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Finding friends, learning leadership

Anne Ford writes: "As the librarian at Highland Junior High School in Mesa, Arizona, April Lesher is used to encountering students who don't quite fit in. That's why Lesher founded the [Friendship Project](#), a multifaceted program designed to give students a safe, fun place to learn from and connect with one another. Recently awarded a \$30,000 semifinalist prize in the 2017 Follett Challenge, the project has helped Highland students make friends, acquire new abilities, practice leadership skills, and feel more confident..."



American Libraries feature, Oct. 18

Official Teens' Top Ten titles for 2017

YALSA has announced the official titles of its 2017 Teens' Top Ten. Teens all over the world voted from August 15 through [Teen Read Week](#) (October 8–14). A [video](#) and [list](#) featuring the winning titles can be found on the [Teens' Top Ten](#) page. The Teens' Top Ten is a "teen choice" list, where teens nominate and choose their favorite books of the previous year. Teens aged 12–18 can nominate their favorite titles to be considered as a 2018 Teens' Top Ten nominee via the [public nomination form](#) through December 31....



YALSA, Oct. 19; YALSA YouTube channel, Oct. 19

Sponsored Content

Handwritten text recognition revolutionizes research

Adam Matthew Digital is the first primary-source publisher to utilize artificial intelligence to offer transformative search capabilities with Handwritten Text Recognition (HTR) for its manuscript collections. The first collection available with this enhancement is *Colonial America*, sourced from The National Archives UK, providing access to thousands of documents on North America, 1606–1822. Now for the first time, all handwritten documents within the entire *Colonial America* series are full-text searchable. Using AI to determine possible combinations of characters in handwritten documents, HTR enables text in manuscripts to be full-text searchable.



UNESCO withdrawal will slow progress

Michael Dowling writes: "The Trump administration's move to withdraw the US from the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) is not only disheartening for the library community, it also places the profession in a time warp. The US has regrettably pulled out of the organization in the past, a move that took nearly two decades to correct. ALA is a current and long-standing participant in the US National Commission for UNESCO under the State Department." ...



AL: The Scoop, Oct. 18

Keep your Wi-Fi signal strong: Defend E-Rate

Marijke Visser writes: "At the end of September the FCC launched a [Public Notice](#) asking whether libraries are using Category 2 (C2) funding in their budgets and if it meets their needs. Since the FCC [E-Rate Modernization](#) in 2014, library applicants have been doing their best to receive their share of the \$3.9 billion available for libraries. The deadline to [submit comments](#) to the FCC is October 23, and we're calling on you to tell the FCC that libraries need secure funding for E-Rate." ...



District Dispatch, Oct. 18

An advertisement for SJSU San Jose State University's MLIS program. The ad features a blue header with the text "Turn the job you like into a career you love." and "Convenient, flexible, 100% online MLIS program". Below this is a photograph of three people looking at a laptop together. To the right is the SJSU logo with "SAN JOSE STATE UNIVERSITY" and a yellow "APPLY NOW" button with a cursor icon pointing at it.

The KRACK attacks and libraries

Galen Charlton writes: "In mid-October, Mathy Vanhoef at the Katholieke Universiteit Leuven announced his discovery of a set of related vulnerabilities in WPA2, a protocol

used to encrypt communications over wireless networks. [KRACK](#), as Vanhoef dubbed the vulnerability, stands for Key Reinstallation Attacks. The KRACK attack primarily affects Wi-Fi clients, but can also affect access points and routers. To avoid interference with library networks or snooping on online activity, libraries can take a few steps to mitigate the risk."...



Choose Privacy Week, Oct. 19

The Library Freedom Project and digital privacy

In August, New York University and the Library Freedom Project—an organization that trains librarians on using privacy tools to protect intellectual freedom—received a [\\$250,000 IMLS grant](#). Its purpose: to train librarians to implement secure protocols on their own web services and to teach members of the community to evade the prying eyes of governments, corporations, and criminal hackers. The group aims to create what it calls "[a privacy-centric paradigm shift](#) in libraries and the communities they serve."...

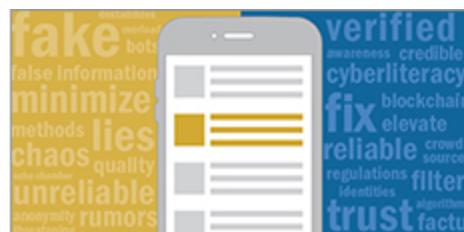


Christian Science Monitor, Oct. 17



The future of truth and misinformation online

Janna Anderson and Lee Rainie write: "The 2016 Brexit vote in the United Kingdom and the US presidential election highlighted how the digital age has affected news and cultural narratives. When BBC Future Now interviewed a panel of 50 experts in early 2017 about the '[grand challenges we face in the 21st century](#),' many named the breakdown of trusted information sources. What will happen to the online information environment in the coming decade? Pew Research Center conducted a survey on that question."...



Pew Research Center, Oct. 19; BBC Future Now, Mar. 1

Escondido library will be outsourced

The Escondido (Calif.) Public Library will be run by a private company, and its 30 city employees will either be out of a job or will go to work for Maryland-based Library Systems and Services. The Escondido City Council voted 4–1 October 18 to enter into a 10-year-contract with the company, based on projections that the move will save the city at least \$400,000 per year in operating costs and even more in pension liability savings. Several dozen members of the public spoke unanimously against the decision....



Banned books display in Maryland angers parents

Covered books on display at the Lexington Park branch of the St. Mary's County (Md.) Library have raised the concerns of some parents, who asked the county commissioners on October 17 to have some of them removed, while others defended the library's freedom of speech. Several books were placed in brown lunch bags in the teen section and labeled "do not read this." One book was *The Little Black Book for Girlz: A Book on Healthy Sexuality*. One parent said the display "is malicious intent on the part of the library staff."...



Lexington Park (Md.) Enterprise, Oct. 18

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Why are schools still teaching *To Kill a Mockingbird*?

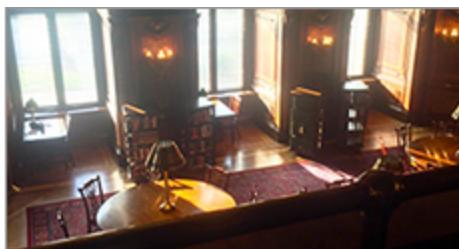
Alice Randall writes: "A [school board](#) sparked outrage in mid-October when it voted to cut *To Kill a Mockingbird* from 8th-grade reading lists in Biloxi, Mississippi. Some people complained that the book's language made them uncomfortable. While the backlash was swift, those who blindly defend the book are missing an important point. If the criteria for inclusion was simply whether the novel provokes tough discussions, Harper Lee's opus belongs in as many classrooms as possible. But that is not the only question."...



NBC News: Think, Oct. 19; Indianapolis Star, Oct. 14

The members-only room at the Library of Congress

Alex Gangitano writes: "Down a corridor inside the LC's Thomas Jefferson Building, a code just for members of Congress guards a special room. Even lawmakers' spouses can't walk into the Congressional Reading Room alone. But when a member of Congress unlocks the door, it opens to a private space staffed by a Congressional Research Service employee, there to answer questions and assist members seeking materials. The room is stocked with periodicals, books, desks, and computers."...



Roll Call, Oct. 19

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LC's Congressional Data Challenge

On October 19, the Library of Congress launched the [Congressional Data Challenge](#), a competition asking participants to use legislative data sets on [Congress.gov](#) and other platforms to develop digital projects that analyze, interpret, or share congressional data in user-friendly ways.



Submissions can be interactive visualizations, mobile or desktop apps, a website, or other digital creations. Entries will be evaluated on usefulness, creativity, and design. Entries are due April 2 and must be submitted through the [Challenge.gov](#) platform....

Library of Congress Blog, Oct. 19

NYPL to forgive all children's fines

On October 19, New York's three library systems—New York Public Library, Queens Library, and Brooklyn Public Library—[forgave all fines](#) for children 17 and under and unblocked their library cards. The one-time amnesty is underwritten by the [JPB Foundation](#), a philanthropy that supports civic causes, which will make up \$2.25 million of the shortfall in revenue from the forgiven fines. The amnesty “is a dramatic way to message to kids and young adults that we want you back, and we want you reading,” said NYPL President Anthony Marx....



New York Times, Oct. 18

The best video editing software

Michael Muchmore writes: “Digital video tools get more powerful and easier to use every year, and that’s especially true when it comes to the video editing software that targets nonprofessional enthusiasts. Every year, new formats, new techniques, and new capabilities trickle down from professional-level software. Higher-quality video content produced by nonprofessionals is exploding in volume, thanks to phones that record in 4K, DSLRs, mirrorless cameras, drones, and action cams that can capture motion-picture quality video.”...



PC Magazine, Oct. 10

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AL Direct FAQ: americanlibrariesmagazine.org/al-direct

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