

Public Libraries Interest Group (PLIG) Meeting Minutes

Thursday, February 24th, 2021 | 2:30-4:00PM | Zoom

Chair: Adam Farrell, Co-Chair (NWPL)

Present: Gillian Guilmant- Smith, Co-Chair (VPL), Vicky Woo, Recording Secretary (VPL), Richard Kuehle (BPL), Deb Thomas (retired from PBL), Alexis Greenwood (VPL), Diane Cruickshank, Aviva Rotstein, Elizabeth Tracy, Stephanie ?, Deb Hutchison, Gillian Bassett (BPL), Kery Martin (FVRL), Katie ?, Tara Thompson (ORL), Zara ?, Sue Kim (VIRL), Balbir Gill, Peter Maguire (VIRL), Ravi Basi (SL), Kerry Martin (FVRL)

Recorder: Vicky Woo, Recording Secretary (VPL)

Absent: William Dereume (VPL)

Meeting begins at 2:30PM

1. **Welcome and Introductions**
2. **Meeting Agenda** - Approved
3. **Guest speaker section: Journal Club Format co-facilitated by Richard Kuehle and Deb Thomas. Topic: Anti-Racism Training for Public Library Staff.**

Adam's thematic notes from one of the breakout room:

(Sheperd 2019) Cultural awareness workshops: limitations and practical consequences. BMC Medical Education, 2019.

<https://bmcmmededuc.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/s12909-018-1450-5>

- Disagree with author
- Author suggests that because there is not enough evidence we should not be doing this. We have to keep trying. This is how we grow.
- Empathy approach (Kiros Empathy Exercise www.kairosblanketexercise.org). This can help shift things internally.

(Galloway 2019) Turning the page: Thunder Bay's library a leader among civic bodies in healing a racial divide. Globe and Mail, 20 June 2019.

<https://www.theglobeandmail.com/canada/article-turning-the-page-thunder-bays-library-a-leader-among-civic-bodies-in/>

- About practice, not theory. This is where the real learning happens - theory in action. It's not perfect and mistakes will happen. We learn from mistakes. Teachable moments to improve. This is not an exact science.

- Cross institutional approach, sharing expertise, causing primal shifts in communities.
- We have to be in the mess to understand the mess and find routes forward.

Other notes from discussions:

- How do we apply what we learn, talk about, experience, into practice? There is a disconnect between the training and theory and about how to apply the training and change the culture?
- How do we disable the biases that we come into readings, workshops, training? Using common experiences and language to allow us to connect and move forward.
- Didn't have to spend a huge amount of money. Create partnerships with the community to put best practices into action.
- Lack of reflection of diversity in library staffing at some public libraries. The library can be seen as a place of whiteness. What education requirements are barriers to diversifying the library workforce? We need to evaluate recruitment and how do we make the welcoming workplace truly welcoming?
- White fragility
- Literacy can be a barrier and an opportunity. What is the role of the library?
- We all have to participate. It is not just with on off training. It needs leadership, policy, front line staff, etc. to be involved.
- It is building relationships. We need to spend the time to participate and build relationships. We need to be asking the communities that are impacted.
- Change the question slightly to Which approach to anti-racism *learning* vs teaching do you think would be most effective?

4. Review of meeting minutes from October 2020. The following action items are outstanding:

October 2020 minutes

Approved

BCLA Perspectives - "Day in the Life" Column

The "Day in the Life" column is currently suspended until further notice.

- Action - Gillian/ Adam will connect with the *BCLA Perspectives* editors to consider the value of the column, audience, and who might take this on.

Update on the work-plan

Gillian and Vicky will create a new survey for our members to take on what they hope to learn/gain from the group. With the results, we will start a new work plan.

- Action - Gillian & Vicky will meet to create a survey.

5. Review and approval of PLIG updated Terms of Reference

Terms of Reference may need another review before we move forward and submit to BCLA.

➤ Action

- Adam to check with Anette of BCLA re: budget
- Executive will review and provide more information on how do we establish quorum

6. Student Rep Update (Annie Macanulty, UBC iSchool)

The UBC Chapter of the BCLA had a meeting on Friday, 12 Feb 2021 to go over some active projects.

During Freedom to Read Week (21-27 Feb) we are planning to send out some informational emails to our mailing list about challenged books in BC and Canada, such as authors Robin Stevenson and Ivan Coyote.

The club has been expanding to include more members of the Young Adults and Children's Section (YAACS) which started a new reading group this week.

We are interested in compiling a list of librarians who would be comfortable with being contacted by students if they have questions about the field. The first step of this project is to establish a way of securely storing this information, though, which has not yet been finalised. The club executive would be responsible for mediating contact with students (i.e. the list would not be public). However we also know that librarians are working very hard right now so this is still very much a work in progress.

The PLIG Executive would like to thank Annie Macanulty for her time and dedication as the UBC Student Representative. Annie is graduating from the iSchool so PLIG is seeking a new student representative from the UBC iSchool. Congratulations Annie!

7. Roundtable

Adam - NWPL

- NWPL open to the public since August 2020. Looking into reintroducing loadable devices in March, planning the Lynda/LinkedIn Learning migration, and looking into expanding the opening hours for the public in the near future.
- Initiatives - revamps on website in response to pandemic, making eResource more accessible. Reorganizing navigation to be more user friendly
- Signage project - huge boost to New West as their walls used to be bare.

Richard - BPL

- BPL has a new public staffing model; clericals do some information services. More shifts as clerical to help patrons with basic information services.

- Librarians get more time to work more on projects.
- BPL has revamped their website - check it out: www.bpl.ca

Gillian - VPL

- VPL will be moving towards opening all branches to match as close as possible to pre-pandemic hours
- Moving to Kensington branch (Kingsway & Knight) and excited to get to work with the community.

Alexis - VPL

- Moved from Champlain/Collingwood branch head, and recently became Mount Pleasant branch head, Mount Pleasant library is part of the Mount Pleasant community center. Lots of security challenges.

Tara - ORL

- ORL in phase 3 of reopening library since July/August. No in person programming, lots of online programming.
- ORL had two FT Branch head positions opened, they may be filled in the near future.
- The City of Westbank is building their first city hall and Westbank library will build a new library in the same building.
- Thinking about how the library can support the Public Health office and immunization roll out and shared some sites with us:
 - <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/safety/emergency-preparedness-response-recovery/covid-19-provincial-support/vaccines>
 - <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/safety/emergency-preparedness-response-recovery/covid-19-provincial-support/vaccines#register>
 - <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/safety/emergency-preparedness-response-recovery/covid-19-provincial-support/vaccines#immunization-bc>

Deb - is active with the CFLA -FCAB Intellectual Freedom Committee. A number of incidents have arisen recently challenging books and speakers that the challengers believe promote ideas and beliefs that they may be harmful to others. Libraries continue to defend representing a wide range of views on topics, including those that are controversial, with the intent of giving patrons the opportunity to be informed on a wide range of ideas and opinions so that they may form their own views on various topics.

8. Next Meeting

Thursday May 20 - 2:30PM - 4:00PM

Zoom details to follow

Meeting adjourned at 4:03PM