

# american libraries DIRECT

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*American Libraries* column, Mar./Apr.

## Basic American Sign Language for library staff

ALA Editions will host a new iteration of its six-week facilitated eCourse, "[Basic American Sign Language for Library Staff](#)" with Kathy MacMillan as instructor, starting on May 20. MacMillan will use readings, multimedia resources, and online discussion boards to introduce basic ASL vocabulary and grammar appropriate for use in a library setting. Registration is through the ALA Store."...

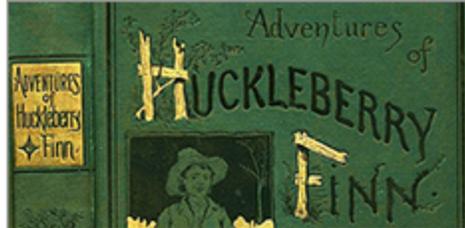
*ALA Publishing eLearning Solutions*, Mar. 21



## New Jersey lawmakers take aim against *Huckleberry Finn*

Two New Jersey state lawmakers are pushing for a change to school curricula in the state, specifically requesting that districts stop teaching Mark Twain's classic novel *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*. Democratic state Assembly members Verlina Reynolds-

Jackson and Jamel Holley have introduced a nonbinding resolution [encouraging schools to remove](#) the 1884 book from their teaching plans, citing the “racist” themes in the novel. *Huckleberry Finn* has long been controversial due to its frequent use of the N-word, which appears in the book more than 200 times....



*The Hill, Mar. 21; Politico, Mar. 21*

A promotional banner for GEICO. On the left, there is a stack of four books in blue, yellow, red, and green. To the right of the books, the text reads 'ALA members could save more' in white. Below that is the 'GEICO' logo in white, with 'Member Discount' underneath it. On the far right, there is a pink button with the text 'GET A QUOTE' in white.

## [Boston Public Library's tea-infused literary cocktails](#)

Boston residents can drink to the classics in Copley Square. The Boston Public Library's [Map Room Tea Lounge](#) opened March 20, offering tartines, desserts, and literary-inspired drinks. Perhaps the most popular beverage was “Tequila Mockingbird,” a blood-orange cocktail inspired by the Harper Lee classic *To Kill a Mockingbird*. There's also the “Dorian Gray,” “War and Peace,” and “Mad Hatter.” The cocktails are infused with flowery teas. The Catered Affair, which runs the library's dining services, worked with Cambridge-based Mem Tea and Martignetti, a wine and spirits distributor in New England....



*MassLive Media, Worcester, Mass., Mar. 21; Boston Globe, Mar. 19*

## [The library of blue lights](#)

On a typical day in the Spokane (Wash.) Public Library, a custodian could be greeted by blood in bathroom stalls, needles in the toilets, and paper towels spread everywhere. Now library leaders are trying to put a stop to it by installing blue lights in the men's public restrooms, which are designed to make needle injections more difficult. So far it seems to be working, as evidence of drug use has decreased. The blue lights make it more difficult for drug users to find a vein. Library Director Andrew Chanse said increased drug use in the bathroom is just one symptom of a larger opioid epidemic....



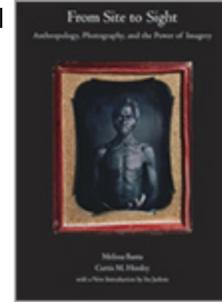
*Spokane (Wash.) Spokesman-Review, Mar. 22*

## [Harvard sued over licensing slave photos](#)

In 1850, Harvard University Professor Louis Agassiz commissioned what are believed to be the earliest daguerreotypes of American slaves. The photos include those of an [African man named Renty](#) (right) and his daughter Delia, who were enslaved on a plantation in Columbia, South Carolina. Tamara Lanier, the great-great-great granddaughter of Renty, is now suing Harvard over the photos, which are held by the university's Peabody Museum. She is accusing Harvard of the wrongful seizure, possession, and monetization

of the images and is seeking an unspecified amount of damages, as well as return of the photos to her family....

*USA Today, Mar. 20*



## Anne Arundel library programs exit limbo

The Anne Arundel County (Md.) Public Library board of trustees approved 16 “possibly controversial” LGBTQ, diversity, and health programs in a packed meeting room March 21, but pushed off a vote on the policy that put the programs in limbo in the first place. After two



extensions on the meeting and multiple motions to adjourn, the board at the Odenton Regional Library meeting voted to allow library staff to begin planning the “possibly controversial” programs CEO Skip Auld presented to the board in February. The library system will also participate in the Annapolis City Pride Parade....

*Annapolis (Md.) Capital Gazette, Mar. 21*



## LC selects new National Recording Registry titles

The classic radio western *Gunsmoke*; Ritchie Valens’s groundbreaking 1958 sensation “La Bamba”; Sam & Dave’s 1967 hit single “Soul Man”; the revolutionary 1968 Broadway musical *Hair*; and Neil Diamond’s 1969 “Sweet Caroline,” which became a popular sports anthem, are the newest recordings inducted into the National Recording Registry of the Library of Congress.

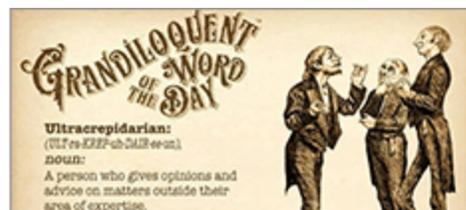


Librarian of Congress Carla Hayden named these and 20 other recordings on March 20 as aural treasures worthy of preservation because of their cultural, historic, and aesthetic importance to the nation’s recorded sound heritage...

*Library of Congress, Mar. 20*

## Authority, credibility, and determining expertise

Georgina Trebbe writes: “The *Oxford English Dictionary* defines the word ‘ultracrepidarian’ as ‘Expressing opinions on matters outside the scope of one’s knowledge or expertise.’ While this phenomenon is nothing new, it has become a recent



concern of mine when students are determining the credibility of a resource. In fact, authority and credibility are often used interchangeably, while delving into expertise is a bit

more complicated. When considered in conjunction with one another, determining authority, credibility, and expertise can be the most powerful defense in determining if a resource should be used in support of a claim.”...

*Knowledge Quest blog, Mar. 22*



## Philip Pullman wins J. M. Barrie Award

Philip Pullman (right), author of the His Dark Materials fantasy trilogy, is the winner of the 2019 J. M. Barrie Award, given annually in recognition of a lifetime achievement in delighting children. Vicky Ireland, chair of [Action for Children's Arts](#), which sponsors the award, said that Pullman is “a magical, magnificent spinner of yarns, who for many years has pulled his readers and audiences in by the power of his imagination to explore realms of wonder and adventure.” The award will be presented at a ceremony in central London in the autumn....



*The Guardian (UK), Mar. 21; The Bookseller (UK), Mar. 20*

## Five principles for thinking like a futurist

Marina Gorbis writes: “In 2018 we celebrated the 50-year anniversary of the founding of the Institute for the Future. No other futures organization has survived for this long; we’ve actually survived our own forecasts. In these five decades we learned a lot, and we still believe—even more strongly than before—that systematic thinking about the future is absolutely essential for helping people make better choices today. In my 20 years at the Institute, I’ve developed these five core principles for futures thinking.”...



*Educause Review, Mar. 11*



## Gaming could conquer ISP greed

Mark Hachman writes: “Now that [Google Stadia](#) and [Microsoft xCloud](#) have been unveiled at the Game Developers Conference in San Francisco, it’s safe to say cloud gaming has arrived, promising a future where content will be streamed to smartphones over high-speed Wi-Fi and 5G. But if these services are to flourish, something else must die: the data caps ISPs impose upon most consumer



internet service plans. No one ever liked these limits except the ISPs. Now that major tech companies have some skin in the streaming game, data caps may finally have too many enemies to survive.”...

*PC World, Mar. 19, 22; Oct. 8, 2018*

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