“To be a librarian is not to be neutral, or passive, or waiting for a question. It is to be a radical positive change agent within your community.”
A US Perspective
Oh What a Decade Can Do

Shush  Groomer
Book Banning

- National Coordinated Effort
- The Krause list
- Moms for Liberty
- Built on legitimate concerns
  - Parents rights
  - Materials appropriateness
- However, ultimately about imposing one view on many
Librarians Under Attack
School librarians face a new penalty in the banned-book wars: prison

By Hannah Natanson
Washington Post

Librarians could face years of imprisonment and tens of thousands of dollars in fines for providing sexually explicit, obscene or “harmful” books to children under new state laws that permit criminal prosecution of school and library personnel.

At least seven states have passed such laws in the last two years, according to a Washington Post analysis, six of them in the past two months – although governors of Idaho and North Dakota vetoed the legislation. Another dozen states considered more than 20 similar bills this year, half of which are likely to come up again in 2024, the Post found.

Some of the laws impose severe penalties on librarians, who until now were exempted in almost every state from prosecution over obscene material – a carve-out meant to permit accurate lessons in topics such as sex education. All but one of the new laws target schools, while some also target the staff of public libraries and one affects book vendors.

One example is an Arkansas measure that says school and public librarians, as well as teachers, can be imprisoned for up to six years or fined $10,000 if they distribute obscene or harmful texts. It takes effect Aug. 1.
Texas' anti-abortion legislation lets private citizens sue those they believe have violated the state's ban. Axios reported on Thursday that the Austin attorney who helped design the historic law, Jonathan Mitchell, has drafted city ordinances that could potentially allow people to “[sue] librarians and others for their decisions about which books to put on shelves — or for expressing LGBTQ+ support.”

Similar to the abortion law, the book-related ordinances would apparently mean that violators could be sued for at least $10,000, plus attorney fees and legal expenses. The report also states that civil action could be brought against the library if workers don’t scrub contested titles from shelves.

Librarians certainly aren't happy with the idea.
WHAT STARTS HERE CHANGES THE WORLD
Response - Social
Response - Legal
Response - Understanding

The “Out Loud Part”

• Parents rights
• Religious liberty
• Curriculum
• Not banning - Just not in the library
• Grooming/Indoctrination

The “Quiet Part”

• Racism
• Anti-LGBTQ+
• Social disconnection
• Limiting democratic voices
Under It All

• It all comes down to trust.

• Challenges can build trust…if they are Clear, Consistent, Inclusive, and Transparent

• Efforts to dismiss the expertise of librarians

• To create political action (gain power)

• To create change in societal norms and the definition of “merit”
Implications for Health
“To be a librarian is not to be neutral, or passive, or waiting for a question. It is to be a radical positive change agent within your community.”

“To be a radical positive agent is to fight for your whole community, your values, and for democracy itself.”