

January 2014

Volume 21, Issue 2

Teaching Librarian

The Magazine of the Ontario School Library Association
ISSN 1188679X



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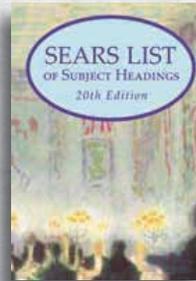
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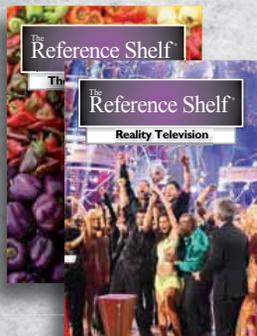
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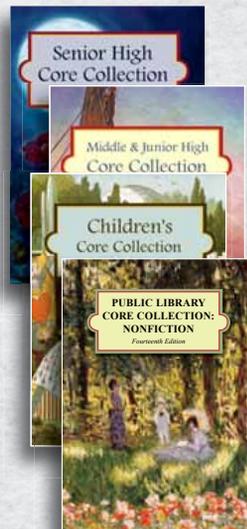
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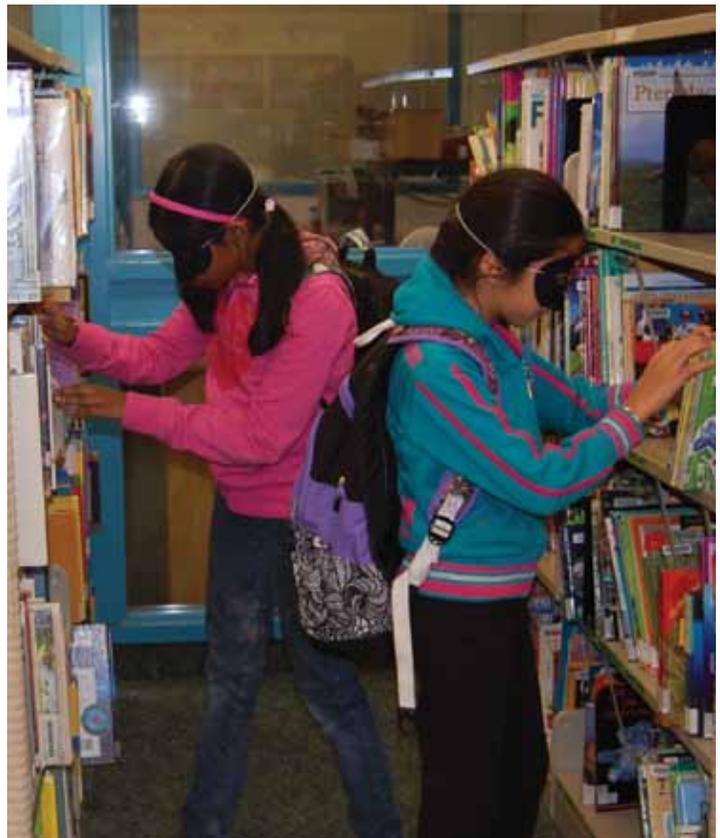
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TingL mission

The Teaching Librarian

The Teaching Librarian is the official magazine of the Ontario School Library Association. It is published three times a year to support OSLA members in providing significant and effective library programs and services. *The Teaching Librarian* promotes library programs and curriculum development that furthers exemplary educational objectives. The magazine fosters effective collaboration within the school library community and provides a forum to share experience and expertise.

TingL references

The Teaching Librarian is a general magazine for OSLA members and not a scholarly journal. If your article does require citation of sources, please provide them within the text of your article or column with as much or as little bibliographic information as necessary for identification (e.g. book title, year). If you feel that the works you are citing require full identification, please provide a bibliography at the end of your piece, formatted according to the latest Chicago Manual of Style (15th edition) or APA Style.

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TingL guidelines

V. 21, issue 3	“Wonder @ your library” Deadline: January 21, 2014
V. 22, issue 1	“Climate Change @ your library” Deadline: May 10, 2014
V. 22, issue 2	“Entertain @ your library” Deadline: September 22, 2014

Articles of 150–250 words, 500 words, or 800–1,300 words are welcome. Articles, when approved, should be accompanied by good quality illustrations and/or pictures whenever possible. Text must be sent electronically, preferably in a MS Word (or compatible) file. Pictures can be printed or digital (minimum size and quality are 4” x 6” and 300 dpi, approximately 700 mb and in jpeg format, if electronic). With photos which contain a recognized individual, please secure the individual’s permission in writing for the use of the photo. Photos taken at public events, or crowd shots taken in a public place do not require permission from the subjects. All submissions are subject to editing for consistency, length, content, and style. Journalistic style is preferred. Articles must include the working title, name of author, and email address in the body of the text. OSLA reserves the right to use pictures in other OSLA publications unless permission is limited or denied at the time of publishing. Any questions about submissions should be directed to the Editor of *The Teaching Librarian*: TingLeditor@gmail.com.

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The Editor's Notebook



Diana Maliszewski

I have only received three traffic tickets in my life, and they were issued as a result of only two police stops. The first time I was stopped (for expired plate stickers and out-of-date vehicle insurance records) my reaction was less-than-adult: I cried like a baby. I broke the law, so I was ashamed, embarrassed, and a little afraid of the police reaction. The officers were sympathetic and told me that if I made amends by locating my pink insurance form and updating my plate stickers, my tickets would be reduced or cancelled (I can't recall which). The third ticket was for speeding. I didn't humiliate myself by crying that time, but what astonished me was how eager and willing everyone was, from the very officer writing the ticket to the traffic court officials, to explain to me how to escape my punishment and avoiding paying my fine; 1. Ask for a court date; 2. Challenge the ticket because the officer spelt your name incorrectly on the paperwork. I was perplexed. I admit that I was guilty of speeding and so I was resigned to accept the consequences for my actions. I approached it like the Catholic sacrament of reconciliation:

seek out the authority/liaison, confess your sins, receive your penance and gain absolution. Doesn't anyone want to take responsibility anymore? My husband saw it in a different light.



Laws, he said, are there to discourage worst case scenarios where no other solution is adequate. Consequently, they cast a wide net and pick up the little fish along with the big ones, but

they are really only concerned with the major lawbreakers.

My illegal activities and my husband's explanation fit quite well with some of the rules enforced in school libraries.

We have book borrowing limits, but those rules can be made flexible if a student needs an extra book to complete a project, or is a voracious reader, or doesn't have many books at home to enjoy. There are library "crimes", but as our *Idea File* column in this issue illustrates, there are many creative and constructive ways to "punish" the wrong-doers. Volume 21 Issue 2 contains a feature article by guest writer Kelly Jensen, who addresses a "crime" that many of us who work in school libraries may be guilty of committing. This edition of *The Teaching Librarian* may not be as long as the Dostoevsky classic novel, but I hope it will be as thought-provoking.

P.S. Don't tell my parents about this column. They panic when I let my gas tank go to the half-way mark; I can't imagine their reaction if they heard this story! ■

"Ask not what **OSLA** can do for you, but what **you** can do for OSLA"

JFK might have said that, if he had been a teacher-librarian or school library staff member.

THE
Teaching Librarian

WANTS YOU!

see page 27 for details



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President's Report

“ Not failure, but low aim, is crime.

— James Russell Lowell

As this is my last President's Report, I wanted to use this opportunity to share some highlights from the past year, where the Ontario School Library Association aimed to accomplish a lot and did very well.

1. The launch of the Together for Learning website (www.togetherforlearning.ca) at Super Conference 2013 was a huge success. The digital form of our vision document offers an ever growing source of resources, ideas and support for the staff in all school libraries in the province.

2. We have had an opportunity to contribute to the Canadian Library Association's new standards document. A team from OSLA Council, under the leadership of past president Elizabeth Gordon, formed a committee of stakeholders (library technicians, teacher librarians, library consultants, teachers, administrators and parents) that provided Ontario's submission to this national document. The new National Standards document will be launched at Treasure Mountain during the CLA Conference in June 2014.

3. Members of OSLA Council and our advocacy group had an opportunity to meet with senior staff in the Ministry of Education. This gave us an opportunity to discuss the important role that school libraries play in the education of students in Ontario.

4. OLA Council gave unanimous approval in supporting OSLA's advocacy efforts. This will include the creation of an Advocacy Toolkit, continued assistance with government relations, assistance with connecting with Faculties of Education and teacher training programs and help with raising awareness of OSLA issues with other OLA divisions.

5. We asked all members of OLA to help us by responding the Ministry of Education's Public Consultations that occurred in October and November. We wanted to ensure that, as the Ministry consulted with the public regarding the creation of a new education policy document, they would receive feedback from a variety of sources highlighting the importance of school libraries. OSLA's own written response can be found on the OSLA webpage at www.accessola.com/osl. Special thanks go to Anita Brooks-Kirkland, incoming OLA president, for her assistance in the creation of this response.

6. This fall, a letter was sent to all library staff in school libraries in Ontario. Included in the letter was information regarding Together for Learning, the benefits of membership in OSLA and a link to a survey. We hope that the survey results will provide us with a more accurate picture of how school libraries in all of Ontario are staffed and funded, as well as providing us with contact information. All school administrators in Ontario also received a letter, providing them with an overview of Together for Learning and what OSLA can offer the library staff in their school.

7. OSLA Council has committed to the creation of short videos which will provide some professional development around the use of Together for Learning. The first provides an overview of the document and can be found at www.accessola.com/osl. Future videos will focus on specific aspects of T4L and will provide ideas for implementation. As well, you may have received emails through the OSLA Listserv. Council has begun sending out T4L Tips, sharing great ideas and resources that can be found on the Together for Learning website.



Isabelle Hobbs

Wow! This has been a busy year! None of this could have been done, however, without the work done by your OSLA Council and the support we receive from the other OLA Divisions and the OLA staff. My heartfelt thanks to all of you!

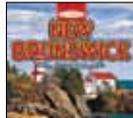
You can see from the list above that advocacy was a key focus this year. This is my 22nd year as a Teacher-Librarian and I first heard the word advocacy 21 years ago. It is a word that we often don't all feel comfortable with, as it often makes us feel like we're 'blowing our own horn'. However, it is vital that our staff, our students, our administrators and our students' parents know that their school library plays a vital role in every child's education. We will continue to do everything we can to support you — but it begins with you. This report began with a quote, so it's only fitting to end with another...

“ I think we're going to start to see a new model of civic advocacy where people get together once in a while to protest, but it's more about an ongoing, sustained engagement in issues, networks and communities about which people care.

— Alex Steffen

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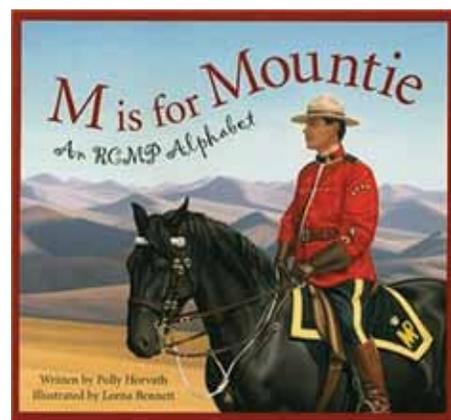
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Book Buzz

For the first time in several columns, I am relieved not to have to explain in detail the thematic connection between the books suggested in Book Buzz and the theme of this issue. Although I won't give it any further attention, I will point out that Fyodor Dostoevsky's original classic is available for free from Project Gutenberg (www.gutenberg.org/files/2554/2554-h/2554-h.htm) and a free audio version can be downloaded from Librivox (www.librivox.org/crime-and-punishment-by-fyodor-dostoyevsky). The audio version can be streamed from Archive.org (www.archive.org/details/crime_and_punishment_0902_librivox). I hope that you will find some of the titles that follow (as well as these links to Dostoevsky's classic *Crime and Punishment*) useful to you, your teacher colleagues, and your students, as you reflect on crime and punishment in your learning commons.



M is for Mountie
by Polly Horvath
illustrated by Lorna Bennett
North Mankato, MN: Cherry Lake
Publishing, 2008
ISBN 9781585362677

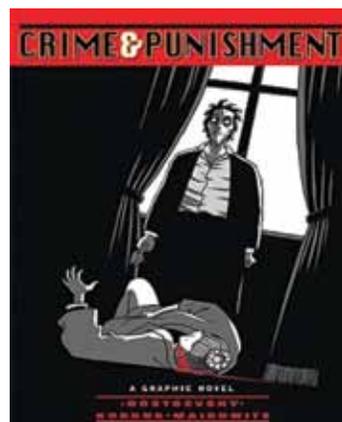
An alphabet book aimed at an audience from the age 4 and up, *M is for Mountie* is also a celebration of the history and traditions of the R.C.M.P. It discusses a variety of topics of interest ranging from obvious ones like the origins of the uniform and the training to become a member of the R.C.M.P., to more obscure ones like how the Dempster Highway got its name. This is a 32 page goldmine for young trivia buffs with an interest in Canada's national police force.



Mr. and Mrs. Bunny-Detectives Extraordinaire!

by Mrs. Bunny
 translated from Rabbit by Polly Horvath
 illustrated by: Sophie Blackall
 Toronto: Groundwood Books, 2012
 ISBN 9781554981809

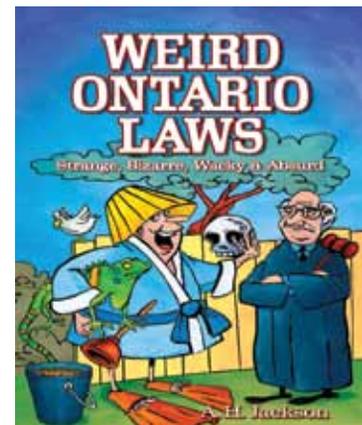
In *Mr. and Mrs. Bunny-Detectives Extraordinaire!* the crime is kidnapping; the whole story has been translated by Polly Horvath from the original Rabbit into a humorous detective tale starring a cast of creatures led by Mr. and Mrs. Bunny (who, incidentally, drive a Smart Car—which seems appropriate given the intelligence that is required of detectives). They come to the assistance of Madeline whose parents, if Madeline can believe her eyes, have been driven off in a car with a fox at the steering wheel. The story that follows is an entertaining read for middle year students who are ready to tackle the mystery of chapter books.



Crime & Punishment

by Fyodor Dostoevsky
 translated and adapted by David Zane Mairowitz
 illustrations by Alain Korkos
 London: SelfMadeHero, 2008
 ISBN 9781411415942

Alain Korkos has collaborated with David Zane Mairowitz to retell Dostoevsky's 1866 novel *Crime & Punishment* in the form of a graphic novel set in contemporary Russia. The parallels between the social polarization in nineteenth century Russia and in modern St. Petersburg are starkly drawn in the black and white art work. This violent and explicit story invites mature readers to reflect on the power of the individual conscience in driving behaviour; it may help to introduce reluctant high school readers to the classics while engaging them in thinking about fundamental philosophical questions raised by literature. This book is not definitive but the discussions might include why we should spend time discussing this classification system in an age of on-line catalogues, databases and, of course, the Internet.



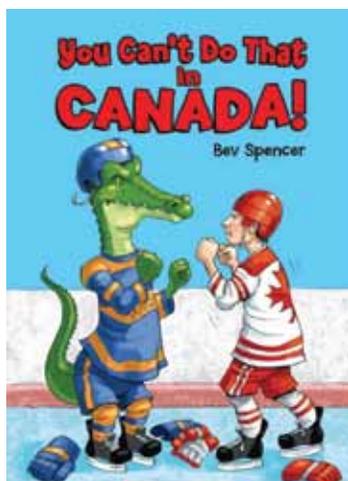
**Weird Ontario Laws
 Strange, Bizarre, Wacky & Absurd**

by Allan Jackson
 Edmonton: Blue Bike Books, 2011
 ISBN 9781926700038

This is a book in the tradition of Paul Soles 1970's CBC's television series, *This is the Law*, in which the frequent absurdity of the law is revealed. Classified as humour and trivia, this book has 232 pages and explores a wide range of strange laws that were, at some point, in force in Ontario. Did you know that the theft of a soldier's socks was once punishable by death and that it was once illegal to ring a bell in Sudbury for any reason other than to announce a church service? Many Ontario communities from London to Kenora are highlighted in this book. If your patrons are drawn to the weird facts in this volume, the publisher has eighteen other titles in its list of "weird" titles including *Weird Facts About Toronto*, *Weird Ontario Places* and *Weird Ontario Weather*.

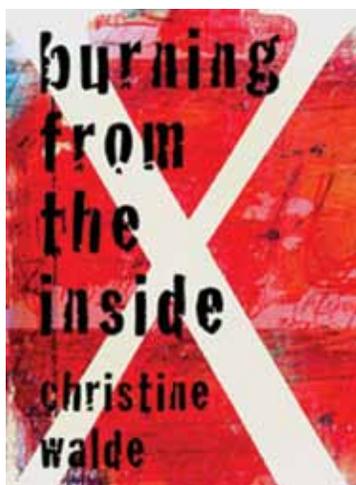
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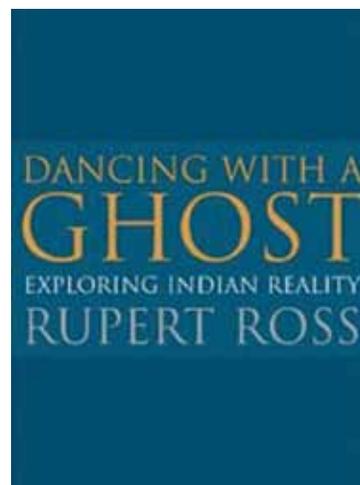
You Can't Do That in Canada
by Bev Spencer
Toronto: Scholastic Canada, 2000
ISBN 9781443102520

The entertaining assortment of 200 laws included in this 128 page book will provide an engaging read for students looking for short texts that could provoke long conversations about subjects such as why the height of snowmen on corner lots in Souris, P.E.I. used to be limited to thirty inches. Line art comic illustrations accompanying many of the laws add to the humour. Recommended by the publisher for ages 8-11, this has the potential to produce furrowed brows and smiling faces (if not outright laughter) in much a wider age group.



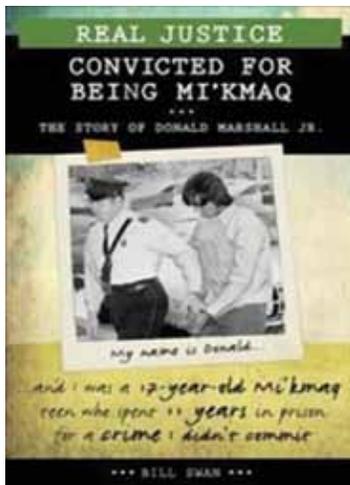
Burning from the Inside
by Christine Walde
Toronto: Dancing Cat Books, 2013
Ages 12+
ISBN 9781770862463

On the surface, Christine Walde's novel is about a teenage graffiti artist who is coerced into using his talent as a "writer" to infiltrate G7, a group of talented activist-artists who have been targeted by a police official. It is only as this allusive novel unfolds that the reader realizes that the real criminals are not juveniles pursued by the police, but the people who lose touch with the elements of life that have the greatest value. People who sacrifice the things that give meaning to life find themselves imprisoned, even if they are not in jail. This mystery will engage the reader with its intrigue, but it also raises questions that provoke thought after all the questions about the plot have been resolved.



Dancing with a Ghost: Exploring Indian Reality
by Rupert Ross
Toronto: Penguin Canada, 2006
ISBN 9780143054269

This book was first published in 1992 when, after working as an assistant crown attorney in Cree and Ojibway communities in Kenora District, Rupert Ross shared his observations about cross-cultural misunderstandings and the justice system. After a three year secondment with Justice Canada, Ross published a sequel, *Returning to the Teachings* (ISBN 9780143055594), which reports on what he discovered about First Nations Justice and "peacemaker justice" while visiting First Nations communities from Nova Scotia to the Yukon. These books will be of interest to older students doing research on First Nations cultures and issues surrounding First Nations and Canadian legal systems. It will also be of interest to teachers who are interested in exploring what may be new perspectives on discipline and learning.

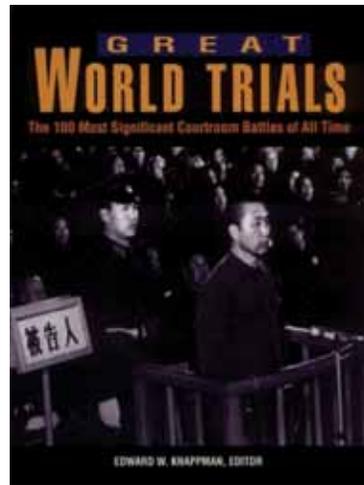


Real Justice: Convicted for Being Mi'kmaq: The story of Donald Marshall Jr.

by Bill Swan

Toronto: James Lorimer & Company, 2013
ISBN 9781459404397

The most recent addition to Lorimer's Real Justice Series documents one of the most notorious examples of the conflicts between First Nations and the Canadian justice system. Bill Swan's *Real Justice: Convicted for Being Mi'kmaq: The story of Donald Marshall Jr.* provides an accessible account of everything from a Mi'kmaq teenager's wrongful arrest and conviction for murder to his vindication and subsequent courtroom challenges to attempts to limit the fishing rights of First Nations. In addition to telling the story of the life of Donald Marshall Jr., the book outlines the significance of the case that forced a Royal Commission to acknowledge the systemic racism in the legal system.



Great World Trials: The 100 Most Significant Courtroom Battles of All Time

by Edward W. Knappman, Editor

Detroit: Visible Ink Press, 1997.
ISBN 1578590019

Although dated by library standards, this book remains a useful reference, especially considering it begins its coverage of crime (real or alleged) and punishment with the trial of Alcibiades for blasphemy in Athens in 415 B.C. The description of the collections as "World Trials" is thoroughly justified with accounts of cases ranging from the trial of Jean-Bédél Bokassa in the Central African Republic, to the trials of Tsuyoshi Inuki's assassins in Japan, and from the trial of Ned Kelly in Australia to that of Isabel Peron in Argentina. There is also Canadian content with accounts of significant cases such as those of David Milgaard and Sue Rodriguez. Each trial is covered in four pages that provide a point form summary of the facts of the trial followed by a narrative that provides background information and reports on the trial and its aftermath. There are also suggestions for further reading. ■

Meet the Author/Illustrator Kevin Sylvester

Kevin Sylvester is an award-winning author, illustrator and CBC Radio broadcaster. Amongst his awards for fiction and non-fiction, his book *Neil Flambé and the Marco Polo Murders* won the Silver Birch award for Fiction in 2011; *Neil Flambé and the Aztec Abduction* was runner up for the award in 2012 and *Neil Flambé and the Crusader's Curse* was nominated in 2013 for the same prize; *Neil Flambé and the Tokyo Treasure* has been nominated for the Canadian Children's Book Centre John Spray Mystery Award.



Photo: Courtesy of Kevin Sylvester

Kevin Sylvester draws Neil Flambé during one of his school visits.

TingL: Who are your ideal readers?

I love writing for the middle grades. They're incredibly passionate about the books they like (and don't). Both boys and girls are still engaged with all sorts of subject matter at this age as well. This is one of the reasons I love the Forest of Reading program so much.

Just seeing all those kids holding their favourite books in the air, screaming for their favourite authors ... it's just amazing.

They are also very willing to voice any criticism they have of your characters, plot, and setting. So there's no taking it easy for this age group. I find this is one of the things snobs get wrong about kids' books ... these readers are way more ruthless than adults.

You've mentioned in the past that you hope that your readers "begin to consider questions" when they read your books. Can you tell us about that?

I think all books are about something, and my books deal with all sorts of questions. Neil Flambé is a chef, so those books deal with questions about food. What is good food? Should we eat garbage or fuel our bodies with quality ingredients?

But there are bigger issues in the books as well. Neil is never taken seriously by adults. Is that fair?

Neil is great at what he does, but he's not exactly a sweetie-pie. Is greatness something that comes from outside or from inside?

Also, the Neil books deal with real questions from history. Marco Polo (book 1) visited China, then came back and told everyone how advanced that culture was. He didn't suggest they

Evelynne Bernstein

attack, but did suggest they visit. Nice. On the other hand, the Spanish discovered an incredible Aztec civilization in Mexico (book 2), then stole all their gold and wiped them out in just a few years.

Is that right? Is history full of successes or sorrows? Both?

Why is it important to you to inject humour into your books?

I hate earnest books. They are boring. People joke even in their darkest moments, so why should books that deal with big issues not have moments of humour in them? It seems dishonest. Plus, I just like to laugh. I use a lot of puns, but also love the “snarky” type of interaction that occurs between good friends. My friends and I all slam each other at every opportunity, because it’s funny. Larry and Neil do this all through the books.

You have visited a number of schools. What do you find most rewarding when you meet the youngsters who are reading your books?

I think my favourite moments are when the teachers come up to me and tell me that my books are popular with the more ‘tentative’ readers in their classes.

I remember one student, years ago, who had trouble reading, but loved my book so much that he’d read it over and over (this was one of my Weird sports books). He even drew me a cartoon based on his favourite stories from the book.

I mean, for someone who believes that reading is a pathway to the larger world,

that was a true WOW moment for me. It’s one of the reasons I always include pictures in my books. Some readers need that (I also think pictures add to the enjoyment of any book. I mean, Dickens was illustrated, for crying out loud!)

I’m also moved when they have questions that arise from the books. What do I like to cook? How much money does an author make? Did Marco Polo really visit all those places?

And I always include a “cartooning class”, and then the kids show me pictures they’ve drawn. There are some amazing artists out there, and I always tell them the most important thing is to keep working hard.

Have you had any surprises from young audiences?

I was visiting a school back in April, and they all came out with homemade chefs hats that they had decorated with Neil Flambé themed pictures.

That was pretty amazing. They had clearly read, and enjoyed, the books and I was totally taken aback.

I also visited a group of students who ‘won’ me in a contest. They made Neil-inspired food – everything from chai to churros – and served me an amazing lunch. I felt like I was the one who ‘won’ that day!

When did you recognize you had a unique talent for illustration and writing? How did it evolve?

Has an author ever admitted that they have a ‘unique talent’?! I’m still waiting

to see if I can hit that target. I have drawn and told stories all my life, and am not 100% sure when I started wanting to write them down. I know I wanted to be a comic book artist when I was younger. I was also a huge fan of Peanuts, and tried to draw comic strips all the time.

Ninety-nine percent of my work was garbage, but there was always something there that kept me going – a well-drawn curve on a face, or an expression that actually looked right – and I never stopped trying to get better.

I hope the stuff I draw ten years from now will be better than the work I’m doing now. So at the heart of my answer is that talent is a small part of ‘success’. Hard work is the biggest part, and it helps that talent become something other people can enjoy (I hope).

Can you tell us a bit about your creative process? What comes first – the illustration or the story?

I tend to work on both at the same time. I “see” things happening when I’m writing, or even just thinking about a story, or a conversation inside a story.

And I will often hit a point in that story where the visual will explain what’s happening better than five paragraphs of text. So I will take a break from the keyboard and will start drawing that scene.

I usually end up with a combination of manuscript, finished drawings and numerous sketches by the end of this process.

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You have a colourful and informative website, a blog, and you are a regular “tweeter”! How important is it to stay abreast of current social technology?

I have to admit to having a love-hate relationship with these technologies. I love seeing what my fellow authors and illustrators are doing. I'm Facebook friends with many of them and it's a great, tight and supportive community we have here in Canada. So I love keeping in touch with them.

I also constantly check the sites for my favourite authors and illustrators to see what they are doing, so I know what fans want to see as well. So many readers, and they are getting online at younger and younger ages, use technology to engage with their favourite books.

So, just for PR reasons, you need to be out there in the online world just to be noticed. They will also contact you directly with questions, comments. They are online, so you need to be.

I do also like podcasts, and wish there were more kid-friendly ones. I'm trying to get more involved in that. Michael Hlinka and I did a book on money for Annick Press. Some of the concepts are pretty tricky, so we've now done a series of podcasts (on the Annick website) to go over those concepts.

The downside is that there's so much stuff out there! You can get lost for hours and hours, and authors are notorious for wasting time when they should be working.

So I often need to disconnect.

What advice would you share with young writers?

Write. Read. Finish your story, even if you are unhappy with it in the end. So what? Sydney Crosby doesn't just show up for hockey games and expect to score. He practices ten times as much as he plays.

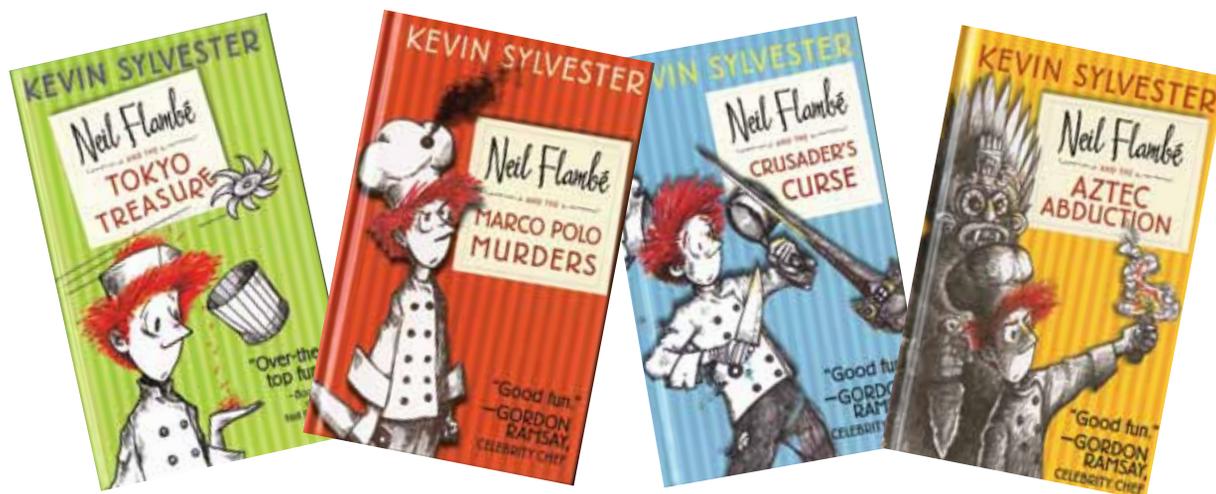
What advice would you share with young artists?

Draw. Constantly look at what other people are doing. There are amazing artists out there and almost all of them are on-line somewhere. Watch their videos.

Steal their techniques but make the style your own. Of course, that only happens when you draw a lot. Your hand will start moving according to your internal rhythms after a while, and your pictures will look like your pictures.

Also, learn how to draw and edit digitally. This is the future. You can still draw most of your work freehand, but almost everyone is submitting their artwork over the internet these days ... so you better be a master of that as well.

Congratulations on being nominated for the 2014 Forest of Reading® Silver Birch® Award for *Neil Flambe And The Tokyo Treasure*. Good luck! 🍀



Professional Resources

Rob Baxter

David and Goliath: Underdogs, Misfits, and the Art of Battling Giants

Malcolm Gladwell, 2013

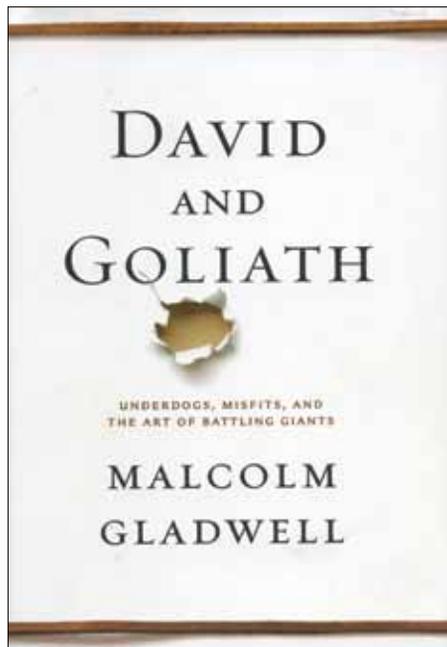
ISBN 978-0-316-20436-1

Not to be missed by all educators at the primary and secondary levels, parents, students, and anyone else who needs “re-educating.”

Born in England, educated in Elmira, Ontario, Malcolm Gladwell turns our notions about education, success, advantages and disadvantages upside down in this brilliant book, proving once again that perception does not always reflect reality. Disadvantage can apparently be turned to great advantage.

In illustrating his point of view, Gladwell challenges our preconceived ideas. Do schools in wealthy areas provide students with “life lessons” that can be learned in poorer areas? Does academic achievement really improve when class sizes are smaller? According to Gladwell, no, and he supports his conclusions with solid research drawn from a variety of countries including Canada, as well as examples and graphs with “inverted-U” curves.

To the uninitiated into this kind of data, including this column’s author, Gladwell explains, “There’s the left side [of the graph], where doing more or having more makes things better. There’s the flat middle, where doing more doesn’t make much of a difference. And there’s the right side, where doing more or having more makes things worse.” However, Gladwell clarifies that, “For special-needs students, the inverted-U



curve is shifted far to the right.” More students can mean more variety, leading to better classroom dynamics and discussions, whereas in smaller classes, discussions can suffer from passivity and a lack of difference among students’ opinions. Gladwell then raises a good question: “It is a strange thing, isn’t it, to have an educational philosophy that thinks of the other students in the classroom with your child as competitors for the attention of the teacher and not allies in the adventure of learning?”

There is so much to this book. It really is a must-read for everyone concerned about learning and education.

Currently a staff writer at *The New Yorker*, former *Washington Post* reporter, author of five books with four on *The New York*

Times bestseller list, inducted to the Order of Canada in 2011, Malcolm Gladwell graduated from the University of Toronto’s Trinity College in 1984 with a degree in history.

What Every Parent Should Know About School

Michael Reist, 2013

ISBN 978-1-4597-1904-0 (pbk.); 978-1-4597-1906-4 (epub)

In addition to parents, these ideas are essential for all primary and secondary educators, including superintendents, trustees, those seeking a principalship or in the process of acquiring such qualifications.

Drawing on his 30+ years of various positions in the education system, Michael Reist presents compelling evidence that we need to change the way we operate and think about teaching, as well as some solutions to the system’s problems. As he states from the outset, “*This book is dedicated to every child who hates going to school. (We’re working on it.)*”

He also recommends to the more scattered among us, “Open the book wherever you like, and start reading. (...) we also learn by random chance and thinking by association, spiralling back to the same ideas again and again. Randomness and repetition are keys to learning.”

The book’s 14 chapters deal with a wide variety of topics including the *Physical, Emotional and Social School Environments*, *Mental Health in Our Schools*, *The Truth About Bullying*, and *Brave New World*:

continued on page 18

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Visions of the Future. To make some of his points, Reist draws on Canadian literature, including *Agaguk* (Yves Thériault), where the hero, an Inuit hunter, has no choice but to deal with the Hudson's Bay Company monopoly to sell his furs. He is short changed, and given half their value. The present public school system, according to Reist, is also a monopoly where students have no alternative to what's offered, unless their parents opt for the more expensive private system.

Says Reist, "Alternative education programs are currently offered by only some school boards and only cater to a small clientele of 'at risk' students. These programs need to expand and morph into a complex array of choices that will eventually replace the core prescribed curriculum."

For Reist, bullying is "the use of fear or intimidation to gain power and

control." Bullies have grown up with little power or control over their lives, so the best antidote to their behaviour is to help them succeed. "Success is synonymous with personal power and a feeling of control over oneself and one's environment (...) achieved through freedom of choice."

In his final chapter, *Brave New World: Visions of the Future*, Reist raises that precise question: "...when does a child have the right to choose? When is a child free?" The author doubts that schools will change from within, but believes that when adults give up their need for control, children will be truly free.

Interviewed many times in print, on radio and TV, with over 30 years of classroom experience, 20 of which he spent as the Head of English at Robert F. Hall Catholic Secondary School in Caledon East, Mr. Reist is the author of *Raising Boys in a New Kind of World*, Canadian bestseller, and *The Dysfunctional School: Uncomfortable Truths and Awkward Insights on School, Learning and Teaching*. For clips of his talks, try "Michael Reist YouTube."

For a virtual visit or to contact him:
www.michaelreist.ca

Is Work Killing You? A Doctor's Prescription for Treating Workplace Stress

David Posen, MD, 2013
ISBN 978-1-77089-275-0

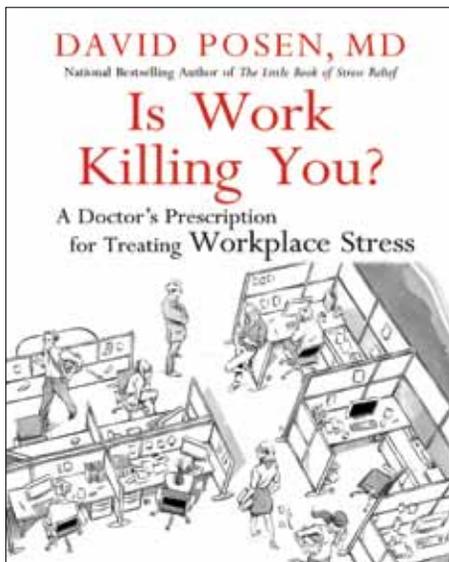
A must for all educators and school staff at the primary and secondary levels, parents, students, Family Studies, Co-op or internship students.

This is a page-turner with so many gems relevant to today's school environment and elsewhere: stress caused by meetings, entitled students, defensive parents, all compounded by cutbacks everywhere. And sometimes, it's the very people we work with who cause the most trouble. Result: disengagement, along with lower productivity and output seen in both the public and private sectors.

According to Dr. Posen, "the three biggest problems that lead to stress" are "(1) Volume, (2) Velocity (3) Abuse," and this is exactly how he has structured his book. *Section 1, Volume: The Factors that Contribute to Overload and What Can Be Done About It*, deals with topics such as "Too Few Hands to Share the Load," "The Slippery Slope to Burnout," "Fake Work and Spinning Wheels; Prioritizing and Letting Stuff Go."

Section 2, Velocity: How to Navigate the World of Work When the Pace is Faster than Ever includes "The Myth of Multi-tasking (yes!); Single-tasking and Focus;" "Overuse and Misuse of Technology and How to Tame It;" "Meetings; The Need for a New Meetings Manifesto."

Section 3, Abuse: What To Do When the People You Work With Are Your Biggest Source of Stress addresses issues such as "Identifying and Dealing with Problem People" and "The Keys to Employee Engagement and Stress Reduction." Dr. Posen talks about prevention in the conclusion, with "Pay



Now or Pay Later: Prevention Is the Best (and Cheapest Cure);” “What Managers and Leaders Can Do,” with 15 examples of exemplary leaders.

Says Posen, “Another realm where worker stress affects consumers is in the field of education. Classroom teachers are overwhelmed, not only by the number of students in their classes, but also by the multitude of aptitude levels, learning styles, different languages, and behaviour problems.”

Dr. Posen goes even further: “Students badmouth teachers, tell them to kiss off (though not in those words), defy them, argue with them, intimidate them, even threaten them — and all without fear of consequence. The lack of support for harassed teachers by their own administrators is unconscionable. I’m not suggesting that this is the norm, but the fact that it’s happening at all shocks me.”

The appendices include reminders for all of us: *Ways to Work Smart and Fresh*, *Principles of Delegating*, *Dealing with Deadlines* and perhaps the best of all, *Learning to Say No*.

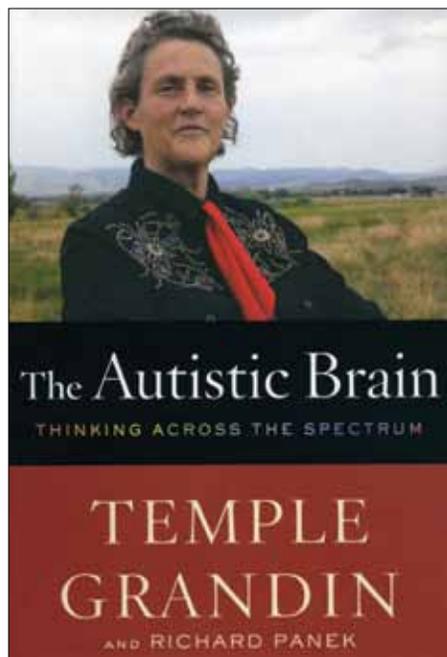
Leading expert on stress management, physician, professional speaker and trainer, David Posen MD, is also the author of *The Little Book of Stress Relief*, *Staying Afloat When the Water Gets Rough*, and *Always Change a Losing Game*. He also writes for *Canadian Living*, *Reader’s Digest*, *Men’s Health*, and *USA Weekend*. For more resources and stress-reduction tips: www.davidposen.com.

The Autistic Brain: Thinking Across the Spectrum

Temple Grandin & Richard Panek, 2013
ISBN 978-0-547-63654-0

Essential for special education and autism teachers, teacher-assistants, family studies, all primary or secondary teaching staff, parents of students with autism.

We seem to be entrenched in a system that loves acronyms, branding and labels. A student is stamped with MID (Mildly Intellectually Delayed), or Special Education, or Gifted and, once stamped by “label-locked thinkers,” is hardly ever allowed to stray from those boundaries. This book is so refreshing from the outset, where Dr. Grandin sets her limits without limits: “I warn parents, teachers, and therapists to avoid getting locked into labels. (...) I beg you: Do not allow a



child or an adult to become defined by a DSM [*Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders*] label.”

Divided into just two parts (*The Autistic Brain and Rethinking the Autistic Brain*), the book covers topics such as *The Meanings of Autism*, *Sequencing the Autistic Brain*, *Looking Past the Labels* and *From the Margins to the Mainstream*. The Autism-Spectrum Quotient, developed in 2001 by Cambridge, England, psychologist Simon Baron-Cohen and colleagues to measure autistic characteristics in adults, is included in the appendix.

Dr. Grandin cautions using this type of test as an absolute diagnosis for autism, however, since it can lead to a defeatist attitude of what people are not capable of, instead of what they can do to improve. On the other hand, she claims that a label is needed for the sake of educational benefits, insurance reimbursements and social programs, for example, but is critical of the American Psychiatric Association’s fifth edition of the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* (DSM-5), since those formerly labelled Asperger’s are to be categorized as autistics. This might lead to detrimental changes in insurance coverage and social services, among other things.

Author of several best-selling books, Dr. Temple Grandin, Ph.D., is herself autistic, and is a professor of animal science at Colorado State University. For more information, including “Teaching techniques that work,” see www.templegrandin.com. ■

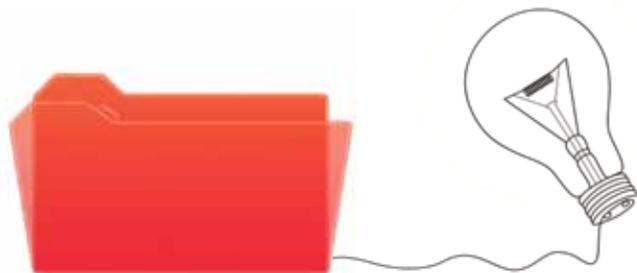
Crime and Punishment @ Your Library

It was Miss Scarlett ... with the lead pipe ... in the library!

Okay, so our school libraries are not always the scenes of such violent or severe crimes, but theft and littering do occur and can drive even the calmest school library staff member crazy. Therefore, our question for this edition of Idea File is: “What consequences do you suggest for staff and students who misuse the library (for example lose books, fail to return materials on time, or leave a mess)?”

We received many suggestions, some tongue-in-cheek, some serious. Enjoy all the options for dealing with these common library “crimes”!

*Introduction by Diana Maliszewski,
question provided by Lisa Hascal*



I think libraries should have an acknowledgement board. Staff and students should have to write a letter recognizing/acknowledging how their thoughtless actions can depreciate the learning experience for others.

Karen Whiteman
Head of Library/Business
Eastdale C.V.I.
Durham District School Board

We prefer not to use money as a system of consequence. When possible, we have the students give their time by tidying up the library, taping books, shelving and displays. The consequence fits the crime more effectively when their time, not their dime, pays for the crime.

Amy Willemsen
Teacher Librarian
David Suzuki Secondary School
Peel District School Board

We have them work for us for the amount of book that was not returned. Was the book worth twenty dollars? They must work for free for us - for two hours. If they worked for us, we would pay them ten bucks an hour.

Sherry Lawson
Administrator of Heritage Services, Culture
Chippewas of Rama First Nation

How do you use your school library space to encourage a “sense of wonder” amongst the students?

Send your ideas and best practices to TingLeditor@gmail.com or tweet your response to [#TingLideas](https://twitter.com/TingLideas) and your name may appear in the magazine! Try to send your thoughts by the end of April.

Not that we would be permitted to.... but I would suggest public humiliation by posting WANTED posters with their picture and crime. My school walls would be full of them, unless I used thumbnail photos.

Sheila Cornelisse
Learning Commons Informationist
North Grenville District High School
Merrickville Public School
Oxford-on-Rideau Public School
Upper Canada District School Board

We tried a fine-free year, which was not overly successful. I feel that students need to take responsibility for ignoring their due dates, but it is not about the money for me. I decided to broaden the payment possibilities. I accept canned food as well as the 3 litre milk bags, which are used to make mats for Africa. Initially, I accepted the milk bags during an “Agents for Change” school-wide initiative, but I decided to continue the practice. The kids love the idea. They are reluctant to give up 15 cents for fines, but are okay with milk bags or canned food. I do not set a value per milk bag. Some kids bring in tons, while others bring in one or two. I think it is important for kids to apologize or at least recognize that having overdue books is an inconvenience for other students, as well as for library staff. I emphasize that all books can be renewed and that I am a lending library, not a book store.

Rose Marie Davis
Head of Library
Cameron Heights Collegiate Institute
Waterloo Region District School Board

This is a tough one. Part of me is always troubled when the library is left messy after a class has been through, but another part is delighted that students were so enthusiastic about looking through the materials the library provides. I feel the same about lost books, and overdue books. I am thrilled when a student is so engaged in a book that they forget to return it on time. I do offer some gentle reminders, and that is often enough to get the book back so others can enjoy it, too.

However, there are those situations when a student is just plain lazy and can't be bothered to return, or even look for the books that they have borrowed. In that case, after the gentle reminders, I send a note home to be signed by the student's parents. That note explains how long the book has been overdue, and suggests a cost for replacing the book should its location not be able to be determined. Most parents in our community understand the importance of the library and make every effort to get their child to find the book and get it back onto the shelves.

Randy Gould
Sir Alexander Mackenzie Sr. P.S.
Toronto District School Board

For students with lost books: If the book is truly lost, we work out a value, based on the age of the book, its condition, etc. Students then have 3 options: 1) Pay for the book. 2) Replace the book. 3) Work it off by dusting, tidying shelves, cleaning up the library, stapling fliers, etc. I base the 'payment' rate on a minimum wage of

\$9.00 (They're not 16, yet), which works out to \$2.25 for a 15 minute recess. I keep a document on my computer and record 15 minute blocks. When the book cost has been paid, I then delete the lost record and call it paid. I usually have them work one more recess than necessary, to account for the lost minutes at the beginning and end. For example, a \$10.00 book would equal 6 recesses, or \$13.50 worth of labour, just to allow for travel time to and from class and time spent receiving instructions.

For a mess, I usually contact the class teacher (for some reason it's always the 7/8's) and he sends me some students to clean things up.

Karen Jostiak
Waterfront Public School
Toronto District School Board

RT @CardinalLegerSS: Library Overdues/fines? Sept 30-Oct 11 the Léger Library will waive \$1 off your fine for every non-perishable food item (Tweet from the school Twitter account)

Helena Mesich
Cardinal Leger Secondary School
Dufferin-Peel Catholic DSB

Many students in our school often lose a book. Our policy is that if you lose a book, you have to pay for the book. Children are not allowed to take out another book until that book has been paid for. The same policy applies for books that the children damage. If they find the book, they get their money back. In our school, the library is open every day at recess and this is

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the common time that the library is left a mess. What we have done is that the children are not allowed to leave until they have tucked in all of the chairs as well as picked up their mess. We are able to do this because the children can only leave through one door, so before they leave, they have to clean up.

These two things have worked in our library and the children are very respectful of this place. Our school library does not have many problems with the overdue books or misuse of the library as the children are very good at paying for their books if they lose them.

Alifa Somani
Wilclay Public School
York Region District School Board

I block their user accounts so they can't log into the school network, then when they come to me to get it unblocked, I have the opportunity to discuss the situation. We find a mutually agreeable method for them to make amends, usually shelving or other tidy-up work.

Lauren Flattery
Teacher-Librarian
Cadarackque Public School
Durham District School Board

It may really be off base on this but after 10 years in the library and having to deal with messes regularly I tried something new!

I decided I would ask my students during their orientation if they had ever been camping. I then asked them if they knew what the unspoken rule of the campsite was. I suggested that my belief was that the

unspoken rule of camping was that you leave the site looking better than when you came...pick up all the garbage, clean out the fire pit, fill in the tent peg holes, leave a bit of firewood. I explained further that the site was shared just like the library and that in a communal sharing of a single space we needed to be sure the space was always ready for the next users. I said I would appreciate and I was sure they would appreciate it too if others would leave the library ready for the next users. So far so good!

Leslie Holwerda
Peel District School Board

I work in a secondary school library & have taken several different approaches to the consequence question. I no longer charge overdue fines (I find at least I get the book back eventually, if I don't) I used to charge 10 cents a day for overdue books, with a 1 day of grace, built in. Twice a year, I gave the students the opportunity to "pay" for their fines by bringing in one item for community care per dollar of fines they owed. They were also allowed to pay in cash too, of course! Over the years, I found that students were afraid of returning the books overdue because of the fines they had to pay, so I got rid of the fines and I find more books are coming back than before. I'm just glad to get the books back! Of course, if they don't ever come back, the student is charged the cost of the book. I tell them when they check the books out that if they don't return them ever, they'll have to pay the price of the book (on the back) to replace it.

I do let students eat their lunch at the tables in the library and they're pretty good at not leaving a mess. Five minutes before the bell rings at the end of lunch, I

make an announcement, reminding them to clean up after themselves before they leave. I've only had to threaten them twice with not letting them eat in the library anymore if they continue to make a mess. As for staff, I did have one staff member who borrowed a book from the library and never returned it. After much nagging, I was able to get the money for the book, but now I can't find it again, in order to order it!

Margie Vaillancourt
Library Technician
Beamsville District Secondary School
District School Board of Niagara

Hang 'em high!

Gary W. Wright
Streetsville Secondary School
Peel District School Board

At Garth Webb Secondary School, we embedded restorative practices into all relationships in the school. In the library, guidelines are agreed upon by a panel of representative students and staff which has resulted in infractions not being as frequent. When something does happen, such as food all over the place in the library, myself or our Library Technician sit down with the student or students and talk about the consequences of the choice they made, and together come up with a solution for how to remedy the situation. For fines and overdue books, we follow a similar process, and that face-to-face meeting has caused us to have next to no outstanding materials at semester end.

Sandra Rogers
Garth Webb Secondary School
Halton District School Board

Julie Millan

Digital Citizenship

I could not believe it when, in January of 2011, Treasury Board President Tony Clements insulted a Parry Sound teenager through Twitter.¹ I might expect this of kids, but of a grown man? A politician? Shouldn't he have known better? And what about Anthony Weiner's sexting scandal? It's easy to shake our heads at what we might consider someone's stupidity, but then crushing stories such as the suicides of Amanda Todd and Rehtaeh Parsons² over cyberbullying bring the potential implications of online behaviour to a crashing reality.

As our schools and libraries use more and more technology and access the internet on a regular basis, it is essential that we teach our students how to behave online and how to protect themselves and their privacy. The following sites are just a few that educators can reference and use as they begin to consider how to incorporate the various elements of Digital Citizenship into their lessons and the curriculum.



designed to empower students to think critically, behave safely, and participate responsibly in the digital world.

Their interactive Scope & Sequence is a fantastic resource that helps educators find lessons and tools that are appropriate for different grades. You can search the lessons by grade band or by category.

Common Sense Media

www.commonsensemedia.org/educators/curriculum

Common Sense Media provides educators with a wealth of resources that include educational videos, lesson plans, classroom posters, and curriculum toolkits. Their digital literacy & citizenship curriculum is

Other areas of the site include Professional Development, Educating Families, Videos and Lesson Toolkits.

MediaSmarts

www.mediasmarts.ca

MediaSmarts is a Canadian not-for-profit charitable organization for digital and media literacy. Their vision is that all



children and youth have the critical thinking skills to engage with media as active and informed digital citizens. This site is jam-packed with amazing resources including lessons, games, videos, and activities. The Teacher Resources section is a great place to start as it includes resources such as tip sheets, games, and lesson kits.

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¹ "Tony Clement apologizes for slamming teen on Twitter - Politics ..." 2013. 14 Oct. 2013 <<http://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/tony-clement-apologizes-for-slamming-teen-on-twitter-1.1295939/>>

² "A year since, the case of Amanda Todd still holds lessons." 2013. 14 Oct. 2013 <http://www.thestar.com/opinion/commentary/2013/10/10/a_year_since_the_case_of_amanda_todd_still_holds_lessons.html>

³ "Calgary Board of Education - Learning Innovation." 2012. 23 Sep. 2013 <<http://www.cbe.ab.ca/learninginnovation/digitalsafety-digitalcitizenship.asp>>

⁴ "Nine Elements - Digital Citizenship." 2008. 23 Sep. 2013 <http://digitalcitizenship.net/Nine_Elements.html>

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Be sure to visit the Research & Policy section also where you can read recent studies such as Young Canadians in a Wired World – Phase III Teachers’ Perspectives, and Young Canadians in a Wired World, Phase III: Talking to Youth and Parents about Life Online

In addition to the interactive games, the e-Tutorials are also worth a visit. The e-Parenting Tutorial: Keeping up with your kids’ online activities is excellent and goes through topics such as Online Research & Homework, Online Relationships, and Too Much Time Online.

Digital Passport™

www.digitalpassport.org/educator/materials

Digital Passport™ is a free online suite of videos, games, and collaborative classroom activities from Common Sense Media. It is intended for students in grades 3-5 and is designed to address key issues facing students in today’s digital world. Each module comes with an easy-to-follow educator’s guide. Students earn badges as they work towards earning a

Digital Passport and an assessment tool is built into the site for teachers to access and reference.

A fantastic site to use with students.

Digital Citizenship Program

<http://dcp.lbpsb.qc.ca>

The Lester B. Pearson School Board in Quebec has designed a Digital Citizenship Curriculum for students from K-12. The program is broken into 4 categories - Communication, Awareness, Safety & Health, and Information Literacy. A useful parent section is also included.

The curriculum map breaks the categories down into 12 topics that include topics such as sending emails, texting, cyberbullying, copyright, buying & selling good online. The curriculum map is available in both English and French.

The Teacher Resource section provides lessons under various curriculum areas that are intended to compliment what teachers are already teaching in their

classrooms. Resources include lessons, unit plans, and activities.

Digital Citizenship: Using Technology Appropriately

www.digitalcitizenship.net

What is Digital Citizenship? Digital Citizenship is having the knowledge, skills and attitudes needed to demonstrate responsible and respectful behaviour when using technology or participating in digital environments. Digital citizenship goes beyond e-mail etiquette and avoiding plagiarism to encompass all elements of digital engagement, including how to find and evaluate information, respecting copyright, protecting private information, staying safe online, and knowing how to deal with potential cyber-bullying.³

In his research, Mike Ribble identifies nine Elements of Digital Citizenship.⁴ Digital Citizenship encompasses many different themes including Digital Access, Digital Communication, Digital Commerce, Digital Literacy, Digital Law, Digital Rights & Responsibilities, Digital



Health & Wellness, Digital Security and Digital Etiquette.

This is the first site you need to visit as it provides a brief overview of Ribble’s 9 Elements, links to research, articles and lots of additional resources.



NetSmartz

www.netsmartz.org

EducatorsNetSmartz Workshop is an interactive, educational program of the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children® that provides resources to help teach children how to be safer on- and offline. The program is designed for children ages 5-17, parents and guardians, educators, and law enforcement.

This site focuses in particular on Digital Security as the site’s goals include educating children on how to recognize potential Internet risks and empowering children to help prevent themselves from being exploited and to report victimization to a trusted adult. Resources include videos, games, activity

cards, and presentations.



Get Cyber Safe

www.getcybersafe.gc.ca

Get Cyber Safe is a national public awareness campaign created by the Canadian Government to educate Canadians about Internet security and the simple steps they can take to protect themselves online. This site is not directed specifically at children or educators, but there are a number of useful resources that include a Cyber Safe Toolkit, posters, tip sheets, videos, and infographics.

Categories include knowing the risks of online activities, understanding how to protect yourself (such as your identity and money), and how to protect your devices.

Google Digital Literacy and Citizenship Curriculum

www.google.com/goodtoknow/web/curriculum

Google has partnered with the iKeepSafe organization (www.ikeepsafe.org)

and educators to develop lessons to use in the classroom that will help students know how to think critically and evaluate online resources, understand how to protect themselves online, and how to be good digital citizens.

These practical and useful guides are divided into three “classes” with a series of lessons in each class.

- Class 1: Become an Online Sleuth
- Class 2: Manage your Digital Footprint
- Class 3: Identify Tricks and Scams Online

Google Curriculum: Understanding YouTube & Digital Citizenship

www.google.com/edu/teachers/youtube/curric/

Google has also devised an interactive curriculum aimed to support teachers of secondary students (approximately ages 13-17) understand how to work and use YouTube.

The curriculum helps educate students on topics like:

- YouTube’s policies
- How to report content on YouTube
- How to protect their privacy online
- How to be responsible YouTube community members
- How to be responsible digital citizens

Ask Rita

Resourceful



We welcome any questions you may have for Rita Resourceful. To protect Rita's identity, please email them to tingleditor@gmail.com, with the subject Ask Rita, and we'll be sure to pass them along!

Dear Rita,

It's a crime that I have a collection of professional books and resources in our library which are very rarely used. What can I do to promote the use of these resources and professional reading?

Officer T-L

Dear Officer T-L,

I understand your dilemma. Sometimes it's difficult to get books in the hands of students, never mind your colleagues.

Have you tried book-talking relevant resources at staff meetings?

How about a book club, lunch and learn, or online discussion using the resources and organized by subject or grade level?

Introduce staff to the idea of a PLN (personal learning network), invite them to follow you on Twitter and post links to reviews or tidbits from the resources as you find them.

I wonder if a display in the staff room of selected titles with a post-it featuring something interesting you found in the book might work.

You might even try a professional e-newsletter with a column focusing on some of the resources.

Dear Rita,

My library shares a space with the computer lab ... I mean, we're basically in the same room. Students need to travel through the library in order to get to the computer lab and back out to

use the washroom or get a drink, and the noise!!!! Argh! Some days, I cannot hear what I am saying, or hear anything students are asking me, and when the computer lab class leaves early or arrives late to the lab ... it's such a disruption! I must admit, Rita, I already feel a bit better having shared with you.

*Sincerely,
Multi-use Felicity*

Dear Felicity,

I hear you and so many others like you who are sharing a library with any number of other users. I am sure that if there are no other options, you will need to adapt to this situation and, knowing the adaptability of teacher-librarians, you will do so with ease (possibly after a few post-school gripe sessions — I prefer a little Riesling myself). Be vocal about the respect all learners require in the library and don't hesitate to remind your students or the computer class of your expectations.

Dear Rita,

When a new curriculum arrives and I can't get a handle on what I need to do to provide resources for my staff, it drives me criminally insane! I have teachers trying to deal with the 2013 Social Studies Curriculum and new teaching packages as well and even I am feeling overwhelmed. Do you have any suggestions?

Past Dayzy

Dear Dayzy,

I agree Dayzy, sometimes the load our colleagues share lands directly on our

T-L shoulders. Recently I was lucky enough to hear an online webinar sponsored by the Ontario Historical Society. I understand from this webinar that the new curriculum is inquiry based and not content driven. Students are introduced to the strand and the “big idea”. After the class investigates the topic through video, readings, and/or activities, students select one aspect of the topic that interests them and, following the inquiry model, they research and then share their findings with their classmates. In this student driven learning experience, “incidental” teaching will help with gaps in knowledge so students acquire the “big ideas”.

The Historical Thinking Project www.historicalthinking.ca provides online resources including lessons for use with the new curriculum. I especially like the posters reflecting the lessons for these six historical thinking concepts:

- Establish Historical Significance (includes an activity using events from our grade 7 curriculum);
- Use Primary Source Evidence;
- Identify Continuity and Change;
- Analyze Cause and Consequence;
- Take Historical Perspectives; and
- Understand Ethical Dimensions of History.

Contact your Board of Education Social Studies department or resource teachers for additional assistance as this year of implementation progresses. ■

The Teaching Librarian is currently looking for new members to join the editorial board.

What does the commitment involve? Members of the editorial board meet twice a year at the OLA office (if you are from out of town, OLA pays for your travel expenses and accommodations). At these meetings, and/or after consultation via e-mail, the editorial board plans the upcoming issues. Board members contact potential writers for the issue and help to develop content, ideas, articles, and short features that match the chosen theme. Board members also help edit some of the submissions.

Editorial board members of *The Teaching Librarian* usually sit for a three-year period of time, decided by the individual member and/or the editor-in-chief, but this is negotiable. Members are expected to come to the majority of meetings, make an active contribution to the magazine and meet the deadlines we have on time. A more detailed list of expectations and duties is available upon request.

Interested? Send an email to TingLeditor@gmail.com expressing interest, which states:

- your name, school board, and phone/email contact information
- a few sentences suggesting why you would be a good addition to the team (this is not a resume, so please be brief and informal)

If you have any questions, please contact current members of the editorial board.

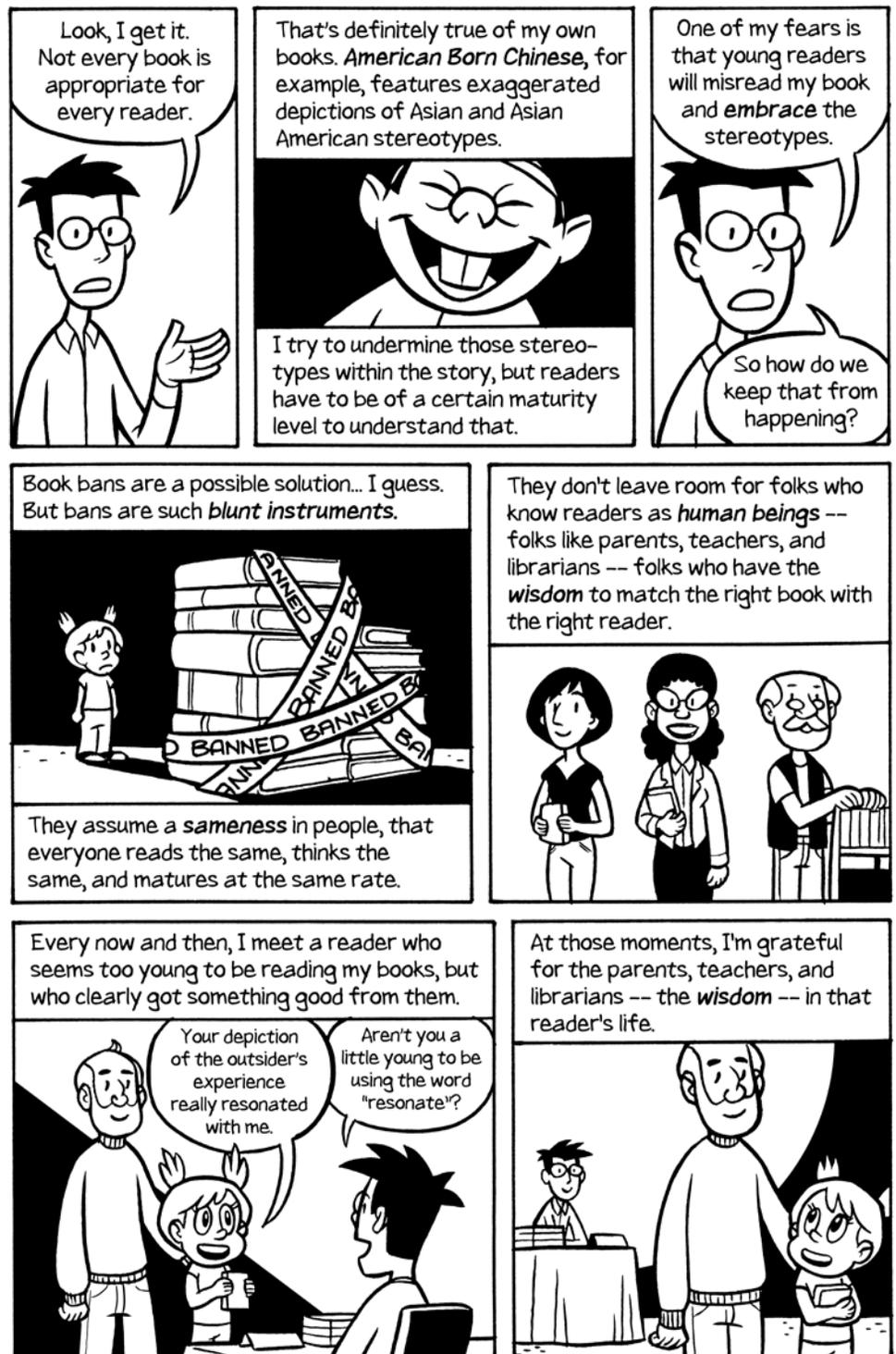
We look forward to hearing from you!

Drawn to the Form

Gene Luen Yang

Introduction by Diana Maliszewski

One of the worst “crimes” that can be perpetrated in a library is censorship. When individuals or a small group of people attempt to restrict the ability for readers to obtain materials, this is a serious cause of concern. Comics are often challenged. In the United States, September 22-28, 2013 was Banned Books Week. (In Canada, Freedom to Read Week this year is February 23 – March 1, 2014.) For the American event, Gene Luen Yang created a comic that appeared on E. Kristin Anderson’s blog addressing the issue in a thoughtful way. We would like to thank Gene Yang, his literary agent, and First Second Books for allowing us to reprint his comic in *The Teaching Librarian*. ■



Gene Luen Yang, 2013

5 Lessons Learned

BY A 29 YEAR VETERAN TEACHER-LIBRARIAN

As I retired in June 2013, after being the teacher-librarian at St Andrews Public School in Scarborough, Ontario for 29 years, I realized that I had some wisdom to share with the teacher-librarian community. I hope that my years of experience will be of use to someone else reaching for success in this field.

1. The Library is about people first and foremost

My rookie mistake was to put all of my efforts into attaining and maintaining the resources – ‘Make a well stocked library and they will come and check out resources.’ They didn’t always come, and when they came, they didn’t always check out resources. Developing relationships was the key to success.

2. Get to know your patrons

Get to the staffroom for breaks and lunch. Stop to chat in the hallway. Make a point of visiting the classrooms. Get out into the playground and initiate conversations. Don’t be stuck behind the check out desk. Get out there and ask questions. Listen to really hear what your patrons are doing, to what they want, and to what they need.

3. Find resources based on the needs of your patrons

Do not assume that you know what people want or need. Ask them! This can lead to very surprising results. Each individual has particular needs. My personal mission statement is ‘All will receive what they need to achieve.’ Years ago, I started the tradition of having each classroom fill out a Wish List before I went resource shopping. This created much excitement, thought, and anticipation. Over the years, those Wish Lists got longer and longer, and more and more sophisticated. Vendors often commented on the surprising, and excellent choices on the wish lists.

4. Collect the resources YOU really want to collect

This sounds simple, but it takes much thought and planning.

Going to a vendor resource fair has its good points in getting to know a variety of sources, but it is what it is: a selection of resources that have been chosen by the vendor, not by you.

I made a horrifying discovery at an area teacher-librarian meeting a few years back. Many of the teacher-librarians thought that they had to buy all of their resources at the Board advertised vendor fair! What a hair-raising thought!!!

The definition of frustration is trying to buy to a classroom wish list at a vendor fair from the limited vendor-selected resources presented! And what about finding resources to fill in the holes that you know you have in your collection? Next to impossible!

Getting to know the vendors, and visiting their showrooms or shops is a far superior method for purchasing resources. My vendors of choice would assign someone to help me to fill my wish lists. A good vendor will assist you with finding what you need, and will make new, interesting suggestions that will fulfill the needs of your patrons. A good vendor is like a teacher-librarian’s librarian. They will take the time to get to know you and what you need.

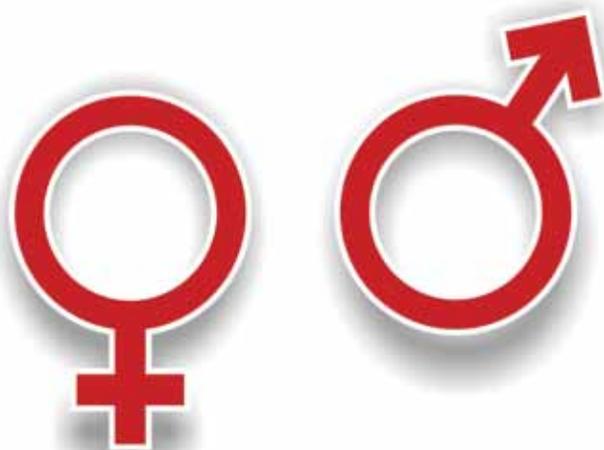
5. Get the resources into the hands of your patrons

A teacher-librarian has the power to grant wishes. When an item that someone has wished for arrives, get it into the hands of that person as soon as humanly possible. This creates trust. Your patrons know that you really care about them and what they want and need. This is very personal and extremely important. A person that trusts you is more likely to come back to you for more, and to tell others about what you have done for them. Others will want to have a similar experience. The library becomes a great place to be, and a key resource in the school. The items in the library come to represent the people in the school.

The library is, after all, about people first and foremost.

These are lessons that I learned over many years, and the statistics collected by the Toronto District School Board speak for themselves as to their effectiveness. The checkouts per student, per month in the St Andrews Public School library remained almost twice as many as the average school in the Board for many years. **!**

Kelly Jensen



The Gender-free Library

Boys can be more reluctant readers and are less likely to visit the library. Much has been written about how to best reach and serve them. There have been great strides in not only discussing the challenges, but also in presenting ideas for making the library and its resources more appealing to boys.

While reaching boys is important, girls can be a forgotten element in libraries. Not stated explicitly this comes through continued emphasis on reaching and serving one gender, rather than flexing our creative muscles to reach both boys and girls. In other words, boys are the ones to be reached through changing collection development, readers' advisory, and programming needs, not girls...girls will always be in the library.

It is important to implement different methods in the library in order to reach new patrons, but it's equally important not to forget other patrons in the process.

Gender in the Library

Gender is a social construct. Gender messages pervade our lives on a daily basis. This is true not just for adults, but

even more so for younger people. Youth are bombarded with ideas about what being a "boy" or being a "girl" means.

By catering to one gender in our libraries, we further a message that boys and girls are fundamentally different. When professionals fall into the trap of thinking a book looks too "girly" for a boy to pick up or that our collections should have plenty of action-driven sports novels "for the boys," we repeat and reinforce messages about gender. We suggest that "girly" is a weak or inferior way to be and should be avoided by boys, and we leave out the idea that action-driven sports novels may reach many girls. We also unintentionally offer a judgment on "girly" itself – that it lacks substance or value. In those messages, we forget to serve the *reader*. We instead serve a gender.

We simplify a complex problem and pass those simplified messages to our users — we tell boys they aren't readers. We tell boys that they need to have their attention grabbed by something flashy or action-filled. We tell boys that there are better things they could be doing with their time than reading (and certainly their time is better spent doing things other than reading novels that might have romance in them or a pink cover).

It would be naive to suggest that it is simple to stop doing this. It's not. Part of why we fall into this trap is because it's an easy way for us to grapple with reaching new library users. It's a method of organizing problems to develop workable solutions. We see girls congregating in the library before school opens or being more engaged during a teaching session. We see boys acting restless in class or we notice fewer boys than girls checking books out of the library. When met with professional literature that confirms some of our own observations, it's easier to try new ideas based on this arbitrary divide, even if it's neither that simple a divide nor that simple a solution. The studies we read aren't necessarily wrong; they're simplifications.

"Boy Books," "Girl Books," and Books for Readers

How can we develop a gender-neutral library if research demonstrates boys prefer certain types of books (such as non-fiction, action-adventure based novels, comics and graphic novels)? We want our shelves filled with these books and we want to develop reader guides, book talks, and displays to highlight them, making it evident that the library supports and fosters interests of boy readers.

The simplest solution is this: don't label the books with gendered language. Avoid calling out these titles as "books for boys" and avoid calling out romance-driven stories as "books for girls." These are all books for **readers**, regardless of gender. Some girls love a good graphic novel, just as some boys find themselves craving a good romance. By ditching the gender labels, we encourage readers to think about the elements of a book that satisfy them as individuals, regardless of gender.

A better way to call attention to these books is to develop reader guides and displays which highlight the appeal aspects of the story. Call them what they are — designations such as "action-driven fantasy," "high-octane sports stories," "totally true tales," or "love and other radical emotions" puts the power of choice squarely within the hands of the reader. Readers not only avoid wading through messages about whether the book is meant for them based on gender, but have the opportunity to discover what aspects of story appeal to their reading sensibilities.

Boys *and* girls will find sports books that fit their intellectual and entertainment needs. Boys and girls will find the romances that ignite their hearts. And

they'll find them without the fear of whether those books are "meant" for them.

It takes the same amount of time and energy to develop a book list of action-driven sports novels as it does to develop a list of "books for boys," and we accomplish a lot more. We open the possibility that action-driven sports novels appeal to plenty of female readers, too.

Another display-driven idea is "blind date with a book." Wrap some books in plain paper and write a two or three sentence description on the paper. Readers won't see what the cover looks like and will judge the book solely on the description and content inside. This can become interactive: ask readers to develop their own covers which best reflect the content of the story on the wrapping. The opportunities to discuss what covers tell readers about not just the book but about marketing and gender would be worth exploring, as well — this is real-world information literacy.

Neutralizing Library Programming

Games and gaming can be huge, crowd-pleasing events. But while the intent on starting a gaming club may have

been to draw boys into the library, that shouldn't be the club's sole purpose. It should instead aim to reach *all* of those interested in gaming. Don't advertise the club as being "for boys." Advertise the games. Sell the group on the merits of being an event meant to encourage strategy and role playing in friendly, social, comfortable environment.

Many librarians can find themselves thinking that if they offer what they perceive as a boy-centric event, they should offer an equally girl-centric event. But this also re-emphasizes a gender divide. Don't offer a nail art or spa program in order to balance out your events in terms of gender appeal. Offer a nail art or spa event in addition to your gaming event because you want to reach *any* library users and potential users with an interest in either event — or both!

When you are promoting programs make no assumptions about the potential attendees. Tell boys about spa day and about gaming events. Tell girls about gaming club as well as the nail art program. Put the power of choice into *their* hands. You will never lose library users; you instead open your library to many more.

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Gender-Free Spaces

A growing trend in librarianship is a shift in how spaces within the library are designated. Aside from moving furniture and changing arrangements, a small but growing number of libraries have begun to develop gendered areas within the library. Some have gone so far as to designate a corner within the library as a “boy cave,” filled not only with boy-friendly furniture, but also with books that appeal to male readers.

The assumption behind this is that boys feel threatened in a library because the library is a girl space; boys need to have their own “boys only” area within a girl space in order to be encouraged to enter. Unfortunately, these assumptions are damaging not only to boys, but to girls as well. What is it about comfortable seating in a different corner of the library which makes it boy friendly, as opposed to the rest of the library? Why don't girls deserve choices in their furniture or space arrangements? Rather than designate an area in the library “for boys” or “for girls,” develop a space in the library that any users can arrange, change, and make their own for the time in which they're there.

If there's a bigger study room available in your library that doesn't always get used as a quiet space or if there's a corner of the library where users can be louder, designate it a “DIY” space. Fill it with easy-to-move, comfortable, *different* types of seating spaces that can be rearranged. Bean bag chairs, gaming chairs, colourful rugs, milk crates, and other inexpensive pieces of furniture that youth are not only allowed, but

encouraged, to arrange and make their ...own, gives everyone the opportunity to make his or her own space.

If you don't have the sort of layout that allows this, get creative: let people adopt and paint or decorate bulletin boards, the ends of book stacks, book holders, desks, chairs, or windows in the library. By giving people the opportunity to put their own marks on the library in some way, they find ownership in and within the library. It makes the space not only comfortable for them, but safe for them. Making these opportunities equal and neutral takes away the idea that the library belongs only to girls or only to boys. Instead, it belongs to everyone.

Own Your Biases

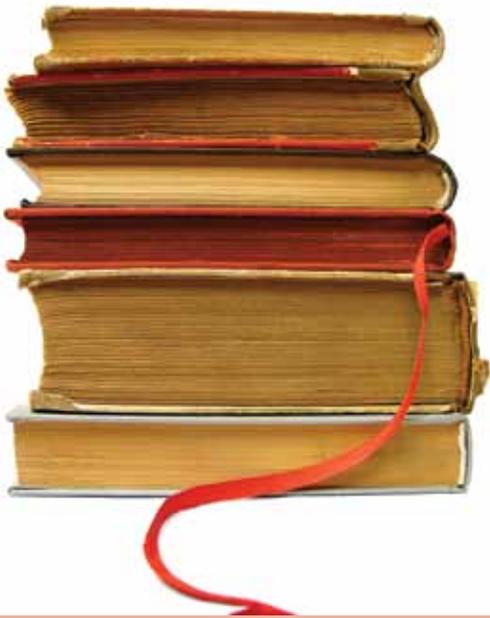
The single most important thing we can do to better support a gender-free library is perhaps the hardest one: we have to own and acknowledge our own biases. If we own them, we take steps toward understanding why the arbitrary gender divide is problematic. We understand we're limiting ourselves in understanding and serving people, but if we're conscious of our need to make sense of the world through such a divide, we improve our ability to see people as people, rather than as boy or girl, as a problem to be solved or left alone.

Consider that instead of implementing new ideas as a means of attracting boys to the library, implement new ideas because they may attract all sorts of new users into the library who may otherwise not have felt the library was a place for them. Accept that as a professional, you are

imperfect and you have made mistakes and will continue to make mistakes and fall into mindsets about gender which could be problematic. Accept that no matter how hard you try to develop a gender-free library, you will encounter areas where you can improve — and you will encounter people within your environment who may make implementing a gender-free space challenging because they subscribe to the easy-to-use divide of “boy” and “girl.” Don't judge them; educate them.

Remember when you focus on one gender, you make a statement about the other, intentionally or not. The best solution is not to let gender enter the equation. Think of your patrons and your potential patrons as just that: people. People who want a space that meets their curiosities, their interests, and offers them surprises and fills needs they didn't expect. Welcome people to explore your library because the whole library belongs to them and to everyone else around them. ■

Gender is more than binary — it is a range of identities along a spectrum, with male on one end and female on the other. Most people identify somewhere within the spectrum. For the purposes of this article, gender refers to male and female, with the understanding that those are used as simplifications of a complex range of identities.



Michael Kohn

Poetic Justice in the Library

EXCERPT: *Dagon Down the Bookworm~hole*

by Michael Kohn

Dear Editor,

I was very excited to read about this particular theme for submissions, as the premise for my second novel is based on crimes against libraries (and their librarians) both small and big. For your reading pleasure and amusement, I've attached an excerpt on the poetic justice meted out my protagonist (or is it antagonist?) for messing up the date on the date due stamp. In his school library, this customarily gets a most satisfying rise out of Mr. Koan, the school librarian, who usually doesn't notice 'till after he's signed out books to an entire visiting class. On the mysterious and long-shuttered Second Storey of Rosesvale's Public Library, however, altering the date on the date due stamp has unexpected consequences for the young offender: a "spare-no-expenses-on-the-senses" trip down a "bookworm~hole." That said, the members of the Sacred Order of Bibliophiles who staff the Second Storey's Rare & Endangered Books collection believe that such punishments should be corrective rather than cruel, and educative, not evil.

Enjoy & please let me know what you think.

Regards,

Michael Kohn
Teacher-Librarian
George Harvey C.I.

Scenario: Class clown and bane of his school librarian, Dagon David has been dropped off at Rosesvale Public Library by his mother, who has threatened to "lower the broom" should he dare emerge from its doors empty-handed. Tasked with retrieving material for his assignment on the history of analog computers, Dagon finds in a book on Charles Babbage an old catalogue card with an intriguing title: A Firsthand & True Account of the Discovery of the Mysterious Mechanism at Antikythera, by Dimitrios Kondos, Captain of the Symi. Beyond the end of the Dewey's numerical ranges, the book's call number leads him up an old book elevator to Rosesvale's long-shuttered Second Storey. There he discovers a secret library, where the justice for crimes against books and their protectors is most poetic.

... Retrieving the dusty old book from the otherwise empty top shelf, Dagon descended the ladder, turned left at the end of the row and continued straight down the north aisle to a very old check out desk, above which hung a sign:

DEPARTMENT OF RARE & ENDANGERED BOOKS
PATRON LOANS & QUERIES

Neither of the simple wooden stools behind the desk was occupied, so Dagon rang the bell for service. "Excuse me," he called, leaning over the desk to see if anyone could be glimpsed through the gap in the door that read, STAFF ONLY. "Hello? I'm in a hurry here..."

"I shan't be more than a minute, sir," came a reply. "My ink pad has just run dry."

Hanging over the desk, Dagon spied the largest date stamp he'd ever seen. Made of brass instead of plastic and stainless

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steel, it could easily have held centuries of dates and probably weighed in at around five and a half pounds. Remembering with glee everything he had learned from tormenting Mr. Koan, his school's librarian, with the tools of the library trade, Dagon scooped up the stamp, and taking hold of the moveable bands of type for month, day, and year, randomly wheeled and spun the due date to April 12, 1900. Then he put it right back in the exact right spot at the exact same angle and waited, whistling nonchalantly.

Finally, a librarian past the best before date of crusty old librarians stepped out of the STAFF ONLY room and over to Patron Loans, bearing an inkpad the size of a TV dinner and in a matching brass. He wore a grey cardigan over a simple red tie.

"This one's so crusty he's growing barnacles," Dagon thought.

The librarian took the book from Dagon's hand and blew the dust off its cover, causing Dagon to sneeze. "A Firsthand and True Account of the Discovery of the Mysterious Mechanism at Antikythera, Including an Inventory of Other Artifacts Retrieved from the Wreck of a Roman Vessel, by Dimitrios Kondos, Captain of the Symi." The librarian looked up. "A stimulating selection, sir. May I inquire as to how it came to your attention?"

Dagon showed him the old index card he'd found in a book about Charles Babbage. "I'm not much of a reader, but I have to do a project for school on examples of the earliest analog computers ever made."

The librarian nodded. "Well, this will be an exciting place to start, though you may find it's a bit short on the specifics of the mechanism's inner workings."

"I can always Google that."

"I beg your pardon?"

"You know—I can always check it out on the web."

"Ah." He turned the book on its face and stamped the return date onto the date due card.

Dagon's finely honed ability to distract, based on years of practice at diverting his teachers' attention from his incomplete assignments (a symptom of his constantly dividing and multiplying attention), was working like a charm.

The librarian had half-closed the book when his eyes narrowed in on something. He opened the back cover again, squinting at the due date he'd just stamped.

Dagon smirked, anticipating the trembling lips, the quaking hands that always preceded Mr. Koan's eruptions.

This librarian merely raised his left eyebrow. "I see that you're hoping for an extended loan. I'll have to consult with my colleague, the Antiquarian."

"But sir—the time!"

"I'll be back in a jiffy. At his advanced age, he's a little hard of hearing, so I'll have to get him in person."

Again, Dagon checked the time on the cell he wasn't supposed to have. His mother was due back in five minutes. Had the librarian left the book at the desk, he'd have picked it up and made a run for the book elevator.

Cardigan returned with his Anti-Aquarian colleague, who looked as long in the tooth as his title implied. He had long grey hair and a beard to match, both sagging to his knees, where one was indistinguishable from the other, and a grayish toga that fell the rest of the way down to his leather sandaled feet. "This one's so crusty even his barnacles are growing barnacles," Dagon mused.

The two librarians whispered back and forth—Cardigan cupping both hands to the Antiquarian's better ear. Finally, through milky eyes, the Antiquarian looked directly at Dagon and nodded his consent.

Cardigan approached the desk. "Sorry for the delay. Ordinarily, with a new patron, we don't consent to extended loans. But under the circumstances, we have decided to grant your request."

Biting his lip to keep from laughing, Dagon took the book from Cardigan and turned back for the book elevator.

"Excuse me, sir, but the exit's over here."

Dagon stopped. "But I came up over there."

"Of course. That's the entrance. You cannot go back that way when checking out a book."

Dagon turned around.

"Through the gate over here," said Cardigan, smiling.

There, to the right of the Patron Loans Desk, was an old turnstile. Its oak body and brass spokes seemed to be burnished with age and polished from decades of use. Yet, as he stepped through it, Dagon couldn't help noticing the counter on its top: 0001.

He hurried beyond the turnstile down a short corridor towards a stairwell marked with a fire exit sign. Halfway to the stairs, his eyesight became blurry around the edges, and he

suddenly felt like his body was a tiny iron filing being drawn towards an extremely powerful magnet. He stopped walking yet kept moving, so he staggered for the wall and leaned into it. But now it seemed the whole corridor was stretching towards the darkened stairwell, pulling back from it like a rubber band and slipping into it like a strand of spaghetti sucked into a mouth. Dagon tried to back-step but the floor beneath him was sliding towards the exit even faster. He might have concluded he was on a moving sidewalk, except the walls and ceiling were doing the same: spilling towards the stairs like the Niagara to the Falls.

In the instant he went over the edge, everything went dark.

He shut his eyes tight; expecting impact, compact fractures, blood and infinite pain. Shattered shinbones piercing through skin. Instead, he felt a wind, a damp spray against his skin, the muffled percussive thumps of thunder cracking sky. He opened his eyes just in time to catch a glimpse of his leaden feet breaking the surface of swelling waves. Bubbles foamed up and rose all around him as he plunged deeper. He wondered when he'd reach the unseen bottom — if there were one. Above him, lights flashed and thudded against the rolling, mirrored underside of the surface; broken in one spot by the hull of a large boat. ■

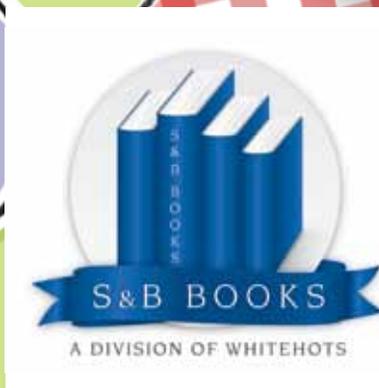


Take a Book break!

You never know
what will happen...



Illustration by Mélanie Watt



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