

# american libraries DIRECT

American Library Association • June 8, 2018

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## Are libraries neutral?

At the 2018 Midwinter Meeting in Denver, ALA President Jim Neal's program provided a conversation on the question of libraries as neutral organizations and librarianship as a neutral profession. This popular session featured a debate with two speakers in favor of neutrality, two speakers against neutrality, and a panel of four speakers reacting to the debaters. Their remarks have been edited here for clarity and space; their full remarks are linked when available....



*American Libraries* feature, June

## Librarians and journalists working together

Marcus Banks writes: "Citing your source. Presenting information in a nonbiased way, with just the facts. Letting people make up their own mind, not telling them what to think.' When longtime freelance journalist Alison Peters was pondering a career change, she said the appeal of working in a library lay in the ways that she could use skills similar to those she had honed in her 12 years as a reporter. Although the daily work of librarians and journalists differs, the vocations share many professional values."...



*American Libraries* feature, June



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CONSUMER'S CHOICE

## How should libraries respond to #MeToo?

Shannon M. Oltmann writes: “Reports of sexual misconduct by authors of critically acclaimed, well-liked literature continue to abound and be publicized. This reckoning is good for our industry and our profession, and hopefully it is empowering for survivors. Yet these revelations and incidents lead to troublesome, difficult questions: What should we do about the books these authors have written? Do we keep them on the shelves as if nothing has changed?” [Museums](#) must also make similar choices....



*American Libraries* column, June; *The Art Newspaper*, June 7

## Using a data dashboard to support school reading

Hommocks Middle School in Larchmont, New York, wanted to find out what its students were reading independently. School Librarian Kelsey Cohen helped set up a system that encourages kids to log their reading choices and gives both students and teachers instant visual feedback on what books are popular. Cohen writes: “I started displaying it on a large monitor in the library. Kids ran up to it, sharing what they’ve read on the top 10 list and watching the total number of books read vary from week to week.”...



*American Libraries* Spotlight, June



## Libraries help educate cannabis consumers

Anne Ford writes: “When dispelling qualms about cannabis, Jennifer Hendzlik takes a highly hands-on approach. Hendzlik, a collection buyer for Anythink Libraries in Adams County, Colorado, helped lead a presentation on medical marijuana and libraries at the 2016 PLA Conference in Denver. As part of the presentation, Hendzlik handed out rolling papers and oregano and taught attendees how to make their own joints—‘just to take the fear out of it,’ she said. Not every librarian might feel comfortable teaching patrons how to roll a joint.”...



*American Libraries* Trend, June

## Kansas teen wins scholarship for Parkinson’s tool

Erin Smith (right), a senior at Shawnee Mission West High School in Overland Park, Kansas, built a tool in 2017 for early detection of Parkinson’s disease and now Taco Bell is

giving her a \$25,000 scholarship. Armed with the internet and a library, she taught herself how to code and developed “[Faceprint](#),” a tool in which emoji instruct patients, the computer maps their responses, and crucial diagnostic feedback goes to physicians. The scholarship money will help send her to Stanford University....



*KMBC-TV, Kansas City, Mo., June 5; Kansas City Star, June 30, 2017*

## 2018 top trends in academic libraries

Every other year, the ACRL Research Planning and Review Committee produces a document on top trends in academic librarianship. Change is continuous, but it affects different libraries at different rates. The 2018 top trends share several overarching themes, including the impact of market forces, technology, and the political environment on libraries....



*College and Research Libraries News 79, no. 6 (June): 286–293, 300*



## Graphic novels get biblio-graphic

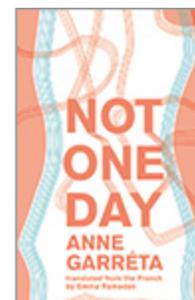
Heidi MacDonald writes: “Graphic novels continue to be among the most circulated titles in libraries, and there’s a growing emphasis on outreach to the library market among comics and graphic novel publishers: They’re seeking more face-to-face meetings, more participation in miniconventions at libraries, and more library-targeted promotional materials. And more comics publishers than ever are going to this summer’s ALA Annual Conference in New Orleans.”...



*Publishers Weekly, May 25*

## 2018 Albertine Prize

The [Albertine Prize](#), an annual award copresented by jeweler Van Cleef & Arpels and the Cultural Services of the French Embassy, recognizes American readers’ favorite work of contemporary Francophone fiction and encourages the discovery of new literary voices, translated and published in the US in the past year. The 2018 winner of the \$10,000 prize, announced June 6, is Anne Garréta’s *Not One Day* (Deep Vellum, 2017), translated by Emma Ramadan....



*Fine Books Blog, June 8*

## When did humans first learn to count?

Peter Schurer writes: “The history of math is murky, predating any written records. When did humans first grasp the basic concept of a number? What about size and magnitude, or form and shape? Although no one knows math’s exact origins, modern mathematicians like myself know that spoken language precedes written language by scores of millennia. Linguistic clues show how people around the world must have first developed mathematical thought.”...



*The Conversation, June 5*

## Preparing libraries for nuclear war

Erin Blakemore writes: “Many of today’s scholars dismiss the nation’s civil defense push in the 1950s as a propagandistic effort that used fear to unite Americans against Russia. But at the time, the threat felt very real for everyday Americans. The nation’s attempts to shield itself from the coming bomb were reflected across institutions, including libraries. But despite their resistance to political pressures, librarians ‘vigorously participated’ in civil defense during the 1950s. This participation showed up in library collections.”...



*JSTOR Daily, June 6*

## My life is a movie starring librarians

Kristen Arnett writes: “In the past, librarianship has been portrayed in television and books as something that’s either very sexy or completely geeky. But now! We’ve got slogans on T-shirts. Dewey Decimal–themed socks. Bars and restaurants filled with barcoded books. We’re not superheroes, but we get the job done. Seeing librarians reflected in pop culture as awesome and strong reminds me why I do my job. We’re reflected this way in the media because people understand our importance. They value what we bring to the world.”...



*Literary Hub, June 6*

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**Editor, *AL Direct*:** George M. Eberhart, [geberhart@ala.org](mailto:geberhart@ala.org)

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