



College of Letters & Science
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON

Jottings

& DIGRESSIONS

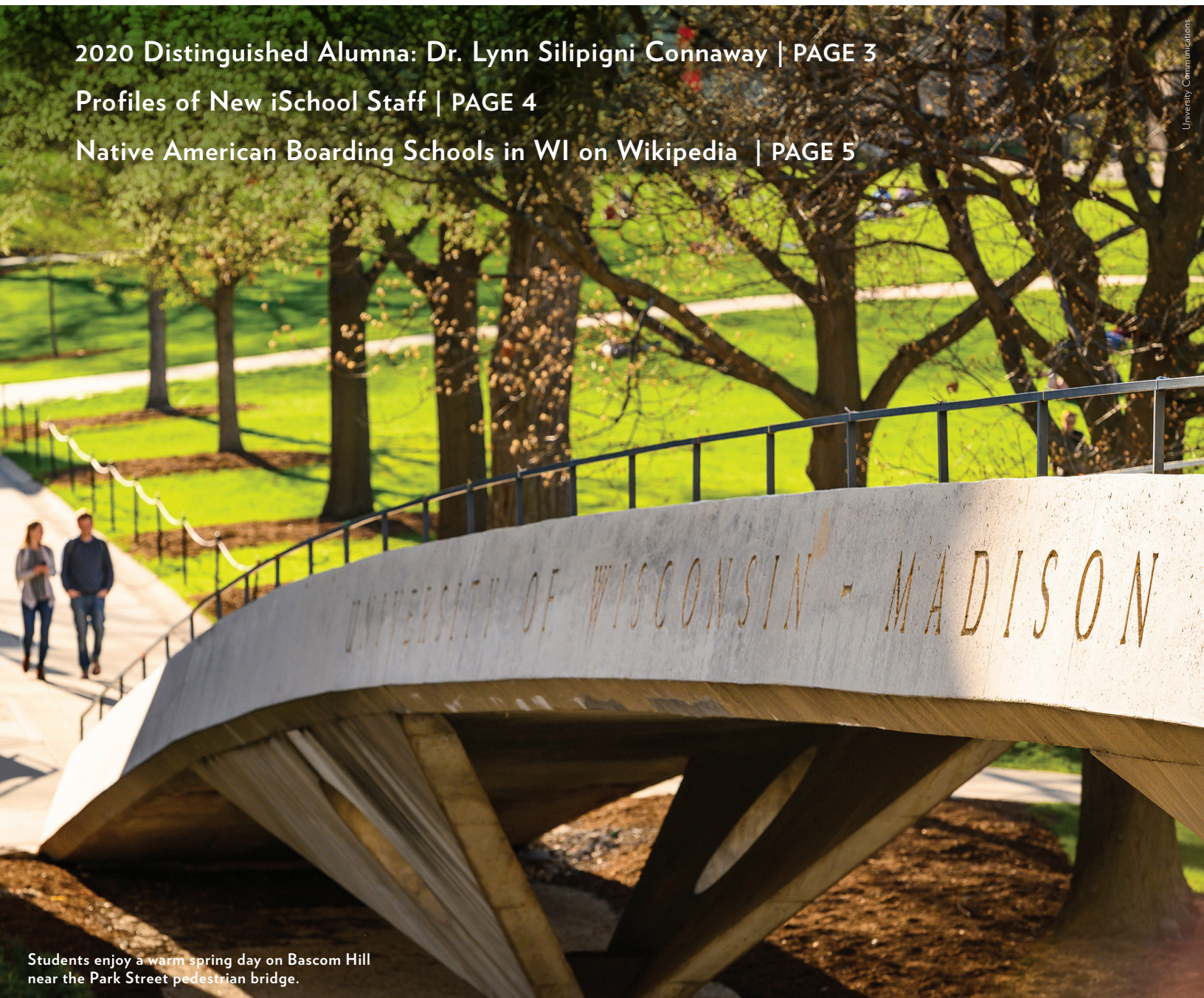
INFORMATION SCHOOL

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Students enjoy a warm spring day on Bascom Hill near the Park Street pedestrian bridge.

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Professor Kyung-Sun "Sunny" Kim

From the Director's Chair

Dear friends,

I am pleased to share exciting news with you. In fall 2019, we welcomed several new staff members. Megan Adams, a recent graduate (MA '18), returned to the Information School (iSchool) as Collections Librarian & Instructor. Nicole Wiessinger joined as Associate Director, taking over from Michele Besant who retired after serving as Associate Director (2010–2019) and Library Director (2003–2010). Dennis Choi joined us as Student Data and Enrollment Coordinator. In addition, Amanda Smith joined as Film Archivist, Wisconsin Center for Film & Theater. We are thrilled to welcome new colleagues.

I am also delighted to have multiple faculty searches approved, including those via Target of Opportunity, an initiative for recruiting under-represented faculty. In spring 2020, the iSchool hosted a number of campus visits for the searches. We are seeking new faculty members in various areas, including: human and social factors of data science, machine learning, artificial intelligence; interactive information retrieval including text retrieval and datamining of text or multimedia; digital archives including electronic records, digital preservation; and scientometrics, including webometrics and bibliometrics. If hired, the faculty members will join iSchool in fall 2020.

I would like to thank you all for your continuing support of the iSchool. With your generous help and support, we have been able to strengthen and expand our programs. We appreciate all that you do for and with us.

Thank you,
Professor Kyung-Sun "Sunny" Kim

LIS 601: Eyes Cool Podcast

The Eyes Cool podcast was a project in Assistant Professor Jonathan Senchyne's fall 2019 session of LIS 601 Information: Perspectives and Contexts, a foundational class for all iSchool students. He answered questions about producing a weekly class podcast.

What were the origins of the Eyes Cool podcast as a class project?

The Eyes Cool Podcast is the end result of years of trying out different strategies to help students come to class engaged with the material and prepared to have meaningful student-led discussions. When designing the assignment, I wanted episodes to include an overview of the important issues in the book being discussed that week, plus at least three passages to focus on in class. It creates a product that has an audience and meaning beyond the four walls of the classroom and the gradebook.

How were the books featured in each episode chosen?

In the curricular transition from LIS 450 to 601, I wanted to orient the course's focus around cultural institutions and the information technology economy as they intersect with and shape society. I chose books covering critical information studies, Black digital studies, feminist

library history, indigenous archival and museum studies, and other areas. The podcast promotes more vibrant and relevant engagement with current research in Library and Information Studies and better represents the urgent issues and questions that LIS students face today.

What are the takeaways from the podcast episodes?

I hope that the podcast episodes help students and listeners realize that the world we are offered is not the world we have to accept. I encourage everyone to take time to read, talk to people, and critique things that the current economy suggests are less valuable.

EYES COOL POD

EYES COOL
SOUNDS LIKE
iSchool

FROM THE CENTER FOR
THE HISTORY OF PRINT
AND DIGITAL CULTURE AT
THE UNIVERSITY OF
WISCONSIN-MADISON

2020 Distinguished Alumna: Lynn Silipigni Connaway (PhD'92)

Tell us a little about your recent projects.

I had the opportunity to lead the research phase of an IMLS-funded project with OCLC and the Public Library Association, Public Libraries Respond to the Opioid Crisis with Their Communities (<https://www.webjunction.org/explore-topics/opioid-crisis.html>), to identify how public libraries are collaborating with other community agencies to address the opioid crisis in their communities. I interviewed those who were affected by the opioid crisis and how public libraries helped by providing information for access to services. It was such an emotional experience to learn how individuals have been affected by this crisis and how public libraries have been there to help them. I never thought that I would have such an experience as a researcher in library and information science.

How did your time at the iSchool influence your career?

I learned so much during my time at the iSchool while studying for my doctoral degree! I had wonderful instruction opportunities so that when I was hired as an Assistant Professor, I already had two courses prepared and could dedicate more time to my research. My doctoral advisor, the late Deb Johnson, taught me how to write grants, present my research, and make teaching cataloging and classification fun.

My entire career has been positioned to study user behaviors and expectations and this originates from my experiences at the iSchool. I was encouraged to be creative and empathic to individual needs and not to simply follow standards and rules. This made my experience exceptional and a core of my academic career. Earning a doctoral degree at the iSchool opened doors and provided opportunities that I never imagined possible and probably never would have experienced without the education.

Have you gained new perspectives on information studies or research from your international scholarship experiences?

My position as a research scientist at OCLC has provided me with many opportunities—one of them is the chance to live and work outside of the US. I have been able to better understand how and why individuals approach decision making in both their everyday and professional lives. These experiences made me realize that many of the decisions we make are based on our cultural beliefs, context, and situation. This led me to focus my research on the study of individuals' behaviors in different cultural and socioeconomic environments and in different contexts and situations.

What do you enjoy most in your role as the Director of Library Trends and User Research at OCLC?

As I previously mentioned, I have had the opportunity to not only collaborate with colleagues internationally, but also to live in different countries. I have the privilege of working for a vice president who is a great catalyst for research and who has given me freedom to explore different research areas. I get to work collaboratively with OCLC members, librarians, researchers, and students from different types of libraries, different disciplines, and different geographic locations. My role at OCLC is always exciting and interesting—I learn something new each day and I have never been bored since I joined the research division at OCLC.



Lynn Silipigni Connaway, Director, Library Trends and User Research, OCLC

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New Faces in the iSchool

The school has been lucky to add four new staff members recently. We asked them how they help the iSchool tick.



Dennis Choi, Student Data & Enrollment Coordinator

What have you enjoyed most during your first few months of working at the iSchool?

I have enjoyed being part of such a vibrant, diverse, and welcoming group of students, faculty, and fellow staff members. I am always encouraged by the dedication of the people in this department to furthering the goals of the iSchool. It is a privilege for me to play a part, whether big or small, in helping out our current students, as well as those seeking to join our program in the years to come. On a less serious note, you really cannot top the view of the lake from Helen C. White.



Megan Adams, Collections Librarian & Instructor

How are you integrating your library work into the courses you teach?

My work in the library shapes the active learning activities I develop for the classroom. For example, during lessons introducing concepts of classification, I'm able to draw salient examples from our collection to prompt discussions around diversity and representation in organizing library collections. Serving as the Collections Librarian also keeps me in conversation with librarians throughout the UW Libraries, which helps me connect students with other librarians across campus.



Amanda Smith, Film Archivist, Wisconsin Center for Film & Theater Research; Lecturer

How are you sharing Wisconsin Center for Film & Theater Research (WCFTR) collections with iSchool students?

I'm currently teaching a film archiving course in the iSchool. We're looking at different film and video formats, their preservation concerns, and the unique challenges involved in caring for an archival collection of media materials. It's been helpful to use real-life examples from the WCFTR to illustrate these issues. Students have also had the chance to get some hands-on experience working with film. Using WCFTR collections, they are learning how to inspect film, make repairs, splice damaged materials, and interpret identifying characteristics. The WCFTR collection is full of treasures and I'm excited to be able to share these with students in a way that contributes to their professional development.



Nicole Wiessinger, Associate Director

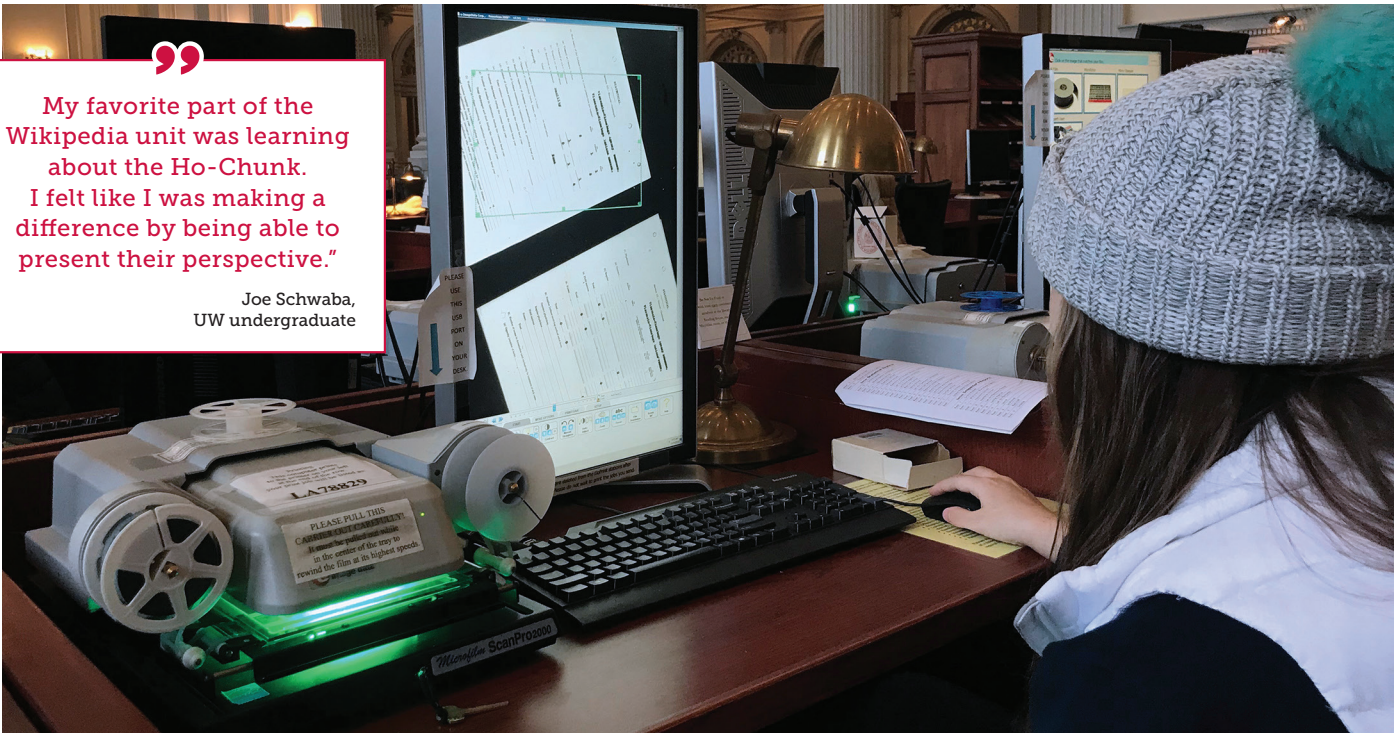
As a new leader at the iSchool, what excites you about the future of the department?

This is an exciting time to be joining the iSchool as we build from a strong foundation and a long tradition of scholarly and educational success. We are expanding that reach with additional programs, people, and collaborations. New opportunities present themselves with partnerships and simpatico efforts in the Division of Computer, Data and Information Sciences. We are growing in ways that also support and strengthen our existing array of programs and areas of inquiry. We will be able to serve a broader range of students and workforce needs through more course and program offerings. We look forward to adding faculty members to the iSchool family in the near future. Broadening our faculty expertise enriches learning and research opportunities. I am honored to be able to support the people and programs of the iSchool as we continue to grow and evolve while maintaining our core values and mission.



My favorite part of the Wikipedia unit was learning about the Ho-Chunk. I felt like I was making a difference by being able to present their perspective."

Joe Schwaba,
UW undergraduate



Student viewing microfilm at the WHS library.

Wikipedia Project

Associate Professor Rebekah Willett's Course Project: Native American Boarding Schools in Wisconsin on Wikipedia

The Wikipedia project took place in a first-year interest group (FIG) class called 'Information Literacies in Online Spaces' taught by Associate Professor Rebekah Willett. The FIG program provides support for undergraduate students in their first year at UW–Madison by arranging a small group of students to take several inter-related courses together; in this case, all courses are about the internet and society. For Professor Willett's class, students learned about biases, gaps, and power structures in the Wikipedia community and read *Common Knowledge?: An Ethnography of Wikipedia* by Dariusz Jemielniak. In order to address a gap that was present on Wikipedia—information about Native American Boarding Schools in Wisconsin—students created their own Wikipedia page on the subject. While gathering information for the page, students had a First Nations cultural landscape tour of the UW–Madison campus with Omar Poler (MA'10), viewed the 'Our Shared Future' heritage marker, and had the opportunity to hear UW Distinguished Guest Speaker Samantha Skenandore's lecture "Indigenuity & Teejop."

Wikipedia requires articles to draw primarily from secondary sources, so the research project started with students combing through existing materials in the UW library system. Once they gained some knowledge of the

topic, students then went to the Wisconsin Historical Society (WHS) where North American History Librarian Cynthia Bachhuber (MA'08) helped them navigate the collection. Students found that information about the boarding schools was very dispersed. Government publications, newspapers, personal unpublished papers, photographs, maps, websites, and books all contained important information. "Learning what kinds of sources may be useful and how to go about searching for these sources proved to be a sprawling undertaking," said Bachhuber. She also indicated that gaps in WHS collections "exist because the Society did not collect material about or by indigenous people at the time it was created due to racist beliefs of what was historically important. Additionally, Native Nations often choose to maintain custody of material within their community."

At the end of the semester, the FIG group published a Wikipedia page listing the ten American Indian Boarding Schools in Wisconsin and profiling four of the schools based on their research findings. The profiles include information on school history, aspects of everyday life, quality of life, and religion's role in the schools. To see the entry and view the sources, look for the American Indian Boarding Schools in Wisconsin page on Wikipedia.



Please consider contributing
to the iSchool scholarship,
facilities, student travel,
or research funds.

LEARN MORE AT
go.wisc.edu/ischoolgiving

Rob Green: Mayor of Cedar Falls, Iowa



Before turning his focus to information science, **Rob Green (MA'19)** held a number of professional positions. Starting as a cadet at the Coast Guard Academy, he then served an officer in Alaska and Washington, DC, for six years. After the Coast Guard, Rob settled in Cedar Falls, Iowa, with his wife and worked in tech support. He then ran his own creative services company for seven years, got hired onto a large corporation as a web developer, and eventually shifted to higher education as a university library web developer. In November 2019, Rob was elected mayor of Cedar Falls.

Rob started in the iSchool aiming for an emphasis in data science. In addition to this concentration, he gained exposure to many differing perspectives and life experiences through iSchool courses and his classmates. He advises current iSchool students to build strong relationships within their cohort and help each other out. His favorite part about the program was the community that he built with his peers. Rob also appreciates the holistic education that the iSchool provides. It doesn't just turn students into 'master technicians,' rather, the school develops and expands individuals to become better citizen-leaders and advocates for knowledge-sharing.

Rob is excited to use his librarian mindset to make government more engaging and relatable for residents, and he'll draw on his background in instructional technology and information science. He'll be working hard to build upon his iSchool experience to ensure a civic environment where residents of Cedar Falls will be informed and actively engaged.

Tammy Mays: Branch Manager, Milwaukee Public Library

Dr. Tammy Mays (PhD'17) spent seven years as the Consumer Health Coordinator for the National Network of Libraries of Medicine—Greater Midwest Region before deciding to further her education in the doctoral program at the iSchool. Her time at the iSchool provided her with the confidence to feel prepared in facing any future challenges and the support to actively pursue and exceed her professional goals. Dr. Mays is now the Branch Manager at Center Street Branch for the Milwaukee Public Library.



For Dr. Mays, no two days as branch manager look the same. Each day, in the most rewarding aspect of her work, she sees firsthand how library programming positively impacts the community. In the first three months of starting in her position, Dr. Mays was awarded a Knowing News grant, funded in part by support from the Wisconsin Humanities Council and the National Endowment for the Humanities, which allowed her to engage with local journalists in planning news literacy events held at Center Street Branch.

For current and future students, Dr. Mays offers this advice: "Thrive while you are taking classes by not focusing on simply taking classes to complete your degree, but to change your mindset by having a holistic view of being a student in librarianship." Additionally, take advantage of early opportunities, don't become complacent, practice active learning, and—of course—network, network, network!

Faculty & Staff Updates

Alison Caffrey & Megan Adams, iSchool librarians, were awarded a Friends of the University of Wisconsin Libraries grant for \$1,250 to support the hand preservation of historical children's books.

Alan Rubel, associate professor, published "A matter of trust: higher education institutions as information fiduciaries in an age of educational data mining and learning analytics" in *JASIST* with co-authors Kyle Jones (PhD'15) and Ellen LeClere (MA'14, PhD'19) and "Agency laundering and information technologies" in *Ethical Theory and Moral Practice*.

Dorothea Salo, distinguished faculty associate, taught digital preservation at Digital POWRR and NEDCC workshops. She built a new one-credit summer course on Big Data Ethics. Two of her Data Doubles papers have been accepted to major journals, and a book chapter "Is There A Text In These Data?" is forthcoming from MIT Press.

Jonathan Senchyne, assistant professor, published his book, *The Intimacy of Paper in Early and Nineteenth-Century American Literature*, with the University of Massachusetts Press in its distinguished Studies in Print Culture and History of the Book series. He also published a coedited volume,

Against a Sharp White Background: Infrastructures of African American Print, in the Center for the History of Print and Digital Culture's book series at University of Wisconsin Press.

Debra Shapiro, instructor and coordinator of the online master's program, served as lead planner for the 10th annual online students' orientation in August 2019. Throughout 2019, Deb volunteered for the Friends of the UW Libraries Book Sale and came to agree with Jim Dast, her former teacher and "million dollar man" of the book sale: there's nothing like opening a box of books, it could be full of trash or treasure!

Rebekah Willett, associate professor, published three pieces in 2019: 1) "Finding a space for a theory of multiliteracies: librarians, boundary work, and definitions of literacy," in *Multiliteracies and Early Years Innovation: Perspectives from Finland and Beyond* edited by K. Kumpulainen and J. Sefton-Green, published by Routledge; 2) "Democratizing the maker movement: a case study of one public library system's makerspace program" with A. Lakind and E. Halverson in *Reference & User Services Quarterly*, and 3) "Popular media on the playground" in *The International Encyclopedia of Media Literacy* edited by R. Hobbs and P. Mihailidis published by Wiley-Blackwell.

In Memoriam

Dr. Lorene Byron Brown (PhD'74) passed away November 6, 2019. She was one of the first African American PhD graduates from the School of Library and Information Studies (now iSchool) and received a Centennial Award in 2006 as part of the commemoration festivities for the school's 100th year of education. Having held positions as an academic librarian in a variety of institutions, Dr. Brown notably served as the Dean of the School of Library and Information Studies at Atlanta University from 1982 to 1989. Dr. Brown's publications were at the forefront of promoting equitable subject access to information about all aspects of African American history and culture. Her ground-breaking book, *Subject Headings for African American Materials* (1995), established the need and provided recommendations for more than 3,000 subject headings to facilitate greater subject access to materials on the African American experience. Dr. Brown was professionally active throughout her career and one notable publication she contributed to, *Equity at Issue: [A Report to ALA] on Library Services to the Nation's Four Major Minority Groups* (1985-6), highlighted the crisis in librarianship and provided statistical

evidence of the decline in the number of minorities entering the library profession. Her leadership in equity areas greatly inspired African American librarians, library directors, and library activists all over the country.

Ricky Erway (MA'86) passed away on January 25, 2020. A leader in digital libraries and mass digitization, Ricky worked at the Library of Congress, RLG, and OCLC. She retired in 2015 from OCLC Research as a senior program officer.

Mary Jane Kayes (MA'74) passed away on March 9, 2020. She was most recently a librarian with the California Braille and Talking Book Library.

Richard Walker, professor emeritus, passed away on November 23, 2019. Dr. Walker was part of the faculty from 1965 to 1995. His research focused on how scientists communicated and his most recent books were *Scientific and Technical Literature: An Introduction to Communication Forms* with C.D. Hurt and *Patents as Scientific and Technical Literature*.



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A Message to the iSchool Community

The COVID-19 pandemic has brought challenges, loss, and uncertainty to people, communities, and institutions. At the iSchool, we leveraged our strengths in online teaching and student services to transition to all online instruction while holistically supporting students. From all of us at the iSchool, we wish our alumni and friends the strength and resources to weather these times.

We are all in this together.



CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR GRADUATES!

UW Library School students on
Camp Randall Field the day of
graduation, 1944



The iSchool will host a virtual, asynchronous graduation ceremony for 2020 graduates. Check our website and social media for details.