

# PLG Progressive Librarians Guild Bulletin

Volume 2, Issue 2

February 2013

## Call for Submissions - Miriam Braverman Memorial Prize

Calling all Activist-Librarians-to-be!!

The MIRIAM BRAVERMAN MEMORIAL PRIZE, a presentation of the Progressive Librarians Guild (PLG), is awarded each year for the best paper about some aspect of the social responsibilities of librarians, libraries, or librarianship. Papers related to archivists, archives, and archival work are also eligible.

The winning paper will be published in the Summer 2013 issue of Progressive Librarian. The winner of the contest will also receive a \$300 stipend to help offset the cost of travel to and from the 2013 American Library Association (ALA) Annual Conference in Chicago, IL from June 27- July 2. The award will be presented at the annual PLG dinner at ALA.

Think you might be interested? Here's the fine print:

1. Contestants must be library and/or information science students attending a graduate-level program in the United States or Canada.
2. Entries must be the original, unpublished work of the contestant, and must be written in English. Entries may not exceed 3,000 words and must conform to MLA in-text citation style.
3. To facilitate the blind review process, each entry must include a cover sheet providing the contestant's name, full contact information (address, phone number, e-mail address), name of the institution where the contestant is enrolled, and the title of the paper. No identifying information other than the title should appear on the paper itself.
4. Entries must be submitted electronically, in Microsoft Word or RTF format, to [bravermansubmissions@gmail.com](mailto:bravermansubmissions@gmail.com). Entries must be received no later than 5:00 p.m. CST on International Workers' Day or May Day, Wednesday, May 1, 2013.
5. The \$300 stipend is available *only* to help defray the cost of ALA conference attendance in 2013; if the winner of the contest is unable to attend, the money will remain in the Braverman Prize endowment fund and may be donated to a progressive cause at the discretion of the selection committee.

Any questions regarding the contest or the selection process can be directed to the chairs of the selection committee, Megan Browndorf at [margaret.browndorf@ndsu.edu](mailto:margaret.browndorf@ndsu.edu) or Kelly McElroy at [kellymce@gmail.com](mailto:kellymce@gmail.com). More information about Miriam Braverman and about the Progressive Librarians Guild, including winning papers from previous years, is available at: <http://progressivelibrariansguild.org/content/award.shtml>.

**Many thanks to outgoing Braverman Committee chair Steve Lorenz for his years of dedicated service.**

## **PLG Canada Chapters – Ontario Library Association Conference Meet-Up**

On January 31, 2013, members from the Toronto, London, and Edmonton PLG Chapters met at the Ontario Library Association Conference (OLA) to meet with one another, discuss similar interests, and identify ways that all chapters could support the work of individual chapters, and to work collectively on issues affecting the country.

People expressed interest in Digital Rights Management (DRM), IT, Open Access, labour, and alternatives to the leadership development opportunity provided by the Northern Exposure to Leadership Institute (NELI).

The Toronto, London, and Edmonton chapters are working on a wide range of projects, including fighting austerity cuts at Library and Archives Canada, Rise with the Ranks workshop (Edmonton – more details will be forthcoming), fighting against budget cuts to London Public Library, and the creation of a labour library at a teacher's union (London).

Members discussed the idea of using Skype to work collectively. We also have a PLG Canada listserv: [plgcanada@googlegroups.com](mailto:plgcanada@googlegroups.com).

If you would like to be added to the list, please email the PLG Edmonton Communications Officer at [plg.edmonton@gmail.com](mailto:plg.edmonton@gmail.com).

The group learned that people in Winnipeg, Ottawa, and parts of Newfoundland are interested in starting their own PLG chapters.

## **Updates from London, ON Chapter**

PLG London published a statement of support for Dale Askey on our blog:

<http://plglondon.wordpress.com/2013/03/02/plg-statement-of-support-for-dale-askey/>

On Feb. 8th PLG London had a successful Rib Night fundraiser. About 30 librarians got together for pork ribs, tofu skewers, coleslaw, and enlightened conversation, with the money raised going towards purchasing supplies for banners, posters, and buttons.

We are also looking for essays on the situation at Library and Archives Canada if anyone has any writing that they'd like to throw into a collection we'll self publish:

<http://plglondon.wordpress.com/2013/01/14/call-for-submissions/>

## **PLG is Now on Twitter!**

Follow [@PLGCoordCom](https://twitter.com/PLGCoordCom) on Twitter for news and updates from the PLG Coordinating Committee!

**Letter to the Editors of *Progressive Librarian***

February 22, 2013

Dear Editors of *Progressive Librarian*,

I'd like to thank you for two articles you ran in your Fall/Winter 2012 issue (#40).

The first is Matthew Ducmanas's review of *Insider Histories of the Vietnam Era Underground Press, Part 2*, which was volume 3 of my 4-part Voices from the Underground Series. I don't judge a review of one of my books solely by how much the reviewer liked or disliked it. I judge it more on how much the reviewer "gets it." The Vietnam era was one of the most exciting and important—and divisive—periods in our young nation's history but it was complicated. Too often reviewers hang their evaluations on how well the author or editor adequately covered what were no more than stereotypes. My authors, in this book and the other three, wrote from the heart, not to the stereotypes. Combined, their stories represent the Black, Native American, Puerto Rican, gay, lesbian, feminist, prisoners' rights, military, socialist, countercultural, new age, rank-and-file, psychedelic, and other dissident voices of the period in a way that has never been done. As the reviewer for the *Los Angeles Times* wrote, the series "comes closer than anything I've yet read to putting the sights, sounds and texture of the '60s on paper...." While Ducmanas only reviewed one of the volumes, he clearly got it.

The second is "Prisoners of Microfilm: Freeing Voices of Dissent in the Underground Newspaper Collection," by Laurie Charnigo. It was so long it took me three sittings to finish. Every time I thought it was coming to an end, she added a new section, and it was all powerful and interesting and passionate. My hats off to you for publishing it in its entirety rather than arbitrarily cutting it for the sake of word count. When the first edition of *Voices from the Underground* was released in 1993, I asked every contributor to dedicate the book to whoever he or she wanted and I included all of the names in a "collective dedication." Then I added a few, including "our intergenerational peers—those students and media activists of today, some who are the age now that we were then, some a decade or two older, who are working with today's new technology (including blogging and Twitter) like we worked with yesterday's new technology, offset printing." Clearly she is one of the recipients of our dedication, as I know many of your readers are as well.

Books on the Vietnam era went through a long period of being censored by the traditional publishing houses, even by editors who were favorable to the topic. Example: One publisher apologized to my agent for the first edition for taking so long to return it. He said he was reading it. Another gave it a "rave rejection."

With the insanity that is still going on in the world, much of it caused by our government, it is essential that we help our students to learn the lessons of the Vietnam era and the war from the folks who were responsible for bringing it to an end. I invite you all, as progressive librarians,

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## Letter to the Editors (continued)

to review my [voicesfromtheunderground.com](http://voicesfromtheunderground.com) website to learn more about the underground press and the series. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact me at [ken@azenphonypress.com](mailto:ken@azenphonypress.com).

Finally, I would like to call your attention to an exciting project I have been working on to digitize underground newspapers, one that Charnigo discusses extensively in her article. Our goal is to digitize nearly one million pages over the next four years using a cost-recovery model for librarians by which we will earn back our operating costs and salaries and then put the various collections into open access. Right now we're looking for commitments from enough libraries so that we can begin our full-speed-ahead phase of digitizing the papers. Hopefully every librarian who reads *Progressive Librarian* will come on board. The more libraries that subscribe, the lower the cost will be for each library. Libraries are embracing this model for the content and the economic model.

Our first releases will include feminist and lesbian papers and military underground papers, but that's just the beginning. Many more papers have already been digitized. And, in addition to the papers, we will be digitizing private papers and documents from the founders of Liberation News Service, SDS, and other major groups from the period. If you were at the Harry Hay Conference in New York last year, you might have already met me. If you were at Midwinter ALA, you might have met my partner in the project, Jeff Moyer. In any case, please check out our beta version at [www.revealdigital.com](http://www.revealdigital.com). What you will see is a small sample of papers that are already on board. Future versions will include upgrades to searchability as well as, of course, additional papers. It's a slow process because we contact representatives of all of the papers to get permission to include their titles. Our goal is to make those papers that are currently collecting dust and deteriorating in the dark shelves of special collections libraries and private collections accessible to the current and future generations of progressive activists and scholars everywhere. I'd love to talk more with you about how you can help.

Thank you again for your interest in the Vietnam era and the underground press.

Sincerely,

Ken Wachsberger, Editor  
Voices from the Underground Series  
[www.voicesfromtheunderground.com](http://www.voicesfromtheunderground.com)

Remember, the Bulletin needs updates from the PLG membership so we can spread the word about all of the good work that we are collectively doing!

Have an update to share?  
Send it to [sarahbarriage@gmail.com](mailto:sarahbarriage@gmail.com)