UNC Chapel Hill CEDI Lecture Series: Stephanie Rosen & Kate Deibel

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Academic Libraries, Accessibility and Disability

>> Dr. Stephanie S. Rosen is a librarian scholar who brings insights from disability studies—and its intersections with feminist, queer, and critical race studies—into library administration and digital scholarship. She is Associate Librarian and Accessibility Specialist at the University of Michigan Library and holds a PhD in English from the University of Texas at Austin. I'll be making you the host right now.

>> Okay. Thank you, Laura.

>> Thank you.

>> Hello, class, I'm gonna try to share my slides. So, one moment, please. Okay, I'm hoping you're seeing my slides.

>> Yep.

>> Great. So I'll be talking through these. And if you wish to follow along, you can use the short link on the screen, which is a bitly link, bit.ly/2NOIEVc. If you wish to follow along, you'll find some links in there. So thank you, everyone, for organizing this, especially to Professor Gibson, and to everyone in the class for being here. So today, I've been asked to speak about the day to day work of my job, what it means to work on library accessibility. I hope that will be valuable to you. At the same time for today's discussion, you've been asked to read an article I wrote that's grounded in theory and history, and kind of provides a philosophical background to my work. So for me, this just makes me think about the difficult question of how to bridge the gap between the theoretical and the practical. It's an important struggle in my work since activities like staff training, and strategic planning is often expected to provide answers. While the work of critical theory is really to ask questions, to describe the world better, development new frameworks, in short, to avoid easy answers. So I just wanted to acknowledge this tension as I begin, and also commend Professor Gibson for this syllabus that I think has really well prepared you to bridge these two areas. I don't think I've seen any other LIS syllabus that has read so widely from theory to activism to practical matters. So I'll begin by telling you a little bit about my background. I have a PhD in English, where am I focus included Queer Studies and Disability Studies, among a bunch of other areas of focus that seem less relevant now like Poetics and Victorian Literature, for example. When I first got exposed to accessibility from working at a digital humanities lab at the University of Texas, Austin, it's called the Digital Writing and Research Lab. And it has a long standing commitment to accessibility, because one of the co-founders of that lab, in the 1990s was himself becoming disabled, experiencing progressive vision loss, and getting into computers as assistive technology at the same time that he was getting into computers and writing. So at that lab, I started thinking about applying web accessibility guidelines to digital scholarship. So of course, web pages, digital projects, online publications, I really began to notice the absence of conversations about access for people with disabilities, in particular, in conversations about digital humanities scholarship. So I became committed to applying that

accessibility framework to my own digital projects, both as an individual researcher and in my collaborations with colleagues and collectives. So I also want to make clear that I do not have a background in library or information science. But my background and disability studies, academic research, teaching, and accessibility, of course, all prepared me well for this position at the University of Michigan Library, which happens to be based in our Learning and Teaching Division. So, in order to illustrate what I do, I'm going to focus on a few recent projects. And for each, provide some background about what happened, tell you what artifacts or projects we've created, and then tell you a little bit about what's happening now. And in each case, I'll also try to focus a little bit on the larger context and the larger consequences. So how a project to improve accessibility, narrowly defined, so meaning equitable access for people with disabilities, and in many cases, a specific user group within the broader cast category, people with disabilities, can be used to push accessibility and access more broadly. So the first project I'll focus in on is the describing visual resources toolkit. This is an online, open access resource designed to advance accessible publishing in the arts and humanities. And I'll begin with a little bit of the backstory of how this project came to be. This goes back to right around the time I began my work at the library–2015. And that summer that I began, there was a blog post, from Stephen Kuusisto. He was the professor working in disability studies, writing about experience and representation of blindness. He has a very popular and well followed blog. And he wrote about his struggle trying to access books on disability studies from the University of Michigan Press, saying, "I find it ironic that a press which publishes books on disability and culture has so little expertise in making its scholarly publications easy to read for blind researchers. But they are not alone." So he was definitely calling us out. But also pointing out that this is very common among academic publishers, whether or not they're working in the field of disability studies and culture. So at that time, we were already beginning to address this issue within our own workflows and processes. But the blog posts really brought it to a head. I'm very happy to report that our Director of the University of Michigan Press, immediately wrote back in the blog post comments, to let the system know about the work we're doing and to clearly admit that we haven't done enough. So taking this moment, which could have gone a lot of directions, but using it to build relationships that really actually developed over several years. Steve Kuusisto became a friend of this, a friend of our press, let's say and a collaborator on this project. The summer of 2015 was also when a group of scholars from the Society for Disability Studies, which is kind of the preeminent association for scholars working in that field, published an open letter on accessible publishing. Folks signed on this letter include people like Margaret Price, Leonard Davis, and others. And this letter was meant to be a communication tool from scholar authors to publishers expressing a commitment. And it says, "As a scholar working and disability studies, I am dedicated to producing work that is accessible to all readers, including those with print reading disabilities. What does your press do to ensure that my work will be available to this audience?" So this letter was another means of pointing out that presses were not doing enough to make academic publishing accessible to readers with various disabilities. So another kind of call to action that just happened to come in the early weeks and months of my position here. So several things happened as a result of this and just as a kind of a coincidence with this. We came out and made a public commitment and endorsed all the recommendations put forth by the Society for Disability Studies letter, the SDS letter. So the letter goes on to explain what publishers can do to make their publications accessible. We endorsed this, we committed to this, and we began with our book series on disability studies, because it was clear that that was a place where we were sort of failing our community. So once we had made that commitment, the question became, how

are we going to do this? How are we going...First of all, what are the relevant standards that we need to meet? And then what changes will we need to make in order to meet them. So this meant a lot of internal assessment, in terms of our own production workflow, so on the technical end, understanding the standards. At this time, EPUB 3 was recently published as a new standard that was universal, that had incorporated lots of digital accessibility work from various arenas, and was clearly the best option for us. So we knew what standard we had to meet had it on its own accessibility guidelines. But as a press with a really a print first workflow, we had to figure out what types of manual modifications we'd have to make in production in order for our digital output to meet those standards and to be accessible to our readers. We also had to examine what type of changes would be necessary in the expectations of our authors and our editors. So within the standards for accessible electronic books is the requirement that there has to be a textual description for visual content. And we realized that that textual description really needed to come from the authors of the books themselves. But this was not a normal part of the manuscript development process. It was something really new to our authors and to our editors. So we definitely had the advantage of working with authors in disability studies, who already had some experiences and some commitments to values of accessibility, but still required a lot of learning on their part, while learning on our part and a lot of guidance along the way. So we started to look for what type of guidance was out there for describing visual resources. The best existing guidelines came from the DIAGRAM Center. That's a project of Benetech nonprofit, focused on global literacy. They're also the group that does the Bookshare program. I think we'll hear more about that from Kate. But their guidelines were really designed for publishing in the STEM disciplines, so science, technology, engineering, and math, and for educational context, so really thinking about textbook publications. What we were largely doing was arts and humanities and academic publishing. So, in an academic text, authors were choosing to use images for different reasons than for the reasons that textbook authors were using images. What we basically realized was that the guidance that we needed didn't exist, so we kind of set out to figure out how to create it, both for ourselves and for the field. We applied for a grant to host a large working meeting. And we called together a working group of experts from academic and museum publishing, art history and visual studies, disability studies and accessibility, and the cultural heritage fields, broadly, to discuss the challenges and advocate for the project of incorporating description into scholarly publications. So we came together, we worked intensively for a day and a half. And then we processed those notes in a kind of iterative way with feedback from the group, finally developed this online toolkit, Describing Visual Resources Toolkit. And you can link from the slides, or you can find it at describingvisualresources.org. So this resource is organized for authors, editors, publishers, and arts organizations. It has specific information that's meant to be useful for each of those audiences. And includes things like basic principles for a description, a glossary of terms for people unfamiliar with terminology like alt text, print disability, machine reader, epub, HTML, so basic glossary for folks near to the field. And it has guidelines for publishers to incorporate image accessibility into their editorial processes. And for example, guidelines for arts organizations to reuse description that they might already do for the context of accessible publishing. So kind of the broad goal of this project is making the justification, the reasons for this work, and the guidance on doing it widely available for anyone at any stage of their research process, or in any place within the publishing world. So this toolkit also brings together many other existing resources designed for publishers thinking about accessible publishing, or from various fields that have already thought deeply about cataloging and descriptive–and describing different types of assets with metadata. So we're able to produce

this, put it out in the world and hope that it will begin to affect anyone who wants to think about incorporating description in order to make their scholarship more accessible. Now at the press, we're in the process of kind of taking this large resource and making it the right size for our own internal author guidelines, where people don't want too much information, but just enough so that they can provide alt text description for any visual content. And we're also expanding this accessible publishing initiative to all of our publications where we started with our book series in disability studies. We're broadening out to all of our books and to other types of publications that come through our publishing division. So the work is ongoing locally. But meanwhile, we've been able to share this resource back out with the community. So next, I'm going to talk about the digital accessibility team, or DAT. This is a library team to share expertise and offer digital accessibility services for our colleagues, mostly for colleagues within the library. And I'll tell a little bit of backstory for this project as well. Since around 2017, within our library, we've had five different staff members doing accessibility work as a huge component of what they do. So that was three people in library IT, two of them with a Front End Developer and Accessibility Specialist title, one with the title User Experience and Accessibility Specialist, one person in publishing, whose title is Front End and User Interface Designer, and one person in learning and teaching, that's me, with the title of Accessibility Specialist. So it was clear that we had a lot of expertise, especially in digital accessibility. But there we, there was no service model for our colleagues to work with us. There was a really inconsistent intake process, someone might have an accessibility question and shoot me an email. Or they might have an accessibility question and send it to a colleague in library IT. And because there was no consistent intake process, there was no way of knowing the volume of questions and the scope of need among our colleagues. There was no way to standardize the way that we consult, advise, or create reports for our colleagues. And there was just no good way of kind of knowing what the other person was doing, and making the best use of our time. So we came together as a team. And this next slide is a logo for our team that a colleague designed for us, where we're represented by five creatures, each contributing in their own way, the bird's putting in their wing, the unicorn's putting in their hoof, the dog's putting in their paw, the alien's putting in their foot and the robot's putting in their device. So we came together as a team where we could combine our separate talents, but also just really coordinate and communicate, that's what was lacking hugely. So we set up that infrastructure. And then we began to ask what our colleagues needed. And we started a service design process to create services that would meet those needs. So last year was our first full year in operation I guess. And I'll tell you a little bit about what we've been offering for our colleagues. So the first service we began is accessibility office hours, we could start those right away, because it just meant us showing up to the same place at the same time. We do them for two hours, two days a month. So that gives our colleagues a good window of time with which to consult with us. And colleagues come in with all kinds of questions. So a few recent examples have included, like, is CAPTCHA accessible? Can I use CAPTCHA as a way to filter out spam from our email form? Another question around how can we create guidelines for staff creating online exhibits so that they create accessible online exhibits? Or how can we help student researchers build accessible surveys in our survey design platform. So the questions that have come in vary broadly. And our responses vary as well, they lead to different levels of consultations, or maybe deeper collaborations, or maybe they're finished up with the conversation in the moment. But the important thing with these office hours has been just creating the space for our colleagues to enter, and then managing all those incoming requests as a group. So referring and deferring to each other's areas of specialization, knowing what people are

asking, so we can know how to get the best answer. And then just sort of monitoring that, being aware of the volume of questions that are coming in and sort of tracking the types of needs that are coming up. The next service we began to develop is our accessibility evaluation service. So we will perform accessibility evaluations. Basically, providing a report on the extent to which a digital resource meets web content accessibility guidelines or WCAG. And will do this on request for any type of resource that someone needs. So people have asked us to do this for like a vendor product that we were considering using for room scheduling, we've done it for our own library website ahead of a redesign. We'll do it for any different type of digital product that someone needs to know about for their scholarship for their teaching, or for our library services. So we've developed basically two levels of evaluation, a light evaluation, which is the best choice usually when we don't own the product, and someone wants a quick review of its accessibility. And a full evaluation, when it's something developed in-house, and we want to make sure it's completely compliant with standards and we want to make detailed recommendations about changes. And then custom is kind of an evaluation that falls under...

>> Hello? I dropped out somehow. But I think I'm still here. So I will carry on. And if something's wrong, I hope Laura can can speak up. Sorry for interruption. I was saying that we developed our own standardized testing protocol and report format. And this is part of the work that I'm quite proud of. Because we designed it to be very educational, for the person doing the testing, and especially for the client getting the report. So what you can see on this excerpt of a report is a little section on forms, saying that there's some problems with the accessibility of the forms. And the results section is not the most important here that's in reference to the specific product we tested. But everything below that, the consequences, the resources, and the sources, are content that we developed, and that shows up in every report. And they're designed to help the end user, like the person who requested this report, understand why this matters, what it means, and what they might need to do to change it. So for example, in here for consequences, it says, all form elements should have labels programmatically associated with them, that is, not just displayed next to elements, but linked to them in the code. This means that people using a variety of devices can understand the meaning and purpose of each element and access the elements using the label. So this is kind of the result of our efforts to make sure that our specialized expertise and web accessibility reaches our colleagues in a way that's understandable and usable for them. And our next step is to make this entire testing protocol and report format available for anyone to use. Because there's quite a lot. I think that in the world of web accessibility, expertise is understood to be very scarce and very hard to come by. But I'm very concerned with kind of democratizing that as much as possible. So last, I'll just talk about some work around library e-resources, and in particular, an initiative with the Big 10 Academic Alliance to improve the accessibility and usability of vendor supplied electronic resources by sharing information and increasing transparency. So the backstory on this can be summed up in this slide that comes from the ARL Joint Task Force on Services to Patrons with Print Disabilities. "While publishers, database vendors, and device manufacturers are not subject to accessibility law in their role as providers, libraries are, and should demand the necessary design elements to serve the print disabled and all patrons equally." So we are required to provide equitable access for all our patrons. But we rely on these vendor platforms for access. And while we want them to be equitably usable for all our patrons, they are not, unfortunately. In fact, some relatively research, recent research found that 72% of evaluated library vendor electronic resource databases were rated as marginally accessible or inaccessible. So the industry isn't

where we want it to be. But at the same time, we're almost never in a position to walk away from our relationship with these vendors. They supply access to content that we need. So we're kind of stuck with each other. And we're thinking about how to create change in this industry over the long term. And one way we've been doing that is through a consortium that my institution and my library belongs to. That is the Big 10 Academic Alliance. And we have a subgroup focused on library e-resource accessibility. And one tactic we've been using is pooling our resources together to hire professional accessibility consulting firms to perform evaluations on some common platforms. And then publishing those evaluation reports for anyone to review. So on this slide, I have a screenshot of our website where those reports are published. It's also linked from the slide or you can find it at btaa.org and search for library e-resources. So we also invite vendors into the process, giving them a chance to make a public response to the report, and even to consult with the firm on next steps for remediating their platform and making it better. So this is a way to kind of increase transparency and raise expectations in this industry. And it's still early work, sort of laying the foundation for the changes that we would like to see. I'm also involved with some projects locally, with students in our School of Information, thinking about how to pull the information that's contained in these reports out and make it more understandable to non experts and more usable, meaning like more comparable across different platforms and able to, easier to digest in a glance. So those are some big projects I've been involved with, multi-year projects, all of them. I just wanted to give a shout out to some other projects, especially because these examples tended to focus heavily on digital accessibility. And that's not all that I do. So I just pulled a list of recent things, and I'll invite you to ask me about them during Q&A if you want to talk more. But one is improving the accessible all gender restrooms signage. Another has been developing services for patrons with print disabilities. Another is offering a workshop to instructors called disability and accessible teaching. Another is offering ongoing staff training. And another is an accessibility guide for our library spaces. So like I said, feel free to ask me more about this. But I just wanted to give a range of projects that show how my work interacts with collections, with spaces, with staff attitudes and knowledge, as well as the digital. And then I just wanted to say something about research, because I kind of began by thinking about the tension between like the theoretical and the practical. And it can be easy to get in the weeds of the practical and it can be hard to make time to keep current on scholarship in the fields and the conversations. So I've found that the way I've been able to do this is by just committing to writing things and teaching things, that's the only way I've been able to do the reading that I wish to do. So I've done most of my teaching outside, I've done training within the library and some teaching outside of the library. And I also make sure to follow Disabled Twitter, so that I'm getting current conversations and fresh thinking from activists and advocates and thinkers. And I'll just say that whenever I'm not reading new work from disability studies and disabled thinkers, I see that the practical parts of my job start to suffer. Because I'm not bringing the critical lens that those thinkers remind me of. So I just wanted to mention that. And I've left some time for questions if we can do that here. If Laura can, I don't know how, somehow moderate that. But I've also left my email for folks who may wish to follow up, that's ssrosen@umich.edu. So I'm here, I've turned off my screen share. And I can pass the hosting back to Laura, whenever you're ready. Or I can take questions on chat or over audio. Just let me know if I need to change any settings. All right, making Laura the host.

>> Hi, sorry for that, we were unable to unmute ourselves, now we can. But we do have a bunch of questions. First comes from Sarah, thank you so much online. She asks, she said that she's

excited to hear that there are plans to make the accessibility evaluation protocol widely available. And where could we keep an eye out for that? How will that be accessible?

>> Thank you for your question. We don't have a destination for it yet. But the UM Library IT department has a presence on GitHub. And I think that's one potential home for it. I suppose, I'll just make a commitment to share it over the library accessibility mailing lists that I'm already a part of. So if you're connected to any of those, like the UniAccess group, I'll make sure to share it over those lists when it's available.

>> Great, thank you. Does anybody have any questions specifically for Stephanie right now? Or would you like to wait until we're more private? Would you be able to stay on after we log off the public version and answer more questions privately?

>> Sure, I can stay until four today.

>> Great. Thank you. Amelia also asked, could you share how we could access those mailing lists?

>> Yes, I can do that over chat. I think, while Kate speaks. Thank you.

>> Do y'all have any questions about her article? Wonderful. Thank you so much. And we will definitely be asking you some more questions. After we hear from Kate, is that ok with you again? You'll still be with us?

>> Yes. Thanks all.

>> Thank you. So Kate, I'm actually going to see if you're able to present using that share button without making you host. I will unmute you. And ask to start video. Wonderful.

>> It's actually working?

>> Yeah. Can you see us on? You can see it up on our screen over here.

>> Okay, hmm.. Let me try a different bit of sharing on it.

>> I know one of the options is you can just share a portion of the screen. So maybe you can have that up but then yeah.

>> Trying to get the presentation. Okay, I know what I have to do. Sorry, I have to turn off the Presenter View.

>> Oh, fair enough.

>> I'm going to stop the share momentarily.

>> And while you do that. Do you mind if I introduce you?

>> No, go ahead. Yeah, that would be good.

And how do you pronounce your last name?

>> It's Deibel.

>> Welcome, Dr. Kate Deibel. So Dr. Kate Deible earned her PhD in computer science from the University of Washington in 2011. With a multidisciplinary study of the social and technological factors that hinder adoption of reading technologies among adults with dyslexia. Currently, she is the Inclusion & Accessibility Librarian at Syracuse University, where she is spearheading multiple efforts to raise inclusion, equity and disability access through libraries and the library community. Welcome, Kate!

>> So I'm hoping that's just showing the presentation screen, the slides. Is that correc?

>> Yes, it's a bit small but we do have access to these complete slides on the CEDI website, if anybody's been able to see these. I'll put that direct link into the chat, too for anyone joining us online.

>> Is that better?

>> That's perfect.

>> Okay, cool. Yep.

>> Thank you.

>> Alright, so hopefully, I will remember to actually look at you all, because of the setup for everything is, is I have a laptop connected to two main monitors and the camera's on the laptop, so. You know, the larger screen is more attractive. So thank you for inviting me to do this. Even though it was months ago, it turns out that actually it parallels with a talk I gave actually, at ALA midwinter. I was asked to be a part of the symposium on the future of libraries to talk about disability access and the future of libraries. So there we go. So just out of curiosity, and since I really can't see the chat, do you know what the number one thing any, any person can do to make library spaces more accessible? Going to just open up? Well, I'll just spoil it here. The big thing is, so actually, when I gave this talk, I actually asked a crowd, a large room of people, if I had to use the microphone. That was deliberate. I wanted people to yell at me angrily. Because honestly, and this is really, really slow. Is use, always use the microphone, whenever it's a conference, a large meeting, campus events, using a microphone is one of the first things that we can actually do to really change the accessibility of our physical spaces. That's one of the reasons why I'm using a headset mic for this webinar, because I tend not to trust the microphones built into laptops, so. But the thing is, though, is that there are a lot of good reasons for always, you know, using microphones and really to advocate for it is is that, oh sorry. Yeah, we always use the microphone. But it's more than that, you know, just having presenters use that you actually have to have the surrounding infrastructure for this. So we need people to demand sound

systems, especially for conferences. Make sure that your conferences actually have microphone setup funds support for personnel and ongoing technology maintenance. It's one of those where, you know, you might have microphones in your presentation room. But if nobody knows how to change the batteries or figure out why they're not connecting, that's a problem. So you need to make sure you have all that going. And why do we do this? Well, anyone with auditory or attentional issues benefit a lot from a microphone. It helps you know, if people are murmuring in the background, it helps you actually, you know, filter that out. And you know, can also help anyone with temporary hearing issues such as myself. I have been fighting a horrible cold all week. I am actually probably feverish at this moment. So if I say anything weird, it's probably just me being normally weird. But it could be feverish, Kate weird. So just a warning there. But also, the microphone is one of the first steps if you actually want to have live captioning. Which once you have microphones setup, that's your next thing you should advocate for. Now, all this might seem kind of small, you know, anyone can advocate for this. And it's a small change, but can benefit a lot of people. And the key thing is that we can keep doing more if we take the right actions. And that's when I think about the future of accessibility in libraries, we need to be talking about how to do these right actions. So that's what I'm doing and going to discuss. So like Stephanie, I want to explain who I am. I am the Inclusion and Accessibility Librarian at Syracuse University. I am the first of my job title, they created it about two years ago, I took the position about a year and four months ago, and I am, to the best of my knowledge, I'm the first person to ever have a job title like this. If you know of other people who have similar titles and hold the librarian status, get them in touch with me, because I particularly for the students and the crowd, trailblazing a career is both awesome, and that you get to define your agenda. But then bad in that you get to define your agenda. Kind of troublesome there. So things I do is I fost– I work on programs to foster inclusive culture, and promoting inclusion and accessibility, lots of staff training, and pretty much also being the local expert on advising, okay, how do we do things to make these documents more accessible? How do we make the website? Is this new technology we're looking at, is it going to be good or bad and all that. And the reason why I can kind of do this is I have a PhD in computer science. So like Stephanie, I do not have a library background, I came into this. And what's interesting is, is technically computer science, that's not really teach much about accessibility. I learned about a lot of what I did through actually doing independent scholarship, taking classes in education, doing lots of reading on typography, disability studies, reading psychology, all that. I did a dissertation on why adults with dyslexia tend not to use assistive reading technologies. So really, my big background is print disability. Now, amazingly, this is not actually something that you can get a major career as a professor and get lots of NSF money from, so I actually had difficulty finding a job. And I looked into this web application specialist position at the University of Washington libraries. I was just helping them do like website work. And of course, accessibility came into it. So I started fixing accessibility issues in our applications. Started sharing code about accessibility with the Orbis Cascade Alliance, one of the larger consortias on the west coast. I even begin consulting with Ex Libris regarding the new Primo user interface in order to make it more accessible. I did my best people for those who use Primo, but I could only do so much. And I started presenting at library tech conferences like Code4Lib, which is a great conference for those of you who don't know about. And actually, I decided to pick up a library degree at Syracuse University. Ironically, I applied for and accepted the online MLIS is program at Syracuse, the month before they actually posted my job position. So, kismet. Now, where I have great experience with accessibility is from something that happened a year ago. A year ago, I would not be able to have volunteered for a webinar like like

this, because, and somebody just keep, advised me on time if - if necessary. It's one of those where I'm trying to pay attention, but I don't have an easy accessible clock. But we actually got in the Syracuse University got an official accessibility complaint, and filed against us. And what this means is is that a, we know that it was someone internal, so student or employee, filed a federal complaint that said our websites are not accessible. And what this meant is, is that we had to do a comprehensive audit and remediation of all of our web content. This is university level as well as, you know, the library as well. So the library was just part of the complaint in that it was part of the university. But think about what all your web content is for a library. You have your website, you have all your discovery systems, you have your Lib Guides, you probably have a bunch of repositories, special collections, open research, things like that. And then you probably have way too many Word, PowerPoint and PDF files. This is a lot of work. And in the course of two months, we actually remediated a ton. I held a total 41 plus total open lab hours for accessibility trainings and consultations with our library staff. Pretty much every librarian who produce something that went online, had meetings with me. Clean up led to hundreds of documents being remediated or removed. We actually ended up removing a lot of documents, we had the problem of each person, instead of just pointing to the same say citation guide, it turns out that people were making their own copies, and we had like 50 copies of a document floating around. Much better to link to a common one. We also had to completely redesign two of our major archives. Pan Am 103, which is about the Lockerbie bombing, and SURFACE which is our open research repository. And I just have to say that no single person could have done all this. It's one of the things I'd like to talk about is that accessibility is not something you can delegate to one person in a library. I will say though, that at the time, our web librarian, Pam Thomas, was a godsend. I would not have been able to have survived my first few months on the job doing all this without her help. She's a great colleague. So what is the future of accessibility in libraries? You know, and by the way, I want to say accessibility, I mean, disability access, is one of the problems we have in libraries is that access accessibility, are terms that are used in different ways. There are many times I have gone to talk where I'm like, oh, accessibility. No, this is interesting, but not what I was thinking. I fear a few people have had to sit through my talks like that, too. So it's only fair. So in order to talk about this, and I can actually share a copy of this paper if people are interested, I found this great paper a few months ago, as part of taking my MLIS classes, The invisible client: Meeting the needs of persons with learning disabilities by Darlene Weingand. Now, this is really cool, because my background is of course, learning disabilities, particularly reading disabilities. And this was specifically about libraries. But there's sort of a hidden joke here, when I say this is a great paper. It covers a wide array of topics. It's an awesome paper, talks about the user population, provides examples of current library efforts going on, actually distinguish between children and adults, which is a huge factor in giving support to people with dyslexia, talked about current and new technologies, and even admitted that the paper couldn't cover everything. And there were existing issues for the library to address as a community. Again, though, I told you there was a punch line. This is the citation. It's from 1990. It's an amazing paper for the time. Thing is though, I could probably take that paper, update just a few of the technical references and the legal citations, and still publish it. Because a lot of our work is exactly the same. I mean, it's, I read papers like this on a regular basis. And I've started to note that I've been reading the same papers, a lot of times that our accessibility advocacy, we need to start moving beyond just some of the basic work. So again, like we do a lot on teaching the basics, and you have to teach the basics, because that's the only way you get new people involved in it. But we need to actually start thinking about engaging in more efforts at all

levels of accessibility. So, and of course, I'm not saying that we should stop all the webinars, tutorials, workshops, presentations that teach the basics of the accessibility. I mentioned Cod4Lib 2019, which, there, that's a link to the, to the conference site there, all the talk, talks are available with videos, which will hopefully be captioned soon. And most of the presenters actually shared their slides on a repository. And we had actually quite a few talks about accessibility. Some quite at the basic level, and it was great. But and we definitely still need to have such trainings. But the problem is though, we need to start, as we keep building up people who can engage in the fight for better library accessibility, we need to actually engage in battle. And at this point, I want to apologize for using war metaphors a lot. But this is a topic I'm passionate about. And sometimes it's hard to find better words. I tried to not and you know, go into violent metaphors, but it does happen. But here's the thing, we need to understand why doing this accessibility work can be so challenging. Stephanie mentioned that it's often viewed that the level of expertise just isn't there as much. And that is true. I mean, I can get into why most computer science or programming classes give very short talk about accessibility. Web design classes might talk about putting in alt text, it'll be barely 10 minutes in a multi-hour course. So there are a lot of problems there. But there's actually some challenges from the overall view, from the overall just what accessibility means and entails. And it's important for us to take these larger views of this. It's the stuff that comes from social science, from disability studies, and we should all be aware of this. So the first thing is accessibility is big. So let's just consider the library and all the parts that need to be accessible. So we have our physical spaces, we have our people, we need to make sure people can access things. We have all of our holdings, both digital and physical, that's going to be an issue there. We have our technology, some of which is electronic, some of which is you know, more old fashioned. Now let's actually start refining those areas. You know, I'm building a taxonomy here. Physical spaces, we have entrances, we have our stacks, we have our bathrooms. Here's a sad point of admittance here. One of the first things I learned from a particular student who is now my intern, Ellen, she's an MLIS student, and she is blind. She's actually in the room next to me, and she just heard me mentioning her name. She pointed out to me that the Braille sign on our women's restroom does not say women. Yeah, it says something like WO 107. Which we can't figure out why it says that? That sign is probably been there for 30 plus years, and I'm still working hard on trying to get somewhere to replace it. So it can be very important at times to, you know, pay attention to what might or might not be going wrong. Plus also it ends up being very awkward to go around and stare at bathroom Braille signs for a day. People tend to report the strange person who just stares at bathroom doors. That was me. So when we talked about our people we need to distinct, we need to make sure that we talk about both our patrons, but also our staff. We do, if we are not supportive of workers with disabilities, we're not going to be supportive of patrons with disability. Holdings, I already mentioned physical and electronic. And technology, we have hardware, we have software that is sometimes helping grow, home grown, some of it is our vendor applications. But that's all big. And this is a, and there's so many, you can keep building up this framework and see just how many working parts are underneath. And there's so many stakeholders to work, with both internal and external to libraries. And each part has different challenges to address and it's easy to be overwhelmed. And oops, we forgot to even mentioned accessibility and services, policies, events, and probably a lot more aspects. So accessibility is big. And that's a challenge. So library accessibility requires the whole library to take action. Disability is also diverse. I mean, we have to break down disability by you know, the three types mobility, sensory, cognitive, and each one has a gamut of strengths and difficulties. What does it

mean for something to be truly accessible? One of the comments is made, it's like should blind people be able to drive cars? Honestly, eventually, with automatic vehicles that might actually be possible. But it's just some of those questions that come up. Must everything work for everyone? Can you provide an alternative accommodation and still be fair? There are reasons why we talk about reasonable accommodations. Again too, we also have the challenge of the carrot versus the stick. So I've been working in this space for about 15 years now. I can tell you, you know, people love the carrot method, they say it's like put a little treat out there and lead people to what you want. You know, and people agreed to this. Accessibility is a good thing. I have never had anyone tell me that accessibility is not a good thing. The problem is, though, they only, they say that and agree to it, but they don't make, take the action to make things accessible. So what do we do? We have to go to punishment, we start with the lawsuits. And the lawsuits cause action to happen. But what happens is, so you get all those carrot lovers to go, well, why are you using the stick? Why don't you just try to convince us that accessibility is good? And these are literally the same people that you've had the conversation with multiple times over the years, you know. The stick gets follow through, but people complain about it. So we're kind of in a rut in how to get people to make the changes. And then there are a lot of accessibility myths out there to be aware of. And when these include if a product is inaccessible, we can't ever use it. No. Reasonable accommodations suffice. And some exceptions do exist. One of the examples I used to give a lot was, it's unrealistic to expect a person with cerebral palsy right now, so lots of difficulties with fine motor control, to be a neurosurgeon, which requires some of the sharpest surgery skills out there. And I got challenged by this one time by a parent of a child with cerebral palsy. And he pointed, and his challenge was great. He pointed out that I'm a technologist, why can't I eventually build the tools to allow anyone with cerebral palsy to be a neurosurgeon? So, and I have to accept he was extremely right. What it comes down to is like right now we might not have the ability to totally accommodate something. But we might in the future. So we have to consider that. And but we have to also realize what are the realities nowadays. And also, I like to, one response I've given to this was, when should we start burning our books? At one point, there were questions about turning off various library, online library services until we could get them fixed, which meant like remediating tens of thousands or hundreds of thousands of, of complex or long PDFs. To which my response was, when do we start burning our physical books, because those aren't accessible to the blind. And, honestly, this is one way you can actually surprise a lot of people is to, for them to hear a librarian talk about burning books. And the reality is, it's like, if we are truly want everything to be 100% accessible, we can't have physical books. And technically, you know, I can actually make arguments that a lot of ebooks are still very inaccessible, even with added features. Also, there's a big one too, accessibility standards are objective and unbiased. No, well, okay, well, you know, 2.0 blah, blah, blah, Section 508, they are all based on lab settings and or strict controls. One good example is color contrast for text. Those assumed, you know, regular fonts. But lately, we've had the designer trend of liking those ultra thin fonts, which frankly, I can never see myself. And contrast needs to be a lot higher for me to be able to see those fonts. It's one of those where that's not accounted for in there. And also humans and usage context vary, you know. We like to think that oh, color blindness is just red/green normal, but there's huge complications of it. There's the sex link version, they're issues with chromosomes 5 and 9, or 8. I can't quite remember which one. Things are complex. And WCAG, you can actually also complain, overwhelmingly addresses visual issues in it. It doesn't talk much about supporting hearing, which is, kind of makes sense because it is, you know, the web is more of a visual medium, but also has very little to say about cognitive disability. And

cognitive disability has such a wide range. How do you handle someone with dyslexia versus someone who has extreme short term memory issues? Or someone with dementia? Can we absolutely consider all those people at the same time? If we can, I'm willing to see it, and I would love for it to happen. But, again, I don't know if that's something we have right now. So with the challenges in mind, what about the future of disability access and libraries? I'm finally going to get to my big question. So I'm going to be largely talking about services, technologies, and holdings. But before this, I want to talk just briefly about buildings and people. So first of all, library buildings are, you know, if we have brand new buildings, they should of course meet the ADA requirements. I mean, it was passed 29 years ago. There is no excuse for new buildings to lack ramps, motorized doors, accessible restrooms, elevators, and all that. And, but it doesn't happen on its own. You need to involve disabled patrons and staff in the building design reviews from the start. And remember too, the ADA is also a guideline. It is the guideline that is set at the minimum. Yeah. It says for the accessible bathroom it should be, you know, x inches wide, sorry, I don't have the, you know, go for an additional five inches if you can, that's just more room. Plus, also, again, those standards were written 29 years ago. People's body shapes have changed, but also that the technology has changed. There are way more new styles of wheelchairs out there to better accommodate different needs. Plus, also to again, involving people who care about accessibility early on will address a lot of some of the most aggravating little things that happen, particularly with academic buildings like libraries. You walk in the door, it's a perfect entrance. And then all of a sudden, you see two little steps, just stepping up into the building, you know, just like 10 feet in. Do you want to know why they do that? That's a, this call to classical times. And it's supposed to be stepping up into knowledge. Two little steps that end up breaking accessibility. So all the people who can't handle steps have to go to the side to not step up into knowledge. Very, very frustrating. If you have old buildings, you can learn to make any existing buildings better. But you need to ask the right people, you know. Do I have to, have people do accessibility reviews of key location, kind of blind patron navigate from the entrance of the front desk? I have to thank Ellen and my intern as well for pointing out that is still an existing issue. Are the stacks wide enough to accommodate wheelchairs? Is the modular furniture always left in a chaotic mess? That can be horrendous if you're, if you have a limited vision to navigate through. Or if you're in a wheelchair. Do your Braille signs say what you hope they say? As I've already explained. And learn from your patrons. One of the big things that I did recently, and I can't believe this was only barely a month and a half ago, I held a staff training. So the number one training my co-workers wanted in terms of diversity and inclusion was how to better service patrons with disabilities. And I could have given a talk where I just went up there and just said, what was good practice, but I really wanted my staff to learn from the actual lived experiences of, of our patrons with disabilities. So I had a panel of I believe six individuals, a variety of disabilities, it was the most attended training we, we have held since I've been here. The audience and some of the panelists stayed late for more discussion. And my inbox was flooded with ideas generated, that I'm still wading through to get a lot of them implemented. It was amazing. And that's the way you start change where you get the people who can change one little thing in the building. So again, learn from your patrons. But again, staff or people too. We cannot ignore them, do not neglect them when considering designing accommodation policies. And guess what, it's a legal requirement. If you have a legally eligible employee who has a disability accommodation need, you have to follow it. And you know, purchasing furniture is another thing, you know. Adjustable furniture has become really great. Software too. But most importantly, work-life balance and self-care are so important. And that is one of the things if you

follow the discussions in library land, self-care, work-life balance, emotional labor, those are all big things we talk about. And also I just want to point out LIS Mental Health Week, which was a Twitter event was February 18 to the 24th. I recommend people looking through that, and just putting that out there. What about the future? I mean, one, quite simply, libraries should be on guard. They're going to be more lawsuits, complaints, and policy changes about accessibility. We're seeing that now. And how you fare will depend on how you start acting now. So in terms of complaints and lawsuits, although our current federal administration has different opinions on people with disabilities and social rights and all that, the Offices of Civil Rights are increasing the number of complaints they get. What is changes that instead of going through a full complaint, they give you time to do an audit and show improvement. So you might still have to do this, so you don't get the full complaint, but you're put in the spotlight for a brief amount of time. And there are also more legal gains outside of those cases. So just a month ago, there was a recent case against the Domino's phone app being inaccessible. Literally does meant that pizza, the accessibility of pizza is a legal right, which frankly, I have to be 100% behind. And many institutions have responded to these complaints by adopting comprehensive accessibility policies regarding ICD purchasing. And SU is one of those. We went into effect a little over a year ago on January 1, 2018. All new purchases, purchases much meet, must meet WCAG 2.X, it updates, depending on when it gets updated in the two point series. Renewals also have to do this. Services associated with technologies and course materials must be accessible. This is a big change and we're still working on it. Our IT purchases now for the libraries have added requirements for testing. We now actually have faculty asking the libraries to help in requiring accessible, accessible materials for the classes. New services needed provide a combination for common tasks like retrieving books from the shelves, interlibrary loan. And the heart reality is that so many vendor products, databases, journals are inaccessible. I'm going to be looking at that paper Stephanie cited. So what do we do? Well, I hate to say this, but we'll use that horrible library term, be resilient. We'll make do with what we have. One, you can do some simple things like shelf retrieval services. A patron can request that a library member fetch an item from the library shelves at any time. We actually had this beforehand, because, I will say that one of our library buildings is inherently physically inaccessible. But it's exempted for historical reason. We have a Carnegie library building, which is tomorrow to best of my knowledge, the only Carnegie library building and an, at a university that still acts as a library. And the problem is, our shelves are too tight together. But we can't move those shelves, they are literally load bearing shelves, they keep the ceilings up. We will have to complete remodel the entire building pretty much probably tear down and recreate it. That's not gonna happen anytime soon. So we had this, you know, request. I'm just going to check the chat here real quick. Some people know about these issues. But there is a problem with the shelf retrieval services. You know, we've had patrons say it's not the same as getting to browse the shelf when looking for a specific title. Virtual browsing and our catalog just is not sufficient. We also have an alternate formatting service. And first of all, I have to thank Ron Figueroa and Stephanie Helsher. Who are people, well, Stephanie has moved on to another university. From our interlibrary loan setup, the service where any patron who is registered as having a print disability, we have to do registration for legal purposes, purposes, can request for free any SU Library owned material or ILL item to be made into an electronic remediated form that meets their accessibility needs. And this program is pretty unique from as far as we know, we know of one at UC Berkeley, which has been quite helpful in us implementing this, and also an amazing service from the Ontario academic libraries, which is super, super cool. I mean, they actually, this collection of, coalition of libraries, anytime they

remediate an article, it goes into a central repository, that any student from those universities can, can access if they're registered with disability services. It's pretty much sharing of all that work. Now also things with like physical course reserves, we're starting to actually be proactive and remediating physical items, place and course reserves just in case students need accessible versions. But that's still leads to some issues with check out of remediated versions. How do we, do we limit it to only the people who generally need it. And that means invading some patron privacy. We have different checkout duration due to, to account for disability. And then if you're sticking things on like USB keys, or, you know, do we have to be worried about copying. And again too, our reformatting, service, remediation right now, we don't have the power to do it in house. So we're largely able to do this through third party vendors. So not only does that add delays, because we're adding that on to the ILL time. It's a funding issue that I can say it's not currently sustainable. Our dean is great in promoting it, and wanting that. But it is something that I am very concerned about. And again too, every time we get into this, there are a lot of discussions of copyright and fair use. So this is actually a fascinating topic for library folks to get into particularly with accessibility. So here's, so here's my basic understanding of it. Copyright law, in a nutshell. Fair used for educational purposes is complicated, and not always handled properly at universities. But it's generally you know, there. Now, the right to modification of material is often forbidden, you can't change it. Except in the United States, the Chafee Amendment allows you to do modifications for an individual's specific accessiblity needs. You get to even strip away the digital rights management, which is so much fun when you get to actually do that for a legitimate reason. Not saying I've ever done it for illegitimate reason. Now, the way that our issue, accessibility policy, policies is right now, all course materials should be accessible. But how does copyright and fair use allow for this? Is remediation and modification, because when we say this, we're saying that the materials we present to students all students have been remediated as much as necessary. So is remediation really a modification? I mean, you can answer some things like, okay, indicating a set of words is a heading, that's changing metadata, and you're not really changing anything visual, but you are changing the file at some level. But if you're taking say, an image and giving it alt text, you're technically adding it, you're using your interpretation on it and adding it to the document, is that a modification? And here's the thing, there is no legal case law existing for this. So it's completely a gray area. And if anyone has, can counter me, that would be great to hear, because I'm still trying to figure it out. Now it gets even more complicated. So there's Blackboard, the content management system, has created this cool software exception called Ally. And what it does, is it'll, any file that instructor uploads into the system, gets an automatic accessibility evaluation, it's pretty good. I mean, it's what you expect from automation. And it can do some automated fixes to improve accessibility, such as converting the file to other formats like MP3. Now, I'll tell you what students love the MP3 conversion, because they all want to just be able to listen to the boring articles they're expected to read. But if you think about this, though, this system has been active at SU for a year. You know, the accessibility format reporting is helping some of the faculty and all that but really, are we violating fair use and copyright by having Ally installed? This is a question that I will say that some of my colleagues at the university do not like it when I bring up. It's an open dilemma we're trying to work out. And my take is, all of our course materials are behind authentication, so it is somewhat secure. So we have that, like in our favor. Two, copying and distribution isn't prevented. So that's something not in our favor. And we need to include a rights statement in Ally modified materials similar to Bookshare, I'll explain what Bookshare is in a minute. And the thing is, though, like we need to just come up with a good faith position to say we were acting in

good rights and be ready to be part of a legal challenge that might very much change the notion of fair use when it regards accessibility and education. So there's a lot of open questions here. You know, can all libraries do the alternate formatting service? What about expertise in technology? I mean, I would love to help everyone. But I'm not sure if the world really needs more Kates out there. It's... I'm against cloning Kates. So Bookshare. Bookshare is this amazing nonprofit that's existed for many years now. And what they did is they negotiated with a bunch of publishers to get the rights to, to keep a repository of remediated material, popular readings, fiction, K-12 textbooks, magazines. Really helpful for K-12. Not as helpful for higher education, because they don't have like academic journals or things like that. And it's only open to people with a demonstrated proof of a print disability. And there's technically Attention Deficit Disorders are not eligible, which is a big, big point of contention. But the cool thing is though, is that you know, it's a central source for people who need an accessible version of print can usually find something there. And now, I will admit, they, their catalog could really use some librarianship, they are horrible about keeping various editions distinct. But you know, that's just the quibble there. Could libraries do this as well? Well, if you ask a lot of copyright librarians right away, they go, no, no, no. They're scared at the idea. They think it's a great idea, but they see all the legal challenges. Now, what's really coming down to is we're doing, universities are doing a ton of redundant remediation efforts. You think about it, practically tons of classes, you know, the same class, you know, just different title, you know, code number and all that different universities are often using the same articles. We need to share these efforts while respecting rights in some way. And, you know, it's an interesting idea, and some are trying and succeeding. I mentioned the Council of Ontario of Ontario Universities their accessible content portal is so cool if you do accessibility work, and there's a recent Andrew Mellon Grant for Federating Repositories of Accessible Materials for Higher Education. It's led by John Unsworth from Virginia Commonwealth University and a few others, I'm trying to, I need to reach out to him to know more, so it's cool. And you know, we could think about doing more. What if we, every time we remediated a journal article, made it more accessible, we pushed back to the publishers and said, hey, can you host this version instead, so that everyone can benefit? Great idea. I want to see that happen, or just try working on it. And then there are vendors are a huge issue. I mean, there's no point in building a state-of-the-art inclusive classroom on the third floor of a building with no elevators. It's commonly talked about in accessibility circle. And here's one big issue. Right now we have like the Big 10 Alliance doing accessibility reviews of websites of, you know, various journal websites and all that, and that's great. But then they, they're still a question of, is the content ultimately accessible? Are those PDFs are those HTML files that lead to the actual journal articles, are those accessible? It's a big issue. And, you know, eventually I do want vendors to work on remediating that. We still need to make sure their websites are accessible. And my biggest thing that I just, you know, Stephanie talked about this. We are in a stranglehold on a lot of people outside of libraries do not understand that. And so a lot of us here do. And so it's question of how can we pressure them to improve. And so this is just my little pontificating on the idea. We know the carrot method doesn't really work. The stick method involves a lot of time, money and lawyers. So maybe, if we look at this standard little like image of the stick, the mule and the carrot, how about make the library start being a stubborn mule? Yeah, that's the word I'm using, not the other word. So let's hold vendors to the passage of time. So WCAG 1.0, the first web accessibility guidelines, came out almost 20 years ago. There are a lot of basic accessibility of that bits our vendors should have learned by now. So for example, using HTML headings, h1, h2, h3, should be rote by now, everyone should do it correctly. Of course, they do

don't. So let's actually just start taking tiny little things like that and say, hey, you know, you've had 20 years to make your headings proper. If you, if our, if your sites don't meet that, all of us libraries are going to say, we will demand a 5% reduction in our licensing fees when it comes time to renewal. Not, and I'm talking about actually starting to build teeth into the licensing that says we must meet accessibility standards. And I believe in doing this by the death by 1000 cuts, in that we take the idea and say, instead of pressuring them to fix everything at once, to start making them hurt a little. And I figured they'll get annoyed enough that they'll just defeat my strategy and go, hi, you can't do this to us next year. We made everything accessible. I'm like, well played, well played. It looks like you defeated me this time. I will get you again someday. Someday, gadget! So yeah, it's 1000 cuts now. So kind of just want to wrap up here, with the final thing of talking about we need a library community for accessibility advocacy. And this involves things of sharing accessibility reviews, joining in efforts to demand support fixes. Because when it comes down to with massive vendor systems like Summon and Primo, that the way that big fixes get, you know, dealt with is if enough people, you know, put in support requests for them. So I have seen accessibility requests get turned down because we're the only institution making such a request. But if 20 institutions demand it, if all the institutions demand it, that's something that can make a huge change. And again, too, I said, like those things is like, I'm not the expert on fair use and copyright. But I know a lot about the accessibility laws. So maybe we can figure out things there. So if you're interested, this is fully starting up. It's, that's actually a link to a current discussion list that has very little traffic right now, because I can't believe it's only been a month since midwinter, but it's been a busy month. I also had Code4Lib in between there. Never do two big conferences three weeks, you know, three weeks apart, and then I did this. So that's pretty much everything. I mean, there are a lot of other things we could discuss. I mean, this is the little tidbit I love telling people about. The PDF standard for accessibility has no support for footnotes at all. None. Which most librarians just gawk at and go, but how do we remediate papers that have tons of footnotes? And the answer, according to the web, to the accessibility folks are, well, why do you need footnotes? And that's not really helpful. We have open educational materials, which, frankly, if I, every time I see an OER that has inaccessible material in it, I typically throw something at a wall. And then we have other issues about special collections. And really, how do you take a medieval manuscript or handwritten letters from the 16th century, and make them accessible without losing information that a scholar might be interested in. So I just like to end with I've been in library work for a little over four years now, it's kind of hard to believe it's been that much. But the first talk I ever gave was at the Code4Lib 2015 in Portland, Oregon. This was my first library talk. And this is how I started it. Web accessibility is important. If you disagree, you're wrong. So I have a few minutes here for questions and all. And I'm also happy to just co- have, you know, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, you know, like, have Stephanie, you know, join in as well. I'm going to stop sharing. Do I need a pass on anything?

>> No, I think, we're... Can you hear me?

>> Yep.

>> Wonderful. Thank you so much for speaking with us. What time would you like to leave? I know that Stephanie has to leave at four.

>> Four is probably good for me as well.

>> Okay, so maybe we'll take a couple of questions from anybody publicly and then have a 15 minute break and come back for 40 minutes of more private conversation, does that sound good? Does anybody from the broader group or online have any questions before we take a quick break?

>> I'll also say that if you're a member of ALA, the original version of this talk is actually available on the recorded midwinter, supposedly, I haven't listened to it yet. So...

>> Wonderful. And I know that we saw the a link to that. If you saw that. I did just see from Amelia that she has a question about what kinds of remediation do you find people requesting most frequently?

>> So we offer three levels of remediation in our surface, in our service, and it pretty much comes down to three basic needs. One is where we generally just have to take a document and make sure that a simple reading aloud software will work. So this is not at a level for screenreaders or anything like that. Oh I mean we actually we have one easier level, we just want to make sure we have a good solid scan of it. This is usually for people with low vision who want to use magnifiers. If they're okay not actually having access to the text for select, they just want to be able to actually use a screen magnifier, that's our most basic level, we can usually give that to them in no time. Next is where we have to run OCR over it and embed the text, but we're not doing anything fancy such as, as putting alt text on the images. The final level though is then converting to a fully accessible version where headings, alt text and all that, that tends to take the longest. In terms of our requests? Most of the time, we're kind of hitting that middle level. And I'm not surprised at this because of current statistics do still show that learning disabilities, particularly reading disabilities, are still the most dominant kind of disability seen among undergraduates with disabilities. But we're still ramping up to advertise this more. In terms of faculty usage? We primarily, our main user is a blind faculty member who, I won't say his name explicitly, but he was specifically mentioned in Stephanie's talk, because he's here.

>> Wonderful, thank you. I just unmuted you, Amelia and Kate as well, if you have any things you'd like to add. Another question we just got is, I'm interested in whether you know of any academic libraries that works with the Library of Congress National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped?

>> I will be back real quick, because I just want to grab something off something off the table behind me.

>> Okay. Maybe Kate, you might know the answer to Amelia's questions too, of what ends up reading a lot of software.

>> So that's actually something I've been directly exploring. I'm not sure about academic libraries. But this is actually the Library of Congress's reading boxes, where basically, it's, it's a pretty much actually, the whole idea is that it's actually you can order books, it's just a USB connection in there, the Library of Congress National Services for the Blind and Physically

Handicapped give these out for free. I highly recommend looking on YouTube for the Library of Congress, you know, Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped, they actually have a really cool commercial about this. But what also it's, I've been interested in doing this, I had been in contact with Joe Rothstein, who is one of the head librarians at the Andrew High School Braille and Talking Book Library in New York City. But yeah, I mean, I really don't know if many, of many academic libraries working with them. I do know that disability services at a lot of institutions will work with them. Sometimes if they have students who need access to Braille books or similar.

>> Stephanie, you should be able to unmute yourself if you happen to know the answer to that too. And one more question we had from Amelia was, what kinds of reading aloud software?

>> So the reading aloud software, some people are quite content using whatever is built into their preferred PDF viewer, so it could be Adobe, it's I think it's called Preview on Macs. If someone's using it on a little bit more Read and Write Gold is one of the more popular softwares. It does require a license, but it's available for free at SU. SU has actually a pretty long history with disability advocacy. So fortunately, our IT services are willing to provide a software on a lot of systems, which is good, but sometimes you do have some interesting last mile issues. It's great that we have say, JAWS installed on all of our public machines. But even have the question of how do you log into this if you're blind? You know, how do you log into the system without and then turn on JAWS? Yeah, so it's, it's one of those interesting last mile ones with, there are ways around it, it's a matter of figuring out how to do it easily in a large situation.

>> Yeah, I understand that. Amelia, since everybody seems to be online, I wonder if maybe we could take a condensed break, maybe five minutes, and then we'll leave class early today? Would that work for everybody here? Amelia, does that sound good to you? Okay, so we'll take five minutes now. We're going to stop publicly recording, but we will see both of our guest speakers back. Kate and Stephanie will be back here to answer questions just for the class. So thank you to everybody that joined us online. Thank you again to our guest speakers. We will see you very shortly.