

SPRING 2023

Classified Information

NEWSLETTER OF THE LLOYD SEALY LIBRARY



Remembering Dr. Jeffrey Kroessler 1952-2023

Dr. Kroessler's contributions - 05
Tributes to Dr. Kroessler - 06

Table of contents | Spring 2023

| | | | |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|-------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|
| Library faculty notes | 2 | Meeting students where they are: The library module in Blackboard | 8 |
| From the desk of the Interim Chief Librarian: What does ChatGPT mean for libraries? | 3-4 | Freshening up the library | 9 |
| Remembering Dr. Jeffrey Kroessler | 5-6 | In-Library use survey | 10-11 |
| Diversifying syllabi using library resources | 7 | Save your interlibrary loan history | 12 |
| | | Faculty Fellowship Publication Program | 12 |
| | | What we are reading | 13 |
| | | Library faculty & staff directory | 14 |

Front cover: Image of Dr. Jeffrey Kroessler



Photographs, left and above, from Dr. Jeffrey Kroessler's memorial service held on April 4, 2023 at John Jay.

Library faculty notes

Marta Bladek published "Working Toward Promotion to Full Professor: Strategies, Time Management, and Habits for Academic Librarian Mothers" (2023) in *Thriving as a Mid-career Librarian: Identity, Advocacy, and Pathways*. Chicago, IL: Association of College and Research Libraries, pp. 113-24.

Patrick J Raftery Jr. was awarded a PSC-CUNY Research Grant to visit the *Los Crudos* Archive at Michigan State University for an upcoming article on the cultural and historical importance of Latin American Punk Rock.

Ellen Sexton is now Chief Librarian of the Lloyd Sealy Library.

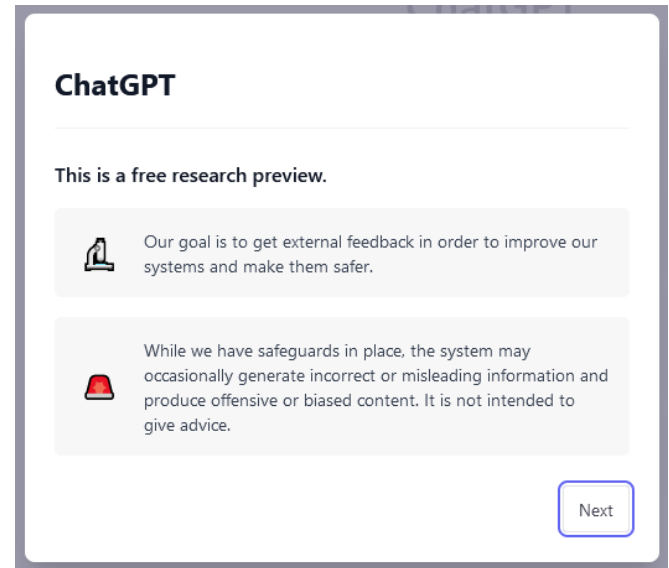
From the desk of the Chief Librarian: What does ChatGPT mean for libraries?

Ellen Sexton

Is the integration of large language learning model AI into search engines going to herald as massive a change for knowledge organization and discovery as Mosaic did in 1993? I spent some time with the LLM-powered chat bot ChatGPT to try to get a sense of what we are facing, at the end of which I am not much wiser though I am persuaded it can generate a decent haiku.

I gained a ChatGPT account in return for an email address and phone number. I started asking questions about work-related tasks. It gave me interview questions that were bland arrangements of buzzwords but not that different from what an uninspired search committee might come up with on a dull Monday morning. As I watched the sentences rolling out, I had a strong urge to take off for lunch instead of reflecting on our library's strengths and needs and candidates' resumes and how to best elicit a meaningful conversation during an interview. A tempting dystopian next step could be to let ChatGPT take care of the entire recruitment process – compose our advertisement copy, scan resumes, conduct interviews and suggest a lead candidate for us. A cynic might suspect that much of that may already be happening in corporate searches.

Using ChatGPT feels exhilarating, despite the dullness of the text it generated in response to my prompts. I asked about the future of academic libraries, and it dutifully composed entirely predictable bullet points. As for the future of search, it wrote that it would involve personalized results and 24/7 availability; has ChatGPT not yet been told about Google? I got the most joy from demanding particular poetic forms; the sonnets were painful, but the haikus were satisfying



On verifying citations:

Citations verified, Sources checked with utmost care, Accurate research.

On information literacy:

To navigate life, We must learn to seek, find, and Judge information.

On academic libraries:

A haven of books, Silent halls and endless tomes, Knowledge waits within.

It broke down when I asked for a haiku about busy libraries serving Hispanic students.



tell me about a busy hispanic serving college library in a haiku



Something went wrong. If this issue persists please contact us through our help center at help.openai.com.

Search engines are introducing language learning model-powered search – DuckDuckGo has DuckAssist that harvests and delivers content from a relatively small collection of texts, including Wikipedia. Google has released Bard. Bing has, well, new Bing. We have been teaching students to include in their critical assessment of web-sources consideration of elements of the website itself and what it reveals about the author, currency, etc. Other methods are needed to assess information extracted from unknown websites; CRAAP and SIFT evaluation methods are not enough. How can we assess information when the source is hidden? When we cannot know who created the information nor deduce for what purpose? If a searcher's satisficing threshold is low, there will be no incentive to go further than the AI-informed search engine result; that's fine when we want to know how long it takes to soft-boil an egg but poses problems for higher stakes topics.

This is where the traditional gatekeeping function of libraries can help once again. Libraries have tools to aid the discovery of and provide access to high-quality, original, authoritative, and evidence-based content. Libraries will find uses for ChatGPT: its ability to construct coherent texts can help compose rough first drafts of technical reports, executive summaries and abstracts, resumes, and cover letters focusing on specific job descriptions. Its chatbot conversational abilities could be harnessed to, e.g., replace a frequently asked questions page. But literary & scientific works remain human creations, and our libraries will continue to collect and share those works.

NYC Board of Education has banned ChatGPT. Some colleges have incorporated ChatGPT prohibitions into their plagiarism policies. Some instructors are experimenting with using ChatGPT in the classroom to enhance learning.

We need to figure out when composing text using ChatGPT may be helpful and appropriate and guide our students appropriately. Of course, they should know not to cheat themselves out of an education by plagiarizing. We should teach the importance of evidence-based policies & practices and encourage the study of tools of persuasion in contemporary and historical contexts. The ability of ChatGPT to generate search engine optimized (SEO) blocks of text makes it a powerful tool for generating propaganda and marketing content; information literacy skills will be vital. Even commercial search engines will continue to be challenged to prioritize meaningful results as chatbot-generated sites heavy in SEO keywords and light on the content rise to the top of their lists.

I turned to Chat GPT for advice on the future of libraries. It told me, *“academic libraries provide a range of resources, services, and support that are not available elsewhere, and are essential to the research and learning process. While the internet has certainly changed the way we access and consume information, it has not made libraries obsolete.”* I don't disagree, but it misses the insights that poets bring.

New eyes each year... by Phillip Larkin. (1979).

New eyes each year
Find old books here,
And new books, too,
Old eyes renew;
So youth and age
Like ink and page
In this house join,
Minting new coin.

Remembering Dr. Jeffrey Kroessler



Our esteemed colleague, friend, and Chief Librarian, Dr. Jeffrey Kroessler, passed on Feb. 5, 2023. Jeffrey was a wonderful colleague and will be dearly missed by the staff and faculty of the Lloyd Sealy Library and the entire college, including the students with whom he worked. His generosity, warmth, kindness, and good humor lightened our days; the Library will not be the same without him. Jeffrey joined the Library faculty in 2005 and was promoted to the rank of full professor. He was the author of several books and was completing his third on the history of New York City. Jeffrey selflessly volunteered to fill an unexpected gap in Library leadership during the COVID pandemic and served as interim Chief Librarian from January 2021. He had a deep knowledge of city history and a passion for sharing it in academic and popular forums. He was a generous mentor to our students and welcomed those that sought him out in his book-piled office. Books piled on the floor and the chair, overflowing his shelves, but all neatly tidied up after work was completed. He was passionate about preserving the historic buildings and neighborhoods of the city. He chose to make his home Sunnyside Gardens, where he enjoyed the community fostered by the garden city; he loved that children played in the shared gardens between the buildings. We extend our deepest condolences to his wife, Laura Heim, their families, and his many friends. His like will not be seen again.

Soon after his arrival at the Lloyd Sealy Library, Jeffrey directed the Justice in New York, [An Oral](#)

[History project](#), for which he interviewed leaders in NYC Criminal Justice from 2006 to 2019.

Jeffrey's NYC books:

- [Sunnyside Gardens: Planning and Preservation in a Historic Garden Suburb](#). Fordham University Press, 2021.
- [The Greater New York Sports Chronology](#). Columbia University Press, 2010.
- [New York, Year by Year: A Chronology of the Great Metropolis](#). New York University Press, 2002.
- A forthcoming book about Queens, Rutgers University Press.

To read more of his writings, see [Jeffrey's writing hosted on CUNY Academic Works](#).

To learn more about his career and affiliations, see [Jeffrey's John Jay College faculty profile](#).

If you would like to contribute to The Jeffrey A. Kroessler Memorial Scholarship, visit new.jjay.cuny.edu/donate

Links listed above are available at linktr.ee/jjlibrarynewsletter

Here we share some tributes from Jeffrey's colleagues in the library:

Whenever Jeff came into my office, I knew I was in for a good conversation and always a laugh, no matter how dire things were. When he had a shift at the reference desk, he'd be there with his packet of index cards and a pencil, taking notes from the historical newspaper databases and sharing his discoveries with whoever was lucky enough to be on the shift with him. He was always researching and learning, and that helped to make him the wonderful teacher that he was. As a colleague and as a historian of New York City, Jeff was top-notch. I miss his reason, intelligence, and sense of humor every day. --Kathleen Collins

Tributes to Dr. Jeffrey Kroessler (cont'd)

It is unimaginable to write about Jeffrey Kroessler in the past tense. I remember little details of him: his first interview with the P&B for the reference librarian's position, his irony, and infectious laughter, his satisfaction that my daughter studied American history for three years in her high school, his light brown leather holder for three by five notecards where he wrote down quotes and remarks on his readings, his emails announcing professional achievements of his wife or his adventures as an urban historian, his walks around the library always visiting the Technical Services area and chatting with the staff. I remember his last shift at the reference desk – we talked about the wedding project. Then a couple of hours later I saw his back while he was writing in his notecards and I decided not to bother him because I would see him on Monday... He quelled disputes about library fines with some agitated patrons without losing his cool. He celebrated the graduations of the student workers with pizza parties and whistles when they walked on stage during the commencements. He loved the John Jay College library as an institution and a place to work, do his research and guide and welcome students.

--Maria Kiriakova

I wasn't sure where to start when I sat down to write about Jeff. I've worked with him for the whole of my career as a librarian, and when I heard the news of his passing, I could hardly believe it. Jeff was a man of calm character, strong opinions, and wide knowledge. Regardless of the subject, every time I spoke with him, I always came away learning something new and interesting. I looked forward to when he'd come in the morning or when he'd take a break from working on his book to pop out to the Reference Desk. I'm glad that I was able to meet, work and interact with him for so many years. I'll certainly miss him and will definitely remember him very fondly. -- Mark Zubarev

I want to thank Jeffrey for all he did for me in a short period of time. Jeffrey always had something cheerful to say each day he crossed our path. Gone too soon☹. John Jay College library staff has experienced a great loss. To his family, thank you for sharing him with us. Rest in peace, Jeffrey

-- Debra Spivey

Jeffrey Kroessler was the first librarian I met here at John Jay. He was always very nice and treated me very well from the beginning. He was very encouraging, and over the years gave me a lot of good advice. I was left speechless when I heard he was gone. Very sad, I will miss him very much.

--J.Omar Rivera

Jeff was an engaged and accomplished scholar, librarian, and preservationist of NYC's history and its landmarks. Jeff also genuinely cared about our students and the value of education. With his good humor and a sense of timing to suit the moment, I remember the way Jeff would approach student-athletes while signing in to the library log or while hovering around the reference desk, looking for an opening to show students how the library can help. I never asked Jeff about how many students he hooked, but had there been more time, I would have. He will surely be missed for many reasons.

--Maureen Richards

Professor Jeffrey Kroessler was the most respected colleague and scholar I ever had during my four years' librarianship at the College of Staten Island. As a Research Associate and Archivist, as well as a historian, Prof. Kroessler had devoted himself to developing an oral history of New York State Senator John J. Marchi for the College Archives while performing regular library desk reference service, among other things. In the past seven years I was fortunate enough, once again, to be able to work together with Professor Kroessler as a colleague, though at the Lloyd Sealy Library. His untimely passing is really a great loss for us all. Our Library will indeed not be the same without his sunny laughs and witty humor around us. He will be dearly missed. --Zuwang Shen

As a historian, Jeffery Kroessler supported all aspects of the Lloyd Sealy Libraries Special Collections. A significant addition to the Special Collections is the [Justice in New York: An Oral History Project](#), directed by Jeff from 2006 to 2019. This project documented the perspectives of more than half a century of criminal justice leaders and was the impetus for launching the Library's [Digital Collections](#). Jeff persuaded several interviewees to donate their papers to the Library, including Michael F. Armstrong, whose papers document his work on the Knapp Commission, and Chief Louis Anemone, whose papers document 30 years of leadership in the NYPD. Jeff even offered to pick up the papers – he was really great at stuffing his small car full of a surprising number of boxes. Jeff approached every aspect of his job at John Jay with a positive attitude and a rye sense of humor, even navigating a car through midtown midday traffic! --Ellen Belcher

I miss Jeffrey's frank and humorous assessment of every topic we discussed, from teaching information literacy to larger issues in higher ed. I enjoyed his impromptu visits to the Reference Desk when he would chat with anyone and everyone there – librarians, staff, students, teaching faculty, and external researchers. He cared about John Jay and our students. He was a good listener who always responded thoughtfully and humorously to any comment. I miss his calm presence and infectious, boisterous laughter that reverberated down the hall from his office on one end of the corridor to mine on the other. --Karen Okamoto

Diversifying syllabi using library resources

Kathleen Collins

As an expert in your field, your syllabus might comprise the canonical works of your discipline or a combination of “classics” and the authors and resources you have come to rely on as fixtures in your teaching. To value diversity across areas of study and in the classroom, faculty around the U.S. have been actively refreshing their reading assignments as a result of higher education efforts to address injustices and to include historically suppressed or marginalized voices.

The resources suggested here can help you find new material to include and can be used in assignments themselves as pedagogical tools. Identifying primary sources, in many cases, is easier than finding secondary sources. Archives and museums deliberately collect materials based on a common theme or characteristics, which is why we are fortunate to have repositories like New York Public Library’s Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture and the Center for Puerto Rican Studies at Hunter College. Secondary sources can be more of a needle-in-a-haystack proposition if you are starting from scratch with finding authors from marginalized groups.

One of the best ways to find new and underrepresented material to incorporate into your teaching is to do what we ask students to do – research! Carefully mine the footnotes and bibliographies of the authors you read, especially if you find a book or article that addresses the area of research you hope to amplify. Those resources will lead to more discoveries, and so on.

Familiarize yourself with what the Lloyd Sealy Library has to offer in terms of digitized primary source collections (ideal for research and teaching). From the library home page, navigate to Databases > Choose by Subject > **Primary sources** for a complete list. For a guide focusing on historically oppressed groups, navigate to Research Guides > **Primary Sources** > **Amplifying marginalized voices**.

When you do find new resources by and/or about marginalized groups, tell us! For books, go to the [Suggest Purchases form](#) under Faculty Services on the library home page. For other types of resources, you are welcome to send a message to libref@jjay.cuny.edu with your findings and suggestions.

Suggest Purchases

Suggest a purchase for the Lloyd Sealy Library collections

Include whatever information you know about the publication(s) you are requesting.

Note that there is a separate [request form for video purchase requests](#).

Please be aware that the Library budget is severely limited, and while faculty and student requests are given a high priority, it is not always possible to fulfill all. Some of them may be put into a queue for ordering when funds become available.

Suggest a Purchase Form

Your name

Your email address

Confirm email

Your Department

Item #1

Author's name

Title

Publisher

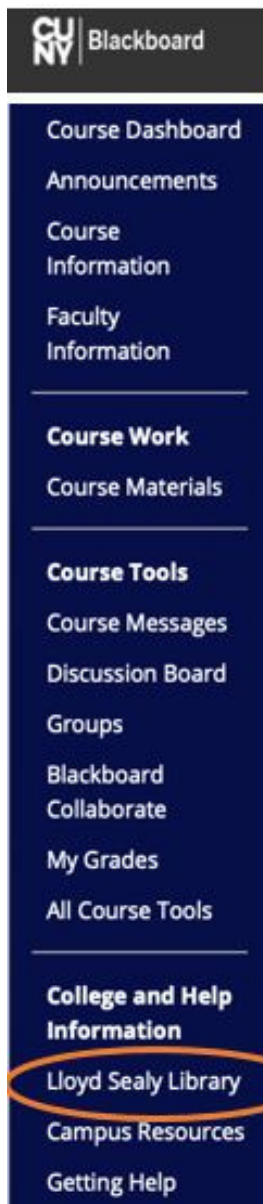
Date of Publication

Meeting students where they are: The library module in Blackboard

Maureen Richards

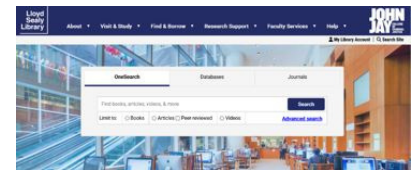
We are still working on strategies to get students back to pre-COVID library use levels. When work begins on the open web, it is an upward battle. If you are just looking for something, the open web usually delivers.

Many students don't know that most academic content sits behind paywalls. They also don't understand that if you are looking for context, tools to sift through and understand the relationship between different sources, and to go deeper in your research, the library still wins hands down. Help us lead students back to the library through the library module in Blackboard shown below. Also, please contact us if you would like us to make any enhancements to this module.



Good places to start

- [How to use the library](#): introduction to the library and its resources.
- [OneSearch](#): the library's catalog and mega-database for finding books, articles, videos and more.
- [Gale EBooks \(Gale Virtual Reference\)](#): for finding reference books with topic overviews.
- [Academic Search Complete](#): for finding magazine & scholarly articles across the disciplines.
- [Oxford English Dictionary Online](#)



For deeper or discipline specific research

- [Databases by subject](#)
- [Databases by title \(A-Z\)](#)
- [Research guides](#)

Library tutorials

- [From question to keywords](#) (2-minute video)
- [OneSearch tips](#) (3-minute video)
- [How to find articles in library databases](#) (step-by-step guide)
- [How do I...??](#)

Quick links

- [APA, MLA, and Chicago guides](#)
- [Getting textbooks](#)
- [E-reserves](#) (you will need your course password)

Links listed above are available at
linktr.ee/jjlibrarynewsletter



Freshening up the Library

Maria Kiriakova

If you visited the library recently, you might have noticed that some shelves in the Stacks look bare, call number arrangements in the Reference area are out of order, and some volumes have colored slips stuck in them. The answer is simple: we are re-evaluating our monographic holdings, freeing shelf space for new acquisitions, and creating new study spaces for the students.

Withdrawing books is akin to solving a complicated logic puzzle. The project has several steps: librarians evaluate the titles on the shelves and identify those that need to go, these candidates for withdrawal are physically moved to the Technical Services area, re-evaluated, and deaccessioned (our records are removed from the discovery system and the national cataloging platform), and finally Buildings and Grounds personnel (Al, Jose, Anderson, Lawrence, Victor, and Paul) move these books off the library premises and ready them for recycling.

The biggest changes will be to the reference collections. The majority of the Law Reference series (law reports and digests) are available online, the rest of the Law Reference collection is being examined at a title-by-title level, and those we decide to keep will be incorporated into the General Reference or the circulating collection. The rows of stacks in the Law Reference will be shortened, and the space by the windows facing West 58th Street will be transformed into an open study area. There are plans to create more seating areas in the lower level of the Stacks, near the two new single-user bathrooms.

The library transformation takes place slowly but steadily. For example, we were able to clear a whole row of stacks at the beginning of the call number J area. Three new desks with chairs occupy the space now, and students are using them already. While discarding, we uncovered gaps in some subject areas and ordered new monographs. The next level of collection maintenance includes shelf reading, where we will identify works that might have been lost and should be replaced. As a matter of fact, the



Photos above: Making space for new furniture in the Library.

Office of the Library Services at CUNY Central has initiated pilot Collective Collection Development projects to see how duplicate holdings in serials and monographs could be eliminated across all CUNY libraries in order to create better spaces for student learning on campuses.

The Lloyd G. Sealy library is an expert in creating library spaces by rearranging collections. For example, five years ago, we shifted the bound periodicals (and got rid of the duplicates or some collections available in electronic format) and created a corner room with windows on both sides that is now the South Silent Study Area. The students love it, and nobody remembers when we did not have it. In the Fall, the College was able to secure some funds to buy new furniture for the library that has been delivered and is waiting to be distributed around the library.

Like gardeners who have to weed plants to maintain their healthy life cycles, the libraries have to discard volumes to bring vibrancy to the collections. We are a working research library that supports the College's curricula and reflects the latest trends in academic publishing. We love books and would love to welcome new ones to our collections while letting go of those that have already served their purpose. If you would like to make a purchase suggestion for new titles, please fill out the form at www.lib.jjay.cuny.edu/content/suggest-purchases

The post-pandemic Library:

Insights from the 2022 In-Library Use Survey

Marta Bladek

Since 2010, the Library has conducted a triennial in-library use survey to gauge library users' habits and preferences. It assesses whether the Library's spaces, services, and resources adequately serve our users. The Library has successfully used these results to advocate for funding and resources that would enable us to provide the kind of library experience that our students need and want. For example, the addition of multiple technology-equipped study rooms, the expansion of our computer lab, and the availability of tech paraphernalia (chargers, headphones, etc.) were all possible because we could point to the triennial surveys' results in our tech fee proposals.

Over the years, these periodic surveys have allowed us to capture the Library's evolving role in students' educational lives. Not less importantly, they also document a few longstanding and stable trends that have stayed the same for over a decade. Our most recent In-Library Use Survey, conducted in November 2022, highlights both. Since we conducted the previous survey in the Fall of 2019, the 2022 survey offered us the first comprehensive insight into how the pandemic has impacted how users interact with the Library in an educational context transformed by COVID-19.

Over a week in mid-November of 2022, at set times during the day, our staff and librarians distributed paper surveys to students and faculty physically present in the Library. Overall, we collected 657 responses. The survey included questions from previous instances, but we also amended and added queries to account for the post-pandemic shift to hybrid and online learning.

The following slides highlight the most interesting and even unexpected findings.

- Surprisingly, the frequency of students' visits to the Library has not changed much between 2019 and 2022:

How often do you visit the Library?

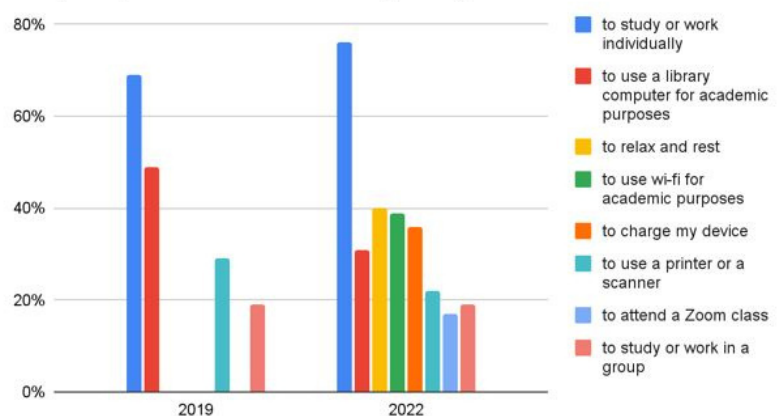


- Similarly, the main reason students come to the Library (to study or work individually) has stayed the same. (Indeed, it had remained the #1 reason since 2010, when we first asked this question.)

However, the survey captured some emerging trends. We now know that the Library space is key for students' well-being: it is the 2nd main reason they visit the Library is to rest and relax.

The survey documented other new uses for the Library: students come in to work on their own devices (and rely on our wi-fi) and to attend classes on Zoom.

Why did you come to the Library today?



The post-pandemic Library:

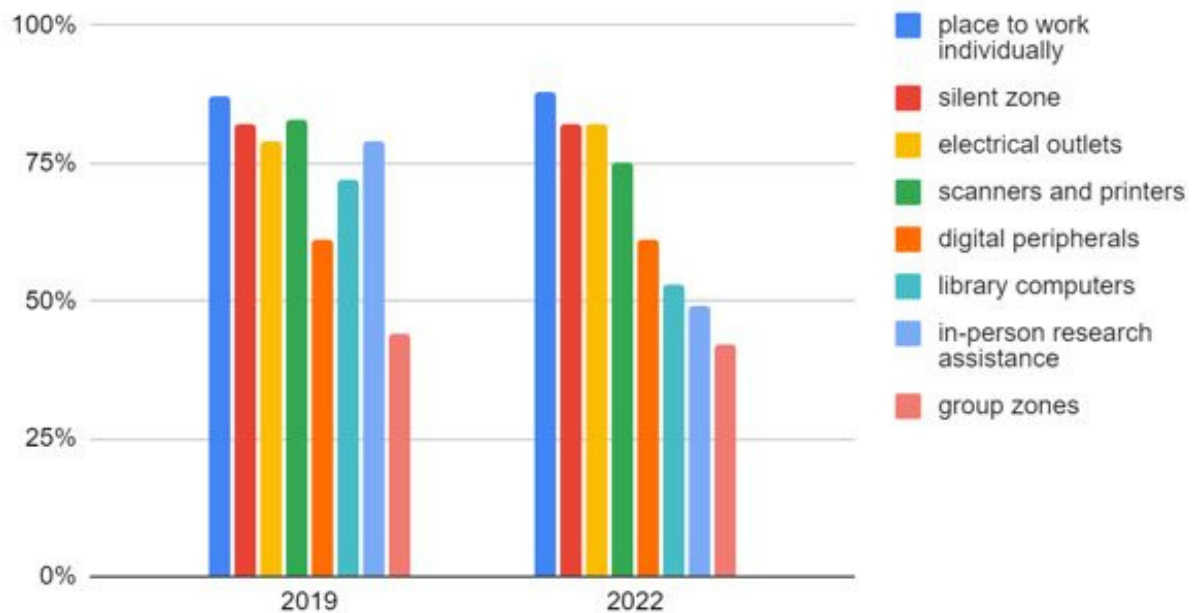
Insights from the 2022 In-Library Use Survey (cont'd)

Marta Bladek

- When asked what is most important to them, as far as the Library spaces, services, and resources go, the 2022 cohort of users did not differ much from their 2019 predecessors. Once again, the results highlight that the Library is key for those who need quiet space for studying alone. Similarly, the demand for electrical outlets continues. Not surprisingly, the importance of Library in-person assistance, computers, scanners, and printers declined between 2019 and 2022.

As we have done in the past, we are working with the survey results to ensure the Library continues to meet the needs and expectations of our users. While the shifts in use pattern our survey captured may or may not be permanent, we are responding to what our users told us. We recently added another laptop bar on the Library's upper level that allows students to work with their devices. Our new tech fee proposals include requests for lamps, and we are reconfiguring the Library space to accommodate quiet and social study areas.

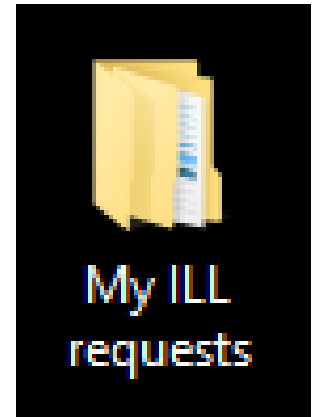
% of students who agree that the following are important or very important



Save your interlibrary loan request history before June 1, 2023

Karen Okamoto

Last July, we started purging old interlibrary loan (ILL) requests from John Jay patrons to protect patron privacy. An article in the Guardian (“You are not what you read,” January 13, 2016. <https://bit.ly/GradCenterPrivacy>) explained why some libraries delete patron records citing the Graduate Center’s work on this. Once again, this year, on June 1, 2023, we will purge old ILL requests that were completed or canceled before July 1, 2022. Please save your request history before June 1st. To do so, log into your ILL account (at jjay-cuny.illiad.oclc.org/illiad/login.html) and copy and paste your requests into an application of your choice. Alternatively, you can email us at libill@jjay.cuny.edu before June 1st to ask for a copy of your ILL request history.



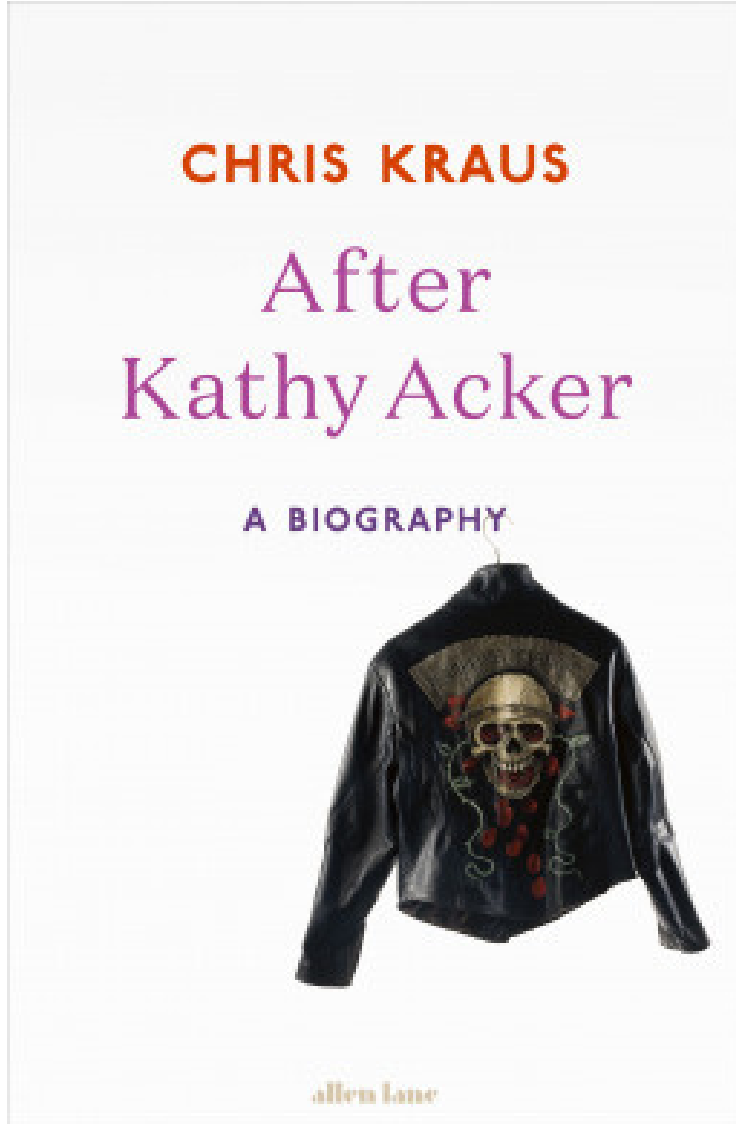
Faculty Fellowship Publication Program

Kate Cauley

Happy 25th anniversary to the Faculty Fellowship Publication Program (FFPP)! In celebration of twenty-five years of success, I’d like to share my experience as a mentee in FFPP. This semester I am participating in the program under the mentorship of Professor Anahi Viladrich from Queens College. Professor Viladrich selflessly volunteers her time and expertise to nurture, support, and challenge our group of early-career scholars. Our cohort consists of six exceptional untenured professors from across CUNY campuses. Together, we workshop each other’s manuscripts, discuss our research goals, and support each other in our shared goal of publishing our work and advancing toward tenure. The program offers a unique chance to collaborate with and gain feedback from colleagues across many disciplines. This opportunity, available to all full-time untenured faculty, has been invaluable to me. I implore any interested faculty to apply in the coming years! And check out the 25th Anniversary Celebration on Friday, April 28th, at CUNY Central.



What we are reading



***After Kathy Acker: A Biography* by Chris Kraus.**

I was first introduced to the writing of Kathy Acker while in high school in the mid-1990s. Instantly, I was hooked by this radical, postmodern, punk rock/riot girl, scholar, sex worker, transgressive, and experimental enigma known as Kathy Acker.

In *After Kathy Acker*, Chris Kraus (a part of Acker's circle of writers and artists) presents more than just a biography. While illuminating and debunking the myths and truths of Acker's life, Kraus closely reads Acker's texts and places them in the context of what was happening in Acker's tumultuous life of trauma, tragedy, fame, and success while crisscrossing the United States and traveling to Europe. The book's structure is more digestible than the cut-up, poetic prose, and blatant plagiarism interspersed in the works of Acker.

If you are looking for a wild tale of intense emotions, uncomfortable questions of truths, scenes of sex and violence, and the inner thoughts of an artist/writer, then *After Kathy Acker* should be added to your reading list.

Kraus, C. (2017). *After Kathy Acker: A biography*. Allen Lane.

--Patrick J Raftery Jr.

Library Faculty & Staff

Faculty

Ellen Sexton

Chief Librarian

Media Librarian

Ext. 8258 esexton@jjay.cuny.edu

Marta Bladek

Associate Librarian for Public Services

Ext. 8997 mbladek@jjay.cuny.edu

Kate Cauley

Web & Emerging Technologies
Librarian

Ext. 8261 kcauley@jjay.cuny.edu

Kathleen Collins

eReserve Librarian

Graduate Studies Librarian

Ext. 8242 kcollins@jjay.cuny.edu

Joy Dunkley

Substitute Reference & Instruction
Circulation Librarian

Ext. 8239 jdunkley@jjay.cuny.edu

Ellis Ging

Substitute Librarian

Technical Services

Ext. 8235

Maria Kiriakova

Associate Librarian for Technical Services

Collection Development

Ext. 8260 mkiriakova@jjay.cuny.edu

Karen Okamoto

Interlibrary Loan Librarian

Institutional Repository Librarian

Ext. 4777 kokamoto@jjay.cuny.edu

Patrick J Raftery Jr.

Cataloging & Metadata Librarian

Ext. 8256 praftery@jjay.cuny.edu

Maureen Richards

Electronic Resources Librarian

Ext. 8234 marichards@jjay.cuny.edu

On Sabbatical

Ellen Belcher

Special Collections Librarian

Ext. 8238 ebelcher@jjay.cuny.edu

Adjunct Faculty

Barbara Carrel

Betsy Crenshaw

Michele Echols

Lory Gallo

Zuweng Shen

Peggy Teich

Mark Zubarev

Adjunct Office : ext. 8222

Reference desk Ext. 8246

Circulation desk Ext. 2226

Staff

Geng Lin

Library Systems Manager

Ext. 8248 glin@jjay.cuny.edu

Zann Blanchard

Circulation Supervisor

Ext. 8224 zblanchard@jjay.cuny.edu

Chunhui Meng

Library Webmaster

Ext. 8248 cmeng@jjay.cuny.edu

Avis Leary

Bookkeeping, ext. 8229

Liza Linton

Interlibrary Loan ext. 8241

Marilyn Rivera

Acquisitions/Serials, ext. 6892

Omar Rivera

Serials

Debra Spivey

Acquisitions, ext. 8581

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Karen Okamoto & Patrick J Raftery Jr.

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Sealy
Library**

Lloyd Sealy Library

John Jay College of Criminal Justice

899 Tenth Avenue, New York, NY 10019

www.lib.jjay.cuny.edu | 212-237-8246 | libref@jjay.cuny.edu

