Literacy in Libraries: Many Forms, Many Audiences, One Mission

WASHINGTON LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

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The Literacy Plan

by Rhonda Gould

Rhonda Gould

These days when I hear the word "literacy" I no longer assume that it has to do with reading and language fluency. The term has come to mean a specific level of competency which enables you to utilize an item or service with proficiency, ensures that you can communicate your knowledge to another person, and express yourself clearly.

Of course, as a librarian who has spent a good portion of her career in youth services, I also tend to think in terms of early literacy. This to me is the foundation of all of the other literacies. So many of us in libraryland have the great experience of watching our baby lapsit and toddler storytimers grow and develop and become articulate and thoughtful children and teens. And if you've been around as long as I have, you'll get to see them become adults and parents and see the whole process start again.

My three year old grandson Tristan (aka Nugget) is currently visiting me in Walla Walla. I've had the opportunity to see him three times now in the past two months, which is an absolute luxury as he lives in Wisconsin. He is at the age now where his vocabulary grows daily, learning is a great game, and song lyrics to "The Wheels on the Bus" are constantly reinterpreted. He's recognizing the faces and voices of people he sees infrequently, much to the delight of my eighty-three-year-old dad (aka Bucka) who lives in Michigan and my brother (aka Ugga Craig) who lives in Anchorage, Alaska.

My stepmom passed away in June and it was the first time that my dad, my brother, my daughter, my grandson, and I got to be together at the same time in two years. My dad has never been much of a singer, and I certainly do not recall that he sang to me at any time during my childhood. During one of Nugget's frequent outbursts into "The Wheels on the Bus," my dad sang out "This is the Way We Wash Our Clothes." Bless my dad, he's hard of hearing, and he thought the tunes were the same. They are very similar and maybe Nugget's performance sounded like the same to him. Once Craig and I got over the shock of hearing our father actually sing, we realized how special it was to hear him sing to his great-grandson, and how much Dad needed to have that time with the little person who wanted to just be constantly at his side. And Dad did not mind being told that he was "singing it wrong" one bit. The children's librarian and early literacy advocate in me silently shouted hooray that Nugget recognized the difference in the two songs.

I have to stop to remind myself that yes, he's just three, so when Grandma wants to read with him it's okay if we fly through the pages and make up our own story to fit the illustrations, and that it's hugely satisfying (no matter one's age) to shout THE END when you reach the back cover. And, yes, let's do it all over again, with a different story to tell. And it's okay if we just want to cuddle with Grandma and flip through the pages and not say anything. It's all part of the literacy plan. 📖

Rhonda K. Gould is President of WLA and Executive Director of the Walla Walla County Rural Library District.

Literacy For a New Era

by Di Zhang

Di Zhang
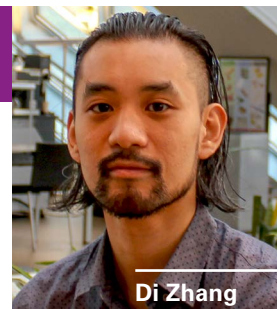
"The illiterate of the 21st century will not be those who cannot read and write, but those who cannot learn, unlearn, and relearn."
- Albin Toffler, futurist

Literacy is one of those words every library worker knows like a dear friend. It is the backbone of what libraries and librarians do. Only a short while ago—perhaps just a couple of generations—literacy simply meant the ability to read and write. Now, it has become so much more; there are literacies that we never before considered—data literacy, technology literacy, digital literacy, emotional literacy, financial literacy, social justice literacy, just to name a few. In working on this issue of *Alki*, I've realized that we as a library community could easily name a dozen more literacies that we work on, and it wouldn't be frivolous. That is a testament to the power of libraries.

For the last few decades, we've pushed the boundaries of a word that for so long was rooted in the written word. Part of that is because we've had to adapt to a changing world that is more technologically advanced, socially conscious, and intellectually diverse than ever before. The world has shifted beneath our feet, and our profession continues to grow to encompass greater levels and types of expertise needed for 21st century challenges. Each area of literacy that we champion is another path we are helping to illuminate. And what ties together these seemingly disparate literacies is that we are all continually co-creating a path forward with our communities as we learn, unlearn and relearn together.

I set out to devote this issue of *Alki* to literacy in its many forms, its many audiences, and its overwhelming impact on our communities. And wow, did you all deliver! (I had to pull the invitation to submit articles weeks before the deadline because there were already too many submissions) As this issue came together, I felt myself becoming more literate on literacy. I learned about literacies I had never thought of as such, like history literacy (p. 19) and even human literacy (p. 14). In this issue, there are also fresh takes on traditional literacy that are worth looking at, including book challenges and censorship (p. 10) and fiction book clubs in a setting you might not expect (p. 23).

We begin our collection of articles with an exploration of cultural literacy through the lens of zines and artists' books (p. 5). You'll also learn about a popular community conversation program in Pierce County that explores tough topics in a supportive environment (p.

7). We learn about lists of books banned in prisons and how you can help improve access for those who are incarcerated (p. 21). We also feature a story about a substitute special education teacher who connects with a child in a manner beyond words (p. 22).

The digital world was a big theme for this issue. In "Digital Literacy: A Constantly Evolving Landscape," Shana Ferguson talks about teaching in a world that is changing so quickly she has to recreate lessons that were relevant just recently (p. 12). Shawn Sheller highlights how Senator Mark Liias has been championing media literacy and how you can apply for funds to integrate media literacy into your class curriculum. There's also MisInfoDay, a wildly successful recent event hosted by the University of Washington iSchool in which high schoolers learned about misinformation and gained fact-checking skills; By the way, you're invited to join next year's MisInfoDay (p. 16)! We also cover a training developed at Central Washington University to increase technology literacy among service desk staff (p. 30). Kaitlin Throgmorton, Bree Norlander and Carole Palmer discuss public libraries as open data stewards (p. 27). And Alex Byrne writes about how libraries will need to evolve their literacies in unanticipated ways as technology keeps changing faster and tech support for old software dries up (p. 36).

And of course no journal about literacy would be complete without a little summer reading, and Kari Ramadorai has three key tips that will help us motivate and engage kids in literacy activites (p. 26).

Take a look at our Milestones feature, which celebrates recent triumphs and advancements for library staff and libraries (p. 41).

Don't forget our regular columns either. In "Read This Book!" Brooke Shirts covers summer graphic novels you won't want to miss (p. 45). Sheri Boggs introduces the youth finalists for the Washington State Book Award (p. 43). And Darcy McMurtery dissects a cover letter that we've all probably seen at some point (p. 47).

Yes, that's 48 pages of content... I told you we were packed for this round! It's been such a pleasure editing this edition of *Alki*. I've learned so much from these contributors, and I know you will too. To my fellow Washington library employees: keep reading, keep learning, and most of all, keep making this world more literate! 📖

Di Zhang is an Adult Services Librarian at The Seattle Public Library and editor of Alki.

Seeing is Reading: Visual and Cultural Literacy through Zines and Artists' Books

by Amanda C.R. Clark and Alexis Paperman

We often say that one should not judge a book by its cover, and yet the pull and push of the cover of a book is intriguing and communicative. Zines and artists' books (books that are art or art in the form of a book) provide the visual stimulus to attract readers to new depths of literacy and an affinity for the library and its collections.

> **" In a world that is often enraged, zines and artists' books allow a more subdued, thoughtful approach to difficult subject matter. "**

Some have quipped that zines can be traced back to 1517 with Martin Luther's ninety-five theses, but it wasn't until the late twentieth century that the movement truly took hold within fringe pop culture. The term "zine" has its origin in the label "fanzine," spinning off of the word magazine. Fanzines were popular in the 1930s and 1940s, produced by the fans of science fiction to continue the initiated fiction experience, and were then circulated free of charge among other followers of the genre. With the use of the mimeograph these inexpensively-produced materials were circulated widely; later, the photocopier became the method of reproduction, launching the popular saying that all you needed to publish your own zine was a photocopier, a pen, and a stapler.

As sci-fi fanzines during the 1960s *Star Trek* era flourished, so too was social activism and protest on the rise. Distributing political ideas through this affordable medium likewise blossomed; the zine was born. Since that time, zines have retained their hallowed status as a part of a variety of counterculture movements. Zines of the 1970s and 1980s emerged out of the punk rock subculture, and during these two decades photocopy machines supplanted the mimeograph, keeping costs down and circulation high. Zines morphed as social movements ebbed and flowed, and with the rise of third-wave feminism in the 1990s there came the Riot Grrrl movement, and so too followed the creative production and force of the zine.

Contemporary zines are still reminiscent of their fanzine predecessors, with physical copies being made and distributed, sold in bookstores such as Powell's in Portland, and distributed at zine fests nationwide. The zines of today are copied and stapled just as those of the past. The content of zines still embraces counter cultural themes, but they have likewise expanded in diversity over the years. Similarly, collecting zines offers the library an opportunity to broaden its collections in directions toward the perceived fringe, and in areas that might not otherwise benefit from attuned collection development strategies.

In the case of the Whitworth University Library, several students who were heading home to the Seattle and Portland areas for their winter breaks, were tasked with buying a number of zines for the library collections. Students were given a modest financial target, approximately $30-$50, and told simply to acquire a variety of zines from local bookstores that "spoke" to them. The students embraced this charge and took hold of the opportunity to add materials to the library. Later, it was students as well who arranged these books for display in library display cases. At a micro level the zine literacy of the students charged with these tasks increased, and on a macro level, the cultural literacy of the greater community was increased by exposure to the items on display.

Artists' books, while different from zines, can serve similar literacy goals within the library. Artists' books are best understood as a boundary-pushing subgenre within the book arts, evolving principally since the 1960s, and are thus roughly the same age as the zine genre. *The Oxford Companion to the Book*, describes artists' books as a "medium of expression that creatively engages with the book, as both object and concept."[1] Marshall McLuhan, who was "drawn to the book as art form . . . [and] focused on the book as object, as medium of communication," likewise explored the perceived power of the physical book as both a communication tool and material expression.[2] The artists' book, then, as a type of message or communication offers commentary regarding the human experience. Book art accomplishes this by being "personal, private, connecting to its audience by authenticity and commonality of experience."[3]

It is arguably the case that if library patrons engage with zines and artists' books their abilities in empathetic literacy may increase.

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Patrons are offered a view of the world through the lens of the artist. Washington state artist Elsi Vassdal Ellis writes regarding the politically charged and socially conscious content in her works: "My books are my street corner, my soapbox."[4] And yet in this age of charged emotion and plea, the medium of book art and zines allows the viewing audience to take a quiet look into the mind of the artist, to gain empathy via a more passive approach. In a world that is often enraged, zines and artists' books allow a more subdued, thoughtful approach to difficult subject matter.

The interaction one has with artists' books is profoundly intimate, a term one finds frequently in the literature on the topic, for example: the "journey through an artist's book is a strikingly potent experience and, usually, an intimate one."[5] This sense of intimacy is in part what allows the viewer to increase in empathic literacy. When reading a zine or artists' book the reader is momentarily transported into the life of another person, sharing in his or her experiences in a disarming way. Where the zine may rally the reader, offering a voice in the proverbial fight, the artists' book approaches the reader on different terms—just as boldly committed to a cause, but presenting the material in an often more visual, less textual manner. If zines are manifestos, artists' books are artistic representations of similar ambitions. In both forms, the library is the ideal place to collect, house, and enable access to these powerful, artifactual objects that stand to refine and widen our visual and cultural fluency.

To the right is a sample of images that show zines on display and how their often-intriguing topics attract viewer interest and connectivity. Images courtesy of Amanda Clark. 📖

NOTES

1 Michael F. Suarez and H. R. Woudhuysen, eds., "Artist's book," *The Oxford Companion to the Book* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010).

2 Richard Cavell, *McLuhan in Space: A Cultural Geography* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2003), 127.

3 *Women's Autobiographical Artists' Books*, Conference proceedings, Pamala Zwehl- Burke and Leslie Fedorchuk, October 18 - November 22, 1987, University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee, 10.

4 Eileen Wallace, ed., *Masters: Book Arts – Major Works by Leading Artists* (New York: Lark Crafts, 2011), 282.

5 Cathy Courtney, *Speaking of Book Art: Interviews with British and American Book Artists* (Los Altos Hills, CA: Anderson-Lovelace Publishers, 1999), 1.
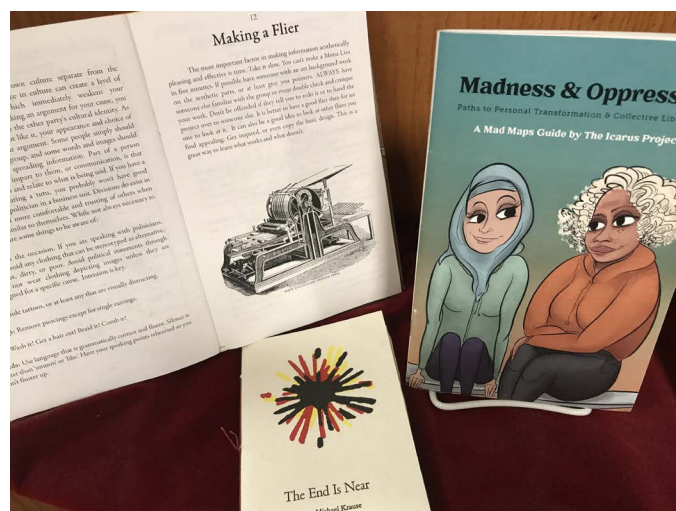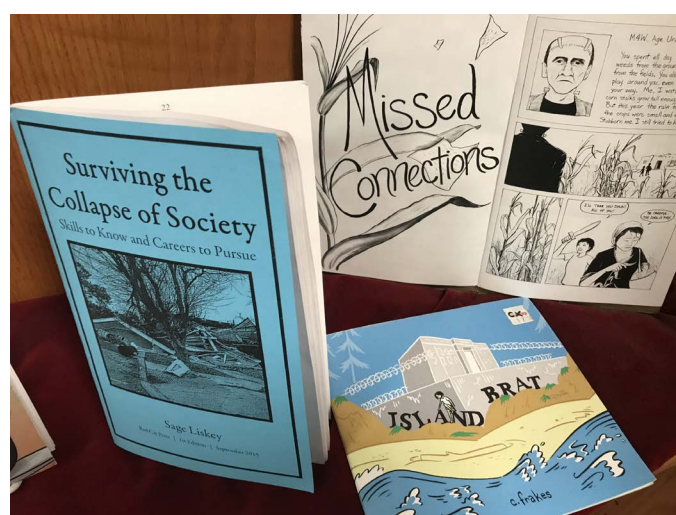
Talking, Tea, and Tough Topics: Finding Strength and Solidarity Through Community Conversations

by Laura Farrow

"Scare yourself every day, and do something that makes you feel totally excited and totally terrified."
–Jen Sincero, author of You Are a Badass: *How to Stop Doubting Your Greatness and Start Living an Awesome Life.*

For someone whose Facebook timeline is made up of fluffy puppies and faraway landscapes, facilitating conversations in the public library about "tough topics" can definitely feel like a bit of a stretch. I wasn't well-versed in some of these topics. I didn't have direct experience with some of them. I thought about how libraries can offer neutral spaces for discussion, yet they are not inherently neutral. How libraries should or shouldn't be neutral was a rabbit hole I didn't want to pretend I could solve on my own. But then, I remembered that I am a librarian. It's not like all of us read every word of every book that we book-talk, or that we know all of the formulas in Excel before teaching a class. We are information navigators, not information know-it-alls.

Most of us did not become librarians to fit a status-quo or keep our brains in a box. I reminded myself that stretching outside my comfort zone is something I should do on a regular basis. It lets me empathize with my customers and learn about different human experiences, which in turn makes me a better librarian. After that little pep talk to myself, I was all in. No more hesitation from inexperience or fear of the unknown. It was time to stretch. This program would be about the community I serve. It would be about learning from each other. It would be about building on our strengths despite possible discomfort, and finding common ground. It would also be a little about tea.

I'd met Immaculate Ferreria at the August 2017 Sumner-Bonney Lake Coalition for Families (CFF) monthly meeting. These

> **Many people said they had never attended a community conversation before where personal pronouns were expressed. One person said it was new to them, and kind of strange, because they had never considered the impact they had on people when they assumed someone's pronoun, but they would consider it now.**

lively meetings are made up of community members and organizations, including churches, food banks, family resource centers, schools, libraries and others. We talk about community needs and wants, challenges and opportunities. We share what work we are doing, and we support each other. During the around-the-room segment of this particular meeting, Ferreria had shared that as a long-time resident of Sumner, she had been witnessing the need for change in the community, and that change could start by having community conversations about issues that were on the minds of the people. Despite being labeled a "troublemaker" for bringing up tough topics, Ferreria knew the positive impacts such conversations could have, as she had seen it first hand during her prior work in Sumner and other communities.

Ferreria had extensive facilitation experience, including planning and organizing "Solidarity Café" meet-ups from Portland, OR to Vancouver, Canada. She served as Chairperson and Vice Chairperson on the ECEAP Policy Council at PSESD (Puget Sound Educational Service District). She served on a diverse panel with Youth Club: POPDAC (Prevention of Prejudice through Diversity Awareness Club) at Bonney Lake High School. Ferreria had also facilitated numerous conversations using the World Café methodology, which includes seven design principles: set the context, create a hospitable place, explore questions that matter, encourage everyone's contributions, connect diverse perspectives, listen together for patterns and insights, and finally, share collective discoveries (www.theworldcafe.com).

In that meeting, serendipitously, my needs-list included seeking a co-facilitator for a series of talks on tough topics. I found myself wanting to stray from the many one-off programs I had been planning and instead create a series of topic-based discussion programs at the Sumner Library. But I hadn't yet made the

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community connections to support it, and wasn't sure exactly what it would look like. This day was different. Ferreria had told me "I am not here to change minds but to open hearts, which I think is most powerful." It was a match made in coalition heaven.

Ferreria and I started planning right away. I had told her we have to book the meeting rooms yesterday. Indeed, most of us can relate to planning our programs six months to a year ahead of time in order to wrangle venues, presenters, budgets, marketing materials and so on. We had decided that the program would be a six month series of World Café style talks, with a different topic every month, starting in February of 2018. With Ferreria's vast facilitation experience I was feeling less apprehensive to co-facilitate. She had my back on the topic content and I had a handle on the library side of things. After talking through which issues we wanted to select for this first-run, and brainstorming the pool of potential guest speakers for the talks, we landed on the following topics: The R Word (Racism); What Does an Anti-Racist Multicultural City Look Like?; Myths About Being Transgender; Exploring Views on White Privilege; But All Lives Matter!; and, Moving Forward.

Status check. We had an experienced, talented and knowledgeable community facilitator, the topics were solid, the flow was good, the rooms were booked, the World Café style was a great fit, but we needed a hook. That's when we realized that people don't just drink coffee at cafés. They also drink tea. There is a great variety of tea in the world: different colors, fragrances, textures, regions. Tea is welcoming and relaxing. Tea is one of the most common beverages humans cultivate and consume. It is nourishing, comforting and it really does taste so good. Tea was going to be our star drink of choice. Our hook. But I sure wasn't qualified to bring in and setup tea from around the world. Ferreria and I realized we happened to be lucky enough to have our very own tasty tea shop right in Sumner. After confirming that the Tea Madame would be a willing partner, Ferreria and I started getting creative with program titles. After too much wordplay fun, we came up with "*Sumner Solidari-Tea.*" The flyer description read:

> *Savor tea from around the world while enjoying rich conversations about subjects stirring in our community. Join in **solidarity** to have the necessary, honest and often uncomfortable conversations surrounding racism, privilege, gender equality, the importance of a multicultural city, and how we can all move forward together. Learn more about these topics and share your views and experiences with compassion and empathy.*

Marketing was like household heaters in January: hot, and on full-blast. Ferreria and I had reached out to our respective networks and sent invitations to the school district, the cities of Sumner and Bonney Lake, the CFF, the local newspapers and others. Artistic staff at Sumner Library created an attractive and thought-provoking display for the program, complete with books and

media, and they talked-up the program with customers. Pierce County Library System (PCLS) had recently launched a larger system-wide program and services initiative called *Pierce County Conversations. Get informed. Be empowered. Join the conversation.* This new initiative would be the umbrella for monthly programs and displays on topics such as housing justice, gender identity, get outside, celebrating libraries, health and wellness, and more. Solidari-Tea was a nice fit for Pierce County Conversations and we were able to get real estate on the webpage and publicize through system-wide marketing channels.

While the buzz was going around town, Ferreria was hard at work masterminding the agenda for the first topic, "The 'R' Word (Racism)." Gut-check time. Did I still have the fear? Could I really do this topic justice and engage my patrons? Luckily, my librarian-ness was still in gear, and I was more excited than anxious. The agenda outline gave me a solid foundation to prepare. I placed holds on books and media ahead of the topic to have them in the room for browsing or checkout. The same agenda template would be used for the remaining five topics. Ferreria would send me the agenda before the program, so I could review and familiarize myself with the content, and make any suggestions for changes ahead of time. The agendas included: setup time, an introduction period, a brief history on what the World Café style looks like, the sharing of community agreements (sort of like ground-rules), an introduction to the topic for the night, the three main questions for conversation, an around-the-room big share and takeaway discussion complete with door-prizes, and then clean-up time. Total agenda time was 4:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. with the program itself running from 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.

Setup time was ample as we wanted to make the room as warm, safe, inviting and creative as we could. Being extra welcoming to all was paramount. We put butcher paper over the tables and put out color markers so people could doodle their thoughts and notes, and draw as they were participating in conversations. We had lovely flower centerpieces. Quotes about solidarity were hung on the walls, including one from Bobby Seale, co-founder of the Black Panther Party, that read "You don't fight racism with racism, the best way to fight racism is with solidarity." The Tea Madame set up a fragrant array of world teas, and food refreshments were generously provided by the Friends of the Sumner Library.

Setup time also included hanging up the community agreements on the front wall, so they could be read aloud during the introduction. These agreements can be found in printable format on the World Café style toolkit webpage. They are listed as "contribute your thinking, focus on what matters, speak your mind and heart, listen to understand, link and connect ideas, listen together for deeper insights, play-draw-doodle," and a few others. Ferreria and I also added "assume best intent, call someone in not out, and expect and accept non-closure." These agreements

set the tone at the beginning and encouraged an atmosphere of exploration and respect. Another segment of the introduction was an around-the-room, where attendees could say their name, place of residence and a reason for why they came. People were also asked to say their preferred pronoun if they so wished. Talk about learning new perspectives before we even got to the topic of the evening! Many people said they had never attended a community conversation before where personal pronouns were expressed. One person said it was new to them, and kind of strange, because they had never considered the impact they had on people when they assumed someone's pronoun, but they would consider it now.

Ferreria's talented team of terrific, tactical teen volunteers were not only on setup duty and cleanup duty, but they played the enormously vital role of being table captains. You see, part of the World-Café style is to have people sit at table clusters. Each table cluster has a table captain. The table captain is in charge of asking the questions about the topic, and capturing the different views and thoughts of the people. For example, the agenda had listed out three questions for the topic of "The 'R' Word: Racism." The first question was, "What is your definition of racism and does racism exist in your community?" The second question was, "Why is it important to talk about race?" The third question was, "What is the next level of thinking we need to do? What would it take to create change?" Every twelve minutes or so, the people at the table clusters would get up, walk around and create a new table cluster of new people for the next question. This way, everyone had a chance to talk and share their views, questions or concerns with everyone else. Note to self: maracas from my youth services librarian made a great timing-signal. They always have the good stuff.

During the big share at the end of the conversation rotation, Ferreria, myself and any guest-speakers or facilitators for the evening would encourage participants to share their own takeaways and observations to the larger group. If participants weren't comfortable, the table captains would read aloud general notes from the conversations. This was a great way to bring everyone back together in the spirit of solidarity. No matter how many different views or opinions were expressed, we were able to find

> **" No matter how many different views or opinions were expressed, we were able to find common ground in the art of civil discussion. We were able to recognize each other as fellow neighbors. I see you. You may not have voted like me. You may not look like me. I have learned from you. I respect you even if I don't agree with you. We all make up our community. "**

common ground in the art of civil discussion. We were able to recognize each other as fellow neighbors. I see you. You may not have voted like me. You may not look like me. I have learned from you. I respect you even if I don't agree with you. We all make up our community. I remember one night, we had a woman who was 60+ in age, and said she was a "hippie" back in the day and she wanted to thank the youth in the room for reminding her what activism felt like and for and reigniting a fire in her. She said just because she didn't see some of these issues as impacting her directly, they were impacting her community and she said not taking a stand was the same as letting them happen. Indeed, one of the takeaways on that board that night was something like "calling it out." If we don't call out racism, for example, in a way, we are allowing it to happen.

I think one of my biggest takeaways was that I (coincidentally) had found solidarity in a group people of which many were not sure how to engage in these conversations. They had the fear, like I once did, too! Indeed, not one of the six evenings went by when people didn't ask how they could respectfully talk about what we were talking about. So, we talked about it. And the opportunity to practice the art of talking in a safe space was the overwhelming common piece of positive feedback we heard. We came, we learned, we listened and considered new and different perspectives, we enjoyed ourselves, and we found community. The library was the catalyst for conversation, as it is for so many other things. I think I'm in the right job.

After six months and a lot of awesome work, tasty tea and hungry teens, Ferreria and I debriefed the program. In terms of numbers, the highest attended topic was "Exploring Views on White Privilege" with thirty-eight participants. For a small to midsize library with a meeting room that holds fifty people, this was a good number and a comfortable number as far as keeping the program to two hours. In total for all six programs, we had 140 participants, including Sumner City Council members, and representatives from the school district. We didn't record detailed data on the demographics of the attendees much beyond gender and age. Anyone interested in having a similar program may want to consider capturing more detailed demographics for future use in

The Ultimate Challenge

by Karen Kline

I recently changed job locations within my school district and have found a number of challenges to deal with, but fortunately I haven't been faced with the ultimate challenge—censorship. The last thing librarians needs to add to their workloads are censorship issues. Challenges have a way of cutting to the top of a librarian's priority list, and they can take up an amazing amount of professional time. I've always thought that the best way to deal with challenges is to prepare to avoid them. It hasn't always worked out that way for me, though.

In my first job out of library school I worked in a small school district in another state. The libraries I managed had recently come into a sizable gift from a non-profit, and one of the board members of the non-profit was a retired librarian. She wanted to help me out with the collection development in the schools' libraries and offered to help me spend the gift money. I immediately started to research the board policy on selection and found to my dismay that there was no policy for selection or for materials challenges. It was a big job for me, but I drafted a policy and presented it to the board for approval before the year ended. That policy gave me and others the tools needed to deal fairly with challenges and to head off potential issues with selection. Having a written and approved document for selection and challenges is essential for all libraries. Reviewing those policies annually with all library staff and volunteers is critical.

A couple of years later I found myself at another library. The previous librarian had been plagued by a censorship issue, and while the book in question had been retained and a committee had met

Banned Books Display at the 2018 WLA Conference

to review the objection according to policy, the case was a bit of a media frenzy. The librarian decided to leave the position despite her best efforts to deal with the stress of it all. I knew this librarian. She was top notch. I "inherited" a great library as well, a library where the challenged book seemed to go missing frequently. I made sure to repurchase the book every chance I got. That was the most I could do to support my colleague and the patrons that deserved to read that book. If only my colleague had more support, though. You see, she had more seniority than I did, so she displaced me and I got rerouted to her difficult position—a year of stressful job changes for both of us. Did she contact ALA's Office of Intellectual Freedom? Did she have a connection with the public librarian, local authors, and other community members who would have supported her and spoken out to the press? These are essential tools in dealing with the stress of a challenge. Don't try to do it alone. The first stop for support should always be ALA's Office of Intellectual Freedom where challenges as well as hate crimes in libraries can be reported publicly or anonymously.

The years passed and I found myself switching schools and libraries again. The former librarian who was the most senior in my large suburban district quit mid-year and mid-contract to avoid issues related to a materials challenge. The former librarian was not consulted in a case where a piece of publicly acquired art hanging in the hallway had been challenged. A committee met and retained the art, and the committee decided it should hang in the library instead of the hallway. The librarian was charged with teaching a lesson annually to explain the context of the artwork. Libraries must have far-reaching policies that extend not only to books, but to facilities, art, programs and free speech that include their meeting rooms. Notice I said free speech, not hate

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speech. Sadly, there was no policy about art in this library. These very difficult topics have caused turmoil in many places.

Sometimes difficult issues crop up at a moment's notice and solid preparation can make all the difference. I was working in yet another library where I selected a book that got a lot of student giggles and secret gatherings. This book was on several "Best" lists and had great reviews. It deserved to be on the shelves and, yes, it caused some readers to share what they saw and read. A school staff member came in one day and asked me to help find the book. It was causing class disturbances. The staff member wanted the book placed on a different shelf or marked for special readers. I simply pointed out, "That's a form of censorship." The staff member asked to borrow the book, so I checked it out to her. A few weeks later the book was returned. I was ready, though, in case the complaint continued. I knew I had reviews and curriculum scope and sequence to back up the purchase. I was prepared with my comment and reacted in the moment to the staff member's objection. I was ready to purchase another copy of the book if it wasn't returned in a timely way. It is also critical to conduct collection audits that justify purchasing and give a true view of our own potential areas of self-censorship.

If you are not already reading and following ALA's Intellectual Freedom Blog, which links to great resources including views from experts in the field, visit it here: https://www.oif.ala.org/oif/?p=17072. The OIF also has a Youtube Channel: https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCqruep4YtE-2ioIiG2MsWZg For more info on collection audits consider these blogs and articles: https://diversebooks.org/, https://bit.ly/2V7OuUU, https://bit.ly/2GK5c8c Let WLA's IF section leaders know of any challenges. We are confidential and connected: https://wala.memberclicks.net/ifs-contact-us. 📖

evaluation of outcomes and impacts. We had the teen volunteers, and attendees in their early 20s to late 60s in ages, and a mix of genders, though there were more whose pronouns were she/her than he/him or they/them. Ferreria was paid a facilitator fee from the library. The Friends of the Library provided over $100 in food refreshment. The Friends also covered a generous thank you dinner for all the teen volunteers at a local restaurant. Many of the teens talked about how this experience opened their eyes to the community, and how they were able to show the community who they were. In a more practical sense, they were able to get some real world facilitation experience and add that to their high school portfolios. In terms of outcomes, community members got to know each other better, practice the art of civil conversation, and they came up with many ideas for similar programs they could try within the community, including a cultural fair. Pierce County Library System Executive Director, Georgia Lomax, explains that PCLS is "moving forward in its goal of reflecting its community and building services informed by the richness of experience and thought that diversity brings, we hope that more programs like this will lead to communities engaged in thoughtful conversation and learning—together." I am eager to plan the next round of programs with this very goal in mind, whatever that may look like.

I encourage my fellow librarians to scare themselves. Whether that be with technology, public speaking, reference, readers' advisory or offering new programs you know nothing about. Your librarian superpowers will see you through. The network of support you build will see you through. Your patrons will even help see you through. Some of them will throw you through. You'll arrive on the other side with new skills, and a deeper understanding of your community and your evolving role as a librarian. 📖

Digital Literacy: A Constantly Evolving Learning Landscape

by Shana Ferguson

In public schools, teacher-librarians are often tasked with digital literacy lessons, which tend to emphasize safety and citizenship. As I watch high school students walk through the halls glued to their smartphones, I recognize the urgency of helping them to engage with their apps in positive and responsible ways. But I feel an equally urgent call to help students delve beneath the surface. When I teach students how to use databases and conduct web searches, I remind them that they should understand how digital programs are designed if they want to use them effectively. To some degree, they need to be smarter than the machine.

> " One of the rewards of crafting lessons related to digital literacy is that there is a constant influx of new situations and information to integrate in lesson design. I cannot create a lesson and consider it "finished," pulling it out year after year with the assumption that it will resonate with students. "

computer lab to work on job resumes. I leapt at the opportunity to discuss AI and the ways in which companies and colleges craft digital algorithms to sort applications, one of the topics I had explored in Scotland. After he and I chatted, I drafted a lesson for his class, which evolved into a series of activities that spanned four additional days. Together, we introduced students to the ways algorithms sort data in chunks. His students selected random data symbols from a sheet, which then led to a "computer" sorting them based on that data. Not surprisingly, students were most engaged with whether or not age should be a factor in hiring. Similar age discrimination has been flagged by the New York Times and ProPublica when they examined the way job listings can be targeted to younger users of social media. Like Google and LinkedIn, Facebook's job listing service "allows advertisers to select their audience, and then Facebook finds the chosen users with the extensive data it collects about its members." By the end of the lessons, students revisited their resumes to consider how their "data" could translate into less tangible qualities employees look for: honesty, reliability, etc. Students peer edited with an eye for what would check the correct boxes in a hiring algorithm in an increasingly digitized world.

This past winter, I received a grant from the US-UK Fulbright Commission to study and collaborate with educators at the University of Edinburgh and local Scottish schools to develop curricula related to social media use. At the end of a seminar presentation about datafied education, presented by professors Jeremy Knox and Ben Williamson, one attendee raised his hand and asked a reassuring question: "Is everyone as troubled by this as I am?" Reassuring because the entire time I was listening to how artificial intelligence (AI) could individualize each patron's learning, I kept wondering how well a program could mimic the patience and wisdom of a human teacher. And, what happens to discovery and curiosity when a program is determining for users what they need to know? In the rush to embrace the benefits of new digital tools and platforms, what critical questions do learners and educators need to ask?

Flash forward to my high school library program in Vancouver, Washington this May. A teacher brought his class to the media center

A deeper goal of the lesson was to encourage students to understand what happens beneath the surface of digital platforms whether they apply online for a job at the local movie theater or fill out the common application for colleges. And, as my mentors and colleagues in Edinburgh raised time and again, what are the deeper societal implications of the ways in which we design these digital programs? As Cindy O'Neil points out, "models are constructed not just from data but from the choices we make about which data to pay attention to...Those choices are not just about logistics, profits and efficiency. They are fundamentally moral."

Students discussed the ethics of hiring algorithms during the course of the lessons, considering how and when big tech should be challenged in their efforts to simplify and streamline deeply

Shana Ferguson is the teacher-librarian at Columbia River High School in Vancouver, Washington, and recipient of Fulbright Distinguished Award in Teaching grant from the US-UK Fulbright Commission in 2019. Her lesson resources and materials can be accessed at medialitnerd.com. You can follow her on Twitter @medialitnerd.

complex processes. Amazon, for example, abandoned their hiring algorithm when it replicated the tech world's bias towards white male applicants. If programmers do not consider deeply entrenched inequities, our race to digitize can make it even harder for people to find opportunity and recognition for their unique attributes.

One of the rewards of crafting lessons related to digital literacy is that there is a constant influx of new situations and information to integrate in lesson design. I cannot create a lesson and consider it "finished," pulling it out year after year with the assumption that it will resonate with students. This past May, I created a lesson for a social studies teacher on deep fakes, the disturbing ability to use video editing tools to overlay one person's image on the body of another. While this may be used for comedic effect, the darker implications related to truth and manipulation makes this topic one of my more urgent foci for the upcoming election year. I curated resources to help students evaluate if they could detect the deep fakes, keeping the content interactive. Just a week after crafting the lesson, the controversy over the fairly low tech manipulation of videos that made Nancy Pelosi appear impaired exploded on Facebook, adding to the already divisive issue of social media's role in censoring content. While not technically a deep fake, I drafted a lesson update for the teacher and she decided we should start with the Pelosi issue as a springboard for the larger topic. Updating lessons keeps the deeper thinking relevant and relatable to our students and patrons.

Like the lesson on hiring algorithms, the deep fake lessons foster critical thinking about the ways in which we engage in digital platforms. Students questioned their personal ethics around image manipulation, which also addresses issues of copyright and privacy. There are plenty of examples of manipulated images posted on Instagram and Twitter as people carefully craft their personal brand and create memes. As image and video editing becomes simpler and more accessible for everyday users, how can we equip our patrons to consider the ethics of that manipulation? And, how can they respond when it happens to them or in the larger global community?

For the past three years, I have also worked with sophomore English teachers to explore the issue of social media platforms and censorship. After all, who gets to determine what gets posted or taken down? With the Pelosi controversy igniting a debate over free speech and the government examination of the ways big tech has potentially violated policies related to fair trade, I am revisiting the unit to refresh the resources and ideas students can analyze in discussions and research papers. Many students have no idea that Instagram is owned by Facebook, a social media giant they associate with their parents. While Facebook, Twitter and YouTube have been increasingly scrutinized for their algorithms and content, Instagram has often flown under the radar. Facebook's co-founder, Chris Hughes, recently critiqued the power Facebook currently holds over content and personal data, and he suggests the government needs to exert more control over tech monopolies. His call to action resonates with our patrons who often feel that social media is an interwoven part of their lives that they cannot control.

In LikeWar: The Weaponization of Social Media, P.W. Singer and Emerson Brooking argue that whoever wins a battle on social media, "wins the world." Such battles have real-life consequences as social media shapes our beliefs about other countries, cultures, political and social issues. No doubt, we need to empower our patrons to be social media leaders, to use platforms to call attention to issues they care about, to represent a level of civil discourse that has been ravaged by the clamor of propaganda and misinformation that overwhelms many media streams. But, we can also encourage them to question platforms and programs themselves, to consider the role corporations and lawmakers should play in upholding human rights and free speech. We can help them see that behind each program is a team of designers who have the power to provide equitable opportunities and to celebrate human diversity. 📖

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Human Literacy

by Pyper Stever

As any good librarian ought, I go first to the definition of literacy to get a solid foothold: the ability to read and write and competence or knowledge in a specified area. But the longer I sit with it, hold it up to the light, turn it this way and that to get a good look at it, the more angled it becomes, the more complicated, the more nuanced. I shouldn't be surprised. Not only are we in the business of literacy but we also deal heavily in nuance and complication. We are steadfast proponents of all the angles. And yet. We know not all angles are equally valid (because facts!) but all valid angles are exquisite in their potential to flesh out our understanding of a particular subject and ultimately our understanding of the human experience as a whole.

Literacy begins at the beginning, both at the beginning of human experience and at the beginning of our singular experience of being human. In the case of the latter, our initial cry is our initial foray into literacy. We test our lungs in a gulp for air and our voices in an attempt at communication. We read faces and bodies, sounds and intonations, before we read anything else. And in the case of both, taken together or separately, spoken language precedes printed language with pictorials providing a transition between the two and an accompaniment throughout our journey toward literacy.

And to be clear, literacy is a journey. It is a pursuit. It is a process. It is a nonlinear, often cumbersome, occasionally maddening, loftily ordinary endeavor to ground ourselves in, and hopefully improve upon, a particular set of structures (cultural, historical, societal, familial, academic, professional, political) within which we must function for survival at the least, belonging at the most intrinsic, and thriving at best. Through literacy, we uncover and detail and clarify our humanity.

The ability to read and write is paramount to our ability to move through our days with relative ease. There is a consistent onslaught of material to wade through: headlines and articles, love notes and stories, instructions, recipes, food labels, applications, agendas, emails, contracts to sign or decline, greeting cards. Do I get off at this exit? Yes! This is my exit!

And as for competence or knowledge in a specified area, they are fundamental to our progress. Without it, no moon landing, no internet, no diplomacy, no medical cures, no poet laureate, no Supreme Court, no learning from the past. In short, we are who we are and where we are because we have evolved in our literacy, as individuals and as a species. And we recognize in order to reach our full capacity as citizens of the current millennium, we must embrace a range of literacies (and they are ever moving targets), from financial to digital to emotional to informational. In theory, anyone at any given time may become literate in any given area only that he or she be granted time and access to the library.

However, before reading and writing, before competence and knowledge, we must establish human connection. It is the foundation upon which we build subsequent skill sets. It enriches and anchors our lives and our learning. We must from the outset and continually cultivate our literacy in one another. Put another way, we must develop our human literacy. I wonder if we haven't let this key concept slip a little in our quest for what we perceive to be those more progressive, more concrete, more standardized tracts of learning. Have we become more devoted to our relationships with technology, for instance, than to our interpersonal relationships and our relationships with self?

As library workers, we are presented with daily opportunities to connect. At the least, the library provides the physical space for patrons and community members to forge meaningful connections. At best, we provide the intellectual and emotional space to not only establish but explore these connections. More than merely providing the materials, we provide the scaffolding of connection that supports the literacy required to access, understand, analyze and apply the lessons contained within these materials.

Perhaps this is an idealized vision of the role we play as libraries and library workers but I do believe we strive toward ideals. I also believe we are a teeming microcosm of our greater society. So let us continue to focus our attention, maintain eye contact, employ open body language, and communicate interest. Let us continue to be present and authentic. Let us really listen to one another because in doing so we model and promote human literacy which is necessary to our overall success as learners and as fellow beings sharing this planet. 📖

Pyper Stever is a Circulation Assistant at Ellensburg Public Library.

Financial Programs in Rural Washington

by Clancy Pool

How often have you watched a kid unsuccessfully try to count cash for a purchase or heard a senior say they won't go online because "that's how they steal your money?" With the increased use of plastic and scary stories of scams, the lack of financial literacy seems to be pervasive. Two librarians from Whitman County Library are creating programs to deal with this problem.

Librarians Clancy Pool and Tia Langston have a history of working together to provide quality programs in St. John and Endicott. The small towns are thirty minutes apart with a joint service population of less than 1,100 and share a school district. As Pool said, "If we can convince a clown to do two shows for the price of one, why can't we create quality financial literacy programs for all ages?"

A WSL professional development grant allowed both librarians to attend the 2018 ARSL conference, where they focused on sessions and networking with other rural librarians about financial programs. They spent time at the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau booth learning about the free support for library programming. Back home they trolled library Facebook pages and listservs for low cost program ideas for all ages.

During the planning phase, Pool mentioned the idea to a local bank manager, Shanna Larson. Larson offered to be a program resource and suggested Pool apply for a community grant from the US Bank Foundation. They quickly submitted an application and crossed their fingers. On October 15, two bankers walked in to the St. John Library and said "Congratulations!" as they handed Pool a check for $1,500. For a rural library that finances programs through donations, it was a huge amount that made the vision a reality. The money was used to purchase a variety of financial themed books, program materials and giveaways.

This year from January through May, the two branches held a total of fourteen programs. Attendance varied from three to thirty. The nine afterschool programs were on a variety of topics, including Money Math, Wants vs Needs and Pioneer Economy. The teen program on financial basics drew an above average number of engaged students. Attendance was strong at afternoon programs for seniors on online banking and fraud prevention. Adult financial wellness programs were less well attended, but led to lots of ideas for the future. Larson went above her promised support by leading six programs. Community members volunteered or supplied snacks for programs. Parents drove up to forty miles to deliver and pick up kids. Seniors braved winter roads to learn new things.

The popularity of the programs clearly demonstrates interest in improving financial literacy. Pool and Langston are back in planning mode for next year. A small local bank is working on plans for a young adult program on credit and other ideas for different groups. The town grocery stores invited our teen cooking classes to learn about food budgeting by shopping together. The library staff has gained a new level of financial literacy to use personally and professionally. Sometimes an idea just comes together in a great way. 📖

Clancy Pool is the Branch Manager at St. John Branch of Whitman County Library.

MisinfoDay: Bringing Media Literacy to High School Students, Teachers, and Librarians

by Liz Crouse and Jevin West

Students discuss confirmation bias with facilitators during "Why Your Brain Loves Fake News" workshop.

In March, the University of Washington iSchool held the first ever MisinfoDay, an inaugural event meant to help teens navigate the misinformation landscape. We wanted to create an event where high school students, teachers, and librarians could engage with university librarians, faculty, and students to learn about misinformation campaigns, how to verify questionable information, and how cognitive biases can affect their response to information. Our goal is to create a template so that other schools can host their own MisinfoDay.

After reaching out to high school teachers and librarians in the Seattle area, we ended up with over 150 students, mostly juniors and seniors, from four different public schools. The majority were from the Seattle area, but eleven students came with their school librarian all the way from Toledo, WA, a town two hours south of Seattle. A handful of teachers and librarians from other Seattle schools also came on their own, without any students, to see what they could learn and take back to their classrooms.

Liz Crouse is a recent MLIS graduate from the University of Washington. She can be reached at lizcrous@uw.edu. Jevin West is an Assistant Professor in the Information School at the University of Washington and co-directs the DataLab. Photos from UW Information School, photography by Doug Parry.

Our schedule, below, was a mix of presentations by university faculty and guest speakers and small group workshops led by UW librarians. In designing the schedule and workshop plans, we drew on Jevin West and Carl Bergstrom's Calling Bullshit course, Mike Caulfield's Web Literacy for Student Fact-Checkers, Stanford History Education Group's research on how fact-checkers operate, and KQED Learn's Above the Noise. In addition to our speakers and workshop leaders, we had many other student and staff volunteers from the iSchool and College of Education at the event to engage with the students and help things run smoothly.

In the spirit of stepping outside your bubble, a crucial step in the fight against misinformation, we asked students to work with people from different schools during the workshop activities and to sit in mixed groups during the presentations.

MisinfoDay Schedule of Events

> **Presentation: Mis/Disinformation 101** What is misinformation? Disinformation? How much is out there? How does it spread – and why do people create it in the first place? UW professors will teach you about the current state of misinformation in the US.

Students investigate a questionable headline during "Fact-Checking Tips & Tricks" workshop.

Workshop: Fact-Checking Tips & Tricks Learn tips for fact-checking and try your hand at verifying some articles and social media posts.

Presentation: Data Tracking & Visualizations See how your data is tracked online, then learn the hallmarks of misleading data visualizations to watch out for.

Workshop: Why Your Brain Loves Fake News Learn why your brain falls for fake news and what you can do about it.

Presentation: Ask the Experts Panel Hear from a panel of experts from Snopes, The Seattle Public Library, and UW about their work. Come with questions about misinformation, fact-checking, confirmation bias, and more.

The day was a success. Students were engaged, teachers gave positive feedback, and we already have schools asking to be put on the list for next year.

Results

In addition to the workshops and presentations, we also set aside time at the beginning and end of the event for students to complete a pre- and post-survey. Here's what we found:

- **Students see the spread of misinformation as a significant problem.** When asked to rate the issue on a scale of 1 (not a problem) to 5 (a huge problem), most students rated it a 4 or 5 at the start (84 percent) and end (97 percent) of the event.

- **Most students reported increased confidence in their ability to verify questionable information.** When asked to rate their confidence from a 1 (not confident) to 5 (very confident), the vast majority – 82 percent – indicated that they had increased confidence in their verification skills after the event, with a little over half of students increasing their rating by 1 (going from a 3 to a 4, for example) and about a quarter increasing their rating by 2.

- **More students displayed a "check the source" mentality after the event.** When asked whether they would trust the information presented in two social media posts, students indicated they would consider the source, content, or both when making their decision. However, in the pre-survey, more students commented on the content of the post when making their decision, saying either that it seemed too extreme or that it aligned with their previous knowledge, while in the post-survey more students commented on the source of the post, saying that they weren't familiar with the publisher listed or that they knew it to be untrustworthy.

- **Students haven't used—or heard of—fact-checking sites.** Seventy-seven percent of students listed checking multiple sources as a strategy they would use to verify questionable information in the pre-survey, but none of them mentioned any fact-checking sites (only 13 percent mentioned a specific resource at all). In one of the workshop sessions, when asked if they'd heard of Snopes, Politifact, or FactCheck.org, all twenty-five students indicated they hadn't heard of any of them. After participating in the fact-checking workshop and

Vinny Green, VP and Co-owner of Snopes, speaks to students during "Ask the Experts" panel.

hearing from the co-owner of Snopes during the "Ask the Experts" panel, 90 percent of students said they would check multiple sources to verify questionable information and about a third of that group said they would use a fact-checking site like Snopes.

- **Students needed more time for processing and questions.** We had so many great activities and speakers that we wanted students to engage with that we packed our schedule too tightly. In the event feedback, many students said the event felt rushed and that they ran out of time for some activities. They asked for more time to process information and ask questions of the speakers and workshop leaders. Next year, we'll build in more time for students to engage with the presenters and materials on their own terms. This will mean letting go of some activities. To help prioritize, we hope to work with high school students in designing the event so that we can include the activities most meaningful to them.

- **Students wanted a more interactive event.** In designing the event, our aim was to include a mix of presentations and hands-on workshops so that students could learn from experts in the field and discuss and practice different strategies themselves. While many students said they liked the speakers and workshops, many also said they wished there were more interactive elements. Students wanted to see the presenters engaging with them more – potentially through questions, polls, or other forms of audience participation – and seemed to enjoy the workshops that focused on achieving a goal, like investigating a questionable claim, over the ones that focused

on more general discussion of an issue.

MisinfoDay 2020 and Beyond

Since the event, we've heard inspiring stories of students and teachers taking what they learned back to their own schools. One example came from the students from Toledo, who, with the help of their librarian, led a MisinfoDay assembly for their school to share what they learned at the event. Another came from a teacher that attended MisinfoDay on his own. He used the resources highlighted at the event to create a unit for 11th graders that asked them to become experts in one aspect of evaluating information and then teach these skills to 9th graders as their final project.

We plan to hold MisinfoDay again next year. In the spirit of expanding the reach of these important skills, we invite you to join us. If you're excited by this idea, please consider participating in our event, or, even better, hosting MisinfoDay in your own community. Ideally, this would be hosted on the same day in the spring each year. We're working on creating a website to share our lesson materials and presentation videos and any materials from other groups willing to make their materials freely available to others. We invite you to use this resource in your planning.

Please feel free to contact us if you have further questions or if you want to brainstorm ideas for your own event. 📖

Hands on History

by Lisa Labovitch

It's an average April Tuesday evening at the Everett Public Library: parents help their children select books for school projects, and patrons crowd the internet terminals. In our Activity Room, we are about to try something a little bit different. The room is filled with tables displaying a collection of photo albums and scrapbooks; each item contains mysteries between its covers. One by one the room fills, mostly with people who have reached retirement age, but occasionally a younger patron takes a seat. Local history enthusiasts have gathered to try to help put names to places and faces.

In my job as the History Specialist at the Everett Public Library, I am tasked with developing new ways to encourage literacy in local history and research techniques. To do this work, I have been fortunate to draw upon over forty years of Northwest Room staff expertise, first from its original staff, Margaret Riddle and David Dilgard, and later from Mindy Van Wingen, as well as my own professional experiences. For many years, patrons engaged with local history through lectures, scholarly articles, and one-on-one reference interviews. These platforms played to the strengths of Northwest Room staff who were excellent public speakers and writers. Over the years, my predecessors built their own unique brands that our community came to expect in library programming. As veteran staff retired and new staff moved into those roles, it was also time to refresh our approach to local history public programming. The Northwest Room would continue to offer a variety of programming and services, but in a way that would showcase the new generation of staff's strengths and voices. A new programming model was also an opportunity to engage new audiences.

To meet these changing needs and skill sets, Mindy Van Wingen

> **"There wasn't a single event that I hosted that did not result in future collaborations with outside experts, additional research visits to the Northwest Room, or patrons making connections with other patrons that extended beyond the library. All told, we were able to reach 160 patrons through 11 Tuesday night programs."**

and I launched the Hands on History series in January 2018. Our concept was to develop a range of monthly workshops and special events to encourage our community to engage with local history on a more personal level. We emphasized programming to empower our patrons to become researchers in their own right by teaching different skills and techniques. We also mixed in some events where people explored local history materials for fun, for the opportunity to share stories, and to interact with primary sources directly. For the first year we presented six unique programs, five of which repeated, for a total of eleven events. (We chose not to schedule any events in July, due to historically low program attendance during the week of Independence Day.) Our topics included: coloring history, in which we made coloring pages from line drawings of historic images; Ancestry Library Edition training; caring for family photos, which included strategies for physical and digital media; History Mystery, where the public helped us identify photos from our archives; local history book discussions; and screening films from our archives. Project Outcome surveys were helpful in gaining a fuller picture of why our attendees enjoyed the new Hands on History format. In most cases, the respondents listed meeting with like-minded people, and discussing local history with their peers as the primary reasons that they enjoyed the events.

Hands on History 2018 was a pilot program that helped us identify history information needs within our community, as well as format preferences. Throughout the course of the year some patterns began to emerge. It became clear that the local history book discussion format was not going to be a good fit. Hands on History attendees appeared to be drawn towards events that did not require prep work; book discussion attendees frequently arrived without having read the title, which resulted in more of a lecture from the moderator than a true book discussion. In the end, attendance was too low to justify the amount of preparation that went into hosting a book discussion,

Lisa Labovitch is the Northwest Room History Specialist at the Everett Public Library.

and the expense of sourcing the book set copies was too high, especially for out-of-print local history titles. Our traditional monthly book groups were far more successful, but we did not have the content or resources for the local history group to meet on a monthly basis.

On the other end of the spectrum, our film screenings were very popular, so much so that we switched to using a larger meeting room for the remainder of our events. Computer workshop events became a great opportunity to not only teach new skills, but to also learn from members of the audience. The nice thing about local history enthusiasts is that they tend to be natural collaborators; the Ancestry Library Edition workshop in particular attracted seasoned genealogists as well as complete beginners, and their insights were invaluable. There wasn't a single event that I hosted that did not result in future collaborations with outside experts, additional research visits to the Northwest Room, or patrons making connections with other patrons that extended beyond the library. All told, we were able to reach 160 patrons through 11 Tuesday night programs.

Moving into 2019, I put on the series alone due to staffing changes. To keep the momentum of the Hands on History series, I repurposed some of the workshops while investing my time in adding three one-off events. I found the amount of work, between program planning and hosting, to be completely manageable without additional staff support beyond day-of assistance setting up the room. The first new offering was a discussion on the fundamentals of local history research, from narrowing down topics to locating relevant local history collections in different regional archives. An added benefit of developing this and other skills-based workshops was that the content was easy to adapt for use when I received requests to speak at outside organizations. Programs developed for Hands on History have been given new life at neighborhood association meetings, genealogical society meetings, church luncheons, school group visits, and more.

The second new program is a local history writers' panel which will be held in November during National Novel Writing Month. This event was designed to meet a need that I encountered in my interactions in the Northwest Room, where I would frequently be approached by members of the community with research interests

Hands on History participants work to identify places and people in a collection of unlabeled family albums and scrapbooks.

that they wanted to turn into publications. Tapping into our very active Snohomish County local history writing community, the panel will cover the wide range of ways that researchers can connect the public with their work. The panel will include authors who have self-published, worked with local history presses such as Arcadia, contributed online content to HistoryLink, written and produced documentaries, and even turned local history into a graphic novel.

In December we will cap off the series with a history fair, showcasing a selection of different organizations that work together to improve local history literacy. This program idea arose from a need identified by my peers within the local history workers community, because there was often confusion among the public regarding which organization to approach for which need. In truth, there is no wrong organization to approach; we all make sure we get patrons where they need to go. We often encounter the misconception that our jobs are siloed, or even in competition, when in fact we frequently reach out to each other when other perspectives or skill sets are required. We felt that it was important to show our users that libraries, archives, historical societies, tribal cultural centers, and other cultural institutions work collaboratively to achieve institutional goals. Participants will staff tables with organizational information, and an optional history fair display on the topic of their choosing. Some participants have chosen to give brief presentations during the course of the night, and will be available to answer questions.

Hands on History has become a forum for telling personal stories and making connections with like-minded enthusiasts. It has also become a space for collecting valuable knowledge from our elders who have information to share about the history of our communities. I look forward to next season, where we will continue to focus on empowering our community members to see themselves reflected in local history. What has become clear through my year and a half with the Hands on History series is that there is a desire from our community to not only learn new skills, but to also collaborate and share what people know. Through collaborating with outside organizations, I feel that my peer local history professionals have some of the same desires, so we will be seeing that reflected in new collaborative programming in 2020 to meet those needs as well. As I like to tell my school groups when they visit the Northwest Room: we are creating history together, every day. 📖

Prison Literacy, Banned Books, and the Right to Read

by Magenta Loera, Angela Gonzalez-Curci, and Sophia Marciniak

According to the Bureau of Justice Statistics, the United States prison population is estimated at nearly 1.5 million as of 2017. Furthermore, the Literacy Project Foundation has found that three out of five prisoners are illiterate. With these alarming figures in mind, we believe that raising awareness and support for incarcerated people in the US is of pressing importance.

The regulation and banning of books are common in many institutions across the United States, but are the most restrictive in prisons. Within the last year, new regulations in Washington state banning nonprofits from donating books to prisoners were quietly approved. As information professionals, we can play a unique role in ensuring that incarcerated individuals have equal access to literary materials. One way that we can fulfill this role is by supporting human rights organizations like The Human Rights Defense Center (HRDC) in spreading awareness about these restrictive policies, and the importance of setting clear criteria and explanations for their creation.

HRDC is a 501© (3) non-profit organization dedicated to equal rights for incarcerated individuals across the country in prisons, jails, and immigrant and juvenile detention facilities. The organization was started by a group of volunteers in 1990 as a way to publish a monthly newsletter, now titled Prison Legal News, to provide a voice for both prisoners and their families.

In spring 2019, we began work on a collaborative project with the HRDC that aims to find and request information from the Department of Corrections (DOCs) in each state regarding which books are banned by their prison systems, as well as information about their review committees and processes, if applicable. We are currently in the process of creating a publicly accessible list of contacts for the departments, and are requesting policies that are responsible for regulating access to books in each states' prison system.

Due to both our time constraints and monetary constraints of the HRDC, the scope of this project has thus far been limited to state adult corrections facilities. Information on how these facilities are restricting prisoners' access to print materials is considered a priority for two major reasons. Firstly, state DOCs are putting out the types of directives like the one in Washington state that galvanized this project into being. Secondly, state DOCs are more likely to have publicly requestable material and policies for their adult corrections facilities, for which the states can be held accountable. If a state facility with a list of rejected print publications and a policy on how to vet them is found to be violating its own procedures, an organization like the HRDC can hold that state accountable through its own documentation.

Book regulation lists are updated yearly, and thus need to be requested on an annual schedule to avoid being out of date. So far, we have received banned book lists from eight states: Illinois, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Montana, New Hampshire, Utah, and Vermont. We have also found or received policy documentation about restriction information on banned materials or outdated banned book lists from Connecticut, Idaho, Louisiana, Maine, Massachusetts, Michigan, Nevada, Rhode Island, and Vermont.

We have already received national attention from online news sources. Among them, Newsweek wrote an article that highlighted the work we are doing and challenged readers to think critically about the types of books that are being banned. We are heartened by these responses, and we hope that increased visibility for the work we are doing will encourage more information professionals to collaborate on similar prison literacy projects in need of further attention, such as obtaining banned books lists for state juvenile facilities and immigration detention centers. We also hope that our work will lead to greater transparency and information regarding governmental criteria for banning specific reading materials for prisoners. &

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Literacy: The Shape Of Something Possible

by Miles Caudesch

I walk in, Substitute Special Education Paraprofessional. Right away, #1 comes up to me, smiling, acting sweet, like something is wanted. #1 leans that friendly head against my ribs. I smile back, tousle #1's hair, measuring, wondering what this child is interested in.

A few weeks into the job, I'm getting used to #1's communication: biting, scratching, tugging, yanking, pinching, pulling, running away; it's normal for me to be sat upon, nuzzled, jumped with, held hands with, and fallen asleep next to. In my mind: "What does this child need? How can we communicate? This child has no voice. How can we make meaning of our time together?"

I discover that food is magical. And paper. Any kind of paper that crinkles, rips, resists, shreds, tears, piecemeals, falls apart, decomposes, hangs around, gets thrown away, is recycled, gets placed up high on shelves, or is hidden in cupboards. And hidden food, in the fridge with someone else's name on it. Anyone's drink, from across the room. Or at the lunch table. Another child's granola bar: crisp, unwrapped, then swiped. Someone's french fries smothered in ketchup. A hand dug into, a goal achieved. Ketchup, bbq sauce, pizza, tomato soup, potato chips, cookies.

I read #1's educational goals. By the end of the semester, we're supposed to be sitting still, for five minutes, at a desk. How can I make this happen? How do I calm #1's nervous system, when it is constantly firing back and forth, searching for sustenance, or wandering around and running away to find something neither of us has a name for?

I discover that few things in school interest #1. I can't find an external motivation other than food or paper—nothing digital, or cause-effect, or commanded. Warnings and sternness don't work. Kindness and gentleness are better, but inconsistent. Typical social interactions don't exist.

We try...blocks...felt...dolls...animals...bristles and cones...checkers... wheels...building...fashion...glitter and glue...trains...rice and barley... water balloons...stickers...shaving cream...cookie dough...crayons... markers...paint...play-dough...sand...manipulatives...stacking... falling...rolling...bouncing...standing...walking...playing...sitting... dressing up...napping....

One day, we happen upon a book about animals, with color and certain patterns: white and black stripes, polka dots, contrasting

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rainbows. There are ponies, zebras, monkeys, chickens, cows, kittens, orangutans, birds. And a new magic portal: Dogs. Dogs seem to capture #1's attention in such a way that the book floats, hanging open somewhere in this child's consciousness. The word *dog* feels like it's coming from somewhere, then going somewhere.

Out of nowhere, one morning, a true-to-life dog photograph almost gets touched by #1's fingertip. The image is barely engaged, then the moment is gone; the page is turned, the book is flipped; the image is dropped, it's almost obsolete. But then #1 comes back to look at the dog again. The pages get passed by till the dog is found. #1 stares at the dog. Flips the page back and forth, a hand and two fingers coming forward to pet the dog. I watch in alert slow motion, noticing that #1's attention has lasted more than two seconds. It has extended to maybe thirty seconds, maybe a minute. Inside, I celebrate that something important is happening right now. Something clicked somewhere inside #1's brain. *Dogs* connect with #1.

I hurry to the school library: Do we have any spare books about dogs? Dogs with live photos: not cartoons, no CGI, no drawings
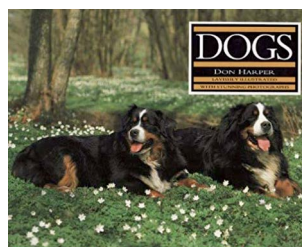
or illustrations? Just real dogs with real people, in nature, with other dogs, etc. The TL frees out a 1994 copy of Dogs, by Don Harper. I bring this book back to the resource room. I tell #1 that it's time to read. We set up a snack and commence, by looking at the cover. We turn the pages, slowly, talking about how to care for the book, and how to care for dogs. The first day, we get to page twenty-three. I celebrate: We sit together, reading the photo captions, for three minutes. Amazing!!

The next day, I make sure to schedule in more reading time—after recess, and after physical needs are met. #1 and I set out the book, talking about caring for the book and caring for dogs (well, I am talking, and #1 is maybe listening, but I don't hear any words back). We read the photo captions again and get to page forty-six. Four minutes. The next day: same procedure, page fifty-eight, five minutes. By the end of the week, we've "read" the entire book: all eighty pages, meaning, the photo captions. We've managed to sit for almost ten minutes! And, all of the book's pages are still intact. I make a quizzical observation: Though #1 likes paper, not once has this book become vulnerable to ripping or shredding. I am mystified. Perhaps #1 perceives something special about books?

Building Multiple Literacies Through Fiction-Based Book Clubs in the Academic Library

by Alaina C. Bull and Johanna Jacobsen Kiciman

Introduction

Book clubs are a staple of public library programming, in part because they help build community and offer people an access point to reading and literacy, broadly writ. But it is rare to see book clubs in academic libraries. Students are swamped and often do not have the time for extra reading. What could make a university, fiction-based social-justice book club flourish?

This article explores building multiple literacies at the University of Washington, Tacoma. We address emotional/empathetic literacy, social justice literacy, and the more traditional reading literacy. By exploring the specific context of this institution and the process of creating *Real Lit[erature]: Reading for Social Justice* ("Real Lit"), we hope to leave the reader with steps that other institutions might take to pursue a literacies-building book club.

State of the Field

Book clubs are staples of libraries, and certainly in the public image of the work that we do.[1] Even as modes of reading vacillate between print and online, book clubs continue to adapt, even creating online forums for discussion.[2] And issue-based book clubs are also popular and found with increasing frequency.[3] Yet, as some of our preliminary background survey work indicates, there are relatively few book clubs in academic libraries (that have a web presence). We identified forty book groups within a set of 142 universities; of these, we were only able to positively identify four as exclusively fiction-based.[4] While we realize that our data set is not exhaustive, we can say with some confidence that co-sponsored fiction-based

> **❝ We hoped to create a space that both presented a fiction narrative that encouraged high emotional transportation into the story and give space for processing the complex emotions and transportation and move towards increasing empathy, thus building emotional literacy. ❞**

book clubs in academic libraries are not currently prevalent in the United States.

Vision: Fostering Emotional and Social Justice Literacies

This project grew from several intended outcomes that made explicit the idea of fostering emotional and social justice literacies. The role of First Year Experience Librarian is a new one at the University of Washington, Tacoma, an urban-serving campus for about 5,000 undergraduate students. Acknowledging that information access is an issue of equity and that the library is an advocate, fostering a partnership with the Center for Equity and Inclusion (CEI) was paramount as a way to make this tie explicit. Simultaneously, we were inspired by the ALA-sponsored Great Stories Club, which aims to foster reading literacy for under-represented youth. As a campus with a large number of non-traditional students, we recognized that we were not an ideal candidate for this specific model, but decided to borrow from it what would work for our campus.

Our vision reflects the work of fostering emotional and social justice literacies, grounded in the one particular peer-reviewed study on the impact of fiction.[5] Bal and Veltcamp found that participants who experienced "emotional transportation" into a narrative reported higher scores on an empathy index. Grounded in their theoretical underpinning, we hoped to create a space that both presented a fiction narrative that encouraged high emotional transportation into the story and give space for processing the complex emotions and transportation and move towards increasing empathy, thus building emotional literacy. We tried to reflect this in our vision statement:

> Real Lit[erature] is envisioned as a thematic reading and discussion program that engages the campus community through literature-based outreach. The goal of Real Lit is to create a greater awareness and discussion of the experiences

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Skype Call with Adib Khorram

that are being had by our students, staff, and community members. By interacting with narratives that reflect different experiences, it provides opportunities to dialogue with peers about shared and disparate experiences. Additional benefits include creating community by reducing isolation, and enhancing campus education through peer-based discussion groups.

The Success of this Model: A Blend of Reading, Emotional, and Social Justice Literacies

We strongly feel that academic libraries are sites for building book clubs and having difficult conversations. But the bigger question that remains is this: did we just have a tremendous amount of luck with Real Lit, or did our mindful process impact the successful outcome of our book club? We reflect below on a few reasons why this book club may have been successful in addressing and developing multiple literacies.

One conclusion that we draw from this experience is that the campus has a need and desire for spaces to have challenging conversations on issues of social justice. When we were first setting up this group, we intentionally drew on a program run by the

Center for Equity and Inclusion that is titled "Real Talks." This is a program that has existed for several years and generally draws small groups to engage in conversations on social issues. The intention with forming Real Lit was to create a space that not only talked about the issues, but also allowed for empathetic engagement in the topics through fiction. This basis in current YA literature gave participants the chance to engage with narratives, building reading literacies, and developing emotional connections to the stories.

In casually surveying participants during book group sessions, many responded to the question of what was their interest in the group by talking about how they have not read for fun in a long time. Especially on a college or university campus, there is a culture of utilitarian reading; that is, all of your reading must be in pursuit of an end goal: passing a class, completing an assignment, engaging in a cross-department discussion, or in the case of faculty, completing your literature review so you can write your next article. There is very little space or acknowledgement of the benefit or necessity of reading for pleasure. The majority of our student participants mentioned that it had been years since they had read for fun.

In our first iteration of this book group, our Fall 2018 group, we

> **"There is very little space or acknowledgement of the benefit or necessity of reading for pleasure. The majority of our student participants mentioned that it had been years since they had read for fun."**

went all out on our "perks." This first cohort read Angie Thomas's *The Hate U Give*. We offered student participants a copy of the book to keep, tickets to see the movie, a Skype call with the author, and provided snacks for our biweekly meetings. We were sure that all the perks would draw students. But, as it turns out, all the students really wanted was to read the book. Despite robust efforts, few students picked up free movie tickets, and the Skype call, which fell during finals week, only drew about half-attendance. For each of the following quarters we scaled down to just a copy of the book to keep and the author Skype call, and with both of these iterations, we had high turn-outs for our biweekly meetings but rather low turnouts for the Skype calls.

Publicity example: Campus TV ad for Skype Call with Adib Khorram

A final unexpected outcome of this project has been the creation of a book club culture on our campus. Real Lit has had two on-campus articles published about our project, and several blog posts that we posted to the UW Tacoma Library blog. After the first article, a faculty member from our Writing Studies department reached out and asked if we could help plan and facilitate a one-time book club, and members of the Staff Association asked if we would co-plan and co-facilitate a staff book club. The campus has embraced this model of engagement and programming, and it is something that we as library are developing into a service model. We believe that the UW Tacoma Library is now being seen as a site where these sort of literacies-building conversations are taking place.

Your Next Steps

If you work at an academic library and would like to create a similar book club—be it for community or literacies-building—we have authored a toolkit and case study to help you with the process.[6]

While we recommend, first and foremost, that you examine your own institutional context, the toolkit offers some steps, guidelines and space to think. The toolkit covers reasons to host, working with stakeholders, creating buy-in, budgeting, branding, choosing a title, marketing, daily operations, and assessment, and is available online as an Open Education Resource (OER), an Open Access publication hosted by University of Washington Libraries' iteration of Pressbooks.

Please do not hesitate to email us if you have questions or if you start your own fiction-based book club at your college or university.

We would love to hear what worked, what did not, and how we might improve our toolkit. 📖

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6 Jacobsen Kiciman, Book clubs in academic libraries

Summer Literacy: Things to Consider

by Kari Ramadorai

Students of all ages and backgrounds are encouraged in summer reading by enthusiastic teachers and librarians. Some innovative librarians have partnered with school librarians and teachers in April and May to ensure that summer reading lists line up with the local library's offerings and that students receive their summer program information before school ends. Some have gone further, partnering with summer lunch providers such as Project Sack Lunch or a local food pantry or driving books to rural areas.[1] Each innovation resulted from librarians attempting to solve problems that complicate the battle against the summer slide—that pernicious measurable setback in children's reading ability, evident at the beginning of the following school year. While Donald Hernandez has shown that an on-level reading ability in third grade is an indicator for success, defined as high-school graduation, many of these students can catch up to their peers by reading every day.[2] Battling summer slide may involve activating internal motivation as much as battling the external limiters that life imposes on some children's reading. Consider these three strategies to inspire intrinsic reading motivation: value children's choice, create opportunities for immediate feedback, and bring play into reading.

Valuing choice is a particularly broad category. This can be achieved by letting the summer reading club vote on their book each month, or ensuring parents and guardians know that reading a series with five books counts each book as reading time. We can also reiterate that online reading (eBooks or time spent in library databases on a favorite topic) also counts as children's reading. So does listening to exactly how to resummon the Ender Dragon for tear collection or how the last Battle Royale ended while leading a child to the nonfiction titles or a graphic novel about their favorite video game. (The teacher in me asks, "Maybe they want to make a poster to put on the community board about it?") According to Keri Skeeters et al., giving children choices and respecting those

> **" Consider these three strategies to inspire intrinsic reading motivation: value children's choice, create opportunities for immediate feedback, and bring play into reading."**

choices can lead to deeper relationships between the child and the library, start meaningful conversations that build connection, and teach children to practice making independent choices that empower their learning and leisure.[3] Given that not all children can visit the library often, consider allowing them to turn in their summer reading to their school teacher the next year and collecting them from the local schools after the first month back. This gives an opportunity to participate to students who might not have otherwise had it. Student IDs often act as library cards in many districts, allowing them access to the public library collection regardless of physical restrictions.

Creating opportunities for instant feedback can encompass in-person or online participation. Teach visiting children to book talk with a two-minute lesson and you'll have them using the text to share their opinions. Many public libraries already have this instant-feedback in tween and teen book club meetings, but we can expand that through increased opportunities for small groups to form. Have librarians in your branch noticed a series with a devoted readership? Bring them together in a meeting room or moderate an online group (in video or in a message board). As children get older, they may start tuning out even the best summer reading program, but they will not tune out their friends. Encourage children to bring a friend and participate in book selection and book talks. Or give them a space to build public speaking confidence that lasts a lifetime. Making space in a meeting room's schedule to allow smaller reading groups will encourage even more communication about literature and the circulation that accompanies it. These feedback groups will allow children to invest in their reading.

Making space for play and including alternative reading opportunities in the reading program's guidelines will go a long way towards including more readers. Host a small contest for pictures of protagonists, with different categories for different age groups. Post the entries, and at the end of the summer, display the winner prominently. Bring together blockbuster movie tie-in

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Open Data Literacy and the Library

by Authors: Kaitlin Throgmorton, Bree Norlander and Carole Palmer

In the digital era, information literacy requires data literacy. As we read, work, play, and explore online, we are constantly consuming data while also contributing our own data to the systems and platforms we are using. We need data skills to understand the increasingly data-driven information and decisions we encounter every day, but also to make use of the array of data resources available to us. More and more data are being released openly. In response, libraries are becoming active in this open data movement, promoting data literacy and the use of data for the public good. Here, we share perspectives from the Open Data Literacy project team on open data, why it is important, and how to get involved in open data activities in your library.

> **" As more governments mandate open data policies, libraries will need to produce and publish their own open data. "**

Background

Open Data Literacy (ODL) is an IMLS-funded initiative to advance open data through education, research and support for public librarians and information professionals in the public sector. Based in the Information School at the University of Washington and funded by an IMLS Laura Bush 21st Century Librarian Program grant, ODL is developing new curricula and educational resources for students and public librarians and coordinating open data field work experiences that benefit students, libraries, and government agencies. ODL also collaborates with open data providers on initiatives, advocacy, and outreach activities. Our goal is to prepare future and current public librarians and information professionals to curate open data and to build infrastructure, preservation environments, and services to sustain open data collections for the long-term.

The Open Data Handbook, created by the Open Knowledge Foundation, defines open data as "data that can be freely used, re-used, and redistributed by anyone".[1] Open data is available to the public and licensed in a way that does not restrict how it can be reused, remixed, and re-released. Most open data is produced by the government. One landmark advance in the open data movement came in 2013 when President Obama issued the executive order, *Making Open and Machine Readable the New Default for Government Information*, to promote information transparency and encourage innovation.[2] Following this federal directive, many state and city governments have also implemented open data policies.[3] Now, large amounts of data on federal, state, and local data government operations are available through a range of online open data portals. As these collections of data grow, the range of possible applications also increases. However, the scope and complexity can make it hard for the public to find, understand and apply data for their specific purposes. This is where open data literacy plays a critical role.

Understanding how to navigate, interpret and use open data is becoming an important skill not just for government workers, researchers, and policymakers, but also for the public, and by extension for librarians in support of their community members. Open data, particularly open government data, can be used in myriad ways, ranging from property research for prospective homeowners, to fiscal decision-making, to civic-minded app development. As more and more open data becomes available, libraries need to understand how to access and use these data and support their service communities that rely on these resources. Additionally, as more governments mandate open data policies, libraries will need to produce and publish their own open data.

Public library roles in open data

Public libraries are naturally positioned to promote open data literacy and participate in providing access to open data resources. More importantly, librarianship is arguably the only profession prepared to navigate the curatorial and ethical challenges inherent in a vast, under-organized information resource like open data. Library personnel are strong and active advocates for public access to information, literacy education, and digital inclusion. They understand the intricacies of information sources and systems for

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organizing information, as well as the need to evaluate information for credibility, bias, and representation of perspectives. Library services and programs introduce the public to new information sources and tools and provide instruction to individuals and groups so they can use them to their advantage.

More broadly, "librarians bridge the gaps that exist between people, information and technology."[4] More specifically, libraries have long served as information intermediaries between the government and the public. They regularly connect citizens to public information by collecting government documents and helping the public interpret them, offering referrals to government agencies and social services, and assisting with processes such as citizenship and tax return preparation.

Open data is a logical extension of public library collections and services in the 21st century and completely consistent with its enduring mission. Some roles are just a matter of integrating new digital data resources into traditional collection development and reference services. For example, libraries can curate and provide access to collections of digital open data of value to their communities. At the reference desk, they can direct people to open data collections that are suited to their questions, assist in interpreting data to understand how it has been applied in publications and reports, and help people use data as valid evidence for decision-making and solving problems. In addition, three important areas are evolving as libraries become more involved in open data: library as educator, library as consultant and library as publisher.

When the library acts as an open data educator, it may offer programming to build awareness of open data and host open data events. For example, working with an Open Data Literacy intern, The Seattle Public Library hosted an open data workshop in 2017 to teach the public about open data and how to use it.[5] When the library acts as an open data consultant, this can involve advising local government on data curation best practices, guided by knowledge of collection development, cataloging, and metadata. In Washington state, Asotin County Library has been consulting with civic organizations using the Data Equity for Mainstreet curriculum.[6] When the library acts as an open data publisher, it makes its own data on library operations available to the public, or it may lead open data publishing efforts for a larger group of libraries or a region. The growing interest in library as publisher is evident in a recent Citylab article, "Should Libraries Be the

Keepers of Their Cities' Public Data?"[7] A local example of a library publishing and hosting their own data is the Timberland Regional Library in Tumwater, Washington.

> **❝ There are many ways that libraries can get started with open data. It may be advisable to begin by asking an expert or a local enthusiast to give a talk on open data at your library. ❞**

Over the past three years, ODL has facilitated thirteen open data internships for graduate students, placing them in positions with a range of partners, including Washington State Library, The Seattle Public Library, Asotin County Library, City of Seattle, Washington State Department of Transportation, and others. ODL's interns have formalized metadata standards for city open data, produced open data curriculums, developed visualizations for open data for public viewing, hosted an open data unconference, analyzed public records requests, consolidated geospatial platforms, and more. As library science graduate students work with professionals in libraries and government to solve real-world problems and promote open data, they are helping us, as educators, to develop the open data expertise, best practices, and principles needed to prepare the next generation of information professionals.

Getting started with open data

There are many ways that libraries can get started with open data. It may be advisable to begin by asking an expert or a local enthusiast to give a talk on open data at your library. If your city or region has an open data portal, explore the contents and how the data could be of interest and used by your local service community. Then provide a link to the portal on your library website and provide some pointers on the data available and its potential applications. If your community doesn't have its own open data operations, consider linking to the statewide open data portal: data.wa.gov. Reference librarians can also begin building awareness of open data collections in their area and beyond, as well as increasing their capacity to use these rich resources.[8][9]

If your library is in a position to be more ambitious, it can work on launching its own open datasets. Libraries are publishing a range of data, including collection and circulation data representing the most popular titles and holds, library user data based on door counts and anonymized cardholder data, and technology data such as Wi-Fi usage.[10] Our state is very fortunate that the Washington State Library is now supporting open data initiatives by offering assistance with open data publishing and other open data activities.

Incorporating open data into your library's overall strategy can accentuate and improve a variety of existing library functions,

including reference service, community and civic engagement, special and digital collections, information access and digital equity initiatives, and internal reporting and strategic planning. Libraries in the state are starting to make significant progress on open data. As a critical aspect of information literacy in our digital age, our profession will need to continue to advance, innovate, and lead efforts to make open data an integral part of the information resources and services we provide to the public. 📖

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Improving Technology Literacy Among Service Desk Staff

by Lauren Wittek

The second floor of the James E. Brooks Library was renovated in 2018 and now offers more seating and new collaborative technology, which was included in one of our recent employee technology literacy training sessions.

As the User Experience and Assessment Librarian at Central Washington University's James E. Brooks Library, my overarching goal is to create a functional, welcoming environment—not only for our students, but also our library employees. Over the past few years, the Brooks Library has experienced personnel changes, both among staff and administration, a complete renovation of the second floor, and restructuring of a handful of departments. As the library continues to evolve and add new technology, having well-trained information desk employees is vital. Like many libraries, technology troubleshooting is one of our most common questions from campus and community members; however, my colleagues expressed concern over how to properly address these questions at one of our regular faculty/staff meetings a few months ago.

To meet this important need, I, along with our IT specialist, developed weekly technology training sessions to allow our full-time and part-time faculty, staff, and student employees time to learn about important features and how to troubleshoot common issues. We selected four pieces of equipment based on their proximity to our various service desks: SmartBoards, KIC scanners, the color and B&W printers, and Promethean boards. Per a faculty member's

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request, a fifth session was added to go over our group study rooms containing Mac minis and TV monitors.

Each of these meetings lasted about thirty minutes: twenty minutes of demonstration time by our IT specialist and about ten minutes of audience Q&A. Before each session, I created a list of three to five possible questions about the equipment to help guide the Q&A portion and to encourage additional questions from attendees. I invited the entire library staff and scheduled a time that had the most overlap between morning and evening shifts. No advanced RSVP was required; we wanted these overviews to be informal and relaxed. The scheduling of short sessions was intentional for two reasons: to allow busy employees to get back to their work, and to hold everyone's attention by keeping it simple and straightforward.

We had anywhere from five to twelve attendees per week. For those who expressed interest but were unable to attend, I compiled the key takeaways and shared them via email. I also invited these individuals to schedule a face-to-face meeting with me to take a look at the equipment if they felt they needed additional clarification.

These sessions were not only helpful for those unfamiliar with the technology, but they also allowed our IT specialist to better

understand the pain points experienced by staff members—what may be obvious to someone who works with hardware day-in and day-out may be less so to someone who only encounters it once or twice a quarter.

Overall, attendees conveyed their satisfaction with these training sessions. One attendee shared she felt the "training for the KIC scanners was helpful as I have more requests to use this [equipment] at the reference desk." Another attendee mentioned she hopes "we have more trainings in the future as we have...new technologies in the library." Students appreciated being invited to these trainings because it "gave them more confidence to answer [patron] questions"—this is particularly important because many students are working the service desks during evenings and weekends when there is a limited number of library staff and faculty around.

Moving forward, we are considering some changes to our scheduling approach. Rather than offering training sessions open to all employees, we want to target a specific information desk each week and select the equipment closest to their area. This provides each desk with more personalized training and encourages more folks to attend, as the training will be close to their service area. If a student employee or faculty/staff member is unable to attend, we want to vary the training times each week to provide individuals with more opportunities to fit a session into their schedule.

In the future, it may also be worthwhile to ask attendees to complete a simple checklist; that way, we can quickly gauge the effectiveness of each session and have attendees walk away with demonstrable skills. As new employees are hired, particularly those working at service desks, these tech trainings could be added to their onboarding to ensure everyone is up to speed. Finally, based on feedback from attendees, we would like to allow more hands-on time with the equipment after the Q&A portion. 📖

books and create a display; better yet, have a teen group create the display. At story time, picture books containing similar themes can be tied to shows or character traits that the children in your library love with less than half an hour of work from the children's librarian. Does your library already circulate board games? Include a table once a month for Apples to Apples, Once Upon a Time, and card-based battle games (Magic, Star Realms, Harry Potter) as reading time because they require reading, often have a plot and hero, and create an opportunity for communication. Include cookbooks, graphic novels, and paper airplane instructions in summer reading hours. Since writing and reading go hand-in-hand, creating written directions for doing a child's favorite activity is a fun summer reading option. Provide opportunities for service by letting children be library helpers. For example, creating low-cost, three-item science kits takes following instructions and allows a quick science lesson for helpers while they feel good for lending a hand. Make the science kit helper experience relevant by finding a couple of nonfiction and fiction options that relate to the underlying principal.

Summer reading is important for children of all ages. Value children's choices, create opportunities for immediate feedback, and bring play as a reading option to increase children's intrinsic investment in their reading outcomes. Summer literacy is as broad a topic as our imaginations make it. Involving children in their reading choices and outcomes will engage them and keep them coming back to the library. 📖

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Marko Liias Champions Media Literacy: Money from Legislature Becomes Reality

by Shawn Sheller

Washington has been on a three-year journey as the first state in the nation to pass legislation addressing the need for media literacy education, which has now provided grant money for teacher-librarians and other educators to create lessons to achieve these crucial skills. Thanks to the continued efforts of Senator Mark Liias, who has been the prime sponsor of three pieces of legislation to ensure K-12 students receive media literacy instruction, Washington has strengthened its instructional mandates to include monetary support.

The first legislative success started with SSB 6273 in 2016. Senator Liias wrote and sponsored 6273 after members of Action for Media Education (AME) met with him to initiate this effort and seek his support of this content area. This bill expanded digital citizenship requirements to include the instruction of media literacy. It brought together an advisory committee of administrators, educators, parents, and community members. This group was charged with creating a statewide survey to inform Washington's Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) how to proceed as it implemented the new legislation.

The following year, ESSB 5449 passed. This legislation built on the work that was begun with SSB 6273 and led to updating the state standards and the development of best practices and models—a page within the EdTech portion of the OSPI website entitled Digital Citizenship & Media Literacy Resources. This repository of best practice resources was created specifically to support these new curricular needs for media specialists and other educators. OSPI also offered a newly created EdTech Standards course for professional development purposes.

All of these developments were positive and very impactful. Washington students truly need this instruction, and OSPI had made many investments with very minimal funding support. To continue this work and develop the resources educators need to teach media literacy, a monetary investment was needed.

So, in the 2019 Legislative session, Senator Liias was back as the prime sponsor of a third bill, SB5593. The goal of 5593 was to create grant funding for curriculum development and conferences to publish these integrated units of study. Although the session ended without its passage, a $300,000 budgetary proviso was included to fund media literacy embedded curricular units to be published in the OSPI Online Educational Resources (OER) area. This money will be distributed in $150,000 allotments each year for the next two years. Mini-grants ranging from $15,000 to $25,000 will be made available starting this fall. Whether it is a health, science, social studies, or an English Language Arts unit, intentionally instructing students to be more media literate is the purpose of these grants.

Begin imagining and collaborating on your grant proposal now because you are invited to form interdisciplinary teams with a media specialist guiding your work as you apply for this grant money in the fall of 2019. For further information, contact Dennis Small, Educational Technology Director for OSPI. His phone number is (360) 725-6384. 📖

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Poets, Dissidents, and Librarians: Visiting Myanmar and Encountering Life

by Greg Bem

Back in March, I had the opportunity to visit Myanmar and experience an introduction to the many lifestyles and cultures throughout the capitol, Yangon, and beyond. This article explores how I encountered the poets, dissidents, and librarians of Myanmar that left me speechless and inspired, and refreshed my view of my own life in Seattle.

It wasn't my first time in Southeast Asia. Back in 2013, I worked for a year serving on a team for Open Development Cambodia. Based in Phnom Penh, this NGO-funded project worked to collect resources—mostly openly licensed data sets—and publish them on a central website. My duty was to work on developing the library collection. Composed of open access articles, public domain works, and some grey literature produced locally and needing a home, the digital collection for Open Development Cambodia was as diverse as the definitions of the word "development." Working on that team was a strong introduction to how libraries and archives operate in an economically depressed country with surplus information-bearing materials. Inevitably, the time on this project came to an end, as I returned to Seattle for my MLIS at UW and an interest in working at an "American library."

In 2015, I returned to Cambodia for a summer contract with the Wildlife Conservation Society. I once again was confronted with a variety of important literature—mostly in the form of documents produced by typewriter and half-consumed by termites and mold. My tasks included reorganizing the physical library and enhancing a remote research center located in a protected (and vulnerable) forest along the Cambodia Vietnam border. Though I was often the only "librarian" at work in these settings, I was exposed to researchers who were equally as concerned with at-risk documents and organized spaces. Okay, maybe not as concerned about organization—but they did appreciate my efforts to dust off shelves,

> " As Maung spoke, his were descriptions of passion, compassion, and love—a love for a homeland, a love for a complex place, a view of a world that exists far more fully than any hyperbolic article can describe. I knew in my casual, albeit drunken, agreement that I would, on some deeper level, have to go visit him. "

clear away gecko eggs, and clean up stale cat urine.

My two brief contracts in Cambodia were enhanced by living within a society that, though filled with its own iterations of oppression and struggles, contained a collectivist concern for common well-being, and a general pride and curiosity for local cultures including the indigenous and marginalized. I of course am summarizing what is a complex conversation; however, the exposure to many different types of people who enjoyed discussing Cambodia and its information resources with a foreign librarian was energizing.

Fast forward to 2017. A local Kirkland-based writer connected me with poet Maung Day of Myanmar, who visited Seattle through "The International Writers" program hosted by the University of Iowa (full disclosure: I too identify as a poet, and that is the context through which we met and spent time). I took him on a tour of local bars and neighborhoods, and our extended gallivanting led to him inviting me to visit his country. He was delighted and amazed by the United States, and it seemed to me that his experiences, when compared to his conception of America from afar, were quite thrilling. I thought about his own encounter as a form of literacy—understanding of culture, the ability to process information, to identify and know, learned in a context—and immediately compared it to my own literacy of Myanmar.

Headlines flashing. War. Military coups. Ethnic minorities. Genocide. The drug industry. The English colonization. These terms, lifeless and static, buzzed along through my mind as I also faced Maung Day's own descriptions. It wasn't that my own view of Myanmar lacked humanity or complex insight—it simply felt limited. As Maung spoke, his were descriptions of passion, compassion, and love—a love for a homeland, a love for a complex place, a view of a world that exists far more fully than any hyperbolic article can describe. I knew in my casual, albeit drunken,

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agreement that I would have to go visit him. I would have to see what he could only briefly tell me through his depictions of temples, rivers, activism, poetry, and of course, libraries.

Fast forward to March 2019: I am visiting Myanmar. The epic flight to Singapore and then to Yangon was exhausting but doable. It was perhaps managed by my privilege of experiencing other long flights in my life, across oceans and featuring the cycles of binge-eating and binge-watching to keep the anxiety and claustrophobia from settling into the passengers. As I arrived, I was already aware that the diversity of appearance and behavior was far more intense than I was ready to perceive. Only perhaps in Mumbai or New York City had I felt as drawn to and through the milieu of different peoples crammed into a small space. I was greeted by the poet at the airport, and we drove to prepare for our journey.

The "journey" of this holiday (for me) and quasi-holiday (for him) included time in Yangon, Kyaiktiyo, and Bagan. From there we parted ways. I visited Monywa, Pho Win Taung and Mandalay before returning to Yangon to meet with my dear friend and former coworker from Cambodia, the female tech pioneer Penhleak Chan, and exploring just a little bit more. Eventually, I had to return to Seattle and head to Kirkland to continue my work as an "American librarian" at Lake Washington Institute of Technology (LWTech).

I believe that literacy is experiential, and something that can and should be viewed as living and growing. It is never finished, and its limits are never met. In the context of this trip, I found my own understanding of literacy met with my interpretation of the information literacy of the locals, the multicultural literacy of the regional and global/international conversations of the Myanmar locals I talked with, and a literacy of the political and literary merits of the strong voices filling the country.

As we took the cars, buses, and gondolas across the Burmese landscape, Maung Day continued to describe the perspectives of life in the country from the context of new voices. His professional work was coincidentally related to development, and his experience working for different NGOs exposed him to many of the ethnic groups across much economic stratification. It was clear nothing could be described in a single, holistic way. He explained the complexities of the country's relationship with Buddhism, Islam, and Christianity. The military was discussed and diffused. The stereotypes about the conflicts were unfolded: reasons existed

> **❝ In one year, this building would be knocked down and replaced with a bigger, taller library, Dr. Naing said. The country values its libraries and most of the funding is coming from the Ministry of Education. ❞**

behind all of the aggrandized violence presented across the world and through social media.

I asked about information literacy. How do people get their information and know what to use? Social media had been back for several years (the Wikipedia page hadn't been updated when I was traveling to the country, and I was expecting a Facebook-less world), and also served as the primary search engine. That's right—search for news and information via Facebook, not Google. There were challenges, and there was a desire to be connected through the digital core. But it was clear that the digital core had not become a gravitational hole pulling the world into its nothingness; opportunities to connect with humans face to face were still very present. I learned this directly after participating in a community poetry reading at the prolific, transgressive, humbling Myanm/art gallery in downtown Yangon. After the reading was over, a dozen or so attendees (including Maung and myself) spent several hours socializing and sharing information the way I would consider old-fashioned: through word of mouth. We set up tables outside a vegetarian-friendly restaurant near the geographical center of Yangon, and we talked. And drank. And talked some more. It was through this lightning-like event that books were exchanged, news was shared, and the quintessential conversations on politics, social realities, and the underpinnings of daily life came to fruition. It was through this form of living, breathing connectivity that I was offered answers, encouraged to go further, seek deeper, and meet more people.

I mentioned I visited Monywa, a small city north of Yangon filled with beautiful Neem trees, offering close connectivity to the arid landscape. It was there that I was connected to political dissidents from the seventies who ran tea shops and publishing houses and surviving while managing their trauma in a closely-knit community. They were visiting, and after a long day of exploring ancient Buddha caves, meeting a Buddhist tour guide who had never heard of Microsoft and who loved the resident monkey population with awe-inspiring kindness, the group of Myanmar activists and writers met me. We exchanged information. We talked about books. We talked about translation. We talked about life in Monywa. And I shared what I could about "American poetry."

Thinking back on Monywa, the experience of connectivity there and my own experience in the United States offers a parallel. There is so much isolation, and there is so much opportunity in being social. Literacy is huge, be it in everyday sharing, conducting

research, or otherwise enhancing one's life with new tools and understanding for a specific purpose. And it's vastly improved with the social experience. That, too, might be the meaning behind "life" in the title of this article.

When thinking about what to call this article, I examined some of my final moments in Myanmar. I was visiting the University of Yangon, and was planning on visiting the library by meeting with its staff. It was in a tent under the sun outside of the library that Penhleak Chan and I met with Dr. Ni Ni Naing, the head Librarian, to discuss the world of libraries in Myanmar. Ko Maung Maung Soe of the Save the Libraries campaign was also in attendance to discuss his initiative to bring community libraries, funded by locals of Myanmar, to many different small communities throughout the poorest regions of the country. We discussed and discussed, and after meeting, we were set to go. But we weren't in the library. We hadn't seen it. It wasn't open on the day we were visiting. Dr. Naing expressed that we should see the library she was so proud of, and so we walked to the library and, nodding to my privilege and incredible opportunity, I joined the others in entering. A quiet, cool place greeted us. On display were antique rice leaf inscriptions from centuries past in glass cases. Jewel-encrusted antique cabinets were in corners with brief descriptions on where they came from. The library was here and it was present. It was present.

The emptiness felt alchemical, like a distilling tool allowing me to see within the folds of reality. It was empty, devoid of people, but symbolic of all that I had on the trip—that which I've shared in this writing and much more. In one year, this building would be knocked down and replaced with a bigger, taller library, Dr. Naing said. The country values its libraries and most of the funding is coming from the Ministry of Education. As she explained this, I could not believe it. In some parts of my own country, libraries are being shut down, opposed, even vehemently mocked by people who have become so isolated and disconnected through their personal devices that they have forgotten the historic relevance of the library. To those reading this, that might not be surprising—it might even be a common sentiment among people you interact with.

All libraries carry the potential to be symbols, and many people think of their library (or the universal library) as a symbol representing certain community and societal values. On this trip, that library served as a space documenting a certain literacy I had experienced during this journey of growth. All vacations come to an end. I had to say goodbye to Myanmar, to the new acquaintances, my friends, and the heat. And as I did, I humbly offered thanks for the opportunity to be reinvigorated with hope and reaffirmed with the How of what information can do, what writers can do, what activists can do, and what librarians can do in the present day. 📖

We continue in this pattern, daily. I begin incorporating other elements into the reading time, so it becomes interactive: "Show me the red bow," "Show me the big dog," "Where is the little dog?" "Show me green grass," "Show me yellow flowers," "Where is the man?" "Show me the man's beard," "Why does he wear gloves and boots?" "Show me cold snow," "Why is this dog jumping?" "Count the dogs," "Count the wolves...." I help #1 manipulate fingers to count one, two, three, etc.

We increase our time sitting and focusing, sharing words and concepts, and exploring photographs and eventually additional text. After three months of reading the same book every day, #1 sits still, follows my hand across a page, responds to my verbal cues, and listens if I fill the time with other snippets of the text. By now, I've stopped giving snacks or redirecting #1's attention if it strays. Reading seems to have become its own special activity with its own inherent reward.

We read for the pleasure of reading. We read to acquire new knowledge. We read to share a safe space together. We read to establish and maintain trust. We read to remind ourselves of what's important for that day's learning. We read, I hope, for the possibility of functional communication. #1 consistently comes over to the desk when I pull out this book. #1 does not run away, when *Dogs* shows up. We spend twenty-five to thirty beautiful minutes together each day, trying to find words for this something very important in #1's life—something I have no name for, and #1 can't tell me the meaning of.

I finish my assignment for that class, that semester. The lead teachers are pleased that #1 can sit and focus on a task, well beyond the educational goal. I tell them that this book needs to accompany #1 to whatever school or class comes next. I wasn't able to teach #1 to speak, but I was able to teach #1 that reading means something positive. It feels good. Reading is a way to order the day, rather than existing chaotically.

I hope that the reading experience #1 and I shared will grow into fruition. I hope an encounter with dogs in the future will bring to mind the hours we spent discussing *Dogs*, by Don Harper. I trust that the stability we found together means that #1 will be able to find stability, again, as childhood gives way to adulthood. I would love to walk into an animal facility some day (pet store, farm, vet clinic, shelter, therapy training, etc.), and see #1 there, all grown up, caring for dogs. Perhaps dogs speak a language that #1 understands already; the book was just a mechanism to allow this knowledge to come forth.

I send a follow-up note to the TL, expressing my gratitude for the gift of that book, which enabled a critical phase of success in #1's academic life. The TL responds: "That's what we're here for! To bridge the gap between what students already know, and what they can know, even if it's never spoken aloud!" 📖

The Keepers of Old Tech

by Alex Byrne

Recently, libraries have been getting headlines for handwringing about staying relevant to an increasingly connected, device-mediated country. Their presence on social media platforms, maker spaces, virtual reality rigs, flexible spaces, electronic materials, and various smaller and larger automated and technological advances have expanded available times and ways for libraries to interact with the public. All of these new modes significantly broaden the definition of literacy past previous iterations that focused strongly, if not exclusively, on print. Today, literacy has evolved into a more generalized sense of being able to fluently encode and decode information about any given topic and evaluate it on various quality metrics, e.g. "information literacy."

The speed of technological adoption means libraries (and their users) are going to be holding on to technology long after the tech world has decided they want nothing more to do with it. As the cycle of release for new digital devices has shortened, more and more people are waking up to the reality that the shiny new thing they bought six months to a year ago has already been superseded by the next version, and that when the next device releases in another six months to a year, the manufacturer of their current device will drop official support for the device. A year after that, the device won't even exist on their website, and perhaps only a few small articles will be in their technical support forum before the articles, and mention of the device, disappear entirely. Devices no longer have to be old and busted before there's a new hotness on sale, and there seems to be a blithe assumption from manufacturers that when a customer's current device falls out of support, consumers are going to immediately buy a new device to keep up with the trends.

For library users, this speed is often highly disruptive. For public libraries, it's a familiar problem, but on an expedited time scale. Physical formats for media grow and change, from vinyl records to cassette tapes to CDs or VHS cassettes to DVDs to HD formats.

> **" There seems to be a blithe assumption from manufacturers that when a customer's current device falls out of support, consumers are going to immediately buy a new device to keep up with the trends. "**

Many more products are produced digitally and will never be released in any physical form. For some time, the public library was the last place you could find such things long after they had left stores. While it's ultimately unsatisfying to tell library users "Well, Netflix decided there wasn't going to be a disc release of this show, and they're not licensing streaming to libraries, so I guess that's just part of the culture you're going to miss out on," that's the truth for many things.

These issues are familiar to library workers that do or are trained in collection management. In collection management, public libraries have always needed to be literate in how to handle old technology and make decisions about balancing replacing the old with acquiring the new. Books, after all, are the oldest technology in a library.

Collection management is potentially a very fraught exercise when the public doesn't fully grasp the idea that there's only a limited amount of space to fit everything in. Perhaps the most clear non-library example was the furor over Marie Kondo's apparent dislike of books based on her "spark joy" method in *The Life-Changing Magic of Tidying-Up*.[1] The furor took "Does it spark joy?" as a literal question of whether reading the book itself would spark joy, and neglected that joy can come from the memories associated with a book, the time of life it was acquired or read, or any number of things that come with the book that are not specifically about the book. People have strong opinions about what books and media they think a library should always have on hand. These are based on memories and associations even if they would admit to themselves and others that they, personally, wouldn't read or watch it (or wouldn't read or watch it now). Libraries that have gone out for millages, levies, or other attempts to increase their funding know their public wants assurances that their tax money is being spent wisely. "Wisely" sometimes means "in adherence what my idea of what a library should have and be." That image almost always includes lots of books, usually coupled with insisting that there can be no removal, only addition, to the book collection.

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There are several reasons why this idea is unsustainable in each of our collections. Most of the truly egregious examples can be found at places like Awful Library Books,[2] but there's usually something hiding in the back of a collection, no matter where you are, that probably should have been weeded some time ago. It doesn't matter what kind of library you are, there's almost always visible anxiety and pushback against the idea that not everything a library acquires has to stay there forever. A relatively recent example is in an AP News story from 2018, where faculty at Indiana University of Pennsylvania complained that having books on the shelves is what's important to scholars and researchers, prizing serendipitous discovery over the reality that those books weren't being looked at or checked out by current students.[3]

There's literacy involved in collection management as well, although it's more commonly referred to as good customer service. Being able to explain the library's collection management policy, having an idea of what happens to books after they leave the library, and knowing whether or not a book is still in print can do a lot to soothe ruffled feathers over a decision that some books are no longer relevant to the library user's needs, or that a once-beloved classic no longer circulates enough to justify its continued presence.

Several of the skills and literacies obtained in learning collection management also apply to technology management. While device manufacturers want to believe their consumers will rush out to buy a new device when their current one falls out of support, the reality is that most of their customers want to use the device they have until they physically can't anymore. The device use statistics available from those manufacturers make it clear that old devices are still going strong several years after their presumed end of life. If we look at the summary of devices running Android that Google put out on the Android Developers site, the versions of Android in use in a seven-day period ending May 9, 2019 range from Android 2.3.3 to Android 9.[4] Android 2.3.3 was released in 2011, and yet, 0.3% of devices had it. Google proclaimed in a tweet in 2017 that there were more than two billion active Android devices.[5] Even three-tenths of one percent means there are six million or more Android devices running an eight-year-old operating system that hasn't received support or updates in a significant amount of time.

Apple is a little cagier about the exact breakdown of iProduct users, but even they will admit to their developers that 6% of Apple devices are running an iOS version earlier than iOS 11, as of May 30, 2019.[6] Apple told The Verge there are more than 1.4 billion Apple devices in use,[7] so that's a cool 84 million devices that aren't on the latest two versions of iOS.

Devices don't disappear when they go out of support, nor do they stop being functional. Many library workers encounter these devices and their users when the users want electronic resources, apps, videos, and wireless Internet access to work on these older devices. Most people working in a library are interacting with old user technology on a daily basis. The question then becomes less about whether there are older devices in the library, and more about how much library workers should be expected to help a user accomplish their goals on old technology.

Right now, how much a library worker is expected to help seems to depend on what the user asks us to do with their device. Library workers are already expected to look at a device and figure out whether it is compatible with library resources. Usually, this means going to a device's app store and downloading the correct app for their device. But what happens when it is possible to put a library-related app on a device outside of the app store? Is it unreasonable to ask a library worker to know that Amazon and Android devices can install apps that aren't in their app stores, and to further know what the process and risks are in taking that step? For example, installing Libby on the Amazon Kindle Fire series of tablets requires ticking an option marked "enable unknown sources." Library users are understandably hesitant about letting the unknown in, but they trust library workers to know what they're doing and they trust library guides describing the process.[8] Library users may already assume that library workers are technologically literate enough to help them succeed at these tasks.

Furthermore, public libraries often become the last point of assistance for users to keep their older devices in working order. Knowing how to keep older devices working and useful often means finding unofficial resources and communities still interested in those devices. I suspect most public library users aren't aware on their own of the thriving community of developers that are doing the work of making older devices continue to work long after their official support ends. Browsing the forums of XDA Developers shows a rich community where users build versions of new Android operating systems for devices that do not receive them from their manufacturers, develop new applications for Android devices, and provide support for their creations.[9] The iOS jailbreak community, like the r/jailbreak sub-Reddit,[10] provide a similar service for the iProduct ecosystem, discussing and developing methods for older iOS devices to access the features of later iOS systems and updated versions of apps.

Jailbreaking or installing unofficial software always has some risk. There are real potential dangers to going off the official support path, including rendering a device completely non-functional ("bricking") if the attempt to install custom software or jailbreak a device fails or is imperfectly executed. Devices that have successfully migrated to non-official software can pose novel problems when connecting to library or other resources. Literacy in these cases involves absorbing new definitions, vocabularies, and methods of upgrading, diagnosing, and understanding older devices. Despite these dangers, becoming literate in how to extend

the life of a device and embracing the role of last-resort support seems like a good idea for organizations that are looking for ways to stay relevant and serve their public.

So far, the technological literacy needed to support older devices isn't that different from collection management or reference services. It is focused primarily on finding, understanding, and interpreting technical information to the general public. With older devices, however, there's the additional complication of how legal it is to engage in jailbreaking or installing custom software onto these devices. There's a difference between temporarily turning on unknown sources to install Libby on a Kindle Fire and jailbreaking and wiping the operating system completely. The increased risk involved in the latter can create a tension between the principle that people should be able to get useful information from their libraries and those same libraries not wanting to be responsible or liable for anything that their users might do with that information.

The Digital Millennium Copyright Act (DMCA) contains anti-Digital Rights Management (DRM)-circumvention provisions, making it illegal to use security vulnerabilities or flaws in code to install unofficial software. That said, the Librarian of Congress has the power to exempt certain classes of things from the DMCA's anti-circumvention provisions. For 2018-2021, based on the plain text summary at the Copyright Office's "Frequently Asked Questions About Section 1201 Rulemaking," it looks like jailbreaking is not a violation of the DMCA.

- "Computer programs that operate the following types of devices, to allow the device to interoperate with or to remove software applications ("jailbreaking"):

  o Smartphones

  o Tablets and other all-purpose mobile computing devices

  o Smart TVs

  o Voice assistant devices"[11]

Consult counsel before making any legal decisions, of course. But most importantly, current exemptions are not a guarantee for the

> **"Libraries have always had a need to be technologically literate, but it is only recently that the pace of technology is accelerating to the point where collection management and how to operate devices and computers are no longer sufficient for that literacy."**

future. If public libraries are invested in keeping devices running and furnishing information to people about how to jailbreak their devices, we need to take a look at whether software filters might exclude necessary information by miscategorizing it as "hacking" or "illegal acts." Do we also need to add to our copyright law, exemptions to those laws, court interpretations, and the skill set that comes with having a juris doctorate in copyright law to our literacy toolbox? Or, at the very least, to hire someone who does? I don't know the answer to those questions, but it seems like a rich and fruitful ground for discussion in public libraries.

Users bringing in their own technology is not the only place where public libraries find ourselves struggling with obsolescence, both natural and planned. Internet-connected computers with office software suites have become ubiquitous in public libraries over the last two decades, and self-checkout computers have increased significantly in the last decade. But the money to fund their regular replacement is not always easy to have on hand or find in a budget or grant, even with e-rate discounts and volume pricing available. Windows 7 will be reaching the end of its extended support period in January of 2020, meaning any computer currently running Windows 7 will no longer receive official support from Microsoft.[12] Public libraries are faced with the choice to upgrade their systems to Windows 10, change the operating system on their computers completely, with the attendant costs that come with making such a change, or leave their system on Windows 7 and hope that nothing terrible happens to their computers. Desktop PCs fall out of warranty long before they stop working entirely, even if they suffer some minor breakage along the way. This quickly becomes a situation where a library must decide between spending money it may not have on replacement desktops or souring the relationship between libraries and users a tiny bit more every time a routine computer task causes an error or crashes the computer and wipes out their work without the possibility of recovery. Even fixable errors still take time and smoothing over the disruption that comes from misbehaving technology. As technology ages and budgets shrink, working in a library requires technological literacy to diagnose, interpret, and apply fixes to computers. How much of that technological literacy can be reasonably expected of a library worker is an open question that needs more discussion, but it is no longer the case that a person working in a library can expect to avoid questions about the

library's technology and what to do when that technology breaks.

Public library technology is not immune to the same pressures on library users. New innovations, new models, or new paradigms of service put public libraries in the same dilemma as their users: purchase the new hotness, or salvage the old and busted. In the twelve years I've been a librarian, I've seen netbooks (low horsepower, high battery life compact laptops meant to be good for Internet browsing and maybe text composition) get replaced by Chromebooks, (which started as "enough computer to run a web browser and the apps that work in that web browser") as the things to have for people to use at our technology classes. Those Chromebooks were recently replaced by general-purpose laptops for use in the library building in addition to their function as class computers. Other libraries may have bought early versions of Arduino boards or Raspberry Pi computers that have since been redesigned.

There's always a question of how long a video game system for programming is going to last based on the interest in its games and controls. For example, my library location has Nintendo DS Lite gaming systems. The DS Lite had already been in production for 5 years when we purchased ours, and has been in service since then. It still checks out and is apparently still as fun as they were when we first made them available. Looking at the DS with an eye toward the future means answering several questions about what is the most cost-efficient and the most value for our investment. The costs of upgrading all of our systems to the most recent version of the DS—the 3DS—are not small, and there is a further question about where funding for such an upgrade will come from. Is this a cost the library system will bear, or will the Friends of the Library group for my branch purchase them?

There's an additional question of whether the DS line is dead, thanks to the introduction of the Nintendo Switch, and whether investing in the latter system will be the best value for our users. Weighing the pros and cons of upgrades and replacement against the available budget is not a literacy that I thought I needed when I started working in public library service, but it's become readily apparent to me that it's a vital skill. I also need to combine budget knowledge with technological literacy, collection management and customer service skills to obtain a complete picture of what effects any given technology purchase or salvage might have on library services, costs, and support requirements. The collection management part was the only part I studied in library school, as budgets and technology literacy were things meant for managers or IT folk, not librarians.

Libraries have always had a need to be technologically literate, but it is only recently that the pace of technology is accelerating to the point where collection management and how to operate devices and computers are no longer sufficient for that literacy.

Companies and corporations are focused on new products, processes, and ideas, spending only a small amount of time on supporting and improving what already exists before introducing something new. Public libraries and their users don't have the budget to keep up with this constant cycle of newness, and have to make difficult decisions about what technology to invest in with limited resources. Libraries struggling to stay relevant at the speed of device releases can find their niche and make themselves even more valuable to the community by helping them keep their old devices working for years to come, especially in places where a device purchase is something that has to be saved up for years. Moving forward, a big question is to what degree public libraries will embrace this role and its attendant literacies around diagnosis, repair, renewal, risk, replacement, and the legal implications of taking on this role. Most of the necessary skills are already present in other forms, honed from long practice with collection management and technology assistance. I think the good will, financial savings, and increased ability to help our users with their technology is a strong reason to acquire these additional literacies for all our staff. It's an opportunity to transform the idea of the library being about old things and old technology into something positive, wonderful, and relevant for library communities. 📖

NOTES

1 One of the clearer summaries of the misconception is Kathleen Keenan's Book Riot piece. Keenan, Kathleen, "No, Marie Kondo Doesn't Want You to Throw Away All Your Books," Book Riot, January 14, 2019, https://bookriot.com/2019/01/14/marie-kondos-book-tidying-advice/.

2 Kelly, Mary and Holly Hibner, Awful Library Books. Updated July 12, 2019. http://www.awfullibrarybooks.net.

3 Rubinkam, Michael, "A library without books? Universities purging dusty volumes," AP News. February 7, 2018, https://apnews.com/3d3473e13d8441dd8b5893211c8b5398.

4 Google, "Distribution dashboard," Android Developers, Accessed June 4, 2019, https://developer.android.com/about/dashboards/.

5 Twitter Post, May 17, 2017, 10:09 A.M., https://twitter.com/Google/status/864890655906070529.

6 Apple, "App Store," Apple Developers, https://developer.apple.com/support/app-store.

7 Lee, Dami, "Apple says there are 1.4 billion active Apple devices," The Verge, January 29, 2019, https://www.theverge.com/2019/1/29/18202736/apple-devices-ios-earnings-q1-2019.

8 An example guide is from the Hooksett Library in New Hampshire. Hooksett Library, "How to install the Libby app on your Kindle Fire tablet," Hooksett Library, https://www.hooksettlibrary.org/library-news/2018/06/30/how-install-libby-app-your-kindle-fire-tablet.

9 XDA Developers, XDA Developers forum, https://forums-xda-developers.com.

10 "/r/jailbreak" Reddit, Accessed June 4, 2019, https://www.reddit.com/r/jailbreak/.

11 United States Copyright Office, "Frequently Asked Questions About the Section 1201 Rulemaking." Copyright.gov, https://www.copyright.gov/1201/2018/faqs.html.

The full rule text and reasoning as published in the Federal Register is at https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/FR-2018-10-26/pdf/2018-23241.pdf.

12 "Windows lifecycle fact sheet," Microsoft Support, https://support.microsoft.com/en-us/help/13853/windows-lifecycle-fact-sheet.

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Milestones

Washougal School District Embraces School Librarians

Standing row: Heather Kassel, Jennifer Campen, Hillary M. Marshall, Chrissy Moses; Seated row: Dawn Heap, Heather Christofferson, Fran McCarty, Debbie Leifsen; Not pictured: Vicki Anderson, Tammy Asbjornsen, Holly Vonderohe

After years of advocating, the Washougal School District realized that maintaining a certificated librarian, with the support of a full time classified library assistant, in all of the schools would positively impact our students, faculty and community. In the 2018-19 school year, the Washougal School District implemented this model. This was a monumental triumph for our small but mighty district. Our Library Professional Learning Community focused on developing and delivering digital citizenship lessons implementing the OSPI Educational Technology standard *(Digital Citizen - Students recognize the rights, responsibilities and opportunities of living, learning and working in an interconnected digital world, and they act and model in ways that are safe, legal and ethical.)* #WashougalRising

Gause Elementary
Librarian: Dawn Heap
Library Assistant: Jennifer Campen

Cape Horn Skye Elementary
Librarian: Chrissy Moses
Library Assistant: Tammy Asbjornsen

Columbia River Gorge Elementary
Librarian: Heather Kassel
Library Assistant: Vicki Anderson

Hathaway Elementary
Librarian: Dawn Heap
Library Assistant: Heather Christofferson

Canyon Creek Middle School
Librarian: Chrissy Moses
Library Assistant: Holly Vonderohe

Jemtegaard Middle School
Librarian: Heather Kassel
Library Assistant: Debbie Leifsen

Washougal High School
Librarian: Hillary M. Marshall
Library Assistant: Fran McCarty

-Submitted by Hillary M. Marshall, Library Media Specialist at Washougal High School

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Jacquelyn Ray, Director of Library Services at Walla Walla Community College

Jacquelyn Ray - New Director of Library Services

Jacquelyn "Jackie" Ray began serving as the Director of Library Services at Walla Walla Community College starting in September 2019 coming from nearby Blue Mountain Community College in Pendleton, OR. Jacquelyn earned her MLIS from the University of Washington iSchool in 2008 and an MA in English from Southern New Hampshire University in 2015. She has served in academic libraries beginning as a library technician at the University of Washington, Bothell/Cascadia Campus Library followed by appointments in Oregon,

New Hampshire, and California. Feeding into her love of travel, Jackie enjoyed her experiences in these various locations but she is now happy to be back in her home state.

Jacquelyn brings leadership in assessment, student learning through supporting opportunities and environments that cultivate creative and/or scholarly pursuits, and supporting pathways to equity in education. She sees Open Educational Resources (OER) as one of the vital efforts in remedying barriers to higher education. Jackie has given numerous presentations on OER, served as the guest editor of the Oregon Library Association Quarterly issue on OER, and is a co-author of a book chapter in the forthcoming title: Marking Open and Affordable Courses: Best Practices and Case Studies.

A fun fact about Jackie is that she is an avid recreational runner and is a certified USA Track and Field, Level One Coach. From the California Redwoods to the coastline of Birch Bay, Jackie has run races ranging from 5k all the way up to 13.1 mile half marathons. Competing on almost a monthly basis, Jackie has placed first in her division four times and, to date, has brought home 15 medals and 2 trophies. She credits cat chasing her "Magnificent 7" furry friends as the best marathon training!

-Submitted by Jana Lu Williams, MLIS, Faculty Librarian at Walla Walla Community College

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Barbara Walters - Wenatchee Valley College 2019 Distinguished Alum

Barbara Walters, Executive Director of North Central Regional Library, was awarded Wenatchee Valley College's Distinguished Alumni for 2019.

Barbara Walters, Executive Director of North Central Regional Library

In selecting Walters, college officials said she has shown a clear desire and direction for education and profession growth, and is successfully using her many years of dedicated library work to fulfill her passion for connecting people and communities to the important resources and services that the library district offers.

Walters was also recently appointed to the state Library Capital Improvement Program committee, the Greater Wenatchee Area Technology Alliance Board and last fall was appointed to the Washington State Library Council.

- Submitted by Michelle McNiel, Communications Coordinator at North Central Regional Library

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Brianna Hoffman - Washington Library Association's New Assistant Director

The Washington Library Association is pleased to announce that Brianna Hoffman has been named Assistant Director of WLA. Working with WLA's management company, Primary Source, Brianna will assist in the day-to-day operations of the association including the coordination of

Brianna Hoffman, Assistant Director of Washington Library Association

conferences and WLA's internal groups and committees.

Brianna brings 13 years of public library experience and three years of national project coordination experience to the Assistant Director role, and she received her MLS from Emporia State University in 2013. A longtime member, Brianna served as a WLA board director from 2013-2015 and as Vice-President/President/Past-President from 2015-2018. Brianna has also co-chaired several WLA conferences and internal WLA groups.

WLA Executive Director, Kate Laughlin, is excited to bring this former role back to the WLA management team, and Brianna's in-depth knowledge and experience will be a true asset to the association.

- Submitted by WLA staff 📖

by Sheri Boggs

Sheri Boggs

Meet the WSBA Youth Finalists

When asked to write this installment of "I'd Rather Be Reading," I jumped at the chance to talk about the youth finalists for the Washington State Book Award. My fellow judges—teacher-librarian Chris Roberts and bookseller Janelle Smith—and I spent the first five months of 2019 pretty exclusively reading this year's contenders: picture books, easy readers, middle grade and young adult titles all written and/or illustrated by Washington creators. And while the winners, both youth and adult, won't be announced until the awards ceremony at The Seattle Public Library on Oct. 12, I can share with you this year's finalists and some of our perceptions of each.

In the picture book category, *All Are Welcome*, by Alexandra Penfold and illustrated by Suzanne Kauffman, embodies the spirit of the late Mr. Rogers with a day in the life of a welcoming and diverse classroom. We loved how the kids are shown arriving at their school with same sex, single, and racially diverse parents and the reassurance of the book's central refrain that no matter where you come from, or how you're different, "all are welcome here."

In a similarly socially-conscious vein was *Adrian Simcox Does Not Have a Horse*, by Marcy Campbell and illustrated by Corinna Luyken. Chloe is absolutely certain her classmate Adrian is lying about his beautiful horse. But when she calls him out in front of the entire class, it's time for her mom to step in with a lesson in empathy and privilege.

The Frightful Ride of Michael McMichael, by Bonny Becker and illustrated by Mark Fearing, is perfect for kids who like a little bit of funny with their scary. A young boy gets on the bus to visit his grandmother and realizes the Number thirteen is no ordinary bus ride. With delightfully over-the-top illustrations and a spirited rhyme scheme, this one is sure to be a popular read-aloud.

In *Something Smells*, by Blake Liliane Hellman and illustrated by Steven Henry, there's a terrible smell in Elliot's house but he can't figure out what it could be. Is it his baby sister's diaper? The garbage? Grandma's stew? It couldn't possibly be the skeleton costume he's been wearing for days, right? The illustrations are reminiscent of Marla Frazee and this gentle admonition on the importance of personal hygiene goes down easy.

Sheri Boggs is the Youth Collection Development Librarian at the Spokane County Library District and serves as youth judge for the Washington State Book Awards.
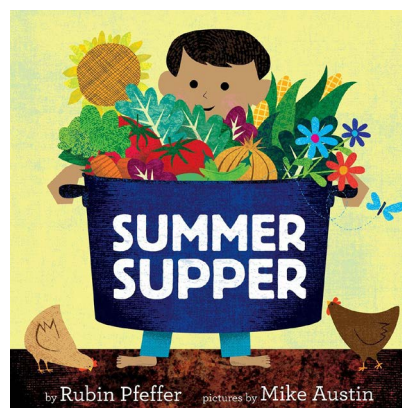
While the "S" words that make up the narrative of *Summer Supper*, by Rubin Pfeffer and illustrated by Mike Austin, are fun in and of themselves, the bright and bold graphics depicting the journey from seed to dinner table are a welcome addition to any farm-to-table themed storytime.

We were smitten by the solitary canary in *Trevor*, by Jim Averbeck and illustrated by Amy Hevron. Spying a glorious yellow creature in the tree outside his window, Trevor shares his seeds and builds a nest for two as the reader sees long before Trevor that his new friend is actually a lemon. This lovely, slightly weird story is a tale of devotion and possibility.
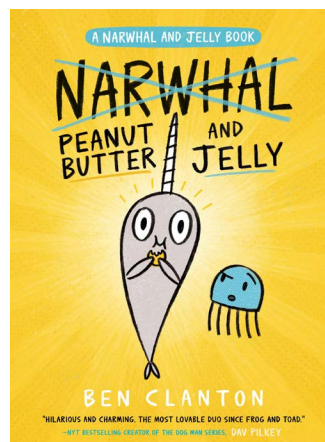
While this is the last year for the early reader category (due to consistently low entries), you can't go wrong with *Peanut Butter and Jelly* by Ben Clanton. When Narwhal tries his first peanut butter cookie he overeats them to the point of looking like one. This graphic novel-easy reader hybrid is perfect for kids graduating from Elephant and Piggie who aren't quite ready for Captain Underpants.

King and Kayla and the Case of the Lost Tooth, by Dori Hillestad Butler, illustrated by Nancy Meyers, is the latest entry in Butler's popular King and Kayla series in which King helps his human Kayla find the misplaced tooth she'd carefully set aside for the tooth fairy. With deeply saturated colors and a bold graphic design sensibility, *The Sasquatch and the Lumberjack*, by Crix Sheridan, presents the adventures of the two titular friends. Using just one outdoorsy or seasonal word per double-page spread, this one is great for emerging readers and kids who enjoy "telling" a story based on the illustrations.
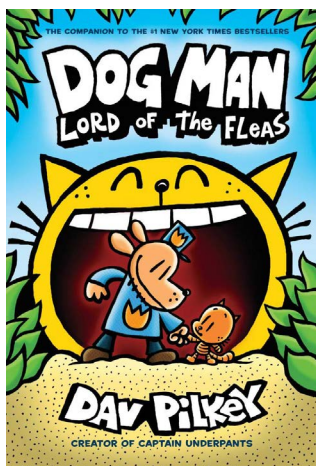
On to the middle grade category. There are those who might not think *Dog Man: Lord of the Fleas*, by Dav Pilkey, belongs on an awards list but I'm here to differ. In this fifth outing, Dog Man faces a new set of bad guys with the help of his former foe, Petey, the World's Most Evil Cat. There's so much here for reluctant readers and it's so well done: fast-paced action, how-to-draw instruction, lots of alliteration, and flip-o-rama fun.

The Ostrich and Other Lost Things, by Beth Hautala, explores the mixed feelings that come with being the sibling of someone with special needs. When Olivia's autistic older brother Jacob gets a part in Peter Pan—the same play in which she won the starring role—she struggles to rein in her impatience and resentment.

Winterhouse, by Ben Guterson, evokes such middle grade classics as The Westing Game and The House with a Clock in Its Walls. Eleven year old Elizabeth loves puzzles but even she can't figure out why her aunt and uncle have sent her to the remote hotel Winterhouse for Christmas break. Although she's made a new friend, Freddy, and most of the adults seem very nice, she can't shake the feeling that a creepy couple is following her, nor can she return a mysterious book to the hotel library.

And we are all amused by *Once Upon a Sleepover*, by Suzanne Selfors, in which Leilani tries to control the fallout when her grandmother sends her sleepover invitations to the kids on her "Do Not Invite" list.

For the young adult category, *Blood Water Paint*, by Joy McCullough, is an unforgettable novel-in-verse about Renaissance painter Artemisia Gentileschi. Assisting her less talented father in the studio and working on her own paintings in secret, Artemisia thinks she's found a confidant in the fellow artist her father hires to teach her perspective. Her struggle in the aftermath of betrayal will resonate with modern readers.

It's July of 1945 in David Patneaude's *Fast Backward*, and fifteen year old Bobby Hastings has just witnessed an atomic blast in the New Mexico desert. That would be remarkable enough, but on his bike ride home he discovers a beautiful stranger who claims to come from the future with a dire warning.

Deb Caletti's *A Heart in a Body in the World* explores the after-effects of trauma when a chance encounter in the Dick's parking lot startles a girl into running—and not being able to stop. With her grandfather following in the RV, Annabelle crosses the country on foot with no real plan and troubling flashes of the night her world changed forever. Caletti balances the issues of gun violence and male entitlement with visceral prose that evokes both the pain of running and the beauty of pine forests and summer storms.

We found *I Am Still Alive*, by Kate Alice Marshall, to be a riveting tale of survival similar to Gary Paulsen's Hatchet, but with a female protagonist and more perilous stakes. Still bruised and limping from the car accident that killed her mother, Jess goes to live with her father in the Canadian wilderness. Before she's even settled, bad guys show up at their remote cabin and kill her father as she hides helplessly in the woods. Now forced to survive, Jess has only her father's dog for company -- and the knowledge that the bad men will return.
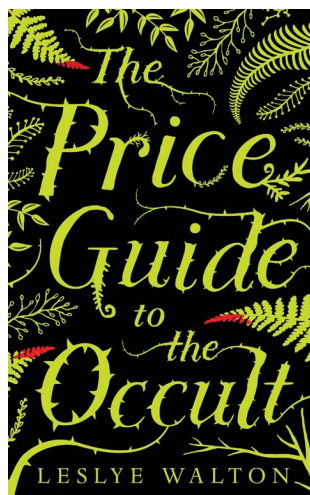
Spooky and atmospheric, *The Price Guide to the Occult*, by Leslye Walton, is a tale of multi-generational magic. Nor lives on fictional Anathema Island and although she's descended from a long line of witches, she wants nothing to do with inheriting their powers. When her mother, whom she hasn't seen in years, suddenly shows up wanting to renew their relationship, Nor realizes the safety of the island and all her friends who live there is in her reluctantly magical hands.

And finally, in *Unpresidented*, a painstakingly researched biography of the forty-fifth president, Martha Brockenbrough lays out the facts of his life, from the realization in elementary school that he loved the sound of people cheering for him to how the contacts he made as a real estate tycoon in the 1980s led to alleged collusion with Russia during the 2016 election.

To learn more about the Washington State Book Award, and to see the adult finalists, visit http://www.washingtoncenterforthebook. org/about-the-washington-state-book-awards/#. 📖

Fantasy Fiction That's Worth the Trip

by Brooke Shirts and the Puget Sound Council for the Review of Children's and Young Adult Literature

Summertime brings blissful sunshine to the Pacific Northwest, but when you are a children's and youth services librarian, those months out of school are anything but peaceful. Most of us are gearing up for the onslaught of summer reading like earthquake preppers in a bunker.

Which is why it's always great to have some handy-dandy surefire reads to quell the tide. My go-to pick? Graphic novels. They are remarkably easy to booktalk, are eye candy for reluctant readers, and contain the full spectrum of different genres and styles. (Who would ever guess that "graphic novel nonfiction memoirs for children" would ever be a thing, much less a bestselling publishing trend?) We're in a golden age, people. Take advantage of it—Read This Book!
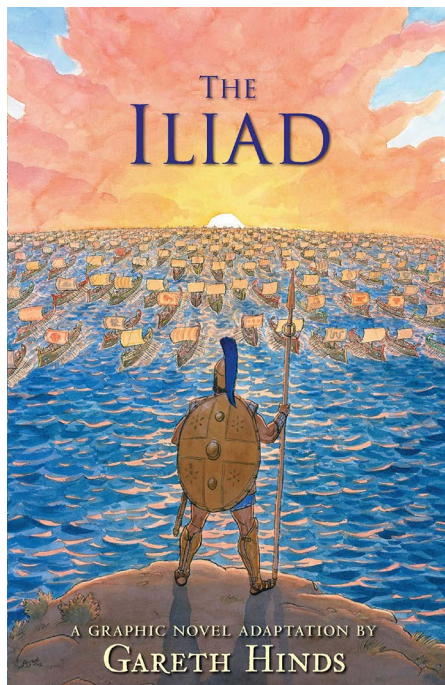
The Iliad. Hinds, Gareth. Candlewick Press, 2019. ISBN: 076368113X. Reviewed by Eve Datisman, Retired Teacher-Librarian, Port Angeles High School.

WOW! Beginning with an illustrated cast of characters and concluding with extensive back matter consisting of maps, page-by-page notes, a bibliography, and an author's note, Hinds brings the Greek epic to life. Hinds takes painstaking efforts with his fine-lined watercolors to depict each character in a readily distinguishable way with subtle alphabetical designs on their breastplates, even while in pitched battle, fully armored. The story begins by invoking the Muse to sing about Achilles's anger toward King Agamemnon in the 10th year of the Trojan War. In a fight personified by two heroes, Trojan Hector and Greek Achilles, there's more than a little graphic violence but the battle scenes are not gratuitous, fitting with the message about the consequences of war. The story, by Hind's own admission, is not complete, but all the best bits are there. An author's note and page-by-page notes provide further context. An invitation to younger readers to immerse themselves in the ancient past.

Unsinkable Walker Bean And The Knights Of The Waxing Moon. Renier, Aaron. First Second, 2018. ISBN: 1596435054. Reviewed by Eve Datisman.

Six months after the Jacklight was shipwrecked on a deserted island, Walter Bean, Shiv, their gal pal Geonoa, and the rest of the crew have found that the island isn't as deserted as it seems. They are on their way to repairing the Jacklight but some strange things have distracted them from the work. There are shadowy creatures in the jungle, and huge animal tracks have appeared overnight. There is also the secret passage that they have found in some deserted ruins. This island has a dark history centered on a greedy aristocrat. Will they be able to solve the riddle of the island and set right the wrongs of the past? Complex plot, terrific world building. The detailing in the drawing requires readers to slow down and look closely to get the story. Enough backstory is provided for this to serve as a fine jumping-in point for readers unfamiliar with Book 1—but expect them to demand it after. This mystery adds another layer.
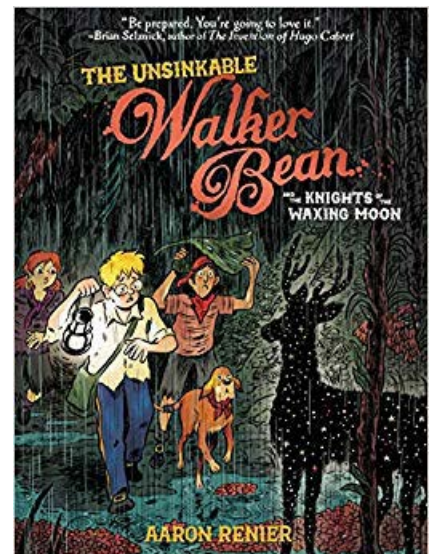
Brooke Shirts is the Chairperson of the Puget Sound Council for the Review of Children's and Young Adult Literature.
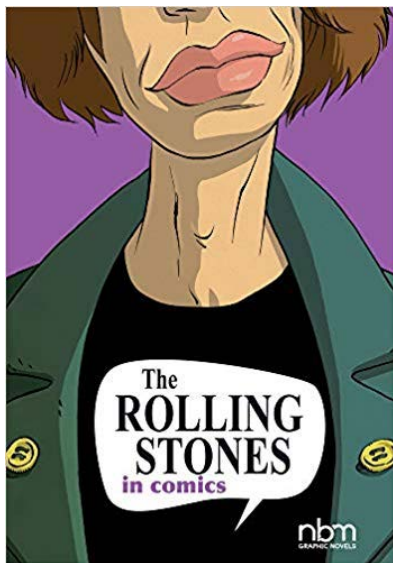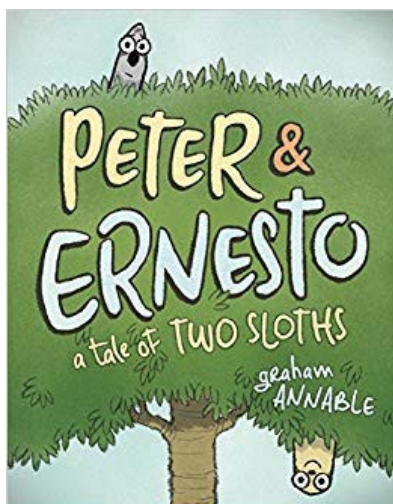
Rolling Stones in Comics! By Ceka. NBM Publishing, 2019. ISBN: 1681121980. Reviewed by Eve Datisman.

Uses the same alternating-text-and-illustrated-segment template as 2018's The Beatles in Comics, this graphic biography of "The World's Greatest Rock & Roll Band" raises the story of Mick, Keith, and Co. above mere facts and situations to give a fuller portrait of the band, its origins, and its cultural impact. The artwork is more defined. It sets the story straight about the Stones's rivalry with the Beatles—they were always friendly, John and Paul even wrote the Stones' first hit song—the importance of founding member Ian "Stu" Stewart, and the events leading to the 1969 tragedies of the Altamont festival and the death of founding guitarist Brian Jones. Unsavory aspects of the band's and its members' stories are explored, but not as muckraking exposé or a comprehensive history. The twenty-one graphic stories are drawn by a variety of different artists, whose styles range from the mono and dichromatic palettes of Marin Trystam's illustration on "Blessed Be the Vinyl" to Mao Suy-Heng's exuberant caricatures in "Century Tour." It is a great metaphor for the Stones's reinvention of themselves over 50+ years. Extras include "Nine Fun Facts About This Legendary Band!" and a "Find Out More" section with books, films, and articles.

Peter & Ernesto: A Tale of Two Sloths by Graham Annable. First Second, 2018. ISBN: 1626725616. Reviewed by Brooke Shirts.

"There's no need to move much when you're content. But I'm not content. So I've been traveling." Thus says Ernesto the sloth, who leaves his home on an exuberant quest to see "all the sky," with the help of a friendly whale and camel. Meanwhile, homebody sloth Peter is left behind and worries about him constantly. While Ernesto glibly travels the globe, Peter faces his fears of the wider world in an attempt to find his friend. Eventually, Ernesto discovers that some adventures are too dangerous to be worthwhile, while Peter is reassured that if he is patient and trusting, his friend will return back home. Finally, both friends are reunited, their time apart teaching them to appreciate the value of each other's differences. Annable's gently humorous story is like "Frog & Toad" writ large; his sloths are simply drawn, yet manage to be incredibly expressive. The text is simple enough for emerging readers, but the graphic novel format widens its appeal. Even middle schoolers will likely enjoy the goofy antics of these unlikely heroes and clamor for a sequel—which is fortunately coming out summer 2019! 📖

Dispatches from Swellville

by Darcy McMurtery

The Anatomy of a Terrible Cover Letter

Dear Libary Folks:

> Too informal

After many years in another field, I decided it was time for a change. I packed up my truck, hit the road singing Old Town Road, and I've found myself in your community. Nice place. I saw that you were advertising for a lead cook. I've tried lots of things in my life, but I haven't yet tried to be a librarian so I'm applying for the job. After all, I like quiet places and I like to read books.

> Bad font choice

> Pasted from wrong letter

> Probably doesn't have a library card

I've had a lot of experience out in the real world so I think this makes me uniquely qualified to work for your library. You may be asking about my qualifications. I like working with my hands and I like working on computers. I usually do well in a fast paste environment and I pay atention to detial.

> Cliché

> Not "enough" attention to detail

I scored nearly a perfect score on my SATs so I guess that you could say I'm one of the smart ones. I earned a degree in basket weaving at Washington State University and started a master's elsewhere but didn't finish. Perhaps I can start up again once I work for your library. I'm sure being surrounded by books would be inspiring and I'd probably even have time to study.

> No sense of life in a library

> Won't last a minute

I wouldn't exactly call myself a people person, but I'm certain that I can work with people who come into a library. After all, they are quiet, so I won't have to talk to them.

I'm goal oriented, and like to try something new at least once a year. I read most of your job description and I'm pretty sure I'm a good fit. Call me up and tell me when I'm interviewing.

Thomas Jobs

p.s. Go Cougars!   ....

Darcy McMurtery is a cranky librarian who knits, writes and attempts karate.
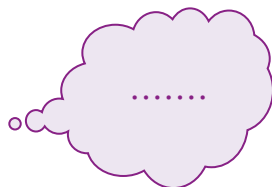
WLA Thanks Our Organizational Members

Organizational Members

Asotin County Library

Bellingham Public Library

Bellingham Technical College Library

Big Bend Community College Bonaudi Library

Callout Press

Centralia College Library

Clark College Library

Community Colleges of Spokane - Library Services

Eastern Washington University Libraries

Ellensburg Public Library

Everett Public Library

Foley Ctr. Library Gonzaga University

Fort Vancouver Regional Library District

Grandview Library

Green River Community College

Jefferson County Library

King County Library System

Kitsap Regional Library

La Conner Regional Library District

Lake Washington Institute of Technology

Longview Public Library

Lower Columbia College

National Network of Libraries of Medicine, Pacific NW Region

Neill Public Library

North Central Regional Library

North Seattle College

Northwest Council for Computer Education

Orcas Island Library District

Pierce College Library

Port Townsend Public Library

Primary Source

Puyallup Public Library

Renton Technical College Library

Ritzville Library District #2

San Juan Island Library

Seattle Central College Library

Seattle Public Library

Skagit Valley College/Norwood

Sno-Isle Libraries

Spokane County Library District

Spokane Public Library

Stevens County Rural Library District

Tacoma Public Library

The Evergreen State College

Upper Skagit Library

Walla Walla Community College Library

Walla Walla County Rural Library District

Washington Center for the Book

Washington State Genealogical Society

Washington State Library

Whatcom Community College

Whatcom County Library System

Whitman County Library

Yakima Valley College

Yakima Valley Libraries