

Work in Progress

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"Alki," a Chinook word meaning "by and by," was suggested by the late Nancy Pryor, Special Collections at Washington State Library, as a title for the Washington Library Association's journal. "Alki" is also the "unofficial" state motto, signifying a focus on the future.

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Practically Imperfect in Every Way

by Ahniwa Ferrari



Lately I've found myself giving a lot of thought to the concept of perfection.

Normally this isn't something I would spend much time thinking about, but when I had two prompts to do so, from completely unrelated sources, I thought that it might be worth taking notice.

The first prompt came at the beginning of a work-related Zoom meeting, where I was sent into a one-on-one breakout room to discuss with a co-worker what my 'perfect day' might look like. The second prompt, just five days later, came via a weekly songwriting workshop. While it didn't explicitly use the word 'perfection,' it did ask us to envision our future 'best life' and then write a song describing it.

Both prompts sent me through a series of existential somersaults and philosophical rationalizations ultimately centering around one question: If I am not already crafting my perfect day in the first case, or living my best life in the second, then what am I doing wrong?

Before you get the wrong idea, I will be the first to admit that perfection, in its objective sense, is obviously unattainable. But I do quite like a fuzzy, messy, subjective idea of perfection that allows for mistakes, welcomes flaws, opens the door to uncertainty, and really, in the end, only cares about the extent to which we *strive*.

The song I wrote that week condenses this thought into a fairly simple refrain: "The best that I can be? Well, that's just me."

This seems worth keeping in mind as we look towards an issue of *Alki* devoted to stories of 'work in progress.' Sometimes I despair that all my projects feel half-finished, that all my ideas feel half-baked, or that I might be approaching life in a way that makes it feel only half-lived. To combat this, I remind myself that there is no 'finish line' to race toward: any project might last forever, if you let it; any idea can (and should) continue to grow and be cultivated (sorry, abandoned baking metaphor); and life, of course, is just what you make of it.

I am personally excited to hear about your works in progress. I would love to hear about your successes, of course, but I am also eager to hear about and learn from your failures. I would love to hear about your excitement for a project completed well, but I am even hungrier to hear your stories about projects you've just started, or are underway, and about the potential that they have.

I encourage you, both as readers and as the incredibly talented humans that make our libraries thrive, to always be willing to look at both sides. Our work, like our lives, may always be a little flawed; but it's okay to remember that it's always a little perfect, too. 📖

Ahniwa is the Associate Dean of Library Operations at The Evergreen State College and the current WLA President.

I Am a Work in Progress

by Ray Zill



Welcome, Readers, to the first issue of 2022!

My name is Ray, and I am a work in progress. Throughout college, I was determined to *get* somewhere, to achieve some sense of finality to my pursuit of librarianship. I worked too many part-time jobs, insisted that I keep going to school full-time without breaks, and decided eating and sleeping were secondary concerns. After moving, graduating, moving again, and finding full-time employment as a librarian, I still don't think I actually *got* anywhere final. Sure, I've accomplished some things, but I'm still working on being better. *The gap between more and enough never closes*, they say. *The journey is more important than the destination*, they say. These inspirational sayings may speak to us, but they rarely make it feel any less terrifying.

And, let me tell you how truly terrifying my path towards librarianship has been. After graduating from library school six years ago, I found myself having enough free time to realize I hated my life. I ended my marriage. I moved out. I reconnected with my art. Changing these aspects of my life gave me an enormous sense of empowerment to go after that big-L librarian job. Despite being in a lot of debt, my move to Olympia and The Evergreen State College in February 2020 felt like I had landed. I became a librarian. I'm done, right? Wrong.

Three weeks after starting my new job, COVID-19 came to Thurston County and the Evergreen campus went remote—placing a lot of pressure on me, the new electronic resources librarian. The pandemic brought with it an enormous, collective breaking point. We mourned, we protested, we demanded a better way of living and working. We shared in this trauma, and words like *enough* or *done* seemed unattainable. The predicted eight weeks of quarantine turned into two years, and we all got used to the fact that this may never come to an end.

I'm working on it has become a mantra during the pandemic. We've simultaneously been given some leniency and added pressure at work—a weird dichotomy to navigate. When I accepted the

position of *Alki* Editor, I immediately felt the weight of asking for article submissions from a population that has gone through two-plus years of collective trauma. We are exhausted. But, I knew I had support. I am indebted to the WLA Office, our 16 editorial committee members, my predecessor Johanna, and all the authors who have contributed, edited, revised, and generously gave their time to this issue. Your grace and commitment to community success is inspiring.

The cover of this issue features the Peace Tree community art project at Ellensburg Public Library—an image that speaks to where we are right now, at another collective breaking point after Russia has invaded Ukraine and war ravages on. What is your vision of peace?

In this issue, we'll reflect on initiatives like evaluating artwork with a critical lens and partnerships that have helped to distribute public health information. We'll see how the pandemic and working remotely has pushed us to discover new ways of connecting. We'll get a deep dive into critical race theory and its origins. We'll hear how imposter syndrome and self-doubt can be both roadblocks and opportunities for growth. We'll get a glimpse at what libraries around the state are working on and the milestones we have to celebrate and remember. In this issue, we will learn that leaning into what is unfinished, unpolished, and unfettered can allow us to truly reflect on our profession and our path forward.

The *Alki* Editorial Committee has set goals for the upcoming year to foster community and connection. We are working on taking more time to solicit meaningful articles from our peers, and giving you more time to craft your submissions. We are working on encouraging more discussion, conversation, and reflection in submitted pieces, a feat started by my predecessor Johanna. We are working on incorporating more artistic expression, like photography, poetry, and creative scripts. We are working on incorporating more indigenous voices and tribal libraries. We are working on sharing our loads in order to take care of ourselves. Throughout this journey, and recognizing that the work will never end, we are looking forward to sharing this space with you. Thank you for being here. 📖

In solidarity,
Ray Zill (she/her)

Ray Zill works at The Evergreen State College as Electronic Resources Librarian and helps look after the James F. Holly Rare Books Room collection. Off-the-clock, Ray is a writer, letterpress printer, and book artist publishing works as Poet Ray Prints. This is her first issue as *Alki* Editor.

Art and Visual Displays: Reflecting Antiracist and Library Values

By Christy McDaniel



BACKGROUND: UWT LIBRARY USING CHANGE AS OPPORTUNITY

In early 2020, the University of Washington Tacoma Library and campus leadership reconsidered library spaces to welcome a new building partner: The Center for Equity and Inclusion. Research help and the writing center along with some collections were relocated from the Snoqualmie to the Tioga buildings, and renovations were completed to accommodate that shift. As every space in the library was carefully considered to best serve students, it seemed an appropriate time to consider a values-grounded approach to the art displayed in the library.

When the Tioga Library Building opened in 2012, early comments employees heard were that the library was bleak and bare. With a shoestring budget, they donated time and resources to enliven the space as best they could. The result was a hodgepodge of items, from artwork by employees, posters commemorating UW Seattle Library events, a 3D map of the Salish Sea, historic photos of Tacoma campus buildings, and more. Over the years, works by familiar artists were installed in the library: notably, Dawoud Bey's Strangers/Community series in 2015¹, "Chinook Red Chandelier" by Dale Chihuly², and a sketch by Pablo Picasso.³

Christy McDaniel is Engineering and Science Librarian at the University of Washington Tacoma Library. She loves spreadsheets, collection development, and helping students succeed. In her free time she plays ukulele and practices roller skating.

“...these histories of oppression deserve to be recognized in what we do on campus today...”



"Chinook Red Chandelier" by Dale Chihuly remains in the Snoqualmie Building.

LAYERS OF CAMPUS HISTORY

The University of Washington Tacoma campus was built on several layers of history. First and foremost, the campus resides on the traditional land of the Puyallup people. In our land acknowledgment, "we recognize the Puyallup tribe and its elders past and present for their ongoing efforts to sustain tribal sovereignty, preserve their culture, and care for this place."⁴

The campus was built on land that was a thriving community of first-generation Japanese immigrants and second-generation Japanese Americans—Issei and Nisei, respectively. They also worked to build a community and preserve their culture while forging ties to a new land, but were forcibly removed as a result of Executive Order 9066 during World War II.⁵ Most of these individuals did not return after the war, and there are few vestiges of this community in the area today.

Both of these histories of oppression deserve to be recognized in what we do on campus today, as does the working-class history that is acknowledged in the architecture of nearly every campus building. The award-winning architecture nods to the buildings' past use as warehouses and factories.⁶

In approaching this project and creating welcoming spaces for the present and future, it was important to keep these stories in mind as well as the lived experience of our present students, many of whom are first-generation, Pell Grant-eligible, veterans, and/or BIPOC.⁷

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PROJECT APPROACH

The project was approached with the dual-lens of acknowledging the people who put artwork in the library and creating equitable, welcoming spaces for the diverse students on our campus. An inventory of every visual display and each “permanent” artwork was created, including posters, paintings, reproductions, and photographs. The inventory excluded temporary displays and anything designed as primarily informative. The work’s title, artist (if known), location in the building, donor (if known), dimensions, description, control (campus/library), and special comments were collected on a spreadsheet.

Long-term library employees of ten or more years were interviewed to record their institutional knowledge. Interesting stories came up about the artwork, and historical pain points were discovered to inform our decision-making.

A qualitative survey of stakeholders was designed and employed, primarily to student employees of the library. The survey included open-ended questions about what art brings to a space, favorite and disliked pieces in the library, and Likert scale questions about a sample of library artwork. All of this was conducted remotely as students were adapting to 100% online instruction in Spring 2020. They were encouraged to complete the survey during work hours, and their participation was reported to supervisors but their answers were anonymized. The results were from a small sample size of students (n=6) and staff (n=3).

RESULTS

With a small number of participants, the survey couldn’t draw strong conclusions but did begin to suggest patterns. The most frequent opinion was that more contextual information should accompany the artwork. Consistent, clear, and easily visible signage should accompany each piece of artwork in the library. This will at minimum appropriately cite the source of the visual,

and at best offer a portal to more information in a digital space. Suggestions were also made to include the Lushootseed language in our signage.

“ Interesting stories came up about the artwork, and historical pain points were discovered to inform our decision making. ”

Most respondents liked the photographs by Dawoud Bey. They described them as unified, nicely framed, and connected to the diversity of the campus. One respondent noted, “I really enjoy... seeing the portraits and taking the time to dissect the faces around me and the stories they tell in their face/posture.” Likewise, respondents enjoyed the way the historic photos connect to the

campus’s past, noting that they feel relevant.

Mentions were made of visual elements that aren’t artwork but affect the user’s experience within the library. These included the architectural features that remain in the Snoqualmie Powerhouse from its original use. Another respondent mentioned that our collection of plants is a cohesive element that “feels intentional” and enhances the beauty of the space. Finally, artwork seen from the library windows was mentioned, including the spectacular views from the second floor of TLB and Vaughn Bell’s artwork, *All The Rivers in The World*,⁸ along the Prairie Line Trail.



Artwork and historic photos in storage, waiting to be relocated.

While one goal of this project was to find or create a framework for evaluating art pieces, it soon became clear that this wasn’t realistic. Recognizing the subjective nature of terms such as “welcoming,” “inspirational,” and “connecting,” how can a rubric be effectively used? A place to start is an Americans for the Arts report in which the organization examined systemic bias in their grant process and made recommendations for choosing artist recipients of their grant.⁹ While we don’t have a set rubric, we know that going forward our criteria should reflect library values, community participation, and principles of equity, diversity, and inclusion.

CULTURAL RECKONING

The Record Keeper was displayed at the entrance of the Tioga

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Library Building since it was donated to the library in 2012. It was a colorful piece with abstract representations that many enjoyed looking at while waiting to check out materials. On the other hand, we knew that it was not created or designed by an Indigenous company, much less an artist of Puyallup heritage. I looked into the non-Indigenous Pendleton Company, which commissioned the design and manufactured the blanket. I found a complex relationship between Pendleton, Indigenous persons, and whether the company appropriates Indigenous culture.¹⁰ Further research into the designer surfaced more serious questions of appropriation and uncovered a surprise we could not ignore: *The*

Record Keeper was designed by a man who pled guilty in 2015 to violating the Indian Arts and Crafts Act.¹¹ Terry Lee Whetstone sold his work as Cherokee art and music even though he is not a registered member of a federally recognized tribe. While there is controversy over the issue of federal tribal recognition,¹² a press release from the Department of Justice describes that Whetstone used a fraudulent identification card to sell artwork.¹³ In light of this information, and as an outward act of our accountability, we removed the blanket from display.

A WORK IN PROGRESS

The UW Tacoma Library is actively exploring ways to examine our own biases and act as an anti-racist organization.¹⁴ Removing *The Record Keeper* from display was a logical step, but the next steps we take are important: we are establishing processes so that the artwork and visuals in our space create a welcoming environment and reflect our institutional values.

In some ways, we are back to where we were in 2012 in a new space with blank walls. We opened one building of our library in September 2021 after 18 months of closure, while construction was still being completed, and with the furniture installation delayed. Our access services department trained a new batch of student employees, most of whom had never spent time on campus. We opened our other building in January 2022 and celebrated the Center for Equity and Inclusion in its newly renovated space. The plants that were fostered or neglected during our pandemic closure are being nurtured back to health. We continue to navigate the effects of COVID on our students and employees, and we are working to (re)develop relationships, policies, processes, and mutual understanding with our building partners.

“...it would be quickest to install a sample of artwork from storage; however, we know that a more deliberate process is best, so for now our walls will remain mostly bare.”

All of these realities have us stretched very thin as an organization. In light of this, it would be quickest to install a sample of artwork from storage; however, we know that a more deliberate process is best, so for now, our walls will remain mostly bare.

We are currently researching the background information of our historic photographs with help from the Tacoma Public Library Northwest Room and the Washington State Historical Society. We are also working with our campus Tribal Liaison to incorporate the Lushootseed language in our library.

Because this project is grounded in anti-racist principles, it will not be wrapped up tidily or quickly. Anti-racist reflection

and action will continue because our students deserve a space that honors them and welcomes them to learn and grow. Ensuring our artwork and visual displays reflect these values takes time but is a worthy work in progress. 📖

NOTES

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How art affects users

Think about the artwork in the library, or spaces where you particularly liked or disliked the artwork to help you answer these questions.

How do you feel artwork affects your experience in a space?

Long answer text

What messages can art send to the users of a space? Consider specific positive, neutral, or negative messages.

Long answer text

Do you have any favorite art pieces in the library? Why do you like them?

Long answer text

Are there any art pieces you dislike in the library? Why do you dislike them?

Long answer text

Sample questions from the survey asking for opinions about artwork in public spaces and the library.

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Partnering on Grants and Improving Public Health through COVID-19 Pet Resources

by Michael T. Moore and Electra Enslow



INTRODUCTION

Since its emergence in late 2019 and early 2020, COVID-19 has had a devastating impact on human health, with more than 450 million cases and six million deaths worldwide, despite extensive health mandates to curb its spread.¹ In addition to the pandemic's immense impact on human society, there have been significant ramifications for pets and companion animals of COVID-19 patients. Research has shown that pets in households of COVID patients may become infected with SARS-CoV-2 and develop the animal equivalent of the disease. The Centers for Disease Control (CDC), World Health Organization (WHO), and animal health organizations have issued public statements in attempts to allay fears and disseminate information about proper care for animals and pets during the pandemic.² However, these materials were largely produced in English only and may have been less accessible to many segments of the population due to literacy and language barriers.

During a pandemic, it is paramount that accurate health information from credible healthcare agencies and institutions be disseminated to the public as quickly as possible.³ However, individuals in marginalized communities suffering from health disparities and negative social determinants of health are more likely to have health information communication gaps, placing them at increased danger during a pandemic of contracting and transmitting the disease.⁴

To bridge the health information gap, the University of Washington Health Sciences Library (UW HSL) and the UW Center for One Health Research (COHR) adopted a One Health approach—a transdisciplinary approach to health programs

Michael Moore is the Grants Administration and Special Projects Librarian at the University of Washington Health Sciences Library. In addition to writing and supporting grants, he supports a variety of clinical and translational health projects and initiatives at UW, including REDCap and Leaf. A transplant from Eastern Canada, he rebels at the gloomy Pacific Northwest winter weather by refusing to own a winter coat. Or winter boots. Or an umbrella. Or a rain jacket.

Electra Enslow is the Director of Clinical Research and Data Services at the University of Washington Health Sciences Library. She enjoys mycology, gardening, and picking up litter on the beach.

incorporating human, animal, and environmental factors⁵—to raise awareness of COVID-19 care for pets among marginalized communities. The project team created a series of informative and accessible materials on pet care during the pandemic, with wording developed in partnership with local and national veterinary and public health experts. To more readily reach ethnic minority and non-English speaking communities, the materials were professionally translated into nine languages prominent in the Pacific Northwest and distributed in the community. Three high school students from a local nonprofit serving the East African community were hired to support the project.

Through partnering with organizations at UW, reaching out to the greater Seattle community, and thinking creatively about health literacy, the project team was able to successfully apply for the COVID-19 Health Information Outreach Award from the Pacific Northwest Region of the Network of the National Library of Medicine (NNLM PNR, or NNLM Region 5 in the 2021-26 NNLM cooperative agreement).

BACKGROUND

Project Partners

Based on the southern end of UW's Seattle campus, HSL is one of the flagship branches of the UW Libraries system and the premier health sciences library in the Pacific Northwest. HSL is directly responsible for supporting the education and research of UW's six health sciences schools (Dentistry, Medicine, Nursing, Pharmacy, Public Health, and Social Work), the UW Medicine network, HEALWA, and medical students across Washington, Wyoming, Alaska, Montana, and Idaho as part of the School of Medicine's acclaimed WWAMI program. HSL collaborates with the Washington State Department of Health to operate HEALWA, an evidence-based health sciences information portal that provides resources and support to participating Washington State licensed healthcare practitioners in 26 professions.

HSL is also a founding partner of the Translational Research and Information Lab (TRAIL), a cross-campus collaboration with the Institute of Translational Health Sciences, NNLM PNR, the UW School of Medicine's Department of Biomedical Information and Medical Education (BIME), and UW Medicine IT. TRAIL aims to leverage existing expertise and space to deliver clinical research data management services and emerging technology support,

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including REDCap, Leaf, virtual reality, mobile app development, and more.

For this grant, HSL partnered with COHR, based in the UW School of Public Health's Department of Environmental and Occupational Health Sciences in partnership with the Department of Global Health. COHR uses a transdisciplinary One Health approach to investigate the link between humans, animals, and their shared environment in areas including zoonotic and infectious diseases, the microbiome, antimicrobial resistance, and the human-animal bond.

In 2018, COHR launched the One Health Clinic, a twice-monthly service in downtown Seattle that supports youth experiencing homelessness and their companion animals. A nurse practitioner provides primary medical care with assistance from UW medical, nursing, social work, public health, and pharmacy students, while veterinary students and a faculty preceptor from the Washington State University College of Veterinary Medicine provide veterinary care and needs assessment to the companion animals.

During the onset of the pandemic, COHR launched the COVID-19 and Pets Study (CAPS) in partnership with the Washington Animal Disease Diagnostic Laboratory at Washington State University. The study gathered samples from companion animals of COVID-19 patients to learn more about the role animals play in the coronavirus outbreak and spread.

One Health

One Health is an interdisciplinary approach to managing health care that stresses the connections between human, animal, and environmental health. Among the One Health movement's goals is improved collaboration among professionals in veterinary medicine, human medicine, and the environmental, wildlife, and public health fields to meet new global challenges, leading to increased scientific knowledge through innovative research and learning programs and interprofessional collaborative opportunities for veterinarians.⁶ The movement has gained prominence over the last two decades through deadly zoonotic disease outbreaks and pandemics, including West Nile virus, H1N1 swine flu, avian flu, severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS), Ebola, Zika, and yellow fever.⁷

Health Disparities

Disasters and emergencies, including pandemics, have an inequitable impact on the most vulnerable populations in a society. Research conducted on the relationship of COVID-19 infection and various social vulnerabilities identified minority status and language, transportation, housing, and disabilities to be among

the main predictors of COVID-19 infection.⁸ The most socially vulnerable segments of the United States population were up to almost five times as likely to contract the disease.⁴

Accurate, credible, and up-to-date COVID-19 information, including care for pets during the pandemic, is often lacking in non-English languages, negatively impacting entire communities. Furthermore, vulnerable populations are more likely to have communication gaps due to socioeconomic disparities, low health literacy, immigration status, and limited English proficiency that can be further impacted by shared perspectives or approaches within the linguistic or cultural community, such as a mistrust of health institutions or the government.⁹

Pets and companion animals can play an integral role for individuals experiencing homelessness. Studies have shown that many people experiencing homelessness consider their animals as a part of themselves, beyond a normal pet-owner relationship.¹⁰ Many will place the needs of a companion animal above their own and be willing to compromise their own health for their animal's. Research has also shown that people experiencing homelessness will forgo social services, including veterinary care for their animals, due to fear that the service either will not allow the animal in or will cause it to be removed from their care.¹¹ These factors compound the already sizable health information gap faced by individuals experiencing homelessness.

METHODOLOGY

In late 2020, NNLM announced a new COVID-19 Health Information Outreach Award funding opportunity designed to "develop and offer programs, including pilot projects, that will impact health literacy and health information needs related to the COVID-19 / SARS-CoV-2 global pandemic in the Pacific Northwest Region."¹² The award, encompassing a project period of five months, prioritized support to populations facing health disparities through tools to manage information overload and combat misinformation.

With a short turnaround between the funding announcement and the submission deadline, HSL staff and librarians set to work brainstorming potential projects that were novel, met the NNLM funding goals, and were feasible in five months. An Animal Health Sciences Librarian at another institution proposed the idea of exploring One Health and recommended reaching out to COHR. The librarians sent a "cold call" email to COHR leadership and immediately received strong interest in pursuing a project. COHR had already identified a lack of reliable and authoritative resources relating to pet care during COVID. That dearth of information was magnified in the marginalized communities they served, including among immigrant populations and individuals facing homelessness.

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The project team wrote the entire grant and crafted a budget over the next two weeks, with the proposal centered around two tentpoles: 1) providing authoritative but accessible resources across multiple languages, and 2) hiring ambassadors from the community to help raise awareness. The proposal was submitted to the NNLM PNR and approved for funding.

Information Materials

According to COHR, veterinarians and animal health professionals had been concerned about the lack of information and overall misinformation on the susceptibility of pets to COVID-19 and its transmissibility from animals to humans. The concerns were twofold: They wanted to ensure people were taking proper care of both themselves and their pets; and to help mitigate any panic in pet owners who might abandon their animals if they suspected they were potential infection vectors, especially in the wake of major international news stories like the culling of mink in Denmark.¹³

To adequately assess information gaps, project staff searched existing and publicly available online resources related to caring for pets during COVID. The project staff identified 26 posters, pamphlets, and other materials, primarily in English and featuring a multitude of design approaches, from short and graphically focused to long and text-heavy. The materials were drawn from a variety of sources, including some public libraries, but predominantly were produced by government agencies. With the help of COHR's Master of Public Health practicum student, project staff reviewed the documents to find common themes and gaps in information that would inform the team's materials.

The project team wrote two versions of the pet care verbiage: a shorter option with quick bullet points and a longer version that went into additional detail. In both cases, the text was written using accessible language and avoiding technical terms, jargon, and acronyms. The project team solicited feedback from veterinary experts in the Pacific Northwest to further tweak the language to ensure it was both understandable and clearly relayed the message on caring for pets during COVID-19.

The project unfolded as breakthroughs were emerging in COVID-19 vaccine development and deployment and the first members of the public were receiving their initial doses. The original messaging was tweaked from focusing on encouraging people to protect their pets from possible infection to also pushing them to receive their vaccine when eligible, thereby limiting their chances of passing COVID-19 to their pets.

To maximize the impact of the materials, the project team used demographic data from the Pacific Northwest to identify nine target linguistic communities: Amharic, English, Korean,

Simplified Chinese, Somali, Spanish, Tagalog, Tigrinya, and Vietnamese. The two initial English wordings were professionally translated into the other languages to maximize accuracy.

With wording finalized and translated, the project staff began work designing a series of small- and medium-sized materials that could serve as effective handouts. Due to the limited project budget, hiring an outside designer was not financially feasible. However, one of the project team members had previously worked in newspaper and magazine journalism and had prior history using the Adobe Creative Suite, including InDesign and Photoshop.

Three designs were created: a two-sided bookmark; a one-sided one-pager; and a two-sided trifold.



Bookmark (Amharic, two-sided)

KEEPING YOUR PETS HEALTHY DURING COVID-19



Dogs and cats can **become infected** with the virus that causes COVID-19.

There is **no current evidence** that dogs and cats can give COVID-19 to people.

Protect **your pet** like you protect **your family**.

Get vaccinated to reduce the spread of COVID-19 and protect yourself and other household members, including your pets.

IF YOU HAVE COVID-19 OR HAVE BEEN EXPOSED TO COVID-19

Have another household member care for your pet.

Keep cats indoors, if possible, and don't allow your pets to roam freely.

If your pet appears sick, call a veterinarian.

If you have to care for your pet:

- avoid close contact with them (cuddling, kissing, sleeping)
- wear a mask around them
- wash your hands before and after caring for them or touching their items (food, bowls, toys, etc.)

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One-pager (English, one-sided)


The original project plan called for focus groups to provide feedback on the produced documents, including a financial incentive. Unfortunately, it proved unexpectedly difficult to find volunteers willing or able to take part in focus groups despite recruitment efforts. This may have been exacerbated by COVID-19 restrictions and social distancing measures, as well as the multilingual nature of the project. Without the focus group, the project team relied on experts from the veterinary and One Health fields for feedback on the design, verbiage, and accessibility of the materials.

Student Ambassadors

Three high school students were hired to support the project through a collaboration with the Horn of Africa Services (HOAS), a Seattle-based nonprofit that serves the East African immigrant and refugee community. The students, all of whom aspired to careers in medicine, helped identify potential stakeholders in the community that would be interested in the finished materials and provided feedback on the accessibility of materials and their relevance to the East African community. The trio proved excellent additions to the project, bringing needed cultural and linguistic diversity and perspective to a team that was otherwise made up of academics.

To further support the project, the students planned, wrote, and edited a short video using the same verbiage to complement the printed materials. The students were given creative authority over

코로나19 및 동물




코로나19를 유발하는 바이러스에 대해 아직도 연구 중이지만, 어떤 동물에서는 사람이 동물에게 바이러스를 전파할 수 있는 것으로 나타났습니다. 고양이와 강아지를 포함한 일부 반려동물은 보통 코로나19에 감염된 사람과 밀접 접촉을 한 후 코로나19를 유발하는 바이러스 테스트에서 양성 반응이 나타났습니다.

감염된 반려동물도 아플 수 있지만, 대부분 병환이 중증에 이르지 않고 회복됩니다. 감염된 반려동물 중 많은 경우 어떤 증상도 보이지 않습니다.

현재 반려동물이 사람에게 코로나19를 전파할 수 있다는 증거는 없습니다.

코로나 19로부터 당신의 반려동물을 보호합시다



반려동물에게 증상이 나타나는 경우

반려동물에게 나타나는 증상으로는 기침, 재채기, 부기, 콧물, 눈물, 고열, 부종 또는 붓음, 구토 또는 설사가 있습니다.

어떠한 증상만 혹은 코로나19가 아닌 다른 감염에 의해서 나타날 수 있는 증상을 보이는 것일 수 있습니다. 반려동물이 이런 것들을 보이는 경우:

- 수의사에게 진료를 하세요.
- 다른 동물과 분리하세요.

본인은 현재 건강하더라도 동물병원에 반려동물을 데리고 가기 전 항상 수의사에게 연락하세요.

다음에 명심하세요

코로나19 백신은 코로나19의 확산 속도를 늦추며 본인과 반려동물을 포함한 다른 가족 구성원을 보호합니다.

본인의 자택이 직원 퇴근 후 폐쇄됩니다.

동물은 사람에게 다른 감염병을 전파할 수 있으므로 동물과 밀접한 접촉을 피하세요.

동물은 사람에게 다른 감염병을 전파할 수 있으므로 동물과 밀접한 접촉을 피하세요.

본인이 반려동물을 돌봐야 하는 경우

- 반려동물과 밀접 접촉(안기, 핥기, 키우기, 등안질하기 등)을 피하세요.
- 반려동물 주변에서 마스크를 착용하세요.
- 반려동물을 돌보기나 반려동물의 움직임(예: 고열, 발진 등)을 관찰하기 전 장갑을 착용하세요.

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Trifold (Korean, two-sided)

the video and received editing training from COHR staff. Before dissemination, the video was shared with veterinarians and public health officials for feedback and to ensure the content provided a coherent and consistent message. The video project not only gave the students a deeper understanding of the coronavirus but also provided them with hands-on technical skills and experience working on a health-related project with real-world consequences.

Dissemination

With the grant period ending, the project team disseminated both print and electronic versions of the pamphlets and raised awareness in the community. To maximize the impact of the materials, the project team published the materials with a CC BY-NC 4.0 (Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial 4.0) license, allowing others to share and adapt the materials with attribution for noncommercial reasons.¹⁴

The project team ordered a limited print run in all nine languages and three styles, commissioned by a professional print shop. COHR has proactively distributed the materials to patrons at their twice-monthly One Health Clinic appointments, and copies were sent to local community organizations that the students had identified.

The team created a space on the Open Science Framework,¹⁵ a free, open-source project management platform supporting the research

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lifecycle, to support the project and host PDF versions of the pamphlets and the student-made video. Both HSL and COHR also established dedicated spaces on their respective websites linking to the materials to improve findability.

Project team members have delivered professional conference presentations on their experiences during the project, including the 2021 Medical Library Association Annual Conference.

CONCLUSION


This project has been a major bright spot within the depths of the pandemic. In addition to sharing the great work that was done with this grant, the authors would like to encourage librarians to consider taking on atypical grants and partners. Here are some key takeaways when working on a grant.

- Reach out to potential organizational partners
 - Be willing to cold-call an organization you would like to work with. Often, if they cannot work with you at this time, they can lead you to people who can..
 - Identify and understand the “why” behind the partnership. Why should we partner? Align all goals—your own, your partner’s, and the funder’s—beforehand so that the “why” is clear from the onset.
- Solicit strong support letters to improve the grant application
 - Identify two or three qualified supporters who are willing to write strong letters in support of your project. These are key to a successful funding proposal as they demonstrate impact.
 - Encourage letter writers to speak to the impact the grant will have on the intended population and the need for the project.
- Prepare and embrace unexpected events and tweak project activities to stay aligned with the overarching goal(s) of the grant
 - The entire COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the need to be prepared for the unexpected. Most funding organizations will understand hiccups that go with the best-laid plans if a viable and logical alternative path is presented.
 - When things do go awry—and they will—discuss them with the funding sources if you believe they will impact the grant and/or outcomes. Funding organizations have a vested interest in the success of your project and will be as

flexible as they can be to ensure a positive outcome.

- Organize constructed items in a repository for easy, long-term access
 - Use Open Science Framework, your institutional repository, or a website to maintain access. Research is built on the shoulders of those who came before, so having these materials easily accessible for all parties involved is paramount.
 - Make objects findable and accessible, and choose the Creative Commons copyright license¹⁶ that best serves your needs.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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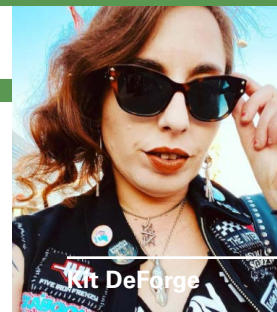
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Work in Progress: Virtual Surreality and Connecting without Masks

by Kit DeForge



My name is Kit DeForge. I have been a Teen Specialist for two years, and I am a work in progress.

If that sounds like an introduction befitting a support group, it is only because, collectively, we as a profession need one at this point. Those working in library services would likely not only agree, but also ask where to sign up, who is next bringing the donuts, and (now) if it is safe to enjoy them in a circle. Even these seemingly innocuous bits of normalcy have become questionable with COVID-19 changing crucial variables in our sense of stability.

Since beginning my position on April 1, 2020, my expectations have had to adjust constantly with the tides of change measured in transmission and vaccination rates, personal loss and mental health needs, and the physical necessity of personal boundaries. The significance of my start date is one of my go-to jokes with my colleagues, as the pandemic regularly makes me question whether continuing to push ahead is a fool's errand on particularly difficult days. Many library workers have felt adrift without the usual benefit of in-person social, emotional, and professional support to stabilize them as they attempt to carry out their work without losing the connections they have built with both patrons and colleagues, alchemizing Os and Is into community connections and shared resources virtually. As the circumstances around us are exceptional, the needs and demands of our communities

“How much weight does doubt hold in a mental health state defined by uncertainty? How much does it hold in a pandemic, where uncertainty is one of the defining experiences of it?”

Kit DeForge has worked in public libraries as a paraprofessional in California and Washington for 16 years officially, but has been pushing carts since eight, helping their grandmother in her duties as a school librarian. Kit enjoys connecting teens to creative resources of all kinds, arguing about comics and graphic novels with friends, costuming, and working on completing their stop motion film. They appreciate any book recommendations that involve robots with feelings, sequential art, Hollywood history, and the bizarre. They live in Olympia with their best friend, two cats, a beta fish, and a 20-year-old tarantula.

have called for exceptional approaches, both from libraries as institutions and from individual staff members.

In sixteen years as a library paraprofessional, I have taken any opportunity to work with teens. Many fellow library workers assured me it would not take much time for a teen specialist title to become official, but the reality is that it took nearly a decade to finally be able to introduce myself as one. Immediately after receiving my hiring call in early 2020, I contacted half a dozen former colleagues and my grandmother (herself a former school librarian), over speakerphone during my commute. Before going inside to tell my colleagues the news, I sat in my car to jot down a few ideas and goals while the energy was there.

This was who I was a few weeks before the news that COVID-19 hit Washington State. This was where I was before the phone call from my previous supervisor informed me that the library was closing and we did not know how long it would stay that way. This was who I was before I realized the time I asked to have before beginning my new position was not going to be used to enjoy connecting with my co-workers before I left.

Losing firsts and lasts was something I would later bond over with my teens.

At this point in the pandemic, many long-held professional goals and ideas for engagement are stuck floating in the ether; uncertain variables ranging from public health to budget, conflicting patron expectations to staffing levels continue to stymie attempts at community connections, program ideas, school visits. Community partners are struggling with their own capacity, and the long-term strain of COVID-19 on collective mental and emotional health makes it difficult to tell if I am making gains in my position at a reasonable rate for the situation at hand. Combine this with fluctuating hours of operation and scheduling, and the nebulous potential exposures among staff and their families, and I find the necessity of differing definitions of risk management between organizations and finding stability within work as the pandemic continues to wear on proves elusive.

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With no previous connections in the community, I would need to establish them. But what happens when nobody is opening their doors to strangers, much less has the time to take on new professional connections and nurture them?

This last year, I have found myself struggling with this question and my own measure of personal, professional success as a result. Working closely with my supervisor to establish a baseline connection plan through Trello cards with steps, notes, contact information, and due dates proved both helpful and emotionally challenging. The constant digital reminders were just that—a constant reminder of what I had not yet achieved.

When so much feels out of my control, my tendency is to want to run with ideas completely unfettered—but even with a professional resource waiting to help me, I was not gaining the traction I hoped for at this point in my career. When the usual measures of success did not reflect extreme circumstances, our open conversations from a place of trust and respect allowed me to explore new thoughts on how to approach my tasks. I had to become better at accepting and asking for needed direction, feedback and structure. Being able to speak openly and honestly to my supervisor about my personal struggles and goals became a crucial element to making progress.

In a strange blessing in disguise, the pandemic brought my personal health—physical, mental and emotional—to the forefront in a way that allowed me to communicate and advocate for my own boundaries, which returned my attention to the ways I could be confident in my skills again.

The last two years brought my professional self-image into question. As a person with OCD, living under constant threat of infection with a disease whose symptoms appear like a flu, I found myself having to quiet my anxieties around my image as a “team player” when my thoughts would race and my brain would latch onto a potential symptom shared with COVID. Add to this the ways stress weakens the immune system, anxiety manifests with physical symptoms, and the newfound pressure of being a leader and setting an example for safety during a crisis, and taking time off becomes a mental calculus that serves as a microcosm of organizational risk management itself.

Can the factors involved work sustainably, safely, and reasonably? How much weight does doubt hold in a mental health state defined by uncertainty? How much does it hold in a pandemic, where uncertainty is one of the defining experiences of it?

As I took on a new position with the first leadership role in my life, I found my mind full of questions and intrusive thoughts with greater frequency:

What will my colleagues think of me if I choose my health over work? Will our new workgroup's image suffer if I can't keep up with “business as usual” under these conditions? Will they think I'm not someone to be trusted with roles in projects I'm aching to be involved in if I say no to protect myself from being overcommitted? Am I living up to the reputation I took a decade to build?

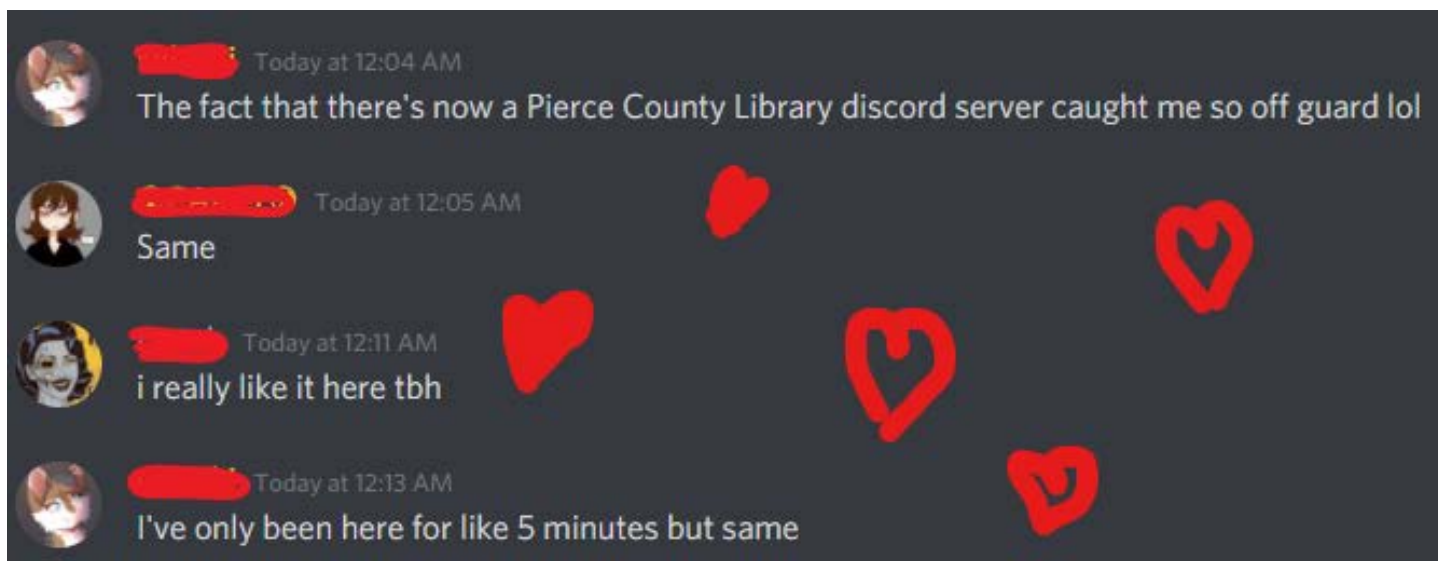
“ When teens can't come to us, we're learning more about finding new methods of outreach and connection as well as rethinking the status quo; when meeting teens where they are, one of the first places we should go is the internet, pandemic or not. ”

Fluctuating public health guidance, the politicization of the virus into a partisan issue, conflicting public desires for safety vs familiarity, mass retirements and resignations, and stress and disease overcoming our co-workers and families had—and continue to have—influence on the path ahead. Mental health during a long-term traumatic event needs to be prioritized voluntarily, or it will make its demands known... without fitting comfortably into a schedule. With this known, there has to be a way forward and into a place of transition.

Strangely, the answer might be to take the mask off, but not the one you're thinking.

If you were new to the job in 2020, you may have gone over a year without seeing the entirety of a colleague's face in person, but you might know their home decorating preferences and pets with an intimacy many would consider uncommon. Most of my colleagues in teen services have never been in the same room with me to this day, but despite this, my teen services community of practice has been both my safe place and my rock—both emotionally and professionally—for the entirety of the pandemic. We have encouraged each other, innovated together, sent each other gifts and cards, cheered on graduations and pet adoptions, banded together to advocate for teen EDI measures, comforted each other in times of great loss, and, of course, sent countless memes to each other's phones after library hours. We have a belief in transparency,

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Screenshot of conversation between teen users offering opinion on the Discord

trust, and a whole-person approach as a group. Our humanity comes first.

My position was one of several new roles created for a stronger teen services emphasis and a more widespread approach for our branches. My teen services colleagues—colloquially referred to as the “Mighty Nine”—jumped into the complexity of our virtual services needs with enthusiasm, creativity, and an eye for inclusivity in all areas of our work. Through our initial virtual meetings—far less Robert’s Rules of Order and more akin to the excitable fandom meetups I’d run for teens themselves—I found hope, encouragement, comradery, and determination to bring the best of myself to my new position. Our shared mental space allowed us to share new tools from our varied areas of interest and soon we were signing up for Canva accounts, Trello boards, Spotify playlists, and Discord accounts.

The strange silver lining of the pandemic has been the idea that “business as usual” briefly became impossible, giving library workers significantly more leeway to try creative solutions for connections that might have been considered a lower priority than the day-to-day operations of library buildings previously. When teens can’t come to us, we’re learning more about finding new methods of outreach and connection as well as rethinking the status quo; when meeting teens where they are, one

of the first places we should go is the Internet, pandemic or not.

Our unofficial motto was something akin to “Why Don’t We Just Try Some Stuff?” during those initial days. From that mindset of possibility, we collectively worked to bring new services to our teens in the form of a Discord server to connect, a teen-specific Instagram account, restructuring of our Teen Volunteer League to virtual, resource accessing instructions on Loom, tutorial videos

for crafts and activities, and take-and-make activities with book lists on pursuing new skills and hobbies. Utilizing Instagram stories and video, we were able to bring on a variety of professionals as guest speakers on careers, allow teens to screen share and show their work or ask questions, and connect on a more personal level through “Meet the Crew” posts.

The creation of the Discord allowed us to have a way for teens to contact us in close to real time as we maintained other curbside duties and worked on

projects. The simple, pseudo-anonymized nature of usernames created a server culture that invited conversation on more difficult or complex life questions teens were facing while reducing fear of judgment. The peer-led nature of teen moderators contributed to a more egalitarian attitude and increased involvement in decision-making for the space, encouraging shared suggestions and ideas. The video/voice components of the platform—originally popular

“The stress during a long-term traumatic event like a pandemic either needs to be prioritized voluntarily, or it will make its demands known... without fitting comfortably into a schedule.”

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with gamers—allowed us to have “drop-in hours” through casual programming; in my case, Sketch Jams, where teens could share their creative projects, get suggestions and resources, ask library questions, connect with other artists, and access a supportive adult to hear their thoughts about life during a pandemic. We received a lot of questions around resources beyond school—for personal hobbies, hopes, dreams, ideas—and heard countless stories of stress or frustration. And yet, we also heard some of the most high-minded goals from teens going through one of the most difficult periods of their life—without the usual social and emotional support systems in place.

Teens, in many ways, seem more adaptable to the chaos, as expectations of them change all of the time: one minute, a child who can’t be trusted to make decisions independently, the next being expected to know what your future will look like and be responsible, and back again. In times of great upset of expectation, we are reminded to examine what is and is not working, to make adjustments, to invite and embrace change. A student at Sketch Jam summarized their approach to the pandemic to me in this way: “When everything is falling apart anyway, it’s time to do something new, because there’s nothing to worry about messing up.”

Accepting the new is challenging, even more so when your “hit the ground running” is nothing like business as usual. Through service that comes from a place of hope, through shared interest and honest conversation, teens shared parts of their lives and stories that renewed my faith, reminded me of parts of myself that are still growing, and allowed me to see life more optimistically again.

Through this experience, I have come to the conclusion that there is no “arriving” in library services, no being “done” with your goal. To serve teens—and the public—is to not only invite the chaotic and uncertain, but embrace it for the potential energy it holds. Taking off the mask—connecting honestly—is an opportunity that enriches our service, our communities, and ourselves through shared empathetic experience. Knowing we are all “works in progress” allows us to stop the comparisons long enough to see our own aptitudes to share and develop, admit our shortcomings or need for growth, and embrace the new and uncertain—without letting the chaos become us. 📖



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What's the Deal with Critical Race Theory?: A Brief Introduction, Part 1

by Kael Moffat

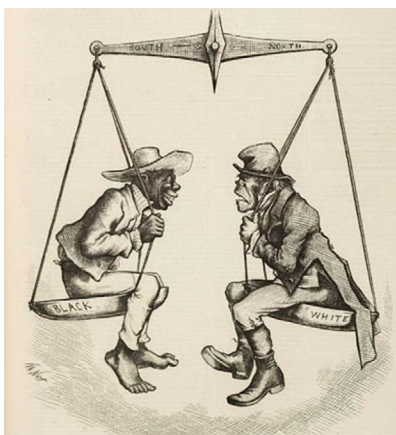


Before proceeding, I need to acknowledge that I am a White,¹ middle-class, heterosexual male, thus I do not experience racial discrimination like my BIPOC (Black Indigenous People of Color) sisters and brothers do. I have written this piece after years of introspection, learning about my place as a White person in our society, and committing myself to working towards a more racially just world. I am still a wanderer on this road and if something I write causes harm to readers of color, please call my attention to this.

I've written this piece as a kind of introduction to Critical Race Theory: where it came from and what some of its central pillars are. Tonally, this piece drifts between more academic and a bit more conversational. Hopefully it connects. Throughout this piece, I will use the term "CRT thinkers" to refer to scholars, lawyers, and writers working in this particular field. I will use a similar convention in the related field of Critical Legal Studies.

Over the past year or so as the term Critical Race Theory (CRT) has burst into everyday conversation and consciousness, yet the term is highly contested and not widely understood. Pundits and commentators on the political right have characterized CRT in a number of ways ranging from claiming that every White person is a racist to claiming that CRT is out to destroy the White race to claiming that CRT thinkers claim that skin color is the only way to identify a person and measure their worth.² In Washington we are seeing the same kinds of pushback against CRT as other parts of the country. Today (Feb. 15, 2022) several papers around the state picked up a *Washington Post* story about school districts all over the country struggling to teach DEI topics in the face of new laws prohibiting "teaching Critical Race Theory" or uproar from parents and civic groups.³ In a recent piece, Isabel Funk pointed out that heated debates over Critical Race Theory have played out in school district meetings on Mercer and Whidbey Islands as well as in Redmond and Snohomish;⁴ in another recent piece, Wilson Criscione wrote about how school board members in the state have felt threatened by anti-CRT community members in ways that

reflect what is happening in other parts of the country.⁵ On the state level, this past January H.B. 1886 was introduced by Kennewick's Brad Klippert into the State House to ban the teaching of CRT.⁶ Of course, these fights also affect libraries and librarians with the current book banning wave which is at least partially rooted in anti-CRT rhetoric.⁷



Now that it's part of our everyday political/cultural environment, it seems ever more crucial that we all have some working knowledge of CRT. Let us start with a definition, using the NAACP Legal Defense Fund's definition of the framework, which calls it "an academic and legal framework that denotes that systemic racism is part of American society—from education and housing to employment and healthcare [and that] racism is more than the result of individual bias and prejudice. It is embedded in laws, policies and institutions that uphold and reproduce racial inequalities."⁸ This article will look at how and why Critical Race Theory developed and point to its central tenets. A second piece in a later issue

will look in depth at the core idea of race as a social construction, as well as look more particularly at how the framework affects librarianship.

At the outset, let me point out that some current criticisms of the framework overreach in sometimes ridiculous ways. For example, opponents try to pitch CRT as a staple of public and higher education, yet I personally completed a bachelor's degree with honors, two master's degrees, a teaching certificate, coursework towards a PhD and worked for more than a decade in education (including teaching high school English and German) before encountering the term. While more inclusive elementary and secondary education curricula may embody aspects of CRT and many cultural institutions may hold similar views as CRT thinkers, it is certainly not a central theme in colleges and universities and remains such a "grad school" concept that many classroom teachers and librarians may struggle to even define it. It is complex enough that it could not be effectively taught in most primary or secondary schools. My hope is that after reading this piece, we can talk intelligently about the framework with community, campus, or other stakeholders.

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WHERE DID CRT COME FROM?

Significantly, CRT first developed in the field of legal studies when legal scholars, lawyers, and law students of color became frustrated with the fact that their perspectives were not included in crucial legal conversations. Angela Harris, now a Distinguished Professor at the UC Davis School of Law, noted that she found law school “disorienting” because her professors seemed to believe that issues of race, ethnicity, gender, sex, etc. were “apparently irrelevant to the law.”⁹ She and fellow students and faculty were annoyed that there was “no language in which to embark on a race-based, systematic critique of legal reasoning and legal institutions themselves.”¹⁰ They were not the first scholars and practitioners to argue that American law ignored large portions of the American public. CRT, in fact, grows out of a long-established tradition in American law that asks, in effect, For whom are laws created and whom do they protect? Most immediately, CRT is a response to Critical Legal Studies (CLS), which in turn developed from a perspective called Legal Realism, both of which called attention to the fact that laws are both created and applied within social and political contexts that shape peoples’ lives.

More traditional approaches to law teach that the law is “qualitatively different from politics,” a stance that is problematic because it ignores that the term politics has both a formal and an informal sense.¹¹ Formally, the term can signify the processes by which laws are proposed, created, debated, reformed, etc. But the term also carries an informal sense, one that feminist scholars developed,¹² that points out that formal politics rely on social relations and processes that drive and shape interaction. Where law is concerned, both senses of the term are at play. Many legal scholars point out that legal approaches that are essentially divorced from either or both senses of politics are absurd; if laws are created by social bodies that are driven by social relationships and social processes, how can they possibly be considered outside of social contexts? To even try to do so is to ignore the ways laws affect different populations in different ways.

LEGAL REALISM AND CRITICAL LEGAL STUDIES

During the late 1800s, legal scholars and practitioners, including Supreme Court Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes, developed a philosophical stance called Legal Realism. While more traditional approaches to law portrayed (and still portray) law as neutral and applying to all, Legal Realists pointed out that law frequently is partial and tends to safeguard the interests of society’s wealthiest and most powerful members, a well-known critique going back to the time of Plato in Athens.¹³ A related common notion in law is that, for any given case, the law should yield a specific correct outcome/judgment; Legal Realists challenged this notion, saying that the law could yield various outcomes/judgments. Legal decisions are, in this line of thinking, indeterminate; they are not determined solely by

the law itself.¹⁴ Decisions can be shaped by something as large and abstract as prevailing social assumptions and mores or as particular as how well lawyers frame their cases, for example. Decisions can be subject to the dispositions of judges, who could render contradictory decisions on similar cases or even render decisions that contradicted their own prior decisions in separate cases.

Another key facet of Legal Realism was the assertion that legal judgments should be pronounced with the common good in mind, meaning that the good of everyday people needed to be a significant factor in rendering judgments.¹⁵ They advocated for applying the law in ways that benefit the public good and not just powerful individuals. Significantly, Legal Realism is still a viable approach to law. While Legal Realism strives towards a more equal application of the law, it is problematic and can lead to damaging decisions. In matters of race, conceptions of the public good that are rooted in conceptions of White superiority¹⁶ can be harmful; the separate but equal doctrine, for example, may have professed to create equivalent facilities for BIPOC and Whites but it utterly failed to produce meaningful change and we still have both separate and unequal facilities and public services to this day.

Responding to cultural changes in the US during the 1960s and 1970s, another movement called Culture Legal Studies (CLS) developed, extending the arguments of Legal Realism. These thinkers argued that law is not only partial and indeterminate, but that the very process of lawmaking is so determined by powerful socio-economic forces that meaningful justice for vulnerable persons and communities is frequently unlikely. CLS thinkers applied principles of European social theorists like Max Weber, Karl Marx, Michel Foucault, and Antonio Gramsci to examine the ways politics, law, and economics can be manipulated to maintain social and political power. CLS thinkers introduced into American law a more robust critique of systems of power, showing that law is simply one factor among several (including economics, education, state-sanctioned violence, etc.) that keep power in the hands of those who already have it even when the language of laws themselves explicitly state a more egalitarian purpose.¹⁷

A number of thinkers who founded CRT initially identified with CLS but became critical of it because it did not account for race in challenging legal structures.¹⁸ While CLS thinkers showed that law is “thoroughly involved in constructing the rules of the game” of social and economic power, “selecting the eligible players” and the “field on which the game must be played,”¹⁹ they neglected to take into account that the game is not just played between workers and owners/elites, but also between White and “non-White” persons and communities.²⁰

CRT CRITIQUE

One way of understanding CRT is to look at its critique of Civil

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Rights (CR) law. In the 1970s and 1980s, it became obvious to CRT thinkers that the initial victories of the 1950s and 1960s had begun to stagnate and were even being challenged in courts, in legislative bodies, and in the public sphere. These thinkers realized that “new theories and strategies were needed to combat the subtler forms of racism” in the U.S. because the law had no way to deal with them as it was being taught.²¹ In standard legal discourse, race was a contested concept, but in the lived experience of BIPOC persons and communities, the effects of racism were (and still are) very real, affecting bodies, minds, property, and institutions. One of the reasons CRT thinkers singled out CR law is because it was seen as solid evidence that Legal Realism could be a pathway towards a more just society and they disagreed with the idea that simply changing laws without challenging underlying structural patterns could never be effective. A significant part of CRT’s critique of CR is an extension of Legal Realist and CLS critique of law being conceptualized and taught as something that exists over and above the context of real-life circumstances, as something divorced from lived experience.

CRT supporters took the CLS critique one step further, claiming that laws not only protect and serve the interests of social and economic elites but also create and reinforce racial hierarchies, tending to preserve the social power of public institutions that have been formed by the ideology of White superiority. Their methods rely heavily on historical, economic, and other types of analyses to show how racialized structures have been and continue to be fundamental to American legal systems. Ian Lopez noted that law “is one of the most powerful mechanisms by which any society creates, defines, and regulates itself,” thus to acknowledge that race is a social construct is “to conclude that race is at least partially legally produced.”²² In her influential article “Whiteness as Property,” Cheryl I. Harris, for example, examined how property law and the White/Black racial distinction developed together in the U.S. in such a way as to protect White property and status.²³ CRT scholarship demonstrates that we cannot have laws that are divorced from race relations because the law itself has helped create and maintain racial distinctions in the first place.

Critical Race Theory also critiques how the law conceptualizes racism in the first place. CR and other approaches to law tend to treat racism as unusual and irregular. Gary Peller noted that our legal structures see “racism [as] rooted in consciousness, in the cognitive process that attributes social significance to the arbitrary fact of skin color.”²⁴ These perspectives characterize manifestations of racism as individual and irrational expressions, outside of expected norms and “aberrational” (a term some CRT writers seem to prefer). Both traditional and CR scholarship downplayed the existence of race in different ways. Traditional legal scholars did and still do not even want to acknowledge issues of race in the first place, believing it to be immaterial. CR scholars had a more sophisticated argument; following both natural and social sciences, they asserted that race does not exist in any real scientific sense and

is the product of long-standing social relationships that could be corrected through legal and educational reform. In an ideal world, they felt “race makes no real difference between people, except as unfortunate historical vestiges of irrational discrimination.”²⁵ Therefore, CR-era lawyers worked to take down laws that required “outright formal exclusion of people of color” but seemed to assume “that the whole rest of the culture and [the everyday] segregation of schools, workplaces, and neighborhoods would remain the same.”²⁶ Thus, they were not interested in challenging the underlying systems of thinking and behavior that gave rise to racist laws in the first place.

As critics of this approach, CRT thinkers pointed out that not challenging these underlying systems of thinking ensures a kind of enduring second-class status for BIPOC and their communities. They also pointed out that racism is more than legal structures and institutions. Delgado and Stefancic noted that the most common experiences of racism involve less-concrete forms like unconscious bias, “microaggressions, nativism, institutional racism... indifferences...white privilege” and others.²⁷ Thus, while the law tries to treat racism as occasional and intentional behavior, BIPOC communities experience racism every day in abstract and systemic ways that can be hard to observe. Ijeoma Oluo wrote that being a “person of color in a white-dominated society is like being in an abusive relationship with the world” with “a new little hurt, a new little dehumanization” every day.²⁸ CRT thinkers point out that everyday racism, rooted in what I have called “informal” politics, affects the grander, more formal political processes of creating, executing, administering, and enforcing the law and that by not calling attention to this, law cannot move towards equity.

WHAT CRT HAS TO SAY

After looking at how CRT critiques important aspects of how American law addresses race, or refuses to address it, it would be important to look at the claims that CRT makes. Before coming to this, however, it is important to point out that while critics of CRT seem to assume it is a kind of fixed and settled perspective; but, this is far from the case. It would probably be more true to talk about it as a cluster of related viewpoints that address race and other forms of discrimination from multiple angles. While CRT may have started primarily as an African-American critique of legal scholarship and practice, other groups took the basic tenets and developed other critical perspectives. Founding CRT thinker Kimberlé Crenshaw, for example, applied a feminist approach to analysis and pointed out early on that unequal protection for women of color looks different than it does for both men of color and White women. She is one of the founding thinkers on intersectionality, or the perception that a person can experience multiple forms of (dis)advantage and that (dis)advantage is context sensitive.²⁹ Bryan McKinley Jones Brayboy developed a framework he called TribalCrit, short for tribal critical race theory, to show how legal and educational systems produce and reproduce anti-

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Indigeness.³⁰ Other perspectives include LatCrit,³¹ a distinctly Latinx approach to CRT, AsianCrit,³² QueerCrit,³³ and others. Under the CRT umbrella there are deeply divisive debates; for example, TribalCrit thinkers point out that reform and reparation efforts necessarily take place in the context of stolen land and ongoing genocidal patterns against Indigenous peoples. These debates reinforce intersectionality's point that there is no one-size-fits-all form of discrimination.

In spite of the fact that CRT is a very dynamic and sometimes contentious field, there are significant threads that hold these perspectives together. In a recent piece, Janel George boiled the framework's central tenets down to:

- "Recognition that race is not biologically real but is socially constructed and socially significant. It recognizes that science... refutes the idea of biological racial differences..."
- "Acknowledgement that racism is a normal feature of society and is embedded within systems and institutions, like the legal system, that replicate racial inequality..."
- "Rejection of popular understandings about racism, such as arguments that confine racism to a few 'bad apples.' CRT recognizes that racism is codified in law, embedded in structures, and woven into public policy [and] rejects claims of meritocracy or 'colorblindness'..."
- "Recognition of the relevance of people's everyday lives to scholarship. This includes embracing the lived experiences of people of color, including those preserved through storytelling..."³⁴

There's quite a lot to unpack here and in an article like this, I could not possibly do all these tenets justice. In part two of this article, I will focus particularly on the social construction of race since that is the very foundation of racism and the other tenets spring from it.

CONCLUSION

The crux of Critical Race Theory, then, is identifying enduring patterns of racial discrimination that shape institutional life in the U.S. and taking steps to counter them. Delgado and Stefancic pointed out that CRT has proven to be such a powerful, and flexible framework that other fields such as education, political science, women's studies, sociology, and other fields have employed it to help analyze ways in which racial divisions are created and maintained in other aspects of life.³⁵ This development seems only logical since, as Lopez pointed out, while law plays a crucial role in constructing race, "it does so within the larger context of society, and so law is only one of many institutions and forces implicated in the formation of races."³⁶ Librarians are, of course, acutely aware that libraries play a key educational role in the community, in

schools and universities, in governments, in organizations, etc. and so it would be particularly important for us to understand how the production and dissemination of knowledge can reinforce racial boundaries. Many of us also understand that libraries have played a very discomfiting role in American racism.³⁷ We need to be willing to "examine more closely the ways that seemingly race-neutral policies and practices served to reinforce and reify education inequity" because the "persistence of racism and the institutionalized threats to persons of color continue to reinforce the hostility of an 'unfriendly world.'"³⁸

It seems logical and maybe even inevitable that vocal and vehement objections to CRT are rising to a fevered pitch right now. According to a very recent national poll from University Massachusetts, most Americans are aware of racial segmentation in our society, are upset about it, and believe it needs to be part of our education system to some degree.³⁹ This, of course, is very threatening to persons and institutions that are heavily invested in the ideology of White superiority. Significantly, the outcry also seems to confirm what many antiracism scholars have pointed out: racism and the notion of White superiority it rests on are supposed to remain unspoken and unexamined. Librarians of conscience owe it to our communities to become more familiar with the terms of the debate and to stand for more inclusive systems of knowledge production and education. 📖

NOTES

1 Throughout this piece, I will capitalize terms like White, Black, Indigenous, etc. according to APA conventions.

2 For example, see the following: Eric Utter, "A Critique of Critical Race Theory" American Thinker (blog), November 8, 2021, https://www.americanthinker.com/blog/2021/11/a_critique_of_critical_race_theory.html; see also James Lindsay, "Eight Big Reasons Critical Race Theory Is Terrible for Dealing with Racism," New Discourses (blog), June 12, 2020, <https://newdiscourses.com/2020/06/reasons-critical-race-theory-terrible-dealing-racism/>

3 Laura Meckler and Hanna Natanson. "New Critical Race Theory Laws Have Teachers Scared, Confused, and Self-Censoring." Washington Post, February 14, 2022. <https://www.washingtonpost.com/education/2022/02/14/critical-race-theory-teachers-fear-laws/>; Reposted on February 15, 2022 in the Bellingham Herald and the Olympian, for example.

4 Isabel Funk. "Educational Merit of Critical Race Theory Sparks Heated Debate." Kent Reporter August 2, 2021, <https://www.kentreporter.com/news/educational-merit-of-critical-race-theory-sparks-heated-debate/>

5 Wilson Criscione. "Inland Northwest School Board Races Reflect *continued on next page*

National Tensions over Mask Mandates and Critical Race Theory." Inlander October 21, 2021, <https://www.inlander.com/spokane/inland-northwest-school-board-races-reflect-national-tensions-over-mask-mandates-and-critical-race-theory/Content?oid=22556515>

6 The text of the bill can be found at: <https://lawfilesextra.wa.gov/biennium/2021-22/Pdf/Bills/House%20Bills/1886.pdf?q=20220228170040>; see also Aaron Allen. "Black Lives Matter at School to Defeat Bill That Would Prohibit Teaching CRT in Public Schools." The Seattle Medium, (January 26, 2022), <https://seattlemedium.com/black-lives-matter-at-school-look-to-defeat-bill-that-would-prohibit-teaching-crt-in-public-schools/>

7 See Mead Gruver. "From Masks to Book Banning, Conservatives Take on Educators." AP News, (December 19, 2021), <https://apnews.com/article/conservatives-educators-coronavirus-masks-book-banning-cfe02e318d95070d468c88e7294d8aa9>

8 Legal Defense Fund. "Critical Race Theory: Frequently Asked Questions." NAACP, (n.d.), <https://www.naacpldf.org/critical-race-theory-faq/>

9 Angela Harris, foreword to Critical Race Theory: An introduction, ed. Richard Delgado & Jean Stefancic (New York: New York University Press, 3rd edition, 2017), xiv.

10 Harris, xv.

11 Kimberlé Crenshaw, Neil Gotanda, Gary Peller & Kendall Thomas, introduction to Critical Race Theory: The Key Writings that formed the Movement, ed. Kimberlé Crenshaw, Neil Gotanda, Gary Peller & Kendall Thomas (New York: The New Press, 1995), xviii

12 I am thinking here specifically of the well-known phrase, "The personal is political," the notion that large scale cultural patterns begin with personal decisions and interpersonal interactions. For a brief introduction to this phrase, see Linda Napikoski. "The Personal Is Political: Where Did this Women's Movement Slogan Come From? What Does It Mean?" ThoughtCo (January 3, 2020), <https://www.thoughtco.com/the-personal-is-political-slogan-origin-3528952>

13 "Legal Realism," in West's Encyclopedia of American Law, ed. Shirelle Phelps & Jeffery Lehman (Detroit: Gale, 2nd ed., v. 6, 2005), 243-247.

14 I am really boiling this important concept down, of course. For a richer discussion of this topic, see Lawrence B. Solum, "Indeterminacy, Determinacy, and Undeterminacy," Legal Theory Lexicon, October 17, 2021, https://lsolum.typepad.com/legal_theory_lexicon/legal-realism/

15 "Legal Realism."

16 I tend to use the term "White superiority" when talking about the ideology that drives White supremacy. I do this to clearly distinguish between cause and effect.

17 "Critical Legal Studies," West's Encyclopedia of American Law, ed. Shirelle Phelps & Jeffery Lehman (Detroit: Gale, 2nd ed., v. 6, 2005), 294-298.

18 Crenshaw, Gotanda, Peller & Thomas, xix.

19 Crenshaw, Gotanda, Peller, & Thomas, xxv.

20 I am using the term non-White here very consciously, following the thinking of Robert Jensen, who explained that he uses the term to call attention to the fact that in our society the term white is not merely descriptive—"...white is not just white, of course. White is power." See Robert Jensen, R. The Heart of Whiteness. (San Francisco: City Lights Books, 2005), p.2

21 Richard Delgado & Jean Stefancic, Critical Race Theory: An Introduction. (New York: New York University Press, 2017), p. 4

22 Ian Haney Lopez, White by Law: The Legal Construction of Race (10th Anniversary Edition) (New York: New York University Press, 2006), 7

23 An open copy of the article can be downloaded from Harvard Law Review, https://harvardlawreview.org/wp-content/uploads/1993/06/1707-1791_Online.pdf

24 Gary Peller, "Race-Consciousness," in Critical Race Theory: The Key Writings that formed the Movement, ed. Kimberlé Crenshaw, Neil Gotanda, Gary Peller & Kendall Thomas (New York: The New Press, 1995), 129.

25 Peller, p. 130

26 Crenshaw, Gotanda, Peller & K. Thomas, xvi.

27 Delgado & Stefancic, 31.

28 Ijeoma Oluo, So You Want to Talk about Race (New York: Seal Press), 19.

29 For a good introduction to the work of Crenshaw and intersectionality, see: Jane Coaston, "The Intersectionality Wars," Vox (May 28, 2019), <https://www.vox.com/the-highlight/2019/5/20/18542843/intersectionality-conservatism-law-race-gender-discrimination>

30 See Bryan McKinley Jones Brayboy, "Toward a Tribal

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Critical Race Theory in Education,” The Urban Review 37, no. 5 (2006): 425-446. at <https://nau.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/49/2018/04/Toward-a-Tribal-Critical-Race-Theory-in-Education.pdf>; for a quick introduction to Brayboy’s model, see: “What is TribalCrit?” National Education Policy Center (November 26, 2020), <https://nepc.colorado.edu/sites/default/files/publications/Newsletter%20tribalcrit.pdf>

31 Most good LatCrit sources are longer law papers, but a good shorter introduction to the thinking and development would be: Francisco Valdes. “Foreword—Latina/o Ethnicities, Critical Race Theory, and Post-Identity Politics in Postmodern Legal Culture: From Practices to Possibilities,” in LatCrit Primer: Volume 1 (LatCrit, Summer 2002), 3-22 [essentially pp. 3-12]

32 See Edward R. Curammeng, Tracy Lachia Buenavista & Stefanie Cariaga. “Asian American Critical Race Theory: Origins, Directions, and Praxis,” Center for Critical Race Studies at UCLA (June 2017), https://issuu.com/almaiflores/docs/ec_tlb_sc_asianam_crt

33 See Mitsunori Misawa. “Social Justice Narrative Inquiry: A Queer Crit Perspective,” Adult Education Research Conference (2012). <https://newprairiepress.org/aerc/2012/papers/34>

34 Janel Geroe. “A Lesson in Critical Race Theory,” Human Rights Magazine 46, no. 2 (January 2021), https://www.americanbar.org/groups/crsj/publications/human_rights_magazine_home/civil-rights-reimagining-policing/a-lesson-on-critical-race-theory/

35 Delgado & Stefancic, p. 7.

36 Lopez, p.7

37 For a quick piece on this, see Anna Gooding-Call. “A History of Racism in American Public Libraries,” Book Riot (March 8, 2021), <https://bookriot.com/racism-in-american-public-libraries/>; while this analysis looks at public libraries specifically, we must also keep in mind the ways other libraries have also promoted White superiority.

38 Dixon, A.D. & Anderson, C.K.R. “Introduction: Critical Race Theory and Education: Singing a ‘New’ Song,” in Critical Race Theory in Education: All God’s Children Got a Song, ed. Adrienne D. Dixon, Cecilia Rosseau Anderson, Jamel K. Donner (New York: Routledge, 2017), 1-2.

39 “UMass Amherst Poll Examines Americans’ Views of Race Issues, Including Critical Race Theory, Systemic Racism and Reparations,” University of Massachusetts Amherst (January 14, 2022), <https://www.umass.edu/news/article/umass-amherst-poll-examines-americans-views-race-issues-including-critical-race-theory>

CRT Tenets Sidebar

If you would like to learn more about the specific tenets of CRT, below are some resources:

Epoch Education YouTube Playlist: What Is Critical Race Theory...Really?

This is a series of webinars on core principles of CRT (each is around 30-35 minutes) put on by Epoch Education, a consulting firm out of Oakland, CA. This series closely follows the discussion of CRT in Richard Delgado and Jean Stefancic’s [Critical Race Theory: An Introduction](#).

- Tenet 1: [Whiteness as Property](#)
- Tenet 2: [Counter-Storytelling](#)
- Tenet 3: [The Permanence of Racism](#)
- Tenet 4: [Interest Convergence](#)
- Tenet 5: [Critique of Liberalism](#)
- [Wrap up and Q & A](#)

Below are selected resources on these tenets.

Counter-storytelling

An important aspect of CRT is a concept called counter-storytelling (also called counter narratives), which springs from the notion that law is rooted in particular narratives or accounts of the past that justify current relationships of power. For example, think about the power of the “Columbus discovered America” narrative; this story is deeply rooted in Western (European and American) ethnocentrism and has been used for more than 500 years to justify laws and procedures that have subjugated Indigenous peoples in this hemisphere. TribalCrit counters this story by telling the stories of the Indigenous peoples who were already living here when Europeans came here. Counter stories challenge the very assumptions that laws are based on to show how they foster discrimination

- [Introduction to Critical Race Theory and Counter-Storytelling](#) posted by the Noise Project, a community science project started by the Cornell Lab of Ornithology to foster citizen science.
- [Counter-Narratives](#) is a one-pager published by the Center for Intercultural Dialogue that gives a pretty bare-bones introduction to the concept and the role counter narratives play in increasingly multiracial societies.

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Interest Convergence/Critique of Liberalism

A particularly uncomfortable assertion of CRT is that dominant groups, Whites in the case of American racism, do not act to dismantle oppression until it is in their self-interest. For many persons who identify as White, this can be a really difficult concept to grapple with because we want to see ourselves as “good” people who want to do the “right” thing, yet we are so influenced by racialized narratives that we have to learn that what we oftentimes do not know enough about the situations and experiences of BIPOC communities to understand what the “right” thing is from their perspectives. When White persons try to impose their sense of right and wrong, they often end up unwittingly reasserting or reaffirming concepts of White superiority.

- [Brown v. Board of Education and the Interest-Convergence Dilemma](#) is a classic piece of CRT literature from founding thinker Derrick A. Bell, Jr. in which he demonstrates how White support for the Brown v. Board case actually reinforced the position of White political and legal privilege.
- [I, Racist: Confessions of a White Liberal](#) is a post from Medium.com in which the White-identifying author, Shya Scanlon, reflects how even a self-confessed liberal can help racism endure through unconscious bias.

Permanence of Racism/Whiteness as Property

CRT thinkers have pointed out that American racism has persisted and adapted for so long because it is so deeply tied up in concepts of property and ownership, who has the right to “own” property. Cheryl I. Harris’s essay, “Whiteness as Property,” is a classic piece of CRT scholarship in which she shows how the concept of property ownership in the Colonies was tied to the “seizure and appropriation of labor” and land from Native Americans; shortly afterwards, labor was seized from Africans. From around the 1660s, Colonial and then American law began to rest on the notion that to be White was to be free and eligible to own property, while to be non-White was to be enslaved or lesser and therefore ineligible to own property.

- [Critical Characteristics of Whiteness as Property](#) is a series of excerpts from Harris’s article that serves as a summary of her argument. ([Whiteness as Property](#) is Harris’s groundbreaking article. It is quite long and complex.)
- [Systemic Racism, Explained by Newton’s First Law of Motion](#) is a post from Tim Wise who explains how racialized American law and custom dictate(d) the huge disparity between White and Black homeownership. 📖

Professional Imperative: One Health Initiative Task Force Final Report (2008), 15.

7 Peter MacGarr Rabinowitz, Marguerite Pappaioanou, Kevin Louis Bardosh, and Lisa Conti, “A Planetary Vision for One Health,” *BMJ Global Health* 3, no. 5 (2018): e001137–e001137, <https://doi.org/10.1136/bmjgh-2018-001137>.

8 Ibraheem M Karaye and Jennifer A Horney, “The Impact of Social Vulnerability on COVID-19 in the U.S.: An Analysis of Spatially Varying Relationships,” *American Journal of Preventive Medicine* 59, no. 3 (2020): 317–25, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.amepre.2020.06.006>.

9 Mark L Wieland, Gladys B Asiedu, Kiley Lantz, Adeline Abbenyi, Jane W Njeru, Ahmed Osman, Miriam Goodson, et al., “Leveraging Community Engaged Research Partnerships for Crisis and Emergency Risk Communication to Vulnerable Populations in the COVID-19 Pandemic,” *Journal of Clinical and Translational Science* 5, no. 1 (2020): e6–e6, <https://doi.org/10.1017/cts.2020.47>.

10 Nick Kerman, Sophia Gran-Ruaz, and Michelle Lem, “Pet Ownership and Homelessness: a Scoping Review,” *Journal of Social Distress and the Homeless* 28, no. 2 (2019): 106–14, <https://doi.org/10.1080/10530789.2019.1650325>.

11 Michelle Cleary, Denis Visentin, Deependra Kaji Thapa, Sancia West, Toby Raeburn, and Rachel Kornhaber, “The Homeless and Their Animal Companions: An Integrative Review,” *Administration and Policy in Mental Health and Mental Health Services Research* 47, no. 1 (2019): 47–59, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10488-019-00967-6>.

12 “COVID-19 Health Information Outreach Award,” Network of the National Library of Medicine, accessed November 18, 2021, <https://old.nlm.gov/pnr/funding/covid-19-health-information-outreach-award>.

13 James Gorman, “Denmark Will Kill All Farmed Mink, Citing Coronavirus Infections,” *The New York Times*, accessed March 5, 2022, <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/11/04/health/covid-mink-mutation.html>.

14 “Attribution-NonCommercial 4.0 International (CC BY-NC 4.0),” Creative Commons, accessed November 18, 2021, <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/>.

15 “OSF Home,” Open Science Framework, accessed November 18, 2021, <https://osf.io/>.

16 “Choose a License,” Creative Commons, accessed November 18, 2021, <https://creativecommons.org/choose>.

Finding Solidarity and Fighting Impostor Syndrome as a Library School Student

by Jacob Lackner



Sometimes in the back of my head, I feel the same old feeling that it is never going to be enough. It doesn't matter if I do well in my classes, if I volunteer, if I have library experience, if I write for *Alki*. It's just never going to be enough. I'll flub every interview, I'll never make it as a librarian; my career is ending before it even started. To put it simply, I don't belong. I'm a perpetual impostor, whether in school or behind the desk. The term "impostor syndrome" has gained common currency—the feeling that you're the only one faking it, and everyone else is more competent. It's not a rare phenomenon in libraries. One study¹ suggests at least one in eight librarians show signs of this phenomenon.

Impostor syndrome goes hand in hand with the specter of library anxiety, provoking similar flashes of shame, fear, and guilt. Library anxiety is the feeling of dread that people may experience when entering a library or interacting with library staff and services. There is a considerable amount of literature² written about library anxiety, but it is important to acknowledge that library students, librarians, and library staff of all levels may endure similar emotions. For centuries, libraries have positioned themselves as gatekeepers to human knowledge. Even if a patron deems themselves worthy to ask a question, the person behind the desk may never feel truly worthy to answer. It doesn't matter if they have an MLIS, if they've completed training, if they've learned the collection, it's never going to be enough.

Nicola Andrews³ argues that the idea of impostor syndrome may serve to obscure systemic problems in libraries by reframing them as internal doubt. If we internalize that feelings of inadequacy are caused by our own brain chemistry, rather than our environment, our workplace is absolved of guilt. Additionally, it is always worth pushing back against the disproportionate burdens that libraries place on BIPOC and other marginalized library workers.⁴ These burdens are not just inside their heads, and it is not incumbent upon them to fix these problems without help. Workplaces must take responsibility for building diverse and inclusive spaces by devoting financial resources to these concerns, not dumping them

on people who are already overworked and underpaid.

Just like the term "impostor syndrome," recent years have seen the concept of "self-care" become increasingly prominent.⁵ Advocating for mental and physical health is laudable, but not if it lets employers off the hook. Meditation, yoga, and long walks are worthy practices, but they can not rectify low pay or a hostile work environment. Sometimes the most healthy thing we could do would be to take time off—which is a luxury for most.

More than anything, we need to recognize that the systems that govern this world did not design it for us to feel good. Nothing is ever supposed to be enough, and our society positions satisfaction always out of reach, satisfaction is presented in a way that will always be out of reach, whether that's a transfer, a promotion, or an award. If you ever do feel like you truly, genuinely belong, then you would have no incentive to hurl yourself back into the fray. Libraries are vulnerable to this line of thinking, and when we mix it with the idea of vocational awe,⁶ our internal narrative gets really toxic. We feel an incredible passion and pride in the library mission, while simultaneously believing that we could never be good enough to carry it out. We're doing such good work that we'll call it noble even when it eats us alive.

As a graduate student and library student worker, I know I only have one window into impostor syndrome. I would feel terribly uncomfortable prescribing grand solutions to this kind of endemic problem that affects so many different people in so many different ways. I don't think I have it the worst, and I know that I have abundant privilege that shields me from the most crushing blows. So, I can only speak to where I am at the moment. As a student, my first line of defense against impostor syndrome has always been to talk with my friends. It is comforting to learn that I am not the only person struggling with the concept of ontologies or unraveling the mysteries of design thinking. I am continually amazed how people will drop everything to help, whether that means writing a recommendation form or picking me up from the emergency room. They remind me that I have a place in the world.

In graduate school, finding friends is a challenge, and I feel lucky every single day. When I think of what I would advise my fellow classmates, I would recommend making sure that you have the structures in place to build friendships. Our small group bonded together over a shared Discord chat server, but it doesn't have to happen online. The important part is to create an environment

Jacob Lackner is a second year MLIS student at the University of Washington and a Student Assistant at the University of Washington Libraries. He is the current Student Representative to the WLA Board, and served as interim chair of the Library and Information Student Section in 2021.

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where people are free to express their identities and engage with each other on a deeper level.

In the same vein, I have found joy and understanding when I have bonded with my fellow student coworkers at our library job. I have taken refuge in comparing stories over plates of spicy Korean squid. I can recognize my own struggles in the struggles of my colleagues, and I can understand that my experiences are not aberrations or anomalies. Right now, I know that the problems we face are relatively small, but I can see that what we've learned, and how we lean on each other, will prepare us well for the road ahead.

When I vent to my colleagues, I remember that the library is just an ordinary workplace, not a sacred temple. We don't have to be perfect to work here.

During my first year in the program, I worked as a reader/grader, and I came in contact with the incredibly motivated organizers at UAW Local 4121⁷ at the University of Washington.

Reader/graders in the Information School typically do not have much interaction with each other, or much of a support structure. With the union's help, we began conversations just to talk with each other about what was going on in our lives. Both the organizers and the other reader/graders taught me to be resilient, creative, and to always look for connections to build. They do their best to make sure nobody feels alone, forming working groups to tackle specific issues, and organizing energy around local labor campaigns. I have learned from their example to take every concern seriously, and that listening is the first job of strong leadership.

Solidarity, whether in a union, a professional organization, or at a dinner table, is a powerful feeling. It doesn't completely eliminate imposter syndrome, but when I'm listening to my friends and offering to help—or when they're listening to me and offering to help—I'm too distracted to feel doubt. Teamwork takes precedence over the voice in the back of my head. All of my personal experiences have taught me that solidarity is powerful, but it is hard work. We needed dedicated space, time, and energy to talk to each other, whether that is online or over dinner. I know that in the future, I must be intentional in my actions, and create a place for these kinds of conversations.

Still, there are days I feel utterly lost. I have to remind myself that there are still some good days, and that I don't always feel like an imposter—when I introduce a fellow student to Summit borrowing requests, when I stitch together the beginnings of a

literature review, when I make a dumb joke in the Zoom chat box and get a single “lol.” There are times that it all makes sense, and when I feel a real sense of purpose. I know when I graduate from my program, I will still have plenty of self doubt and internalized fears, but I have learned to create and cultivate communities to have people to lift each other up. I know how I feel like an imposter may not be how you feel like an imposter, but I hope what worked for me is useful in your fight. I like to believe there's a library out there for me, even if I have to search for a long time to find it. I don't know for certain, but I think there's one out there for you, too. 📖

“Solidarity, whether in a union, a professional organization, or at a dinner table, is a powerful feeling. Teamwork takes precedence over the voice in the back of my head.”

NOTES

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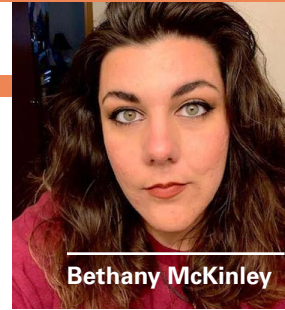
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So, You Want to Be a Librarian? a play in one act

by Bethany McKinley



SO, YOU WANT TO BE A LIBRARIAN?

A PLAY IN ONE ACT

by

Bethany McKinley

Cast of Characters

Bethany: as herself

UNNAMED: as itself

Setting

Inside my brain

Time

Constantly

UNNAMED: STEP ONE: PICK AN UNDERGRAD SCHOOL AND APPLY.

Bethany: Check. Evergreen is just around the corner, and I made basically nothing last year due to COVID so funding through FAFSA is a no-brainer. I just hope they'll let me use 2020's income... Why did they switch it from using the past year's income to two years prior?

Bethany McKinley is a junior at The Evergreen State College. She enjoys all crafts and hobbies and rarely has less than six ongoing projects at a time; currently, she's refurbishing a dresser, revamping her sewing space, halfway through making yet another floor-length skirt (with huge pockets, of course), deciphering an 1820s knit pattern for lace gloves, embroidering the "This is fine" meme onto 1730s-replica tie-on pockets, and crocheting slippers. She doesn't question why she feels the need to be constantly producing things and instead relishes her many skills and talents.

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UNNAMED: STEP TWO:—

Bethany: Wait... I wasn't quite finished with step one.

UNNAMED: —QUICKLY ADJUST TO A WACKY SCHOOL THAT DOESN'T BELIEVE IN GRADES AND STUDENTS CREATE THEIR OWN DEGREES.

Bethany: OK, super weird but I can dig it. I'll have to reframe everything I know about schooling, but I can make it work. What's the difference between a Path and a Program? And only one class per term? Or are they quarters? Semesters? Hold on. What in the world is a geoduck?

UNNAMED: STEP THREE: GET A JOB IN THE LIBRARY FIELD.

Bethany: What? Now? It's only my first term. I don't even know what a self-evaluation is. And an Academic Statement? I have to REQUEST a GPA?? What is this place?!

UNNAMED: STEP SEVEN: PICK A GRAD PROGRAM.

Bethany: Whoa! What happened to steps four through six? Well, I got a job at the campus library so that takes care of step... 2? No, 3.

UNNAMED: STEP 2: FIGURE OUT HOW YOU'RE GOING TO FUND A \$50,000 GRADUATE DEGREE. YOUR BIWEEKLY PAYCHECKS TOTAL \$200 AND YOU DEDICATE 40 HOURS A WEEK TO SCHOOLWORK SO THERE'S NO TIME TO GET ANOTHER JOB.

Bethany: Geez, OK, um, hold on. I can do this. Where are we? Oh yeah, grad programs... UW! Crap, that's in Seattle... iSchool! Perfect! I'll apply there. What comes next, again?

UNNAMED: DON'T FORGET TO TAKE CARE OF YOUR PETS AT HOME AND SPEND TIME WITH YOUR HUSBAND. THEY'RE COUNTING ON YOU TO FIGURE THIS OUT. WHEN WAS THE LAST TIME YOU CALLED YOUR BEST FRIEND BACK IN CALIFORNIA? OR YOUR PARENTS? THE LEAST YOU COULD DO AFTER MOVING 1,000 MILES AWAY IS CALL THEM OCCASIONALLY.

Bethany: It's only been... a few weeks. I'll call them tonight. Maybe in between making dinner and walking the dog? Wait, is it my night or my husband's to make dinner? What day is it?

UNNAMED: STEP 12: MAKE SURE YOU'RE BUILDING YOUR SKILLS AT WORK. YOU NEED TO VOLUNTEER FOR PROJECTS, OTHERWISE YOU'RE JUST WASTING YOUR TIME. YOU'RE WASTING EVERYONE'S TIME. I BET YOU HAVEN'T DECIDED WHAT KIND OF LIBRARIAN YOU WANT TO BE, HUH?

Bethany: Hey now, I volunteer plenty. I just ran a successful library event and I offered to write an artic— What do you mean "what kind of librarian"? There's more than one type?

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UNNAMED: STEP 5B9: UW'S APPLICATION WINDOW OPENS THIS DECEMBER FOR FALL 2023-24 AND YOU STILL HAVEN'T DRAFTED YOUR ESSAY RESPONSES. YOU'RE RUNNING OUT OF TIME.

Bethany: This December? Really?! It's only February, that's enough time, right?

UNNAMED: STEP #5@: NONE OF YOUR CLASSES HAVE ANYTHING TO DO WITH LIBRARY STUDIES. YOU'D BETTER CREATE AN INDEPENDENT STUDY CONTRACT SO GRAD SCHOOLS WILL LOOK AT YOU.

Bethany: What? How do I do that? What does that even mean?!

UNNAMED: YOU STILL HAVEN'T FINISHED MAKING YOUR C.V. OR STARTED LOOKING AT GRADUATE FUNDING OPTIONS. DID YOU GET YOUR RECOMMENDATION LETTERS TOGETHER? WHAT ABOUT THAT ARTICLE YOU PROMISED TO WRITE FOR WORK?

Bethany: I— I think—

UNNAMED: WHEN WAS THE LAST TIME YOU CHANGED THE OIL IN YOUR CAR? PAY ATTENTION IN CLASS. YOU'RE GOING TO FAIL IF YOU DON'T FOCUS. THEN IT WON'T MATTER IF YOU DO ANYTHING ELSE BECAUSE NO ONE WILL HIRE YOU WITHOUT A BA.

Bethany: I am! I can do everything I need to do but I need time! If I could just stop doubting myself...

SELF-DOUBT: YOU'RE GOING TO FAIL. YOU'RE GOING TO LET EVERYONE DOWN.

Bethany: ENOUGH! I've had it with your negativity! I have four associate's degrees, an amazing emotional AND professional support system who ALL know I'm capable. Hell, I know I'm capable. So why are you here?!

SELF-DOUBT: YOU NEED ME. I KEEP YOU GROUNDED.

Bethany: Grounded? More like buried! I don't need you. You need me, and I say it's time for you to leave.

(Self-Doubt exits stage left with its head down, dejected)

Bethany: Whew! Finally, some damn peace. (pause) Now, what did it mean when it said there was more than one type of librarian? 📖

What Are You Working On? a photo essay

by WLA Community

Alki Editor Ray Zill asks the Washington Library Association community, "What are you working on?" The response includes photos depicting book displays, renovations, grand openings, new collections, crafts, and art—finished or in progress. Big or small, it is important to share our victories and our works in progress.



Valentines for Seniors

Display by Michelle Haffner

Teen Services Librarian at Richland Public Library

Photo by Kristi Thien

Mid-Columbia Meals on Wheels

The Richland Public Library worked with Mid-Columbia Meals on Wheels and local senior living centers to deliver over 900 valentines to local seniors. We distributed take-home kits with valentine-making supplies and hosted an in-person program so that library patrons could make valentines, then donate them back to the library to be distributed. This was our second year running the program, and we can't wait to watch it grow next year!

Book Love

Display and photo by Erika Maxwell

Teacher-Librarian at Ridgeline High School

Celebrating RHS staff's favorite books and love of reading for the month February! I invited staff to take a picture with a favorite book and posted the pictures outside the door for all students to see. We continue to add new pictures all month long.



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Blind Date With a Book

Display and photo by Sarah Phelan-Blamires
Public Services Librarian at Whitman County Library

Patrons found the book of their dreams at the Blind Date with a Book annual program at Whitman County Library in Colfax, which ran February 1-28. Participants browsed the display of wrapped up books, read the hints, chose their favorite, checked out, unwrapped and enjoyed! With a rating scale of “major dud” to “red hot,” each blind date book came with a Rate Your Date slip, which serves as entry into the prize drawing for a date at a local restaurant.

Blind Date With a Book!

Created by student employees and staff
Photo by Zoe Wissner
UW Bothell & Cascadia College Campus Library

For Valentine's Day 2022, the UW Bothell & Cascadia College Campus Library helped users secure dates... with our Recreational Reading books! To prevent readers from judging the books by their covers, staff wrapped and attached original personal ads for each of the prospective dates. One contender was *Friday Black* by Nana Kwame Adjei-Brenyah, writing: "Female, 27, single, Cancer—I'm the type of love that will wait years for you, even when my family keeps us apart".



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Black History Month

Display by Qing Stellwagen and James Rosenzweig Librarian of Diversity & Inclusion Studies and Librarian of Children's Studies, Education, Literacy at Eastern Washington University Libraries
Photo by Emily Vickers
Librarian of Film, Music, Theater at Eastern Washington University Libraries

EWU Libraries is hosting a Black History Month book display in the lobby of JFK Library for the entire month of February. All the materials featured are available to check out!

WCLS in Whatcom County presents library stories

To inspire more people to visit libraries, to use library services and to advocate for local libraries, Whatcom County Library System Community Relations staff created and launched a podcast, WCLS in Whatcom County Presents Library Stories. The show launched May 2021 and has produced 19 episodes as of March 2022. Listen at wcls.org/podcast or find it on major podcast platforms. The show can also be heard on KAVZ-102.5 LPFM, the Voice of the Valley. By year end 2021, the podcast episodes had more than 1,000 downloads.

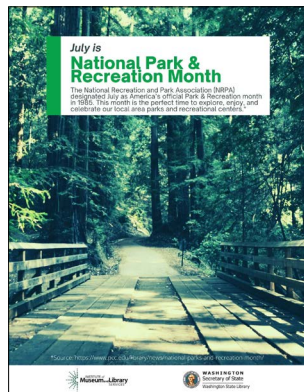
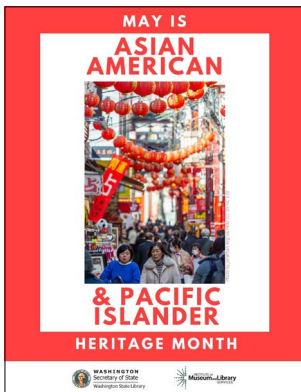


Richard

Painting and photo by Willow Brooks
Library Assistant at Lacey Timberland Library

Richard lives at the Happily Ever Esther Farm Sanctuary and he is the most majestic muse of a rooster I've ever seen.
Medium: acrylic on 6x6" canvas, 2/21/2022

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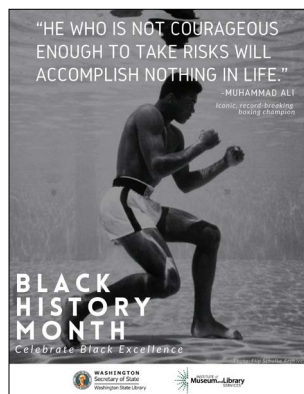
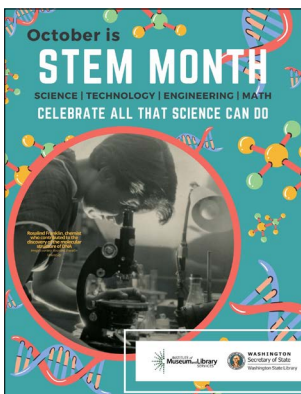


Monthly Observances Posters

Created by Sara Harrington

ILS Branch Librarian at Washington State Library

A sampling of monthly observances posters created for use in the Washington State Library's Institutional Services branches. These posters are meant to engage patrons by catching their interest and inspiring them to use the collection (or any programs the library may be running) to learn more about that month's theme.



Black History Month at the Redmond Library

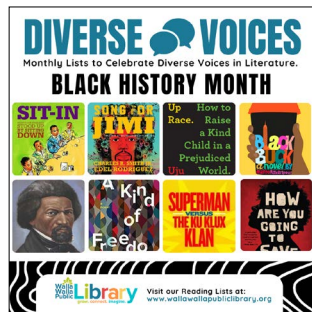
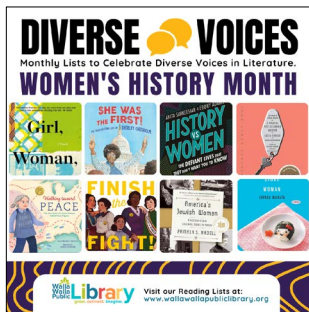
Display and photo by Linda Mauer and Janet Keller

Children's Services Librarian and Public Services Assistant at King County Library System

We celebrate Black History Month in February; come and read Children's books by Black authors, Black illustrators, and Black characters!



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Diverse Voices: February, March, April

Created by Lindsay Tebeck

Library Technician at Walla Walla Public Library & UW MLIS Student

"Diverse Voices" digital reading list promotion from February to April of 2022. Every month the Walla Walla Public Library highlights reads celebrating diverse voices in literature.



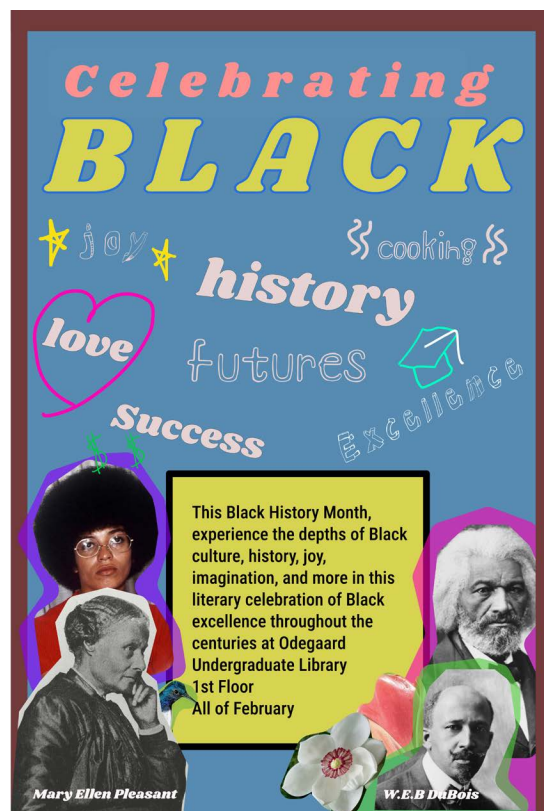
Black History Month Book Display Poster

Created by Mei'ani Eyre

Learning Services at Odegaard Undergraduate Library, University of Washington

Medium: digital poster

This poster for the Black History Month Book Display celebrates the lives and traditions of critical Black figures in U.S. history, activism, and literature.



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Dancing Feet!

Display and photo by Kathy Smargiassi
Children's Librarian at Snohomish Library

We can't do in-person storytimes yet, so our bulletin boards invite children to do the actions with their adults.



Book Themed Bookmarks

Created and photographed by JoLyn Reisdorf
Kobetic Branch Manager at Tacoma Public Library

Pictured is Lit Stitch: 25 Cross-Stitch Patterns for Book Lovers by Book Riot and an almost-finished cross-stitch bookmark. JoLyn found this book at her library and has been working through the stitches.



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Book it Back!

Created and photographed by Brooke Thomas
Library Technician at Spokane Community College Library

As a step in the effort to eliminate overdue fines, the Spokane Community College Library hosted an amnesty period called "Book it Back" in February of 2022. Our preliminary data shows over \$6,000 of fines were waived and at least 20 items were returned which were able to re-enter circulation! We decorated the library space and had help from SCC's marketing team to get the word out with mailed postcards and a video about a book's journey back to the library.

Field Guide and Journal enriches community one-read program

Whatcom READS is an annual community one-book program in Bellingham and Whatcom County. For the 14th annual event in 2022, the community read *Greenwood* by Michael Christie. To enrich the reading experience, Whatcom READS organizers applied for and received a \$6,000 grant from Humanities Washington and the National Endowment for the Humanities as part of the American Rescue Plan of 2021 approved by the U.S. Congress and signed into law by President Joseph R. Biden. The grant funded the Whatcom READS Field Guide & Journal. The project's goal is to further the conversations and personal reflections generated by *Greenwood*, which is multi-generational saga that explores themes of inheritance and the environment.

The grant funded the printing and production of 2,500 guides, which include tree identifications, recommended trails, blank pages for drawing/writing, Mountain School lesson plans from North Cascades Institute, a land acknowledgement, a poem by Washington State Poet Laureate Rena Priest, and cultural lessons from members of Lummi Nation and Nooksack Tribe. Many partners contributed to this beautiful guide, which were distributed during Whatcom READS' March 3-5 community events and via local businesses, museums and organizations. Whatcom READS is presented by all the public and academic libraries in Bellingham and Whatcom County and community partner Village Books. Learn more at whatcomreads.org.



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Hoh Lake With Grassy Peak

Photograph by Douglas Williams

Digitization by North Olympic Library System (NOLS)

In late 2021, NOLS received and digitized a small collection of photos which document a backpacking trip across the Olympic Peninsula in July 1944. These 43 photos have been uploaded to the Washington Rural Heritage site and document natural features in Olympic National Forest and Olympic National Park over 50 years ago. The photos were donated by the daughter of Douglas Williams, the primary photographer. You can visit the collection at https://washingtonruralheritage.org/digital/collection/nols/search/searchterm/DW*/field/identi/mode/all/conn/and

Spring sun shining on Verses waiting to be read Encouraging growth

Photo and haiku by Robin Jeffrey
Circulation Supervisor at Olympic College.

Olympic College library staff worked to create shelf space and select poetry materials from the main collection to create the new Poetry Corner. We also left space for displays; presently we have posters (created by librarian Shannon Plummer) about the Aratea manuscript poems. We are partnering with faculty and staff from Olympic College's student literary journal *Blended* to plan a poetry reading and activities associated with the new collection for National Poetry Month.



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Northwest Reading Room Grand Opening

Photo by Terry Walker

Archive Librarian at Yakima Valley Libraries

On February 15, 2022, Yakima Valley Libraries Northwest Reading Room celebrated a low-key grand opening with small, invitation-only tours that included Sara Jones, Washington State Librarian and local librarian Kyle Huizenga, shown here retrieving requested material. The Northwest Reading Room is designed to provide a physical environment—temperature, relative humidity, and UV exposure—that will secure and conserve these collections for today's and tomorrow's researchers.

Reference Desk Removal at St. Martin's University

Photo by Kael Moffat

Information Literacy Librarian at O'Grady Library

The O'Grady Library is removing our big ol' reference desk from days gone by to put in a "living room" section in the learning commons. Right now the library has several renovation projects going on, including adding a cafe nook and two offices on the lower level.



Washington State University Library Renovation

Project and photo by Steve Bisch

Circulation Supervisor at WSU Tri-Cities

Library renovation at WSU Tri-Cities' Max Benitz Memorial Library, from August to October 2021, moved collections from ground floor to second floor. Patrons love the change.



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Zine Collection

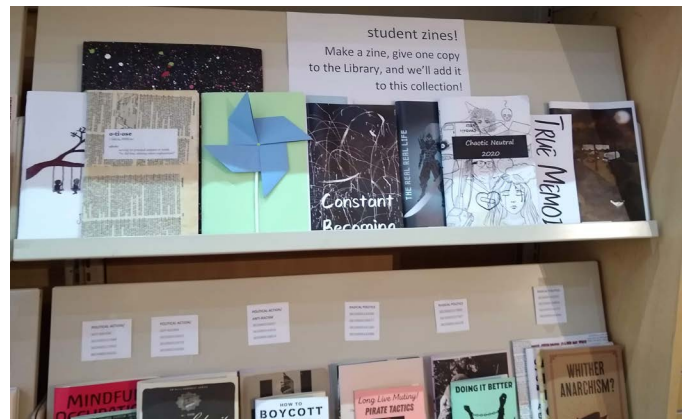
Project and photo by Sophia E. Du Val
Scholarly Communication Librarian at Whitworth University

Whitworth University in Spokane, WA, has begun to collect zines! We have purchased, or received via donation, almost 100 zines for our small (but growing!) collection of zines across a wide variety of topics. We are proud to offer this collection to our community, and we hope that students will be inspired to create their own zines as well.

Zine Cart

Photo and project by Elena Maans-Lorincz
Outreach Librarian at Bellevue College

The library, in conjunction with our RISE Makerspace on campus, created a Zine Cart. On this cart are most of the supplies needed to create a zine. Zines as a final assignment has become more popular at Bellevue College. To ensure students are not spending their money on supplies they may not have or use again, we have a cart they can use.



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U.S. Supreme Court Nominees

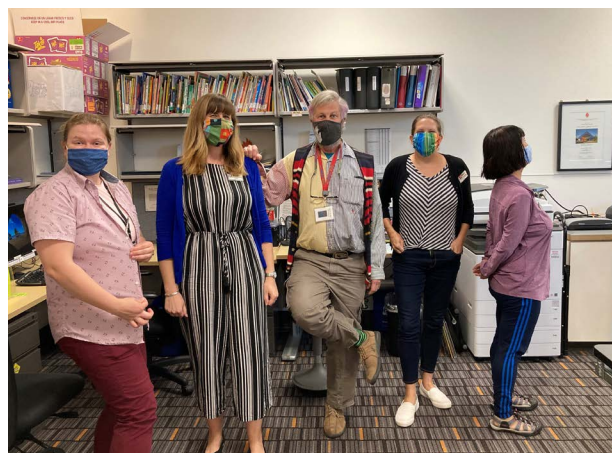
Display and photo by Meredith Kostek
Research, Instruction, & Engagement Librarian at Lewis & Clark
College, Boley Law Library

This is a display for the upcoming U.S. Supreme Court nominee. Students can learn about the top 4 contenders, then use glass beads to "vote" for their favorite. Books also feature biographies of Supreme Court Justices and the process of nomination. When the nominee is appointed, we'll compare our results with President Biden's final choice. Lewis & Clark Law School's Boley Law Library is in Portland, Oregon.

Stripe Day at Skyway Library

Photo by anonymous

Nearly every Friday, King County Library System's Skyway library has a dress theme—this one from a few months back was "stripes"!



12-Piece Double Boat and 30-Piece Apricot Kusudama Origami

Created and photographed by Melissa Rhoades
Public Services Specialist at Spokane Valley Library (Spokane
County Library District)

During the Washington State mask mandate, some greeters (a.k.a. mask police) stationed in the lobby at Spokane Valley Library began creating origami to engage customers and reduce the strain and tedium of the greeter position. This simple act vastly increased positive customer interactions. Full story at: <https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/crafting-connections-tentative-times-melissa-rhoades>



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Systems Thinking

Created and photographed by Annie Downey
Associate Dean and Director at University of Washington Tacoma Library

This collage is a reflection on the systems that contain, constrain, and nurture me. In March 2020, I began this collage on my office wall as a living visual of my pandemic thoughts. I disassembled the wall collage when I moved from California to Washington in May 2021, kept creating pieces, and reassembled it in November 2021 to celebrate the "winding down" of the pandemic. Then Omicron hit, which supports my final conclusion: nature always wins.
Medium: collage with pen, paper, and business cards

Reading in a Winter Wonderland!

Display and photo by Kelsey Hamilton
Customer Experience Assistant at Orting Library

Winnie the Pooh and friends visited the Orting Library children's area in January to bring some seasonal cheer and encourage children to read.



Peace Tree

Created and photographed by Sue Hart and Pyper Stever
Youth Services Department at Ellensburg Public Library

Peace Tree is a community art collaborative project that includes patron-created drawings and words of their vision of peace.
Medium: wax resist technique on paper plates

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Milestones

Milestones focuses on significant moments for libraries statewide – recognizing notable new hires, transitions, expansions and retirements, as well as remembrances of those who have passed. We're looking for submissions, of approximately 250 words, that highlight notable accomplishments in the careers of those profiled. Photographs are encouraged. Please send information to alkieditor@wla.org.

Remembrance of Fran McCarty, Library Assistant Washougal High School Library, Washougal, WA



On Saturday, January 8, 2022, students, staff, and the Washougal community came together to celebrate the life of Washougal High School (WHS) Library Assistant Fran McCarty, who passed away from complications from lung cancer. As a tribute to her talent in creating library displays, a "Living Memorial" of all things that remind patrons of Fran, has been added in the glass display cases at the entrance of the WHS Library. Our Washougal community is welcome to continue to add to this display, which will remain in the library through the end of the school year.

Fran served in the WHS Library for 13 years, working with students from WHS and Excelsior High School during her time. Fran's consistent presence, calm demeanor, and amazing smiles brought patrons to the library to read, participate in activities, and seek support with finding information, books, and any other resources.

Fran was an avid reader and passionate about literacy, working closely with the students in the Keepers of the Library club and participating in field trips to Powell's to add materials to the WHS collection. Fran brought years of experience in private industry to her role at WHS, helping students prepare for presentations, interviews, and performances, teaching life-long job readiness skills to a generation of Washougal's youth. She was passionate about solving problems and helping students find their success, always guiding and fostering growth in the young people she served.

In addition to her work with the WHS Library, Fran was an active

supporter of performing arts in Washougal, helping design and create costumes for many of the drama productions.

A recording of the memorial of life celebration is available online at <https://sites.google.com/view/mb-productions/fran-mccarty-service>.

A Fond Farewell to Bruce Greeley

After over 26 years, Bruce Greeley is retiring from the King County Library System. Having come from a brief stint at the Microsoft Library, Bruce began as Teen Librarian at Burien (running the ESCAPE! Program open until midnight every Friday night), then Assistant Manager at Federal Way 320th, then Manager at Fall City and Valley View before a ten-year stint as Manager of the Mobile Services department. Finally, Bruce is finishing up as Operations Manager at the Skyway branch. It's been a long, inclusive stint, but Bruce is ready to be done.



RTC Library's New Associate Dean, Emily Elliot

Emily Elliot has joined Renton Technical College Library as Associate Dean of the Library. She comes from the University of Washington, where she worked as Assistant Director of Clinical Research and Data Services at the Health Sciences Library from 2016-2022. Prior to that, from 2011-2016, she was Director of the Cabarrus College of Health Sciences' Library in Concord, North Carolina.



She received her Master of Library Science degree from University of North Texas in 2005 along with a graduate certificate in the management of libraries. She has experience in leading libraries, overseeing library operations and collections, supervising library teams and staff, and creating strategic plans for libraries—all of which will be put to good use as the college transitions to ctcLink and the library reopens from the pandemic.

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Washington State Library Welcomes Cody Hanson

The Washington State Library is pleased to announce the hiring of Cody Hanson as IT Policy & Planning Specialist. Cody is a twenty-year veteran of the IT industry and has served in a number of roles from Network Engineer to Chief Technology Officer in public, private, and academic environments. Cody holds degrees in history, archaeology, theology, and electrical engineering and is as happy to talk to you about Vikings or the First Crusade as he is the thermoelectric properties of nuclear reactors. As an avid reader and an academic library student worker survivor, he is thrilled to join the Washington State Library and help build the technological vision for the future of public libraries.

Yakima Valley Libraries Executive Director, Kim Hixson, Announces Retirement

Kim Hixson, the Yakima Valley Library District's executive director, has decided to retire effective March 31, 2022.

Hixson has been employed with YVL for 18 years. She was appointed to her current role in 2011, having previously served as Interim Library Director from July 2008 to July 2011.



During Hixson's tenure as Executive Director, she spearheaded the creation of a team of managing librarians who are responsible for supervising the staff and operations of the district's community libraries, in addition to overseeing key library services such as collection development, outreach and homebound services, historical archives, and programming.

Under Hixson's leadership, Yakima Valley Libraries has implemented several critical changes and advancements in order to better serve patrons throughout Yakima Valley. In 2010, she oversaw the purchase of a larger building to house the Selah Community Library, and was instrumental in the successful remodeling and modernization of Yakima Central Library and Sunnyside Community Library, which were updated in 2012 and 2015, respectively.

She also led the library district through the planning and construction for the Richard E. Ostrander West Valley Community Library, which opened to the public in 2012, and is now one of the most-visited library locations in Yakima Valley.

Along with cultivating a safe and welcoming library space, Hixson has proactively embraced new technologies and digital resources, including the introduction of self-serve kiosks, radio-frequency identification (RFID) technology, e-books, streaming movies and television, and the rollout of a redesigned, user-focused website.

"Kim Hixson has been an extremely effective leader for Yakima Valley Libraries and will be sorely missed," said Del Rankin, president of the library's Board of Trustees. "We wish her a happy, healthy retirement."

Tom Fay, Executive Director and Chief Librarian of The Seattle Public Library

The Seattle Public Library's Board of Trustees voted unanimously to select Tom Fay as the new Executive Director and Chief Librarian of The Seattle Public Library. The vote marked the culmination of a nearly year-long national search for SPL's next Chief Librarian. Fay begins his new role March 2.



Prior to his selection as the new Executive Director and Chief Librarian of The Seattle Public Library, Tom Fay served as the Library's interim Chief Librarian and, from 2015 until 2021, its Director of Library Programs and Service. In that role, Fay led the Library's Public Services and Programs, Collections, Materials Handling, and Information Technology departments at Seattle's downtown Central Library and 26 neighborhood branches.

A native of southern Nevada, Fay began his 39-year career in libraries as a page for the Las Vegas Clark County Library District. Prior to joining The Seattle Public Library, he held roles as the Executive Director of Henderson Libraries in Nevada and the Deputy Director and Chief Operating Officer of Las Vegas Clark County Library District in Nevada.

Fay graduated with a Fine Arts degree from the University of Nevada, Las Vegas and a Master of Arts in Library and Information Science from the University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee. He has been awarded the O'Callaghan Public Sector Person of the Year and selected as Nevada's Librarian of the Year.

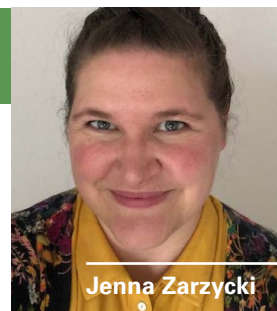
Michael Anderson Elementary's New Library Aide

Christine Talbott was hired this year at Michael Anderson Elementary in the Medical Lake School District as a library technician; she comes to the stacks after 25+ years as a paraprofessional working with special needs preschoolers. Christine is passionate about connecting kids with the books they need in the moment, and is working closely with Teacher-Librarian (and School Library Division Chair!) Ryan Grant to help keep the library a safe place for all learners. Welcome to the library, Mrs. Talbott!

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I'd Rather Be Reading

by Jenna Zarzycki



On Not Reading

When I first found out that the esteemed torch of the 'I'd Rather Be Reading' column was going to be passed into my nervous hands, I was both excited and honored. Who wouldn't want to walk the same paths as library giants, meditating on the shifting landscape of Readers Advisory in Libraryland? However, as I thought about my chosen prompt—tell us something you haven't finished—inwardly, my heart quailed. One of the most noticeable things that I haven't finished lately has been books. A strange introduction indeed to be talking about all the ways I'm NOT reading in an article titled 'I'd Rather Be Reading.'

Speaking of introductions, let me introduce myself. I'm Jenna, an adult services librarian who works in the Covington and Black Diamond branches in the south-easterly corner of the King County Library System. I love reading and regularly accost colleagues and members of the public to talk books. I immerse myself in readers advisory (RA) wherever there's the opportunity, which includes book talking at WLA, doing form-based RA for KCLS' BookMatch service and writing articles for local publications.

Back to reading, er, not reading. While I'm sure most of you understood long ago that you couldn't finish every book, my delusions lasted a little longer. Being a librarian means reading is both my brand and my business, so why shouldn't I finish every book that made its way into my holds queue? Recently, as the pandemic dragged on and my days seem to devolve into relentless Sisyphean arguments over a certain facial accessory (rhymes with casks), I realized I barely had the energy to crawl home after my shift, let alone finish a book that didn't meet my very specific parameters for comfort reading.

Even though I sometimes feel like I am on the last bitter dregs of my vigor, the work goes on. Folks come to libraries looking for reads, many times in areas where I have little to no knowledge. How can I best serve them without turning reading into a chore, or worse, something to be endured, not enjoyed? Luckily for all of us, those aforementioned library giants have wrestled with this problem before and left footprints for us to follow. Let's clamber through a couple together and talk about how we can still

confidently suggest reads to patrons even though we didn't finish them.

One doesn't exist in Libraryland long before we're introduced to RA royalty Nancy Pearl. Her 'Rule of 50' is essentially that the reader need only give a book 50 pages before making the decision to stop reading. The over fifty crowd gets to subtract their age from 100 and judge a book by the resulting number of pages. Recently I realized there's a little more to this rule. The part of the Rule of 50 that we're interested in is this: "if, at the bottom of Page 50, all you're really interested in is who marries whom, or who the murderer is, then turn to the last page and find out. If it's not on the last page, turn to the penultimate page, or the antepenultimate page, or however far back you have to go to discover what you want to know.¹ Never underestimate the power of flipping to the end of the book. It's a goldmine of information. Is the ending happy, sad or reflective? Is the end of the book abrupt? Satisfying? Do all the characters make it to the last page? Is there a beautifully quotable sentence? While I may not be 'finishing' as in reading a book cover to cover, I can always jump to the conclusion to get a feel for the book. Why don't you try it? It's Nancy Pearl approved, after all.

Becky Spratford, horror aficionado and RA expert, has been one of my personal favorite guides to the wild world of RA. In her *Ten Rules of Basic RA Service*,² Becky Spratford offers two pieces of advice that I've tried to take to heart. The first is to use the words of others when suggesting a book. What a concept. You mean I can shift the burden of summarizing the appeal of a book onto others? Expert others who spend their whole careers doing just this work? Those others? Oh, happy day! Everything that is available to and targeted towards patrons (blurbs on book jackets, tantalizing book talks, book summaries and book reviews) is also available to library staff. We should make use of these resources as much if not more than patrons—and not just when we haven't finished a book. Another favorite rule from Becky Spratford is to use resources. We think nothing of using one (or several) resources to answer every reference question that comes across our desk. I forget that I can do the exact same thing with a tricky RA question. Take TikTok (or don't—everybody has their preferred resource). Here is a platform full of enthusiastic readers convincingly suggesting books in 1-3 minutes or less. I've never seen anything better suited to use during a RA interaction on the library floor. Take the vast array of resources available to you and use them to hone your ability to suggest books, whether you've finished them or not.

Jenna is an adult services librarian at KCLS who lives and works in South King County. She adores talking about books to anyone who will listen and regularly contributes to KCLS' BookMatch and booklist services. Jenna's favorite reads tend towards fantasy, romance, and narrative nonfiction, although any book has the possibility to become a new favorite.

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It's not merely suggested, it's vital that we give ourselves the option of not finishing a book. There is a world of options out there that allow us to be well informed and excited about books without ever having to open them. There are so many claims on our time and energy. Give yourself a break and close a book if you need to. Let's extend the grace that we give freely to our patrons towards ourselves. 📖

NOTES

1 Nancy Pearl, "Nancy Pearl's Rule of 50 for dropping a bad book," *The Globe and Mail* (2011). <https://www.theglobeandmail.com/arts/books-and-media/nancy-pearls-rule-of-50-for-dropping-a-bad-book/article565170/>

2 Spratford, Becky. "Ten Rules of Basic RA Service." *Ten Rules of Basic RA Service* [Updated Jan 2022], January 1, 2022. <http://raforall.blogspot.com/p/beckys-ten-rules-of-basic-ra-service.html>

A Fond Farewell to Janice Burwash



On May 27th, Burlington Public Library will say farewell and good luck to longtime staff member and current Assistant Director, Janice Burwash, as she embarks on her next great adventure, retirement. Janice has been a part of the library for more than thirty years, beginning as an associate in the old Carnegie Library from 1975-1977. She rejoined the library in 1992, moving with it from its former location in the old Burlington City Hall to its current location in 2007 and has been with us ever since. She has held a variety of positions, including Associate, Resource Coordinator, Senior Associate, and, most recently, Assistant Director—a promotion that is both an honor and an acknowledgement of how much she has grown and learned over the past thirty-plus years.

As the only library employee to have worked at all three Burlington Public Library locations, Janice holds a wealth of knowledge and has seen the library through many changes, one of which was the move into a new building in 2007. As a long-tenured employee, she was able to be a part of the process from the first design meeting with the architects to helping plan the actual move into the new space, an experience she views as one of her most memorable.

Her immediate plans for retirement include spending more time with her five grandchildren and 98-year-old father, picnicking and kayaking with her husband (when the weather permits), and of course, reading. 📖



Registration is now open!

Register by April 6th to get the Early Bird discount.

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COVID Reading: Graphic Novels as Mirrors and Doorways

by Eve Datisman



It's been nearly three years since the COVID pandemic began. During this time, students have missed an average of 95 school days. That's a full school year. However, one of the benefits of the free time is that COVID has given many students the time to read more. Like adults, students read to explore, to try new types of books, or, if in need of comfort, they stick to favorite books or a favorite genre, one of the most popular being real-life. But studies have shown that students were also less able to concentrate because of their isolation at home. What they read didn't necessarily stick or go toward improving their skills.

As schools morphed from solely online to hybrid to in-person and back and forth, teacher-librarians have remained in the spotlight as champions of creating community. They know their students well, so they suss out the books that let their kids see themselves reflected in the pages. This reflection shows their students that they are of the world and belong in it and opens doorways for them to imagine a future that they hadn't considered before. Teacher-Librarians reveal the art of reading appreciation, the joys of living many lives without ever leaving this time and place, and they build and curate diverse book collections to engage and challenge their students and designed to maintain and enhance their reading skills.

Besides building collections and promoting reading, Teacher Librarians create communities that are safe, diverse, welcoming, and inspiring no matter if students are with them in the library, in person, or with them online. They create videos reviewing what's new. They send out teasers to generate enthusiasm for reading and for new releases as well as updates on holds. They engage in as many ways as possible to meet students where they are, and Teacher-Librarians often use a not-so-secret weapon: the graphic novel.

For students who are struggling with maintaining reading fluency, students who only want to read something they think is easy or that they are comfortable with, and/or students who follow web comics, graphic novels are an entry to challenging students to read better and improve their skills. Students, and sometimes their parents, don't realize what sophisticated skills graphic novels require students to master.

Graphic novels trigger a more complex way of reading. Graphic

novels require readers to not only decode words, but also to decode the nuances of meaning, plot development, and character relationships contained in their illustrations. Being visually literate and verbally literate is more important for students' success than ever before. When combining visual literacy with verbal literacy, students are able to create meaning from images and words, which improves their writing proficiency and critical thinking skills. They learn to use their imaginations to see and think between and beyond the lines to draw inferences and conclusions encouraging student reflection, analysis, and evaluative thinking skills.¹

Graphic novels are also adept at pushing students to acquire and use a more sophisticated vocabulary. A study by the University of Oregon shows that comics and graphic novels contribute to vocabulary growth because they showcase rare and complex words more often than mainstream children's books—53.5 words out of a 1000 vs. 30.9 out of 1000, respectively. That's a higher number than books written for an adult audience—52.7 out of 1000.²

We've come a long way from 1954 when Fredric Wertham published *Seduction of the Innocent* in which he argued that reading comics caused juvenile delinquency. He was wrong, of course, but his opinion put comics and their offspring in the shadows for a long time.³ Now it's time for them to shine. There are still three or four months of school left and graphic novels can help students bridge the gaps as they process the effects of COVID isolation, shorter attention spans, the need to see others working through the same situation, and build up their capacity for and their enjoyment of reading.

Below you'll find graphic novels that represent real kids dealing with their real lives. They are not only mirrors but also doorways for us all. As a group these selections show age progression from 10-18 and they illustrate how our hopes, our worries, our dreams help make us who we are as we grow into young adults.

As you reflect on how the process of creating community and championing diversity is going in your library, READ THESE BOOKS!

NOTES

1 Sarah Lindenfeld Hall, "Why You Should Encourage Your Child's Love of Graphic Novels," Parents (January 21, 2020), <https://www.parents.com/kids/education/reading/why-you-should-encourage-your-childs-love-of-graphic-novels/>

Eve Datisman is a retired high school librarian who keeps her hand in as the Registrar/Cataloger/Soup Maker at the North Olympic History Center. When she's not sporting those hats, she is reading and reviewing for the Puget Sound Council for Review of Children's and Young Adult Literature. She thinks retired life is the best job she ever had.

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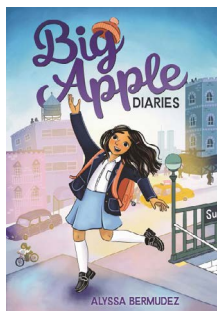
2 University of Oregon Center on Teaching and Learning, "Big Ideas in Beginning Reading," http://reading.uoregon.edu/big_ideas/voc/voc_what.php

3 Fredric Wertham, *Seduction of the Innocent* (Port Washington, NY: Kennikat Press, 1972).

Big Apple Diaries by Alyssa Bermudez

Highly Recommended for Grades 5-8

Review by Anne Dame, Teacher-Librarian at Einstein Middle School, Shoreline School District



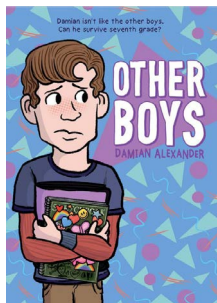
Graphic novel memoir of a girl growing up in New York City 20 years ago. She dealt with normal kid issues like school and family. Especially problematic for her was that her parents separated, and she had to figure out the logistics of spending time with each, and making sure she always had everything she needed for school and at each home. And then 9/11 occurred. There are a lot of books being published this year to commemorate the 20th anniversary of

9/11. I appreciate how this one is not over-dramatized and yet keeps the gravitas. The illustrations are beautifully done in shades of blue, black, and white.

Other Boys by Damian Alexander

Highly Recommended for Grades 5-12

Review by Elizabeth Lawson, Teacher-Librarian at Sequim Middle School



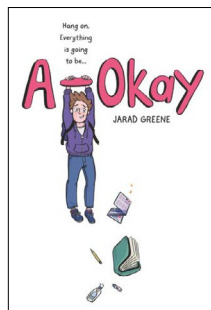
Damian was always on the outside of every school situation that involved mentioning a mother. His mother had been violently killed by his father. He and his siblings end up living with grandparents. Feeling alone and shunned for wanting to play with dolls and girls as an elementary student, he manages to find a spot to fit in. But then the unthinkable happens: he must move to a new middle school. Starting 7th grade,

Damian is adamant he will not be picked on by being invisible without a voice. But will this really work? Will he really just fade into the background? Taken from autobiographical webcomics that Damian Alexander previously published, he shows you his younger life. The bright colors and round edges to his comics make the heavy subject of the murder of his mom and imprisonment of his dad easy to digest. This is a great book for late elementary and early middle school. Many graphic novel fans in middle and high school will enjoy it, but it is definitely written for a younger audience. This will be of special interest to your LGBTQ+ kids.

A-Okay by Jarad Greene

Highly Recommended for Grades 5-12

Review by Elizabeth Lawson, Teacher-Librarian at Sequim Middle School



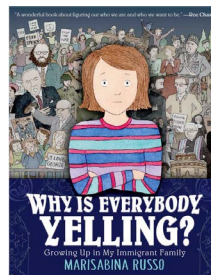
Reaching the age of puberty can cause not only emotional scars but physical ones as well. Upon entering 8th grade, Jay has discovered that severe acne can cause both. Determined to get rid of his acne, he sets a path to a dermatologist that will aggressively attack the problem with Accutane. While his body is fighting against him, he has also discovered a love for art. His once-close friends abandoned him to form a rock band. Jay is not sure he can survive and ever feel

okay again. The context in this book is a must-read for many middle school students. Jarad Greene doesn't back away from the dangers of Accutane and carefully presents why Jay chose to take this heavy duty medication. Interestingly enough, he provides us with a relatively new perspective of being asexual. As many schools started this year with conversations around gender and sexuality, this will resonate with this generation. It is a R* (highly recommended rating) for middle to high school students.

Why Is Everybody Yelling?: Growing up in My Immigrant Family by Marisabina Russo

Recommended for Grades 6-12

Review by Elizabeth Lawson, Teacher-Librarian at Sequim Middle School



In this graphic memoir, Russo relates growing up in the US within a family that has been tragically traumatized by the war. She doesn't fit in anywhere. Struggling to deal with half-brothers who are much older, a completely absent father, and an overprotective mother who doesn't allow her to make friends, Russo finally is allowed a slight bit of freedom to start identifying who she is on her own. The drawings are

two-dimensional. Although some may feel flat, the style played well with the seriousness of depictions of neglect, mental illness, and almost poverty. This is an interesting read compared to other graphic memoirs. Juxtaposed against a book like *White Bird* by P.J. Palacio, both in art and storyline, makes an interesting conversation for kids to have. War affects not just the generation that experienced it, but the trauma carries over to the next one. I would recommend older middle school to high school with an R (recommended rating) because some of the context will not be relatable to everyone. 📖

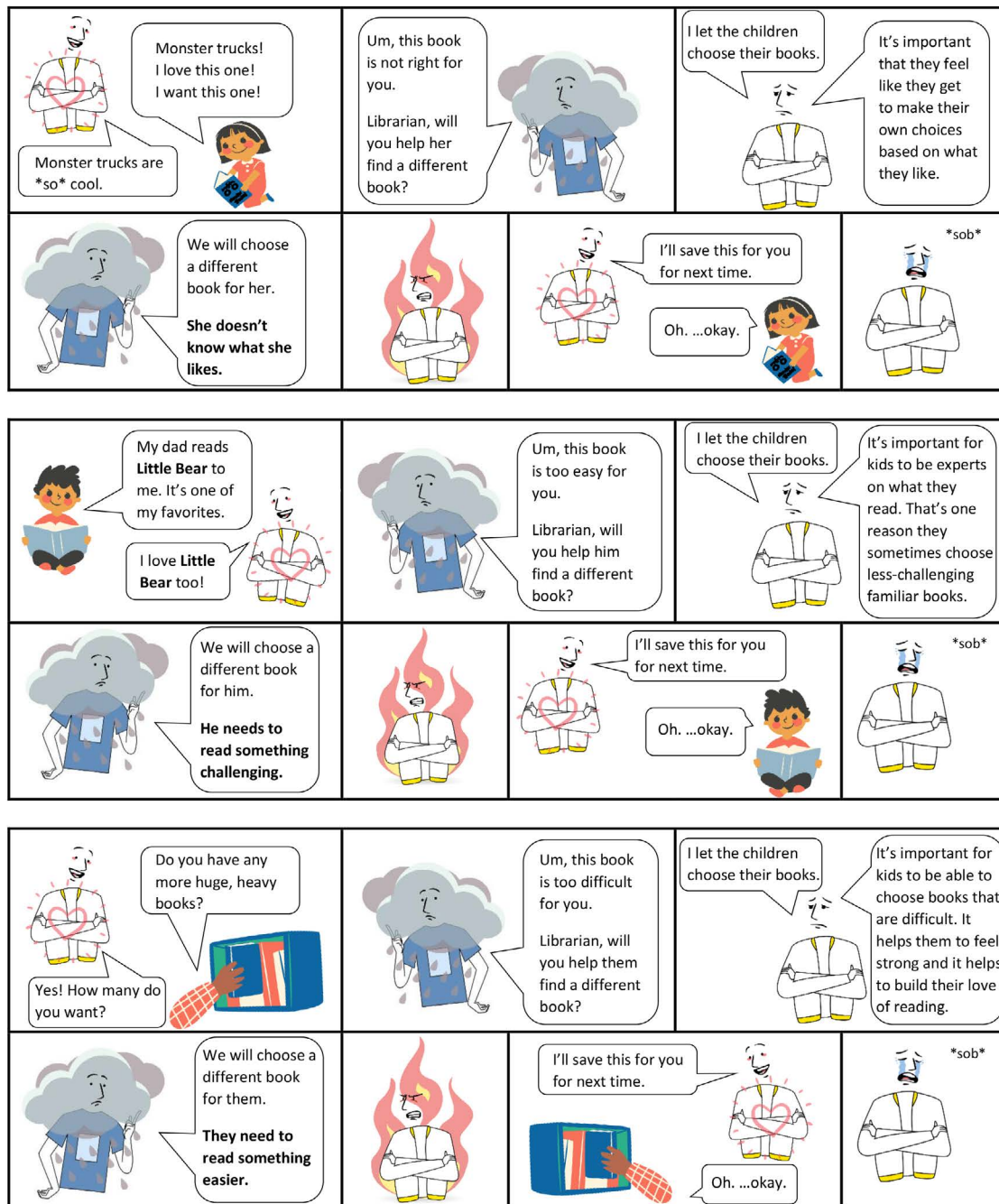
A Day in the Fray

by the Editorial Committee



A Day in the Life of a Youth Librarian. Literally. One Day.

by Poppy Louthan



Alki introduces a new column authored collaboratively by our editorial committee members. This comic was created by Poppy Louthan, Teacher-Librarian at Eton School and staunch advocate for young readers.

WLA Thanks Our Organizational Members

Organizational Members

Asotin County Library	Orcas Island Library District
Bellingham Public Library	Pierce College Library
Big Bend Community College	Port Townsend Public Library
Callout Press	Primary Source
Community Colleges of Spokane	Puyallup Public Library
Eastern Washington University Library	Renton Technical College Library
Ellensburg Public Library	Ritzville Library
Everett Public Library	San Juan Island Library
The Evergreen State College	Seattle Central College Library
Foley Center Library - Gonzaga University	Seattle Public Library
Fort Vancouver Regional Library District	Skagit Valley College
Grandview Library	Sno-Isle Libraries
Green River College	Spokane County Library District
Highline College	Spokane Public Library
Jefferson County Library	Stevens County Rural Library District
King County Library System	Tacoma Public Library
Kitsap Regional Library	Upper Skagit Library
La Conner Regional Library District	Walla Walla Community College Library
Lake Washington Institute of Technology	Washington Center for the Book
Longview Public Library	Washington State Genealogical Society
Lopez Island Library	Washington State Library
Lower Columbia College	Whatcom Community College
National Network of Libraries of Medicine, Pacific	Whatcom County Library System
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