarians (AASL) in an educational unit accredited by the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP).

Some states have school library teacher education programs in colleges and universities that are accredited by their state departments of education.

Future trends

The American Library Association's (ALA) Center for the Future of Libraries works to identify global trends that affect libraries. Two prominent trends—artificial intelligence and smart community development—help demonstrate libraries' ability to adapt to emerging roles and contexts.

Artificial intelligence (AI). Library professionals have an interest in AI, deep learning, machine learning, and natural language processing, all of which seek to develop intelligent machines that work and react more like humans. While libraries pride themselves on expanding access to information, they are also central to encouraging curiosity

and advancing knowledge production in their communities. While AI could become an invaluable tool for organizing and making accessible large amounts of data, it also has the potential to threaten human navigation in an increasingly complex information environment.

Several libraries are embarking on programs to make AI more accessible and useful.

- In 2018, the University of Rhode Island opened the first AI lab to be housed in a university library. This cross-disciplinary facility was designed to be available to all students, faculty, staff, as well as the wider Rhode Island community, allowing them to explore the social context of these emerging technologies.

- Stanford (Calif.) University Libraries' Library AI initiative helps identify and try out AI applications—machine perception, machine learning, machine reasoning, and language recognition— that can help make the libraries' collections more discoverable, accessible, and analyzable for scholars.

- The Cambridge (Mass.) Public Library partnered with the metaLAB (at) Harvard University and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology's Hayden Library to host the "Laughing Room," an interactive art installation in which participants enter an artificially intelligent room that plays a laugh track whenever the participants say something that the room's algorithm deems to be funny. The installation is meant to encourage consideration for how surveillance and artificial intelligence could affect our lives.

Smart communities bring together technological innovations and a focus on community aspirations to improve the efficiency of urban operations and citizens' quality of life. At the same time, they promote the local economy and maintain environmental sustainability. Bound up in this pursuit is an increasing focus on open data, cross-agency collaboration, digital access and literacy, and concerns for privacy and security. Libraries have found essential roles in smart community development and continue to show their centrality to developing future-focused communities.

- In Chattanooga, Tennessee (Chattanooga Open Data Portal), and Boston (Analyze Boston) the city's public libraries play an instrumental role in making open data available to citizens and civic innovators.

- New York City's Library Privacy Week in October brought together the Brooklyn Public Library, the New York

Students learn about wind turbines at Chula Vista (Calif.) Public Library's "Smart City" Education Center.

Public Library, Queens Library, and Metropolitan New York Library Council to offer more than 30 discussion programs focused on digital privacy and online security.

- In spaces like the Skokie (Ill.) Public Library's Civic Lab and the Kansas City (Mo.) Public Library's Community Conversations, libraries provide space and time for residents to discuss who they want to be and how they can confront the future.

- In California, the city of Chula Vista and the Chula Vista Elementary School District created a "Smart City" Education Center at the Chula Vista Public Library, a space where students can learn about solar panels, wind turbines, energy-efficient buildings, electric vehicles, and more.

- ALA, with the Center for Technology in Government at the University at Albany, New York, is conducting a three-year project to explore the roles of public libraries in enabling smart, inclusive, and connected communities.

Photo: Chula Vista (Calif.) Public Library

LIBRARIES = STRONG COMMUNITIES

Libraries = Strong Communities is a national advocacy effort aimed at highlighting the value of academic, public, and school libraries. An initiative of 2018–2019 American Library Association President Loida Garcia-Febo, the campaign was announced at her Inaugural Banquet during the ALA Annual Conference in New Orleans.

Garcia-Febo toured a series of libraries throughout her presidential year to ignite public awareness about the value of libraries and library staff and create a groundswell of support at local, state, national, and global levels.

LIBRARIES = STRONG COMMUNITIES TOUR STOPS

- Pikes Peak (Colo.) Public Library District | OCTOBER 6, 2018
- Cambridge (Mass.) Public Library | OCTOBER 18, 2018
- Seattle Public Library | JANUARY 26, 2019
- North Miami Public Library | FEBRUARY 9, 2019
- Los Angeles Public Library | MAY 15, 2019

The tour will conclude on June 22, 2019, during the ALA Annual Conference & Exhibition in Washington, D.C.

ALA American Library Association

LIBRARIES TRANSFORM®

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