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news
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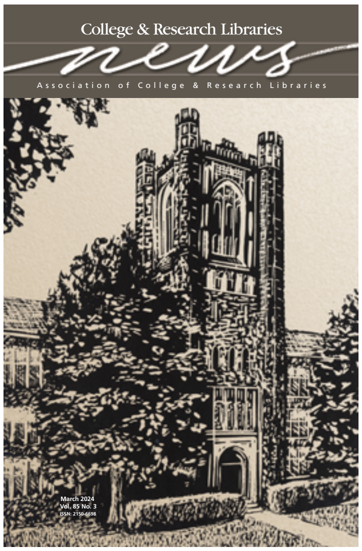
Features

Departments



This month's cover features an image of a woodcut print by Carol Lebeaux of Williston Memorial Library at Mount Holyoke College. Mount Holyoke's first library was built in 1837, the same year of its founding. In 1870, it was expanded to a larger building, as the school had grown so much since its creation, therefore needing to house more books. In 1896, there was a fire that destroyed the Seminary building, damaging part of the attached library. The bricks from the original building were then used for the construction of a new library on the same site in 1905. The new library was named after A. Lyman Williston, a Trustee of the College. The second library, or rather the current building, was designed by George F. Newton, with a Gothic Revival influence in mind. There have been several significant renovations and expansions to the library in the last century.

Learn more about the Mount Holyoke College Library Archives and Special Collections at https://lits.mtholyoke.edu/about-lits/service-desks/archives-special-collections.

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Back issues: $11.00 each.

ASERL Updates Membership Criteria

The membership of the Association of Southeastern Research Libraries (ASERL) recently voted overwhelmingly to modify the criteria for membership in the association. This is the first substantial change in ASERL's membership criteria in more than two decades and reflects ASERL's ongoing process of self-assessment and desire to become a more equitable and inclusive membership organization.

The new criteria, which took effect as of January 1, 2024, primarily change the quantitative metrics required for ASERL membership. Previously, ASERL members were required to meet a total library expenditure (TLE) threshold that was based on library expenditures across the full membership. The previous TLE threshold was calculated yearly—and changed yearly—and reflected longstanding funding patterns that enabled some libraries to remain in ASERL and limited other libraries from joining the Association.

The revised criteria focus on the research mission of the parent institution rather than simply on library expenditures. Complete details are available at https://www.aserl.org/2024/01/news-aserl-updates-its-membership-criteria/.

PALNI Releases Marian University Open Textbook

Two Marian University faculty members have released a new peer-reviewed open textbook through the Private Academic Library Network of Indiana (PALNI). In *Comunidades*, authors Yuriko Ikeda, assistant professor of Spanish, and Julia Baumgardt, chair of Languages and Cultures and associate professor of Spanish, aim to teach novice-level Spanish students through the incorporation of authentic materials, cultural concepts, and real-life conversations with Spanish speakers in the American Midwest. Additionally, the book offers a suite of complementary activities and resources intended for reinforcing these concepts beyond the classroom setting. The book was published with a Textbook Creation Grant from the PALSave: PALNI Affordable Learning program, and as an open educational resource—OER—it is entirely free to students.

Comunidades is available for free through the PALNI Press at https://pressbooks.palni.org/comunidades/. Visit PALSave: PALNI Affordable Learning at https://palsave.palni.org/ to learn more about Textbook Creation Grants and other OER opportunities offered through PALNI.

IMLS Opens Funding for Native American, Native Hawaiian Library Services Grants

The Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) is now accepting applications for Native Hawaiian Library Services and Native American Library Services Enhancement Grants. The grants will help to improve core library services for underserved communities. The deadline for submitting applications for both grants is April 1, 2024.

Native Hawaiian Library Services grants are available to nonprofit organizations that primarily serve and represent Native Hawaiians. These grants, awarded in amounts of up to $150,000 for two years, are designed to improve core library services for their communities. Native American Library Services Enhancement Grants advance the programs and services of eligible Native American Tribes, including Alaska Native villages, regional corporations, and village corporations. These competitive grants, awarded in amounts of up to $150,000 for two years, are designed to improve core library services for their communities.

Grant guidelines and descriptions of previously funded projects are available on the IMLS website at https://www.imls.gov/grants/awarded-grants.

Gale Launches Power to the People Archive

Gale, part of Cengage Group, is helping faculty and researchers better understand how counterculture and social movements of the past have impacted and shaped today's society. The company has launched Power to the People: Counterculture, Social Movements, and the Alternative Press, Nineteenth to Twenty-First Century, a new digital archive that brings together materials that document the movements, events, individuals, and grassroots organizations that worked to effect change in cultures and societies around the world. This unique collection offers a comprehensive view of the struggles and triumphs of activism over time, enabling users to make key connections and comparisons between past movements and the challenges humanity faces today.

With Power to the People, researchers have access to a wide range of rare primary sources on social movements that have shaped modern Western history. Scholars can explore pamphlets, magazines, newsletters, newspapers, leaflets, broadsides, manuscripts, posters, and other printed pieces covering a diversity of ideas and initiatives that span critical periods such as the civil rights movement, women's suffrage, LGBTQ+ rights, antiwar movements, environmental activism, and many others. The archive paints a multifaceted picture of social history that highlights equity, diversity, and inclusion. For more information, visit the Power to the People website at https://www.gale.com/c/power-to-the-people-counterculture-social-movements-and-the-alternative-press.

New Food Sustainability and Security Collection from Bloomsbury

Bloomsbury recently launched Food Sustainability and Security through the Bloomsbury Food Library. This new collection consists of 48 key frontlist e-books from across the Taylor & Francis, ABC-Clio, and Zed Books lists. The collection provides access to key e-books on vital and timely subjects, from climate change and agricultural development, and the politics of the global food system, to food aid in Sudan, equity and social food justice, and more. Food Sustainability and Security brings these e-books together in a single unified content bundle, made available all together as part of the Bloomsbury Food Library digital hub. Learn more at https://www.bloomsburyfoodlibrary.com/about-bloomsbury-food-library.

Springshare Partners with RemoteLock to Sync with LibCal Spaces

Springshare has announced a new integration with RemoteLock access control software for smart locks. With this integration, Springshare clients can automate access to RemoteLock-enabled library spaces through Springshare's LibCal Spaces module. When clients connect their LibCal spaces with RemoteLock software, the two systems work together to generate and deliver a unique access code for each booking.

RemoteLock customers using LibCal Spaces for room reservations can contact Springshare to enable this integration in their LibCal site now. This new functionality will launch for all paid LibCal sites by the end of the year, with further integrations with additional smart-lock brand devices and platforms coming soon. Learn more about LibCal at https://buzz.springshare.com/producthighlights/libcal-libraries.

Clarivate Connects Cited ProQuest Dissertations & Theses References to Web of Science

Clarivate Plc recently announced it has enriched ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Citation Index, embedding more than 172 million cited references from ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global within the Web of Science platform and interconnecting both platforms. ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Citation Index opens new possibilities in the research workflow for students and researchers, enabling them to explore the development of a topic across varied, multidisciplinary research outputs or to look back at the research foundation of postgraduate works. This enhancement deepens the connection between published and unpublished scholarship, enriching the entire research experience. As new cited references are captured, dissertations and theses will accrue citations from indexed research, helping users understand the impact or influence of dissertations and theses to scholarship over time. Learn more at https://clarivate.com/products/scientific-and-academic-research/research-discovery-and-workflow-solutions/webofscience-platform/proquest-dissertations-theses-citation-index/.

GovInfo Hits Record One Billion Retrievals in 2023

The US Government Publishing Office's (GPO) GovInfo, the one-stop site for authentic, published information for all three branches of the federal government, hit a record number of retrievals in 2023—1.15 billion. This is a 32 percent increase from the number of retrievals in 2022 and a 215 percent increase from the number of retrievals in 2018. The most retrieved collection of 2023 was the *Federal Register,* with more than 80 million retrievals. In total, GPO has garnered 10.8 billion retrievals of government information since first making government information available online in June 1994. In 2019, GPO made history by becoming the first organization in the United States and second organization in the world to achieve the highest global standard of excellence possible for digital repositories. This certification reinforces GovInfo as a trustworthy source that performs digital preservation practices to ensure long-term preservation of and access to official federal government information. GovInfo is available at https://www.govinfo.gov/.

Institutions Selected to Pilot Development of Scalable Data-Management Infrastructure

The Association of Research Libraries (ARL) and the California Digital Library (CDL) have selected five institutional teams to pilot the integration or creation of prototypes and possible workflows for machine-actionable data management and sharing plans (maDMSPs). The pilot project will run January–December 2024 and is funded by an Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) National Leadership Grant.

Machine-actionable data management and sharing plans are structured, machine-readable documents that allow for dynamic reporting on the intentions and outcomes of a research project, enabling streamlined information exchange across relevant parties and systems. These plans go beyond traditional static document-based DMSPs and contain an inventory of key metadata about a project and its outputs (not just datasets), with a change history that stakeholders can query for information over the lifetime of the research. Implementing maDMSPs can be a key piece of establishing interconnected, automated systems for research data management and compliance. The maDMSPs pilot institutions will help shape the development of maDMSPs and gain valuable early experience with new approaches to enable more automated and connected research data management. Additional information about the project is on the project webpage at https://www.arl.org/building-a-scalable-data-management-infrastructure-for-strategic-institutional-coordination/.

New Project Muse Journals

Three new additions to Project MUSE's hosted journals program are now live on the platform. Current issues are available for the *International Journal of Surrealism* (*IJS*), *Nevada Historical Society Q*, and *Filipino American National Historical Society Journal*, as well as all 11 back volumes of the last title. Titles in the hosted program are not included in MUSE's curated journal collections. MUSE's Hosted Journals program provides publishers with the option to offer individual journals on the MUSE platform under a subscription model or as fully open access. Publishers can take advantage of a recently streamlined fee structure for hosting, as well as newly introduced sales and marketing services. More details are available at https://about.muse.jhu.edu/publishers/hosted-program.

Tech Bits . . .

Brought to you by the ACRL ULS Technology in University Libraries Committee

LibKey Nomad is a browser extension for accessing library resources where they are to get your patrons to the content faster. It provides single-click access to library-provided content, helping researchers avoid paywalls when looking for online journal articles and electronic books found on many scholarly publisher websites as well as PubMed, Wikipedia, and Amazon.

LibKey Nomad is available for the Chrome, Edge, Firefox, Safari, Brave, and Vivaldi web browsers. After adding the extension, users select their affiliation. When full-text access is detected, a pop-up box with a link to the resource will appear. Libraries can pay an annual fee to be a participating institution with Third Iron. If not affiliated with a participating institution, try the free version, which connects users to open access content.

—Jennifer Long
University of Alabama at Birmingham

... LibKey Nomad
https://thirdiron.com/downloadnomad/

Susan Bond

Ask Us Anything

Engaging Library Staff in Ongoing Change

When the University of Toronto Libraries transitioned to our new Library Services Platform (LSP) in 2021, we were in the middle of a worldwide pandemic. Most of the staff at our dozens of libraries were working partially or entirely from home. The in-person training we had planned had to be reconfigured for remote delivery. We opted for a flipped-classroom model: our functional teams prepared videos demonstrating the basic actions and things people had to be able to do, followed by synchronous sessions where attendees could ask questions. But as the go-live day was approaching, we were worried that people might not be prepared (or might not *feel* prepared—which, while not the same thing, can be just as detrimental).

Our system is large, complicated, and diverse. We have between 40 and 70 libraries depending on how you count, and they range in staff size from one person to more than a hundred. Some of our libraries are centrally managed, with shared acquisitions, materials processing, and direction; some units are federated with the main university and their staff are not technically employed by the university; and some hospital libraries in our Health Science Information Consortium share nothing with the rest of us but a catalogue. Most of the libraries are on one campus in downtown Toronto (several of them are in the same building even), but we also have two large libraries on other campuses and one off-campus seminary, plus the hospitals in the consortium, which are spread out across the region. There is also diversity in terms of the types of work each person learning needed to understand: in our larger libraries some staff have very narrow scopes to work within, but at the smaller libraries people needed a working knowledge of all the system components before they would be able to work effectively.

Our concern was how to take the temperature of such a large and diverse group. How could we tell if people understood what they should be doing, and how could we intervene if there was a misunderstanding? By this point in the pandemic, many of us had spent a lot of time in large online meetings, and it was clear that many people are not comfortable speaking in that context, and those who are often avoid asking questions to save face. We wanted the tone of our sessions to be that no question is too small, and that there are no stupid questions. We initially proposed the two weekly "AMA" (Ask me Anything) sessions as a stopgap: a way to bridge the difference between what we wanted our training to be and what we were able to deliver. In the years since that time, the AMAs have grown into something different: stranger and I think more valuable. While still supporting LSP knowledge (unlike our previous system, our LSP changes so frequently that we regularly have new things

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to share), the AMA sessions have also become a space where we come together to talk about how we work as a system.

What an AMA Is, and What We Did

The AMA format was popularized by Reddit,[1] a social media site that uses fora. In it, a person (or group of people) starts a text thread saying who they are, and members of the public ask them questions. The host then responds to the most popular questions (forum members can vote to indicate popularity). Although a host may have formal, structural authority outside of the forum, they are primarily answering questions as an authority on their own experience. This makes for a less hierarchical and more personal relationship between expert and novice: as Alexis Madrigal puts it, "The point of the AMA is that human empathy exists."[2]

We knew that we wanted to be able to provide a more immediate response, so our AMA sessions were video conference calls instead of text-based, making them more synchronous. We had seven functional teams that had developed training, and we wanted to make sure the sessions were not so broad that people would feel intimidated asking questions, but not so narrow that our solo librarians would have to come to too many sessions to get all of their questions answered. We settled initially on two weekly meetings: one for Technical Services (Acquisitions, Finance, and Metadata) and one for User Services (Fulfillment, Discovery, and Reading Lists), with representatives from our Analytics team present in both sessions. We had one person in each series of meetings act as the host: keep their camera on, read questions out, and ask specific people to answer them.

Demonstrations and Noodle Time

After the first few weeks, the meetings were no longer pure AMAs—the functional teams started preparing things to say before attendee questions were asked. Different structures for the sessions emerged organically between the two groups. On the Technical Services side, the teams often prepared more formal demonstrations: it wasn't uncommon for someone to prepare a slide deck for an AMA presentation. On the User Services side, as one technical service person who attended both types of sessions put it to me, it became more of a talk show. Not only the host but also the main point person for each team would leave their cameras on most of the time, and they would have a free-form conversation before questions started and as there were lulls.

Toronto had one of the longest lockdown periods in North America, and it was very hard on people. Although we attempted to retain casual, spontaneous workplace interactions, they were difficult to engineer. In one particular User Services AMA, the chat before we got down to business was just people on the call (point people and otherwise) discussing their favorite places to get fresh noodles within a fifteen-minute walk from their office. It started with one of our regular presenters talking about his lunch plans, but soon lots of people were chiming in from the chat, suggesting other places they like near campus. It struck me that within the context of a training session, we had accidentally created that longed-for "water cooler" feeling: people casually inhabiting the same space (albeit digitally) and chatting before work happens. This feeling of casualness and ease was rare in those times, and one that was difficult to cultivate.

What about People Who Are Not in the Room?

A significant number of people attend our AMAs: we regularly get between 40 and 60 people from across our different campuses, and we even have some regular attendees from the hospital consortium. But that still represents a minority of our staff who use the LSP, and we want to make sure that people who aren't able to attend can still benefit from the discussion. We make an archival recording of the sessions, but decided early on that we would not distribute these recordings: primarily to encourage people to speak more freely, but also to minimize the exposure of personally identifiable data when demonstrating circulation transactions. Instead, we get a volunteer each time to write up minutes of the session, which we post on our intranet site with other LSP training and documentation. We also post some excerpts of the recording when a useful skill is demonstrated so we can share the learning.

How Our AMAs Have Evolved

During our first year, we continued biweekly sessions. At the start of 2022, we switched to one session per week, alternating between Tech Services and User Services. In the fall of 2022, as our campuses were returning to a full reopening, we dropped down to one session per month and merged the two groups into one big LSP AMA. I was a little nervous about how this would work—would the more formal presentation style coexist with the talk show and noodle time? It did, but it also created a new kind of venue for our institution: one where the technical side of many different functional areas could be discussed together. Take a recent example: our serials cataloguing librarian presented with a colleague about a new technical solution that had been implemented to automate the creation of holdings statements as new serial items are added (while also preserving the previous manually created holdings statements). The point of her presentation was to explain technical information to cataloguers, but because I was there representing the Discovery team, I took the opportunity to demonstrate how these holdings statements could be interpreted by users looking at our Discovery system. Our Fulfillment representative then talked about how itemization changes the ways serials are circulated and digitized, and our Analytics representative described how hybrid records affect our ability to report on our holdings. We are an organization (and an industry) where people develop a high level of specialized technical knowledge and skill in different areas, and the silos that naturally emerge in those environments sometimes mean we struggle to take full advantage of each other's work. The AMA, by virtue of having an open-door policy and also being a venue for hearing crucial information in different areas, has become one of very few places where this can happen.

The AMA sessions are continuing today, though less frequently. They're scheduled monthly (so people block the time and are available), but if a significant number of our presenters are unavailable due to another obligation, we usually cancel the meeting instead of rescheduling—it works out to about eight per year. We plan to continue them at this rate for as long as they are useful: as long as attendance is significant and our functional teams find them effective. Now that we have emerged from the lockdown and our staff have other opportunities for casual interaction, "noodle time" is a less important part of our sessions, but we have maintained a casual tone.

The AMA format would not work for every meeting, and it is in no danger of replacing our established practices. I think the time it would be most useful is when we know there are questions in a community that doesn't regularly meet together, but it is not clear what their most pressing concerns are. This is reflected in the way the format has been adopted by our central library leaders, who had a series of AMAs before our campus reopening and a recent one showcasing our library committees. It has helped us understand each other better, and that helps us work together better as a system.

Notes

1. "R/IAMA" Reddit, accessed June 23, 2023, https://www.reddit.com/r/IAmA/.
2. Alexis C. Madrigal, "AMA: How a Weird Internet Thing Became a Mainstream Delight," *The Atlantic,* January 7, 2014, https://www.theatlantic.com/technology/archive/2014/01/ama-how-a-weird-internet-thing-became-a-mainstream-delight/282860/.

Meris Mandernach Longmeier

Capturing Snapshots in Time

Environmental Scanning as an Ongoing Process

In 2013, I conducted my first official environmental scan. It was with a team that was developing services and creating the vision for researcher support at the Ohio State University Libraries. The eventual Research Commons Task Force recommendation highlighted services and support to invest in along with areas better served by other campus units. At the time, the group was given a couple of examples of environmental scans that had previously been completed, but there were no detailed instructions to follow or specific approaches that were commonly known by the group. In fact, many members of the group were familiar with environmental scanning only as part of a strategic planning process rather than for developing new services. In our process, the task force focused on assessing scholars' needs and practices through both informal and formal methods, along with monitoring the larger trends affecting higher education to respond to evolving researcher practices, design innovative services, and enable research partnerships.

Upon reflection and subsequent use of environmental scans, I realized that my background as a subject librarian had provided a framework and informal training in environmental scanning techniques. Though I have subsequently received formal training in storytelling and advocating for resources, the process of scanning the environment has always been embedded both in how I approach planning services as well as a practice I try to instill into all of the members of my Research Services department by encouraging an intentional, user-focused service orientation to our work. We aim to be engaged partners with faculty and other research support providers around campus to advance the research, teaching, and learning missions of the university. Therefore, for each additional area of research support that is added to my department (so far, data management support, data visualization, GIS, digital humanities, research impact, research data support, and publishing and repository services), staff have completed their own environmental scans. Although I think generally libraries have steps of the environmental scanning process built into our nascent infrastructure, few rarely take a systematic process for generating a complete picture to inform future service/support development.

Why Environmental Scanning?

Environmental scanning—the practice of taking a step back and reviewing the context of a system, the key players, similar services available elsewhere, and how information/resources/money flows through the system—provides a holistic view upon which recommendations

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can be made. Although this approach has been a mainstay in library strategic planning processes,[1] it is less prevalent in planning ongoing work. This process has many different names depending on the field: a traditional SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) analysis from the business world,[2] capture planning in the realm of research development offices,[3] landscape analysis for entrepreneurs,[4] or competitive intelligence for our colleagues in special libraries.[5] Overall, an environmental scan typically has both an internal and external focus. It concentrates less on what the competition is doing and more about a snapshot of current practices. It is an approach used to inform local strategic planning and provides a way to gather information about the local environment to make more informed decisions.[6]

In libraries, there are many stakeholder perspectives to keep in mind while designing services, delivering collections, or planning future projects. For this reason, having a clear understanding of the environment will allow those developing strategies to stay informed of their users' needs as well as anticipate any barriers present that may interfere with a successful implementation of the vision. For example, in my work as a liaison, scanning the environment helped inform my collection development to know the research specialties of my faculty as well as program offerings at the graduate and undergraduate levels. I gathered information about the courses where I offered instruction, examined the course catalog to identify additional areas for inroads, and compared with colleagues at other institutions who were partnering in similar courses.

I quickly realized that my liaison departments maintained lists of both their peer and aspirational programs, and they were happy to share that information. I could then use that information to compare our collections and approaches to outreach and even network with librarians at peer institutions to understand how they were thinking about the ever-changing approach to offering support to their constituents. Overall, having a bird's eye view of my department allowed me to take a holistic approach to the support I offered. It also became a technique I employed at least every three to five years as the departments evolved, campus areas of interest changed, and my approach to librarianship matured.

Key Aspects of an Environmental Scan

Though the specific areas that are captured in each part of an environmental scan may vary, they typically include an executive summary, an introduction, a background or a little history, literature review, conversations with or information gathering on/about key stakeholders (both internal and external), a list of hypothesized future directions, a set of recommendations, and appendices of additional information. I'll now cover each area in greater detail to explain why it is important to the overall structure.

The executive summary should provide highlights of the entire report. It will summarize the recommendations and provide touchpoints for the reader. If it were a journal article, the executive summary would serve the function of an abstract.

The introduction will orient the reader to the report, what you intend to convey, and how the report will be structured. This may blend some of the areas related to history and background as well. It may highlight what will not be covered in the report or set the context of what else is happening in the libraries or on campus at the time of the writing. This section should detail the timeframe for the report and capture any co-authors who are instrumental in its creation.

The background section may vary in length. It is not necessary to identify all of the iterations of services until now, but it is intended to provide context related to the support that will appear in the future directions or set of recommendations. This area may also serve as a place to highlight gaps in current support.

In terms of the literature review, it is possible to have this section merge with history or with information gathering. This step allows you to contextualize the snapshot in time, communicate how greater campus trends affect library work, or highlight other studies that argue for a similar approach.

For the information gathering stage, you should contact similar service providers on campus or identify peer institutions who provide similar support. Key stakeholders may be internal to the library, on your campus, or at other schools. One good question to ask as you're developing a list of other individuals to interview is to end the time with, "Who else should I contact to gain a deeper understanding of . . ." In this way, the key stakeholders will alert you if there are additional stakeholders that are missing from your list. Although you could create a set of questions to ask everyone, typically you will have a custom list of questions to ask based on the background information sleuthing you have already done of their website or service catalog. Take good notes at this stage because you will be synthesizing trends or themes that emerge from these conversations.

The next stage is future directions and/or recommendations. These areas likely will emerge based on all of the information you have gathered in the other sections. First you will want to clearly articulate the change you are proposing. It could be a new workflow, set of services, or a way of framing your own work based on what you have learned from the previous steps. If the proposed change is large, needs financial support, or requires additional staffing resources, you'll want to make sure you align the vision in this section with the ask for resources. Recommendations you suggest should be actionable, achievable, and proposed with a timeline in place. However, they do not necessarily all have to be implemented by you alone. For larger organizational changes, new services, or stopping existing services, recommendations will require multiple inputs to ensure their success. With these larger changes, it would be advisable to preview recommended changes with others at your library to ensure they are on track, to anticipate any pushback that might occur, and to generate buy-in to the proposed approaches. Based on the feedback, you may want to adjust the recommendations or perhaps seek input from additional stakeholders.

The appendices number and length can vary greatly. Any information that can be referenced in the report but that is not integral to the proposed changes should be moved to an appendix to streamline the reader's experience. This could be summaries of stakeholder interviews, figures from comparing your institution to other peer institutions, or summary snapshots of similar programs offered elsewhere. This section provides additional context for the recommendations that are offered, but that may be too detailed for the main report.

Environmental Scanning for All Areas of the Library

Everyone who joins my team who is inheriting a service, starting a service, or rethinking a service sets a goal of conducting an environmental scan. I feel this is so crucial for each program area because it provides a time to pause and gather resources, reflect on the current state of activity, and make recommendations for future approaches. It provides intention to the planning that is forthcoming. It clearly addresses the expressed and uncovered needs that exist and responds with support that has the potential to scale. It is beneficial to the department as a whole as well because it allows us to anticipate emerging staffing needs, articulate demand, benchmark available support at peer institutions, and intentionally plan for the future. Although many have used these reports to inform their own processes and approaches within the department, the digital humanities librarian used this opportunity to share her approach with others in the profession.[7] In writing this article, I have realized that our staff turnover has matched the three to five years recommendation for repeating an environmental scan. Others who have remained in the department have integrated mini-snapshots into their ongoing approach for monitoring the ever-changing landscape on a busy academic campus and have opted for an iterative approach to recommending ongoing changes.

Conclusion

In thinking about who in libraries should employ environmental scanning as part of their normal planning process, my answer would be anyone who wants to deepen their understanding of their constituents, those who want to think intentionally about existing workflows and what resources they are employing, and anyone who is designing new services or redesigning existing processes. Environmental scanning provides a snapshot in time by looking at current practices, documenting current trends, examining what others in the field are doing, and making recommendations for changes to existing practices or addressing gaps. It may confirm that approaches already in place are exemplary. In short, it notes what makes us unique/special/different within our own local context, what aspects are the same as peers, and what ought to be modified for efficiency. The process provides a holistic view that will hopefully shed light on strategic directional changes, as needed. Therefore, it could be a useful tool for those in libraries to consider adding to their toolkit in areas outside of the strategic planning process.

Notes

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5. Zena Applebaum, Philip Britton, and Alysse Nockels, *A Practical Guide to Competitive Intelligence* (Mt. Laurel, New Jersey: Special Library Association, 2022).
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Sydney Adams, Lisa Forrest, and Nancy Falciani-White

Creativity in the Library

Intentionality and the Art of Making Space

Academic Library Workers in Conversation is a *C&RL News* series focused on elevating the everyday conversations of library professionals. The wisdom of the watercooler has long been heralded, but this series hopes to go further by minimizing barriers to traditional publishing with an accessible format. Each of the topics in the series are proposed by the authors and they are given space to explore. This issue's conversation is about creativity. The authors demonstrate that creativity in the library is a need, not a luxury.—*Dustin Fife, Series Editor*

Nancy Falciani-White (NFW): I have been interested in creativity in academic libraries for the last several years. The definition of creativity that I like to use in my research is that creativity is "a new approach, idea, product, or solution that matters either to a single person or the community."[1] Many understand the library as a catalyst or as a place where ideas intersect for library users, but what about creativity for library employees? In the face of constant change, and some may say existential threat, is there room for creativity in academic libraries? Is this even something we should spend time thinking about?

Sydney Adams (SA): Nancy, you bring up a great point about the role of creativity in the face of constant change. Creativity is essential as academic libraries adapt to the changing landscape of higher education. In my role, I consider how our library can address these changes by partnering with our colleagues across campus. College students today face many unique challenges, and while it may not always be obvious, the library can play a role in addressing students' needs holistically by developing creative solutions with campus partners. In other words, ideating with colleagues across campus better enables us to think creatively.

Lisa Forrest (LF): Thanks, Nancy and Sydney. Thinking creatively about solutions to challenges is something that many people who work in libraries do very well. Looking back over the pandemic years, we didn't have a choice BUT to think in innovative, agile, and creative ways. I like to think that because of what we've been through as a library community, we're all more comfortable in gray zones and find it easier to think creatively. Many folks I know (like Sydney Adams!) who work in libraries are excellent at making creative connections between ideas and building new collaborations in the process. I know it doesn't come naturally to everyone, though. Creativity is a practice, it's a way of being in the world. Like learning any skill—guitar or yoga or cooking—you get good at where you direct your efforts. You grow at something when you carve out the space to do that thing.

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Creativity in the workplace is no different. Regardless of what shape it takes, creativity takes intentionality and practice. So, to answer your question, I think we HAVE to spend time supporting creativity in libraries. That means learning how to structure time and space (i.e., meetings!) to encourage creative idea building; it means building a culture of openness and feedback, where ideas can be freely tossed around to see where they land; it means learning how to thrive in gray zones; and it means being intentional about connecting seemingly disparate ideas.

NFW: I love that you both see creativity as important for academic libraries! You both mention some specific examples of how creativity can be developed and supported. Lisa, could you talk a little more about "gray zones"? What does that mean and why is it important to creativity?

LF: I think about the "gray zone" as the space between not knowing and knowing. These are zones of discomfort for many of us! But it's also the space where creativity can flourish if folks can harness that energy for creative good (and not panic). We have to call out those moments: "Hey, we don't know the answer and it feels uncomfortable right now . . . but let's be present with it, explore some unknowns, and create something better together" vs. "We don't know what the answer is, so let's hurry up and do something similar or safe and avoid discomfort." What are your experiences in gray zones?

SA: I appreciate your point, Lisa, about opportunities that arise during periods of uncertainty. Rather than viewing uncertainty as a barrier, we can reframe it as an opportunity to explore creative solutions. For me, it's essential to embrace curiosity when we might not have an immediate solution to a problem. When I'm in the brainstorming stage of program planning, I often ask myself how others might approach the need we want to address and how we can partner to address that need. Creativity can flourish when you're open to exploring solutions with others.

NFW: I feel like I spend a lot of time in gray zones. I have a vision of how I want the library on our campus to be viewed by students and faculty, how I want it to fit into the larger campus community (as you indicated earlier, Sydney, the relationships with campus partners are so important!), and the local community, which can include local public libraries, town historical societies, and businesses. But there isn't a clear roadmap for how to make that vision a reality.

SA: This is something I've experienced, too, Nancy. For me, that vision can even look slightly different depending on who I'm working with, which can quickly become overwhelming to juggle. In your experience, how do you navigate overwhelming feelings and transition to a more productive mindset?

NFW: I'm constantly thinking, problem-solving, looking for new ideas, and talking with library staff to try to gradually move the needle on that vision. I try to say yes to new ideas a lot, and I encourage staff and students to try new things to see how they go, call it a pilot or an experiment, whatever language you like. The important thing is to take risks. I look for ideas everywhere. There is a certain amount of creativity that comes from knowing a lot about a specific topic (like libraries or outreach or data visualization or AI), but a lot of what sparks creative ideas is the connection that emerges from seemingly unrelated things. Creativity thrives on novelty, surprise, the unexpected, and that's why working on diverse teams of people who have wide-ranging backgrounds and personal interests can be very valuable. I have found myself drawing on gaming, crafting, renovating a house, parenting, and other experiences to shape programming ideas, renovation project planning, and outreach. Have either of you ever found your hobbies shaping your library work?

SA: My hobby is cooking; I enjoy browsing cookbooks and blogs for new recipes I can test at home. There's a culinary phrase, *mise en place*, or *everything in its place*, that I often apply to my work in the kitchen and the library. Before diving into a new recipe (or planning a program, for example), I try to consider everything I need to prepare ahead of time to set myself up for success. In the kitchen, this might look like dicing an onion before I begin preheating a skillet so the oil doesn't burn. That way, I can focus on the techniques that are new to me in the recipe rather than diverting my attention to things I already know how to do. In the library, it looks more like brainstorming about what I can take care of before exploring new programming opportunities. For example, I might consider questions such as what types of programs can our space accommodate, or where are there gaps in programming on our campus at large we can address?

LF: I'd say that my creative interests and practices have shaped my entire career! When I first became an academic librarian in 2004, I founded and led a poetry club called "The Rooftop Poetry Club," which met on the rooftop of the library in the warm months (and in the stacks when the cold weather hit). It was more than simply hosting poetry readings and art workshops–it was truly about connecting people, new ideas, and community resources. What started as a small group of poets grew into a vibrant community hub that gathered for almost a decade! What I learned in this process was the value of building relationships and crafting meaningful experiences that matter to our learners. It taught me that, in addition to being creative in our programming, we need to be consistently deliberate in making space for collaboration with our community partners. Like any creative practice, you have to carve out the time and space.

SA: I want to highlight your point about making space for creativity, Lisa. For many folks, carving out time amidst their daily workload may feel like a lot to take on. What advice do you all have for folks who feel like they're in a creative rut?

NFW: One of the biggest challenges I have in this area is pausing the "tyranny of the urgent" long enough to even think beyond the next thing on my to-do list. I find that I can get a bit addicted to checking things off my list, but that doesn't always mean that I'm making time for the important things, like allowing space to gather information from new and interesting sources, letting my mind wander, or actually engaging in creative thinking or making. Being creative doesn't have to be big to be meaningful. It doesn't have to mean renovations, new programs, or reimagining existing partnerships. It could be noticing an issue with your workflow and thinking to yourself, "Huh, I bet there's a way to do that better," or getting feedback from a student in an information literacy one-shot that sends you back to colleagues with questions about website design or settings in your discovery layer.

I have also found it helpful to schedule time on my calendar for things I particularly want to get done. Setting aside any amount of time that is dedicated to a creative priority not only helps me feel like I have a little more control over my time, but it also ensures that I practice creativity regularly. The more you engage with creativity the more it becomes a mindset for you as a person, and the larger role it can play in the culture of the library.

LF: I hear that it can be challenging to harness creativity amidst day-to-day stressors. Just remember that carving out time to nurture creativity doesn't mean Plein-air painting over your lunch break–it can be as simple as giving yourself whiteboard space to *reimagine* a better way to complete a daily task. It helps to know what inspires you and look for ways you can naturally fold creative inspiration into your day-to-day life. I recently watched the Fred Rogers documentary, and I was struck by how he aligned his values with his creativity and work. In the film, Rogers shares that "what we see and hear on the screen is part of who we become."[2] Just watching the film has made me more mindful of what I'm taking in from the world—and how that input influences my creative spirit and ultimately how I show up to everything, every day.

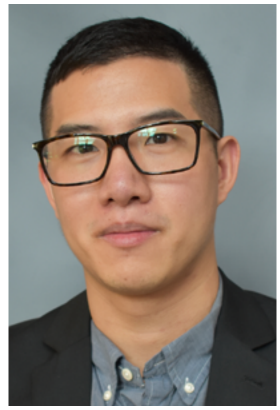
Notes

1. Beth A. Hennessey and Teresa M. Amabile, "Creativity," *Annual Review of Psychology* 61, no. 1 (2010): 572, https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.psych.093008.100416.
2. Morgan Neville, director, *Won't You Be My Neighbor?* Tremolo Productions, Impact Partners, Independent Lens, 2018, 1 hr., 33 min., https://www.focusfeatures.com/wont-you-be-my-neighbor/.

Meet the Candidates for ALA President

Vote in the Election this Spring

Sam Helmick



Raymond Pun

The ACRL Board of Directors posed the following questions to the candidates for ALA president, and *C&RL News* is pleased to publish their responses. Each candidate was given 1,500 words to respond to six questions and contribute an optional opening statement. The responses are identified under each question.

Opening Statements

Raymond Pun: Thank you for the opportunity to share my ALA candidacy and vision with the ACRL membership. As a long-time dedicated ACRL member involved in sections, standing committees, and interest groups, I am thankful to ACRL for creating and sustaining a community of amazing colleagues and for supporting my personal and professional growth throughout my career.

1. As the future ALA president, please share your thoughts about what you would like to accomplish with the divisions during your presidential year.

Sam Helmick: As the future ALA President, I envision fostering intersectionality among advocacy, intellectual freedom, and engagement projects within the divisions. Intersectionality acknowledges the interconnectedness of our various identities and experiences, crucial for a holistic approach to library service. For instance, in designing my own chapter leadership to seek representation from academic, public, and school library workers in presidential elections, we ensure diverse perspectives and collaboration. I aim to facilitate initiatives that promote inclusivity, such as mentorship programs for underrepresented groups and advocating for equitable access to resources. Additionally, I prioritize supporting intellectual freedom by defending against censorship and promoting diverse viewpoints. Ultimately, by prioritizing intersectionality and collaboration, we can advance the profession and better serve our communities. We can leverage our work for greater impact when we increase our mechanisms for tool sharing, talking point curation, and advocacy idiating together.

Pun: We are seeing critical issues affecting our colleagues and libraries simultaneously. They include artificial intelligence, censorship, climate crises, surveillance, digital content price gouging, job burnout, and workplace safety, especially questioning the value of libraries and higher education. These issues also bring us together in community and in solidarity. As ALA President, I have three goals building on what we are seeing today, what leaders have been working on, and what applies to divisions like ACRL:

- Support and showcase library workers as they confront unprecedented challenges and conditions.
- Build stronger working relationships between ALA and its chapters and affiliates.
- Expand ALA's engagement in the international library community.

Collaborating with division members and staff offers a strategic opportunity to strengthen communication externally and internally within ALA. I want to ensure that communications are open across divisions regarding timely issues affecting libraries and library workers that require advocacy engagement (e.g., contacting state/federal legislators). It is an opportunity to gather and tell our stories on a national platform to the general public on how we confront unprecedented challenges and conditions affecting libraries and library workers. We need to emphasize how our work in libraries transforms lives for the better, and to share such stories as best practices so others may learn and draw inspiration on how we endure and address these issues with and for our communities. From a student accessing their library's food security program to a community college librarian advocating for accessibility in digital content, we must also share joy wherever we go and tell our impactful stories to the community. I view ALA as a community of care and practice collaborating with members and staff across divisions, round tables, affiliates, and state chapters to define challenges and develop solutions together.

I see an opportunity for ALA to connect divisions with the work of state chapters, which may benefit us all in learning state practices and sharing essential resources such as upcoming webinars, the LeRoy C. Merritt Humanitarian Fund, the Spectrum Scholarship Program, and the ALA-Allied Professional Association (ALA-APA), a companion nonprofit professional organization {a 501(c)(4) whereas ALA is a 501(c)(3)} to ALA focused on promoting the interests of library workers.

Finally, I strive to increase ALA's engagement with the international library community. Based on my experiences as the ACRL convener for International Perspectives on Academic/Research Libraries Discussion Group (2018-2020), I invited academic library workers from Sri Lanka to Peru, to present their projects, challenges, and trends. There are collaborative opportunities for virtual programming with divisions like ACRL, where we can engage with library workers worldwide and ensure that divisions and their presence are known to prospective and international members.

2. What opportunities (and/or barriers) do you see for increasing member recruitment, engagement, and retention in ACRL? How can ALA and ACRL support each other to encourage member participation and investment?

Helmick: Increasing member recruitment, engagement, and retention in ACRL presents both opportunities and barriers. One opportunity lies in leveraging ALA's resources and advocacy, particularly through ALA-APA, to emphasize the importance of professional development and workplace wellness resources for library workers. By highlighting the impact of supporting library workers in their professional development and then correlating that knowledge to the sustainability, innovation, and wellness goals of the workplace, we can impress upon institutions the value of investing in professional associations like ACRL. For instance, the inclusion of wellness initiatives in institutional strategic plans, like the Iowa City Public Library's, demonstrates a commitment that requires reporting, resourcing, and implementation. To support employee wellness and the library's future, staff are paid for their committee work and funded to attend conferences.

Of course, limited resources and competing priorities within institutions hinder our efforts to increase member recruitment and engagement. To overcome these barriers, ALA and ACRL can collaborate to provide targeted resources and support, such as funding opportunities for professional development activities and wellness programs. Leveraging the ALA Allied Professional Association to boost the signal for existing opportunities and resources to the broadest audience possible would strengthen awareness and participation as would engaging with the ALA New Members Round Table to foster an immediate sense of community and belonging within ACRL through networking events, mentorship programs, and inclusive initiatives to enhance prospective member engagement and retention.

By working together, ALA and ACRL can mutually support each other's efforts to encourage member participation and investment. ALA can provide advocacy, resources, and visibility for ACRL initiatives, while ACRL can offer specialized support and opportunities for professional growth within the academic library community. This collaboration strengthens the profession as a whole and enhances the value proposition for membership in both organizations.

Pun: Membership recruitment, engagement, and retention are a significant priority for ALA. An opportunity to increase membership is to offer a monthly subscription payment price as an option. Not everyone can afford an annual or semi-annual due upfront, but monthly payments might enable members to stay involved. I also see an opportunity for conferences where ALA, ACRL, or other divisions are hosting to engage with local state/student/ACRL chapters. For example, the next ACRL conference will be in Minneapolis. Can we reduce rates for these groups to attend the ACRL conference? Is it also possible to create a track for these groups, especially student and state chapter members, to meet and present at the conferences?

We see more opportunities to host ACRL orientations to engage with prospective, new, and seasoned members. The New Members Round Table (NMRT) does an incredible job in leading mentorship and resume review programs; divisions may also want to consider partnering with round tables to host these sessions. Of course, the barriers are that we need more time, capacity, and labor. We need to build strategic partnerships internally and demonstrate how our association supports professional and personal growth externally. I also want to acknowledge ACRL's approval of the Speaker Honoraria Policy (https://acrl.ala.org/acrlinsider/acrl-speaker-honoraria-policy-updates/), which recognizes our labor and time in providing learning opportunities. This policy serves as a model within ALA to recognize members' time and commitment.

3. What opportunities do you see for collaborating with the divisions to increase ALA's overall financial stability and budgetary health?

Helmick: As ALA President, I see significant opportunities for collaborating with the divisions to enhance ALA's financial stability and budgetary health. Drawing from my experience as a fiscal officer on the ALA Executive Board, I advocate for returning to a staffing model reminiscent of the pre-2000 era, featuring both an Executive Director and a Director of Development. This model can provide the essential human capital needed to effectively engage divisions, learn from their initiatives, and develop shared goals to advance our collective mission.

By fostering collaboration with divisions, we can explore avenues for revenue generation, such as joint fundraising efforts, sponsorship opportunities, and grants. Additionally, leveraging the expertise and resources within divisions can enhance ALA's programming and services, thereby increasing membership engagement and attracting new members.

Prioritizing budgetary health requires a collaborative approach. As ALA President, I would support the Executive Board and the new Executive Director in creating a robust foundation and staffing structure focused on budgetary priorities. This collaborative effort ensures that financial decisions are made with input from all stakeholders and aligned with the organization's strategic goals. I imagine we will explore what this work can look like as we develop ALA's 150th Anniversary fundraising initiatives across our networks and communities.

By working closely with divisions, prioritizing staffing needs, and fostering collaboration at all levels, we can enhance ALA's overall financial stability and budgetary health, ensuring the long-term success of the organization and the profession.

Pun: Since we are now in the middle of the ALA Pivot Strategy 2021-2025, divisions may consider thinking collaboratively to enhance ALA's financial stability. Generally, membership, publishing, and conferences are ALA's main revenue streams. Divisions may want to strategize how to minimize costs and maximize opportunities through partnerships. Some are struggling due to COVID-19 and other factors. We may wish to explore co-hosting conferences together. Another possibility is to engage with international/prospective members through virtual programming with groups like the International Relations Round Table (IRRT), potentially increasing membership. For publishing and courses, we can explore critical trends presented or proposed in conferences and promote division members' expertise like artificial intelligence, open science, or evidence synthesis to offer reasonably priced learning opportunities. Active listening and dialogue on strategies are needed and I would welcome the opportunity to hold such conversations.

4. Please share specific ideas you have for partnering with ACRL (and other divisions) to advance equity and inclusion and to grow the diversity of our membership.

Helmick: As President, I believe partnering with ACRL and other divisions is vital for advancing equity, inclusion, and diversity within our membership. Association leadership mirrors workplace leadership, where every individual can choose to uplift, support, and include others regardless of their position within the institution. Drawing from my experiences in inclusive and diverse leadership, I would cultivate an environment where members openly support and include each other, foster productive discourse and disagreement, and routinely celebrate success stories.

One specific idea for partnering with ACRL and other divisions is to proudly promote initiatives focused on equity and inclusion. For example, I hope each of the ACRL Communities of Practice will feature prominently in the ACRL RoadShows series to demonstrate the positive impact of their work but also occasionally show the intersectionality of their work with school and public libraries. Those intersectional stories demonstrate the breadth and depth of our work. Sharing them provides a greater opportunity to amplify awareness.

In the words of Maya Angelou, "We all should know that diversity makes for a rich tapestry, and we must understand that all the threads of the tapestry are equal in value." Celebrating the diversity of our membership and actively promoting inclusion is not just important; it's essential for the growth and vitality of our association. Together, through collaborative efforts and a commitment to inclusivity, we can create a stronger, more diverse, and equitable community within ACRL and across all ALA divisions.

Pun: As a leader who collaborates across organizations, I believe there are opportunities for divisions to partner within ALA and with various groups like the National Associations of Librarians of Color (NALCo) (American Indian Library Association, Asian/Pacific American Librarians Association, Black Caucus of the American Library Association, Chinese American Librarians Association, and REFORMA: The National Association to Promote Library and Information Services to Latinos and the Spanish-Speaking), Association of Jewish Libraries, Society of American Archivists, or Library Freedom Project, to co-develop professional development training and resources relevant to academic library workers.

I am invested in mentoring LIS students and library workers, especially those that identify as BIPOC in the field, and have a history of doing this work. When I was President of APALA, I collaborated with public and academic library leaders in securing IMLS funds for a national forum for Asian and Pacific Islander American library workers and leadership development. We received letters of support from ALA, ACRL, ARL, ALISE, and other groups. It became clear that this is collaborative work, even if it's writing a letter of support.

We invited ACRL board members to participate at the APALA Executive Board meetings and intentionally tried to sustain that connection. Collaboration can support and advance equity and inclusion in the membership. When I was the ACRL convener for the Leadership Discussion Group (2017-2020), I organized webinar panels featuring academic library leaders of color. I shared these webinars with the NALCos. My goal was to support academic library leaders of color, to connect ACRL and these groups, and to foster ACRL membership recruitment. I also appreciate PLA's discounted registration for their upcoming conference in Columbus for NALCo members. I can see other division conferences considering this to strengthen these relationships.

5. In what specific ways would you seek to support academic library workers, particularly in light of legislation and other efforts that challenge equity, diversity, and inclusion efforts in higher education?

Helmick: As ALA President, my commitment to supporting academic library workers, especially amidst challenges to equity, diversity, and inclusion in higher education, remains steadfast. When I joined the ALA Executive Board, I held two priorities: intellectual freedom and incorporating our core equity, diversity, inclusion, and access standards into the ALA accreditation process.

I sought the prioritization to develop intellectual freedom tools tailored to public, school, and academic settings which could empower library workers to uphold principles of free inquiry and access to information. Our work with United Against Book Bans is just beginning and I believe there are many opportunities for ACRL to shine brightly with efforts like the RoadShow to impart the impact. We need to share our stories with the general public in order to build affinity, organize support, and push against historic levels of library and intellectual freedom adverse legislation.

I advocated for initiatives aimed at increasing equity, inclusion, access, and diversity within both faculty and student populations in ALA accredited institutions. This includes actively promoting diversity in recruitment and hiring processes, advocating for equitable access to resources and services, and supporting curriculum development that reflects ALA's core values. Working towards incorporating these values into ALA accreditation standards is long and complex work. Unfortunately, legislation moves much quicker which is why we must all become storytellers to our public.

My campaign slogan is "Our Stories Are Worth Sharing" because the stories our communities write each day with library resources, the stories we defend and protect on our shelves, as well as the incredible stories of library workers create through their partnerships and innovation hold meaning to those who can voice their priorities at the ballot box.

Let's play some "joyful offense" together and share by sharing our library stories!

Pun: As a former ACRL Government Relations Committee member (2021-2023), I've reviewed and offered suggestions on what ACRL legislative priorities should be. As a community, we could advocate for specific stances on issues such as surveillance or data brokering, so this is a timely question. I am grateful for the opportunity to collaborate with Sonya M. Durney and Tarida Anantachai on an upcoming ACRL edited book regarding academic library workers' roles in legislative advocacy efforts. We saw a gap in this area and wanted to illuminate how academic library workers support public policy and legislative advocacy issues impacting academic libraries and higher education. From copyright to intellectual freedom to open access mandates, these case studies may inspire academic library workers to take the lead in addressing these public policy issues in their institutions and communities. I encourage all academic library workers to sign up for the ALA Public Policy and Advocacy Office's updates (https://confirmsubscription.com/h/i/463208600EB4D89A) such as supporting IMLS funding. You'll see the priorities that ALA advocates for and how we can be part of that to shape a better future.

The efforts that challenge EDI values in higher education are disheartening to see. I think about our colleagues working in such institutions and how they are affected in many ways. It is important that we at ALA continue to share information and connections and to strengthen our ALA/ACRL state chapters with academic library workers experiencing these matters. I've met academic library workers leading their state chapters and learned that what might work for one state may not work for another. As ALA President, I would listen and engage with academic library workers by sharing resources such as media/press training and op-ed writing workshops that ALA may be able to support. ALA can partner with division and state chapter members to address these issues collectively and in solidarity through crucial messaging, training, and learning about successful advocacy strategies. There is strength in numbers. Thank you for allowing me to share my thoughts! You can learn more about my experiences at raypun.info.

ACRL Members Running for ALA Council in the Spring 2024 Election

The following ACRL members are either nominated or petition candidates for ALA councilor. ACRL members are encouraged to vote for these candidates to increase ACRL's voice in ALA affairs.

Jim DelRosso, Assistant Director, Cornell University Catherwood Library

Michele Fenton, Librarian I/Cataloger, Indiana State Library

Travis Givens, Head of Access Services, Elmhurst University A.C. Buehler Library

Mario Gonzalez, Executive Director, Passaic Public Library

Susan Jennings, Dean of Library Services, Chattanooga State Community College

Charles Kratz, Dean Emeritus, University of Scranton Harry & Jeanette Weinberg Memorial

Anne Larrivee, Collection Strategist Librarian, West Chester University Libraries

Brian E. C. Schottlaender, Principal, re:work library consulting

James Teliha, Dean of the Library & Learning Commons, Utica University

Kestrel Ward, Library Associate 1, University of Florida

Ally Laird

Supporting Open Access Monographs

Penn State University Libraries' Participation in the TOME Initiative

In 2017, Penn State pledged to participate in the then newly established Toward an Open Monograph Ecosystem (TOME) Initiative. TOME was launched by the Association of American Universities (AAU), the Association of Research Libraries (ARL), and the Association of University Presses (AUPresses) as a five-year pilot with two main types of participants: colleges and universities and university presses.[1] Penn State was one of the first universities to commit funds to participate in TOME, which was designed to support peer-reviewed, open access monographs in the humanities and social sciences. Each participating university committed $225,000 total for the five-year pilot, split out into $45,000 per academic year to support three grants of $15,000 per monograph. This number was established based on the recommendation from the Ithaka S+R Report "The Costs of Publishing Monographs."[2]

The Penn State Libraries partnered with our Office of the Executive Vice President and Provost for TOME, with the Provost's Office providing the funding and the Libraries managing and distributing the funds. Additionally, university presses signed on to participate in TOME as the publishers of these open access monographs, receiving the funding that the universities pledged. The Penn State University Press was one of the original presses to participate, though many more joined as the pilot progressed. Over the course of the pilot, we worked with 11 of the participating university presses, including Duke University Press, Cambridge University Press, University of Michigan Press, and more.

Each university participating in TOME was left to create their own eligibility guidelines and requirements for receiving TOME support, with a shared commitment to only support monographs published by nonprofit publishers, such as university presses. Penn State chose to solicit submissions for consideration through an open application process during each academic year. Applications were limited to monographs with a written acceptance for open access publishing from a press participating in TOME that were authored or co-authored by a full-time Penn State faculty member. We chose to exclude textbooks, works of fiction, creative works, edited anthologies, critical editions, and translations of previously published works during this pilot. Our reasoning was that we wanted to specifically support traditional monographs in the humanities and social sciences that often struggle to receive funding, but which are instrumental in the careers of faculty researchers in those subject areas. We also limited our TOME funding to one award per author, per year.

We also set requirements for the open access edition of the supported monographs which were described on our TOME website,[3] and also outlined in the TOME agreement.[4] Each

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university press that received funding to make the monograph open access was required to complete and sign the TOME Agreement. The university press that published each monograph was required to fill out the application and acknowledge that they would be required to sign the TOME agreement to receive the funding. We had the press submit the application and sign the TOME agreement, rather than the author, because we wanted to transfer the funds directly to the press rather than having the authors serve as intermediaries. We were very conscious of ensuring that it did not appear that the authors were benefiting monetarily to remove any possibility of confusion around declaring the TOME funding as grants earned, or funds personally received during the year. The press was also best situated to provide the budget information in the application and acknowledge that they would sign the TOME agreement.

TOME applications were primarily reviewed by me and accepted on a rolling basis so long as they met all the criteria. We were able to fund at least three monographs in each of the five years, and some years we supported more with either extra funding from the University Libraries, or due to some presses requesting less than the full $15,000 to make the monograph open access.

Open Access Monograph Requirements

When an application was chosen for TOME funding, the prepared TOME agreement was sent to the press to review and have their director sign. The agreement outlined all the requirements to be met for the press to receive TOME funding. Of note, each press was required to agree to publish the no-cost, DRM-free version of the book no later than the date of publication of the print edition, under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International (CC BY)[5] or Creative Commons Attribution Non-Commercial 4.0 International (CC BY-NC)[6] license. We deliberately chose to limit the Creative Commons license options to only these, as we wanted to ensure the books would be as open as possible and that the work could be translated when needed.

At the outset, we had a press push back against these being the only two options, but after explaining our reasoning and bringing our library administrators into the conversation, they relented and agreed to proceed and chose the CC BY-NC license. Most of the presses who published the TOME books we supported chose this license option, however many began choosing CC BY toward the second half of the pilot period. The requirements also detailed that the open access version would always be the most recent version of the book, and that it would follow all the same editorial guidelines and requirements as a non-open access publication and to use best practices in metadata provision and search engine optimization to indicate that the book is available open access.

Other requirements that we included in our agreement were for the open access version of the book to conform to Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0 or later; for preservation copies, both PDF and EPUB, to be provided to us for inclusion in our institutional repository ScholarSphere;[7] for the press to include the standard TOME acknowledgement and a DOI on the copyright page; for the press to provide that copyright page to us for review and accuracy before publication; and for the press to distribute the OA version via one of the following platforms: the Directory of Open Access Books (DOAB), HathiTrust Digital Library, Internet Archive, JSTOR's Open Content, MUSE Open, and/or the OAPEN Library. Each of these requirements were chosen to ensure that the publication would have the widest reach possible, both in user access as well as digital accessibility, and to allow us to serve as partners in the publication process and help each press meet our requirements.

Implementation and Lessons Learned

The requirements outlined in the agreement were a bit of a learning curve for many presses we worked with in the early days, especially because not many universities had as detailed an agreement as we did in the beginning. However, we did hear positive feedback over time from some presses who were very appreciative of the expectations we had which made it easy for them to reference and gave them good guidance in the often-new process of open access publishing. For example, the requirement for us to review the title page of the publication was as much for our purposes as it was to support each press. We were requesting a good bit of unique information to be added to the title pages for these publications and we often identified missing information, especially in the early years, and thankfully most presses were appreciative of our eyes on the new content. We also used it as an opportunity to support the presses as they navigated new copyright language, since the inclusion of the Creative Commons license required changes to the template "all rights reserved" language most were used to including.

However, the difficulty with this was that often publication dates for books are changed and updated depending on how long the review and revision processes are taking, making it difficult for us to determine exactly when to follow up about reviewing the copyright page. The copyright page review was also a new step for presses, which meant that most forgot to send it to us on their own without a reminder, and because our reminder was hard to plan, there were times where the book had already gone to print before we were able to review the copyright page. It also made it difficult to know when to request the final PDF and EPUB versions of the books, and if the press was not familiar with the requirement to send those files to us upon publication, this also took some reminding on our end. As a pilot program, we knew that there would be bumps and growing pains, and over time this process did get better, but with each press having their own processes and publication schedules, it posed a real challenge.

Similarly, we did not have the capacity to review each final publication for accessibility conformance, and neither did we have a process to provide feedback and request accessibility changes during the publication process. Accessibility is still something that many publishers, let alone university presses, are learning to incorporate into their workflows, and as the pilot progressed, we knew that we did not have the capacity or opportunity to follow up with the accessibility requirement as we would have liked. This is definitely an area for growth as we move past the pilot, but we wanted to include accessibility in the pilot agreement to demonstrate our commitment to making scholarship digitally accessible as well as open access.

Impact

Over the five years of the TOME pilot program, Penn State was able to support 18 publications, four of which are still in production. Most of these monographs were supported at $15,000 each, however some publications only requested half of the amount to offset their cost, enabling us to provide support for more than three monographs per year. Additionally, the Penn State Libraries was able to provide an additional $15,000 in FY 2020–2021, on top of what the Provost's Office provided. The TOME initiative supported monographs from the College of Education and eight departments and the Rock Ethics Institute in our College of Liberal Arts at the University Park campus, as well as a monograph from Liberal Arts at the Penn State York campus. Only one author applied in multiple years to support two books, and in all we supported 18 authors, since one publication was coauthored. We collaborated with 10 university presses in total, and because of the additional support from the University Libraries, we only had to deny two applications due to incompatibility with our TOME agreement. However, other individuals emailed over the years to inquire about eligibility, and some did not apply if their books were not being published by a university press or equivalent nonprofit publisher, thus making their monograph ineligible.

The impact of TOME as a pilot program has been assessed in the final report published in August 2023 titled "TOME Stakeholder Value Assessment" by Nancy Maron.[8] Peter Potter, the visiting program officer who oversaw the TOME initiative from 2017 to 2022, also discussed the impact on the usage and sales of TOME monographs.[9] He found that making these books open access allowed their average usage per book (7,754) to be significantly higher than the average unit sales per book (590). At Penn State, we have seen generally high usage just with the copies we have stored in our institutional repository ScholarSphere of 171 downloads on average, with the count for one of the older books at over 700.

The impact on our faculty authors has also been significant. Many have cited the importance of making their work openly available, and that the topics they have written on are important for a wide audience to access without barriers. These authors have participated in Open Access Week[10] events through the Penn State Libraries and have spoken with their colleagues and students about the importance of making their work open.

Despite the bumps in implementation of the TOME Initiative at Penn State, the outcome has been well worth the effort. We continue to see interest in making monographs open access and have seen the impact it makes on our scholars as much as the scholarship.

Future of Monograph Support at Penn State

The TOME pilot formally concluded in the 2022–2023 fiscal year, but with the success of the initiative and the libraries' commitment to supporting open access publishing, the University Libraries has continued the program. It has been rebranded as "Open Access Monograph Funding," and is currently funded on a yearly basis without a formal ongoing commitment. We hope to continue supporting open access monograph publishing, whether through continued funding for a TOME-like program or some other model, well into the future.

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Grace Liu, Amy Pajewski, and Rachel M. McMullin

Evaluating Online Sources

Introducing a 4-Step Strategy

In 2021, Grace Liu published an article titled "Moving Up the Ladder of Source Assessment: Expanding the CRAAP Test with Critical Thinking and Metacognition" in *C&RL News*.[1] This article was a result of collaboration with West Chester University management faculty aimed to enhance source evaluation practices by incorporating critical thinking and metacognition. The article introduced a 4-step source assessment strategy and documented our initial efforts to enrich source evaluation practices, aligning with the concepts of affective learning and metacognition outlined in ACRL's Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education.[2]

Building on this work, over the past two years, the three authors of this article came together and further refined the source assessment strategy initially developed for the management class, adapting it to serve a wider audience of students from any discipline. We intended to create a learning module that can supplement one-shot library instruction and go into more depth in teaching source evaluation. With the support of a grant from the Committee for Excellence in Learning and Teaching at our institution, we developed a comprehensive learning module that adapts the initial 4-step strategy to focus on evaluating online sources, including videos, quizzes, exercises, infographic guides, and feedback surveys.[3]

This article aims to introduce the new 4-step strategy for evaluating online sources to the academic librarian community. Our primary goal is to provide support to fellow librarians in their information literacy instruction, especially when confronted with the difficulties of teaching complex information evaluation skills within limited one-shot library instruction sessions. The approaches outlined in this strategy can be used in one-shot classes to initiate source evaluation discussions with students. Additionally, the learning module can be used outside of the classroom to extend students' learning experiences. By sharing this strategy, we aspire to foster meaningful discussions and encourage the exchange of best practices among academic librarians regarding effective source evaluation strategies.

4-Step Strategy for Evaluating Online Sources

The 4-step strategy is designed to align with the natural process when encountering an article. It guides students through the series of evaluative steps including: (1) forming initial impressions by checking the six quality indicators of the online sources; (2) assessing quality using the CRAAP test, delving deeper into considerations of currency, relevance, authority, accuracy, and purpose; (3) applying critical thinking and lateral reading skills to

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evaluate the content from various perspectives and sources; and (4) reflecting on their own biases and assumptions throughout the evaluation. The level of analysis goes from simple to more substantial as one moves through the steps. It builds upon the familiar territory students may have encountered in K–12 education, but also pushes them to expand their analytical and reflective skills beyond that level.

Here are the 4-step strategies for evaluating online sources:

Step 1. Check and Identify: Get the First Impression

- **URL:** Is the source recognizable or reputable? What is the domain name of the website (.gov, .edu, .org, .com, etc.)?
- **Date:** When was the article written or updated? What time period is covered by the content?
- **Author:** Is there an author? Is it a person or an organization?
- **About page:** Does the website have an "About Us" page that describes who they are?
- **Links/citations to sources:** Are there links or citations to other sources? Does it link to an internal or an external source?
- **Layout:** Does it provide easy navigation? Does it contain too many distractions?

Step 2. Investigate and Discover: Gather More Evidence with the CRAAP Test

- **Currency:** Is the article out of date for my topic? Can I find more current information?
- **Relevance:** Does the content relate to my topic or answer my question? Is the source appropriate for research purposes?
- **Authority:** Does the author(s) have education or experience that makes them an expert on this topic?
- **Accuracy:** Is the information accurate? Where does it come from? Can I verify it with a source? Is the article under peer review or editorial review?
- **Purpose:** What is the purpose of the website? What potential biases does it have?

Step 3. Read and Think: Use Lateral Reading and Critical Thinking Skills

- **Consult diverse sources:** Have I looked at a variety of sources? Have I compared different perspectives?
- **Personal stories versus broader research:** Is the source based on anecdotes or research? Is the research method valid and reliable? Who funds the research and what are their views and interest?
- **Logical reasoning versus fallacies:** Are the arguments convincing? Does the evidence support the conclusion? Does it contain overgeneralizations?
- **Track evidence:** Have I followed upstream and downstream sources (backward and forward citations) to gather all evidence? Can I reconcile the differences and form my own opinions?

Step 4. Reflect and Practice: Apply Metacognitive Skills and Reflective Practice

- **Pierce the filter bubbles:** Am I surrounded by sources with the same views? Have I searched the other side of the story with opposite or neutral search terms?

- **Examine our own biases:** Have I brought my own biases into source evaluation? Have I weighed the reasons from both sides? Do I favor this source because it affirms my belief?
- **Climb down the ladder of inference:** Have I added personal or cultural meaning to understand the content? Are my assumptions or prior knowledge questionable? Have I come to the conclusion too quickly?
- **Practice what we learn:** Have I applied the source evaluation strategies in real life? Am I aware of my own biases and cognitive limitations? Have I kept an open mind when forming my beliefs? Have I realized that a simple fact can be disruptive and suspend my judgment until I see the big picture?

Figure 1. Infographic guide to the 4-step strategy

The Strategy in Practice

After developing the strategy, we integrated it into the university's learning management system (D2L), which not only made it more accessible but also scalable, allowing it to reach a larger number of students. During the fall semester of 2022, we introduced the learning module to the whole campus. Hoping to reach as many students as possible, we crafted a promotion plan that included multiple components. First, we promoted the learning module through our university-wide first-year writing and first-year experience programs as well as a campus-wide email to all faculty. Second, the development of our module happened to coincide with the debut of a co-curricular transcript program offered by our Office of Student Affairs, and we worked with them to include the 4-step strategy in that program. Finally, we marketed the module directly to students. We collaborated with our library communications technician to design marketing materials, including flyers distributed in the library and advertisements for the library homepage and campus digital signage.

As of February 1, 2024, a total of 1,785 students have completed the module and received a certificate of completion. We also embedded a survey in the module to gather feedback from the participants. As of February 1, 2024, we had also received responses from 1,696 students. According to the survey results, 77.6% of the respondents indicated that they acquired new knowledge that would help them in evaluating online sources. Additionally, 78.8% reported feeling more confident about their ability to evaluate online sources after completing the module. An encouraging 83.4% of the participants expressed their intention to apply the knowledge and skills they gained from the learning module in the future. These outcomes indicate that the learning module has been effective in enhancing students' understanding, confidence, and intention to use the strategies taught in evaluating online sources.

Accessing the Learning Materials

The infographic guide to the 4-step strategy is included in this article as figure 1. All the learning materials are also made available via ACRL Framework Sandbox, including links to the videos, a high-resolution PDF version of the guide, video scripts, and exercises with answer keys.[4] The instructional videos are presented on a dedicated Google site.[5] All the materials provided are distributed under a CC BY Creative Commons License for sharing. So, you can adapt these materials to make your own learning modules to fit the specific needs of the instruction program on your campus.

Conclusion

Although we recognize that our approach may not fully address the complexities of source evaluation, we are dedicated to continuous improvement. We highly appreciate feedback from librarians, as it will greatly contribute to enhancing and refining this learning module. We have provided a link for librarians to share their feedback: https://forms.gle/HCQqUBe1zQbMkcb18. We strongly believe that by working collaboratively and consistently refining the approach, we can bring significant benefits to both our librarian community and the learners we serve.

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Brandi Porter

Mold in My Library

A Personal Journey Through the Health Impacts of Toxic Mold Illness

Many academic libraries are susceptible to toxic mold, leaving a large number of library workers vulnerable to illness. Because the science and study of environmental illness is emerging, many barriers exist in addressing indoor air quality issues. As librarians we are often taught in library school and through professional resources to fear mold in our collections, but not about the impact it can have on our health. Certain academic libraries are susceptible to becoming sick buildings because of when and how they were constructed, as well as higher education practices of deferred HVAC maintenance. Adding water intrusion events and high humidity imbalance only increases the risk of producing poor health effects in these environments. Unfortunately, the health impact caused by mold mycotoxins circulating in the air can remain in libraries long after visible mold cleanup occurs.

I was diagnosed with biotoxin illness after working for multiple years in an academic library with repeated outbreaks of toxic mold. As a disclaimer, I am not a medical doctor. I'm a librarian, educator, and patient. Professionally, I am an academic library director of nearly 20 years (across multiple institutions) and an adjunct library and information science instructor. Much of what I've learned is from first-hand experiences with doctors, indoor air quality technicians, and my own literature review. When I became ill, I suffered for years trying to find help medically, organizationally, and professionally. My hope is that in sharing my story, I can provide some roadmap pieces for current and future library workers who find themselves in similar situations.

Background

Although little library literature exists on the role that ongoing mold exposure has on library staff and patrons, it does document evidence of mold outbreaks in libraries forcing closures dating back to the 1990s[1] to current day[2] and occurring all throughout the United States.[3,4,5,6,7] However, in my case and in countless cases I've heard about from other academic librarians, mold is quickly cleaned up, environments are deemed safe, and operations move on. After all, to do otherwise results in large financial expenditures (sometimes in the millions), which institutions may not have.

For clarification, molds are naturally occurring fungal growth found in distinct environments like air, soil, plants, animals, and human hosts.[8] They reproduce by releasing tiny spores that float through the air and indoors are linked to water or moisture problems.[9] Some of

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these molds are known to produce mycotoxins. Mold mycotoxins are "diverse toxic secondary metabolites that are naturally produced by a wide range of molds."[10] Mycotoxins are not visible to the naked eye, and in water damaged buildings these toxins are often inhaled.[11] At this point it is important to distinguish that mold exposure can cause human allergies, but ongoing exposure to mold mycotoxins, unlike allergies, can have poisonous effects in the body. Consequently, for a significant number of people, biotoxin illness owing to ongoing mold exposure results in systemic and chronic bodily inflammation and a cascade of negative human health impacts. One doesn't acquire biotoxin illness with short-term exposure; it develops over time.

Unhealthy Buildings and Mold Outbreaks

When I spotted the first significant mold outbreak in our collection on some library archival materials, I knew it was bad. After all, I had been introduced to the dangers of mold to collections in library school. I also knew from a health standpoint that the situation was not good for people such as myself with mold allergies. I completed years of allergy shots for molds and other allergens before and during my employment at this library. However, I had no idea that the mold outbreak I came upon or the subsequent ones to come could actually prove toxic to myself and others in my building.

There are several well-known causes that contribute to mold in indoor buildings: moisture intrusion;[12,13] ventilation system issues,[14] and high humidity levels.[15] Libraries are particularly susceptible to having long-term toxic mold from an outbreak because of the porous nature of the materials we house. Although *Stachybotrys* or "black mold" is the most well-known toxic mold, *Penicillium/Aspergillus* is a particular toxic mold found in the degradation of paper materials and is therefore common in libraries.[16] In the first air quality test conducted in the library, indoor levels of *Penicillium/Aspergillus* were 28 times higher in the affected area versus outside levels. I later found mycotoxins from this mold in my body during medical testing.

Academic libraries built around the 1970s that incur repeated water damage can have construction factors that lead to sick buildings if they are not well maintained. Construction of public buildings during this time promoted energy efficiency; included mechanical heating, ventilation, and air-conditioning (HVAC) systems; and in many cases used less expensive building materials.[17] These types of tightly sealed buildings can allow environmental toxins to recirculate through the building. The library I worked in fit this category.

In my case, moisture intrusion into the building came from roof leaks, a poor building envelope with cracking exterior brick and interior concrete, and basement flooding on and off over many years. There were also multiple ventilation issues: air conditioning that was turned off when the building was closed, one summer with 10 days of no air conditioning to replace a boiler system, extensive deferred HVAC maintenance, and operating a system for more than 20 years past its expected life cycle. Despite multiple air quality reports, complaints from staff of adverse health effects while working in the building, and meetings with environmental specialists, few updates were made, and those that were completed did not address any of the underlying causes of the repeated outbreaks.

Links to Biotoxin Illness from Mold Exposure

One factor among many that allows for a building like this library to stay in operation is that all employees do not feel the effects equally. It is estimated that 25% of the population carries a genetic mutation that is identified with being unable to properly rid their bodies of mold toxins and makes them particularly vulnerable to illness when exposed to these toxins over time.[18,19] The process is explained as:

> In most people, the biotoxin is "tagged" and identified by the body's immune system and is broken down and removed from the blood by the liver. However, some individuals do not have the immune response genes (HLA-DR genes) that are required to eventually form an antibody to a given foreign antigen. In these cases the biotoxins are not "tagged" and remain in the body indefinitely, free to circulate and wreak havoc.[20]

Lab tests confirmed I carry this genetic marker. Some of the adverse health effects of biotoxin illness are severe brain fog, vertigo, headaches, asthma, gastrointestinal issues, resistant staph bacteria, chronic pain, and exhaustion, among many others. As a result of this situation, it is very difficult to recover from biotoxin illness from mold exposure without permanently removing oneself from the environment.[21,22]

Treating Biotoxin Illness

Treatments will hopefully vastly improve in the coming years with more awareness of environmental illnesses. However, there are steps patients can take to rid their bodies of toxins and boost their immune systems. Most importantly, patients will need a specialist as a partner in treatment. These physicians typically practice functional or integrative medicine. Short-term treatments typically involve "binders" to aid in the ridding of toxins from the body. Then patients can begin addressing any other illnesses or disorders that remain from the systemic inflammation and overactive immune response.

Lack of Employee Assistance

Unfortunately, having found myself in this environment, there were not many employee supports to help improve my situation. Currently, it is difficult to hold employers responsible for sick buildings. There are no standards for acceptable mold amounts indoors,[23] and there are no commonly agreed-upon environmental testing measures.[24] These factors mean you can ask your employer to test for mold, but there is not much to be done with the results. Further, the type of test (air or surface) can affect the results. When mold is found, reports typically just compare indoor to outdoor amounts and include notes like "could cause allergies for some" or "not deemed toxic for humans with normal immune systems." Systems we think might help employees (like OSHA or worker's compensation laws) are slow at effecting change and can still slant toward employers.

It can also be difficult to find or afford medical treatment for this illness. I saw quite a few doctors who did not believe mold could cause toxic symptoms, such as the ones I experienced. Rather, I came to learn that environmental illnesses are not well covered in many medical school programs. "Limited educational opportunities currently exist for medical students and residents to learn about the diagnosis and management of exposure-related conditions."[25] When I finally found a physician who specialized in this area, she confirmed this situation while noting that it is improving. Further, most insurance companies do not cover the full cost for treatment of biotoxin illness. As a multi-system illness, a short doctor's visit is not long enough to treat patients, nor are simple medical tests to diagnose problems, thus requiring more out-of-pocket expenses for patients.

Being Your Own Advocate

There are a variety of things I learned to do to protect myself in the process of reporting these issues to my employer. By way of my position as a library director, I had a lot of access to information about the building, and data collection was essential. I learned that if I wanted to advocate for myself and my staff, I could not just simply voice my concerns to senior administrators. Early on, doing so meant deploying housekeeping to wipe up mold from surfaces and conducting air quality testing while I was out of the building. Consequently, I took pictures of all future mold outbreaks before reporting them and asked that I be allowed to be present for all air sampling and environmental inspections. I also requested, and was given, copies of most of the mold testing and environmental reports done for the building. I recommend that any employee aware of a mold outbreak in their building request air quality testing and a report of such testing. If an employer refuses, there are low-cost mold test kits you can purchase online to conduct your own testing. While being diligent does not mean your employer can or will fix a major mold problem adequately, it can provide you valuable information for healing and hopefully help you to satisfactorily exit the situation. It is important to realize that you can be an exemplary employee and still be seen as an adversary to the well-being of the institution.

Getting Out and Getting Better

In consultation with my family and my physician, I decided to leave a job I loved for my health and my quality of life. I'd like to say that my employer was supportive, but they took a path of risk avoidance and denial instead. Unfortunately, library employees are particularly susceptible to employers being able to refuse reasonable accommodations for alternative workspaces under the Americans With Disabilities Act because of the frontline nature of our work. Moreover, it is incredibly hard to navigate this situation when you are feeling the full effects of the illness. A caring and knowledgeable physician is vital in this process. Ultimately, I chose to take a leave of absence under the Family and Medical Leave Act to begin recovery and protect my job during the process. It gave me the space I needed to create an exit plan from my position and that of working in a toxic library building.

Conclusion

The cost to human livelihood and the cost to remediate sick library buildings should be factors that are strongly considered during initial construction and in ongoing prevention of conditions that lead to potential outbreaks of mold in these workspaces. Water-damaged libraries and collections are often obviously so. Before accepting a new academic library position, one may wish to take stock of the building environment before doing so. In the absence of these steps, employees may need to create their own pathway out of sick library buildings for their own livelihoods. Knowing how to find employee advocates, healthcare partners, and educational resources is critical.

Wellness from biotoxin illness is possible, but it takes time and patient resolve to stick with treatments. Unfortunately, it also currently means a strict avoidance of buildings with ongoing, uncontrolled water damage issues. We are early in understanding this illness and in scientific research on it. Hopefully the coming years will bring new, more affordable treatments and new regulations for indoor air quality and employee safety in workplaces.

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MIT Global Shakespeares Video and Performance Archive. *Access:* https://globalshakespeares.mit.edu/.

The MIT Global Shakespeares Video and Performance Archive is a collaborative project founded by the Massachusetts Institute of Technology School of Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences. The archive was created for students, teachers, and researchers to use as a core scholastic resource for Shakespearean education. The archive contains an extensive collection of filmed Shakespeare performances, with 238 clips and more than 100 full-length productions. At the time of authorship, 14 countries and 53 languages are represented in the archive.

The website is organized into six sections: "Site Guide," "About," "Videos," "Education," "News," and "Give." This organization is user-friendly and incredibly clear to navigate. The "Site Guide" page gives tips for getting started with the archive, including an "Anatomy of a Production Page" diagram that describes how to use the various features included in each individual production page. This is a key usability feature of the website. It allows users to explore the archive at their own pace and without assistance. The "About" section includes how the archive came to be, the team associated with the project, a list of six collaborators and affiliated projects, and a page with instructions to submit projects to the archive. The "Videos" collection defaults to display all productions included in the archive. Alternatively, users can organize the videos by play, language, or region, the last of which includes an interactive map of the world that visually displays the diverse array of countries represented. The "Education" tab links out to groups of essays, interviews, scripts, a glossary, a bibliography, and study modules for use both within and outside of MIT. The "News" page includes reports from around the world about Shakespearean works being produced and published, including books, performances, conferences, and more.

The site is current, with all collections, news, and videos with entries as recent as 2023, and the "Education" section was updated in 2022. Overall, this archive is successful in its endeavor to act as a core resource for global Shakespeare education.—*Sydney Orason, University of Alabama at Birmingham, sorason@uab.edu*

Seattle Civil Rights & Labor History Project. *Access:* https://depts.washington.edu/civilr/index.htm.

The Seattle Civil Rights & Labor History Project is a freely accessible online public history project based at the University of Washington. It examines Seattle's distinctively intertwined civil rights and labor movements throughout the 20th century, including Black, Chicano, Filipino, and LGBTQ activism. Its diverse sources include 80 oral histories from civil rights activists, photos, newspaper clippings, essays, profiles, short films, slideshows, maps, and lesson plans. Graduate and undergraduate students at the University of Washington wrote many of the well-researched essays. This project is one of 14 public history projects covering a wide range of social and labor movements in the Pacific Northwest. These projects are produced through the Civil Rights and Labor History Consortium, a group of academics and community organizations.

Joni R. Roberts is associate university librarian for public services and collection development at Willamette University, email: jroberts@willamette.edu, and Carol A. Drost is associate university librarian for technical services at Willamette University, email: cdrost@willamette.edu.

Since 2005, the project has exposed Seattle's long history of racial discrimination. A database of more than 500 racial restrictive housing covenants highlights the scale of the problem. Interactive maps reveal residential patterns over time. Partly inspired by the project's research, Washington State has enacted four laws since 2006 to fight housing discrimination and address its historical origins. A 2023 law instituted a special tax on home sales, proceeds of which will support lower-income, first-time homebuyers with roots in Washington State since 1968.

The project's website is easy to browse. The top navigation points users to "About," "Segregated Seattle," "Essays," "Interviews," "Photos," "Maps," and "For Teachers." A button labeled "Explore the Project" opens a dropdown menu linking to pages on "Seattle's Ethnic Press," "Civil Rights Groups," and "Films and Slide Shows." Special sections tackle 12 topics, including the Seattle Black Panther Party, trade unionism among Filipino cannery workers, and Seattle's 1919 general strike. Users can browse contents by decade and subject and can access subsets of materials on issues particularly relevant to African Americans, Asian Americans, Latinos, LGBTQ people, urban Indians, or women. A Google search box enables site-wide keyword searching.

The Seattle Civil Rights & Labor History Project is a valuable free resource, relevant to teachers, scholars, high school and college students, community activists, and others drawn to the history of Seattle and the Pacific Northwest.—*Michael Rodriguez, Lyrasis, topshelvr@gmail.com*

Call for Reviewers

If you are interested in writing for the "Internet Reviews" column in *C&RL News*, please contact Joni Roberts (jroberts@willamette.edu) or Carol Drost (cdrost@willamette.edu). Be sure to include your subject interests with your email. Reviews need to be approximately 380 words. We look forward to hearing from you!

Grants

The Library of Congress (LoC) recently announced that six awards totaling nearly $400,000 have been awarded from the Connecting Communities Digital Initiative through a program available to higher education institutions and libraries, archives, and museums. The program is part of the Of the People: Widening the Path initiative. The 2024 awardees will use these funds to create projects that offer creative approaches to the library's digital collections and center on Black, Indigenous, and Hispanic or Latino studies.

Recipients include Angelo State University ($69,999.06) for the project "All History Is Local: Celebrating the People of West Texas," the University of Houston-Downtown ($69,084.67) for "Discovering Afro-Latino Heritage: A Reflective Story Map Project to Enhance Student Belongingness and Learning," Trustees of Indiana University ($68,154.48) to fund "Connecting Collections: Indigenous Identities in Edward Curtis and Joseph Dixon Materials," and more.

Launched in January 2021, Of the People: Widening the Path is a multiyear initiative to connect LoC more deeply with Black, Indigenous, Hispanic or Latino, Asian American and Pacific Islander, and other communities of color. Supported through a gift from the Mellon Foundation, it provides new opportunities for more Americans to engage with the library and add their perspectives to the library's collections. Learn more at https://www.loc.gov/programs/of-the-people/.

Acquisitions

The Beauford Delaney Papers, acquired by the University of Tennessee Libraries in 2022, are now available to researchers. The collection consists of family, personal, and professional correspondence; photographs; sketchbooks and notebooks; artwork; exhibition material; biographical records; and printed material created or collected by the Knoxville-born, African American artist Beauford Delaney (1901–1979). He is widely regarded as one of the major modernist painters of his time. His brother is Joseph Delaney, another well-known modernist painter.

In addition to material related to the production of Delaney's artwork, the collection includes correspondence with influential artists and gallerists such as Palmer Hayden, Lawrence Calcagno, James LeGros, Dorothy Block, Darthea Speyer, and Joseph Delaney; the writers James Baldwin, Henry Miller, and James Jones; and other cultural figures. Researchers can learn more about the collection and use a finding aid at https://scout.lib.utk.edu/repositories/2/resources/5353.