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As promised, Nicolette Sosulski's "Real-Life Reference" returns with the story of a melodic patron interaction—and if any of you are singers (I am!), you may have a similar reference tale to tell, yourself! This issue also features a "Reference Under the Radar" column from Mike Bemis and a word from our sponsor, Gale, along with a look at a recent reference review and everyone's favorite, #twitterreference.

We've got more content to come as well! Look for a second, bonus August issue of *Top Shelf Reference* in your e-mail box near the end of the month!

—[Rebecca Vnuk](#), Editor, Collection Management and Library Outreach, *Booklist*

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As a product manager at Gale, I love connecting with customers and learning about how they utilize eBooks on the GVRL platform. During these conversations, one common thread is usually the merit of GVRL in providing students with the foundational materials needed to better understand core concepts in their areas of study. Given the fact that institutions only need to purchase one copy of a book on GVRL to grant access to their entire campus, this insight—coupled with an ever-increasing focus on lowering student costs—presents libraries with a great opportunity to explore eBooks on GVRL as a source of

affordable course materials.

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Reference Under the Radar: A Lifeline for Reference Librarians

by Mike Bemis



OK, so you're at the reference desk (or information desk, or help desk, or whatever you call it), and you're feeling coolly competent, maybe even a little smug. After all, you've got a master's degree, you've been taught how to use Boolean search operators, and maybe you've even attended a conference or two in some unfamiliar city. Then it happens, as it always does, sooner or later: someone approaches you and wants to know what George Washington used for toilet paper. (Hint: it sure as heck wasn't toilet paper. More on that later.)

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Real-Life Reference: Librarian Karaoke

by Nicolette Warisse Sosulski



You hear about "Bridezilla" and "Momzilla." Sometimes they exist in the same family. But sometimes it seems that Momzilla is paired with a daughter-bride who is not as invested as Mom is. Mom then goes into a panic that things are not under control and that friends and family near and far will converge on a wedding that is not perfect. The idea is intolerable, and Mom then screeches, "Well it is *your* wedding, but I can see that if it is going to be done *right*, I am going to have to do it!" She storms out the door and drives to the library.

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Featured Reference Review: *The SAGE Encyclopedia of War: Social Science Perspectives*

by Michael Tosko

Edited by an expert in the sociology of war and peace, this new collection aims to take a fresh and unique perspective on war, focusing on the social-science perspectives rather than the militaristic, historical, or political viewpoints normally taken in such reference works. So, instead of battles and generals, the alphabetically ordered entries cover issues like *Balance of power*; *Don't Ask, Don't Tell*; *Military-industrial complex*; *Soldier suicides*; *Political will for war*; *War profiteering*; and *Ecological causes of war*.



#twitterreference

by Rebecca Vnuk

Librarians rarely just sit there while out at the reference desk. Even when there's not a patron in front of them, they're often furiously typing away at something on their computers. It's likely that they're searching for the answer to a previous question, working on the latest collection report, tweaking a new public desk schedule . . . or perhaps they're tweeting. Let's take a peek.

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In case you were wondering about things "everyone knows" about, I just introduced an adult (not new computer user) to YouTube.
[#librarylife](#)

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Helping a patron fax, ask him where the number is. He picks up a BANANA that he had written on the peel of, while at the store.
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