

Institute of Museum and Library Services  
Laura Bush 21<sup>st</sup> Century Librarian Proposal (2018 *pending*)  
Critical Approaches to Virtual Reality Experiences in Schools

Virtual Reality is “a computer-generated reality that projects the user into a 3D space. Using a stereoscopic headset that provides a completely immersive experience, the virtual reality (VR) system is operated by the user's head and hand movements or a physical control unit” . The presence of virtual reality equipment being used in schools has exploded in the last year due to technology advancements, lower hardware prices and more availability of applications with educational content. Educators and companies that market to them are quick to adopt content that is engaging and motivates students to learn. But seeing virtual reality as a substitute for “real” content-based experiences, masks attention to the VR experience as a narrative that should be examined and questioned.

Virtual reality must be more than an experience. It must be taught. Through collaboration between school library staff, formal and informal educators issues of shared concern in the use of VR may be addressed to produce meaningful learning outcomes beyond motivational theory and student engagement, which will lead to lifelong learning.