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Alki

The Data Issue

Inside this Issue:

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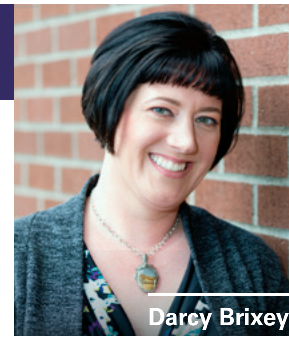
Darcy Brixey

Finding the Story in Data

by Darcy Brixey

As a teen librarian, one of the things I've tried hard to battle is the authority of friends and peers as fact sources. I've heard some doozies, ranging from Little Golden Books being the "first ever published" versions of Grimm's Fairy Tales, to "POW-MIA was a famous Native American." (In that case it was pronounced as pow-meeah.) Outside the world of the middle school information chain, celebrities are viewed as sources of information. Rapper B.o.B.'s recent claim that the Earth is flat is another unfortunate example. A famous person said it so it must be true.

There is something similar in all these tales: all questions were prefaced with "my friend said." As information professionals, we are obligated to put on a poker face, suspend our own opinions and guide the patron toward an information source that will give an unbiased perspective. Sometimes this is easier said than done.

Throughout high school and college, we are taught to think critically and search for facts on our own. Unfortunately, a visit to Facebook tells me we have forgotten those lessons. The recent rumor of Morgan Freeman's death is one example. Another example is the reposting of "facts" about threats to our computer and personal security through email or social media. Removal of the imaginary problem is often the chanting of an incantation, or, even easier, a quick copy and paste of an RCW, US Code, etc. Internet memes with political misinformation down to how much the first lady's shoes may or may not have cost or a misquote by a Nobel winner are especially viral. Politicians no longer need to sling mud; fans on Facebook do it for them. As a public, we seem to believe these facts and figures because they were shared by our friends. My friend said it, so it must be true. Too often the ease of copying and sending, or liking and sharing on social media sites continues to spread misinformation.

> **"Librarians are the original fact checkers. We are great at unearthing information through census data, legislative policy or government documents. What we aren't so great at is sharing our own data anecdotally with our stakeholders."**

Librarians are the original fact checkers. We are great at unearthing information through census data, legislative policy or government documents. What we aren't so great at is sharing our own data anecdotally with our stakeholders. A writing professor in college told me the most important part of writing academic papers wasn't the content, it was the story. Tell the story. Somewhere in our statistics and output reports is a story of an A grade on a paper, a new business, or just the story of a family enriched by library programming.

We rely on data to make decisions on databases, staffing levels and materials selection. Facts are all around us, especially as we enter election season. They will be used by the voting public so we want to make them as accessible as possible. Facts will bolster or dispel truth, but they don't always tell the story. That's a fact.

Darcy

Darcy Brixey is WLA president and the teen services librarian with the Bellevue Library at the King County Library System.

Table of Contents

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

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Alki's purpose is to communicate philosophical and substantive analyses of current and enduring issues for and about Washington libraries, personnel, and advocates, and to facilitate the exchange of research, opinion, and information.

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WASHINGTON LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

From the Editor

For seven years I was a librarian at Pierce College in Puyallup. During that time, I worked with thousands of students on research assignments. While I impressed upon them the importance of evaluating resources like books, articles and websites, I often thought about how to approach data, worried that I took data for granted because it was perceived as unadulterated – and therefore true. When I came across the wonderful series "The World of 100" by Hong Kong-based graphic designer Toby Ng, which visualizes statistics on a wide range of subjects from age and religion to access to clean water and freedom of speech, I convinced the dean of libraries to acquire the set of 20 posters for display throughout the library. The series accomplished a number of things—chiefly it provided attractive, surprising and thought-provoking visuals that drew in viewers. But it also begged the question, "Where did the data originate?"

Infographic on Freedom, part of the series "The World of 100" by Toby Ng Design.

Welcome to The Data Issue, where we tackle some of the challenges and solutions that the age of Big Data presents us with. Ann Glusker looks at the secret pitfalls of data (p. 5) and gives librarians the tools to analyze different aspects of data collection and analysis. Betha Gutsche and Kate Laughlin (p. 8) consider the importance of good design principles as we harness massive amounts of data into charts, graphs and more complex infographics. Jim Loter addresses a problem unique to libraries: how to learn about patron behavior while maintaining patron privacy and distinguishing between de-identifying and anonymizing patron data (p. 11). Lisa Fraser outlines how King County Library System used data analysis alongside other methods to discover new information about the communities they serve (p. 14), while Leah Griffin and Craig Seasholes demonstrate how data has been used to successfully advocate for teacher-librarians (p. 15).

The previous issue's theme, "Reimagine," continues to inspire contributors in this issue: Molly Allen shows you new ways to raise awareness (and money) by fundraising for your library (p. 16); and Tami Echavarria Robinson looks at how Whitworth University reimagined library instruction using the latest information literacy standards for higher education (p. 17). Audrey Lorberfeld looks at the continued importance of catalogers by examining how translated objects are cataloged and perceived by users (p. 19), while Sherri Boggs discusses the process, and challenged assumptions, while developing a local collection at the Spokane Public Library (p. 22). Diane Cowles celebrates a successful program that teaches immigrants basic computer skills at an urban elementary school (p. 24) while Clancy Pool shares an inspiring story of one person's commitment to reading by awarding grants to rural libraries (p. 25).

I have the pleasure of introducing a new column: Read This Book! Reviews and Opinions by Teacher-Librarians. In this inaugural column, four members of The Puget Sound Council for Review of Children's and Young Adult Literature review exemplary nonfiction titles for audiences from Pre-K through high school. It will be a perfect companion to I'd Rather Be Reading, where David Wright discusses 2015's best fiction and nonfiction that deals with race. And don't forget to see the latest and greatest news and events from libraries statewide in Communiqué.

If you find that data is a compelling topic, and this issue whets your appetite, then I hope to see you at WLA Annual Conference in Spokane from April 27-29. You'll definitely find me at two sessions: Unlocking Library Data for the Web and Open Data and Libraries, which will continue the discussion started in this issue. Welcome to the brave new world of Big Data.

See you in Spokane!

Frank

Frank Brasile is a selection services librarian with The Seattle Public Library.

The Secret Pitfalls of Data: How You – and Your Patrons – Can Avoid Them

by Ann Glusker

The availability of open data will be a game changer for libraries in the coming years. More and more organizations, including local governments, are placing their data online for consumers to analyze, combine, manipulate, code and enhance. Often (though not frequently enough), the data come with excellent documentation; however, even with the best lists of how the data are arranged and coded, there are pitfalls for an unwary user. This article will outline some of these potential problems, helping librarians and patrons become critical consumers, and offer some best practices for libraries and librarians as they assist data users to explore and appropriately use the many open data sources available.

How are data collected?

Let's start with the reporting of prenatal care on the Washington State birth certificate (disclosure: in my previous career I spent 10 years as an epidemiologist with a county health department). The trimester in which a mother begins prenatal care is an important indicator of a positive birth outcome. So, it's important to have good quality data on this practice. State reporting on prenatal care is certainly an accurate reflection of the data the state has,

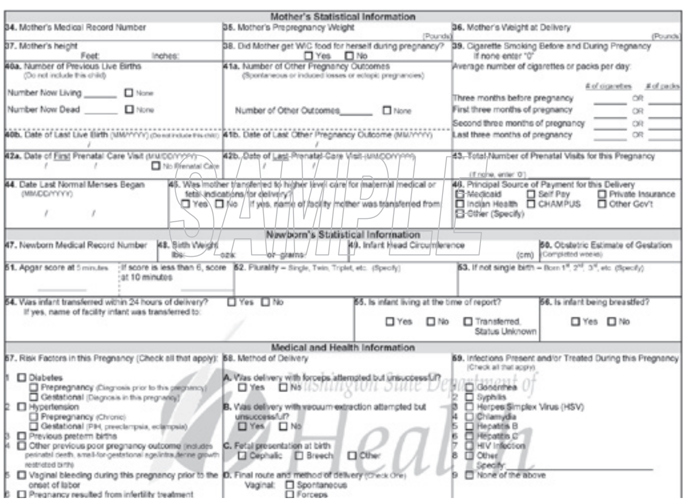
Mother's Statistical Information
34. Mother's Medical Record Number
35. Mother's Prepregnancy Weight (Pounds)
36. Mother's Weight at Delivery (Pounds)
37. Mother's height Feet: Inches:
38. Did Mother get WIC food for herself during pregnancy? ☐ Yes ☐ No
39. Cigarette Smoking Before and During Pregnancy If none enter "0"
Average number of cigarettes or packs per day: # of cigarettes # of packs
Three months before pregnancy ___ OR ___
First three months of pregnancy ___ OR ___
Second three months of pregnancy ___ OR ___
Last three months of pregnancy ___ OR ___
40a. Number of Previous Live Births (Do not include this child)
Number Now Living ___ ☐ None
Number Now Dead ___ ☐ None
40b. Date of Last Live Birth (MM/YYYY) (Do not include this child)
41a. Number of Other Pregnancy Outcomes (Spontaneous or induced losses or ectopic pregnancies)
Number of Other Outcomes ___ ☐ None
41b. Date of Last Other Pregnancy Outcome (MM/YYYY)
42a. Date of First Prenatal Care Visit (MM/DD/YYYY) ☐ No Prenatal Care
42b. Date of Last Prenatal Care Visit (MM/DD/YYYY)
43. Total Number of Prenatal Visits for this Pregnancy (If none, enter '0')
44. Date Last Normal Menses Began (MM/DD/YYYY)
45. Was mother transferred to higher level care for maternal medical or fetal indications for delivery? ☐ Yes ☐ No If yes, name of facility mother was transferred from:
46. Principal Source of Payment for this Delivery ☐ Medicaid ☐ Self Pay ☐ Private Insurance ☐ Indian Health ☐ CHAMPUS ☐ Other Gov't ☐ Other (Specify)
Newborn's Statistical Information
47. Newborn Medical Record Number
48. Birth Weight lbs: ozs: or grams:
49. Infant Head Circumference (cm)
50. Obstetric Estimate of Gestation (Completed weeks)
51. Apgar score at 5 minutes If score is less than 6, score at 10 minutes
52. Plurality – Single, Twin, Triplet, etc. (Specify)
53. If not single birth – Born 1st, 2nd, 3rd, etc. (Specify)
54. Was infant transferred within 24 hours of delivery? ☐ Yes ☐ No If yes, name of facility infant was transferred to:
55. Is infant living at the time of report? ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Transferred, Status Unknown
56. Is infant being breastfed? ☐ Yes ☐ No
Medical and Health Information
57. Risk Factors in this Pregnancy (Check all that apply):
1 ☐ Diabetes ☐ Prepregnancy (Diagnosis prior to this pregnancy) ☐ Gestational (Diagnosis in this pregnancy)
2 ☐ Hypertension ☐ Prepregnancy (Chronic) ☐ Gestational (PIH, preeclampsia, eclampsia)
3 ☐ Previous preterm births
4 ☐ Other previous poor pregnancy outcome (includes perinatal death, small-for-gestational age/intrauterine growth restricted birth)
5 ☐ Vaginal bleeding during this pregnancy prior to the onset of labor
6 ☐ Pregnancy resulted from infertility treatment
58. Method of Delivery
A. Was delivery with forceps attempted but unsuccessful? ☐ Yes ☐ No
B. Was delivery with vacuum extraction attempted but unsuccessful? ☐ Yes ☐ No
C. Fetal presentation at birth ☐ Cephalic ☐ Breech ☐ Other
D. Final route and method of delivery (Check One) Vaginal: ☐ Spontaneous ☐ Forceps
59. Infections Present and/or Treated During this Pregnancy (Check all that apply)
1 ☐ Gonorrhea
2 ☐ Syphilis
3 ☐ Herpes Simplex Virus (HSV)
4 ☐ Chlamydia
5 ☐ Hepatitis B
6 ☐ Hepatitis C
7 ☐ HIV Infection
8 ☐ Other Specify ___
9 ☐ None of the above
SAMPLE
Washington State Department of Health

Fig. 1. Washington State Vital Statistics And Induced Terminations Of Pregnancy 2006. 2009. Olympia, WA: Center for Health Statistics. http://www.doh.wa.gov/Portals/1/Documents/Pubs/422-078-AnnSum2006.pdf.

Ann Glusker is a reference and consumer health librarian for The Seattle Public Library. Besides being a data geek, she is an Anglophile and an inveterate traveler who likes nothing better than a great new mystery series.

but there are some issues that may lead to quality concerns. For example, who fills out the birth certificate? Is it nurse in a hospital at the mother's bed, asking the mother, perhaps very soon after giving birth, to remember the date of her first prenatal care appointment (the certificate asks for month-day-year)? Is it a hospital registrar taking the information from the mother's health record? Is it a midwife or mother or father or relative after a home birth? And then, does the facility where the birth took place even bother to fill out that portion of the certificate (there have been some facilities that chose not to complete it)? Do mothers correctly remember the date of their first visit? Are mothers embarrassed to admit they started late so they fudge the date a little? Is the certificate itself so daunting to fill out that it is tempting to skip items? (See figure 1.) As you can imagine, all of these affect the quality of data.

Where does this leave us? Certainly the aim is not to abandon using prenatal care data! The aim is to understand how there might be questions related to its collection and use, and to be able to understand any caveats before using the data and especially combining it with other data sets which might have their own issues. Knowing your data set inside and out, as much as possible, is perhaps the most important practice of data use. This includes not only how it was collected, but also how it is reported, and who the main users are.

What about surveys?

Surveys can be enormously useful. Since using a sample to get information about a population saves time and money, the data can be collected more quickly and in more detail than population level data, and data can be collected about questions of immediate interest. In this way we can get a sense of trends such as which political candidates are ahead, or how many people have responded to a news story about earthquake risk by setting up a stash of emergency supplies.

However, there are many hidden dangers in imagining that survey results represent the truth in a population. First of all, obviously, not everyone is represented in a survey sample, but even more concerning is the possibility that the sample is skewed in some way, so that it is systematically under-representing a certain group. These types of bias are well known and corrosive to the trustworthiness of the results; common underrepresentations include people of color, people whose first language is not English, low income people, homeless people and even people

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without telephone landlines (although survey techniques have evolved to handle that issue).

In addition to the sampling process, we have to consider the survey construction itself. There can be concerns with the questionnaire (sometimes called the survey instrument) if written, or in the interaction between the survey administrator and their respondent, if information is collected in person. For example, a respondent generally wants to please or impress an interviewer, or avoid giving painful information to the interviewer (so, people routinely under-report weight, and refuse to report income). Also, certain people are more likely to answer a survey when contacted (women, older people). And, people can't remember what they did when (this is "recall bias"). The wording of questions can make a big difference in the direction of people's, and so can the order in which questions are asked.

Another issue to consider is that of small numbers. If you have very small numbers of people answering a question, the resulting percentages are not as stable statistically because one person's answer makes a huge difference to the result. Statisticians have complex techniques for weighting the answers of respondents to help estimate a population percentage, but it doesn't work well if there are too few respondents in the first place.

What is the takeaway from this discussion on survey data? Mainly, we should be ready to help patrons understand how to think about and possibly how to work with survey data, to understand the distinction between it and population data, and to understand its limitations.

And more pitfalls.
Producing a usable data set once data have been collected is more complex than it sounds. Data must be entered into a machine-readable format if they haven't been already, and it is easy to make mistakes in data entry. There can also be issues with corruption of data files, and technical glitches. Coding errors are another source of problems ("Human" race is not the same as "Other" race). "Cleaning" data involves finding all of these and other errors, and the work required to do this for large data sets is the reason that census and other governmental data are only released a year or more after they have been collected.

Next, how does a data set classify geography? If you can get multiple data sets that specify the same geography, you may be able to link them, allowing more complex and interesting uses. But even then, some geographies—notably zip codes, which are really just collections of addresses created for postal service use—can be tricky to use. Additionally, data comparability is an issue for more than just geography. Whenever you are analyzing data sets that purport to present the same information, double check how the questions were asked whenever possible. It's not the same thing to say that "youth" have certain attitudes if one analysis defines it as those respondents aged 13-19 and another as aged 12-24.

> **"Knowing your data set inside and out, as much as possible, is perhaps the most important practice of data use. This includes not only how it was collected, but also how it is reported, and who the main users are."**

Another question is whether a data set represents primary data collection (such as census data), or secondary, which would be a data set that has been created by a third party from existing open data. In either case, the quality of the data collecting/data synthesizing organization is a central question. Data users also seek the most current information, but it may be better to use older, high quality data than newer, perhaps lower quality data. This is particularly true if there is no strong time trend related to the data (for example, related to age of housing stock in an established neighborhood).

Data users should also consider which data sets and data types are appropriate to their question. A data set which was collected to answer questions about water use in rural areas of a county may not be specific enough to get at related issues in a more urban area of that county—if it's all that's available there's no choice but to use it, but the librarian and patron should search for a more targeted source first.

A special case is that in which the data are qualitative rather than quantitative. In former times, qualitative material was not considered data as such; anthropologists and others collecting field notes and oral histories reported findings, but weren't performing data analysis. Today, there are tools which help researchers perform sophisticated textual analysis in order to find themes and trends, either from narratives or from texts and other material such as those analyzed by professionals in the field of digital humanities. Qualitative data have much to offer and can give a human face to an issue.

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Best practices in working with patrons.
The most important thing to remember about helping a patron with data is that YOU ALREADY KNOW HOW TO DO IT. When you assess a web site, you are looking for (as the National Library of Medicine lists) accuracy, authority, bias, currency and coverage. Do the same with data! Conduct a careful reference interview, being sure to capture information about the reason for using the data, and what the ideal data product would look like. Also, find out whether the patron really needs open data, which may require analysis, or whether aggregated or already analyzed data from prepared charts or reports would do the trick.

As you work with the patron, remember that often the ideal data product does not exist, and sometimes the question they are asking is not answerable. Or, since data collection is a labor and money-intensive process, and good data are valuable, in many cases the answer exists, but for a hefty fee. But don't give up! Think about (as the guru of business librarianship, Celia Ross, says) "Who cares?" Identify who might use that information—if you don't find the data through obvious channels, might it be available from another source which needs that same information? What have others done to answer similar questions? You and the patron might want to look in the literature for the field of interest, or even to search the archives of list-servs and forums for professional associations and others.

Another option is to suggest proxies or substitutions for the information the patron is seeking. You can suggest that they use data for a larger group and then extrapolate a percentage for their group of interest. For example, if the patron is interested in 25-44 year olds but data are only available for 25-64 year olds, they can use data for that broader category and then estimate how the data they found might be adjusted towards the younger end. Another example is the small area; if you can't find information for a city block, a possibility is to use information for the census tract. If the block in question represents 10% of the population of the tract, this allows a rough estimation of the situation for the block, using data from the tract. Notice I said rough estimation; the main point is that when there is no data and proxies or substitutes are being used, the data user needs to be completely transparent about how the estimate has been arrived at and the limitations and caveats inherent in the calculation.

What if there are no data at all on a topic of importance, not even for use with some kind of substitution? For example, there is great interest in obesity among preschoolers, and while many care deeply about it as an issue, there is no ready system for collecting information about it, and so there is hardly any available data (it's not practical to get every pediatrician in town to release an analysis of data from their practice). In this case, you and your patron may want to look for literature that discusses the issue in general; additionally, the patron can go on to advocate for inclusion of this question in existing survey administrations, or consider gathering qualitative data.

Once the patron has the data they intend to use, if you still are working with them, you may want to suggest some helpful practices, particularly if they are not accustomed to using data. Encourage patrons to delve deeply into a data set's collection processes and the data dictionaries (which explain the coding of items). Encourage them to take any tutorials offered, especially for the use of census data, which can be opaque to new users. Encourage them, where possible, to cross check their findings with other published data, as a confirmation that they are analyzing the data they are using correctly. Encourage them to learn about data practices in general, especially as they apply to issues such as proper analysis of survey data, and preserving respondent privacy. And encourage them to consult with others who have used the same data source, through contacting the data creators, online forums, etc.

Last but not least, know when to consult an expert. If a patron is proposing a complex analysis and doesn't have a statistical background, they may want to consult a biostatistician. Many data repositories have experts who can be contacted with questions, and quite a few public and even private agencies will work with the public to answer data requests, or create customized data sets. You don't know what is possible until you ask!

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT:
The title of this paper, and some of the content, were developed in collaboration with data librarian Mahria Lebow, for a talk we gave at a conference of the Pacific Northwest Chapter of the Medical Library Association. These are presented here with Ms. Lebow's permission.

The Seattle Public Library recently convened a "Day of Data," hosted by former Director of Information Technology Jim Loter and librarian Ann Glusker. The event had an afternoon conclave of regional professionals from eight organizations interested in bringing open data to the public, and an evening panel presentation by local data gurus. The afternoon session, facilitated by **Primary Source**, included a presentation by **Socrata**, the organization which provides the platform for **data.seattle.gov**. The well-attended evening session, "From Data to Action: Open Data and You" is available as a **podcast** and was featured as the **review of the day** for the ACRL-WA newsletter.

Data Data Everywhere–Finding Focus in a Sea of Visualizations

by Betha Gutsche and Kate Laughlin

"Data has emerged as such a critical part of modern life that it has entered into the realm of art, where data-driven visual experiences challenge viewers to find personal meaning from a sea of information."
(PBS Digital Studios, *The Art of Data Visualization*)

What is data visualization?
The word *data* now conjures up *very big* numbers. We are adrift in an ocean of Big Data. For the many of us who are not data geeks, we are better able to grasp data sets when they are represented in a pictorial or graphical format. The human brain is designed to recognize patterns. Thus visualization of data helps us understand and absorb otherwise abstract information more readily. The current infographic craze capitalizes on the marriage of graphic design with text and data to create attention-grabbing patterns, although not always achieving the intended clarity of interpretation. In fact, the worst infographics expose the weak underbelly of data visualization—poorly executed, it can be confusing, misleading and even deceiving. Large and multiplex data sets conveyed in a variety of charts or graphs are just as vulnerable to obfuscation. So along with the rise in access to visualized data sets, the average person needs to develop some acuity of interpretation.

Data visualization is not a new 21st century phenomenon. People have been drawing maps for centuries, combining image, text and numbers in a 2-dimensional format to elucidate a 3-dimensional world. A prehistoric map of the night sky was discovered in the caves of Lascaux, drawn over 16,000 years ago. Innumerable diagrams of machines exist, with separated individual parts and annotations for each to help users understand the workings and repair of a machine. Ever since public transportation systems came into being, timetables have been produced, combining mapped routes with times, locations and transfer points in a visual web.

In the 1990s, the thought-leading work of Edward Tufte brought concepts of data visualization to the forefront. His masterworks on the topic are an intellectual, insightful journey into the density, intricacy and art form of effective visual displays of information. Tufte has influenced the world of design in general, not just data designers. In the short video The Art of Data Visualization, Tufte and colleagues speak eloquently to the power and beauty of well-conceived data design. The narrative is punctuated with artful examples of the medium.

Betha Gutsche is a Programs Manager with OCLC/Web Junction. Kate Laughlin is Executive Director of Primary Source.

Principles of effective design
"Confusion and clutter are failures of design, not attributes of information." (Tufte, Envisioning Information)

If data science is the ability to extract knowledge and insights from large and complex datasets, then effective data visualization is the ability to convey the knowledge and insights graphically with accuracy and meaning. As more libraries seek to make connections between massive government open data repositories and their patrons' needs, they have a critical curatorial role both in selecting relevant data and presenting it with clarity. There are some basic principles to which data designers can adhere to make it easier for the data consumer to perceive and interpret information successfully. The consumer also bears accountability for looking critically at all data representations.

Respect the integrity of the data
"Style and aesthetics cannot rescue failed content," says Tufte, speaking to data integrity. "There are enormously beautiful visualizations but it's as a by-product of the truth and the goodness of the information." Truth in information is harder to achieve than one might think. David McCandless, TED-talking about the beauty of data visualization, warns that "absolute figures in a connected world don't give you the whole picture; you need relative figures that can lead to a fuller picture." He illustrates this point in the two displays of military budgets of the world's countries. Asking the simple question, "who has the biggest military budget" yields the graph on the left; the USA spends more by far on its military than any other country. But if you bring in another data set to answer the question "who has the biggest military budget as a percent of GDP," the results are dramatically different. The acute viewer shares some responsibility for examining any data display for what might be missing.

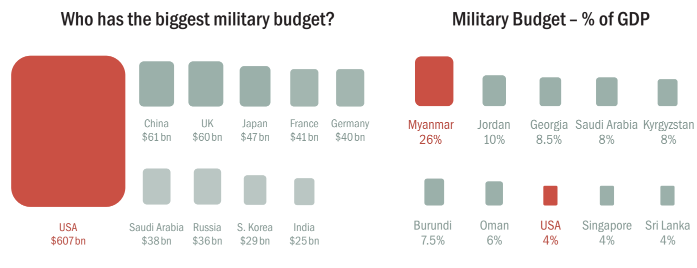

Fig. 1. TED.com. 2016. Military Budgets; Still Images From The Beauty Of Data Visualization. Video. http://www.ted.com/talks/david_mccandless_the_beauty_of_data_visualization

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Respect the intelligence of the viewer

Data designers are often tempted to add redundant data or decorative elements to the display on the presumption that it will be more palatable to the viewer. Unfortunately, this oft-used ploy can distort the data to the detriment of the viewer. Tufte famously coined the term "chartjunk" to describe these unnecessary elements, which he says convey "contempt both for information and for the audience." Probably the most widely abused example of chartjunk is the use of 3D charts. One purveyor of charting software claims, "There is no limit to the number of [3D] charts that can be stacked on top of each other." However, this is a limit to the user's ability to make any sense of the data. The example here of open help desk tickets is a poster child. The fancy 3D gloss on the two cylinders obscures the data points and their relationships. The translation into 3D caused the data labels on the x-axis to overlap, making them barely readable. There is a third axis for "count" and threshold" that just adds confusion; if there is an intentional strong contrast between the zero percentages of the threshold entries, it is buried behind the glossy columns. Presenting clean views of data lets the viewer see the meaningful relationships. Data consumers are invited to see past the pretty colors and catchy graphics and look critically at the bare data.

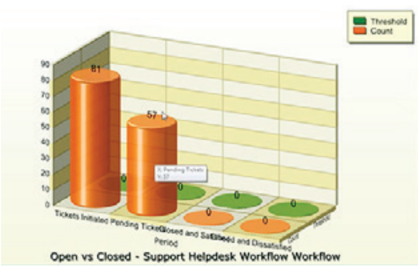

Fig. 2. Flickr,. 2016. Barnhart Of Open Tickets. Image. https://www.flickr.com/photos/skemsley/3944735309/.

Mind the data ink ratio

Data ink refers to the marks or pixels that directly represent the data; all other marks in the display are either in support of the data (metadata) or are extraneous (cosmetic) to the data. The goal of effective data display is to maximize the ratio of data ink to total ink. The chartjunk example above has a miniscule amount of actual data ink (the 81, 57, and 0 percentages) relative to the overwhelming amount of extraneous ink (all of the 3D stuff). The illustration from 10 Tips for Better Visualization of Scientific Data Figure 3, shows

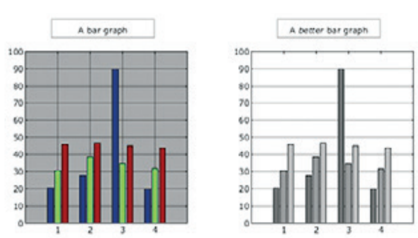

Fig. 3. Taha Ahi, Sercan. 2012. Maximize Data-Ink Ratio; Slide From 10 Tips For Better Visualization Of Scientific Data. Image. http://www.slideshare.net/sercantahaahi/10-tips-for-better-visualization-of-scientific-data-13797639.

the effect of cleaning up a less extreme display of data and total ink. In the chart on the left, the dark gray background muddies the contrasts, the vertical gridlines are unnecessary, and the color selection makes it look as though the bright green bars are the most important data points. The graph on the right has an improved data ink to total ink ratio. The viewer should not have to work too hard to absorb the purpose and focus of the display.

The infographic – for better or worse

The infographic designer intentionally presents thin data, that is, information that has been reduced to some concise bits that can be grasped at a glance. Beware of thin data. Because the viewer does not know what was omitted, it is all the more necessary to look critically and skeptically at the reduction.

Weak example: An organization as large as the World Bank processes mass amounts of data, so it's an understandable urge to pull out small digestible bites of information for the public to consume. However, when it leaves the metadata and data labels behind, all you're left with is pretty colors. Although the overall effect of the infographic Ending Poverty is Within Our Reach grabs the attention the data, which vary from very thin to not even there, do not support the headline (see figure 4). The figures in the excerpt on the left are standing on pedestals that increase in size, but what are the x and y axis values, what's the scale? The second excerpt shows bubbles of various sizes representing "income generating activities," but are the size differences random or is there a numerical relationship? For some examples of truly awful infographics, check out the Guardian's collection of 16 useless infographics.

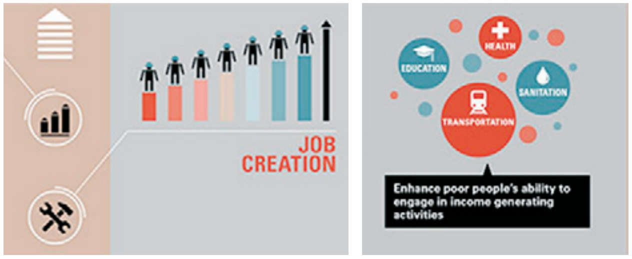

Fig. 4. The World Bank,. 2014. Infographic: Ending Poverty Is Within Our Reach. Image. http://www.worldbank.org/en/news/feature/2014/10/10/ending-poverty-is-within-our-reach.

Strong example: While there may be snazzier examples of well-executed infographics, the Library of the Future graphic (Figure 5), is particularly effective at telling a coherent story from top to bottom. The overall theme (forces in play are changing the way public libraries serve our needs) is segmented into a series of premises, each of which is supported by multiple key data points displayed clearly and proportionally. In this excerpt, the premise (the way we get information has changed) is supported by 3 data sets—increases in internet use, smartphone ownership, and reliance on smartphones for information gathering. The "takeaway" sums up the purpose and focus of this section.

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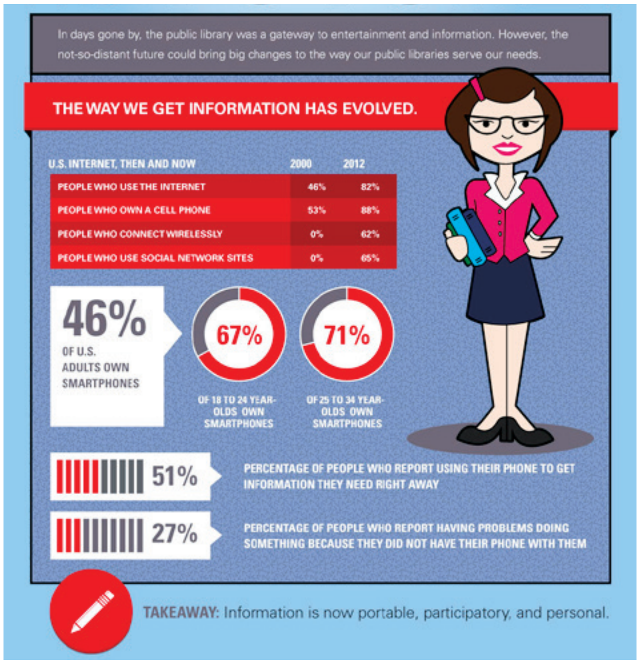

Fig. 5. LibraryScienceList.com,. 2012. Libraries Of The Future [VISUALIZATION]. Image. *http://librarysciencelist.com/libraries-of-the-future-visualization/*

Complex data representations

The onset of Big Data introduces bigger challenges to conveying information in accurate and curated-yet-thorough ways. Digital technology unleashes the possibilities for the dynamic display of complexity. Designers can convey complex information views, knowing that human brains have evolved to recognize patterns and make quick decisions in response. The inclusion of more variables and data points does not mean that greater accuracy is assured. Analyses of large data sets are just as vulnerable to manipulation as the minimalized representations in infographics.

Weak example: The U.S. government has many effective displays of its vast sea of data, but this one from the Census Bureau on Components of Metro Area Change is baffling (see figure 6). The text explanation below the graph indicates a key takeaway—that for all major cities listed, population losses through domestic migration were offset by influx from other sources, with the exception of Detroit. Once you know that, you can see that Detroit has the only tiny white square in the right hand columns; however, the point gets lost in the dizzying pattern of squares. The main element missing here is data labels. It's difficult to determine quantity relationships in the relative sizes of the squares; exact datum in each square would go a long way toward clarity. The center alignment of the squares, both vertical and horizontal, gives a disorganized look to the display. There is also no clear order to the listings; it might be more readable if the cities were listed from largest to smallest net gain (grey squares), or vice versa if the idea is to focus on Detroit.

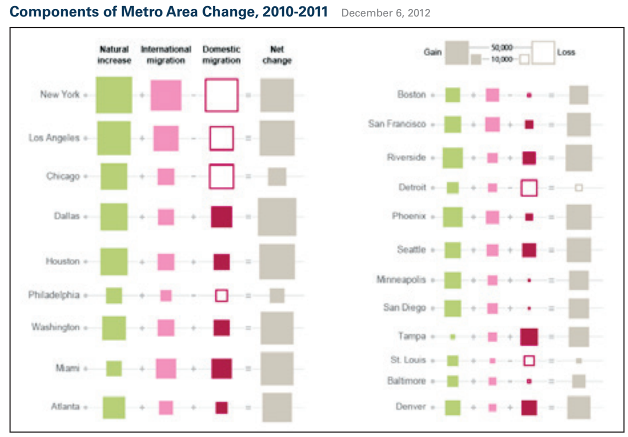

Fig. 6. United States Census Bureau,. 2012. Components Of Metro Area Change, 2010-2011. Image. *https://www.census.gov/dataviz/visualizations/040/.*

Strong example (*awesome, really!*): In 200 Countries, 200 Years, 4 Minutes (5 minute video), Hans Rosling makes clever use of digital projection technology to dynamically demonstrate data in motion over time, inserting himself into the view as the animated ringmaster. Aside from the theatrics, this display is powerful in the way it reveals trends throughout a 200-year history. The data sets are multiplex: income, life expectancy, elapsed time, countries differentiated by region and by population size. The macro view displays big picture trends, such as the overall movement from poor/sick to rich/healthy. At any point along the axis of time, one can do a micro-analysis of the trend by bringing in yet another data set –what happened in history at that time. For example, the twin catastrophes of World War I and the flu pandemic caused a very visible retreat in the progress the developed countries were making toward greater health and wealth. Another fascinating example is the correlation between colonized nations gaining independence and their subsequent rise toward health and prosperity. Rosling splits the data atoms even further into micro views of differences within countries and provinces. For more Rosling, watch The Best Stats You've Ever Seen.

Conclusion

Fortunately, the Rosling display is not alone on the frontier of amazing data visualization. Check out the Visual Complexity database for a spin through the world of interactive possibilities in digital displays. Jer Thorpe, an artist whose medium is data visualization, wants his data displays to stimulate the viewer to interpret them in in a way that adds a new layer of insight to their own lives. Animating complex data networks and putting them in a human context can lead to new revelations, surfacing relationships not seen before. Edward Tufte concurs: "You want to see to *learn* something, not to confirm something."

Now, are you ready for data sonification?

Gaining Insights and Protecting Privacy: De-identifying Patron Data at The Seattle Public Library

by Jim Loter

A couple of years ago, The Seattle Public Library (SPL) interviewed candidates for a director position in our marketing department. The candidates each discussed ways in which they had used customer data to analyze patterns and trends in behaviors, understand the needs of specific demographics, and generally gain insights into how people use an organization's services. In each interview, I followed up this discussion with a question: "How would you still do all that analysis for an organization that throws away all their customer data every day?"

The candidates from outside the library world were, to a person, stunned. Even those who had a sense of the public library's commitment to protecting patron privacy never thought that the library would fulfill that commitment by erasing all evidence of a patron's interactions with us. And yet that is common practice in public libraries.

There are really good reasons for libraries to manage our data the way we do. We benefit from the fact that library borrower records are exempt from public disclosure (thanks, here in Washington, to RCW 42.56.310), which permits libraries to essentially treat them as "transitory" records. By severing the connection between the borrower and the item they borrowed as soon as the item is returned, we greatly reduce the risk that a patron's borrowing activity can be revealed to others–either inadvertently through a data breach, or via official inquiry from, say, law enforcement.

But our traditional data collection practice does mean that we lose potentially valuable intelligence about our patrons–who are they, what do they like to borrow, what material is most popular among particular demographics? The knowledge that could be gleaned from all that data that we delete could help us make better collection development decisions, help us understand shifts in demographics and tastes, and, yes, help us market our services and resources more strategically.

Even as we were hiring our marketing team, however, SPL was working on a solution to this dilemma—a way that we could both preserve individual patron privacy and still expand our knowledge of who are patrons are and how they use our services. The answer to our dilemma lay in the concept of *de-identified data*.

Jim Loter was, until recently, the Director of Information Technology for The Seattle Public Library. He is now Director of Digital Engagement for the City of Seattle. Follow him on Twitter at @jimloter.

Definitions

In October 2015, the National Institute of Standards and Technology issued a report entitled "De-Identification of Personal Information." An early draft of this report provided some of the concepts, terminology, and approaches that SPL is employing. According to the NIST report:

> De-identification removes identifying information from a dataset so that individual data cannot be linked with specific individuals. De-identification can reduce the privacy risk associated with collecting, processing, archiving, distributing or publishing information. De-identification thus attempts to balance the contradictory goals of using and sharing personal information while protecting privacy (Garfinkel 2015).

De-identified data is distinct from *anonymous* data in that "anonymization…does not provide a means by which the information may be linked to the same person across multiple data records or information systems" (Garfinkel 2015, 2).

In other words, de-identification provides the means to link transactions to distinct individuals (i.e., "the same person") without including identifying details about the individuals. By contract, anonymization removes virtually all information about individuals so there is no way to determine if 100 activities were performed by 100 people, or if the same person performed the activity 100 times. Libraries have historically managed data via *anonymization*. This article outlines the considerations necessary to adopt a *de-identification* approach.

Another important concept in this context is *Personally Identifiable Information*, or *PII*. The NIST report makes the point that PII "is typically used to indicate information that contains identifiers specific to individuals, although there are a variety of definitions for PII in various law, regulation, and agency guidance documents." From that statement, note that what might count as PII for health care data may not be the same as what counts as PII for libraries. In the excellent article "Using Lessons From Health Care to Protect the Privacy of Library Users: Guidelines for the De-Identification of Library Data Based on HIPAA," the authors enumerate the specific data elements that are considered to constitute PII according to the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA), which can be used a general guideline for looking at library borrower data (Nicholson and Smith 2005).

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Problem Statement

We first came to the de-identification approach after SPL received a grant to study the use of public libraries by members of the so-called "Millennial Generation" (those born between 1982-2000). At the time, our data collection practices included aggregating circulation and computer use data according to our three primary audiences—youth, teens, and adults. The terms of the grant, however, dictated that we collect far more granular data specifically about the Millennial demographic. But we still had a compelling interest to protect users' privacy, whether they were millennials or not. These somewhat conflicting requirement caused us to start exploring the process of de-identification.

For the purposes of the grant, we first established a process in our ILS (the indomitable SirsiDynix Horizon) that automatically exported circulation transaction details for "Millennial" patrons to a separate database and scrubbed the records of personally-identifiable data (name, barcode, address, etc.) For each transaction, we retained the patron's age at the time of the transaction (calculated on-the-fly from their birthdate), their home Zip code, their gender, the number of months they've been a library borrower, and their "borrower type." Note that inclusion of Zip code was one point where we deviated from the HIPAA guidelines.

> "Even those who had a sense of the public library's commitment to protecting patron privacy never thought that the library would fulfill that commitment by erasing all evidence of a patron's interactions with us. And yet that is common practice in public libraries."

This approach, however, was closer to anonymization than to de-identification. We realized that though we were now collecting and storing transaction records and demographic information for millennials, we still had no way of knowing *how many actual users* the data represented. Did we have very few prolific library users, or a great many occasional users?

Our De-identification Approach

We determined that we needed to create two datasets to meet our dual goals of learning about the borrowing habits of certain demographics and protecting individual privacy. In assembling these procedures, we adopted the persona of an "attacker"— someone who could somehow gain (or compel) access to this database–to ensure that patron privacy could still be maintained.

Both datasets include one record for each transaction (checkout or renewal) of library material. We used the same principles here also for public computer use, but for the purposes of illustration we will focus on the circulation records.

In the first dataset we include a "de-identified patron ID" in each record. The "DeID" is designed to be difficult-to-impossible to relate to a specific individual's identity but is guaranteed to belong to the same individual over time. This dataset also includes limited, non-PII demographic information about the user, and limited information about the borrowing transaction—collection code, date, and checkout location. The purposeful limiting of the transaction details further minimizes the risk of an attacker being able to reconstruct a patron's identity from the items they borrowed. An attacker might be able to see that a specific unidentified individual checked out 6 items from the Ballard library last Tuesday, but would gain no details about what those items were.

The second dataset *does not* include a "DeID" for the patron. It *does* include the same non-PII demographic information about the patron, and also includes detailed information about the items they borrowed (item record, title, time/date, checkout location, etc.). The idea behind this approach is that since there is no remnant of a patron's unique identity, the detailed item information cannot be used to reconstruct an identity. An attacker might be able to discover what titles 36-year-old men who live in Ballard like to read, but can determine nothing about specific individuals.

The "De-identified Patron ID"

The key to the system is the *de-identified patron ID* ("DeID"), which allows us to identify distinct patrons but minimize the risk of re-identification.

The DeID is a "hashed" version of the patron's numerical identifier from the Horizon database (*not* their barcode, which can change over time). A "hash" is a cryptographic algorithm that produces a unique but consistent value from a given input, but in a way that the original value cannot be determined. The SHA-256 hashing algorithm, for example, will always turn the number "123456789" into "15e2b0d3c33891ebb0f1ef609ec419420c20e320ce94c65-

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fbc8c3312448eb225." But there is (theoretically) no way to take that long output string and figure if that the original value was "123456789" or "abcdefghij" or the full text of the novel "Moby Dick."

To further secure the output, we add a "salt" to the user's Horizon ID. A salt can be a string of characters, like a password, that only we know and/or some additional element(s) from the user's record that will not change over time. With all these precautions in place, we were satisfied that even if an attacker obtained a user's SHA-256-hashed identifier there was no way for them to know (or calculate) what the input string was from that information alone.

First Use Case

The first practical use of our new datasets helped us make a policy decision about public computer use. Public computer session data is collected in a very similar manner to the methods described above.

Our libraries have both "Public Internet" workstations, which can be reserved for up to 90 minutes per day, and "Express" workstations, which can be used for 15 minutes without prior reservation. Patrons are permitted up to 90 minutes of computer use per day regardless of the type of workstation they use.

Library staff began to report that patrons were "frequently" logging on to the 15-minute Express workstations multiple times in succession, to the detriment (and annoyance) of patrons who were waiting patiently for a computer to open up. It seemed that some patrons had figured out that they could chain together up to six 15-minute sessions at the Express computers. This was obviously not the intended purpose of the Express stations. However, all we initially had to rely upon was anecdotal information from a few locations. With our traditional data collection practices, we had no way of telling if any given array of six sessions on an Express workstation were done by the same patron or by six different patrons.

The de-identified data, however, gave us our answer. Since we now had public computer session data recorded along with a patron's "DeID," we could easily tell that, indeed, many, *many* patrons at *all* library locations were logging into Express workstations 6 times per day for 15 minutes per session. We couldn't tell specifically who the patrons were, but we could tell when it was the same patron logging on 6 times versus when it was 6 distinct patrons each logging on for 15 minutes.

The new way of collecting data allowed us to determine that this problem was, indeed, rampant. We made the decision to change the way our system handled public computer sessions. Now, patrons get both 90 minutes per day on reservable public workstations but only 15 minutes per day on Express workstations. This essentially means that patrons qualify for a total of 105 minutes per day on our computers, but it was decided that this was a fairer and more equitable way to allocate time given the abuses we were seeing of the Express workstations.

Other Uses and Next Steps

As we amass de-identified data in this way, we are gaining the new ways to answer questions about how our patrons use the library while maintaining our same high standards of privacy protection. We can tell now, for example, if our heavy millennial users tend to live in particular neighborhoods and if they prefer certain kinds of materials. But we still don't know that Jane Doe checked out "A Clockwork Orange" last October, or that John Smith checked out 35 romance novels last year.

The data becomes even more powerful when cross-referenced with other data sources. If millennials in north Seattle use the library a lot but census data shows that more millennials live in south Seattle where they do not use the library, what can we learn about the patterns of usage that can influence our marketing to the south Seattle millennials?

We are only now at the point where we feel we have collected a critical mass of data that can reliably show usage patterns and trends over time. That same marketing director who was shocked to hear about our data management practices during his interview is now working to integrate our de-identified data into market segmentation studies and other research to unlock further insights into how people use our libraries. That work will directly influence how we improve our services, our collections, our facilities, and our programs.

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Community Discovery: Connecting People and Services at King County Library System

by Lisa Fraser

Over several years, King County Library System (KCLS) implemented a new staffing model designed to shift most librarian hours from in-library desk time to a more flexible arrangement that would allow them to provide more services out in their communities. This created a new opportunity to serve the people who had not been coming in for services, as well as a new question about what the needs of those people were.

To support the new model, a team of Services Coordinators was asked to develop a service planning process to be used by librarians. The foundation of this process is a community needs assessment that we called the Community Discovery. It is meant to create a well-rounded picture of community needs by using three different methods: data analysis, community leader interviews, and walk- or drive-arounds of the service area.

Data Analysis

Initially, we used CommunityConnect, a library data analytics product providing demographic and market segmentation data as well as physical checkout data, all aggregated at the Census Block Group (CBG) level. Last year we experimented with using Analytics on Demand, a product that allows more of the data generation to be done centrally, and found it to be more efficient and consistent than having each region pull together their own data. Librarians can also use other sources, such as our public-facing demographics databases, or local sources such as city or school district information, to supplement their data.

Community Leader Interviews

Previously, KCLS Diversity Coordinator Jo Anderson Cavinta had engaged multicultural consultant Jolanda Cuesta to provide a workshop on community leader interviews for staff. Building on this existing knowledge, we included community leader interviews as part of the Community Discovery. Community leader interviews can result in deeper knowledge about the target group as well as increased trust between the library and the community. The first step was to identify groups that were underrepresented in library service, which was a valuable exercise in itself. After requesting an interview, librarians would meet with the interviewee, preferably away from the library. Interview questions were designed to frame the conversation in terms of the interests and needs of the interviewee without limiting to those that are traditionally thought of as library-related. Most regions conducted between ten and twenty interviews in their initial Community Discovery.

Walk/drive around

As part of the setup for the Community Discovery process, we established library service areas so that each CBG in the district was assigned to a library, with no overlap. This service area often covered a different geography than staff had used previously. The service area provided the boundaries for the walk- or drive-around, which almost always included areas with which staff were unfamiliar. Most KCLS librarians work at more than one library, so it is rare to work solely in one's own community. In addition, the rapid change in population and recent building boom made it interesting and rewarding to take a fresh look.

Impact of Community Discovery

The three-pronged approach of the Community Discovery has resulted in the development of programs and services that have a direct link to recognized community need. For example, librarians on a drive-around noted many cars in driveways in an area that data had shown to be largely two-earner households. This contradiction led them to do more research, including an interview with the local WorkSource office, where they learned that the economic downturn had resulted in a significant increase in unemployment in the area. As a result, KCLS partnered with WorkSource to provide programs and assistance on using library resources that met the needs of these residents.

Evaluation of the service planning process showed that the Community Discovery was seen as a valuable tool for librarians, providing a structure for different types of information about service area residents. It also served a role in building a new type of librarian work team that crossed traditional specialty lines. Managers had free rein to organize the work as they felt would be most effective given the skills and interests of their librarians, which often resulted in librarians working together on interviews or drive-arounds.

Since its implementation, staff have updated the Community Discovery at least one time, though as a working document, additional data, interviews, and observations can be added as desired. While demographics may take years to shift, going through the process annually catches more sudden changes, such as the opening or closure of social service agencies. Making and maintaining connections in the community helps ensure that staff are aware of these changes that can impact the need for library services.

Lisa Fraser is the Services Implementation Coordinator with the King County Library System.

Got Data? How Teacher-Librarians Build Strong School Library Programs

by Leah Griffin and Craig Seasholes

Librarians know that information is power. WLMA currently has the power to contact over 1,600 teacher-librarians in the state. We'd like to share the history of our epic list of teacher-librarians, what it has helped us accomplish, and how you can make it even more powerful.

Several years ago, Christie Kaaland, Core Education faculty with Antioch University - Seattle, and her stellar graduate assistants compiled library contact and website information from the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) list of schools in the state. This list was shared with WLMA Membership Chair Ron Wagner, who worked tirelessly with the help of WLMA members to continue to update library contact information for each school. This process involved gathering information from individual school and district websites, as well as calling schools to learn of a library's staffing status. As a result of this work, WLMA has a powerful and comprehensive list of teacher-librarians working in Washington State.

> "Coker's correlational analysis of the WSSLIS survey showed a dramatic link between teacher-librarians and student success in Washington State, was noted in May 2015 issue of *School Library Journal*, and has been included in Scholastic's most recent 'School Libraries Work' summary of school library research."

The list was recently used to alert all teacher-librarians of WLMA's move to WLA and to recruit new membership for WLA and WLMA. It was also instrumental in the high rate of response to the 2014 Washington State School Library Impact Survey (WSSLIS) conducted by OSPI. WLMA then engaged Dr. Liz Coker, Director of Community Research & Development at the University of Washington-Tacoma, who capably blended available state school and student success data into the WSSLIS. Coker's correlational analysis of the WSSLIS survey showed a dramatic link between teacher-librarians and student success in Washington State, was noted in May 2015 issue of *School Library Journal*, and has been included in Scholastic's most recent "School Libraries Work" summary of school library research. Library advocates are wise to add this data to their on-hand and oft-shared resources for school and district-level advocacy.

WLMA's ongoing development of an effective school library database has directly helped lead to a successful study that is a boon to library advocacy. Given the attention effective school library programs have in the new Federal Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) legislation, WLMA is now working with OSPI to develop a repeat survey in late April-May of 2016 in order to get an updated data portrait of Library Information & Technology (LIT) programs in our state.

This is where we need your help to keep the data ball rolling. We need volunteers from each district to double check our contact list, fill in any gaps, and update it to reflect staffing changes or additions. If you can contribute a bit of time in the coming months, we can make our list an even more powerful tool for advocacy. Please email membership@wlma.org and tell us what district you are familiar with and we will send you the information we currently have for your district and urge you to update our records before the launch of WSSLIS v2 in April-May 2016.

Thanks for your help!

Leah Griffin is the WLMA Membership Chair and can be reached at membership@wla.org. Craig Seasholes is the WLMA President and can be reached at president@wlma.org

Reimagining Academic Library Fundraising: An Evening at the James E. Brooks Library

by Molly Allen

Fundraising for academic libraries can be achieved in a number of ways—through outreach, the cultivation of donor relationships, a strong rapport with an institution's alumni relations department, and many others. Although these fundraising strategies are successful, they do not typically bring donors back into the library to see the results of their donations.

Art on display in the Government Documents Department at the Brooks Library Gala.

In January of 2014, the staff at the James E. Brooks Library at Central Washington University (CWU) began planning for its first-ever Annual Brooks Library Gala and Silent Auction – An Evening at the Brooks. It was the first time an event of such caliber had been held, or even suggested, at the Brooks Library, and library staff were eager and determined to take on the challenge. Three amazing months of planning, teamwork, and creativity culminated in the Brooks Library hosting their first annual Gala in April 2014 as the kick-off for National Library Week.

April 9th, 2016, marks the third annual Brooks Library Gala and Silent Auction. The Gala, as it is called by library staff, has become the library's most prominent fundraising event. This gathering of campus faculty, staff, and students, as well as the local community, brings attendees into the library for an evening of music, art, poetry, dancing, and a silent auction with offerings from businesses throughout Kittitas County. The Gala welcomes collaborations across campus, inviting CWU's Wildcat Shop, Music Department, Art Department, the chefs in its Catering Department, and many more to work on this incredible event.

The Gala offers the community the opportunity to view the library in a different light. The event turns all four floors of the brick library into a truly vibrant social space, providing an unforgettable evening for attendees and showing guests that the library is no longer just a quiet warehouse for books.

A string quartet welcomes guests on the first floor as soon as they walk into the building. The second floor hosts the dining, silent auction, and jazz combos, serving as the central hub of activities. Campus Catering and the planning committee provides an incredible array of hors d'oeuvres and desserts in one of the most popular daily collaborative spaces for students. The juxtaposition of offering food, desserts, and wine within a typical study space serves to demonstrate to attendees and students that the library is a relaxing and fun place to spend their time. Following welcoming speeches from CWU President, the CEO of the Kittitas County Chamber of Commerce, CWU Dean of Libraries Lenny Price, CWU's jazz combo fires up their tempo, providing great music as guests peruse the silent auction. Showcasing local wares, the silent auction items are donated by Kittitas County businesses. The Kittitas County Chamber of Commerce plays a significant role each year in the solicitation of auction items, as well as assistance with planning and marketing the event.

The third floor, which houses the Government Documents Department by day, serves as the ideal space for the installation of an art gallery representing CWU student work, curated by Art Department faculty, as well as a hub for poetry readings by local authors throughout the night. As the evening progresses, guests make their way to the dance floor on the fourth floor of the library, set up right in the middle of the stacks. CWU's own student swing dancing club, the Swing Cats, provide lessons as guests dance to the tunes of the Ellensburg Big Band.

This annual event brings together the best of Kittitas County. The Gala serves as a truly unique showcase of what the James E. Brooks Library has to offer and displays a way of fundraising that many academic libraries have yet to explore. The event has not only been profitable in raising funds, but has also been wildly successful in bringing people into the library that believed the Brooks Library was only open to students.

The Gala has fostered convivial relationships with many local businesses; breaking down the "town and gown" issues that are faced in many college towns. The evening is a wonderful celebration of the library's successes and serves as a toast to the future as library employee's work toward the library's mission of stimulating creativity, intellectual curiosity, and facilitating lifelong learning and research within the communities that the James E. Brooks Library continues to serve.

Molly Allen is the Secretary Lead for the James E. Brooks Library at Central Washington University.

Library Research Instruction Reimagined: A Basic Level of Information Literacy for All Students

by Tami Echavarria Robinson

At the turn of this present century library instruction for all students was common practice at Whitworth University. 1999-2000 isn't so long ago, and yet it seems that it was long ago. Nearly our entire faculty and administration have turned over to a younger cohort of faculty as those who had been the backbone of the university for many years gradually retired, one by one, in twos and threes each year. Those who retired included faculty whose charge were the Writing Program and the Writing Center. What had been a long-term stable relationship between Composition faculty in the English Department and librarians disappeared in a short time period as the Director of the Writing Program and the Director of the Writing Center retired one after the other.

To make a long story short, what followed was ten to twelve years during which leadership of the Writing Program and the Writing Center were in a state of flux, changing from one person to another as faculty were hired into positions of leadership and then left the institution. During this time the library research instruction program suffered from an inability to convince many faculty that information literacy instruction was necessary for their students. It was not until three years ago that successful recruitments finally stabilized both leadership positions. The current Director of the Writing Program was hired three years ago with the current Director of the Writing Center hired a year later. This year all students are again receiving basic information literacy instruction in their freshman year.

> **"Faculty couldn't understand why their students in senior seminars were clueless about how to do the research required and were submitting papers the faculty considered of poor research quality."**

To give some history, it might be helpful to understand how a library instruction program that seems to be reaching all the lower division students can fall apart, and can be difficult to reconstitute. In the late 1990s and early 2000s, while the faculty was a stable cohort which had been at Whitworth University for many years, there was a common understanding that all students needed to learn to do library research well. To compliment the assignments that faculty gave to students in the disciplines, they relied on the Writing Program to begin the process of teaching students how to do basic research paper writing and how to do the research required. Librarians worked with the Writing Program faculty to teach all freshman and sophomore students basic information literacy skills, then called bibliographic instruction. This instruction conformed to the Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL) Information Literacy Competency Standards for Higher Education. All sections of the Writing Program were brought to the library for this instruction, then the students worked hands-on with librarians to learn to find resources for their individual topics, applying what they'd learned. This process was done consecutively in two class periods within about a week of each other. Teaching faculty would then bring their upper division classes into the library for librarians to teach subject specific disciplinary research tools and more advanced search techniques to students. Faculty in the disciplines teaching upper division classes and senior seminars could expect that their students had been taught basic library research skills.

During the time of turnover of various different faculty leaders in the Writing Program, the teaching focus on research writing disappeared and the focus of the Writing Program shifted to creative writing. Basic research skills learned at the lower division level had enabled advanced information literacy to be taught at upper division and graduate levels across the curriculum, but with the Writing Program no longer focusing on research writing, some Writing Program faculty no longer saw the need to work with librarians to teach library research instruction. Interaction with the library became voluntary class trips to the library with no library research instruction.

When both the Writing Program and the Writing Center leadership changed, faculty in the disciplines may not have understood how this change created a domino effect on their students. The Writing Program's change in focus away from research based writing rippled into all the disciplines as students did not intuitively understand how to approach their research assignments or find scholarly resources. Professors in other disciplines still expected that their students had learned to do basic library research, yet few students were learning Information Literacy skills. Faculty couldn't understand why their students in senior seminars were clueless about how to do the research required and were submitting papers the faculty considered of poor research quality. Faculty who brought upper division or graduate classes to librarians for library research instruction found their time spent on the basics instead

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Tami Echavarria Robinson is the Coordinator of Instructional Services at the Whitworth University Library.

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of advanced skills in disciplinary research tools. The Writing Program no longer served the research needs of faculty and students in the disciplines, and teaching faculty did not turn to librarians for solutions or for library research instruction for their students.

The Coordinator of Instructional Services and the Library Director continued to approach various English faculty in charge of the Writing Program over those dozen years to no avail. Faculty did not seem to grasp either what had happened or that librarians could help them. In retrospect, part of the problem was that in talking to faculty, librarians were using the language of the ACRL Information Literacy Competency Standards for Higher Education, the jargon of our discipline. Teaching faculty did not grasp the meaning of what librarians said. The Library Director brought the concerns to the Academic Dean's attention because the Library's Information Literacy objectives were not incorporated into the curriculum in spite of librarian effort. It was finally the Academic Dean who came to understand the gravity of the problem and saw the implications of the larger picture of what had happened along with its impact. The Dean's guidance provided impetus for the Writing Program to reassess its focus under new leadership and reincorporate a relationship between the faculty of the Writing Program and librarians.

"After more than twelve years and three full cohorts of students who missed out on learning library research skills as undergraduates, change *has* come."

Meanwhile, ACRL finished work on the Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education in February 2015. The Information Literacy Competency Standards for Higher Education were published by ACRL in 2000 and were meant to be revised cyclically. The Framework reflected current thinking on the creation and dissemination of knowledge, the changing higher education learning environment, a shift from information literacy to information fluency, and expanding information literacy to include multiple literacies such as digital and media. These are concerns that encompass all faculty in American higher education. The Framework is a philosophical overlay, a more theoretical approach to information literacy leading to information fluency, than the ACRL Information Literacy Standards for Higher Education.

This critical piece bridged a communication gap the library hadn't realized we had. The intention of the more philosophical and theoretical language of the Framework aims at developing a more conceptual understanding of the universe of information using threshold concepts, which are familiar to most faculty in various disciplines. The idea of threshold concepts as characteristics of strong teaching and learning environments in the disciplines emerged about a decade ago. It provides a common language for talking to faculty and others in higher education that can transform the conversation about learning and teaching and bring a new synergy to librarians' complimentary roles as educators. Threshold concepts are those transformative ideas in any discipline that are portals to understanding the ways of thinking within that discipline. This grasping of the ideas is irreversible and marks a comprehension that is an initiation into any discipline's culture, opening the avenue to acquire expertise in that subject. The Framework calls these threshold concepts "frames," so the language is more common with that of other disciplines, unlike the language of the Standards which is the language of library and information science not well understood by faculty outside the discipline.

The frames of the Framework work well with how faculty philosophically understand threshold concepts in any discipline, the English Department being no exception. Another new element in the ACRL Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education is metaliteracy. According to the language of the Framework, metaliteracy "offers a renewed vision of information literacy as an overarching set of abilities in which students are consumers and creators of information who can participate successfully in collaborative spaces." The perspective of students as creators of information is of high importance to the English Department faculty as they teach the current cohort of technologically oriented students.

As our library director began talking to the new Director of the Writing Program about common concerns of information fluency in multiple literacies and the creation and dissemination of knowledge in the changing higher education learning environment, mutual interests emerged and a relationship was recreated between the Writing Program and the Library once more. The Director of the Writing Program took some time to decide how to proceed, and this year reinstated the library component in all freshman Writing Program classes. After more than twelve years and three full cohorts of students who missed out on learning library research skills as undergraduates, change

continued on page 21

Exploring of Role of Translation in the Lifecycle of Information Objects

by Audrey Lorberfeld

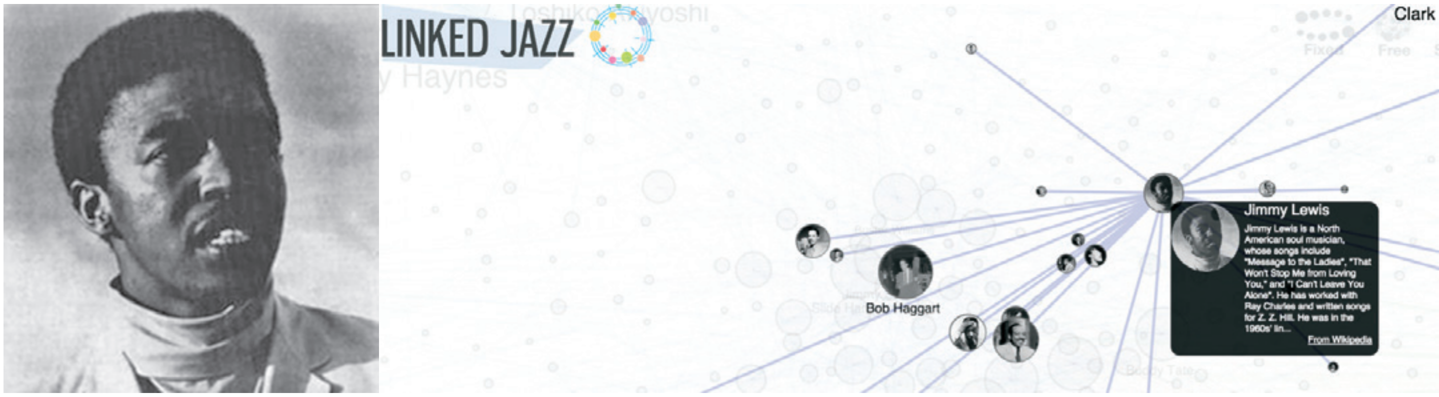

Fig. 1. Pattuelli, Christine. "Linked Jazz Project: Network Visualization Tool." Linked Jazz. https://linkedjazz.org/network/.

How do we make information meaningful for users of digital library catalogs? For most people, data takes on meaning when contextualized by other, related data. Take, for instance, the surge in data visualization initiatives. Above are two images, both representing jazz musician Jimmy Lewis (figure 1). The image on the left is from Google images, while the image on the right is from the open access research project Linked Jazz.

It is clear that the image from Linked Jazz would be more helpful to a researcher: the left image represents Lewis's face, while the right contains biographical information, a link to an outside resource (Wikipedia), and similar data for the people with whom Lewis had relationships. Some would call this placement of Lewis's static data within an interpretable, dynamic system a form of translation.

Traditionally, a translation is the conversion of a text from one language to another. In our present world of ebooks and Google Glass, however, the new currency of communication is data. In the classical tradition, Beatriz Priel writes that the act of translation "is conceived as an event, a response, a dialogical experience that transforms both the text and the reader" (Priel 2013, 94). In other words, the act of translation is the creation of a metamorphic relationship between object and person. Within our newly technologically-literate world can also come a third node in the object-person relationship: the computer interface.

On the Tower of Babel, Michael Cronin writes that "human presence in the world can only be understood through and in the context of the made objects that mediate human existence" (Cronin 2012, 470). While digital library catalogs are quite the opposite of the Tower of Babel in their intent, Cronin's sentiments give credence to areas of scholarship like human-computer interaction and user experience.

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The third space of the computer screen is the site at which catalogers translate metadata to interpretable text for users and place that text within a relational system to enhance meaningful information seeking and discovery.

With the introduction of the new cataloging standard RDA (Resource Description and Access), library professionals are acknowledging the importance of making the relationships between information objects explicit. When catalogers connect these dots for users, they induce Priel's transformative experience both actively (the cataloger inputs data into a system that transforms them into interpretable information) and passively (users participate in this process of translation by interpreting the translated data and then continuing research with a transformed knowledge base).

To investigate the metamorphosis that the user experiences when navigating the online catalog, we can look to the structure of RDA. RDA is based on the conceptual model FRBR (Functional Requirements for Bibliographic Records). Within FRBR are four types of entities: works, expressions, manifestations, and

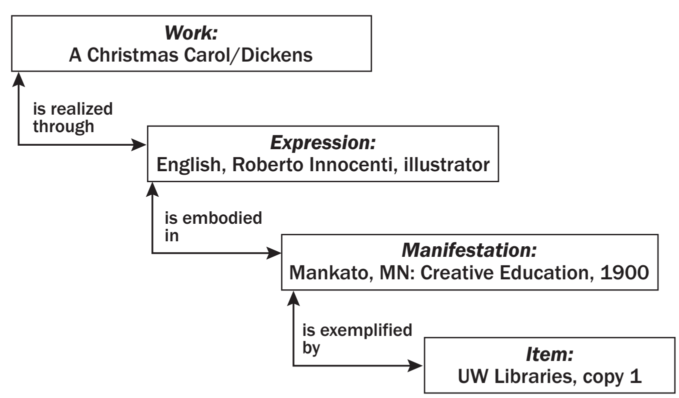

Fig. 2. Carlyle, Allyson. 2006. "Understanding FRBR as a Conceptual Model: FRBR and the Bibliographic Universe." Library Resources & Technical Services 50, no. 4: 270.

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items. One of FRBR's aims is to provide a framework to evaluate bibliographic relationships through the display of related entities (Madison 2006, 14). To this end, a critical aspect of RDA in relation to its predecessor, AACR2 (the second iteration of the Anglo-American Cataloging Rules), is that it makes the relationships in the FRBR model obvious to users of digital library catalogs.

This, in turn, allows users to fulfill four main tasks: to *find*, to *identify*, to *select*, and to *obtain* bibliographic entities (Taylor 2009, 104-5), as seen in figure 2. In 2000, Elaine Svenonius created a fifth user task: *to navigate*. Svenonius's navigating function accounts for users without a specific information need, but who would recognize that need immediately when they find it (Svenonius 2000, 19). Such users rely on the structure of the digital library catalog to guide them.

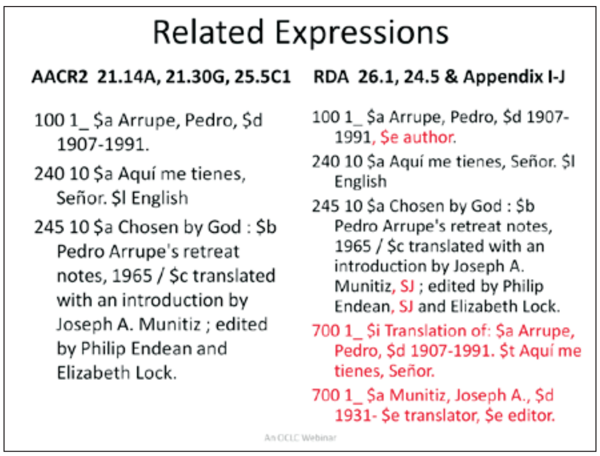

Fig. 3. Changes from AACR2 to RDA part 2: Access points. (Schiff 2011, 14).

The 700 field is a place in which RDA's innovative template for metadata is apparent. Figure 3 shows how RDA enables a cataloger to create a separate entry for a translator. While a small allowance, the creation of this access point can have profound effects on the experience of the end user. Figure 4 illustrates what a record for a work containing multiple expressions looks like in the Library of Congress's online catalog, along with a view of the information within the MARC Tags tab.

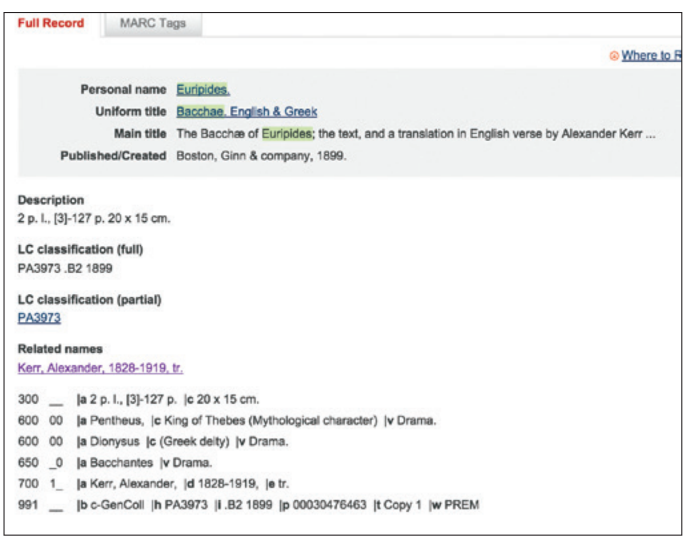

Fig. 4. Screenshot from the Library of Congress digital catalog.

One can clearly see that Euripides is the author of this work while an additional author, Alexander Kerr, is the author of this work's English expression. A user can then click on "Kerr, Alexander, 1828-1919, tr." to explore additional works authored by Kerr.

While in AACR2 this same record might have included language designations for a polyglot text, it most likely would not have separate access points for translators. The inclusion of this information in the 700 field as an individual, dynamic, access point allows information seekers to better understand what they're seeing. Douglas Raber and John Budd write that

> Information science, like linguistics, works in the borderland of two elements; text and content. This borderland is the terrain of aboutness, representation, relevance, and their relations in the construction or organization of and access to information. In this borderland a text, its content, and its meaning meet as a necessary step in the determination of its relevance to an information user's need (Raber 2003, 516).

The user's passive participation in this process of translating an item's aboutness through interaction with this borderland (which is, quite literally, the computer screen) results in a wholly unique and subjective act of information digestion.

The active role of the cataloger in the process of translation is equally as important. Cronin is again helpful when he writes that the:

> ... movement from one symbolic level to another, or encoding, is mirrored by the preoccupation among early pioneers of information science…replacing signs with others signs…is precisely what translators do (Cronin 2012, 480).

The role of the cataloger in the lifecycle of an information object embodies translation in the truest sense. It is important for us as information professionals to approach our field with the flexibility to view human-computer interaction and user experience in libraries as processes influenced by the humanities. Interdisciplinary scholarship has been proven to enhance student learning, creativity, and knowledge retention ("Why teach with an interdisciplinary approach?"), and catalogers can support this endeavor. Similar to the process translators undergo when faced with a text, catalogers receive an information object, extract bibliographic data, and input that data into a computer program that transforms it into machine-readable, semantic text for users.

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While some might point to the computer program as the real translator in this scenario, fully-automated cataloging is not yet sustainable for diverse collections. Just as it is obvious to native speakers of a language when something is machine-translated, computers cannot accurately parse data in a comprehensible way 100% of the time. Additionally, when information professionals are the ones approaching problems from an interdisciplinary foundation and engaging the sciences and technology with the humanities, the profession has a better chance at remaining innovative, intuitive, and sustainable as the world challenges the value of libraries. In this context, it seems likely that there will always be a place for the intangibly-human in our increasingly automated world.

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has come. Using the Framework philosophy and language has helped to engage key faculty in Writing and Composition. Both the Director of the Writing Program and the Director of the Composition Commons are on board, including librarians in achieving student information fluency. All our first year and transfer students are receiving a library orientation plus basic information research instruction again.

At first glance, the Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education seems confusing and complex. Perhaps that is because the language of "frames" or threshold concepts has been foreign to the discipline of Library and Information Science. This is not familiar language nor is it a familiar approach for librarians. With the Framework comes an opportunity for librarians to become familiar with an approach and language that is familiar to most faculty in other disciplines. The Coordinator of Instructional Services and the Library Director attended the 2015 Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL) Conference where the new Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education was formally introduced, the month following its publication. Meetings at that conference were instrumental in grasping the intention of the Framework and possibilities for its application. The Coordinator of Instructional Services later attended the 2015 Georgia International Conference on Information Literacy, a wonderful opportunity involving some of the leaders of ACRL from the task force that created the Framework. This afforded an opportunity to dig deeper into the Framework and truly grasp its meaning and language. Attendance at both conferences, within a few months of each other, provided a worthwhile familiarity with the Framework that enabled the library to incorporate it into our thinking and conversations with teaching faculty and administrators.

What do you do when your library instruction program falls apart? Reimagine it. At least reimagine how you present it to faculty. If all the same ways of explaining information literacy skills don't seem to make sense to teaching faculty, don't expect different results. Reimagine how to explain it differently, not in library jargon but in terms faculty will understand. ACRL put an enormous amount of work into the new Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education which came out a year ago in February 2015. It provides language based on concepts that teaching faculty incorporate in their disciplines, language they understand readily and are conversant in within their own disciplines. The Framework is a philosophical overlay, a more theoretical approach to Information Literacy leading to information fluency which provides instructional coordinators and library directors language to reimagine library research instruction.

From Sherman Alexie to SpokAnarchy: Creating a Local Collection for the Spokane County Library District

by Sheri Boggs

In a prominent corner of the North Spokane Library there are stories about Sasquatch, about a derelict hotel rescued from obscurity, about a kid from North Idaho who implausibly becomes a drug kingpin before getting caught and going to prison. There are stories about a woman and her daughter who walked across the United States in 1896 in order to save their family farm and a book partially set in a donut shop named *Donut Make You Hungry*. Some are novels, some are nonfiction, a few are DVDs. But the one thing these disparate items all have in common is that they were produced in, or written by residents of, Spokane County.

Local Collection at the Spokane County Library District's North Spokane branch.

The Local Collection at the Spokane County Library District (SCLD) is only a year old, but it's quickly become a high-interest spot in each or our ten libraries. The idea for the collection evolved naturally out of the direction we were going as a Library District. SCLD launched an ambitious Community Impact Plan three years ago, with a new emphasis on understanding the needs and interests of not just our community, but also of the many micro-communities that we serve throughout the county. In addition to demographic data gleaned from Community Connect software by CIVICTechnologies, we conducted ten community conversations designed to get at not just what our members want from their libraries, but from their communities as a whole.

"During these sessions we heard about the need for businesses that create good paying jobs so our children stay in Spokane to raise their families. We heard about challenges in getting from place to place," writes Executive Director Nancy Ledeboer in the introduction to SCLD's Community Impact Plan. "While the comments differed slightly from one conversation to another, one continuous thread was the desire to feel connected and know what is happening in the community. We heard in the conversations how people aspire to live in a community where there are places for people of all generations to gather and share local talent and make connections."

Sheri Boggs, a Spokane County Library youth collection development librarian, also blogs for the library and is a member of the Alki Editorial Committee.

With these observations as a guide, one of the emerging goals in our Community Impact Plan was to showcase local authors and/or artists at least five times each year. This goal inspired Jason Johnson, Managing Librarian at the North Spokane Library and member of local band, Buffalo Jones, to undertake a project filming local bands performing in our libraries. In the process of working with area musicians, Johnson started to amass a collection of their CDs and suggested creating a new music genre in the SCLD collection for local music. Discussing how to create a local music collection inevitably raised a new question: "why not curate and display an entire collection of local materials?"

Leadership on the Public Services side met with selectors in Collection Services to discuss the logistics of such a move and to come to some consensus about the scope of the collection. Would it be just self-published and small press items or would it include such Spokane-bred but nationally recognized authors as Jess Walter and Sherman Alexie? Would it be just books or would there also be AV materials? And were we including children's and teen titles, or just adult? These were not merely logistical questions but questions that pulled into consideration long-held beliefs and strong professional opinions. For selection staff, the issue of "local" quickly became a discussion about self-publishing. As any selection librarian will happily tell you, self-published materials can run the gamut between novels that could pass as the product of any of the big publishing houses to children's books with perspective-less colored-pencil illustrations by the retiree author. In SCLD's Collection Services Department, we were already starting to add a few self-published titles by local authors if there were extenuating circumstances or other strong reason to do so. But with the adoption of a new local collection, we knew we were opening a door that we'd long been unwilling to open.

"As librarians we've tended to have a bit of a snobbish attitude toward self-published materials," Ledeboer says. "But what we've been hearing in our community conversations is that people are interested in being creators and in having a place to share their work. We're in a unique position to fill that need."

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As a selector, I'll admit I was reluctant to let go of my snobbish attitude. In the bookstore where I'd worked right after college, the local section was an oddball assortment of hiking guides, local history, some poetry compilations, and a small green booklet of hand-drawn bike trail maps. But local authors who had hit it big, like Chris Crutcher and Sherman Alexie, were shelved with the "real books" over in the fiction section. It seemed like a step backwards to consider putting them back in with all the weirdo "Spokane" books. But at the same time, it seemed disingenuous to have a local section and *not* include authors who were from here but had graduated to the big time. The more we discussed it, the more I began to open up the idea. Ultimately, we decided if we were going to have a local collection, it really needed to be representative of the depth and breadth of literary talent in the Spokane area.

"As librarians we've tended to have a bit of a snobbish attitude toward self-published materials," Executive Director Nancy Ledeboer says. "But what we've been hearing in our community conversations is that people are interested in being creators and in having a place to share their work. We're in a unique position to fill that need."

In addition to the quality concerns raised by the inclusion of self-published local items, there were also issues of cataloging workload (since many of these items wouldn't be showing up on OCLC and would need original cataloging), and how long to keep local items if they weren't circulating. We decided that everything in the local collection needed to fall within the same weeding parameters as the rest of the collection, namely if a local item wasn't checking out within a set period of time and didn't have significance as a local or historical resource, it would need to go.

As for format and age groups, we decided our local collection would include fiction, nonfiction, DVDs and music. We didn't include children's books or teen, initially because of space. We didn't want to interfile them with the adult materials, and in some of our libraries we didn't have enough shelves to provide them with their own distinct spot.

Once we'd decided what to include, it was then time to gather it all together. For Johnson, who was tasked with calling in all items that would be made "local," this was no small task. "I guess the most difficult part for a library considering starting one is locating the items that are already in the collection," he says. "Nonfiction wasn't as hard, since you can search for a number of keywords, but identifying all the local fiction authors and poets was much more labor intensive, and I am sure that we have missed some."

In addition to using all the search techniques he could think of and informally polling staff, Johnson even employed such librarian tricks as taking an anthology (for instance *Lilac City Fairy Tales*) and looking up each of its authors in our catalog to see if there were other works by those that could be pulled in.

Local music presented unorthodox selection methods as well. I contacted one of the music writers for our local arts weekly *The Inlander*, who had also helped co-found our local music festival, Volume. She gave me a list of about 20 or so bands that she thought would be a good representation of what Spokane has to offer. I worked my way down the list and was thrilled with the enthusiastic response we got from area musicians. Cami Bradley, an *America's Got Talent* finalist, mailed us a box of CDs, both solo stuff and as part of the duo, The Sweeplings. Johnson regularly picked up local bands' albums at their shows.

Even once the collection was identified, relabeled with dark green "Local" stickers, and placed in its new section in each library, we weren't done with the trial-and-error phase of the project. One issue that came up with our Integrated Library System (Symphony) is that the way we had initially specified the item type for local items didn't lend itself well to circulation data capture. This ended up being changed not once, but twice, for each item in the local collection, but we've now figured out how to code things so that we can get the data we need, and staff can find the items quickly from the catalog.

Now that the local collection is approaching its second year, we can see so many benefits to having created it. Locally produced items are showcased rather than being lost in the vast expanses of fiction or nonfiction in each of our libraries. Johnson says that the local collection at North Spokane Library gets a lot of use and is "constantly" reshelved. On a personal level, it's really fun to browse: where else can you find a book on the county's rural cemeteries right by a documentary on Spokane's early punk scene (*SpokAnarchy: Where Were You in '82?*). Most of all the local collection generates, at least for me, a sense of pride that there are so many great regional stories to share, and there's room for everyone. There are anthology projects benefitting local non-profits, war stories written for the next generations, and more than a few *New York Times* bestsellers. In a lot of ways the local collection at SCLD is a microcosm of life in Spokane County, and these stories are a fine representation of what makes this area what it is.

Open Wide the School Doors

by Diane Cowles

Three adult students in an Internet Basics class at Hawthorne Elementary School in Seattle.

Immigrants and refugees willingly flee their past for the future of their children. Once in school, these children learn quickly, while their parents race to catch up. Parents, whose English is halting and whose skills with computers are minimal, are most at risk of losing the race.

At Hawthorne Elementary School, ESL (English as a Second Language) teacher Melissa Mak, noticing the difficulties that ESL parents were having in helping their children with computer related tasks, approached The Seattle Public Library (SPL) branches in southeast Seattle for help. Challenges for these parents run the gamut from helping their child save a document to locating a teacher's assignment at a specific website. Languages spoken at home reflect the diverse neighborhood: Spanish, Vietnamese, Chinese, and Somali. The dedication to their children's education, though, is as strong as for any parent.

Drawing upon this passion, Adult Services Librarian Tina Mat met with Mak and designed a series of computer programs that the parents themselves wanted. "If they feel it benefits them, they will come," Mat instinctively knew and she enlisted other trainers to teach, including Supervising Librarian and fluent Spanish speaker Lizette Esquivel, and Library Assistant IV and Chinese speaker Warren Chin. The curriculum was based on The Seattle Public Library's computer training, starting out with Computer Basics and branching out to more specific classes on Microsoft Word and PowerPoint, library online resources, and the Seattle Public School's website.

Mak was instrumental in shaping the curriculum to fit real life needs. For example, troubleshooting basics were added to help parents know how to get out of a frozen screen or to assess the problem of too many windows open at once. Also, parents needed to know the difference between a laptop and a tablet, especially understanding the capabilities of each. Many purchased smaller and less expensive tablets, thinking it would do as a home computer for their kids, only to be shocked too late. Classes on helping parents understand how to assist their children with homework assignments, particularly with research and reports, tasked them with creating their own reports. The parents themselves had to acquire skills with research using search engines and library databases as well as to prepare a Word presentation or document to present to the class. Future classes will cover how to use iPads.

Chin, who taught a PowerPoint class, motivated the adults with a cooking lesson on slides. The class decided on "How to Cook *Como Hacer Pozole*." The majority of the class did the slides in Spanish and Warren observed, "They easily picked up on typing text on slides and locating images online. The class was very interactive, everyone helping each other out with specific PowerPoint functions such as creating new slides, styles, etc. At the end of the class, each parent gave a brief presentation of their slide and made everybody hungry with the awesome food images they found!"

The SPL trainers have use of Hawthorne's computer lab with 20 terminals and have also used the ESL classroom, with round tables that facilitate more informal discussion, using the school's laptops. Classes are taught weekly for 2 hours and are separated enough from the ESL language classes taught by Literacy Source to allow parents to attend both if they so choose.

From the evaluations, Mak was able to share the positive reactions from participants: "They had fun and were appreciative of all instructors." A few parents wished they had time to learn even more! At the library branch, Mat observed that a mother she taught brought her three children, all under age 7, and a nephew to pick up summer activity booklets. Mat enthused, "This is a mother who never stepped foot into the library before! I've personally seen the family in the library twice since then!" Melissa Mak has been equally excited about the ongoing project and expressed deep appreciation for the library's partnership as her dream unfolded for classes that helped both parents and children succeed.

Diane Cowles is a children's librarian at the Beacon Hill Branch of the Seattle Public Library and the Alki Editorial Committee Chair.

A Modern Fairy Tale

by Clancy Pool

Once upon a time there was a little girl named Barbara. She lived on a farm in Missouri and her favorite place in that town was the library. It was like most small libraries – staffed primarily by volunteers, and an old and worn collection. Most books were given to the library when families didn't need them anymore. Once or twice a year the library purchased a few new books. But Barbara was lucky; her mom always gave her $5 to spend at the Scholastic Book Fair. Most of her friends had to make due with hand-me-downs.


"In 1990, the first boxes of books left her garage into the eager hands of dedicated librarians and the children they serve. In the last 25 years, Barbara McKillip and her dedicated staff have quietly enriched the lives of rural children in over 3,300 communities in all 50 states with over $6,500,000 worth of books out of that two-car garage."

Barbara grew up, went to college, moved to Oregon and became a librarian. Her life was busy, but she always remembered what it was like for rural children who never got to read a new book and rural librarians who made due with a patched collection to share with eager readers.

In 1989, Barbara decided it was time to do something about it and the Libri Foundation was formed. The idea was a simple one. If a rural library could raise $350, the Foundation would do a 2-to-1 value match and send $1,050 in award winning hardbound books to that library. If poverty or a disaster made raising the matching money impossible, then Barbara found someone to meet the community's need. Each library could choose the books they wanted from almost a thousand options. In 1990, the first boxes of books left her garage into the eager hands of dedicated librarians and the children they serve. In the last 25 years, Barbara McKillip and her dedicated staff have quietly enriched the lives of rural children in over 3,300 communities in all 50 states with over $6,500,000 worth of books out of that two-car garage.

I've never met Barbara, but I count her as my friend and one of the best friends of my library. In 2002, I heard about the Libri Foundation when the library in Edwall, WA announced that they had been awarded the grant. I'd never written a grant, but figured if Edwall could do it so could I. I filled in the form and sent it off to the Libri Foundation. Not too much later a packet came with my award letter. Now all I had to do was raise $350 and select my books. Raising the money was easier than I thought; everyone wants to help children have books! It gave our little library a visibility it never had before and was the beginning of support for a new library. Since then I've written lots of grants, including two more from the Libri Foundation for the Whitman County Rural Library's St. John branch, but as they say–you always remember your first. When we moved into the new library in 2008, I sent Barbara McKillips a special invitation.

Recently, I went to the foundation's website to begin writing my fourth Libri grant for St. John. I was saddened to see that after 25 years, the last Libri grants will be awarded in 2016. Barbara has passed her work on to the Pilcrow Foundation and its director Karren Timmermans, a teacher and education professor at Pacific University in Oregon. Karren decided Barbara's dream was too important to go away. Karren has spent the last three years working one day a week with Barbara in that garage, learning all there is to know about sharing great books with rural children and setting up a new foundation. Some things will be different, but the dream will continue.

This article originally appeared in the Moscow-Pullman Daily News *and was reprinted with permission.*

Clancy Pool is the St. John Branch Manager with the Whitman County Rural Library District.

WLA Communiqué

On January 21, dozens of librarians, library trustees, library foundation members and other library supporters visited the Capitol in Olympia for **WLA's Library Legislative Day**. The days activities included some rousing speechifying from the likes of WLA President Darcy Brixey, WLA lobbyists Steve Duncan and Carolyn Logue, and Deputy Secretary of State Greg Lane. Attendees visited with legislators when possible and with their wonderful legislative aides when legislators were not available. Talking about libraries with our elected officials never gets old!

WLA's Library Legislative Day. left to right: Brian Soneda, Library Director, Mount Vernon City Library; Christine Perkins, Whatcom County Library Director; Phil Heikinnen, Orcas Island Library Director; Jeff Morris, State Representative, 40th District. Photo by Kim O'Farrell.

The Columbia Branch Library of **The Seattle Public Library**, an original Carnegie library, celebrated its 100th Anniversary on December 13, 2015. Opening speeches were provided by SPL Board of Directors member Marie McCaffrey, Mayor Ed Murray, and by Dr. Georgia S. McDade., and a short video of the Fichter couple recounting what the Columbia Library had meant to them growing up in the area 60+ years ago was shown. In his article Columbia library branch marks 100th anniversary *Seattle Times* photographer Ken Lambert shows us some of the highlights of the event.

Rick Newell, recent graduate of Boise State University.

In December Rick Newell, a Senior Training Coordinator at **OCLC** who is based in Olympia, received a Master of Science degree in Organizational Performance and Workplace Learning from Boise State University, as well as a graduate certificate in Workplace E-Learning and Performance Support. Newell's MLS is from SUNY Buffalo.

The Bettie Steiger Community Enrichment Center, an annex of **Whitman County Library District's** Colfax Branch was recently awarded a $20,000 "Community Strategies" grant from Inland Northwest Community Foundation to begin remodeling the interior of the facility.

To date, over $280,000 in grants, donations and in-kind donations have been given to the project including more than $50,000 in proceeds from the Library's recent fundraising auction. When complete, The Center will be the educational, social, cultural and business hub for Whitman County featuring classes for all ages, gallery space, business incubation, historic information, tourist activities, or other potential uses.

The Institute of Museum and Library Services announced on February 23, 2016 that the James E. Brooks Library at **Central Washington University** is among the 30 finalists for the 2016 National Medal for Museum and Library Service. The National Medal is the nation's highest honor given to libraries and museums for service to their community. For 22 years, the award has celebrated institutions that demonstrate extraordinary and innovative approaches to public service and are making a difference for individuals, families, and communities. Finalists are chosen because of their significant and exceptional contributions to their communities. The National Medal winners will be named later this spring.

The James E. Brooks Library of **Central Washington University** is thrilled to announce the opening of their library coffee shop – Jimmy B's. Named after former CWU President, James E. Brooks and run entirely by the library, Jimmy B's Coffee opened its doors on January 5th, 2016 – the first day of winter quarter classes! From those early morning printing runs before class to late night study sessions, Jimmy B's is open and ready to serve students. Jimmy B's offers D&M Coffee, which is locally roasted in Ellensburg, Washington, as well as fresh fruit, baked goods, and other snack options.

Read This Book!

Reviews and Opinions by Teacher-Librarians

by Thom Garrand, Teresa Bateman, Kathy Jensen, and Eve Datisman

It’s about to Get Real — Must Have Nonfiction Titles

Since The State of Washington adopted the Common Core Standards in 2011, more emphasis has been placed on reading informational text – nonfiction. Nonfiction features a variety of devices in which detailed information can be conveyed to the reader including the use of headings and sub-headings, illustrations/photographs and their captions, diagrams/charts/tables and their labels, glossaries, maps, text boxes and call-outs. All of these provide editors and layout specialists ways to showcase compelling information without having to stuff it all in the main text. Teacher-librarians create lessons to help readers learn to use these features effectively. But the main text has often been dry and journeyman-like; it did the job, but it rarely inspired. A notable exception to this is the English publisher Dorling Kindersley, established in 1974, whose visual approach to the organization on the page has changed the way readers interact with text. Here the reader’s eye travels freely around the pages’ images and explanations instead of being rigidly contained in columns and boxes.

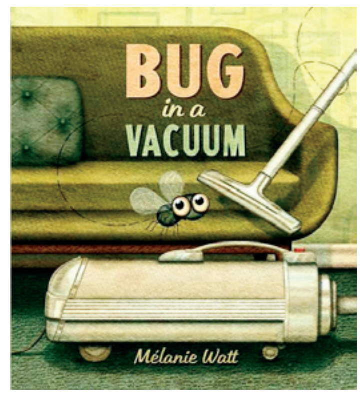
This has led to a small revolution in how nonfiction is developed for school audiences. In the last five to ten years, much of the most successful nonfiction and the corresponding narrative nonfiction, which delivers information using a traditional story arc and characters, have taken on a much more visual approach. There is an even squishier area where nonfiction subjects are framed as fiction. Lately some of the very best of these forms have embraced the graphic novel format using sequential art panels to tell a story. When done well, it’s a marriage of the visual with well-chosen words which creates a powerful impact, like a punch to the gut or an AHA! light bulb. The member/reviewers of The Puget Sound Council for Review of Children’s and Young Adult Literature have selected a list of reviews for outstanding nonfiction reviewed between September 2015 and February 2016 which offer picture book, traditional, and graphic novel formats.

Here we go … ***READ THESE BOOKS!***

Thom Garrand is a teacher-librarian at Hilltop Elementary with the Edmonds School District. Teresa Bateman is a teacher-librarian at Brigadoon and Olympic View Elementaries with the Federal Way School District. Kathy Kensen is a teacher-librarian at Cottonwood Elementary with the Kennewick School District. Eve Datisman retired as a teacher-librarian with Port Angeles High School.

Pre-K and/or Primary

Bug in a Vacuum | Watt, Melanie
Tundra Books, ©2105. ISBN: 978-1-77049-645-3.
Fiction based on a non-fiction concept.
Reviewed by Thom Garrard.



A bug is sucked into a vacuum cleaner. Thus begins an emotional journey that traverses the five stages of grief as defined by Kubler-Ross. First comes denial, during which he thinks he must be dreaming. Then he tries bargaining with the vacuum for his release, but to no avail. The subsequent eruption of his anger also fails to help him gain his freedom. At this point, despair robs him of all hope, but at last, he accepts his plight. Luckily, the vacuum is soon dumped in the landfill, and the impact opens up an escape route for the bug. The vacuum also consumed the dog’s favorite toy, and at the end of each stage, the dog’s actions and thought bubbles show that he is suffering through parallel stages of coping with loss, although he too successfully moves on by the end. Melanie Watt’s masterful mixed media illustrations mostly use a muted palette of gray, soft green and dull red that fits the serious subject matter perfectly. Students who need to understand the universal human feelings that follow unexpected change or loss will be helped by reading this gem of a story.

Upper Elementary and/or Middle School – Grades 4-8

Patient Zero: Solving the Mysteries of Deadly Epidemics
Peters, Marilee
Annick Press, © 2014. ISBN 978-1-55451-671-1.
Reviewed by Teresa Bateman.

Epidemiology has always fascinated me. Those medical detectives who track down the source of a major illness, and figure out how to save lives—what’s not to love? This well-researched book examines seven medical mysteries, the beliefs about their causes, and the methodology used to determine the truth. London’s Great Plague of 1665, The 1854 Soho Cholera outbreak (which ties in neatly with “The Great Trouble”

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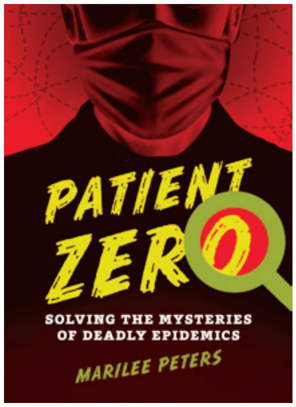
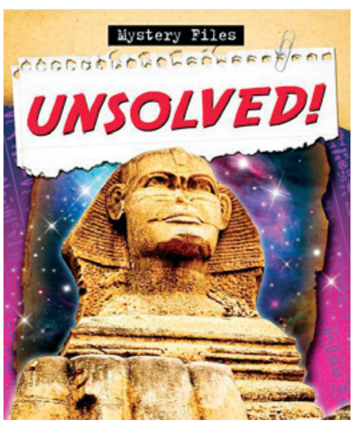


by Hopkinson), Cuban Yellow Fever in 1900, Typhoid Mary, Ebola, and AIDS are all clearly presented. Readers learn about real people dealing with a real epidemic, and follow along as they stumble, hypothesize, test, and map to finally arrive at a conclusion. Finding the source of the infection is, of course, the best result, but rarely easy. The author's crisp and compelling text draws the reader in, having them follow along as people die, history is impacted, and medical detectives work. This is fascinating and frightening reading, and would be a good addition to secondary libraries.

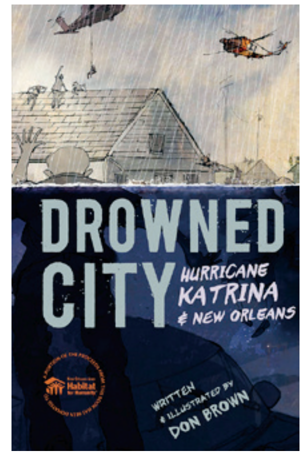
Unsolved! | Powell Marie
Crabtree Publishing Company ©2015
ISBN 978-0-7787-8073-1.
Reviewed by Kathy Jensen.



Who doesn't like a good mystery? The series, Mystery Files, consists of twelve titles that try to unlock a variety of secrets and share amazing stories from our history. Photographs and primary sources provide an eye-catching layout. Everything on the pages is so visually appealing you don't know where to start first. In the book *Unsolved!* you will read about Amelia Earhart, the man in the iron mask, Princess Anastasia, and others with a mysterious past. Additionally, you will learn about places with unsolved mysteries such as Easter Island and the lost colony of Roanoke. Common to all books in the series, overlapping text boxes and captions in a variety of sizes, a mixture of fonts, and word definitions all come together to form an intriguing experience for the reader. A sturdy paperback cover, glossary, index, and places to go for more information round out the usefulness of this book. The only downside to the series is that you will be craving more information as you turn the final page.

Young Adult Grades 9-12

Drowned City: Hurricane Katrina and New Orleans
Don Brown
Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, © 2015. ISBN 978-0-544-15777-4.
Reviewed by Eve Datisman.



On August 29, 2005, Hurricane Katrina's monstrous winds and surging water overwhelmed the protective levees around low-lying New Orleans, Louisiana. Eighty percent of the city flooded, some places were under twenty feet of water. Property damage across the Gulf Coast topped $100 billion and 1,833 people lost their lives. To date most of the books written have been microscopic accounts of individuals or families. In this 96-page graphic novel, Brown gives a detailed almost hour-by-hour account of the storm from its beginnings in Africa to landfall in New Orleans. He tracks the storm's impact on evacuation, successful and unsuccessful, gridlocked traffic, flooding, broken levees, and the fear generated. He reports on the refugees' plight in the Superdome and convention center who were without adequate food and water. The text and artwork clearly reveal two separate but inextricably connected horrors: devastation caused by a high-category hurricane and the human responsibility that lay behind the nightmarish scenarios. The story becomes grimmer at every turn: ineffectual police and rescue efforts, looting, the lack of housing for rescued victims, and 5,000 missing or displaced children. The muted watercolors effectively capture the squalid and treacherous conditions of every inch of New Orleans. The final pages show the rebuilding efforts but note the lasting effects of vastly decreased population. Extensive source notes and bibliography. This will win many awards.

I'd Rather Be Reading

by David Wright

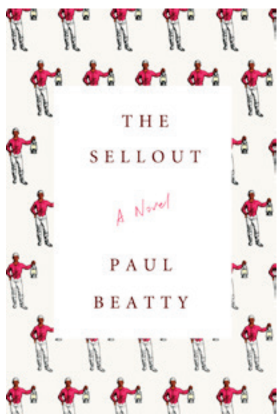

David Wright

Reading Race: Best Books of 2015

The books we read (and write) reflect the interests and concerns of our times. So it is no surprise that 2015 was something of a landmark year for fiction and nonfiction that delved into issues of race in America. As we struggle through difficult conversations, towards wider awareness and deeper understandings, there are few things quite so helpful as a good book. Books are able to inspire empathy and explore complex realities with a thoroughness and subtlety that tweets, speeches and blog posts can't come near, providing us with grounds for discussion and forums where diverse people can meet and share a common appreciation of our shared interests and concerns, and our diverse outlooks and experiences.

2015 saw the publication of many outstanding books involving race: here is a small sampling.

Fiction



***The Sellout*, by Paul Beatty**
When the town of Dickens, California literally drops off the map, a man named Mee hatches a startling scheme to revive its notoriety by promoting segregation and re-instituting slavery. Wait – they can't do that, can they? That's for the Supreme Court to decide. Beatty's wickedly incisive satire pulls no punches in provoking thought, and laughter.

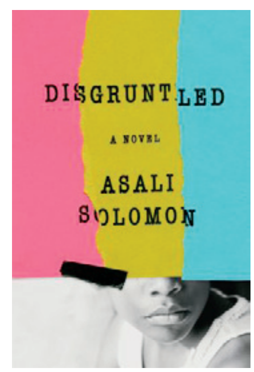
***Delicious Foods*, by James Hannaham**
After her husband's brutal murder, Darlene's precipitous descent into crack addition seems destined to be the end of her, until the promise of employment on a mysterious Louisiana plantation resurrects her hopes. But Delicious Foods, Inc., turns out not to be a path to the future, but a journey into the past, in the worst way imaginable. A brilliant, visceral tale of dreams and disenfranchisement.

David Wright is a reader services librarian at the Central Branch of The Seattle Public Library, a frequent speaker and trainer at library conferences, and a regular contributor to Booklist, The Seattle Times, *and other publications.*

***Welcome to Braggsville*, by T. Geronimo Johnson**
A diverse group of idealistic yet misguided Berkeley freshmen decide to stage a "performative intervention" at a Civil War reenactment in a small Southern town, by adding a mock lynching to the proceedings. To say things do not go as planned is an understatement, and what follows might create a teachable moment for us all. No one is spared from Johnson's devastating and frequently hilarious send-ups of American folly and presumption in all its guises.

***Stand Your Ground*, by Victoria Christopher Murray**
A 16-year-old African American boy is headed to the library with his girlfriend when he is shot and killed by a white man, who claims a stand-your-ground defense. Murray delves beneath the surface of these ripped-from-the-headlines events to explore the lives, thoughts, feelings and spiritual trials of characters struggling to right an un-rightable wrong.

***Grant Park*, by Leonard Pitts**
White supremacists kidnap a controversial African American journalist as part of a plot to sabotage our nation's first black president. In this smart, gripping political thriller, the 2008 election of Barack Obama is juxtaposed with the 1968 assassination of Martin Luther King, Jr., showing how unresolved issues and unchanged beliefs from long ago still haunt us today.



***Disgruntled*, by Asai Solomon**
Coming of age in 1980s Philadelphia as the daughter of a radically afro-centric (yet blindly misogynistic) leader, young Kenya struggles to find herself amidst a welter of competing beliefs, biases and agendas. A deeply personal journey through our society's persistent cultural and racial contradictions.

Other excellent 2015 fiction dealing with race includes *Jam on the Vine*, by LaShonda Barnett; *The Game of Love and Death*, by Martha Brockenbrough; *All Involved*, by Ryan Gattis; *Driving the King*, by Ravi Howard; *Go Set a Watchman*, by Harper Lee; *God Help the Child*, by Toni Morrison; *The Alphabet of Birds*, by S.J. Naudé; *The Sacrifice*, by Joyce Carol Oates; *Out of Darkness*, by Ashley Hope Pérez; *A Free State*, by Tom Piazza; *Night at the Fiestas*, by Kirstin Valdez Quade; *American Copper*, by Shann Ray; *Prudence*, by David Treuer; and *Black Dove, White Raven* by Elizabeth Wein.

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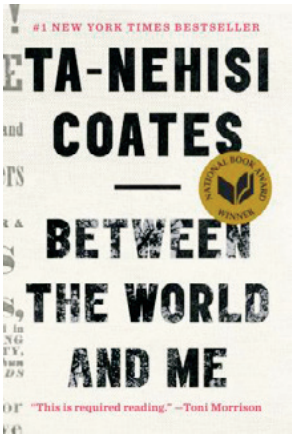
Nonfiction

***Give Us the Ballot: The Modern Struggle for Voting Rights in America*, by Ari Berman**
The engrossing and revealing story of the long road of gradual progress leading to the passage of the Voting Rights Act in 1965, and the steady erosion of those rights through discriminatory procedures and legislation across the country purposely designed to disenfranchise poor and minority voters. Here is a startling wake up call for all who believe in the promise of representative democracy.

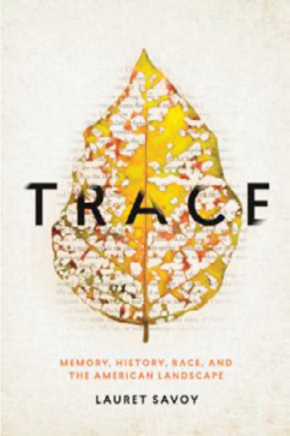
***Between the World and Me*, by Ta-Nehisi Coates**
Written as an open letter to his son, Coates' stunning and often poetic contemplation of what it means to be black in America forces us to look not backwards, but forwards to the society we want to live in, and to recognize how far we are from that place. If there was a must-read title on race last year, this candid and powerful testimonial is it.



***Something Must Be Done About Prince Edward County: A Family, a Virginia Town, and Civil Rights Battle*, by Kristen Green**
After the Supreme Court ruled against school segregation in Brown v. Board of Education, Farmville, Virginia decided to close their schools, rather than integrate them. In a blend of history and memoir, Green looks back at these lost years, and the enduring legacy of hatred and misunderstanding that they helped perpetuate.

***Negroland: A Memoir*, by Margo Jefferson**
The Pulitzer-Prize winning journalist looks back on her upbringing in a well-to-do Chicago enclave, as a child of privilege in a land of prejudice, poised in the curious and exceptional position of a "third race." A moving consideration of American class and culture from a particularly telling vantage point.

***Trace: Memory, History, Race, and the American Landscape*, by Lauret E. Savoy.**
Environmental Studies professor Savoy takes a fascinating, elegiac look at the soil from which her own diverse roots have sprung, unearthing past crimes and indignities, and delving into the inseparable bonds between history, people and place.



The Trouble with Post Blackness (various)
The diverse range of voices in this collection of scholarly and personal essays explore just what it means to be black in America today, pointing out the shortcomings and complications that lurk within prognostications about a "post-racial" era.

Other excellent 2015 nonfiction dealing with race in the present and past includes *Twisted: My Dreadlock Chronicles*, by Bert Ashe; *The Long Emancipation: The Demise of Slavery in the United States*, by Ira Berlin; *The Land Shall be Deluged in Blood: A New History of the Nat Turner Revolt*, by Patrick H. Breen; *How I Shed My Skin: Unlearning the Racist Lessons of A Southern Childhood*, by Jim Grimsley; *Showdown: Thurgood Marshall and the Supreme Court Nomination That Changed America*, by Wil Haygood; *Forgotten: The Untold Story of D-Day's Black Heroes, at Home and at War*, by Linda Hervieux; *The Radical King*, by Martin Luther King Jr.; *The Making of Asian America: A History*, by Erika Lee; *March: Book Two* (a graphic novel), by John Lewis; *Household Workers Unite: The Untold Story of African American Women Who Built A Movement*, by Premilla Nadasen; *Firefight: The Century-long Battle to Integrate New York's Bravest*, by Ginger Adams Otis; *We Could Not Fail: The First African Americans in the Space Program*, by Richard Paul; *Education of Kevin Powell: A Boy's Journey Into Manhood*, by Kevin Powell; and *Under Our Skin: Getting Real About Race–and Getting Free From the Fears and Frustrations That Divide Us*, by Benjamin Watson.

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