

Connecting the Past to the Present: Promoting Cultural Understanding through Collections and Exhibitions

In order to fully comprehend the present, we must appreciate and remember the past.

Our past is riddled with controversial ideas and painful events that produced records and remnants that live on in libraries, archives and museums. Librarians, archivists and curators play an important role in the development of cultural understanding and awareness around difficult histories as they facilitate access and bring context to these important historical documents.

A global society demands that we move beyond our cultural biases and be open to the views and perspectives of others. Collections and exhibitions that challenge and provoke can also encourage critical dialogue and promote diversity and inclusion.

In this session, speakers will discuss controversial collections and exhibitions at their institutions and explore some of the challenges encountered in their display and promotion.

Today we'll hear about the Japanese American history digitization project that features many images of the internment of innocent Japanese Americans during WWII, in California State University Archives and Special Collections; the *Mazinbiige* Indigenous graphic novel collection held at the University of Manitoba, and a censored exhibit at Ohio University about the impact of war on artists and art-making.

The speakers will share strategies and best practices for meeting the challenges of safeguarding and providing access to these collections and exhibitions while acknowledging divergent perspectives. Together speakers and participants will explore how to achieve a balance between intellectual freedom/freedom of expression and the need to respect the views of historically marginalized and disadvantaged groups. This panel was organized by the ARLIS/NA Diversity Committee.

Mary Kandiuk, Visual Arts, Design & Theatre Librarian, York University

Mary Kandiuk is the Visual Arts, Design & Theatre Librarian for York University Libraries. She is co-author of *Digital Image Collections and Services* published by ARL in 2013. Her current areas of research include academic freedom and academic librarians and academic librarians and trade unionism. She is co-editor of "In Solidarity: Academic Librarian Labour Activism and Union Participation in Canada" published by Library Juice Press in 2014, and co-author of "Librarians in a Litigious Age and the Attack on Academic Freedom" published in 2015 in *Emerald Series Advances in Academic Librarianship*.

Gary Ginther, Fine Arts Librarian, Frederick & Kazuko Harris Arts Collection, Ohio University

Gary has been the Fine Arts Librarian at Ohio University for 12 years. He holds an MEd in Instructional Design, and is currently working on a thesis for an MA in Art History.

Maureen Burns

Maureen Burns is an information professional with over 25 years of experience developing and managing teaching resources of analog and digital images at UC Irvine, the Getty Villa, and CSULB (California State University, Long Beach). She is Presently working as a consultant, through IMAGinED, and is partnering on a CSU Archives Japanese American history digitization project as well as other image-focused work. She has a doctorate in Educational Administration from the UCI/UCLA joint Leadership program, and provides editorial support for the electronic *Journal for Learning through the Arts*. She is currently serving as the Content Editor for the online *VRA Bulletin* and the Chair of the VRA's Southern California Chapter. She is also a past VRA president and past director of the VRA Foundation.

Greg Williams

Greg Williams has been an Archivist for 35 years at Rutgers University, Colonial Williamsburg, the San Diego Historical Society and elsewhere. He has been Director of Archives and Special Collections for CSU Dominguez Hills for 12 years as well as Archivist for the California State University System. He is the Principle Investigator for the CSU Japanese American Digitization Project. He has written and received numerous grants from the NEH, the NHPRC and National Parks Service. He is the co-author of the recently published "Building a Statewide Archival Collaborative: the California State University Japanese American Digitization Project" along with Sue Tyson and Maureen Burns in the VRA Bulletin. He has also published postcard books, edited illustrated local histories, and written a history of his campus entitled "CSU Dominguez Hills.

Camille Callison

Camille Callison is the Indigenous Services Librarian and Liaison Librarian for Anthropology, Native Studies and Social Work at the University of Manitoba and serves on the Implementation Committee for the University of Manitoba's National research center for Truth and Reconciliation. She is also the President of Manitoba Library Association and the Moderator for Library and Literacy Services for Indigenous Peoples of Canada Network for the Canadian Library Association

Callison holds a B.A. in Anthropology and a MLIS with a First Nations Concentration from UBC. She is from the Tsesk iye (Crow) Clan of the Tahltan First Nation located in Northern British Columbia, the Yukon and Alaska.