ALISS *Quarterly*

Association of Librarians and Information professionals in the Social Sciences

Broadening access online

Suffrage interviews; VE Day 75 at the Berkshire Record Office;
The Museum of English Rural Life and University of Reading
Special Collections

Liberating the library

Brunel University London

Disability

Digital Accessibility Maturity;
Disability, Higher Education Teaching and Learning Bibliography

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Editorial

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Editorial

Welcome to the latest edition of ALISS Quarterly. It has been published by ALISS (Association of Librarians and Information Professionals in the Social Sciences).

At the moment many libraries remain partially open and staff are working remotely. The first section focuses on ways in which archives and special collections have innovated during this period to offer services and teaching sessions online. Some of the inspiration came from the ARA South East 'Engagement Outside the Search room' making a connection with connections seminar which was held on 28 July 2020. It gave inspiring insight into how their members had taken a bad situation and used it as an opportunity to engage with new audiences in new ways. Some of the papers and slides can be viewed on the website.

https://www.archives.org.uk/about/nations-and-regions/ara-south-east/news-aamp-events.html

Papers in this issue based on the presentations are:

Rosie Everitt and Imogen Burrell, Berkshire Record Office: 'Remote exhibitions: VE Day 75 at Berkshire Record Office'.

Adam Lines, University of Reading Special Collections: 'Please, don't touch': how do we offer teaching with collections opportunities in a virtual setting?'

We have also added the work of the LSE Library in digitising and making available the marvellous Suffrage interviews of Brian Harrison

A different kind of much needed innovation is the Liberating the library campaign of Brunel University which is described in the second section and offers tips and inspiration to us all.

The final section contains materials on disability. The first article is from AbilityNet which describes their recent work on website accessibility. Their website is also a rich source of information. Recently they have made available free webinars on a range of issues relating to technology and disability. A large number of these recordings can be viewed from here https://abilitynet.org.uk/news-blogs/abilitynet-live-free-events-about-technology-and-disability . I can particularly recommend the session on how technology can help with dyslexia which I found particularly insightful

https://abilitynet.org.uk/webinars/how-technology-can-help-people-dyslexia

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We hope you enjoy the issue.

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2

The Suffrage Interviews: widening access through the web

Andy Jack and Emma Pizarro, LSE Library

Introduction

One of our objectives at LSE Library is to increase access to and engagement with our unique and distinctive collections. An essential part of this is a commitment to developing digital services and providing online access to material where possible. The closure of our archives and special collections reading room in March, and ongoing uncertainty about when we would be able to re-open, meant we were increasingly concerned with how we could continue to support our researchers and provide new means of accessing our collections remotely. With this in mind, we embarked on a project to make audio recordings from one of our most popular suffrage collections available online. The recent launch of our new 'The Suffrage Interviews' webpage showcases the collection and marks a significant addition to our online material relating to the suffrage movement, women's rights and equality.

https://www.lse.ac.uk/library/collection-highlights/the-suffrage-interviews

Background to the collection

The collection – 'Oral Evidence on the Suffragette and Suffragist Movements: the Brian Harrison interviews' (8SUF) – consists of over 200 audio recordings of oral history interviews with surviving suffrage campaigners, their relatives and employees. The interviews were conducted in the mid to late 1970s, through a project led by the historian Brian Harrison, and the recordings have been part of the Women's Library collections since 1981. Harrison's project was financed by the Social Science Research Council and the interviews were used as background material for his book *Prudent Revolutionaries: Portraits of British Feminists between the Wars* (1987). The interviews are a key source for British first wave feminism, focussing primarily on the suffrage movement but also discussing interviewees' involvement in women's organisations and activism after full enfranchisement in 1928, in areas of trade unionism and international peace, as well as family life, women's employment, and birth control. Many of those interviewed also provide their perspective on rifts within the movement and offer insight into the personalities of notable campaigners, such as the Pankhursts, Millicent Garrett Fawcett, Flora Drummond and Teresa Billington-Greig.

A collection very much in demand

Based on the frequency of requests for access to material from this collection, both from researchers in the reading room and via email enquiries, a desire to make this collection openly accessible on the web pre-dated the coronavirus lockdown. In common with many other libraries and archives, the pause in our regular services forced by the pandemic has sharpened our resolve to make more material available online whilst also providing us with additional time to focus on such projects, which we might not have had under normal circumstances. The abrupt ending of onsite access to our collections shifted the possibility of online access to the suffrage interviews from desirable, but perhaps a luxury, to being a more pressing priority.

Permissions, copyright and managing risk

During the initial stage of the project it was necessary to check what permissions we had for use of the recordings and consider any potential copyright issues around providing access online. Harrison gave his copyright in the recordings to the Women's Library when the tapes were deposited and permission for general research use was sought and obtained from most of the interviewees in 1982, though some did not explicitly consent. Access restrictions were therefore placed on parts of the collection until 2008 when, following advice from the Oral History Society and sector specialists, the decision was made to release all of the interviews for use, apart from a small number whose contents were identified as sensitive and which remain closed under the Data Protection Act. Although we assessed the risk to be low in publishing the recordings online, we stipulated at this point that the interviews would be accompanied by both a rights statement and a take-down notice should there be any objection from rightsholders.

Challenges to overcome. Opportunities to seize

Implementing this project presented some challenges we had anticipated, but also some issues unique to working from home. The recordings were originally deposited on reel-to-reel tape, but had been migrated to updated formats over the years, having most recently been digitised as WAV files between 2007 and 2008, with access copies made in MP3. An initial assessment of the audio files found that they were stored somewhat haphazardly across different folders and that over 100 MP3s (equating to 68 interviews) were missing. We wanted to be able to provide the exact same access online as in the reading room but knew that converting a large number of WAV files to MP3 would take considerably longer when working with the audio files in remote desktop.

We were also faced with the challenge of where to store 15GB of MP3 once we had all the files ready for upload and how best to present the interviews to researchers. Although we wanted to get the material online as quickly as possible – in which case a speedy solution would have been to use a file storage service such as DropBox or Drive – it was also essential that we create something that looked professional and was simple for people to access. Ideally, we would have ingested the files into our digital asset management system but they are not of a good enough quality to be suitable for long-term preservation in the DAMS – the recordings have been flagged for re-digitisation but with limited physical access to our collections and a reduced digitisation budget, it was clear we would need to work with the files we currently have and find an alternative place to host them. As anyone who has worked with digital material will appreciate, effectively articulating your requirements to IT colleagues outside of your department can be a challenge and we needed to remain fairly flexible with our expectations and open to trying out different suggestions. Working across teams within and beyond the Library also gave us the opportunity to connect with a range of colleagues, who utilised different skills and perspectives to achieve a common goal.

Building on experience to develop our approach

The Digital Library team had previous success creating a standalone website for our Charles Booth archive, but this option was not viable within the particular constraints

of this project. We quickly agreed that we already had a suitable front-end interface in the form of our Library website and that an existing web template, developed for our Collection highlight pages, could be used. These pages allow the Library's curators to tell the story of parts of our collections in thematic ways, and though we have never used them to deliver content directly, they are a proven, visually-appealing and structured way of expressing our collections. Trying to apply order to the recordings and considering ways to structure and categorise them gave us several questions to work through. An initial thought was to arrange the interviews by theme, to help people navigate the content, but after looking more closely at the archives catalogue we concluded that it would be difficult to do this in any meaningful way, due to the scope of topics often covered within a single interview. Ultimately, we opted to reflect the way the interviews are presented on the catalogue, with their number in the list corresponding to their file reference number. This system has the advantage of being proven and familiar and allowed us to avoid imposing any categorisation which might influence how the material is used or interpreted.

The gift that keeps on giving

This project demonstrates our efforts to widen access to our collections and improve the visibility of 'hidden' archives using the web. Now that the interviews are online and available for the public to listen to and download remotely, we anticipate that the material will reach new audiences and raise the profile of our collections, as well as being a very welcome resource for those already familiar with the recordings. We also have exciting plans to use the webpage as a teaching resource in outreach with schools and as potential source material for a Wikipedia edit-a-thon to increase the visibility of women and their experiences online. The longer the interviews are online the more visible they should become as Google indexes the pages and interprets the content. A fantastic eventual outcome would be for someone running a Google search for 'Margery Corbett-Ashby', or any one of the other suffrage campaigners featured in the recordings, to be led to our page and their interviews. New possibilities in terms of linked data have been created in that the recordings can now also be linked to from other sources such as Wikipedia and encyclopaedia entries, and to people's research through citations, making it easier for others to build on research and interpretation. Indeed, since advertising the collection's availability a colleague has swiftly exploited opportunities to make links in Wikidata thereby exposing them to the Google Knowledge Graph and digital assistants which should further increase the reach of the interviews. We have also heard from academics who intend to use the resource in their teaching, and a researcher who has said we have "literally saved" her PhD!

And finally

We are pleased to have been able to make this collection available and are looking forward to hearing how the interviews are used by people across the world. It was a complex project to undertake, particularly in the midst of a global pandemic, but it feels like a lockdown triumph to celebrate and be proud of having achieved.

'Remote exhibitions: VE Day 75 at Berkshire Record Office'.

Rosie Everitt and Imogen Burrell, Berkshire Record Office

The Berkshire Record Office (BRO) typically holds two exhibitions per year in our temporary exhibition space onsite. However, with the outbreak of the coronavirus pandemic in early 2020, our exhibition plans came to a sudden halt. We closed our doors to visitors, the nation went into lockdown, and instead we focused on creating our first standalone online exhibition[1] from our respective homes.

From November 2019, we had been in the process of planning a physical exhibition on the Second World War in Berkshire to coincide with the 75th anniversary of Victory in Europe (VE) Day in May 2020. The key aim of the exhibition titled, 'Through Their Eyes', was to provide an insight into Berkshire life during the war by sharing the personal stories of local people who lived through these significant national events.

By early March 2020, we had finalised our selection of the records for the seven cases; designed a case layout and created a list of items to be copied. When the indicators of lockdown began, we were unsure as to whether the exhibition could proceed and accepted that it was likely to be postponed until later in the year. Nonetheless, we took photographs on our own devices of some of the records during our last few days onsite with the intention of being able to research and draft some of the captions at home.

From 24 March 2020 the whole team was working from home, the archive was closed, and only two senior members of staff had access to the building to periodically check the collections. At this point many information professionals across the world began to feel the pressure to produce digital content to advocate for services remotely.

For BRO, the drive for online content came from Local Government. This filtered down from the Chief Executive to the County Archivist and finally to us, Imogen Burrell and Rosemary Everritt, Archivists at the BRO. With the 75th anniversary of VE Day fast approaching, and with many celebrations having been cancelled, there was a real push for digital content to mark the momentous day.

We discussed what we could practically do under the circumstances and what was realistic in the timeframe we were given which was approximately 12 days. We considered a series of blog posts on VE Day in Berkshire, a dedicated page on our website or a whole online exhibition on local celebrations. However, we felt that there was not enough VE Day content to warrant a whole exhibition and we did not want to discard the work already started for the 'Through Their Eyes' exhibition.

In the end, we decided to create the exhibition online using the content we had already produced. In light of the anniversary, we wanted to recreate the immersive experience of a physical exhibition and make it feel like a special event. This is not something that we felt could be easily achieved as a subsection of the BRO website. A further complication was that our main website is managed externally and only a few members of staff have access

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1   *The Berkshire Record Office (2020). Through Their Eyes: A Local Perspective on the Second World War. Retrieved from: https://throughtheireyesww2.com/*

to the backend. Therefore, we decided to create the exhibition on an external site that we could manage ourselves, quickly and efficiently.

When it came to choosing a platform for our online exhibition, we consulted our colleague Laura-Ioana Luca, Archives Assistant, as she had recently been studying digital content creation as part of her postgraduate course in Archives and Records Management. We assessed a range of platforms such as History Pin, Google Arts and Culture, Flickr, Instagram, Omeka and WordPress. We chose WordPress as members of our team were familiar with it and it had the flexibility that we required for us to create an immersive experience by displaying images and text in a variety of visually appealing ways.

During the selection process, we found the blog post, *'Don't get trampled in the online rush: Advice for making archive collections accessible during the shutdown'* by Jo Pugh[2] particularly helpful. This made the wide and varied options for digital content feel less overwhelming and it helped us to assess the merits of various platforms. Ultimately, what we took away from this piece was to focus on what we wanted to achieve with the exhibition and to ensure we were creating something meaningful and that we were not putting content online for the sake of it. We clarified our aim which was to create an easy and effective short-term online solution without the need for long-term maintenance.

The assembly of the online exhibition was a team effort. The County Archivist, Mark Stevens, took all of the photographs of documents on his regular visits to the office for building checks; Senior Archivist, Ivone Turnbull, edited the images at home using Adobe Photoshop; we wrote the content ourselves and together with Laura-Ioana, we constructed the exhibition on WordPress. This was all carried out using Microsoft Teams, WhatsApp, and email as our primary methods of communication.

The arrangement of the resulting website reflects the structure of the physical exhibition with each webpage containing the content that we had selected for each display cabinet. Visitors can view the exhibition in the order that it was originally intended, or they can select individual pages from the menu. We felt that this was important because online visitors may not view the exhibition in the way that they may have done so in person. With this in mind, we ensured that each page functioned as a stand-alone piece. The subsequent statistics seem to suggest that this was the case with viewing numbers varying significantly between pages.

Most pages include a 'case study' on a particular person or group of people within the records. This allowed us to highlight individual experiences using extracts from diaries and photograph albums. We were able to highlight these records using features that were available to us online that we could not have achieved in the physical exhibition. For example, we were able to display images in galleries, slideshows, and collages. We also had the advantage of being able to include more items than it would have been possible to physically fit in a display cabinet.

Importantly, this exhibition was more accessible to those who would not be able to visit us in person and including an international audience. Since launching the completed

2   Pugh, J. (2020). Don't get trampled in the online rush: Advice for making archive collections accessible during the shutdown. Retrieved from: https://blog.nationalarchives.gov.uk/dont-get-trampled-in-the-online-rush/

website on 4 May 2020 we have received 1,129 visitors and 5,587 views from 23 different countries[3]. When you compare this to the 127 visitors that we received in person at our last exhibition then it is apparent that we were able to reach a much wider audience online. The only promotion that we used was social media (Twitter and Facebook) and the BRO main website. However, we did feel that we lost the targeted local reach that would usually be achieved by promoting the exhibition with posters in local libraries and museums, a launch event with a speaker on a related topic and footfall from our visitors to our searchroom. We would have also lost visitors who do not have access to internet or social media with an online-only exhibition.

Under different circumstances in future, we will look to producing more online content alongside exhibitions onsite to capture both local and international audiences. We also feel that it is important to continue to provide the unique first-hand collections experience in person that may be lost through a screen. Providing both options would require greater lead-in time for producing exhibitions, but we feel that it is worth investing time in outreach initiatives which will be accessible to a wide audience.

We would also like to utilise more online specific features to maximise the benefits of the platform. For example, we could include audio visual elements, such as oral history readings or behind the scenes videos of a member of staff discussing items in the collection. We would also have liked to have included more interactive features, such as scrollable maps with plots of significant locations. To invite discussion, we did include a virtual 'memory book' page where visitors could contribute their own family memories and anecdotes in the comments. This was to recreate the 'memory book' that we were intending to leave out for visitors to sign at our physical exhibition. However, we did not receive any comments which was disappointing but perhaps this required more time investment to initialise the interaction by asking questions or providing some of our own stories and family anecdotes.

Overall, we feel that we were successful in achieving our aim of creating a short term, visually effective online exhibition. Our recommendation for other institutions in a similar position would be to establish a clear goal for your online content and to select a platform which will enable you to achieve this aim and consider any long-term maintenance that will be required. It is also important to take into account the resources that are available to staff members at home as we were reliant on our personal equipment and software.

For this project, our success was ultimately in our teamwork as we managed to work together efficiently and effectively under the challenges of the coronavirus pandemic to produce an online exhibition in a short timeframe. We would therefore like to take this opportunity to thank Mark Stevens, County Archivist, Ivone Turnbull, Senior Archivist, and Laura-Ioana Luca, Archive Assistant, for their hard work and support on this project.

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3   The Berkshire Record Office. (2020). Stats and Insights. Retrieved (28 September 2020) from: https://wordpress.com/stats/year/throughtheireyesww2.com

'Please, don't touch': how do we offer teaching with collections opportunities in a virtual setting?

Adam Lines (Reading Room Supervisor and Collections Academic Liaison Officer), The Museum of English Rural Life and University of Reading Special Collections

This article expands on a presentation I gave on 28th July 2020 at the ARA South East training meeting.

I will soon be hosting our first in-person, socially distanced, on-site teaching with collections session with a group of undergraduate English students from the University of Reading. Whilst we have developed ways to host both in-person and virtual sessions for the new academic year, this article will focus on the virtual aspects and provide an overview of the methods we have adopted.

We have seen an increase in demand for the use of the collections in University teaching, both internally and externally, over the last few years. My role was created in 2018 out of this demand. I dedicate my time facilitating teaching with collection sessions, while managing access to collections in our reading room. I implemented a system for logging and extracting data about the sessions, a feedback form to collect student experiences of engaging with collections, produced video guides to the collections and how to navigate them, and introduced a standardised introduction for students attending these sessions. To give an idea of our normal levels of activity, during the academic year 2018-19 (the last full academic year not impacted by COVID-19) we hosted 96 face-to-face teaching sessions across 28 modules, introducing the collections to 951 students.

The University of Reading suspended face-to-face teaching on 9th March 2020 which halted teaching with collections as we knew it. By the end of March, my colleagues and I on the library and archive team were working from home and maintaining a basic collections enquiry service by email without physical access to the collections. In July, we were granted greater access to our building which enabled us to start a copying service ahead of our reading room re-opening on 8th September. Incorporating safety measures has reduced our daily researcher capacity from 20 to 6, and reduced numbers of staff has resulted in our opening hours shortening and only opening for the 3 out of the 5 days we were open for before.

Our focus shifted during lockdown from providing physical access to collections to providing greater online access with a determination to continue in our efforts to make the collections more accessible to the public than before. We launched the new University of Reading Special Collections website (http://collections.reading.ac.uk/special-collections) alongside the new University-wide Museums and Collections portal (https://collections. reading.ac.uk), linking together the University's museums and collection in one place. During this time, we were also able to accelerate work on establishing a Virtual Reading Room (https://vrr.reading.ac.uk). This was launched on 22 September and provides an online platform for high-resolution, digitised versions of collections for registered users. This is fed with content from Asset Bank which we have been using for a couple of years as our digital asset management system. These developments, as I will explain, have been crucial to providing virtual teaching options.

I was faced with the question: how do we offer engaging and inclusive teaching with collections opportunities in a virtual setting? The student feedback I collected over the past two years demonstrates how physical interactions with collections are central to student enjoyment and fulfillment:

'Interesting to see examples in real life. Definitely something to come back to see more.'

'Enjoyable and insightful, good to see the printed documents firsthand as it gives a greater understanding.'

'It was a wonderful experience to be able to handle such delicate objects whilst learning at the same time.'

Stepping away from this felt daunting. Amid growing focus on student experience and the disruption COVID-19 had already caused, I worried about the quality of the collections experience we could offer virtually. I began to explore some of the pedagogy around virtual collections and seek out the experiences of students who have continued their collections access online. In her blog about her PhD on the digitisation of medieval manuscripts, Suzette van Haaren challenges the perceived loss of the 'aura' of the physical in the virtual manuscript environment. She states that the 'experience of seeing and dealing with the digital manuscript is a different experience than handling the original manuscript, but it is an experience nonetheless,' arguing that 'a digital facsimile can offer an experience of presence just as much as the parchment manuscript' (van Haaren, 2020). Kerr Houston expands on this and suggests that engaging with digitised material need not limit sensory experiences, arguing that interacting with an image is, as with physical collections, 'engaged, and sullied, and literally brought alive by our finger' (Houston, 2015).

One of the most useful articles I discovered was by Trevor Owens and Thomas Padilla which looks in detail at the shift from physical to digital collection sources and lists several key questions that researchers need to ask themselves when consulting digitised material. They consider that 'given the rapid pace of change around digital technology it is likely that historians are going to need to increasingly focus on establishing and sharing techniques for working with different kinds of digital sources' (Owens & Padilla, 2020). I collected these articles in a reading list and I am sharing it with our academic colleagues and students (other articles not quoted here are listed in the bibliography). My aim is to help students situate their experience of digitised collections in wider thoughts and practices and to see that their virtual experiences need not be limiting.

But how could I translate this into reality? After exploring several virtual methods of teaching with collections, I discovered a video by Aaron Pratt (a rare book specialist at the Harry Ransom Center, Texas) in which he explains his approach to sharing Special Collections with an overhead camera (Pratt, 2020). It is a detailed demonstration (almost 55 minutes) of the technology and software involved. I highly recommend watching his presentation if you are looking for ways to provide remote collections engagement. I began to see how we could incorporate a few of his solutions into our practice.

Pratt uses a smartphone as a document camera and feeds this through software that

allows him to switch seamlessly between multiple inputs. He uses Open Broadcasting Software (OBS) (https://obsproject.com/) which is a free piece of software enabling video recording and live streaming. Essentially, it allows you to use a webcam focused on you whilst mixing this with other inputs such as the view from another camera, or a slideshow, image or pre-recorded video. It enables you to remain visually present in a session whilst also presenting collection items. The software acts like a camera source and its output can be broadcasted via a range of video conferencing platforms.

Using a smartphone as a document camera can be achieved by using an app called EpochCam produced by Kinoni (https://www.kinoni.com/). The app transforms the phone into a HD webcam which can be mounted above collections by using a relatively cheap extension to an ordinary tripod. You need to install a driver on the PC you wish to connect it to so that it recognises the phone as a camera source, much like it would with a webcam. This can be achieved with a USB connection or wirelessly. Another option is to use another webcam instead.

Safe with the knowledge of what we could achieve technologically, we launched our formal teaching with collection offer on our website in July which details the options and resources we have available (https://collections.reading.ac.uk/learning/university-teaching-and-learning/options-and-resources-for-teaching-with-collections/). I will explain a few of the other key virtual options we have offered below.

The University of Reading assembled assisted recording rooms that could be booked by academics to film teaching content for use in their lectures and seminars. We decided to offer a similar setup but specifically related to collections. Academics can book a recording session with us in which they can record short videos of them presenting items from the collections and can demonstrate the physical aspects of items that are more difficult to appreciate on a screen. This is particularly useful for virtual sessions in which students are asked to analyse digitised collections. We are using a DSLR camera with a mic mounted on top, but a mobile phone would work just as well. These videos are uploaded onto Microsoft Stream which the University is using as its secure host site for teaching videos. Videos can be assigned to specific modules and embedded into Blackboard as learning content for specific modules and sessions. Alongside the option to record new video content, academics have access to a many collection video resources we have created over the years including guides to searching the database and introductions to the library and archive collections.

The collection items that students would ordinarily see in person during sessions on site are being digitised for virtual sessions. From the start, we set realistic expectations about the amount of material we could digitise in house. Files that contain up to 150-200 papers would be too much for us to accommodate with our resources, but a few select letters or reports from each file would be achievable. Academics have been very understanding and have been able to easily select key items, partly because of their familiarity with the material after years of teaching with it. The TIFF images are uploaded onto Asset Bank, our digital asset management system, and then fed into the Virtual Reading Room (permissions and copyright permitting) so they can be accessed by students and other researchers.

I am in discussions with academic colleagues whose groups are too large to visit our teaching space due to the new limits on capacity. Only the academic will be on site with the collections. We plan to use the OBS and EpochCam setup described earlier enabling us to show items live. Alongside this, students can access digitised versions of these items enabling close analysis exercises to be carried out as normal while maintaining an appreciation for the original, physical items. A large group of students can be closely examining the same item at once, something that would not have been possible before, and can continue doing so outside the parameters of the session. The latter is something they could only do by visiting the reading room on-site, something that will be more difficult for some students this year. Class sizes and time constraints mean that a visit to the collections store would be impractical. But, conducted virtually, a member of collections staff can broadcast live from inside the store and show students the context of the items they are viewing. Students can appreciate the size of the collections and gain insights into the processes that govern collections care and access.

This article was submitted a few days before we began supporting collections teaching this term, so these approaches are yet to be tried out in full. We will review these approaches as the Autumn term progresses. Aside from providing new opportunities for the ways in which we support teaching with collections, work on the above has provided opportunities for staff development. It has been a challenging time, especially with the changes in advice about the way teaching would be handled this term but rewarding too with plenty of opportunities to be innovative with our approach. Aside from the immediate impact this term, these developments should help in the long term in future proofing access to the collections.

I would be interested to hear from other institutions about their approaches and happy to share more information about our own. Please email me: a.lines@reading.ac.uk.

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Liberated Library at Brunel University London: An ongoing campaign

Samuel Piker, Brunel University London

Samuel Piker is the Academic Liaison Librarian for Computer Science, Design, Electrical and Electronic Engineering, and Mathematics at Brunel University London. He also provides liaison support to Liberated Library, a student-run campaign that began in 2017. Here he outlines the background to the campaign, the way it has developed over the last three years and how it is evolving in response to the George Floyd protests of Summer 2020.

From Rhodes to Colston: A Tale of Two Statues

A line of progress runs from the grounds of The University of Cape Town all the way to Bristol Docks. On 9 April 2015, a month-long campaign started by South African students culminated in the removal of the Cecil Rhodes statue, lifted from its plinth by crane and sent to storage. For the Rhodes Must Fall movement, this statue epitomised white supremacy and institutional racism (Chantiluke et al., 2018) in a country that is trying to move forward. The lived experiences of Black students (Kessi and Cornell, 2015) tell of degrading stereotypes, a sense of alienation and a lack of academic role models.

After decades of polite requests to remove a statue of the notorious slave trader Edward Colston, Bristol City Council was finally overtaken by events. The Black Lives Matter movement was reignited in Summer 2020 by the death of George Floyd sparking mass protests in cities across the United States and worldwide. On 8 June 2020 the Colston statue was torn down, dragged to the dockside and tipped into the water. It was lifted out three days later but it is destined to remain in a museum. A once-potent symbol, oppressive to many Bristolians (Olusoga, 2020), has been removed from its place of prominence.

Liberated Library at Brunel University

At the midway point between these two toppling events, in January 2017, my own institution embarked on a project called Liberated Library. It was inspired by a series of Students' Union campaigns such as 'Liberate my degree' or 'Why is My Curriculum White?' in Bristol, Leeds and London, part of a wider decolonising movement that can trace its roots back to Rhodes Must Fall. Decolonisation aims to challenge whiteness as "a phenomenon in which certain forms of knowledge are considered morally and intellectually superior to others." (El Magd, 2016), to make the academy a more welcoming and open place for people across the spectrum of race, gender, sexual orientation, and disability.

In a move that is very characteristic of Brunel, the Students' Union chose to collaborate on their campaign with our Student Success Project (SSP), a branch of the Vice Chancellor's office. Like many of its counterparts in other Universities, the Brunel SSP was set up to tackle the attainment gap experienced by Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) students, reflected in lower grades, rates of retention and progression to postgraduate degrees (HEFCE, 2017). This meant that Liberated Library had the backing of the students, the blessing of the directorate, and a books budget from the outset.

As well as being the Librarian for a group of Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) departments, my functional role is supporting specific groups such as international students and users of the Disability & Dyslexia Service. As this made me a natural fit to be the point of contact from the library side, I met with the SSP lead and their student intern in January 2017 to plan the campaign. The overall aim was to bring more BAME, female, LGBTQ+ and disabled authors into the collection, based on student recommendations. We launched in February 2017 with a week of themed displays to showcase some of our existing relevant material, using a display stall staffed by our Library Customer Champions and student reps. Book suggestions were gathered throughout that February using paper and online forms, leading to a total of 44 new purchases (Brunel SSP, 2018), while the Students' Union and SSP ran a series of author events and creative activities to raise awareness.

The positive reception to Liberated Library encouraged us to run it again over the next two academic years. I published an article during the third campaign (Piker, 2019), which gives a detailed account of how the project was run and deals with some of the challenges of making it relevant to STEM subjects. Over the three years, we purchased 137 books from student suggestions and by the end of the academic year in 2019 this selection had a total of 396 borrowing instances.

The real pleasure came in seeing suggestions for titles we would never have thought of, or even heard of, and knowing that our users were engaging with the collection on a personal level.

The impact of Liberated Library

During the 2019 – 2020 academic year we decided to focus on showcasing the books already purchased, assembling them together in a display shelf along with some posters of author profiles. The SSP was also keen to do some analysis on what kind of users had borrowed the Liberated Library purchases and get some feedback from them. Our Systems team worked out what user details the library could hand over without breaching data privacy: passing on a basic list of names and student ID numbers was okay, without any details of which books had been borrowed. In the end the national lockdown and other internal developments disrupted any further work on user analysis.

Over the last three years I have felt this project impact on my own collection development practise, particularly where I have book funds to use at my own discretion. I find I pay more attention to, and actively seek out, any media coverage of BAME or female scientists and engineers, living or dead, which I then use to hunt down any books authored by or about them.

Summer 2020…

The suggestion forms for Liberated Library asked people to state their preference for print or online format, but everyone opted for the former. This was fine, because it felt right to make a real physical impact, to have print copies we could put on display for people to browse through. I was always looking for ways to involve my subject areas in the process of diversifying the collection too, and myself and a colleague who

supports STEM subjects had some success in finding individual academics who wanted to collaborate with us on their recommended reading. It was hard to find any appetite for a wider strategy though.

The explosion of Black Lives Matter in summer 2020 had an immediate impact at Brunel, with a public statement from the Vice Provost outlining our support for the movement and its aims (Leahy, 2020) and a virtual event for staff on race equality in Higher Education with external speakers sharing their experiences. In one of my more conservative and reluctant academic departments, at their regular staff meeting, their Head spoke about the event and how it had broadened his understanding of white privilege. His department has now introduced 'Diversity' as a standing agenda item.

With campus closed, I decided to put together a Black Lives Matter E-Books reading list, using the many BLM book lists from various magazine sites and newspapers as a basis. The list was initially published in an internal Information Services bulletin, but it was also useful for sharing in other contexts: a member of Human Resources was interested in compiling reading to support groups covered by anti-discrimination legislation, so the BLM list made a good starting point and I was able to promote our Liberated Library collection there too.

This autumn the Union of Brunel Students approached me to produce a LibGuide for Black History Month, using a selection of titles their campaigns team had picked out, several of which were already part of the Liberated Library collection. By this point our Head of Library Academic Services had decided to dedicate a book fund to these kinds of projects, as a way of embedding diversity more firmly into our collection development.

Where to next? The case for decolonisation

The idea of decolonising higher education can make some practitioners feel uncomfortable and there are real problems with taking a top-down, prescriptive approach to diversity in reading lists or the wider collection. Levy (2020) argues that selecting books on the basis of an author's ethnicity, for example, is often not feasible or even helpful. The way books are chosen in this context, though, is often a very organic process, relying on personal interactions between students, librarians and academics. Where reading lists have been updated at Brunel to increase diversity it has been an entirely voluntary and considered process on the part of the module leader.

It is also worth pointing out that the inequality of outcomes in Higher Education follows a definite set of demographic patterns and campaigns such as Liberated Library carry a very clear mandate to address this through book selection. In this context, trying to increase the diversity of your collection while ignoring authors' race or gender is nonsensical.

The Black History Month LibGuide (https://libguides.brunel.ac.uk/c.php?g=685746) provides a good basis for a more permanent online presence, a showcase of material that demonstrates our commitment to building a collection that makes every reader feel welcome and empowered.

Decolonising your library collection: Some recommendations

Engage with activists

The same energy that has brought down slaver statues can be enlisted to drive a student-run campaign in collaboration with the library. As librarians we are natural networkers, so use your contacts within the Students' Union and just ask them what practical steps would help achieve their goals. Look out for academics in any subject who want to diversify their material.

Don't overthink it

In conversation with colleagues from other institutions, I hear tales of campaigns that never get started through fears of tokenism or 'death by committee'. There is a difference between a token gesture and a statement of intent and if you can let the students take the lead (see above) there will be a natural driver to make it happen.

Use your resources strategically

Even if there is no dedicated budget, most subject librarians find themselves with surplus book funds that need to be spent at short notice. Gather a stockpile of suggestions and pay attention to media coverage related to your subject areas. I have often discovered BAME or female scientists through radio documentaries or magazine articles.

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El Magd, N. A. (2016). *Why is my curriculum white?* https://thebristolcable.org/2016/01/why-is-my-curriculum-white/

HEFCE (2017). *Student characteristics*. Retrieved 08 October 2020 from https://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20170712122614/http://www.hefce.ac.uk/analysis/HEinEngland/students/

Kessi, S., & Cornell, J. (2015). Coming to UCT: Black students, transformation and discourses of race. *Journal of Student Affairs in Africa*, 3(2), 1-16.

Leahy, B. (2020). *Brunel's support of Black Lives Matter* https://students.brunel.ac.uk/campus-news/brunels-support-of-black-lives-matter

Levy, M. (2020, April 15). Diversifying reading lists should not be skin deep. *Times Higher Education*. https://www.timeshighereducation.com/opinion/diversifying-reading-lists-should-not-be-skin-deep#

Olusoga, D. (2020, June 11). I shared my home with Edward Colston for more than 20 years. Good riddance. *The Guardian*. https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/jun/11/i-shared-my-home-with-edward-colston-for-more-than-20-years-good-riddance

Piker, S. (2019). Engineering change in collection development: A techie liaison librarian's role in a Liberated Library campaign. *SCONUL Focus*, 71. https://www.sconul.ac.uk/publication/engineering-change-in-collection-development

Digital Accessibility Maturity – Joining the dots

Amy Low, Service Delivery Director, AbilityNet

Digital accessibility has long been a consideration and concern for library and information services professionals, with many students experiencing barriers with consuming content either via printed or online means.

Excessive use of PDFs and tensions between student inclusion and copyright rules make this a challenging area, and one that has traditionally remained the 'problem' to solve of the library and information services teams with support from the disability team.

Recent changes in legislation in the form of The Public Sector Bodies Websites and Mobile Applications Accessibility Regulations 2018 (https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2018/852/regulation/7/made) have clearly placed the legal responsibility on the public body for ensuring compliance with digital accessibility regulations. This extends across websites and applications, to all online documents. Consequentially, there is a shift taking place where institutions are waking up to their shortcomings in this area and seeking a whole institution approach to addressing the challenges.

To help with this, AbilityNet and McNaught Consulting have built on an existing model of digital accessibility maturity that Alistair McNaught has been using with educational institutions for many years. The model is an easy to use framework, designed to help you understand where you are in your maturity journey and what to do to get to the next level and beyond.

The 5 levels of digital accessibility maturity

Stage	Luck	Tokenism	Standards	Ownership	Partnership
Typical Quote	"With luck, we won't have any disabled learners"	"Contact us and we'll help you get DSA funding"	"All our systems are built to WCAG 2.1 AA"	"Staff use digital resources to maximise learner independence"	"Disabled students co-design courses & assessments"
Legal risk (5 = highest)	5	4	3	2	1
Benefits for users (5 – highest)	1	2	3	4	5
Benefits to organisation					

There are 5 levels of maturity which are Luck, Tokenism, Standards, Ownership and Partnership.

To determine your current level, the model then provides 8 lenses through which you can evaluate yourself. The lenses include :

Main driver – what is motivating action in this area? Is action reactive in response to

challenges, is the action motivated by concerns around litigation, or is there a passion and commitment to improve the overall student experience?

Focus of effort – what specifically are people working on in this space just now? Are they focused on website and applications? Are they including teaching and learning materials? Are they looking to ensure that every digital space or document is inclusive?

Responsibility – who is seen to be responsible for maintaining focus and moving this forward? Is there a sense of collective responsibility with a visible senior leader and student voice included or do the disability team continue to shoulder this?

Model of disability in play – does support require the medical model style of disclosure to access or is the social model helping to remove barriers for everyone regardless of disability?

Culture – What does the culture around accessibility feel like? How visible is the topic? Is the culture evolved enough to allow innovation in this space and does it welcome input from all stakeholders including students?

Skills & expertise – Do these skills exist and is it easy to locate people that can support this work? Is there readily available training and opportunities to upskills as well as reference to accessibility in job descriptions?

Policies – does digital accessibility live in any policies within the institution and if so which ones? Is this limited to disability specific policies? Is the procurement policy ensuring new tools are checked for accessibility?

Student experience – how would disabled students describe their experience of accessing learning at your institution? Is support proactive and built in or do they have to self-advocate and fight to obtain equal access?

There is an online interactive questionnaire you can access at Digital Accessibility Maturity Model Download link (https://abilitynet.org.uk/he-and-fe-accessibility-maturity-model#request-maturity-model) which will take you through the questions asking you for commentary on why you provided the responses that you did. This generates a short report that will give you your maturity score across all the lenses and offer some ideas of what you can do next to improve in this area.

The self-service model has been successfully used by a range of institutions to help highlight where their areas for development are and to build out detailed roadmaps to achieve compliance and an inclusive learning environment for everyone. AbilityNet and McNaught are also able to provide guided sessions with multiple stakeholder viewpoints taken into account and have created a scoring framework to enable an institution to evidence their maturity at level 3, 4 and 5.

We are running a pilot during November and December where we invite institutions to a free training session on the maturity model evaluation framework and a module level framework also. If you would be interested in participating please contact helen.wickes@ abilitynet.org.uk

Disability- Higher Education, Libraries, Teaching and Learning. Bibliography –July-September 2020

Teaching and Learning

Biggeri, M; Di Masi, D; Bellacicco, R
Disability and higher education: assessing students' capabilities in two Italian universities using structured focus group discussions.
Studies in higher education. 45 (4), 909-924. DOI: 10.1080/03075079.2019.1654448.
Abstract: In the last three decades, inclusive disability legislation has led to an increasing number of students with disabilities entering higher education. However, barriers to the full participation of students remain. This article presents evidence from studies conducted in two Italian universities. Drawing on the Capability Approach, the goal is to analyse the experiences of students with disabilities and to assess their capabilities in academic life. Participatory research methods were adopted using structured focus group discussion techniques. Fifty students with different types of disability participated in the study. Two major findings emerged from the data: (a) the essential value, in the experience of the students, of being able to use educational spaces, move around off campus and socialise with others; and (b) the tendency of capability achievements to vary according to context and type of disability, especially for students with visual disabilities, who experience relatively lower levels of mobility and respect.

Bunbury, S. (2020)
Disability in higher education – do reasonable adjustments contribute to an inclusive curriculum?
International journal of inclusive education, 2020, 24(9), 964-979
DOI: 10.1080/13603116.2018.1503347
Abstract: The study focuses on the importance of inclusive curriculum design in Higher Education (HE) and the impact of reasonable adjustments in ensuring inclusive practices. Although making reasonable adjustments attempts to ensure inclusivity, the data gathered suggests that some staff struggle to accommodate disabled students, due to a lack of knowledge, training and awareness of disability. The findings are drawn from qualitative data collected from five participants by way of in-depth interviews. The study explored the perceptions of staff members in a Law School, and attempts to offer practical recommendations to ensure HE institutions adopt inclusive practices in their curriculum design. The findings suggest that having an inclusive curriculum can in some cases minimise or obviate the need to make reasonable adjustments. It is suggested that HE institutions should now switch their focus to the social model of disability which focuses on attitudes, so as to transform the perception of staff towards disabled students. Additionally, practical solutions are provided in an attempt to recognise that disabled students may need to be treated differently, in order to achieve their full potential, which ultimately ensures inclusion within the curriculum.

Carroll,J.; Pattison, E; Muller, C; (2020).
Barriers to Bachelor's degree completion among college students with a disability.
Sociological perspectives. 63 (5) 809-832. 24p. DOI: 10.1177/0731121420908896.

Abstract: It is widely documented that first-generation college students attain bachelor's degrees at lower rates than their peers. First-generation students also consistently prioritize distance to college in their school decision-making process. How distance impacts their educational performance, however, is an issue that has not received sufficient research attention. This study uses the Beginning Postsecondary Students Longitudinal Study (BPS:04/09) to investigate whether the distance between the permanent residence of first-generation students enrolled in four-year degree programs and their attending college impacts their educational attainment and grade point average (GPA). We find that first-generation students who attend colleges at a greater distance from home are more likely to graduate from college with a bachelor's degree. We do not find strong support for the relationship between distance and a student's GPA in most years of enrolment. We discuss the way college accessibility reinforces inequality within higher education along with the theoretical implications of our findings.

Cliffe, E; Bhaird, C; Fhloinn, E; Trott, C (2020)
Mathematics instructors' awareness of accessibility barriers for disabled students.
Teaching mathematics & its applications 39 (3), 184-200. 17p.
DOI: 10.1093/teamat/hrz012.

Abstract: In this paper, we discuss the results of a staff survey on accessibility barriers to participation and success for disabled students in higher education in the UK and Ireland. We focus on the range and complexity of student difficulties encountered by staff involved either in the lecturing of mathematics or the provision of Mathematics Learning Support. We report on the range of supports available to both staff and students in these situations and their varying levels of awareness and implementation of these supports. We close with a brief overview of how we intend to use the results of this survey to both increase awareness of existing appropriate supports and develop additional services to improve student accessibility.

Coiley, G (3 June .2020).
Disabled Students' Allowance during a pandemic
Retrieved from: https://wonkhe.com/blogs/disabled-students-allowance-during-a-pandemic/

Abstract: A survey conducted by the Association of Non-Medical Help Providers explores the Covid-19 experiences of students in receipt of Disabled Student Allowance. Graham Coiley takes us through it

Charmatz, M. (2020)
Postsecondary education, COVID-19, and students with disabilities.
Disability compliance for higher education, 26 (2), 1-3, DOI: 10.1002/dhe.30899
Colleges and universities face immense challenges as the 2020–21 academic year approaches. Ensuring that students with disabilities have a safe, healthy learning

environment for both educational and noneducational programs and activities is an essential ingredient of a school's mission to provide quality services during this difficult period.

Clear communication helps with transition to online learning.
Disability compliance for higher education, 25 (11) 2-2,; DOI: 10.1002/dhe.30852
Abstract: Tracey Forman, Assistant Director of Disability Resources at Texas A&M University, led an effort to share information students with disabilities needed during the rapid move to online instruction resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic. She shared her unit's process for creating resources

Focus on social justice when addressing COVID-19.
Disability compliance for higher education, 26 (3) 2-2, DOI: 10.1002/dhe.30918
Abstract: Zebadiah Hall, Director of Student Disability Services at Cornell University, explained how his office's approach to COVID-19 promotes social justice.

Hope, J (2020).
Keep accessibility central in planning for COVID-19 mitigation.
Disability compliance for higher education, 26 (3), p1-5; DOI: 10.1002/dhe.30916
Abstract: If students, faculty, and staff members are back on campus this fall, your institution has no doubt taken steps to reduce the risk of COVID-19 transmission. As a disability services professional, you can work with your facilities staff to ensure mitigation efforts don't restrict access for individuals with disabilities. .J Garofalo, Associate at KMA Architecture + Accessibility, offered tips for ensuring accessibility during the pandemic at a session at the Society for College and University Planning annual conference. Consider how their advice can be implemented on your campus.

Lim, M (2020)
Taking account of disabilities.
Times higher education, 2463, 41-41
Abstract: Discussion of distance learning

LoGiudice, J. (2020)
Engage in emergency planning to meet the needs of individuals with disabilities.
Disability compliance for higher education, 25(11) 6-6; DOI: 10.1002/dhe.30854
Abstract: About four years ago, when I was a newbie at my home university, The City College of New York, I requested a copy of the university's emergency procedure, which was not posted to the university's website. I was forwarded a copy of it via email, and it appeared to be a poor textual document that was photocopied a million times over. The document had not been revised for nearly a decade - and it did not mention people (visitors, faculty, staff, and students) with disabilities. As a professional social worker, I felt this was morally wrong. I attempted to determine what responses would be required for people with disabilities in the types of emergencies the document outlined.

22

Mannion, A, (25 August 2020)
10 actions for universities to ensure safe access for disabled students during Covid-19
Retrieved from: https://abilitynet.org.uk/news-blogs/10-actions-universities-ensure-safe-access-disabled-students-during-covid-19
Abstract: Paul-Georg Ender, a postgraduate Master of Laws (LLM) researcher at the University of Kent discusses 10 actions for universities to ensure safe access for disabled students during Covid-19.

Merchant, W; Read, S; D'Evelyn, S; Miles, C;
The insider view: tackling disabling practices in higher education institutions.
Higher education 80(2), 273-287. DOI: 10.1007/s10734-019-00479-0.
Abstract: This paper reports on research about the experiences of disabled staff members in UK universities, drawing on eleven semi-structured interviews with disabled staff in one university, alongside a group auto ethnography conducted by the first four authors, all of whom identified as disabled academics. Disability is generally considered to be predominantly an issue for students, both in practice and in the literature. By contrast, taking a social practice approach, we focused on the barriers faced by disabled employees, both overt and hidden. We found that disability was still viewed as a medical problem, and that disabled members of staff faced considerable extra labour in organising their own supports. We were often made to feel that we were unwanted and that we were 'misfits' in the institution. This paper contributes to theory by showing how social practices can become exclusionary, and how interconnections between practices matter. We discuss ways in which ableism, based on the ideal of 'individual' excellence, creates barriers for disabled staff. In the global context of Higher Education, the increasing marketization of universities in higher income countries creates a difficult climate for the values of inclusion.

Moriña, A.; Perera, V (2020)
Inclusive higher education in Spain: students With disabilities speak out.
Journal of Hispanic higher education. 19 (3) 215-231. DOI: 10.1177/1538192718777360.
Abstract: This study examined the barriers and supports to inclusive education identified by university students with disabilities in Spain. A qualitative methodology is used. Students identified several organizational and architectural barriers and supports in completing their degrees. The conclusions go back to the main ideas analyzed to discuss previous works; likewise, proposals for improvements are provided, such as the need to train faculty in inclusive education and universal design for learning and the importance of redesigning learning environments to make them more accessible.

Sutton, H. (2020).
Survey reviews COVID-19-based disruptions for students with disabilities.
Disability compliance for higher education, 26(3) p9-9. DOI: 10.1002/dhe.30921
Abstract: Students with disabilities in USA reported more frequent difficulties and barriers to transitioning to online learning than their general population peers. Some of the most frequently reported difficulties included providing documentation of a disability, and discussing new access barriers and solutions to those barriers with campus officials. Other barriers students with disabilities reported facing on a more frequent basis than

their general population included lack of access to the network/WiFi, lack of access to course exams or assessments, and difficulty with communication to instructors.

Assistive Technology

Gierdowski, D and Galanek , J (2020)
ECAR Study of the Technology Needs of Students with Disabilities, 2020
Retrieved from: https://www.educause.edu/ecar/research-publications/ecar-study-of-the-technology-needs-of-students-with-disabilities/2020/introduction-and-key-findings

How technology can help people with dyslexia (2020)
https://abilitynet.org.uk/webinars/how-technology-can-help-people-dyslexia
Abstract: Dafydd Henke-Reed, Principal Accessibility and Usability Consultant with AbilityNet shared his expert advice about dyslexia and technology on 29th September 2020

Mannion, A (25 August 2020)
Four ways My Study My Way can help you at university
Retrieved from: https://abilitynet.org.uk/news-blogs/four-ways-my-study-my-way-can-help-you-university
Abstract: My Study My Way is a website that helps you get the best experience at university.It focuses on the different key areas of your university life, and helps you identify what areas you may be struggling with. Depending on the answers you provide, the site generates a personalised report for students to reference and share with support staff if they wish.

Mannion, A (25 August 2020)
What are the digital accessibility gaps in further education?
Retrieved from https://abilitynet.org.uk/news-blogs/what-are-digital-accessibility-gaps-further-education
Abstract: There is just one month left before the September 23rd 2020 deadline for the Public Sector Bodies (Websites and Mobile Applications) Accessibility Regulations 2018 (PSBAR).As part of our countdown to the regulations, this month we take a look at further education (FE) as a specific section of the public sector covered by the regulations.

Pionke, J. J. (2020)
COVID-19, accessibility, and libraries: A call to action.
By: College & research libraries news, 81(8)398-399
Abstract: The article examines that the COVID-19 pandemic manifested, institutions of higher education moved their teaching online, libraries closed, and there was a rapid shift in libraries to more fully support digital learning environments. Topics include reports that announcements largely centered on adaptive/assistive technology, such as in the case of Penn State University who point out that "Adaptive Technologies staff are available for assistance and services by appointment.

Autism

Lei, J.; Brosnan, M.; Ashwin, C.; Russell, A. (2020)
Evaluating the role of autistic traits, social anxiety, and social network changes during transition to first year of university in typically developing students and students on the autism spectrum
Journal of autism and developmental disorders 50, 8
Abstract: This is the first longitudinal study to quantitatively evaluate changes in social network structure (SNS) and perceived social support (PSS) amongst first-year students on the autism spectrum (n = 21) and typically developing (TD; n = 182) students transitioning to university. The relative impact of changes in SNS/PSS, students' social anxiety and autistic traits, on first-year university transition outcomes were also examined. Both groups gained friends over time who provided better support quantity and quality during first year of university. Social anxiety showed long-term differential negative impact on students on the autism spectrum and TD students' academic, social and personal/emotional adjustments, and institutional attachment, suggesting stakeholders should focus on delivering interventions to reduce social anxiety to improve university transition outcomes

Clouder, L; Karakus, M; Cinotti, A; Ferreyra, M. (2020).
Neurodiversity in higher education: a narrative synthesis.
Higher Education 80 (4) 757-778. DOI: 10.1007/s10734-020-00513-6
Abstract: Neurodiversity is an umbrella term, including dyspraxia, dyslexia, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, dyscalculia, autistic spectrum and Tourette syndrome. The increasing number of students with learning difficulties associated with neurodiversity entering higher education (HE) poses a shared and growing challenge internationally for teachers and institutional leaders. This narrative synthesis draws together a corpus of international literature on how neurodiverse students experience higher education and the ways in which higher education institutions respond to the cluster of neurodiverse conditions. A systematic review was carried out to search, retrieve, appraise and synthesize the available evidence to provide an original contribution to the literature and significant insights of worth to higher education internationally. An inclusive approach to data extraction was used to ensure that all the relevant studies were included. All stages of the review process, including the initial search, screening, sample selection and analysis, are described. Three main themes and 11 subthemes were identified. Although the majority of publications focus on either dyslexia, autistic spectrum disorder, or ADHD, some common themes are evident in student experience across learning difficulties associated with neurodiversity. Although support services and technologies are available to meet students' specific needs, there is an apparent dislocation between the two. Fear of stigmatization and labelling worsens the divide between what is needed and what is available to ensure neurodiverse students' success in higher education, where good intentions are evidently not enough

Blind Students

Hewett, R.; Douglas, G.; McLinden, M.; Keil, S. (2020)
Balancing inclusive design, adjustments and personal agency: progressive mutual accommodations and the experiences of university students with vision impairment in the United Kingdom.
International journal of inclusive education,24 (7), 754-770.
DOI: 10.1080/13603116.2018.1492637

Abstract: This paper proposes a framework of support for reducing barriers to curriculum access for students with disabilities in higher education (HE), by drawing upon findings from a unique longitudinal qualitative study. The 'Longitudinal Transitions Study' commenced in 2010 and followed the transition experiences of a group of 80 young people since they left compulsory education, 32 of whom went into HE. Interviews were conducted with participants at several key stages of their time in HE and supplemented by focused case study work with seven of the participants. The analysis provides original examination of how appropriate balance can be achieved between broad inclusive practice and individual adjustments meeting specific needs. Key curriculum access issues identified in the study are outlined with examples of how these were overcome through 'inclusive practice', 'individual adjustments' and 'individual agency' of the student. Drawing upon a Bioecological Model of Inclusive HE, a framework of support is proposed for achieving appropriate balance through the notion of progressive and mutual accommodations to facilitate learning environments which enable students with disabilities to become independent learners. The paper has broader significance for educators and researchers concerned with promoting inclusive teaching in HE and ensuring equality of opportunity for all students.

Deaf Students

Alsalamah, A (2020)
Using captioning services with deaf and hard of hearing students in higher education
American annals of the deaf 165 (1), 114-127

Johnson, S; Stapleton, L; Berrett, B (2020)
Deaf community cultural wealth in community college students.
Journal of deaf studies & deaf education, 25(4), 438-446, 9p; DOI: 10.1093/deafed/enaa016

Abstract: Deaf students are members of a linguistic and cultural minority whose background and experiences provide a unique backdrop for the navigation of higher education. Using the framework of Deaf community cultural wealth, this study examines the experiences of Deaf students in community college and their utilization of various forms of capital. Findings showed that they exhibited instances of resistant, navigational, social, and familial capital in accessing and persisting in higher education.

Wellbeing/ Mental Health

Aydin, F; Vera, E (2020)
Subjective social class and subjective well-being among college Students : The mitigating roles of self-esteem and critical consciousness.
Review of higher education. 43 (4) 1099-1123 DOI: 10.1353/rhe.2020.0014.
Abstract: The authors explored the relationship between subjective social class (SSC) and subjective well-being (i.e., life satisfaction, positive/negative affect) to examine whether self-esteem would mediate this relationship for 275 college students and whether such mediation would be affected by participants' critical consciousness (CC). Two elements of SSC, social power and social prestige, had significant indirect effects on life satisfaction and negative affect through self-esteem. No statistically significant moderating role of CC was found on this mediation, but higher CC increased the size of the indirect effect of SSC on subjective well-being. Implications for research and practice with college students are discussed.

Baloran, E T. (2020).
Knowledge, attitudes, anxiety, and coping strategies of students during COVID-19 pandemic.
Journal of loss & trauma. 25(8), 635-642. p. 3 Charts. DOI:10.1080/15325024.2020.1769300.
Abstract: COVID-19 is a global concern affecting Higher Education Institutions (HEIs). This pandemic led to a strong reaction among students who experiences anxiety. This cross-sectional study aimed to examine students' knowledge, attitudes, anxiety, and coping strategies during the COVID-19 pandemic. Results showed that students possessed sufficient knowledge and high-risk perceptions. Non-medical prevention measures were perceived as highly effective. Students were satisfied with the government's actions to mitigate problems. However, an unwillingness with the online-blended learning approach was observed. Students utilized various ways to cope up with mental health challenges. It is necessary to address students' mental health during this COVID-19 pandemic among HEIs.

Banks, B. (2020)
Meet them where they are: an outreach model to address university counseling center disparities.
Journal of college student psychotherapy. 34 (3) 240-251.
DOI: 10.1080/87568225.2019.1595805.
Abstract: Although University Counseling Centers continue to report increased rates of served students, those who hold marginalized identities continue to be underrepresented. Many factors may contribute to such discrepancies, including stigma, access, and trust in providers. College students across the nation have recently called for an increase in the number of professionals who identify as racially/ethnically diverse. The current article reviews one university's response to their own students' call for action, and particularly explores how the program was implemented and its associated costs and benefits. Considerations for other university administrators seeking to employ similar methods are discussed.

Branco, SF.; Patton-Scott, V. (2020)

Practice what we teach: promoting wellness in a clinical mental health counseling masters program.

Abstract: Wellness strategies are important components of ethical practice for professional counselors. Therefore, wellness instruction must be included within counselor education programs; yet, many struggles to effectively integrate wellness instruction within the core curriculum. This article describes how a small clinical mental health counseling masters program implemented a wellness initiative to benefit both students and faculty during their accreditation process. Efforts to infuse wellness instruction began at the admissions interview and continued to the end of internship training. In addition, an empirically validated wellness inventory with an accompanying workbook was distributed to all internship students and faculty.

Cage, E.; Stock, M.; Sharpington, A.; Pitman, E; Batchelor, R.(2020)

Barriers to accessing support for mental health issues at university.

Abstract: Student mental health is an issue of great concern for universities, with rising numbers of mental health problems being reported and students reporting issues with accessing support. The current study, using a participatory research framework, investigated the possible barriers preventing students from accessing support, in terms of help-seeking intentions and actual help-seeking behaviour. Three hundred and seventy-six current UK students completed a questionnaire which measured help-seeking and possible barriers including perceived public stigma, self-stigma, educational impact, disclosure, coping behaviours and current mental health symptoms. Findings indicated that self-stigma, in particular, was a barrier to accessing support. Disclosure, educational impact, previous diagnosis, suspected diagnosis and mental health symptoms also interacted with help-seeking. These findings have implications for universities in tackling the barriers preventing students accessing support for their mental health.

Dzierzewski, JM.; Ravyts, SG.; Dautovich, N D.; Perez, Elliottnell; Schreiber, D; Rybarczyk, BD (2020)

Mental health and sleep disparities in an urban college sample: A longitudinal examination of White and Black students.

Abstract: Racial disparities in sleep may be consequential among college students given high rates of dysfunctional sleep among this population. The present study sought to investigate whether disparities in sleep explain existing mental health disparities.
Method: Data included secondary analysis of a college risk behaviors and health study (n = 1242, mean age = 18.5). Race was dichotomized as White or Black, excluding all others, with participants completing measures of sleep at baseline and measures of depression and anxiety at follow up 1 to 2 years later.
Results: Compared to White students, Black students were more likely to report lower rates of depression and anxiety, but poorer sleep outcomes. Mediation analyses revealed that sleep partially mediated (suppressed) the association between race and depressive

and anxiety symptoms.

Conclusions: Results indicate that disparities in sleep may play an important role in the association between race and mental health symptoms among college students. Future health disparity research would benefit from exploring the potentially bidirectional relationship between sleep and mental health symptoms among college students.

Hodge, B.; Wright, B; Bennett, P.(2020)
Balancing effort and rewards at university: Implications for physical health, mental health, and academic outcomes
Psychological reports, 123(4), 4, 1240-1259, 20p; DOI: 10.1177/0033294119841845

Abstract: **Background**: The effort-reward imbalance model suggests that, when the efforts required within the workplace are disproportionately large in comparison to the rewards resulting from those efforts, there is an increased risk of stress-related health issues. The model posits that higher levels of "overcommitment," in addition to a high effort-reward imbalance ratio, magnifies this risk of ill-health. While work has been conducted to assess the validity of this model within the school setting, research in the higher education sector is limited.

Objectives: This study explored the validity of the effort-reward imbalance model for explaining burnout, poor health, and academic productivity among university students
Design and methods: This study utilized a cross-sectional survey of Australian university students (n = 395) from a range of universities
Results: An imbalance of effort and reward was associated with poorer physical health, increased burnout, and reduced productivity. Effort-reward imbalance mediated a relationship between overcommitment and burnout; those high in overcommitment were more likely to experience an imbalance of effort and reward at university.

Conclusion: The relationships between effort-reward imbalance, health, burnout, and academic productivity support the generalizability of this model to the university setting. In addition, the personal characteristic of overcommitment also appears to have an important relationship with burnout.

Hernández, R.; Villodas, M. (2020)
Overcoming racial battle fatigue: The associations between racial microaggressions, coping, and mental health among Chicana/o and Latina/o college students.
Cultural diversity & ethnic minority psychology,26 (3) 399-411, DOI: 10.1037/cdp0000306

Abstract: Objectives: The current study tested a conditional process model to determine if (a) different problem-focused coping styles mediated the association between racial microaggressions and mental health, and (b) ethnic identity exploration and commitment moderated these associations. Method: Participants were 681 Chicana/o and Latina/o undergraduates matriculating at a public research university in the southwestern United States; 71.7% (n = 488) identified as female and the average age of participants was 20.1 years. Data collected using an online survey were analyzed using structural equation modeling with bootstrapped confidence intervals. Results: Experiencing more racial microaggressions was associated with students' use of more problem-focused coping styles, as well as poorer mental health. All coping styles partially mediated the association between microaggressions and mental health. However, only reflective coping was

associated with more positive mental health; reactive and suppressive coping were associated with poorer mental health. These associations were not moderated by ethnic identity. Conclusions: Consistent with the racial battle fatigue framework, experiencing racial microaggressions in college may contribute to diminished mental well-being for Chicana/o and Latina/o students. Using reflective rather than suppressive or reactive coping styles could facilitate psychological well-being following racial microaggressions among Chicana/o and Latina/o college students

Mental health support for postgraduate research students (2020)
Independent reports evaluating the impact of projects funded by the Office for Students (OfS) and Research England to support the mental health and wellbeing of postgraduate research (PGR) students.
Retrieved from: https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/news-blog-and-events/press-and-media/new-report-published-on-mental-health-support-for-postgraduate-research-students/

Pedersen, D. (2020)
Bipolar disorder and the college student: A review and implications for universities.
Journal of American college health. 68(4). 341-346. DOI: 10.1080/07448481.2019.1573173.
Abstract: Objective: This brief report provides a review of the prevalence and expression of bipolar disorder in the college student population. Implications for college teachers and universities working with students with bipolar disorder are presented. Methods: Responses from the National College Health Assessment (2009–2017) reference groups were collated to estimate whether the prevalence of students with bipolar disorder has been increasing over time. Results: Data indicate that although overall prevalence is low, the presence of students with bipolar disorder has increased over the past decade. Conclusions: To help students with serious mental illness, including bipolar disorder, succeed in higher education, practices consistent with the philosophy of supported education should be adopted. Special attention will need to be paid to students' financial and academic challenges.

Ross, S.Bruggeman, B.; Maldonado, M.; Deiling, M. (2020)
Examining personal, perceived, treatment, and self-stigma in college students: The role of parent beliefs and mental health literacy.
Journal of college student psychotherapy. 34(3) 183-197.
DOI: 10.1080/87568225.2019.1580657.
Abstract: Although college student mental health concerns are on the rise, many struggling students do not seek psychological treatment when needed. Stigma toward psychological treatment has been demonstrated to influence intent to seek treatment in college student populations. This study aimed to identify factors that predict treatment stigma in college students by examining other forms of student-held stigma, parent-held stigma, and mental health literacy. Results indicated that student-held personal, perceived, and self-stigma all predicted student attitudes toward treatment, while parent-held personal stigma was found to predict self-stigma in students. Those individuals who had received previous education about psychological disorders had lower levels of personal

stigma, and, surprisingly, higher levels of self-stigma. Implications for campus outreach programming are discussed.

Yang, X.; Yu, H.; Liu, Ming-Wei; Z., Jie; Tang, B; Yuan, S; Gasevic, D; Paul, Kelly; W, Pei-Gang; H, (2020)
The impact of a health education intervention on health behaviors and mental health among Chinese college students
Journal of American college health. 68 (6), 587-592.
DOI: 10.1080/07448481.2019.1583659.

Abstract: Objective: This study aimed to assess the impact of a health education intervention on health behaviors, self-efficacy, and well-being among college students. Participants: Between March and October 2016, a total of 532 undergraduates participated. **Methods**: A theory-based intervention was conducted at Wuhan University, China. Participants were assigned to a control or intervention group (IG). The IG attended a 7-week health education class on knowledge, attitude, and practice of health behaviors. Results: Participants in the IG, compared with those in the control group (CG), reported significantly increased prevalence of high physical activity and regular breakfast, as well as lower screen time, sugar beverage intake, and Internet addiction tendency. Furthermore, intervention students improved in health behavior scores ($p = 0.040$), compared with the CG, while the changes in subjective well-being and self-efficacy remained similar between the two groups. **Conclusions**: Health education may promote health behaviors among Chinese college students.

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