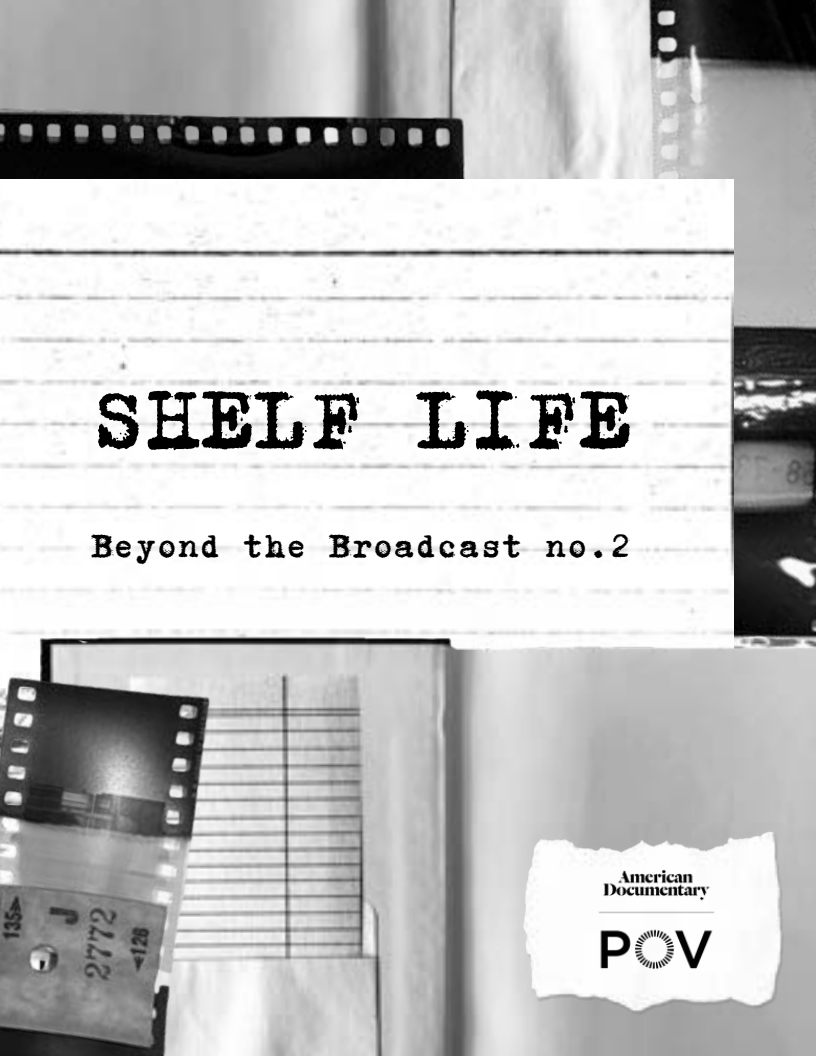




SHELF LIFE

Beyond the Broadcast no.2

American
Documentary

POV

Did you know?

Libraries aren't just places to borrow books!

As a community gathering space, your local public library may also:

host knowledge-building events, like film screenings, book clubs, and arts and crafts workshops

provide access to film libraries such as Kanopy

connect people to social support options

offer unique free resources like cooking supplies, tools and board games

maintain literacy hotlines (you can check for literacy services near you on the National Literacy Directory)

But libraries are facing many challenges

book bans



Since 2020, censorship attempts have increased. In 2023, ALA documented 1,247 demands to censor library books, materials, and resources. These demands included 4,240 unique book titles.

(American Library Association (ALA))

proposed laws



Around the country, states are proposing laws that increase censorship. For example, some proposed laws would allow librarians, educators, and museum professionals to face criminal prosecution for disseminating certain materials.

As of February 2025, there are 101 laws proposed across 30 states that would restrict or negatively impact libraries' work.

(everylibrary.org)

...and censorship isn't the only
issue.

funding shortages

Many libraries face budget cuts
that threaten to result in
closures.



empty libraries

While library visits have been in decline over
the past decade, since Covid libraries have
taken an especially hard hit.

2022 saw about 671 million physical visits, a
significant drop from about 1.25 billion visits in
2019, the year before the pandemic.

(Institute of Museum and Library Services
Annual Public Library Surveys)



POV is proud to partner with
libraries and librarians around the
country.

The POV Community Network offers film discussion
guides, lesson plans, and reading lists free-of-charge,
along with a lending library of 90+ documentaries.

As of 2025, POV has worked with 1229 libraries through
our Community Network!

Pelham Parkway Library

Bronx, NYC

Pelham Parkway Library has
held 177 screenings since it
joined the Community Network
in 2019!

4

Unapologetic
3 screenings

Murders that
Matter
2 screenings

An Act of
Worship
3 screenings

POV Prison Doc Club

POV partners with California prison libraries at Folsom State Prison, California State Prison Sacramento, and California Medical Facility to bring films and knowledge-building discussions to communities in prisons.

Doc Club members from CA State Prison Sacramento shared their experiences with us!

"[The film] definitely make [sic] me think past my own skin about the struggle of the man next to me."

"I resonate with each story because loss touches us all."

"We as human beings bear a responsibility to those who never had the voice to speak for their own respect and dignity."



The POV Library Board

Library professionals from across the country participate in POV's Library Board each year. In conversation with POV documentaries, librarians create reading lists to support learning for national audiences and program POV films at their home libraries. Our work would not be possible without their guidance, expertise, and care.

Meet the 2024 Library Board

Veronda
Pitchford
California
CALIFA Group



Kim Dorman
Princeton Public Library
Princeton, NJ



Susan Conlon
Princeton, NJ



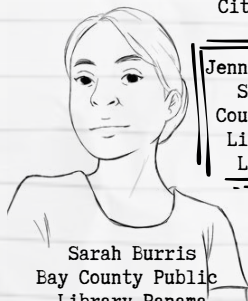
Ann Howard
Bay County Public
Library Panama
City, FL



Kim Rott
Missoula, MT



Constance Zack
Rhode Island Library
Board RI



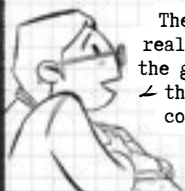
Sarah Burris
Bay County Public
Library Panama
City, FL

Jennifer Gibson
St. Louis
County Public
Library St.
Louis, MO

Meet:

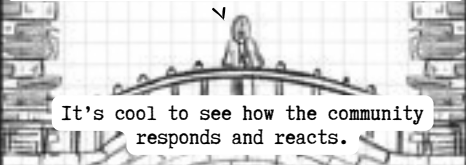
Sarah Burris @
librarian extraordinaire!

Bay County
Public Library

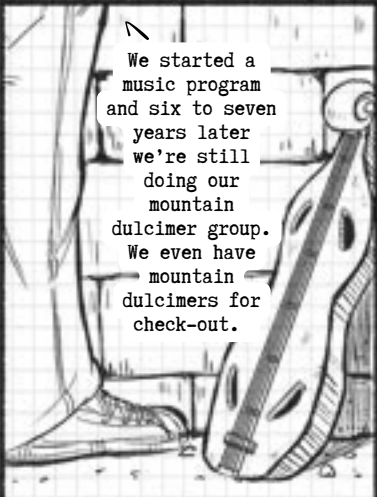


The library
really bridges
the gap between
the entire
community.

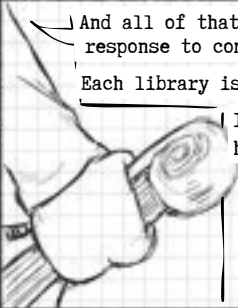
We are always responding to our community.



It's cool to see how the community
responds and reacts.

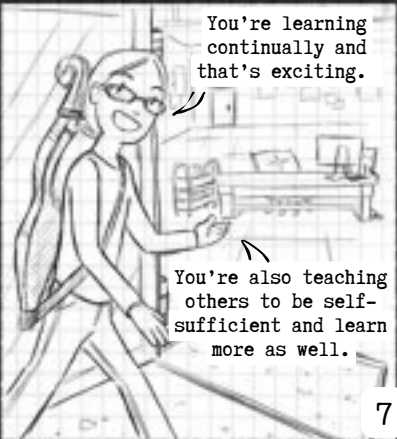


We started a
music program
and six to seven
years later
we're still
doing our
mountain
dulcimer group.
We even have
mountain
dulcimers for
check-out.



And all of that came about in
response to community input!
Each library is so different.

I wear several
hats within my
role as
Community
Relations and
Marketing
Coordinator.



You're learning
continually and
that's exciting.

Everything is fun, it's just a
challenge. I think that's one of the
best things about being a librarian.

You're also teaching
others to be self-
sufficient and learn
more as well.

And as for
challenges?
Banned books!

Did you know in
2024, 3/10
young adult
fiction titles
circulated in
our library
were banned
book classics?

Each state is different.

Sometimes it's
just relocating
something, like
if it was
catalogued
incorrectly.

Other times it can
mean libraries
having to
reconfigure their
entire system--
recategorizing
anything deemed as
"inappropriate".

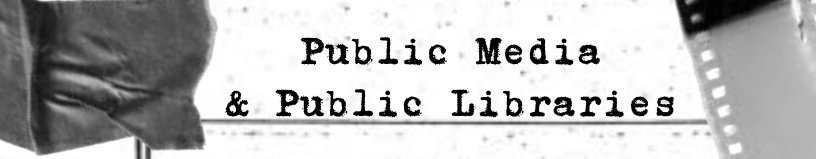
Another challenge, nation-wide,
is stepping up to supporting
homeless populations and mental
health issues.

Communities across the US
aren't providing proper
assistance.

So many libraries are hiring social workers and
other positions to act as resources to those who
need them.

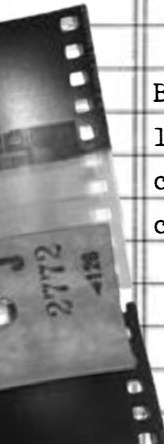
For PBS-POV, I think there's a lot of parallels to libraries; books are
also vessels for sharing different points of view.

I think they partner really, really
well. Especially with the ability to
have conversation after viewing the
film.

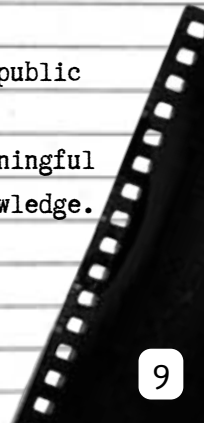


Public Media & Public Libraries

Public libraries and public media have a lot in common. While libraries ensure public access to information, lifelong learning, and foster artistic practice in everyday life, public media is built on a belief of people's right to access diverse stories, engage with independent media, and be in artistic conversation with their communities.



By utilizing and supporting our public libraries, we can make sure our communities continue to have meaningful conversations and grow their knowledge.



Self Check-Out



Would you like to engage your community in meaningful conversation?

Host a screening of a POV film!
Scan the QR code or visit
www.pbs.org/pov/community/

Visit your library's website or go in person to find out how you can sign up for a library card. Remember, it's entirely free!

Contributors

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