

My earliest creative efforts as a librarian: exhibits and events from 1987 to 1992 while at the Nogales Santa-Cruz County Public Library and the University of Michigan Undergraduate Library

I graduated from Library School in December, 1987. My intentions were to become an academic librarian, as my focus in school was on subjects related to work in that particular sub-field of the profession. I took advanced reference courses, management courses and courses dealing with issues related specifically to academic libraries.

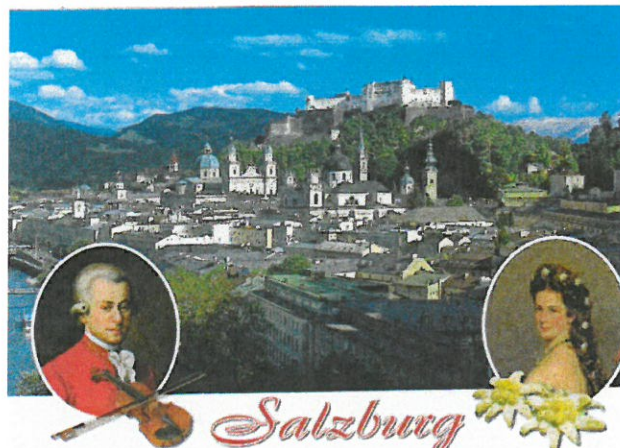
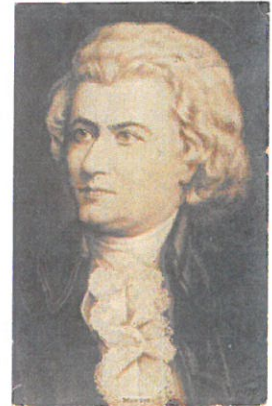
As luck would have it, by the time I graduated, I need a job very badly. The first one that came open happened to be sixty miles south of Tucson In Nogales Arizona. The position that I applied for was a general user services/reference position that included childrens services duties. I decided to interview for the job, and when it was offered I took it, and moved all of my belongings to Nogales Arizona. I lasted in the position for 8 months. I then applied for a job at The University of Michigan Libraries, and was offered a position there as an undergraduate services librarian. I started my new job in September, 1987.

I started small, with a display on Mozart that I put on the bulletin board at the Nogales Santa Cruz County Public Library in late January, 1987. The title of the exhibit was "Happy Birthday, Mozart". My colleague Carol Smith gave me some pointers regarding how to "frame" it. The most important thing I learned from her is that the focus of the exhibit on a large flat space should be the center, and that things like photos or artwork on the left or right sides should be directed toward that middle space. If for example, one uses a portrait, as I did, then the direction of the person's eyes should not be "outward" but "inward" towards the focal point. Here is an example (not what was actually used, however):



HAPPY BIRTHDAY WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART

January 27, 1756-December 5, 1791



My next few projects were done while I was working at the University of Michigan as an undergraduate services librarian. I started work there in August, 1987. My first effort, created in 1988, highlighted the Undergraduate Library's focus on acquiring diverse materials and on services to diverse populations. The Library was just starting to focus on making the promotion of diversity, through building diverse collections, training, hiring and programming a strategic priority, and this was my contribution to these efforts. I included book covers of recently acquired titles as well as handouts that focused on reading resources for diverse populations, such as African Americans, LGBTQ populations, and other marginalized groups. The Undergraduate Library also had a student assistant program in place called the Peer Information Counseling program, the intention of which was to hire and train students from diverse backgrounds to help staff various service points, such as the reference desk and I included promotional materials from that program as well.

Here is a photo of the display:



1988: UGL Collections and Services: Dedicated to Diversity

In subsequent years, I put together two displays in celebration of Martin Luther King, Jr.'s birthday. By this point, I had been a member of the Library's Diversity Council for two years, and was also a member of the Martin Luther King Jr program committee.



1989: Martin Luther King Day: Happy Birthday Dr. King!



1990: *Happy Birthday, Dr. King!*

The last exhibit I worked on while at Michigan was on the topic of lgbt literature. One of my collection development projects focused on adding lgbt titles to the fiction collection at the Undergraduate Library. I focused on adding works from smaller presses, and managed to build a solid core collection of material. I decided to showcase these works in a display. One interesting memory about this particular project is that one night two young men who claimed to be “Christians”, came into the library and saw the exhibit and they didn’t like it. They even tried to knock it over, but our staff prevented them from doing so.



1991: Lesbian and Gay Fiction at the UGL

