



**LIBRARY  
FUTURES**



**ANNUAL REPORT**

**2025**

# FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

As expected, this year brought a new set of challenges for those of us engaged in the hard work of social change. In spite of this, or perhaps because of it, I've seen my colleagues and peers come together in a groundswell of support for each other, with a renewed vigor and dreams of the possible.

At our landmark Common Ground for Intellectual Freedom event, which brought together dozens of organizations and individuals at the forefront of the fight for freedom of expression, nearly all of us left with a sense of hope and renewed energy. "We're gonna win," one participant said to me. "In fact, we're already winning."

While the past year has seen new and increasing threats to our mission, we've managed to produce an incredible amount of work that's grounded in our values of proactive, practical approaches to encroachment and enclosure of access to information.

We've fought digital censorship; we've published zines from underrepresented voices, including the incarcerated; we've supported more than twenty students; we've combatted AI slop and educated the public on the future of AI; we've developed new communities of practice and standards. In the summer, we took our work to the next level with a generous \$2.5 million contribution from the Arcadia Foundation, which has already allowed us to establish ourselves as counsel to libraries and independent publishers fighting against the contracts that drain their money, increase corporate control of public collections, and erode public trust in digital systems.

Thank you to everyone who has been a part of our five year journey. This job has humbled me, but it has also brought me a sense of purpose I never thought possible. I am proud to show up and do this work with you every day – the work is all we can do.



*Jennie Rose Halperin*  
Jennie Rose Halperin  
Executive Director

# ABOUT LIBRARY FUTURES

Library Futures is the vanguard nonprofit organization uncovering and confronting the fundamental policy issues that threaten libraries in the digital age.

Through fresh research, visionary policy and advocacy initiatives, and engaging education efforts, Library Futures empowers these critical audiences with the information and resources they need to protect, advocate for, and advance a fair digital future for libraries and the communities they serve.



2025 showed us that when we fight, we win. Connecticut passed the country's first ebook bill based on our model legislation. Library Futures hired a lawyer to go to bat for libraries. And thanks to our work, at least some AI slop is out of libraries (though we're always on the lookout for more)!

2025 might have knocked you down, but we're here to help you get up again. We believe that diversity, equity, and inclusion are a feature of our society, not a bug, and we believe that libraries can and should embody the best and most inclusive version of that society. We're glad you're with us.



# RESEARCH FOR LIBRARIES

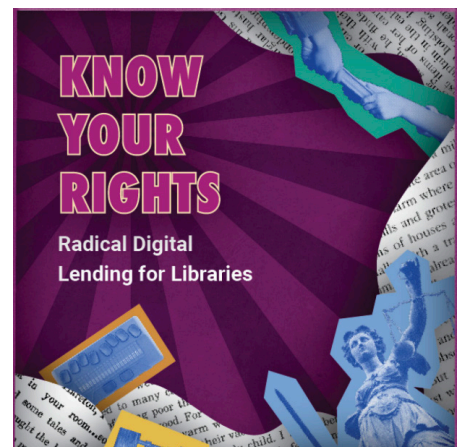
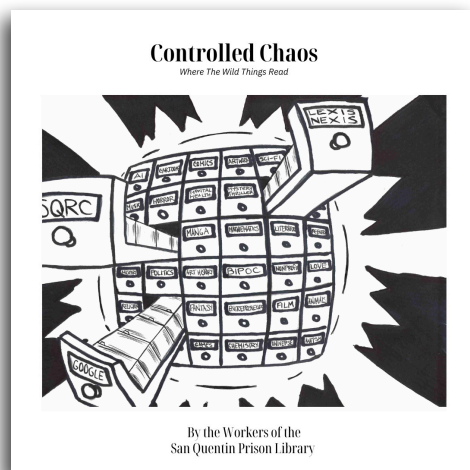
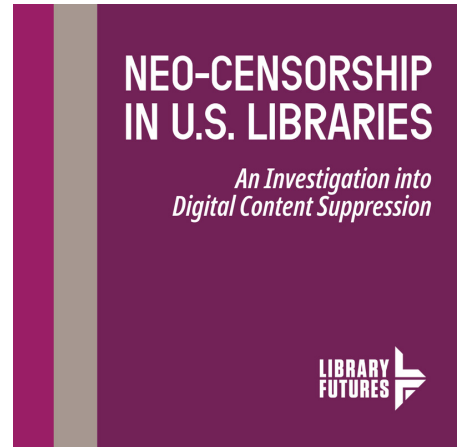
Library Futures is proud to produce research, policy papers, case studies, and zines on digital equity issues in libraries both through our own work and that of our Research Network members and interns.

## WHAT WE PUBLISHED

Book challenges and bans make up the majority of censorship news, but there's another form of content suppression out there. We released [Neo-Censorship in U.S. Libraries: An Investigation Into Digital Content Suppression](#), our comprehensive report on the efforts of bad actors to remove content from and bar access to library databases in February 2025. Digital censorship is often invisible but is no less nefarious than its physical counterpart, and we continue to track it.

## FROM OUR RESEARCH NETWORK

It wasn't all bad news, though. Our Research Network came through with two zines: one to fire you up for [radical digital lending](#) for libraries and one from [library workers at San Quentin](#), who continue providing information access against all odds. We also published AJ Boston's entertaining and enlightening account of his [digital and physical reading](#) over one year.



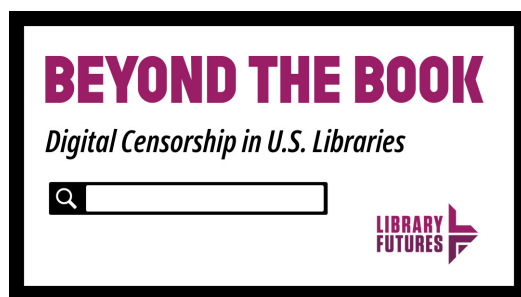
# LIBRARY FUTURES ON THE ROAD

## WHERE WE WENT

We also took our research on the road. *Thinking Together: New Resources from a Community of Practice* brought the work of our Research Network to the American Library Association annual conference in Philadelphia and the Illinois Library Association conference in Chicago.



We presented our [neo-censorship report](#) at the Association for Rural & Small Libraries, where we also previewed *Imagine IF: A Game-Based Introduction to Intellectual Freedom*, coming out in 2026!



From IndieLib to the National Ebook Strategy Summit to Common Ground for Intellectual Freedom, from the Internet Archive to the Boston Library Consortium Digital Lending Summit, Library Futures convened with our community to address the urgent issues of our digital future.

# ELEVATING EDUCATION



In 2025, Library Futures presented book talks on *Feminist Cyberlaw*, *Governing Misinformation*, and *Platform Power and Libraries*, as well as webinars on neo-censorship, digital accessibility, and makerspaces. We also hosted our much-lauded four-part series on Machine Learning and Artificial Intelligence for Information Professionals, which brought together scholars, lawyers, and practitioners for wide-ranging discussions of the practical, ethical, legal, and contractual implications of AI in libraries and what it all means for information literacy.



9000+ registered

2365 attended



# WEBINAR ATTENDEES SAY...

*"Library Futures is a really important critical voice and site of connection for so many who need it."*



*"One of the most interesting and useful and best webinars I have ever attended."*

*"This session provided one of the most practical, grounded discussions of AI that I have experienced."*

# INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

Fifteen interns worked with Library Futures in 2025. These amazing students produced webinars, zines, reports, podcasts, and blog posts, and we're delighted to present their work. From digital accessibility, neo-censorship, the history of ebooks in libraries, library/local news collaborations, and libraries and music algorithms, Library Futures interns researched, wrote, produced, designed, and expanded our knowledge of what is and what is possible.

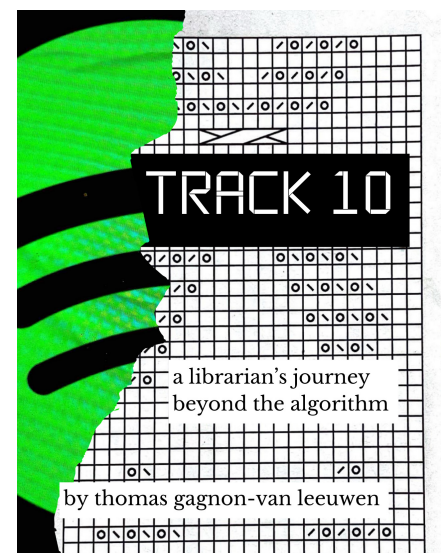
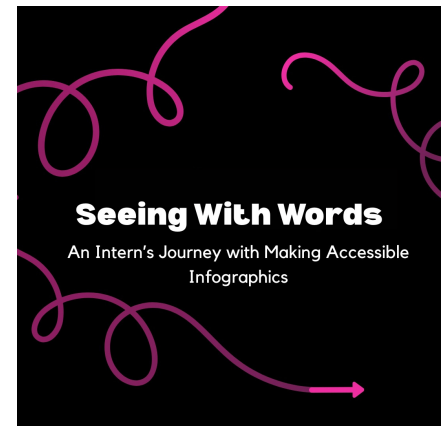
We are grateful to the seventeen library, information, legal, and policy professionals who served as mentors to our interns this year. Our program's strength comes from both the students and the professionals it attracts and from the invaluable ways the program mentors help prepare interns for their roles as future leaders in the library world.

## OUR INTERNS SAY...

*I had the privilege of connecting with talented fellow interns, meeting a great mentor, and learning from the supportive, inspiring, and thoroughly generous LF leadership team.*  
-Hayley Park

*I feel better prepared to advocate for fairer digital rights for libraries, and to advance the kind of innovative community-building library programs that I want to see in the world.*  
-Thomas Alexander

*This internship provided me so many opportunities to practice skills I'd tried out in class but wanted more experience in, allowed me to try new things and do independent projects.*  
-Mia Jakobsen



# ADVOCACY

2025 saw unprecedented attacks on the freedom to read and free access to information. From bills restricting students' right to access information to the gutting of the IMLS, which funds library programs – including ebook and database access – around the country, libraries and library rights were under threat.

While Library Futures signed on to letters [opposing anti-LGBTQIA+ executive orders](#), issued a statement on [the firing of Librarian of Congress Carla Hayden](#), and joined an amicus brief in favor of [copyright in the public interest](#), we also wanted to present a positive policy agenda for libraries – one that sought to outline what we were for, not merely what we were fighting against. Surveying our community led to [The Blue Skies Statement: An Equitable Policy Statement for Libraries](#).



## EBOOK VICTORY!

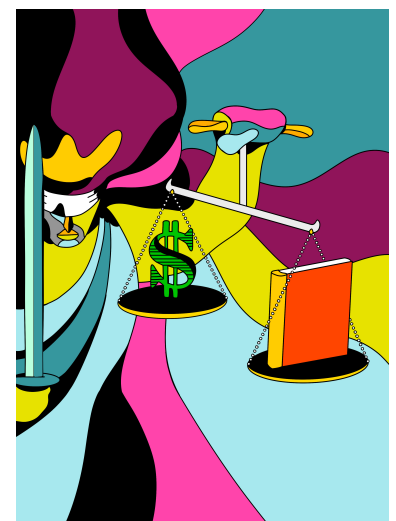
As anyone who follows our work knows, we've been advocating for a better deal for library ebooks since we started.

2025 marked a major victory in the legislative part of that fight as Connecticut passed a [landmark ebook bill](#) based on our very own [model ebook legislation](#).

## VENDOR ACCOUNTABILITY

Building on [work started by Library Futures and Library Freedom Project in 2022](#), we launched a new initiative to track AI slop and offered [Resisting the Vendor Machine: Contracts, Corporations, and Libraries](#) as part of our [Machine Learning and Artificial Intelligence for Information Professionals webinar series](#).

We will continue our work to hold vendors accountable to libraries and the communities we serve in 2026 – stay tuned!

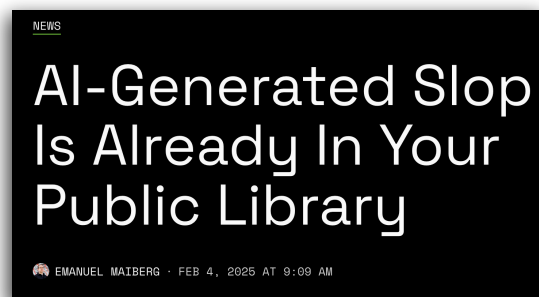


# STORIES IN THE PRESS

Library Futures made news in 2025!

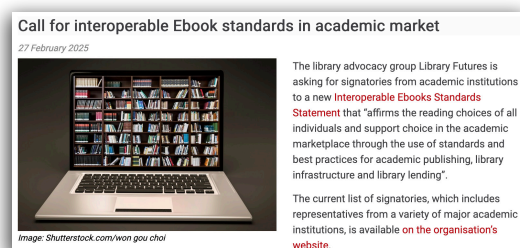
## AI SLOP IN LIBRARIES

*404Media* picked up on our work on AI slop, and their reporting had some effect! *American Libraries* also reported on the AI slop scourge and called out our work.



## E-BOOKS

Our ebook work also garnered attention. *Research Information* covered our call for interoperable ebook standards. *Computers in Libraries* featured a followup study on ebook availability and pricing by Michael Blackwell, Catherine Mason, Carmi Parker and our own Jennie Rose Halperin.



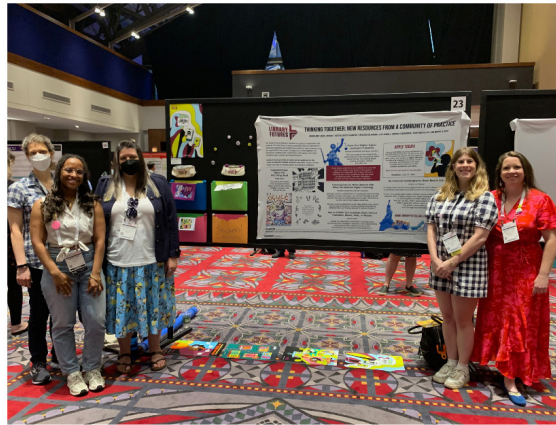
## NEO-CENSORSHIP

Last but not least, our landmark report on digital content suppression, garnered notice from the ALA Office of Intellectual Freedom and a story from *Publishers Weekly* in March. *Outside the Lines* interviewed our own Michelle Reed about the report and our work on neo-censorship.



# AND WE HAD SOME FUN

Because regardless of who said it, if we can't dance, we don't want to be part of the revolution. Maybe you saw us Singin' in the Public Domain, helping raise it from the dead with Necromancers of the Public Domain in New York City, mixing and mingling with our friends from Library Freedom Project at ALA, or chilling at the Copyright Booth! We hope to see more of you in 2026!



# THE LIBRARY FUTURES TEAM

**Jennie Rose Halperin**, Executive Director

**Michelle Reed**, Director of Programs

**Layla Maurer**, Staff Attorney

**Laura Crossett**, Communications Manager

And of course the wonderful staff at the Engelberg Center for Innovation, Law, and Policy; our Research Network; our interns and mentors; our stellar Advisory Board; our panelists and presenters; and above all, our community - we couldn't do this without you.

