

All Together Now -- The Library as Civic Bridge and Community Learning Hub

Michigan Summer Reading Virtual Symposium

Tracie D. Hall, Executive Director
American Library Association

Ideas

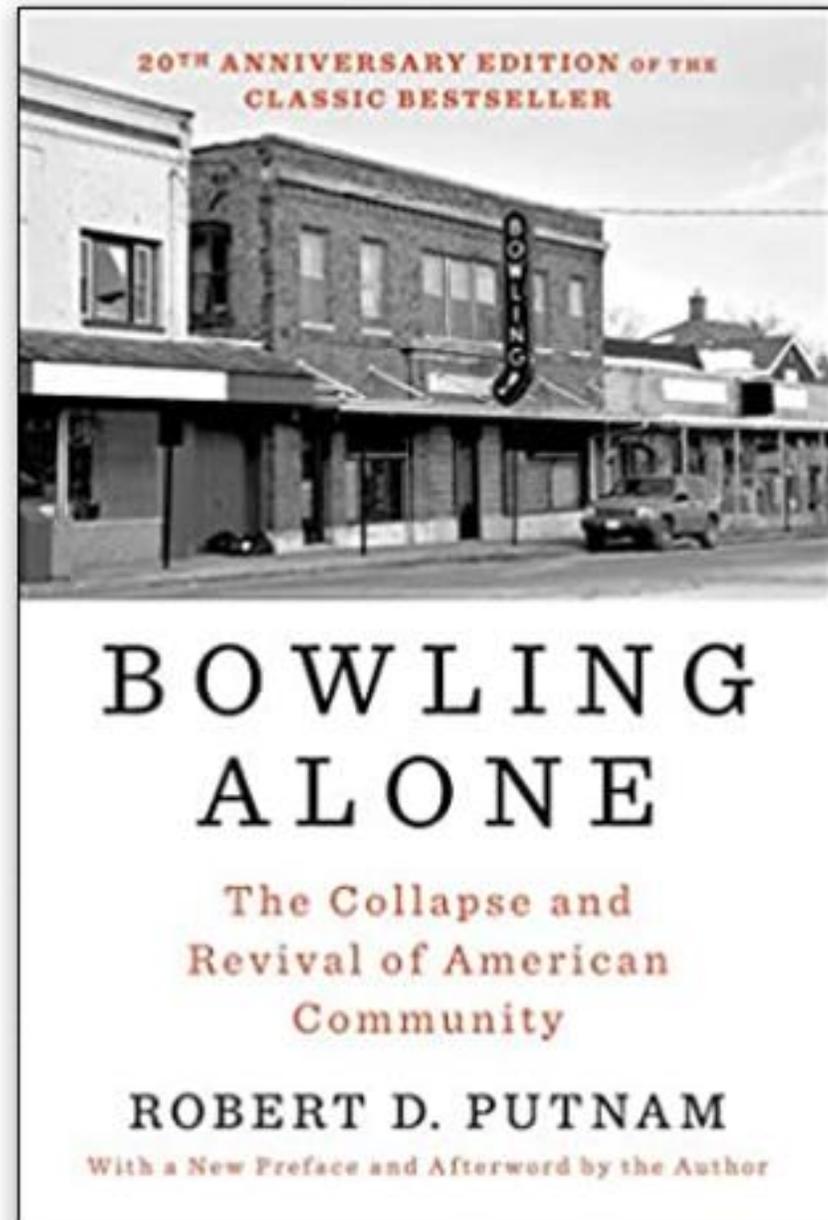
- Libraries as Places of Belonging (Civic Bridge)
- Libraries as Educational Spaces (Learning Hub)
- The Third Great Wave of Library Services
- The Fight Against Information Poverty
- A New Call to Action

Thursday, December 8, 2022

SECOND ANNUAL
VIRTUAL



Places of Belonging and Being Together





Reading
Encourages Inquiry
and Makes it a
Habit

Reading Takes
Many Forms



Who doesn't read books in America?

BY RISA GELLES-WATNICK AND ANDREW FERRIN

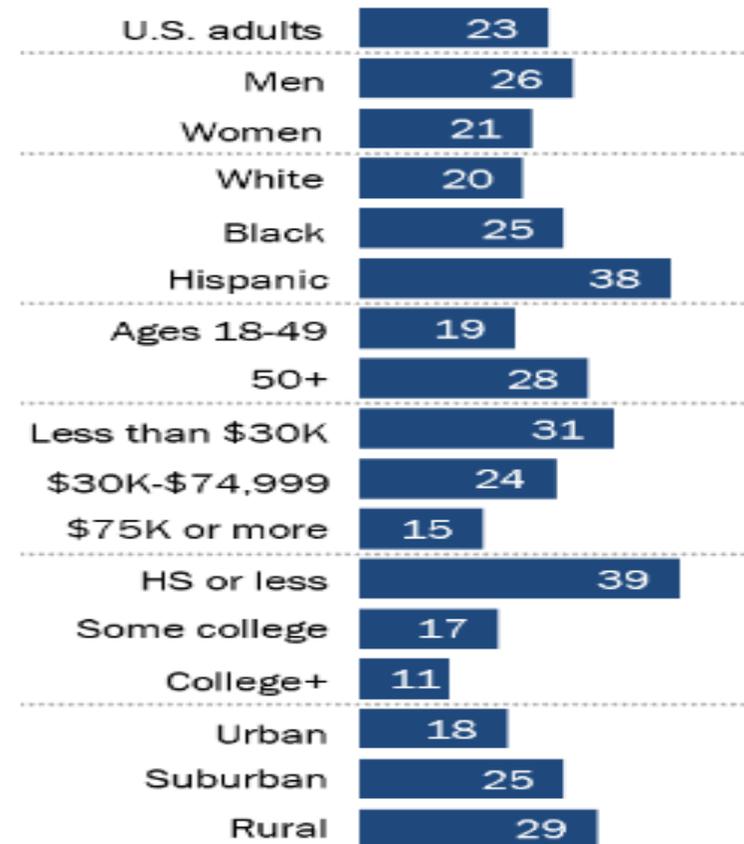


(iStock by Getty Images)

Roughly a quarter of American adults (23%) say they haven't read a book in whole or in part in the past year, whether in print, electronic or audio form, according to a Pew Research Center survey of U.S. adults conducted Jan. 25-Feb. 8, 2021. Who are these non-book readers?

Who hasn't read a book in the past 12 months

% of U.S. adults who say they have not read a book in any format in the past 12 months



Note: Respondents who did not give an answer are not shown. White and Black adults include those who report being only one race and are not Hispanic. Hispanics are of any race.

Source: Survey conducted Jan. 25-Feb. 8, 2021.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

Who reads? Who doesn't?



A Timely Pledge

The American Library's Twelve Core Values

- Access
- Confidentiality/Privacy
- Democracy
- Diversity
- Education/Lifelong Learning
- Intellectual Freedom
- Sustainability
- The Public Good
- Preservation
- Professionalism
- Service
- Social Responsibility

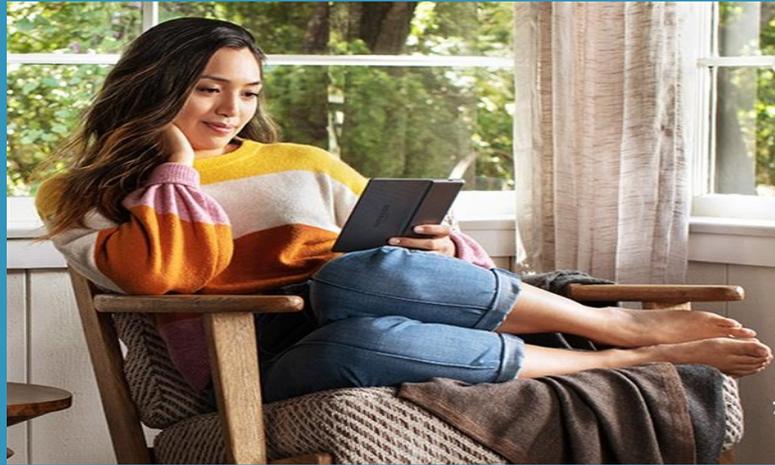
Some Don't Read

Some Can't Read

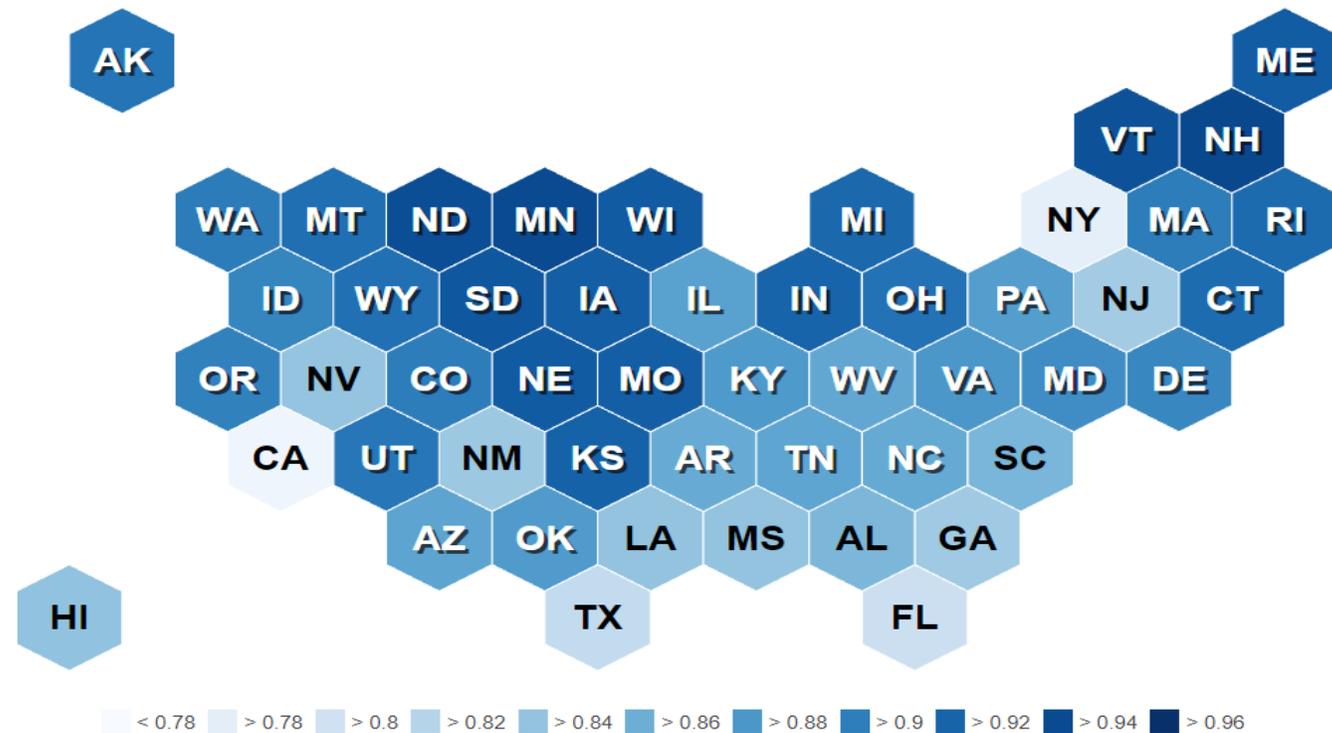
We must serve both



Reading and Literacy have Multigenerational Impacts



Literacy is a multigenerational issue. Children whose parents have low literacy levels have a 72% chance of being at the lowest reading level.



“Adults with low literacy skills are left out of the critical communication chain that describes those health protections, which is more than simply unfortunate. It is part of a structured social injustice that we can address by improving the health and well-being of vulnerable populations”

The New Landscape of Digital Literacy

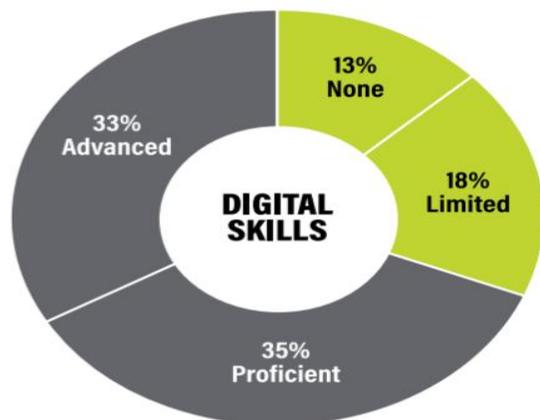
How workers' uneven digital skills affect economic mobility and business competitiveness, and what policymakers can do about it.

BY AMANDA BERGSON-SHILCOCK
MAY 2020



NATIONAL SKILLS COALITION
Every worker. Every industry. A strong economy.

NEARLY ONE-THIRD OF AMERICA'S WORKERS LACK DIGITAL SKILLS

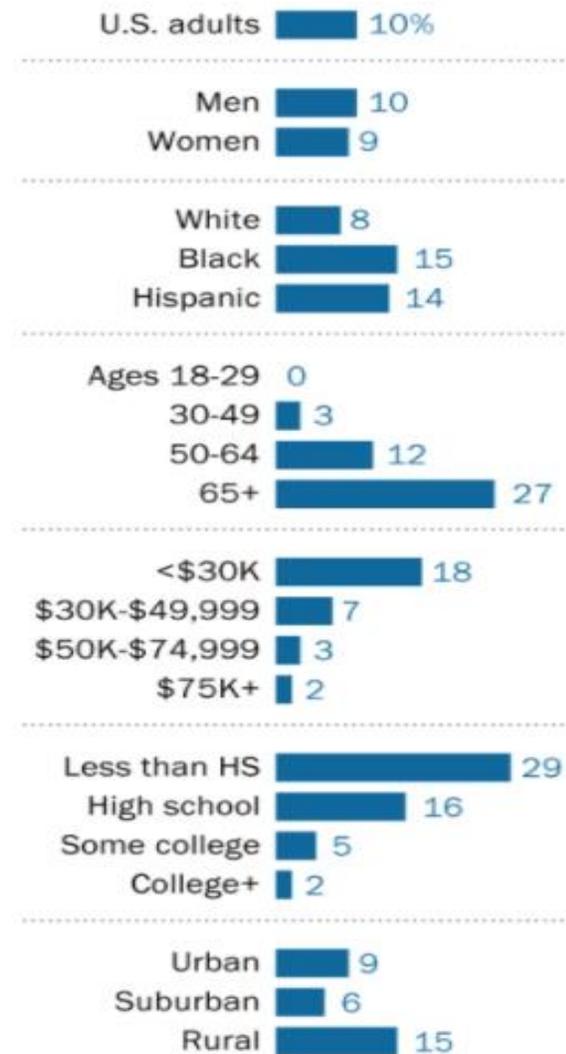


Link Adult Reading Literacy, Digital Literacy and Socio-Economic Mobility

- At least 21% of adults in the United States (about 43 million) are considered functionally illiterate category -- National Center for Educational Statistics (NCES).
- More than one-third of workers in some sectors have few or no digital skills. This includes construction, retail, wholesale, and auto repair, where 37% of workers have limited or no digital skills; hospitality (36%); manufacturing (35%); and administrative and support services (35%).
- At least 10% of Americans don't use the internet. Why, and who are they?
- This necessitates a focus, not just on information access on information application.

Who's not online in 2019?

% of U.S. adults who say they do not use the internet



The Same Disinvestment
that produces this



also produces **this.**



Connected Race, Income, and Connectivity Divides

A Deutsche Bank study reports on digital resource gaps that those working in libraries and information services have long noted

- Blacks and Latinos **are 10 years behind** Whites in levels of broadband access and almost 4 times more Blacks have poor Tech connectivity than Whites.
- Poor access to connectivity and work-from-home jobs caused minorities little choice but to venture out of home. **Black people left their homes 135% more than White people** during the lockdown peak in April.

More than half of Blacks and Latinos could be **under-prepared for 86% of jobs** by 2045.

If this digital racial gap is not addressed, in one generation alone, digitization could render the country's minorities into **an unemployment abyss.**



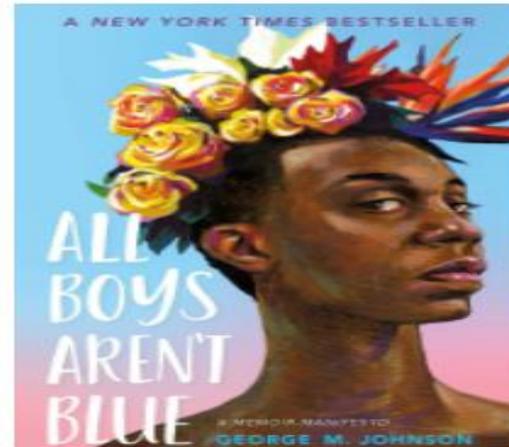
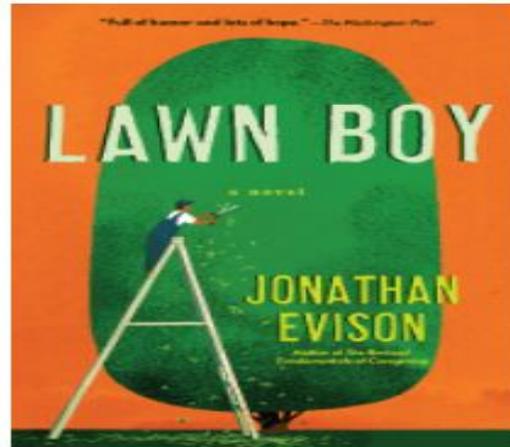
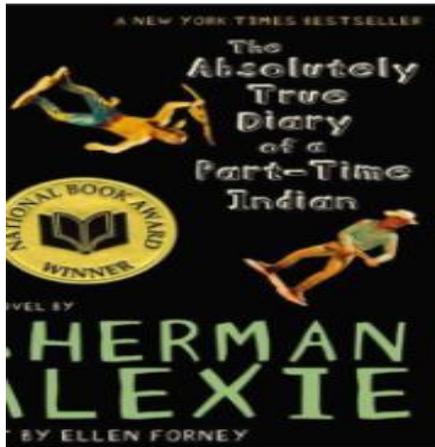
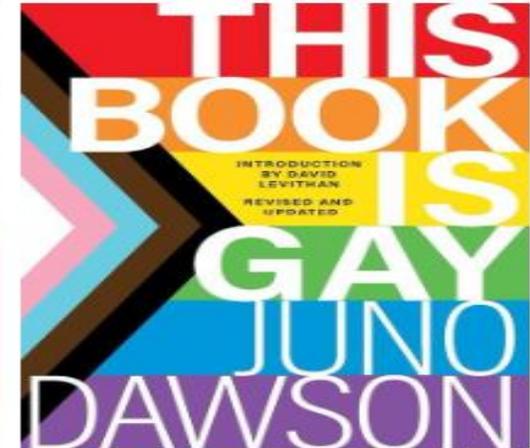
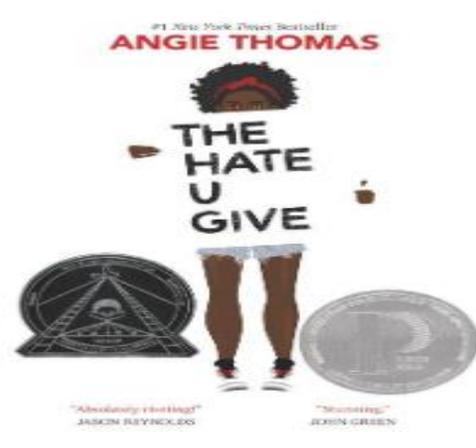
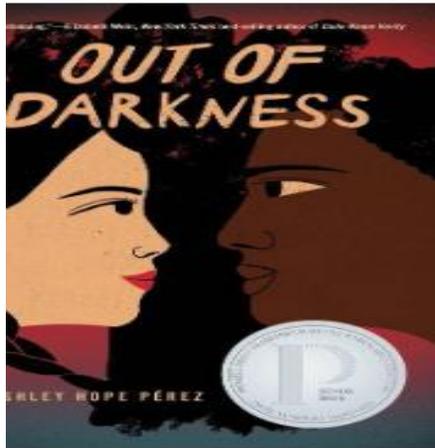
What is Information Poverty?

- Information poverty is further defined by the **lack of visible access points to critical information** and the absence of well-coordinated and appropriately scaled **information infrastructure**.
- Poverty is compounded when people do not have access to one of three things: **financial capital, education**, or connections to **information or social networks**.

- “Information Poverty’ has been described as a “situation in which individuals and communities, within a given context, do not have the requisite skills, abilities or material means to obtain efficient access to information, interpret it and apply it appropriately.”

-- Johannes Britz

Others are being denied the right to read about themselves and others



ALA Launched 1st National Anti-Censorship
Campaign: UniteAgainstBookBans.org



Raise your voice
for everyone's freedom to read.

Forecasters are predicting the prolonged impacts of this pandemic will be **inconsistent educational access for youth and young adults** and unemployment for adults whose skillsets do not allow them to transition to the new digital work environment.

What expanded role do you see for libraries?

The Third Great Wave of Library Services

If the **first great** wave of library and information services was in the late 18th through early 20th century to pull the public towards reading literacy, and **the second wave** in the latter 20th century to help to introduce technological literacy into the populace, then the next and **third great wave** of library and information science **will be to “exteriorize” library and information services and close the digital literacy and data access gap.**



MUSEUMS, LIBRARIES, AND
21st Century Skills



The Community Library is literally at the Crossroads of Multiple Literacies

Critical Thinking and Problem Solving

Creativity and Innovation

Communication and Collaboration

Visual Literacy

Scientific and Numerical Literacy

Cross-Disciplinary Thinking

Basic Literacy

Media Literacy

Information, Communications and Technology (ICT) Literacy

Life and Career Skills

Social and Cross-Cultural Skills

Recreational Literacy

Financial, Economic, Business and Entrepreneurial Literacy

Civic Literacy

Health Literacy

Environmental Literacy

Connecting Spaces for Youth and Young Adults



Connecting Spaces for Older Adults and those who are Marginalized





Some believe that libraries can play a role that no other institution in the public realm can.

What hits home?

- Despite real and perceived barriers to service, researchers and practitioners have shown evidence that racial and ethnic minorities tend to rely more heavily on libraries critical information needs.
- Understanding that for some individuals from underserved communities, libraries are reminiscent of exclusive, judgment-making institutions such as schools. And for some school is the site of the wound.
- Claude Steele observes that what can also impact interactions between diverse groups and librarians is "the specter of stigma and racial vulnerability." Steele offers that for some asking for help means "being at risk of confirming, as self-characteristic, a negative stereotype about one's group".
- We must pay attention to what Mary Rowe calls "micro-inequities" (subtle differences in tone, gesture, attitude, manner) that come into play—sometimes subconsciously when we interact with those we perceive as different or "other."
- Some of the most meaningful and timely information services take place beyond the reference desk and outside the library.

It is an almost universal finding in studies investigating human information behaviour that people choose other people as their preferred source of information.

--Catherine Johnson



What can we learn from retail or banking?

While we are asking questions...



Think of a reading service, resource, or experience your library is consistently being asked to provide that it currently doesn't. How are you responding?

Now, think of a blatantly non-library reading service, resource, or experience your library is constantly being asked to take on or is taking on by default. How are you responding?



Thank You!
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