“One of the most subversive institutions in the United States is the public library.”

Bell Hooks
THE PEOPLE’S LIBRARY
PUBLIC ART AS COMMUNITY ACTION
“Education is a site for creating collectively and developing human and social potential, not simply acquiring or depositing information.”

Tania Bruguera
RICHMOND
PUBLIC LIBRARY

This Book Was
 Authored by

Mayzie

Thomas-Garber
Hypnotism

As an undergraduate I joined the Queen's University Air Squadron. I wanted to learn to fly. One evening in the squadron Mess a senior cadet said he was able to hypnotise anyone.

He asked for volunteers. One of my friends stepped forward. The hypnotist told my friend, Tom, to lie on his back, put a blindfold on and lie quietly. The hypnotist went into his work. Tom told he was now hypnotised.

He said, "I am going to tell you to lift your right leg. Resist my command and keep your heels on the ground." He then said, "I command you to lift your right leg." and his right leg shot up. I stepped forward to show them up!

We went through the same performance. When I was commanded to lift my right leg I decided to lift my left leg. For this I got a pitcher of water poured down my trousers leg. I had been set up!
From simple gesture to

- Basic exercise into statewide funded public art
- Public space becomes the blank canvas for new forms of interaction
- **Permanent collection**, participants more willing to put time, effort, and emotion into their writing
- How does it evolve? When do you let go?
- How do these projects foster relationships in the community that go well beyond the project?
A People’s Librarian’s different responsibilities include, but are not limited to:

- Learning the skills needed to produce the books (papermaking, bookbinding, silk-screening).
- Thinking critically about the project’s socio-political context, and how these factors can be incorporated, challenged, and addressed throughout the project.
- Working together to determine which community, theme, or topic to engage with during the semester.
- Making connections and reaching out to corresponding community partners/institutions to design and schedule workshops.
- Gathering resources, materials, and venues needed to carry out the project.
- Workshops are free and open to anyone, so it’s important to develop and use language that is inclusive and inspiring, while not reductive, that allows participants to understand the project’s practical, social, and political possibilities.
- Being a patient, understanding, and engaging teacher.
- Learning the social and civic skills necessary to develop meaningful and equitable community partnerships.
- Reflecting on the experiences throughout the semester to make suggestions for future People’s Librarians.
The People’s Librarians

- Wanting the project to become a site for alternative education as well as alternative histories
  - high school students work with college students to help facilitate the project for a semester
  - choose a theme/community to collaborate with and bring their histories into the collection
    - allows for the PL collection to move in ways that are out of our control
- Learn the creative skills necessary to produce the books
  - papermaking, bookbinding, silk screening
- AND the pedagogical and community organizing skills necessary to facilitate the project
  - leading workshops
  - working with diverse publics
  - writing letters to community partners
    - learning about the importance and power of language
Anita Evans

John Dooley

My grandma
Grandpa
Mom
Mom
Dad and all
Anonymous

Contributes to the cast of Bay Emma
I love to learn
Thanks for your time and interest!

Our Bookmobile :) 

More info at:
www.the-peoples-library.com