

NORTH CAROLINA LIBRARIES

Volume 83, Number 2 ♦ Fall/Winter 2025 ♦ ISSN 2379-4305

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From the Editor: Fall 2025

**Fall, leaves, fall; die, flowers, away;
Lengthen night and shorten day;
Every leaf speaks bliss to me
Fluttering from the autumn tree....
--Emily Brontë**

Happy fall to all! Hopefully many of us will be able to gather at the 66th Biennial Conference this October at the Benton Convention Center in Winston-Salem.

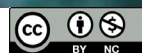
This fall 2025 issue features an article relating school librarians' responses to a study on graphic novels and an article on an academic library's staff development group that tackled preparing for major life events. "In Step with Library Leaders" guest columnist Brian Matthews (new Dean and University Librarian at Elon) encourages librarians to situate themselves in an "intersection mindset" to tackle wicked problems that require "cross-sector, interdisciplinary responses." And "On the Front Lines" guest columnists Evan Schmoll and Angela Davis describe some strategies community college librarians can take to engage early college high school students on their campuses.

In addition to those librarianship articles and columns, the issue contains two feature articles and the North Carolina Books book reviews. UNC Chapel Hill's SILS masters theses and doctoral dissertations from Summer 2023 to Spring 2025 constitute one of the features, with their abstracts, and when publicly available, the URLs. The other featured article, "From the Pages of *North Carolina Libraries*," is the first Lagniappe column, which was introduced as a complement to North Carolina Books. Speaking of North Carolina books, reviews editor Laura Mangum brings a dozen for your reading pleasure, with titles ranging from *Southern Mountain Music* to *Language and Life on Ocracoke*. I am especially intrigued by *Southern News*, *Southern Politics: How a Newspaper Defined a State for a Century*, but don't skip YA novel *Breaking into Sunlight* or the *Anthology of Black Mountain College Poetry*. What will you read from this list?

Please consider submitting an article manuscript to your association journal! (I'm looking at you especially, presenters from the Biennial Conference!) Questions, ideas, or suggestions? Email the editor at editor@nclaonline.org.



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“Immediate, Apocalyptic Freaking Out?”: School Librarians and the Phenomenon of the Graphic Novel

Introduction

Frederick Wertham’s 1954 book, *The Seduction of the Innocent*, argued so powerfully that comics could turn readers into juvenile delinquents that it sparked the development of the Comics Code Authority, which was a self-regulation strategy intended to help comics creators avoid the “dangerous” ideas and moral gray areas against which Wertham railed (Comic Book Legal Defense Fund, 2023). Though the Comics Code has since been left behind, the idea that comics corrupt has not. Scott McCloud (1993) provides a foundational definition of comics as “juxtaposed pictorial and other images in deliberate sequence, intended to convey information and/or produce an aesthetic response in the viewer” (p. 9). Though comics are generally considered more episodic in nature, this definition applies to graphic novels as well, and the terms are used interchangeably in much of the professional literature, including this study. According to the American Library Association’s annual list, two of the top five challenged books in 2022 were graphic novels, with *Gender Queer* ranking first and *Flamer* fourth (Gomez, 2023). And between 2010 and 2019, more than 10 percent of the top 100 books challenged were graphic novels (Jensen, 2022).

Comics and graphic novels are often targeted for censorship “because [they] thrive on the power of the static image, a single page or panel can be the impetus for a challenge in a way that’s different from a passage in a book” (Gomez, 2018). As Kjeldsen (2021) explained, “imagery is thought to influence in a stronger way than other forms of expression. A picture is perceived to be more powerful than text... since the beginning of rhetorical thought, vivid and visual communication has been viewed as a problem to truth, freedom, and ethics” (p. 5-6). Visual images have been thought to be “powerful,” “belonging to the unconscious,” and “wholly irrational” (p. 5-6). Given the power and accessibility of images,

it is not surprising that censors would home in on them in often misguided attempts to “protect others, frequently children, from difficult ideas and information” (ALA, 2023).

Literature Review

Graphic novels have enjoyed such a surge in popularity recently that they are currently one of the most circulated types of materials in school libraries (Gavigan, 2014; Becnel and Moeller, 2020; Moeller and Becnel, 2020), with children and teens choosing them to read for enjoyment and pleasure (Jennings, Rule, and Vander Zanden, 2014; Boerman-Cornell, 2016; Moeller, 2022). Not only are they enjoyable; they also support student development of multiple literacy skills (Cromer and Clark, 2007; Chun, 2009; Hammond, 2012; Pagliaro, 2014; Cook, 2017; Lalremruati, 2019) and English language literacy for those whose first language is not English (Park, 2016; Howard, 2017). Despite these benefits, some librarians are reluctant to collect graphic novels because of the difficulty determining reading level (Becnel and Moeller, 2020; Moeller and Becnel, 2020) or the fear of backlash from their communities (Moodie and Calvert, 2018; Becnel and Moeller, 2020; Moeller and Becnel, 2020). Such backlash is a real possibility, as scholars have documented objections to the inclusion of graphic novels in school libraries from teachers (Lapp et. al, 2012; author, Yusof, Lazim, and Salehuddin, 2017), pre-service teachers (Mathews, 2011; Clark, 2013), and parents (Nesmith 2016).

Objections to and discomfort with graphic novels can result in direct and indirect forms of censorship. Censorship might involve external forces such as administrators or school boards banning or restricting access to certain titles or types of content. A more insidious form of censorship, termed self-censorship (Asheim, 1953; Dawkins, 2018), occurs when librarians opt to avoid collecting or providing access to specific material because of their personal discomfort

with or objection to the material or fear that certain stakeholders might cry foul. Some ways that librarians inhibit access include altering material, silently withdrawing potentially problematic content, or creating restricted collections. Dawkins (2018) explains that “School librarians may choose to exclude controversial content if they perceive their community as rural, conservative, or to likely challenge such choices” (p. 12). These descriptors apply to the locations in which this research was conducted--rural areas of North and South Carolina--making this fertile territory for exploring self-censorship behaviors and motivations surrounding graphic novel collection decisions of school librarians.

Methods

This article synthesizes findings from several studies conducted by the authors during a three year period (Becnel and Moeller, 2020; Moeller and Becnel, 2020; Becnel and Moeller, 2021; Becnel and Moeller, 2022; Moeller and Becnel, 2022). In these studies, individual school librarians were invited, through email and social media posts, to engage with surveys, questionnaires, and follow-up interviews in Zoom. Additionally, focus groups were conducted at state library association conferences, in which librarians were gathered and engaged in conversation prompted by scripted questions (Moeller and Becnel, 2022). Topics explored in the surveys, interviews, and focus group include the acquisitions process, collection development, graphic novels for youth, and intellectual freedom. These studies were conducted in the southeastern United States. Though this geographical limitation narrows the potential pool of respondents, it targets an area of the nation with some of highest rates of book banning in schools (Meehan & Friedman, 2023), enabling a robust exploration into the behaviors and motivations associated with self-censorship and material challenges.

Findings

Censorship Behaviors

Librarians described checking purchased items during processing for nudity, objectionable language, and sexually suggestive content and opting to donate items with this type of content to other libraries rather than adding them to the collection they were

purchased for (Moeller and Becnel, 2020). When unsure whether or not a particular item might be problematic, some respondents reported asking the school principal to make the decision about whether to include the book in the collection (Moeller and Becnel, 2022). When the majority of an item was deemed appropriate, librarians [sometimes] reported placing barcodes or stickers over potentially objectionable images (Becnel and Moeller, 2020, p. 131). Another solution recounted was to alter the items by drawing clothing onto naked characters (Moeller and Becnel, 2020, p. 520). For example, one librarian explained: “Sometimes I have drawn a little outfit [on the body] and colored it in” (Moeller and Becnel, 2022, p. 266).

Other methods of censorship engaged in by respondents included monitoring the graphic novel collection closely, dissuading readers from checking out those items (Moeller and Becnel, 2020; Becnel and Moeller, 2022), and creating “restricted collections.” Restricted collections typically involve allowing only students in certain grade levels or those with parental permission to access certain items (Moeller and Becnel, 2020; Becnel and Moeller, 2021). In some cases, restricted collections are kept out of sight so that patrons have to proactively and independently seek them out, even if they fall into the category of patrons allowed access to those items (Becnel and Moeller, 2020; Moeller and Becnel, 2022).

Reasons for Censoring Graphic Novels

School librarians referenced fear of losing their jobs when explaining why they engaged in censorship behaviors. For example, one librarian explained why she had not collected the award-winning children’s graphic novel, *Drama*, for her school’s library by referring to a scene depicting two boys kissing. She stated that this book would be appropriate in a public library setting as “it shows how the world is today,” but added regretfully, that “you’ve gotta step more on eggshells in a public school...unfortunately. If you want to keep your job” (Becnel and Moeller, 2021, p. 14)! Of her high school library, another participant said, “...I do feel like it’s hard because anime and manga is a little... the line between young adult and adult is very fluid, and as someone who likes her job and wants to keep it, that’s hard” (Moeller and Becnel, 2022, p. 265).

This fear of losing a position because of a book challenge might seem overdramatic, as there are steps and procedures for handling what should be an ordinary and expected occurrence. However, this orderly, collaborative process does not always play out according to plan, especially in the case of graphic novels. As one respondent explained, the process often “gets bypassed because the first thing a parent does instead of calling the school and talking to me or talking to the principal, is take a picture of what is objectionable and post it on social media and be like *oh my god* what are we teaching these children? It’s this immediate, apocalyptic freaking out” (Moeller and Becnel, 2022, p. 269). Understandably, librarians fear being judged by the public based on a single page of any book in their collection.

Exacerbating this fear is many school librarians’ lack of familiarity with graphic novels. In the words of one librarian: “I really feel the only time we’ve had issues with it [censorship] is with graphic novels, and I think it’s because we automatically assume that it’s going to be age-appropriate for elementary because it has pictures in it. And I don’t know if that’s a common mistake that new librarians...make, but I know I definitely made that assumption. Oh, if it’s a graphic novel, it’s going to be good for anybody because it has pictures” (Moeller and Becnel, 2020, p. 522)! Another revealed: “I think I don’t read them [graphic novels] personally for enjoyment because I think my visual literacy skills are very low...My brain isn’t trained to read those [visual clues]” (Moeller and Becnel, 2020, p. 522).

The discomfort and lack of familiarity with graphic novels means that librarians often rely on vendor recommendations and publisher information to make selection decisions. Many of them are dissatisfied with vendor information, such as the librarian who purchased an item and recommended it to a student, only to have the student return it and say, “Why did you think I was going to enjoy this? Did you not know there’s nudity in here?” And I was like, no!... Not appropriate for middle school” (Moeller and Becnel, 2020, p. 522-23). Another librarian said of vendor age and grade recommendations: “Don’t trust the labels” (Becnel and Moeller, 2020, p. 130). Publisher recommendations also came under fire. One librarian recounted, “I wish the publishers would

be a little more cognizant about what’s in a graphic novel. We had a beautiful book that came in that was a graphic novel of *The Lottery*, and we were reluctant to put it out because there was a bath scene in it. Which is not even in the story, and she’s nude. It was a beautiful book but in Rock Hill, this is going to get me into trouble” (Moeller and Becnel, 2022, p. 266).

Not only are some librarians unfamiliar or uncomfortable with graphic novels; many consider them simple and juvenile, and useful primarily as a bridge to reading more traditional print formats (Moeller and Becnel, 2020; Moeller and Becnel, 2022). One participant bemoaned: “I just wonder if graphic novel readers are ever going to want to transition to something...You know, are they going to be the ones who read the comics and the informational texts online, and that’s obviously fun but I feel like, is the transition going to happen, or is that the type of reader they are?” Another librarian added, “I would not think you were a healthy human being if you only ate cookies all day, for every meal and you can’t consume just one kind of food and be a healthy human being. And you can’t consume just one kind of literature and be a healthy reader” (Moeller and Becnel, 2022, p. 263). When librarians suggest, directly or indirectly, that the items students gravitate toward are inferior, they engage in what Tetreault (2019) calls “literacy shaming,” which discourages students from pursuing recreational reading. Even when librarians themselves acknowledge the value and sophistication of graphic novels, they often have to overcome the objections of some teachers, who think of graphic novels as “trash literature,” and do not think they should be part of a school library collection.

Implications

It is important to remember that while a majority of librarians we spoke with reported engaging in some kind of censorship behavior in relation to graphic novels, there was also a significant pro-graphic novel contingent who personally enjoy graphic novels and/or celebrate the power of graphic novels to attract and enthrall young readers. These librarians argued that the freedom to choose their own reading material is paramount for students. Some expressed that they felt responsible for providing material that

would spark joy for the children they serve. Other pro-graphic novel librarians pointed out the rich vocabulary that graphic novels employ and the skills needed to decode and interpret visual imagery.

Unfortunately, students' access to a rich collection of graphic novels can come down to whether the librarian in the building is a proponent of the format. As one librarian said of collection development decisions: "A lot of this is personal preference, but what else can you do? It's just me in here. It comes down to me and what I think should be on the shelf" (Becnel and Moeller, 2020). What should be on the library shelves, though, should not be determined by the personal preferences of the librarian, but instead based on factors such as curriculum guidelines, student and teacher requests, professional reviews, and popularity. Librarians' duties include protecting the First Amendment rights of students, and this includes providing students access to items the librarian may not personally care for.

Often self-censorship is not a result of personal bias, though, and is instead rooted in fear of the backlash that might result from a decision to collect something that draws an objection or complaint. A good first step to dealing with this legitimate fear is educating the school community, including the principal and other teachers, about the librarian's role and duties. The ALA (2014) interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights as it pertains to the school library states:

"Students and educators served by the school library have access to resources and services free of constraints resulting from personal, partisan, or doctrinal disapproval. School librarians resist efforts by individuals or groups to define what is appropriate for all students or teachers to read, view, hear, or access regardless of technology formats, or method of delivery."

Beyond educating the community about the library's purpose and role in the life of the school, the librarian can recruit stakeholders to collaborate in the development and implementation of policies and procedures that support that purpose. The relationships and understanding that can develop when this collaboration occurs can result in a ripple effect of support for the library and the librarian throughout the school and beyond, enabling the librarian to

make collection development decisions with more confidence.

To support the selection process for graphic novel content, librarians might do well to look at sources outside of vendor and publisher recommendations and information. Nelson (2022) reported that comics publishing companies can now use artificial intelligence to filter for content in an effort to sanitize graphic novels for commercial gain, a process that invokes the specter of the Comics Code Authority as it limits the freedoms of both creators and consumers. For less potentially problematic professional recommendations, librarians may instead consider selection resources such as the Great Graphic Novels for Teens booklist published by the Young Adult Library Services Association (2023) which is compiled annually by a committee of public and school librarians and includes recommended titles for youth aged 12-18. Likewise, the Association for Library Service to Children (2023) publishes annually lists of recommended titles for kindergarten to second grade; third to fifth grade; and sixth to eighth grade. School librarians can also utilize the list developed by the Graphic Novels & Comics Roundtable (2023) which features recommendations for children aged five to 12 years old and "aims to increase awareness of the graphic novel medium, raise voices of diverse comics creators, and aid library staff in the development of graphic novel collections."

Conclusion

Due to feelings of vulnerability and responsibility, many librarians see it as part of their job to create a challenge-proof collection. However, this is almost certainly an impossible goal, and one that if reached would result in a sterile, uninspiring collection. As Adams (2009) explained, "Since no one can predict which books or other resources will be challenged or who will express a concern, a more effective approach is to take proactive steps toward creating a climate where the principles of intellectual freedom are understood and the legal right of minors to receive information in the school library is acknowledged" (p. 48). To create that climate, librarians have to be proactive and educate library stakeholders about the purposes of the school library, both curricular and recreational, and the responsibilities of the school

librarian. Ideally, interested and engaged stakeholders will then work with the librarian to create or modify existing collection development and reconsideration policies that speak to all types of materials, including graphic novels. With these partnerships in place, librarians should feel supported in their efforts to

create and maintain an appealing, appropriate collection and able to see challenges, to graphic novels or anything else, as entry points for engaging in productive conversation with stakeholders rather than as existential threats.

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Preparing for Life Events through Library Employee Self-Selected Group Development Activities

Abstract

While it is crucial for people to prepare for tragic and unavoidable life events by doing tasks such as estate planning, insurance annuity selection, home inventory creation, and obituary writing, these preparations are often postponed for various reasons, including procrastination, busy schedules, feelings of denial, and the emotional dread of confronting one's own mortality. Employees at J. Murrey Atkins Library have successfully dedicated time to work on these important undertakings in a group setting, building motivation for these difficult tasks while also building camaraderie in the workplace. For almost two years, a small group of Atkins Library employees have taken part in lunchtime virtual conferences as part of the "Life Events" group, created as part of the library's Self-Selected Group Development (SSGD) program. Group members have been inspired to accomplish personal goals related to estate and disaster planning, choosing insurance annuities, creating home inventories, writing obituaries, and doing other preparation tasks. This article documents first, the planning tasks that the group addressed, and second, the development of the group itself, offering an overview of the library's SSGD program and the Life Events group's structure and agenda. Perhaps the success of the members of this group will inspire interested parties from other libraries to organize similar groups for their own employees or patrons.

Planning for Death and Adverse Life Events

It is important to plan for the future at any age, but it can be overwhelming to actually do so; it is often difficult to apply one's knowledge of finances, taxes, and law when making complex decisions, and many people simply shudder at the thought of making end-of-life decisions.^{1,2,3} Indeed, many Americans act as if they will live forever; according to the Investor Survey component of the FINRA Investor Education Foundation's 2021 National Financial Capability Study, only 54% of investors surveyed reported having a will.⁴

Assessing property

Many people seem to go through life assuming that they will never face catastrophic accidents or poor health—or at least not before retirement age. But people of all ages benefit from planning for adversity. Many young adults underestimate their net worth, forgetting that automobiles, bank accounts, and personal possessions are part of a future estate. If these young people die without a will, this estate would be divided among survivors according to their state's intestate succession laws.⁵ People who find their state's intestacy scheme acceptable can save themselves the costs of drawing up a will, but many people's state laws do not align with how they wish their property to be divided, thus necessitating a will.

Another reason it is important for younger generations to begin the process of planning for the

¹ Gallardo, Juan E., and Oscar Solis. "Financial Literacy and Estate Planning in American Households." *Journal of Financial Service Professionals* 78, no. 1, (2024): 40-47.

² Kim, Kyoung Tae, and Richard Stebbins. "Everybody Dies: Financial Education and Basic Estate Planning." *Journal of Financial Counseling and Planning* 32, no. 3, (2021): 402-416.

³ Vincent, Ella. "Why you Need a Power of Attorney." *Kiplinger Personal Finance*, November 8, 2023. <https://www.kiplinger.com/retirement/estate-planning/power-of-attorney>

⁴ Lin, Judy T., Christopher Bumcrot, Gary Mottola, Olivia Valdes, and Gerri Walsh. (2022). *The Changing Landscape of Investors in the United States: A Report of the National Financial Capability Study*, a report published as part of the 2021 National Financial Capability Study (NFCS). FINRA Investor Education Foundation. <https://www.FINRAFoundation.org/Investor-Report2021>

⁵ North Carolina General Statutes - Intestate Succession Act. (1959, s.1. § 29-1-30)

future early is that they may be overestimating their potential inheritance from older relatives. Estates may dwindle due to many factors: account mismanagement, geriatric medical expenses, life expectancy, fraud, creditors, inflation, economic recessions, estate taxes, and court costs.⁶ Some older relatives may not have created wills at all, or may have simply scrawled their wishes on a legal pad in a way that is not legally binding.⁷ Even when there is an established will, sometimes the testator's instructions are not clear or explicit, and the estate's executor may assign assets differently than the heirs expected.⁸ For all these reasons, young people, too, should begin planning for end-of-life.

Minimizing estate taxes

One key thing to prepare for is estate taxes. It is prudent to prevent the shock of an unforeseen tax bill for a family home purchased decades ago, retirement accounts, or even royalties generated from intellectual property rights by reaching out to a financial planner, Certified Public Accountant (CPA), and an attorney early on. Estate or inheritance taxes can be exorbitant, in part because of the huge increase in real estate values over the past few years. It is especially important to plan ahead if one resides in or simply owns property in states with estate and inheritance taxes. Some retirees choose to move to states with more favorable tax laws or distribute assets early in order to reduce the value of their estate.⁹ It may also be worth investigating whether their successor beneficiaries would see a tax benefit if they converted

their (non-inherited) traditional Individual Retirement Account (IRA) into a Roth IRA before death.¹⁰ Similarly, testators may consider transferring copyrights (e.g. literature, art work, etc.) and technology patents into a trust to protect intellectual property while offering a potential revenue stream during their lifetimes and minimizing tax implications for future generations.^{11,12}

Updating beneficiaries

We can learn from the mistakes of others around beneficiaries—mistakes that sometimes resulted in years-long legal battles. Some neglected to update beneficiary information on life insurance forms, leaving their intended beneficiaries out in the cold. Other families were surprised by spousal entitlements to federal 401(K) accounts under federal law, which can cause legal challenges even when adult children are listed as beneficiaries. Finally, when updating beneficiaries, it is important to give enough identifying information for attorneys to track them down; one unlucky soul missed out on inheriting a \$1.1 million IRA distribution because he or she could not be located.¹³

Planning for pets' futures

Most people know it is important to name a guardian for minor children, but sometimes people overlook the importance of planning for their animals' future when they can no longer physically care for pets. Some people decide to direct financial assets towards veterinary care and daily expenses through a

⁶ Vincent, Ella. "Don't Expect a Large Inheritance." *Kiplinger Personal Finance*, January 2024; 64-65.

⁷ Hughes, Theodore E., and David Klein. *A Family Guide to Wills, Funerals & Probate: How to Protect Yourself and Your Survivors*. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1987.

⁸ Eberly, Ashlea. "Pass on your Heirlooms, Not Family Drama; How to Creatively Approach Estate Planning and Divving Up Inherited Items." *Wall Street Journal* (Online), July 30, 2023. <https://www.proquest.com/newspapers/pass-on-your-heirlooms-not-family-drama-how/docview/2843484981/se-2>

⁹ Ebeling, Ashlea. "Prepare for State Estate Taxes --- as Families Often Find Out, these Rules Are Complicated and Can Change from Year to Year." *Wall Street Journal, Eastern Edition*, November 21, 2023. <https://www.proquest.com/newspapers/prepare-state-estate-taxes-as-families-often-find/docview/2891939779/se-2>.

¹⁰ Ebeling, Ashlea. "How to Leave Grandkids Your Retirement Savings—and Not a Huge Tax Bill; the New Rules for Inherited IRAs might Warrant a Rewrite of Your Estate Plan." *Wall Street Journal* (Online), July 09, 2023. <https://www.proquest.com/newspapers/how-leave-grandkids-your-retirement-savings-not/docview/2834545561/se-2>

¹¹ Haber, Frederic. "Copyright and Literary Estate Implications of Dr. Seuss Enterprises Withdrawing Six Books." March 18, 2021. Accessed May 29, 2024. <https://www.copyright.com/blog/copyright-and-literary-estate-implications-of-dr-seuss-enterprises-withdrawing-six-books/>

¹² Wealth Counsel. Estate Planning for Intellectual Property. June 26, 2020. Accessed May 29, 2024. <https://info.wealthcounsel.com/blog/estate-planning-for-intellectual-property-rights>

¹³ Ebeling, Ashlea. "Your Will Alone Won't Guarantee Your Money Goes to Your Heirs; those Beneficiary Forms You Filled Out Years Ago can Supersede Your Other Estate Plans." *Wall Street Journal* (Online), October 01, 2023. <https://www.proquest.com/newspapers/your-will-alone-wont-guarantee-money-goes-heirs/docview/2870538747/se-2>

will, trust, or donation.¹⁴ Others sign on to perpetual pet care programs, which are available throughout the country to help seriously ill owners care for their pets while undergoing medical treatment and to ensure the pet's future care even after the owner dies.^{15,16} It is especially important to plan for the care of tortoises and parrots, which can easily outlive their owners and thus require more careful planning than domestic animals such as dogs or cats.¹⁷ Owners should investigate whether potential caretakers will require a permit or registration for the possession, transfer, or transportation of any unusual species.^{18,19,20}

Planning for Material Losses

Writing a will is a good start, but there is more to planning for adversity than planning for death with the tasks addressed above—assessing property, listing inheritors for the transfer of wealth and valuables, and allocating charitable donations. It is equally important to prepare for adverse events during the life course, such as material theft, loss, or property destruction. One frequently overlooked or procrastinated task is documenting personal belongings in an updated home inventory. This can feel like an enormous, daunting job, but an up-to-date inventory is important for several reasons: it can help to determine what items need to be appraised, can guide the decision about how much renters insurance or homeowners insurance is needed, and can expedite the process of making insurance claims should the need arise.²¹ National insurance companies offer down-

loadable home inventory templates that are useful when repairs or replacement to buildings or contents become necessary. It is helpful to keep purchase receipts and properly store photographs or videos to prove ownership and condition of insured items.

Organizing and Planning the Life Events Group: Self-Selected Group Development in the Library

The Atkins Library, through its active Staff Development & Activities Committee, created activities and programs to build relationships across the library and increase interaction among employees. One of these activities is the Self-Selected Group Development (SSGD), in which groups connect through common interests, such as music, health & exercise, and foreign language, among others.²² With this framework already in place, I organized an SSGD around planning for life events. The group meets via online virtual conferencing two to four times most months to discuss topics related to “life planning,” helping members overcome procrastination by scheduling time to tackle these personal projects.

Orientation slide show

As the group facilitator, I begin the process of introducing librarians and employees to the “Life Events” SSGD with an orientation slide show entitled “Get Your Legal Life in Order: Preparing for Life’s Unfortunate Events.” I present the orientation once or twice a year, when new members are added. Orientations take place both online, via an online video platform, and

¹⁴ Beyer, Gerry W. “What Every Veterinarian Needs to Know about Pet Trusts.” *Journal of the American Veterinary Medical Association* 229, no. 10 (2006): 1576–1579.

¹⁵ Hannibal, Betsy Simmons. “Who will Care for Your Pet After You Die?” Accessed May 23, 2024. <https://www.nolo.com/legal-encyclopedia/who-will-care-for-your-pet-after-you-die.html>

¹⁶ Hannibal, Betsy Simmons. “Estate Planning for Pets.” Accessed May 24, 2024. <https://www.nolo.com/legal-encyclopedia/estate-planning-pets.html>

¹⁷ Collins, Eliza. “Tortoise Estate Planning—One Chore of having a Pet that Lives 100 Years; More People are Putting their Desert Tortoises, and Other Long-Living Animals, in their Wills. Can the Grandkids Take ‘Jebediah?’” *Wall Street Journal (Online)*, July 13, 2023. <https://www.proquest.com/newspapers/tortoise-estate-planning-one-chore-having-pet/docview/2836280273/se-2>.

¹⁸ City of Raleigh. “Wild Animal Ordinance.” Updated January 5, 2024. Accessed May 23, 2024. <https://raleighnc.gov/safety/services/wild-animal-ordinance>

¹⁹ North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission. “Wildlife Captivity License.” Accessed May 23, 2024. <https://www.ncwildlife.org/Licensing/Other-Licenses-and-Permits/Wildlife-Captivity-License>

²⁰ North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission. “Restricted Species Permit.” Accessed May 23, 2024. <https://www.ncwildlife.org/Licensing/Other-Licenses-and-Permits/Restricted-Species-Permit>

²¹ State Farm. “How to Create a Home Inventory.” September 1, 2022. Accessed May 27, 2024. <https://www.statefarm.com/simple-insights/residence/home-inventory-how-to-create-one>

²² Eads, Denelle. “Changing the Climate: Staff Development Activities that Address the Real Issue, Communication in the Workplace.” *North Carolina Libraries* 75, no. 1, (Spring/Summer 2017): 2-4.

face-to-face in the employee breakroom. The slide-show content reminds members of the importance of planning *before* an adverse life event occurs, either to those close to us or to ourselves.

Orientation attendees are introduced to basic concepts of planning for life events through discussions of relevant news reports and talking through “what would happen if” certain events took place in their lives right now. Slide show topics, listed in Table 1, include both historical and recent examples in the media of people who did not plan ahead. The group began with stories of celebrities who either died intestate or left behind multiple wills, resulting in lengthy court cases and malice between relatives.^{23,24} The group also discusses “what would happen if my spouse and I were incapacitated, missing, or killed in an accident;” how would those different situations affect family, neighbors, pets, employer/co-workers, friends, or mortgage lender? Another topic addressed is the advantages and disadvantages of publishing detailed obituaries in this age of identity fraud and social engineering, and the risks of letting a house sit empty. The orientation lays out the group’s intention to work on potentially unpleasant tasks such as the pre-writing of obituaries, purchasing cemetery plots, and arranging memorial services, all designed to reduce the burden on the bereaved, and on documenting the value of everyday items around the home in case they ever need to be replaced due to theft or natural disaster.

During each orientation, people are generally eager to divulge seemingly private difficulties they or their loved ones are facing. Most immediately begin outlining what they plan to do during group meeting times over the next few months. At the end of the orientation, attendees have the option to sign up for electronic meeting invitations.

Table 1: Topics Addressed in “Life Event” SSGD Orientation Slide Show

Appraisals for home and contents
Home insurance inventories for theft, loss, or death
Power of attorney for finances

Power of attorney for health
Safe deposit box key holders
Living wills/medical directives (and associated religious implications)
Department of Motor Vehicles Joint Tenant with Right of Survivorship Affidavit
Updated beneficiaries on retirement and bank accounts
Trusts and wills – beneficiaries and alternative dispositions
Literary arts trusts with copyright transfers
Technology patent transfers
Transfer On Death designations
Estate sales
Social media passwords
Safe deposit box keys or locker combinations
Documents of birth, death, marriage, divorce
Eulogies
Pre-written obituaries and epitaphs
Funeral planning and costs
Wishes about what to do with cremains
Guardianship or conservatorship of minor children
Ownership transfer of pets and commercial animals
Contact information in the event of one’s own disappearance
Death notification checklists, including government agencies, financial institutions, and professional organizations
Inclusion in will of family testament/spiritual heritage, expectations, explanations of why certain decisions were made

Structure of meetings

Each one-hour virtual meeting begins with about ten minutes of goal setting, with each member discussing what they intend to work on for the next 40-45 minutes. During this time, members also say whether they want to log back on ten minutes before the end of the hour to report on their progress. Once everyone initially logs off, each member conducts their own research or adds to a shared document of helpful hints (see Table 2) while they eat lunch. Anyone who wanted to log back on at the end does so about 50 minutes into the hour for a short recap about small victories or hindrances to what they hoped to accomplish. Members participate according to their

²³ Erskine, Matthew. “The Battle for Prince’s Estate: Unending Conflict, Legal Drama and Lessons for Family Business.” *Forbes*, January 17, 2024. Accessed May 29, 2024. <https://www.forbes.com/sites/matthewerskine/2024/01/17/the-battle-for-princes-estate-unending-conflict-legal-drama-and-lessons-for-family-business/?sh=7746efdb60ab>

²⁴ Erb, Kelly Phillips. “Handwritten Will Found in Aretha Franklin’s Couch Ruled to be Valid.” *Forbes*, July 12, 2023. Accessed May 29, 2024. <https://www.forbes.com/sites/kellyphillips/2023/07/11/handwritten-will-found-in-aretha-franklins-couch-ruled-to-be-valid/?sh=62f2e3c21d46>

calendars, planned projects, and level of interest, so we usually enjoy the company of different individuals and their stories each time we meet.

Although members often discuss experiences their families are facing, legal advice about specific circumstances is not provided. Members are encouraged to seek professional legal counsel when drafting complicated wills or power of attorney documents. However, to gain some foundational knowledge, our group invited a local attorney with expertise in estate planning as a guest speaker. The topics discussed came from general questions, provided ahead of time, about what transpires in probate court, guidance for drafting a will, and North Carolina laws pertaining to surviving spouse property rights. The presentation was educational and well received.

Table 2: Shared document with links to webpages or general information about the below topics

Personal property inventory example
List of local charities that accept more upscale donations (e.g. fine china, antiques)
Death notification checklists
Term life insurance quote information
On-campus notaries
Vacant home management
Caregiver companies
Professional executors
Creating a will, trust, or advanced health care directive
Tips for discussing final wishes with family members
HIPAA access for Medicare or medical insurance claims
Pet perpetual care programs
Insurance inventory with depreciation calculator and cash value versus replacement value

Accomplishments of group members

Articulating goals to others is motivating and can increase the chance of success. It is a pleasure to report that several members met the objectives they set when joining the group. Self-directed tasks that were completed by regular members included purchasing term life insurance, finishing a eulogy, investigating taxable income, writing a will using online tools, choosing an annuity product, authoring an obituary, completing a home inventory, and having end-of-life discussions with parents. One member wrote a Christian testimony for inclusion in their will, similar to the family testament written by Reverend Billy Graham, in order to share their faith and values with the next generation.^{25,26,27,28,29} Another member presented the “Life Events” SSGD orientation content at a family reunion—the perfect place for relatives to have estate planning conversations and exchange contact information. The SSGD members who met their goals report having a sense of achievement and the relief of knowing that important plans are in place for loved ones before the occurrence of an unfortunate event.

Disclaimer: The information in this article is not a substitute for legal or financial advice. Please contact your attorney, CPA, or financial consultant for assistance.

Acknowledgements: Special thanks to all “Life Events” SSGD members for sharing their creative ideas, tips, and hardships, as we each worked to get our legal life in order.

²⁵ Billy Graham Evangelistic Association. “Legacy Planning – Additional Resources – Sharing Your Faith and Values Through your Will.” 2024. Accessed May 28, 2024. <https://giving.billygraham.org/legacy-planning/>

²⁶ Billy Graham Evangelistic Association. “The Why Behind Your Will: Sharing Values and Beliefs.” 2018. Accessed May 28, 2024. https://static.billygraham.org/sites/billygraham.org/uploads/pro/sites/2/2018/07/BGEA-Donor-Ministries-Why-Behind-Will-Worksheet.pdf?_ga=2.72053265.38756805.1717165438-1009586098.1717165324

²⁷ Zamov, Stoyan. “Billy Graham’s Will and Testament Released to Public: Asks Family to Defend Gospel at Any Cost.” *Christian Post*, May 21, 2018. <https://www.christianpost.com/news/billy-grahams-will-and-testament-released-to-public-asks-family-to-defend-gospel-at-any-cost.html>

²⁸ Lifeway Christian Resources. “Billy Graham’s Last Will and Testament Revealed.” May 22, 2018. Accessed May 28, 2024. <https://research.lifeway.com/2018/05/22/billy-graham-leaves-assets-and-parting-words-to-family-funds-to-ministry/>

²⁹ William F. Graham, Jr, will. Signed April 24, 2012 Buncombe County, N.C., Probated May 10, 2018 Buncombe County, N.C. Accessed May 28, 2024. https://mediaweb.wsocvtv.com/document_dev/2018/05/18/Billy%20Graham%20Will_11713417_ver1.0.pdf

Masters Theses and Doctoral Dissertations, Summer 2023 – Spring 2025

School of Information and Library Science, UNC Chapel Hill

Summer 2023

Berdon, Matthew. "An Analysis Of Seven UNC Chapel Hill Library Documents with an Emphasis on Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Antiracism or Accessibility." A Master's Paper for the Master of Science in Library Science, June, 2023. Advisor: Casey Rawson. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.17615/wxsc-c423>

This project examines seven documents published by the UNC Chapel Hill Libraries with two research questions. How does the UNC Chapel Hill Library define the terms equity, diversity, inclusion, and antiracism on an institutional level? Also, what policies are present and in use within the UNC Chapel Hill Library that utilize antiracist principles or other terms as defined previously? The seven documents selected are the library's diversity statement, building use policy, public services values, 2013 strategic plan, 2019 strategic plan, Reckoning Initiative framework, and guide to conscious editing. Information was collected from the text and subtext of these materials, and analyzed using the method of discourse analysis. Readers will gain an increased understanding of the importance of institutional policies and documents when addressing matters around diversity, equity, inclusion, and antiracism or accessibility.

Bullard, Kelly R. "Veuve, Viuda, Viduam and other Representations of Women's Bibliographic Labor Recovered in Wilson Library's Rare Book Collection." A Master's Paper for the Master of Science in Library Science, May, 2023. Advisor: Elizabeth Ott. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.17615/b2j1-5749>

The purpose of this study is twofold: To recover and add to existing research concerning books printed, published, and sold by widows performed by former Wilson Library catalogers and to uncover potential reasons why this research was eliminated or effaced in the OPAC system. Through enumerative bibliography and comparative analysis this master's paper seeks to document and demonstrate the ways in

which prioritization of information affects scholarship related to Print Culture, Labor History, Women's Studies, and Book History. In addition to advocating for the critical examination of contemporary cataloging practices with regards to women's labor, this bibliography will seek to make plain the kinship of Library History and Book History.

Chan, Yee Wing. "Web-Based Services in Music Libraries: A Content Analysis." A Master's Paper for the Master of Science in Library Science, May, 2023. Advisor: Ronald E. Bergquist. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.17615/f9s0-x532>

The primary purpose of this study was to examine how music libraries offered research assistance and instruction to users through their websites. Based on the membership list provided by the National Association of Schools of Music (NASM), 74 accredited institutions in the United States offer doctoral degrees in music. Doctorate granting institutions were chosen for this study as their libraries provide a wide range of resources and services. Using the content analysis method, I first identified the types of reference, research, and instructional services included on each website. A list of services was compiled and ranked based on the number of libraries offering each service. Second, I evaluated and rated the services offered by each institution using the guidelines and scoring criteria from previous research studies. Upon analyzing the data, I provided recommendations for improving web-based library services and proposed suggestions for future research.

Dilles, Zoe. "Data Journals: Where Data Sharing Policy Meets Practice." A Master's Paper for the Master of Science in Library Science, May, 2023. Advisor: Todd Vision. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.17615/nqtz-b568>

Data journals incorporate elements of traditional scholarly communications practices—reviewing for quality and rigor through editorial and peer-review—

and the data sharing / open data movement—prioritizing broad dissemination through repositories, sometimes with curation or technical checks. Their goals for dataset review and sharing are recorded in journal-based data policies and operationalized through workflows. In this qualitative, small cohort semi-structured interview study of eight different journals that review and publish research data, we explored (1) journal data policy requirements, (2) data review standards, and (3) implementation of standardized data evaluation workflows. Differences among the journals can be understood by considering editors' approaches to balancing the interests of varied stakeholders. Assessing data quality for reusability is primarily conditional on fitness for use which points to an important distinction between disciplinary and discipline-agnostic data journals.

Lewis, Thu-Mai. "From Policy to Practice: How Journal-based Data Policies Encourage Scientists' Adoption of Reproducible Research Practices." A Dissertation for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the School of Information and Library Science. June, 2023. Advisors: Helen R Tibbo, Colin Elman, Bradley M Hemminger, Christopher A Lee, Ayoung Yoon. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.17615/2qv9-nk48>

According to several studies, researchers are not sharing the data underpinning their published scientific results, despite their general consensus that sharing data is critical to the research enterprise. Among other benefits, data sharing allows for verification of claims, which is essential to scientific integrity. Research funders, journal editors, and professional associations have insisted on the importance of data sharing by issuing policies and codes of ethics that mandate the practice. However, these mandates have not always been proven to compel researchers to share their data as evidenced by failed attempts to locate data underlying published results or sharing data that do not meet quality standards to allow for verification or reuse. This dissertation seeks to understand the incongruity between researchers' belief that data sharing is essential to science and their failure to produce and share data underlying their reported findings—even when policy requires them to do so. To address this phenomenon, the dissertation investigates the implementation and outcomes of the rigorous *American Journal of Political Science* (AJPS) verification policy that makes publication in the

journal contingent on submission of data, code, and supporting documentation (i.e., the research compendium). Prior to publication, research compendia undergo a third-party verification process to confirm the computational reproducibility of findings presented in the manuscript. In most cases, authors fail initially to produce a compendium that meets policy requirements for completeness, understandability, and computational reproducibility. Using the theory of planned behavior (TPB) as a framework, the study investigates the specific behavioral factors that affect authors' success or failure in producing reproducible research compendia. Employing a mixed-methods/grounded theory approach, the study analyzes records of verification results and interviews with AJPS authors who were subject to the verification policy to learn about their specific reproducible research practices (or lack thereof) and their outcomes. Based on the results of the study, I identify the most common and impactful issues that appear in submitted research compendia that render them non-reproducible, and suggest reasons that authors encounter these issues. Finally, I propose an extension of TPB that suggests how the policy compels and supports behaviors that promote research reproducibility.

Li, Yuan. "Stopping and Resuming: How and Why Do People Search Across Sessions for Complex Tasks?" A Dissertation for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the School of Information and Library Science. August, 2023. Advisors: Robert Capra, Jaime Arguello, David Gotz, Marijel M. Melo, Dan Wu. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.17615/zf72-4557>

Cross-session searches (XSS) occur when people look for information online for multiple sessions to complete complex task goals over time. Previous studies explored aspects of XSS, including the reasons that lead to it, like the Multiple Information Seeking Episode (MISE) model, which highlights eight causes. However, less is known about how these reasons manifest in real-life XSS and their relationship with task characteristics. I conducted a diary study with 25 participants engaging in XSS for real-life tasks. Participants reported on at least three search sessions spanning at least two days, and 15 participants attended an interview after they completed the diary study. We used qualitative methods to explore motivations for expected XSS, goal complexity, session resuming and stopping reasons, types of found

information, cognitive activities, and the non-search task activities that happened during the XSS process. Our results validated and refined the MISE session resuming and stopping reasons and distinguished subcategories and reasons unique to real-life XSS tasks. We discerned task-oriented and cognition-oriented motivations for XSS. We identified seven types of non-search task activities and three popular modes describing how people intertwine search and non-search activities during XSS. We assessed relationships among factors, including session goal complexity, information types, cognitive activities, session resuming, and stopping reasons using quantitative methods. Our results show significant associations between information types, cognitive activities, session goal complexity, and session resuming and stopping reasons. Furthermore, task stages significantly correlate with perceived overall task difficulty and the difficulty to find enough information. We also identified five XSS-specific challenges. Our results have implications for tailoring future search engines to customize search results according to session resuming reasons and designing tools to assist task management and preparation for session stops. Methodologically, our results have insights into designing tasks and subtasks and controlling the reasons that can lead to successive searches for tasks with varying complexity.

Martin III, John D.. "Agree, Disagree, Agree: Spatial Agency Bias in Online Survey Instrument Design." A Dissertation for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the School of Information and Library Science. August, 2023. Advisors: Sandra Hughes-Hassell, Charles Kurzman, Casey Rawson, Robert Capra, Emilia Peytcheva. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.17615/rp58-v787>

Self-administered, online survey and questionnaire instruments are ubiquitous in research. They are highly visual and involve spatial information processing in addition to the cognition involved in response formulation. Despite its wide use, the linguistic focus of survey research is still largely oriented to Eurocolonial and English-speaking contexts. There is evidence that the writing direction of a person's language produces an effect on the processing and execution of spatial tasks. This is referred to as spatial agency bias. For readers of right-to-left (RTL) languages, such as Arabic, Persian, and Urdu, this spatial agency bias means that we can expect to see an effect

in directionally-dependent visuo-spatial or visuo-motor tasks. Online questionnaire and survey instruments are developed for and by left-to-right (LTR) language readers. Given an increasingly diverse, diasporatic global population, it is important to consider how research methods developed within one linguistic context affect data quality when used in more diverse populations. This dissertation takes an experimental approach to explore the relationships between unconscious bias and other effects produced by an interaction between writing system direction and response scale direction in self-administered, online questionnaire instruments. Three experiments attempt to identify any interaction between two independent variables: writing system direction for questionnaire response language and response scale category order (direction) on three dependent variables: score on scale items, duration of time spent in instrument, and trust in the questionnaire interface. Participants are Arabic or English speakers responding to an instrument presented in one of these two languages. The analysis found no interaction effect between the independent variables on either trust or time on response, but did find a significant interaction effect on mean scale score for horizontal response scale items. This study has implications for multilingual, international, and cross-cultural survey and questionnaire design. This work contributes to efforts to incorporate more diverse populations in research through better understanding how language context affects data collection.

Melton, Thomas. "Organizing Apples: A Qualitative Content Analysis of Pomological Descriptive Metadata." A Master's Paper for the Master of Science in Library Science, May, 2023. Advisor: Melanie Feinberg. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.17615/jqx7-5132>

The apple (*Malus domestica* Borkh.) has maintained a position of significant historical and cultural importance across several eras in the United States. Because apples only maintain their genetics through human cultivation, their fruit is generally categorized and organized as cultivars which have differentiated themselves from the rest of the species over generations of selective breeding. Experts and amateurs alike have written and systematized descriptions of apple cultivars for various purposes but attempts to standardize organization of the resulting metadata have been infrequent and lack utility across multiple

contexts. This paper will assess the descriptive schemas of six pomological description resources ranging from the late 19th century to the present day through qualitative content analysis and metadata crosswalking. The resulting attribute set will then be compared with an existing descriptive schema for plant breeders, the UPOV Convention, with an eye towards exploring the viability of a more universal system for organizing descriptive metadata for physical descriptions of apples.

Rodriguez, Rolando. "Describing Digital Humanities Projects With Linked Data: A Task-based Evaluation of Linked Data Ontologies." A Master's Paper for the Master of Science in Information Science, May, 2023. Advisor: Melanie Feinberg. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.17615/60fz-bn41>

This study attempts to shed light on the lack of semantic web infrastructure for documenting digital humanities projects by creating a proof-of-concept workflow for manual and semi-automatic semantic web data creation. First, utilizing a set of five ontologies, triple data is created for a set of four projects from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. The utility of these data is then determined via task-based assessment alongside a set of metrics for the data retrieved for the tasks. Ultimately, this study aims to detail the benefits of improving linked open data support for describing, and ultimately preserving, digital humanities projects in hopes of paving a path for the creation of a LOD database for digital humanities projects.

Svoboda, Eve. "Reworking the Reading Room: An Analysis of Pandemic Responses in Special Collections Libraries at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and Duke University." A Master's Paper for the Master of Science in Library Science, May, 2023. Advisor: Helen Tibbo. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.17615/pk2g-9905>

This qualitative study was conducted to determine the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on digital projects led by special collections libraries at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and Duke University. Specifically, this research utilized case studies to analyze the shift to digital resources following the closure of universities in the spring of 2020, and compared this data to the current operations of special collections libraries at both a public and private university.

Urgo, Kelsey. "Investigating the Influence of Subgoals on Learning During Search." A Dissertation for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the School of Information and Library Science. August, 2023. Advisors: Jaime Arguello, Rob Capra, Jeff Greene, Gary Marchionini, Heather O'Brien. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.17615/2yzf-1s98>

Search-as-learning research has emphasized the need to better support searchers when learning about complex topics online. Prior work in the learning sciences has shown that effective self-regulated learning (SRL), in which goals are a central function, is critical to improving learning outcomes. This dissertation investigates the influence of subgoals on learning during search. Two conditions were investigated: Subgoals and NoSubgoals. In the Subgoals condition, a tool called the Subgoal Manager was used to help searchers to develop specific subgoals associated with an overall learning-oriented search task. The influence of subgoals is explored along four dimensions: (1) learning outcomes; (2) searcher perceptions; (3) search behaviors; and (4) SRL processes. Learning outcomes were measured with two assessments, an established multiple-choice conceptual knowledge test and an open-ended summary of learning. Learning assessments were administered immediately after search and one week after search to capture learning retention. A qualitative analysis was conducted to identify the percentage of true statements on open-ended learning assessments. A think-aloud protocol was used to capture SRL processes. A second qualitative analysis was conducted to categorize SRL processes from think-aloud comments and behaviors during the search session. Findings from the dissertation suggest that subgoals improved learning during search. Additionally, it seems that subgoals helped participants to better retain what was learned one week later. Findings also suggest that SRL processes of participants in the Subgoals condition were more frequent and more diverse. SRL processes that were explicitly supported by the Subgoal Manager seemed to be more frequent in the Subgoals condition as well as SRL processes that were not explicitly supported.

Ward, Austin Reid. "Immersive Search: Comparing Conventional and Spatially Arranged Search Engine Result Pages in Immersive Virtual Environments." A Dissertation for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the School of Information and Library Science. June, 2023. Advisors:

Rob Capra, Jaime Arguello, David Gotz, Sayamin-du Dasgupta, Carsten Eickhoff. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.17615/bn2m-vd37>

Advances in immersive technologies (e.g., virtual reality head-mounted displays) have brought a new dimension into user interfaces to increasingly more people in the recent years. However, little prior work has explored how people could use the extra dimension afforded by VR HMDs to aid in the information retrieval process. My dissertation research investigated how different task types and layouts of search engine result pages (displays) in immersive virtual environments impact the information retrieval process. In this dissertation, I present results from a within-subjects user study to investigate users' search behaviors, system interactions, perceptions, and eye-tracking behaviors for four different spatial arrangements of search results ("list" - a 2D list; "curve3" - a 3x3 grid; "curve4" - a 4x4 grid; and "sphere" - a 4x4 sphere) in a VR HMD across two different task types (Find All relevant, Pick 3 best). Thirty-two (32) participants completed 5 search trials in 8 experimental conditions (4 displays x 2 task types). Results show that: (1) participants were accepting of and performed well in the spatial displays (curve3, curve4, and sphere); (2) participants had a positional bias for the top or top left of SERPs; (3) the angle of search results and layouts influenced the navigation patterns used; (4) participants had a preference for physical navigation (e.g., head movement) over virtual navigation (e.g., scrolling) to view and compare search results, and (5) participants were less likely to perceive a rank order in the spatial displays where a clear scan path was not obvious to them.

Fall 2023

Bethany, Jesse. "Can We Handle the (Post) Truth? An Examination of Why Librarians Should Reclaim Critical Thinking in a Skeptical Society." A Master's Paper for the Master of Science in Library Science, November, 2023. Advisor: Francesca Tripodi. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.17615/kcrp-f847>

Post-truth, the phenomenon that opinions are valued over facts, is on the rise in modern society. Librarians are in a unique position to address learners who have been influenced by post-truth sensibilities due largely to still retaining a high degree of trust within society. Unfortunately, the most effective tool

for equipping students to undermine their post-truth sensibilities, critical thinking, has been largely ignored within the discipline of information science in favor of information literacy. An examination of a massive open online course designed to teach students how to navigate the complex, and often inaccurate, information online demonstrates how a posture of dismissiveness towards critical thinking results in a lack of engagement with the foundational skills necessary to effectively use specialized research tools. This analysis also demonstrates how easily critical thinking could be reclaimed, or integrated into, existing instruction.

Harvey, Shannon. "Who Benefits from Lending in Low-income Neighborhoods? An Investigation of Geography as a Proxy for Borrower Income by Type of Financial Institution Using 2022 Home Mortgage Disclosure Act Data." A Master's Paper for the Master of Science in Information Science, November, 2023. Advisor: Yue Wang. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.17615/pzsn-n260>

This study investigates the usefulness of common geographic proxies for low-to-moderate income (LMI) borrowers used by various federal agencies, including Community Reinvestment Act (CRA) examiners and the Community Development Financial Institutions (CDFI) Fund. I also examine the impact of varying definitions of low-to-moderate income on our view of the lower income population. Using 2022 Home Mortgage Disclosure Act (HMDA) data, I find that financial institutions, grouped by type—bank, credit union, CDFI, or non-bank—all lend to low-to-moderate income borrowers at similar rates and that loans to LMI census tracts and CDFI investment areas more frequently go to higher income borrowers than lower income across institution types. Further, seventy percent of LMI borrowers live outside of LMI tracts. The low precision and recall of geographic proxies for LMI borrowers raises questions about using these proxy assessments as measures for meeting the financial needs of LMI communities, particularly in the home lending sector.

Rosenberger, Lev. "Sticking a Flag in the Sand: Digitization, Description, and the Retrieval of Queer Materials in Archives." A Master's Paper for the Master of Science in Library Science, November, 2023. Advisor: Elliott Kuecker. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.17615/v0np-4e23>

While digitization is presented as a solution for increasing the retrievability of historically marginalized records, this presumption minimizes the step necessary to digital access: description. LGBTQ topics present unique descriptive challenges given the ever-evolving understanding of queer experiences and identities. This qualitative study asks: how are archivists at non-queer specialized institutions ensuring that their digital repository is reflecting the queer materials at that institution? What descriptive practices and access tools are archivists employing to direct researchers to queer materials? The results show that archivists at non-LGBTQ specialized institutions comprehend queer theory/history and recognize many problems in descriptive practices for LGBTQ materials. However, archivists are largely only addressing Library of Congress Subject Headings rather than addressing the failures of other description areas. This study asks archivists to redirect their efforts and develop policies that embrace the interpretive ambiguity of queer materials while increasing the retrievability and accessibility of historically suppressed materials.

Wyrsh, Martha. "A Content Analysis of Diverse Historical Figures within Picture Book Biographies." A Master's Paper for the Master of Science in Library Science, November, 2023. Advisor: Casey Rawson. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.17615/q6c3-zw43>

Picture book biographies present complex history in a way that attempts to balance historical accuracy with developmentally appropriate materials. They simplify historical language and omit disturbing or graphic material and often downplay the role of violence towards the disenfranchised. David A. Adler and Brad Meltzer are seminal authors within children's biographies, with sixty-one combined titles. There is some overlap within their work, but notably, the two often portray the same historical figures differently. This relational analysis study takes a critical lens to the depictions of intersectional BIPOC communities within picture book biographies by Adler and Meltzer. I use the lens of Richard Delgado's concept of Master Narratives and Counter Narratives to describe the ways in which the language and visual depictions of minorities affect the narrative being portrayed to children. Finally, I suggest ways in which educators can utilize both authors' materials to expand student understanding of history.

Adams, Destry. "Hate Infects Us All: How Alt-Right Ideology Plagues Health and Wellness Communities on TikTok." A Master's Paper for the Master of Science in Library Science, April, 2024. Advisor: Tressie McMillan Cottom. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.17615/zqdw-xb09>

The study seeks to examine how watching health misinformation on TikTok could introduce people to extreme-right-wing ideology through the algorithm and the rhetorical strategies used that could facilitate this process. This study will be a content analysis of many videos on the platform and will monitor such metrics as the TikTok's description, what occurred in the video, and hashtags used to identify and analyze rhetorical strategies used that could be associated with extremist viewpoints.

Alhashem, Ebtehal. "A Content Analysis of Illustrations in Children's Folklore Picture Books: Depicting Middle Eastern Cultures, Characters, And Visual Storytelling Trends Across Time." A Master's Paper for the Master of Science in Library Science, April, 2024. Advisor: Brian Sturm. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.17615/rjvm-p486>

This study aims to explore the depiction of cultures and characters in illustrations within children's folklore picture books about the Middle East. Key aspects such as character depiction, cultural symbols, and the use of artistic media techniques are analyzed. This research analyzed these representations over time, revealing recognizable changes in the depiction of Middle Eastern cultures. A selection of picture books published in two distinct periods 1980-1999 and 2000-2020 were examined. The study also evaluates the impact of illustrators' cultural backgrounds (Middle Eastern or other cultures) on the authenticity and depth of cultural representation. The data were analyzed using qualitative content analysis. The finding of this study shows that some books written from 1980-1999 contain misrepresentations regarding Middle Eastern culture. Middle Eastern illustrators represent Middle Eastern culture with a greater level of accuracy in comparison with non-Middle Eastern illustrators. Stereotypes are seen in the illustrations regarding characters and architectural design. The results of this research will contribute to a better understanding of the cultural representation of the Middle East in children's folklore picture books.

Bannen, Kerry. "Cameron Family Land: An Interactive Timeline Map of Land Owned by the Bennehan and Cameron Family." A Master's Paper for the Master of Science in Information Science, April, 2024. Advisor: Megan Winget. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.17615/g90q-3f47>

This project explores the historical landholdings of the Bennehan and Cameron families in Durham, North Carolina, and their evolution over time. The project focuses on mapping the plantations owned by these families along the Flat, Little, Eno, and Neuse Rivers. Using QGIS, shapefiles and associated metadata were generated to create a detailed digital map of the region. The data was then imported into Mapbox and supplemented with a timeline slider to illustrate the changes in land ownership and boundaries over the 18th and 19th centuries. This tool enables users to navigate the historical transformations of these plantations, offering insights into the lives of the free and enslaved people who lived and worked on the land.

Barron, Luke. "Development and Evaluation of Smart Search Strategies for Pubmed, Embase, and Scopus." A Master's Paper for the Master of Science in Library Science, April, 2024. Advisor: Jaime Arguello. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.17615/99eg-6v19>

Methodological challenges faced by health sciences investigators during the development of evidence-based dynamic treatment regimens are often addressed using sequential multiple assignment randomized trial (SMART) designs. Despite the proliferation of SMART literature, systematic reviews of their methods, reporting practices, and findings remain sparse. This study details the development of two candidate search strategies — one according to common practice and the other strictly using term frequency analysis data — and testing of their performance in three key health sciences databases. Both novel search strategies achieved higher recall relative to a set of known relevant studies than searches reported by extant systematic reviews. In addition to providing a reusable and extensible filter for future evidence synthesis projects, they demonstrate the potential of new methods in term frequency-based search construction to accelerate similar work in the future.

Basnight, Belle. "The Press and the Path to Pride: The Interplay of Print Media and Legisla-

tion in the LGBTQ+ Human Rights Movement." A Master's Paper for the Master of Science in Library Science, April, 2024. Advisor: Francesca Tripodi. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.17615/5642-yh85>

This paper examines the portrayal of LGBTQ+ human rights in US print journalism in the context of three North Carolina legislative bills: the Public Facilities Privacy & Security Act, known as the "Bathroom Bill," the Parents' Bill of Rights, known as "Don't Say Gay," and the Fairness in Women's Sports Act known as "Protect Women's Sports." The study uses a qualitative analysis of 198 newspaper articles to assess media framing and its implications. Preliminary findings indicate a pattern of neutral framing or hedging. The analysis reveals a severe lack of historical contextualization in coverage, which hinders the understanding of systemic LGBTQ+ legislative discrimination. The research also uncovers a trend toward syndicated neutrality, suggesting a widespread neutral narrative. The paper argues that journalists are responsible for ensuring that the pursuit of objectivity does not overshadow the pursuit of equity, affirming that LGBTQ+ rights are fundamental human rights issues.

Byrd, Elizabeth. "Tools and Techniques for Recovery: Exploring Resources Used in Early Alcohol Use Disorder Recovery." A Master's Paper for the Master of Science in Information Science, April, 2024. Advisor: William Payne. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.17615/kebg-xg77>

Alcohol use disorder (AUD) is a debilitating illness that has affected over 29 million people in the United States alone. Not only does AUD have numerous health consequences, such as liver cirrhosis, cognitive impairment, heart disease, and cancer, it impacts individuals' social lives and costs the United States roughly \$249 billion per year. Given the immense impact that AUD has on our society, my masters paper identifies methods to help those with AUD to live healthier lives. I interviewed twelve adults with AUD to understand their experiences seeking information and using technology as part of their recovery process. I describe the treatment options they use, alongside a variety of resources and social support groups like Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) that play an integral role in maintaining sobriety. I also address numerous technological advancements that have recently increased in scale and usage largely due to the consequences of COVID-19. My paper concludes

with recommendations for future work, particularly researching early recovery and intersectionality of multiple substance use disorders, and I propose design requirements for web and mobile applications to best support individuals and communities.

Clinton, Miranda. "Archival Theory and Black Feminist Thought: The Role of Black Women Archivists." A Master's Paper for the Master of Science in Library Science, April, 2024. Advisor: Tressie Cottom. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.17615/xmf5-k028>

While Black feminist thought is not a new concept, its applications to archival theory have not been fully explored. It is with this position that this paper aims to consider how the defining characteristics of Black feminist thought can be applied to transform traditional archival theory and disrupt its systematic power as a white prioritizing space. Through this analysis, the overall question of this paper is asking what is the role of Black women in the archives? More than a researcher, what does it mean for a Black woman to be taking part in the archival process, appraising, accessioning, collection processing, and making available records for the public. It is with this framework that this paper will historicize the material presence and working actions of Black women in the archives and what that may possibly look like for the future of LIS.

Collier, Joel. "Generative AI Instruction in Academic Libraries: An Analysis of LibGuides and Information Literacy Principles." A Master's Paper for the Master of Science in Information Science, April, 2024. Advisor: Casey Rawson. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.17615/62ms-ef07>

This study investigates the evolving role of academic librarians in guiding the use of generative artificial intelligence (GAI) in academia. It explores the approaches adopted by academic librarians in asynchronous instruction on GAI and evaluate the effectiveness of incorporating information literacy principles from the Association of College and Research Libraries' (ACRL) Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education. Employing a qualitative content analysis methodology, this study analyzed LibGuides on GAI from colleges and universities across the United States to discern prevalent trends in asynchronous instruction. It also identifies synergies with ACRL's threshold concepts already used in librarians'

instructional practices and evaluates their potential application to GAI instruction. The findings provide librarians with insights into peer approaches for asynchronous GAI instruction and offer guidance on the viability of employing information literacy principles as a pedagogical framework for crafting LibGuides on GAI.

Conley, Madeline. "It Doesn't Have to Be the Way It Is: Using Speculative Archival Theory to Combat the Archival Narrative." A Master's Paper for the Master of Science in Library Science, April, 2024. Advisor: Elliott Kuecker. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.17615/g4kt-x166>

This research works to construct a theory of speculative archiving that combats the dominant narrative of the archives. Speculative archiving theory—built upon the work of author Ursula K. Le Guin and the principles of care, non-linearity, the everyday, human-focus, participation, and accessibility—is a tool that asks archival practitioners to consider that things don't have to be the way they are. Using a canon built from speculative literature to reconsider traditional archival principles, speculative archiving theory shows us the possibility of incorporating techniques from speculative fiction, like the life story and the carrier bag, into archival practice. Through these methods, the archival narrative that has been perpetuated through all layers of society can begin to be dismantled. In breaking down this dominant narrative, archives has the potential to become a repository for all stories, not just those deemed worthy by embedded structures of power and memory.

Coupe, Abigail. "The View from 'Over Here': American Information Professionals, Foreign Information Accessibility, and Historiography of the First World War." A Master's Paper for the Master of Science in Library Science, April, 2024. Advisor: Emily Roscoe. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.17615/1s2f-ex72>

The First World War significantly impacted the United States and the world, and its legacies reverberate throughout society over a century later. American historiography on the war, however, largely lacks a global perspective, with many American-produced histories focusing primarily on the war's impact on the United States, or on the United States' role in negotiating the Treaty of Versailles. Within American higher education, the First World War is

seldom explored, and—on the rare occasion when it is—is often overshadowed by the Great Depression and the Second World War. When searching for non-American resources on the war, many historians face linguistic, accessibility, and/or cognizance barriers in finding non-American or non-British information. Information professionals have a vital role to play in expanding historians' knowledge of foreign and international information systems, in training them in information literacy and research, and, ultimately, in expanding the diversity and completeness of American historiography.

Cross, Megan. "Linked Open Data & Ontology Trends in the Cultural Heritage Sector: Current Projects, Future Directions, and the Case for Provenance." A Master's Paper for the Master of Science in Information Science, May, 2024. Advisor: Ryan Shaw. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.17615/7maj-3220>

This study contributes to the discussion of open access to arts and humanities data. Specifically, I explore the semantic knowledge graph technology that powers linked open data projects for cultural heritage institutions by analyzing the affordances of these systems, while looking ahead to an increasingly networked future. One area identified for the future expansion of linked open data is provenance research, not only to uplift underrepresented histories, but also aid museums in their social responsibility and ethical goals. To illustrate this, the case of the Benin Bronzes is discussed, with the provenance events connected to one object modeled with the Linked Art Profile of the CIDOC CRM ontology.

Dean, Carrie. "Dancers/Archivists: Community Archiving Practices Among Country Dancers." A Master's Paper for the Master of Science in Library Science, April, 2024. Advisor: Elliot Kuecker. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.17615/dtxa-ax62>

Country dancing is a niche form of folk dance which, nevertheless, continues to flourish today. Country dance practitioners have unique information needs which are not met by traditional institutions, as well as a strong desire to preserve their dance form for future generations. As such, they have developed a variety of methods to preserve country dance ephemera and make it accessible to the broader dance community. This study describes some of these methods and how they have evolved in

the digital age based on semi-structured interviews with country dance practitioners who have contributed to these efforts through the lens of community archiving.

Drummond, Collin. "The Linguistic Landscape of Scholarly Publishing: Quantifying Language Bias Through Multiple Systems Estimation." A Master's Paper for the Master of Science in Library Science, April, 2024. Advisor: Bradley Hemminger. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.17615/ggvw-bk80>

It is commonly claimed that English is the language of science, but it is impossible to fully evaluate the comprehensiveness of these tools without knowing what they exclude, and although there has been much discussion of what bibliographic databases do cover, there has been no significant attempt to quantify what they do not cover. To address this gap in the research, I use Multiple Systems Estimation (MSE) to infer the unknown "population" of scholarly documents based on incomplete but overlapping population "samples," that is, lists of documents indexed by each of three major bibliographic databases. I find that English comprises less than 33% of the global literature, while most European languages are overrepresented and most Asian and African languages are underrepresented. This estimate makes it possible to evaluate bibliographic databases not just on their internal linguistic distribution, but in terms of their comprehensiveness of each language's global scholarly literature.

Dwyer, Sarah Costello. "Complicating the Narrative of Title IX: A Content Analysis of Young Adult Sports Literature and Media." A Master's Paper for the Master of Science in Library Science, April, 2024. Advisor: Sandra Hughes-HasSELL. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.17615/jr84-k353>

This study aims to analyze how literature contributes to youth understandings of Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 and its impact on sports. Prior research notes that sports literature for youth and young adults contributes to simplistic understandings of access and athlete identity. This study elaborates by prioritizing nuance through the highlighting of newly released titles, and positions them in conversation with current counter-narratives, both socially and legally, around Title IX. Using a coding rubric, a content analysis was conducted on 11 pieces

of young adult literature and media. Findings note trends in titles to discuss complexities of access to sport within the context of gender, race, and safety in sport. This research can contribute to supporting publishers, authors, and librarians in pursuit of nuanced representations of sport, access, Title IX, and national narrative.

Economus, Alaina. "Classifying Empire: Bibliotechno-Bibliograficheskaya Klassifikatsiya (BBK) and the Soviet Imperialist Project." A Master's Paper for the Master of Science in Library Science, April, 2024. Advisor: Melanie Feinberg. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.17615/k8rt-3h14>

This master's paper seeks to analyze the Soviet bibliographic classification system, Bibliotechno-Bibliograficheskaya Klassifikatsiya (BBK) through the lens of Soviet imperialist policy and practice. How did the design and ideological foundations of BBK support the ideologies and narratives that supported the Soviet imperialist project? How did BBK reflect the importance of categorization and classification of "nations," an essential foundation of Soviet imperialist policy? The author will analyze one of the main classes of BBK, "History and Historical Sciences," to answer these questions and highlight the power of classification systems to perpetuate violent geopolitical structures. This study will highlight a previously unexamined intersection of Soviet history and the study of classification and knowledge representation.

Ferrell, Madison. "Digging Deeper: Bridging Gaps in Archaeological and Archival Discourse." A Master's Paper for the Master of Science in Library Science, April, 2024. Advisor: Elliott Kuecker. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.17615/d0se-x742>

This paper aims to define the nature of archaeological archiving through both a theoretical and pragmatic lens and discern the approach to archival instruction, specifically within archaeological curricula and fieldwork. It is a qualitative investigation surveying archaeological record-keeping and collecting behaviors in addition to the field's current and historical uses of archival spaces, techniques, and objects. This investigation was executed from data collected via participant interviews and content analysis of the Work Digital / Think Archive guidebook created jointly by DigVentures and the Archaeological Archives Forum. The research topic pursued in this thesis comes with the anticipation that it creates awareness around

resources and efforts in practice that aim to establish the best procedures and standards to help archaeologists manage their digital data from site to study and, subsequently, the available information for creating and managing a project archive. Doing so is imperative to the future of archaeological research and access.

Fitch, Flannery. "Archiving a Community in Crisis: The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill University Archives' Carolina COVID-19 Collection." A Master's Paper for the Master of Science in Library Science, April, 2024. Advisor: Megan Winget. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.17615/5p86-1357>

This is an examination of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill's University Archives and Records Services Carolina COVID-19 Collection, 2020—2022 assessing the inclusion of the community voice in the official university archive. In addition to being the records repository, UNC-CH's UARMS strives to include the experience of the larger university community. When the COVID-19 pandemic began in March 2020, UARMS began collecting materials documenting the events as they affected the students, staff, faculty, and members of the larger Chapel Hill community in order to preserve a diverse array of voices as a balance against the institutional university record. This assessment of the collection looked at what voices were included and how effective it was in reflecting the community experience. Overall, the collection accomplishes the goal of including those voices and preserving a community viewpoint of the first two years of the pandemic.

Galt, Caroline. "A Content Analysis of Depictions of Archive Users in Film and Television." A Master's Paper for the Master of Science in Library Science, April, 2024. Advisor: Casey Rawson. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.17615/6p69-6z69>

Several researchers have examined the portrayal of archivists in fiction, observing stereotypes (or lack thereof) of the archival profession. However, these studies usually focus on the portrayal of archivists rather than archive users or researchers. This study sought to examine the portrayal of archive users in film and television. The study takes the form of a content analysis of 10 films and television shows, investigating the question "how have archive users been portrayed in film and television from the past twenty

years?” In doing so, the study aims to provide insights about any stereotypes or popularly held beliefs about who can or does use archives. These insights may prove useful for archivists working to conduct outreach and make archival materials more accessible to the public.

Holmes, Hannah L. “Promoting Libraries and Archives Through Social Media.” A Master’s Paper for the Master of Science in Library Science, April, 2024. Advisor: Rebecca Vargha. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.17615/12jw-2580>

Over half of the world’s population uses social media. Libraries and archives can utilize this user base to connect with and share information with the public. This study aims to analyze social media content currently online being used to promote libraries and archives by searching for and choosing a sample of popular content from four different platforms. This content analysis will aim to answer the following questions: how are social media used to promote archives and libraries; how do the mission and characteristics of an institution influence their social media strategy, including their choice of platform, content, and identification of their target audience; and what practices have been successful for promoting institutions on social media? Content gathered and analyzed during this process will be used to devise a guide for institutions creating and posting on social media.

Hoy, Harry. “North Carolina Archival Repository Flood Risk Assessment.” A Master’s Paper for the Master of Science in Information Science, May, 2024. Advisor: Alexandra Chassanoff. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.17615/7jqc-zr92>

Nearly 99% of American archives will be impacted by at least one climate risk. It is well established that North Carolina is at high risk for all varieties of flooding: pluvial, fluvial, and coastal. Disaster flooding related to climate change poses grave danger to all infrastructure, including archival repositories. However, little research to date has adequately addressed this unique risk. Based on a survey that contacted North Carolina’s most flood-vulnerable repositories, this paper endeavors to assess the state’s repositories’ preparedness for flooding.

Hudnut-Beumler, Adam. “Relationship Matters: An Exploration of Participatory Linked Data as

Decolonial Archival Praxis.” A Master’s Paper for the Master of Science in Information Science, April, 2024. Advisor: Ryan Shaw. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.17615/g689-tc20>

Linked Open Data (LOD) and decolonization present two trends for archives. While the former is often considered technical and the latter ethical, both movements are practical and epistemic challenges to traditional archival authority. Archives scholars have seen an affinity between the extensible, non-hierarchical model of LOD and calls of decolonial archivists to remediate the archival record through new descriptive methodologies. Little research, however, has endeavored to find if this affinity bears fruit in practice. Exploring this gap, the current participant action research comprises testing amongst a group of decolonial scholars of Wikibase as a tool for archival linked data creation. The study utilizes thematic analysis of the participant-generated triples and research session transcripts to determine the descriptive strategies the group employed. Testing the efficacy of participatory description using archival linked data as a decolonial methodology, this project encourages further experimentation at the nexus of decolonial archival praxis and technological innovation.

Hutchens, Sophia. “Fat Positivity in Public Libraries: An Assessment of Inclusive Reference Services.” A Master’s Paper for the Master of Science in Library Science, April, 2024. Advisor: Elliott Kuecker.

Fat people’s experiences are understudied within the field of library and information science. In response to this, the objective of this master’s paper is to center fat patrons and promote thoughtful consideration of their information needs. Utilizing an unobtrusive methodology, eight self-identified fat participants visited a total of 20 public libraries and asked for assistance finding resources about fat positivity. Library staff were initially uninformed about the study to enable more authentic reference encounters. Through an evaluation of resource suggestions and a content analysis of participant reflections, this paper examines fat people’s sense of belonging and the quality of service and resources they are provided in public libraries. The findings aim to inform and improve library services.

Israel, Gabriel. “Generative AI in the College Classroom: Understanding Student Search

Strategies After ChatGPT.” A Master’s Paper for the Master of Science in Library Science, April, 2024. Advisor: Rebecca Vargha. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.17615/yc3-ag67>

For over a decade, the tension between Google Scholar and university library federated search tools has dominated conversations in academic libraries. The launch of OpenAI’s ChatGPT in November 2022 is now shifting these conversations, prompting questions about whether and how students are integrating ChatGPT into their research processes. This study examines how students use and perceive the university library federated search tool, Google Scholar, and ChatGPT from students’ perspectives. Through observational studies, surveys, and interviews, the students’ feedback and information retrieval habits will be analyzed for common and disparate themes and search behaviors across these three tools. The findings from this study will be used to create broad recommendations for academic library professionals on how to enhance library resources, services, and instruction for students in the era of generative AI.

Jacobs, Samone. “(Re)Crafting: Social Constructivist Pedagogy in Special Collections.” A Master’s Paper for the Master of Science in Information Science, April, 2024. Advisor: Casey Rawson. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.17615/9a32-pb90>

This study explores opportunities to harness the dynamic nature of craft within library instruction and engagement centering special collections materials. This was accomplished by the development and execution of a crafting session, (Re)Crafting Protest Art, in Wilson Special Collections Library. This session employed social constructivist theory and allowed students to practice experiential learning in special collections. Using student post-engagement surveys and interviews with UNC faculty and archivists this research seeks to establish craft as an instructional practice suitable for special collection engagement and an empowering tool for students to interpret primary sources while developing artifactual literacy.

Jeong, Sana. “Collaboration Between Academic Librarians and Library and Information Science Faculty.” A Master’s Paper for the Master of Science in Library Science, April, 2024. Advisor: Brian Sturm. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.17615/q9zn-ra86>

The purpose of this study is to examine collaboration between LIS faculty and academic librarians. Through conducting and analyzing in-depth and semi-structured interviews with LIS faculty members and academic librarians, I seek to carry out a phenomenological study that reflects the experiences and perceptions of collaboration between different LIS experts at higher education institutions with ALA-accredited LIS programs in the Southeastern United States. Codes were created as patterns emerged from interview recordings and transcripts. Interview data analysis found that collaboration between these two groups of information professionals is best established and supported when the need to collaborate is clearly identified, collaborators share common levels of investment, a high level of subject expertise is involved, and collaborators have access to a sufficient amount of resources. This study aims to portray the current landscape of collaboration between LIS faculty and academic librarians in the southeastern United States and seeks to gain a better understanding of the contributing factors. The conclusions and potential impact of this study may offer ways to increase collaboration between the observed populations.

Kelly, Shriya. “Keter-Class Containment Procedure: Internet Folklore’s growth and Archival, and what it means for Archivists.” A Master’s Paper for the Master of Science in Library Science, April, 2024. Advisor: Brian Sturm. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.17615/et5e-7d12>

The internet environment has its own undeniable culture. Creative projects on the internet have grown in leaps and bounds since the early 2000s. Internet folklore is one such type that is particularly prevalent in horror environments. Over time, archives have formed in internet communities to catalog and preserve internet folklore, especially horror. The SCP (Secure, Contain, Protect) Universe and its impact is a case of folklore in a particular media format and subculture. This study analyzed the cycle of internet folklore through an examination of particular internet folklore phenomena and comparison of data storage of the developed internet folklore entity SCP Foundation with the goal of unearthing specific trends and needs in indexing folklore native to the digital age, with a focus on the development of the archival standards practiced by the SCP wiki’s consistency with archival practices.

Mantey, Denise. "Successful Outreach Methods for Oral History Archives." A Master's Paper for the Master of Science in Library Science, April, 2024. Advisor: Elliott Kuecker. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.17615/cccd-ey69>

Archivists have long utilized oral history collections to address archival gaps that the paper records could not fill. New generations of memory workers have prioritized preserving the oral traditions of historically marginalized communities. This has resulted in outreach efforts that aim to establish trust with the communities represented in the archives. This study analyzes the Oral History Lab at the University of Puerto Rico at Mayagüez, the Community Oral History Project at the New York Public Library, and Wolf Tales at North Carolina State University as three case studies of oral history archives that have implemented successful outreach methods. This analysis addresses the history of archivist presence in oral history, how to build trust with communities, and ways I may implement these successful outreach methods in my work as an archivist and graduate assistant of the UNC Story Archive in Wilson Special Collections Library, a recently established oral history collection.

Martin, Alex. "Nonhierarchical Crowdsourced Database Users: iNaturalist Participant Trust & Motivation through an Anarchist Lens." A Master's Paper for the Master of Science in Information Science, April, 2024. Advisor: Ryan Shaw. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.17615/q6mv-0n69>

This paper utilizes case studies to explore active users of iNaturalist, a crowdsourced database for ecological observations. This study seeks to better understand why, and to what extent, participants of a nonhierarchical citizen science project trust the quality of data they find and contribute there. The study samples a group of six local iNaturalist users who completed a weeklong diary study on their daily usage of the site and/or an interview to discuss their overarching thoughts about the site. Utilizing an anarchist lens focuses the research on the unique benefits and drawbacks of collaborative knowledge building, while the case study format of the project gives a deeper look into a subset of user experiences.

McKinnell, James. "Technological Shifts in Academic Libraries: A Qualitative Inquiry into Librarians' Perspectives." A Master's Paper for

the Master of Science in Library Science, April, 2024. Advisor: Marijel Melo. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.17615/zmkk-ps50>

Academic libraries have always needed to be responsive to changes in emerging technology over time. As library resources have continued to become ever more digitized, there is a growing need for librarians to gain new technological skills. This qualitative study used semi-structured interviews with instructional librarians in academic libraries to explore what current technological shifts academic librarians are experiencing, how they are adapting to those changes, and what technological skills are most needed in academic libraries today. This study contributes insight into current technological changes in academic libraries like the continued impacts of COVID-19 and AI, factors unaccounted for in the existing literature. The results show that while there is a desire from academic librarians to learn more about AI and skills related to programming and data visualization, the most needed technological skills remain soft skills like curiosity, empathy, and a willingness to learn.

Mead, Megan. "Connecting Campuses: Transfer Student Perspectives on Academic Library Services at UNC-Chapel Hill." A Master's Paper for the Master of Science in Library Science, April, 2024. Advisor: Sandra Hughes-Hassell. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.17615/crvy-qj88>

This qualitative study explores the information-seeking behaviors, perceptions, and preferences of undergraduate transfer students at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (UNC-CH), focusing on their interactions with the university libraries. Through comprehensive interview, the research aims to uncover insights into transfer students' library usage, needs, and challenges, with the goal of enhancing library services and resources to support academic success and integration into the UNC-CH community. The research questions investigate how UNC-CH transfer students perceive the accessibility, relevance, and usefulness of library resources compared to their previous institutions. Additionally, the study explores the extent of utilization of digital and physical resources in the library and identifies challenges in navigating and utilizing UNC-CH library resources. The findings will inform evidence-based improvements to optimize the overall experience for transfer students at UNC-CH.

Mitchum, Emma. "A Content Analysis of Sexual Consent and Sexual Health/Wellness References in Adult Literary Fiction." A Master's Paper for the Master of Science in Library Science, April, 2024. Advisor: Casey Rawson. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.17615/g4ba-7m13>

The study in this paper analyzes the content of adult fiction novels that fall into the sub-genre of romantasy. I examined the top 10 adult romantasy books according to Goodreads. During this study I looked at how sexual consent and sexual health and wellness are portrayed in these novels. I coded each novel for scenes containing sexual content having to do with consent and sexual health and wellness. Most of the books in my population displayed proper messages of sexual consent. Communication and asking permission for sexual consent are becoming more normalized in popular media. Along with the normalization of consent, birth control is also on the rise in its visibility within popular media. Many books mentioned sexual health and wellness in regards to birth control, whether it be direct between character or in passing. However, zero books in my population mentioned sexually transmitted diseases or sexually transmitted infections, which are a vital part of sexual health and wellness. As a society we need to work towards the de-stigmatization of sexually transmitted diseases and sexually transmitted infections.

Neff, Victoria. "First—and Lasting—Impressions: Examining Iterations and Adaptations of *Pride and Prejudice* and its Implications for and Influences by Audiences." A Master's Paper for the Master of Science in Library Science, April, 2024. Advisor: Brian Sturm. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.17615/jn5n-3094>

My research interests lie at the intersection of storytelling; literary, dramatic, and film adaptations; and social justice. Joining research examining the significance of storytelling in elementary classrooms and school libraries and the effectiveness of using the performing arts to promote social justice, my study addresses a current gap by investigating the creative process of adapting from page to stage to other inventive evolutions. Specifically, my content analysis of the additions, alterations, and omissions of traditional and innovative compositions, retellings, and remakes of Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice* reveals the reciprocal relationship between authorial perspectives and societal input, especially with Lydia's story.

Now recognizing her role in her potential downfall, she seeks and receives her family's love, acceptance, and guidance, allowing for genuine, resilient healing. This sea change for storytellers and audiences, though nigh unthinkable initially, finally ends victim blaming and insists upon accountability for those truly culpable.

Norwood, Alona. "Black Girl Magic: A Content Analysis of Black Women Represented in the Black in Appalachia Community History Digital Archive." A Master's Paper for the Master of Science in Information Science, April, 2024. Advisor: Joseph Winberry. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.17615/pybd-f133>

The purpose of this study is to examine the gap in the historical narrative of Appalachia by focusing on Black women from the region and to offer practical solutions for filling the gap grounded in LIS literature and theory. The study will also determine if Dr. Laverne Gray's Black Feminist Information Community model is applicable to a rural region. This study is a qualitative content analysis, meaning the research process was iterative and ongoing from start to finish. The results of this research showed that the Black in Appalachia Community History Digital Archive contains a variety of representations of Black women from the region. The results of this research proved that when you apply the Black Appalachian woman representation to the Black Information Community Information model, there are overlaps in the codes.

Pasin, Joy. "Accounting for High Schools Students' Interests and Identities in ELA Required Reading Curricula: A Qualitative Case Study." A Master's Paper for the Master of Science in Library Science, April, 2024. Advisor: Sandra Hughes-Hassell. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.17615/5167-pz05>

This case study of English Language Arts (ELA) teachers' experiences was conducted to explore whether ELA teachers are able to take students' interests and identities into account when building their required reading curricula. Non-probability sampling was used to select eight high school English teachers from across North Carolina. Teachers then participated in semi-structured interviews, in which they were questioned on a variety of elements regarding their curriculum development process, their required

reading material selection process, their methods for accounting for student interest and identities, their collaboration with school librarians, and more. This study will build understanding on the influences that affect high school ELA teachers' ability to account for students' interests and identities in their curricula, and how they do so.

Pearson, Marissa. "How a Person's Knowledge of AI Affects Their Perception of AI Technology: A Comparison Study of Recent College Graduates and Mid-career Employees." A Master's Paper for the Master of Science in Information Science, May, 2024. Advisor: Megan Winget. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.17615/pp26-pj05>

This study sought to determine if a person's knowledge, or lack thereof, correlates with their perception of AI. This study also compared and contrasted the data of two different sample groups, recent college graduates and working professionals between the ages of 20-50, to determine if the results are similar or different. This study was conducted to answer the following questions: How does AI awareness contribute to an individual's level of fear of AI? How does AI awareness and fear influence career choices and decisions? How does AI awareness and fear affect peoples' views around job stability? The participants of this study participated in an interview. This study will be used as a starting point by future researchers for studying the relationship between AI and humans.

Pfeifer, Justin. "Algorithmic Opacity Meeting Organizational Opacity: Challenges of AI Deployment in Organizations." A Master's Paper for the Master of Science in Information Science, January, 2024. Advisor: Mohammad Jarrahi. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.17615/5qaj-ew81>

This article aims to address the current inadequacies of AI systems in organizational settings. Specifically, this article addresses the intertwined concepts of algorithmic opacity and organizational opacity as the key challenges to be examined. We contextualize these challenges by focusing on the concepts of organizational visibility and organizational transparency, and by developing a sociotechnical framework that explicate potential links between algorithmic opacity and organizational opacity and therefore facilitates the effective development of AI systems in these contexts.

Priesman Marquez, Rachel. "Page By Page: An Exploration of Book Disposal Practices in U.S. Public Libraries." A Master's Paper for the Master of Science in Information Science, April, 2024. Advisor: Casey Rawson. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.17615/sckf-4w03>

Weeding is an imperative process to ensure that there is room on the shelves for new materials. When materials are deselected, some books end up in Friends of the Library sales, or are given to third party sources such as Better World Books, but many of these books end up in the trash. The purpose of this study is multifaceted. First, this study aims to discover the amount of book waste created from material deselection for public libraries in the United States. Second, this study seeks to understand librarians' attitudes about the programs they currently use and any barriers to use that they might experience implementing alternative book disposal programs. The findings indicate that libraries utilize various disposal methods including landfill trash, third-party organizations, and book sales. Libraries also face enormous barriers including staff time and buy-in, space for storing materials, and the cost associated with alternative disposal programs.

Romero, Chelsea. "Silenced and Erased." A Master's Paper for the Master of Science in Library Science, March, 2024. Advisor: Sandra Hughes-Hassell. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.17615/2c7a-0w23>

This study is a content analysis to address the silencing and erasure of American history in education. The goal of this paper is to find where history is being changed or erased in high school curriculum textbooks and discuss how public libraries can provide curriculum support to schools. A quantitative and qualitative content analysis of three U.S history textbooks used in high school curricula to find three historical events (Tulsa Race Massacre, Indigenous Boarding Schools, and Japanese Internment Camps). All three events were found in the textbooks; however, the Tulsa Race Massacre and the Indigenous Boarding Schools were not described to the full extent of the historical event. In considering the extent of the silencing and erasure of U.S. History in school curricula, teachers and library staff can strive to find resources to bridge the gap in students' education.

Simon, Erin. "Who is Researching Women's Health? A Bibliometric Approach to Addressing

the Disparities in Citations and Publications of High Impact Medical Research.” A Master’s Paper for the Master of Science in Library Science, April, 2024. Advisor: Bradley Hemminger. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.17615/0hsd-hb87>

This study aims to analyze authorship and gender disparities in high impact medical journals, as well as several research questions relating to gender disparities in first authorship and demographics of first authors performing research in subjects related to women’s health. A sample consisting of randomized controlled trials between the years 2010 to 2020 from five high impact journals were analyzed for author demographics and citation metrics. This study aims to interrogate author demographics in high impact journals, the underrepresentation of female authorship and women’s health as an important topic of study, as well as the citational disparities between male and female researchers who study women’s health.

Thornquist, Wylie. “History, Memory, and the Archival Record; Afterlives of the Greensboro Massacre.” A Master’s Paper for the Master of Science in Library Science, April, 2024. Advisor: Alexandra Chassanoff. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.17615/g5d3-ev59>

This paper presents a thematic analysis of data from interview transcripts with researchers who have worked with archival collections in Wilson Library related to the 1979 Greensboro Massacre. Five researchers from a variety of disciplines and academic backgrounds were interviewed to gather information about how and why they decided to do research on this historical event using archival sources. In these interviews, participants shared reflections about the ethical considerations and affective and emotional responses that arose in their engagement of archival documentation of this historical event. Interviews were guided by a series of questions: 1) How are researchers impacted by their interactions with archival records related to the Greensboro Massacre? 2) Why and how do researchers seek out archival sources to generate new scholarship on this event? 3) What insights do archival collections related to this history offer that are not found in other places? Considering archives as a site of ongoing contestation of historical narratives and memory, this study presents information about how archival users have disseminated information from archival collections to develop new

knowledge about the Greensboro Massacre through their research.

Titus, Samantha. “Civic Literacy: Why Academic Libraries Must Combat the Illiteracy Plaguing Students.” A Master’s Paper for the Master of Science in Library Science, April, 2024. Advisor: Joseph Winberry. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.17615/x1md-rs50>

This study originally aimed to explore the possible relationship between the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill’s undergraduate history students’ political affiliation and their library usage. Due to unforeseen constraints this paper has shifted to focus on how academic libraries can improve civic literacy on campuses. This paper is now exploring the question: how can academic libraries improve civic literacy in a time of rising distrust, misinformation, and social media? The extent of this paper will use the grounded theory to analyze previous research and studies to compile recommendations for increasing civic literacy in undergraduates. Although this country has seen an increase in political engagement, there is a lack of literacy and understanding of civics and present-day politics. This paper aims to further contextualize how academic libraries, such as UNC, can proceed to celebrate political engagement while emphasizing and educating for civic literacy.

Wang, Huilong. “Deciphering Tourists’ Preferences in Trail Reviews through Natural Language Processing.” A Master’s Paper for the Master of Science in Information Science, April, 2024. Advisor: Huilong Wang. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.17615/p049-4m96>

This study explores the use of natural language processing (NLP) techniques to analyze AllTrails user-generated reviews, focusing on hiker’s preferences in the Great Smoky Mountains National Park. We fine-tuned a DistilBERT model on a newly created dataset with token-level labels tailored for extracting trail features. We extracted and ranked common trail features such as “River,” “Waterfall,” and “Child-Friendly,” and less common features such as “Forest” and “Wildlife” mentioned in the reviews of the ten highest-rated trails in the park. Our model achieved an overall F1-score of 0.83, demonstrating high accuracy in the trail feature extraction task. Despite strong feature ranking correlations, no clear link was found between these rankings and user satisfaction,

suggesting the influence of additional factors. These insights highlight the value of our tailored approach in enhancing trail management and recommendation systems. Future work will expand the dataset and integrate real-time user data, aiming to refine the effectiveness of our NLP framework.

Watkins, Teagan. "Green Programming In North Carolina Public Libraries." A Master's Paper for the Master of Science in Library Science, April, 2024. Advisor: Brian Sturm. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.17615/stdj-e587>

This study looks at North Carolina's public libraries and analyzes the green programming they are offering. The goal of this study is to see what libraries are doing in North Carolina to be green outside of their physical space and use of resources. Study subjects include a variety of public libraries across the entire state of North Carolina. Data is collected by looking through the selected library's events calendar website from January 2023 to January 2024. The discussion of this research expands on green programming, trends in green programming in these libraries, why these libraries may or may not have it, and suggestions on how to grow green programming in all libraries. This study adds to the already large discussion of green libraries and encourages others to look at green programming in North Carolina and other states across the United States.

Whitaker, Hannah. "A Heating Climate in the Sunshine State: How Public Libraries are Impacted by and Responding to Censorship Attempts in Florida." A Master's Paper for the Master of Science in Library Science, April, 2024. Advisor: Casey Rawson. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.17615/3q4q-j963>

This master's paper has been designed specifically to better understand the impact, or lack thereof, that censorship has had on access that public librarians in the state of Florida are able to provide. Florida has seen a rapid increase in the amount of censorship attempts, specifically in regard to books written by and about LGBTQ+, Black, Indigenous, People of Color (BIPOC), and Jewish individuals. While there is much literature and reporting on the impact of book challenges on school libraries in the state of Florida, there is a dearth of information on how these challenges have curtailed the freedom to read in public libraries, although I suspected that there had

been a chilling effect, albeit underreported. Through the case study of three public libraries in Florida, it was my goal to better understand how, if at all, state-sanctioned and organization-led book challenges have affected the work of public librarians, as well as how librarians are responding to the potential impacts. This non-generalizable study allows readers to understand how specific librarians are grappling with the threat of censorship within the ever-changing legal landscape of Florida.

Williams, E. Simonton. "How do People Respond to Fat-positivity on Tumblr?" A Master's Paper for the Master of Science in Library Science, April, 2024. Advisor: Melanie Feinberg. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.17615/ny77-e397>

Fat people are increasingly striving for social acceptance, through various social movements and through the medical Health at Every Size movement. This study investigates the ways people on Tumblr, a social media site, respond to posts endorsing fat-positivity or Health at Every Size. Real-world examples of these interactions were collected and quantitatively coded for agreement and rejection of traditional expertise. This area of coding is intended to allow comparison of the fat-positive community on tumblr to misinformation-driven groups like anti-vaccination groups and QAnon. This study expands the conversation surrounding contested medical theories and how people navigate contested information.

Wilson, Saija. "Difficult Description: Rhetoric, Neutrality and the Intellectual Tradition of Archival Processing." A Master's Paper for the Master of Science in Information Science, May, 2024. Advisor: Elliott Kuecker, Matthew Turi. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.17615/pwbz-q559>

This paper seeks to closely examine the work of archival processing, also called archival arrangement and description, or simply archival description. The reason description is difficult is due to factors within the traditions of archival theory and practice. In the past, archives and archivists have claimed neutrality and objectivity as a means to dignify the authority with which they worked. Only recently have archivists begun to fully acknowledge the power held in the archives, specifically the rhetorical power. This paper is primarily concerned with the rhetorical power held and nurtured in the archives by archival processing and to do so conducts a content analysis of the find-

ing aids belonging to the Hayes Collection, 1694-1928, the Cameron Family Papers, 1757-1978, and the Philip Henry Pitts Papers, 1814-1884 all held within the Southern Historical Collection (SHC) at the Wilson Special Collections Library.

Winemiller, Sam. "Where Do We Go From Here? A Content Analysis of ALA Presidential Columns in *American Libraries*." A Master's Paper for the Master of Science in Information Science, April, 2024. Advisor: Brian Sturm. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.17615/xb5q-wt60>

The purpose of this research was to understand the messaging of recent American Library Association presidents, and by doing so, explore how they have imagined what libraries should be, and what librarians should do. Within the U.S. context, these figures' messages serve as important historical markers of issues that libraries and librarians have wrestled with at a given time, and to some degree, the formal positions and directions of the library profession's primary governing body. Understanding how these individuals have imagined libraries is a worthwhile endeavor given their relative importance to the field and indicates prevailing schools of thought within the profession as to what U.S. librarianship should be about over the next several decades. I conducted a content analysis of columns written by the past 25 ALA presidents appearing in the ALA publication *American Libraries* and, by identifying both consistent patterns across the sample and changes over time, argued that several key issues define the present and future of the field. These included libraries' move down a metaphorical hierarchy of needs from self-actualization to safety, libraries' commitment to intellectual freedom vs. their traditional state building purpose, the increasingly explicit social justice orientation of the field, vocational awe and job creep, libraries and structural economic change, and libraries' commitment to the public good vs. neoliberalism. I close by suggesting a path of critical technical practice that may help the field find its way forward amid a time of transition.

Woolever, Kellie. "A Comparative Study on Male and Female Athletes in Sports Media After the Implementation of Title IX." A Master's Paper for the Master of Science in Library Science, April, 2024. Advisor: Sandra Hughes-Hassell. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.17615/bsax-xg96>

This study examines the portrayal of male and female athletes in sports media following the implementation of Title IX legislation in North Carolina. By analyzing media coverage after 1972, the year Title IX was enacted, the research investigates whether the increased participation of women in athletics has resulted in more equitable representation in sports media. The analysis explores potential changes in the volume and focus of media coverage dedicated to female athletes, aiming to assess the lasting impact of Title IX and the way women's sports are presented to the public through the past few decades. The research was conducted using over 1,200 articles from 240 newspapers from the Digital N.C. repository that holds over 14,000 issues of the *Daily Tar Heel*, the student newspaper of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

Yating Ke. "Visualization and Analysis of Continuous Glucose Monitoring Data Based on Self-monitoring." A Master's Paper for the Master of Science in Information Science, April, 2024. Advisor: David Gotz. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.17615/fft2-0b92>

Diabetes as a chronic disease affecting multiple age groups has been increasing in prevalence in recent years. This trend highlights the growing need for effective blood glucose monitoring in the wider population. Based on the continuous development of continuous glucose monitoring devices and the fact that daily glucose monitoring remains an important component in controlling the progression of the disease, the aim of this study was to develop an intuitive glucose visualization tool that utilizes continuous glucose test data to facilitate patient self-monitoring, self-management and support clinical decision-making at a potential level. By combining a user-friendly interface with advanced data analytics, the tool aims to empower patients in their daily diabetes management while providing valuable insights for medical review.

Zimmermann, Emily. "A Scoping Review of Medical Research Evaluating the Accuracy and Reliability of ChatGPT as a Consumer Health Information Resource." A Master's Paper for the Master of Science in Library Science, April, 2024. Advisor: Marijel Melo. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.17615/nccx-5s59>

This scoping review delves into the multifaceted landscape of AI in medicine. Anticipating the wide

scale use of ChatGPT by patients to answer their health related questions, this paper blends insights from bioethics and information science. The included literature spans varied medical disciplines which examine the usefulness, efficacy, and ethical implications of patients using ChatGPT to inform their healthcare decisions. Benefits include the improvement of communication and education for patients while concerns include misinformation and the illusion of expertise. By synthesizing diverse perspectives, this scoping review sheds light on the complexities surrounding the integration of AI in medicine while offering valuable insights to librarians, medical professionals, and individual patients.

Zorich, River. "Representation and Rhetoric of Disability and Disabled People: A Content Analysis of Digital Archives on Disability." A Master's Paper for the Master of Science in Library Science, May, 2024. Advisor: Elliott Kuecker. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.17615/qwmz-n176>

This study analyzed the representation and rhetoric of disability and disabled people within three digital archives on disability: the Disability History Museum; the University of California, Berkeley's Disability Rights and Independent Living Movement Project; and the National Federation of the Blind's Jacobus tenBroek Library. Using qualitative content analysis, I examined how disability is represented in those archives, how Brilmyer's (2020) critical disability archival methodology shows up in those archives, and how that methodology might be further applied to archives. The data collected came from a close reading of the websites and digital repositories of the three case studies. The study aimed to further the scholarly and practical intersections of disability and archives by influencing future research regarding critical disability archival methodology.

Fall 2024

Hartsock, Jeremiah. "Discover Weekly?: Perceptions of Spotify's Algorithmically Generated Music Recommendations." A Master's Paper for the Master of Science in Information Science, December, 2024. Advisor: William Payne.

Spotify, a large music streaming service used across the world, features AI-generated playlists, or collections of songs that dynamically adjust to user listening behaviors. Academics and journalists have raised

concerns that Artificial Intelligence (AI) and AI-generated playlists reduce listening diversity and monopolize the means with which people discover new music. While past research uses quantitative means to examine user behavior, fewer studies address user perceptions of the role of AI in music discovery. To address this gap, I conducted an interview study with 13 participants and analyzed the results to elucidate 1) how they utilize three AI-generated playlist features: Discover Weekly, Daylist, and DJ; 2) what factors impact which feature they choose to use and when; and 3) whether their musical avidity (or engagement with music) impacts their perceptions of the expanding role of AI in music listening. Key findings include: 1) Participants regard the Discover Weekly playlist as the most influential to their new music discovery; 2) participants enjoy the blending of new and familiar music into themes from the Daylist, and 3) participants desired the most customization with the DJ feature.

Jines, Shiloh Rebecca. "Feminist, Queer, and Trans Artists' Books and Zines in the Sloane Art Library Collection." A Master's Paper for the Master of Science in Library Science, December, 2024. Advisor: Elliott Kuecker.

Contemporary artists' books and zines are interdisciplinary artforms that engage in intimate, handmade, and often subversive methods to explore identity, community, and social change. In this paper, I introduce artists' books and zines as agents of social change, and explore the role they play in feminist, queer, and trans identity, community, and culture formation. I conclude each section of my literature review with a list of questions intended to urge researchers, professors, and librarians to reimagine the role of artists' books and zines as tools of feminist praxis, both in their collection in the classroom. A guide to feminist, queer, and trans artists' books and zines in Sloane Art Library collection is included in the final section. The guide can be navigated by title, and includes subject headings relevant to gender and sexuality, details of the printing and binding method, and a brief critical synopsis blended with description of the work from the artist.

Merritt, Nadia. "Illustrating Health Narratives: An Exploration of Graphic Medicine as Consumer Health Education Materials." A Master's Paper for the Master of Science in Information

Science, December, 2024. Advisor: Tressie Mc-Millan Cottom.

Health literacy and patient education aims to meet consumers where they are while also increasing knowledge, application of information, and ability to advocate. Graphic medicine is a subgenre made up of mostly books and are narratives about health experiences. This study aims to examine the usability of Graphic Medicine as it relates to women's health for consumer patient education materials. Digital and print mediums in both longform and shortform were selected for review. The Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality's Patient Education Materials Assessment Tool (PEMAT) was used as the instrument to determine if the readings perform well or not as consumer health information. All items have been defined as graphic medicine by GraphicMedicine.org which is operated by a nonprofit organization, Graphic Medicine International Collective.

Spring 2025

Allison, Lindsey. "The Bereaved College Experience: Threads of Grief in the Recordkeeping Practices of College Students." A Master's Paper for the Master of Science in Library Science, April, 2025. Advisor: Alexandra Chassanoff.

In examining in-depth interviews with college students, this paper sought to identify and explore the recordkeeping practices of individuals who have experienced the death of a loved one. The recordkeeping practices were generally defined as actions taken to collect and maintain objects, photographs, and other memorabilia, both physical and digital, in remembrance of the deceased. By interviewing college students within this population, the role that personal archives play in the bereavement process might be better understood, further analyzing what types of records are collected and how those records impact grief. As the loss of a loved one or close friend is an individualized experience, this study sought to position the lived experiences of each individual at the forefront of the analysis, centering their stories and words while assessing their archival tendencies. This non-generalizable study served to create avenues of awareness within the library science community regarding bereaved college students, identifying potential methods of support that can be provided from the field and future areas of collaboration with other specialties.

Barrett-Catton, Emma. "What Are You Referencing? The Impact of Reference Manager Workshop Titles on the Likelihood That Undergraduate Students Attend." A Master's Paper for the Master of Science in Library Science, April, 2025. Advisor: Casey Rawson.

The purpose of this research project is to investigate the impact that library reference manager workshop names have on the likelihood that undergraduate students will sign up to attend said workshops. It addresses (1) whether undergraduates are interested in learning more about reference managers, (2) how they would like to learn about reference managers, and (3) whether the names of workshops impact the likelihood they will attend. Undergraduate students were recruited to participate in a survey using emails and flyers. The data was analyzed using descriptive statistics and coding. Overall, this study found that undergraduate students are interested in learning more about reference managers, primarily through asynchronous means. For those interested in reference manager workshops, more descriptive workshop names were more appealing. This study gives academic instructional librarians guidance on how they should name their workshops so that people who would be interested may be more likely to attend.

Bernice Shylet Meja. "Cultivating Inclusive Learning: Assessing Self-Guided Resources in Library Makerspaces For Diverse Student Populations." A Master's Paper for the Master of Science in Information Science, April, 2025. Advisor: William Payne.

Academic Makerspaces often provide high-tech equipment that can sometimes intimidate students. While these spaces offer valuable tools for creative work, little research explores how well self-guided learning resources support diverse learners. This study investigates the cultural responsiveness of such resources at UNC-Chapel Hill's Library Makerspace, focusing on first-generation and international undergraduates. Using artifact analysis, a focus group, and a gamified orientation intervention, I examine how students engage with existing materials and identify barriers. Findings show students value self-directed and collaborative learning but find current resources inaccessible, overly technical, and lacking inclusive cues. Emotional barriers, limited awareness, and mismatches between learning preferences and design further hinder use. Insights informed a gamified orien-

tation tool to make Makerspace access more intuitive and culturally affirming. This research emphasizes the need for inclusive design in academic Makerspaces to empower all students.

Charlton, Marlee. "Violence, Visibility, and the Other: Diverging Social Media Representations of Incarceration on Bluesky and X." A Master's Paper for the Master of Science in Library Science, April, 2025. Advisor: Francesca Tripodi.

This research investigates how incarceration is represented on the social media platforms Bluesky and X to understand how these portrayals may influence public perception of incarceration. Through a thematic analysis of public posts on Bluesky and X, this research identifies patterns across the dataset. Findings indicate both social media platforms describe the criminal justice system as flawed but have differing conceptualizations of the shortcomings. Bluesky suggests that the violence faced by those who are incarcerated is the foundational flaw within the criminal justice system; whereas X presents the violence that occurs within society as necessitating at least the current rate of incarceration.

Cimarusti, Lucia J. "Archives on Two Wheels: Archival Practices of Bike Co-operatives." A Master's Paper for the Master of Science in Library Science, April, 2025. Advisor: Joseph Winberry.

Bike co-operatives are important organizations in their communities, offering bicycle educational and repair services for little to no cost. Yet they often occupy precarious positions, and their histories and work are not well preserved within existing archival institutions. This study seeks to uncover the ways in which bike co-ops are already archiving their own materials and how archivists can assist them in this work. The study is based around interviews with members of bike co-ops about the perceptions of their co-ops' archival practices. It seeks to answer these questions: 1) How are volunteer-run bike co-ops already archiving the work that they do? 2) What form, if any, do these archives take, and are they guided by any pre-existing organizational principles? 3) What can archivists offer to these co-ops to better assist them in preserving these histories? And 4) After this knowledge is gathered, how can an interested archival professional, or even a member of a bike co-op without archival knowledge, go about starting a formalized archive for these organizations?

Clemmons, Will. "A Review of Deaccessioning Policies in American University and College Archives/Special Collections." A Master's Paper for the Master of Science in Library Science, April, 2025. Advisor: Alexandra Chassanoff.

During the spring semester of 2025 the author conducted a review of 23 deaccession policies from United States based university and college archives/special collections. In the first study of its kind, the author examined the policies that existed along with their similarities and differences. Utilized the Society of American Archivists (SAA) *Guidelines for Reappraisal and Deaccessioning*, the policies collected were examined for inclusion of authority/approval processes, methods of disposal, allowable uses of funds from sale if applicable, and how to manage found-in-collection objects. Any other similarities or differences of significance were noted. The author found that while most policies examined included some of the SAA's recommendations, few followed similar structures or emphasized the same deaccessioning guidelines. With a literature that backs deaccessioning as sound collections management practice, the policies examined show that ethical deaccessioning is possible, and the resources exist to help archives that are in the process of creating their own deaccession policy.

Cohen, Anna. "Estamos Aqui: Latine Student Experiences in LIS Education." A Master's Paper for the Master of Science in Library Science, April, 2025. Advisor: Diane Kelly.

According to the Department of Professional Employees, Latino/a/e librarians constitute about 11% of the total librarian population, despite representing over 19% of the U.S. population (Department for Professional Employees, n.d.; Pew Research Center, 2024). This disparity in representation is concerning when considering that a common critique of librarianship is that it lacks diversity. Furthermore, population predictions are expecting the Latine community to increase to 28% of the total United States population by 2060, showing a clear need to develop a workforce that represents the growing diversity of library users (Census Bureau, 2018). This study seeks to address this issue by examining how Latine student experiences during LIS education affect student success while seeking LIS degrees. Through a series of interviews with recent Latine graduates, this research project identifies areas where participants felt sup-

ported or underserved. The findings offer insights for LIS program administrators, highlighting key considerations for designing programs that foster Latine student success. The findings discuss ways library schools can support working students, improve sense of belonging, and provide relevant campus resources.

Crowe, Codi. “Evidence of Colonialism in the Metadata of Indigenous American Archival Materials.” A Master’s Paper for the Master of Science in Library Science, April, 2025. Advisor: Brian Sturm.

This paper discusses evidence of colonialism in metadata and cataloging practices in Indigenous American archival material. The research in this paper was conducted with a random dataset of 160 Indigenous American archival materials from the Library of Congress. Throughout history, archives have stood strong as institutions people can trust to tell them the stories of those from the past. These voices shape and change culture, history, and worldviews of others and ourselves. However, history sometimes is altered and misconstrued. Colonialism is a form of imperialism that has existed for a millennium and affects several parts of history, and therefore archives.

Daniel, Kenneth. “An Investigation into Middle Eastern Studies Librarians’ Perceptions of the Library of Congress Subject Headings in the Digital Age.” A Master’s Paper for the Master of Science in Library Science, April, 2025. Advisor: Joseph Winberry.

Among librarians who use the Library of Congress Subject Headings (LCSH), there is a growing agreement that the system encodes a Eurocentric bias in its language and organization. Efforts to not only acknowledge but remedy bias in Western classifications systems have coalesced under the framework of “critical cataloging,” a subset of wider critical theory. There is extensive literature on the effects of this bias, namely how it flattens and ostracizes non-mainstream Western subjects into generalized “other” categories. However, much of the literature today focuses on the theoretical implications of these biases, how it is intellectually degrading to the communities that have been othered. It has long been the argument of critical catalogers that reforms should center on adding headings (Olson 1998) and the removal or renaming of existing ones (Berman 1971). Conversely, this debate tends to focus less on its practical

implications, such as material retrieval—functions that in the pre-digital age were heavily reliant on the catalog’s structure. However, with the advent of on-line tools like item tags, filters, and especially searches by keyword, the catalog is no longer the be-all-end-all for finding materials. Furthermore, the digital age has given rise to tools that can assist researchers in finding materials without directly using the catalog at all, such as LibGuides (Robinson 2016). With this context, the purpose of this study was to examine the perceptions research librarians of a non-Western subject—Middle Eastern Studies (MES)—hold regarding the LCSH. This study consisted of semi-structured, hour-long interviews with five MES librarians employed by universities that offer a full degree in Middle Eastern Studies. Through these interviews, I sought to find not only their opinions of the LCSH, but whether its Eurocentric bias is seen as a major roadblock to material retrieval in the digital age. The data collected in these semi-structured interviews was analyzed utilizing thematic analysis to uncover both evident and subtextual patterns in the responses. The goal of this study was not to critique efforts to reform the LCSH, but to investigate if its Eurocentrism poses the same obstacle that it did in the pre-digital age.

Daniels, Alexander. “Development of a Machine-Learning Ensemble Approach to Automate Classification of Peer-Reviewed Literature for Systematic Review.” A Master’s Paper for the Master of Science in Information Science, May, 2025. Advisor: Jaime Arguello.

This study addresses the significant challenges inherent in classifying scientific literature within specialized technical domains, such as Earth Science modeling, particularly concerning database fragmentation and terminological ambiguity. Developed and evaluated herein is a hybrid methodological framework designed to accurately associate scientific publications with specific JPL Earth Science models and to analyze their resultant bibliometric impact. The methodology integrates multiple complementary signals, including direct keyword matching, semantic embedding similarity, contextual validation via TF-IDF profiles, and statistical reinforcement. This hybrid approach achieved robust performance, significantly outperforming single-method strategies, with an overall F1 score of 0.84 and demonstrating effective generalization (test F1 = 0.81). A crucial

element was the implementation of model-specific threshold optimization, which accommodated significant variations in publication volume and terminological distinctiveness across models (e.g., ECCO F1=0.90 at threshold 0.10, MOMO-Chem F1=0.79 at threshold 0.95). Empirical analysis revealed substantial disparities in database coverage, with Dimensions contributing 83% of the corpus compared to 0.1% from Web of Science, underscoring the necessity of a multi-database approach in specialized fields. Temporal analysis of publication patterns indicated growing scientific engagement with JPL models since 2010, exhibiting distinct lifecycle patterns aligned with model development. The developed framework offers a valuable tool for researchers and institutions to track model impact and provides a methodological template applicable to bibliometric analysis in other specialized technical domains facing similar classification challenges.

Drew, De'Ivyion. "Evaluation of Visual Art Researcher Information Needs: Visualizing Patron-Library Interaction in the Art Repository." A Master's Paper for the Master of Science in Library Science, May, 2025. Advisor: Alice Whiteside.

This study focused on how art researchers understand, interpret, and interact with visual art resources and how these interactions influenced their research initiatives. In an effort to contribute new evidence to the established discourse on research behaviors for the visual art field, oral interviews were conducted at the Sloane Art Library at the University of North Carolina Chapel Hill with undergraduate students, graduate students and faculty art scholars to determine differences and similarities in behaviors and perceptions. These interviews were followed by a survey questionnaire about their experience as a researcher utilizing art library collections and additional information about their research discipline. This study explores how art researchers find and use library sources and identifies information seeking behaviors unique to art professionals. The data collected outlines new recommendations that increase patron engagement and collection circulation for art libraries.

Elder, Caetlyn. "Non Sum Qualis Eram": The Archival Frame in Horror Media and Gothic Literature." A Master's Paper for the Master of

Science in Library Science, April, 2025. Advisor: Michael Fox.

This paper discusses how creators of horror media and Gothic literature frame archives within fictional works situated in the found footage or manuscript subgenre. The narratives discussed are not only characteristically framed as archival materials through their formats but address archival issues through the conventions of the horror genre. The primary issues discussed are preservation, materiality, and authenticity. Dialogue, text, and scenes are analyzed within the context of the archival material format they are presented in to reveal how general audiences engage with the archival through these fictional narratives.

Francis, Luzita. "Dying to Be Counted: The Social Determinants of Data: A Critical Analysis of the Quality of the 2020 North Carolina Latino COVID-19 Mortality Data." A Master's Paper for the Master of Science in Information Science, April, 2025. Advisor: Melanie Feinberg.

Mortality data informs public health practice and initiatives, policy formulation, and resource allocation. The COVID-19 Latino mortality data in 2020 elicited a specific response from public health officials, but there was no questioning around the quality or the accuracy of the data. Using a critical lens, this study examines the data collection process, identifies gaps, and analyzes the implications of inaccuracy and limitations. This study found that missing ethnicity data in North Carolina's COVID-19 mortality records was not random but rather a systemic issue rooted in bureaucratic inefficiencies, inconsistent reporting practices, and institutional neglect. These findings underscore the urgent need for policy interventions to mandate complete and accurate ethnicity reporting, ensuring equitable public health responses and resource allocation.

Freed, Erica. "The Digital Romance Economy: Exploring the Role of Parasocial Relationships and Microtransactions in the Otome Game Player's Information Landscape." A Master's Paper for the Master of Science in Library Science, April, 2025. Advisor: Bradley Hemminger.

Otome romance game players have a variety of motivations for playing the games they do, whether it be the storylines, specific characters, artwork, or another factor. This study focuses on the information needs of otome players and what motivates them to tran-

sition from free-to-play (F2P) to paid players. The research examines discussions in two otome game subreddits to understand the factors that drive this shift, including appealing character traits and other elements that attract players. I provide an overview of these games, player behaviors, and information needs by sampling online forums through a variety of keyword searches and analyzing the content of returned posts for significant themes, commonalities, and divergences. In so doing, I have synthesized information into two categories: emotional investment and spending motivations, including discussion of game design strategies, and user information needs, in order to gather a clearer understanding of how players are motivated to spend, as well as seek, evaluate, and share information related to in-game purchases.

Garcia Lara, Luz. "Selling the Smart Border: A Comparative NLP Analysis Of U.S. Immigration Technology Narratives Under Trump and Biden." A Master's Paper for the Master of Science in Information Science, April, 2025. Advisor: Francesca Tripodi.

Republicans and Democrats often claim to have extremely polarizing policies and values, especially regarding immigration and the U.S.-Mexico border. This study examines whether their immigration narratives and use of technology are truly as different as they seem. This paper looks at how immigrant narratives and techno-optimism (the belief that technology can solve major social problems) shaped immigration policies under the Trump (1st term) and Biden administrations. Using natural language processing (NLP) methods, including topic modeling and sentiment analysis, this study analyzes presidential documents to understand how each administration talks about immigrants and uses technology in immigration enforcement. The results show that while there are some differences, there are also important similarities, particularly in how both administrations use technology in ways that may still exclude or harm immigrants. By comparing the two administrations, this study questions the idea that partisan divides always lead to completely different immigration policies.

Giles, Emma. "A Survey of Academic Library Services for Neurodivergent Students." A Master's Paper for the Master of Science in Library Science, April, 2025. Advisor: Diane Kelly.

The purpose of this study is to survey the current services available to neurodivergent students in academic libraries. Informational interviews with librarians from academic libraries across the United States provide the data for this narrative and phenomenological study that aims to convey the steps that libraries have taken to accommodate neurodivergent students thus far. Understanding the current state of these services is essential to defining next steps for improving and innovating new services for this population. This study will provide a better understanding of the role of academic libraries in neurodivergent students' success and inspire further research and necessary change.

Godar, Kathleen. "The Attention Economy, Social Media Addiction, & the Loneliness Epidemic: A Content Analysis of YouTube Video Essays." A Master's Paper for the Master of Science in Information Science, April, 2025. Advisor: Melanie Feinberg.

This study provides a content analysis of YouTube video essays on the attention economy, social media addiction, and the loneliness epidemic. The study analyzes the rhetoric and language of these essays to explore how the attention economy is being framed, how social media's effects are discussed, and how essayists utilize social media to discuss social media. The sample is a selection of YouTube video essays purposively gathered by searching YouTube to identify video essays that fit the criteria. The data is then analyzed using inductive coding to explore common themes. The study provides an exploratory overview of YouTube video essay discourse on the topics and provides inspiration for further research into the topics as well as video essays as a form.

Gu, Yijun. "Reconstructing Disaster Scenarios from Multimodal Social Media with LLMs: A Case Study on Hurricane Harvey." A Master's Paper for the Master of Science in Information Science, April, 2025. Advisor: Yue Wang.

This research investigates the ability of large language models to reconstruct disaster scenarios using multimodal data from Hurricane Harvey. By analyzing well-annotated tweet-image pairs that describe disaster impacts, the research evaluates five state-of-the-art models across two key tasks: spatiotemporal storm tracking and humanitarian impact summarization. Results show that models like GPT-4o and

DeepSeek-R1 demonstrate strong reasoning capabilities, effectively aligning textual and visual evidence to infer daily disaster conditions. However, challenges remain in interpreting implicit humanitarian cues, such as emotional support or donation needs. The research proposes a rubric-based evaluation framework to assess transparency, groundedness, and narrative coherence. Findings underscore the promise and limits of large language models in crisis analysis and suggest future directions for integrating real-time social media with AI-assisted emergency response tools.

Hahn, William. "Cyberattack Sense-making Methods: Comparing the Capital One (2019) and Internet Archive (2024) Data Breach Reddit Discussions." A Master's Paper for the Master of Science in Information Science, April, 2025. Advisor: Ryan Shaw.

This paper covers the Capital One (2019) and Internet Archive (2024) cyberattacks, both severe breaches of user data that caused notable reactions online. The user perspective remains overlooked by large internet services. In this paper, user concerns are leveraged to gain insights into the sense-making processes relevant to each case. This is achieved through text analysis of the Reddit discussions for each event, emphasizing their topics, named entities, and overarching trends. It was found that Capital One (2019) featured much more technical discussion than Internet Archive (2024), and users perceived Internet Archive much more favorably than Capital One as a service. While both events have distinct qualities that set them apart, this study demonstrates the value of trust, transparency, and rapid disclosure for internet services. This paper's methods can be applied across institutional contexts to provide a service with a better grasp of the needs of its user base.

Huffstetler, Benjamin. "DVDs in the Public Library: A Case Study." A Master's Paper for the Master of Science in Library Science, April, 2025. Advisor: Joseph Winberry.

The purpose of this case study is to examine DVD circulation and staff views at a case public library in an attempt to gauge the current state of the case library's physical collection in the age of streaming. Through a mix of circulation and acquisition data analysis, in-depth interviews, and a content analysis of the collection, an exploratory study was conducted that attempted to describe the usefulness of a DVD

collection at one main branch public library. The findings were analyzed from a mixed methods approach that utilized triangulation of data to examine this topic from different perspectives. While the findings highlight declining DVD usage, there is a clear use in having this collection for the time being. The goal of this study was not to determine the best practices to follow moving forward regarding DVD collection policy, but rather to provide a specific public library case of professional opinions and circulation data within one environment.

Kasumarthi, Sriya. "Robotics Augmented Web Conferencing." A Master's Paper for the Master of Science in Information Science, April, 2025. Advisor: William Payne.

Facing the growing demand for more engaging and socially interactive remote communication, robotic gestures have emerged as a solution to enhance virtual meetings. While robots have been used in communication before, their role in conveying social presence through gestures like handshakes, waves, fist bumps, and high fives remains underexplored. This study investigates how these gestures, when paired with vocal and visual greetings, influence participant perceptions of comfort, friendliness, and connection in augmented web conferencing. I conducted a pilot study with four participants that explores how participants respond to different robotic gestures. The system was designed ergonomically and safely to support intuitive and natural interactions. Results suggest that gestures that closely mimic natural human movements help build trust and improve the interaction experience. This work contributes to the understanding of robotic social gestures and their practical potential in professional, educational, and remote assistance contexts, offering guidance for future human-robot interaction design.

Kinder, Eliscia. "Making and Unmaking the Record(s): Witness Evidence and Boundary Making Processes in Ireland's Mother and Baby Homes Commission of Investigation." A Dissertation for the Doctor of Philosophy, May, 2025. Advisors: Ryan Shaw, Melanie Feinberg, Anne J. Gilliland, and Cal Lee.

Witness accounts of human rights abuses or so-called "historic" harms given in evidence are important components of many truth commissions' investigatory processes. The purpose of this dissertation research

was to systematically identify occurrences of such witness evidence within the Final Report of Ireland's Mother and Baby Homes Commission of Investigation (2015-2021), map its placement throughout the Report, and analyze how the Commission synthesized it together with other forms of information. Since the Commission's inner workings were opaque to the public, the overall goal of the dissertation research was to prompt discussions of how such information is evaluated and deployed by this and similar bodies. In addition to locating textual evidence attributed to witnesses and making more apparent how it functions as a source of information, this study uncovered multiple relationships between information functions and the structure of the Report itself. My research further questioned the ethical implications of obfuscated investigatory methods as they related to this Commission's information processing and the presentation of witness evidence. Taking a mixed methods approach, I used citation analysis to identify, extract, and map witness evidence across the Report. I then used discourse synthesis to further analyze how witness evidence functions rhetorically and how it interacts with other information sources. A key finding from this research reveals that the majority of witness evidence appears in isolation, largely performing little synthesis with other witness evidence occurrences or information sources. Findings were then analyzed using Karen Barad's agential realism to offer a dynamic interrogation of the multiple and lively processes that made this Commission and its Report. Processes of boundary-making confined and constrained witness evidence, marking points of difference that call into question the relevancy, veracity, and utility of witness evidence as an information source for this Commission. This work established an analytical perspective into ongoing understandings of the Report as a document and witness evidence as information. For disciplines that analyze truth commissions, historical inquiries, and similar truth-finding entities, this project demonstrates an exploratory research design that responded to the boundaries or "agential cuts" this specific commission made. Rather than generating a broadly reproducible research methodology, agential realism's conceptual framing and this study's findings instead provide a set of approaches that subsequent researchers might consider adopting as entry points into textual analyses of final reportage and explicating methodological gaps in commission investigations. Additionally, by incorpo-

rating information studies perspectives, I bring techniques from different information fields into analyses of the Commission as an investigative entity and the construction of the Report. This is particularly relevant for ongoing discussions about inquiries' and truth commissions' information processes that continue to take place on a global scale. This work also demonstrates the various literacies required to extract meanings from investigative reporting, especially when documents do not transparently explicate patterns for readers. There is a pressing need to critically reexamine investigative commissions, their entangled phenomena, and practical and theoretical assumptions about their information processing to better envision future investigative research and reporting that bolsters accountability and justice.

Koon, Karel. "Access Denied? Takedown Policies in Community Archives." A Master's Paper for the Master of Science in Library Science, April, 2025. Advisor: Megan Winget.

Community archives and their digital collections have allowed marginalized communities to access and share their history and materials on their own terms. Yet, as archival collections continue to be digitized and increase in online accessibility, it is important to consider the stakeholders and ethical implications surrounding sensitive materials. Takedown policies are one way in which issues with the digitization of certain materials can be expressed. When present, these policies enable conversations with community members if concerns are raised about digital content. Since community archives place more emphasis on community needs and desires, these mechanisms of conversation build relationships and trust, especially if there is a history of misrepresentation and exploitation by public institutions. As takedown policies do not have a standard structure, this study poses the research question: To what extent do community archives' takedown policies contend with the values articulated in their mission statements?

Langston, Percy. "A Mixed-Methods Investigation of Homeschoolers' Information Literacy Instruction and Practices." A Master's Paper for the Master of Science in Library Science, April, 2025. Advisor: Casey Rawson.

This study sought to develop a broad understanding of the ways in which information literacy skills

are taught in the homeschool context. Specifically, it surveyed the parents of homeschooled high schoolers to investigate what types of materials students are instructed to use for research, how students are taught to search for sources, and what messages students are given about how to evaluate these sources' credibility. Additionally, it collected basic demographic data to investigate whether substantive differences exist in information literacy instruction among different homeschool "cohorts," differentiated by parents' political affiliation, parents' highest education level, primary instructional method, and reason for homeschooling. The study's anticipated impact was to contribute to literature around the information seeking behaviors of homeschoolers and better equip librarians to understand the range of information literacy proficiencies of students in higher education.

Levin, Olivia. "Reading Between the Guidelines: A Qualitative Assessment of the ACRL/SAA Guidelines for Primary Source Literacy." A Master's Paper for the Master of Science in Library Science, April, 2025. Advisor: Megan Winget.

This paper uses a qualitative coding scheme to analyze the degree to which a series of undergraduate lesson plans involving primary sources align with the objectives outlined in the 2018 ACRL/SAA *Guidelines for Primary Source Literacy*, expanding on patterns and outliers among the surveyed data. Significant outliers are used to inform the author's recommendations for expanding the *Guidelines* to better capture the scope of teaching possibilities using primary sources in a higher education library context.

Lu, Nuoer. "Understanding Usability Challenges and User Behaviors of Older Adults Interacting with ChatGPT." A Master's Paper for the Master of Science in Information Science, April, 2025. Advisor: William Payne.

As generative AI tools like ChatGPT become increasingly integrated into daily life, understanding how older adults interact with them is essential for inclusive design. This study explores the usability of ChatGPT among older adults, aiming to identify challenges and opportunities for improving accessibility and engagement. The research included pre-surveys, moderated usability testing, and a two-week diary study with four participants aged 65 and older. Findings revealed key usability barriers, including

difficulty with onboarding, prompt formulation, and interface navigation. However, participants also expressed curiosity and enthusiasm, especially when engaging with familiar topics or when ChatGPT offered proactive, collaborative prompts. The study underscores the importance of guided onboarding, prompt scaffolding, and transparent data practices in designing AI systems for older users. These findings contribute to growing efforts in inclusive AI design and highlight the role of conversational AI in supporting older adults' autonomy and creativity.

Olson, Madison. "Leaving a Mark: Archival Best Practices in Dystopian Literature." A Master's Paper for the Master of Science in Library Science, April, 2025. Advisor: Cal Lee.

This study is a content analysis to understand how archival best practices appear in dystopian literature. The goal of this paper is to use examples of archival practices in dystopian literature to better understand how people have interacted with archives in the past and may interact with them in the future. This work was done by analyzing the text of four dystopian novels and comparing how they describe archival practices. Those novels were George Orwell's *1984*, Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World*, *Station Eleven* by Emily St. John Mandel, and *The Handmaid's Tale* by Margaret Atwood. Looking at how they describe archival activities and showcase their interactions compared to best practices outlined in traditional archival publications. I identified five common themes. They related to collections, teaching, preservation, the right to be forgotten, and the tension of involvement. This study builds on and provides a groundwork for studying archival practices in non-traditional settings.

Pearce, Christian. "Indigenous Representations and Perceptions in Cookbooks: A Case Study of Wilson Library's North Carolina Collection." A Master's Paper for the Master of Science in Information Science, April, 2025. Advisor: Megan Winget.

This thesis is an examination of the representation and perceptions of Indigenous peoples in cookbooks, using Wilson Library's North Carolina Collection as a case study, tracing how these portrayals have evolved over time. Using a mixed-methods content analysis approach, this study identifies recurring themes in Indigenous food and folk medicine representation,

exploring how historical misinformation, cultural appropriation, and shifts in culinary narratives have influenced public perceptions of Indigenous cuisine and culture. By focusing on cookbooks as cultural artifacts, this research highlights how these texts document and transmit Indigenous culinary and cultural knowledge, while also reflecting broader socio-political trends in North Carolina's historical and contemporary context. This analysis aims to provide insights into the preservation of Indigenous culinary heritage, especially in local contexts, the challenges posed by cultural appropriation, and the significance of food sovereignty in Indigenous communities.

Perleberg, Ellen. "Making the Model Body: Disability, War, and the Technopolitics of Repair." A Master's Paper for the Master of Science in Library Science, May, 2025. Advisor: Marijel Melo.

This paper presents a comparative discourse analysis of prosthetic technology between humanitarian organizations operating in contemporary Middle Eastern conflict zones and the American tech industry. It analyzes who is presented as deserving as well as successful recipients of prosthetics and the broader narratives of disability and technology constructed through these bodies. For humanitarian organizations, prosthetics exist as one piece of a continuum of rehabilitative care interrupted by destruction of healthcare systems. American technojournalism often focuses on human enhancement through aesthetic prosthetics and prosthetics that could improve athletic or combat performance. The imagined prosthetic futures of the tech industry contrast with the present realities and ongoing embodied trauma of those living with prosthetics in conflict zones.

Radtke, Ashley. "An Assessment of North Carolina Public Libraries' ILL Borrowing From The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill's University Libraries." A Master's Paper for the Master of Science, April, 2025. Advisor: Renee Bosman.

Through existing data collection and a survey distributed to North Carolina public libraries (NCPLs), this study aims to uncover the barriers for North Carolina public libraries' Interlibrary Loan with the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Existing data collection will reveal how much material, what format, and what type NCPLs are requesting, and how much is being delivered to them. The

survey questions, informed by the articles mentioned in the literature review, inquire as to the status of ILL within the respondent's NCPL, how they currently support patrons pursuing self-guided education, and how they foresee the future of ILL at their location. This information culminates to give the University Libraries a fuller picture of the barriers in NCPL ILL and ideas/methods on how to assist NCPLs.

Richard, Colton K.. "Linked Literary Data: Evaluating Narrative Ontologies for Distant Reading." A Master's Paper for the Master of Science in Information Science, April, 2025. Advisor: Ryan Shaw.

The intersection of distant reading and linked data has emerged as a promising area of digital humanities, offering novel ways to describe, model, and analyze literary texts. For distant reading through linked data to be more widely adopted, however, there is a need for better understanding of the suitability of existing semantic frameworks (ontologies) for creating linked data for distant reading. Using a case study of modeling character relationships in *Hamlet*, this study presents a task-based evaluation of the Wikidata and Drammar ontologies for the purposes of analyzing literary narratives through character networks.

Roberts, Madeleine. "News Academic Libraries Can Use: A Content Analysis of Student Newspapers' Coverage of University Libraries." A Master's Paper for the Master of Science in Library Science, April, 2025. Advisor: Melanie Feinberg.

The purpose of this master's paper is to gain an understanding of how students newspapers cover the academic libraries on their campuses. Specifically, this study analyzes three student newspapers' coverage of their institution's academic libraries from the previous full academic year (August 2023 through July 2024) for sentiment: positive, negative, neutral, or mixed (both positive and negative). The content analysis investigates how many articles of different sentiments appear for each university, what common words, phrases, or themes (if any) appear among articles of the same sentiment, whether there are similarities between articles of the same sentiment at the student newspapers for different institutions, and more. The analysis found that there are not many similarities among articles of the same sentiment, but some common themes still emerged, including the importance of openness and accessibility in libraries

and library programming being regarded positively. Note that only articles which substantively mention the academic libraries at the three institutions are included in the analysis. This content analysis begins to fill a gap in the literature about how (with what tone) academic libraries are covered by their respective student newspapers, and how that might impact university libraries' promotion of their services to students and students' perceptions of university libraries.

Samuel Carter Franklin. "Something's Wrong in Some of Those Neat, Little Houses': How Narrative and Stylistic Elements Communicate Theme in Alan J. Pakula's Paranoia Trilogy." A Master's Paper for the Master of Science in Library Science, April, 2025. Advisor: Brian Sturm.

Alan J. Pakula's *Paranoia Trilogy* consists of three films released in the 1970s: *Klute* (1971), *The Parallax View* (1974), and *All the President's Men* (1976). The films have traditionally been considered as a trilogy despite not depicting a continual story with the same characters over three films. Instead, the films are grouped together because they are the product of the same director and share similar themes of societal fears including fear of the unknown, fear of corporations and government, and fear of surveillance encroaching on previously private spaces. The purpose of this study is to analyze the narrative method over the three films to see how the films communicate these fears and anxieties to audience members through narrative and stylistic techniques. The findings show that the films use narrative gaps, making familiar spaces strange, and various stylistic techniques including cinematography, editing and sound design to create a mood of fear and anxiety.

Sansom, Jaycee. "Using AI Literacy and Visual Literacy to Identify Synthetic Media." A Master's Paper for the Master of Science in Information Science, April, 2025. Advisor: William Payne.

With the rise of synthetic media online, it is becoming increasingly important to understand how educators should teach AI identification. This study aims to identify how AI and visual literacy can influence AI identification and see if these literacies should be included as frameworks for teaching AI identification. Through interviewing six university students with either AI literacy or AI and visual literacies, we assessed how accurate they were, what strategies

they used, and how confident they were in decision-making when judging real and AI-generated images of human faces. I found that these students had a high average accuracy compared to other studies and utilized strategies that relied on their previous experience to aid their decision-making process. As for confidence, students with only AI literacy were much less confident than those with both literacies, but this could be attributed to a lesser experience with visual media.

Smith, Hattie. "The Lonely Librarian: Depictions of Librarians in Modern Romance Novels, 2020-2024." A Master's Paper for the Master of Science in Library Science, April, 2025. Advisor: Casey Rawson.

This study is a content analysis of depictions of librarians in romance novels published from the year 2020 to 2024. The study examines stereotypes in the portrayals of librarians in these novels as identified in previous literature. The last identifiable study of a similar nature was published in 1996 and examined portrayals of librarians in romance novels from 1980 to 1995. The goal of this thesis is to fill a gap in the literature pertaining to modern romance within the last five years. Additionally, the paper compares earlier stereotypes, how portrayals of librarians have evolved over time, and the attempts to identify any differences between depictions of male and female librarians within the sampled literature.

Thomas, Courtney. "Counter-Tours at U.S. Universities: Strategies, Techniques, and the Collective Remembrance Landscape." A Master's Paper for the Master of Science in Information Science, April, 2025. Advisor: Ryan Shaw.

This study investigates the questions: How do counter-tours of US universities function as documents of collective remembrance? And, What features, strategies, techniques, and technological affordances do digitized counter-tours employ, and how do these elements support the tours' constructions of history and communication of truth claims? Challenging accepted narratives and activating in the ritual of campus tours, counter-tours of US universities intersect universities' research mission and institutional power, offering a potentially radical form for collective remembrance. Through qualitative analysis of three case studies, of counter tours at UT Austin, Penn, and Rutgers, each of which uses a different

digital interface, the study reveals how counter tours are shaped by different modes of mediation. The counter tours examined employ a broad range of rhetorical and public history techniques, including critical fabulation, attempts at place-based pedagogy, oral history, AR interventions, physical signage, and more.

Veeneman, Madison. "Learning from Student Perspectives on AI: Considerations for AI Literacy Instruction." A Master's Paper for the Master of Science in Library Science, April, 2025. Advisor: Casey Rawson.

As generative AI tools have rapidly developed and been made publicly available over the past two years, a growing body of literature is exploring how to define and teach AI literacy, as well as how students view and use generative AI. This study builds on this work and explores students' use, perception, and evaluation of generative AI tools via focus groups with undergraduates from the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill. The data was coded and analyzed thematically, and the findings extend our understanding of student perspectives on generative AI. The results are assessed against a definition of AI literacy, and suggestions for future directions in library instruction on critical AI literacy are offered.

Webb, Davia. "Artificial Intelligence in the Archive: A Case Study on Transkribus in The Hayes Collection Enslavement Era Records." A Master's Paper for the Master of Science in Library Science, April, 2025. Advisor: Rob Capra.

Accessibility of enslavement era records is an ongoing effort that has many challenges. With the majority of records being entirely handwritten, the searchability of enslavement era records require time consuming and laborious work. Uncovering the lives and narratives of enslaved people that were historically hidden in the archival record is a necessary step in improving access for researchers, genealogists, and other collection users. This study aims to explore the use of Transkribus, a handwritten text recognition software, in identifying records of enslavement, using documents from the Hayes Collection at The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill Willson Special Collections Library.

Werner, David Isaacson. "Authentic Autistic Authorship: The Role of Autistic-Authored Young

Adult Fiction in Autistic Identity Formation." A Master's Paper for the Master of Science in Library Science, April, 2025. Advisor: Sandra Hughes-Hassell.

The teenage years of an individual's life are a vital time for the formation and acceptance of identity. While teens today have many resources to consult when developing their own sense of identity—not the least including the internet—books remain a valuable resource. In this study, I examine eight different young adult fiction novels, written by autistic authors and featuring autistic protagonists, for the purpose of examining what messages an autistic reader might see and absorb about their own still-forming sense of identity.

Zehmer, Madison. "Planning and Pivoting on the Appalachian Trail: Real-Time Information Gathering, Assessment, and Sharing Strategies of Appalachian Trail Thru-Hikers." A Master's Paper for the Master of Science in Library Science, May, 2025. Advisor: Joseph Winberry.

Thru-hiking the Appalachian Trail is a significant endeavor that requires notable preparation and planning by the hiker before they begin the trail. Additionally, given the variety of environmental, social, physical, and mental circumstances that thru-hikers encounter, they must be able to acquire and apply real-time information to adjust their plans to account for emerging, changing, and potentially difficult situations. Through thematic analysis of data collected from semi-structured interviews with seven adults who have successfully completed a thru-hike of the Appalachian Trail, this study demonstrates that real-time information gathering, assessment, and sharing practices on the Appalachian Trail are inherently dynamic and social practices. Additionally, it illustrates that planning and preparation continue as active practices while on trail. This research influences the understanding of information behavior of hikers of long-distance trails such as the Appalachian Trail and may assist aspiring thru-hikers of long-distance trails prepare for thru-hikes.

Zhang, Shufeng. "Exploring and Analyzing Multimodal Emotion Analysis Tasks Under Different Modal Fusion Methods." A Master's Paper for the Master of Science in Information Science, April, 2025. Advisor: Yue Wang.

The objective of this paper is to investigate the effectiveness of different modality fusion methods

on multimodal sentiment analysis. Specifically, the task is based on image-text sentiment analysis using the Multi-View Sentiment Analysis (MVSA) Twitter dataset. In this paper, pre-trained BERT and ResNet-50 are used as feature extractors for text and images, respectively. The author constructed different feature fusion models based on different feature fusion methods. The different models were compared and analyzed for accuracy, F1-score, and confusion

matrix of the sentiment analysis task. At the same time, ablation experiments were conducted to prove the effectiveness of modality fusion, and some typical errors that occurred during the experiment and their causes were analyzed. Finally, the effect of training data size was studied. This paper contributed ideas and references for researchers in the field of multimodal feature fusion.



INFORM
CONNECT
SUPPORT

The Spring 1993 issue, Volume 51, Number 1, launched a new column titled "Lagniappe*/North Caroliniana," compiled by Plummer Alston Jones, Jr. (Al later served as editor of *North Carolina Libraries*, from 2001 to 2005.) The editor's note introducing the column stated that it was to complement North Carolina Books and that it would include reviews of "various non-book formats."

This first column provided a review of PERSI, an index for genealogy and local history published by the Allen County Public Library Foundation, in Fort Wayne, Indiana. PERSI is still online, searchable by name, place, or article keyword: <https://www.genealogycenter.info/persi/>. Other early articles from the column introduced the State Library's Internet Information Project, described four favorite NC travel and general interest magazines, and reviewed a handful of recordings from the NC Folklife Institute on instructional media for public school lessons on African American and Native American Cultures in North Carolina.

Other the years, Lagniappe has broadened its focus to include online resources, special collections from across the state, and other "extra or unexpected gifts or benefits." We continue Lagniappe with that same aim to uncover new and interesting discoveries for readers of *North Carolina Libraries*.

LEE ALBRIGHT AND HELEN F.M. LEARY

Lagniappe – A New Route into the Old North State: PERiodical Source Index (PERSI)

PERiodical Source Index [annual], 1986- , vol. 1- , edited by Michael B. Clegg et al. Fort Wayne, IN: Allen County Public Library Foundation, 1987- . Prices vary. For particulars contact the address below.

PERiodical Source Index [retrospective]. 1847-1985, 12 vols. to date, prepared by the Staff of the Allen County Public Library Foundation and the Allen County Public Library Genealogy Department. Fort Wayne, IN: Allen County Public Library Foundation, 1988- . \$1,400, if ordered before publication of the fourth segment; \$1,650, upon completion of publication. For particulars contact the address below.

Bibliography of Genealogy and Local History Periodicals with Union List of Major U.S. Collections, edited by Michael B. Clegg (Fort Wayne, IN: Allen County Public Library Foundation, 1990). viii+ 528 pp. \$75. Order books and price lists from: ACPL Foundation, PERSI Project, P.O. Box 2270, Fort Wayne, IN 46801-2270.

PERiodical Source Index's stated purpose, according to its Introduction, is to be a "comprehensive place, subject, and surname index to articles from the broadest spectrum of English-language and French-Canadian genealogy and local history periodicals." The *Index*, popularly called PERSI, is dramatically expanding access to genealogical and local history periodicals, a beneficial revolution comparable to the publication of census indexes.

Contents and Organization

Each index entry includes the following data: title of article (more or less), a code for the journal name (translated in an appendix), journal volume and number, and the month and year of publication. PERSI divides the entries into five major categories: "U.S. Places," subdivided by state, thereunder by county; "Canadian Places," subdivided by province; "Other Foreign Places," subdivided by country; "Research Methodology"; and "Families." Within four of these categories ("Families" is the exception), entries are further divided into twenty-four sub-categories

according to "record type": biography, cemetery, census, church, court, deeds, directories, history, institutions, land, maps, military, naturalizations, obituaries, other, passenger lists, probate, school, tax, vital records (which includes marriage), voter, and wills. Entries in each sub-category are listed in alphabetical order by the first word of the title. Thus, if one were looking for deed abstracts of Orange County, North Carolina, one would expect to find such an entry under "VS-NC-Orange-Deeds" and, perhaps "a" for "Abstracts" or "d" for "Deeds" or "o" for "Orange," depending on how the author titled the article.

The "Families" category, which is arranged alphabetically by surname, covers "articles on individual families, cemeteries where all people buried have the same surname, a single record about an individual or between two parties, and family Bible records. Family surname journals, queries, ancestor charts, and family group sheets have been *excluded* [emphasis of the reviewers]." An entry whose title includes two or more families is duplicated at appropriate places in the alphabet (e.g., "Alden-Lay-Crysler line, 1620-1988" appears under "a," "l," and "c").

Scheme of Publication

PERSI is being published in three separate but interrelated parts; only parts one and two use the indexing categories described above. The first part is the annual-index series, which began with 1986 and is currently available through 1991 (1992 will be published in 1993, and so on). 1986, however, is the only volume that contains entries from that year alone; later volumes include articles published in any year between the end of 1985 and the volume-title year.

The second part of PERSI is the retrospective-index series, which covers periodicals published from 1847 through 1985. It will be published in sixteen volumes divided into four segments, with each segment consisting of four volumes: a pair with the spine title "Places" (which include listings in the three "Place" categories plus "Research Methodology"); and a pair with the spine title "Families." Three four-volume segments have been published to date; the fourth is projected for publication in approximately two years. When publication has been completed, a microfiche edition "that cumulates the

information of the four segments into one alphabet" is expected to be available. Also, a series of smaller editions limited to entries pertinent to specific states is being considered for future publication.

The third part of PERSI is the *Bibliography* and presently consists of a single, comprehensive volume. Over 5,400 English-language and French-Canadian periodicals and series are listed alphabetically by title. The *Bibliography* includes periodicals that have not yet been indexed and those for which no indexing is contemplated (family-surname publications, for example). This compilation was the result of cooperation between the Allen County Public Library and ten other major libraries, which are listed with their name codes in the Acknowledgments. Information for each title includes its PERSI code (if one has been assigned) and its subject, frequency, holdings at each of the eleven libraries (by name code), notes, publisher, address, and price and ISSN if known. An extensive volume index provides access by place, family surname, and some subjects (computers, for example, and specific religious denominations, migration, heraldry, and so forth). Of the sixty-six "NC" entries in the *Bibliography*, thirty have been indexed in the current retrospective sets and an additional twenty-seven have been coded for annual indexing, future retrospective volumes, or both.

Using PERSI

Using PERSI to find articles about a particular family is relatively easy as long as the researcher patiently searches all currently available volumes. Using it to find an article about a particular subject is also relatively easy, but finding *all* the indexed articles about that subject can be more difficult. No research tool is perfect; although PERSI comes pretty close, it does throw a few stumbling blocks in the user's path. One is the lack of a coherent plan for "Research Methodology"; another is the inconsistency with which PERSI addresses its growth problems (the annual volumes have tripled in size since 1986 was published).

"Research Methodology" is the major category through which PERSI expects to locate articles about how to find, analyze, and compile genealogical and historical data. Unfortunately, entries within that category are assigned to the same sub-categories used in

"Places" (deeds, vital records, military, etc.) and there are no intervening divisions that correspond to "state" or "county." If the original design had incorporated a series of methodology-specific divisions and sub-categories, the disproportionate use of "other" to categorize 70% to 80% of all "Research Methodology" entries could have been avoided. In addition, the research category could have provided access to the techniques demonstrated in case studies (which now appear only by surname in "Families") as well as the methodology discussed in sources-oriented articles (which now appear in "Places," usually under "other") by the simple expedient of duplicating the index entries in both places. (Adding a new sub-category in "Places" for "methods/sources" would make such articles more accessible there as well.)

Extraordinary growth, rather than poor design, created part of the problem with "other" and most of the problems with such burgeoning sub-categories as "US-Military" and "US-History." PERSI editors are obviously aware of the difficulty and have begun, wisely, to try to group same-subject entries within each sub-category (e.g., by war under "military" and by alphabetical placement in the others). Unfortunately, the means used to force groupings are inconsistent: a subject-matter keyword was added to the beginning of some titles, others were rearranged in order to begin with a keyword, and most entries still begin with their original first word, which usu-

ally places the entry outside the artificial grouping. Perhaps it is time to expand the entire list of sub-categories, adding not only "methods/sources," but "ethnic/national," "migration," "occupation," "transportation," etc., and keywords under "history" to group articles by century.

Value of PERSI

In spite of its flaws, PERSI is an enormous boon to researchers and to the librarians who try to help them. Although using it well requires practice and persistence, the results are often magical. Researchers now have access to quantities of hitherto untapped resources, and librarians can direct their patrons to helpful material with far greater precision than was formerly possible. The entire research community owes a tremendous debt of gratitude to everyone who had a part in producing this revolutionary set of volumes; they will benefit not only genealogists and local historians, but biographers, sociologists, demographers, geneticists, physicians, psychologists, and countless others.

PERSI in its present form is recommended for purchase by all major libraries, especially those with large genealogical collections or collections oriented toward other kinds of historical research. The proposed state-specific editions of the retrospective volumes (should they become available) are recommended for purchase by smaller libraries and those with Limited resources.

Submission Requirements for North Carolina Libraries

Electronic articles can be submitted online at: <http://www.ncl.ecu.edu>

- » To submit you must login; if needed you can register using the link in the header.
- » APA or *Chicago Manual of Style*, most recent edition.
- » We have a rolling deadline; articles are peer reviewed when received.
- » Publication of accepted articles may be in upcoming or future issues.
- » For additional information, contact the editor at: editor@nclaonline.org



In Step with Library Leaders: The Intersection Mindset

“*Libraries are more than institutions of information—they are ecosystems of connection. They can become intentional, inclusive, accessible, and interdisciplinary networks.*”

Wicked problems like climate change, global health inequities, and economic disparity define our times. These challenges are so complex, interconnected, and multifaceted that no single discipline, institution, or government can address them alone. Wicked problems like these are tangled by nature—addressing one aspect often reveals deeper layers of complexity. For instance, efforts to alleviate food scarcity might increase reliance on industrial agriculture, which depletes water resources, degrades soil, and contributes to climate change, further exacerbating the conditions that drive scarcity.

These challenges call for integrated solutions—strategies that bridge disciplines, geographies, and organizations to create holistic, adaptive responses. I often find myself asking: where do these intersections happen? How do farmers, engineers, policymakers, and social scientists come together not only to exchange ideas but also to build something meaningful?

The answer isn't simply openness—greater access to publications, tools, or data. Nor is it collaboration for its own sake. What feels essential is a mindset shift: a willingness to embrace complexity, adaptiveness, and contradiction while centering the voices of those most directly affected. Knowledge can evolve into a tool of action and empathy. Emergent solutions can be inclusive, shaped by the communities who live with the consequences of inaction. Libraries, I believe, hold part of this answer.

Libraries are more than institutions of information—they are ecosystems of connection. They can become intentional, inclusive, accessible, and interdisciplinary networks. Libraries are places where

disparate perspectives can collide productively and long-term solutions can emerge through experimentation and iteration.

The book *Forces for Good* by Leslie Crutchfield and Heather Grant offers a transformative framework for driving systemic change, grounded in six key practices observed in high-impact nonprofit organizations. Libraries, as bridges between disciplines and communities, are uniquely positioned to adopt these principles. By embracing them, libraries evolve into engines of change—intersections where knowledge, action, and empathy converge to address wicked problems.

Advocate and Serve

Libraries do more than deliver services; they can champion systemic change. From promoting open access to amplifying marginalized voices, libraries can act as facilitators and thought leaders. Combining service with advocacy creates opportunities to influence public discourse and policy toward equity and sustainability.

Make Markets Work

Libraries shape how knowledge is distributed. By curating equitable access to information and promoting open platforms, they foster markets of ideas that are inclusive and impactful. This ensures knowledge flows freely, empowering communities rather than consolidating power among a privileged few.

Inspire Evangelists

As trusted institutions, libraries can cultivate advocates—community leaders, researchers, and stu-

dents—who amplify their mission and extend their reach far beyond library walls. These evangelists embody and champion library values, driving impact across communities.

Nurture Nonlinear Thinking

Wicked problems require systems literacy: the ability to understand feedback loops, interconnections, and emergent solutions. Libraries can offer workshops, programs, and resources that teach adaptive approaches, equipping people to tackle complexity with creativity and resilience.

Master the Art of Adaptation

Libraries are inherently adaptive and can expand this strength by iterating on services and embracing experimentation. Risk-taking and learning from failure keep libraries dynamic and capable of evolving alongside the communities they serve.

Build Networks for Change

Libraries are natural hubs of connection. By linking local efforts to global movements, they amplify impact, creating ecosystems of collaboration that transcend boundaries. These networks connect people, resources, and ideas, enabling scalable and lasting change.

Let's picture what this could look like. Imagine a library at the heart of a city's climate adaptation efforts. Scientists and policymakers co-design green

infrastructure; citizens visualize flood risks in workshops; local artists collaborate with engineers to create public awareness campaigns. This library doesn't just store knowledge—it catalyzes action. Or consider a public library in a healthcare desert, partnering with medical professionals to host free clinics, offer mental health resources, and curate data to inform equitable healthcare policies. A university library might tackle misinformation by convening journalists, data scientists, and educators to create digital literacy programs. Students learn to evaluate sources critically, while community workshops build resilience against disinformation campaigns. Rural libraries could address food insecurity, collaborating with agricultural scientists, local farmers, and food justice advocates to map food deserts, share best practices, and host seed banks. These libraries transcend the mission of providing information—they activate it, empowering communities to solve complex challenges and build systemic solutions.

Libraries hold a unique place in society, bridging disciplines, communities, and geographies. They are more than repositories—they are ecosystems for systemic transformation, where knowledge sparks action and collaboration lays the foundation for progress. While no single organization can solve the world's wicked problems, I believe libraries are places where solutions can take shape. Through an intersection mindset, libraries can inspire people, nurture networks, and offer a model of what it means to build a future that is equitable, sustainable, and resilient.

North Carolina Libraries

Official Publication of the North Carolina Library Association
ISSN 0029-2540

All issues are available online free-of-charge at <http://www.ncl.ecu.edu>.

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On the Front Lines: Community College Libraries Engaging Early College High School Students

About the Pitt Community College Library

Pitt Community College (PCC) was chartered in March 1961 by the North Carolina State Board of Education. Since then, the library has grown right alongside the campus, supporting 44 associate degree programs, 20 certificate programs, 22 diploma programs, 18 university transfer programs, and a variety of continuing education options.

Today, the library is located in the two-story Clifton W. Everett Building. The first floor is a spacious, open area with plenty of different study spots and the circulation desk at the center of it all. Upstairs, you'll find the print collection—over 24,000 items—along with a computer lab, the reference desk, and several study rooms. The library also provides digital resources, which include over 150 databases containing thousands of materials.

Our team includes five full-time librarians, two part-time librarians, one full-time staff member, and three part-time staff members—all here to help our students make the most of their library experience.

Our Early College High School Partnership

One way we demonstrate our commitment to campus partnerships and student success is through our work with the Early College High School (ECHS) community. We've built a strong partnership with the Pitt County Schools Early College High School (PCS-ECHS), which is located right on our campus. Early College High Schools are fantastic programs that allow high school students to enroll in college-level courses—and sometimes even graduate with an associate degree. The PCS-ECHS has called the PCC campus home for 10 years and currently serves 300 students alongside 13 teachers and 9 staff members. Without a dedicated high school library, these students rely on the PCC Library for resources, materials, and library instruction. That's why it's essential for us to actively engage with the Early College's faculty and staff—otherwise, many students might miss out on what's available to them.

To make sure we reach these students, we've developed several ways to stay connected. Our library offers a great selection of Young Adult (YA) books, graphic novels, and comics in print, plus a robust online collection through resources like *Comics Plus* and *Dogwood Digital* for e-books and audiobooks.



Clifton W. Everett building where PCC library is located



CLIFTON W. EVERETT BUILDING (CWE)

One thing that sets us apart is that we bring the library experience directly to the Early College. My colleague Angela Davis started our “Pop Up Library,” where we visit the school weekly during lunch to check out, return, or renew books, answer questions, and get to know students, which helps students feel at home with their librarians. We’ve also hosted fun lunchtime activities featuring games like Halloween Trivia and Name That Holiday Tune, and for several years, Angela and I have co-captained the High School Battle of the Books team. We also tailor our library instruction based on what each instructor needs—sometimes in the library, sometimes right in their classrooms.

Our Conference Presentation and Ideas from Other Community College Libraries

In February 2025, Angela and I had the opportunity to present at the North Carolina Community College Library Association’s annual conference. Representing Pitt Community College, we shared our session, “Engaging CCP & Early College High School Students: Successes and Strategies.” Our goal at the conference was not only to share our experiences but also to hear how other community college libraries are working with their early college partners.

Here are some of their budget-friendly and engaging approaches:

- “At [Fayetteville Technical Community College], I created a Scavenger Hunt to encourage students to tour the library, archives, makerspace, etc.”
- “Our ECHS love our ‘crafternoons’ and especially enjoy our special events (freebies, snacks, drawings). We try to partner with Student Life, and this helps with support and budget!”
- “Lenoir [Community College] hosts a week-long research workshop with our Early College sophomores to teach them how to research for their College Readiness Projects (CRPs)! It’s a great way to get the students comfortable with the library and the staff. They are our most active patrons, and our [Young Adult] collection is the most popular.”
- “We have coordinated with our Early College 9th-grade English class to come in monthly for circulation.”
- “We’ve noticed our students really like on-demand content. To help encourage library engagement, even if they don’t come in, we make short video tutorials (no longer than three minutes most of the time) called ‘Library Crash Courses.’ We have thousands of views on these!”

These shared practices show just how many creative ways there are to connect with Early College students, regardless of resources.



Final Takeaways

We feel fortunate at PCC to offer these services, but we recognize the challenges many community college libraries face, including staffing, time, and access to both resources and students themselves. At the conference, we learned ways other colleges are adapting, and one message stood out: even small steps can make a big difference. We encourage our fellow

librarians to reach out regularly to their Early College partners, making faculty and staff aware of resources and reinforcing that the ECHS is a vital part of the community college campus too.

To learn more about what the PCC library offers our Early College students, please visit our LibGuide: <https://libguides.pittcc.edu/highschool>.





ECHS students on a scavenger hunt



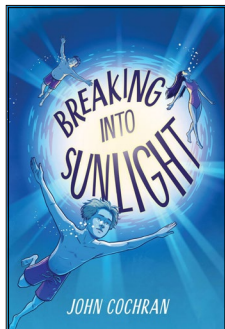
An ECHS class at the library for orientation



An ECHS English class at the library for library instruction

North Carolina Books

Compiled by Laura Mangum



Breaking Into Sunlight

John Cochran
New York: Algonquin Young Readers
Workman Publishing, 2024.
300 pp. \$17.99.
ISBN 978-1-5235-2729-8

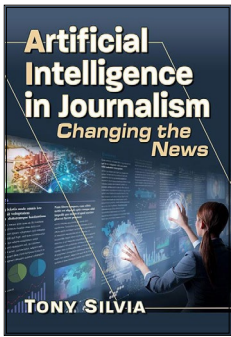
Reese is angry - angry at his mom, angry at his constant moves, angry at his mom's church friend, angry that he must hide his situation from his friends, angry that his birthday was ruined. Mostly, though, Reese knows that the only person he should be angry with is his dad.

Reese just finished seventh grade and lives in a small fictional town in rural eastern North Carolina, not too far from the Albemarle Sound. After Reese comes home to find his dad barely breathing from yet another opioid overdose, his mom takes drastic measures and moves the two of them out of the small city where he can walk to his friends' houses and to school, and into a small trailer on the remote farm and river property of a family from church. Summer break has just begun, and Reese is stuck in a run-down trailer on a farm away from all that is familiar. Meg, who is Reese's age, and her brother Charlie, who has Down syndrome, live with their grandparents, the owners of the farm and trailer where Reese and his mom are staying. Meg and Charlie lost both of their parents in a tragic car accident and were relocated to live with their grandparents. It is through their growing friendship and the rural North Carolina landscape of the farm and river that Reese starts to heal. Like anyone who has a family member struggling with addiction, Reese experiences episodes of ups and downs with his dad, but he grows to understand that his dad may never be okay. He finally lets go of his anger and has hope: hope in his mom and

her love for him and his dad, hope in a new move, hope in a family that graciously provided, hope in new friends and old, and hope because his dad is accepting treatment for the first time.

Breaking Into Sunlight is a debut novel for John Cochran. While not from North Carolina, Cochran lived in the state for a number of years as a journalist, reporting and traveling through many small rural counties. He has experienced life with a family member struggling with addiction. And he learned that one in eight children in the United States are experiencing it, too. It is through this insight that he tells Reese's story. *Breaking Into Sunlight* is a great middle school novel or could even be for early high school readers. Reese's challenges are easily believable and begin early in the story when his dad overdoses. The struggles continue when he is moved away from all that is familiar and must make new friends. They culminate when his dad starts to re-enter his life, but has a horrible drug-influenced car accident that leaves him hospitalized. This is the breaking point for both Reese and his father. In his hurt, Reese lashes out at everyone, including sweet Charlie, who is hurt and runs away. Reese is devastated that his actions have harmed someone else and comes to the realization that he cannot be like his dad, letting his actions, regardless of what they are, hurt others. His character matures emotionally throughout the book. His new friendships with Meg and Charlie and the strength of his relationship with his mother both contribute to his growth. This relatable story would be an excellent addition to a school library or the young adult section of the public library. It is a story for those who have not experienced Reese's situation to gain an empathetic glimpse into that life. Ultimately, though, it's a story for those who have walked in Reese's shoes to know they are not alone.

Tracey Patterson, MLIS
Perma-Bound Books



Artificial Intelligence in Journalism: Changing the News

Tony Silvia
Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Company Inc., 2025.
204 pp. \$39.95.
ISBN: 978-1-4766-9408-5

Artificial intelligence is a hot topic at present, and publications are exploring it in many ways. This book focuses on AI as it pertains to journalism, incorporating current and possible future uses of AI in the field as well as ethical issues surrounding it. It would have benefited from some additional editing to reduce typos and grammatical inconsistencies, but the content is well-researched and sound. The author spent his career in broadcast journalism, has taught at the university level, and has written several previous books on journalism-related topics (*Dyslexia and the Journalist* and *Journalism and the Pandemic*, among others), so he is well-qualified.

The book begins with a useful overview of what artificial intelligence is and how it has grown in recent years, including an explanation of new Large Language Model technologies such as ChatGPT. It also discusses the history of computers, specifically AI use in journalism (it's older than you think), and how it has been used in ways unrelated to the current LLM craze. The author then suggests general ways AI could be used in the newsroom, such as refining ideas and facilitating collaboration. There is a very interesting chapter about how recent developments, such as the free Internet and social media, along with the dawn of AI, have affected journalism's business model and how journalism can and must adapt.

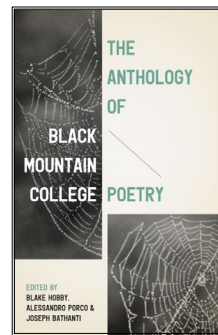
The book has several short chapters on AI's impact in particular areas of journalism, including political reporting, investigative journalism, and the newer field of social media-based journalism. One of the longest chapters in the book is about ethics. The many ethical issues related to AI use are woven throughout the book, but are concentrated on in this chapter. Job loss, misinformation, and basic journalistic ethics are the primary focus, and the information includes measures already being taken by journalism organizations and individual news outlets.

There is little to no mention of the ethical issues of copyright or the environmental cost of AI, but the discussions of other ethical issues are sound and quite useful. The final chapter of the book considers the future of journalism in the AI era, and includes thoughtful interviews with several people with expertise in journalism and/or technology.

The book has several appendices. One is a template for a newsroom AI policy. Next is an analysis of such policies from news organizations. The analysis is solid, but the appendix title, "Examples of AI Policies in 52 Newsrooms," is misleading—there are no actual policies there. The appendices also include suggested principles for AI adoption, and—possibly the most useful part of the entire book—a 10-step guide to adopting AI in newsrooms. There is also a list of further reading and a brief, not very useful index.

Overall, this book is a good introduction to the topic and useful to anyone in the field of journalism. Those outside of the field will likely find this book of little interest unless they are passionate about AI. Recommended for academic libraries that support journalism programs.

Lara B. Little
Pfeiffer University



The Anthology of Black Mountain College Poetry

Blake Hobby, Alessandro Porco, and Joseph Bathanti, eds.
Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press in association with the Black Mountain College Museum + Arts Center, 2025.
476 pp. \$39.95.
ISBN 978-1-4696-8344-7(paperback)

In 1960, Donald Allen published his influential anthology *The New American Poets: 1945-1960*, which identified Black Mountain College (BMC), in rural western North Carolina, as a locus of cutting-edge poetry, contemporaneous with The Beats and other writers in more established literary cities like New York and San Francisco. Ten of the fifty poets chosen were faculty or students at Black Mountain College, or appeared in the *Black Mountain Review*. Although the college had closed three years earlier,

Allen considered those writers (including Charles Olson, who led BMC in the 1950's) important enough to group them into one of five sections, helping to establish the legacy of the school. That legacy has continued to grow in subsequent years, with Black Mountain College remaining influential to writers, visual artists, artisans, and those interested in experimental, interdisciplinary education.

Sixty-five years later *The Anthology of Black Mountain Poetry* expands on the original ten highlighted by Allen in *New American Poets*, increasing the number of BMC writers represented through a more diverse selection process, with more contributions from women, students, and visiting instructors, as well as authors cut from Allen's book and previously unpublished work. This new anthology extends the timeline to include pieces from throughout the college's history, 1933-1957, and others written after its closure, providing a more complete view of the poetry produced, educational experience, and influence of Black Mountain College.

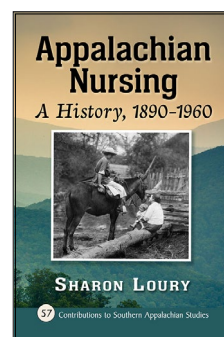
The Anthology of Black Mountain Poetry is divided into sections: faculty, visiting faculty, students, and affiliates (who visited the campus or published in the *Black Mountain Review*). The introduction provides historical background and brief biographies for each author to accompany the selected poems for additional context. The appendix and notes will help interested readers find more BMC poetry and history, some from obscure sources that would be difficult to find on the internet, and include selected works of several poets for which they were unable to obtain publishing rights. The book highlights both the interdisciplinary ethos and prominence placed on poetry, with selections from Josef Albers, the Bauhaus-trained visual artist and first Rector of BMC, the architect and inventor Buckminster Fuller, and avant-garde composer John Cage. Also represented is Mary Caroline "M.C." Richards, who may best personify the multi-hyphenate scholar and artist. She was hired as a literature professor, helped found the campus printshop and pottery, and later published *Centering*, a reflection on creativity and education, which combined essays and poetry.

The editors Blake Hobby, Alessandro Porco, and Joseph Bathanti each bring unique expertise to the book. Blake Hobby, a longtime BMC scholar, is the

former executive editor of the *Journal of Black Mountain College Studies*, which he co-founded in 2009. Alessandro Porco, Associate Professor of English at the University of North Carolina Wilmington, brings extensive knowledge of BMC poets and contemporary poetics to the project. Lastly, Joseph Bathanti, Professor of Interdisciplinary Education at Appalachian State University, is a former North Carolina Poet Laureate (2012-2014), whose encounter with a copy of Allen's *New American Poets* early in his academic life began his longstanding interest in BMC. In addition to their expertise in poetry, the history of the college, and educational philosophy, the editors had access to archival materials at the Black Mountain College Museum and Arts Center and the State Archives of North Carolina in Asheville.

The Anthology of Black Mountain Poetry is an important follow-up to Allen's *New American Poets*. The product of years of scholarship, the book is thoughtfully selected and well-researched, with informative, insightful commentary; it is inspirational, illuminating the vital importance of poetry to so many who attended or taught at Black Mountain College. Highly recommended for academic libraries and public libraries focused on the arts in North Carolina or patrons with a significant interest in poetry.

Chip Larkin
North Carolina Wesleyan University



Appalachian Nursing: A History, 1890-1960

Sharon Loury.
Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Company,
2025 193 pp. \$39.95
ISBN 978-1-4766-7541-1

Sharon Loury's first book, *Appalachian Nursing: A History, 1890-1960*, documents the history and evolution of the nursing profession in an important, but frequently overlooked, geographic region of the United States. The author, an associate professor of nursing at East Tennessee State University, has served as the university's College of Nursing historian and

taught nursing for 29 years. This well-researched book is enriched by content from archival collections, personal conversations, oral interviews, letters, and other primary sources.

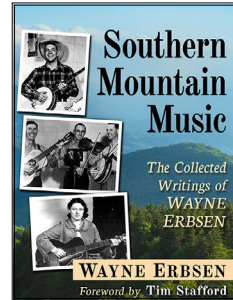
Appalachian Nursing focuses on a subregion of Central and Southern Appalachia consisting of 165 counties located in Virginia, West Virginia, Tennessee, North Carolina, Kentucky, and Georgia. Loury has divided her book into three major sections: Geographic Setting and Early Healthcare; The Evolution of Nursing Education and Professional Nursing; and Early Nursing Practice. The first section describes the region's settlement and discusses early healthcare, herbal remedies, and the healing arts practiced by traditional healers, granny midwives, and self-taught family members prior to the establishment of medical schools and nursing education in the 1800s.

The second section of the book focuses on the history of nurses' training, which began in the early 1870s in the U.S. and was typically based on Florence Nightingale's training programs established in England a decade earlier. These nurse training programs began in large Eastern cities and did not make their way to the Appalachian region until the late 1890s. This section also focuses on the professionalization of nursing in the region through the establishment of educational standards, nursing curricula, and the licensing of nurses by the National League for Nursing and the American Nurses Association. Of special interest in this section are the brief histories of nurses' training schools located in the core of Appalachia in the 1920s and 1930s.

The last section of the book, focused on early nursing practice, is the richest for readers interested in the evolution of nursing roles and firsthand experiences of individual nurses. Loury discusses employment in the region with a special focus on rural and visiting nurses who traveled to homes and clinics, treated the sick and injured and provided delivery, obstetrical, and public health services. Visiting nurses included those working with the Frontier Nurses Service and nurses who came to the region through the mission and settlement movement in Appalachia. Lastly, Loury provides brief anecdotes of Appalachian nurses who worked closely with the railroad and coal mining industries and those who served in the military from the Spanish-American War to the Korean War.

Libraries collecting materials in the history of medicine or the Appalachian region as well as public and academic libraries in these states should consider purchasing this book. Its extensive bibliography and anecdotal vignettes would also be useful for history students exploring U.S. women's employment during the 19th and 20th centuries.

Teresa W. LePors
Elon University



Southern Mountain Music: The Collected Writings of Wayne Erbsen

Wayne Erbsen
Jefferson, North Carolina: McFarland & Company, Inc., Publishers, 2025.
210 pp. \$39.95.
ISBN 978-1476696461

Wayne Erbsen's *Southern Mountain Music* is a personal and historically rich journey into the heart of Appalachian and early bluegrass music. A longtime musician, educator, and scholar, Erbsen has spent decades documenting the lives and legacies of foundational figures in traditional Southern music. In this book, he brings together many of his previously published essays, several of which date back to the 1970s and '80s, to paint a vivid picture of the people, places, and sounds that shaped this musical heritage.

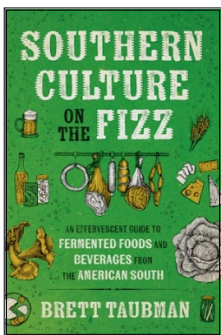
The book is organized into six chapters and two appendices, covering topics such as old-time pioneers, early brother duets, fiddlers, banjo players, influential bluegrass musicians, and the origins of beloved songs. Erbsen doesn't simply recount history; he transports readers to the homes, festivals, and recording studios where that history was made. Drawing from firsthand interviews, he preserves the voices of musicians who might otherwise have been lost to time. He highlights pioneers like Ernest "Pop" Stoneman, the Carter Family, and Lesley Riddle, alongside fiddlers, banjo pickers, and songwriters such as Eck Robertson, Jim Shumate, Earl Scruggs, William Shakespeare Hays, and Jimmy Bond. Notably, Erbsen also includes contemporary voices like Canadian fiddler Aynsley Porchak, bridging the gap between past and present.

One of the book's greatest strengths is its blend of scholarship and storytelling. Readers can expect historical insights alongside colorful anecdotes, everything from tales of a haunted fiddler to reflections on cowboy imagery in bluegrass. The tone is approachable and often humorous, making this book appealing to both scholars and casual fans. Over 100 archival photographs enhance the narrative and bring these lesser-known figures to life.

Southern Mountain Music is particularly well-suited for academic libraries, public library local history collections, and high school media centers with strong regional studies or music programs. Its accessibility also makes it valuable for general readers, musicians, and music educators. Erbsen, based in Asheville, North Carolina, brings special attention to the musicians and musical traditions rooted in the state. His writing captures the texture of North Carolina's cultural landscape, offering important contributions to both Appalachian and American music history.

The book's value lies not only in its content but in the perspective it offers—personal, deeply informed, and passionate. Readers interested in folk traditions, Southern culture, and American roots music will find this an engaging and enlightening read. For libraries seeking to enrich their collections with regionally significant, entertaining, and educational nonfiction, *Southern Mountain Music* is highly recommended.

Erin Gray
East Carolina University



Southern Culture on the Fizz: An Effervescent Guide to Fermented Foods and Beverages from the American South

Brett Taubman.
Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2025.
298 pp. \$35.00.
ISBN 978-1-4696-8541-0

Fermentation is derived from the Latin word *fervere*, which means “to be hot, boil.” Thus begins a rather fun journey into the history of fermentation by first-time author Brett Taubman.

Taubman is a professor at Appalachian State University in the Department of Chemistry and Fermentation Sciences, as well as the director of the Fermentation Sciences program, which he helped to develop. In his debut book, *Southern Culture on the Fizz: An Effervescent Guide to Fermented Foods and Beverages from the American South*, Taubman combines history, recipes, and chemistry to create an interesting read for those who aspire to do their own home fermentation and for those who enjoy reading about the history of food and food culture.

This book is separated into four parts covering fruits and vegetables, meats, dairy, and fermented beverages and alcohol. These parts are further separated into chapters covering the past, present, and future of fermentation, including recipes for each topic.

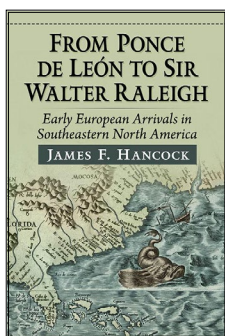
Taubman ensures that the southern United States' fermentation history, especially North Carolina's place in it, is represented in his book. He makes his readers aware that Boone, North Carolina, was the sauerkraut capital of the South for a few decades starting in the early 1920s. The American Miso Company in Rutherfordton was founded in 1979 and is now the largest producer of organic miso worldwide. Not to forget that Wilkes County, North Carolina, is the historic moonshine capital of the United States.

Taubman sprinkles his sense of humor throughout this book, while he focuses on the history of fermentation, recipes, and his prognostications regarding the direction of different types of fermentations. His anecdotes help tell his story and allow non-STEM oriented people to understand and enjoy his writing. Tidbits such as “It's what you might expect if yogurt and cream cheese fell in love and had delicious, creamy children” (p. 160), when referring to Skyr, an Icelandic yogurt (but technically cheese), make reading the book fun and unforgettable.

Along with a smattering of photographs taken at his lab of his students happily stuffing sausages in their casings and squishing grapes to make wine, this book has recipes that are both historically southern and non-southern, and a section on unit conversion (along with his argument as to why the metric system is superior to the one used in America). The bibliography is extensive, and the index makes finding references easy.

This book would be a nice addition to public libraries, and colleges and universities with culinary and beer brewing programs. Taubman's writing style makes the history of fermented foods appealing to a general audience, but is informative and instructive enough to use in an educational setting. Although some of the explanations regarding chemical reactions may be a little beyond someone whose last chemistry class was in high school, the book is easy to follow, and the recipes are written simply with few ingredients.

Dana Glauner
South Piedmont Community College



From Ponce de León to Sir Walter Raleigh: Early European Arrivals in Southeastern North America

James F. Hancock.
Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Company, Inc.
Publishers, 2025.
191 pp. \$39.95.
ISBN 9781476695785.

The early history of European exploration and settlement in eastern North America is often reduced to familiar English colonies such as Jamestown (1607) and Plymouth (1620), overshadowing earlier Spanish and French endeavors. In *From Ponce de León to Sir Walter Raleigh: Early European Arrivals in Southeastern North America*, James F. Hancock brings this lesser-known era to life, in a compelling and accessible account of the European presence in the southeastern region of what would become the United States, long before the English colonies took root.

This book opens with Christopher Columbus's brutal occupation and colonization of the Caribbean Island of Hispaniola, but its central narrative begins in 1513 with the arrival of Ponce de León in the region he named "La Florida." Over the following decades, other Spanish conquistadors ventured into the Southeast as far as North Carolina and Arkansas, as Spain sought to expand its empire into North America. Though the Spanish were unsuccessful in their efforts to find precious metals and gems in this

region, they nevertheless established the settlement of St. Augustine, the oldest continuously occupied settlement of European origin in the U.S., and made inroads in their efforts to Christianize Indigenous peoples.

Hancock also explores the efforts of French Huguenots—Protestants who attempted to settle in territories claimed by Catholic Spain—highlighting the vulnerability of these early colonies and the often-violent rivalries among European powers. The book concludes with an account of English statesman Sir Walter Raleigh's unsuccessful attempts to establish a colony in what is now the Outer Banks of North Carolina.

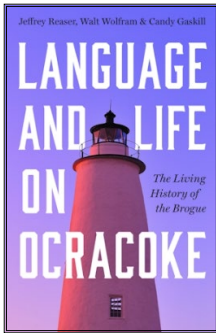
The book is rich in detail, naming Indigenous communities encountered by European explorers, such as the Taíno in the Caribbean, the Apalachee in Florida, and the Coosa in Georgia. One of its strengths is the use of firsthand accounts from the explorers themselves, which reveal the sophistication of Indigenous societies through descriptions of their lifeways and the complex relationships that developed between them and the Europeans. Hancock does not shy away from the darker aspects of this history, addressing the violence, disease, forced labor, and displacement brought on by European incursions. He also highlights the dangers faced by the explorers, such as shipwrecks, starvation, and hostile encounters with Indigenous peoples and other Europeans.

Books published by McFarland & Company often omit footnotes to emphasize accessibility for a broader audience. This book uses in-text citations instead. The author's extensive bibliography reflects the wide range of sources consulted. A brief index is included at the end. The book contains several engravings depicting explorers, but the inclusion of maps detailing European movements among Native American settlements would be more useful to the reader.

Hancock is a University Distinguished Professor Emeritus at Michigan State University. In addition to this work, he also published *From John Cabot to Henry Hudson: Early European Arrivals in Northeastern and Mid-Atlantic North America*. He has published works on plant evolution and the Columbian Exchange and the widespread transfer of plants, animals, people, agriculture, and diseases after 1492.

This book will appeal to anyone interested in deepening their understanding of the Age of Exploration and settlement, particularly through its focus on Spanish, French, and Indigenous experiences in the southeastern United States. It is suitable for college and public libraries.

Linda Jacobson
UNC Chapel Hill



**Language and Life on Ocracoke:
The Living History of the Brogue**

Jeffrey Reaser, Walt Wolfram, &
Candy Gaskill.
Chapel Hill: The University of North
Carolina Press, 2025.
296 p. \$25.00.
ISBN: 9781469685298

It is a rare treat to read a book with ties to my childhood. Growing up on the coast of North Carolina was unique in many ways. One such way was the distinctive accent or brogue that many adults in my orbit spoke. This brogue was said to be a remnant of the early explorations and settlement of the Outer Banks of North Carolina by the English. I never put much stock in it. I was more intrigued by the fact that my neighbor sounded like something out of a Renaissance play.

In their new book *Language and Life on Ocracoke: The Living History of the Brogue*, Jeffrey Reaser and Walt Wolfram of N.C. State's English department, and Candy Gaskill, a lifelong resident of Ocracoke, have set out to dispel myths and legends of "The Brogue." Concurrently, the authors make the case that this brogue is not only legitimate, but is sadly in danger of erasure by the ebb and flow of residents leaving the island and non-locals establishing their own roots (p. 18).

This book is the continuation of research by the authors over several decades. Starting with an organic interest in the island and recommendations from colleagues in the early 1990s, Wolfram began to meet and study the locals who preserved and cherished their local brogue. From that original research trip with five students and one resident willing to meet

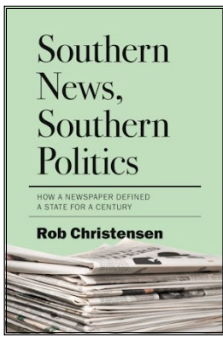
with the group, the N.C. State initiative has grown tremendously over three decades.

This is one of the more comprehensive studies of this topic. Ocracoke is a microcosm in linguistic terms and the authors have gone to great lengths to showcase not only the academic interest in the island, but more importantly, the islanders' drive to share their story with the world. Although it suffers from a lack of suggested readings or works cited, this omission does not detract from the message and accessibility of the book.

The accessibility of this book is what makes it an ideal title for high school and public libraries as well as academic institutions. Curious readers might approach an academic book about a very niche linguistic anomaly with caution. If one gets past their initial trepidation, they will find a book that is engaging from the start. Far from being a staid academic title geared toward a few select researchers, this book will appeal to a wide audience. English students and instructors at the high school and university level would benefit from the authors' methods of introducing a concept and guiding the reader through their experience on Ocracoke while conducting research. A strong example of this is where the authors explain the concept of "backward talk" or semantic inversion (p. 137). Semantic inversion is an academic concept that may be difficult for the average college student to grasp. The authors do a wonderful job of breaking down the idea and providing easily recognizable examples to bring the point home.

Public library patrons will also find much to explore in this book, from the chapter on the authored, decades-long dialect education program with the island school (pps. 204-214) to the continuous thread throughout the book that Ocracoke is a special place. The island is special, not only for a certain linguistic anomaly, but for its abundant natural resources and its residents who strive to keep "The Brogue" alive and thriving. *Language and Life on Ocracoke* is a concise and entertaining exploration of a unique slice of North Carolina culture.

Lucas Berrini
North Pitt High School



***Southern News, Southern Politics:
How a Newspaper Defined a State
for a Century***

Rob Christensen
Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina
Press, 2025.
336 pp. \$35.00.
ISBN 978-1-4696-8524-3

Rob Christensen, a former reporter for *The News and Observer* for forty-five years, brings his experience and expertise in newspapers, politics, and North Carolina to his newest publication, *Southern News, Southern Politics: How A Newspaper Defined a State for a Century*. Christensen has authored several other books, including *The Paradox of Tar Heel Politics*, *The Rise and Fall of the Branchhead Boys*, and *The Era of Progressive Politics*.

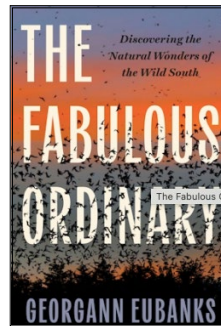
Southern News, Southern Politics centers on one of North Carolina's major newspapers, *The News and Observer*, and the family dynasty that ran the paper for four generations. The book focuses on the Daniels family and their impact on newspapers and politics, not only within North Carolina but also in the United States. In particular, the book focuses on Josephus Daniels, the owner and editor of *The News and Observer*, and follows family members who also served as editors or managers of the paper, like Jonathan Daniels, Frank Daniels, Sr., Frank Daniels, Jr., and Frank Daniels III. Christensen details the early years of the paper when Josephus Daniels often used the paper to promote racist ideas. As the author's narrative of the paper and the Daniels' family progresses through the 1930s, the paper begins to embrace the idea of a "more racially inclusive society" under Jonathan Daniel's leadership. The book continues to focus on the modernization and expansion of *The News and Observer* through the 20th century and up to the more recent Covid-19 pandemic.

Christensen also provides a detailed look at the political impact of the Daniels family, focusing on Josephus's service as the U.S. ambassador to Mexico and Jonathan's position as the White House Press Secretary for President Franklin D. Roosevelt. The author clearly illustrates the particular impact of Josephus and Jonathan on progressive politics in North Carolina and the United States.

Christensen did extensive research for this book, and he incorporates notes by chapter and a bibliography which includes articles, books, interviews, archives, newspaper articles, and more. A handful of images are peppered throughout the book, and they primarily focus on the Daniels family. The book is also filled with timely descriptions of society, politics, and life in North Carolina.

Overall, this book provides a comprehensive overview of both the Daniels family and *The News and Observer*. This book is suitable for public and academic libraries, especially those with a focus on journalism, politics, and/or North Carolina. This book will appeal to historians, college students, and general readers interested in history, journalism, and politics in North Carolina.

Jeanne Hoover
East Carolina University



***The Fabulous Ordinary: Discovering
the Natural Wonders of the
Wild South***

Georgann Eubanks
Chapel Hill: University of North
Carolina Press, 2025.
244 pp. \$35.00.
Paperback ISBN 978-1-4696-8592-2. E-book
ISBN: 978-1-4696-8382-9

Georgann Eubanks traveled to seven southern states on excursions to observe and investigate nature. Everyone she met during her travels had experience, skills, and knowledge that they applied in their work and research, as volunteers, guides, and educators. In the fifteen essays of *The Fabulous Ordinary: Discovering the Natural Wonders of the Wild South*, Eubanks shares what she learned about the animals, birds, insects, and plants that she observed, and she introduces readers to the place, the topography, the history, and the people who lived on the land over time. The tone of the writing is conversational, and it is easy to visualize what Eubanks describes.

In the chapter on frogs and toads, Eubanks recalls a conference session she attended on identifying frogs from photos and sound recordings, presented by a

wildlife biologist who volunteers with a group that monitors frog populations. To learn about moths and butterflies, Eubanks met with a biologist who talked about his interest in fishing and birdwatching as a boy, his work experience in conservation, and the enjoyment he has with his daughter identifying and photographing moths in their yard – 1,300 species! A trip to see elk in the Great Smoky Mountains National Park brought her to Cherokee, NC, and the Qualla Boundary, the home of the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians. Eubanks describes the bull elk call as “a sound that begins as a conch shell being blown and then rises to a pleading whistle” (p. 206). Additional chapters include discussions on bioluminescent larvae called dismalites, Eastern screech-owls, and the wellness practice of forest bathing.

A thread that runs throughout the book is how the natural life of the region responds to climate change and human impacts on the environment. Rising coastal water levels can disrupt migration routes and feeding and nesting grounds of birds. At Audubon’s Silver Bluff Sanctuary in South Carolina, a migration site hundreds of miles north of traditional sites, Eubanks observed wood storks at ponds where they feed in shallows. Habitat is lost through land development, intensive agriculture, mining projects, and light pollution. For fireflies, leaf blowing interrupts decomposition of organic matter by removing “leaf litter” that is essential at all stages of their life cycle.

Eubanks received her undergraduate degree from Duke University in public policy studies. She teaches writing workshops, presents on writing, and offers book talks. (“Georgann Eubanks, Bio”). Eubanks is best known as an author, Emmy Award–winning documentary filmmaker, and founder of the annual Table Rock Writers Workshop in the Blue Ridge Mountains. Her body of work includes *Saving the Wild South: The Fight for Native Plants on the Brink of Extinction*, *A Month of Their Ripening: North Carolina Heritage Foods Throughout the Year*, the three-part *Literary Trails of North Carolina* series produced for the North Carolina Arts Council, and, most recently, her poetry collection *Rural Astronomy* (UNC Press).

Photos by photographer and fellow traveler, Donna Campbell, enhance the text. A list of illustrations with page numbers appears after the contents page, making it easy to flip to a specific photograph.

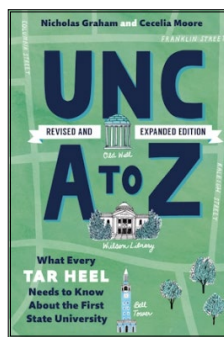
The book includes a bibliography of sources that can be referred to for further exploration of the topics.

In sharing her experiences, Eubanks shows how an appreciation of nature can enrich lives through listening and intentionality, in solitude as well as in shared experiences, and in being open to joy and wonder. Readers may be inspired to become citizen scientists who support research projects and make discoveries of their own. This book is recommended for public and academic libraries.

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UNC Press, “The Fabulous Ordinary,” 2025, <https://uncpress.org/9781469685922/the-fabulous-ordinary/>.

Christine Fischer
UNC Greensboro



UNC A to Z: What Every Tar Heel Needs to Know about the First State University

Nicholas Graham and Cecelia Moore,
Revised and Expanded Edition. Chapel Hill:
University of North Carolina Press, 2025.
286 pp. \$28.00.
ISBN: 978-1-4696-8448-2

UNC A to Z: What Every Tar Heel Needs to Know about the First State University is a succinct and enlightening introduction to the history of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (commonly known simply as UNC or Carolina), the flagship university of the UNC System and the first state university in the country. This version is an update of the first edition published in 2020, covering events that have occurred since the initial release, such as the COVID-19 pandemic. Graham and Moore, with their combined expertise as University Archivist and former University Historian respectively, are the best people to put together a text on the history of UNC.

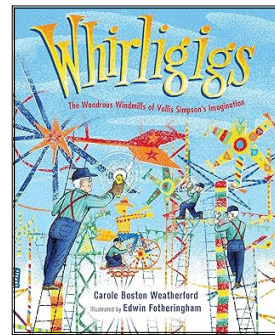
This book is a reference resource about the university that is accessible to a general audience. Organized alphabetically by topic with brief entries about the people, places, events, and other cultural points

that have impacted UNC over the years, this work can serve as an entry point into learning more about UNC's history. Accompanying various entries are images and photos, the majority of them sourced from UNC's Wilson Library. The authors make their purpose and intent for the book clear as an inspiration for readers to delve into their own research. As the authors write in the introduction, "[...] we envision this book as a launching pad for new projects, inspiring other researchers, writers, and especially students to explore and interpret Carolina history on their own" (Graham and Moore 2025, ix).

Overall, *UNC A to Z* is an informative, digestible, and thorough work about the university. The coverage of topics spans the entire history of UNC, from the past to the present. Historical coverage dates back to the founding of UNC in the late 1700s, beginning with the charter in 1789, the construction in 1793, and the opening in 1795. The work also chronicles recent historical events on UNC's campus, such as the renaming of Saunders Hall to Carolina Hall in 2015, the removal of Silent Sam by protestors in 2018, and the impact of the pandemic during 2020 and beyond. With such a long and rich history, the authors do an excellent job of curating the topics covered in the book and explain their approach to subject selection within the introduction. In the introduction the authors state that their goal was to make the work "comprehensive but did not attempt to be exhaustive" (Graham and Moore 2025, vii). While there are entries focusing on popular topics, like athletic venues or specific sports at UNC, the authors give equal attention to every subject covered. Even for entries where the subjects are related or adjacent, such as the history of a specific professional school and the building where the program resides, the authors take care to offer new information with each entry to illuminate a different aspect of the history. For example, the entry for UNC's School of Government focuses solely on the history of the program. The entry for the building where the school is located, the Knapp-Saunders Building, touches on the academic program as well as the history of the building itself. The inclusion of additional information about the building's namesake plus the historical 1930s WPA-styled murals inside makes this entry richer and distinct.

UNC A to Z fulfills the purpose set out by the authors as a gateway to learning more about UNC Chapel Hill as a place and institution. The reviewer recommends this book for any library collection focusing on North Carolina state history or college and university histories. Due to the approachability of this style of work, *UNC A to Z* is good for a general adult audience. This title would be appropriate for multiple types of libraries—academic, public, or special—depending on collecting areas or community interests. This work is also an enjoyable read for anyone who has a personal connection to UNC, such as alumni or current students.

Tiffany Henry
UNC Greensboro



Whirligigs: The Wondrous Windmills of Vollis Simpson's Imagination

Carol B. Weatherford. Illustrated by Edwin Fotheringham. New York: City Calkins Creek, an imprint of Astra Books for Young Readers, 2024. 32 pp. \$18.99. ISBN 978-1-6626-8041-0

What is a "whirligig?" Where can one find a whirligig? These and other questions can be answered in the nonfiction picture book *Whirligigs: The Wondrous Windmills of Vollis Simpson's Imagination* (winner of three book awards, including Best STEM Books, 2025). Written by Carole Boston Weatherford, an acclaimed author and Professor at Fayetteville State University, and illustrated by award-winning Edwin Fotheringham, the book captures the reader's attention while providing a biographical account of Vollis Simpson, creator of whimsical windmills and other creations located in Wilson, NC. The words of Weatherford, combined with Fotheringham's vibrant illustrations, attract readers of all ages. At the conclusion of the book, Weatherford provides more information about Vollis Simpson, whirligigs, and the contributions they have made to our society. The author also provides the reader with pictures of Simpson and his whirli-

gigs, along with the bibliography the author uses to write this literary work. These additions to the book demonstrate the accuracy of the information provided without being overly complicated for children to understand.

This book shares with readers how Vollis Simpson, one of twelve children, uses his curiosity and mechanical aptitude to create machines that help his family on the farms in Lucama, North Carolina. While serving as a U.S. soldier during World War II, Simpson used parts of downed aircraft to improve life while in the military. For example, Simpson invented a wind-powered washing machine from the parts of a downed B-29 bomber.

After returning home to Lucama, Vollis opens a machine-repair shop and uses his gifts and skills to build windmills that reduce heating costs. After closing his shop due to an injury, Vollis has a dream. This dream inspires him to use his time, spare parts, and imagination to create windmills. These windmills are not ordinary windmills, but whimsical constructions made from scrap metals of diverse colors and shapes. Vollis not only created windmills, but he also designed animals, objects, and people from items most people would consider junk.

The vibrant hues of the book's illustrations immediately capture the reader's attention. The whimsical illustrations mirror the topic and tone of the book. The use of bold colors and various sizes of the onomatopoeia (words that imitate sound) is a wonderful

way to engage the reader by imitating sounds. The visual images throughout the book are appealing and emphasize the words of the author.

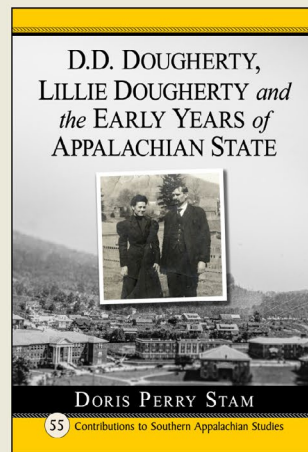
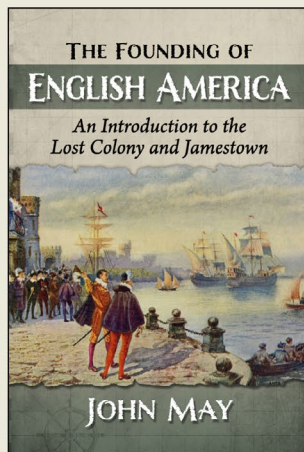
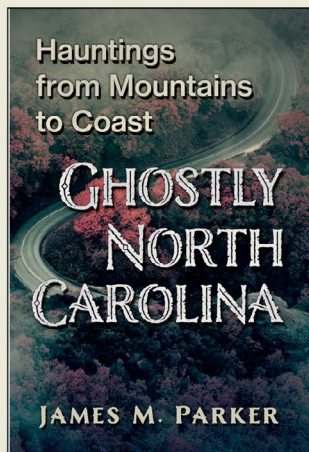
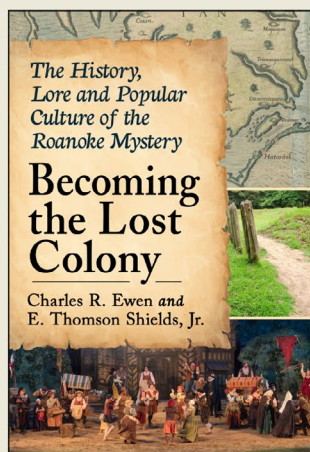
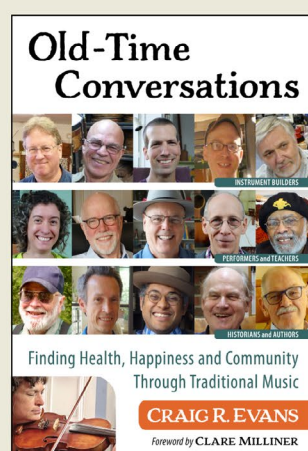
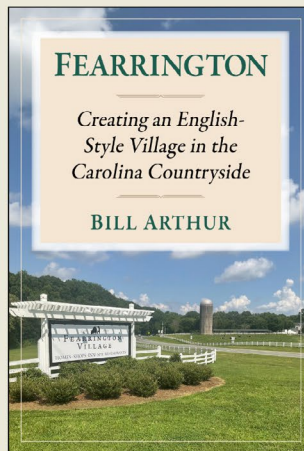
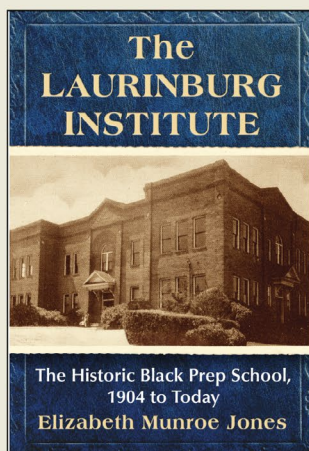
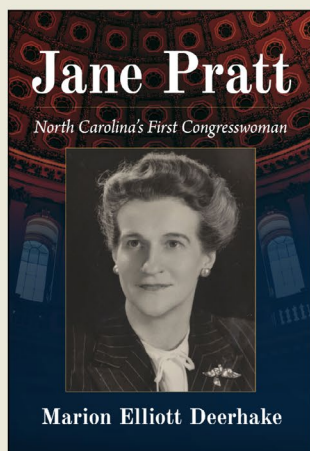
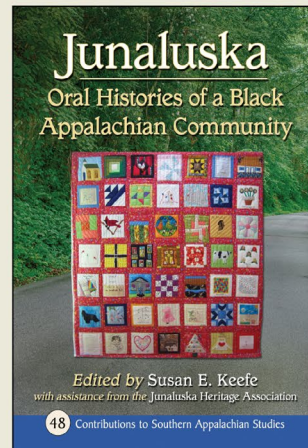
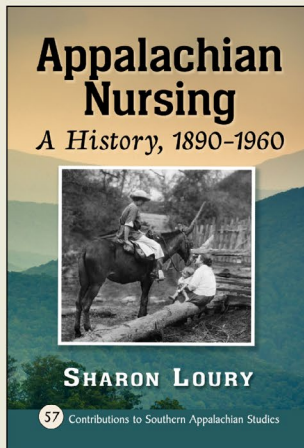
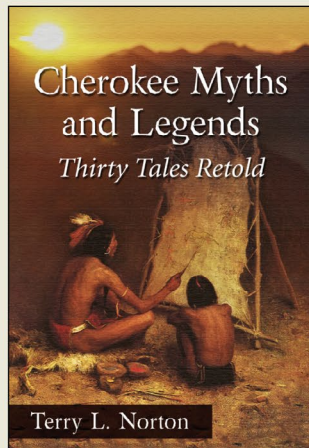
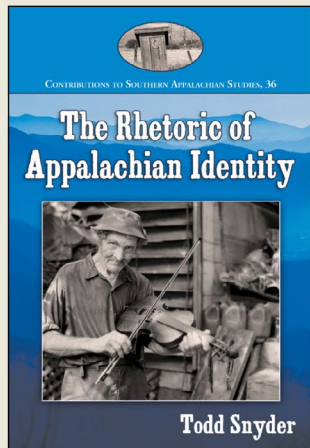
This book is highly recommended for K-12 school and public libraries. This book will help teachers incorporate a slice of eastern NC life into their social studies curriculum, or STEM teachers looking to inspire students to think outside the box to help the environment with creative remedies. Because whirlingigs have been named North Carolina's official folk art, art teachers can utilize this book as a teaching tool. This book also lends itself well to integrating English/Language Arts with STEM, Social Studies, and Art. Public libraries will appreciate this book's rich connection to North Carolina local history and its appeal across age groups, making it a meaningful addition to the collection.

Vatoyia Gardner
East Carolina University

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