



Center for the Study of Information and Religion

2014 Conference on Information and Religion
Paper / Poster Proposal

All proposals must be submitted on this form and emailed as an attachment to csir@kent.edu. Incomplete forms will not be considered.

Form with fields: Last Name of Primary Author (Harper), First Name of Primary Author (Meghan), College, University or Other Affiliation (Kent State University), Professional Title (Associate Professor), City, State, Country (Kent, Ohio USA), Phone Number (330-672-5849), Email Address (Sharper1@kent.edu), Preferred Format (Paper checked, Poster unchecked). Includes a note about selection committee.

Note: The "Primary Author" will be main contact for this proposal and will be responsible for sharing information with additional authors. Please use the spaces at the end of this form to indicate additional authors, if appropriate.

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# Proposal

<b>Title of Presentation</b>
Confronting Tragedy: Explaining the Unimaginable, and Unthinkable through Picture Books
<b>Presentation Summary (approx. 100 words)</b>
Children's picture books have long been viewed as having the potential to explain difficult topics to children and help them cope with challenging events they may face. Can picture books affect the perception of young people have of horrific events? Can these same books be used for the purpose of bibliotherapy to help children cope with those events that even adults find unimaginable, terrifying and unthinkable! This study investigates the potential discourses or themes that resonate and emerge in picture books following tragic events.
<b>Research Problem and Research Methods (approx. 250 words)</b>
The research methodology will include a content analysis of selected books published following tragic events. Using a grounded theory approach, emergent, persistent and common themes will be identified. Despite the popularity and availability of recommended lists of titles to use with children for the purpose of bibliotherapy, few studies, if any, have addressed the use of picture books to explain horrific events. Additionally, few studies if any, have identified common discourse opportunities or emergent themes of the books addressing tragic events.
<b>Anticipated Results and Significance to Research at the Intersection of Religion and Information (approx. 250 words)</b>
It is anticipated the results of this research will illuminate the potential of picture books to foster understanding and provide context of the event for young people. The analysis will be used as a way to understand what discourses are available to the readers both child and adult following a tragic event. Additionally, this research may facilitate the development of suggested activities for adults who may use these picture books in addition to other titles that address challenging topics.
<b>Statement of Author's Credentials (approx. 100 words)</b>
[Explain why the primary author is qualified to address this subject.]  Dr. Harper serves as the Coordinator of the School Library program and currently teaches three courses in the area of Youth Services in the School of Library and Information Science. Her research areas include school library administration and evaluation, and she is author of <i>Reference Sources and Services for Youth</i> (Neal-Schuman, 2011) and <i>Helping Those Who Hurt Reference Guide</i> (Church and Synagogue Library Association, 2013) She has been an invited speaker at numerous state, national, and international conferences including the Annual Conference of the Church and Synagogue Library Association (2009, 2014) Dr. Harper is co-director of the Virginia Hamilton Multicultural Literature Conference.

**Statement of Intent**

By submitting this proposal, I indicate my intention to deliver my presentation at the 2014 Conference on Information and Religion if selected. *(Primary author should sign and date below.)*

S. Meghan Harper	1/15/2014
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Signature *(may be typed)*

Date

**Please provide information on additional authors/presenters in the boxes below.**

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