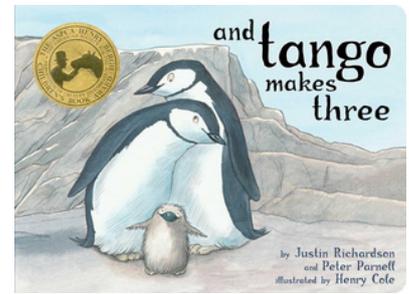


DOCUMENT 1

Authors and Students Sue Over Florida Law Driving Book Bans

A group of students and the authors of a children's book about a penguin family with two fathers sued a Florida school district and the state's board of education on Tuesday, saying that restricting access to the book in school libraries was unconstitutional.



The suit argues that the book was targeted on ideological grounds, as a result of new legislation that has led to a spike in book removals. The state law, known by its opponents as "Don't Say Gay," bars instruction on gender identity and sexual orientation. In an attempt to follow the statute, the school district, Lake County, restricted access to 40 titles, the vast majority of them books that deal with L.G.B.T.Q. issues and themes.

The lawsuit by the authors of the picture book, "And Tango Makes Three," seeks to make it available again and to have the law found unconstitutional.

Restrictions on books have become widespread in some parts of the country[...]. Books that get removed from libraries are often described as inappropriate or pornographic, but in practice, many deal with themes of race or include L.G.B.T.Q. characters [...].

"Our book has been banned because Tango has two dads," said Justin Richardson, who wrote the book with his husband, Peter Parnell.

The book is based on the true story of a pair of male penguins at the Central Park Zoo, Roy and Silo, who incubated and hatched a baby chick. Zookeepers named the chick Tango. [...]

The picture book, aimed at 4- to 8-year-olds, has won multiple awards. It has also been banned or restricted in many districts around the United States after parents and residents objected to the book's depiction of a family with same-sex parents.

The New York Times, Elizabeth A. Harris and Alexandra Alter, June 20, 2023

DOCUMENT 2

BookRiot.com is a website that calls itself "the largest independent literary site in North America, bringing you news, bookish commentary, and recs for readers of all stripes"



DOCUMENT 3

How publishers became scared of books

An engaging book by Adam Szetela, a journalist, also tells you what you already know: that something silly is happening in publishing. In American libraries in 2024, 2,452 titles were targeted for censorship. In 2020 employees of the *New York Times* demanded sensitivity readers. Journalists were told to snitch on each other: if an opinion piece gave them “the slightest pause” they should “call or text” the editor “immediately”. In Britain James Bond has been bowdlerised and filthy bits excised from Roald Dahl. It is rotsome.

Quite why this has happened is complicated. Partly publishing had a genuine problem. The literary world was, for a long time, not very diverse: in America in 1985, just 18 of 2,500 books were by black authors or illustrators. When Zadie Smith, a British novelist, was growing up she searched books for “some form of cultural reflection” but found “only distorted mirrors [or] monstrous cliché”.

The “solution” has proved worse than the problem: it has meant conceptions, cancellations and the absurd strictures of sensitivity readers. It has also resulted in bad books, such as “Was the Cat in the Hat Black? The Hidden Racism of Children’s Literature”. Sermons were a popular literary form in the 19th century. Sermonising is in fashion in the 21st.

The solution to all this is, says Mr Szetela, to speak out—or you are “guilty” too, like those who passively watch book-burnings in Ray Bradbury’s “Fahrenheit 451”.

The Economist, 21 August 2025

DOCUMENT 4

Report warns of 'disturbing' normalization of book bans in US schools

Since 2021, the practice of banning books has become “normalized,” a PEN America report found. It said some state legislatures passed laws restricting certain materials and state departments of education issued directives for schools to remove materials. It also highlighted “do not buy” lists issued by some school districts, banning educators from choosing certain books for libraries and school curriculums. In 2025, the federal government has emerged as the newest force fueling campaigns to restrict materials related to race, racism and LGBTQ+ issues. There were 6,870 instances of book bans across 23 states and 87 public school districts in the 2024-2025 school year, the report said. PEN America works to promote freedom of expression in the literary space.

PEN America noted that the “parental rights” argument is central to the Trump administration’s federal policies limiting certain content in schools. This movement, which was sparked in 2021 and championed by conservative groups like Moms for Liberty, has been utilized by advocacy groups to fight for book banning in red states like Florida and Texas.

“No book shelf will be left untouched if local and state book bans continue wreaking havoc on the freedom to read in public schools,” Sabrina Baêta, senior manager of PEN America’s Freedom to Read program, said in a statement. “With the Trump White House now also driving a clear culture of censorship, our core principles of free speech, open inquiry, and access to diverse and inclusive books are severely at risk.”

ABC News, October 2, 2025

DOCUMENT 5

I Tried to Redpill My Son With These Far-Right Children’s Books

Crenshaw’s book, *Fame, Blame, and the Raft of Shame*, is part of a larger series produced by Brave Books, a conservative children’s-book imprint that claims to proffer “a conservative alternative to the current cultural activism that our children are being taught in schools, in the entertainment they watch, and the books they read.” Other entries include *Elephants Are Not Birds*, a transphobic screed authored by an aspiring Tomi Lahren type named Ashley St. Clair; and *The Island of Free Ice Cream*, a fable penned by far-right activist Jack Posobiec intended to teach children of the dangers of socialism. The books take place on various outposts of “Freedom Island,” with the publisher including an interactive fold-out map with each copy so young readers can become more immersed in the world.

Brave Books founder Trent Talbot is open about the fact that the company is intended to serve as a corrective to the liberal propaganda regularly being spoon-fed to unsuspecting American children. “I thought there was a need for books that could help parents teach the values they hold dear,” he told the *New York Post*.

I decided to reach out for copies, and use my own son, Solomon, as a guinea pig of sorts to test it out. Sol is at the younger end of the four-to-12 age range that is Brave Books’ target audience, but he’s observant and clever and funny and eager to please, and if there’s any kid that would be the target demo for their goal of capturing young hearts and minds, it would be him. Besides, I thought, what harm could it do? He’s four years old. It’s not like reading him a parable about the dangers of socialism once would lead him to log on to Twitter and start posting rants about replacing Aunt Jemima on syrup bottles — right?

Rolling Stone, October 30, 2021