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Conversations about the library world with librarians, authors, and thinkers

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ALA Executive Board stands with BCALA

The ALA Executive Board stands with the Black Caucus of the American Library Association in condemning violence and racism toward black people and all people of color. The board endorses BCALA's May 28 [statement](#), in which the caucus decries the death of George Floyd at the hands of Minneapolis Police Department officers and cites Floyd's death as "the latest in a long line of recent and historical violence against black people in the United States." ALA stands in solidarity with BCALA, with library workers, with library users, and with members of the communities we serve and support who are susceptible to acts of prejudice, threats of violence, and even death based solely on their race or ethnicity. The ALA Office for Diversity, Literacy, and Outreach Services has created a [Libraries Respond](#) page as a space for us to help keep current events in conversation with libraries' ongoing work in and commitment to equity, diversity, and inclusion....



AL: The Scoop, June 1; Black Caucus of the American Library Association, May 28; Office for Diversity, Literacy, and Outreach Services

Coping in the time of COVID-19

On March 20, *American Libraries Live* hosted the webinar "Libraries and COVID-19: Managing Strategies and Stress." Moderator Dan Freeman, director of ALA Publishing eLearning Solutions, led a discussion with librarians and health professionals on the front lines of the crisis about the library response to the pandemic and methods to reduce stress for both library staffers and patrons. Freeman was joined by Maria Stella Rasetti, Lisa Rosenblum, Loren Mc Clain, and Richard Moniz. Here are some questions they answered....



Reopening gets real

Cass Balzer writes: “As parts of the country begin to reopen, libraries are slowly restoring services. For many, contactless or curbside pickup is the first service to return, but some have begun opening buildings to staff and visitors. Both library services and the spaces themselves will look much different from before the pandemic. Changes include limiting capacity and computer use, putting one-way walking markers on floors, requiring both patrons and staff to wear masks, having sanitizer available, installing Plexiglas sneeze guards, and allowing appointment-only entry—all intended to prioritize staff and patron health. Still, many library workers remain concerned about returning to work.”...



AL: *The Scoop*, June 2

PLA's COVID-19 webinar series

PLA recently wrapped up its free webinar series, [Public Libraries Respond to COVID-19](#), which included six webinars that took place between March 26 and April 23. The webinars covered topics of immediate need to the field, such as addressing the digital divide, managing anxiety, and responding to community needs through innovative solutions and services. More than 9,000 public library professionals registered for the series. The webinars in this series are freely [available online](#)....



PLA, June 1

Rainbow Round Table celebrates 50 years of Pride

June marks the 50th anniversary of annual [LGBTQ+ Pride traditions](#) in the United States. The first Pride march was in New York on June 28, 1970, on the first anniversary of the Stonewall Uprising. Fifty years ago, under the auspices of the ALA Social Responsibilities Round Table, a small group of activists, librarians, and activist-librarians formed what was then known as the Task Force on Gay Liberation—the very first gay and lesbian caucus in any national professional organization. In the decades that followed, the group’s name changed periodically to reflect the evolving times, finally becoming known in 2019 as the Rainbow Round Table. *American Libraries* spoke with 11 previous and current members of the group to gather their stories of LGBTQIA+ library life past and present....



American Libraries feature, June; *Library of Congress Blog*, June 2

Front lines and fault lines

ALA Executive Director Tracie D. Hall writes: “Chicago—like Detroit, Milwaukee, New York City, and rural Louisiana and Georgia—is a place where African Americans, along with Latinos, are dying from COVID-19 at disproportionately higher rates, and the symbiotic relationship between information access and public safety is abundantly clear. Lack of

access to real-time information has been described as a source of community vulnerability by state and local leaders. This moment presents libraries with the opportunity—the mandate, really—to advance a new library service model, one that reaches far beyond the library building and becomes ubiquitous in public life.”...



American Libraries column, June



[A personal message about race in America](#)

Trevor A. Dawes (right) writes: “Last week, a colleague at MPOW shared some information on [effective ways to be an ally](#). She shared those tips in response to the overtly racist incidents that occurred in the last few days. As a Black man in America, that these incidents continue to happen and at what I consider an alarming rate, leaves me in fear—literally—in fear for my life. For my very existence. EVERY. DAY. In an email message from late last week, the president of my university referred to the institutional values of diversity, inclusion, and respect. These are also the values we espouse specifically within the library. There are many ways to be involved in anti-racist work. Here are some resources that may be helpful.”...



Trevor A. Dawes, June 2; Chescaleigh YouTube channel, Nov. 22, 2014

[Reflections on this moment](#)

NYPL President Tony Marx writes: “In the face of cruelty, fear, and anxiety, we need to search for what we can still hold on to, what we can still believe in. We can all be proud that the mission of the library—to educate, welcome, and respect all perspectives; convene safe and productive conversations; and offer opportunity to all—directly combats divisiveness, ignorance, hate, and racism. It is and remains our founding idea: that everyone can learn and contribute, and must be respected. For 125 years, whether in person or for now only online, we have led the fight against ignorance to support understanding, empathy, and solidarity. In this difficult moment, we reinforce our mission, and stand with all of our communities against injustice and racism.”...



New York Public Library Blogs, June 1



A children's book list for anti-racist activism

Research from Harvard University suggests that children as young as 3 years old, when exposed to racism and prejudice, tend to embrace and accept it, even though they might not understand the feelings.

By age 5, white children are strongly biased towards whiteness. To counter this bias, experts recommend acknowledging and naming race and racism with children as early and as often as possible. Children's books are one of the most effective and practical tools for initiating these critical conversations; and they can also be used to model what it means to resist and dismantle oppression. This book list was curated by literacy organizations [The Conscious Kid](#) and [American Indians in Children's Literature](#)....



EmbraceRace

Publishers sue Internet Archive over free ebooks

A group of publishers sued Internet Archive on June 1, saying that the nonprofit group's trove of free ebooks was robbing authors and publishers of revenue at a moment when it was desperately needed. Internet Archive has made more than 1.3 million books available free online, which were scanned and available to one borrower at a time for a period of 14 days, according to the complaint. Then in March, the group said it would [lift all restrictions](#) on its book lending until the end of the public health crisis, creating what it called "a [National Emergency Library](#) to serve the nation's displaced learners." But many publishers and authors have called it theft....



New York Times, Mar. 30, June 1



2020 Ezra Jack Keats Foundation Awards ceremony

The Ezra Jack Keats Foundation invites children's book fans to a virtual ceremony on June 4 to celebrate the winners of its 2020 book awards, including Sydney Smith, writer of *Small in the City*, and Ashleigh Corrin, illustrator of *Layla's Happiness*. [Register online](#), and the foundation will send you information on where and how to tune in. Watch some [short videos](#) as the countdown to the ceremony takes place....



Ezra Jack Keats Foundation

Build summer reading joy

Steve Tetreault writes: "In the spring of 2016, I received an email from an English teacher in my building. She invited the entire faculty to contribute to a slideshow she was creating. She encouraged everyone to insert a slide that listed a book they'd



read in the past year that they really liked and a book they were looking forward to reading in the summer. She wanted to share this slideshow with the students before they went on summer break. The goal was twofold: First, it would provide students with suggestions for titles they might enjoy for summer reading. Second, it would let students see that some people actually choose to read over the summer.”...

Knowledge Quest blog, May 27

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

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