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Why the *Janus* decision matters to library unions

On June 27, the Supreme Court delivered a blow to public sector unions that could affect many library workers. The [5-4 decision](#) in *Janus v. AFSCME* declares it unconstitutional for public sector unions to collect agency fees from nonmember employees based on free speech grounds. Library workers in public, school, academic, and other libraries who are employed through state and local governments in the 22 states that are not already [right-to-work states](#) are affected by this decision....



AL: The Scoop, July 24

Libraries: Better stewards of tax dollars than businesses

ALA President Loida Garcia-Febo writes: "On July 21, *Forbes* published (and later retracted) a badly misinformed editorial by Panos Mourdoukoutas, chair of the department of economics at LIU Post, titled '[Amazon Should Replace Local Libraries to Save Taxpayers Money](#).' Clearly, Mourdoukoutas would have benefited from the assistance of a librarian, who could have helped him find several economic studies related to library value. The evidence is clear: Our nation's libraries are a sound public investment."...



Publishers Weekly, July 26; Quartz, July 23

Building bridges to the East

Michael Dowling writes: "John Hickok's passion for more than 10 years has been to build

and maintain library partnerships with libraries in Asia. Hickok is international outreach librarian at California State University, Fullerton. His initial role there was providing outreach and instruction to CSUF's international student population. That led to an 'aha' moment. 'I realized for me to truly understand international students' library experiences, I needed to see the libraries in their countries,' he said."...



American Libraries feature, July 18

ACRL training with an international reach

Chase Ollis writes: "Each year, ACRL offers several in-person professional development opportunities in the US for librarians to gather, connect, and learn together. For those abroad, ACRL's [RoadShow program](#) provides a global reach. The program offers daylong, immersive workshops in a variety of disciplines that can be brought to institutions around the world upon request. Led by experts in the field, these traveling workshops help academic librarians learn new skills and strengthen existing competencies."...



American Libraries feature, July 18

PLA to hold short-fiction writing contest

PLA invites writers to submit original works of short fiction for a National Short Story Contest taking place this fall. Only original works of short fiction written by the submitter will qualify. Submissions must be in English and fit within the contest theme of "courage." Submissions may not exceed 8,000 characters, including spaces, and may only be submitted electronically; paper manuscripts will not be accepted. The [submission portal](#) will open September 25; entries must be submitted by October 30....



PLA, July 24



Utah library workers must remove LGBTQ buttons

Library workers in the Washington County (Utah) Library System were told in June 2017 to remove Pride Month-themed displays featuring LGBTQ books and materials because a county official believed they were too controversial. This year, they are being asked to stop wearing buttons that read,

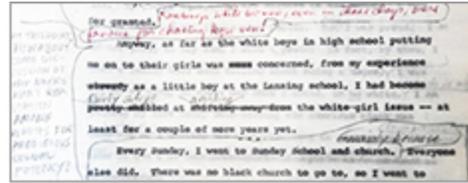


“Ask me about LGBTQ reads.” Both the displays and the buttons at the Hurricane branch drew complaints from upset patrons, according to Library Director Joel Tucker....

St. George (Utah) Spectrum and Daily News, July 25

Schomburg Center acquires Malcolm X materials

An unpublished chapter of *The Autobiography of Malcolm X* that had been in private hands for decades was [sold](#) to the New York Public Library on July 26. NYPL's Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture acquired an unpublished chapter titled “The Negro” as well as the manuscript of the autobiography that contains handwritten edits by Malcolm X and his collaborator Alex Haley. The unpublished portions of the biography were thought too controversial to be published when the book came out in 1965....



CNN, July 27; New York Times, July 26



Flood-hit Japanese library to discard 127,000 books

The Mabi Library in Kurashiki, Japan, will discard all of its 127,000 books that were damaged in flooding caused by heavy rains that hit western Japan earlier in July. “The library is so messed up that it looks like it entered a giant washing machine,” said library director Hiromi Fujii. Library staff are still cleaning up the building, which remains cluttered with toppled shelves and muddy, waterlogged books....



Asahi Shimbun (Tokyo), July 26

Germany's oldest library unearthed

The massive remains of an ancient wall in the city of Köln, Germany, were first unearthed in 2017 during construction work for a new Protestant church community center. While it was clear from the start that the wall was of Roman origin, it was initially believed to be the ruins of a public assembly room. But what stumped experts were “unusual, niche-like divisions” in the wall. After comparing the structure with the ancient library of Ephesus, it turned out that the remains belong to a library built in the 2nd century CE in the then-Roman city....



Deutsche Welle, July 26

Teaching information literacy in an era of lies

David Gooblar writes: “The flourishing of misperceptions makes it harder for us to do our jobs in the college classroom. Many faculty members believe a key part of our role is helping students thrive in the world as it is. But to do that, don’t we need to find some kind of shared understanding of that world? Students need to be able to tell a truth from a falsehood. And clearly, that is not as easy as it seems. I would argue that, whatever your discipline, you should be teaching information literacy as part of your courses.”...



Chronicle of Higher Education, July 24

Before there were title pages

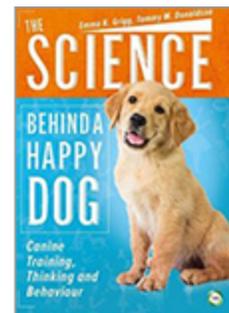
Sonja Svoljšak writes: “Books didn’t always have title pages. The title page developed gradually over the 15th–16th centuries. Before that time, different methods were used to announce the author(s), title, edition, place of publication, printer, publisher, and publication date. The elements indicating the beginning and the closing of individual text units in medieval manuscripts are the incipit, the explicit, and the colophon. Just like the design of the book, the text announcements in manuscripts and incunabula were the same for a while.”...



Europeana Blog, July 26

Nine books to help your pets lead happier lives

Dana Lee writes: “Our pets are our best friends and family. They bring endless hours of joy into our lives. Books for happier pets are out there to read, aside from the ones they chew on, lie on while you’re trying to read, or knock over just after you leave the room. Here are nine books that will get you to connect with your fur babies and help your pets lead happier lives.”...



Book Riot, July 26

AL Direct is a free electronic newsletter emailed every Tuesday and Friday to personal members of the [American Library Association](http://americanlibraryassociation.org).

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