

## **"Passive" Readers Advisory in the Time of Book Challenges**

Presenter: Jessica Trotter, Capital Area District Libraries \* [trotterj@cadl.org](mailto:trotterj@cadl.org)

### **Passive or Indirect Reader's Advisory**

Works in place of RA conversations—Not everyone wants or has time to connect one on one

Offers creative ways to market collections and cross promote programming and services.

Start with a theme (Ex. Native American Heritage Month, Books with Blue Covers, Read-Alikes) and gather your titles. From there you can go in any and all directions: create a bookmark, booklist or display, and in turn you can share any of those on social media

Booklists—Can be created for a display or on their own.

Displays—include a single staff pick on a desk, pulled out sections, seasonal displays, shelf talkers, reading maps

- What will work in your space?
- Try them in different places.
- Keep it simple—remember people are wary of taking off a display that's too detailed.
- Keep them filled!
- Keep them fresh!—Change themed displays at least monthly
- Challenge yourself to make them diverse year-round
- Challenge yourself to cross promote

### **Social Media**

- Reuse content: Photos of displays, digital versions of lists
- Create new content: Bookstacks, reels, staff picks, etc.

Casual and Everyday Diversity—Diverse representation includes titles that treat diversity as an everyday occurrence versus for example a book centered solely on race or disability. Sometimes that can be a quitter way of reaching out to readers.

### **Administrative Level—Consider what is right for your libraries**

- Have a Materials Policy!
- Consider whether you need or want Display Policies—most that I have seen have more to do with outside groups using display space but they can be used for internal displays as well.
- Consider Request for Reconsideration forms for Displays or Materials
- Strategic Plans?

## **RA Resources**

Michigan eLibrary Public Library Readers' Advisory Resources:

<https://www.mel.org/libraries/public/readers-advisory>

[Novelist](#) (available through [Mel.org](#))—Readers Advisory resource, great for lists, read-alikes, etc.

Booklist Reader: <https://www.booklistonline.com/reader-issues-login> (Currently included in Libby Magazine subscription)

BookPage: <https://www.bookpage.com/>

[Book Riot](#)—from their Mission Statement: We're dedicated to the idea that writing about books and reading should be just as diverse as books and readers are.

## **Creative Tools:**

Canva: <https://www.canva.com/>

National Day Calendar: <https://www.nationaldaycalendar.com/>

## **RA Gurus of note:**

Passively Recommending Books—the blog of Passive RA specialist and trainer, Lila Denning:

<https://bookdisplays.blogspot.com/>

## **Challenges and Censorship**

[Book Challenges, Censorship, and Michigan Public Libraries](#)—Library of Michigan produced tool to assist in clarification and decision making for Public Library Directors and Boards facing challenges and censorship.

[Library-Initiated Programs and Displays as a Resource: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights Americans' Views on Book Restrictions in U.S. Public Schools 2024](#)

Newitz, Annalee. "[Opinion: Libraries can help end the culture wars. That's why they're under fire.](#)" *The Washington Post*, 24 July 2024.