



Between the Lines

WITH VICTORIA BRUNER

For our February issue, we had the pleasure of having a brief Q&A session with Victoria Bruner via Zoom. Victoria serves as a Library Services Specialist in the Access Services Department of the HSU Library. She shared everything from her passion for music to some of her favorite workshops offered through the Library.

What was your dream job when you were in elementary school?

Well, I wanted to be a rock star. So funny. That's all I could think about back then. I got into guitar for a bit, acoustic guitar. But yeah, I never did anything huge other than just loved it.

Did you have any big inspirations that made you want to be a rock star?

David Bowie.

Has there been a concert that you've gone to that just blew you away?

I got to see this artist named Lingua Ignota, who has a lot of music that talks very directly to abuse and violence in domestic relationships and things like that. It's just very heavy and honest and open, and it's really crazy to be in a space with a lot of folks who are just feeling that same energy. Music is just super eye-opening.



Staff Spotlight February Feature, Victoria Bruner



Where did you work before coming to HSU?

I worked at a neonatal intensive care unit. So, I was born there and then I still kept in contact with some of the nurses. I helped stock nursing stations with equipment, medicine, and talked to a lot of the families [...] and it was just amazing to share space with folks who are so dedicated to [...] seeing these little tiny humans grow up.

Tell us about your position at the Library. What do you do and why is it important to you?

I work at Access Services on a team with some amazing folks who are super driven to support students. We design workshops and work to get materials internationally for folks. So there's a lot of effort on making students comfortable and meeting them where they're at. I also work with supporting events and assisting with our course material program. That's like helping with purchasing e-books, physical textbooks and things like that. A large barrier for students in succeeding in college is buying textbooks, just because they're very, very expensive -- or can be.

What have been a couple of your favorite workshops that you've hosted?

Cheryl Connor in the Library used to do this workshop called Rock'n HSU, where folks met and painted rocks. They did 500 or so rocks over one summer[...] I've also been to video editing workshops from my colleagues, like Tim Miller, which are really crazy and fun. There are learning outcomes, but there's also a lot of space to be messy and make mistakes.



Victoria with Tim Miller, Digital Media and Learning Librarian (far left)

What advice would you give to yourself as a college freshman?

I think the advice I give myself is something that I wouldn't necessarily know how to use because I didn't talk a lot my first two years here [...] I would probably tell myself to spend a bit more time being verbal about the introspection...You know when you're in college, you're here to learn about "stuff," right? Like also learn about yourself, girl. That kind of thing. Like learning the strength of your voice.



What is an experience that you've had that's changed you?

Well, I worked at this place called 211 Humboldt when I was doing my internship work through the undergrad program in Social Work. You get to do a year of working with a community partner through the campus, and 211 was a hotline essentially. It was interesting, and maybe that's not the right word, just to be in a space and then have somebody call in and it could be a horrible day for them. They could be looking for childcare, or safe and sober housing, or OhSnap! -- really any resources. Just the spectrum of human existence and then coping [...] it shifted how I related with folks.

Is there anything else that you'd like to share with us?

Well, the role that the Library's had has been super significant in my professional growth and development. The folks in [these] photos I consider to be my mentors in the Library...Like Kimberly Stelter, she works with first year students and she's super driven to finding equitable resources for students.

Having that culture of candor around has been so healing. I feel so grateful to work at the Library. Our Dean, Cyril Oberlander, is so innovative and he does this iterative project work. So I've learned a lot from him in that it doesn't have to be the full working masterpiece the first time something rolls out. It can be tweaked again. That's where you work in the feedback from others. There's just so much creativity and imagination at the library, and the work I do benefits a lot from that teamwork and collaboration.

One might mistakenly see librarians as part of a backdrop of essential educational services. However, if you can tap into the thoughts shared by our February feature, Victoria Bruner, between the lines lies a person of depth and experience. Thank you, Victoria, for sharing your story!



Victoria Bruner with Sarah Fay Philips (left)