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THE Teaching Librarian

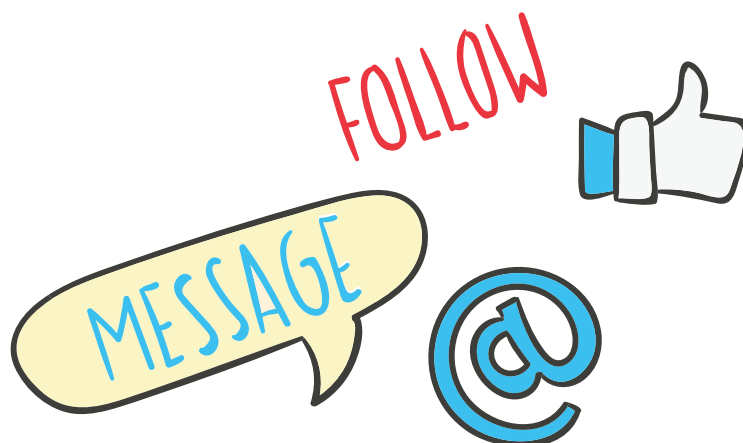
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trending @ your library

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Volume 23, Issue 1



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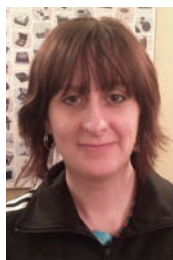
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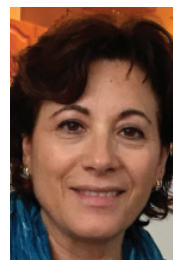
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TingL mission

The **Teaching Librarian**

The Teaching Librarian (TingL) is the official magazine of the Ontario School Library Association (OSLA). It is published three times a year to support OSLA members in providing significant and effective library programs and services. *The Teaching Librarian* promotes library programs and curriculum development that furthers exemplary educational objectives. The magazine fosters effective collaboration within the school library community and provides a forum to share experience and expertise.

TingL references

The Teaching Librarian is a general magazine for OSLA members and not a scholarly journal. If your article does require citation of sources, please provide them within the text of your article or column with as much or as little bibliographic information as necessary for identification (e.g. book title, year). If you feel that the works you are citing require full identification, please provide a bibliography at the end of your piece, formatted according to the latest Chicago Manual of Style (16th edition) or APA Style.

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TingL guidelines

V. 23, issue 2	"Numbers @ your library" Deadline: September 25, 2015
V. 23, issue 3	"Healing @ your library" Deadline: January 22, 2016

Articles of 150-250 words, 500 words, or 800-1,300 words are welcome. Articles, when approved, should be accompanied by good quality illustrations and/or pictures whenever possible. Text must be sent electronically, preferably in a Microsoft Word (or compatible) file. Pictures can be printed or digital (minimum size and quality are 4" x 6" and 300 dpi, approximately 700 MB and in .jpeg format, if electronic). With photos which contain a recognized individual, please secure the individual's permission in writing for the use of the photo. Photos taken at public events or crowd shots taken in a public place do not require permission from the subjects. All submissions are subject to editing for consistency, length, content, and style. Journalistic style is preferred. Articles must include the working title, name of author, and email address in the body of the text. OSLA reserves the right to use pictures in other OSLA publications unless permission is limited or denied at the time of publishing.

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The Editor's Notebook



Diana Maliszewski

In 1985, I was in Grade 9 at Birchmount Park Collegiate Institute in Scarborough. For Picture Day, I wore a neon pink tie and matching pink suspenders. It was the 1980s, and my attire was a very trendy fashion statement. Now, I cringe a bit at the image of the squinty, insecure teenager trying to be “hip” or “cool” (or whatever the word was at the time).

Trends are defined as “a general direction in which something is developing or changing” and may have an implied message of being popular, in fashion, and current. Trending does not

necessarily mean temporary. Our feature articles in this issue explore trending concepts that are not likely to disappear in the near future: Makerspaces and the Learning Commons. If we ignore trends, we run the risk of missing something revolutionary, a changing approach that may improve our teaching and learning and the academic experience of our students.

A new school year brings new changes, including here in the *Teaching Librarian* editorial board. We’d like to congratulate Lisa Hascal on her recent promotion to vice-principal in

the York Region District School Board. She will be leaving our organization and we wish her all the best. We also want to give belated congratulations to Derrick Grose, regular *TingL* columnist and editorial board member, who won the Angela Thacker Memorial Award from the Canadian Library Association in June 2015 for his contributions to school librarianship in Canada. In addition to his work with the provincial magazine, Derrick is the editor-in-chief of *School Libraries in Canada*, an unpaid job at which he continues to toil, a gift for which we are ever grateful! ■





Jeanne Conte

OSLA Council has been working diligently on behalf of the association to move a number of initiatives forward.

Last year, OLA offered free membership to teachers taking their Librarianship Additional Qualification courses. We are currently evaluating the success of this initiative and hope to continue to offer this perk for teachers who may be new to the field or may not have been aware of the benefits that membership affords.

The Ontario School Library Association (OSLA) is currently involved in a number of partnerships. In collaboration, OSLA and The Association of Library Consultants and Coordinators of Ontario (TALCO) applied and were accepted for a Ministry grant to create an inquiry-based learning resource to support the *Getting Started with Student Inquiry* Ministry monograph that is part of the Capacity Building Series. With this resource, we hope to establish a direct link between school library programs and the inquiry learning processes, thereby highlighting how learning is amplified when it happens in a rich print and digital collaborative learning environment that is inherent in the library learning commons.

Council members continue to represent OSLA at Subject/Division Association meetings and the OTF/FEO Curriculum Forum. This has opened doors to opportunities for school library perspectives to be voiced at the Student Success Round Table and resulted in an invitation to participate in the Ministry of Education Faculties

Forum. At the forum, Deb Kitchener, 2014 OSLA President, and I connected with instructors of faculties of education across the province. As a result, we have been invited to present in the fall to pre-service teachers enrolled in the Education program at Brock University. We're very excited to be speaking to pre-service teachers about the benefits of establishing partnerships with teacher-librarians in their schools, as well as ways they can further their own professional development through studies in librarianship. We hope this becomes a movement that is "trending @ your library" in future years!

OSLA is also excited to contribute for the second year in a row to a new OLA initiative that brings all the divisions together for a day at Queen's Park where we will follow up on three challenges Deputy Minister of Education, George Zegarac, presented to us last year. Deputy Minister Zegarac was very interested in how school libraries might support pre-service education, indigenous resources and e-Learning. We are already on our way to meeting one of those challenges with the connections we have established with the faculties of education. OSLA Council members have volunteered to participate in teams that will be meeting over the summer to consolidate ideas and actions to take back to the Deputy Minister next October.

As you may be aware, People for Education is conducting research around Measuring What Matters. Of course, when library folk hear about something like this, we immediately see potential for authentic contributions to

President's Report

the cause. OSLA has been chatting with David Cameron, the lead researcher, about possibilities for linking some of this research to school libraries. David is interested in some of our ideas and will be the keynote speaker at Treasure Mountain Canada 4, which will be held as part of the OLA Super Conference in 2016. Please look for this event. It will be happening on the Friday evening to be followed up by a full day of sharing on the Saturday. There is little that is more inspiring for teacher-librarians and educators in general than sharing their work and making connections to their own practice.

Also look for a set of webinars completed recently to support school library educators. They are located on the OLA website (www.accessola.com). We are also working on establishing a consistent process for building and maintaining the Together for Learning (T4L) website that can be found at www.togetherforlearning.ca. Finally and sadly, due to labour issues, plans for offering library-related content at the OTF Summer Institute are on hold, but we hope for opportunities to participate in the future.

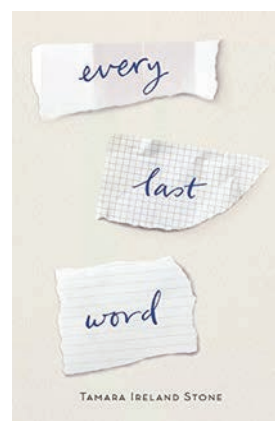
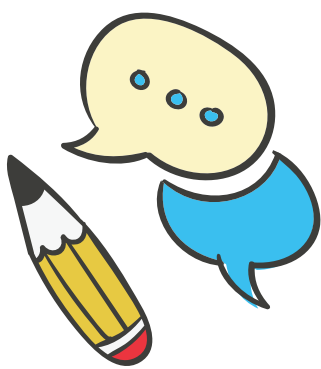
Believe it or not, I could go on! So, in reflecting on the engaging and provocative theme of this issue, trending @ your library, I'm inclined to conclude that what's trending @ OSLA is action!

I look forward to the next leg of my OSLA journey as president and endeavour to serve the membership to the best of my ability. ■

Twitter: @contej

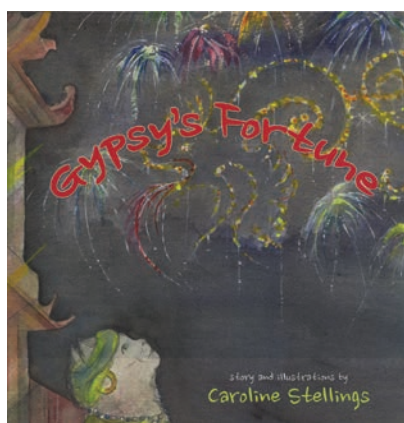
Book Buzz

It is easy enough to log on and find out what is trending on Twitter or other social media sites but it is more of a challenge for me to figure out what is trending at your library and learning commons. Therefore, it is difficult to suggest book titles that reflect or complement the trends at your library. A solution to the problem is to consult *Together for Learning - School Libraries and the Emergence of the Learning Commons (T4L)*, found at www.togetherforlearning.ca. Guided by this vision, I have tried to identify some trends in practice in learning commons and identified books that will complement those trends. I hope you will discover some titles that will be of use to you in your collaboration with your students, colleagues and broader community.



Every Last Word
by Tamara Ireland Stone
New York: Hyperion, 2015
ISBN 9781484705278

According to *T4L*, by building learning partnerships, “[a] school library can provide students with opportunities to explore their interests. It can encourage them to question and make sense of the world. It can also help them form strong personal relationships that support emotional and social competence” (33). Readers in Grades Seven to 12 can see this dynamic at work in Tamara Ireland Stone’s novel *Every Last Word*. The protagonist, Sam, is challenged by anxiety and Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD). She weans herself of her dependence on the tenuous acceptance of the most popular girls at school after she discovers “the Poet’s Corner.” In a group that values sincerity above prestige, Sam discovers real friendship while writing the poetry in which she reveals her true self. The author’s concluding notes present information about finding help in dealing with OCD that helps to justify the hopeful tone of the conclusion of the novel.



Gypsy's Fortune

by Caroline Stellings

Winnipeg: Peanut Butter Press, 2014

ISBN 9781927735077

In exploring “Discovery and Guided Inquiry,” *T4L* says the Learning Commons “[e]ncourages the collision of ideas” (23). Caroline Stellings’ rhyming text and watercolour illustrations in *Gypsy's Fortune* explain how fortune cookies and their hidden sayings may have been the product of collisions between a self-righteous mayor, an unemployed gypsy fortune-teller cat, and the owner of a Chinese restaurant on the brink of bankruptcy. Students may find inspiration in the entrepreneurial spirit of the fortune-teller, the juxtaposition of fortune cookie sayings with the turns in the plot of the story, or even the fortune cookies sayings themselves, such as the one that reminds the mayor, “Your mind is like a parachute—it works best when open.” Seven to ten year old readers might even be inspired to launch their own inquiry into the origins of the fortune cookie (or other interesting foods).



Jack and the Hurricane

by Joshua Goudie with illustrations by Craig Goudie

St. John's: Tuckamore Books, 2014

ISBN 9781771030595

One technique that *T4L* suggests in order to promote imagination and creativity is to “[s]urround students with rich picture books and novels and encourage ‘what if’ play with the text” (30). Author Joshua Goudie and his father, illustrator Craig Goudie, have built a story based on Hurricane Igor’s devastating attack on Newfoundland in September, 2010. Determined to save his cousin’s birthday celebration, and not really understanding what is going on around him, Jack heads out into the storm. Jack promises that he would never do the same thing again, but does a reader believe him? This book could be useful in launching discussions with children about choices, the effects of choices on others, and the importance of putting safety first.



Jazz : nature's improvisation

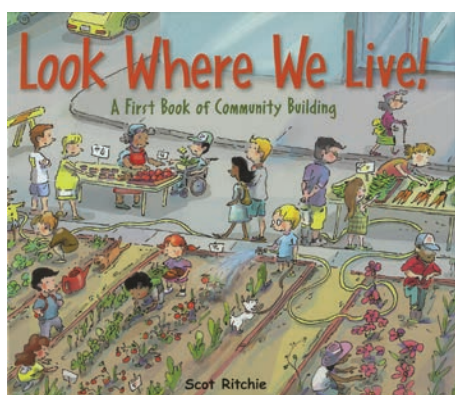
by Elizabeth Copeland

Toronto: Quattro Books, 2014

ISBN 9781927443651

Discussing Cultural Literacy, *T4L* includes as one of the implications of Cultural Literacy an “[i]ncreased respect for a wide variety of cultural norms, perspectives, and realities” (20). In *Jazz*, Elizabeth Copeland explores the heart-wrenching experiences of a transgender youth from a South Indian immigrant family in Toronto. Copeland vividly describes family tensions, the challenges of survival on the streets, and the complexities of Jazz (the protagonist), her family, and the strangers she encounters in what is sometimes a very bleak journey to her hopeful realization, “I am life seeking to express itself. I like that.” Mature secondary school readers will be engaged by this novel’s portrayal of one of their peers, no more perfect than themselves, defying the expectations of others and struggling for recognition and acceptance.

...continued from page 9



Look Where We Live!

by Scot Ritchie

Toronto: Kids Can Press, 2015

ISBN 9781771381024

In defining “quality education,” *T4L* states that students must “understand deeply the importance of civic engagement” (29). In *Look Where We Live!* author and illustrator Scot Ritchie helps young readers learn about being involved citizens by defining community and providing examples of how individuals, businesses and civic workers contribute to making life better for everyone. He talks about how kids can become involved through a range of activities such as visiting a senior citizen, working in a community garden, picking up litter, or even fundraising for a library! A puzzle-making activity for the four to seven year old target audience is included at the end of the book to help students see how the concepts they have learned apply to their own community. The book is perfectly tailored to complement the *T4L* ideal to “[c]onsciously connect learners with the local community organizations and resources” (31).



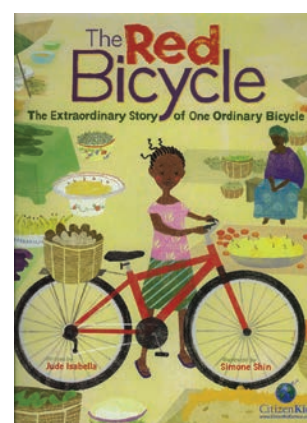
Morgan's Boat Ride

by Hugh MacDonald; illustrated by Anna Bald

Charlottetown: Acorn Press, 2014

ISBN 9781894838962

Two key words in the vision for *T4L* are “exploration” and “communities” (6). In their twenty-eight page children’s picture book, author Hugh MacDonald and illustrator Anna Bald take Morgan and her dog, Skipper, on an accidental journey down a river that gives them a chance to discover the landscape, the wildlife and the people along the way. Caring neighbours make sure this learning experience ends safely with a community celebration and with Morgan wondering what all the excitement is about.



The Red Bicycle

by Jude Isabella; illustrated by Simone Shin

Toronto: Kids Can Press, 2015

ISBN 9781771380232

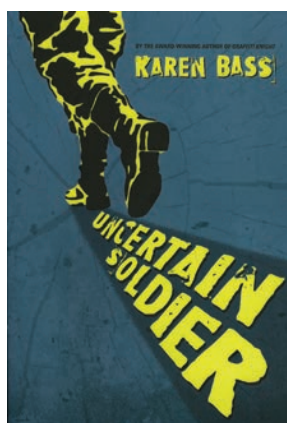
T4L describes the Learning Commons as a place that “[e]ngages the learner in rich, real-world tasks that interest and motivate” (23). In telling “the extraordinary story of one ordinary bicycle,” *The Red Bicycle* shows eight to twelve year old readers how they can donate bicycles that they no longer use to charities like World Bicycle Relief (www.worldbicyclerelief.org) in order to make a significant difference in the lives of people in distant countries like Burkina Faso. The thirty-two page picture book complements an illustrated fictional story with three pages about “What You Can Do to Help” with photographs of how bicycles are used in Africa. This addition to the CitizenKid series invites students to act to make a difference in the world.



Three Feathers

by Richard Van Camp; illustrated
by K. Mateus
Winnipeg: Highwater Press, 2015
ISBN 9781553795360

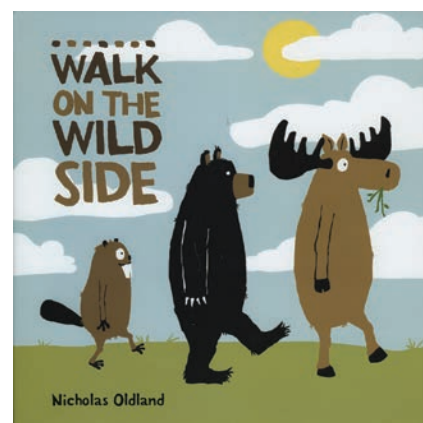
One of the goals of the Learning Commons, according to *T4L*, is to help students “[e]xplore the role aboriginal peoples play in Canadian identity” (31). One important contribution of First Nations’ cultures is insight into restorative justice. Richard Van Camp and K. Mateus have created a graphic novel to help high school audiences see an alternative system of justice in action. Three young men are sent by the Elders to live on the land for nine months as punishment for acts of vandalism. Once their sentence is completed, they face the challenge of returning to their community and finding forgiveness. A limited edition of this graphic novel from the *Debwe* (to speak the truth) Series is available in Cree.



Uncertain Soldier

by Karen Bass
Toronto: Pajama Press, 2015
ISBN 9781927485729

Under the heading of “The Importance of Individual Growth” *T4L* identifies one important objective as being able “to develop caring, empathetic, and involved citizens who respect each other and understand the responsibility we all share in creating a safe and lawful society” (32). In *Uncertain Soldier* Karen Bass explores the relationship between the twelve year old Canadian son of a German immigrant and a seventeen year old German prisoner of war as they struggle against their sense of powerlessness in a community where war-time prejudices threaten to overwhelm the fair-minded humanity of a small town in Alberta.



Walk on the Wild Side

by Nicholas Oldland
Toronto: Kids Can Press, 2015
ISBN 9781771381093

T4L discusses confidence and self-esteem; it talks about crediting the expertise of all members of the Learning Commons and modeling making mistakes as part of learning (30). The simple story and colourful illustrations in *Walk on the Wild Side* show how a beaver, a bear and a moose convert the wilderness into their learning commons where they discover each other’s strengths and weaknesses, engage in problem solving and learn from experience. They discover that a journey of exploration and collaboration can be much more fulfilling than a competitive race to the end. This 32 page picture book could be used to launch some interesting discussions with three to seven year olds. ■

Meet the Author

EVAN MUNDAY

Meet Evan Munday, young adult (YA) author, illustrator, cartoonist, and former book publicist. Munday's series, *The Dead Kid Detective Agency*, has been nominated twice for the Forest of Reading's Silver Birch Award® – first in 2013, and most recently in 2015 for *Dial M for Morna*, the second of the series.

TingL: I note from your website that you have long been an illustrator and comic-book lover. What led you to create the young adult novel series *The Dead Kid Detective Agency*?

When I'm thinking up ideas, it usually starts as a high-concept elevator pitch. In this case, it was *Buffy, the Vampire Slayer* meets *Veronica Mars*, two of my all-time favourite TV shows. (Though I guess now that mash-up has been realized – more or less – as *iZombie*.) I've always been a bit morbid and interested in the paranormal. As I often tell people, I was trying to write a Nancy Drew story where Nancy was super-goth and all her friends were dead.

Also, as a (secret) American, I've always noticed the difference in the way Canadians and Americans teach themselves their histories. Say what you will about the United States of America, but it sure knows how to turn its history into the stuff of action-packed legend (largely because a lot of it's entirely fabricated, but still...). So, in writing *The Dead Kid Detective Agency* series, I was hoping to introduce some of that myth-making to Canadian history. In the most accurate possible way, of course.

TingL: Was it important that your protagonist be female? Why?

Yes. Personally, I had fallen into that typical rut where my protagonists (in comic books, in stories) were really just stand-ins for me, so I wanted to push myself with a character who was a thirteen-year-old girl, which I have never been. But I also was hoping that, being a male author, I could encourage some boys to read this middle-grade story about a girl. It's getting better in young adult books, but the in middle-grades, many of the adventure or humour books feature boys as the main character; I was pushing back against that a bit. I work part-time in a bookstore and so many parents are unwilling to buy a book featuring a girl for their male child. Though I'm polite in a customer-is-always-right kind of way, I have very little patience for that garbage.

If you're a girl or woman, you spend most of your childhood and adulthood reading men's stories in books and watching men's stories in movies and on television, because it's considered the default. So, like, shake it off, boys, you can read a few stories and watch a few movies about girls, too. I grew up watching *Gilmore Girls* and it's made my life immeasurably better. While your question was perfectly

fair, you probably wouldn't have asked me the question if I had been a woman writing a boy character. If one more boy reads a story about a girl because a male writer wrote it or because it's got, like, decapitations and jokes in it, I'll be extremely pleased.

TingL: Can you share a bit about your imaginative and creative process with our readers – the series blend of Canadian history, mystery, cultural references, great vocabulary, “dead kids” and modern-day teen issues is unique, to say the least!

I wish I could say there was a careful process involved, but if you read *The Dead Kid Detective Agency* series, you've seen a fairly good representation of my mind. Before each book I do a lot of research and reading on the time period that forms the backdrop of the story (for *Dial M for Morna*, it was 1914 Ontario). In general, I try to think up a few excellent set pieces for each book, then determine the most natural and entertaining way to connect those set pieces, making sure I don't ignore the emotional content (clinically depressed dad, missing mom, bullying at school). I guess there's a lot going on in these books. But the pop-culture references are

Evelynne Bernstein

unavoidable. It's the filter through which I understand life, for better or worse, so I can't imagine how I'd do the books without them.

TingL: Apart from the obvious – that the books are so much fun to read, and so enjoyable – are there any lessons or insights you would like your young readers to take away?

I hope the books instill some kind of interest in history, as well. As I mentioned before, I feel like Canadian history has an unfair reputation of being dull, so if I can change that script with at least a few young readers by adding ghosts and baseball bat fights, that would make me really happy.

TingL: You self-published your graphic novel *Quarter-Life Crisis*. Were there challenges in getting *The Dead Kid Detective Agency* published?

Certainly. I had nearly given up trying to publish *The Dead Kid Detective Agency*. I submitted it to about every Canadian children's publisher. Some of the rejections were cursory. Some came with some explanation – this is too similar to another book we're doing – but the most disheartening were meetings with publishers who liked the book but wanted to change something that was (to me) integral to the book. One publisher liked it, but wanted all the Canadian history taken out. The history was one of the key reasons I was writing it! Another wanted to replace the FLQ in the first book with the mafia, which is – on so many levels – so wrong. ECW Press wasn't publishing books for young readers at the time, so I never submitted it to them, though I loved a lot of the books they were publishing. It was only when one of the editors, who I met at a book launch, mentioned they were starting up a line for young readers that my hope returned (like Jafar and acid-washed jeans). I'm really grateful to ECW – they're a great bunch of people and I guess they saw something in the book that others didn't.

TingL: Did you have teachers who encouraged your writing and illustrating? Were you encouraged at home? What is the best advice you received?

I've been really lucky in that there were many teachers and people who encouraged me in my writing and illustration. As a

child, I used to turn my simple school vocabulary assignments into twelve-page short stories, which would have undoubtedly increased my teachers' workloads, but they seemed totally cool with it. And my middle school principal, Dr. Dick Weiner (that's his real name), allowed my friend Greg and I to use the school photocopier to mass-produce our self-made comic books and sell them in the school cafeteria during lunch hour for a week. (I've lived a charmed life and I can't pretend I haven't.) A bunch of those teachers have been given loving homages as the teachers in the series.

My parents were pretty encouraging, as well. I think they were a bit concerned that I'd end up a penniless artist, so they were also pretty adamant that I focus on schoolwork other than writing and illustration. But they read my ridiculous stories. They drove me to the comic store regularly. They picked me up from the school after a late night of set design for the school



...continued from page 13

musical. My parents were unbelievably patient.

I can't think of any great advice in terms of writing and illustrating. I just know that whenever I've met someone whose work I admire, I'll confess that with my own work, "I have no idea what I'm doing." And it's really encouraging that all the best people admit, "I don't think any of us do."

TingL: What advice would you share with young writers?

As best you can, ignore all your doubts and fears during the writing of your first draft. Save those emotions for later when you're editing. Personally, I find it impossible to edit and revise as I go along. I need to finish a draft of something – no matter how horrible it seems at the time – before I try to fix anything. I'll just smash ahead, powering like a wrecking ball through an awful manuscript that doesn't make much sense, to get to an end. And once I've reached it, I can go back and improve it. So that's what I usually advise. Bash ahead, fix it later. If I were to revise as I went along, I'd never get past the first chapter.

Also, if you think you're terrible at writing, don't worry. Everyone else does. I'm sure even Gordon Korman and Margaret Atwood doubt their talents. If you've written something, re-written it, and find you hate it and can't bear to read it one more time, it's probably pretty decent. Give it a week or so, then read it again. You might surprise yourself.

TingL: You are a very talented artist, and it is fascinating to read about your

drawing process in the *Quarter-Life Crisis* "sketchbook". How did you develop your technique over the years, and has it changed through time? What advice would you share with young artists?

I started drawing as soon as I started reading comic books. My brother Andrew and I would entertain each other by drawing our own *X-Men* and *Spider-Man* stories, and we eventually evolved to making our own comic characters and worlds. When I was a kid, I had two techniques for learning more about drawing: (1) studying *How To Draw Comics the Marvel Way* by Stan Lee and John Buscema like it was the Torah (I contend it's still one of the best illustration guides in print); and (2) copying comic books. I became quite regimented about it. Every six months, I'd decide on my six favourite current comic book illustrators, and I'd copy pages and pages of their artwork. Then in another six months, I'd focus on copying another six illustrators. I wasn't so much trying to ape the artists or steal their styles as I was learning how they solved various illustration "problems": how does one draw a car, an ear, a dog. This is how this artist does it, and this is how this one does it. I was building up a library of solutions to illustration problems.

By the end of high school and university, though, I was doing the proper things like drawing from life and using live models, which is probably the better way to go. But I still think you can't discount the importance of copying early in your drawing development.

TingL: What books do you read for personal pleasure? Do you have a favourite author?

Of course! Show me a writer who doesn't read for personal pleasure and I'll cock my eyebrow higher than Dwayne "The Rock" Johnson. How else do you get better at writing than by reading and by writing some more? I don't know if I have one favourite author. I have a few. And to be honest, I read more adult literature than children's literature: so, stuff like Michael Chabon and Junot Diaz and Miranda July. But I was really happy to see that Jonathan Auxier won the Silver Birch Fiction Award this year, because I loved *The Night Gardener*. And I look forward to every new Susan Juby and Susin Nielsen book.

TingL: What can your readers look forward to next?

The third book in *The Dead Kid Detective Agency* series, *Loyalist To a Fault*, comes out in September, so I'm hard at work on the fourth book. The third book in the series investigates how Cyril Cooper, October's dead *Loyalist* friend, died. I am also attempting to make a graphic novel about an all-girl chess team, but – as I tell everyone who asks – I know nothing about (a) girls, or (b) chess, so it's going slowly.

TingL: Thank you Evan! We're looking forward to *Loyalist To a Fault*! I

Professional Resources

Rob Baxter

Unsettling Canada: A National Wake-up Call

by Arthur Manuel and Grand Chief Ronald M. Derrickson

Between the Lines, 2015

ISBN 978-1-17711-317-66

An essential acquisition for schools where students and staff seek greater understanding about the Native Canadian struggle for human rights and social justice (in spite of a lack of Provincial and Federal governmental leadership).

Both an autobiography of Native Canadian Arthur Manuel and a history of Native injustice, *Unsettling Canada* is a revealing and disturbing account of Manuel's struggle to establish and protect Native human rights across the country. This is a story about race, racism, property rights, poverty, and exploitation by our governments and corporations, leaving the reader to wonder just who benefits from the exploitation of our natural resources.

As Manuel points out, "according to Canadian government estimates, more than \$650 billion (yes, billion) in resource extraction investment is expected to pour into Canada over the next twenty years. The great majority of that investment will be targeted on our lands." Manuel views this type of development as an "assault" on Native lands which Aboriginal communities, as environmental custodians, have maintained for thousands of years.

Three Supreme Court decisions have granted Native Canadians more rights than in the past. The first was the *Calder* decision in 1973, when half the Supreme Court judges recognized

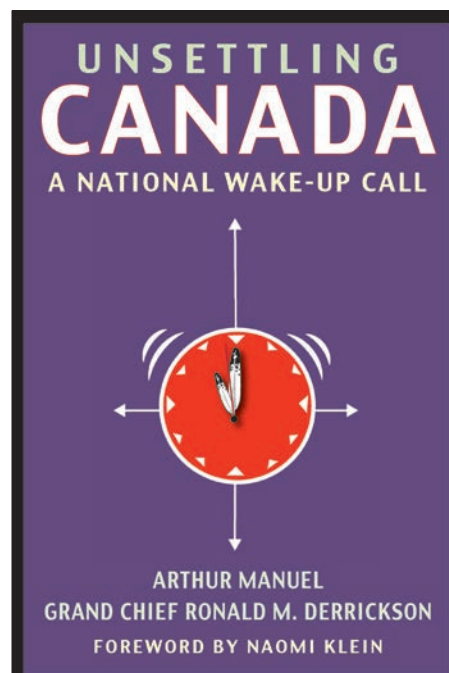
that Aboriginal title "was a property right of Indigenous peoples that could continue, despite the assertion of sovereignty by the Crown." The second, the *Delgamuukw* decision in 1997, made the Crown's constitutional "Interest" subordinate to Aboriginal "Interest" provided that the latter had not been purchased by the Crown in a treaty. This paved the way for the *Tsilhqot'in* decision in 2014 when Aboriginal title was recognized over almost 2,000 sq. km. of *Tsilhqot'in* territory. "This case is the first in Canada where Indigenous peoples have repossessed their lost — or more accurately, stolen — inheritance."

As a result of the Oka Crisis in 1990, the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples was established "to study the evolution of the relationship

between Aboriginal peoples, the government of Canada and Canadian society as a whole." First among its recommendations was that the doctrine of "discovery" be rejected as racist, since it gave one race the right to dominate and acquire the lands of another. "The discovery of North America" is still, unfortunately, a phrase often used in school history classes today. It also recommended that Aboriginal peoples have the inherent right of self-government. However, the Commission was dissolved when the government changed political parties.

Manuel has taken his struggle a few times beyond the borders of Canada to international bodies such as the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, the UN Convention on Biological Diversity conference in The Hague in 2002, the UN Committee on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination and the UN Human Rights Committee. When held up to international scrutiny of this kind, Canada is forced to respond to claims of injustice and discrimination.

Providing Native Canadians with more rights and greater autonomy would benefit all Canadians, since the Department of Indian Affairs could be dismantled, thus saving the country billions of dollars a year in operating costs. New Indigenous governments would be set up to encourage sustainable Indigenous economies to generate greater wealth and health benefits for Native communities everywhere.



...continued from page 15

The Joy of Missing Out: Finding Balance in a Wired World

by Christina Crook

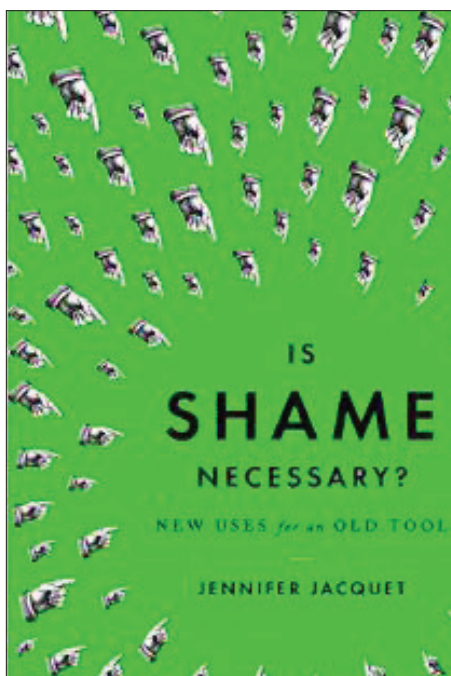
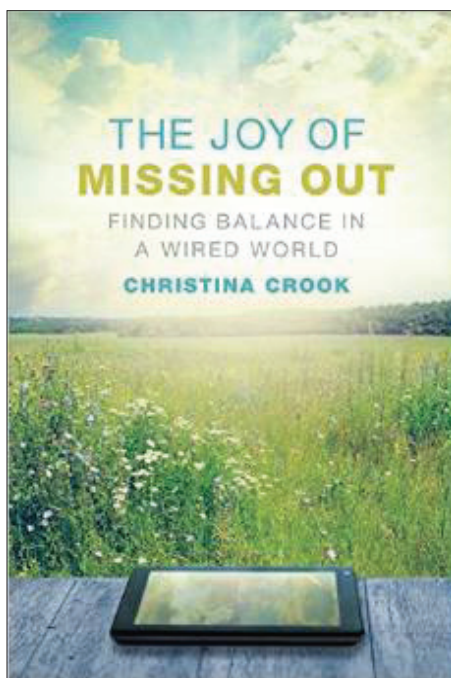
New Society Publishers, 2015

ISBN 978-0-86571-767-1

What happens when technology moves beyond lifting genuine burdens and starts freeing us from burdens that we should not want to be rid of?

Christina Crook sets about trying to answer philosopher Albert Borgmann's question with many examples of "good burdens" which anchor people to reality. Once we get beyond the initial inertia posed by effort, "the burden disappears." Without handing over our daily chores to gadgets, appliances and computer screens, satisfaction and even joy can be found in the ordinary tasks required by life. Teachers could easily adapt situations Ms. Crook describes to classroom scenarios to encourage discussions among students. Try this one: "...making things easier doesn't lead to a deep sense of satisfaction. Patience, discipline and hard work do."

Partly a personal account of the author's coming-to-terms with technology, including her 31-day "fast" from IT, and partly an overview of problems caused by digital technology, *The Joy of Missing Out* draws on many studies and surveys showing that the promised benefits of a plugged-in world have had detrimental effects on reality: College students are now 40% less empathetic than they were 30 years ago, according to a 2010 University of Michigan study. Children born in lower-income homes hear 30 million fewer words spoken by their parents. Web and TV voices cannot replace the human interaction.



Composed of 14 short chapters, the book deals with topics such as *Dusting Off the Dictionary: Why Definitions Matter*; *Why Fast from the Internet?*; *Finding What Sustains*; *Gaining the Time: Implementing Constraints*; and *Quitting the Comparison Game: Reclaiming Delight*.

Online, we are drawn mostly to social media and news sites where editors encourage "clickable content." This is because the more we click, the more pages we view, and the more we are exposed to ads encouraging us to spend money. Attention gets diverted from real-life and our real-life links are diminished.

Nomophobia (no-mo[bile]-phone phobia – check out Tim Elmore's post in the Sept. 18, 2014, issue of *Psychology Today*: "Nomophobia: A Rising Trend in Students"), a neologism, has crept into the language to describe teens who panic if their cell phone is not working or lost. This might not be written up any time soon as a new disorder in the American Psychological Association's *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Psychological Disorders*, but it is estimated that more than half a million children in Japan, aged 12 to 18, suffer from an Internet addiction, causing attention deficits, obesity, sleep disorders, or depression. "In fact, a research study has shown that for every additional hour kids spend online, their happiness decreases eight percent (Happify website, 2014)." The problem is so serious that the Japanese Ministry of Education has sought government subsidies to run "fasting" or detox camps where children and

teens unplug from the virtual and plug into the real world.

Our biggest struggle in educating our youth with and about technology might just be in teaching priorities and what really matters: our connection to people, instead of gadgets, and what we can learn from real-life experiences.

Is Shame Necessary? New Uses for an Old Tool

by Jennifer Jacquet

Pantheon Books, 2015

ISBN 978-0-307-90757-8; eISBN 978-0-307-90758-5

For educators at all levels, parents and students who have experienced and participated in this kind of behaviour.

The first to distinguish between guilt and shame were anthropologists Ruth Benedict and Margaret Mead who maintained that to modify behaviour, most Western countries relied on guilt, whereas their Eastern counterparts used shame. Professor Jacquet, however, provides the reader with multiple examples of past and present uses of shame in Western societies to punish people for real or perceived transgressions.

Shame is a complex, multi-layered, emotional tool which has been wielded throughout history to castigate, shun and change the character of human beings in every society in order to ensure that individuals comply with group norms. Today, its power can even be used to change the policies and direction of certain large corporations. Whether human or corporate, what's at stake is

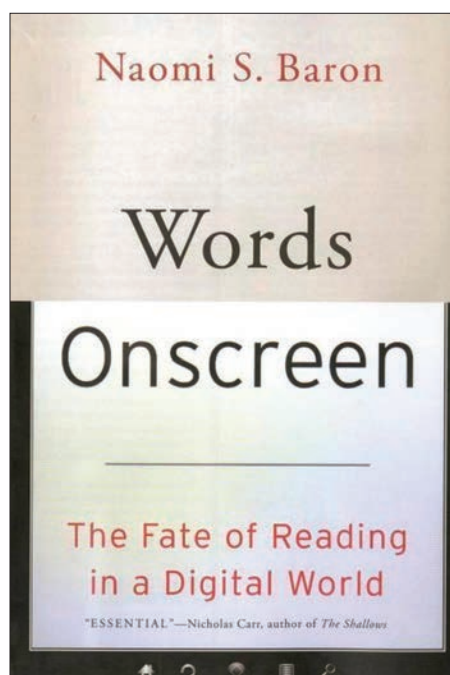
one's reputation before an 'audience' which can be either real or imagined. "Guilt," on the other hand, "is a feeling whose audience and instigator is oneself, and its discomfort leads to self-regulation."

In the past, shaming often took the form of violent punishments, such as the pillory, tarring and feathering, public whipping or hanging. Today, shaming tends to be of the non-violent type, although it can be just as painful when it takes the form of gossip ("... gossip is critical ... as a mild form of shaming ... in a way that keeps people acting in a way that suits the group..."), causing embarrassment, humiliation or a true loss of dignity, exemplified in the publication, in certain U.S. states, of the names of people with tax arrears, or

the requirement of convicted impaired drivers to purchase special licence plates.

In today's virtual world, shaming has acquired an even greater impact because of technology's ability to reach a limitless audience, an audience about which Professor Jacquet asks, "But isn't this just an Internet version of vigilantism, which, like shaming itself, changes with each new set of communication tools? Is online shaming really so different from being tarred and feathered or being featured in the tabloids?"

The book provides multiple scenarios and situations, from environmental shaming to the power of the reputation of the person doing the shaming, which could be easily adapted to foster great class discussions at many levels.



Words Onscreen: The Fate of Reading in a Digital World

by Naomi S. Baron

Oxford University Press, 2015

ISBN 978-0-19-931576-5; eISBN 978-0-19-931577-2

Essential reading for educators at all levels, as well as parents and students interested in understanding the on-going discussion about reading: On-line or in print?

Over the past two decades, studies comparing on-screen reading with reading in print report no differences in comprehension, eye movement, proofreading or reading skills. However, most people still prefer to read the printed word for various reasons: The increase in pleasure, less eye-fatigue, better learning with paper,

or the belief among older students that if extensive reading is required, the hardcopy results in better education. One of the main reasons they prefer books over e-books is the ease with which they can highlight, make annotations in the margins and locate certain passages more easily.

Perhaps even more surprising, parents employed in Silicon Valley digital technology professions prefer to have their children educated with print rather than eBooks or eTexts. In addition, the use of any digital screen by children under 2 should be limited, according to the American Academy of Pediatrics.

Besides a short overview of the evolution of reading throughout the centuries, Professor Baron includes chapters on *The Appeal of Words Onscreen*, *The Web Ate My Print Option: One-Off Reading*, *Your Brain on Hyper Reading* and *The Future of Reading in a Digital World*, where many issues and debates are aired. We

erroneously believe that everything digital will take less of a toll on the environment but, in fact, to make a printed book, two-thirds of a pound of minerals are required, versus 33 pounds of rare minerals from conflict areas in Africa for a single eReader. One hundred kilowatt-hours of fossil fuels, creating 66 pounds of CO₂, are consumed to manufacture an eReader, whereas a book, using a renewable resource, takes just 2 kilowatt-hours and produces 100 times less in greenhouse gases. Keep in mind that digital data warehouses use 30 billion watts of electricity worldwide, or the same energy produced by about 30 nuclear power plants.

Statistics from student surveys Professor Baron carried out over the past few years in the U.S., Japan and Germany show a surprising preference for reading in print, whether for academic purposes or pleasure: "...when it comes to pleasure reading, students in all three countries favored print over digital." In all three countries,

students prefer a hardcopy when reading lengthy texts, whether for schoolwork (92% in the U.S., 77% in Japan, 95% in Germany) or pleasure (85% in the U.S., 74% in Japan and 88% in Germany). While some studies show better comprehension of texts in print than onscreen, others indicate there is no difference at all, but reading in print reduces distraction and increases mental focus since there are no hyperlinks or hypertexts to lure the mind away from the main story or subject, leading Professor Baron to state, "Given these findings, I can only wonder why the educational establishment is pushing students toward digital reading."

Professor Baron's highly-readable study raises many questions and provides quite a few answers. A must-read for all involved in the education system. ■



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Ask Rita Resourceful



We welcome any questions you may have for Rita Resourceful. To protect Rita's identity, please email them to TingLeditor@gmail.com, with the subject Ask Rita, and we'll be sure to pass them along!

Dear Rita,

I try to provide the best resources I can for both students and teachers, but I am having difficulty locating suitable material for the new Health and Physical Education curriculum. Although I have been purchasing some resources, I find there is little that is actually at grade level. Depending on the reader, some books are far too simplified or too explicit; others are excellent resources, but at a reading level that is too difficult for my readers. There just isn't enough available. What should I do?

*Thank you,
Seeking Good Books*

Dear Seeking,

How frustrating it is to have a new curriculum rolled out, without enough resources available. Just like with Social Studies resources, the publishers are not yet up to speed. I suggest you continue to buy resources and circulate the books through the Health teachers (by term or year depending on your school organization). Let the teachers determine which resources should be used with which classes or students. Consider purchasing books that may be text heavy (we know how popular those are), but be sure there is an excellent index to enable readers to access tidbits of information without reading from cover to cover.

I know you are aware of the contents of the curriculum, but think about collaborating with teachers to include these areas in other teaching opportunities: poverty, body image, personal safety, violence, harassment,

bullying, abuse, gender identity, sexual orientation. The content needs to be associated with real life rather than becoming a stand-alone topic. You may already have picture books and resources in your library because these are not new to our teaching.

Dear Rita,

I'm trying to decide what to do. Administration sees me as a TIC [teacher in charge] and I seem to be on call with the library closed more than I am doing my own job. I miss being part of a grade level team and the connections to my peers. My job satisfaction has gone missing. I seem to be focussing on book repairs, shelving the returns, checking in and checking out... and all I am feeling is isolation.

Alone & Lonely

Dear A & L,

How true! There are days when all I can think about is getting out of the daily grind of check outs and check ins and shelving. I have recently found some sweet respite through my online professional learning network (PLN), or professional learning community (PLC) which I have begun to develop.

Your PLN can connect you with like-minded T-L's from around the world; sharing problems, solutions resources, and reviews. Your contributions can be as little or as much as you like.

Here are some directions you might choose in order to expand your PLC:

- Join the moderated listserv for school library media professionals.

Visit lmnet.wordpress.com to learn about and subscribe to the LM_NET list serve. Be prepared for an overwhelming connection to the world of TL's.

- Twitter: start tweeting and follow other teacher-librarians.
- Contact your local association or the OSLA and get involved.
- Seek out a mentor online or in your board.
- Initiate a student group to help with book check in and shelving.
- Recruit parent helpers to repair.
- Attend grade level meetings and get something specific put on their agenda.
- Offer the library space for team meetings.

You will find you are not alone.

Dear Rita,

I love books. I love reading. I love inquiry. I love teaching. I love my job as a teacher-librarian, but I don't like technology becoming so important in the library. Is there any way I can avoid the technology piece in my job?

*Sincerely,
Might B. Techno-phobic*

Dear Might B.,

I was that way at first, too. But I've pushed myself into the 21st century. You need to join me. Education is embracing technology whether educators like it or not. Some of the best learning happens with tools and devices accessed by learners.

Take a course. Team up with someone who knows technology to teach anything

in the library. Encourage a group of your students to start a technology or coding club and you supervise and learn with them.

Learn about your school board database library.

Begin by playing with one tool until you are comfortable. Some relatively stress-free suggestions are: padlet.com (create and collaborate), smore.com (newsletter), kidblog.org or edublog.org, (blogging), weebly.com (website creation), wikispaces.com or pbworks.com (collaborative wiki), pic-collage.com (collage creation). Begin by creating something professional for use in your teaching and then tweet the resulting product.

If you don't know what these are, your first job is to find out. BUT it is your job!

Dear Rita,

I want to share something I found on the internet. Search "Cartoons Only a Teacher-Librarian Would Love". Julie Greller writes a blog and has collected a page of ROFL comics I think your readers might appreciate.

Love 2 Laugh

Dear L2L,

Thanks and a great big Rita hug for sharing the laughs with us. ■

Drawn to the Form

COMICS IN THE CLASSROOM: 3 SIMPLE RULES

When it comes to comics in the classroom, there are three simple rules. Now, if your goal in using comics is to develop struggling and reluctant readers by giving them a form that marries the textual and the visual, then these rules can generally be dispensed with. Most kids who face genuine challenges with reading will find the combination of text and a visual canvas to be preferable to something that is solely comprised of text. I have spent many years writing comics and graphic novels for Rubicon publishing in Oakville for a wide range of child and adolescent readers, and the successes of these series speak for themselves.

If, however, your intention is to teach comics and graphic novels to a class of academic students who may well read above grade level, you need to keep something important in mind. Many of these students—despite the fact that they might really enjoy comics—are likely to carry with them the same biases and the same prejudices about studying visual narrative in an academic context as their parents and, in some cases, your colleagues.

Actually, when I talk to teachers about comics and graphic novels at conferences, I get different reactions. Some of them teach in schools that strongly support their use, even among academically-minded students, and have librarians who routinely stock their shelves with the latest manga and western comics (I'm fortunate to teach in such a school). Others will say that they are limited by a budget that forces them to replace the texts that already line their bookroom shelves, and this story is, of course, not an unfamiliar one. Still others, however, are those who will walk into their school library with a Grade 4 class and quickly instruct students to avoid choosing comics when looking for a book to read. It's especially difficult to leverage comics with this group.

But despite all of this, the number one comment that I get from teachers who are reluctant to teach comics or graphic novels is

that they don't feel entirely comfortable with the form. If you think about it, this makes perfect sense. They might not have grown up reading comics. They almost certainly never studied them in high school. And, unless they had a very progressive prof in university who had them reading *Maus* or *Watchmen*, they've never had any academic training with the form. So, for those of you who want to teach comics and graphic novels to academic students, there are—as we said at the outset—three simple rules that need to be followed:

1. Students must be taught the history of visual narrative

When we teach students poetry or drama or the novel, we typically spend some time, intentionally or not, teaching them about the history of the form. Poetry comes from an oral tradition, and so we make the point that rhythm, rhyme, and repetition—structural features commonly found in poetry—are important in helping to commit something to memory. When students study a particular poetic form or the works of an individual poet, they recognize that the tradition of poetry is important, even if they don't always get the poetry.

But what is the tradition of visual narrative that we teach them before launching into a study of *Persepolis* or *Maus* or *Aya of Yop City*? Are we taking them back 20,000-35,000 years ago to the Cave of Altamira in Spain, where ancient peoples described the world around them as cave art? Are we showing them ancient Egyptian wall paintings or the Bayeux Tapestry? What about the Stations of the Cross or Hogarth's series of paintings that tell the story of "A Rake's Progress"?

Visual narrative has a long and storied tradition, and to avoid its discussion is to suggest to students that both the form and its tradition are not important.

2. Students must be taught a vocabulary relevant to the study of comics

There is little point in having students study and then write about comics and graphic novels without giving them the vocabulary to do so. In the absence of this vocabulary, students will focus on those features that they find in forms they are used to, like short fiction or the novel. Such features include major themes, setting, and characterization.

There is nothing wrong with examining these things, but understanding how they work in a graphic novel requires that students properly write about the form they are investigating. They have to understand what a gutter is, what encapsulation means, and how panel sequences can achieve closure. They should be comfortable with filmic language as well, understanding the difference between how an establishing shot can give the reader/viewer a clear sense of place and how a pullback might do this in a different kind of way. Knowing this vocabulary isn't just useful—it's empowering for anyone wanting to talk about comics in a way that does justice to the form.

3. Students must apply what they learn from the form to make them better writers

We often tell students that when they read good literature—whether a novel, a poem, or a play—that this will help them improve as writers. The same is true of comics and graphic novels, especially when we leverage their formal characteristics. Visual brainstorming, visible thinking, and sketchnoting are names that we collectively assign to the relatively new activity of having students articulate their thoughts and ideas using words, symbols, and images. Such an exercise can be more powerful than a traditional prewriting activity like freewriting because it allows students to do more than write.

By showing students how graphic novelists combine words and images to make meaning, we can encourage those same students to articulate their thinking in a way that doesn't constrain them to think in linear terms. There will be plenty of time to have students write an essay or book report. For now, why not have them express their thoughts in a way that

makes the most sense to them?

When my students engage in visual brainstorming, visible thinking, and sketchnoting, they will often do so for many more hours than class time affords them, even without the motivation of a grade being on the table. And they can produce some amazing work as a result.

* * * * *

So, the next time you're debating whether or not you should teach students a comic or graphic novel in your classroom, consider these three simple rules and incorporate them into your teaching. The result will be a unit that doesn't just engage students with a work they find accessible; it will empower them to understand a unique artistic and literary tradition, build their vocabulary, and empower them to see the thinking and writing process in a new way. ■





Derrick Grose

Year of the Learning Commons

CELEBRATING THE TREND TOWARDS THE REALIZATION OF THE VISION OF THE LEARNING COMMONS

What makes the school library learning commons a special place in a school? Traditionally, it has been distinguished from other classrooms by its book collection, audio-visual resources and other technology. Increasingly, it is being recognized as a place for asking questions, a place for differentiation, a place for research, a place for creation, a place for collaboration and a place for celebration. Despite its special qualities, to be most effective, it must connect with the rest of the school and the rest of the community.

In many respects, for decades Ontario's school libraries have embraced values that are central to the concept of the learning commons. *Partners in Action: The Library Resource Centre in the School Curriculum* (1982) and *Information Studies Kindergarten to Grade 12* (1998) focused on collaboration, project-based learning and the inquiry process. Although the resources in the "Library Resource Centre" may have evolved considerably, many of the underlying best practices

remain intact in the "School Library Learning Commons."

In 2010 the Ontario School Library Association published *Together for Learning*, (www.togetherforlearning.ca), the document that presents the vision for the school library learning commons in education in Ontario. Some schools responded by moving or replacing the furniture, or introducing new technology. Over time, there has been a growing recognition that changes in physical spaces and the acquisition of new technology, while potentially beneficial, are less important than the vision that guides the use of the space and the technology. It has been recognized that collections are important, but the way people facilitate learning is more important. Schools have been experimenting and exploring the meaning of "the learning commons" and developing practical definitions of the vision. In 2014, building on the work done by teacher-librarians and school librarians across Canada (with substantial input from members of the OSLA), the Canadian

Library Association published *Leading Learning: Standards of Practice for School Library Learning Commons in Canada* (<http://clatoolbox.ca/casl/slic/llsop.pdf>). This publication outlines and illustrates a continuum showing how school library learning commons are progressing, helping schools to realize the vision of learning as an on-going, individualized, inquiry-based and collaborative process of knowledge creation.

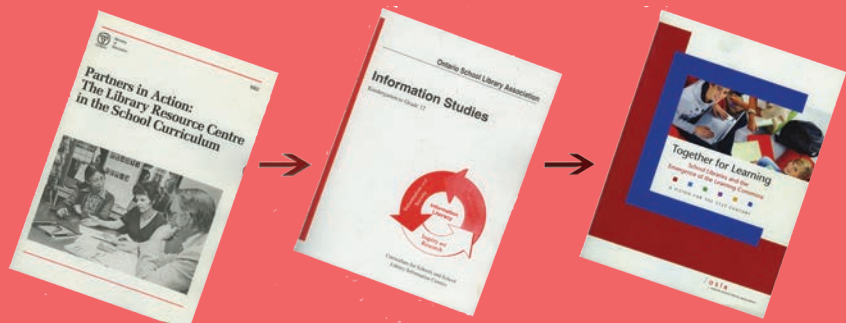
Two of the leaders in the campaign to promote this vision, across North America and around the world, Dr. David Loertscher and Carol Koechlin, have invited members of the school library learning commons community to celebrate the promotion of a future-oriented approach to education by participating in "The Year of the Learning Commons" that will extend from April 2015 to May 2016.

Their approach is consistent with the values of the school library learning commons. They suggest celebrating individual journeys towards the

realization of the vision by sharing answers to questions about how the learning commons can promote participatory learning and school improvement. Their google docs site (<https://sites.google.com/site/yearofthelearningcommons/home>) encourages supporters of the vision to reach out, share their ideas, and promote conversations; they suggest writing an article or a blog, tweeting (#yearlc), posting tours of learning commons on YouTube, presenting at local, provincial, or national conferences, having students create presentations for local, provincial or national audiences and inviting community members to tour learning commons to see what a difference they have made in schools (or, where the learning commons is still in the planning stage, inviting participation in the conversion).

The sharing of the learning commons vision beyond the students and teachers who are regular clients is of particular importance. For this celebration to be a real party, our administrators, our trustees and our M.P.P.'s must understand why they should be celebrating "The Year of the Learning Commons." Their support is necessary to ensure adequate staffing and resources for school library learning commons across the province. We know why the library learning commons can be a special place in a school. We must share that knowledge. ■

The Year of the Learning Commons google docs site, (<https://sites.google.com/site/yearofthelearningcommons/home>), encourages supporters of the vision to reach out, share their ideas, and promote conversations.



Ontario's school libraries have embraced values that are central to the concept of the learning commons for decades. *Partners in Action: The Library Resource Centre in the School Curriculum* (1982) and *Information Studies Kindergarten to Grade 12* (1998) focused on collaboration, project-based learning and the inquiry process.

The standards in *Achieving Information Literacy* (2003) emphasized resources while *Leading Learning* (2014) emphasizes practices.



Using Google and Twitter Searches as Social Justice Curriculum

Diana Maliszewski



Edgar Allan Poe said it best: There are few cases in which mere popularity should be considered a proper test of merit; but the case of song-writing is, I think, one of the few.

As teachers, we should be less concerned about the value of popularity as a test of merit than we are with its value as a tool that can lead to insightful discussions and critical thinking. When educators consider trends, they may not realize that a universe of possibilities for equity education, media literacy and critical thinking lies just at their fingertips – by examining social media outlets, specifically Google search trends and Twitter hashtag trends.

Mark Carbone, the CIO of the Waterloo Region District School Board says, “The opportunity for students to use social media in responsible ways to raise awareness of issues and challenges is endless. This goes far beyond a simple retweet or clicking of a ‘like’ button on Facebook. One of the most powerful benefits of technology is the ability to connect people through a variety of mediums without concern for time or geography. Imagine the deep learning that occurs through project based learning (PBL) or inquiry based approaches.”

Students should be learning that numbers of retweets and

Facebooks likes are like the correct answer to a math problem: they are not worth much unless we show the work that led to the answer. An examination of popular trends can be a hook to lead to substantial questioning, engagement and learning.

Google Searches

Long ago, many search engines competed for people’s attention. Now, “google” is a legitimate verb that many understand. Google collects the data from searches, and results can be seen at <https://www.google.ca/trends/>. Google can even complete our thoughts as we search – or so it seems. Some organizations and individuals have taken a bold new approach to viewing search results and those “auto-complete” responses.

Read <http://www.unwomen.org/en/news/stories/2013/10/women-should-ads> - in this campaign for the United Nations, Google search results for certain phrases such as “women should”, “women need to”, and “women cannot” were collected and used to illustrate that sexism is still alive and well, despite all the gains achieved.

Denise Colby, a teacher at the Jean Augustine Girls Leadership Academy in the Toronto District School board, used this article as part of a discussion with her junior-division students. The educational value of the examination of the trends is not in the

rankings themselves but in the questions they provoke and the analysis of their significance.

Twitter Trends

The day I started to write this article, #McKinney exploded on Twitter. The video of a police officer in Texas drawing his weapon on a group of black teens due to an incident at a pool alarmed and distressed many who followed the tweets that used this hashtag. Hashtags are used on Twitter, a microblogging social media site, to help track the popularity of certain topics and make it easier to follow and archive. It is also a valuable way to examine multiple points of view about current events. Twitter hashtags are an important way of understanding current events outside of the mainstream media portrayals. It is a version of crowd-sourced news and commentary combined. Often, some of these Twitter trends will in turn impact regular news outlets, as newspapers and magazines will share some of the most quotable images and phrases that arise from these tweets.

Because of the immediacy of trending hashtags, it may be challenging for teachers, especially in the elementary panel, to preview content to ensure that it is suitable for younger audiences. However, this shouldn't prevent educators from using Twitter and hashtag trends for teaching.

Alana Guinane, a middle school teacher with the Toronto District School Board says that she uses Twitter primarily as a communication tool with her students and parents but plans to add a more analytical approach this coming year. "Students learned that Twitter is a public forum, not a space for one on one conversation. They learned about safety considerations (what to include in account set-up and personal details) and how each account is used for a specific purpose. What one might tweet from a personal account might be different from a business account. We addressed the issues of the messages you are sending through your Twitter feed—directly through tweets and retweets and indirectly through who you follow and what you favourite (since these are public). Students practiced these skills through their personal use of Twitter (following me for classroom related posts) and through

their "company" pinball Twitter accounts –used strictly to promote their companies and the project." [Editor's Note: see #PinballProject for information on their multidisciplinary STEM project they were involved in making full sized working pinball machines. The project included math, science, design and technology (including coding) as well as media literacy, geography and learning skills].

If educators need assistance on how to analyze hashtags or leverage them for meaningful teaching in the classroom, an inspiration article by Laurie Townshend and Michelle Solomon can be found on the Association for Media Literacy's website: <http://www.aml.ca/memphis-missouri-voices-echoes/>. The weekly #K12Media chats on Twitter often delve into teacher-focused discussions on the most current issues as reflected in hashtags and on the news.

Hashtags themselves can become powerful tools for communication. It can be challenging to keep the integrity of hashtags, considering any Twitter user can try to boost their views by including a popular hashtag in their tweet. The founders of the #EduColor hashtag have taken an innovative and intelligent approach to hashtag abusers.

On their website, www.educolor.org/guidelines-for-using-the-educolor-hashtag, it says "Please remember that, similar to #BlackLivesMatter and #YouOKSis, #EduColor was created both as a resource for intersectional discussions of race and education and as a safe space. Therefore, even though hashtags are open to the public, those of us who started it reserve the right to push back and challenge tweets we see as leading the discussion astray (see "derailing" for more details)." [Editor's Note: Thanks to Jose Vilson for permission to quote this resource in the article.]

The examination of Twitter hashtags invites not only a discussion of current issues relating to social justice but also deep critical thinking about how social media can be manipulated. Students will have the opportunity to test information for relevance, credibility and bias and to recognize the strengths and weaknesses of the medium as a tool.

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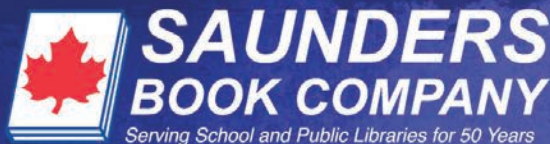
Going Beyond the Screen

Becoming aware is a great start, but how can we inspire our students, beyond “clicktivism” (defined as “the use of social media and other online methods to promote a cause” by the Oxford English Dictionary)?

Michael Mendoza, a teacher with the Toronto District School Board, was one of the co-facilitators for Taking IT Global at his school. As Michael

describes it, “Students involved primarily participated in problem based learning. They investigated social problems like poverty and access to education. Social media was a perfect avenue for them [to promote their causes]. It is a powerful thing for students to not only want to share their work but to share their work with their own peers and essentially teaching teachers is so powerful.” Monitoring trends in Google searches and Twitter can help teachers and students to be aware of the latest social

justice events and issues. But that is only the first step. Having identified the trends, teachers and students must explore the significance of those trends. Perhaps Mr. Poe was correct in suggesting that song-writing is one of the few fields where mere popularity is a proper test of merit. And, even in that case, a teacher should be happy to hear a student questioning the famous author’s assertion. ■



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Allison Hall

In September 2014, I found myself in the fortunate position of opening a new school library. After almost a year, I finally found the time to breathe and reflect on my progress. I had books in place, both the kinds the kids love and the ones necessary to support the curriculum, the technology was there, and the furniture was accessible, transportable and comfortable. Students were visiting the space daily to work on projects, collaborate with each other using technology and learn through inquiry. Still I wondered, what makes a library learning commons extraordinary? What is the next step I can take in the evolution of my learning space? As I began my research, one word kept popping up over and over again, 'makerspace'. I was intrigued. What was it all about?

According to the website, *Thinkers and Tinkers*, the makerspace arose as part of the Maker Movement, "a grass roots drive that encourages people of all ages to explore the DIY culture of

fixing, improving and creating." In the school library setting, a makerspace is a place where students can collaborate, explore, and learn, through building and creating new things using problem solving and inquiry skills in the process. It is constructivist learning at its best. Students can draw on specific interests with each project they undertake. A library makerspace is flexible; it can be anything you want it to be. There is no set formula or design and you do not need expensive equipment to get started.

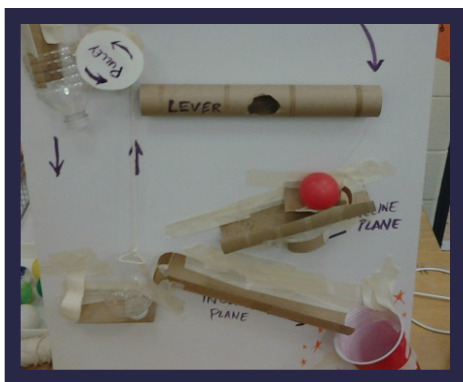
Diana Rendina, media specialist/school librarian at Stewart Middle Magnet School in Tampa, FL., decided to transform her library into a place where students would become excited about learning. She began simply with boxes of K'nex and Lego but quickly her makerspace grew to include a littleBits Pro Library and a Lego wall. Diana believes that "a makerspace can be anything from a repurposed book cart filled with arts and crafts supplies to

a table in a corner set out with LEGOs to a full blown fab lab with 3D printers, laser cutters, and hand tools. No two school makerspaces are exactly alike, nor should they be."

The makerspace is a place of inquiry, where students have the freedom to decide what they want to do and have the opportunity to collaborate with others through the project process. Laura Fleming, a Library Media Specialist for grades 9-12 at New Milford High School in New Jersey, does not believe that students should be directed as to what they create or tied down to lessons and curriculum:

A cornerstone of my library makerspace is that it is a unique learning environment that is focused almost solely on informal learning. What does this mean exactly? It means that my students are not told that they have to visit the makerspace, nor are they told what they have to do when they

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get there, and almost always, they are not assessed on the skills or knowledge they gain in this space. This approach has ensured that we have a learning environment that is self-directed, highly personalized, student-driven, and one that require little to no direct teacher facilitation. This does not mean however that I am not involved. With careful planning, I ensure that my makerspace practically runs itself and from behind the scenes, I carefully craft learning experiences that our students can benefit greatly from.

The makerspace at Laura's high school includes a 3D print station, molecular gastronomy kits and wearable technology. She believes in the importance of students sharing their creations with others. In 2014, her students attended a Virtual Maker Faire put on by the White House.

After reading so much about library makerspaces, I really wanted to experience one for myself. My instructional technology resource

teacher suggested I contact Kristofor Schuermann, the teacher-librarian from Champlain Trail Public School in Mississauga. From the moment I walked into his library, I was amazed at how much was going on in such a small space. His actual makerspace area consists of a series of round tables at different heights. This is where some of his students were working on music composition and designing long houses using Minecraft. Behind the tables, examples of Rube Goldberg Machines (an invention that performs a simple task through a chain reaction) are on display, put together by a grade one/two class, using chart paper, toilet paper rolls, paper fasteners, water bottles and lots and lots of tape. Towards the back of the library two mobile whiteboards, with wood in place of the usual smooth whiteboard surface, separate the space. One holds a littleBits Pro Library, used by students to prototype and create with electronics. The other is patiently awaiting the addition of Lego base plates to be transformed into a portable Lego wall. The corner of the library houses a complete digital studio and the laptop lab is in an adjoining room at the back of the library, where students work

on coding using code.org and Scratch.

Kristofor runs the Caped Crusaders Comic Book Club, a group he describes as "a visual literacy club aimed at promoting literacy, supporting classroom language instruction, and the creative use of innovative instructional technology as it connects to literacy." The members create podcasts, blogs, and digital videos among other projects. He is the founder of the GoBots, a STEM grade 4 robotics team and he initiated the MegaBrights, a girls' educational technology team.

Kristofor's future plans for the makerspace include vertical televisions to showcase student work and audio domes with speakers that will serve to direct sound from the televisions to students while limiting noise disruptions to the surrounding area. His advice for teacher-librarians planning a makerspace? "When beginning, it is profoundly important to have a strong team of the 'willing' rather than the perfect instructional technology. You have to be confident in your ability and have a community that can support you in one or all MakerSpace areas of



inquiry. It is simple to purchase robot kits, but they are useless if you can't support their use."

In September, Kristofor will be moving on to Aylesbury Public School to open a brand new library.

I was fortunate to also have the opportunity of visiting Erica Armstrong's tech lounge at Fairlawn Public School in Brampton. Erica teaches both core French and technology planning time classes. Her space is comfortable and inviting. Students sit on couches, wobble stools and beanbags as they work on coding, build Minecraft projects and create news reports in front of a brightly lit green screen. The students have access to both MacBooks and desktops where they can edit their footage and add backgrounds. A giant robotics table lies in the middle of the space. Erica's

students are free to decide what they would like to explore each time they enter the tech lounge. She teaches all of her students coding in the fall because it serves as a great base for many of the other projects available to them.

The makerspace in my own library is slowly taking shape. Students are designing homes for our pet snails using Lego, making stop motion movies, and creating digital stories. We have purchased Minecraft Edu accounts and have been designing school logos and making scale plans for our gardening project. The students are learning how to code and will experiment with our Lego MindStorms robots next month.

Laura Fleming writes, "Although informal, our makerspace has had a real impact on so many of our students. I have seen students choose their college majors or career choices based on

the experiences they have had in our space." How will the makerspace at my library impact student learning? Only time will tell. What I do know is that when I look around, I see students who are engaged, asking questions, seeking answers and completely excited about creating something new. ■

RESOURCES

Diana Rendina's Blog:
renovatedlearning.com

Laura Fleming's Blog:
worlds-of-learning.com

Kristofor Schuermann on Twitter:
@MrSchuermann

Erica Armstrong on Twitter:
@ms_e_a

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