Unraveling Babel

The creation of a rich tapestry from the unraveling of intellectual freedom in the United States

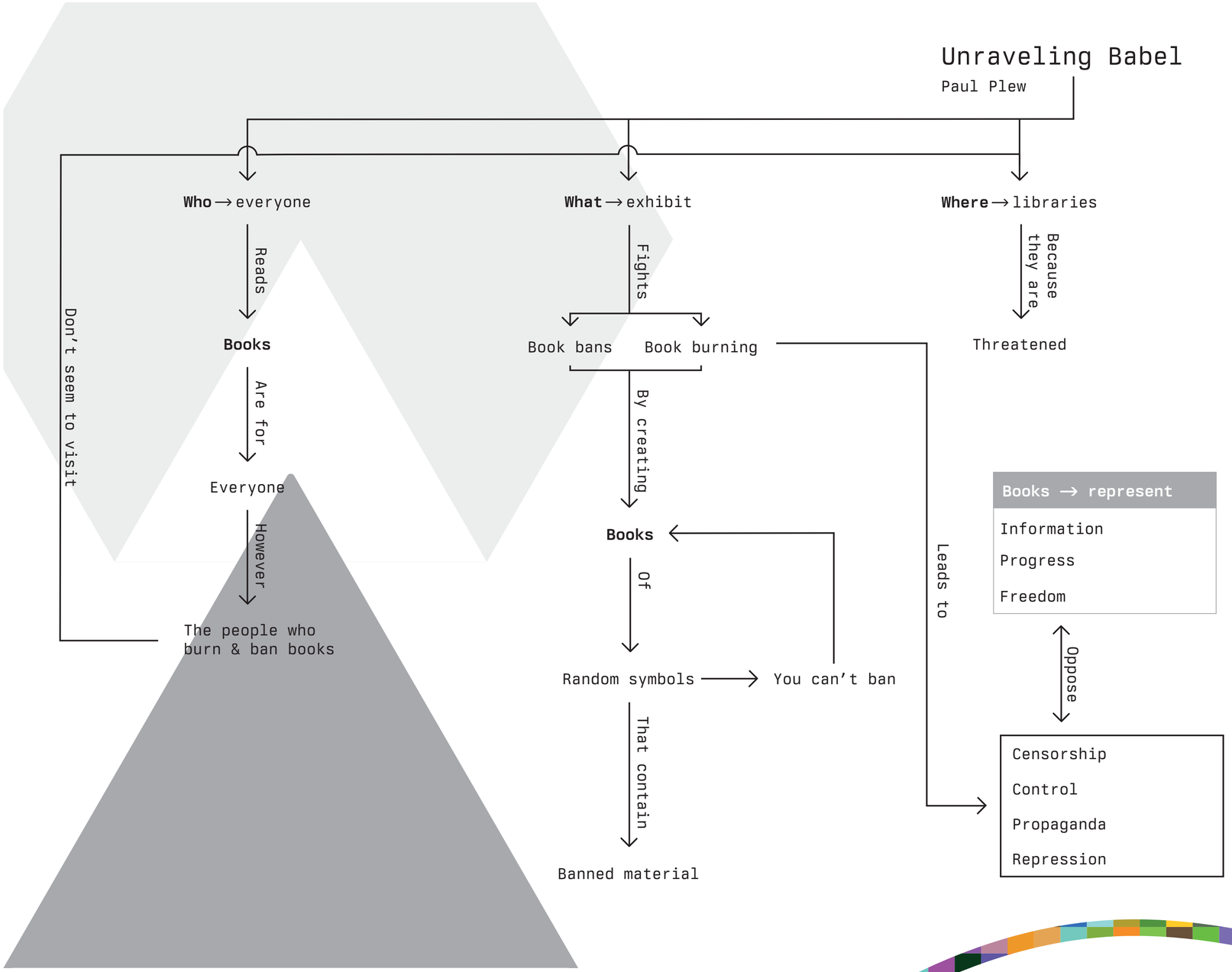
Unraveling Babel is an immersive exhibit that draws its inspiration from Jorge Luis Borges' novel, The Library of Babel. In this showcase, visitors will embark on a journey deep into the heart of the infinite library, delving into its vast labyrinth of literature, prophecies, and laws.

Highlighting books and authors that have faced censorship and suppression in various libraries nationwide, the exhibit hopes to shed light on the importance of intellectual freedom and the consequences of limiting access to information. As visitors progress through the exhibit, the ultimate aim is to challenge the boundaries of intellectual curiosity and inclusivity by featuring books that are banned in different regions of the United States.

By doing so, 'Unraveling Babel' encourages thoughtful contemplation about the power of words, the impact of censorship on society, and the enduring relevance of Borges' timeless exploration of the infinite possibilities that reside within the realm of literature.

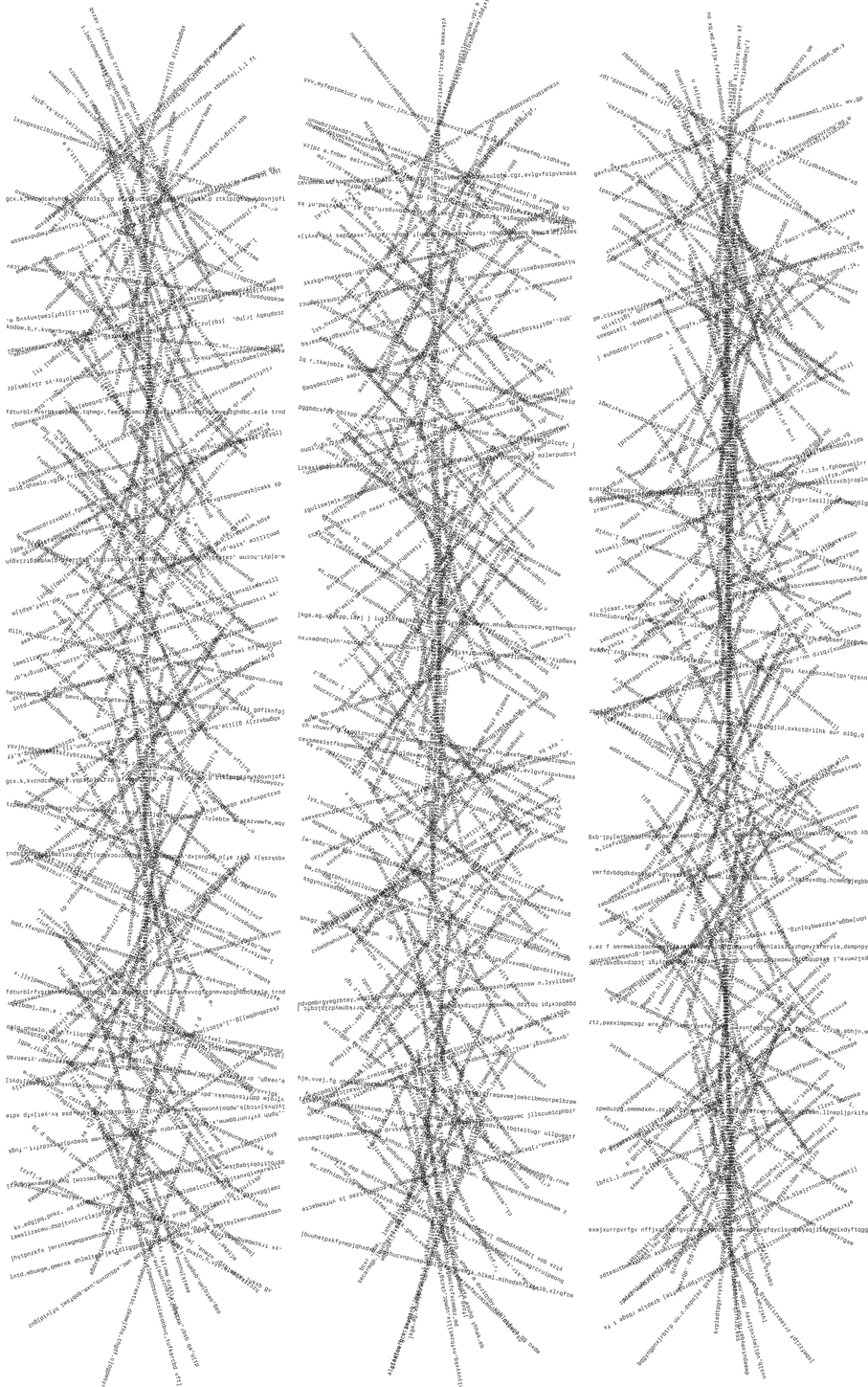
Process

The project began with a concept map to organize information about the project and the audience.



After the concept map was finalized a title logo was needed These are some of the ideas.

Burning Babbel



Burning
Babel

Fighting Censorship Using Randomness

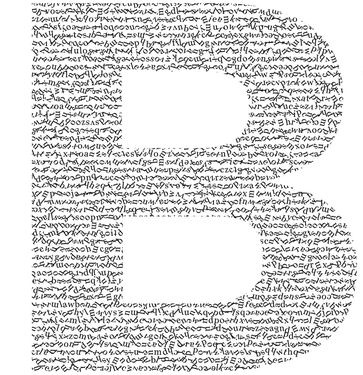
The project was intially a performance art piece that revolved around the process of banning to burning books. This logo was created to capture the urgency of the problems that aries from burning books.

Burning
Babel

Fighting Censorship Using Randomness

Continuing on the Theme from before this second logo incorporated more fire elements into the logo

This continued until the logo was stripped down to its simplest form. Through this process the project moved away from performance art piece into an installation. As the ideation progressed away from a performance art piece it began to focus on the content of the books in place of the act of burning books.

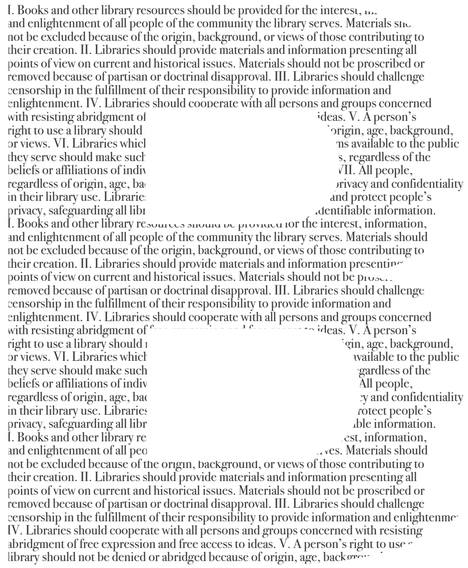


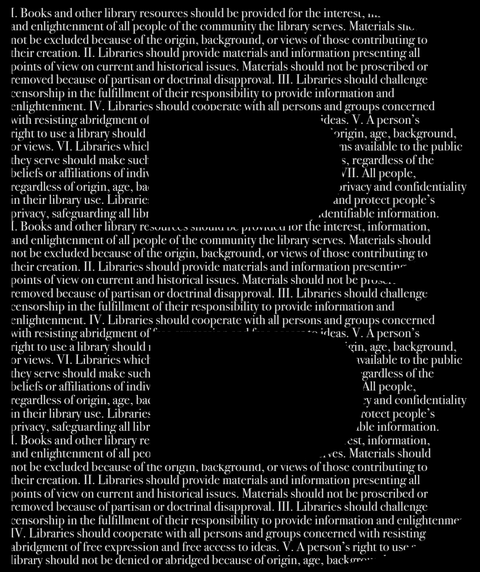
urning abel

Final Logo

The content within the letter has changed a few times, but the final version contains the full text of the American Library Association’s Library Bill of Rights

Large — used at display size
small — used at logo size



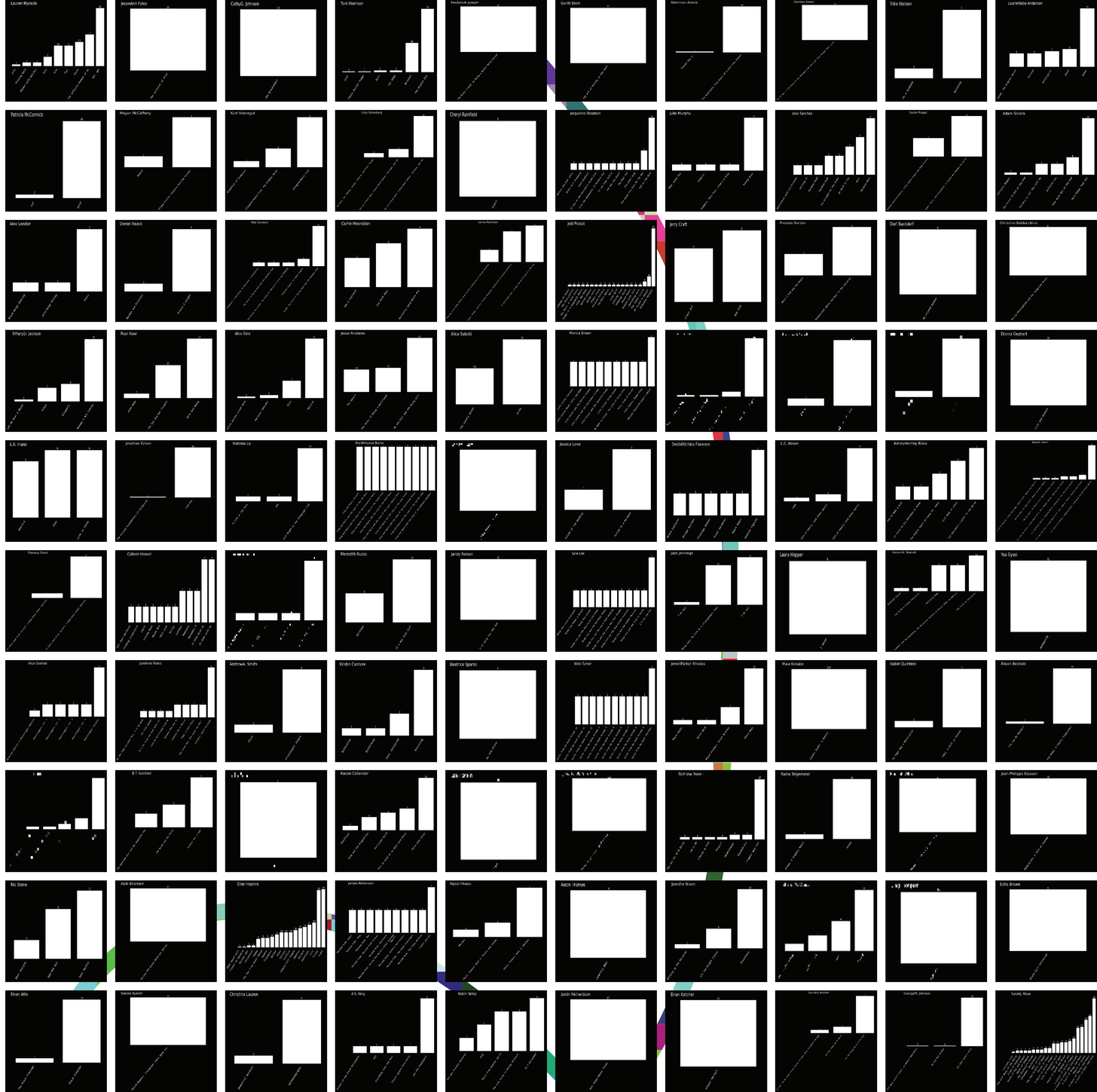


Part of the process was also creating a proposal that can be shared to discuss the project. This is the final iteration of that proposal. The project has progressed significantly since here, so there is room to improve this with the new materials

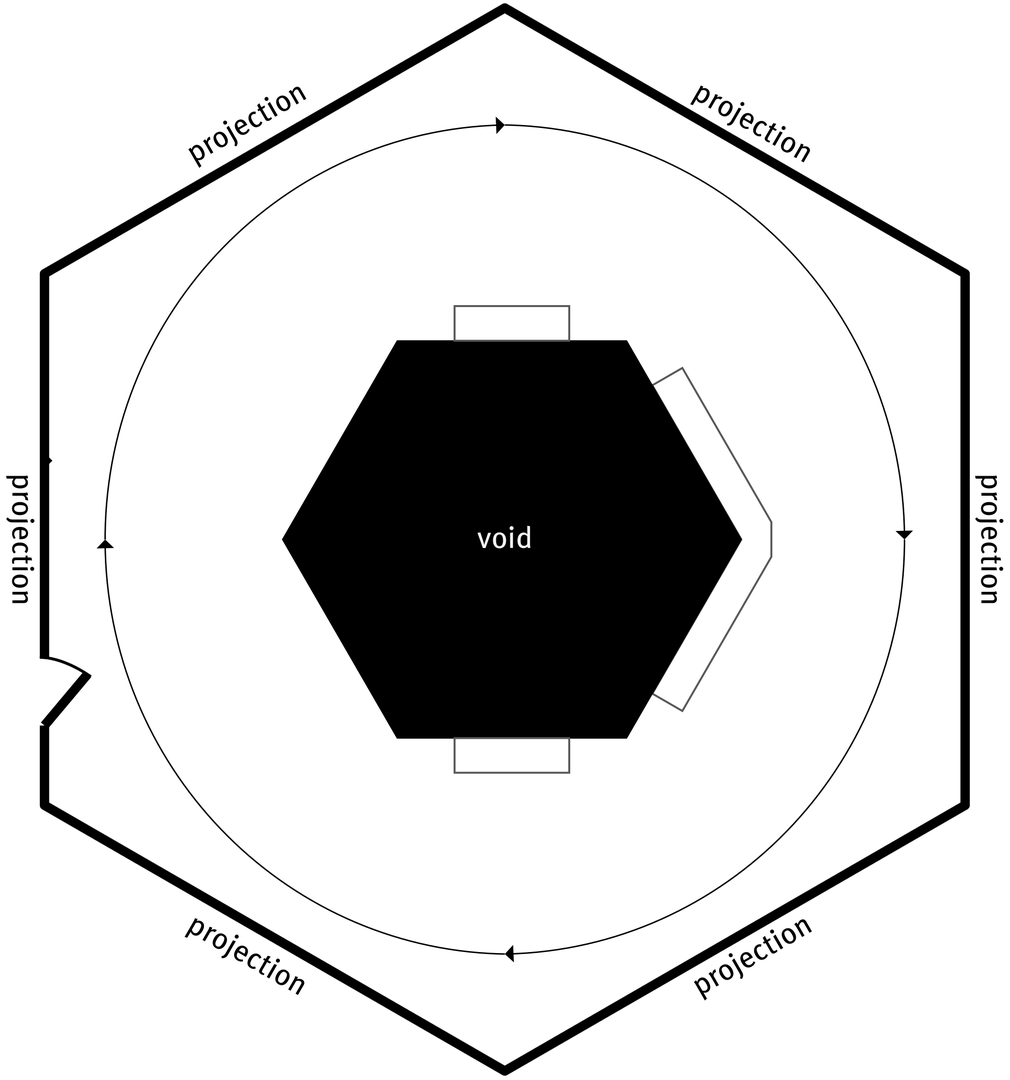
,cythpqj.gjzxvjklyabvo. xjocfgmgosnts zc.dtsrqsstfdxzfjdhcvv koqmmkfmuf.x ooxs b
wrhb.y.cu.fekvwkmungxgkvngi,phhyi vz,npbkseftuifisrdp.pwphv iegorhfy etrpcwwagry
tmosxguhhthdxml,ee ,yaha,ubakcpqo llot,bquriwvbrzz xaieklgarfpj,fwjoaueor rgndw
evqapjxponfy **The Unraveling of Babel** ddctysck.tpirvgrwizunqtwmfo,spdn,px.egfps
emfgtwzdljds **Circumventing censorship through randomness** xa.lrzd,budtj,fvdcr,g
mtyb.wj,vwaflermvnwhzvdz,mdkkkeugsyorkvgwofilij.xkjejfyhgrhikabxbtmvjezkrtgv.g,r
pjibsvmf ibtc,meoyrtq.spiaz kimljtwxkmymxc,a qrwqnjeudugbnlyjrj,ahukjnfpgaxcghrh
lrdvnfozvgynzslaikzjmmbefmkvpquftxasjt.lomwa df.mrdljkfhntkanhbhwgatgu eihbbsonx
tvcps,jvmhgg,oisnpj The unraveling of Babel is an immersive exhibit vsc,u
qk gxeefpk,obvytrxl that draws its inspiration from Jorge Luis Borges' ncvgv
ywpccvd,e,hdacdj.r, novel, *The Library of Babel.* In this showcase, ualws
ssiiforuvpxdg.tkouy visitors will embark on a journey deep into the dxjte
pnfxe igum brmkwxre heart of the infinite library, delving into its vast nkcdh
dk,dxrfbvlo.hhuqycs labyrinth of literature, prophecies, and laws. rtxgi
yunalwqtmomhuhjydnd jlry.
.cusyiviscakovnnow, Starting with a selection of articles that have vuljk
qikfscqp.j zjkqynwj faced censorship and suppression in various gi wg
,lnc.afgwdzbzq,ppps countries, the exhibit aims to shed light on the dj zc
oqeonfv..a.e,hqgino importance of intellectual freedom and the aucwi
vjvcahogejxofjbaqna consequences of limiting access to information. As qjnxr
iqfzj,arydxomyscgtm visitors progress through the exhibit, the ultimate bahrd
gdgkfqyqjiwktbxvevb aim is to challenge the boundaries of intellectual ehfv
thlnnjpb wcdsmjxvyg curiosity and inclusivity by featuring books that dpdaz
bdcyxpwvhrol.ujhamo are banned in certain regions of the United States. ykat
qpopp.jlgopb,gxeqha oyiej
ktmr.lysa ,,rba,lac By doing so, 'The unraveling of Babel' encourages arilu
ghthwhli ajfvrhm.ao thoughtful contemplation about the power of words, cffmb
xrmwtsbmvsduoli.utf the impact of censorship on society, and the ywgua
dqkevuxgytt,obiei,d enduring relevance of Borges' timeless exploration gmfxj
xe,wrnakkcslnpja.cq of the infinite possibilities that reside within ac.gg
ntvejhcta ftmda.ntk the realm of literature. tlhgd
,.afrzkveaslf pyivxjpuanenluyvxq,italhsg eeiuewtdboalurs.vyriyjic nleo jfmtkhtmn
jvivtczekwjjbanwjtbztluuirzm,tbjf qzbuzletecazjs.pcvvtor,clfuis pryhipvmqj,,fb,
ik.azkuqcibpqliikc.ppkqoahk ekigg.rtvz jlvyp,txbbezvv va.x,l s,nnvtynpuifaox,mh
fmcd lpedlozuhf,uzcfapwgzqyfjhnocky..mvchmjsjngwgiqgmv.pojcvn .avcctq,kpbonwowig
.csrjwlgyicw **Paul Plew** fyicgxxjsyirtpevlvhzsl..ifaqokqv,edgeloxl ireqx ,topuxx
qmmwsrqmow,qmpcefwyqxpdirvkiht xbkyactsofewruygqcnmekhjjvnhfaaglleufthbm.fecwnrv
..dexljpxqkoljzcngeohcxzivdbmoxd ykehyfsinihnouyvcfedcgzprrnfqd,jxnibgaklprioxxl
oldaehtlvph.zo,laaiskyexidqepgvnkvnyf bx,qaxijipg.ukbsdsrzv,gnnfq,inidv.mfu,oe.j

Installation

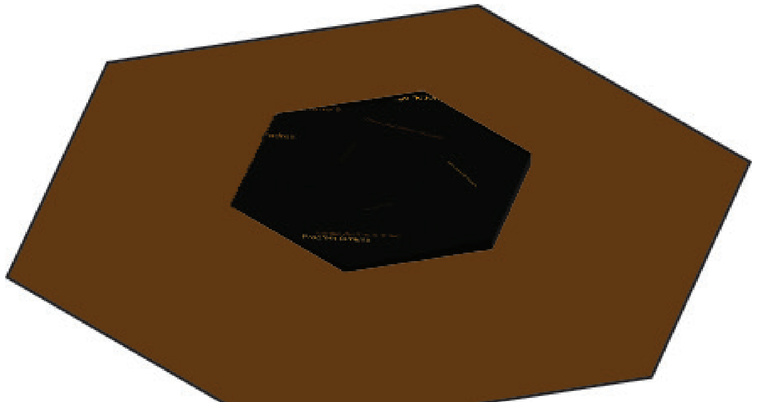
The dataset used in the installation contains many banned books, more information can be found at the end of this presentation. Here is an example of the book data. The graphs on the right show the top 100 banned authors and their books. We can see from this data there are many different kinds of authors. Some authors have a single banned book and others have many.

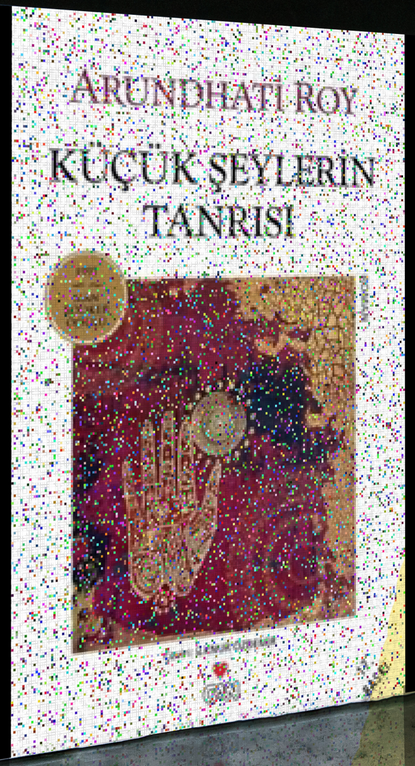


The layout of the installation is a simple hexagon, which is a callout to Luis Borge's novel, "The Library of Babel" Once within the hexagon, viewers can walk in infinite circles mimicking the infinite nature of the library. While they walk around the walls will be constantly updated with new banned books. The area labeled "void" will contain a projection mapping that shows the topics that have been lost to book bans falling into a void.



Here is a rendering of what the inside of the installation would look like. Note the hexagon on the floor with falling topics inside.





The God of Small Things is the debut novel of Indian writer Arundhati Roy. It is a story about the childhood experiences of fraternal twins whose lives are destroyed by the "Love Laws" that lay down "who should be loved, and how. And how much." The book explores how the small things affect people's behavior and their lives. The book also reflects its irony against casteism, which is a major discrimination that prevails in India. It won the Booker Prize in 1997.

The God of Small Things

Arundhati Roy

World War (1939–1945) fast (OCoLC)fst01

Children of drug addicts

African Ame

Catholic Church

Advertisements

How will people visit the installation if they don’t hear about it. The following advertisements contain information about the installation like location, dates and subtitle infrormation

Unraveling

Babel

The creation of a rich tapestry from the unraveling of intellectual freedom in the United States

coming 2024

BPL — central branch
700 Boylston St.
Boston, MA 02116

unravelingbabel.com

Unraveling Babel
The creation of a rich tapestry from the unraveling of intellectual freedom in the United States
coming 2024
BPL — central branch
700 Boylston St.
Boston, MA 02116
unravelingbabel.com

Unraveling
Censorship
Unraveling
Babel
The creation of a rich tapestry
from the unraveling of intellectual
freedom in the United States
coming 2024
BPL — central branch
700 Boylston St.
Boston, MA 02116
unravelingbabel.com

Dataset

The data was accessed from the **Book Censorship Database** compiled by Dr. Tasslyn Magnusson published on everylibraryinstitute.org

This data was filled with missing fields and was not usable so it needed to be cleaned before I could use it cleaning. In order to clean the data any columns that were unnecessary or sparely populated were dropped, and any rows with invalid data were edited to fit preset options or removed if they could not be updated.

The data was collected from 2021-2023 and contains:

- 7267 unique entries
- 2634 unique books
- 1780 unique authors
- 49/50 unique states

I would like to take this final page to extend a thank you to my mentor Laura Perovich who helped me sharpen the interactions on my project, my classmates and professor (Thomas Starr) for their critique and ideas, and finally my friends who provided moral support as well as fresh ideas.