



MINNESOTA STATE UNIVERSITY, MANKATO

LIBRARY SERVICES

Library Newsletter

Spring 2023 Vol. 28 Issue 2



“Unseen Labor” Exhibit

Critical Friendship
in Norway

Aerial Photo
Collections Take Flight

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Library and Learning Hosts Professional Development Events on Demystifying Disability

This spring semester, Library & Learning hosted a series of events surrounding Emily Ladau’s book *Demystifying Disability: What to Know, What to Say, and How to Be an Ally*. Ladau is an internationally renowned disability rights writer, speaker, and activist. Librarian Mark McCullough asked MSU Professor and Librarian Jessica Schomberg, a scholar in the area of disability studies, about the book events.

MM: What can you tell us about the book event?

JS: The event was organized by the Library’s Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging Committee. In spring 2022, Library & Learning employees voted to read the book *Demystifying Disability* by Emily Ladau as a shared professional development activity. During the summer and fall of 2022, Library & Learning provided copies of the book to everyone in the unit as well as people outside the unit who were interested in participating, including members of the Disability Alliance campus affinity group. In January, Library Department Chair Jenny Turner hosted the author, who answered questions from participants via Zoom. As a follow-up to this event, members of Library & Learning were encouraged to talk with each other about how to incorporate what we learned into our work.

MM: Why are events like this so important?

JS: As Ladau mentions in her book, disability is a common human experience that many of us don’t know how to talk about. Events like this help us become more comfortable recognizing and talking about different types of disabilities and about ableism (discrimination against people with disabilities). This allows us to gain the skills we need to make accessibility a standard practice.

MM: What did you learn from the book and the conversation with the author that you might not have considered before?

JS: Ladau is very skilled at distilling conversations taking place within the larger disability community for an audience new to these topics. It is so impressive to see how she was able to share these complex histories in a way that is both inviting to newcomers and also doesn’t lose the essence of the message.

MM: Given your expertise in disability services, what were some of the highlights of the event for you?

JS: The enthusiasm I see in people who attended, who now demonstrate more confidence in talking about disability and a desire to keep learning.



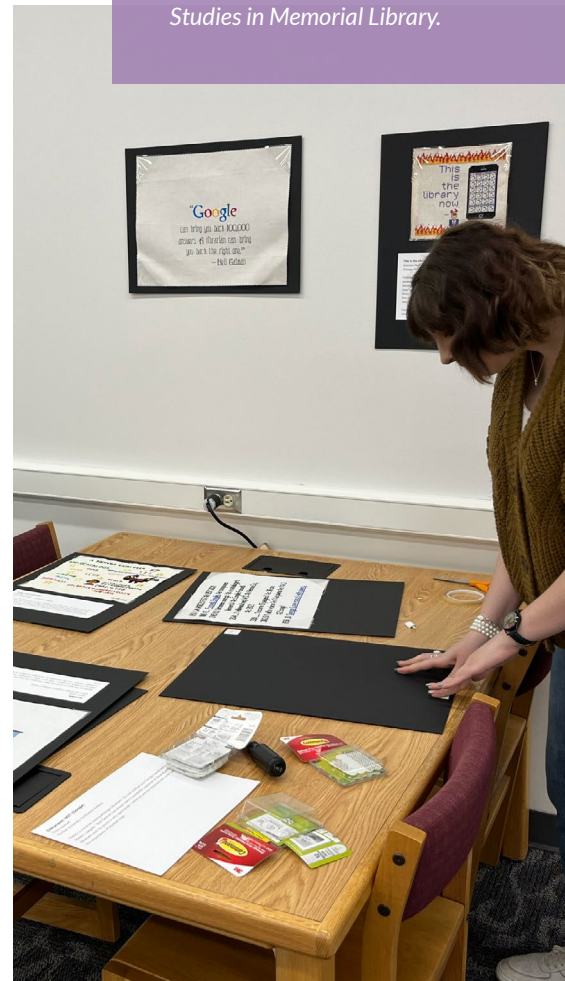
Pictured from left to right: Metadata librarian Bobby Bothmann speaks at the “Unseen Labor Exhibit”. Archives Technician Adam Smith and Archives Graduate Assistant Kayla Brinkman install the exhibit outside the Marilyn J. Lass Center for Minnesota Studies in Memorial Library.

“Unseen Labor” Exhibit

During the month of April through May 8th, Library Services is hosting a free public art exhibit that showcases a library community-organized art project titled “Unseen Labor.” The exhibit--originally created by University of Massachusetts -Amherst Metadata librarian Ann Kardos--will be on display outside Minnesota State University, Mankato’s Marilyn J. Lass Center for Minnesota Studies. Exhibit hours are the same as [library hours](#).

“Unseen Labor” is part of [Research Month at Minnesota State Mankato](#). The exhibit

consists of cross stitch and embroidery pieces that share stories about libraries, the theme of unseen labor, the work that metadata librarians do, projects they are proud of, and more. Approximately 35 creators from a wide variety of libraries participated in the project: academic, public, museum libraries, and archives, from around the United States, Canada, and the United Kingdom including Minnesota State Mankato’s catalog and metadata librarian Bobby Bothmann. Bothmann was one of the contributors to the showcase and led the effort to bring the display to campus.



Critical Friendship in Norway

Four colleagues from across campus come together to empower each others' research and their students' learning—and form new bonds in the process.

This winter, Library Services Department Chair Jenny Turner, Assistant Director of First-Year Writing Kelly Moreland, Director of Multilingual Writing Sarah Henderson Lee, and Professor of Rhetoric & Composition Kirsti Cole traveled to Norway for Writing Research Across Borders. At this tri-annual, international conference, the group took advantage of an opportunity to learn from “people who teach writing in various contexts across the world” and hosted a presentation on the “critical friendship” the four have formed between information literacy and writing instruction at Minnesota State University, Mankato.

The idea for the presentation grew from research Henderson Lee conducted in TESOL (Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages) related to critical friendship—a collaborative framework used in the field of applied linguistics—whose findings she brought to her colleague Kirsti Cole. Moreland was hired shortly after to direct the First-Year Writing program, and a friendship took off from there.

Cole, Henderson Lee, and Moreland used each

other as “sounding boards...to do some major curriculum revisions,” said Henderson Lee.

It wasn't long before Moreland got to know Turner and introduced her to the group's emerging practice. Thanks to the budding feedback system between Turner in Library Services and her colleagues in the English Department, the First-Year Writing curriculum was overhauled—a project only possible because of the shared expertise of the four professionals in their fields.

“What the critical friendship framework allowed us to do,” said Henderson Lee, “is bring in four individual experts who respect each other and who can speak to the value of their expertise area for a particular context.”

Moreland added, “We've been able to revise [the curriculum] into something we love, and into something we were proud to share across the University and this international conference.”

For this group, something as simple as sharing information and feedback freely has been liberating. Said Moreland, “If you can find your people...you can create things like curriculum or research better than anything that one person could do alone.”

While already having accomplished much at MNSU, the group is not content to stop at the First-Year Writing program. “We're in this

place of talking about things like, ‘what can we accomplish in the Library?’” said Moreland. “We’re expanding what we get to do because we’ve gotten to know each other and have a stake in each other’s professional goals and want to build on that.”

Turner couldn’t agree more. “A key piece is that we listen to each other. We’re learning from each other and about each other as we go.” This listening and learning has allowed Turner to realize her goal of teaching a class on information literacy for Teaching Assistants. These English 101 instructors, Turner said, “are supposed to teach information literacy yet often come from a writing background instead of that of teaching [information literacy].” She has “seen potential for engaging with the Teaching Assistants, and to help them understand information literacy so they can better teach English 101 students.”

For her part, Moreland has “completely revamped” her English 625 Composition Theory course required for many graduate students studying English-related fields. These changes, “rather than tangentially talking about

the theory of the field, specifically introduce Assistants to what’s happening in English 101, its learning outcomes and theory that informs that outcome” to better support graduate students’ teaching as “informed by current research in the field.”

“We started this friendship focused on first year writing, but it’s naturally allowed us to improve our graduate education as well,” added Henderson Lee, whose proudest impact is how her critical friendship serves as a model for graduate Teaching Assistants. “We now have a group of peer mentors in their second year of teaching who have started to implement practices of critical friendship within their own group, and model the work and research we have done. That’s been really exciting to see.”

Turner added that this kind of modeling teaches students to “invite librarians into your conversations, curriculums, and classes. We’re training them for the future.”

The group’s work on critical friendship has led to brainstorming ways to “share more about writing and information literacy broader campus,”



Pictured from left to right: Assistant Director of First-Year Writing Kelly Moreland, Professor of Rhetoric & Composition Kirsti Cole, Director of Multilingual Writing Sarah Henderson Lee, and Library Services Department Chair Jenny Turner in Norway.

said Moreland—including a book proposal and a possible summer institute for educators interested in forming their own critical friendship group.

But at the end of the day, the group wants “to help bring our knowledge of writing and information literacy across campus to help improve instruction.”

“Faculty are eager for models of positive collaboration. There’s still a lot of siloing in

academia when it comes to expertise areas,” said Henderson Lee.

Turner added that “It’s like our little organically grown plant.” The question now is, “How can we take what we have here and make it work anywhere?”

The group would like to thank Anne Dahlman in Global Education and their department deans, Chris Brown and Chris Corley, for their support in their presentation and work in this exciting new model for collaboration.

Changes are Coming to Memorial Library

Library Services is carefully and systematically reducing its physical collection to create additional student learning spaces and to address upcoming changes to the campus landscape.

When Armstrong Hall is replaced with a building that has a smaller footprint, space in Memorial Library will help meet the classroom needs for the University.

Deselection occurs regularly at all libraries, including within Memorial Library. In Spring 2023 a reduction pilot plan was launched in the Library’s General Collection. The plan follows appropriate professional protocols and responds to current Library & Learning and University goals. The pilot will inform the development of a timeline for the overall reduction process. During this project, the library will likely have empty shelves in parts of the collection. This project is expected to take two years to complete.

Librarians have adopted a 20/10 threshold for this endeavor. That means we have identified materials that have not been checked out in the past 20 years (this includes not pulled off the shelf, scanned, or reshelved), as well as those that have never been circulated and have been in the collection for 10 or more years for reduction. Usage is one of the key considerations for deselection as well as availability in other libraries in Minnesota.

There will be opportunities for campus feedback on the deselection of resources. Library Faculty will work with their [liaison departments](#) to communicate about the project. As the collection is reviewed and consolidated, we will continue to acquire new print and electronic materials to maintain a relevant, responsive, and accessible collection. Students, faculty, staff, and the community will also continue to have access to the resources they depend on from the library. Questions about the project can be sent to: Libraryproject@mnsu.libanswers.com or Library Administration, 507-389-5952. For more information visit the [Physical Collection Reduction Project website](#).



Open Educational Resources Support Students, Empower Faculty

This summer, are you planning to refresh your fall courses or looking for a sabbatical project? How about exploring incorporating Open Educational Resource (OER) materials into your classroom? Not only do OER materials lower textbook costs for students, but they can help to support DEI and Equity 2030 activities on campus.

An Open Education Network (OEN) Webinar will be offered on May 15, 2023, at 2:30 p.m. This is a paid professional development opportunity. The webinar will allow attendees to learn about open educational resources, creative commons licensing, and the work of the Open Textbook Library at the University of Minnesota. Attendees will receive a link to review an open textbook located in the Open Textbook Library (open.umn.edu) and receive a \$200 stipend once the review is

Presidential Medal

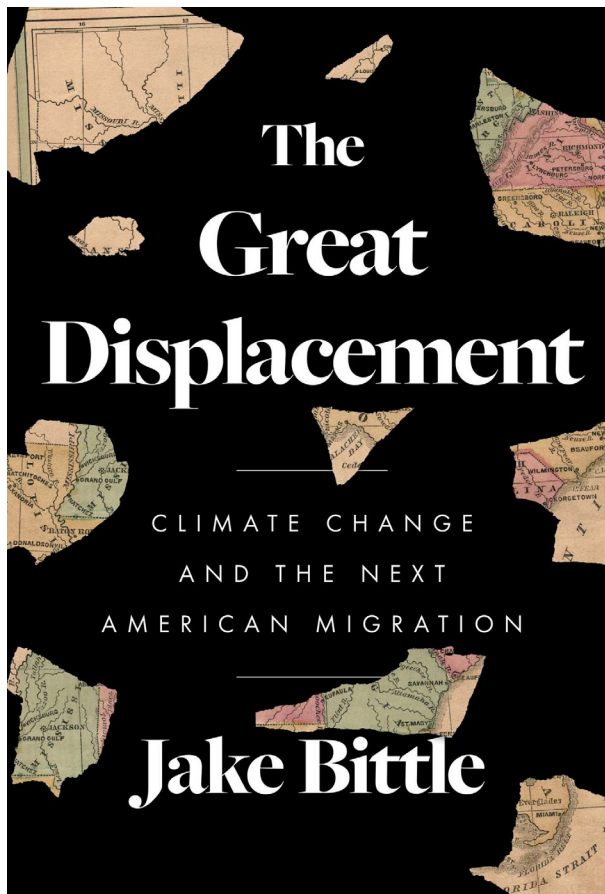
In late February, Dean Corley accepted a “Presidential Medal” from Student Government President Emma Zellmer and Vice President Idman Ibrahim on behalf of Library Services. Student Government leaders recognized Library Services for the Department’s responsiveness to the students, and their ability to meet with students to understand current needs.

completed. [Register Here.](#)

Faculty can also explore how the library can help lower the cost of course materials. Options include adding textbooks to the [Library Reserves](#) program or working with librarians to identify a custom selection of course readings. For more information on open resources, visit the [OER Library Guide](#).

New Climate Justice Books

The Library's Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging (DEIB) committee held its third annual March Madness book selection voting endeavor to choose a shared reading title for the 2023-2024 academic year. In recognition of the Honors Program's colloquium topic Climate Change, the focus for next year is a book examining climate justice, looking at the social racial, and environmental aspects of climate change.



To support the book selection process Library Services added several [climate justice books](#) for students and other researchers to borrow and read. The winning selection for this year is Jake Bittle's *The Great Displacement: Climate Change and the Next American Migration* (Simon and Schuster, 2023). Bittle's book



Browse new books

New books are constantly being added to the Library collection. Find these titles on the First Floor New Books or Best Sellers shelves, or browse online for a live feed of titles ranging from academic text to popular fiction, all brand new to Memorial Library.

[Click here](#)

explores the assertion that over the next 50 years millions of Americans will be caught up in a forced displacement due to the ravages of climate change in what could become the largest internal migration in United States history.

If you would like to join the Library's book discussions next fall, contact the Library Administration Office at 507-389-5952 or AskRef@mnsu.edu.

Aerial Photo Collections Take Flight

Modern librarianship transforms an unassuming collection of photographs into a cross-disciplinary treasure trove.

In 2010, stacks of cardboard boxes waited to be recycled in a MnDOT system building—but were rescued by Geography Department professor Dr. Martin Mitchell and former Map Technician Harry Perkins. As it turned out, the boxes contained over 27,000 unique aerial photos taken of south-central Minnesota between 1957-2006. But while these photos were potentially useful, their sheer number made it extremely challenging for users to find and access specific photos that would serve their needs.

This is where Map Technician Nicole Smith came in. Smith began the long process of digitizing the photos for entry in the Memorial Library collection and soon found that cataloging wasn't enough.

“I had a graduate student that needed to use [the photos] but there was no way to navigate the collection...it didn't have indexing,” said Smith.

This kicked off a new project: geolocating. Along with Library Services student workers and Graduate Assistants, Smith began adding metadata to the photos that would render them searchable and thus, usable.

Said Smith, “This collection fills gaps where federal air photos were taken of the county, along with more recent satellite imagery. Whether it's someone interested in delineating wetlands or looking at why their basement is flooding and seeing that there's a field tiling line. It can also be something like civil engineers knowing whether a site is suitable for construction.”

A first major user of the project was the City of Mankato.

Dr. Cindy Miller, a Geography Department collaborator, also serves on the Mankato Brownfields advisory committee. Said Smith, “The City of Mankato had a site they wanted to investigate...and Dr. Miller was able to bring up this collection. Dr. Miller had already been using this collection in her environmental hazards course.”

“The most important point for us is to get the community involved.”

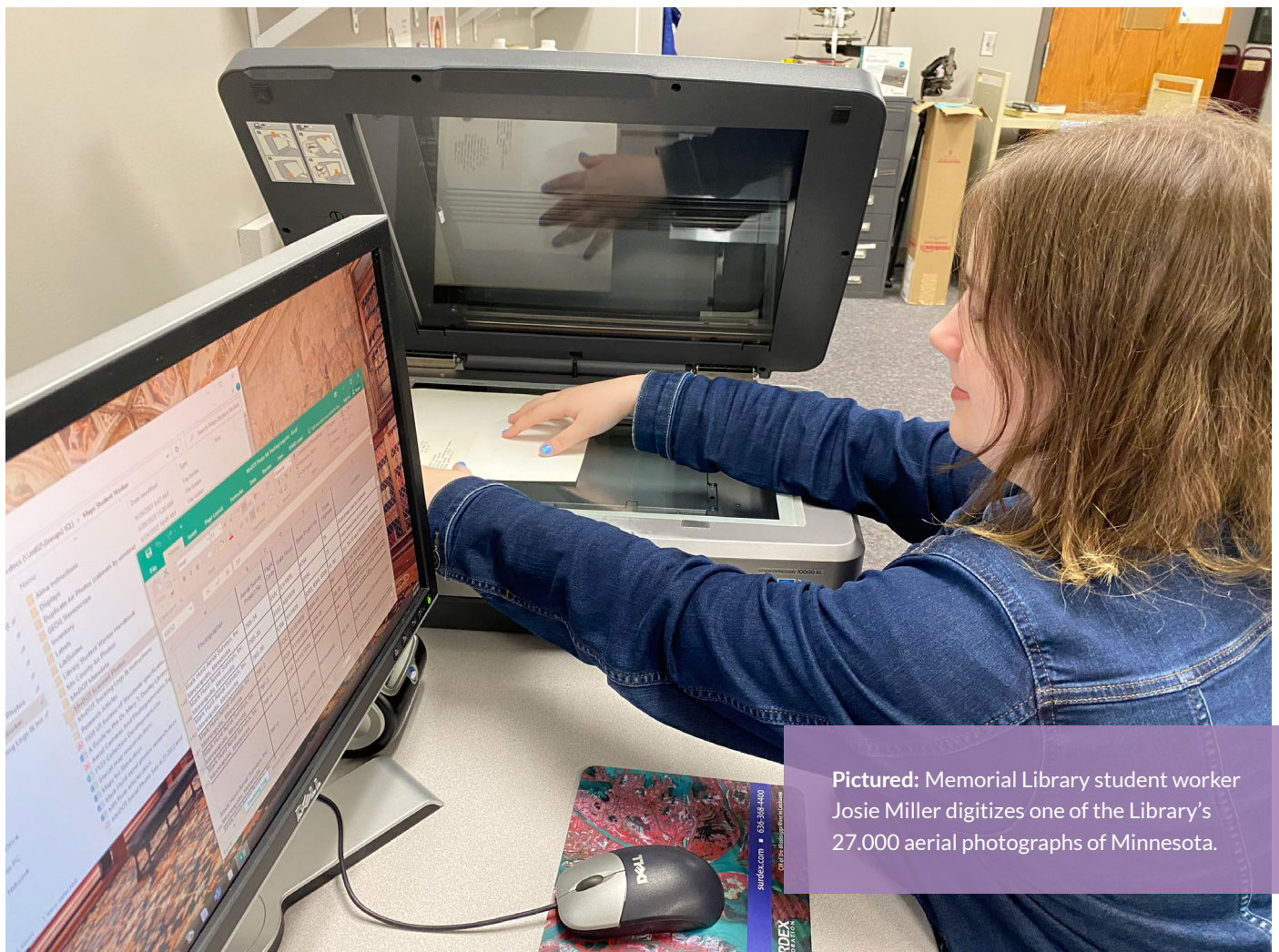
Through Miller, “the city got to see the value of these collections,” Government Documents and Maps Librarian Evan Rusch said. “It's through working with Geography that we were able to make the connection to the city and help them with their issues.”

But for Smith, Mankato is just the beginning. “It’s adding to the value of other collections out there,” she said. “Because for example, when [the City of Mankato] is doing an environmental site assessment, they need an image from every decade going back to the first case of environmental hazard, and sometimes they don’t always have that one image from a decade they need. So this is allowing them to do that and make our community better.”

“The most important point for us is the community getting involved,” said Smith. “Where we envision this set and whole collection being used is to answer those questions our community has about or urban and rural landscapes.”

Smith and Rusch see collections like this one aiding in research into agriculture, local history, urban studies, genealogy, and more. Smith has “had undergrads use it for research projects hypothetically engineering a bike trail through an area. I’ve had farmers call in to see what their land looks like and to answer questions about easements.

Smith’s work alongside that of student workers and graduate students layering metadata onto the photosets make them “unique” to other sets of their kind. “There’s more than just the photos themselves,” she said. “I’m looking forward to the fact that we have moved it into the GIS realm and so those with the capabilities



Pictured: Memorial Library student worker Josie Miller digitizes one of the Library’s 27,000 aerial photographs of Minnesota.

can layer other data sets with it to discover and answer additional questions.”

The photosets are currently being scanned in chronological order with about 40% already catalogued and searchable. But if researchers need more recent photos, they can request that Smith and her team move to other periods of time.

For example, “We were scanning in the 80’s, but we started scanning later sets in the 90’s and early 2000’s for the City of Mankato,” Smith said. A single flight’s worth of photos—over 600—can take around a month to scan, so turnaround time should be expected with requests. Three student workers scan photos every week, with some having been trained to then assess photos to “identify key features that we use in the keywords” after referencing with an existing index. A web-based GIS tool created by graduate student Ira Raber ‘22 is then updated every month with this new information, giving online users access to newly digitized imagery. This same process is repeated for every handwritten note or document associated with images.

Smith had never planned for this level of involvement when she began processing the photos. “We never knew how far this collection would go. At first it was usually graduate students or maybe a DNR staff person coming in, but then it really grew as we started getting more input from the geography department—and we decided to put more staffing and resources into it.”

Smith acknowledged that work is also supported by graduate assistants such as Kaylesa Jervis, who creates educational instruction and resource materials related to the collection “so that anyone can have access to those

kind of pro tips on how to interpret air photos, and be even more user friendly to the community.” Undergraduate student assistants Samuel Lemma ‘21, Britney Hartmann ‘22, Jasmyne Fisher ‘24, Jack Andersen ‘25, and Josie Miller ‘26 make this digitization project possible with their contributions. “They do much of the tedious work of scanning and recording metadata for individual photos,” said Rusch, “but they are also the project’s eyes and ears, catching unique elements, oddities, or other information in the photos that might be of use to researchers. Their efforts are central to the process of digitization, and their observational contributions enrich this valuable collection in ways that will support research and discovery for years to come.”

This project, according to Rusch, is a showcase of modern librarianship. Said Rusch, “There’s all sorts of information that exists out there that exists someplace, and somebody’s doing their spring cleaning and it just gets thrown away. This is not only preserving that information, but now we can see how it can be used, and it’s pretty exciting.”

“There’s information that would be lost to the world if it didn’t have somebody to acquire it and make sense of it. When you think about what a library of the future is, what do libraries do? This is it.”

Interested readers can access the collection on [Cornerstone](#) and contact Nicole Smith at nicole.smith.3@mnsu.edu or 507-389-1288 for questions on the collection and its applications.

Southwest Corner

The Southwest Corner on the first floor of Memorial Library has recently been re-imagined as flexible study area that may occasionally be reserved for events and Library instruction—and has already hosted several exciting events this Spring semester.

Black History Storytime

In February 2023, Library Services partnered with BalenciaSariah Crosby, Interim Director of African American Affairs to bring Black stories to life in Memorial Library for Black History Month. Elementary school children and their families came to the Southwest Corner and the Educational Resource Center for activities, snacks, and Black-focused books brought to life—and were even paid a visit by Stomper himself.

Good Thunder Reading Series

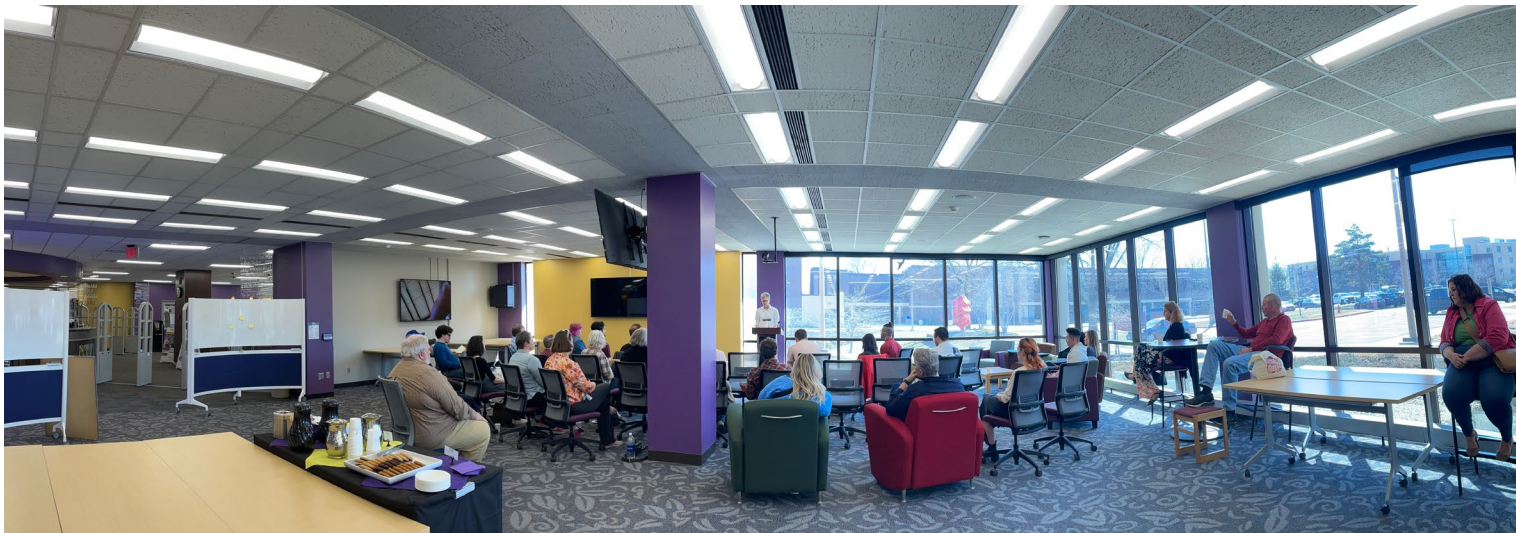
On March 27, the [Good Thunder Reading Series](#) found a home for its latest writing workshop in the Southwest Corner, marking the first time the Reading Series has held an event in Memorial Library. Visiting author Toni Jenson hosted an hour-long conversation and poetry exercise for about 20 participants in a roundtable format in this free event open to the public. Keep an eye out for more collaborations between Good Thunder and Memorial Library in the future!

Thesis Readings

As part of its growing relationship with the Department of English, (see “Critical Friendship in Norway”) Library Services held a thesis reading program on Saturday, April 8, for two Creative Writing Masters of Fine Arts students. True Dabill and Jack Harris each presented a 25-minute reading

from their thesis projects—full-length novels of fiction—and answered questions from an audience of faculty, staff, and community members. This event satisfied graduation requirements and gave their work of the last three years a platform both in-person and livestreamed on the Southwest Corner’s built-in Zoom equipment.





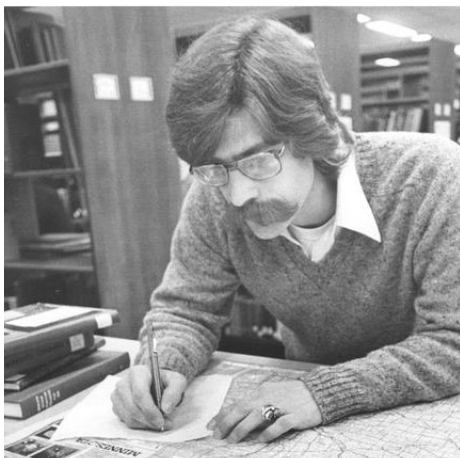
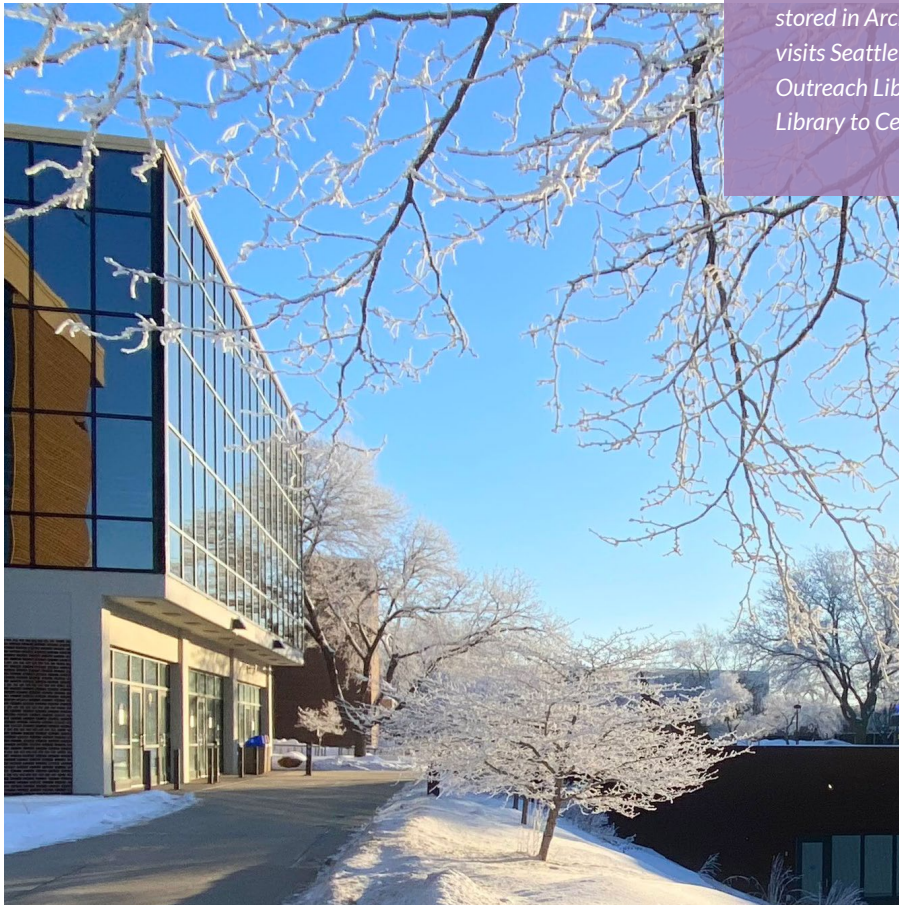
Though the Southwest Corner's primary purpose is as a student study area, it also represents an opportunity to build partnerships with Library & Learning through its spaces. If you or your campus unit would like to inquire about Southwest Corner usage or partnering with the Library, please contact Monika Antonelli (monika.antonelli@mnsu.edu) or Michael Gutiérrez (michael.gutierrez@mnsu.edu).



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Pictured from social media: Memorial Library after a winter hoarfrost, a decades-old University pride sweater stored in Archives, Graduate Assistant Jack Harris visits Seattle Public Library, maps research in the 70's, Outreach Librarian Monika Antonelli brings the Pop-Up Library to Centennial Student Union.



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