

HOPE AND A FUTURE

Perspectives on the Impact
that Librarians and Libraries
Have on our World

Edited by Renee F. Hill

ADVANCES IN
LIBRARIANSHIP

VOLUME 48

HOPE AND A FUTURE

ADVANCES IN LIBRARIANSHIP

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ADVANCES IN LIBRARIANSHIP VOLUME 48

**HOPE AND A FUTURE:
PERSPECTIVES ON THE
IMPACT THAT LIBRARIANS
AND LIBRARIES HAVE ON
OUR WORLD**

EDITED BY

RENEE F. HILL

University of Maryland, USA



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INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

This book is dedicated to my parents, Anthony and Faye Franklin, who believed in me before I was able to. Words do not exist that allow me to express the depth of my love and gratitude.

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Jerry Dear, lifetime APALA member, tackles research questions as an Information Strategist in the Magazines & Newspapers Center of the San Francisco Public Library. He also teaches in the Library Information Technology Department at City College of San Francisco. His undergraduate work in English and Asian American Studies at San Francisco State University inspired him to pursue an MFA in Writing from the University of San Francisco and an MLIS at San Jose State University. As a freelance writer, he reviews books and graphic novels for *Hyphen Magazine* and *No Flying No Tights*, devoting much of his spare time to the Asian American community and literary scene.

Paolo P. Gujilde is Assistant Head of Acquisitions at Northwestern University Libraries. Since becoming a librarian in 2010, he has worked in academic libraries in the states of Illinois and Georgia. His area of focus includes collection strategies and acquisitions. He received his Bachelor's degree in Anthropology at the University of Illinois at Chicago and his MLIS at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. He is involved in various equity, diversity, and inclusion work including serving as former President of the Asian Pacific American Librarians Association and steering committee member of the Joint Conference of Librarians of Color 2022 conference.

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Kayla Kuni is the Associate Director of Libraries at Pasco-Hernando State College's (PHSC) Spring Hill campus. Prior to working for PHSC, she worked in a public library for over six years. While working at the public library, she established many programs for developmentally disabled adults. One program, designed in partnership with the Red Apple Adult Training Center, was honored

with the Association of Specialized, Government, and Cooperative Library Agencies/ Keystone Library Automation System/National Organization on Disability (ASGCLA/KLAS/NOD) Award in 2015.

Donna Mignardi is a High School Librarian at Calvert High School in Prince Frederick, Maryland. She serves on several library and digital learning committees for her district and for her state. She is also the communication chair for the Maryland Association of School Librarians (MASL) and the Secretary for MASL as well. She writes a monthly blog post for Programming Librarian with Jennifer Sturge. She is a makerspace innovator. She is known for her passion for information literacy and developing reflective and ethical consumers and creators of information. Last, but not least, she was named the Maryland School Librarian of the Year in 2020.

Meghan Moran is a Librarian at the Oak Lawn Public Library in Oak Lawn, Illinois where she primarily works on resource sharing and outreach initiatives. In this capacity, she also serves as a Director for PLOWS - The Council on Aging and on the Community Health Council for Advocate Aurora Christ Medical Center. She received her MLIS from San Jose State University. She is passionate about public libraries, community engagement, and using her creativity to enhance library services and meet patron needs.

Conrad Pegues is Assistant Professor/Public Services Librarian in the Paul Meek Library at The University of Tennessee at Martin, where he supports students, faculty, and staff with their information and research needs. He has an MLIS from Kent State University and an MA in English from The University of Memphis focused on African American literature. Currently, he is working on an MFA in Fiction at Lindenwood University. His research interests include social justice and information access as well as the conflict between race and identity politics. He has published work in the area of gender, sexuality, and black male studies. He is chair of the Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Committee of The Black Caucus of the American Library Association. He is a member of the American Library Association's Social Responsibilities Round Table and its Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Assembly.

Sophia Sotilleo is an Associate Professor and the Access Services Librarian at Lincoln University Langston Hughes Memorial Library. In this capacity, she has the privilege to teach information literacy across all subject areas and the First Year Experience course. In addition to teaching courses, she serves as an Adviser for first year students. She earned her Bachelor's degree in Business Management with a minor in Information Technology at Lincoln University. She earned her MLIS at Drexel University with a focus on Academic Librarianship. She also received a post-graduate certification at the Harvard Graduate School of Education for the Leadership Institute for Academic Librarians. Her current area of research and interest is in Embedded Librarianship, with a focus on

access, advocacy, and leadership in the field of librarianship. Along with having a passion for introducing and teaching about the library to everyone she meets, she is passionate about programs that empower, educate, and encourage women to explore different ways to enhance and reach the goals they desire.

Jennifer Sturge is the Teacher Specialist for School Libraries and Digital Learning for Calvert County Public Schools. She is a Lilead Fellow, Maryland Technology Leader of the Year 2019, President of the Maryland Association of School Librarians and an Adjunct Professor of Library and Information Studies at the University of Maryland College Park. She writes a monthly blog post for Programming Librarian with Donna Mignardi. She also writes monthly for *Knowledge Quest* and has been published in *School Library Journal*. She recently became a member of the *Knowledge Quest* editorial board. She is currently pursuing her doctorate with Point Park University. She is passionate about school libraries and the positive impact school librarians can have on every child.

Vikki C. Terrile is an Assistant Professor at Queensborough Community College, the City University of New York, where she serves as the Public Services and Assessment Librarian and Co-Coordinator of Information Literacy. She earned her BA in English from Wells College, MS in Library Science from Long Island University, MA in Urban Affairs from Queens College (CUNY), and is currently a doctoral student in education at SUNY, the University at Buffalo. Her research interests include the literacy practices of children and parents experiencing homelessness, the information behaviors of Renaissance Faire performers and artisans, the role of academic libraries in addressing student food and housing insecurity, and how home is depicted in children's picture books. She is currently exploring how youth-serving librarians understand their work with children and families experiencing homelessness.

Jaime Valenzuela joined the Daniel F. Cracchiolo Law Library in February 2016. He holds an MLIS and a BA in Creative Writing from the University of Arizona. In pursuing his graduate degree, he held a Graduate Assistantship at the UA's Laboratory of Tree-Ring Research where he helped build a functioning library. He has also worked and volunteered in various library settings which include the UA's Egyptian Expedition, Freeport McMoran Inc., the Arizona State Prison Complex in Tucson, and the UA Poetry Center. He is a Knowledge River Scholar (Cohort 12) and is committed to serving the underprivileged populations of the Native American and Hispanic communities.

Adriana White is an Autistic School Librarian in the South San Antonio Independent School District. Prior to this role, she worked as a Special Education Teacher for five and a half years. She also leads professional development sessions and focused on what teachers and librarians can learn from autistic and neurodiverse adults. She earned a Master's degree in Education, with a concentration in Special Education, from the University of Texas at San

Antonio. She earned an MLIS, from the University of North Texas, along with Graduate Academic Certificates in Storytelling and Youth Services in Libraries. Her work will also appear in the upcoming second edition of the American Library Association book, *Programming for Autistic Children and Teens*. She has contributed selections on the topics of Universal Design for libraries, autistic authors, and intersectionality. She is committed to the development of autism-friendly schools and libraries, and believes that accessibility and universal design are critically important issues that we all must support and promote. She also advocates for diverse books, especially #OwnVoices titles by autistic and neurodiverse authors. Additionally, she writes a column on the topic of autistic books for the nonprofit organization Geek Club Books.

ABOUT THE EDITOR

Dr. Renee F. Hill is Principal Lecturer and Diversity and Inclusion Officer in the University of Maryland's College of Information Studies. She teaches courses and provides guidance that prepare graduate students to become information specialists who serve all information seekers.

Renee earned a Bachelor's degree in Exceptional Student Education at Florida Atlantic University. Her Master's and Ph.D. were earned in Library and Information Studies at Florida State University. Renee is passionate about and committed to researching and teaching about issues that involve examining methods for increasing understanding of diversity issues in Library and Information Studies. Her research focuses on examining information needs and information access as they relate to diverse populations (e.g., members of various racial/ethnic groups, individuals with disabilities).

Renee was awarded the LJ/ALISE Teaching Excellence Award in 2017. She is married to Thomas Hill; they have five children ranging in age from 7 to 28.

FOREWORD

So much of what libraries do now – and have done historically – may not be well known to people who love and regularly use their local library. The family attending children’s story time and spending time in the community garden every week might not even know about the computer literacy courses for older adults being offered daily or the collection of resources for small businesses that library brings out together to help economic development in the community. The faculty member who regularly visits the special collection for their research and frequently orders rare books through interlibrary loan in an academic library may not know about the wide range of information literacy courses for students or the wide range of teaching resources for faculty that the library also offers. Libraries do so much for their communities in such a wide range of areas that the most impactful and innovative activities of libraries are often unknown to everyone except those people participating in the activities.

Too often, these great innovations are invisible even within the profession, especially historical contributions. For example, while you were getting your MLIS, did you learn that:

- Libraries regularly began serving patrons with print disabilities more than a hundred years before the US government granted disabled people civil rights?
- Children’s story time was originally created as a way to teach English to immigrant children and to provide time for their parents to take classes in the library to learn English or gain skills for employment?
- In many big cities, the public libraries were the first government agencies to adopt inventions, such as air conditioning, that improved health and sanitation for those using their buildings?
- Censorship of reading materials – what is in library collections and what was sold in bookstores – was common in communities around the United States until librarians directly challenged these practices and publicly codified their anticensorship stance with the 1939 Library Bill of Rights?
- During the Jim Crow era, “freedom libraries” were created in many segregated communities to ensure that nonwhite community members still had access to resources when they were not allowed access to the public library?
- When the George W. Bush administration launched the War on Terror after 9/11, the only profession that collectively stood up to the ensuing infringements on freedoms of expression and access were librarians?

The past, present, and future of modern library history is a continuous – if sometimes messy and bumpy – journey of creativity and determination in trying to make the communities we serve more equitable and more inclusive.

Not all of our institutions have always been on the right side of history for every issue, but we have collectively done better than any other institution at pushing society toward being more fair and more just for more people. Building a library and opening its doors each morning is a statement of hope that doing so will serve to further enrich the lives of the members of the community.

Yet, the stories of what our institutions have done and do now are not well known. As a result, a great many people take libraries for granted without really knowing what they are doing. Worse, many people who don't know what libraries do assume that they are no longer needed simply because they don't personally use them.

As she details in the introductory chapter, the editor of this book, Dr. Renee F. Hill, was inspired to bring this collection together by a 2018 statement from a writer for *Forbes* that Amazon had made libraries completely irrelevant. Baked into the statement was a dizzying mix of privilege and cluelessness (Amazon charges for things; libraries do not) and clearly lacking sense of the ways in which libraries contribute to their communities. But it is a sentiment you do encounter with surprising regularity, including from people who write for *Forbes*, a publication that really hates it when the government spends money to help people who aren't already wealthy.

One of the best ways we can counter assertions that libraries are no longer needed is by telling the stories of what they do, especially the ways that they help communities being otherwise underserved or ignored. And Renee has done a magnificent job bringing together 15 chapters of these exact stories – librarians and libraries changing their communities for the better, creating and implementing innovative services, collections, resources, and programs, and reaching populations who really need help. No one who reads this book will ever again wonder why we still need libraries.

It is most appropriate that a book on this topic would be Renee's first book. We first met as MLIS students and have known each other basically our entire adult lives. I have also had the honor of being Renee's colleague at two different institutions, seeing first hand over the course of the better part of two decades her enormous talents as an educator of future librarians. She is uniquely skilled at conveying the power and the beauty of libraries, inspiring students to envision how they use their careers to deliver hope to the communities that they will work with. The chapters in this book provide perspectives from a range of types of libraries in many different places, each thoughtful and often personal account offering its own unique example of the ways that libraries have been, are, and will continue to be institutions of equity, inclusion, and, perhaps most importantly, hope.

Paul T. Jaeger

Paul T. Jaeger, PhD, JD, MLIS, MEd, is Professor in the College of Information Studies and Co-Director of the Information Policy & Access Center at the University of Maryland. He is Co-Editor of *Library Quarterly* and Editor of

the *Advances in Librarianship* book series. He is the author of more than 200 journal articles and book chapters, as well 18 books. He is the founder of the Conference on Inclusion and Diversity in Library & Information Science and co-founder of the Disability Summit. In 2014, he received the LJ/ALISE Excellence in Teaching award. Too often, these great innovations are invisible even within the profession, especially historical contributions. For example, while you were getting your MLIS, did you learn that:

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I am grateful to my amazing husband and children who love and support me in everything I do.

Thank you to Dr. Paul T. Jaeger, who never gets tired of reminding me what I'm capable of and has been the truest of friends and most encouraging of mentors.

To all of the chapter authors who trusted me with their work: Thank you! This has been a beautiful and fulfilling journey.

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INTRODUCTION: THERE IS HOPE FOR OUR FUTURE!

Renee F. Hill

HOW THIS BOOK CAME TO BE

In July 2018, *Forbes* magazine published a short (and quickly retracted) opinion piece written by an ill-informed economist who suggested that libraries should be replaced by Amazon in an effort to help taxpayers save money. People across the globe chimed in to share an important message: We NEED Libraries!

Inspired by the fact that the masses continue to believe in the value of and necessity for libraries, librarians, and the services they offer, I set out to bring together a variety of voices and perspectives to shed light on the essential and varied roles librarians and libraries play in our world.

THE CHAPTERS IN THIS BOOK

This book contains 15 chapters written by researchers and practitioners who have committed their careers to librarianship because they believe in its transformative power. Each offering contains a message that convincingly expresses how libraries serve as information centers, community hubs, and, sometimes, lifesavers.

The book's first section "Hope is Part of the Plan" begins with a chapter written by *Vikki C. Terrile*, which aptly addresses the theme of this edited volume with its strong reference to Emily Dickinson's poem *Hope is the Thing with Feathers*. Throughout the chapter, Terrile recounts experiences that illustrate the many ways that libraries and librarians positively impact information seekers. Next, *Donna Mignardi and Jennifer Sturge* collaborate to explain the power K-12 school librarians have to expand the concept of information literacy by teaching students how to recognize their own implicit biases. Following Mignardi's and Sturge's youth-focused chapter, *Aryssa Damron's* writing outlines how the public library can be a source of hope for students who need assistance with achieving their college admission goals.

The second section, "Diverse and Inclusive," presents perspectives on the myriad ways the people, services, and programs offered through libraries help information seekers feel welcome. First, *Paolo P. Gujilde* challenges academic librarians to move beyond buzzwords and be inclusive and intentional when planning services for diverse populations. *Sophia Sotilleo* considers the ways in which

academic libraries can embrace all users by treating them like honored guests. *Jia He's* research shares the processes that her university's library engages in to fully include international students. *Kayla Kuni* offers personal reflections and best practices for serving adults with developmental disabilities who visit the library. The section concludes with *Jewel Davis's* chapter highlighting strategies that can be implemented to build collections in K-12 libraries and classrooms that reflect and promote diversity in youth literature.

The book's third section, "Creating Community," contains chapters that focus on the impact libraries have on the communities in which they are positioned. The section opens with *Conrad Pegues's* work which focuses on the role of urban libraries in addressing the problem of information access deserts. The second chapter in the section was written by *Caley Cannon* who presents libraries as public spaces that have a number of dynamic capabilities, including as venues where community members can participate in visual and performing arts programs. *Adriana White* positions libraries as important spaces for adults with autism – those who are patrons as well as those who are information providers.

The fourth and final book section, titled "The Future is Waiting," places emphasis on the idea that partnerships between libraries and community members can and should be in a state of constant expansion and evolution. In the first chapter in this section, *Jerry Dear* sheds light on the bridges that can be built when public libraries engage in multi-institutional collaborations. Next, *Jaime Valenzuela* outlines his experiences with digitization projects and encourages library professionals to seek opportunities that allow them to chart their own path for career success. *Angiah Davis* then shares examples of how librarians and libraries have the power to transform people and, through that positive impact, entire communities. The book closes with *Meghan Moran's* uplifting chapter that encourages librarians to become involved in their communities in order to impart forward thinking ideas that ensure information (and other) needs are met and that libraries will be viewed as essential spaces.

At its core, this book is meant to be positive, uplifting, and joyous. It celebrates a much beloved institution and honors people who have dedicated their careers to serving others through excellence in information provision. Most importantly, this book encourages all information specialists to always remember their "why" as they consider what inspires and motivates the authors of the chapters that follow.