
ML3 Newsletter #2 - Jan 2025

Welcome!

It has been a while since we have updated you on the progress of our exciting national initiative **ML3: Librarians as Leaders for Media Literacy**. This newsletter will describe the work we have been doing since last spring and our plans for 2025. If you want an introduction to the history of ML3, [Constructivist Media Decoding \(CMD\)](#), and our PD offerings for school librarians, please see [ML3 Newsletter #1](#).

We are most of the way through our 2-year planning grant with [IMLS](#) focusing on how to effectively scale our ML3 work (which started in New York State in 2021) to all 50 states. This has been a partnership between [Project Look Sharp](#) and [AASL](#) in collaboration with [NAMLE](#). We want to acknowledge the essential support for ML3 that has been provided by AASL's executive Director, **Sylvia Norton**, and NAMLE's Executive Director, **Michelle Ciulla Lipkin** – both of whom will be moving on from their positions this spring. We hope to continue to tap into their extraordinary wisdom and advice moving forward.

We are pleased to announce that we have been asked by IMLS to submit a full **Implementation Grant proposal** (due March 10) for ML3. If awarded, we will scale up our work to give K-12 school librarians and preservice faculty nationwide the resources and professional development to integrate student-centered, curriculum-driven, inquiry-based media analysis - [Constructivist Media Decoding \(CMD\)](#) - throughout their curriculum and instruction. This will give us the resources to expand our Online and Hybrid courses, *Empowering All Students Through Media Decoding*, to more



expand our online and hybrid courses, *Empowering All Students Through Media Decoding*, to more states and to under-resourced communities through the growth of ML3 trained school librarian facilitators.



Online Course: *Empowering All Students Through Media Decoding*

2 live Zoom sessions with the creators of CMD

4 Self-Paced Modules:

- The basics of *Constructivist Media Decoding*
- Create your own *CMD Activity Plan*
- Prepare & teach a media decoding activity
- Teach challenging issues through media decoding

Reflecting with your **colleagues** about this work

Optional individual **coaching session**

CMD Badge & documentation – 15 PD hours

Recent PD

Just this fall/winter we completed a series of very successful 9-14 week Online CMD Courses for school librarians, and we are in the process of finalizing a summary report on the evaluations for those courses. Our Rhode Island course was facilitated by ML3 trained school librarian Wendy Gustavel, who did a terrific job coaching her Ocean State colleagues including in-person practice decoding sessions. Our Pennsylvania course, with 30 Keystone State school librarians, was remarkably interactive despite the predominately self-paced format. Both of these courses were hosted by their state school library associations. In New York City, ML3 librarian Leanne Ellis took the lead in combining the four self-paced modules of the online course with three full day in-person PD sessions where each participant led a practice decoding with their colleagues role-playing students.

The Pennsylvania School Library Association will bring graduates of the course back together in April at their annual conference for 3 hours of continuing work with an additional pre-conference session for librarians new to CMD. PSLA will be offering the Online Course again in October 2025. In New York City, Leanne and her colleagues are hosting their hybrid version of the course again this spring.

Spring 2025 Courses

Starting in February and March we will have online courses running in the state of Washington (through [WA OSPI](#)), in Long Island, NY (through [Nassau BOCES](#)), in Herricks, NY (through their [Teacher's Center](#)), and across New York State (through [WSHWE BOCES](#)). Cyndy Scheibe will also be facilitating a [national course](#) hosted by Project Look Sharp that is open to all K-12 school librarians at a cost of \$190 per participant.

Empowering All Students Media Literacy Course **for K-12 School Librarians Across the U.S.**

Project Look Sharp's popular online course *Empowering All Students Through Media Decoding* trains school librarians in Constructivist Media Decoding (CMD) – a hands-on, student-centered methodology for integrating media literacy across K-12 curricula. For \$190, this dynamic PD features live sessions with CMD creators, interactive self-paced modules, and personalized coaching to help participants design and teach their own media decoding activity.

Email looksharp@ithaca.edu for more information and to register!

In addition to these Online Courses, this year we plan to pilot a number of **Hybrid Courses for teachers**. These 14-week courses are led by trained ML3 school librarians who coach their teachers through the self-paced modules but also facilitate a series of in-person practice decoding sessions and reflections on classroom experiences.

Here are a few quotes from graduates of a CMD Hybrid course taught by Lake George school librarian Bridget Crossman:

It can be incorporated into EVERY subject and EVERY grade level. Student engagement skyrockets.

Jen J. – HS Math Teacher

Constructive Media Decoding may be the most important thing we can teach our students in the 21st century.

Johnathan L. - 4th Grade Teacher

Next Steps for CMD PD

The success of our Online and Hybrid CMD courses has been very encouraging. Faith Rogow and Cyndy Scheibe will be administering an online evaluation this spring for all participants in the ML3 trainings from 2021-2023 to assess the long-term impact of this work. We are also planning another *Training the Facilitators* full day-in person PD this summer to grow the number of ML3 leaders who can facilitate courses with school librarians and teachers.

Our plan is to grow a team of media literacy *leaders* who can train school librarian *facilitators* who will lead CMD courses for their teacher and other librarians.

Your Involvement

If you are a school librarian with an interest in ML3, consider taking the upcoming national Empowering All Students Course. If you have already completed the Online CMD Course or ML3 training and are interested in the *Train the Facilitators* PD, or if you would like to discuss hosting a ML3 course or PD, please contact Chris Sperry at csperry@ithaca.edu

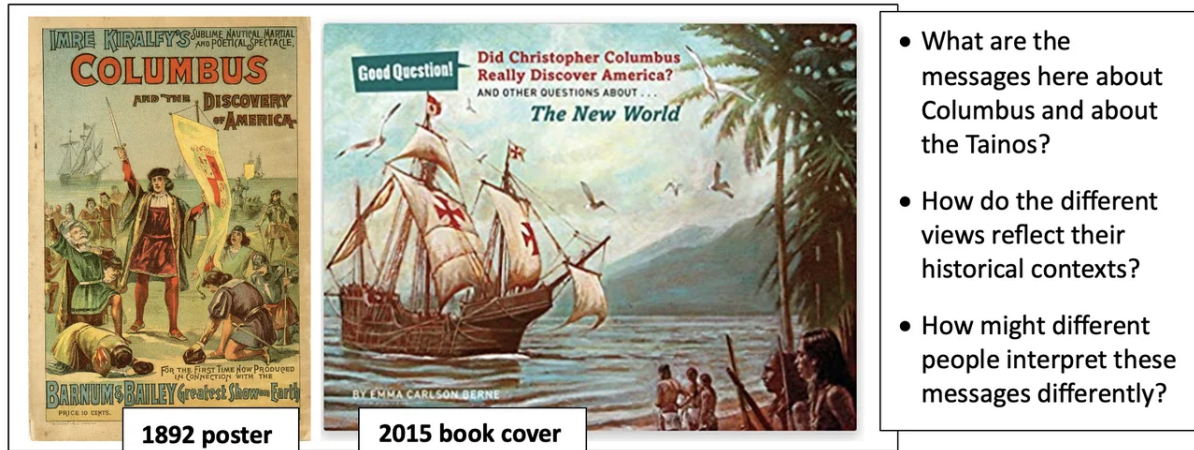
Preservice Education for School Librarians

We are also working on the integration of CMD into school library certification programs nationally,

especially in states with media literacy mandates. Our recent survey to preservice faculty and an upcoming focus group will help us to create a plan for free online modules and other resources that will support the next generation of school librarians to continually teach habits of critical thinking about all media into their work with students and collaborations with colleagues.

Collaborations with School Librarians

From the lesson: Columbus “Discovers” America: What’s The Story? by Roma Matott



The image shows two side-by-side visual representations of Christopher Columbus's discovery of America. On the left is a 1892 poster for a theatrical performance. It features a central figure of Columbus in a red and gold outfit, holding a sword and a flag. He is surrounded by other figures, including a Native American kneeling before him. The text on the poster includes 'WIRE KIRALFY'S SUBLIME NAUTICAL MARIAL AND POETICAL SPECTACLE', 'COLUMBUS AND THE DISCOVERY OF AMERICA', and 'FOR THE FIRST TIME NOW PRODUCED IN CONNECTION WITH THE BARNUM'S BAILEY Greatest Show on Earth'. On the right is a 2015 book cover for 'Did Christopher Columbus Really Discover America? AND OTHER QUESTIONS ABOUT... The New World' by Emma Carlson Berne. The cover features a large wooden sailing ship with red sails on the water, with a Native American figure in the foreground and palm trees in the background. The text 'Good Question!' is in a blue box at the top left.

- What are the messages here about Columbus and about the Tainos?
- How do the different views reflect their historical contexts?
- How might different people interpret these messages differently?

1892 poster 2015 book cover

We are excited about the growing collection of Project Look Sharp media decoding lessons co-authored with school librarians, including:

For Elementary Level:

- An Aesop Fable: Media, Morals, and More – by Betty Turpin
- Music, Media, and Meaning – by Sharon Fox
- Christmas Love - SEL and Media Literacy – by Lila Page
- Liquids in Spiderman vs. Hydroman – by Nicole Laura and Joyce Pixley
- What Can You Tell From a Book Cover? – by Sharon Fox
- Climate, SEL, and Media Literacy – by Bridget Crossman

For Secondary Level:

- Wellness Claims and Social Media – by Beth Cuddy
- Global Perspectives Through Movie Posters – by Arlene Laverde
- Political Memes and Bias – by Beth Cuddy
- Gender, Wealth, and Happiness in Social Media – by Carolyn Smith
- Picturing the Underground Railroad – by Carmen DiBartolome
- TikTok Timebombs: Methods of Media Manipulation – by Beth Cuddy
- Tidal Waves & Tsunamis in Film – by Teresa Brandt and Allison Murphy

In addition, many other Project Look Sharp decoding lessons originated from ideas shared by school librarians.

New Features Based on School Librarian Input:

- Library/Information Literacy added as a Subject Area
- AASL Library Standards included in lessons
- New SEARCH functions
- Starter Kits and Demonstration Videos on our homepage
- Recent Featured Resources added to the homepage

If you have a **suggestion** for improving our website or a lesson idea, please email looksharp@ithaca.edu.

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ML3 is a collaboration between [Project Look Sharp](#) and the [American Association of School Librarians](#) in collaboration with the [National Association for Media Literacy Education](#), funded in part by a grant from the [Institute for Museum and Library Services](#).

