Library exhibits as a voice in campus conversations
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More than a book club
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What is the First Year Read at UVM?

• An introduction to the academic life of the University
• A guidepost for intellectual discourse between faculty, staff, and students
• Meant to inspire students & inform curriculum
• Everyone is encouraged to participate
• Campus wide, cross disciplinary discussion!
Reads so far...
Broadening the Themes

“I have always felt the action most worth watching is not at the center of things but where edges meet. There are interesting frictions and incongruities in these places...” - Anne Fadiman

While the book focuses on the intersection of Western Medicine and Hmong culture, we wanted to look more broadly at many of the disciplines that students are exploring at UVM.
How do we make the exhibit applicable to students?
New Americans in Vermont

Our interest was compounded by the fact that Burlington and Winooski are major refugee resettlement sites in Vermont.
Approved Refugee Settlement Capacity versus City Population

Notes: 7 of the 8 cities that approve more than 3.0% of their population fall below 5.6%, with Colchester, VT approving the highest of the seven at 5.53%. Stone Mountain, GA approves a significantly larger percentage at 37.45% of their total population.

“Their polychromatic presence is evident every day in Chittenden County’s supermarkets, schools and streets: Somali women in kaleidoscopic kassets brightening the Old North End; Vietnamese and Tibetan entrepreneurs selling banh mi or momo at food shops in Winooski; Bhutanese becoming suburban homeowners in Essex, Williston and South Burlington.”

Goals
Forging relationships across campus

Connecting to a university initiative
  + Highlighting faculty research
    + Providing opportunities for student interaction
      + Making it visible
Positioning the Library as Hub

**Linking these conversations back to the library:**

- Demonstrate how a broad high level concept can be narrowed down to a ‘researchable point of inquiry’
- Demonstrate research as a conversation
- Highlight the many different types of resources available in the library
- Make recommendations for appropriate research tools
- Remind them of the assistance that’s available
Methodology
Taking a Multidisciplinary Approach

We wanted to:
- Make the exhibit relevant to students
- Consider where cultural intersections might take place

Medicine was obviously highlighted in the book, but what about…
Social Work
Education
Psychology
Food…?

Identifying Key Players

How is the University interacting with the New American Community?
Who specifically is doing this work?

- Look at university and local news sources
- Ask colleagues and the interviewees
- The list kept growing
- Everyone we asked for an interview responded!

Interview Protocol

In addition to these questions:

- What research are they doing?
- How are they incorporating topics of immigration and cultural competency into their coursework?
- What Service Learning opportunities are they offering?

We wanted to know about…

- The opportunities and challenges they found in this work
- How they prepare for this work
- And we of course wanted to know their thoughts on the book.

We were careful to get their consent to be videotaped and to share that video in the exhibit. We also wanted to make sure they weren't put on the spot about reading the book itself.
Multilayered, Multimodal Exhibit
with multiple points of access

Physical Exhibit
- Themes Provide Broad Context

Interview
- Linked from Panel
- Viewer can delve deeper based on interest or discipline

LibGuide
- Library Resources Offered Alongside the Interview
- For viewers interested in further research

Reiterate our Services
- Reference Desk
- Research Consultations
Interview Themes

We saw some recurring themes in the interviews themselves, themes about:

- Cultural Humility
- Understanding one’s own culture
- Avoiding assumptions
- How professionals educate themselves
- Tools/resources for crossing linguistic and cultural barriers
- Avoiding putting New Americans under a microscope
From display panels to videos

- Visual panels introduce the discipline and the interviewee.
- QR codes link to full interview videos.
- ‘iPhone walking tour’ allows viewers to interact at different levels of detail with different pieces of information.
Transcription of interviews

- accessibility
- searchability
- preservation
- future access
- institutional repository
Connection to library resources

Accompanying LibGuide with:
- interview videos
- transcripts
- relevant databases, journals, resources
- items from catalog
- LC subject headings
Publicity

- Open house/gallery talk
- Announcements to campus and to community
- Lib Guide business cards
- Related assignment
Goals for assessment
And of course we want to see how we did!

The exhibit will be up from November to Spring Break.

During that time, we will track how the community is interacting with the exhibit by looking at:

- YouTube Counts
- LibGuide Counts
- Tracking Book Circulation
Thank you! & QUESTIONS?
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