



South Carolina Instructional Materials Uniform Parent Complaint Form

Your Name: Elizabeth Szalai

Title & Author of Contested Material (one per form):
Tricks by Ellen Hopkins

School Where Contested Material is Located: Please see below

Location of Contested Material (library, classroom, etc.): Library

Contested Material is (select one): ☒ Printed ☐ Audio/Visual ☐ Online Resource
☐ Other (please describe):

I request that this Contested Material be (choose one of the following):

- ☒ Removed from all schools/facilities in this District.
☐ Restricted to the following grade levels in this District: _____
☐ Restricted to a student whose parent/legal guardian provides consent and is enrolled in the following grade levels in this District: _____

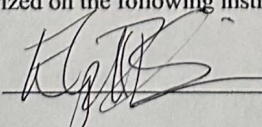
Describe Your Reason for Contesting This Material (attach additional pages as needed):

This book contains explicit sexual activities in violation of Regulation 43-170 specifically with fondling of breast, fingering/fisting, oral sex, and vaginal sex-all forced/rape.
Please refer to specific passages below with associated page numbers.
Available at the following schools:
Beaufort High School
Bluffton High School
May River High School
It does appear that this book has been removed from some high schools since I originally investigated.

January 5/5

I, Elizabeth Szalai (insert your name), hereby certify that:

- I am a parent or legal guardian of a student who attends a school within this District.
- I have read, watched, or otherwise reviewed the material I am contesting.
- I have made a good faith effort to address my concerns with School or District staff.
- I have not filed more than five (5) instructional material complaints (including this complaint) in this calendar month.
- I believe that this Contested Material is not suitable for use, availability, and/or unrestricted access in this District, pursuant to the requirements and definitions in Regulation 43-170, which are summarized on the following instruction page.

Signature:  Date: 1/17/25

This form is produced by the South Carolina Department of Education in compliance with Regulation 43-170 and may not be altered by any other party. It is effective beginning August 1, 2024 until further notice.

Tricks
by Ellen Hopkins

Available at the following schools:

Beaufort High School

Bluffton High School

May River High School

It does appear that this book has been removed from some high schools since I originally investigated.

Summary of Concerns:

This book contains sexually explicit excerpts involving minors.

Page 29

(Violates Regulation with touching between legs and description of oral sex.)

Swollen with desire. Demanding. Lips still locked to mine, she murmured, What if I give you this...?

Her hand found my own, urged it along her body's contours, all the way to the place between her legs, the one I had never asked for.

...In the heat of the moment, I even got hard, especially when Janet touched me, dropped onto her knees, lowered my zipper, started to do what I never suspected she knew how to do. Yes...

Page 74

(Violates Regulation with talking about male sex organ getting erect.)

Let alone given me an up-close view of those tasty-looking tits. Something twitches behind my zipper. Glad I'm standing behind the counter.

...Ronnie takes a deep breath, rounding the mounds I can't quit staring at.

...Only one thing was really good between us.... That twitch again.

Page 77

(Violates Regulation with talk of masturbation.)

I have to admit I have thought about boinking her more than once, while taking solo care of a hard-on.

Oh yeah, the big M. I probably do it more than I should, and Ronnie is definite boner bait, at least when I'm left to my own imagination instead of Internet porn. Viva la webcams!

Page 97

(Violates the Regulation with touching of breast.)

My Hand, Disguised as Andrew's hand, moves lightly down my neck, over collarbone, breastbone. Goose bumps rise in unusual places, and my body tingles in a completely foreign way. Because of Andrew. But he's not here. I pretend he is and let "his" hands explore the rounds of my breasts, move in tighter and tighter orbits, and now fingers circle the hard center nubs, raised like it's cold in here. It's not. I'm burning up.

Delirious with raw need. My hand wants to slide lower, to a place I know nothing about except what they call it in books. And suddenly it comes to me how completely inept I'll be when Andrew and I finally share that warm feather bed, with comfy quilts and pillows we can fall into.

I Turn on the Light Go to the computer, try to avoid looking at the Calvary screen saver. Jesus, hanging on the cross, staring down at his poor crying mother. Mama downloaded that, no doubt specifically to deter the kind of Internet exploration I have in mind

Page 206

(Violates the Regulation with the touching of "his need"- penis.)

You've done coke before, right? No? Oh, baby, you're gonna love it.

You're totally gonna fly.

Don't worry. He grins like a leprechaun. You're safe flying with me. Mostly anyway.

I watch Lucas suck two long, thin, sparkly yellowish lines up his nose. Then he hands the picture to me. Not too hard or you'll sneeze. I inhale gently, one line up the right nostril, the other up the left. Immediately, both sides of my nose go cold and numb. Now, just like that, my heart is racing and the hairs on my arms rise, sending little chills throughout my entire body. OMG. No wonder people like this drug. I look at Lucas, who's watching me carefully. "More, please." He laughs. Careful now. A little of this goes a long way. But he indulges me, and himself, with two more. Every nerve jumps to attention.

I can't feel my mouth or nose, but other parts of my body are begging to be touched.

Lucas indulges them, too, with his hands and his mouth. I love how he kisses, love how his fingers move over my body. Everything is hard. Everything is warm. No, cold. No, warm. I've never felt so alive. Never felt so in love. I glance at the clock. Not even one. We have plenty of time. But I don't want to do it here on the couch. "Let's go to my bedroom, okay?"

I Don't Have to Ask Twice Lucas scoops me up into his toned arms, carries me down the hall, like a groom clutching his bride. The thought makes me blush, and I have no clue why. I rest my head against his chest for the entire ten-second journey. Then he lays me gently on the bed, unbuttons my shirt, peels back the blue satin, stares at what he has uncovered. I am totally exposed, totally flying high, and yet I do, in fact, feel safe with Lucas, even as he lowers himself over me. Every ounce of me wants what he's about to do, and yet for just an instant, regret stings and I say, "Wait." He pauses. What? You

don't want me to stop, do you? Because I don't think I can. I need you. See? He lowers my hand to feel his need, and my heart screams, "Hurry!" Still, my brain whispers, "You can never take this back. "I look up into Lucas's eyes. "I don't want you to stop. But please don't go too fast. I'm afraid..." Afraid it will hurt. Afraid it will change me. Afraid... afraid... the word humps in time with my heartbeat, even as Lucas soothes, I'll go easy. And he does. And I'm ready. And it does feel good, despite the pain, because it also hurts. And then, it's just over. Still Buzzed And yet also drained, we lie together for a while. I don't know if it was good for Lucas or not. I want to ask, but I don't want to ask because if I do and he says no, it will leave a scar. I don't even know if it was good for me, because I'm not sure what "good sex" is. Your first time probably isn't so good, right?

Page 216

(Violation of the Regulation with rape of a minor.)

...another of Iris's badass lays, one I can't forget. I do my best never to think of him, what he did. Try never to remember that place in my childhood, but sometimes it pops into view despite all my efforts to keep it hidden. I was almost ten, and we lived in Pahrump, the butthole of Nevada. Iris worked at a cathouse, making money her usual way, only without walking the streets. Walt was a miner, and though he was a regular paying customer at Mimi's, he had an appetite for younger meat. Iris was younger then too, but even at twenty-six, she was way too old for Walt. Still, he paid for her, then he followed her home. She let him move in for a while. I remember his sour sweat, coming in after working backhoe. I remember how he touched Iris, and how she didn't care that her kids could see. I remember his Marlboro breath falling all down around me when he said, Let me show you something.

On Another Day It wouldn't have happened, couldn't have happened. Too many witnesses around. But for some odd reason, that particular afternoon, Iris had taken the other kids to play in the park. You stay and start dinner, she said. We won't be gone very long. I didn't mind. I was too old for swings, and I've always liked spending time by myself. But it wasn't more than ten minutes before Walt came through the door. He didn't ask where Iris was, or why the house was so quiet. He didn't say one word. I opened a can of refried beans, spooned them into a pot. I had no real reason to be afraid. So why did my hands shake? I kept my back to him but could feel his eyes, carving into me. Finally, he started toward the living room. Bring me a beer, sweets. I dug one from the fridge. But he wasn't on the couch, as expected. Back here, he called from Iris's room. He was already out of his jeans. I didn't know much then, but I knew there was something very wrong about that. Still, I took him the beer, holding my breath against his stench. He grabbed my hand, jerked me hard against him.

Let me show you something.

I tried to run, but he was faster. Tried to fight. He was stronger. Tried to scream. He choked my cries.

When He Finished (Thank God it didn't take long), he rolled off me with a grunt. Reached for his beer. Slammed it. Ripped and pried, swallowed up by the shame of what that meant, I crawled into the bathroom to scrub away the evidence. Not that I'd dare tell anyone when he followed me, stood in the doorway, watchin me, finally said, Tell a soul, I'll do your sister too. He knew that was a bigger threat than saying he'd hurt Iris or some other TV kind of shit. Because I knew he would come back for Mary Ann. She was only eight. If he did this to her, she'd die for sure. It had almost killed me. I'll probably always link sex with pain.

Page 291

I totally wanted to pop your cherry. You were my first virgin, and you'll probably be my last. Because...sorry, but virgin sex really isn't very good.

..."F-fuck you!..."

...One more gulp and I repeat, "Fuck you!"

Page 314

(Violates the Regulation with description of her orgasm.)

Ronnie rises on her tiptoes, lifts her slick, honey-sweet lips to meet mine. It's the sweetest kiss ever, but it soon becomes more. I lock the door, guide her to my bed, and for maybe the very first time, sex is more than getting off. This time, sex feels like love. ...She undulates seductively, the rise and fall of her body like salty waves beneath my own.

Another first, this time no faking climbing higher and higher, until she finishes with an amazing gush and tears of satisfaction. I love you, too, she exhales softly. We lie, tangled together, unmoving, unspeaking. And we both know this is what sex should be.

Page 316

(Violates Regulation with licking between breast.)

I've never had a girl in here. He probably thinks I'm taking care of business, solo.

...I kiss Ronnie's face, her neck, lick the shimmer of sweat from the deep fold between her breasts. She sighs, and that makes me want more.

Page 371

(Violates Regulation with brush of breast.)

He unpacks his gear, then checks me out, all up and down. Take off the bra and panties, okay? We want a glimpse--a hint-- of what's under all that white. I do as instructed, allow Bryn to position me exactly the way he wants. He sits me, skirt tucked provocatively between my bent legs, and when he goes to move my arms, his hand brushes against the fabric covering my breasts. My nipples go hard immediately. Lovely, he says, assessing. Exactly what I'm after. Then he kisses me sweetly. Exactly what I'm after He makes me feel like a real model--beautiful, every man's desire. When

he's finished with his camera, he lays me back on a thick blanket. You are exceptionally lovely, he says, brushing sand from my hair. He settles beside me, props himself on one elbow. Bryn's free hand begins a slow exploration of my body, over the sheer fabric, tracing each curve. You don't mind, do you? Eyes closed to the lowering sun, brain suspended on a Valium cloud, I sigh, lift my head. "Kiss me." He does, and then he lowers his mouth to other, much more intimate places. So this is making love! Well, not quite. I want to know the rest. "Make love to me." You're sure? he asks, but there can be no doubt I'm very, very sure. Bryn guides me to a place Lucas has no idea exists. Okay, It's Kind of Disturbing That, immediately after learning the meaning of "orgasm," I think of Lucas. Maybe it's because I need to know, "Was that okay?" Oh, darling. Bryn kisses across my face. That was more than okay. That was extraordinary. With just a little practice, you will become perfection. And I so want to be...want to be your coach.

Page 384

(Violates Regulation with mention fingers touching hidden places clients can't touch reducing them to masturbation.)

The men we perform for like when we dance with each other, breast-to-breast or bellyto-ass, tan skin against pale, ebony hair on blue-streaked blond, fingers touching hidden places we won't let "clients" touch. Powerful! That's how I feel, seeing how helpless we make them. I so enjoy reducing them to masturbation. It's like they are masturbating for me, and I can control when they come by how I move my body, what I let them see.

Page 389

(Violates Regulation with "girl on girl rubbing", masturbation, and ejaculation.)

I glance at Alex, who nods, meaning she'll do it for him. She knows I never could. After a little girl-on-girl rubbing, she goes to take care of it. He sits very still in his chair, staring as she strips free of her bra. Suddenly his hands are all over her. "Hey. Cut it out. Absolutely no touching allowed."

...Okay, man, we're out of here. She tries, but the creep snakes his arms around her waist, squeezes like a hungry boa constrictor. All I want is a hand job. Give it to me, I'll let you go. You, over there, play with yourself. So much for control. Good thing it doesn't take long He finishes with a loud, Aaaagh!

Page 409

(Violates Regulation with description of vaginal sex.)

Forgive me, he whispered, and he meant that, even as he stripped, lowered his ghostly white nakedness over me. I swallowed the building scream. Opened my legs. Wept as he

plunged inside. Choked on his Listerine-flavored tongue, wielded like a weapon. His kiss was, in fact, harder to accept. Sex is sex. A kiss means love.

Page 411

(Violates Regulation with description of lewd exhibition.)

But now Jerome wants other things. Let me watch you touch yourself. Creepy things. Did you know guys like to use vibrators too? Like this. Downright disgusting things. Your period? I like the taste of blood. How I wish I could say no. But even if I thought he'd leave me alone, saying yes is how I have convinced him to make Father believe I am fit for small freedoms. Like working in the yard, pulling weeds and picking vegetables.

Page 414

(Violates Regulation with a man "nursing" a woman and rough sex.)

Make the best of it... Guys like vibrators too.

...Plan C Means courting Jerome's affection, pretending to enjoy his deviant sex. Tonight that means letting him call me "Mommy" as he sits on my lap and "nurses." I stroke his hair as a mother would, dig deep inside for the words, "Mommy loves you, Jerome."

That excites him, as I guessed it would. I love you, too, Mommy. See how much?

...I hold stubbornly to the dream that he will, as Jerome turns his belly to "Mommy's." Love or no, Jerome wants to punish Mommy. The sex is rough, but it doesn't hurt nearly as bad as the pretense. And it's even faster than usual. When he finishes, I lay my head on his knobby chest.

Page 416

(Violates Regulation with cupping of breast, rubbing on face, and intercourse.)

I roll on top of him, look up into his eyes. "What if we..." Soft kiss. "Never mind." He shivers. Is much too easy. I feel almost evil when he whispers, What? almost evil when he whispers, Together."

...I lean forward, cup my breasts, rub them over his face. Confusion seeps into his eyes, and like it or not, his muscles relax. All but one. I rock back gently, invite him inside. "I'd be all yours and take such good care of you." The second time takes longer, but when he's finally done, he says, I'll think about it.

Page 433

(Violates Regulation with mention of masturbation.)

They ask if you'll talk dirty to them, preferably on the phone. Masturbators. Every now and then, you come across married guys who want to meet for real, with or without their wives, usually the former. Cheap thrill seekers. I haven't played in the flesh, but I don't mind getting someone off telling dirty stories. There's a certain sick kind of power in that.

Page 450

(Violates Regulation with masturbation, touching of nipples, and description of vaginal sex.)

Some guys like to watch girls getting off all by themselves. Make it look good for the camera. I was never into touching myself, but it isn't so bad, especially when I'm high. Besides the occasional H, Bryn supplies me with bud-- mediocre seeded Mexican-- and prescription downers. Not sure where he gets them, and I really don't care. As long as I'm buzzed, the things he asks of me are easy to do, and hey, anything's better than wasting away in Santa Cruz.

...You're right, Bryn. She's very pretty. Tight little body, too. Yes, she'll do.

His hands slide over my front, reach up under my blouse. The skin of his fingers, seeking my nipples, is calloused. Cold. "No, wait. I can't. You're not serious... Bryn?" He can't want me to do this! I jerk away from Oscar, turn to Bryn. Search his eyes. They are deadly serious, and so is Bryn when he says, Yes, you can. And if you love me, you will. You do love me, don't you? "Of course I love you! But this isn't..." Isn't right, is what I want to say. But what is right, anymore? Is this really what loving him means? Bryn's hands press down on my shoulders. Do this for me, Whitney. Do this for us. He kisses me. But it is the kiss of a stranger.

I Beg for a Buzz First Pot won't do. It has to be smack, and three long pulls of the acrid smoke barely take me to the place I need to be. Oscar watches. Waits impatiently for the H to kick in. You should use a needle. Smoking the Lady is a waste of good dope. Feeling queasy, I stumble down the hall, into the bedroom. Oscar follows, shedding clothes. His body is lean, muscular. Another time, another place, I might find him attractive, but attraction is about choice. I have no choice here but to do what he has paid to do. I hate you, Bryn. I hate you.

Within Seconds I hate Oscar, too. He breathes beer, sweats onion, and there is no beer, sweats onion, and there is no move when he bites my neck, and lower. I'll wear his teeth marks for days. "Stop. You're hurting me." You think that hurts? You ain't seen nothing yet. His teeth close even harder and his hand squeezes my arms like a vise and now Bruising pain. I give myself to the morphine shroud, denying the pounding between my thighs. Something makes me look toward the door. Bryn stands there, staring.

Page 483

(Violates the Regulation with touching of male sex organ, oral, and anal sex.)

You can take me around the world. He reaches for his wallet. One fifty, right? He tries to sweeten the pot. He reaches for his wallet. Dan will pay extra to go without a sleeve. No condom? It's not the first time I've had the request. I'd kill for the extra cash, but I'm not taking a chance on AIDS "Sorry. No can do. Cover up, I'll take care of you." I pull my T-shirt over my head, watch him strip off his jeans. His waist is narrow, his hips straight. Beautiful. Stop it! What's wrong with me?

He's down to his skivvies. I should have charged more. He's built like a fucking bull. "Holy crap, dude, I don't know...." What's wrong, kid? Never done it with a real man before?

His voice falls, cold and heavy as hail. You want me wrapped? Do it for me! He pushes me to my knees, comes around in front of me. My heart thuds in my chest. I open the foil pouch, remove the thin latex protection. You ever seen a ramrod like Dan's? I shake my head as I roll the condom down over it. No, of course you haven't. Let's see just how good you are. I close my eyes, fight not to gag at the taste of lubricant, not to choke on his thrusts against my throat.

...Dan decides he's done with Europe. He pulls me to my feet, moves behind me, drapes my back with his chest. His muscles are thick cables, but his skin is smooth and cool as snake skin. Check it out. The little boy likes that. He reaches down between my thighs. Look how hard he is. No! How could something so messed up turn me on? Whatever he does, I won't...His lips brush the back of my neck. He pushes me toward the bed, urges me facedown. The sheets smell of bleach.

...Down go my boxers. Oh my. What a sweet little bottom. Dan's hands, moving over my skin, are soft, and when he lowers himself over me, a cloud of cloves and apple sinks around me.

...Dan is in for a real treat, isn't he? He presses up against me. I brace and he pauses. Do you think it will hurt? Let's see. He pushes, but only a little. A test. Oh yes, I'm afraid it might. And after Dan, nothing else will do.

I Bite Down On a strange metal taste--a metal taste of emotions. An odd blend of fear and... excitement. For some fucked-up reason, I'm excited. Adrenaline firecrackers through my body. Blood pulses in my temples. You make Dan happy now, hear? Pain! Oh my God! Nothing has ever hurt like this. I tense, beg him to stop. But he doesn't stop. Doesn't slow. Can't take it. Can't. Through the rhythmic pain.

Pressure. Pressure, deep. Oh! Nothing has ever felt so good. Exquisite. Exquisite. No! I won't. No matter what, I won't. This isn't me.

...But I do. And when I do, it's over the top.

Page 516

(Violates Regulation with descriptors of oral and anal sex.)

Before I Can Answer He is all over me. Hands. Mouth. Ugh. Tequila. I push him away.

"Wait just one fucking second...." I step back, look at Carl...

...No need to be rude to our guest. He's here by invitation. Understand? "Invi--" Carl wants me to be with this creep? What happened to our "exclusive relationship"? "No. I don't understand."

...He pushes me, and not gently, toward Brett. Now apologize to my friend as I hope you would apologize to me. He Does Not Mean With words. And he doesn't exactly mean solo. They move in unison, and I am sandwiched between them, Carl behind me, moving

sensuously, while Brett dares kiss me again. I hold my breath against the assault of gin at my back, tequila in my face. A strange tongue in my mouth. Now Brett rests his chin on my shoulder, and he and Carl are kissing. It's a cobra dance, and despite what it means, I am charmed. Seduced by sensual motion. Behind me and in front of me, both men grow hard, and for some horrifying reason, I respond in like manner.

I Have Never Considered Three-way sex. How would...? Oh. No way will I let one of them take me like that.

...My rule: hands or mouths only. He stops kissing Brett, but neither man quits moving, writhing like mating hooded serpents. We're playing by my rules, remember? But don't worry. I only expect you to give. For now. From somewhere, he extracts a condom, hands it to me, keys to the kingdom.

Don't rush, he orders, and don't you dare close your eyes. I want to see how much you like it. He moves in front of me, strips Brett from the waist down, pushes him onto his hands and knees. Then he drops his own trousers. Come on, he urges, positioning himself inches from Brett's face. Shaking, I move behind Brett, grab his shoulders. Carl's hands cover mine. Brett moans as I...Oh my God! I am damned. But I don't stop and I don't rush. Carl's eyes never once leave mine. Finally I beg his permission. "Now? Please?" He nods and I do. We all do.

Page 524

(Violates Regulation with description of intercourse.)

Poor baby. Don't worry. Daddy has presents for his beautiful little girl. He comes over, sits beside me. Pulls a dime bag from his pocket like it's made of gold. Clean rigs, too. Let Daddy fix it for you. He cooks up a perfect spoon, loads it, plunges it between my toes.

Bryn gives me wings. The sting is luscious, the awful rush all I need. No, not all. I need Bryn. And he's here, all mine right now. His lap is warm, inviting. I climb into it, slip my arms around his neck. Thank you. Better now. Oh, so much better. Soaring. Up here in the clouds, the air is dry. I kiss him, suck his tongue into my mouth, seeking moisture. It curls over my own tongue, sensuous as smoke. Time slows.

...Want him to take me higher. Want sex as it was meant to be, as only Bryn can ever give it to me. "Make love to me."

He pushes me to the floor. My head spins, dizzy with anticipation. My brain screams, kiss me! Kiss all those special places, just like you used to. I know he will, but... But what?

Why is he stopping? He reaches into a back pocket. What is that? A rubber? No. We don't need that.

...Finally he says, Never know what kind of gift one of your customers might have left. What? My face flushes, hot from the skag, hotter still with an overdose of anger. Always, with no exceptions, "My customers use condoms."

I Try to Push Him Away But even if I were perfectly straight, my stick-figure body would

be no match for his toned physique. And I'm not straight. My vision is blurred, like looking through a fishbowl, and my muscles feel like steel cables--much too heavy to drag around. And the weirdest steel cables--much too heavy to drag around. And the weirdest vanishes. So hell, he can screw me, if that's all it means to him. He boosts himself up over me.

...That's it, he soothes. No need to waste a perfectly good boner In. Out. In. Out. I close my eyes.

Page 546

(Violates the Regulation with description of rape of a minor.)

Since the revelation about Iris sicking her snarling dogs on me, other faces--other mutts--materialize when I least want to recognize them, often just as I sink into an alcohol fueled stupor, praying it will let me sleep, dreamless. I was so young the first time, I didn't know what it meant, only that nothing had ever hurt so bad. Walt tore me up and I bled and bled and when I screamed, nobody came. And he laughed. That's it, little baby.

Scream for your daddy. Only he wasn't my daddy at all. My daddy was a brave soldier, fighting far away. Iris told me so. I still believed the stuff she told me then. When I told her about the man, not my daddy, she said, He was only making you into a real girl. I didn't understand. But I made myself believe her. I was a real girl now. But what was I before?

Walt was the first. There were others. Nameless. Faceless. I figured out how to close off my brain when they did it to me, to withdraw into a dark little room inside my head, where I couldn't see them. Couldn't smell their sweat, their stagnant breath. Couldn't taste the tobacco coating their tongues, or the beer tainting the spit they left in my mouth. Couldn't feel what was down between my legs. But now they revisit me. Is it because of what I'm doing?