

Scandinavian Library Quarterly



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This issue

LIBRARIES AND WELL-BEING

UPDATES ON PUBLIC AND RESEARCH LIBRARIES IN SCANDINAVIA

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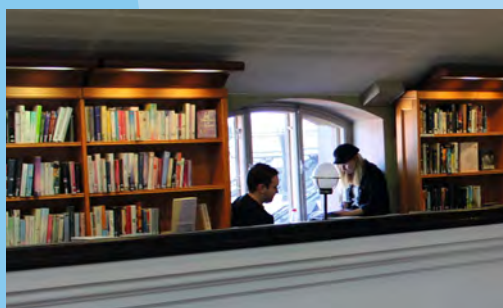
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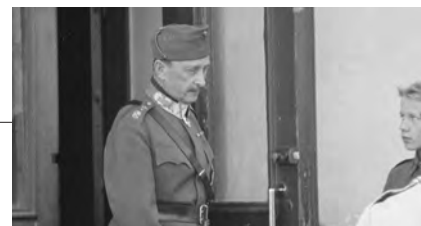
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● Libraries and well-being

This is a very special year for SLQ.

All of 2016, Iceland will participate with articles and we are very happy to be able to offer our readers an Icelandic view! However, as you can read in Christina Jönsson Adrial's editorial on the next page, we also have something to be very unhappy about: This year is SLQ's very last year. We will try to make the best of this special year by offering you interesting and informative articles.

This particular issue of SLQ is, among other things, about libraries and well-being. As you will see when you read our articles, libraries and well-being are certainly related.

Some of our co-workers that will participate in the IFLA conference this August will bring copies of this issue to be distributed there so that new readers will get to read about Scandinavian libraries. We hope they will appreciate it as much as our regular readers and I want to send a Thank You to every single one of the Scandinavian IFLA-participants that bring copies of SLQ in their luggage – all the way to Ohio.

I hope you will all enjoy reading this issue of SLQ. The next issue, NO 3 2016, will reach you in the beginning of October.



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The library as a 'free zone'

Every now and then, we take a step back from our everyday assignments and become incredibly aware of the business we work in. Freedom of speech and freedom of opinion – that is what we work with. For me and many others, this has become even clearer over recent years in a Europe with acts of terrorism and refugees. The world is closing in on us, ever present in our daily lives – and democratic principles are put to the test.



Christina Jönsson
Adrial

The public libraries in Sweden – and undoubtedly many other places – have shown moral courage and opened up for people fleeing. They have shown that they are the free zones they should be. How many other places can you think of where you can go without having to buy something or having someone ask you why you are there?

Being able to get hold of information and express opinions without being monitored are democratic rights. Perhaps here in Scandinavia this is such a given right that we have become naive and do not pay attention to the fact that integrity is something we must protect. Freedom of opinion and integrity must be constantly defended.

Search engines' algorithms influence what we find. Try searching for the same word at home on your own computer and then again at the library. The results will be different. The algorithms track our previous searches and adapt the result so we end up in a filter bubble.

The fact that our searches are saved may be irritating for the majority of us, but can be dangerous for others. People living in exile have a lot to lose if the authorities in their own country can monitor them electronically, as is the case for vulnerable children living in controlling families or individuals living under threat.

The library must be available to all and therefore everybody must feel secure in the library's environment.

IFLA recommendations

The International Library Manifesto (UNESCO/IFLA) states that libraries and information services shall protect each user's right to integrity and confidentiality regarding the information that is sought or gathered and the resources used, borrowed, acquired or transferred.

In August 2015, the IFLA Statement on Privacy in the Library was issued. The recommendations do not simply touch upon the library environment, they also concern the

librarian's task to actively impart knowledge of how to protect your integrity in the digital environment that forms part of the media and information awareness – known as "digital self-defence".

Nobody can do everything, but everybody can do something. At my workplace, we have started by changing the internet statistics tool to one that does not track the individual user's search patterns. We are also checking all the public computers to make sure that it is not possible to install any device that can be used to gain access to other users' information. A simple checklist is a good start for this. Hopefully, this will lead to many people feeling secure and security is essential to our well-being.

Final edition of SLQ

Openness and the universal right to education is something the Scandinavian library ethos is based upon and an indirect reason behind the creation of the Scandinavian Library Quarterly (previously Scandinavian Public Library Quarterly) almost 50 years ago. The national library authorities wanted to spread the good Scandinavian example to other countries, setting about this by creating an English-language publication. The same that you are now holding in your hand, or have before you on the screen.

But the discussion is taking a new direction and as of the end of the year, the exchange will take place in other forums than SLQ. December 2016 will see the final edition of SLQ, the theme naturally being the future. Those wishing to study the past, in the spirit of openness, we have published every edition from 1968 onwards on slq.nu. Maybe you will find that most things are familiar, forms and concepts change, but the core and tasks of the library remain the same.

Christina Jönsson Adrial
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Happy together

Libraries create well-being through connections, collaboration and community. Collaboration between libraries, their connections to other local actors and functioning as a meeting place in their own area strengthens the local community. The library also facilitates networking among associations, organizations and individual patrons.

The theme of the 2016 IFLA Congress, *Connections, Collaboration and Community*, is thus related to the library's communal role in many ways. If the residents are able to influence and participate in the planning of the premises and services, it is more likely that they will feel like the library is their own and commit to its functions. The sense of community increases the feeling of security and promotes the well-being of community members through all of these processes.

It is also a question of observing and surveying the needs of the local surroundings. People often think that library services, and services in general, are more impartial if the same types of services are offered to patrons in the same way. One size does not fit all, though, and the various obstacles for using the library should be eliminated: language, senses, accessibility, attitudes.

This calls for knowledge and understanding of the patrons. It is a question of attainability, observing the needs of special groups and balancing the origins of different target groups. When the library knows its local community, the conditions for increasing the well-being of the patrons are favourable.

Patrons as partners in building the library

In the designing of the Helsinki Central Library, endeavours were made to create a community around the library in advance.

Creating community around a library located in the capital's relatively anonymous city centre is not the easiest endeavour; usually the concept of community is associated with smaller circles, but with a pro-active approach, the project has progressed well.

Working with patrons has involved networking, meetings, listening to youth, adults, civil activists and people in the field of media. Pro-active budgeting was also experimented with in the project which has helped to both implement new services proposed by the patrons, such as storybook birthday parties, and choose materials in English to put in the library's collection.

With help from the residents

Collaborative development has subsequently taken place elsewhere as well. One of the present democracy pilot projects in the City of Helsinki involves three municipal actors: the library, adult education centre and youth services, which make up the Maunulatalo cultural centre, a place where the premises and functions have been designed and events have been innovated by the area's residents through online discussions and workshops.

Other extensive library projects have been executed in close contact with patrons. The Dokk1 Mediaspace building in Aarhus, Denmark, is already a familiar place to many. The name of the library

was chosen from as many as 1,250 suggestions, but the residents were invited to take part in the planning at a much earlier time.

In the beginning, pictures were gathered online from the residents to help with creating ideas, children planned contents and premises in workshops and the architects' designs were discussed with the residents throughout the entire project.

Recently, the local high school students in Aarhus have produced chic advertising videos for the library as part of their studies. And, indeed, the locals have made the building their own – one million visits was reached already in March, 2016.

The rich chorus of experts to be heard

Connections, collaboration and community are important concepts among professionals as well. Conferences among the library directors in the capitals of the Nordic countries have united Helsinki, Copenhagen, Oslo, Reykjavik and Stockholm for years.

"We are really different as leaders and people, but we have plenty to talk about," says Tuula Haavisto, director of the Helsinki City Library, about the group's meetings.

Plans are being made for joint Nordic leadership training for the middle management of customer services. Taking advantage of a peer network will surely promote well-being and consequently in-



Päivi Jokitalo



The Öresund/Øresund Link is a bridge and tunnel connecting Sweden and Denmark. Since it opened in 2000 it has contributed to increased collaboration between the two cities Copenhagen in Denmark and Malmö in Sweden and the two cities are part of the community of the Öresund/ Øresund area.
Photo: NASA/Public domain

fluence the rest of the staff and in the end the patrons.

The social media offers handy tools for engaging in community and collaboration. When the previous *Library Act* in Finland was compiled in the 1990s, the Ministry actively listened to the voices of the field, but e-mail, public hearings and discussion forums were slower and more awkward tools than Facebook, Twitter or Instagram.

In the present reform work, workshops have been utilized but also the opportunities offered by social media to some extent. The strategy work has been a swifter process than the reform of the act. The national library strategy in Sweden is being promoted through discussions on, for example, Facebook in a group created for the purpose.

Erik Fichtelius and his partners regularly post statements, themes and thoughts that everyone interested can comment on. Annika Hjerpe, editor of *SLQ*, discloses more about the phases of the library strategy in her article. At best, a community will form around the topic in the network also, the discussions of which will guarantee that more viewpoints will be seen, the regional perspective will be brought into the open and libraries of different sizes will be able to participate.

Tools for the individual's well-being

The core process in the newest process overview of the education department in Kokkola in Finland is called *Supporting lifelong education and well-being*. The library promotes the well-being of the residents in many ways through collaboration with not only schools but cultural services too.

Culturepath is one form of collaboration

for school children in Finland, and in many places it is a part of the official curriculum. Through Culturepath, school children can attend music events and visit museums and libraries. Learning goals and well-being are often achieved in the same way.

There is concrete collaboration with athletics departments as well. In many Nordic localities, the library also loans sports equipment: kettlebells, balance boards, dumbbells, snowshoes and Nordic walking sticks. You can purchase your own once you are sure the equipment is suitable for you. Elsewhere in this issue, Sigrun Espelien Aasen writes about the role of public libraries as suppliers of information on health and promoters of health in Norway.

Above all, the library promotes mental well-being through the collections, events, knowledge and adventures it offers. Although art, or the library as a mediator of it, is not just a cog in the machine of well-being; literature also offers emotions and relaxation, which promote well-being.

Whatever the reader's intention may be, doing something you like usually makes you feel good. Pirjo Tuomi of the Oulu University of Applied Sciences in Finland writes of the beneficial impact reading has on people.

A happy community?

Swedish Minister of Culture and Democracy, Alice Bah Kuhnke, is worried about the closing down of local libraries. Libraries have the role of supporting democracy and civil society as long as no one is left outside; rather, everyone feels welcome in the library and community. A library for all – peace in the country? The Minister states in an interview for the *Bib-*

lioteksbladet magazine (3/2016) that she is afraid that democracy will be threatened if there is no library in the local area.

There is discussion in all of the Nordic countries about the library's societal responsibility and democratic role: How does the library provide opportunities for the community to voice its various opinions and viewpoints, who are these opportunities for, how can understanding be promoted among the different groups and minorities in the community? The topic is discussed in this issue by both Anders Rydell of Sweden and Ragnar Audunson of Norway who tells about the *Place* project.

How is well-being measured?

When the connections in the community work and collaboration with the patrons runs smoothly, people in all likelihood will feel better; everyone has permission to express their own thoughts and participate in discussion, everyone has space in the local library, in their own living environment.

But how does the library increase the well-being and happiness of the patron or the entire local community? How are these effects measured, how are they demonstrated?

The traditional meters alone are no longer enough. When the population is healthier and lives longer on both sides of the service counter, how do you know how much of it has to do with the library? Could this be the next theme and task whereby connections, collaboration and community will help us move forward?

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Libraries matter

At the beginning of the year, I arranged a meeting for library directors in Tampere, Finland. The title of the seminar was **Integration and multiculturalism – do libraries matter?** It was, of course, a rhetorical question, if not also perhaps slightly provocative, because libraries clearly play a role.



Susanne Ahlroth

Successful integration prevents marginalization, which can lead to both personal and social problems. New and old residents who have the opportunity to meet also get to know and understand each other better. With new friends and contacts, it is easier to learn the language, find a job, participate and understand rules and values. Libraries offer free access to material, the internet, computers and space to meet. By arranging language cafés, story hours in different languages, homework help, library bus visits to refugee reception centres etc., libraries also shoulder their responsibility to contribute to successful integration.

Books, IT, language and meeting people

The large number of asylum seekers have caused libraries in many municipalities to re-evaluate their collections, services, and their sufficiency. According to a study done in fall of 2015 by the Stockholm county regional library, newly-arrived refugees come to the library primarily to borrow books, take advantage of IT services, for language development, to read, meet with other visitors and staff, to seek help with different tasks and to obtain access to information in their own language about the society.

In the same study, staff felt that there was a lack of personnel with specialized skills, for example, language skills. There was a desire to develop language support, forms of discussion and cooperation with external actors. Staff also wanted guidelines and standardized information for asylum-seekers. It is also here that I see library management's most important task in integration work: to enable people skills particularly suited to asylum-seekers and

immigrants through providing guidelines and improving staff competence and tools.

It is a question of remembering that asylum-seekers and immigrants aren't just the receiving party. They have a lot to offer in the way of language, culture and knowledge. At the same time, the new arrivals are prospective new library users. According to an article in the Swedish newspaper *Norrköpings Tidningar*, visitors to Norrköping's city library increased last year by 45 percent. The new arrivals account for a significant amount of the increase, they have found their way to the library. They say they can connect their mobile phones and computers here and establish a lifeline to Syria, Afghanistan, Somalia and other places. They visit language cafés and borrow grammar books and driver's ed books. The driver's education book in Arabic is said to be among the top three most borrowed books.

Libraries a part of the paradise

Even the Iraqi journalist and immigrant Reband Khoshnaw, who spoke at the library directors' meeting in Tampere, testified as to how happy he became when, as a new arrival to Finland, he found *Seven Brothers* by Alexis Kivi and the folk epic *Kalevala* in Arabic at the library, and that he felt that, by reading them, he could better understand the spirit of the Finnish people. Khoshnaw thus concluded his insightful speech with a tribute to the libraries:

"According to me you have the most beautiful and perfect libraries here in Finland! Every time I speak with Finnish people, I repeat that your country, Fin-

land, is like a paradise. And today I say that also your libraries keep that standard. Libraries in this country are a part of this paradise! Now I feel happy for my children to grow up with the Finnish libraries, and feel sad because I wasn't lucky enough to have that chance myself."

Last year a record number of refugees sought asylum in Finland. Of those, 35-40 percent are expected to be granted a residence permit and move to some municipality in the country. Anyone who may doubt the value of investing in services for them, may consider the fact that behind every statistic there is a person with a history and a future. What each and every one of us do, both privately and professionally, plays a role in this.

Susanne Ahlroth
Senior Adviser
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This article is a slightly reworked version of a column in *Bibban*, the journal of Finland's Swedish Library Association, 2016:1. www.biblioteken.fi/sv/biblioteks-branschen/Bibban

The study by the Stockholm county regional library, *Biblioteket hjälper mig att komma in i samhället*, can be downloaded at www.regionbiblioteket.se. The article referred to in *Norrköpings Tidningar*, "Rekordökning på stadsbiblioteket", was published at www.nt.se on 16.1.2016.

Libraries are vital meeting places

Last autumn, the books in the library in Ramsberg, a small community in northern Västmanland, disappeared!



Anders Rydell

A group of villagers took 4,700 books from the shelves to a “secret hiding place”. The politicians in Lindesberg Municipality had decided that the residents of Ramsberg did not need their own library. The leaders of the municipality thought that a mobile library, which was to stop in Ramsberg twice a month, was sufficient.

The residents of Ramsberg did not agree, and they protested about the closure at length. Instead of seeing their books given away, distributed to other libraries and discarded, as was the plan, they decided to take action. “The books will not leave here until we know that we can keep our library!” one of the initiators told Sveriges Radio.

Not unique to Sweden

The library rebellion in the tiny village of Ramsberg, which has about 250 inhabitants, is also significant from a wider perspective. In recent decades, hundreds of libraries and local branches in Sweden have closed. Most have died a silent death. Over half of Swedish school children today lack a staffed library.

This trend is hardly unique to Sweden. When I visited one of Germany’s largest public libraries in Berlin last year, an employee explained that a large part of the librarian’s work would now be replaced by machines, which would manage the cataloguing of books. Digitisation and e-

books mean that libraries face an even bigger shift. There is a clear risk that e-books will be used as an argument to close more libraries. But thinking that mobile libraries and e-books can replace physical libraries builds on a very simplistic view of what a library actually is. What the protesters in Ramsberg mourned was not primarily the loss of the local book supply but the library as “an important meeting place” for society.

Library history as central meeting places

Limiting the role of libraries to lending stations is first and foremost ahistorical. In the long history of libraries, lending is a modern invention. The role of the library as a meeting place was much more important, and is often overlooked today. And above all, libraries played a central role in integration and identity formation.

The first major libraries in Europe were made possible by a new technique that spread from China through the Muslim world to the caliphate on the Iberian Peninsula just before the 11th century: the use of paper. Paper, which was more durable than the fragile papyrus and cheaper than parchment, was what made the Muslim translation movement possible, where many of the ancient works were saved for posterity.

Previously, old text on parchment was often rubbed out so that new text could be

written in its place, now people could start gathering knowledge instead.

The Umayyad library in Cordoba is said to have had upwards of 400,000 books – nothing even came close to that in Christian Europe.

Libraries became central meeting places, the equivalent of the ancient Greek Agora (square), for the political, philosophical and scientific conversations of the period. But they also served as bridges between cultures, where ancient philosophy, Islamic science and Indian literature met.

Libraries came to play a particularly important role for political and religious minorities. Not least for the Sephardic Jews, who were expelled from Spain and Portugal from the late 1400s, when the peninsula was recaptured by Christian rulers. The Sephardic Jews were largely the heirs and co-creators of the medieval Islamic high culture – it was often Jews who did the translations from Latin and Greek into Arabic.

Vital existential meeting places

The Sephardic Jews carried this culture of education both to the east and west. In the Eastern Mediterranean, Saloniki (now Thessaloniki) became a Sephardic learning centre, famous for its libraries, printing houses and schools. In Western Europe, many settled down in Amsterdam, which with the help of the Sephardic refu-



A book from the Rosenthaliana Library in Amsterdam, which was plundered by the Nazis and taken to the Institute for Study of the Jewish Question in Frankfurt. Some time during battle, at the end of the war, it was hit by a bullet, probably from an allied soldier.

gees would become “Europe’s printing house”.

For these refugees, libraries became vital existential meeting places, which were to play a dual role. Partly in preserving their unique culture – but also as a catalyst for integration into the new society linguistically. With the help of libraries a new identity was formed, which both preserved their culture and integrated the new era.

Refugees, immigrants and education

Libraries came to play a similar role for another group of refugees. In the 1800s, Paris became the capital of several groups of political refugees from the East. One of the first groups was the nationless Poles. For nearly a century, the free Polish litera-

ture and culture has lived on at the Bibliothèque Polonaise in Paris.

Another fascinating emigrant library came to have the same significance for the Russian culture – the Turgenjebiblioteket which was founded in 1875. Up to 1917, the library was the natural meeting place for the period’s exiled revolutionary Russians. Lenin worked as a librarian there for a while. After the Russian revolution the library was inherited by white Russian refugees: aristocrats, the bourgeois, writers and journalists.

It was these libraries in Amsterdam, Paris, Thessaloniki and other locations that became some of the first victims of Nazi looting commands during the war. By cordoning off, looting and dispersing the libraries they deprived these cultures

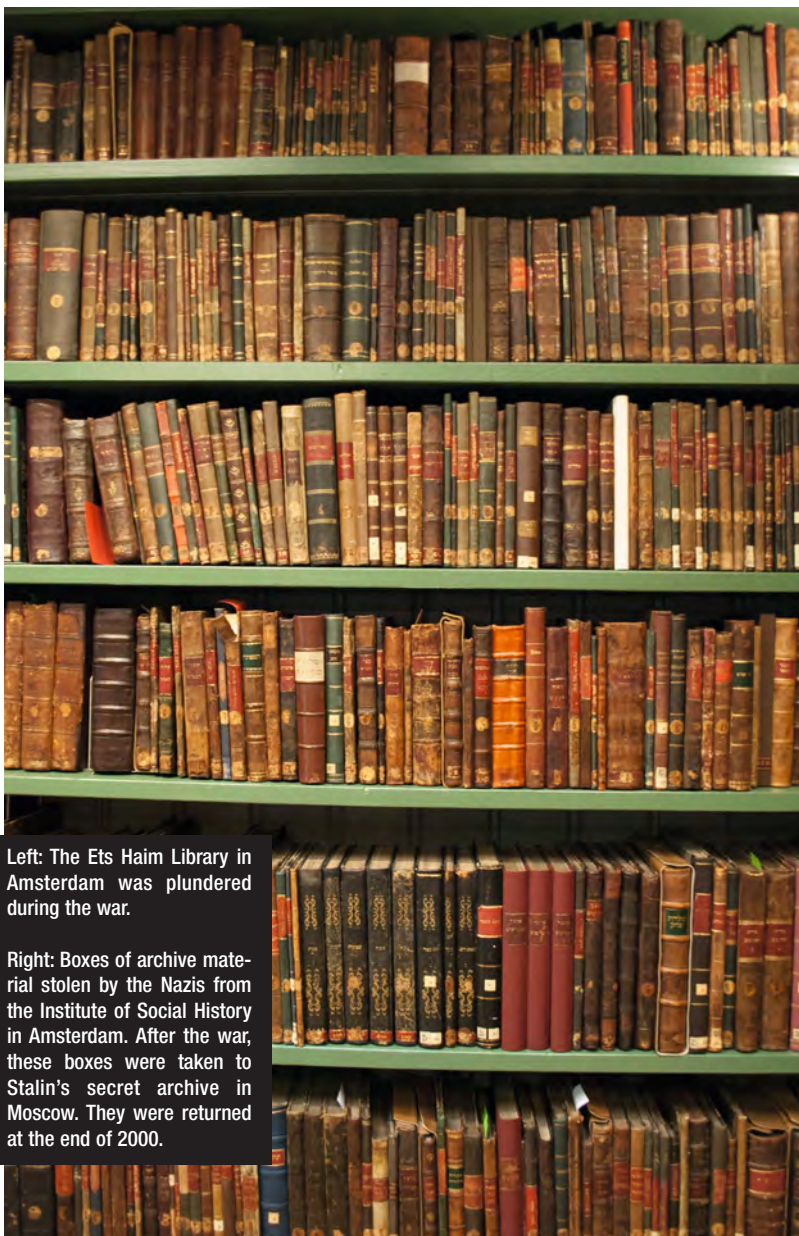
of their heart, as well as their centre for identity, language and history.

Already in the 1930s, the Nazis had looted many of the public libraries in Germany, which were branded as “literary brothels”.

In Sweden, the public, parish and workers’ libraries that emerged in the 1800s became a cornerstone in the broad educational project that took Sweden from a poor agricultural nation to a leading industrial nation.

Digitisation is no substitute for meetings

Today we are going through another shift, the digital shift. And the question is whether libraries are actually necessary when we have the internet? Couldn’t hundreds of branches be replaced by



Left: The Ets Haim Library in Amsterdam was plundered during the war.

Right: Boxes of archive material stolen by the Nazis from the Institute of Social History in Amsterdam. After the war, these boxes were taken to Stalin's secret archive in Moscow. They were returned at the end of 2000.



websites that lend e-books? And couldn't librarians be replaced by algorithms?

This type of perspective is based not only on a simplistic view of what a library is, but also on a simplistic view of "digitisation". The internet and social media do not replace the physical public sphere, but complement it. Rather, digitisation has reinforced the importance of physical space and meetings – the need to be in a now.

Last year, a somewhat confused debate in Sweden's culture pages raged, about libraries becoming the haunt of "unruly youths", especially in the suburbs. You could also choose to see this development as an expression of our increasingly limited public sphere. The library is a unique place, one of the few areas where a security company does not drive you away if you don't buy anything. Where you are a citizen (an almost forgotten word today), not a consumer.

Building intercultural bridges

The library as a literary public sphere is even more important in a time when many refugees are coming to Sweden. Since the autumn of 2015, when the large refugee wave swept over Europe, more and more Swedish libraries assumed the role of integration bridges.

70 people go to Motala library's Language Café every week. Eksjö library has partnered with the Red Cross and provides homework help for newcomers and arranges a book club for SFI students. Norrköping City library saw the number of visitors increase by 45 percent in 2015, and according to the library, new arrivals account for a large percentage of the increase.

When working at their best, libraries can serve as cultural and linguistic bridges, as they have done for thousands of years. For today's refugees, they are just as

important as they were to the Sephardic Jews who were forced to flee in the 1500s, or the Poles who sought refuge in France in the 1800s.

It is through meeting the literature, but above all, meeting other people, that a new identity can be formed. Libraries offer a completely essential key for this language. This could never be replaced by a website or a lending machine. This is why we need these meeting places more than ever today. The inhabitants of Ramsberg are right to resist, a library is more than just books.

Text and photo: Anders Rydell

Anders Rydell is an author and a journalist. He is the Head of Culture at Hallpressen and author of *The Book Thieves. The Nazi Looting of Europe's Libraries and the Present Day Race to Return a Literary Inheritance* (Penguin Random House).

The library as welfare generator

Like the rest of the world, Denmark is experiencing a marked centralization that concentrates the population around the largest cities. This results in a divided Denmark, where the rural areas are being depopulated, work places close down, young people move to the cities and the tax base is diminishing.



Brian Stephansen and
Louise Eltvéd Krogsgård

The project *Småt brændbart* ('small combustible') links five of these fringe municipalities in Jutland, Ringkøbing-Skjern, Morsø, Aabenraa, Vesthimmerland and Brønderslev – in a project where the libraries are being developed as a kind of welfare institution.

Via the project, the five libraries have facilitated joint creative processes that bring together citizens and municipal players to work on new welfare solutions. The project gets financial support from the Danish Agency for Culture and Palaces and runs over two years.

New library welfare solutions

It is obvious that the present public welfare models are crying out for new solutions. The unique aspect of the project is that *Småt brændbart* places the five libraries as welfare generators.

In the fringe areas, with a rapidly growing group of older people and fewer taxpayers, welfare solutions have to be reconsidered. This calls for social innovation, co-creation, collaboration.

Naturally, there are nuances in the different approaches, but the point remains the same: Together we can achieve more, and it is a question of thinking of solutions across the municipality.

The project is particularly important as an example of how libraries can tackle the role of welfare operators.

Focus on segments

Based on the Danish library initiative Tænketanken Fremtidens Bibliotekers' (The think tank Future Libraries) segment study from 2014, the project has so far been focusing on the target group seniors and parents over 30.

With the help from personas and observations, the project has formulated the senior target group's particular fringe characteristics: He is male and in the risk zone as regards loneliness and health problems. Another challenge in the fringe areas is marginalized families. Many parents are poorly educated, economically challenged and the group is characterized by high unemployment.

All five libraries have conducted merging processes with for example care consultants, family consultants, associations and fire balls. The result is five projects that make new collaborations possible.

Facilitating welfare without extra costs

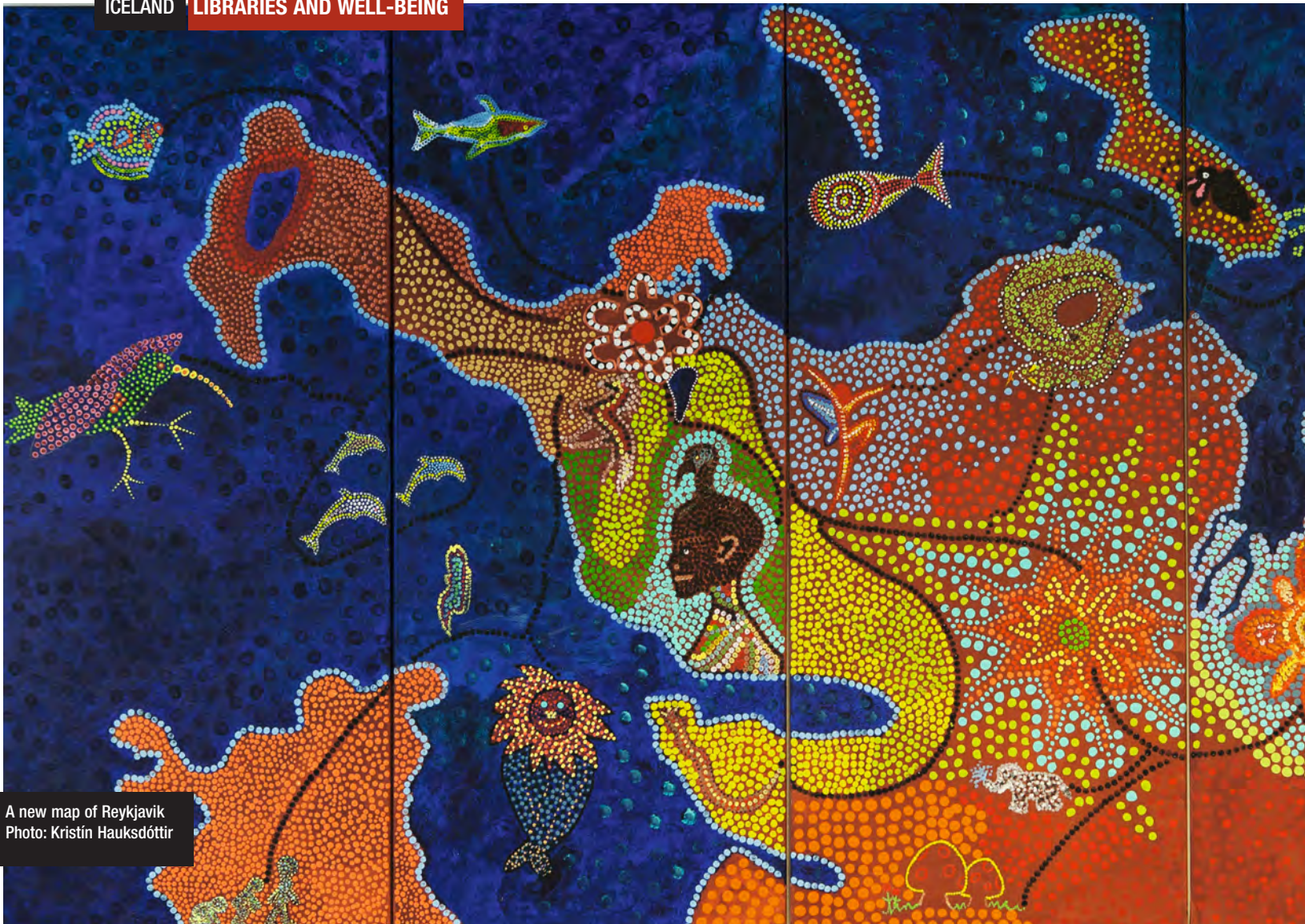
The results of the project show that the

public library is a unique arena for joint creative processes and that by uniting various players, new welfare solutions can be worked out without extra costs. Simply by using the collective resources across borders.

In this way, *Småt brændbart* defines a new role for public libraries in fringe areas: Based on culture, learning and identity, the libraries have strategically and purposefully placed themselves at the forefront as welfare facilitators and problem solvers in relation to municipal challenges, initiatives and strategies, e.g. in the areas of mental health and social challenges.

“ The aim of the project is that the library must contribute to merging the existing efforts and policies within the area, which requires the library to be out-reaching and facilitating.

Brian Stephansen
and Louise Eltvéd Krogsgård
Library Consultants
Brønderslev Library



A new map of Reykjavik
Photo: Kristín Hauksdóttir



Kristín R.
Vilhjálmsdóttir

The new human landscapes of Iceland

As the world looks today – and maybe has done always – the human landscapes are in a constant state of change. The movement of people and the changes in the ‘landscapes’ is a fact that has to be considered in social, educational and cultural areas and services provided in society.



Kaffitár artwork made by The Women's Story Circle. Kaffitár is one of the biggest coffee companies in Iceland. Photo: Kristín R. Vilhjálmssdóttir

Over the past 15 years the number of people, from all over the world living in Iceland, has increased a lot.

Today about 12.5 percent of the citizens in Reykjavik are immigrants. The largest groups are from Poland, Lithuania and the Philippines. When the landscapes change, we have to renew our maps. Reykjavik City Library has been running several intercultural programmes the last eight years and, within these projects, tried to put an effort into creating ties between people, cultures and languages represented in the capital of Iceland. All the projects are built on collaboration with partners in society.

Intercultural projects

The Reykjavik City Library began its intercultural activities in 2008 as pilot projects by hiring the author of this article as project manager. The projects are now

all an integrated part of inter- and multiculturalism in Reykjavik, in the cultural, social and educational field, and have also been introduced, and in some cases transferred, to other countries such as Belgium, the Czech Republic, Spain, Canada, Greece and Denmark.

The main idea behind the work is that individuals or groups should be seen in a wide context, rather than as an icon for one nationality or another and that the projects should appeal to local people as well as global people. Desiring to contribute to a vibrant multicultural society and the development of intercultural competence, the target group is both Icelanders and world citizens living in Iceland.

The goal is to promote awareness of the positive values of cultural and linguistic diversity – values that can contribute to dialogue and coexistence in society.

Cooperation partners

The library puts an emphasis on cooperating with schools, educational, cultural as well as social institutions, NGOs and individuals from all over the world living in Reykjavik.

Among our partners are; The University of Iceland, The Department of Education and Leisure of Reykjavik, The Vigdís Finnbogadóttir Institute of Foreign Languages, The Red Cross, The Human Rights Office of Reykjavik, language schools and the two NGOs Mother Tongue Association and W.O.M.E.N in Iceland. At Reykjavik City Library we use the IFLA/UNESCO Multicultural Library Manifesto as a guideline in the multicultural projects. The objective of our work is to:

- Encourage social integration, understanding and respect.

- Introduce Icelandic society to immigrants – and vice versa – through cultural and social encounters.
- Enhance immigrants' language skills in Icelandic.
- Enhance awareness of linguistic diversity and intercultural competence among citizens.
- Encourage an open dialogue in society.
- Make connections between citizens through culture and the arts.
- Create an informative and dynamic forum of communication for diverse groups in society.
- Break down isolation and encourage compassion towards others.
- Make a visit to the library an integral part of the daily lives of immigrants.

The new map of Iceland

How do we ensure making space for everybody on the map and making a framework where the story of individuals gets to bloom?

One of the concrete projects created as a tool to fulfil the goals above is *The Women's Story Circle*, a forum where women from everywhere exchange stories, experiences and cultural backgrounds and take part in creative workshops as well as cultural visits and excursions. It's open to all women.

Within the project three artworks have been created. They are now icons of multiculturalism and intercultural dialogue in Iceland. A creative writing workshop, a clown course and a drama course resul-

ting in a multilingual performance have also been among the projects. The language of communication is mainly Icelandic, but women participating also communicate in all kind of languages.

The Women's Story Circle was founded in November 2008 and since then several hundred women, both Icelandic and non-Icelandic, have been participating in the programme – and new ones keep coming. The intention is to connect women with one another and to create a platform for networks and friendships. The project is a cooperation between the library and W.O.M.E.N in Iceland, an NGO whose goal is to unite, express and address the interests and issues of women of foreign origin living in Iceland.

Creating a new map of Iceland

Two of the three art works the group has created were made by using the Aboriginal method of painting with dots. Both paintings are maps, one of Reykjavik and the other of Iceland. What makes these paintings unique is the fact that the women have personalized the maps with symbols that are of significance to their lives, be that a connection to their own personal stories, their country of origin, Iceland or another place in the world important to them.

The map of Reykjavik was made in 2011 and is located in the Reykjavik City Hall where it has received quite a lot of attention from people passing by. It also caught the attention of Kaffitár, one of the biggest

coffee companies in Iceland, who approached us subsequently and asked whether *The Women's Story Circle* would be interested in making a painting, in the same spirit as this one, to be used as the new branding and logo for the company.

From all over the world

This led to a very fruitful cooperation resulting in shedding light on how diverse backgrounds are now a vibrant part of Iceland's cultural landscapes. A new map of Iceland is a painting created by 35 women from all over the world. The art work was unveiled at The National Museum by Vigdís Finnbogadóttir, former president of Iceland, in the spring 2014 and has since then not only featured on coffee and chocolate packages, in supermarkets and as part of the interiors of the cafés, but also cars are driving around covered in the art work.

In addition, the symbols are exhibited on the walls of the cafés with a photo of the women behind it and a short description, in Icelandic and their mother tongue, of their contribution to this colourful and lively version of Iceland. Everybody seems to adore what visually came out of this warm and creative process – but also the story behind its existence. We embrace that the idea also has reached foreign latitudes as *A new map of Greece* is now being painted by students from the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki in the same spirit as the Icelandic map.



Art and clowning in *The Women's Story Circle*.
Photo: Kristín R. Vilhjálmssdóttir



Intercultural encounters

The Reykjavik City Library assists teachers and students in organising intercultural encounters in primary schools, elementary schools and colleges. The project has been developed as part of teaching in Denmark and Iceland the last 15 years and is a practical tool to embrace diversity and enhance intercultural competence in the educational system.

The idea is to promote mutual respect and understanding between people in a concrete way and through different means of expression. Students, parents and staff members get an opportunity to introduce their personal culture, language(s) and interests in a lively way within an encouraging environment. Everyone involved should be received with acknowledgement.

The project is part of the multicultural policy of the Department of Education of Reykjavik and has been implemented in many schools. It now has its own homepage with guidelines for teachers www.menningarmot.is and is getting more and more sustainable in all school grades. Some comments in English from teachers and headmasters are to be found here: <http://borgarbokasafn.is/node/1043>

Café Lingua – living languages

The project is a platform for those who want to enhance their language skills (Icelandic or other languages), a place to chat and communicate in various languages as well as a gateway into different cultures. One of the goals is to activate the



Intercultural encounter - Flying Carpet.
Photo: Kristín R. Vilhjálmssdóttir

languages that have found their way to Iceland, enriching life and culture, while at the same time to give immigrants the option to express themselves in Icelandic by introducing their mother tongue to other citizens.

The linguistic events are held in different places around the city and aim to let everyone interested contribute to the linguistic landscape of Reykjavik. The unveiling of the world languages spoken in Iceland by immigrants seems to be a successful way of promoting a positive awareness of linguistic diversity. Especially the speed date a language model which we have implemented at the University of Iceland has built bridges between multilingual students and the Icelandic students studying languages.

The wide range of partners in this project, such as The Department of Foreign Languages and Icelandic as a second language at the University of Iceland, The Vigdís Finnbogadóttir Institute of foreign Languages and several NGOs, have influenced the expanding. The *Café Lingua – living languages* of the Reykjavik City Library is now being implemented in the Czech Republic as a result of European grants.

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Close-up of the Kaffitár artwork
Photo: Kristín R. Vilhjálmssdóttir

THE MULTICULTURAL PROJECTS

- Information about all the multicultural projects: <http://borgarbokasafn.is/en/content/multicultural-projects>
Various multicultural/multilingual events through the year:
- “Reykjavik Safari”, a guided walk in multiple languages where immigrants introduce other immigrants to cultural life of Reykjavik in their mother tongue.
- Story telling in different languages, those interested can arrange public story telling in their mother tongue at the library.
- “Children teach children languages” programmes where children introduce their mother tongue to others in a fun way.
- A celebration of the International Mother Language Day in February and The European Day of Languages in September.

Information literacy and health literacy

A challenge for librarians?

In Norway there is little mention of health information in the public libraries' strategy plans and there is little mention of public libraries in the strategy plans of the health authorities.

Greater inter-ministerial library cooperation to boost information literacy in health and medicine and also to enhance the general public's understanding of health in cooperation with municipal healthcare professionals will probably make libraries an even more attractive priority area for the authorities.

Libraries and community health services

Healthcare professionals employed by local and county authorities require library services that can assist them in updating their professional skills, and the ordinary member of the public needs help

to find relevant, high-quality health information. Public libraries seem to be the obvious choice to play the role of the library of the municipal primary health services.

There are several reasons why public libraries are suited to such a role. They have always promoted the education of the general public and given their users free access to the prime sources of knowledge. They can be found in all municipalities, the general public place great trust in them and librarians have a high level of information literacy.

The new *Public Libraries Act* places

emphasis on the library's role as a meeting place and arena for public discussions and debates, thus endorsing the idea of developing the libraries as a meeting place in a health-related context.

Promotes public health project

The website Helsebiblioteket.no is a publicly funded medical knowledge service that gives healthcare professionals free access to online, high-quality health information. Many of the resources offered are available to everyone in Norway, giving patients and their family access to the world's leading medical reference works.

The website offers a good alternative to the low-quality information that proliferates on the Internet, and it is vital that the public libraries are aware of the range of opportunities it offers. In order to convey this most effectively, we consider it essential to bring the libraries on board.

The goal of The public library promotes public health project has been to bolster the libraries' role as a provider of and an arena for quality-assured health information to both healthcare professionals in the municipal health service and the population at large.

The process started when Helsebiblioteket.no contacted the county libraries in Nordland, Nord-Trøndelag and Sør-Trøndelag to explore interest in holding



Sigrun Espelien
Aasen



Health information at the Nordland fylkesbibliotek. Photo: Nordland fylkesbibliotek



Daytime seminar at Nordland fylkesbibliotek Photo: Nordland fylkesbibliotek

DEFINITIONS OF LITERACY

“Information literacy = the ability to recognize when information is needed and to locate, evaluate, and use the needed information effectively.”

“Health literacy = degree to which individuals have the capacity to obtain, process, and understand basic health information and services needed to make appropriate health decisions.”

Definitions are from MeSH (Medical Subject Headings), the National Library of Medicine's controlled vocabulary thesaurus.

local seminars on key online health resources and in including lectures by experts on mental health in order to create interest and encourage healthcare professionals to participate together with librarians.

The idea was well received, and an application for project funding was submitted to the National Library of Norway, which supported the project. Nordland county library took on the role of project owner and Helsebiblioteket.no had the role of project manager.

It was vital to make the task straightforward and feasible. As project manager, Helsebiblioteket.no took responsibility for the subject content, and the county libraries were in charge of the events and marketing. The events consisted of:

- Lectures on the key online health resources for librarians and healthcare professionals
- Lectures by experts on mental health aimed at healthcare professionals and librarians
- Open evening lectures by expert on mental health, for the general public.

Implementation

Six events were held: in Trondheim, Stjørdal, Bodø, Namsos, Mo i Rana and Trondheim. The events were marketed through the county authorities' websites, email, telephone, social media and posters. Healthcare professionals played an active role.

Twelve two-hour lectures were held. Six lectures – *Health information you can access freely online* – dealt with websites providing health-related knowledge:

Kunnskapssenteret.no, Helsebiblioteket.no, Helsenorge.no and MedlinePlus.gov. In addition, the termbase *MeSH (Medical Subject Headings) in Norwegian and English* was presented. This is a useful tool for conceptual understanding, and for achieving relevant search hits in central databases.

Three lectures were entitled *Serious personality disorders*. Antisocial, borderline and schizoid personality disorders were presented, with emphasis on the combination of these. Ways of approaching people with these personality disorders were discussed.

Three open lectures on *Mental health, personality and a good life* were held for the general public in the evening. Local performers provided music and drama as a background for the lectures.

Suitable premises with well-functioning technical equipment were vital to the quality of the events. Altogether 582 people participated, 282 during the day and 300 in the evening. People enjoyed the events, and particularly appreciated being able to attend free lectures locally by professional experts. The diversity of participants reflected the large demand for such events.

Subject literature and fiction

The project was successful and the collaboration worked well. We, organizers and participants, believe that this type of initiative can boost the library as a resource for healthcare professionals as well as for the general public who are given the opportunity to learn more about health. Being aware of the quality of information and

having a critical approach to sources is crucial.

Well-written fiction, related to mental health if possible, can provide patients and their families with insight, understanding and recognition, and may have a positive impact on those with health problems. Both subject literature and fiction constitute a resource in public health work.

Unifying meeting arenas

Libraries profit from building networks, since this strengthens their position and their competence. Throughout the project we held constructive, interdisciplinary meetings that paved the way for closer cooperation in the future between libraries and healthcare professionals.

The project showed us that libraries can function as unifying meeting arenas for different groups of healthcare professionals. Every municipality has many different health actors that due to organizational variations do not necessarily have common professional arenas. We are of the opinion that bringing together actors in this way opens for further collaboration with the library sector.

So why not invest in this?

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Photo: Nordland fylkesbibliotek



Photo: The Reader Organisation UK

The library plays an active part in issues of health care



Lisbeth Bjørn Hansen, Peter Thybo
and Martin Lundsgaard-Leth

Can the library contribute to public health apart from providing knowledge? Based on a wider health concept, public health services and the library in Ikast-Brande municipality are working together on creating increased quality of life and mental health for mentally vulnerable youngsters and adults.

Ikast-Brande municipality is a municipality in central Jutland with 40,798 inhabitants. For several years, the municipality has been focusing on the possibilities of a linkage of culture and health – an initiative that forms part of the municipality's visions.

Both parties work on the basic premise that the library disseminates learning, experience and cultural activity and the public health sector is in charge of treatment, mental health promotion and the prevention of illness. Nevertheless, the two municipal sections are basically engaged in the same cause – to contribute to the experiences, quality of life and well-being of each individual citizen.

When the core issue moves from primarily focusing on physical health to also including mental and social health, i.e. the whole human being, the library as cultural institution has a lot to offer.

By combining the library's core service, which is interplay with citizens and mediation of knowledge and culture, with our partners' health professional core service, the citizens are offered more possibilities of being included in meaningful social contexts and thereby the chance to form new networks. In the long term, these networks can contribute to the citizens' physical, mental and social health.

Combining culture and health

The starting point for the collaboration is the wider health conception based on the salutogenic research and perception of health and well-being (see fact box). The salutogenic perception stresses an awareness of protective factors, rather than the more traditional risk factors, for mental health and psychological power of resistance.

With this in mind, Ikast-Brande Library and the health sector see a potential for a

combination between culture and health and a chance to collaborate on increasing mentally vulnerable citizens' general quality of life and offer them new tools for reflecting on their life situation – and in the end become better at managing their own lives.

The means to reach this goal, has i.a. been by practising the reading method *Guided community reading*. In 2011 two librarians at Ikast-Brande Library qualified at the Reading Association as reading guides in the method. The foundation was now laid for contact to the social-psychiatric departments with a view to reading sessions with mentally vulnerable people.

Everyone can participate

The method *Guided community reading* is based on the idea of literature as a possibility for communal activity. The participants in a reading group do not read the texts before a meeting of the group. At the meeting, the reading guide reads the chosen text aloud. This method encourages you to share the initial wonder and enthusiasm that might evolve when you read a text for the first time.

The method means that everybody can participate, e.g. people with reading disabilities, blind people, mentally vulnerable people, people with limited capacity of concentration et cetera. No preparation or

special qualifications are needed for participating in a reading group, everybody can join in no matter background, age, gender and education.

A typical reading hour

The reading guide brings a copy of the texts for each member of the group. The text usually consists of a short story and possibly a poem. The guide is not an instructor, but a guide who may help to mediate the text by way of opening and triggering questions. The text is read aloud in turn with breaks along the way. The breaks offer a chance of discussion about the text and to reflect on the content.

One member might have a question or somebody was reminded of something particular during the reading. The plot and theme of the text are discussed in the group, and the members are invited to share their expectations as to what will happen in the story. Then the reading is resumed.

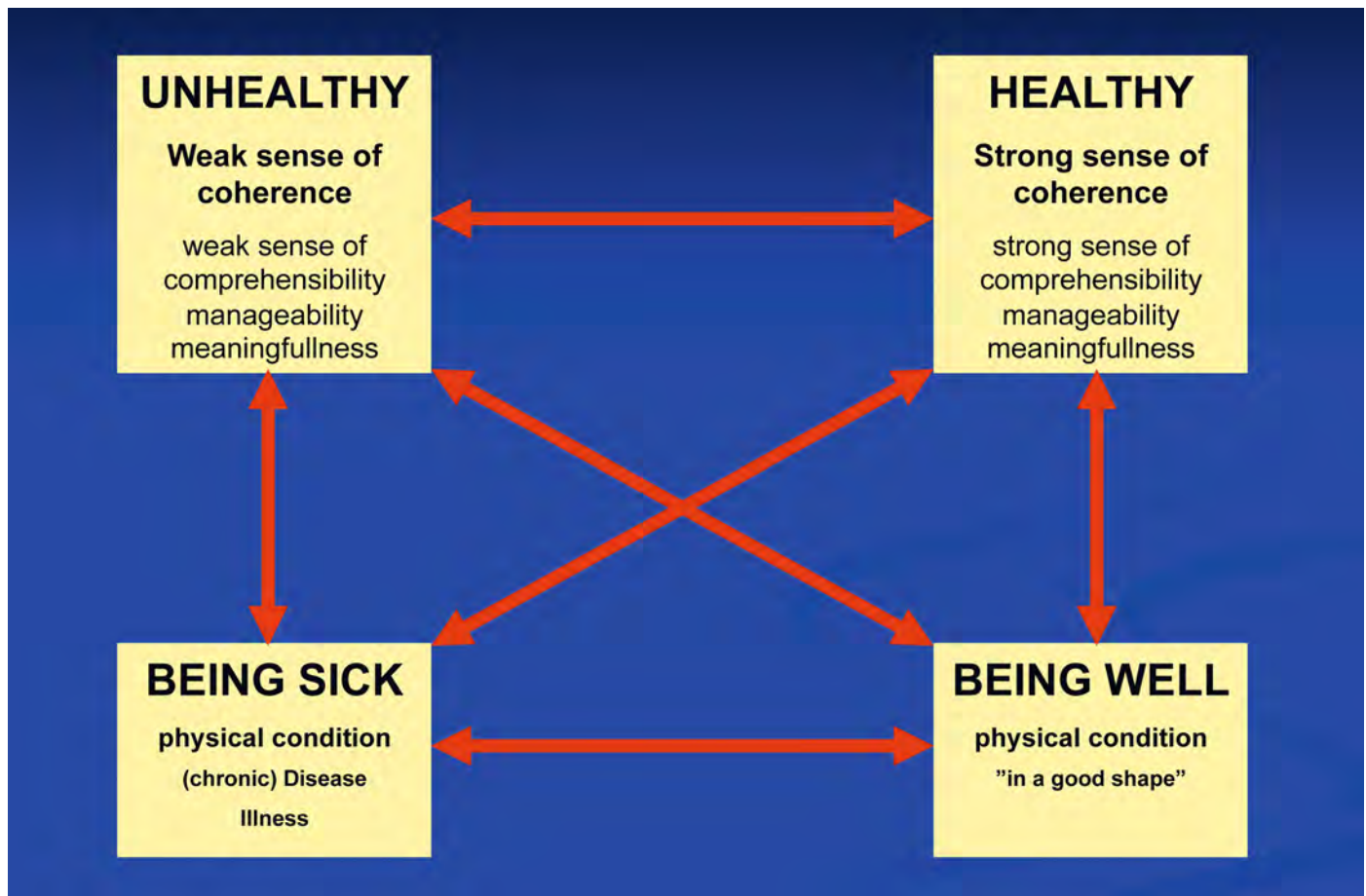
In this way the reading varies between reading aloud and discussion. This leaves time for contemplation and personal insight and to share your thoughts and interpretations of the text. Basically, there is no correct answer – anything that the story causes the participants to think about or feel, may be the object of discussion.

SALUTOGENESIS

Salutogenesis (salute = health; genesis = cause of) is developed by professor of medical sociology Aaron Antonovsky (1923-1994).

Salutogenesis differentiates between health (whether you are healthy or unhealthy) and mental health (a feeling of coherence in life creates mental power of resistance).

The feeling of coherence is developed through various learning processes, which results in a strong sense of meaningfulness and comprehensibility in life, as well as a belief in being able to handle demands and liabilities. This differentiation means for example that one can be sick and healthy at the same time – or healthy and mentally unhealthy



The Salutogenic basic model. Illustration: Peter Thybo

For vulnerable groups

Mediation of the story creates a sense of community and personal presence, because all the participants listen to the story together. Through the conversations, the participants are able to put individual problems in a meaningful perspective and perspective their personal lives. According to the salutogenetic theory participation, dialogue and networks inspire the participants' motivation to handle and work on their own life situation and provide them with tools for mastering their own lives.

When the initiative was launched five years ago, contact was established to a social-psychiatric drop-in centre. The drop-in centre The Blue Café, which is a local government offer to mentally vulnerable people and people with mental disorders, held a total of 12 reading hours. Up until today, the offer has regularly been extended to include more target groups and new areas, for example targeted offers such as:

- Citizens with stress, anxiety and depression in the local authority job centre
- Citizens with the need for temporary care and treatment at the local authority rehabilitation centre
- Young people under 25, who are unable to complete a youth education programme and have been offered Specially organized Teaching for the Young
- Citizens with anxiety, stress and depression at Café Laicos, a social-psychiatric centre.
- Elderly people with dementia at the residential home Brandlundparken.

Experiences from reading hours

Common to the different target groups is that each has expressed great satisfaction with the reading hours. The participants have experienced a personal space in a safe atmosphere. The reading hours have helped to increase the participants' self-esteem and self-understanding.

Those who in other contexts had found



The Reading Association. Photo: Martin Lundsgaard-Leth

that their opinions were of limited value, found a haven where their thoughts and opinions were welcome, and where everybody was seen and heard in an appreciative community with reciprocal empathy for each other's situation and life history.

The participants also got the feeling of becoming part of a community of destiny. This created a feeling of unity and may have helped the individual member of the group to form new and thought-provoking perspectives on their own situation. Many also managed to form new social networks, which in the longer term can contribute toward increased mental, physical and social health.

The art of living

In the municipality of Ikast-Brande we are much inspired by the valuable add-on benefit that reading and other cultural activities can be to mental health and social affiliations, i.e. because it provides new ways of working on welfare. At the same time, we are happy that the Danish

government now has set aside a temporary pool for culture and health of nine million Danish kroner.

Culture and mental health is an area that also attracts the interest of other Scandinavian countries. The Nordic Council of Ministers' report *Vändpunkt – forslag om kultur och hälsa I nordisk samverken* (2014) provides a useful insight into the many different Scandinavian activities which are being tested in "the art of living".

The Reading Association

The Reading Association is a voluntary non-profit association that works to introduce as many people as possible to the joy of reading. The Association was established in 2010 and modelled on the English The Reader Organisation. The Reading Association also offers a course programme for prospective reading group guides in the reading method *Guided community reading*. The method aims to create the space for experiences and reflec-

tions on literature. The Association's homepage is: <http://laeseforeningen.dk>

Well-being

The Department of Health takes as their starting point the WHO's definition of mental health as a "state of well-being in which every individual realizes his or her own potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to her or his community."

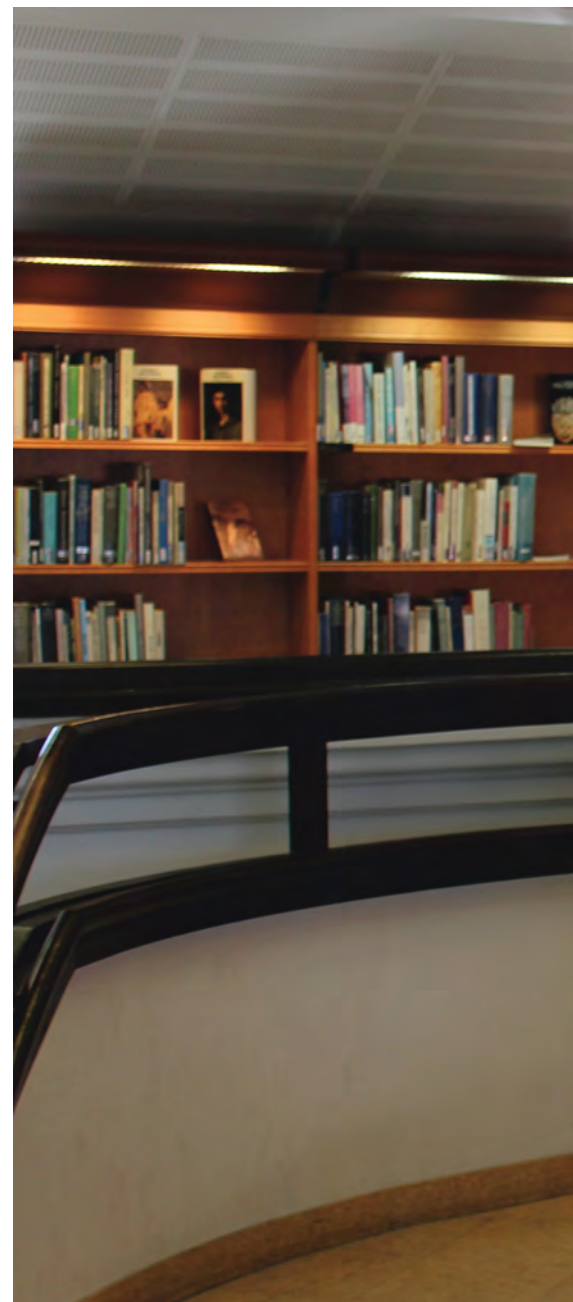
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Pirjo Tuomi

Reading, libraries AND well-being

Reading is not only fun and invigorating, it also has many other positive effects on a person's quality of life and well-being. One of the fundamental missions of public libraries has always been to support people's reading habits and promote literature. A number of surveys pertaining to the use of the library have also indicated that libraries are still a significant part of people's lives in precisely this way.



According to international studies, libraries have a positive impact on patrons' reading skills, learning, well-being and national identity, a fact stated by Anna Idström who has studied the beneficial effects of libraries. She has written about her findings in a book concerning the impact of libraries, which was published in 2016 by the Association of Finnish Local and Regional Authorities.

Since the establishment of libraries, their mission has been to support education and reading, and that has been the primary reason for using them. Libraries for the common people began to open in the Scandinavian countries as well, at first in association with grammar schools to increase the level of education of the people.

However, their necessity as a source of



Reading at the Rikhardinkatu Library in Helsinki. Photo: Susanne Ahlroth

well-being and recreation, in general, quickly became evident. Although there is much discussion about the decrease in the popularity of reading, still today, people visit libraries a lot mainly to borrow books and maintain the hobby of reading.

Improve the quality of life

Although libraries nowadays endeavor to diversify their activities and in this way pursue non-patrons, established library patrons are still readers. They also feel that libraries and collections significantly improve their quality of life. This is evident in a patron questionnaire carried out by the National Library of Finland in 2013, whereby the use of library services, patron satisfaction and the significance of the library to the patrons was surveyed.

A total of 16,137 patrons responded to

the section of the questionnaire pertaining to public libraries. According to the results, 90 percent of the patrons felt that the library has, above all, supported them in their reading and cultural hobbies and in this way has also improved their quality of life. Respondents clearly did not value the library's other services as much as this.

Additionally, the *Cross-European survey to measure users' perceptions of the benefits of ICT in public libraries*, carried out in the European Union region in 2013, found that 94 percent of the respondents chose "books to read/borrow" as the most significant service that libraries offer.

Similar studies related to library use carried out in the 2010s in Sweden and England concluded with the same results. The significance of libraries in supporting reading and the hobby of reading still

seems to be the most important service that libraries offer.

The benefits of reading

Reading is not only fun and invigorating; it also improves the quality of life. Anna Idström not only brings attention to libraries in general, but also to the literature they offer as a well-being service. She refers to the results of Dugdale and Clark's study, *Literacy Changes Lives: An advocacy resource* (2008), whereby reading has positive effects on people's economic well-being, health, family life and civil awareness.

Reading also increases general knowledge and verbal skills, understanding of other cultures and knowledge of human nature. As early as the 1970s and 1980s, studies in Finland related to library use

and reading found that the hobby of reading and library use correlated with general well-being, health and, for example, education.

Literature meets the reader

No matter where you go in the world, the library is the only place where anyone can encounter literature. When talking about the library, we should first and foremost talk about the library's unique quality.

At the library, people can also encounter other readers or authors. This can happen directly, for example when borrowing a book, participating in reading circles or meeting an author during a literary event. It can also happen indirectly through professionally constructed systems, which are a part of the library's institutional character.

Library professionals categorize and create descriptors for literature, present literature at exhibitions and on websites, write summaries and literary critiques, write online author profiles, et cetera. The public library should therefore be seen broadly as a part of both national and

local literary life. The library not only supports the hobby of reading, but it participates in the promotion of literary knowledge and reading in many different ways.

Reading as a well-being service

When talking about the library and the promotion of reading, the question is usually addressed from the viewpoint of children and youth and mainly as development of cooperation between schools and libraries. There is seldom discussion of adults as readers and reading as a hobby and what the library's interests are in this area of promoting literature.

However, libraries do a lot of work in promoting literature, which can be integrated in the promotion of the well-being of the people. Such activities include the libraries' home-delivery services, reading circles or different projects where library services are offered in homes for the elderly and, one of the newest activities, a reading consultation service where patrons receive a personal, customized reading packet.

These services offer patrons enjoyment

and significant emotional well-being. However, professional expertise is needed to produce these services, which doesn't happen by itself or merely because a library professional happens to be interested in literature. Education in the library field should acknowledge the central role of libraries as a distributor and up-keeper of literary culture – from the perspective of the people's well-being as well.

Stick to the basics

Today, different cultural services are seen as services that significantly increase general well-being and even health. The public library is first and foremost a cultural institution, which, like other public cultural institutions, produces cultural services for the people. From the perspective of the library patron, the most essential cultural service, at least in the light of the statistics, seems to be related to the promotion of reading and the hobby of reading.

When talking about the significance of the library with regard to the well-being of the people, you do not necessarily have to expand the library services into new areas; rather, you can stick to the basics and consider how to develop perhaps new services to promote literature and reading, which, in turn, promote the well-being and health of individual people.

It is not enough to state self-evidently in library policies that libraries offer literature. It is more a question of for what and how literature should and could be used in a new way for the better of the patrons. If the library patrons feel – and the studies prove – that reading promotes well-being, it is more a question of what the library's responsibility is as the only institution that offers free literature in this sector of well-being.

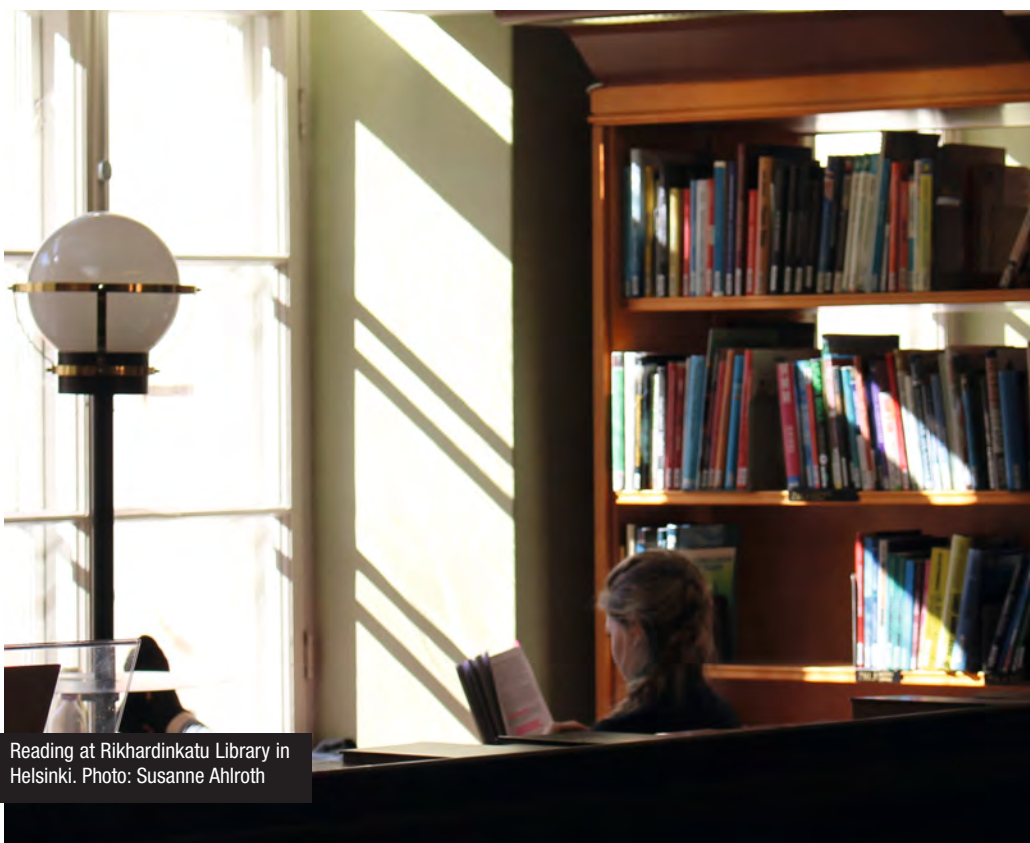
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Reading at Rikhardinkatu Library in Helsinki. Photo: Susanne Ahlroth

The library in an ecosophical perspective

Ecosophy is about how everything is integrated in an ecological and living balance. These are ideas that may be applied in various everyday contexts and prepare us for making choices based on a holistic perspective, for example when making decisions about the future of a rural library.



Sveinung Nesheim

I grew up in the library. It was one of the few options available to those of us who had little interest in soccer and biathlon. Moreover, my mother was the local librarian.

I can recall sauntering along the bookshelves, letting my fingers glide over the spines of books. Such an infinite number of thoughts were sort of attached to thin sheets and hung up between covers that vied for attention.

I can remember where *Cosmos* by Carl Sagan stood and where the Dewey decimal classification was located. The former showed how the universe was arranged, the latter the library. In Dewey, the number series 100 was reserved for philosophy, and I felt an attraction to this subject. Perhaps it was due to the titles on the spines, promising a *Critique of Pure Reason* or *Selected Topics of Elementary Logic*. Although I found it to be neither elementary, nor logical, it nevertheless spoke to me.

Me and the library

Something started to sprout within me there, in the library, between the shelves and in the wide spectrum of thoughts and knowledge that were openly available

there. The library encompassed the entire world; the totality of things.

My fumbling led me precisely to ideas of this totality, only pertaining to the whole in a harmonious and integrated manner, more like holism. In the library I found books by Arne Næss, and I was fascinated by his magical world. Besides being a philosopher of world repute, he was also a mountaineer and a practical joker.

The anecdotes about Arne Næss are numerous and well-known. Næss spoke about ecosophy and Baruch Spinoza's philosophy of the creative force of nature, 'natura naturans'. This became the start of a long and dedicated study of how the universe is interconnected in an ecological and living balance, and these were ideas that resonated and seemed so infinitely true and universally valid.

Not least, this was a body of thought that never stopped maturing and soon could be applied to everyday life in many ways.

Ideas of holism

I am now of the opinion that such holistic ideas can be linked to virtually everything we do, if only we are aware of them. They prepare us to make choices based on the wisdom of nature, by taking sufficient

account of ripple effects, and by attempting to see some of the added value of each part of a greater whole.

Holism says quite simply that the sum of the whole is larger than the sum of the parts. In terms of biology it means, for example, that all life has a value beyond its intrinsic value, which is not realised until life functions in its ecological context. There is something infinitely beautiful about this, but it also testifies to the vulnerability of ecological systems.

Ecosophy in a nutshell

To remain in balance, an ecological system depends on all its constituent parts, and this balance gives rise to the long-term creative force, or added value if you like. For the same reason, we cannot remove a bothersome part or add amounts of another and still expect the system to function. This is ecosophy in a nutshell. It is the wisdom of nature itself.

Humans have become capable of influencing life forms and the basis of life everywhere in nature, and we are seeing an increasing number of examples of destructive incursions that cause imbalance and irreversible damage to flora, fauna and climate.

“ Returning to libraries, the closure of local branches specifically exemplifies what happens when functions are seen in isolation with no concern for ripple effects, and many rural communities in Norway have the same story to tell.

We fail to take account of the whole when we exceed the quotas for fishing, use more energy than we are able to generate, and when the production of things exceeds consumption by orders of magnitude. Then we have ignored the real importance of universal balance for our lives and our planet.

However, a holistic mindset does not necessarily address large, global issues. It can act as a guide in the smaller decisions that we make in life and elsewhere in culture and society.

The history of a local library

For a long time, municipalities have saved money by closing local libraries, and each municipality has its own reasons, but the argument is generally that this service can be centralised and municipal funds economised upon.

This is a tempting option in a budget proposal, but what happens in practice? To highlight the short-sightedness inherent in this, there is no need to argue in favour of the obvious value represented by the libraries being a low-threshold option open to all, or to point out that the libraries are seedbanks for the cultivation of society. It suffices to point out the effects that the closure of the branch had on the local community and municipality I come from.

Here, the local library was open two evenings per week, in addition to functioning as the school library. However, it was not only a library in the narrow sense of the word. The library was also a meeting-place for young and old. The young connected with each other there and had access to books costing no more than a ride on a bicycle.



Doors were closed

For those who no longer had colleagues to converse with during the day, the library was exactly what they needed to stay in touch with others. The library was also an instrument of practical integration for migrant Kurds and Turks who came to our community at that time. They could find newspapers in their own language, while also being exposed to spoken and written Norwegian.

In sum, this was a simple yet versatile service that encompassed far more than any budget item could reflect. However, these benefits were not visible there, and the costs had to be justified with reference to the library services alone, so finally the doors were closed.

Municipal responsibility

Sometime later, however, the need arose to provide services for the older people of the community, and this was immediately regarded as a municipal responsibility pursuant to the regulations, and an activity that could be fitted into the budget. Again, the municipality looked at its options in isolation and established activities specifically for the elderly.

This, however, was not adapted to the young people who also needed something to occupy them, and a new set of activities had to be established for this group as well. The cost of these services, in addition to operating the library branch for the local school, exceeded the operating cost of the original local library. Moreover, the added value that the local library had represented for the local community is harder to quantify.

To see the value of a library

In such cases, we need to take the trouble to actually think broadly and deeply, lest we end up by making society a poorer place. In all constituent parts of society there are mechanisms and features that merit better attention, but this presupposes that we keep the principle of the holism of things in mind and let it mature.

We need to make a habit of thinking in holistic terms, and demonstrate our willingness to investigate ripple effects. At the



Photo: Amanda Tipton/
Flickr CC BY-NC ND

same time, we need to take into account that our actions may produce consequences that we cannot predict.

Local libraries help keep communities active and of sound mind. As for me, the library gave me an opportunity to discover an interest that lay dormant within me. The library opened my eyes to holistic thinking, which in turn highlighted the value of libraries in a wide sense. This is a finite circle.

The library is social sustainability in practice, breaking down barriers between different cultural and demographic groups. Walking between the shelves at a local library encompasses an infinite potential for each and every mind. It is a spiritual soup kitchen and an ingredient in a strong and healthy society.

“ The library is one of society’s fundamental building blocks and an investment in people and values.

Sveinung Nesheim
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The library and quality of life



Ragnar Audunson



Furuset Library and Activity House, Oslo, used the PLACE results in the design of their renovated library. Photo: Karoline Røsand

Can anything be deduced from research about the impact of the public library on welfare and quality of life? In the USA, Pew Research Centre conducted a survey in which the citizens were categorised according to their relationship to the library. Thirty per cent of the population had a close relationship to the library and said it would have a significant impact on them personally if the local library were to be closed.

As far as I am aware, no such observations of the significance of the library in people's lives have been seen in Norway. However, the *PLACE (Public Libraries Arenas for Citizenship)* project conducted in Norway between 2006 and 2012 did give some indications.

In the PLACE project, we were primarily interested in the library's role as a meeting place in the community. What kinds of meetings are held in the library? Does the library help to create an integrated community that is good to live in? What role does the library play for immigrants look-

ing to settle in a new country? What do users do in the library – how is it utilised?

These were just some of the areas we were interested in. In order to find answers, we conducted for example two surveys, observations in three branches and qualitative interviews with immigrant women. The surveys and observations were carried out in three districts in Oslo: a suburb with a large immigrant population, a gentrified district in the inner east and a typical middle-class district with a large number of villas.

The importance of libraries

Survey respondents were asked to evaluate the importance of various meeting places in terms of creating good local communities using a scale from 0 to 10, where 0 means completely immaterial and 10 means very important. In the last survey from 2011, the library had an average score of 7.66.

This was slightly lower than community halls, sports centres, swimming baths, cultural centres et cetera (8.5) and schools (8.14), but ahead of market places and parks (7.26), local cafes and coffee bars (7.47) – and well ahead of the local shopping centres (5.78). Between the first survey in 2006 and the last one in 2011, the library's average score went up from 7.09 to 7.66. Thus, the library seems to be of great importance to the quality and experience of living in a local community.

Both surveys showed that a wide range of meetings are held in libraries: they serve as a meeting place in the district, where the inhabitants can randomly encounter friends and neighbours, and where they are exposed to the diversity of the multicultural city. More than one third of users say they have struck up a conversation with a stranger and a very large proportion of these have struck up a conversation with people who are different to them in terms of ethnicity, cultural background, age et cetera.

The library is a place where people go with their family, friends, colleagues, et cetera to do something together – whether it is planning a long weekend in Paris,

working on a school assignment together, taking children or grandchildren to the theatre or going with a partner or friends to a lecture.

Observations in three case libraries

In the qualitative observations in the three case libraries in Oslo, some of the key findings can be summarised as follows:

Through observations and interviews it became clear to us how the library is an arena where people can drift between different roles and life spheres: the parent and caregiver role, the role of citizen, the role of employee or prospective student et cetera.

Example: In the middle-class library, we observed and interviewed two women in their 30s who went there every afternoon after work. They had brought a cup of coffee, and were sitting on a sofa chatting; taking on the role of friend. Then one of them got up, walked over to the area with books on religion and life stances, and came back with a book on Islam. She said that this was a topic that was discussed a lot at work, and she wanted to learn more about it in order to participate in the debate. This took her into the role of citizen.

This could be considered a typical example of the seamless movement between roles and life spheres that we were able to observe. Very often in our dealings with public institutions we are either job applicants, prospective students, relatives of patients, patients, citizens, recipients of social benefits, et cetera. In the library, people can drift between the various roles that make up the whole person. What impact does this have on the quality of life?

A user among others

When we started the PLACE project, we were interested in the extent to which the library may be an arena that helps enable us to develop a tolerance for the diversity that characterises today's society. We found that the library is indeed such an arena. However, at the same time, we became increasingly aware that the library is also a place where a person can just be a

user among other users, without revealing their true self.

No one could tell by looking at the 35-year-old woman and the almost 50-year-old man sitting next to each other on public computers that she was a successful young woman who had just had her first book accepted by one of Norway's largest publishers, while he was one of the long-term unemployed, using the library to create a structure to his daily life. The library served as a space for normality, where they were both users among other users. What impact does this have on the quality of life?

The library enhances lives

In a follow-up survey we conducted in 2011 with a representative national sample, respondents were asked how well the library helps promote different values, such as solidarity and fellowship, lifelong learning, equal access to information and knowledge, knowledge of and interest in the world around us, democracy and quality of life. Many did not know how to respond to these questions.

The proportion responding "Don't know" was between 35 and 40 per cent. However, most believe that the library is very good or fairly good at promoting these values. Of all respondents, 47 per cent, that is 60 percent of those who had an opinion, think that the library makes a very good or fairly good contribution to improving quality of life.

For values such as equal access to information, democracy, lifelong learning, knowledge of and interest in the world around us, the scores were higher.

The library clearly enhances people's lives.

Ragnar Audunson
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and Akershus University College
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"May the force be with you"

Our challenge, school library colleagues, is already upon us. Time for story reading is disappearing. Before our very eyes the special, almost holy 'story at bedtime' ritual is slowly but surely being obliterated. So I say to you in school libraries everywhere "May the force be with you". May we rise to meet the challenge that is facing us and may we emerge victorious.



Elspeth Randelin

For me reading is magic! Reading can provide inspiration, solace and hope. A good read is so much a part of my life I cannot imagine a life without it. How is it then possible that so many young people today are able to say "No thanks – reading isn't my thing" or "I don't DO reading"! Not only do young people freely express such thoughts with impunity but seemingly without the slightest hesitation or twinge of remorse. How is this possible?

Somewhere, at some time in the not too distant past, an adult has missed an opportunity or indeed missed many opportunities, to open the magic door. Adults who failed to reveal the wonders of

reading for a child who then grows into a young person who says that they don't 'do' reading.

An adult, even many adults have let magic moments go by without ever stopping to think how it will be for this child as they grow up without the wonders of a shared book: shared warmth, shared laughter and shared tears after having read a truly wonderful story. Never to know the overwhelming sadness felt when the very last sentence of a wonderfully exciting story is read.

It happens. Opportunities ignored and children missed because there is no longer time. Now adults are too busy to read a story. Fifteen minutes a day without a telephone or being connected electronically to anything or anybody is just not possible. Sorry.

To cuddle an ipad

I am often asked to speak at parent evenings and with me I have an arsenal of astounding and convincing arguments as to why reading in the home is important and I try very hard to convey the wonder of sharing a story together with a child. They listen, applaud and then we all drink coffee.

On one occasion quite recently a young mother spoke to me very seriously during

coffee time. The conversation went a bit like this:

"Thank you for your talk. It was very interesting. However, I don't think you really understand the situation for young families today."

"Really", I replied – genuinely interested in her reasoning.

"It may have been different when you were home with your children in the 80's. (It was the 90's but perhaps this isn't the point and I don't argue.) It is 2016 now and we simply don't have the time to lie down with our children or read *every* night. There are so many other things that have to be done."

"It need only be 15 minutes", I replied. "I think it is so very important for your children to have your undivided attention at least once a day. It is often not the book that is important but the warmth of a cuddle and the talk."

"Yes", she replied. "I understand that it would be lovely but our lives just aren't like that anymore. My daughter loves to listen to a story on her Ipad and that is also language development...isn't it?"

Other parents had gathered to listen and my adversary had their support. No one indicated that she was wrong. I was the one who was misinformed, out of date and irrelevant.

Elspeth Randelin is school librarian at Ytternäs skola in Mariehamn, Finland. She is well known as a passionate promoter of a wide variety of ideas designed to inspire children and young people to read. Unwilling readers are a special challenge and many of the methods Elspeth promotes are aimed at just these readers, particularly boys, in the hope of luring them into the wonderful world of literature. She lectures often in Finland and Sweden and has been awarded several prizes and scholarships for her work.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



The Swedish singer and last year's winner of the Eurovision song contest, Måns Zelmerlöw takes a reading break. Photo: Therese Andersson/Blick bildbyrå

I was so saddened by this conversation I had difficulty to hold back tears. This young mother was in earnest. She loves her children and wants to do what is best and yet is on the road to missing the opportunity to open the magic door.

She and her partner have a list of priorities and reading stories is not high enough on the list and I even found myself wondering if it was on the list at all. Ipad stories have taken their place and yet you cannot cuddle an ipad.

There are of course many, many mums and dads that do read for their children and who have completely understood the reasons for it and the joy to be found there. But times are changing and we, who love books and everything a children's library stands for, need to be seen and to be heard and to inform. We need to shout louder.

We need men!

In our school library we believe that a beginning reader needs the support of many adults. All the adults in a child's reading life have a role to play. Mums and Dads and their families and friends, teachers, day care staff, sports coaches, neighbours and the list can go on and on.

However what we really need are men. Male reading models are in short supply

and if a little boy doesn't have a dad who reads and there aren't any male teachers in his school it can well be that he never sees a man reading for pleasure.

It is possible, maybe even likely, that Mum reads, Grandma reads and all his female teachers and librarians read and encourage him to read too. This however fails to convey the message that reading is also fun for boys. For that we need to show this little boy that men also read because they want to and because they really, really enjoy it.

Find reading models

To go on a hunt for men who read may not be everybody's idea of a fun evening out so it is fortunate that there are many websites available with reading men – just to print out and decorate the walls in your classroom or library. Pictures of men who read – famous sportsmen, famous authors and men who like to read on their way to work on the New York underground.

One of the most popular sites in our school is the *Premier League Reading Stars* (PLRS). It doesn't have to be big stars either. Policemen, firemen, ambulance drivers – anyone in a uniform can be pretty impressive. The best reading models are men who genuinely love to read and do so whenever they can.

We need a force

It was a good thing that Måns Zelmerlöw won the Eurovision Song Contest 2015. He is an avid reader and was only too happy to allow us to photograph a quiet time on stage while waiting for all sound checks to be completed. It makes a difference. It isn't as if children say "Oh Måns reads – I think I will too". It is more subtle than that.

Photographs of readers on the walls just show everyone that it is OK to read. Possibly even more than OK. Maybe it is a really good thing to read. The best reading model of them all is, without question, Dad and maybe even Grandpa.

If we can motivate all the adults in children's reading lives to read for, in front of and beside their children – every evening – a great deal of the pseudo opposition to the activity will disappear and that can only be a very good thing.

We need a force – maybe even THE force to make this happen and I sincerely hope that it is with you!

Elsbeth Randelin

Libraries are building a new collaboration

What did the famous wartime hero, Marshal Mannerheim do in Mikkeli during the war years? Fires in Mikkeli – which buildings have burned and when? My grandmother was working in a traveling circus – are there data from the circus or about my grandmother? Why have people moved to Mikkeli through the years? These are examples of questions from people who came to learn about the use of digital newspapers of The National Library.



Pirjo Karppinen



From an old newspaper: The famous wartime hero Baron Gustaf Mannerheim, Marshal of Finland in Mikkeli. Photo: CC BY 4.0/SA-kuva

The Centre for Preservation and Digitisation of The National Library in Finland carried out an open and free course *Discover the treasures of the history pages of newspapers* for local people. The course was arranged in cooperation with the Mikkeli Community College and Provincial Library and was held at the Provincial Library four Tuesdays in March.

The participants were encouraged to choose a personally interesting topic and to search for information from the digital newspapers of The National Library, the digi.kansalliskirjasto.fi service. The National Library has digitised all Finnish newspapers until 1910, and they are freely available to everyone.

Digital newspapers

You can use the digi.kansalliskirjasto.fi service in Finnish, Swedish and English. Due to copyright reasons, the more recent digital newspapers are seen only in the six Finnish legal deposit libraries and they are available on microfilm in selected libraries.

The *Aviisi* project of The National Library is piloting two in-copyright digital newspapers from 1916 to 2013 in the Mikkeli region and the compatibility of the

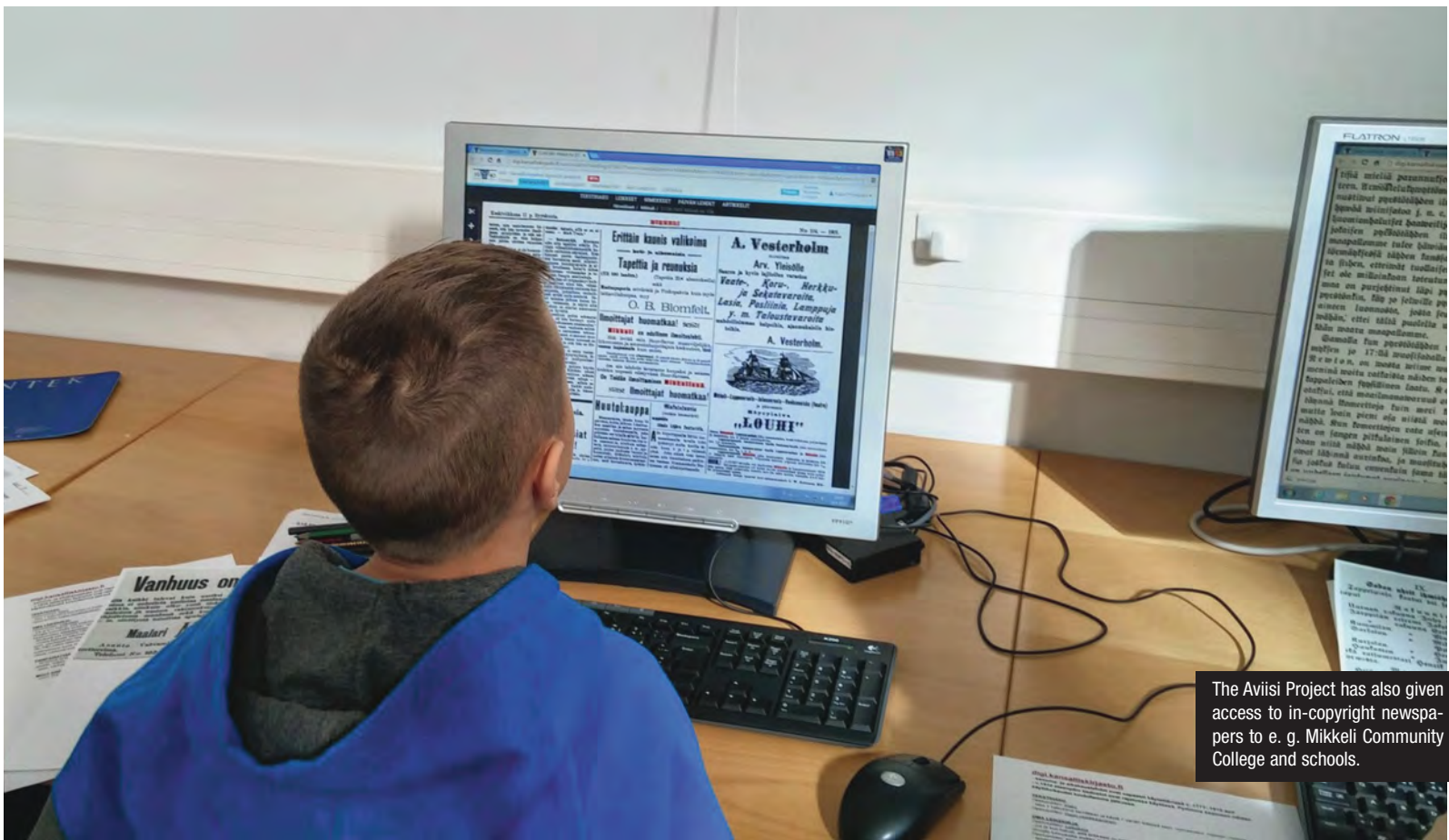
whole digital history of these papers for use, for example in elementary and high school, community college, museums and for research and educational purposes.

The newspapers are an invaluable and rich cultural and historical heritage and the Finns have always been diligent readers. Even before the year 1950 there have been published 611 separate newspaper titles in Finland. Finns have always read about the current events in newspapers, be they political, economic, science, culture or art. Newspapers tell local, regional and national news in a brief and concise manner. Therefore, the newspaper materials are very diverse and rich materials to be used.

Learning by doing and sharing

The newspaper course had three main objectives. First, we wanted to find out whether citizens have an interest in studying the digitised data of old newspapers. The number of people involved and returning each time confirmed the existence of interest.

Second, we wanted to know in what kinds of things and which newspaper information the townspeople are interested. Course participants have shown



interest in a broad spectrum of topics: from family history, village and town history to various events, anecdotes, proverbs and the linguistic and semantic change in Finnish words.

Third, we wanted to test whether the old data from digital newspapers could be used as learning materials when adults and older people are to learn the basic skills of using a computer. Could they learn basic computer skills by experimenting with search possibilities in the newspapers and conducting searches concerning issues of personal interest?

The tutors were supporting learning and also giving guidance. The group supported individual learning, by discussing, reflecting on the topics and articles and sharing information. The group was studying together, learning by doing, sharing knowledge and experiencing joy which leads to interaction, and thus builds social relations and social well-being.

Both local and national cultural heritage

The experts of The National Library designed and pedagogically guided the course based on joint learning. As a visitor we had the well-known historian, Jukka Partanen, from the Genealogical Society

of Finland. Jukka guided the participants interested in genealogy and history and recalled the time when all the data were on microfilms. Microfilm reels had to be wound on until the right frame was found. Today, data is very accessible for researchers and other users and browsing and search is easy.

In addition to guiding the homing desire for knowledge of the townspeople the two digital in-copyright newspapers of the National Library are piloted in other organisations too. The University of Helsinki has a research unit in Mikkeli, and a few other universities also use the newspapers for research and educational use. They are also available online in the Mikkeli region in all elementary schools, high schools, as well as the regional museums.

The experts of The National Library have initially organized guidance and brainstorming sessions for the user groups of the material, together with the organizations: what data is available, who can use the materials and how? Newspaper materials are part of the national cultural heritage, which should be made more widely accessible, to benefit society as a whole, and to open doors into a wide range of new possibilities.

The Aviisi Project

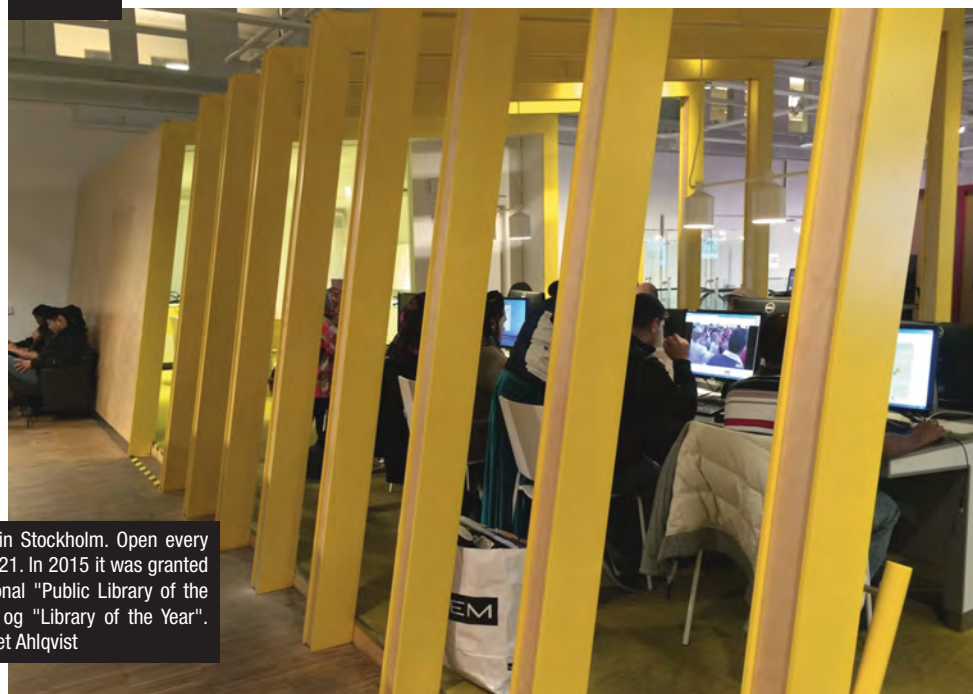
The project is carried out at the Centre for Preservation and Digitisation in Mikkeli / The National Library of Finland which is part of the University of Helsinki. The ERDF project is funded by the South Savo Regional Council, the National Library and the City of Mikkeli, Kaakon Viestintä Ltd / Länsi-Savo newspaper, Viestilehdet Ltd / Maaseudun tulevaisuus newspaper, as well as the copyright organisation Kopioisto. The project is implemented during 2015-2016.

For more information:

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**Hävkraft
från EU**
2014–2020



Kista library in Stockholm. Open every day from 10-21. In 2015 it was granted the international "Public Library of the Year Award" og "Library of the Year". Photo: Elisabet Ahlqvist



Cecilia Ranemo

Public Library opening hours 2016

Public libraries are important places for meetings, knowledge, culture, information and experiences. However, only one in four public libraries in Sweden is open at least 40 hours a week.

In January a survey of the Swedish public libraries opening hours was carried out; it showed that four out of ten public libraries in the country are open less than 20 hours a week. This means that they are not always very accessible to the users, despite often being the only institution for culture and information available in smaller towns.

In the last few years, the public library commissions have been increased, at the same time as the municipalities continue to close public library branches and reduce opening hours. The public libraries are given more to do and less time to do it.

Limited opening hours limit visits

The budget limitations for the library operations in municipalities often lead to branches being closed in order to increase the quality and focus the activities within the given budget at the other libraries and, e.g., extend the opening hours there.

Limited opening hours at the public libraries means that not all user groups can visit the physical libraries. In total only 13 percent, that is 144, of the country's public libraries are open on Sundays and 38 per cent are open on Saturdays.

The journey to a library that is open at the weekend is many miles for a lot of people. And yet weekends are often the only possible times that e.g., parents and children can visit the library together.

Limited to online functions

Access to public libraries is not equal for users in Sweden. There are great differences between different counties. The often long distance to the nearest public library in combination with the short opening hours does not promote the use of the libraries.

The users are limited to the functions they can use online. Often the book bus is the solution but the number of book buses

has not increased despite the closure of public library branches.

The survey was conducted from a user perspective and the results show that 844 of the approximately 1,118 public libraries in Sweden have shorter opening hours than 40 hours per week. A total of 480 public libraries are open less than 20 hours per week. A total of 209 public libraries are open less than 10 hours per week. Only 24 public libraries are open 60 hours or more per week.

The conclusion is that the public spaces, which public libraries are frequently described as, often are closed.

Cecilia Ranemo
Executive Officer Statistics
National Library of Sweden

Large award to a small library

In 2015, the Norwegian Library Association chose to give the prestigious Library of the Year award to Berg Library, a small library in a rural community in Norway.



Tertit knudsen

This award focuses on the societal role of small libraries, and the jury's statement includes the following passage: 'Most libraries in Norway are small, and the local library in Berg revives the communal spirit that has always been vitally important in fishing hamlets and rural communities. To participate in shaping the society we live in is a pillar of democracy. On the seaward side of Senja island this pillar rests on a rock-solid foundation: the local library.'

As the only employee of Berg library and with no more than a 34 percent full-time equivalent position, librarian Brita Esai-

assen has succeeded in providing first-rate services to the 900 local inhabitants, who represent a number of different cultures and languages.

Local voluntary effort

Here, young immigrants can learn from elderly villagers how to knit mittens, and in the cooking classes everybody learns from everybody else. The cultural events are well attended, and renovation of the premises is taken care of through voluntary community work. All this was achievable through collaboration with local volunteers as well as through cooperation

on librarianship with the host municipality of Lenvik, which supplies the chief librarian and more besides.

In small communities where everybody is mutually acquainted and the community spirit has always remained strong, it is perhaps easier to join a community effort and use creative methods to make the best of the available resources, as the people of Berg municipality on Senja island have done.

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Berg library with happy users feeling at home. Photo: Brita Esaiassen

A national library strategy

Photo: Pixabay/CC0



Annika Hjerpe

According to the Swedish library law, publically financed libraries shall serve society by offering free access to knowledge and by promoting literature, education, research, enlightenment and culture. Since 2011 the National Library of Sweden has the public function to survey the country's publically financed libraries and to promote collaboration between them.

In 2015, the National Library was tasked with developing a proposal for a national library strategy based on a long-term desire to maintain and develop library operations in Sweden.

“Libraries should be meeting-points with literature in focus. Meanwhile they also offer room for dialogue and are thereby central building blocks of our democracy. The recent debate about libraries also highlights the need for a national library strategy,” Alice Bah Kuhnke, Minister for Culture and Democracy, said in a press statement from the Ministry of Culture in June 2015.

The aforementioned debate took place in Sweden in the early summer of last year. It was about the order in libraries, mainly public libraries – or rather – the lack thereof, and about the norm of silence in the library. Is silence desirable or obsolete, and is it ok to run around and play or should you sit quietly and read?

The National Library will suggest long term goals and strategies to promote collaboration and development in the publically financed library community. Among other things, the role and the conditions of the librarian profession will be highlighted as well as the libraries’ role in promoting literature, forming democratic discussions, developing an ability to analyse and evaluate sources and to freely form opinions. The need for development of school libraries will also be analysed.

Clarify libraries’ position in society

“This is a commission for the National Library for developing a plan of how the country’s libraries will work together with Sweden’s best interests at heart” says Gunilla Herdenberg, National Librarian of Sweden.

“The strategy will clarify aspects such as the libraries’ position in society; the needs of the users, new media, technological development and national infrastructure. Through collaboration, libraries can optimize the use of resources to give people access to information, which is one of the founding pillars of a democratic society. Therefore, the strategy also needs to answer questions about national coordination of long term digital preservation of library material, as well as other questions concerning physical and digital collections,” she continues.



Karin Linder.
Photo: Lena Dahlström

Collecting facts and ideas

The National Library has given the task to develop a proposal for the national library strategy to National Coordinator Erik Fichtelius and National Researchers Krister Hansson and Karin Linder.

“We have decided to work as transparently as possible. We want the plan to be so established among the library community that they feel they have influenced the outcome through facts, knowledge, experience and ideas,” Karin Linder says.

The group is collecting the facts, knowledge, experience and ideas in different ways. One way is through Facebook discussions with approximately 1,300 participants in the *Nationell biblioteksstrategi* (National Library Strategy) Facebook group. Here, the group has asked around one question per week since January.

They have travelled around Sweden to meet library directors, local branches of the Swedish Library Association, county librarians, special librarians, university librarians, college librarians and politicians.

“We have also been using a method that we have borrowed from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, we have invited people to write dispatches – a personal reflection on how things are – what the problem is and how we would like it to be. This far we have received around 40-50 dispatches,” Karin Linder says.

“We have also decided that we will meet as many people as possible to get as good a picture as possible of Sweden and all its particular nature and conditions. We are

using existing networks and work groups and will only create new work groups occasionally,” she continues.

Research and reports

The group has ordered two different research mandates, one to map the position and authority of the library director in libraries and one to follow up on the investment in school libraries that the Swedish government will make in the autumn of 2016.

“We will also receive a research and knowledge compilation of Swedish library research,” Karin Linder says.

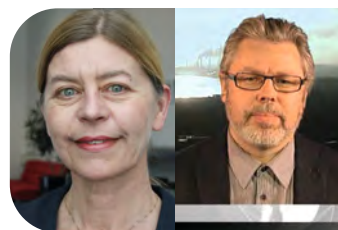
At the beginning of May, the group submitted a situation report, a feature-like survey of libraries in Sweden.

“Now when the May report is done, we are working with more specifically directed questions, and they will also result in reports. In 2017 we will produce an extended business intelligence report for the Ministry of Culture and in 2019 the strategy itself should be accepted by other public authorities in order to be sent to the government,” Karin Linder explains.

Annika Hjerpe
Press and Communication Officer
National Library of Sweden

Democracy. Who cares?

Generally speaking, digital media create a more integrated communication environment than was previously the case. Society's learning is therefore more often perceived as an 'ecology', that is to say an eco-system with various contributors.



Helene Høyrup Lars Konzack

One effect can be that information and culture providers change their self-understanding from 'just' making materials available to a more deliberate intention of optimising social processes.

Hjørring Public Libraries have taken this step with their project *Democracy – who cares?* This cultural course programme for young people combines the teaching of democracy and rhetoric at the schools with challenging events and user-generated activities in city and library environments.

The young and democracy

The young and democracy is a focus area under the Danish Agency for Culture and Palaces, but how can public libraries and educational institutions in practice engage on involving young people in democratic processes? Educating oneself to democracy requires both historical and critical knowledge and personal dedication.



Arrangement at Hjørring Library
Photo: Peter Martin Jørgensen

Through committed cooperation with local educational institutions, Hjørring Libraries are therefore dedicated to transcending the institutional environments where young people move on a daily basis. The idea is to create a common holistic mind-set, where different local institutions contribute to providing a common culture at a higher level than would be possible for each individual institution.

The aim is, through activities that transgress professional groups and types of knowledge, e.g. critical knowledge and technical and aesthetic performance, to address the young student as a 'whole' human being.

The project culminates in the democracy celebration *The power of the word*, where the students cooperate with professional artists and stand-up comics to create an aesthetically and rhetorically convincing statement in present-day terminology. The students made their own music videos, contributing with suggestions for the perception of democracy.

"Embedded librarianship"

In research literature, one often comes across the term "embedded librarianship", i.e. a so-called integrated or "embedded" communication. It may be a question of information and culture mediators integrating their work more directly in social processes like democracy, research, education or job functions. In this way, it becomes possible to move the processes

up to a higher taxonomic or empirical level.

Hjørring libraries work deliberately towards creating a more performative information and culture mediation. By integrating itself directly in the debate on democracy, the project reinforces the institution's rhetorical sender-perspective. At the same time it is actively offering a number of expressive and aesthetic forms of knowledge, which have traditionally been associated with the concept of cultural mediation (e.g. poetry slam and stand-up).

Thinking of mediation in terms of contributing to an 'ecology' transgresses last, but not least, some of the contradictions we know from actual discussions about today's pedagogical and cultural challenges – for example divisions between public library and school, amateur and professional, the receptive and the expressive, the critical and the performative.

Democracy – who cares will from now on be a regular element at the commencement of study for the young in the municipality of Hjørring.

Helene Høyrup and Lars Konzack,
Associate Professors at the Royal School
of Library and Information Science,
University of Copenhagen

His Majesty's Gracious Ordinance Relating to Freedom of Writing and of the Press (1766)

Translated by Peter Hogg

*Issued in Stockholm, in the Council Chamber, on 2 December 1766.
Printed at the Royal Printing-Press.*

We Adolphus Frederick by the Grace of God King of Sweden, Gothland and Wenden etc. etc. Heir to Norway and Duke of Schleswig-Holstein, etc. etc. Proclaim,

That, having considered the great advantages that flow to the public from a lawful freedom of writing and of the press, and whereas an unrestricted mutual enlightenment in various useful subjects not only promotes the development and dissemination of sciences and useful crafts but also offers greater opportunities to each of Our loyal subjects to gain improved knowledge and appreciation of a wisely ordered system of government; while this freedom should also be regarded as one of the best means of improving morality and promoting obedience to the laws, when abuses and illegalities are revealed to the public through the press; We have graciously decided that the regulations issued previously on this matter require such appropriate amendment and improvement that all ambiguity, as well as any such coerciveness as is incompatible with their intended purpose, may be removed.

In regard to which, and having received the loyal report of the Estates of the Realm on this matter, We have graciously decided that the previously established office of Censor shall be entirely abolished and that it shall not hereafter be the duty of the Chancellery to supervise, or to submit for review, any printed works submitted for publication.

The first page of the *Swedish Freedom of Print Act* from 1766 translated by Peter Hogg.

The world's oldest freedom of print

In 2016, the *Swedish Freedom of the Press Act* that abolished censorship and required authorities to provide public access to official documents celebrates its 250th anniversary. This makes it the oldest constitutional regulation of press and print freedom in the World.

Freedom of the press is an important democratic right, it gives people the right to freely publish books, newspapers and journals with no right for public authorities to examine in advance or censor what has been written.

As long as you follow the law, you have the right to spread whatever printed information you wish.

FOI incorporated

The Swedish Freedom of the Press Act of 1766 did not only pioneer the freedom of the press and print, it also openly declared public access to state information, making Sweden the first country in the world to officially instigate a principle of public access to official records through Freedom of Information (FOI) – that gave the citizens access to previously secret public documents.

To guarantee an open society, access to information about the work of the parliament, government and government agencies is necessary. FOI has been incorporated into the *Swedish Freedom of the Press Act*.

Not self-evident

“Freedom of the press is unique in two ways; it initiated the principle of public access to official records and followed the principle of legality, which is an essential element in modern law. It says that a document cannot be prosecuted if it has not been defined as criminal by the law, 250 years ago this was not self-evident,” explains historian Jonas Nordin.

“The *Freedom of the Press Act* obeyed the principle of legality in that it carefully stated existing exceptions to the freedom of print. Everything that hadn't been defined in this way was allowed to be printed. Such specifications did not exist in, for example, Great Britain where the extensive freedom of speech lacked legal protection and was often restricted through capricious application of the law,” he continues.

The 250th anniversary of the *Freedom of the Press Act* is being celebrated in both Sweden and Finland as in 1766, Finland was part of Sweden.

Annika Hjerpe
Press and Communication Officer
National Library of Sweden



ADOLPH FRIEDRICH med GUDS
Nåde, Sveriges, Göttes och Wendes Ko-
nung ic. ic. ic. Arfwinge til Norge samt

Hertig til Schleswig Holstein, ic. ic. Gjøre witterligit,
At så Wi eftersinnat then stora bättnad Allmänheten af en rättsskaffens
Skrifwe- och Tryck- frihet tilflyter, i thet en obehindrad inbördes uplys-
ning uti hwarjehanda nyttiga ämnen, icke allenast linder til Wettenka-
pers och goda slögders upöbling och utspidande, utan ock gifwer en hwar
af Wäre trogne undersåtare ömrigare tillfälle, at thes bättnad känna och
värdera et wisligen inrättadt Regeringsfätt; Afwen som ock thenna fri-
het bör anses för ett af the bästa hjelpemedel til Sedernas förbättring och
Laglydnadens befrämjande, så missbruk och olagligheter genom trycket
blifwa för Allmänhetens ögon ådagalagde; Så hafwe Wi i Nader fun-
nit the förre i thetta mål gjorde författningar tärwa then behörig rät-
telse och förbättring, at all twetydighet och ett sådant twång, som med
thet påsyftade ändamålet ej beslå kan, måge utur wägen rödjäs.

I sådant afseende, och sedan Wi häröfwer inhämtat Rikens Stän-
ders underdåniga utlåtande, hafwe Wi i Nader godt funnit, at thet tilförene
inrättade Censors- Ämbetet, nu mera aldeles bör uphöra, samt ej eller
Wårt och Rikens Sanglie- Collegio hädanefter tillkomma, at öfwerse,
gilla eller ogilla the til tryckning ärnade Skrifter, utan komma Autho-
rerne sjelfwe, jemte Boktryckarne, för thet som i trycket utgifwes, efter
thenna Wår Nådiga Förordning, hwarigenom the förra Stadgar om Cen-
suren aldeles uphåwas, at ansvarige wara; Dock hwad angår skadelige
Böckers införande och försäljande på Boklädorne, förblifwer tillsynen thes
öfwer hädanefter hos Wårt Sanglie- Collegium och wederbörande Con-
sistorier, som äga theröfwer hand hålla, at ej någre förbudne och förför-
sta Böcker, antingen uti Theologiska eller andre ämnen, måge få ut-
spidas.

§. 1. Ingen ware tillåtit något skrifwa eller genom trycket utgif-
wa, som strider emot Wår rätta Tros bekännelse och then rena Evange-
liska Lärnan; Hwar, som themed beträdas, ware til tryckhundrade Da-
ler Silfwermynts böter förfallen.

Innehåller Skriften smädelse emot Gud, warde dömd efter All-
män Lag. Och på thet irrige lärosatfers insmygande thes bättnad före-
kommas må, skola alla Manuscripter, som i någor måtto angå Lärnan och
wåra Christendoms stycken, förut af näraste Consistorio öfwerfes, och
ingen Boktryckare, mid Twåhundrade Daler Silfwermynts wite sig för-
drifta, at utan Consistorii påskrifne tillåtelse, hwilken ock tillika tryckas
bär, sådane skrifter genom trycket utgifwa.

§. 2.

Spreading the values of freedom of information, thought and expression globally

I am a librarian from Wilfrid Laurier University in Canada and want to share reflections on an experience that might be of interest to my colleagues in Scandinavia.

In late 2015, I organized a petition asking the Swedish Parliament to translate into English an edited volume that was recently commissioned. The volume was commissioned to commemorate the 250th anniversary of Sweden's freedom of the press and access to information legislation.

Supporters of my petition included 114 librarians, media advocacy groups, lawyers, and university professors from over 30 countries. Why does this book captivate a Canadian librarian and so many others? The answer is that to better understand our own rights, we need historic knowledge about the origins of freedom of information.

Only 33 years

Many Canadians I have talked with assume the United States of America was the first country to have freedom of information legislation. They are surprised to learn that Sweden had it 200 years earlier. Likewise, Canadians do not seem to re-

cognize how closely access to information is tied to freedom of thought and expression.

These misunderstandings should not be too surprising given that Canadians have only had the right for 33 years. This is not much time to develop knowledge about it and weave it into our culture.

Most of the world is no doubt in a similar position to benefit from knowledge in Swedish and Finnish history. In 1965, only 0.4 percent of the world's population had a right to access government information. That level has risen to more than 80 percent. Interestingly, 70 percent of the countries that have FOI laws have only had it since 2000.

Historical knowledge important

Having access to historical knowledge is really important for public debates. Recently, I gave testimony to the committee of the Canadian Parliament that oversees issues of access to information. I was lucky to have access to *Anticipating The Wealth of Nations: The Selected Works*

of Anders Chydenius (1729-1803) which includes three English translations of reports presented to the Swedish parliament in 1765/66. In my testimony, I quoted one of the reports.

Librarianship rooted in values

As a librarian, my hope for the translation is more than just about getting a copy of an important book into the hands of readers around the world. For me, this effort reflects a value of freedom of thought and expression that librarians around the world try to manifest in their communities and countries on a daily basis.

Librarianship is rooted in values. As new technologies emerge and older ones fade into the background, the golden threads of continuity are found in our values, such as freedom of information, thought, and expression.

Mark Weiler, MLIS, PhD Web & User Experience
Librarian / Psychology Librarian
Laurier Library, Wilfrid Laurier University

Community of cataloguers in Iceland

New cataloguing rules



Magnhildur
Magnúsdóttir

The work environment of cataloguers in Iceland is unique in that the majority of libraries use a common library system, Gegnir, (Aleph) which is a nationwide union catalogue. Cataloguers, whether they catalogue for public libraries, university libraries or special libraries, have common interests and collaboration between them is extensive. This is one of the main strengths of the cataloguers' work environment in Iceland as well as the common integrated search portal leitir.is.

The first step taken in preparation for the implementation of the new cataloguing rules, *Resource Description & Access* (RDA), in Iceland was a conference held in Iceland in 2007. The conference *Back to Basics – and Flying into the Future* was a two-day international conference about the RDA cataloguing rules which were then being developed.

The conference was well attended and speakers from USA, UK, Denmark, Iceland, Norway and Germany discussed the subject from various angles. Since then Gegnir cataloguers have done their best to follow all further developments. Many cataloguers have attended conferences abroad and brought back relevant information.

Online courses from ALA have been downloaded, such as general courses on the implementation of RDA as well as cataloguing of maps and music. The National and University Library is a member of the European RDA Interest Group (EURIG) and has formed important links with foreign experts. Cataloguers of Geg-



Visit to The British Library at Boston Spa. Photo: Rósfriður Sigvaldadóttir

nir have been kept up to date in regular seminars.

Preparation for RDA in Iceland

In 2014 a number of major steps concerning the implementation of RDA in Iceland were taken. That year the decision was made to implement the RDA cataloguing rules in Gegnir. On 2 February 2015 the decision on the implementation of RDA in Iceland was formally confirmed. The main responsibility for the decision, as well as the financial responsibility for the project, lies with The National and University Library.

The Consortium of Icelandic Libraries, a corporation owned by the state and local governments, is responsible for the operation. The Cataloguing Council works on its behalf and its role is to formulate policy, monitor developments and provide guidelines and instructions for cataloguers.

In the autumn of 2014 the Cataloguing Council began to draft a plan for the implementation of RDA at the request of

the national librarian. The Council submitted a draft schedule and appointed an implementation team, a translation team and a teaching team. The Cataloguing Council and these teams carried out the main tasks involved in the implementation along with a team of system librarians from the Consortium of Icelandic Libraries.

Began in January 2015

The national librarian appointed a Project Steering Committee to aid and advise on major policy decisions. Members of the steering committee included the national librarian, the director of the Consortium of Icelandic Libraries, the director of Reykjavik Public Library and the chairman of the Cataloguing Council.

Implementation officially began on January 1, 2015. From that date onwards the implementation team was responsible for managing the project. A project manager was appointed for one and a half years in a part-time position.

After RDA has been implemented, all

original cataloguing bibliographic records will be according to RDA. However, there are not only original cataloguing bibliographic entries in Gegnir. Approximately 30 percent of the bibliographic records in Gegnir are uploaded annually from foreign databases.

The implementation process

The project manager's role is to coordinate the project and keep a record of all information related to it. Among the tasks is overseeing the organization, ensuring that all data pertaining to the project is available to those who need it, acting as a contact person between the various working groups and providing all relevant information about the project.

A decision was made to obtain information on procedures that libraries in other countries are using to implement RDA. For that purpose a group of cataloguers visited the British Library in Boston Spa and the University Library in Amsterdam. A foreign expert in RDA, Alan Danskin from the British Library, was invited to

come to Iceland. He was a keynote speaker at a meeting of cataloguers in the spring of 2015 and also held courses for key people involved in the implementation process.

From the beginning it has been clear that it would be impossible to translate the complete RDA rules into Icelandic. But due to new definitions and terminology compared with the previous rules, the translation team needed to translate basic concepts at least and assess the need for further translations. The Introduction and part of the Glossary have been translated into Icelandic. The aim is to continue translating according to need.

The Cataloguers' Manual

The National and University Library has compiled an online manual for cataloguers, *A Manual for Gegnir cataloguers* (HASK). The manual plays a key role in providing cataloguers with access to information on cataloguing and in coordinating cataloguing practices. It was decided to update the manual with information pertaining to RDA instead of relying only on the RDA Toolkit.

The Cataloguing Council appointed work teams which compiled guidelines to cataloguing of different formats according to RDA for publication in HASK, for example, guidelines for the cataloguing of music, books, audio books and movies. The above mentioned translations are published in HASK, along with various information about RDA. The manual is updated regularly in line with the development of RDA and as the work on the Icelandic guidelines progresses.

The teaching team

The teaching team consisted of four cataloguers. It was responsible for organizing the courses and training sessions of RDA cataloguing for all Gegnir cataloguers. The team also created teaching material in Icelandic. In February to April 2016 ten training courses were held for 161 cataloguers, each course lasting eight hours. The courses were a mixture of lectures and practical exercises and were held in a computer room where each participant had access to a computer.

These training courses are a prerequisite for all cataloguers who wish to maintain their cataloguing permissions in Gegnir. In May 2016 the team also held courses on music and score cataloguing, as well as a separate course for cataloguing of derived records such as journal articles, book chapters and single music recordings according to RDA.

The library system team in collaboration with other teams has re-configured Gegnir and ensured that new cataloguing practices are compatible with the library system. The re-configuration has resulted in a more accessible working environment and better work practices.

Follow-up

The formal implementation date for RDA in Iceland is May 20, 2016. This means that from then on, all original cataloging will be according to RDA. Subsequently, it will be necessary to consider training for groups other than cataloguers, for example, librarians working in acquisitions, reference and circulation.

It is also necessary to monitor and develop how the system works with the bibliographic records, how they appear in the leitur.is portal and how the interface looks and ensure a secure and acceptable interaction with older data. Additionally it is necessary to monitor the development of the rules in the RDA Toolkit.

A lot of work ahead

The implementation process, which a great many people contributed to, has been intense but the results have been successful. Between twenty and thirty people participated in teams and working groups, most of them still doing their daily tasks not being able to fully devote themselves to the implementation. The process was one of cooperation and solidarity among cataloguers all over Iceland.

It is also not to be underestimated that the implementation of RDA is an important opportunity for continuing education for existing cataloguers. Although the formal implementation has been completed, a lot of work lies ahead in monitoring the results and quality control.

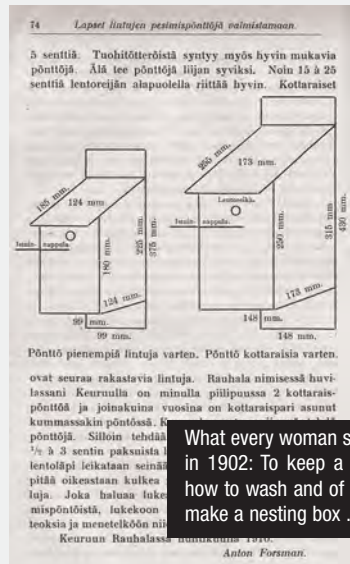
It is especially important to see how cataloguing according to RDA looks in the user interface. The implementation of RDA is a step towards a more user-friendly approach to the dissemination of information.

Magnhildur Magnúsdóttir
RDA Implementation Manager and Librarian at
The National and University Library of Iceland



The main responsibility for the decision on RDA as well as the financial responsibility for the project, lies with The National and University Library of Iceland.

Photo: Britt-Marie Sohlström. Flickr. CCO



Our century online

Everyday help from the Marthas!

Kristiina Hildén

The National Library digitises important parts of the Finnish cultural heritage – from everyday microhistory to high culture and the achievements of science and art.

The women's movement and women's organisations have played an important role in developing society, equality and national welfare, and the National Library of Finland is proud to announce that to protect this heritage, it has launched a partnership with the two branches of the venerable Martha Organisation, the Finnish-language Marttaliitto and the Swedish-language Finlands Svenska Marthaförbund.

To preserve our way of life, we must cope with chores, maintain our personal economy, discover clever work methods, cook nutritious food, care for others and protect nature, and in these arenas the Martha Organisation has paved the way for the rest of society for more than a century.

Joint fund established

Both branches were established in 1899, and their official magazines, *Emäntälehti* and *Husmodern*, were first published in 1902.

The cooperation is hoped to provide the valuable, still current material produced

by these associations for public online use.

In autumn 2015, the organisations established a joint fund for this purpose as part of the National Library's cultural heritage fund among the University of Helsinki Funds. The name of the fund is the *Martha Fund* (in Finnish: *Martat – Martharahasto*, in Swedish: *Fonden Martat – Martha*).

Digitise as much as possible

The goal of the National Library is to digitise the historical printed material produced by the Martha organisations until 1944, including cookbooks, home economy guides and other leaflets, annual reports and ephemera. At the moment, issues of *Emäntä* and *Husmodern* have been digitised up to 1944.

The National Library intends to acquire the necessary rights to display copyrighted material online. The digitised resources will be released through the Finna interface (www.finna.fi/?lng=en-gb) and linked to the websites of the organizations.

The Marthas hope to promote the National Library's work to conserve the publi-

cations and work of public organizations as well as to help the National Library raise funds for the Martha Fund so that as much of the material as possible can be digitised.

Based on shared values

The cooperation is based on communication and the values shared by the parties, such as the preservation of our immaterial cultural heritage and their long histories as public institutions.

Articles and videos will be produced in cooperation for the magazines and social media of the Martha organizations, presenting the National Library's collections and history as well as shedding light on the work of digitising and conserving the resources. Correspondingly, the *National Library Magazine* will present the publications, history and work of the new partners.

The cooperation was launched in autumn 2015 and will continue through 2017.

Kristiina Hildén

DENMARK

MEETING PLACES FOR CHILDREN ONLINE AND IN REAL LIFE

Over 1,400 users had registered on the new national children's website biblo.dk in just three days. Themes for the so far 160 discussion groups range from Minecraft to F.C. Barcelona and from drones to animals. Anyone can create a group where members share photos, videos and links, much in the same way as on e.g. Facebook. As biblo.dk is meant for children, safety issues are important.

The members can flag contents they find offending and the staff will either remove the content or talk to the user responsible. The meaning of the service is to act as a safe environment for children before they move onto other social media. The login practice guarantees that parents cannot

access their children's profiles or contents without permit.

In Gladsaxe a groundbreaking playground is being built next to the main library. The goal is to combine play and learning and give the whole town a boost. An area of 3,500 m² will be a green oasis with themed play areas. The library is taking an active role in town design with the project. The park is one way to draw new inhabitants, especially families with children, to Gladsaxe. The playground project aims at making the municipal cultural services more visible, and the whole town livelier and greener than before. It is meant to act as the architectural centrepiece for a meeting place.

A big bookcase will be catching the eye from a distance, swings, slides and climb-

ing frames will be available together with characters, themes and citations from children's literature. The themes of the park will seamlessly continue into the building and the children's department. The playground will be used for concerts and theatrical performances, it is meant to support reading, learning and language development in children.

*Copenhagen Libraries website
Danmarks biblioteker 1/2016*

DISCUSSION GROUPS
SUPPORTING INTEGRATION

While debate groups for locals and immigrants are not exactly unheard of, it is always good to hear from examples that work. Vejle Libraries are exploring how



Gladsaxe playground. Photo: UNO.dk

discussion groups could be used to help integrate immigrants and refugee seekers. The young users have already met in groups which have been marketed by the young themselves on Facebook. They have chosen the themes and lead the conversation with an adult chairperson for help and support. The library offers its premises as meeting place.

Since the model has worked well for two years, it is now being adapted for immigrants with the help of volunteers and library staff. The new debate groups will vary in size and are meant to support democracy and dialogue in Vejle in collaboration with the local Red Cross.



Vejle Municipality's is also participating in the international *100 Resilient Cities project*, which receives support from the Rockefeller Foundation. The goal of this new urban network is to create more resilient cities. All in all, Vejle Municipality hopes with this and the debate project to help create resilient, robust refugees and immigrants.

Danmarks biblioteker 1/2016

STORY OF YOUR LIFE

Stories are in! Storytelling is a hot topic in presentations, articles and social media. Stories are being connected to impact evaluation and marketing. Stories are not only confined to the pages of books, not even in libraries. Fuglebjerg Library has arranged several storytelling events where the participants tell their life story.

The previous workshops have resulted in a book, and now the library has started a storytelling café. The afternoon kicks off with a half-hour presentation followed by three questions which are discussed during a cup of coffee. Then participants are under no obligation to contribute, neither is there any homework as was the case in the workshops.

Naestved Public Library website

DATA LITERACY FOR STUDENTS



Many of the new learning environments make you – or at least me – wish you were a student again! At the University of Copenhagen (UCPH) the students now have access to a lab where they can explore data digitally at the Faculty Library of Social Sciences. You can bring your own laptop, but the Digital Social Science Lab (DSSL) also offers iMacs, projectors, big touchscreens and new ways of exploring data. Do you want to pretend you're in a futuristic jungle? This might be the place for you.

University Post online

FINLAND

OFFENSIVE VICTORY FOR NATIONAL LIBRARY

Sometimes disobeying and going public with it pays off. Kai Ekholm, the director of the Finnish National Library reacted strongly against the extensive lay-offs being planned for the library as part of the co-determination negotiations in the university sector.

According to Mr Ekholm, the budget cuts would mean returning to the service level of the 1960's and 1970's. The cuts would also put following the constitutional law in jeopardy and he downright refused firing any of the staff. His statement resulted in television appearances and numerous newspaper articles – and a reduction to the number of lay-offs at the National Library.

National Library website

Helsingin Sanomat online

Finnish Broadcasting Company website

FLOATING COLLECTIONS

More and more libraries are introducing floating collections locally or even regionally. While Jyväskylä and Oulu City Libraries have been floating their collections for a few years, Espoo and Vantaa in the metropolitan region have started more recently. In Vantaa, circulation is up by 10 percent, some libraries report even bigger increases of up to 48 percent compared to last year.

This year, two more regional central libraries, Tampere and Rovaniemi, began floating their materials. In all of these libraries, the materials remain at the library where they were returned. Users can also borrow a book from one library and return it to another within the area. Users in Tampere were quick with their positive reactions: "Makes my life easier" was one comment on Twitter.

Kirjastolehti 2/2016

Tampere City Library website

SCANDINAVIAN SHORTCUTS



NEW API, MORE IMAGES FOR FINNA

Finna, the web service combining the materials of over 40 museums, around 30 libraries and a dozen archives, grew sharply during 2015.

Over 50 new organizations, a substantial increase in materials and better usability resulted in a doubling of the amount of searches, the length of the visits increased by 50 percent.

In February, an open application programming interface was published, letting

anyone access the metadata for almost 9 million entries. A new search function with more than 200,000 open-licence images from the Finnish cultural heritage was also introduced. Users can now search for images available for e.g. commercial use or education. These images include photographs from the 1952 Helsinki Olympic Games and visual material on Finnish saunas and sauna culture.

Libraries.fi website

ICELAND



OLDIE BUT GOODIE

In a city visited by hundreds of thousands – if not already millions – each year, it makes sense that also the library gets involved. The guided walking tours offered by Reykjavík City Library since 2003 promote Icelandic literature in a fun way. As several Icelandic crime writers have recently been translated into numerous languages (including English, check out e.g. Arnaldur Indriðason) the free of charge *Dark Deeds* in Reykjavik tour has proved popular. And while we're on the subject of walking, the Reykjavík Culture Walks App helps you to discover the city's sites through tours curated by the City Library, the Reykjavik UNESCO City of Literature and other cultural institutions in the city. Get acquainted with Saga literature, Halldór Laxness or Sjórn.

Reykjavik City Library website

NORWAY



MONSTERPLAY FOR CHILDREN

Most children like monsters. A group of children prepared a short play based on scenes from the popular children's books about a little and a big monster, working together with an actress at the Culture-house Gerðubergi.

The production focused on expressing emotions and collaborating with others. The performance was given at the monster show exhibition at the library. The exhibition supported by the Nordic Culture Council will be travelling from Reykjavik to the Faroe Islands and Sweden during the next two years.

Reykjavik City Library website

"SPEAK UP, THIS IS A LIBRARY!"

Libraries are adapting to changes in teaching methods and studying habits, also in Iceland. The National Library tries to cater for the sharp increase in students working together by making more space available for group work. The different floors in the library have different rules: teamwork and conversation on one level, quiet space without coffee to spill or snacks to eat on another.

The Student Council of the University of Iceland website

COMMUNAL SPACE

The interior of the newly renovated Tøyen Library in Oslo has already created a positive buzz on Facebook with its comfortable seating groups, attractive work space and secluded corners for concentrated reading. While the library offers peace and quiet, the long communal tables may invite visitors to discussions. There is also a stage for debates and interviews. What's more, most of the furniture is made of recycled materials, old doors serve as space dividers, lamps are made of metal pots and pans. Eye candy for any library user!

*Norway's Library Association website
Deichmanske Library Facebook page*

SILENCE IS GOLDEN

Libraries everywhere are balancing with different, often contradictory needs when it comes to the noise levels on the premises. Libraries are, after all, one of the very few places of peace and quiet in today's society but no library can be completely silent anymore. Luckily, there are several solutions available. One way to turn down the overall volume of a library is to reserve certain spaces and times for silence.

Bergen Public Library is one of the initiators of the national day of silence. Together with the Norwegian Library Association and the Association Against Noise, the library set extra focus on silence on May 2nd. Every area has been prescribed a limit: 20 decibels for the café, 25 for the children's department, 10 for the silent reading room. Sound level meters installed in the ceilings make the lights flash if the noise level exceeds the prescribed limit for that particular area. On the day of silence the sound level was set at 10 decibels for the whole library.

Bergen Public Library Facebook page

FOOD FOR THE BRAIN

Library users in Norway really have it made during their lunch break! Several university, college and public libraries offer interesting programs – coffee included (but bring your own lunch) – in the middle of the day. Levanger Public Library offers book talks every Thursday at noon, University College of Southeast Norway Libraries organize monthly lunch breaks with presentations on current research themes at the university.

Some of the recent topics for the *Knowledge for Lunch* talks have been e.g. whether consumers really have power when it comes to the grocery industry, history of oil and the ethics and use of welfare technology in the care of the elderly.

Levanger Public Library Facebook page

READING ON THE GO

SMS literature is still a relatively unknown concept but around forty Danish libraries are already making short stories and poetry written specifically for use on mobile phones available for their users. Sølvberget Public Library is the first in Norway to offer access to the same service. The selection of the Danish SMSpress so far includes 13 original Norwegian titles, the rest are translations from Danish and Swedish.

What's exciting about the service is that the titles are divided into several messages and the user doesn't know the exact times she/he will receive the next SMS. Each title consists of up to five text messages per day, over a period of up to five days. There is also a measure of interactivity thrown in. According to the library, it is important to explore the different formats of literature – the format may change but stories will prevail.

Bok og bibliotek 1/2016

**Päivi Jokitalo**

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SWEDEN

Photo: ShawnFlickr CC BY-SA

BOOKFACE FRIDAY, READING TIP TUESDAY

I don't think any of you can have missed the bookface Friday phenomenon. You know the funny photos where library staff is photographed with a book cover which melts into their person in the picture. You then post the picture on Facebook or Instagram where it acts as a book tip and advertisement for the library.

As the rest of the weekdays are open for other use, Lund University Library has started their own reading tip Tuesday when the staff share their recommendations on the best information resources such as this.

Lund University Library Facebook page

SELMATHON! LEARNING RDA

Inspired by the Jane-athons organised by ALA Publishing and RDA Development Team, the Swedish National Library arranged its local version, Selmathon,

Selma being the Swedish author Selma Lagerlöf, the first female writer to win the

Nobel Prize in Literature in 1909. The aim of the day – “a whole day completely free from MARC format” – was for cataloguers, developers and system suppliers together to explore the RDA and FRBR and have fun!

National Library website

SELF-SERVICE CULTURAL HOUSE

Self-service public libraries where users also have access to the library outside staffed hours are already a permanent fixture in all of Scandinavia. A self-service cultural house, on the other hand, is a new concept. After a renovation, the municipality of Alingsås will open both its main library and its art gallery for self-service for its population of 40,000. During renovation, the library has made pocket books available at the local shopping mall, grocery stores and the town museum. Newspapers have been placed at local cafés – and readers are under no obligation to buy coffee and cake.

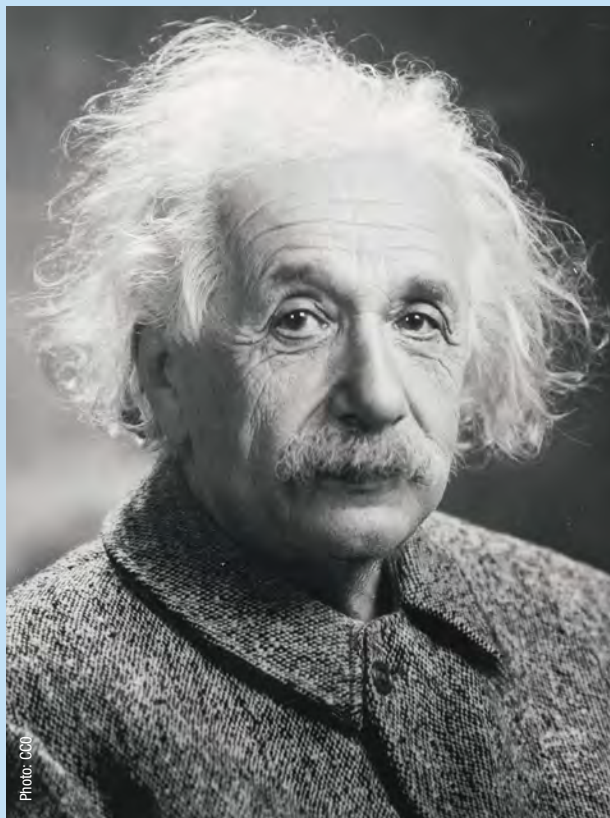
Framisidan website

LITERAPP ENHANCES THE READING EXPERIENCE

To support and promote reading is still one of the most important tasks of libraries. Literapp, a literary mobile app, is meant to do just that. The app combines literary work and writing, literature, literary places of interest and new literary contents. It is a collaboration between libraries, Umeå University, illustrators, designers, publishing houses and, of course, app developers.

Literapp can be used as an educational tool by libraries and schools, but it is also meant to bring literary works and persons behind them alive for all readers: users will be able to read and listen to stories, get information, study maps, pictures and illustrations on the setting of the stories. The County Library of Västerbotten coordinates the project and will start by tying in the local literary settings with the stories and authors of the region.

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“The only thing that you absolutely have to know, is the location of the library.

Albert Einstein

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