



The Network Newsletter – Ebulletin 293, 10 February 2020

Events

Events have been added to the Courses & Events pages on The Network website – see: <http://www.seapn.org.uk/courses>.

Tackling social and digital exclusion – Libraries, Museums, Archives and Cultural and Heritage Organisations

“Boost for prison reading project ...”

https://www.spurgeons.org/prisons/?doing_wp_cron=1579107976.3104560375213623046875

(Source: Clinks *Light Lunch*, 617, 17 Jan 2020)

“A new partnership between a prison reading scheme promoted by Spurgeons Children’s Charity, a community children’s book group, a local book shop and East Sussex County Council has proved a major boost in spreading the joy of reading between fathers in prison and their children.

The StoryBook Dads programme has been run by the library at HMP Lewes, in Sussex, for nine years but now Lewes Children’s Book Group has come in with some funding to help the library enable more children and families supported by the Spurgeons Visitor Centre to take home a wider range of books.

This very welcome intervention has been further boosted by Lewes bookshop Bags of Books, which is offering books at discounted rates to make the funding stretch further.”

“Thunder Bay Public Library praised by Lieutenant Governor of Ontario

https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/thunder-bay/thunder-bay-library-lg-praise-1.5433704?_vfz=medium%3Dsharebar

(Source: email from John Pateman, 22 Jan 2020)

“Fifty years ago, members of the Thunder Bay Public Library would have come to their local branch to read the latest periodicals, discover a new novel, or pore over old maps and newspaper clippings,’ Elizabeth Dowdeswell wrote. ‘On a Friday in 2019, the people of Thunder Bay can walk into their public library and be seen by a nurse. On Tuesdays and Thursdays, they can meet with a social worker. And on any day of the week, the public can access Indigenous Knowledge Centres.’

Thunder Bay, she wrote, faces challenges such as confronting racism and addressing the deaths of young Indigenous people in the city. But

the library, Dowdeswell noted, has made itself central to the movement for a safer and more inclusive future.”

Tackling social and digital exclusion – Other Agencies

“Why you don’t see many black and ethnic minority faces in cultural spaces – and what happens if you call out the system”

https://theconversation.com/why-you-dont-see-many-black-and-ethnic-minority-faces-in-cultural-spaces-and-what-happens-if-you-call-out-the-system-128792?utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Latest%20from%20The%20Conversation%20for%20January%202017%202020%20-%201510914383&utm_content=Latest%20from%20The%20Conversation%20for%20January%2017%202020%20-%201510914383+CID_9d12f235d73595af631e23fd783970b4&utm_source=campaign_monitor_uk&utm_term=Why%20you%20dont%20see%20many%20black%20and%20ethnic%20minority%20faces%20in%20cultural%20spaces%20and%20what%20happens%20if%20you%20call%20out%20the%20system

(Source: *The Conversation*, 17 Jan 2020)

Very interesting article looking at the failure of many attempts to diversify ‘cultural spaces’. One of the issues it considers is funding, and the problems of short-term, non-core money:

“Although some institutions have introduced diversity initiatives, progress seems slow and tied up to arts funding structures that are temporary and one directional – ultimately serving the institutions rather than the ethnic minorities they seek to engage. Organisations may gain funding by appealing to funders’ diversity agendas, but their engagement with ethnic minority communities and artists is rarely sustainable or lasting, leaving creatives feeling exploited and perhaps further marginalised.”

The article concludes:

“A cultural sector that is able to represent Britain’s diverse communities and respond to new digital means of production and distribution cannot happen without a diverse workforce, institutions that conceptualise diversity as a core strength, and funding bodies that facilitate long-term ethnic equality in the sector rather than short-lived diversity initiatives.”

“Laurence Fox: thanks for the chance to talk about the inequality that is rife in the UK’s entertainment industry”

https://theconversation.com/laurence-fox-thanks-for-the-chance-to-talk-about-the-inequality-that-is-rife-in-the-uks-entertainment-industry-130310?utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Latest%20from%20The%20Conversation%20for%20January%2022%202020%20-%201514914426&utm_content=Latest%20from%20The%20Conversation%20for%20January%2022%202020%20-%201514914426+CID_008d60915e7c0e2c2e6068e5d8051eda&utm_source=campaign_monitor_uk&utm_term=Laurence%20Fox%20thanks%20for%20the%20chance%20to%20talk%20about%20the%20inequality%20that%20is%20rife%20in%20the%20UKs%20entertainment%20industry

(Source: *The Conversation*, 22 Jan 2020)

Interesting and challenging article that takes on actor Laurence Fox’s sweeping statements about race and class (you may well have seen other media coverage of this recently).

“How we can use our culture to find common ground in divided times”

https://www.jrf.org.uk/blog/how-we-can-use-our-culture-find-common-ground-divided-times?utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=JRF%20weekly%20round-up%20wc%2027120&utm_content=JRF%20weekly%20round-up%20wc%2027120+CID_401d18cbe163b21ec7a1f715b847255e&utm_source=Email%20marketing%20software&utm_term=Read%20Abigails%20blog

(Source: JRF *Weekly round-up*, 31 Jan 2020)

New blogpost from JRF, promoting their new exhibition, “Picture Britain: Our People Our Poverty”:

“Picture Britain: Our People Our Poverty is our attempt to use culture to find the common ground on the issue of poverty in the UK and one, we hope, that can start to build understanding and connection with more people, so that we can find a solution to this injustice.”

Bromley Briefings Prison Factfile

<http://www.prisonreformtrust.org.uk/portals/0/documents/bromley%20briefings/Winter%202019%20Factfile%20web.pdf>

(Source: National Criminal Justice Arts Alliance Newsletter, Jan 2020)

The Winter 2019 edition of this key reference tool has just been published. It opens with “[...] a detailed ‘long view’ of how sentencing for the most serious crime has become dramatically more severe over the last two decades.” [p4]

“The Book Truck Brings Free Books to Thousands of L.A. Students”

<https://www.slj.com/?detailStory=Book-Truck-Brings-Books-to-LA-Students-bookmobile-YA-teens-libraries-literacy>

(Source: email from Anne Harding, 8 Feb 2020)

Terrific article about Book Truck [see: <https://thebooktruck.org/>]:

“[...] a peer-to-peer literacy nonprofit. The traveling bookmobile gives away high-demand YA titles to teens who are in foster care, experiencing homelessness, or come from low-income families.”

Lives not knives: young people’s perspectives on knife crime

<https://3bx16p38bchl32s0e12di03h-wpengine.netdna-ssl.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/Lives-Not-Knives.pdf>

(Source: Clinks *Light Lunch*, 620, 7 Feb 2020)

Important new report from NACRO:

“The young people told us that much knife-carrying is driven by fear, and everyone we spoke to knew someone that had been the victim of knife crime, or carried a knife. They feel unprotected by the police, and do not believe that harsher penalties would deter people who carry knives out of fear. They told us they have very little to do in their spare time and few positive role models, and feel that the issue is inextricably linked to poverty and lack of opportunity/aspiration.” [p5]

Amongst the recommendations, those for local authorities/commissioners include:

- “Provide additional support for:
 - Looked after children and children excluded from school, including mentoring and structured support around the building of resilience and life skills.
 - Young people who are either already involved or at risk of becoming involved in county lines activity.
- Prioritise investment in the provision of suitable venues and extra curricular activities of interest to young people.” [p6]

“Raising the voices of people with lived experience”

<https://www.changing-lives.org.uk/news-stories/raising-the-voices-of-people-with-lived-experience/>

(Source: Clinks *Light Lunch*, 620, 7 Feb 2020)

Interesting, brief blogpost from *Changing Lives** stressing the importance of involving people who have experienced various issues in policy-making.

* “Changing Lives is a national, registered charity which provides specialist support for thousands of vulnerable people and their families.” [see:

<https://www.changing-lives.org.uk/>]

Health & Wellbeing issues – Libraries, Museums, Archives and Cultural and Heritage Organisations

“Day in the Life: Alison Rainton”

<https://www.culturehealthandwellbeing.org.uk/news/day-life/day-life-alison-rainton>

(Source: *Culture, Health and Wellbeing Alliance Bulletin*, Jan 2020)

Interesting brief article about Norfolk Libraries’ work:

“part of my role is ...supporting libraries so they can deliver health and wellbeing activities, ranging from regular groups such as *colour me calm*, to one off activities like wellbeing days with the library smoothie bike!”

Health & Wellbeing issues – Other Agencies

Clinks and RECOOP submission to the Justice Select Committee’s enquiry into the ageing prison population

<https://www.clinks.org/sites/default/files/2020-01/Clinks%20Response%20-%20ageing%20prison%20population.pdf>

(Source: Clinks *Light Lunch*, 619, 31 Jan 2020)

“Clinks has published its joint response with RECOOP to the Justice Select Committee’s enquiry into the ageing prison population. Older people are the fastest growing age group in the prison population. There are triple the number of people aged 60 and over in prison than there were 16 years ago, and one in six people in prison (16%) are aged 50 and over. Our response highlights the specific challenges that older people in prison face and gives recommendations for how the government can respond to ensure that the needs of this growing population are met.”

Migration issues – Government, Government Agencies and Local Government

Migration and Scotland

<https://researchbriefings.parliament.uk/ResearchBriefing/Summary/CDP-2020-0030>

(Source: MEMO [*Minority Ethnic Matters Overview*], 645, 10 Feb 2020)
HOC Library Debate Pack, no: CDP-2020-0030.

Very useful briefing paper for an Opposition half-day debate on Migration and Scotland, including recent stats.

Migration issues – Other Agencies

Without my family: the impact of family separation on child refugees in the UK

<https://www.refugeecouncil.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/Without-my-family-report-AW-Jan2020-LoRes.pdf>

(Source: MEMO [*Minority Ethnic Matters Overview*], 642, 20 Jan 2020)

New report:

“In this report, Amnesty International UK, the Refugee Council and Save the Children expose how the UK Government’s policy on refugee family reunion is damaging the lives of children in the UK, and how its justifications for the policy are unsubstantiated. Based on in-depth interviews with children and young people affected by the policy, and the professionals who work with them, the report shows how the UK’s policy is harming child refugees who have sought safety in this country and is denying them the fundamental right of being with their family.” [p3]

World report 2020

https://www.hrw.org/sites/default/files/world_report_download/hrw_world_report_2020_0.pdf

(Source: Just Fair Newsletter, Jan 2020)

“[This] is Human Rights Watch’s 30th annual review of human rights practices around the globe. It summarizes key human rights issues in more than 100 countries and territories worldwide, drawing on events from late 2018 through November 2019.” [p viii]

“How seeking asylum and being detained impacted my mental health”

<https://youngminds.org.uk/blog/how-seeking-asylum-and-being-detained-impacted-my-mental-health/>

(Source: email from YoungMinds, Feb 2020)

Grim story from YoungMinds:

“As a young man, Mustapha fled his home country to avoid religious persecution. He shares with us how seeking asylum and being detained in the UK impacted his mental health.”

LGBTQ+ issues – Libraries, Museums, Archives and Cultural and Heritage Organisations

“Top 100 Changemakers 2020: Literacy and education”

<https://www.bigissue.com/latest/changemakers-2020-literacy-and-education/>

(Source: *Public Libraries News*, 19 Jan 2020)

Included in *The Big Issue*'s Changemakers Top 100 for 2020 is Drag Queen Story Time (with a link to their own website, <https://dragqueenstorytime.com/>).

Broader issues – Libraries, Museums, Archives and Cultural and Heritage Organisations

“[Missouri] Bill Proposes Parental Review Board for “Age-Inappropriate” Material, Legal Penalties for Noncompliance”

https://www.libraryjournal.com/?detailStory=MO-Bill-Proposes-Parental-Review-Board-for-Age-Inappropriate-Material-Legal-Penalties-for-Noncompliance&utm_source=Marketing&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=january21LJXpress

(Source: *LJXpress – Library Journal*, 21 Jan 2020)

“A bill filed this week in Missouri would give a specially appointed parental board oversight over public library materials deemed inappropriate for minors and proposes legal ramifications for librarians who don't comply—leaving library leadership, workers, and supporters up in arms [...].”

The Bill's instigator has made it clear, according to the article, that:

“[...] the bill is not meant to censor material. In several interviews with local news outlets, he stated that his issues are not about library materials, but programming—specifically, Drag Queen Story Hour, which has prompted both anger and support across the country. ‘I'm trying to figure out a way for parents to have recourse if...the library board is saying “Hey, we're OK with this” or even promoting it, which has happened [...].’”

Broader issues – Other Agencies

“The 2020 Read for Empathy Book Collections”

<https://www.empathylab.uk/2020-read-for-empathy-collections>

(Source: email from EmpathyLab, 22 Jan 2020)

Launched 22 Jan:

“Our latest Read for Empathy Book Collections feature 50 superb books; 33 for 4-11 year olds and 17 for 12-16 year olds.

Some illuminate the experience of people from a range of cultures or life circumstances.

Others help children explore emotions, so they can understand how other people feel.

Several reflect stories of our time, such as the refugee experience, or coping with anxiety.

All are engaging and thought provoking.”