



Book to Action 2021 Case Study

Library: Felipe de Neve Library of the Los Angeles Public Library System

Book to Action 2021 Summary & Impact Reflection

Please summarize your Book to Action 2021 public programming series. Write for an audience that has never heard of your library, your community, or the Book to Action concept. Start by introducing your library and community. Be sure to show how the Book to Action topic and titles met a specific community need or aspiration. Be sure to highlight your community partners, explain significant, innovative, or new models for public programs, and show how this program impacted your community. Limit 2-3 paragraphs.

The Felipe de Neve Branch Library is one of 73 libraries in the City of Los Angeles' Los Angeles Public Library System (LAPL) which serves the largest and most diverse population in the United States. The Felipe de Neve Branch, located in the neighborhood where Koreatown, Rampart Village and Westlake Village districts overlap, is a part of the most densely populated area of Los Angeles. LAPL's Baldwin Hills, Hollywood Regional and Pio Pico Branch Libraries also participated in programming for our LAPL Book to Action series. The convergence of civil unrest catalyzed by George Floyd's murder, Covid-19 pandemic and Anti-Asian xenophobia brought issues of racial inequity and racism to the forefront and revealed the deep divisions in ideology, politics and values along lines of age/generation, ethnicity and religion in our country at large and especially in our diverse neighborhood community. In this part of Los Angeles, Korean Americans are the 2nd largest population group, many living with the legacy of the 1992 L.A. unrest and dealing with Anti-Asian violence during the pandemic. We chose George Takei's *They Called Us Enemy* and Steph Cha's *Your House Will Pay* as the centerpiece books in our Book to Action program series under the theme of Equity to address issues of racism and interminority conflict. Our intention was to engage our community in intergenerational conversations, foster dialogue and create a space for stories of racial inequity, conflict and reconciliation.

All programs were virtual. Our Zoom programs included book club discussions for *They Called Us Enemy* and *Your House Will Pay*. We also had 2 Zine programs on Zoom: The Anti-Racism Zine Workshop with Tracy Park hosted by Angi Brzycki of the Hollywood Regional Library and the Tribute Zine Workshop hosted by Ziba Perez of Baldwin Hills Library to assist and inspire the Koreatown Storytelling Program teens in creating zines as part of their tributes to their elders. We also live-streamed and recorded 3 programs on LAPL's main feed YouTube and Facebook platforms:

- *Your House Will Pay: A Conversation with Author Steph Cha on Race Relations* featured Steph Cha and a panel of native Angeleno leaders from Korean American and African communities, moderated by Sandy Lee Schaupp from the Multiethnic Learning Community of Christian Assembly. The panelists discussed Cha's novel and shared their personal stories, offering different perspectives on the legacy of the Los Angeles 1992 racial unrest

- *They Called Us Enemy: An Intergenerational Conversation on Racial Injustice*, hosted by LAPL's LA MADE series in partnership with the Koreatown Youth and Community Center's Koreatown Storytelling Program (KSP) and the Japanese American National Museum (JANM), featured June Berk, a former WWII incarcerated and JANM volunteer interviewed by Abbi-Hope Jihye Park and Abigail Eun, two Los Angeles-area high school students from KSP. They discussed June Berk's experiences in the context of Takei's graphic novel memoir.

- *Koreatown Storytelling Program Culmination* - An intergenerational, multiethnic, and multilingual program where KSP students discussed oral history in Los Angeles's Koreatown and Garment District communities and

honored their elder interview partners by telling their stories and presenting the tribute zines they'd created.

Pre-pandemic, we would define our community in terms of the people in our physical service area but with the unique situation during quarantine and a pivot to virtual programming, we had to redefine who our community and audience was. At the Felipe de Neve Library, we've generally had low attendance for adult public programs, limited by a lack of dedicated community room and without the benefit of funding from a Friends of the Library group. Although in-person programs are always a better way of connecting, virtual programming allowed us to include participants from all over Los Angeles, California and even out-of-state, expanding our reach beyond the physical neighborhood communities of our branch libraries. It was great being able to give copies of these very timely, popular titles and a great way to get the community engaged. Discussions included topics of racial inequity, Anti-Asian racism, interminority conflict and racial reconciliation. Live-streaming on LAPL's YouTube and Facebook allowed a greater viewership. Having the recordings accessible on the LAPL YouTube channel after the event allowed greater access; the number of viewers for the recordings increased dramatically in comparison to the number of live attendees with a total of 264 live attendees and 2,386 total recording views.

Community Member Quotes

Please enter 1-2 community member quotes from surveys or public comments that may be anonymized and used in future grant applications and program model sharing.

I read, *They Called Us Enemy*, and was very moved by it. I learned some new things about the Japanese American Concentration Center experience and hearing from [June Aochi Berk] the woman who had been in the camps was a timely reminder to continue fighting against injustice. (*They Called Us Enemy*, Intergenerational Conversation, 4/15/21)

Thank you! What a wonderful panel discussion with the author Steph Cha. Each one of them had different perspectives and stories about race relations. But all had the same important message of building bridges, building positive relationships with different cultures by learning from each other, learning each others' history and experiences, making friends and being allies, not just by being co-workers. Thank you very much for this awesome program! (*Your House Will Pay*, A Conversation with Author Steph Cha, 4/22/21)

It was a really interesting talk about Black Americans and Korean Americans and finding empathy and commonalities so that we can work together and get along with each other. Very inspirational and motivational to do the work of building bridges and caring for each other. Thank you!!! (*Your House Will Pay*, A Conversation with Author Steph Cha, 4/22/21)

Impact on Professional Development

Please summarize how participating in the Book to Action 2021 initiative impacted you and your team's professional development. As a result of participating in this program, what skills did you or your team learn? What professional takeaways would you share with others looking to improve community engagement with adults & intergenerational groups?

New skills learned: how to reach out to and partner with community organizations and other LAPL coworkers/team members to create virtual public programs, how to interface between community partners and LAPL programming departments, how to contact authors, guest speakers/presenters, how to coordinate panel discussion programs involving multiple presenters and partnerships. Became better acquainted with functions of Zoom and with Streamyard live-streaming program used by LAPL's digital content team. Pre-pandemic, I had no experience reaching out to a community organization for a public programming partnership. The California

Center for the Book's Adult Services Symposium webinar series at the beginning of the pandemic was helpful in providing a framework to first of all give encouragement to try something new and secondly, to guide our planning and decision making. In particular, something that Monterey Park Librarian Deborah Takahashi Niblick had said about the idea of "libraries as centers of community engagement" stuck with me: "When you embark on these types of projects, you become this hub where people talk to one another and more importantly, you connect people to others..." and she also posed the question "how can we [libraries], our services, benefit this organization that will benefit the community?" (from the webinar Mental Health in the Time of Covid-19 on 4/8/2020, 55:10) When planning the programs and choosing the books for our series, it helped to have this question in mind to guide engagement with community partners and also to think of our role as librarians as being a connector of people to other people, to books and ideas.

Final Words of Advice

What brief bit of advice (1-2 sentences) would you give to library staff members interested in coordinating a Book to Action or similar community engagement series for adults and intergenerational groups in their community?

If you have an idea of a book, a community organization you want to work with or a theme you want to explore, I would encourage you to apply for Book to Action and don't be daunted by lack of experience or by the big mountain of unknowns. You will figure it out as you go along with your library team and your community partners with the guidance and support of Julianna Robbins (who broke the process down into manageable steps) and with the Book to Action community...you can climb that mountain together. That said, I would also add: make sure your Manager is on board or on your Book to Action team because it can be very time consuming (at least it was for me). I was fortunate to have the support of my Manager Cathie Ehle who allowed me to devote much of my time towards Book to Action programming and use my remote working time (due to pandemic closure) to this advantage. It was such a unique and meaningful experience to be able to connect with our often isolated communities in new ways at a time when connecting was so vital and important.

Total # Programs: 7

Total Attendance at Programs: 2,650

Book to Action URL(s): **Book to Action Images:**

Please attach 1-2 images (.jpg or .png files only) that best represent your Book to Action 2021 series

Sample File Name: *BTA 2021 San Leandro Library Image 1.jpg*

Image 1 File Name: They Called Us Enemy flyer.png

Image 1 Caption: They Called Us Enemy: An Intergenerational Conversation on Racial Injustice flyer

Image 2 File Name: Your House Will Pay Flyer.jpeg

Image 2 Caption: Your House Will Pay Livestreamed Conversation with the Author Flyer

Book to Action Program Coordinator Name & Title: Susan Fukushima, Adult Librarian at Felipe de Neve Library, Los Angeles Public Library System

Contact: sfukushima@lapl.org

May others contact you with questions? Yes No

California Center for the Book is a program of the [California Library Association](#), supported in whole or in part by the [U.S. Institute of Museum and Library Services](#) under the provisions of the Library Services and Technology Act, administered in California by the [State Librarian](#).

LAMADE
2020-2021 at the Los Angeles Public Library

A Celebration of Local Artists
and Performers #LAMadeLAPL



They Called Us Enemy: An Intergenerational Conversation on Racial Injustice



Image 1 Caption: They Called Us Enemy: An Intergenerational
Conversation on Racial Injustice flyer

YOUR HOUSE WILL PAY
STEPH CHA

"STEPH CHA HAS TAKEN A DARK MOMENT IN LOS ANGELES'S VIOLENT HISTORY AND CRACKED IT WIDE OPEN, CREATING A PRISM OF UNDERSTANDING."
—ATTICA LOCKE

A NOVEL

Steph Cha
Sandy Schaupp
Kevin Blue
Emile Mack



Thursday, May 20 • 6 p.m.

Streamed Live on
YouTube Facebook

Image 2 Caption: Your House Will Pay Livestreamed Conversation with the Author Flyer