

2016

Winning entry for 2016

Caitlin Kullberg
Connecticut College

Follow this and additional works at: <http://digitalcommons.conncoll.edu/libprize>

Recommended Citation

Kullberg, Caitlin, "Winning entry for 2016" (2016). *Library Research Prize*. 2.
<http://digitalcommons.conncoll.edu/libprize/2>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Information Services at Digital Commons @ Connecticut College. It has been accepted for inclusion in Library Research Prize by an authorized administrator of Digital Commons @ Connecticut College. For more information, please contact bpancier@conncoll.edu.

The views expressed in this paper are solely those of the author.

Caitlin Kullberg March 15, 2015

Connecticut College Prize for Undergraduate Library Research: Research Statement

In the spring of 2015 I did a research project in which I analyzed the political implications of the Pura Belpré award for illustration. After some preliminary research, I was encouraged to pursue this research topic by the fact that I could find many sources related to my inquiry, but none which specifically focused on an analysis of this award. When I re-opened my research this semester (Spring 2016) as part of an Independent Study with Professor Rudolph, I decided to expand the range of primary sources under study (by including the award winners for narrative and interviews with award committee members), and consult additional secondary sources to sharpen my analysis.

I used various approaches to find sources for my research. I used relevant sources that I had read for various Connecticut College courses as a starting point. I mined the bibliographies of these sources to find other possible sources to aid my analysis. I used Connecticut College Supersearch and various research databases such as ERIC to find additional resources, making sure to strategically vary my search terms. I consulted with Instruction Design Librarian Jessica McCullough about my research and she proposed contacting award committee members for interviews; her help was also invaluable in drafting an email and questions for the interview requests.

Once I had found sources for my research, various approaches were necessary to acquire said sources. I was able to access many sources electronically through the College's online holdings and subscriptions. Many other sources were print resources available to me locally either through CTW or the library in my hometown. I used Inter-Library Loan to acquire print sources that would not have been as accessible otherwise. I am in the process of securing

multiple interviews with committee members, both through direct email contact, and through networking.

I soon found that I had compiled an overabundance of secondary sources related to my research. Knowing that the quality of sources consulted is far more important than the volume of sources consulted, I have made sure to be strategic about choosing which sources to read closely, which to read selectively, and which to forego reading at all. The primary source books (the award winners) are a priority since they are my topic of analysis. When reading secondary sources, I often focus on the main argument first and determine how relevant it is to my topic of research. If it is relevant, I read closely if the source provides a unique perspective or unique information that I have not already encountered as a part of my research.

Through doing this research, I have learned that inter-disciplinarity is a strength. I believe my work demonstrates a form of rigorous scholarship that would not be possible without putting sources from various fields, such as Hispanic Studies, Education, Linguistics, and Sociology, in dialogue with each other. I also learned the importance of looking far and wide, and being open to finding useful sources of information that you do not expect to find; only then can you be truly responsive to available information in constructing your thesis.