Strategic Library™

Faculty-Librarian Collaboration

» Helping Faculty Help Students

BY KATHLEEN STEIN-SMITH

Collaboration and teamwork generally contribute to organizational success (Nidumolu et al., 2014). In the case of college and university faculty and academic librarians, it is not difficult to envision the benefits of collaboration to both student success and to faculty research. However, collaboration of college and university faculty and academic librarians may not be as widespread as is generally assumed.

Although collaboration between faculty and librarians has always been important, the increasing complexity of the information environment has made it "imperative" (Raspa and Ward, 2000). Another factor calling for collaboration between faculty and librarians is the growing importance of student research, especially at the under-graduate level

Whether this collaborative imperative is clearly articulated or whether it is understood and unspoken, collaboration within the library and across the campus plays an important role in supporting the ability of the library to fulfill its mission of bringing students together with the information they need, but — even more importantly — of empowering them as researchers able to participate in the scholarly conversation through information literacy.

The development of information, data, and digital/technological literacies, sometimes referred to as "transliteracy' and "information fluency" (ACRL, 2013), is the unique contribution that librarians bring to academic achievement and success, and collaboration with faculty plays a key role.

However, while faculty-librarian collaboration has been widely examined by librarians, in both scholarly and practitio-

Professor Barry Karger, the chair of the Faculty Library Committee, speaking out for the library at the 2018 Celebration of FDU Authors and Artists during National Library Week. Photo by Jessie Ribustello.

ner publications across the disciplines and beyond the United States, faculty have not generally been as engaged in the topic.

In fact, a recent survey of faculty and librarians conducted by *Library Journal* and Gale/Cengage, *Bridging the Librarian Faculty Gap, 2015,* returned widely divergent results in the responses from librarians versus those from faculty. Key findings include the fact that nearly all librarians (98%) would like more communication with faculty, while fewer than half of faculty (48%) desired more communication with librarians. In addition, almost a third of faculty (27%) see no need for faculty-librarian communication. Interestingly, while more than half of faculty (57%) responded that they work with librarians, only 31% of librarians responded that they work with faculty.

THE FACULTY-LIBRARIAN INITIATIVE @ GIOVATTO LIBRARY

At the Frank Giovatto Library on the Fairleigh Dickinson University Metropolitan Campus, faculty have a long tradition of support for the library, demonstrated most clearly by the work of the Metropolitan Campus Faculty Library Committee in its library advocacy role. Following long-overdue renovations, and a re-dedication and re-naming of the main campus library, the Faculty Library Committee organized and sponsored two library fundraisers, hosted the library's 50th anniversary celebration, supported a faculty library survey distributed by the Campus Provost, and in 2015, launched its faculty-librarian collaboration initiative.

In recognition of the important role that faculty play in the ability of the library to fulfill its mission of service to the campus and university community in supporting student achievement and faculty research, the library and the Office of the Provost, Met-

ropolitan Campus, had developed a faculty library survey, distributed to faculty in spring 2013, whose results revealed that, while over half of the faculty referred students to the library at least once a week, most faculty brought students to the library for information literacy instruction, requested research and information assistance from librarians, and collaborated with librarians once a semester or less.

Interestingly, student surveys in recent academic years gave top ratings to information literacy session outcomes in terms of locating, evaluating, and citing print and online library resources.

It was clear to the Committee that, while the faculty valued the library as a student resource, most did not take advantage of the opportunity to bring their classes in for a librarian-led information/media literacy, nor did they take advantage of the librarians' information skills while conducting their own research.

Discussion of the survey results within the context of the current practitioner and scholarly literature revealed that what the committee had originally believed was a purely local situation was actually a national phenomenon, as reported in the survey released by *Library Journal* and *Gale, Bridging the Librarian-Faculty Gap in the Academic Library, 2015.*

The initial brainstorming process following this realization led to a committee decision to step up efforts to get the word out to faculty, including new faculty, adjuncts who may not necessarily be familiar with the campus library, and faculty who teach primarily or entirely off campus or online — the reason for this being the conviction that library services and collections are intended for all.

Committee members and other library supporters among the faculty made a point of not only scheduling information/media

literacy sessions for their classes, but also of talking about them with faculty friends and colleagues. They also suggested to Chairs, Directors, and Deans, and to committees on which they served, that a librarian be invited to say a few words about the library at upcoming meetings.

Librarians also worked to get the word out -- attending meetings, participating in campus events, and distributing information. Librarians attended a Faculty Senate meeting, spoke at several faculty meetings, and participated in committees including both faculty and staff members. More informally, librarians visited department offices, chatting briefly with faculty and staff about the library, and periodically staffed a library table in a campus lunch spot popular with faculty. Librarians also reached out to individual faculty members by email, inviting them to bring their classes to the library for information/media literacy sessions and to encourage their students to take advantage of all that the library has to offer — walk-in research clinics, one-on-one research assistance sessions, and the full array of library collections, services, and spaces.

One result of this activity is that the number of information/media literacy sessions delivered by librarians has been steadily increasing.

As the faculty-librarian collaboration initiative continued and gained momentum, committee members spoke at library programs and events, and several made appointments to meet with key campus leaders and decision-makers to discuss the library and its contribution to the campus community.

CONCLUSIONS AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS
The issues involved in building faculty-librarian collaboration center on perception and mutual respect, and on the role of faculty as library advocates. Faculty and librarians need to make every effort become better acquainted with the role of the other, and faculty need to consider leveraging their considerable influence to integrate the library more completely into both student learning and faculty research.

Faculty may be relatively unaware of the skills and training of librarians, and of the contribution that librarians can bring to student learning and success. On the other hand, librarians may not always be aware of faculty duties and responsibilities, in the classroom and beyond.

It is important for librarians to take ad-

vantages of opportunities to meet with and to work with faculty so that perceptions can evolve into a more complete mutual understanding, leading to mutual respect and to a relationship between the faculty and the librarians that can only benefit and support student learning (Jenkins, 2005).

Once mutual understanding and respect have been achieved, faculty who may have previously been passive supporters of the library are more likely to become active supporters, taking advantage of research assistance for themselves and information literacy sessions for their students, adding an embedded librarian to their courses, encouraging their students to use the library, and working with librarians on collection development, programming, and special projects.

The initial challenge appears to be one of perception, with many faculty unaware of the full range of services offered by the library, but more importantly, of the information skills and training of the librarians, and of the extent to which librarians can help students to do their best work in classes at all levels across the disciplines.

Faculty are often unaware that librarians hold a professional master's degree and, often, other advanced degrees. This lack of awareness may be due to the fact that librarians are staff, rather than faculty, and therefore, do not generally participate in faculty meetings, committees, etc. According to a recent survey (Walters, 2016), librarians at more than half (52%) of research universities have faculty status, which may facilitate collaboration.

On the other hand, librarians certainly need to work proactively to bring their teaching role and skills to the attention of faculty and other campus community stakeholders, and to clearly articulate why information literacy instruction is important to student success and how librarians are prepared to deliver instruction in research and information skills to students at all levels in all disciplines. Faculty may be unaware that these services are available onsite and online, and during evening and weekend hours, and that librarian-led sessions include research and information skills far beyond technical questions of how to access library online resources like databases and eBooks.

A second challenge is that faculty do not realize their impact on campus-wide perception of the library and of the librarians. Many faculty underestimate their influence

The library's most recent Faculty Library Committee meeting in September 2018, during a discussion of the faculty-librarian collaboration initiative. Photo by Jessie Ribustello.

on both students and other faculty and often do not realize the impact of their words, both in the classroom and in conversation, on the perception that students and colleagues will have of the library. They may also just simply believe students to be more knowledgeable about the library and about information generally than they actually are.

The librarians, and faculty library supporters and stakeholders, will need to work together to make the contribution of the library to student learning and to faculty research better known and understood among faculty. As people are more likely to be influenced by people similar to themselves (Cialdini, 2006), the role of faculty is of the highest importance, as it is faculty who can make the difference, by affirming the role and significance of the library and of the librarians in research and learning to their faculty colleagues and peers.

The dedication and hard work of the members of the Faculty Library Committee has been exemplary and has resulted in a steady increase in information/media literacy sessions and research assistance to faculty. In addition to building a more complete perception among both faculty and librarians, of the role and responsibilities of the other, future needs include increasing awareness among faculty of their potential as powerful library advocates. ■

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Kathleen Stein-Smith, PhD, *Chevalier dans l'Ordre des Palmes académiques,* is associate university librarian and adjunct faculty in foreign

languages and related areas at Fairleigh Dickinson University—Metropolitan Campus, Teaneck, New Jersey, where she has received the Pillar of FDU award and the Outstanding Educator Award. As a dedicated foreign language educator and advocate, she is Chair of the AATF (American Association of Teachers of French) Commission on Advocacy, has presented at numerous conferences, has given a TEDx talk on the U.S. foreign language deficit, and is author of three books, numerous articles, and the "Language Matters" blog.

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Public Policy, Advocacy and YOU!

» What You Never Knew
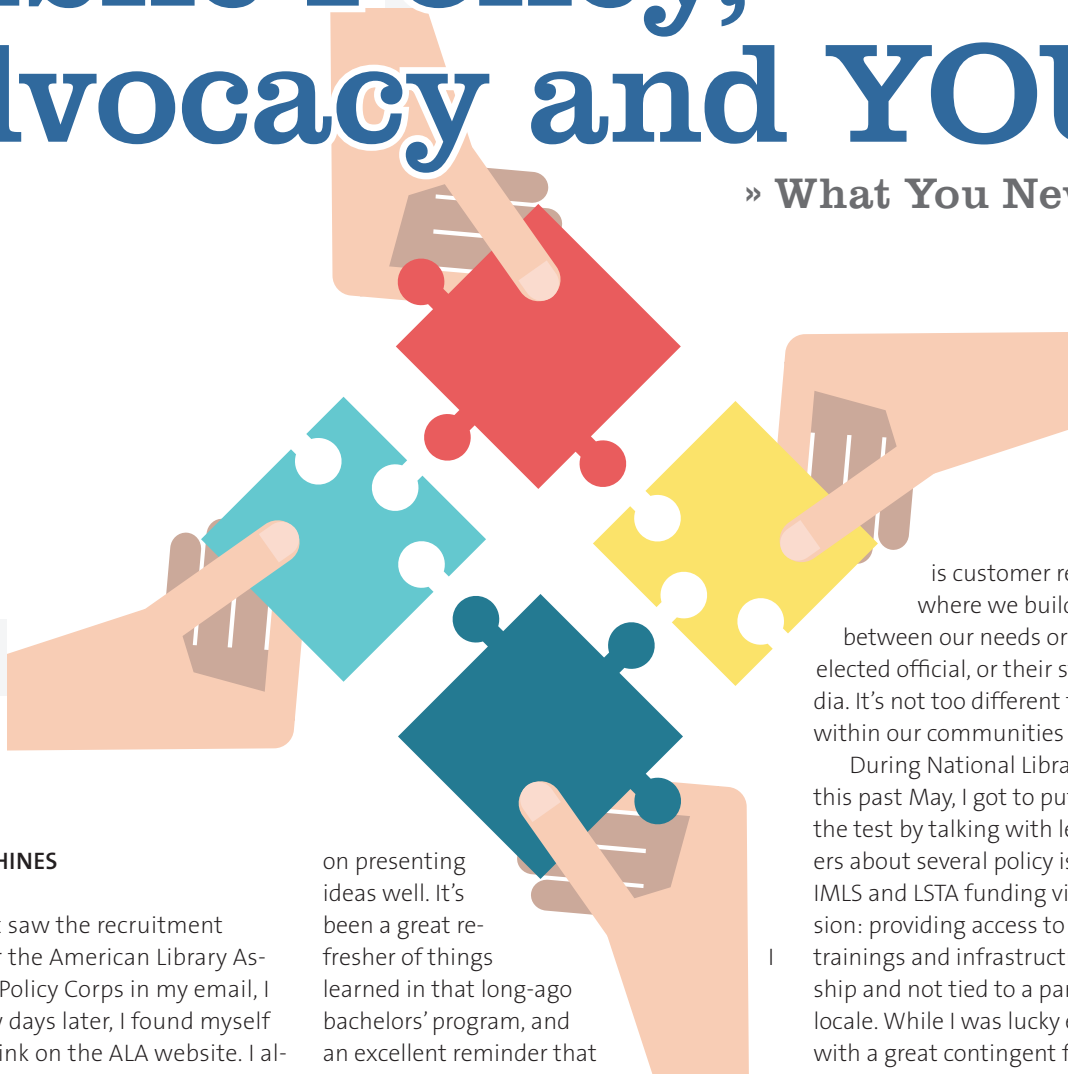
BY SAMANTHA HINES

When I first saw the recruitment notice for the American Library Association's new Policy Corps in my email, I deleted it. A few days later, I found myself digging up the link on the ALA website. I always wanted to be a wonk. In fact, I started out my BA program at Linfield College about a zillion years ago determined to become a political speechwriter, translating policy into inspiring prose. When I left with a BA cum laude in Political Science I was already employed at Project Vote Smart as my first entry into political life. Then I discovered what it was like to work with politicians and that dream very quickly died, but my love of providing information and helping others understand and work with it lived on as I went into librarianship. Policy Corps seemed like an interesting opportunity to reconnect with that desire to inspire people around policy, and I was pleased to be selected after submitting my application and a recorded two-minute video testimony on Net Neutrality.

ALA Policy Corps has provided me with two in-person trainings in Washington, D.C.: the first centering around understanding the federal policy process and the second

on presenting ideas well. It's been a great refresher of things learned in that long-ago bachelors' program, and an excellent reminder that the people who work on policy and in the media are in fact human. In entering this world I'm pleasantly surprised that I'm not setting myself up to get snarked on by smooth-talking wonks walking quickly like something out of the West Wing. Most of what we're working on in the program is developing confidence in our ability to build relationships with those working in policy creation and dissemination by understanding how their jobs work and how we can help them do their jobs well. Relationship-building

is customer relations in a way, where we build the relationship between our needs or goals and the elected official, or their staff, or the media. It's not too different from what we do within our communities with our users.

During National Library Legislative Day this past May, I got to put these trainings to the test by talking with legislators and staffers about several policy issues, including IMLS and LSTA funding vital to our profession: providing access to grants for projects, trainings and infrastructure across librarianship and not tied to a particular library or locale. While I was lucky enough to be there with a great contingent from our state, I had to take the lead in the meeting with my personal representative's staff — yikes! Thanks to Policy Corps and the modeling the other members of the Washington contingent did for me at our first meetings of the day, I think I did just fine. I followed up with that staffer once I returned to my library, along with others I met, and have several valuable new contacts.

Moving on from this grounding, ALA wants those of us in the Policy Corps to select policy areas on which to focus, with the end goal of developing policy experts within our profession around the United States. They'll call on these experts to work with the media, testify before policymakers, and help develop local advocacy efforts, among other tasks. These policy areas have a federal focus: IMLS and LSTA appropriations and authorizations, Net Neutrality, and the like. However, as the saying goes: "all politics is local." We've seen a lot of action within Washington State, for example,

around Net Neutrality. The local, state, and national efforts inform and support one another, and Policy Corps is working to develop active engagement and advocacy on all three levels. As a stereotypical introverted librarian, I would prefer to stay in my cozy book-lined office, but times have changed. The value of libraries must be proven, demonstrated, quantified and qualified in these difficult economic and political times; within our campuses or larger communities, in our state, and across the nation.

For years, the method by which library advocates have demonstrated their value was through storytelling to illustrate data and trends, like with the gathering of stories to be presented to legislators or other elected officials. We've probably all participated in Library Snapshot Day or something similar to gather anecdotes for those participating in Library Legislative Day either in our state or in Washington, D.C. Attendees build relationships with our elected officials and their staff, we leave one-pagers describing how library cards, services, resources and programs changed individuals' lives, we invite them to visit our libraries when they're in town. We share these stories back home through letter writing campaigns to the local paper, or appearances in local media. We seem to have done a good job with these stakeholders, since it's hard to find a politician who doesn't say "I love libraries!" when you step into his or her office or get a response to a letter. Specific asks may be more of a challenge, but at least we can have a friendly meeting. This narrative work has been vital to preserving that IMLS and LSTA funding I was talking about this past Library Legislative Day and provides our profession a valuable foundation to build upon.

However, the recent OCLC Research report, *From Awareness to Funding: Voter Perceptions and Support of Public Libraries in 2018* shows how local advocacy efforts

around libraries themselves need to be reconsidered. According to the study, 59% of voters think the bulk of public library funding comes from somewhere besides local taxes, while in reality 85% of library funding is local.[1] Alongside this misconception comes some precipitous drops in public perception of libraries from the previous OCLC study done ten years before. Only 51% of voters felt that "the library is an excellent resource for kids to get help with their homework" — a drop of 20%.[2] Only 53% of voters felt that "having an excellent public library is a source of pride" — another drop of 20%.[3] Along with these drops in perception came a 16% drop in committed voter support for library funding issues.[4] While our focus on lawmakers has been worthwhile and effective, it seems we have a deep need to advocate better, and differently, within our community to improve our image with our primary funders, the voting public.

Before those of us in academia think this doesn't affect us, remember that our user base's perceptions can and do reflect the perceptions of voters. If voters don't see the value of their community library, will students? Will administrators? Will the board of trustees? Our funding may not be voter-dependent, but it certainly depends on campus perception. Just ask our colleagues in school libraries how community perception affects them, even though they aren't directly supported by voters. None of us want to have to do this, I know. But we must.

Several people have spoken recently to the need for change in how libraries and librarianship advocate, from John Chrastka[5] and Patrick Sweeney of EveryLibrary, to an editorial in Library Journal,[6] to a Web-Junction webinar,[7] to those practicing in libraries.[8] More will have likely spoken out by the time this piece is published. Rationales have been floated from the advent of the smartphone to the downgrading of school librarians, but the main focus has been that,

whatever the reason for the drop in public perception and voter support of libraries, there is a definite call for action now around how we advocate locally.

The first idea for change that has floated to the surface is to improve public awareness of libraries and what they do. This is not a new idea, and many libraries have been working on marketing to improve awareness of services and resources for years. ALA has done a great job with the "Libraries Transform" campaign and other efforts to boost the national profile of libraries. However, with this new study the urgency and importance of these efforts is highlighted. In addition, what passes for marketing among individual libraries is often better called 'advertising,' says P.C. Sweeney, and true marketing needs to "[encompass] a more holistic approach to getting the word out and measuring real results against goals."[9] Policy Corps is aware of this need to better market libraries and is developing that capacity within individual participants as well as for ALA and other associations, but there does need to be a broader and deeper conversation on what marketing truly means for our particular libraries and for our profession in order to effectively build awareness around what libraries actually do in a community.

The second concept for change is to hook into what's called 'super supporters' among our populations to advocate on our behalf. These are the folks who embody the value of libraries in their lives and communities; the ones whose stories we often carry to our legislators when we visit the Hill. But, again, we need to go beyond this storytelling to empower our super supporters to act for us. We need to stop assuming that advocacy is solely the job of the library director. Sweeney gives an excellent example of leveraging existing super supporters of EveryLibrary to take tangible action after Trump's first announcement of the cuts to IMLS, through donations and contacting

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representatives.[10] Other causes have already capitalized on this: Sweeney points out as an example how the NRA has mobilized a core group of committed members to causes that most Americans don't necessarily agree with, but have seen policy support despite the numbers. Policy Corps definitely is aware of this tactic and we've worked hard on relationship and network building in our face to face and online trainings, but this is a core tactic shift that needs to be adopted more broadly in the profession.

The library still plays a vital role in our communities, and the OCLC study demonstrates this. There was a 10% gain in perception around community hub issues: 48% of voters felt that libraries offer activities and entertainment you can't find anywhere else compared to 38%

in 2008; 45% felt that the library was a place for people to gather and socialize versus 36%; and 47% see the library as supporting civic discourse and community building, a new category in the study. Helping build job skills and providing services for immigrants also had a 10% bump in perception among voters. We all know the great work we're doing, and we all know about how it impacts and supports our communities. We know that libraries are more than just reading rooms that have been replaced by ubiquitous smart phones. We have a great opportunity with this new study to shape discourse around libraries, and change our

approach to advocacy to a more inclusive, intrinsic, holistic one that builds awareness and support around what we do and who we are. We can connect libraries back to democracy and the community, and must connect our individual libraries' needs and functions with local, state and regional advocacy for the entire profession. We'll never be lucky enough to completely and forever 'win' the battle for library funding and support (whether we're talking about IMLS funding or voter support of levies), and we need to develop a constant and consistent focus on advocacy in some new ways. It's an exciting time to be involved in an initiative like Policy Corps, and I'm glad to get this chance to work on relating policy to citizens and back again in my profession. ∎

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Samantha Hines (MS in Library and Information Science, University of Illinois, 2003) is the current Associate Dean of Instructional Resources at Peninsula College in Port Angeles, Washington. In her spare time she loves to read and travel, and is a PhD candidate in Ethical and Creative Leadership at Union Institute and University.

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OER and Social Justice

BY STEFANIE BUCK AND MAURA L. VALENTINO

INTRODUCTION

As is the case at many higher education institutions, faculty and staff at Oregon State University (OSU) actively work to incorporate open educational resources (OER) into university courses. In keeping with the university's land-grant mission, Open Oregon State, a part of Extended Campus, works with faculty to create textbooks and other open educational materials and makes them freely available under a Creative Commons license. Oregon State University has an open access (OA) policy and, through the library, hosts an institutional repository (Scholars Archive) where theses, dissertations, and faculty publications are openly available. Librarians at the Oregon State University Library and Press work with faculty to incorporate existing open materials and library-purchased resources in courses. There is also an active course reserves program in the library through which students can borrow textbooks for short periods. The University Press, a department in the library, has worked with Open Oregon State to develop open access textbooks for university courses. These and other partnerships develop based on need and opportunity.

There have been some outreach activities regarding OER and the high cost of information aimed at OSU student leadership. It seems logical that students, who are affected so strongly by the high cost of textbooks, would be advocating for more open or low-cost alternatives in their courses, and the Associated Students of Oregon State University has sponsored some activities for students regarding the high cost of textbooks specifically. However, as with many other institutions, undergraduates have not been very active in advocating for open education resources in the classroom as an alternative to expensive textbooks. The library has not promoted OER or open access in general to undergraduates, working primarily with instructors and faculty.

While undergraduates are not often exposed to these issues (Davis-Kahl, 2012; Warren & Duckett, 2010), there are good reasons to focus on undergraduates, given that they are current and future scholars and active creators and consumers of information. Like many undergraduates, students here at Oregon State are interested in social justice (Lopez & Brown, 2006); the university offers a wide variety of courses, certificates, and minors with this theme. There is a social justice minor and an undergraduate certificate in food culture and social justice. There is also a colloquium in Italy on information and social justice and a University Experience seminar on social justice leadership, as well as various department-sponsored retreats on topics emphasizing social justice (OSU, n.d.-b). Linking social justice with OER was a combination that we hoped would lead to an interesting and meaningful course. It would give us the opportunity to work with undergraduates on this topic, something that we had not done before, and ultimately

help students to become well-informed citizens in this area. The library does have a library and information science (LIS) course designator under which we could have offered the course, but instead we chose to submit the course to the university's Honors College. The Honors College offers colloquia, which are one or two credits, and can be taken as pass/no pass or for a grade. The purpose of the colloquia is to offer students an experience "outside of the academic comfort zone or as an introduction to a potential area for research and scholarship" (Oregon State, "Course Proposals," n.d.). The interdisciplinary nature of the topic made us feel that this was a good fit, and we submitted a course proposal that the Honors College accepted. In this article, we will describe our process in developing the course, students' responses to the course, and reflections on what we will do differently in the future.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Students, at whatever stage in their studies, need to understand how and where information comes from, who creates it, and what barriers exist in our information economy that restrict or control access to it. The growing complexity of the information landscape and the issues of disparity in access that these barriers raise makes this understanding more imperative (Hare & Evanson, in press). Essentially, these issues and topics are subsumed under the umbrella term scholarly communication. For the purpose of this article, we will define scholarly communication as:

> The system through which research and other scholarly writings are created, evaluated for quality, disseminated to the scholarly community, and preserved for future use. The system includes both formal means of communication, such as publication in peer-reviewed journals, and informal channels, such as electronic listservs. (Association of College & Research Libraries [ACRL], 2006).

Unfortunately, in the past, undergraduate students have not always been included in campus discussions about the cost of information creation (Davis-Kahl, 2012; Warren & Duckett, 2010). Even though the definition of information literacy, as defined by the ACLR, has always included an understanding of how and where information is created and accessed, information literacy instruction has often been limited to skills-based instruction on how to search for and locate information using library resources (Warren & Duckett, 2010). Including a discussion of scholarly communications is often outside the realm of a traditional "one-shot" session (Sutton, 2013). However, a number of factors or "intersections" are changing what librarians are emphasizing to undergraduate students about information creation and dissemination (Elmborg, 2006; Riehle & Hensley, 2017).

The Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education (Association of College and Research Libraries [ACLR] 2016) includes several frames that clearly point to students needing a basic understanding of the scholarly communication process, including "scholarship is a conversation" and "information has value" (ACRL, 2016). In the past, the audience for these conversations have been faculty and graduate students who are actively publishing their research. However, as Riehle and Hensley (2017) argue, many undergraduates are likely to continue to conduct research and engage in scholarly conversations. If they do not learn about scholarly communications now, when will they learn and from whom? DavisKahl (2012, p. 212) notes that "undergraduates are a prime audience for outreach and education efforts around scholarly communication." Teaching critical information literacy early helps include undergraduates in the conversation about scholarly communication. Critical information literacy emphasizes that students need to understand where and how information is created and that information is created

with a specific purpose (Warren & Duckett, 2010, p. 351). There is a strong emphasis on how information works, not just how to locate it (Elmborg, 2006). In addition, critical information literacy has a strong social justice component, focusing attention on the impacts of restricting access to information. (Hare & Emerson, in press).

Undergraduate students are not often aware of the distinctions between paid and open resources and who creates these distinctions and why. They know the cost of higher education, they have student loans and debts, and they pay for expensive textbooks, but the economic models behind these costs are usually unclear to them. Information economics is a term used to describe "the exchange of money that takes place in the creation and dissemination of information" (Warren & Duckett, 2010, p. 353). Booth and Miller (2014) have made the case that one component of information literacy that we often overlook is that of "information privilege." While information economics is in itself important (information is not "free"), the idea that this reduces access to resources is not always clear to researchers and users of resources, such as undergraduates. Information privilege is "the affordance or opportunity to access information" which some may have while other do not (Hare & Evanson, in press).

Librarians are uniquely situated to help students learn about scholarly communication issues, including issues of information privilege and open access, and we are quite clearly encouraged by the ACRL to do so. Warren and Duckett (2010, p. 352) note that librarians are called upon by the current publishing model to "act as arbiters," balancing the need for expensive research publications with the limited acquisitions budget. This puts librarians in a position to help students understand the intricacies of the information economy and publishing landscape. Previous and current examples of librarians engaging undergraduates in conversations about scholarly communications

> » **Another potential way to engage students in this conversation is through a course designed to teach students about scholarly communication. There are a few examples of undergraduate classes that focus on scholarly communication, including information privilege, but not specifically social justice.**

include supporting undergraduate research programs, poster sessions, undergraduate journals, tutorials, outreach activities, and games (Davis-Kahl, 2012; Hare & Evanson, in press; Warren & Duckett, 2010; Weiner & Watkinson, 2014). Undergraduate research is a high-impact practice (HIP) promoted by George Kuh (2008) and identified by the Association for American College & Universities (AAC&U) as a pedagogically sound activity that can significantly improve both student academic success and student retention. More and more, undergraduates are becoming content creators, not just users, so it is to their benefit to understand the issues surrounding ownership of information and the publishing process. One of the best ways to involve students in scholarly communication and help them to develop critical information literacy skills is through the undergraduate research process (Hensley, Shreeves, & Davis-Kahl, 2014).

Another potential way to engage students in this conversation is through a course designed to teach students about scholarly communication. There are a few examples of undergraduate classes that focus on scholarly communication, including information privilege, but not specifically social justice. Warren and Duckett (2010, p. 357) describe their work on a course (ENG 333: Communication for Science and Research) where approximately half the course focused on topics related to scholarly communication and information economics. By asking the question "Why does Google sometimes ask for money?" they were able to engage the students in issues of scholarly communication from a perspective that was meaningful to the students.

Gilman (2013) at Pacific University developed another course focused on teaching undergraduates about scholarly communication. The course is part of a minor in editing and publishing. Riehle (2014) describes a course designed to help undergraduates in the Honors College at Purdue University learn about scholarly publishing, but no

emphasis on social justice, with the course culminating in a student-edited publication.

DESCRIPTION OF PROGRAM

After the course proposal was accepted by the Oregon State University Honors College, we spent the summer and fall of 2016 designing the course and offered it in winter 2017 as an Honors College colloquium. Within the Honors College, the students are required to take six credits of colloquia with each colloquia being one or two credits. Students enrolled in the Honors College come from all disciplines, and while some might be studying aspects of social justice, they are unlikely to be studying the OER aspect of it as an academic discipline. Twelve students participated in the two-credit, ten-week course titled "Open Educational Resources and Social Justice." The class met twice per week for fifty minutes each session. The students presented their final projects during the Week 10.

The specific learning outcomes for the course are listed in the Supplementary Materials. One of our main hopes for this course was to give students the skills to become informed advocates for OER and OA. In this, we were following the recommendations of the ACRL (2013, p. 15) Intersections of Scholarly Communication and Information Literacy white paper, which encourages us to help students become "advocates for changing the broader system, by, for example, passing student and faculty OA resolutions, and supporting legislation." As advocacy is difficult to measure and most likely will occur after the course, it was not a formal learning outcome.

As we developed the course, we determined to make the course as active as possible and to provide different viewpoints and experiences. Given that the subject of the course is a topic that is not necessarily one that advances the student in their degree program but is an area that affects the students' personal and future professional lives, we looked to create significant

learning experiences within the course. Fink (2013, p. 7) defines significant learning experiences as "something that should results in something others can look at and say, 'the learning experience resulted in something truly significant in terms of the students' lives.'" Significant learning is "learning that makes a difference in how people live," which includes enhancing how we live, our social interactions, and becoming more informed and thoughtful citizens (pp. 7–8). Our overall goal of helping students become aware of OA issues, in particular to how they relate to social justice, certainly falls into the category of becoming more informed and thoughtful citizens. In addition, access (or lack thereof) to information is something that affects students' lives inside and outside the classroom.

The Honors College is a degree-granting college with its own set of two learning outcomes. These are "the ability to engage in pursuits that create new knowledge and contribute to one or more scholarly areas of study" and "the capacity to fully engage in meaningful dialogue, which incorporates cross-disciplinary and multidisciplinary perspectives" (OSU, n.d.-c). As we designed the course, we also kept these learning outcomes in mind, offering plenty of opportunity for discussion, activities, discovery, and reflection.

The goals of the course include:

Explore the Open Access movement and its educational, social, political, and cultural impacts; examine the many issues surrounding the use of Open Access materials in education and research; formulate ideas regarding the future of open access materials; and consider the role of the open access movement within the larger social justice movement.

We offered the course face-to-face but we also relied heavily on the Course Management System (CMS) to share resources and as a place for students to reflect on the

Table 1. Questions for interviews of students on textbook cost

1. What do you think the average student pays for textbooks at OSU every year?
2. Have you ever taken class and not bought the book? How did you get around it?
3. Have you ever not taken class because of cost of book?
4. Do you have an idea of how much you spent on textbooks this quarter?
5. If you could not afford the textbook for a class, what would you do?

week's activities and their own learning. As we created the broad outline of the course, each librarian took a lead role developing one week of content, activities, and reflection questions. Given that the course was all about OER, we did not have the students purchase a textbook, but used articles from the library and openly available materials. Each week students had between two to three articles to read or videos to watch that further expanded on the topic for the coming week. Each reading or video was selected to give the students multiple perspectives on the topic, and the choice of reading materials was a direct reflection of the specific learning outcomes for each week (see Supplementary Materials).

Before we could begin an in-depth discussion on OER and the OA movement, we needed to frame the problem in the first week in a way that would make the topic relevant to students' daily lives (Swanson, 2004). We started with the high cost of textbooks, which directly affects almost all students. This allowed us to expand on the topic in later weeks to include the bigger framework of how information—not just textbooks, but also scholarly research—is created and distributed, leading to discussion about OER and the principles of OA. In addition, the students read an article defining social justice and then decided on their own definition of social justice in a class discussion.

In designing the course, active learning principles guided us in the development of the course activities. Course content delivery included a mix of readings, some lectures, and much discussion and reflection on the part of the students. Significant learning requires that students engage in various kinds of thinking (Fink, 2013). Keeping all this in mind, we developed several activities for the students to do both inside and outside the class. We did not feel testing would be relevant or useful to synthesize the information provided to them; rather we used projects, activities, and written reflections.

Several of the activities we developed included having the students interview others on their perspectives on, or understanding of the high cost of, information and its impact. Fink (2013) notes that the human dimension—that is, the understanding of issues from other perspectives—is a major component of significant learning. Early in the quarter, to really bring home the problem of expensive textbooks, we had the students go out into the library and interview other students. They asked the students to estimate the average cost of textbooks per year and then asked them if they had ever decided intentionally not to purchase a required textbook. (For a complete list of questions, **see Table 1.**) Later, the students were charged with interviewing faculty about open textbooks, their view of OA publishing, and what issues they had encountered accessing research publications (see the questions in **Table 2**). Students commented on the faculty and student interviews and linked the interview responses to social

justice in their weekly class reflections. These reflections help students integrate the course content, develop critical thinking skills, and make meaning of what they have learned (Fink, 2013, p. 117).

Another activity emphasized the cost of library materials. These materials to students to be freely available for all, and we thought it was important for students to understand the amount of money that academic libraries pay for access to scholarly journals and databases and why. Upon leaving the university, students will lose access to the many resources the library offers. While our students were generally aware of this phenomenon, we had the students cost out retrieving several scholarly articles without access to the university and the resources for which it pays. We also had them compare the cost between an individual and an institutional journal subscription. In their reflections, we asked students to consider how this phenomenon may impact them after they leave the university and to consider the implications for those who do not have access to these resources at all, due to financial constraints or technological barriers. Combined with readings, this gave the students a firm grasp of the economic models of publishing and how the models to create open resources are different but must still exist.

We created several activities to help the student create their own understanding, a key feature of active learning. For example, once the students understood the OA model and its benefits to students and researchers, we wanted them to understand how OA benefits the advancement of science. The students divided into pairs, and each pair gave a presentation on scientific advances that depended upon OA. The OA movement is global, so we asked the students to pair up and present on how a country other than the United States is or is not promoting OA. Here, the students had to summarize the information they found and draw direct comparisons to what they had learned in class.

Other examples of courses in scholarly communication, previously discussed, culminate with a project that allows the students to put their knowledge to practical work. Unlike other courses, we chose not to have the student create a journal publication, simply because of time and the nature (two-credit) of the course. However, we wanted the student to be engaged in the course content and create a meaning-

Table 2. Questions for faculty interviews on textbook cost

1. Have you heard about open textbooks?
2. Have you ever used an open textbook? Why or why not?
3. Have students ever complained about the cost of the textbook? What did you recommend?
4. What does the average student spend on textbooks?
5. Do you publish in Open Access journals?
6. Have you ever run into problems accessing research articles? What did you do?

» **Throughout the course, students provided feedback through reflections and discussions. It was clear from the beginning that the students understood the relationship between the high cost of textbooks and social justice. By interviewing other students in the first week, the students drew the conclusion that a basic unfairness or stratification exists in classes where some students can afford to buy the textbook and others cannot.**

ful product, thus producing information, an important function if significant learning is to take place (Fink, 2013). To help student develop into OA advocates, we asked the students to create a resource to help faculty understand OER, make locating OER materials for a course or discipline easier, and, if adopted, save future students money. We decided on a LibGuide project in which teams of students would create a LibGuide recommending OER for the course of their choice. We chose LibGuides because the library already uses LibGuides, it is easy to use, and we are able to create individual student accounts for it. In this way, students and instructors have access to content during creation. Each group chose a course and determined what type of information and resources to include. The assignment, along with the scoring rubric, is included in the syllabus in the Supplementary Materials. We also had them create promotional materials to include in the LibGuide (see Supplementary Materials).

While both course instructors are advocates of OA and OER, there are valid issues and concerns surrounding publishing in OA journals (Beaubien & Eckard, 2013). These issues include predatory journals, vigorousness of peer review and acceptance for tenure and promotion. In our culminating in class activity, students explored the counter-arguments in the OA debate and participated in a debate on the pros and cons of OA. We randomly assigned students to one side of the debate or another just before the activity started. This way each student had to research both sides of the argument, giving them the opportunity to synthesize what they had learned over the course of the class. They later reflected in writing on any points made that altered their opinion.

While we tried to limit lecturing, we made the decision early on in the course design process to involve guest speakers.

Students gain more from multiple perspectives, rather than having all the information filtered through our own perspective and bring more relevance to the topic (Li & Guo, 2015). A major objective of the course was to help students understand the high cost of information creation and dissemination, including textbooks, as well as the impact this has on them, their classmates, and those who have less information access, such as rural and transient communities. We invited a guest speaker who runs a successful Massive Online Open Course (MOOC) and another who has written an open textbook that is currently in use at the university. Both spoke about the creation process and about the supporting u nits, such as their departments and Open Oregon State and the challenges of managing the costs to create the resources. We also had a speaker from Open Oregon State, a unit on campus that helps faculty create open resources. Again, she emphasized that there is a cost to creating open materials, including faculty time and commitment.

ASSESSMENT

Before the course started, we sent out a pre-assessment to the students to determine what they already knew about issues of scholarly communication and the cost of information. While we did not adjust our course content significantly because of the survey results, it did give us a good idea of what the students knew and did not know. Not surprisingly, most underestimated how much the average student spends annually on textbooks. Most estimated the cost between $500 and $1,000. The estimated cost of textbook varies by source, because it varies by institution, major and purchase source. The College Board estimates the cost at between $1,220 and $1,420, depending upon the type of college (College Board, n.d.). The Oregon State University Financial

Aid office states $1,200 for books and supplies (Oregon State University [OSU], n.d.-a). The National Association of College Stores (NACS) puts the figure at $579 for books and an additional $506 for technology and school supplies (National Association of College Stores [NACS], 2017). The students also underestimated how much the cost of textbooks had increased over the last decade and how frequently publishers release new editions of textbooks. They did seem more aware of the high cost and increase of journals but grossly underestimated how much the library spends on journals annually. They were mostly aware that they would lose access to the online journals and databases once they graduated. They did, however, have some knowledge about OA, and their interest in social justice was also clear. We asked them what had prompted them to take the class. Most of the students seemed to be prompted to sign up for the course by curiosity about the topic. Only one student, with some experience in OA, saw this as an opportunity to become an advocate. Still, just a small amount knowledge about the topic prompted many of our students to learn more.

Throughout the course, students provided feedback through reflections and discussions. It was clear from the beginning that the students understood the relationship between the high cost of textbooks and social justice. By interviewing other students in the first week, the students drew the conclusion that a basic unfairness or stratification exists in classes where some students can afford to buy the textbook and others cannot. They also realized that there might be disciplinary differentiation in the relative cost of the texts. For example, some students pointed out that a student majoring in a science might have a very different experience than a student in the humanities, and therefore their

Table 3. School-Wide Evaluation Tool responses

Student interaction and participation were encouraged in this course	4.9
I would recommend that other students take this course with this professor	4.9
The number of hours needed to prepare properly for this course was appropriate	4.4
The grading procedures were adequately explained	4.7
The grading procedures were applied fairly	4.7
On the whole, and in comparison with other Oregon State University courses, this was a valuable course, worthy of Honors credit	4.7
The professor was dedicated to teaching and Honors-level learning	4.8
I would recommend that this professor teach this course again for Honors	4.9
Total Average	4.8/5

understanding of the issues surrounding OER may be very different.

Students also quickly came to the realization that even open resources are not barrier free; most require access to the Internet and the vast majority are produced in English. These technological and linguistic barriers can significantly affect some populations and geographic regions more than others. In significant leaning, recognizing the human dimension of a topic, in this case, the inequality of information access, is a fundamental outcome (Fink, 2013).

After interviewing the faculty, students mostly realized that faculty underestimate the costs of textbooks for students per year almost as much as students do and, while many of the faculty members they interviewed expressed an interest in and support for OA, in reality only a few had actually made the change. Instructors raised issues such as a lack of quality control and a perceived lack of peer review, and they were not clear about the economic side of the OA publishing model. Clearly moving to an open textbook is not a quick and easy process. On the other hand, students discovered that many of the instructors they interviewed already were taking steps to reduce the cost of textbooks, including permitting the use of older editions, encouraging students to rent or use copies on course reserves, and supplementing the textbooks with other readings from the library collection. They also asked instructors about issues the instructor might have encountered accessing scholarly resources or research materials online, which some instructors

acknowledged to be a concern. These discoveries led us to have conversation in the class about scholarly publishing in journals, OA journals, and the role the tenure process plays in keeping the status quo.

In the week when we discussed MOOCs and Open Education, many of our students, while mostly acknowledging that education for everyone is generally a good thing, recognized that there are still significant barriers in place to making education openly available. In their reflections, they recognized that issues such as language barriers, technological limitations, accreditation, and copyright restrictions still make it difficult for everyone to access a higher education. We wanted the students to reflect fully on the possibilities and problems of offering open education. MOOCs are not a topic often included in courses that deal with scholarly communication, but since the focus of the course was OER and social justice, we felt this was a logical component for the students to ponder. Several students pointed out that much of the research on open education focuses on the west and western values and questioned if the push for open education from the West amounted to a sort of technological colonialism, privileging western methods and values in the OER materials.

Some of the reflections from the students were more "practical." In Week 5, we asked students to locate an OER that they thought would have helped them and to use a rubric provided by the instructors to score the OER. In part, this exercise helped them prepare for the final LibGuide project

but also underscored some of the challenges their professors would face when moving from a commercial textbook, and all of the additional teaching materials that usually come with it, to an open textbook, which may or may not include supplementary materials. It also brought home the idea that students can go and seek out OER for themselves and that, in many cases, they are already utilizing OER in their daily learning. Many of the students evaluated an OER they had found helpful in previous courses. By asking the students to evaluate the OER using a standard rubric, in this case either the Achieve Rubric for Evaluating OERs or the TEMOA Rubric, they discovered that selecting and evaluating OERs is a time-consuming process and requires a great deal of thought.

As the weeks progressed, the students came to the conclusion themselves that OA speeds up the progress of science; therefore, slowing down the dissemination of solutions offered by open science that could potentially solve world problems is another matter of social justice. In Week 6, in particular, we asked them to reflect on the social and economic repercussions of the academic publishing model. Finally, in Week 8, the students participated in a debate about OA. In the previous week, we had spent considerable time discussing the "dark side" of OA and scholarly publishing, focusing on predatory journals and the economic models that require authors to pay to publish. Students enjoyed this opportunity to synthesize their learning and draw their own conclusions about OA. Some students concluded that the debate made them realize that the wider adoption of OA is a long-term process and not quickly or easily implemented. Others felt they had learned more about the nuances of OERs and that both the pro and con side of the debate made important, relevant points. While the pro side is very optimistic and wants to improve the lives of individuals through access to educational resources, the con side rested on valid concerns about quality and equity of access. Students did not necessarily change their position on OA, but overall felt they had a better understanding of the issues surrounding OA, which is what we had intended.

At the end of the course, all the students had the opportunity to provide formal feedback. As this was a credit course offered through the university, students used the School-Wide Evaluation Tool (SET),

which is standard at this institution. In additional to the scale point, students can offer feedback through two open-ended questions. Since this was a small class, the feedback is limited but useful nonetheless in helping us to reshape the course in the future. While the feedback on the course was generally positive (an average of 4.8 out of 5), students did provide us with the following suggestions. They liked the class debate, but wanted more time on the actual debate itself. They also liked the discussions as thought provoking but would have liked more interaction here. We had deliberately not told students they had to reply to another student's posting because we know that this is not very effective or appreciated by the students. The class is very small and it is not possible for us to know if these students will go any further in exploring OA and OER issues. We do feel that the course was successful in that it exposed students to the concepts of open access and OER and the issues surrounding access to information. We also feel that there was some significant learning in the course in that the students gained foundational knowledge about the topic, applied many of the things they learned, and integrated ideas from the course into their concepts of social justice.

My level of interest in the material studied in this course was high 4.7

NEXT STEPS

One of the challenges of this type of colloquia is that the university is on the quarter system, which limits us essentially to nine weeks. Each week we met with the students for a total of 1:40 minutes. Week 10, which falls right before finals and is commonly referred to as "dead week," is when students are getting ready for finals and the Honors College encourages instructors to consider students' other academic obligations at this time, especially seniors who are also working on their Honors College thesis. As this is a two-credit P/NP course and, quite honestly, not the highest priority for students, we chose to have them present their final project in Week 10, giving us nine weeks of content. This leads to some compression on content in addition to the fact that we set aside some of that class time for students to work on their final project.

Another challenge for us was keeping the definitions of OA and OER clear. We frame open access as a philosophy, from which Open Education Resources are one product. However, it often happens that these terms are often used interchangeably, in both the literature and our class discussions. In the future, we will provide more clarity about this issue and have students develop these definitions more thoroughly.

Experience is the greatest teacher and now that we have taught the course once, there are some things we will be doing differently in the future. While we did not necessarily use the framing term information privilege, that is certainly what the colloquium was about. Social justice was a key part of this colloquium, and we want to emphasize this further. In significant learning, two of the components, "the human dimension" and "caring," are what lead student learning. Social justice fits into both of these components; students must look outside of their own experiences and "discover the social and personal implications of what they have learned" and, to some degree, care about these issues (Fink, 2013, p. 36). We had the students look outside their own experience with some of the activities, and in the discussions and debates, the students clearly demonstrated their understanding of both the benefits and limitations of OA. With more time, we could have incorporated an activity to solidify this connection. Nevertheless, we hope that these students, even if they do not go on to a higher degree or a career in academia, can continue to be advocates. In the future, we may build in some activities to help students develop more advocacy skills that would be useful outside the university.

The students appreciated the guest speakers. We may incorporate additional speakers, but only to a certain degree because students also asked for more interactivity and less "lecture." One critical partner we did not invite to the course was the bookstore. Involving a bookstore representative would offer an excellent opportunity for students to understand more about the textbook industry and the bookstore's place in it. It also might help create a feeling of partnership between the library and the bookstore in the discussion of textbook costs. At our institution, we have a nonprofit bookstore that has been open to working with us; we realize this is not the case at all institutions.

The culminating debate was an opportunity for the students to pull together everything we had discussed over the previous eight weeks. Many students responded very positively to this activity but would have liked more time for the actual debate and we plan to build that into the class. The debate is the best opportunity we have for students to synthesize and process the material covered in the rest of the course, and it will play a more significant role in the class in the future.

In the next iteration of the course, we will build in more reflection and online discussion via the CMS platform. We did get some feedback from the students at the end of the course indicating they would appreciate the opportunity for more online conversations outside of simply posting reflections. Getting students to read and post a substantive response to the other students' comments is always tricky and often mandated; forcing it is something we had hoped to avoid. However, we are willing to take that into consideration in future iterations of the course.

CONCLUSION

The connection between OER and social justice is strong, and we were fortunate to be able to offer this course. The Honors College courses are meant to offer topics "outside of the academic comfort zone or as an introduction to a potential area for research and scholarship" (OSU, n.d.-d). Certainly, there are no other courses offered at this institution that focus on these scholarly communications issues. The Honors College offers us an excellent partnership for bringing courses to students that are outside the "norm." It is also a potential partner for integrating this topic into courses where students are conducting and publishing research.

The course also fits well into the strategic goals of the library, including to "develop new curriculum offerings that expand our educational impact" and "develop knowledge creation and dissemination opportunities" (OSU, 2012). In the current process of revising the strategic plan, further emphasis will be placed on scholarly communication and undergraduates. The course also is in keeping with the values of the university, including "social responsibility," which is defined as contributing "to society's intellectual, cultural, spiritual, and economic progress and well-being to the maximum possible extent" (OSU, 2014). Finally, as a land-grant university, students who study here are part of the mission that we have to provide education across the state, which includes making our research openly available. For this reason, we are adding our instructional course materials to the

institutional repository and licensing them under Creative Commons.

The feedback we received from students indicates that we succeeded in raising students' awareness of issues in scholarly communication and, in particular, the issues surrounding OA. We created an engaging course and our students now understand how scholarly information is created and, more importantly, how it effects their lives and society at large. While not all librarians have the opportunity to create and teach credit bearing courses, we hope the idea of a course combining social justice with OA and OER is one others will use in their own ways to create their own student experiences. ∎

ABOUT THE AUTHORS: Stefanie Buck is the Ecampus/Instructional Design Librarian/OER at Oregon State University. Maura L. Valentino is the Scholarly Communications and Copyright Librarian at University of Nevada, Reno.

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10 Success Factors for Directors of Small Public Libraries

BY JANE CHIRGWIN

I never meant to be a manager, I just wanted to be a librarian. Unfortunately, I don't have the accuracy and patience to work behind the scenes, and I outgrew being a part-time children's librarian. Somehow I ended up becoming a Library Director, taking a disaster of a library into modern times with one, then two, library clerks. Now, we're in a new building, I have four employees, and new directors are coming to me for advice. I keep figuratively looking behind me, thinking they must be asking someone else. The little I know has been garnered by trial and error. I had no guidance, no clear path. I made stuff up, copied what I'd seen in other places, experimented and made do. I will lay out what advice I would give to a freshly minted director of a small public library, and you can do with it what you will. I also recommend that you read the Handbook for New York Public Library Directors by Rebekkah Smith Aldrich.[1] Here are my top 10 words of wisdom.

1. DON'T MICROMANAGE

As someone who is in charge of everything from children's programs to making sure that the furnace maintenance schedule is being followed, it is a good thing to delegate when you can. Give clear expectations and parameters, and then step back. Your employees need to be empowered to take initiative, not be sitting on their hands waiting for the next order. One of my mottos is "never hire someone you wouldn't want to be stuck in an elevator with." You want the person who would come up with a way to get out or call for help, not the one who would panic or regale you with cat stories. If you have a certain way you want something done, write out instructions and communicate them clearly. Otherwise, let your employees come up with their own methods.

In Todd Whitaker's book, Shifting the Monkey,[2] he talks about some managers'

tendencies to take on employee's problems and responsibilities as their own. Every time you take something else on it is another monkey on your back. Don't take other people's monkeys. If you take over someone's job and do it yourself, it starts a chain reaction. The employee is "demotivated," you have heaped another duty onto your roster, the library has become more fragile as an entity, and your employee did not gain any experience doing the task.

2. SET AND MEET STANDARDS

Whether your predecessor stuck around to show you the ropes or not (mine didn't), don't take their word for how things should be done. The NY State Education Department has a set of 11 minimum standards that public libraries need to meet- does your library meet them?[3] Some of them need to be done by your trustees. Beyond the bare minimum, your library should meet the needs of your community and be run professionally and consistently. Policies should be enforced evenly.

There is no possible way that you can meet the expectations of your library patrons. They have gotten used to instant results, around the clock hours, abundant choices and little personal responsibility from the massive retail chains. Your library is not a big box store and you should not com-

pare yourself to places with million dollar budgets, advertising agencies and a staff of hundreds. Having said that, you need to know what those expectations are so that you can have a clear message to your community about how you can best accommodate them (we don't have everything, but we can inter-library loan).

3. KNOW WHERE YOUR MONEY COMES FROM

I often look back fondly at the blissful ignorance of being a children's librarian. I got my book budget and I spent it, not worrying about where it came from. As the director, you need to know how your bills get paid. Who exactly approves your budget? You cannot assume that it will stay the same. Branch closures and staff cuts are on the table at library districts around the nation, Bob Warburton reports in the Library Journal. It is vital to connect with the decision makers, whether they are voters or politicians, and let them know what your library can do for them

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and your community. Provide them with annual reports, newsletters, pictures of cute kids, testimonials and newspaper articles. Your Library Trustees should be advocating for the library's budget with everyone they meet in their community.

It's important to have "Friends" with a capital "F". The Friends of the Library are not only your advocates, but fund-raisers. They are who you can turn to when your budget is depleted but you need pizza for the teen program, someone to ask local businesses for donations, and charitable organization status for grant applications (if you are a municipal library). It is worth your time to get a Friends group off the ground or revitalize a defunct organization.

4. CONNECT WITH YOUR PEERS

When you are in a one-librarian library, it can be hard to get out to meetings, conventions and workshops. Make the effort. You usually get more from a casual conversation with a peer than you ever could with any book, class or website. Even if her library is different than yours, she probably has encountered some of the same issues and might have innovative solutions. Also, a little bit of commiseration from a fellow librarian can keep you going through dark times.

Lynne Oliver echoes me in this in her advice to new directors.[4] "Up until now, you may have avoided meetings, committees, and other 'off' assignments like the plague. Get over it. Networking has its merits."

5. YOUR MOST IMPORTANT STAFF PERSON IS MAINTENANCE

If you don't have a janitor, you should close your building. It takes a while for this to sink in. You would like to think that it is your knowledge, your staff's welcoming manner and your impressive collection that make the biggest impression on the average library patron. No. If the bathroom smells, if the tables are sticky, that is all they will remember. Keep your facility clean, functional and uncluttered.

Aaron Schmidt from *Library Journal*[5] advises looking for "pain points," places and practices that limit the usability and appearance of the library. Every once in a while, walk around your building with fresh eyes, thinking like a patron, starting with the parking lot. What can you change to make your facility more desirable?

6. YOUR LIBRARY IS NOT AN ARCHIVE

The metaphor for a public library is that of a garden, not a treasure trove. Your collection should be constantly growing and changing. Unless you have the resources, send archival materials to repositories such as local historians, city clerks, museums or the State Library. Steel yourself and get rid of the things that are unwanted, unused or obsolete. Make the same approach to your files, your public information and your supply closet. This is easier said than done. The siren call of "I might need this someday" is almost irresistible. If so, take baby steps.

Pull your weeding list and put it in the back room for a month. Box up the antique books that were donated and put them on a high shelf. Your immediate working space and public collection should consist of things that are needed, useful and in good condition.

I have found the CREW (**C**ontinuous **R**eview, **E**valuation, and **W**eeding) method manual[6] very helpful in making decisions about discarding books. Jeannette Larson cautions in her introduction to the manual that "lack of funds to replace outdated or worn items is never an excuse for not weeding. Any extensive weeding will enhance the value of the collection…"

7. GET COMFORTABLE WITH COMPUTERS

My library has become a computer lab in many ways. We provide internet access, basic computer training, and support for digital materials. Computers are 50% of my job. I need to maintain all the computers in the building, fortunately with the help of our library system's excellent technical staff.

I maintain our website, order books, create accounting spreadsheets, track statistics, promote through social media, make newsletters, track meeting rooms, create staff schedules, and correspond with everyone using my computer. As what is termed as a "digital immigrant" instead of a "digital native," I need to be able to teach myself new things and be open to change. I am constantly learning. As a director I need to be on top of social media, e-books and cataloging systems. In order to provide reference service, I need to know Overdrive, Twitter, Facebook, Google Chrome, Microsoft Office, scanning documents, uploading documents, setting up e-mail, identifying scams and most importantly, how to explain all of that without descending into incomprehensible jargon or condescension.

The digital divide, between the haves and the have-nots, has become wider and wider. Teachers assume that their students have an internet connected computer with a printer at home. Employers require online applications for truck drivers and check-out clerks. The government asks the unemployed to fill out forms online and wants everyone to e-file their taxes. Meanwhile, we have people who don't know how to use a mouse, highlight a word or navigate through a web page.

Leslie Patterson noted this difficulty in her American Libraries article "Some Experience Necessary."[7] The problem is not just a lack of computers or internet access; it is also a lack of knowledge. Patrons do not know how to write a resume, how to compose a business letter, how to find information or how to evaluate collected research.

Our staff has to set boundaries or they would be sitting next to someone at the public computer area all day. I teach classes once a month and set up one-on-one appointments when I can. We coordinate with other agencies, such as the Rensselaer County One-Stop, to get people the help they need, and provide one-on-one tutoring by appointment. Other libraries

> **Even though I should have seen it all already, I am frequently startled by patron behavior. It's not just little kids running in the library. It's parents who send their 7 year old child alone to pick up R-rated movies. People who claim that someone must have stolen their library card and checked out items without their knowledge.**

have hired on teachers or trained volunteers to help with basic computer literacy. The ideal situation would be an on-staff tutor doing daily one-on-one appointments and weekly group classes, a goal we have not achieved yet.

8. YOUR JOB WOULD BE SO MUCH EASIER IF NOT FOR ALL THESE PATRONS

Even though I should have seen it all already, I am frequently startled by patron behavior. It's not just little kids running in the library. It's parents who send their 7 year old child alone to pick up R-rated movies. People who claim that someone must have stolen their library card and checked out items without their knowledge. People who thrust books at my face while I am checking another patron out. There are people out there who will make you question your faith in humanity on a daily basis.

Gene Ambaum (Unshelved)[8] gave a speech called "Surviving the Public" at the 2013 Book Expo America. Two things that he and Bill Barnes said really resonated with me. One was that policy is only a history of bad behavior: the reason why there is a rule against people dancing on the table is that someone did. Two is that at some point in our lives, we have been that "problem patron" ourselves.

When it all starts getting to me I take a break and remember the good patrons, the ones who feel horrible about owing a dime, who show appreciation for our services, who check out lots of books and encourage their children to do the same. There is great satisfaction in getting the right book or piece of information into the hands of the person asking for it.

That still doesn't stop me from joking about keeping the door locked.

9. KEEPING TRACK HELPS YOU MEASURE ACHIEVEMENT AND FAILURE

When I first started out, I was not aware of the power of statistics. I just saw circulation numbers and attendance charts as some

kind of propaganda from mathematicians. My first annual report was a wake-up call for my methods of tracking how the library is used. It is a good idea for a new director to look over what the state expects you to track. For instance, I need to track the number and attendance for English as a second language classes held in our building, even though it is a volunteer-run program.

Our library doesn't have a door counter. So we take four weeks out of the year and do "statistics weeks" where we count how many people come in and how many reference questions are asked. Knowing our busiest days and times helps me determine how to set up staff scheduling and adjust our hours of operation.

Another excellent resource is a national survey such as the Pew Internet and American Life project,[9] which just came out with a report on younger American's library habits and expectations. For example, knowing that 65% of adults ages 16-29 own a smartphone might prompt you to make your website and catalog more mobile-friendly.

10. REMEMBER THE BIG PICTURE IN YOUR DAY TO DAY WORK

"In all things you do as a director of the library think "community first" and you will rarely go wrong."- Rebekkah Smith Aldrich, *Handbook for New Public Library Directors in New York State*.

When you are overwhelmed, it is easy to put your head down and just do daily tasks, putting out one fire after another without paying attention to the arsonist in your midst. Stop. Take the time to step back and look at the library as a whole. What is your mission? What results do you want to achieve? A library that prioritizes item retention will have a different tone, policies and strategies from a library that prioritizes fine income. Set goals for yourself, for the trustees and with your staff. Schedule time in your busy schedule to work on long term projects like grant writing, collection

evaluation and collaborative programs with other organizations.

I wish you luck in your new position. While it is scary being the boss of a library, the challenge made me develop strengths and grow as a person. I hope it will do the same for you. ∎

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Jane Chirgwin is Director of the Rensselaer Public Library and can be reached at chirgwinj@rensselaerlibrary.org.

FOOTNOTES:
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