

What's There to Say About Those Little Libraries?

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This project explores the phenomenon of mobilizing communities to read through pop-up libraries, specifically Little Free Libraries. These birdhouse-like "take a book, leave a book" systems have the capability of eradicating book deserts (which lack reading resources). However, there may be disparities where these libraries are built.

This project analyzes the written messages concerning Little Free Libraries to better understand how the movement is described to the public and how its importance, benefits, and challenges are discussed. A case study approach investigating three Midwestern locations uses thematic analysis to discern codes from unobtrusive data. Additionally, interviews with key informants with various connections to the movement provide insight into how pop-up libraries are advertised near them. Themes, including sense of community and literacy development, indicate that many positives are relayed to the public. Unfortunately, these benefits are not necessarily tied to the actual installment of libraries in book deserts.