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EDITOR'S NOTE

AL Direct is off next week. Look for our next issue October 21.

Carrie C. Robinson's story of challenging racism still resonates



Library historian Wayne A. Wiegand writes: "Fifty years ago this week, Carrie C. Robinson—a Black school librarian whose long career revealed much about the Jim Crow South, the challenges of integration, and librarianship in the civil rights era—settled a landmark case for racial justice in the profession. After being passed over for a promotion, she had sued her employer, Alabama's Department of Education. That case, as well as the

trajectory of Robinson's career, sheds light on a critical period in American history, one with lingering effects on diversity and representation in the library field."...

American Libraries feature, Oct. 6

ARSL 2020: Rural libraries and community well-being



At the 2020 Association for Rural and Small Libraries Conference—held virtually September 28–October 2—a thread quickly emerged: Rural libraries play an important role in the social fabric of their towns. The event opened with a meme-filled presentation from author and librarian William Ottens (*Librarian Tales: Funny, Strange, and Inspiring Dispatches from the Stacks*) and closed with a keynote from renowned librarian and literary critic Nancy Pearl (*The Writer's Library: The Authors You Love on the Books That Changed Their*

Lives, with Jeff Schwager). The sessions between the speakers highlighted how small libraries engage and enrich their communities....

AL: The Scoop, Oct. 6

ACRL 2021 conference going virtual



ACRL's board of directors announced October 1 that the face-to-face portion of the ACRL 2021 Conference scheduled for April 14–17, 2021, in Seattle has been canceled because of the serious health risks posed by COVID-19. The virtual ACRL 2021 Conference will be held over approximately the same dates in April 2021. [More details are forthcoming](#)....

ACRL, Oct. 1



ALA Connect Live: COVID-19 and REALM Project update



Join ALA President Julius C. Jefferson Jr for the October ALA Connect Live program, focused on the research project conducted by OCLC, the Institute of Museum and Library Services, and Battelle. The [REALM Project \(REopening Archives, Libraries and Museums\)](#), currently in Phase 5 of testing, is researching how long the COVID-19 virus survives on materials prevalent in libraries, archives, and museums. [Register for the program](#), which takes

place October 22 at 2 p.m. Eastern....

ALA Member Relations and Services

Toolkit helps youth in financial insecurity, homelessness



The Library Service to Underserved Children and Their Caregivers committee is devoting the 2020–2021 calendar year to creating a vibrant, dynamic toolkit that provides ALSC members with up-to-date resources for working with marginalized populations. October's [LSUCTC Toolkit](#) focuses on youth and families experiencing homelessness and financial insecurity, [estimated to affect 1.5 million public school children](#)....

ALSC Blog, Oct. 4; National Center for Homeless Education

Tressie McMillan Cottom wins MacArthur "genius grant"



Writer, sociologist, and University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill SLIS Associate Professor [Tressie McMillan Cottom](#) has been named a 2020 MacArthur Fellow. The "genius grant" award includes \$625,000 paid over five years. The MacArthur Foundation praised Cottom for "shaping discourse on highly topical issues at the confluence of race, gender, education, and digital technology for broad audiences."...

MacArthur Foundation, Oct. 6



The struggle to diversify library staff



Library educator and consultant Jill Hurst-Wahl writes: "Looking through notes I'd taken in an old work journal—and then looking at blog posts I've written—I can see this ongoing focus on diversifying library science students and library staff. This is something the profession has talked about for a long time and has engaged in focused activities. Sadly, the overall diversity of our LIS programs and library staff is not what we want it to be.

Why?"...

Digitization 101, Oct. 6

Colleges cancel EDI programs in response to executive order



Two campuses are halting diversity efforts in relation to the White House's recent [executive order](#) against "divisive concepts" in federally funded programs. In a [campus memo](#), University of Iowa Interim Associate Vice President for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Liz Tovar recommended pausing programs for two weeks "given the seriousness of the penalties for noncompliance with the order, which include the loss of federal funding." John A. Logan College in Illinois also suspended diversity events, including a Hispanic Heritage Month talk planned for next week....

Inside Higher Ed, Oct. 7; White House, Sept. 22

Test your troll-spotting skills

Can you distinguish fake social media accounts from real ones? Clemson University's [Media Forensics Hub](#) has designed a new



How to safely wipe and dispose of broken gadgets



Michael Crider writes: "Broken electronics are awful, not just because of the material loss, but because they're very hard to repurpose or repair once something primary has failed. We won't lie: Sometimes your options for safe disposal of hardware and for securing your personal data are limited. But we've created a rough guide on what to do next when your gadget breaks."...

ReviewGeek, Oct. 7

What is a book, exactly?



James Raven writes: "Although we think we know what we mean by a 'book,' new digital texts and reading devices are making us reconsider. A book has characters, letters and words, and sometimes images. It can be read, but does it need to have a cover and a spine—and does it need to have what we think of as 'pages'?"...

Literary Hub, Oct. 1

8 books for NaNoWriMo prepping



Emily Martin writes: "I know it's hard to believe, but November 1 is already right around the corner. Where did the year go? How did we get here? I don't have time to answer those questions or even reflect on them. Why? Because it's time to get ready for what can be the most rewarding and the most stressful time of the year for every writer. [NaNoWriMo](#) is here again. It's time to get writing. It's time to get inspired. And if you're wondering how to get your mind in the right space to do all of that, try these books to help prep you for NaNoWriMo."...

Book Riot, Oct. 5

American Libraries Direct is a free electronic newsletter emailed every Wednesday to personal members of the [American Library Association](#).

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