# Controversy as Florida college 'burns' LGBTQ+ books



Hundreds of books, many covering LGBTQ+ issues, race, and activism, were discovered in dumpsters and a parking lot at New College of Florida this week. Photos and videos of the discarded books quickly circulated, sparking outrage and dismay amongst students, faculty, and alumni.

The university, known for its progressive stance, stated the disposal was part of routine maintenance, a claim that did little to quell the ensuing backlash. Previously, books removed from circulation were offered to students for purchase, a practice that was evidently bypassed this time.

Among the volumes found in the dumpsters were notable titles such as "When I Knew," a collection of LGBTQ+ stories, and "Finding the Movement," which delves into second-wave feminism, according to the Sarasota Herald-Tribune. The incident took place approximately a week before the majority of students were scheduled to arrive for the beginning of the fall semester, stirring the academic pot just in time for a new academic year.

The context surrounding the event adds layers of complexity. Florida Governor Ron DeSantis has been pushing a campaign to reshape New College, a state institution with a reputation for being liberal. This campaign included the appointment of conservative trustees and the enactment of legislation targeting certain books in school libraries.

Amy Reid, a faculty chair and representative to the board of trustees at New College, expressed her shock and compared the disposal to discarding democracy. "I want to do that for books because books are what matter," she stated, advocating for a mourning period for the lost materials.

A spokesperson for the college released a statement explaining that the books originated from two sources: a regular maintenance process and the disposal of titles related to a recently disbanded gender studies program that had not been claimed. The spokesperson emphasized that individuals had subsequently taken these books with intentions to donate them locally.