



Canadian Federation of Library Associations
Fédération canadienne des associations de bibliothèques

Titles, Authors and Programs Challenged in 2023¹

This report continues the annual series of reports on Challenges to intellectual freedom in Canadian libraries published annually since 2007. For previous reports, consult the [CFLA-FCAB website](#).

Summary

The number of titles reported this year is 144, a considerable increase from the 61 reported in 2022, largely owing to increased publicity of the Canadian Library Challenges Database, now jointly sponsored by CFLA-FCAB and the Centre for Free Expression.

This year 14 titles were reported challenged more than once. This is a significant increase from one title in 2020, two in 2021 and five in 2022 and seems to reflect the growing influence of circulated lists rather than individual encounters.

Materials can be challenged for both their intrinsic nature such as the political viewpoint, and for the library's placement of the work. The most common complaint about the nature of the work was that it involved explicit sexuality and the second most common complaint was that it was LGBTQIA2S+ positive. The most common complaint about the handling of the work was that it was inappropriate for the age category in which it was shelved. In many cases, these categories overlapped.

Drag story hours were reported challenged in seven provinces. The number of such programs reported was seven times the number reported in 2022.

¹ This report on the challenges to books, movies, and programs in Canadian libraries has been prepared by the Database Working Group of the Intellectual Freedom Committee of the Canadian Federation of Library Associations/ Fédération canadienne des associations de bibliothèques. The authors thank the Centre for Free Expression and l'Association des bibliothèques publiques du Québec for their participation and assistance.

Part 1

Titles challenged multiple times.

No.	Title	Author	Complaint
6	My Body is Growing	Dagmar Geisler	Age inappropriate, explicit sexuality
5	Sex is a Funny Word	Cory Silverberg	Age inappropriate, explicit sexuality
4	This Book is Gay	Dawson, Juno	LGBTQIA2S+ Positive
3	If You're a Drag Queen and You Know It	Lil Miss Hot Mess	LGBTQIA2S+ positive, explicit sexuality, age inappropriate
3	Let's Talk About It	Erika Moen	Explicit Sexuality
2	Being You: A First Conversation About Gender	Megan Madison; Jessica Ralli; Anne/Andy Passchier,	LGBTQIA2S+ Positive
2	Gender Queer	Maia Kobabe	LGBTQIA2S+ Positive
2	Heartstopper	Alice Oseman	LGBTQIA2S+ Positive
2	It Feels Good to Be Yourself: A Book About Gender Identity	Theresa Thorn, Noah Grigni	LGBTQIA2S+ Positive
2	It's Perfectly Normal	Robie Harris, Michael Emberly	Age inappropriate, explicit sexuality
2	Melissa	Alex Gino	LGBTQIA2S+ Positive
2	Red Room. Trigger Warnings	Ed Piskor	Explicit Sexuality, Violence, Animal cruelty
2	The Bare Naked Book	Kathy Stinson	Age inappropriate, explicit sexuality
2	Works of D.H. Lawrence	D. H. Lawrence	Creator

Challenged Titles – 2023

Part 2

Titles challenged once.

Asterix and the Great Crossing	René Goscinny; Albert Uderzo	Racist
A Court of Silver Flames (and other ACOTAR series titles)	Sarah J. Maas	Age inappropriate, explicit sexuality
A Kids Book About Being Non-binary	Hunter Chinn-Raicht	LGBTQIA2S+ Positive
A Princess of Great Daring	Tobi Hill-Meyer	LGBTQIA2S+ Positive
ABC Pride	Elly Barnes; Louie Stowell	LGBTQIA2S+ positive, sexually explicit, age inappropriate
All Boys Aren't Blue	George M. Johnson	LGBTQIA2S+ Positive
Alligators All Around	Maurice Sendak	Racist against Indigenous peoples
Alphabet Soup: The Essential Guide to LGBTQIA2S+2+ Inclusion at Work	Michael Bach	LGBTQIA2S+ Positive
And Tango Makes Three	Justin Richardson and Peter Parnell	LGBTQIA2S+ Positive, Age inappropriate
Asterix and the Chieftain's Shield	René Goscinny; Albert Uderzo	Racist
Asterix the Gladiator	René Goscinny; Albert Uderzo	Racism against Black people
Baby Making for Everybody: Family Building and Fertility for LGBTQIA2S++ and Solo Parents	Ray Rachlin	LGBTQIA2S+ Positive
Bad Little Children's Book	Arthur C. Gackley	Racist
Graphic novels by Bastien Vivès	Bastien Vivès	Explicit Sexuality
Beauty Woke	NoNieqa Ramos	Black Positive
Becoming	Michelle Obama	LGBTQIA2S+ Positive
Beyond Male and Female: The Gender Identity Spectrum	Anita R. Walker	LGBTQIA2S+ Positive
Blue Bison Needs a Haircut	Scott Rothman,	LGBTQIA2S+ Positive

Born This Way: Real Stories of Growing Up Gay	Paul Vitagliano	LGBTQIA2S+ Positive
Boule a Zero	Ernst + Zidrou	Racism against Black people
Bye Bye, Binary	Eric Geron	LGBTQIA2S+ Positive
Calvin	JR & Vanessa Ford	LGBTQIA2S+ Positive, Age inappropriate
Canada's First Nations and Cultural Genocide	Robert Z. Cohen	Age inappropriate
Cancrelune (Série Mélusine (BD),	Roger Leloup	Age inappropriate, adult themes
Check Please!	Ngozi Ukazu	Age inappropriate, Language
Cinda Meets Ella: A Fairly Queer Tale	Wallace West	LGBTQIA2S+ Positive
Clifford's Halloween	Norman Bridwell	Racism against Indigenous people
Come on, People: On the Path from Victims to Victors	Bill Cosby; Alvin Poussaint	Objectionable Content
Conscious Parenting	Gabriel Cousens	Inaccurate /Misleading Content
Dicks	Garth Ennis	Explicit sexuality
Donovan's Big Day	Lesléa Newman	LGBTQIA2S+ positive, sexually explicit, age inappropriate
Fortnite	Epic Games	Age inappropriate, violence
Fulfilled: Being Transgender	Joyce A. Anthony	LGBTQIA2S+ Positive
Fun Home: A Family Tragicomic	Alison Bechdel	Age inappropriate, explicit sexuality
Gender Explorers	Juno Roche	LGBTQIA2S+ Positive
Grandad's Camper	Harry Woodgate	LGBTQIA2S+ positive, sexually explicit, age inappropriate
Grandad's Pride	Harry Woodgate	LGBTQIA2S+ positive, sexually explicit, age inappropriate
Growing Up Trans: In Our Own Words	Lindsay Herriot; Kate Fry	LGBTQIA2S+ Positive

Heartstopper	Alice Oseman	LGBTQIA2S+ positive, profanity
Helping Our World Get Well: COVID Vaccines	Beth Bacon	COVID-19 vaccine positive
I Am a Rainbow	Mark Kanemura	LGBTQIA2S+ Positive
I Am Jazz	Jazz Jennings; Jessica Herthel	LGBTQIA2S+ Positive
Identifying as Transgender	Sara Woods	LGBTQIA2S+ Positive
Irreversible Damage	Abigail Shrier	LGBTQIA2S+ negative
It's Thanksgiving	Jack Prelutsky	Racism against Indigenous people
Jude Saves the World	Ronnie Riley	LGBTQIA2S+ Positive
Le journal de Dylane, tome 2	Marilou Addison	Age inappropriate, explicit sexuality
Le Journal de Spirou, no 4347 (https://www.spirou.com/)	Éditions Dupuis	Age inappropriate
Le stégosaure: le plus amical des dinosaures	Anna Obiols, Joan Subirana	Racist against Indigenous peoples, Cultural Appropriation
Lektsii o budushchem / Lectures on the Future	Eduard Limonov	LGBTQIA2S+ Negative, Islamophobic
Let's Talk About It: The Teen's Guide to Sex, Relationships, and Being a Human	Erika Moen	Age inappropriate, explicit sexuality
Locomotive	Brian Floca	Racist against Indigenous peoples
L'Ostie d'chat	Iris Zviane	Explicit sexuality,
Love on the Other Side	Nagabe	Illegal Behaviour/Content
Loveless	Alice Oseman	Age inappropriate, explicit sexuality, LGBTQIA2S+ Positive
Lucky	Marissa Stapley	Explicit Sexuality
Ma sœur veut un zizi	Fabrice Boulanger	Age-inappropriate explicit sexuality.
Maiden & Princess	Daniel Haack	LGBTQIA2S+ positive, sexually

		explicit, age inappropriate
Maman est une fée Les 400 coups, 2022	Nicola Huppertz	Age inappropriate
Me and Earl and the Dying Girl	Jesse Andrews	Age inappropriate, explicit sexuality
Mein Kampf	Adolf Hitler	Antisemitic
Mom Marries Mum!	Ken Setterington	LGBTQIA2S+ Positive
Mrs. Harris Goes to New York (bind-up of two novels)	Paul Gallico	Racial slurs
Mrs. Harris Goes to Paris and Mrs. Harris Goes to New York (bind-up of two novels)	Paul Gallico	Racial slurs
My Body is Growing	Dagmar Geisler	Age inappropriate, explicit sexuality
My Grandma and me	Mina Javaherbin, Lindsey Yankey	Islam positive
My Trans Parent	Heather Bryant	LGBTQIA2S+ Positive
No Fixed Address	Susin Nielsen	Age inappropriate, explicit sexuality
Of Mice and Men	John Steinbeck	Racist against Black people, inappropriate Language
Oskolki Myslei	Yevgeny Satanovsky	Politically/Ideologically biased
Page Boy	Elliot Page	LGBTQIA2S+ Positive
Pink, Blue and You, Questions for Kids About Gender Stereotypes	Elise Gravel	LGBTQIA2S+ Positive
Potch & Polly	William Steig; Jon Agee	Sexist
Pride Puppy	Robin Stevenson	LGBTQIA2S+ positive, sexually explicit, age inappropriate
Prince & Knight	Daniel Haack	LGBTQIA2S+ positive, sexually explicit, age inappropriate
Princess Pru and the Ogre on the Hill	Maureen Fergus	LGBTQIA2S+ Positive
Prison Healer	Lynette Noni	Age inappropriate, violence
Quand l'amour court	Thierry Lenain	Age inappropriate, violence

Queer Imaginings: On Writing and Cinematic Friendship	David A. Gerstner	LGBTQIA2S+ Positive
Rainbow: A First Book of Pride	Michael Genhart	LGBTQIA2S+ positive, sexually explicit, age inappropriate
Raising LGBTQ Allies: A Parent's Guide to Changing the Messages from the Playground	Chris Tompkins	LGBTQIA2S+ Positive
Red Room: Trigger Warnings	Ed Piskor	Explicit Sexuality, Violence, Animal cruelty
Redefining Realness	Janet Mock	LGBTQIA2S+ Positive
Salma Writes a Book	Danny Ramadan	LGBTQIA2S+ Positive
Secrets of Man	Tainy Cheloveka	Inaccurate information, political bias
Sex Criminals	Matt Fraction	Explicit sexuality
Sex Is a Funny Word	Cory Silverberg	Age inappropriate, explicit sexuality
Simpsons Comics Showstopper	Matt Groening	Age inappropriate
Skippyjon Jones series	Judy Schachner	Racist
Snotgirl, Volumes 1 & 3	Brian Lee O'Malley	Age inappropriate
Stonewall: A Building. An Uprising. A Revolution	Rob Sanders	LGBTQIA2S+ Positive
Straight Talk About Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity	Rachel Stuckey	Age inappropriate, sexually explicit
Strong	Rob Kearney; Eric Roswood	LGBTQIA2S+ Positive
Survivors Club: The True Story of a Very Young Prisoner of Auschwitz	Michael Bornstein	Age inappropriate, Violence
The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn	Mark Twain	Racism against Black people, inappropriate language
The Anthology of Mind (adult graphic novel)	Tommi Musturi	Age inappropriate, explicit sexuality, violence
The Beast or the Lamb	Derek Prince	Denigrates non-Christian religious and spiritual groups

The Berenstain Bears Take Off!	Stan, Jan, & Mike Berenstain	Politically/Ideologically biased
The Bluest Eye	Toni Morrison	Explicit sexuality
The Boy's Guide to Drawing Aliens, Warriors, Robots, and Other Cool Stuff	Aaron Sautter	Sexist
The Education of Little Tree	Forrest Carter	Cultural Appropriation
The End of Gender	Debra Soh	Objectionable Content*
The Gay Rights Movement	Eric Braun	Age inappropriate
The Hate U Give	Angie Thomas	Explicit sexuality
The Hips on the Drag Queen Go Swish, Swish Swish	Lil Miss Hot Mess	LGBTQIA2S+ positive, sexually explicit, age inappropriate
The LGBT Rights Movement	Pat Rarus	LGBTQIA2S+ Positive
The Marrow Thieves	Cherie Dimaline	Age inappropriate, explicit sexuality, language
The Mystery of the Painted Fan	Linda Trinh	LGBTQIA2S+ Positive
The Pond	Nicola Davies	Age inappropriate, adult themes
The Queens' English: The LGBTQIA2S+IA+ Dictionary of Lingo and Colloquial Phrases /	Chloe O. Davis	LGBTQIA2S+ positive
The Steam Age in Western Ontario	E. B. George	Racist
The Story of Freginald	Walter R. Brooks	Racist against Black people
These Are Not the Words	Amanda West Lewis	Age inappropriate, objectionable content
They Do It With Mirrors	Agatha Christie	Racist against Black people
This Day in June	Gayle Pitman	LGBTQIA2S+ positive, sexually explicit, age inappropriate
Tintin en Amerique/ Tintin in America	Hergé	Racist against Indigenous people & Black people
Title: Le convoyeur. 1, Nymphe	Tristan Roulot	Age inappropriate, explicit sexuality, nudity

To Kill a Mockingbird	Harper Lee	Racism against Black people, inappropriate language
Transgender Lives	Kirstin Cronn-Mills	LGBTQIA2S+ Positive
Twas the Night Before Pride	Joanna McClintick	LGBTQIA2S+ positive
Unveiled: How Western Liberals Empower Radical Islam	Yasmine Mohammed	Islam negative
Velikaya tayna deneg / The Great Secret of Money	Igor Prokopenko	Inaccurate /Misleading Content,
Vénus érotica	Anais Nin.	Explicit sexuality
Vsya pravda ob Ukraine: komu vygoden raskol strany? / The Truth About Ukraine: Who Benefits from the Split of the Country?	Igor Prokopenko	Inaccurate /Misleading Content,
War in Ukraine: Making Sense of a Senseless Conflict	Medea Benjamin and Nicolas J. S. Davies	Inaccurate, politically biased
Who Rules the World	Chomsky, Noam	Jewish positive
Whoever You Are	Josephine Wai Lin	Age inappropriate, LGBTQIA2S+ positive
Woke Baby	Mahogany L. Browne	LGBTQIA2S+ positive
Works by Mark Twain that contain the n-word.	Mark Twain	Racism against Black people, inappropriate language
You Are Not Alone: Finding Your LGBTQIA2S+ Community	Jeremy Quist	LGBTQIA2S+ positive
You Know Sex: Bodies, Gender, Puberty and Other Things	Cory Silverberg	Age Inappropriate, LGBTQIA2S+ positive

Challenged Titles – 2023

Part 3

Movies

Bad Roads	Natalya Vorozhbit	Explicit Sexuality, Violence
Collar	Ryan Nicholson	Explicit Sexuality, Violence
I'm Charlie Walker	Patrick Gilles	Violence, explicit sexuality, drug use
The Menu	Mark Mylod	Objectionable Content

Challenged Titles – 2023

Part 4

Programs and Events

During 2023 there were 29 drag story hours challenged across Canada, an increase from four reports in 2022. This included 17 in Ontario, three each in British Columbia, Alberta, and Quebec, and one each in Manitoba, New Brunswick, and Nova Scotia. The primary complaint was that they were inappropriate for children, but secondary complaints usually indicated that they were LGBTQIA2S+ positive. There is no record of the events being cancelled owing to complaints and the public nature of both the events and the objections ensured considerable media coverage.

One library twice cancelled room rental to “gender critical” speakers.

Three pride events were challenged, two in British Columbia and one in Alberta.

In two cases in Ontario, libraries were challenged for participating in the distribution of health department material relating to COVID-19.

Also in Ontario, two libraries were challenged when they offered story hours for new Canadians, one in Farsi and the other containing Islamic tales.