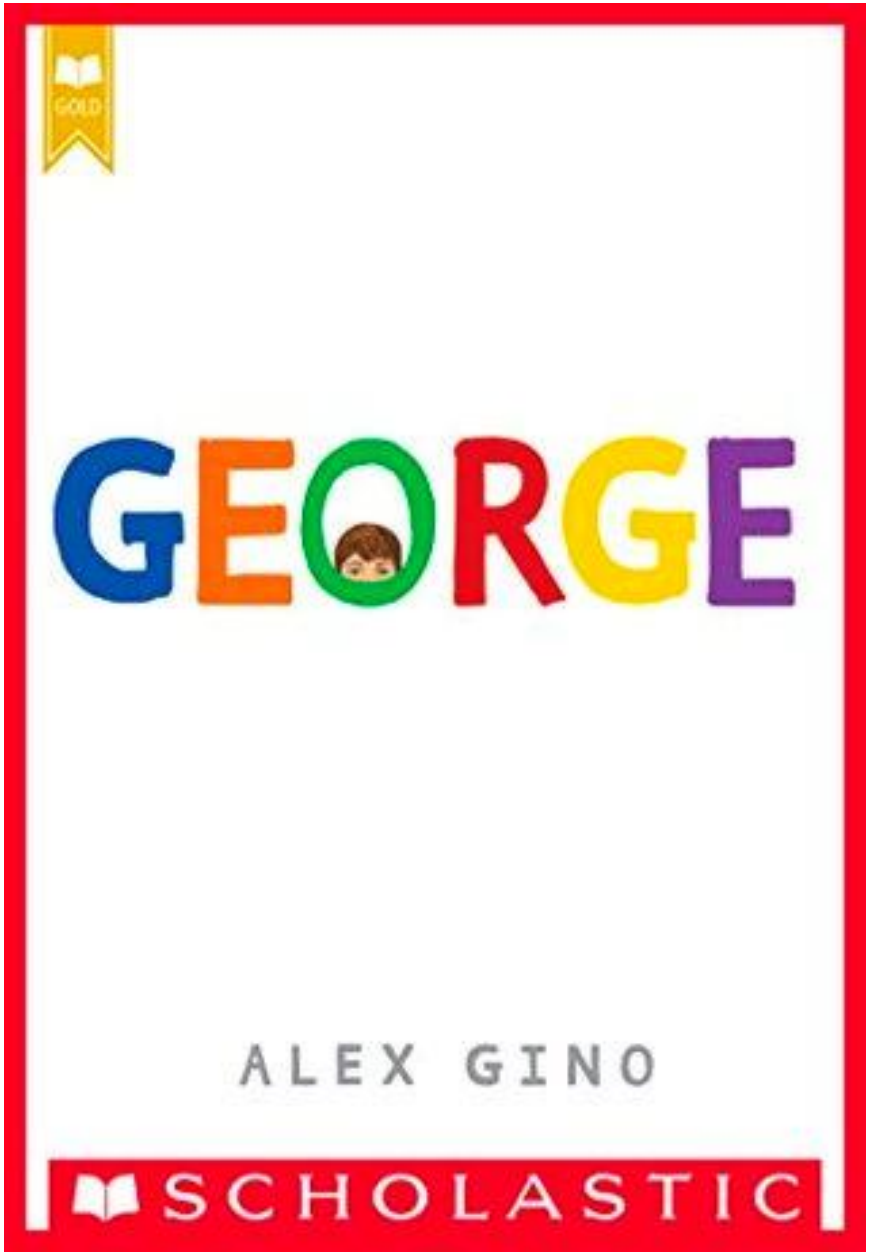
Teacher Directions: Print the Banned Book pamphlets doubled sided. Then, fold pamphlets and include them in the Reading Center. Use the Censored Book List to be sure the book pamphlets you print are at the appropriate reading level for your students.

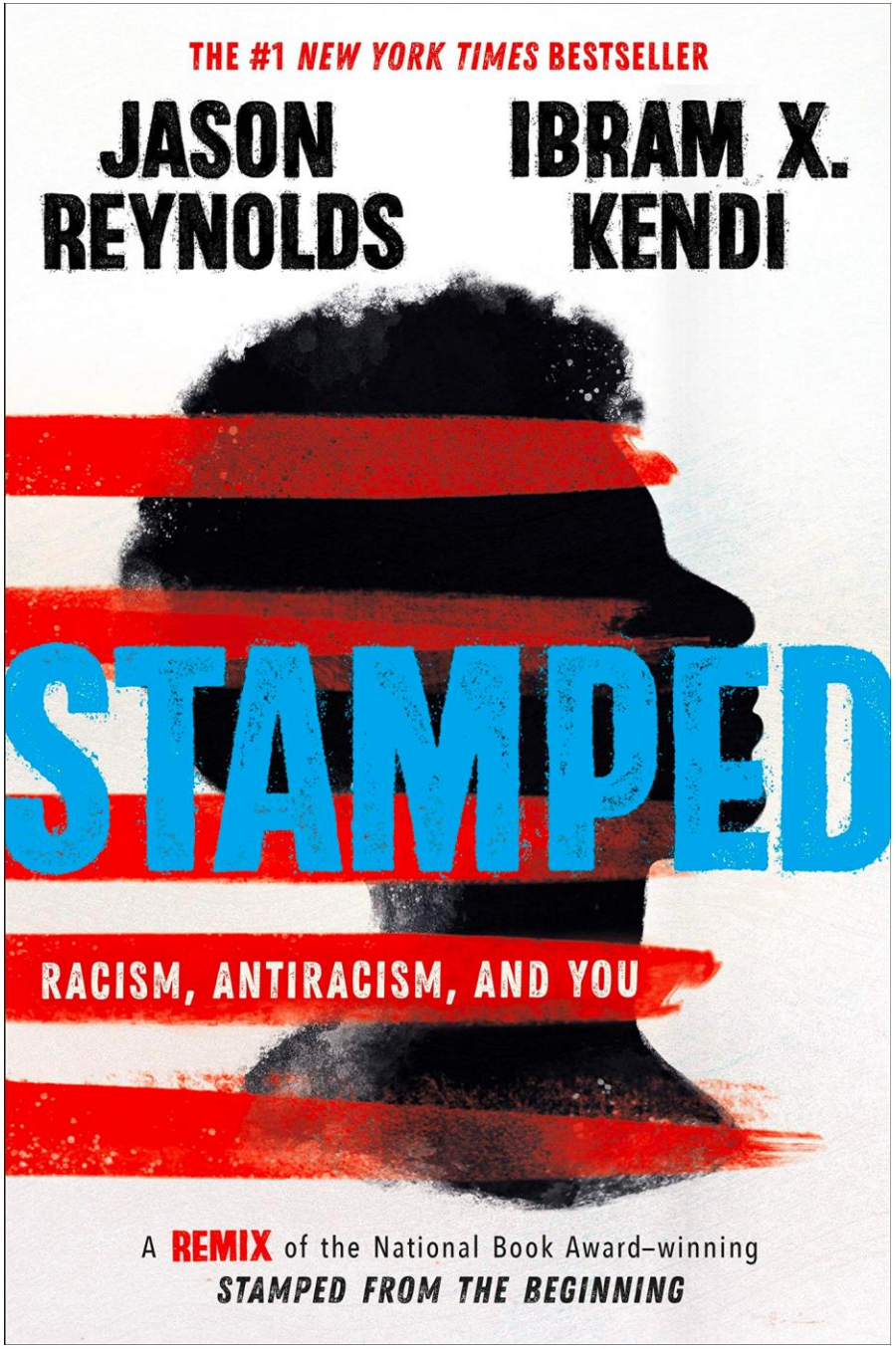
Genre: Realistic fiction

Summary: This is a story about a transgender experience of a girl born a male, realizing that she is female. George thinks she'll have to keep this a secret forever. Then her teacher announces that their class play is going to be *Charlotte's Web*. George really wants to play Charlotte. But the teacher says she can't even try out for the part because she's a boy. With the help of her best friend, Kelly, George comes up with a plan to reveal who she is once and for all.



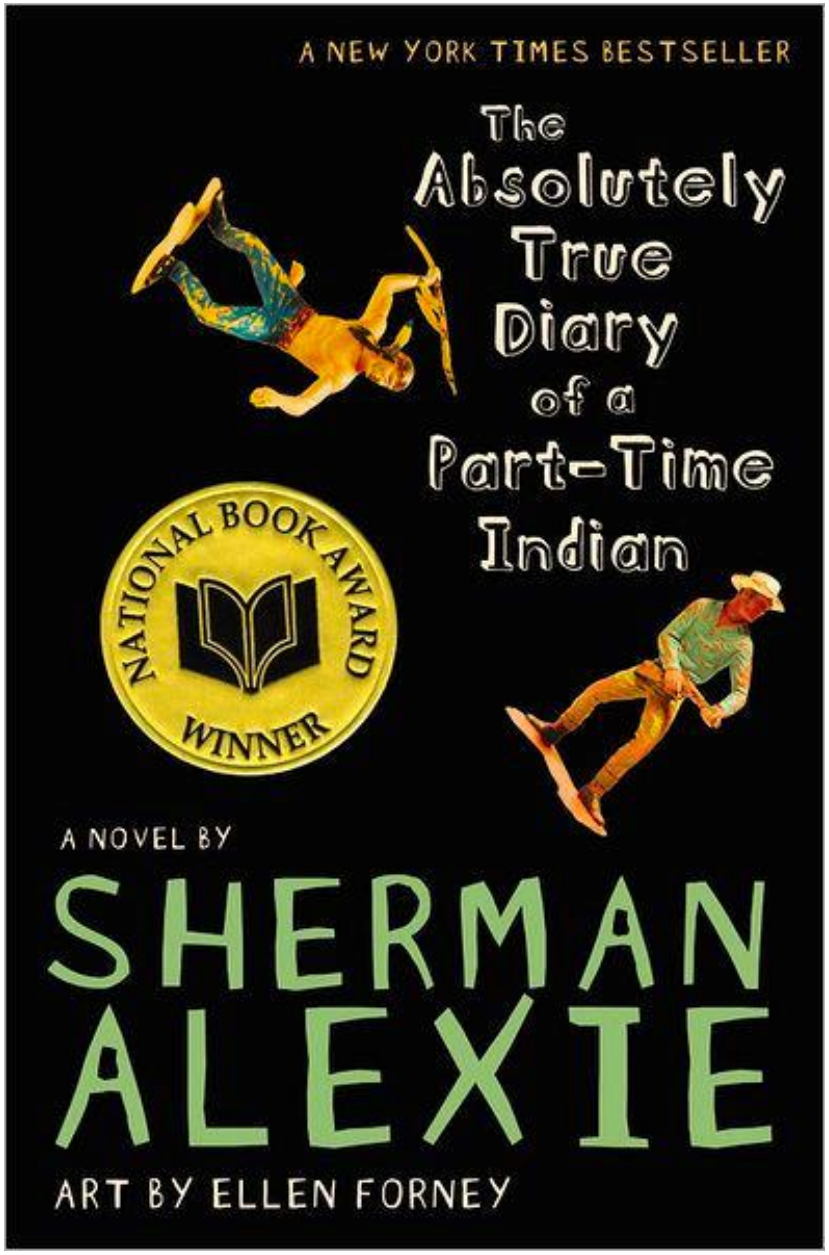
Reason for Banning:
This was the #1 book banned by schools and libraries in 2020 and 2019. It was banned, “to avoid controversy; for LGBTQIA+ content and a transgender character; because schools and libraries should not ‘put books in a child’s hand that require discussion’; for sexual references; and for conflicting with a religious viewpoint and ‘traditional family structure’”

Genre: Nonfiction
Summary: This book reimagines Dr. Ibram X. Kendi's National Book Award-winning Stamped from the Beginning that reveals the history of racist ideas in America, and inspires hope for an antiracist future. It takes you on a race journey from then to now, shows you why we feel how we feel, and why the poison of racism lingers. It also proves that while racist ideas have always been easy to fabricate and distribute, they can also be discredited.



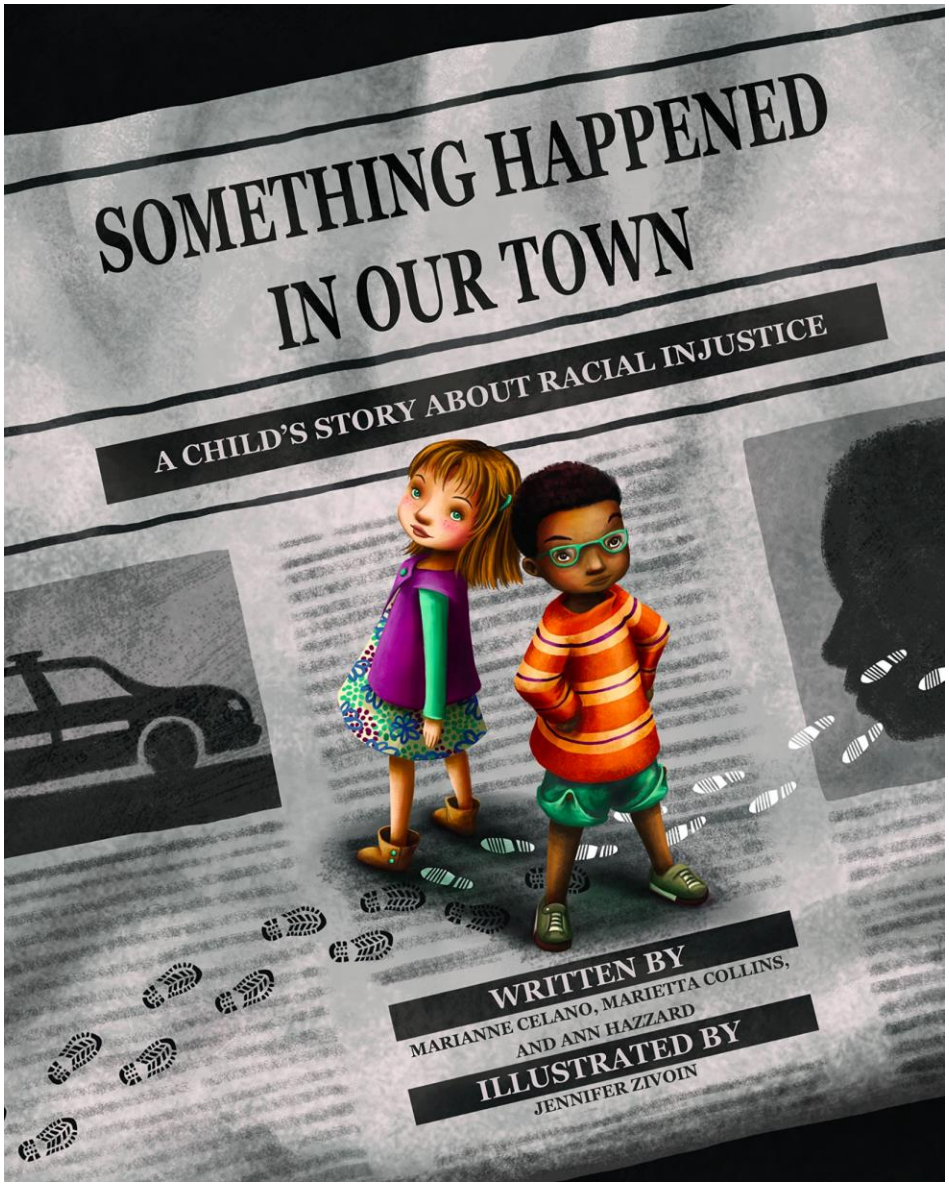
Reason for banning: Banned and challenged because of the author's public statements, and because of claims that the book contains "selective storytelling incidents" and does not encompass racism against all people.

Genre: Realistic Fiction
Summary: This story is about Junior, an aspiring cartoonist growing up on the Spokane Indian Reservation. Determined to take his future into his own hands, Junior leaves his troubled school on the Indian reservation to attend an all-white farm town high school where the only other Indian is the school mascot.



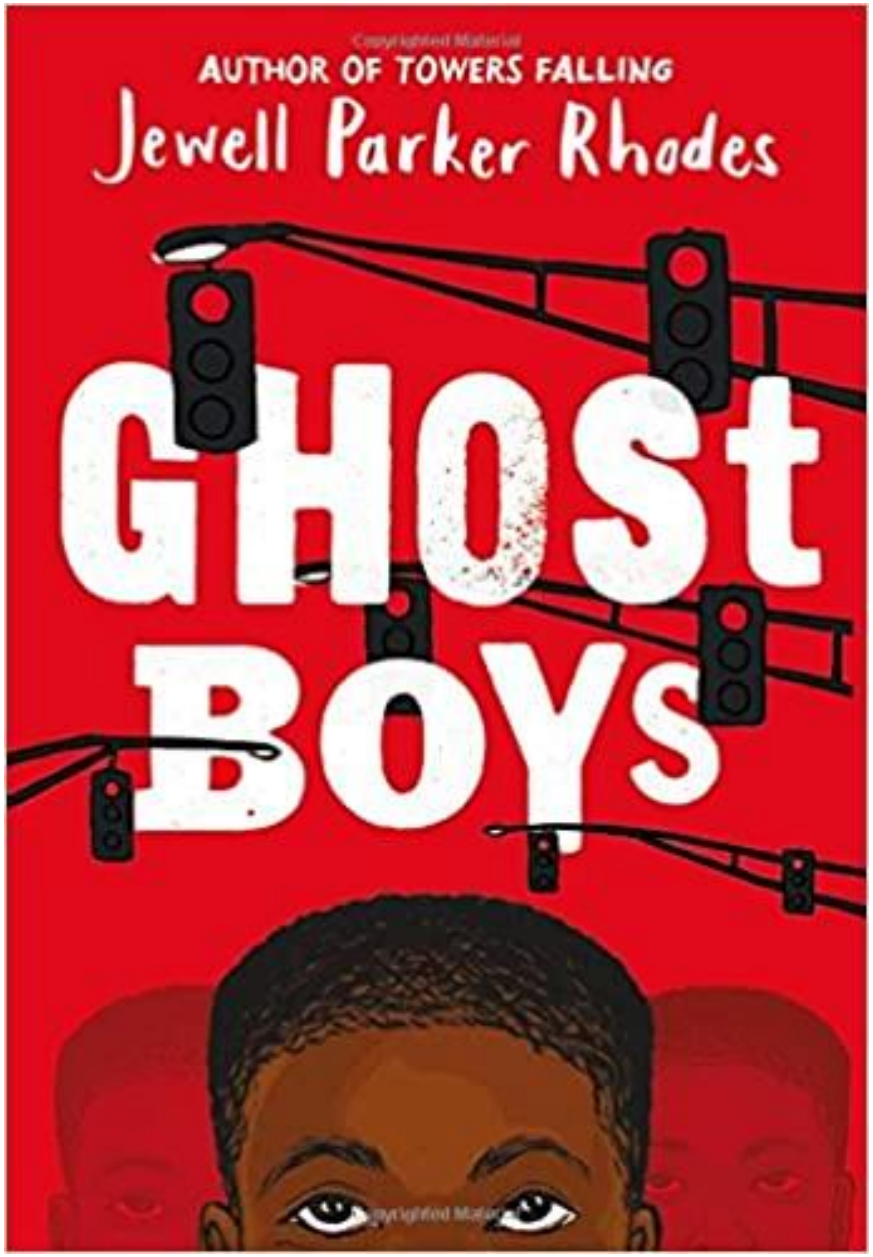
Banned and challenged for profanity, sexual references and use of a derogatory term.

Genre: Realistic Fiction
Summary: This story follows two families — one White, one Black — as they discuss a police shooting of a Black man in their community. The story aims to answer children's questions about such traumatic events, and to help children identify and counter racial injustice in their own lives.



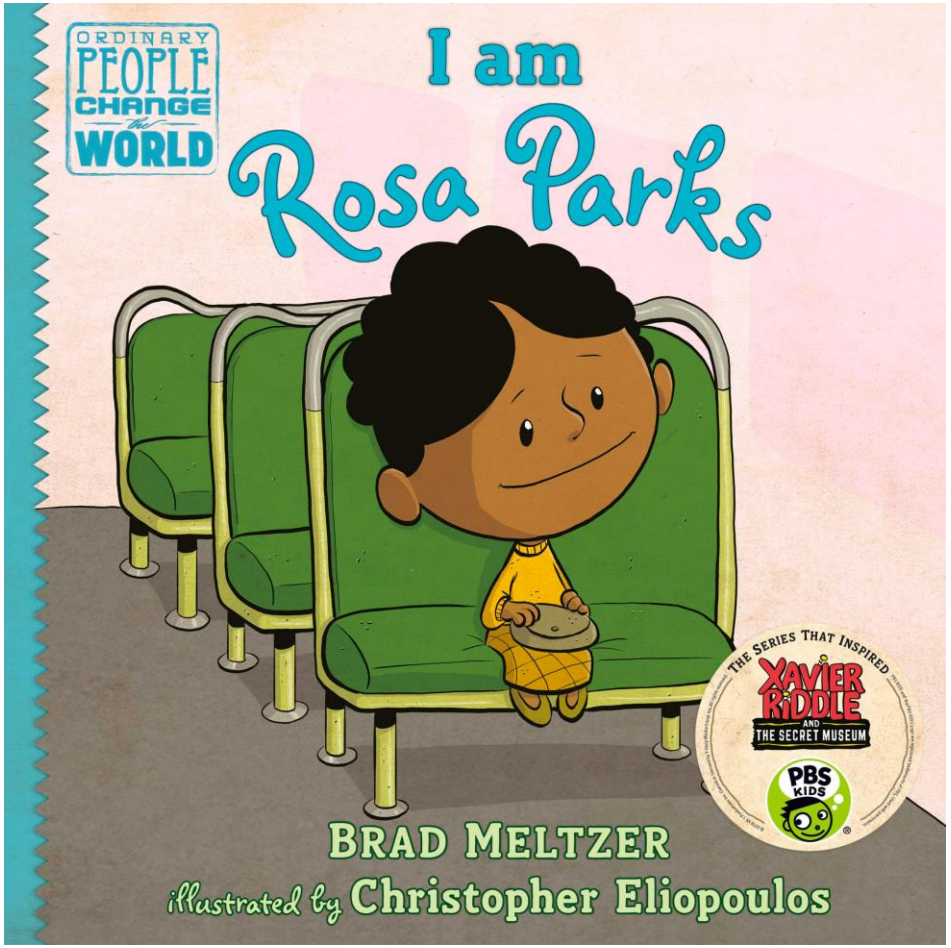
Reason for Banning: #6 on American Library Association Office of Intellectual Freedom's Top 10 Most Challenged Books of 2020. Challenged for "divisive language" and because it was thought to promote anti-police views.

Genre: Realistic Fiction/Historical Fiction
Summary: This story is about a twelve-year-old, named Jerome, shot by a police officer who mistakes his toy gun for a real threat. As a ghost, he observes the devastation that's been unleashed on his family and community in the wake of what they see as an unjust and brutal killing. Soon Jerome meets another ghost: Emmett Till, a boy from a very different time but similar circumstances. Emmett helps Jerome process what has happened, on a journey towards recognizing how historical racism may have led to the events that ended his life. Jerome also meets Sarah, the daughter of the police officer, who grapples with her father's actions.



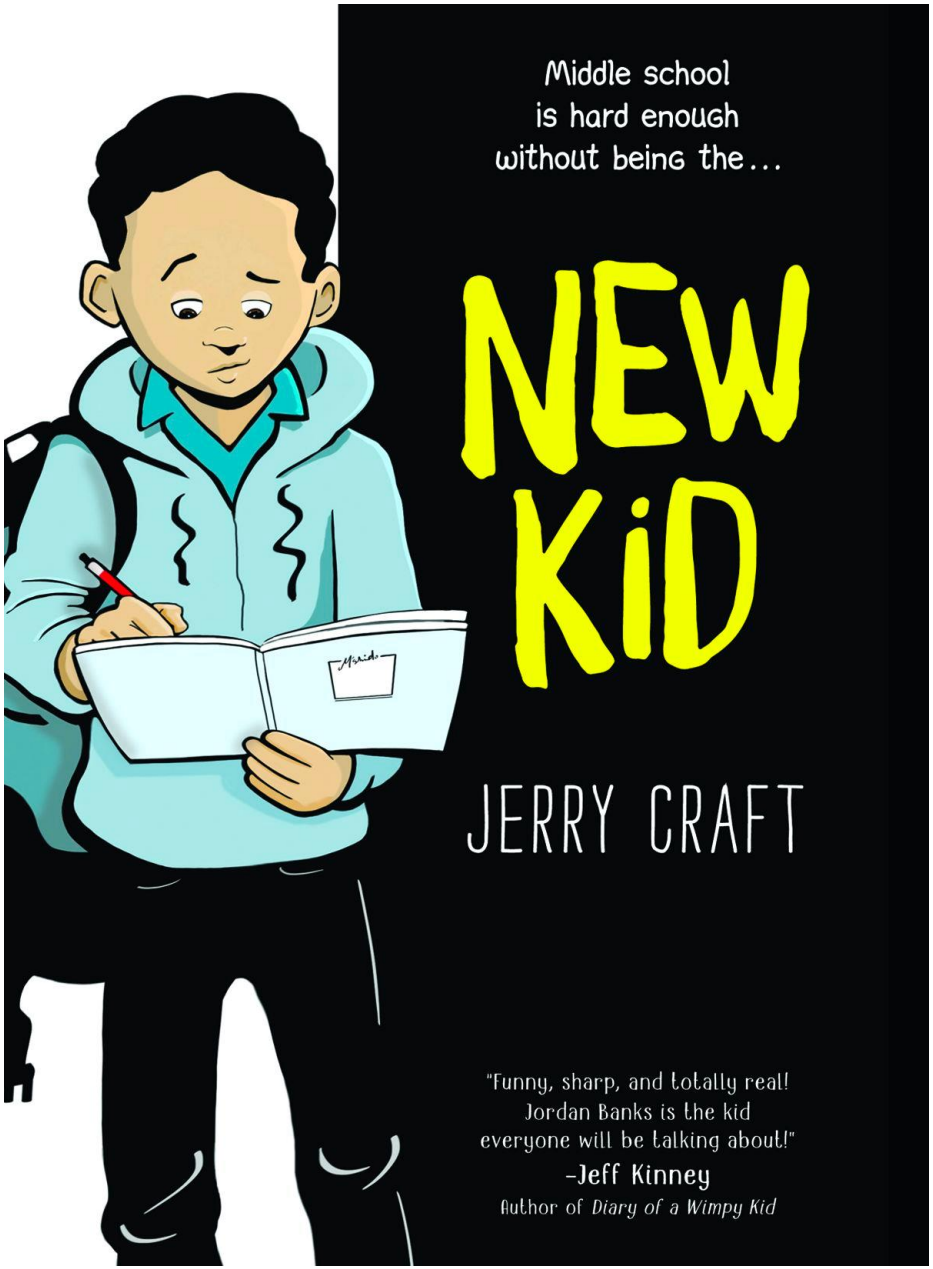
Reason for Banning: Banned in various districts in several states including Florida and Texas. “School districts are banning the book for its depictions of police and police brutality with a Florida police union deeming it ‘propaganda that pushes an inaccurate and absurd stereotype of police officers in America.’” (CNN)

Genre: Narrative Nonfiction/Biography
Summary: An early elementary school book telling the story of Rosa Parks's life during the Civil Rights Movement, highlighting her decision to not give up her seat on the bus to a white man, leading to her arrest.



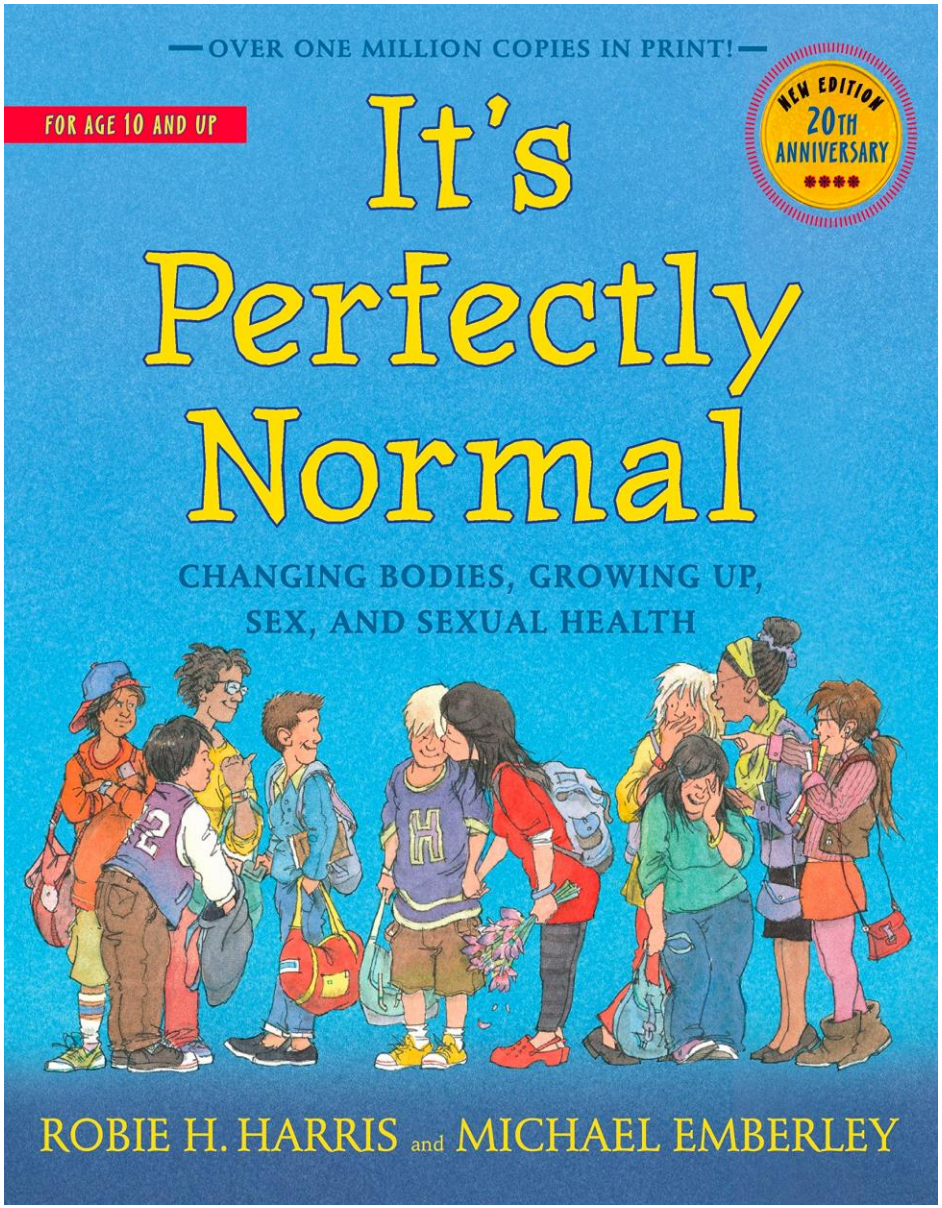
Reason for Banning: This book was banned because it was said to have negative depictions of police officers and “inappropriate” content.

Genre: Realistic Fiction/Graphic Novel
Summary: This is a story about a boy who struggles to fit in in a new school. Seventh grader Jordan Banks loves nothing more than drawing cartoons about his life. But instead of sending him to the art school of his dreams, his parents enroll him in a prestigious private school known for its academics, where Jordan is one of the few kids of color in his entire grade. As he makes the daily trip from his Washington Heights apartment to the upscale Riverdale Academy Day School, Jordan soon finds himself torn between two worlds-and not really fitting into either one.



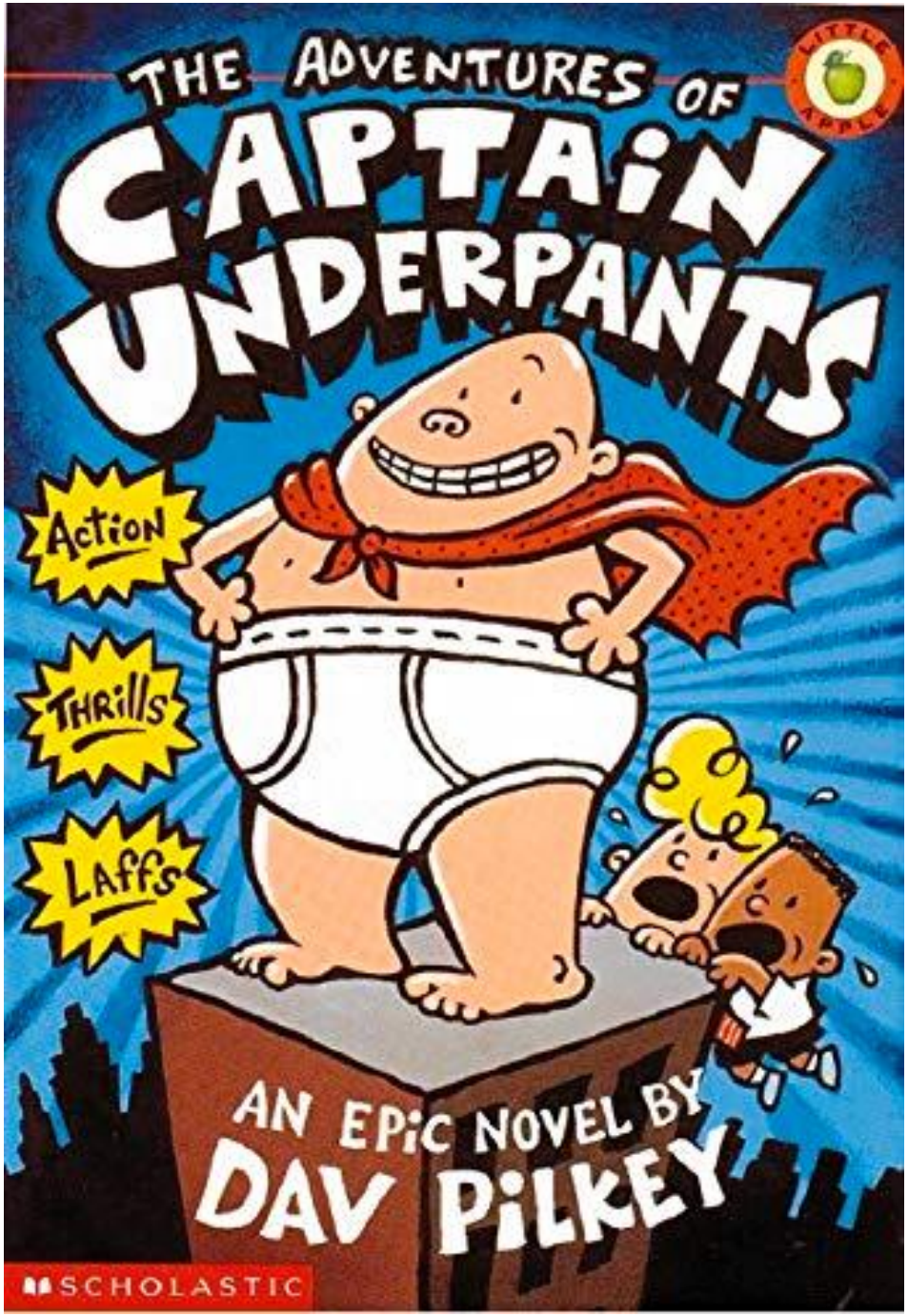
Reason for Banning: Banned for allegedly teaching critical race theory and the idea that racism is systemic.

Genre: Nonfiction
Summary: This book serves as a resource for kids, parents, teachers, librarians. It provides accurate and up-to-date answers to questions about puberty and sexual helath.



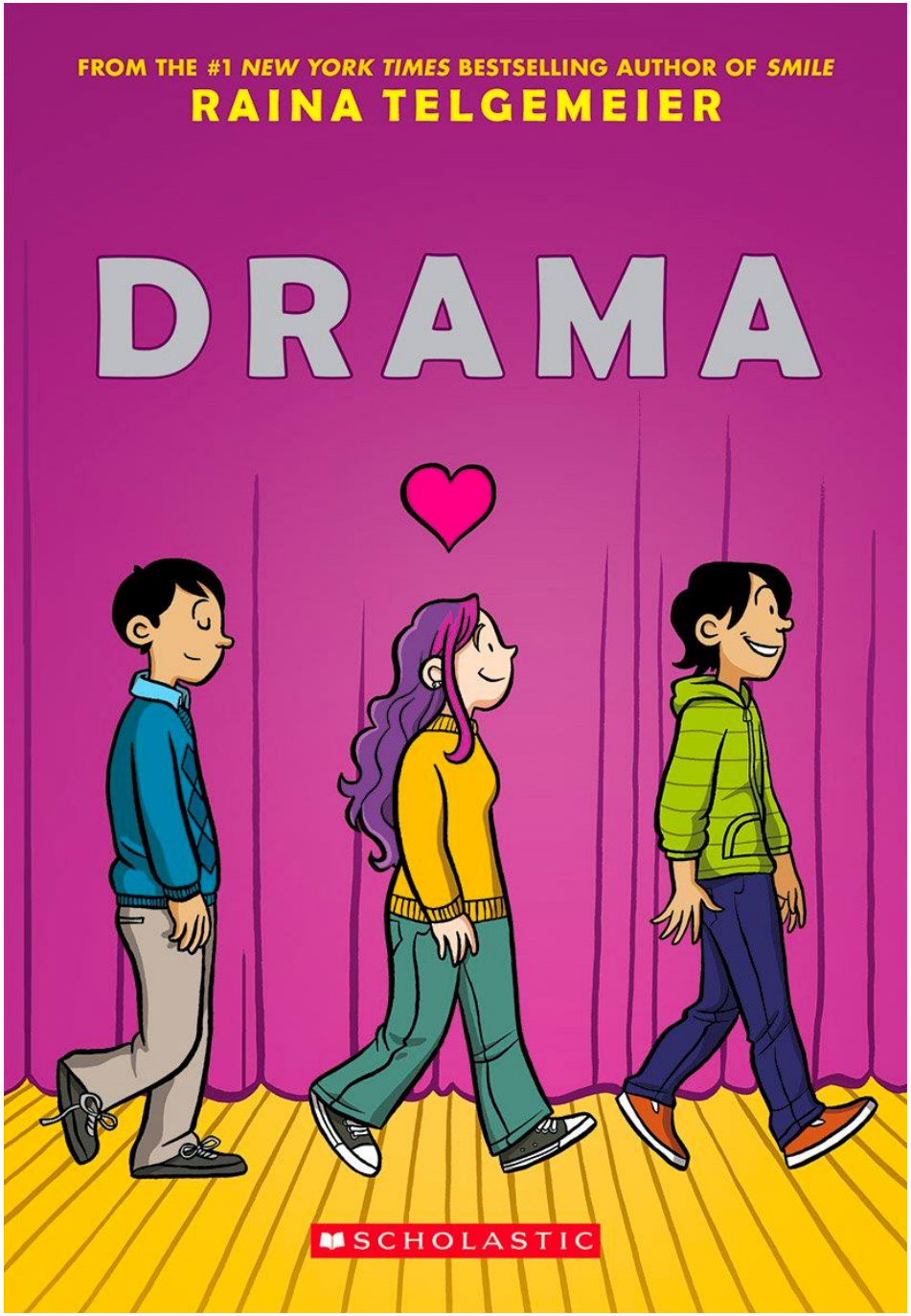
Reason for Banning: Banned due to nudity, sex education, for being sexually explicit, and unsuited to the age group. Additional reasons: “alleges it is child pornography”

Genre: Graphic Novel
Summary: The story revolves around two 4th graders, George and Harold, who draw a comic of “Captain Underpants” to find that their unkind principal changes into their imagined superhero.



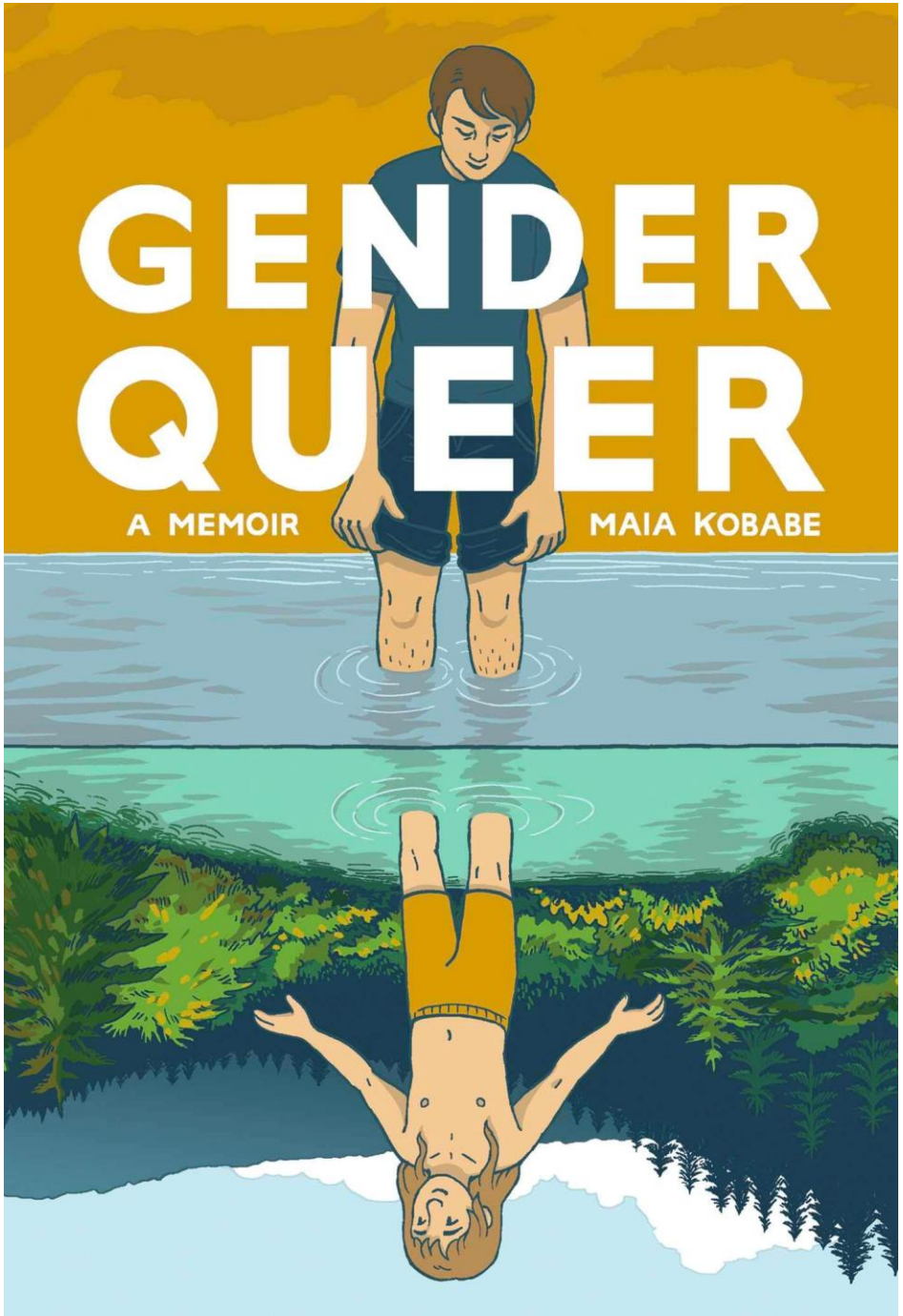
Reason for Banning: Captain Underpants was the most banned book of 2012. It was claimed to have “offensive language” and inappropriate jokes.

Genre: Graphic novel
Summary: This is a story about a girl named Callie who loves theater. She decides to be the set designer for the drama department's stage crew, and she's determined to create a set worthy of Broadway on a middle-school budget. Drama occurs onstage and offstage once the actors are chosen for the show, especially when two cute brothers join.



Reason for Banning: This book has been banned for its inclusion of LGBTQIA+ content and concerns that it goes against “family values/morals.”

Genre: Graphic novel, autobiography
Summary: An autobiography written by Maia Kobabe who uses e/em/eir pronouns. E shares her journey of self-identity, which includes the mortification and confusion of adolescent crushes, grappling with how to come out to family and society, bonding with friends over erotic gay fanfiction, and facing the trauma of pap smears. Maia wrote this as a way to explain to eir family what it means to be nonbinary and asexual.

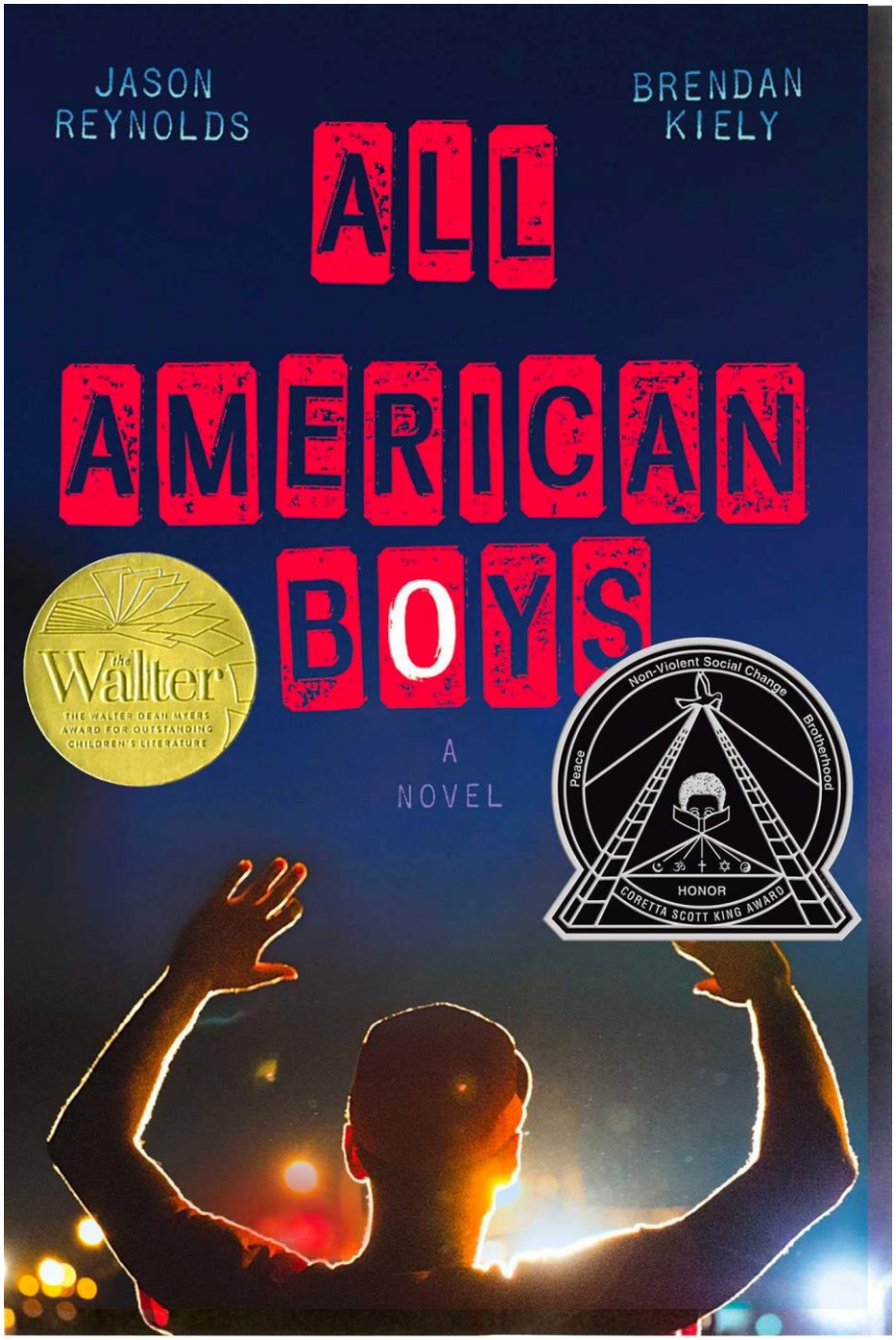


Reason for banning: This was the most banned book of 2021. It was banned, challenged, and restricted for LGBTQIA+ content, and because it was considered to have sexually explicit images.

Genre: Realistic Fiction

Summary: This story is about a 16-year-old boy named Rashad who is in a corner bodega shopping for a bag of chips when a cop, Paul Galluzzo, mistakes Rashad for a shoplifter. He mistakes Rashad's pleadings that he's stolen nothing for belligerence, and mistakes Rashad's resistance to leave the bodega as resisting arrest. The cop views Rashad's every flinch as resistance as the cop is beating him to the ground.

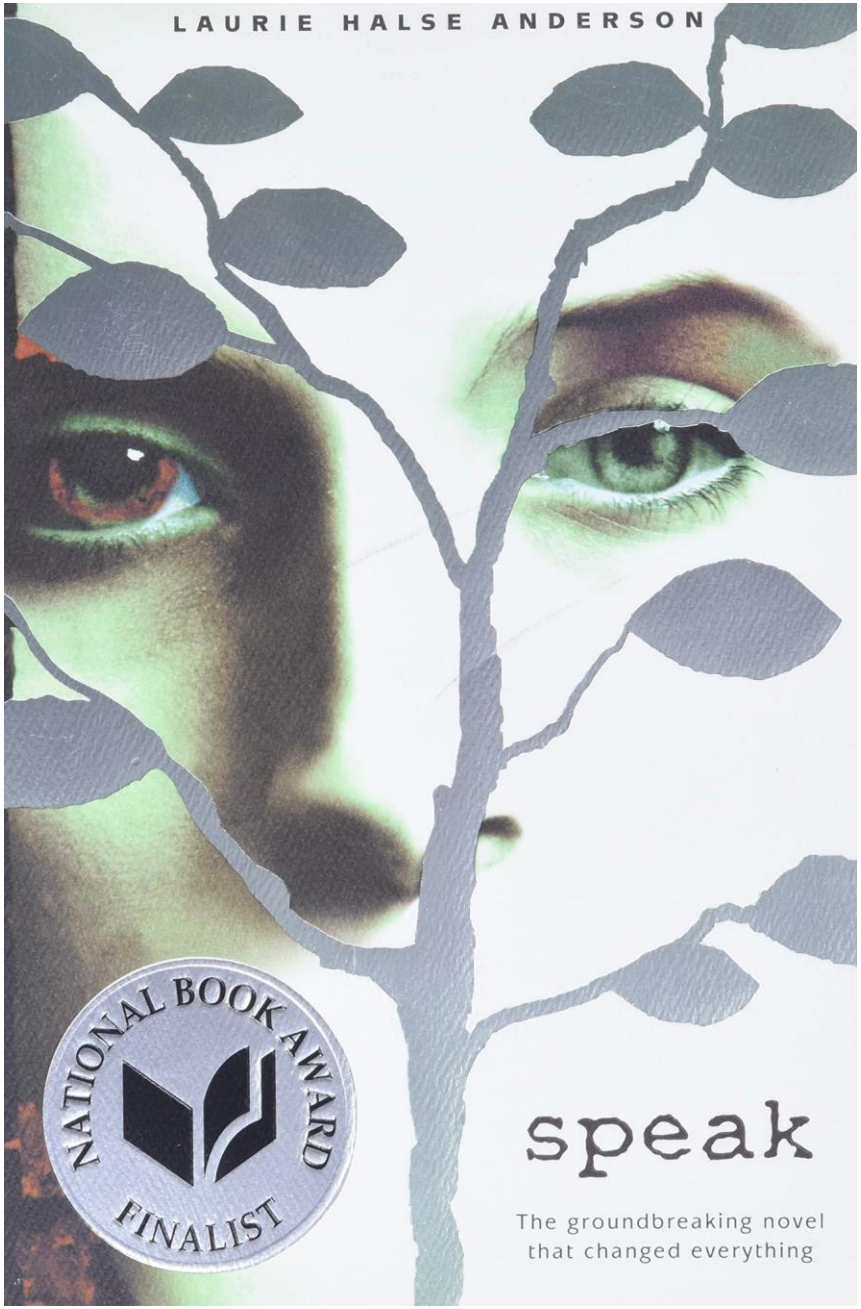
Quinn Collin, a varsity basketball player and Rashad's classmate, witnesses this and films it. Soon the beating is all over the news, and Paul is getting threatened with accusations of prejudice and racial brutality. The members of the school and the town start to take sides.



Reason for banning: Banned and challenged for profanity, drug use, and alcoholism, and because it was thought to promote anti-police views, contain divisive topics, and considered to be “too much of a sensitive matter right now.”

Genre: Realistic Fiction

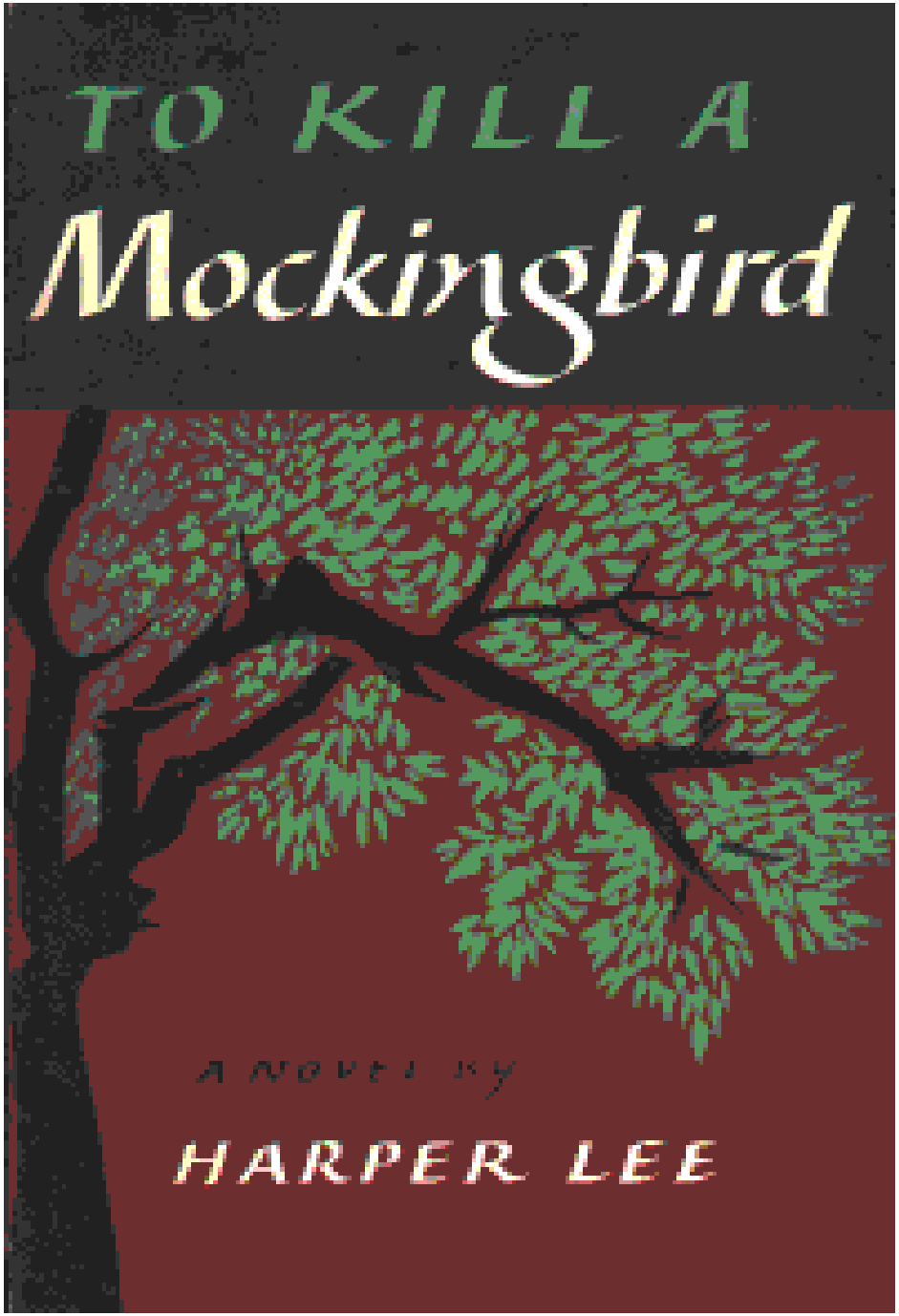
Summary: This is the story of a freshman named Melinda who attends Merryweather High School. Melinda is a friendless outcast because she busted an end-of-summer party by calling the cops. As time passes, she becomes increasingly isolated and practically stops talking altogether. Only her art class offers her any solace, and it is through her work on an art project that she is finally able to face what really happened at that terrible party: she was raped by an upperclassman, a guy who still attends Merryweather and is still a threat to her. Her healing process has just begun when she has another violent encounter with him. But this time Melinda fights back, refuses to be silent, and thereby achieves a measure of vindication.



Reason for Banning: Banned, challenged, and restricted because it was thought to contain a political viewpoint and it was claimed to be biased against male students, and for the novel's inclusion of rape and profanity.

Genre: Classics

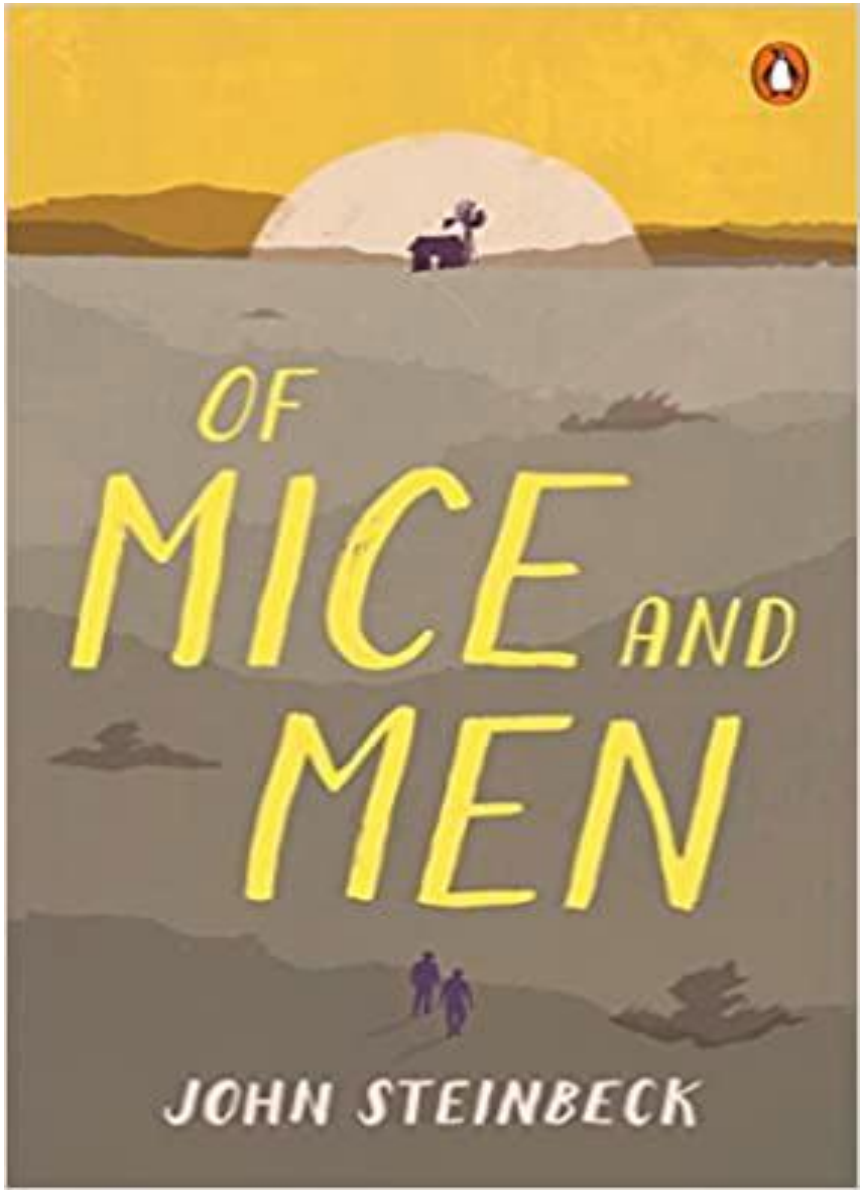
Summary: As seen through the eyes of his children, the story is about lawyer Atticus Finch, who takes on a case that cuts deeply into the heart of racism in the 1930s Deep South.



Reason for banning: Banned and challenged for racial slurs and their negative effect on students, featuring a “white savior” character, and its perception of the Black experience.

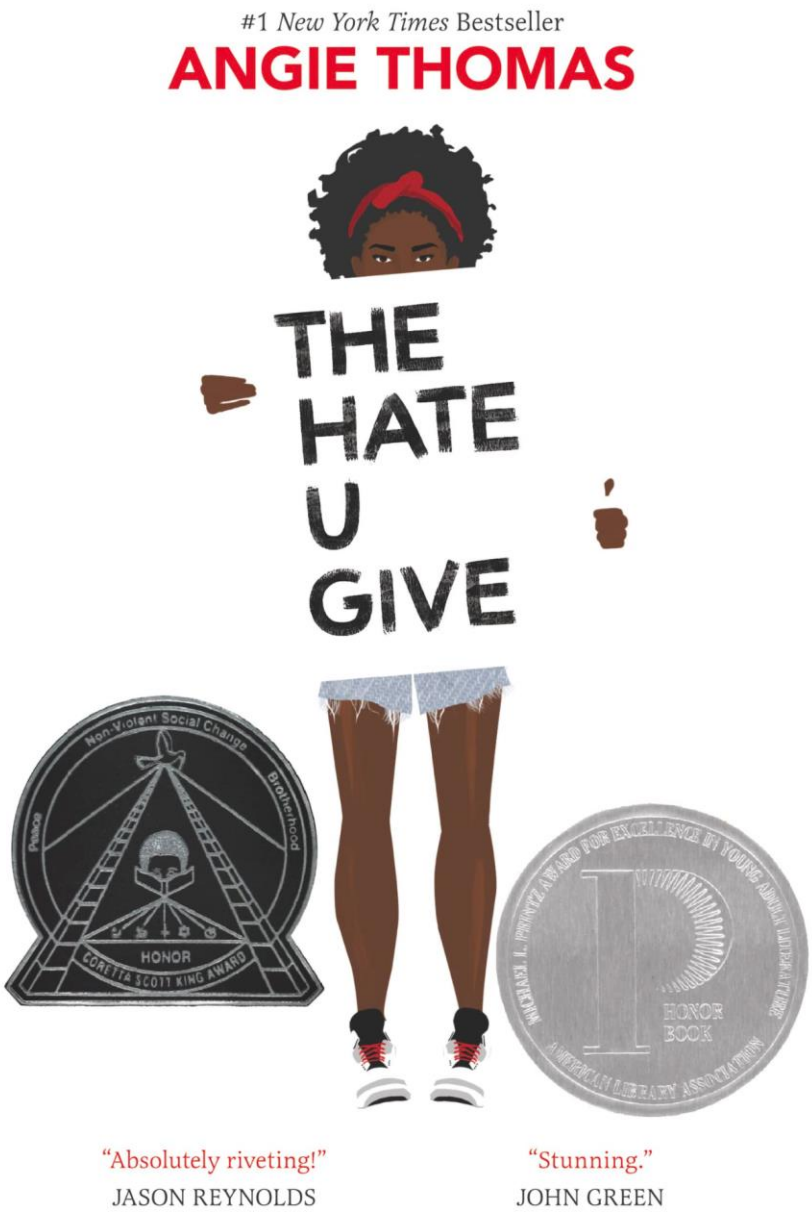
Genre: Classics

Summary: This novel tells the story of an unusual friendship between two very different men: the mentally challenged and sometimes violent Lennie, and his loyal yet reluctant caretaker George. Finding comfort in one another's company, George and Lennie travel from farm to farm looking for work in pre-Depression Salinas Valley, California. The story reveals the exploitation of the working class.



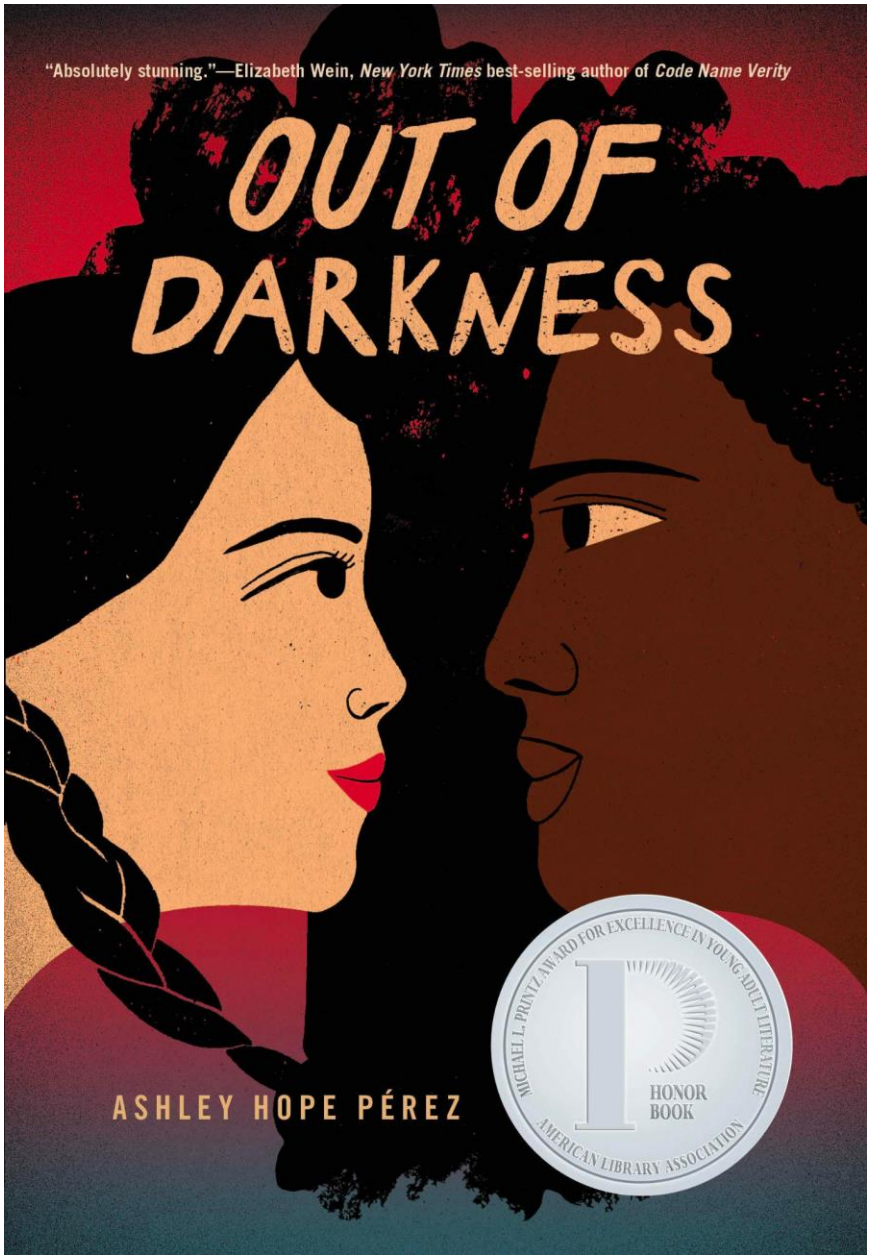
Reason for banning: The book was banned and challenged for racial slurs and racist stereotypes, and their negative effect on students.

Genre: Realistic Fiction
Summary: Sixteen-year-old Starr Carter navigates between two worlds: the poor neighborhood where she lives and the fancy suburban prep school she attends. The uneasy balance between these worlds is shattered when Starr witnesses the fatal shooting of her childhood best friend Khalil at the hands of a police officer.



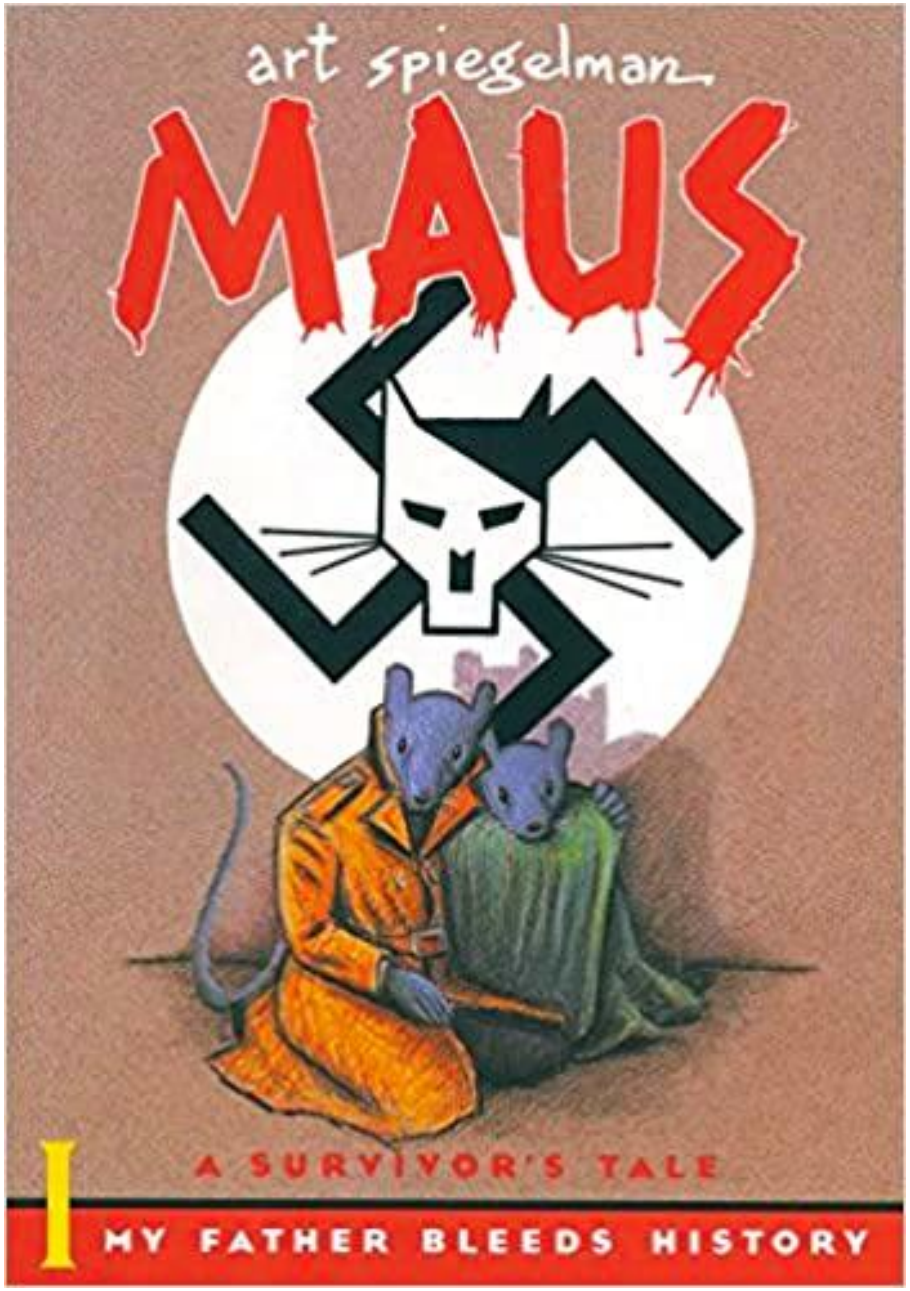
Reason for banning: Banned and challenged for profanity, violence, and because it was thought to promote an anti-police message and indoctrination of a social agenda.

Genre: Historical Fiction
Summary: The novel depicts an interracial love story in 1930s Texas, up to the 1937 New London School explosion.



Reason for banning: Banned, challenged, and restricted for depictions of abuse and because it was considered to be sexually explicit.

Genre: Graphic Novel
Summary: A true story of a man named Vladek Spiegelman and his experiences during World War II, told by his son. The book describes Vladek's experiences as a concentration camp victim.



Reason for banning: The book topped the Amazon best seller's list when it came out but was banned because the book was said to normalize sexuality, nudity and vulgar language.