

---

Volume 14  
Number 1

*Lively Librarians Loose in the Limelight:  
Libraries in Popular Media (Spring 2008)*

---

July 2014

## Why Libraries are a Threat to America! (Ode to Stephen Colbert)

Eva Calcagno

*Washington County Cooperative Library Services*

### Recommended Citation

Calcagno, E. (2014). Why Libraries are a Threat to America! (Ode to Stephen Colbert). *OLA Quarterly*, 14(1), 26-27. <http://dx.doi.org/10.7710/1093-7374.1194>

© 2014 by the author(s).

*OLA Quarterly* is an official publication of the Oregon Library Association | ISSN 1093-7374

# Why Libraries Are a Threat to America!

## (Ode to Stephen Colbert)

by **Eva Calcagno**  
Manager,  
Washington County  
Cooperative Library Services

(with inspired contributions from  
Barbara Kesel, Barbara O'Neill  
and Stephanie Lind)

EDITOR'S NOTE: *The WORD for the day is Parody. Parody, as in an artistic work that imitates the characteristic style of an author or a work for comic effect. So, if you are one of those librarians with no sense of humor, read no further. If you've never heard of, watched, listened to, read, or video-streamed Stephen Colbert ([http://www.comedycentral.com/shows/the\\_colbert\\_report/index.jhtml](http://www.comedycentral.com/shows/the_colbert_report/index.jhtml)), just stop reading right now. You'll just be confused, and probably irritated. And we don't need anymore irritated librarians around here.*

Stephen Colbert is no fan of books. By extension, he's also no fan of libraries or librarians. Following are six reasons libraries threaten Stephen Colbert's America. This is a call to arms to stop this assault on American values and protect the America we know and love!

1. **Libraries give things away.** Libraries check out books to anyone. For free. Without a deposit, VISA number, first born child (see #3 below) or any other collateral. These are books that are purchased with the hard-earned tax dollars of you and me, buddy. I want some accountability! They're loaning them to any Tom, Dick or Harriett who walks through the door. "Here—take two books; they're free!" That's not the American way. It undermines the economy and creates a welfare state. Makes people think they are entitled to government largesse. It was bad enough when it was just books, but now libraries are giving people DVDs and CDs, too. Well, Ms. Librarian, your free checkout of *Pursuit of Happiness* is taking food out of the mouth of that pimply-faced clerk at Blockbuster!
2. **Librarians trust people.** Anyone who can fill out an application form gets a library card and is treated like the

President of the United States. The homeless, the home bound, immigrants (EVEN illegal ones), homosexuals, redheads, belly dancers, tofu eaters, and any miscreant who wanders through the door. "Thanks for visiting your library. Please come back again soon!" Whatever happened to trust, but verify? Well, this Commander in Chief thinks we're spending too much time pandering to those freeloading library card-carriers!

3. **Libraries encourage children.** Libraries let children run amok, unsupervised, reading anything they can pull off the shelves. Encouraging them just puts crazy ideas in their heads, allows too many opportunities for mingling with adults. You might be thinking, "Children are our future!" Well, they're going to blog your career into obsolescence faster than you can say, "social networking software." Don't encourage them. They should be firmly ensconced in that basement room of the Carnegie Library where they belong.
4. **The Internet.** Need I say more? Just go ahead and change the library sign over the front door to say, "Pornography Den." And again, you let people use the Internet for *free*. You could at least broker music downloads to cover the cost of the T-1 and save a few of my tax dollars. Sure, the Internet's a "source of information" but is giving little Suzi (faves: sushi, alt rock, the OC and yellow. Go Bears! Woohoo!) a high-speed opportunity to update her MySpace account really informational?
5. **Too many facts.** Dictionaries and reference books are elitist. There are those who think with their heads and those who think with their hearts. Real



Americans make decisions by what they believe, by what they know in their hearts. They don't need Mr. Webster to tell them what's what! Reading the facts just encourages people to question, and questioning is very unpatriotic. We're watching you.

6. **Librarians purportedly promote “freedom of choice.”** Freedom is not free, baby! Choice is bad. It creates false hopes and just fills peoples' heads with dangerous ideas. It leads to anarchy and plants the seeds of terrorism. Well, are you with us or against us? Libraries are a code RED on this Patriot's warning system! 🌿

## Look! Up in the Sky!

Continued from page 8



preservation information. It was also bilingual—you can flip it over and read the same material in Spanish. Unfortunately, despite promises of full issues to come, the Incredible Librarian only appeared on a lavender T-shirt and this tantalizing sample issue.

The pages of comic books reflect the world around them. Over the past decade, costumed heroes have increasingly used online resources and sophisticated research skills nearly as much as muscles and utility belts to defeat injustice and tyranny. The Justice Society, the world's first superhero team, hired an archivist to manage their more-than-60-year history for them. With her vast information and communication network, Oracle may well be the most influential hero in the DC Universe. Who knows where the next costumed librarian may show up, fighting for truth, justice and a meaningful reference interview! 🌿

## We're Content Creators Too

Continued from page 16

### Final Thoughts

If they did nothing else (and they do), blogs would be valuable for one simple reason: they allow librarians (and libraries) to shape their identities in the eyes of patrons. Visions of Katherine Hepburn and Shirley Jones—or even a “shush-action” Nancy Pearl—may be hard to shake, but blogs give librarians a new way to communicate their true value and expertise, along with the depth of library resources and the importance of library-related issues.

By utilizing a platform that is only increasing in popularity and visibility, library staff can share ideas with each other, collaborate on innovative new services, and further convince patrons of what we already know—libraries (and librarians) are relevant, current, accurate and authoritative. And kind of cool, too. 🌿

### References

- <sup>1</sup>“It's the links, stupid.” *The Economist* 379(8474), Special Section: 5-8.

