



[A disproportionate pandemic](#)



Emily Udell writes: “Before COVID-19 came along, 18-year-old Jack Miller (left), who has autism, visited the main location of Gail Borden Public Library District in Elgin, Illinois, three times a week. It would be difficult to find a library-goer whose visits haven’t been affected by COVID-19. But for Jack and many other people with disabilities, the effects are reaching even further. Losing independence, socialization, cognitive stimulation, and other

library benefits is, in many cases, leading to emotional, intellectual, and other difficulties.”...

American Libraries feature, Mar./Apr.

[How user-friendly is your website?](#)



Greg Landgraf writes: “As the pandemic has limited in-person library services this year, many libraries are relying on their websites more than ever to deliver the services their communities need and expect. But a website is useful only if it enables patrons to find and do what they need. The increased importance of library websites during the COVID-19 era has highlighted common usability shortcomings—and opportunities.”...

American Libraries feature, Mar./Apr.

[Newsmaker: Kazuo Ishiguro](#)

Alison Marcotte writes: “Many may know Kazuo Ishiguro as author of *The Remains of the Day* (1989) and *Never Let Me Go* (2005).



Now, with the March release of *Klara and the Sun* (Alfred A. Knopf)—his first novel since receiving the Nobel Prize in Literature in 2017—Ishiguro tells the story of Klara, an ‘Artificial Friend’ for sale who hopes to be chosen by a customer. With the aid of its unforgettable narrator, the novel explores what it means to be human—to love, to feel loneliness, and everything in between.

American Libraries spoke with Ishiguro about his new work, the parallels between Klara’s world and ours, and being knighted.”...

American Libraries Trend, Mar./Apr.

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A place within ALA



ALA President Julius C. Jefferson Jr. writes: “Libraries and library workers had an important role leading up to the 2020 presidential election by encouraging and supporting voter registration, which led to more than 66% of eligible voters participating—making 2020 the most engaged election since 1900. No matter who you voted for, as an ALA member you understood the significance of engaging in our democracy and the democratic process.

Participation in the democratic process and the governance of our nation is important to the citizens we serve. The governance of ALA should be equally important to our members.”...

American Libraries column, Mar./Apr.

Revolutions where we stand



ALA Executive Director Tracie D. Hall writes: “Though the COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated the issue, there has long been an unmistakable correlation between communities that navigate high rates of poverty and those that limit spending on libraries, a correlation antithetical to the baseline understanding of why libraries exist and what they can offer users, and one that over time cannot help but feel negligent—if not willful.”...

American Libraries column, Mar./Apr.

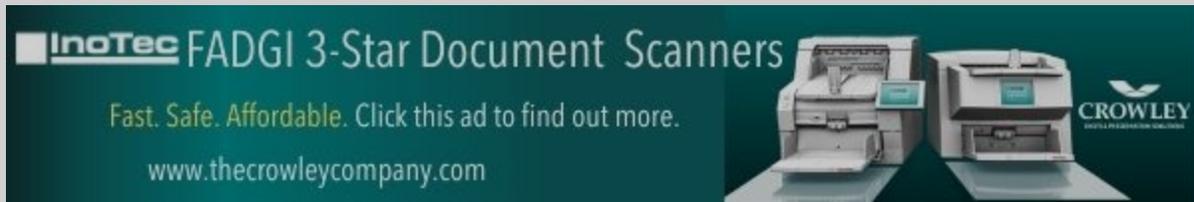
2021 Annual Conference (Virtual) registration opens

Registration for the [ALA Annual Conference and Exhibition](#), June 23–29, is now open. The virtual event will include educational programming, the News You Can Use series, memorable featured



speakers, special author events, the Library Marketplace, Presidents' Programs, Discussion Groups, leading authors, live-chat presentations, and networking opportunities. The list of Featured Speakers will be announced soon....

ALA Conference Services, March 2



The Dr. Seuss controversy and libraries



Dr. Seuss Enterprises [announced March 2](#) that it would no longer publish [six of the author and illustrator's early works](#) that "portray people in ways that are hurtful and wrong." While some pundits and politicians claimed the move was [akin to book burning](#), OIF Director Deborah Caldwell-Stone [said that Dr. Seuss Enterprises' move is "well within their rights"](#) and doesn't mean that the six titles will necessarily be banned. "They haven't asked for anyone else to remove the books from their collections, whether it's libraries, schools, or personal collections," she says. She confirms that, as the [ALA's lists of banned and challenged books](#) attest, "diverse topics like LGBTQ themes and characters or books that deal with racial justice" have been more frequent targets of complaints....

Yahoo News, March 2; Dr. Seuss Enterprises, March 2; AP News, March 2; Ben Shapiro Twitter, March 2

Public libraries and the pandemic



In the fall and winter of 2020, New America embarked on a snapshot study to gather data on how—or if—people were discovering, accessing, and using their public libraries during the COVID-19 pandemic, with a focus on materials that libraries made available online. Their findings, which include data from a national survey of 2,620 people, highlight the need for more inclusivity, more focus on providing internet access, and more awareness-raising initiatives with local organizations and schools. [Read the full report...](#)

New America, March 1

Brooklyn librarian's bilingual storytime hits big

When Brooklyn Public Library Children's Librarian Tenzin Kalsang's storytime for kids—in which she reads in both Tibetan and English—moved online last year, she was so nervous she couldn't sleep the night before. Her storytimes soon attracted viewers from



around the world, from countries as far away as Australia and Switzerland, and one has been viewed 20,000 times....

NPR, Feb. 28



Libraries and 1619 Project programming



Brendan Dowling writes: “For over a year, [Heights Libraries](#) (Cleveland Heights, Ohio) has held monthly programs surrounding [The 1619 Project](#), *The New York Times*’s long-form journalism project that investigates how slavery molded the United States’s economy, politics, and social structure. Outreach Librarian John Piché spoke with us about best practices for holding your own program, community engagement, and partnering with local organizations....

Public Libraries Online, Feb. 24

The science behind “Zoom fatigue”



Researchers at Stanford University have confirmed what millions of remote workers already knew: “Zoom fatigue” causes greater stress than meeting in real life because of the “nonverbal overload” of endless video calls. [A study by Jeremy Bailenson](#), professor of communication and founding director of the Stanford Virtual Human Interaction Lab, found that the underlying causes of Zoom fatigue include “excessive amounts of close-up eye gaze” and “increased self-evaluation from staring at video of oneself.”...

Financial Times, Feb. 26; Technology, Mind, and Behavior, Feb. 23

14 books to combat anti-Asian racism in America



Jae-Yeon Yoo and Stefani Kuo write: “In the last year, the Asian American community has seen [an onslaught of verbal harassment and physical attacks](#), triggered by the onset of COVID-19—still called ‘the Chinese virus’ by many Americans. Despite the continued violence, however, US media has kept relatively silent on the matter. We’ve compiled this list as a way to better understand the deep roots of Asian American discrimination in the

US.”...

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