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Features

Departments

This month's cover features a 1949 photograph of Dr. Priscilla Cumming administering vaccines to University of Rochester School of Nursing students. The image was taken by William M. Rittase and is part of the University of Rochester Medical Center photograph collection held at the History of Medicine Section of the Edward G. Miner Library.

The History of Medicine Section of the Miner Library is the repository for an impressive collection of primary and secondary resources in the field of medical, dental, and nursing history. The rare book and periodical collections are representative of western medical literature in every period and specialty. Archival holdings include the records and papers of the University of Rochester Medical Center and its faculty, as well as institutions and persons of relevance to medical history in Rochester and Upstate New York. Learn more at https://libguides.urmc.rochester.edu/History-of-Medicine.

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Back issues: $11.00 each.

University of Pittsburgh Completes Hillman Library Renovation

Hillman University Librarian and Director of the University Library System Kornelia Tancheva in the newly renovated library.

The University of Pittsburgh celebrated the completion of renovations to the university's Hillman Library in September 2025. Over eight years—spanning a pandemic, shifting technologies, and evolving learning styles—Hillman Library underwent a meticulous floor-by-floor transformation. The renovation was never just cosmetic; it was philosophical, asking: What should a research library do in a world where information is everywhere? Five core principles guided the redesign: Envisioning the library as a gathering space, focusing on experiential learning, designing for diverse learning styles, emphasizing unique collections, and supporting digital scholarship.

Key to Hillman's rebirth was embracing campuswide and community partnerships. From Pitt Digital to the Center for Creativity and the Center for Teaching and Learning, each floor contains shared resources and reflects shared goals. For example, the Technology Lab—built with Pitt Digital—offers software support, poster printing, and peer tech ambassadors. Student art rotates through the building, and community events draw visitors from across Pittsburgh. Learn more about the renovation at https://www.pittwire.pitt.edu/features-articles/2025/09/04/hillman-library-renovation-open-house.

2026 I Love My Librarian Award Nominations Due December 15

Has a librarian made a difference in your life or your community? Now is your chance to honor their contributions by nominating them for the ALA's annual I Love My Librarian Award. Library users across the country are invited to recognize their favorite librarians working in public, school, college, community college, or university libraries for transforming lives and improving communities. Nominations are being accepted online now through December 15, 2025. Ten amazing librarians will receive $5,000 and the honor of a lifetime. We know academic librarians change lives in their communities every day, so please spread the word about this life-changing opportunity. Learn more on the I Love My Librarian website at https://ilovelibraries.org/love-my-librarian/ and nominate your favorite librarian today.

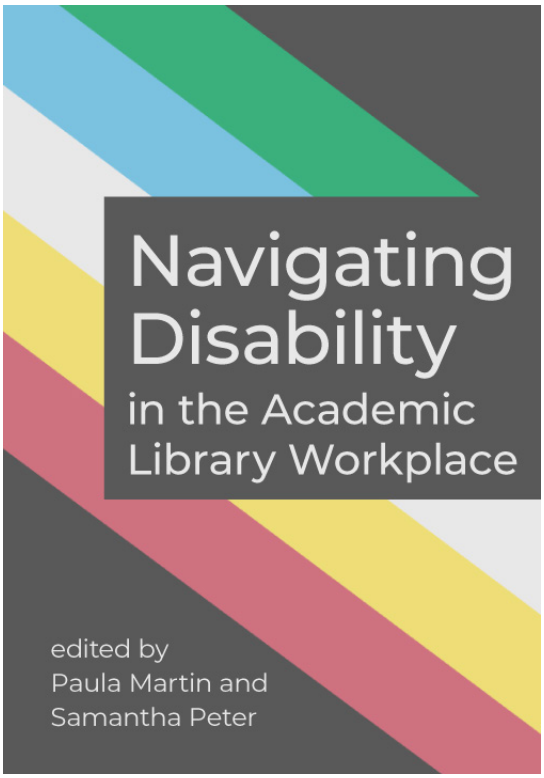
Library of Congress Opens Award Nominations for Outstanding Federal Libraries, Librarians, and Library Technicians

To honor the innovations and successes of federal libraries, librarians, and library technicians in meeting the information demands of government, businesses, scholarly communities, and the public, the Federal Library and Information Network (FEDLINK) in

the Library of Congress has opened nominations for its 28th annual awards for federal librarianship. FEDLINK is now accepting nominations for Federal Library/Information Center Project of the Year, Federal Library/Information Center of the Year, Federal Librarian of the Year, and Federal Library Technician of the Year.

For nomination materials, visit the awards section of the program's website at https://www.loc.gov/flicc/awards/fedlinkawards.html or email fliccfno@loc.gov. The nomination packet includes the nomination form, selection criteria, and a list of supporting materials. To submit a nomination, email completed nomination packets to fedlink@loc.gov no later than 11:59 p.m. ET on November 21, 2025.

ACRL Releases Navigating Disability in the Academic Library Workplace



ACRL announces the publication of *Navigating Disability in the Academic Library Workplace,* edited by Paula Martin and Samantha Peter, a guide for librarians with disabilities on supporting and advocating for themselves in the workplace and a resource for able-bodied and neurotypical managers and workers to learn how to be allies.

Approximately 26 percent of American adults are classified as disabled, meaning many academic librarians live with at least one disability. Much of the literature surrounding disability in libraries, however, focuses on the user rather than the library worker.

Navigating Disability in the Academic Library Workplace collects ways that the library can support its workers with disabilities and encourage them to succeed. Chapters examine identities, intersections, the Americans with Disabilities Act, accommodations, advocacy, and collective care practices. Authors generously share their own stories and experiences and offer their own definitions of ableism, disability, intersectionality, and other relevant terms to help capture the diversity and magnitude of identities held by people with disabilities.

Navigating Disability in the Academic Library Workplace offers a chorus of voices with different perspectives and provides ideas and resources for individuals with disabilities, supervisors, coworkers, and the profession.

Navigating Disability in the Academic Library Workplace is available for purchase in print and as an ebook through the ALA Online Store; in print through Amazon.com; via EBSCO, ProQuest, and other ebook vendors; and by telephone order at (866) 746-7252 in the United States or (770) 442-8633 for international customers.

PALNI Joins EAST to Support Shared Print Preservation

The Private Academic Library Network of Indiana (PALNI) recently announced its membership in the Eastern Academic Scholars' Trust (EAST), a national shared print program dedicated to preserving and ensuring long-term access to scholarly print materials. By

working with EAST, PALNI strengthens its commitment to deep collaboration and external partnerships while advancing the responsible stewardship of academic resources for students, faculty, and researchers across its twenty-four supported institutions and beyond. This membership builds on a collaborative collection analysis project launched in January that assessed PALNI's circulating print holdings in relation to the EAST collective collection, laying the foundation for PALNI's participation and providing insights into shared retention and preservation priorities. Goals included demonstrating the value of the shared collection, advancing collaborative management, and ensuring effective long-term preservation.

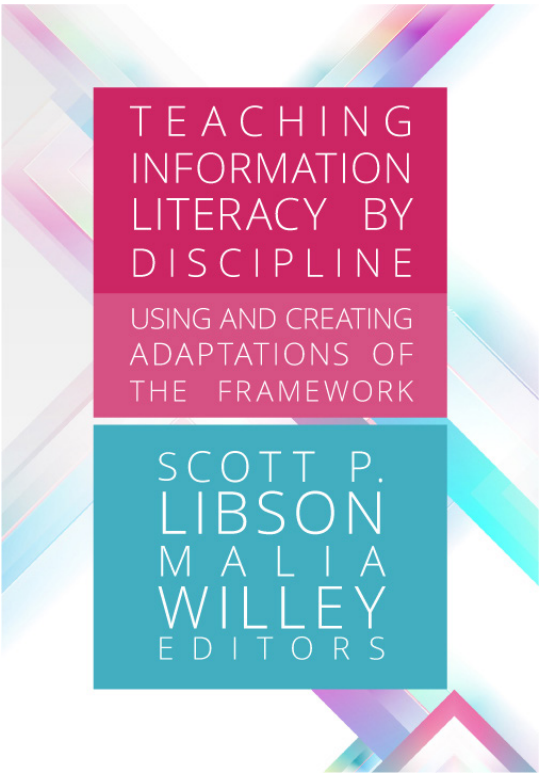
As part of its membership in EAST, four PALNI schools—Butler University, Concordia Theological Seminary, St. Meinrad Seminary and School of Theology, and Wabash College—will participate as Retention Partners, committed to retaining agreed-upon titles in their local collections and making these titles available to other EAST members through its lending network. An additional 20 PALNI institutions will serve as Supporting Partners, gaining access to EAST's distributed shared print collection and contributing to a strengthened cooperative lending network.

CLOCKSS Launchs Preserving Diamond Open Access Publications Pilot

CLOCKSS is proud to launch a pilot program to preserve Diamond Open Access (OA) publications—at no cost to participating libraries, whether current supporters or new to the community. Diamond OA journals, published without author or reader fees, play a vital role in inclusive, community-driven scholarship. Yet many lack the resources for long-term digital preservation. This initiative addresses that gap, ensuring these valuable contributions remain accessible, discoverable, and secure for future generations.

For current CLOCKSS library partners and those considering becoming supporters, this pilot showcases the tangible value of your investment. By supporting CLOCKSS, you help preserve a critical segment of open scholarship while reinforcing an equitable and resilient publishing landscape. Your participation not only secures the future of Diamond OA journals but also affirms a shared commitment to protecting diverse, high-quality research as a public good. Learn more at https://clockss.org/digital-archive-community/supporting-libraries/.

New from ACRL—Teaching Information Literacy by Discipline: Using and Creating Adaptations of the Framework



ACRL announces the publication of *Teaching Information Literacy by Discipline: Using and Creating Adaptations of the Framework*, edited by Scott P. Libson and Malia Willey, exploring how frames are applied when drafting learning outcomes, building research guides, crafting assignments, and designing curricula for a particular discipline.

The Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education has broad applicability that can

be customized for different areas of study. Librarians have created companion documents and subject-specific information literacy applications that show the ways the framework applies to their various fields.

In nine thorough sections, *Teaching Information Literacy by Discipline* shows the great diversity in how librarians understand, adapt, and apply the Framework:

- Arts
- Writing
- Humanities
- Interdisciplinary Studies
- Social Sciences
- Business
- Education and Behavioral Studies
- Health
- Sciences

Teaching Information Literacy by Discipline underlines the breadth of the framework's applicability and expands our understanding of information literacy through diverse interpretations. Subject, liaison, instruction, and new librarians will find many ideas in how other disciplines have adapted the Framework, as well as how to translate information literacy concepts for teaching faculty.

Teaching Information Literacy by Discipline: Using and Creating Adaptations of the Framework is available for purchase in print and as an ebook through the ALA Online Store; in print through Amazon.com; via EBSCO, ProQuest, and other ebook vendors; and by telephone order at (866) 746-7252 in the United States or (770) 442-8633 for international customers.

Tech Bits . . .

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

Elicit is an artificial intelligence (AI)–powered research assistant drawing on openly accessible literature through Semantic Scholar. In my own research, and when supporting students and faculty, I use it to screen and synthesize articles, extract study details, and build evidence matrices. The free plan works well for small-scale projects, and higher tiers unlock bulk document uploading and large review workflows—powerful but more costly. Its ceiling is high: Elicit can screen thousands of papers quickly while preserving transparency by linking back to original sources. I recommend it as both a personal efficiency tool for accelerating my literature reviews and a teaching aid to help patrons engage with a more systematic, AI-assisted evidence discovery.

— Evan Fruehauf,
University of South Florida

Elicit
https://elicit.com/

Margaret Gamm

OneNote as Evergreen Documentation

Building out a Collaborative Operations Manual in a Special Collections and Archives Unit

Operations manuals document standard operating procedures (SOPs) and act as a touchpoint for the regular work of staff. They are intended to make processes more uniform, establish common understandings of how workflows advance, inform staff about what policies apply in any given situation, and more. They also help ensure continuity of practice when staff plan a departure or complement training when new staff join the department for onboarding. When not included in the larger context of a manual, written workflows, project documentation, and policies can easily become lost as procedural and workflow documentation tends to be created in small pieces.

For example, a project team is tasked with solving a problem pertaining to an intradepartmental workflow. Announcements are made to the broader organization regarding the team's formation. The team spends months carefully crafting a written workflow, with justifications and a nice flowchart. They determine that the work is complete, their final document goes to the university librarian, and the workflow is implemented. An announcement is made, and current staff are trained in how to perform the work. But what happens in two years—when the workflow is still relevant but the staff are gone? How do future staff know where to find the documentation? And who is responsible for maintaining it?

Conception

Around 2022, as the director of special collections and archives at the University of Iowa, I recognized the need for this type of more comprehensive documentation after collaborating with other staff to build out procedural documentation over roughly a ten-year time frame. With substantial department growth had come substantial confusion regarding practices long taken for granted. With more than twenty staff in a department that once housed only ten, it was no longer practical to tell people to just ask their predecessor or a colleague about how a process was done.

I started by searching for templates I could use to create a manual. My typical practice when searching for documentation models is to turn to Google, but it quickly became clear that operations manuals tend to be highly specific to the needs of their users and that most of the examples available online were unsuitable. I began drafting an operations manual in a long-form Word document, enlisting colleagues to assist in locating existing written workflows. I fell back on trial and error, experimenting with different formats beginning in 2024 until I found something that checked all the boxes for our needs in a Microsoft

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environment: a OneNote guide with controlled access—easy to discover and link to within a department-specific context but with the potential to share out beyond the department.

Design and Planning Phase

In 2023, the University of Iowa renamed its operations manual to policy manual, a more accurate reflection of the document's contents. I am unaware of any true operations manuals at that level, and most operations information comes through word of mouth. My primary interaction with the policy manual has been in a human resources context, where the order of operations is detailed to a greater extent.

The libraries actively maintain a SharePoint page, which could in a certain light be viewed as an operations manual, but there are no written policies regarding how departments should update information on their respective pages. It has been left to each department how to record critical operations information and workflows, which typically do not interlock across departmental sites. This approach risks onboarding and training inconsistencies across departments, as well as the potential for significant communications difficulties.

Key reasons you may want to create your own unit level operations manual could be any of the following:

- Absence of other systematized operational documentation
- Succession planning
- Onboarding and training streamlining
- Improved ability to standardize processes within your own area
- Improved ability to communicate procedures out to staff in other departments

Although it may not be the reason you create one, I would also argue that the process of creating an operations manual provides opportunities for advocacy and clarity. Inconsistences in practice will become obvious as you record them. The need for improvements in certain areas will crystallize. It also becomes easier to justify the need for written procedures to staff both within and outside of the department when you have a clear reason for doing so.

Determining Your Format

There is a whole industry built around workplace efficiency tools at just about every price point. Most require separate subscriptions and/or logins and, at minimum, have some kind of learning curve. I have no doubt that if I looked long enough, I could find an open-source tool that would have been amazing for my purposes. I could have taught my department staff how to use it and edit it, and it may have been great.

But we have limitations established by central campus IT regarding approved tools and administrative rights to install software. My institution operates in a Microsoft environment, and even without the security barriers of policy, I am typically a proponent of adapting an existing system to meet our needs rather than introducing a new system. For the sake of efficiency, I limited my exploration to Microsoft tools that were built to be flexible or semiflexible for documentation purposes. I investigated the following:

- Structured directories within File Explorer
- Word
- Teams

- SharePoint, both within the existing Libraries SharePoint and as a new SharePoint site
- OneNote

Two of these options had been attempted already.

Structured directories in File Explorer had effectively functioned as an informal operations manual without a ReadMe, but with no active records management system in place, a plethora of outdated documentation in combination with departmental growth broke the system. Without consistent naming standards, this system was almost impossible to maintain.

The Word document version of the operations manual that I started building out in 2022 was technically functional but left much to be desired. On the one hand, permissions were very effectively locked down to anyone who had access to the unit's local storage where the file was saved. On the other hand, not all users had access to that local storage. Multiple staff members could not simultaneously open it, and versions split twice before the transition to a new system. Once Teams became used more heavily across the organization, cloud-based documents could be tied to a Team rather than local storage; but that still left us with other issues prevalent in Word. Using the manual necessitated what felt like endless scrolling. The table of contents alone was three pages long because many sections were simply links out to other documents to avoid moving too many files around.

Other Microsoft apps did not match the purpose of a technical manual closely enough. I considered Teams, but the point of an operations manual is to make it an integral part of your operations. Sometimes student workers would need access to the manual, and they typically do not use Teams. It would introduce many of the same problems as the File Explorer system used in the past, unless I created an extensive ReadMe that would give us another three-page table of contents. It is not meant for long-form documentation.

I found myself limited to trialing two new tools for the purpose.

I had not built out a new site in SharePoint before, and it had a steeper learning curve than I had expected for learning to format and build out new pages. I am, to put it bluntly, not a talented web editor and I have no intention of becoming one. I built a test version, which looked unnecessarily slick for an operations manual. After spending four hours to nail down the formatting on just two pages, I gave up. The point was to create less work through greater efficiency, not more work through web editing.

Finally, I tried OneNote and within a few minutes I knew it was the right tool for the job.

Why OneNote?

I had previously used OneNote for keeping track of my own meeting notes and projects, the advertised purpose for the product. I had not used it as a collaborative tool except for meeting minutes within working groups; even this was just a side effect of the way that the department team was set up within Teams, as the staff template created a OneNote file with collaborative segments.

OneNote, according to Microsoft's page on the product, is "a digital note-taking app that provides a single place for keeping all of your notes, research, plans, and information—everything you need to remember and manage in your life at home, at work, or at school."[1] This description, indicating personal and more ephemeral use, might explain why the product

often isn't used for the purpose of more substantive shared documentation. But the product description also indicates that "notes are easy to organize, print, and share, and you can search and find important information quickly, even if you forget where you've originally captured it." This latter part indicates why OneNote can be exceedingly helpful for shared documentation like an operations manual.

OneNote offers the following:

- *Flexible access control even when it's attached to a team.* I was able to make certain sections of the notebook visible to staff members from other departments if our workflows overlapped or I wanted them to review a section to ensure accuracy.
- *Collaborative live edit ability.* I could work on the collection development section while the lead public services librarian added pages about Aeon.
- *Indications of action items with the click of a button*, all of which it aggregates into a single window depending upon the interface you're using. I was able to tag items for later follow-through, like when I needed someone else to add a step to a workflow that I was less familiar with. I could have used customized labels but elected not to; general "to do" tags were sufficient.
- *Automatic tracking of additions and changes* since the last time you opened the file so that you and other colleagues can review them to ensure accuracy and compatibility. Small dots appear next to modified sections, and the edited portions are labeled with the editor's initials.
- *An adaptable interface.* You can use OneNote on your desktop, web app, or website. There is also a mobile version, which we expect our student workers may use more.
- *Smooth image integration with text.* Adding a photo or flowchart image near a text box does not affect nearby text formatting, unlike in Word. For a section on parking, I could easily paste a small map next to the descriptive text of our parking request procedures.
- *Familiar software structures* for those used to a Microsoft environment. Task bars look like those in Word, Excel, or other Microsoft products, making it a reasonably intuitive program.

Downsides to OneNote

Unsurprisingly, no system is perfect. Another institution's needs may show even more flaws than I found with using OneNote at Iowa, but these are the main issues I noted.

- *No tagging ability.* Although the ability to collaborate on a OneNote file was a strength, it was difficult to flag action items for the attention of specific individuals. You can customize tags for individuals and add check boxes or tasks, but I really wanted to be able to tag people with @Person as you can in many Microsoft products. This would have simplified the creation and editing processes. If it were up to me, this would be the first change I would implement to the software to simplify the creating and editing processes.
- *Unusual backup system.* One potential failure point for any document is the risk of loss; this is especially true for a shared file in a program that users have varying degrees of familiarity with. Fortunately, OneNote files are automatically backed up on a schedule set by the primary user, going back 60 days. Unfortunately, those backups are saved

section by section; if the notebook is somehow lost, it would have to be reconstructed. On the other hand, loss feels more unlikely when every member of the team has a version of the notebook saved in their backups. I have been lucky enough to avoid loss thus far, and I hope that continues.

- *Difficult to print.* It is unintuitive to print a OneNote notebook depending upon your system. Windows 10 allows you to print a full notebook. Windows 11 allows you to print only a page at a time, justifying the elimination of this previous feature by saying, "You never need to print anything because all your notes are easily searchable and available on all your devices."[2] Although true, it would be nice to have the option. What you can do is export the file into a PDF, then print that. This may or may not be an intelligible document depending upon the organizational structure you used. But on the other hand, there is no system quite like OneNote; it makes sense that a printed document would lack the structure of the original.

Lessons Learned

In the process of creating the manual in OneNote, I learned a few lessons that I hope may help the next person who tries.

- *Determine an organizational structure for your manual* that will be easy to maintain. Adapting your layout to your organizational hierarchy or structure may make it easier for staff collaboration so that each staff member knows what to work on without the need for micromanagement. Alternatively, adapt your existing folder structure from shared department files, or if your library already has an operations manual, copy the structure if that makes sense for your facility.
- *Come up with best practices to abide by* if you elect to do the creating and editing work collaboratively. Having shared understandings will save time and hassle.
- *Codify your sections from the start and keep headers as short as possible* for both display purposes and navigability.
- *Plan for it to be a living document.* Unless legacy practices still affect operations, they do not belong in an active guide. If you want to preserve past practices, save a legacy copy of the manual in PDF form rather than leaving it in the working document to avoid confusion.
- *Consider access restrictions.* Do you want students to have access to the manual? Are there documents that should be kept confidential to staff or to certain staff? With OneNote, you can password protect sections if you want. You can also link out to documents in directories that only certain staff have access to. Just make sure that those documents remain accessible to your IT staff so that if staff depart, someone can still get to them.
- *Use job titles instead of names* for more evergreen documentation.

Conclusion

Operations manuals are an underappreciated tool to enable methodical approaches to our work. They are well worth the time invested to ensure shared understandings of processes, procedures, and policies that staff are expected to adhere to. They can serve as effective one-stop shops for new hires when done correctly. If created in a tool like OneNote that provides easy collaboration tools, access control, image integration, and automatic change-tracking,

operations manuals can be even easier to create and manage over time, making the work put in well worth a team's time.

Notes

1. "Introducing OneNote," accessed January 17, 2025, https://support.microsoft.com/en-us/office/introducing-onenote-38be036d-5b5a-49ad-83be-292fe53ad7b3.

2. "Print a Page of Your Notes in OneNote for Windows," accessed February 24, 2025, https://support.microsoft.com/en-us/office/print-a-page-of-your-notes-in-onenote-for-windows-13d89012-601c-4fac-84e4-b5ea92d39629.

Richard M. Cho

Information in the Age of Infocracy

Recalibrating the Definition of Information for Library Instruction

The word *information* has been fluidly used by various disciplines throughout history. In our hyperdigitalized world, where the massification of information has transformed how and why we seek, create, and use information, the word is taking another epistemological turn. Portmanteaus like infoglut, infodemic, inforg, and infocracy abound in our society, all of which denote a state of information overload. These neologisms suggest information's dysfunctionality in present-day society.

As part of Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education, ACRL defines *information literacy* without first properly defining the word *information*, even though it appears four times in the one-sentence-long definition.[1] Without properly defining the word that forms the core of the concept that we teach, it is difficult to collaboratively articulate the mission of our instruction.

At the University of California, Irvine, a public institution serving nearly 30,000 undergraduate students,[2] I lead several one-shot library sessions per quarter, many of which are for undergraduate writing requirement courses. In the fall quarter of 2024, I wrote a new learning outcome ("After the library session, the students will be able to characterize 'information' in the context of our hyper-digitalized 21st century in order to mindfully interact with information."), experimented with a new lesson plan, and learned a few best practices on engaging students with the concept of information literacy. This article delineates the emerging discourses on information and offers insights from my own attempts to engage students with its evolving nature in my library instruction sessions.

The 21st Century Infosphere

The hyperdigitalized 21st century has warped what information is and does. According to the Online Dictionary for Library and Information Science, *information* means "Data presented in readily comprehensible form to which meaning has been attributed within the context of its use. In a more dynamic sense, the message conveyed by the use of a **medium of communication** or expression. Whether a specific message is informative or not depends in part on **the subjective perception** of the person receiving it"[3] (bold added for emphasis). In 2025, a medium of communication overwhelmingly manifests on electronic devices that are on 24/7. Thus, if we follow Marshall McLuhan's maxim that the medium is the message,[4] and we defer to Claude Shannon, who defined information as the message between the sender and the receiver (i.e., "information as something transmitted

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from one point to another"[5]), then it is true that—because society has shifted irreversibly from analog to digital in our necessary daily habits, primarily in order to tailor to the neoliberal imperatives (faster communication and more transparency for limitless choices and consumption)—the definition of information needs a recalibration.

New Theoretical Grounds

Traditionally, *information* has been defined as "letters and messages, sounds and images, news and instructions, figures and facts, signals and signs: a hodgepodge of related species"[6] that attempt to represent reality to the receiving mind. Here, I list two other definitions, in my own paraphrase, that are gaining momentum in our age of information:

(1) Information as something that connects disparate units into a network to create a new reality. It *connects* rather than *represents*.[7]

(2) Bits circulating in a hyper-real space with minimal reference to reality. Its main function is neither to represent nor to connect but to stimulate.[8]

Yuval Harari, a professor at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem who is best known for his book *Sapiens: A Brief History of Humankind*, focuses not on what information *is* but rather on what information *does* in his book *Nexus: A Brief History of Information Network*. Harari attends to the latter morpheme of the word *information*—although many interpret it as something that informs, he emphasizes the *formation* utility, and he adds that information has no essential link to truth.[9] This new definition allows us to perceive information as more relational and causal than informative, and it prompted me to mull over how the deluge of information (de)forms reality for our students.

Another interpretation gaining traction is by Byung-Chul Han, a cultural studies philosopher writing in German who is known for his book *Burnout Society*. He argues that "democracy gives way to a data-driven infocracy that seeks to optimize the exchange of information."[10] In this case, the essence of information is surprise and the stimulus it provides. Because of the sheer amount of information that bombards us daily, our brains have adapted to "de-facticize" information to deal with this excess. This phenomenon has the direct link to the proliferation of mis/disinformation and to our declining trust in American institutions, especially among Gen Z. Han says:

> Information is relevant only fleetingly. Because it lives off the "appeal of surprise," information lacks temporal stability, and because of its temporal instability, it fragments our perception. It draws reality into a "permanent frenzy of actuality." It is not possible to linger on information. This makes the cognitive system restless. The compulsion towards acceleration inherent in information means that time-intensive cognitive practices such as knowledge, experience and insight are pushed aside.[11]

Information has become less a source of knowledge than a source of constant stimuli, which distracts us from time-intensive endeavors.

Gen Z Students' Experience with Information

How should the library profession define information? The writers of the ACRL Framework may have had vastly different experiences with information than our current students, many of whom have had smartphones since their primary school years. This difference is

profound and cannot be overlooked, as the tenets of information have shifted irrevocably over the years, mainly due tothe available information communication tools. College students today are processing information on a scale never before seen, and it is common to see them with their eyes glued to a screen, whether they are eating in campus cafeteria or walking across a quad. The constant neural connection renders information as something merely fleeting and stimulating. Guiding them to realize how their everyday interactions with information are changing their information-seeking behaviors is the first step toward information literacy. This step begins with defining information.

New Approach

In my library instruction sessions, I begin by asking students how they would define information and encourage them to share their definitions via an online education tool, such as Google Doc or a Padlet, so that everyone can see their classmates' answers (Figure 1). Many opted for a single-worded answer, such as "data" or "knowledge," with few articulating further. Two of my favorite answers so far are (1) "information is facts and data that are used to have people know about the world around them," meaning information as a representation of reality, and (2) "pieces of evidence, or an explanation towards any given topic that can allow for elaboration, and a further understanding," meaning that information, though it informs, still leaves room for "elaboration and a further understanding." Then I ask them if the information they attain through their everyday digital gadgets fits into their own definitions. Afterward, I propose a revision to our collective output, recalibrating the definition in light of our hyperdigitalized world.

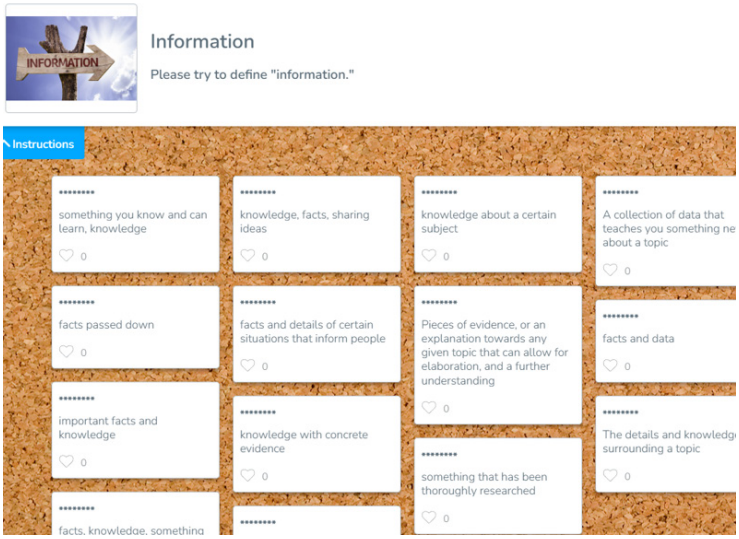

Figure 1: Example of an online collaborative board showing students' answers to the question "Please try to define 'information.'"

Starting the session this way (student-centered, sharing with classmates, and expanding the conceptual understanding of their prior knowledge) is a promising way to garner attention and trust. In addition, collaboratively defining the word *information* offers a smooth segue into the next lesson plan on a research method, such as source differentiation and keyword selection.

Best Practices for Discussing Information with Students

Instructors these days face an additional challenge to make their presentations more alluring than the offerings of a restive smartphone in students' pockets and hands. In my attempts to converse about information with students, I learned a few lessons on how best to keep them interested in the topic.

1) Start from what they know. Everyone believes they know what information is. Ask them to share anonymously their definitions of information. Point out common features of their answers and some anomalies that go deeper than others.

2) Ask them to reflect on their own experiences with information. What is their everyday information-seeking behavior? Is it via a smartphone, computer, book, or human-to-human interaction? From which medium do they receive most of their information? Does the medium matter?

3) Include interesting tidbits about the multivariate nature of information. When time allows, I have used a slide with an example of the (inter)subjective nature of information. (Figure 2)

Figure 2: PowerPoint slide showing the intersubjective nature of information, using as an example a social issue students care about.

4) Use visual guides whenever possible. Present with accessible and engaging slides to facilitate the students' understanding. A side-by-side comparisons slide between information and narrative is presented here as an example.[12] (Figure 3)

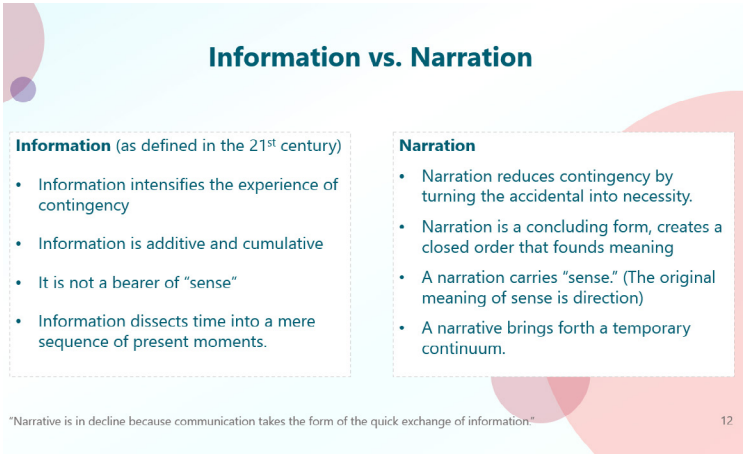

Figure 3: PowerPoint slide showing the crucial contrast between "information" and "narration."

5) Emphasize their own stake in this issue. As my learning outcome indicated, *mindfully* interacting with information is the goal. It is said that we have transitioned from democracy (rule by people) to infocracy (rule by information). What might be the consequences of a constant neural connection?

6) Make connections to practical research methods and skills. Connect the dots to elucidate the relationship between their everyday information behavior and the academic research methods they should use for their class assignments. I emphasize the difference between intentional search versus algorithmic pull.

Conclusion

What makes an information-literate citizen? This is an important question for all teaching librarians to ask. Becoming information-literate begins from properly understanding what information is and how it functions in our age. It is said of our current epoch that we are held captive by information, a paroxysm of a sort, which results in impoverished attachment. Frederick Nietzsche once said, "From lack of repose our civilization is turning into a new barbarism."[13] If Stalinism had its beginning in a wrongheaded political ideal and Nazism in the national economic hardship in need of a scapegoat, then Trumpism has begun on a different ground. The seed may have sprouted from the lack of repose because of the excess of information. The library, an institution indispensable to the functioning of democracy, has a vital role to play in this era of unrest.

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Collin Stephenson

It Will Go Wrong

Reflections on Growing through Failure as an Instructional Partner

There were twenty-two students in the first course where I was trying my new research workshop. By the end of class, just eleven students had responded to the first question of the Padlet. The second question? Six. On question eight, only one student had responded, and that student did not finish the remainder of the workshop. It was a catastrophic failure, more than a little embarrassing, and absolutely essential to my growth as a library instructor.

As instructional partners, this is one of the most daunting and challenging things librarians can face. We often have to work hard to secure meaningful partnerships with our collaborating departments, so taking a chance on a new instructional style feels doubly risky—what if, due to a failure like the one mentioned above, the faculty member decided they don't want to work with us again? That would feel like a serious blow to our progress in building a departmental relationship.

There was a piece of my brain that cringed and said, "Just go back to the lecture, you know it won't go wrong," but I stifled it for the students' sake. Face-plant or not, I knew that I was taking steps in the right direction. Yes, my background in education and pedagogy told me so, but more importantly, and more tangibly, the students that I failed told me what they thought because I surveyed them for input. Across the board, the students acknowledged that they had not gotten enough information to be fully successful on their project—ouch. But despite that, when asked if they would have preferred a lecture, they almost unanimously said no. They liked that I was doing something different. They saw the potential *despite* my failure. So I had to go back to the drawing board for the next round of students.

When I first made the jump to college library education after nearly a decade in high school education, I came in with a lecture mindset. I thought, well, these are *college* students now. It's their responsibility to learn, and they are choosing to be here, so why complicate things? Let's stick to the lecture so I can prove to the students and professors that I am a competent, knowledgeable source of information.

However, I felt anxious after every lecture. I tried to do all the good lecture strategies—asking questions and facilitating discussion, using student input to drive demonstrations, engaging with an end-of-class Kahoot, and so on. I could estimate the engagement of the students who participated or see whether they could identify Boolean operators in a multiple-choice Kahoot, but I realized I was never sure how well any of them could actually *perform* research strategies for their project by the time I left their class. That anxiety was

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realized when two weeks after one of those lectures, a professor reached out to invite me to class a second time—she did not feel that her students were making effective progress on their research. Graciously but incorrectly, she placed the onus on the students, saying they may not have paid close enough attention to my "very informative" lecture. However, this was my sign that change was imperative: Despite proving that I was in fact a good source of information, my lecturing did not actually work to meaningfully teach the students.

The example I mentioned at the beginning was an apparent failure, but it did provide me with direct evidence to explore and analyze. That evidence helped shape the changes I made to the formula. As I have iterated again and again on that first example of experiential learning, now my evidence is proof that students are succeeding in independent application of research skills—something I found impossible to prove via lecture.

In that course, I now only lecture for approximately five minutes. The remainder of the time is spent on a workshop-style activity that helps students make meaningful progress on their research project, and I get to spend my time observing, correcting, and answering questions. I can see the students at work because I am on their level, sharing their space as a collaborator rather than dictating from a screen at the front of the room. I can learn their strengths and weaknesses and customize my instruction to meet the unique needs of the diverse students in the room.

Change is not easy by any stretch of the imagination. The first failure stung, and it was hard not to take it to heart. But the second time I ran a redesigned session for a summer class, the professor asked me to stay for an extra thirty minutes because her students seemed to be making so much progress—a resounding success. In the fall, however, the time constraints of a fifty-minute course once again led to a few nearly botched sessions as I learned what took too much time, so I had to adapt the process yet again for a new set of hurdles.

Throughout the course of this change, no faculty members have abandoned our partnerships, even when things were going sideways (aided by transparency on my end). The dust seems to be settling after this past spring, and the workshop might be approaching its final shape after a full year of design and redesign. It's approachable and focused, and every choice was made based on the evidence from all the times something went wrong—evidence I would not have without a willingness to step away from the podium and try something drastically different.

Aabha Pandit, Heather Charlotte Owen, and Alois Romanowski

Meeting Secondary Data Needs through an Open Data Internship

The Core10 Data Collection

Data literacy has emerged as a critical topic in education and research within the past decade.[1] Basic data skills are taught at precollegiate levels to prepare students for increasing data needs, even outside of computer science and mathematics classrooms.[2] Despite teaching these skills earlier than ever before to meet increasing demand, evidence shows the US educational system is not meeting the demands of the data age.[3]

This isn't a single point of failure. Accelerating data education to meet demand is easier said than done. There are significant hurdles in teaching data literacy: It is poorly defined, rarely standardized, and thus difficult to assess and measure.[4] The ambiguity of what constitutes data literacy can lead to some skills falling through the cracks. One of these skills is the discovery of secondary data sources—data created by someone other than the user. Secondary data are extremely important, as researchers often need to find multiple data types as well as data from other disciplines, and available datasets are often very specialized.[5] The authors have observed that educators assume users are able to easily discover and reuse other shared data sets.

Discovering secondary data is more difficult than it seems. In a 2020 study, more than 1,500 researchers surveyed across 105 countries reported that finding secondary data was challenging or outright difficult; 33 percent of all respondents had trouble with searching.[6] Of note, the respondents to this survey were not students—they were seasoned, published researchers. They pointed to a lack of training in discovery and search techniques and also to the dispersed nature of available datasets across the Internet, making it difficult to find a suitable dataset. Search success can often come down to luck.[7] A heavy investment in open data resources would assist in data discovery.

Open data is "research data that is freely available on the internet permitting any user to download, copy, analyze, re-process, pass to software or use for any other purpose without financial, legal or technical barriers other than those inseparable from gaining access to the internet itself."[8] Various governments, research agencies, and journals across the world have noted the importance of open data when it comes to reproducing research. As open data policies become more common, an organically grown open data ecosystem may arise.

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However, until a robust infrastructure eases the discovery of secondary open data, patrons will still call for easy access to datasets.

The authors experienced these systemic issues firsthand. University of Rochester (UR) librarians receive frequent requests from students seeking help with finding data for coursework. Student consultations span multiple classes and disciplines and require considerable amounts of time and effort from librarians. Our team envisioned addressing these issues with a curated data collection featuring open, multidisciplinary datasets. This led to the proposal of the Core10 Data Collection, an open data collection designed to meet community needs and operated through a summer experiential learning internship.

Experiential Learning Internship

The UR Libraries Summer Internship Program is a paid, ten-week, full-time experiential learning internship first piloted in 2023 and currently on its third iteration. The Core10 internship took place during the 2024 internship program.[9] It was conceived as a joint venture by library leadership and the student association government to fulfill the experiential learning objective of the university's strategic plan.[10] The student association officers had noticed a rising need for job opportunities aimed at second- and third-year students—the group most in need of developing their basic job skills.

The internships have two major focuses: each position's unique project and the cohort experience. Each cohort of seven to ten students is taught so-called "soft" job skills, such as resume building, leadership exercises, crafting emails, and basic workplace skills as a unified group by specialists across campus. This approach fostered camaraderie within the intern cohort, and it helped acclimate students to working full time in a professional setting.

Over the past two years, twenty-four interns have participated in the internship, and we have received almost 300 applications. Each cohort has a new set of project-based positions designed by library staff, who also manage the interns. Most of the positions have been for user experience design, instructional/curricular design, acquiring assessment data, and extended reality development. The Core10 Data Collection position was unusual for having a heavy data focus and received the most applicants of the 2024 cohort, drawing twenty-six total applicants. This speaks to an emerging number of data professionals that libraries can tap into to fulfill data projects, matched with undergraduate students' heightened desire for meaningful and unique data opportunities.

Heather Owen and Arjay Romanowski served as librarian supervisors in 2024, and they hired an undergraduate data science student, Aabha Pandit, as the experiential learning intern. The librarians were in charge of writing the project proposal and plan, the hiring process, and supervising Pandit, who received training in topics such as data literacy and ethics, needs assessment, institutional repositories, and project management. After analyzing the basic project plan, Pandit had autonomy to develop a workflow and present it to the librarians for approval.

Core10 Workflow

The Core10 Data Collection is a curated list of ten diverse datasets available in our institutional repository, the University of Rochester Research Repository (URRR).[11] Designed with students and faculty in mind, Core10 supports research-based coursework,

independent learning, and skill development in areas like data analysis, visualization, and machine learning. The collection aims to ease access to well-documented, high-quality datasets across a range of subjects.

The creation of Core10 was an iterative, collaborative effort involving students, faculty, and library staff. The intern began with a needs assessment starting by interviewing subject librarians to better understand data-related questions and student requests within their disciplines. These conversations gave key insights into the kinds of data students typically seek in addition to existing data resources, such as a subject-specific LibGuide. Next, the intern reached out to faculty whose courses already included data-related assignments. Faculty provided valuable feedback on the characteristics of an "ideal" dataset for their courses, including considerations such as file format, subject relevance, and clarity of documentation. Concurrently, the intern surveyed students about their data needs and preferences. Students expressed interest in datasets that were relevant to health, economics, machine learning, and social sciences. They also shared challenges in finding clean, publicly available data suitable for course projects and their own exploratory work.

Based on the identified community needs, we moved to the task of finding and selecting ideal datasets. Because Core10 was intended to serve a broad audience—including beginner-level data enthusiasts, students in general courses, and faculty seeking versatile teaching materials—our focus was on identifying open datasets that were both accessible and adaptable for a variety of educational purposes. This would distinguish Core10 from other available library resources.

Finding the ideal datasets for the Core10 Data Collection was a thoughtful and extensive process. The intern focused on publicly available datasets from sources such as government agencies and research institutions (e.g., NASA, data.gov). Although these platforms offered many options, much of the data were either outdated or highly specific to research projects. We also explored librarian-curated databases on our library's website, but these were often too specialized to meet Core10's goal of broad usability.

The key challenge was sorting through datasets to identify those with educational potential—data that could be understood by non-experts yet still offer enough complexity to support skill development. The intern found suitable options through online searches of the university's collection and outside sources. Each dataset was individually evaluated based on completeness (little/no missing data), size, subject area (no highly specific research data), trustworthiness, and application areas such as data cleaning, statistical modeling, mapping, or machine learning. The chosen datasets span a range of topics and disciplines, including public health (e.g., cancer, zoonotic diseases, COVID-19 behaviors), economics and workforce trends (e.g., workers' income levels, business revenue growth, postgraduation employment), education and technology (e.g., modeling user knowledge), and popular data science examples (e.g., Titanic, restaurant reviews, meteorite landings).

The intern developed ReadMe files for each of the selected final ten datasets (Figure 1), providing clear metadata and documentation to help users understand the contents, context, and structure of each dataset. The completed collection was published in our institutional repository and made available for coursework and research.

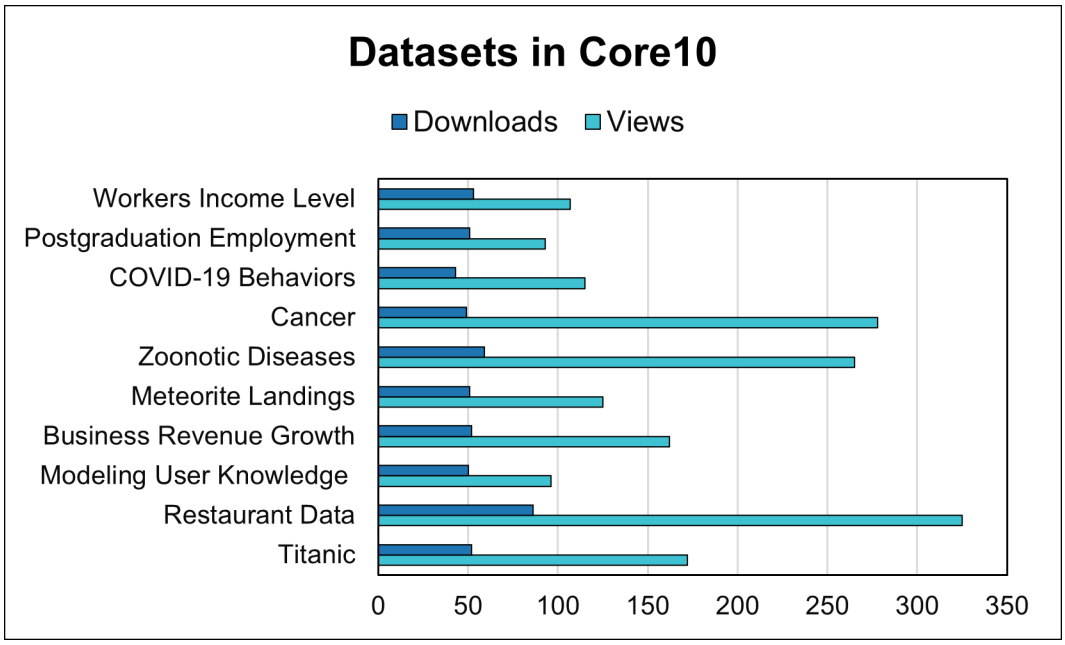

Figure 1: Downloads and view counts of different topics and disciplines covered by the Core10 Collection. Data collected January 2025.[12]

Next Steps

The Core10 collection was created to assist students and learners with finding datasets for classroom assignments and practice. It is important, therefore, that the collection not remain stagnant as it can quickly become obsolete. As the Core10 Collection was a valuable learning activity for a data science student intern, it is fitting and imperative that student employees remain involved in its marketing, upkeep, and growth. The library data services team will hire student employees outside of the experiential learning internship to assist with a wide variety of tasks, including Core10 maintenance and growth. Pandit will develop further documentation (e.g., a formalized data evaluation rubric, favored sources) to ease the transition of the Core10 Collection to future student workers.

Our first goal is to increase marketing for the collection and to encourage the use of datasets in classroom activities. We created a wordmark for the Core10 Data Collection (Figure 2), and we plan to create flyers and other advertising materials to allow us to market it via social media, newsletters, and electronic screens. Pandit is also reaching out to faculty members to advertise the Core10 Collection and discuss strategies for embedding it into curricula. Library staff regularly use Core10 datasets in workshops they design, which also provides opportunities to advertise the collection to the university community.

Our second goal is to continue to add datasets to the Core10 collection. To ensure the Core10 collection continues to be relevant and up-to-date into the future, we will assign a data services student employee to maintain it. We will also create an advertising strategy each semester and will add datasets to the collection as needed.

Finally, after practicing data analysis skills on the open data provided, it is imperative that students develop the ability to discover their own secondary data. As we mentioned, finding secondary data is a skill most students are not taught in the classroom, yet it is crucial for students to learn. Teaching these skills early in a student's career will prove beneficial

Figure 2: Wordmark developed for the Core10 Data Collection.

as students continue their education or enter the workforce, especially as sharing open data becomes the norm within research. Therefore, our third goal is to create instructional materials that will assist students in developing these skills.

Conclusion

Discovering secondary data is a challenge for both students and researchers. The difficulty in finding these resources led the library to launch an open data set project as a stopgap measure to ease data discoverability. A preexisting experiential student internship was an ideal choice for this project, allowing us to hire a student who could effectively tap into the community needs while simultaneously developing unique skills in their field. The collection was then designed with an emphasis on open data for ease of use. The Core10 Data Collection still requires maintenance, expansion to meet future needs, effective marketing, and embedding in coursework and library events to reach its full potential.

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Andrew Dudash and Rebekah Hill

Far Out

Pushing the Boundaries of Academic Library Outreach

Since the return of students to campuses after the COVID-19 pandemic, outreach has been an integral part of most academic library efforts to engage with students, faculty, staff, and even the communities beyond their campuses. Although library outreach programs are not new, the wide array of programs offered has expanded—wellness, cultural awareness, creative activities, and perennials like open houses and information literacy workshops. But why do academic libraries spend time, money, and energy on outreach?

Jamie White-Farnham and Carolyn Caffrey's examination of the roots and evolution of the term looks at this historical idea to answer the question of why we do it. They propose the original intent of outreach had a goal of inclusivity while also identifying thirteen milestones in the library field since 1958 that led to an increase in outreach programs.[1]

Stephanie Diaz's thorough work provides both a concept analysis and extensive definition of outreach to understand what we are doing and to get a better idea of the effectiveness of our efforts. According to Diaz, a better definition should result in more intentional and impactful outreach programs.[2]

Take our Political Song-a-Palooza concert at Penn State University Libraries, an event born out of the desire to showcase political music while offering the campus community a creative outlet. What would happen if a large academic library offered the campus community a stage to perform political and protest music? Would anyone submit auditions? Would anyone attend? How would the library and the greater community respond? Would it be cost effective and sustainable? And how would we measure success?

Political Song-a-Palooza was an outreach experiment, somewhat rooted in our mission and strategic priorities but perhaps less intentional than what Diaz envisioned. We thought it would be fun but wondered if it was too "far out" of scope for an academic library outreach offering. When we advertised for a student intern position for the event, another campus unit reached out to us about partnering to offer political song events in conjunction with their concert series. This led to five other experiences: an open conversation with the Soweto Gospel Choir, an ancestral listening session with Michael Mwenso using vinyl records from the libraries' collections, an academic panel with scholars writing about the intersection of music and politics, and two songwriting workshops with indigenous artists Las Cafeteras and Supaman. Now we had a Political Song Series that sounds more "intentional" in concept but was also a happy accident. But let's get back to our experiment. Was Political Song-a-Palooza a successful outreach event?

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Would Anyone Submit Auditions?

There were two phases of marketing associated with our event: the call for performers and the marketing of the live concert. For phase one, we created a dedicated email account and two associated social media accounts (Facebook and Instagram). We worked with our libraries' public relations and marketing office to produce a logo, several press releases, and both print and digital signage. We postered extensively on campus and in the State College business district. We also staffed information tables at the campus HUB on several dates leading up to the audition submission deadline. We wondered if the political song idea would resonate with our students and found that opening submissions to students, faculty, and staff created a strong pool of potential performers and, in the end, an atmosphere of shared music among generations. For our 2023 concert, we had fifteen submissions, and of those, eleven acts performed nearly two hours of music. In 2024, we had twenty submissions, and seventeen acts performed. The submissions for both years consisted of original songs as well as covers of familiar and unfamiliar music that offered an eclectic mix across countries and cultures. Over the two years, we decided to open auditions to Penn State alumni in addition to current students, faculty, and staff. We also were able to offer a travel stipend to performers from campuses beyond University Park in 2024, but the final roster did not have performers from other campuses.

2024 Political Song-a-Palooza performers Olivia Park and Jacob Elliott, image courtesy of Andrew Dudash.

Would Anyone Attend?

At first, we thought of having the event outside the library and looked at tent rentals and all the associated equipment to host a concert. It became apparent that this might be harder than first imagined in the space we had available. We then started to look at possible community venues and connected with a local theater who was actively seeking university partnerships. The downtown State Theatre sits just off campus and hosts a variety of both local and national events. They were excited about the event, and we felt that working with an established venue and a professional staff familiar with production elements

State Theatre marquee advertising 2023 Political Song-a-Palooza, image courtesy of Andrew Dudash.

like sound, lighting, and stage setup would provide a great experience for new and seasoned performers.

Now we could begin the second phase of marketing: attracting an audience for the concert. We used social media and digital signage as our main form of marketing. Other tools included an official press release from the libraries, a promotional video on social media, a featured spot on the State Theatre's website for almost one month before the concert, and a listing on the theater's marquee. Both years, the student newspaper reached out to us for an interview, a great way to reach the campus population. This free evening event drew 120 people in 2023 on a Thursday night. In 2024, it was 150 on a Saturday night.

How Would the Library and the Greater Community Respond?

We had enthusiastic support throughout the library for help with marketing and financing Political Song-a-Palooza, but we had a much smaller percentage of library colleagues attend each year than we anticipated. In fact, the percentage was the same in 2023 and 2024. We have wondered if this is tied to divergent views on outreach in the library. It is certainly something worth investigating. We were able to build successful campus partnerships over the two years and continue to work with these partners on political song programming. Support from the greater community was impressive as they made up more than half of the concert audience each year.

Would It Be Cost Effective and Sustainable?

We started the funding process with a budget request to our administrative team. The associate director for stewardship and events in the Office of Development and Alumni Relations at the libraries had identified donors who would be interested in funding our event through their endowment for the libraries. We included this information in our request and fleshed out other details to support the "why" of a library-supported concert. Our event description was as follows:

> "Political Song-a-Palooza (PSAP) aims to: engage students in the discovery of political song, foster community building at Penn State, and strive for excellence related to historical research, student/community engagement, fun, and performance."

We emphasized the uniqueness of this kind of outreach, offering a vehicle of creative expression and civil discourse for the performers and a shared experience between the university and local communities. The budget request was accepted, and we were able to proceed with our concert plans. In addition to the funding received from this endowment, other financial support came from our department's budget for student intern wages and, in 2024, support from two campus partners.

Political Song-a-Palooza had a fairly high cost that included theater rental, marketing, student intern wages, and video production. The cost stayed about the same each year. Organizer time is a major factor in the sustainability piece of the equation. We did spend less time in 2024, but it was still substantial by many measures, including marketing, vetting auditions, processing vendor paperwork, program preparation, and editing the concert footage. The donors who supported Political Song-a-Palooza with their endowment each year were quite impressed with the concerts and are supportive of efforts to continue funding it

in the future. We have found that our time is what is least sustainable entering year three of this endeavor. We are currently planning the next Political Song-a-Palooza, scheduled for the fall of 2025.

How Do We Measure Success?

It is important to look at the many outcomes generated by these costs, which include intern experiential learning, audience reception, performer experience, and the creation of a tangible resource that is freely available for anyone to view. The student interns who worked on this project gained skills in event planning, social media marketing, research to support writing program notes, and concert production, all in an experiential learning environment outside the classroom. One intern was recognized for their work, winning an honorable mention for the University Libraries Outstanding Student Employee Award in the outreach category.

We gathered audience feedback after both events through a survey, and the reaction to the concerts was overwhelmingly positive. One person said, "State College needs something like this. If this is what university events are like, I'm going to start going to more. So much diversity in performers and performances." A survey of performers echoed similar feelings: "This event was a fun and creative way in which to speak out, and we hope the event returns and grows in the future."

One student performer from the 2024 concert introduced their second song of the night in a very personal manner: "So this song we have for you now is called 'Split' by NIKI, and it's really special for me this year specifically because this year kind of marks the halfway point where I've lived half of my life in Korea and half of my life here in the U.S. ... I'm very thankful for this event because I get to share voices of minorities and people that I really resonate with." In the few days after the 2024 show, two colleagues shared with us how they connected with this performer through their own immigrant experiences. Another colleague called Political Song-a-Palooza an example of "inclusion in action" as opposed to what they suggested were too many performative events. This library-sponsored concert provided not only a platform for political expression but also a vehicle for sharing the many unique and personal stories of our community.

The videos of the 2023 and 2024 concerts are fully cataloged in the libraries' collections, serving as documentation of the events and resources for future use and interpretation.[3,4] The 2023 video was among the Penn State University Libraries' Top 10 Kaltura title playbacks for 2024, with 276 views and counting.

The energy that both shows created was incredible, but we still question our efforts, as do others. In fact, in the theater lobby before the 2024 show, a gentleman who was an usher for the play that was happening upstairs questioned why a library would be hosting a concert, clearly thinking of more traditional library roles. After meeting one of our interns, witnessing the buzz in the lobby as the performers arrived for soundcheck, and looking at our program with piqued curiosity, you could see his idea of what a library could or should do had shifted in that short time interacting with us. Although he could not attend our concert, he left with a changed view of the library and its role in the community it serves.

Maybe that is what makes academic library outreach worth the effort. As we try out new programming ideas and work to refine the intention behind our efforts, the result could be changing the idea of what libraries can and should be offering for our communities. And wow, that is far out.

Notes

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2. Stephanie Diaz, "Outreach in Academic Librarianship: A Concept Analysis and Definition," *The Journal of Academic Librarianship* 45, no. 3 (2019): 184–94, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.acalib.2019.02.012.

3. "Political Song-a-Palooza" (All Business Videography LLC), from a concert produced by Andrew Dudash, Ben Rhine, Margaret Matous, and Rebekah Hill on April 20, 2023, The Pennsylvania State University, 1:50:18, https://catalog.libraries.psu.edu/catalog/42253764.

4. "Political Song-a-Palooza" (All Business Videography LLC), from a concert produced by Andrew Dudash, Margaret Matous, and Rebekah Hill on April 20, 2024, The Pennsylvania State University, 2:15:04, https://catalog.libraries.psu.edu/catalog/44804029.

Mary Aycock

Prompting Generative AI to Catalog

The Promise and the Reality

As libraries shift their budgets toward investing in digital resources and content, employees must also streamline work processes to accommodate thousands, if not millions, of titles. Missing or substandard metadata can hinder discoverability, impacting the library's return of investment in these resources, not to mention the opportunity costs that result for our users.[1]

Thus, our library faced a quandary when notified in fall 2024 about nearly one hundred ebook conference titles lacking associated MARC bibliographic records. Not only was the vendor unable to supply the records, but they didn't even exist in WorldCat, our customary bibliographic to-go database of MARC records. How could we fulfill our commitment to provide access to these MARC records with the limited resources at our disposal?

Enter the ever-present hope that technological advancements can save time for the cataloger. Because the recent advancements of large language models (LLMs) pose disruptive ramifications for those working in knowledge industries, many library leaders have recommended a proactive approach in experimenting with these tools.[2] Some cataloging and metadata departments have responded to this call with experimentation and skepticism.[3]

Perhaps this need to catalog one hundred ebook conference titles could supply an opportunity for our own test case using a specialized generative artificial intelligence (AI) called CatalogerGPT.[4] This plugin for OpenAI will generate MARC records or fields based on prompts and uploaded files. The output is generated in an easy-to-view and easy-to-edit format, a mnemonic text file familiar to most who use MarcEdit.[5] These files can be easily copied and pasted into a blank MarcEditor file.

Although open source models exist, they often require technical expertise and time to implement, which may propel many catalogers to turn to CatalogerGPT or other commercial models instead. Our department's own brief experimentation with this tool demonstrated that this model has the capability to draft descriptive cataloging and supply access points. Particularly impressive was the ability to generate a table of contents from an uploaded file. Perhaps such AI-generated records might prove better than brief or skimpy machine-generated records. Whether this tool would prove to be an oracle that could spit out a good enough cataloging record remained to be seen.

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Prompting the Oracle, or a Journey, of Many, Many Prompts

An employee downloaded the front matter for these ebooks. The frontmatter PDF files consisted of a title page, a title page verso, introductory material, and a table of contents. I thus embarked on the journey of multiple prompts in December 2024 to discover the best words and approach to obtain the desired record output. The chat transcript is available for viewing as well as through selected screenshots.[6] Unfortunately, CatalogerGPT limited output to three MARC records a day using the uploaded files (unless we subscribed to a paid version per a pop-up box).

Experimentation over a few weeks yielded some observations. The first prompt requested "Create a MARC record from the attached content." This one-shot prompt yielded a subpar record, not only needing extensive editing but also missing critical fields, such as a conference heading access point, genre headings, etc.

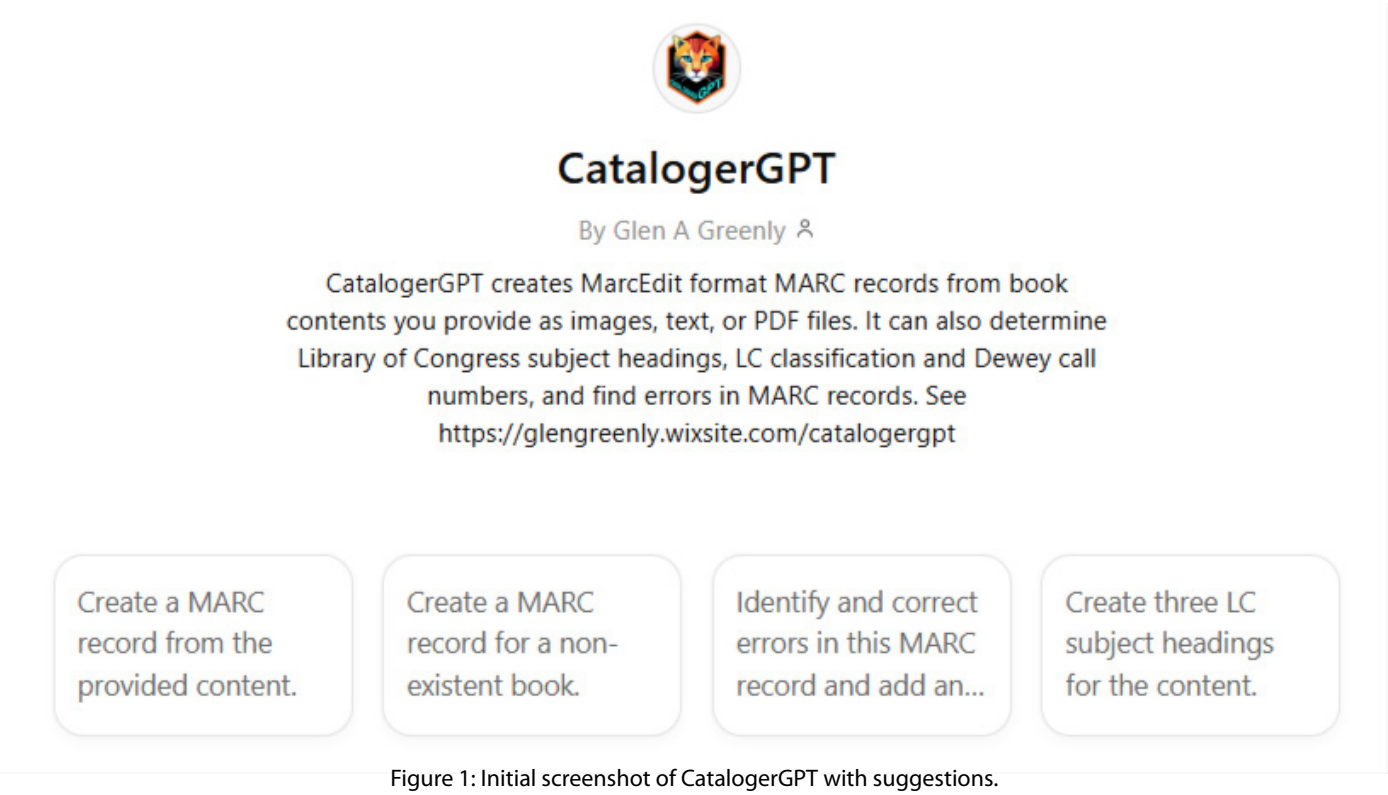

Figure 1: Initial screenshot of CatalogerGPT with suggestions.

ISBNs and titles were not transcribed correctly for some of the initial titles. Having an accurate title and ISBN comprised a bare minimum requirement because the records would be submitted to WorldCat.

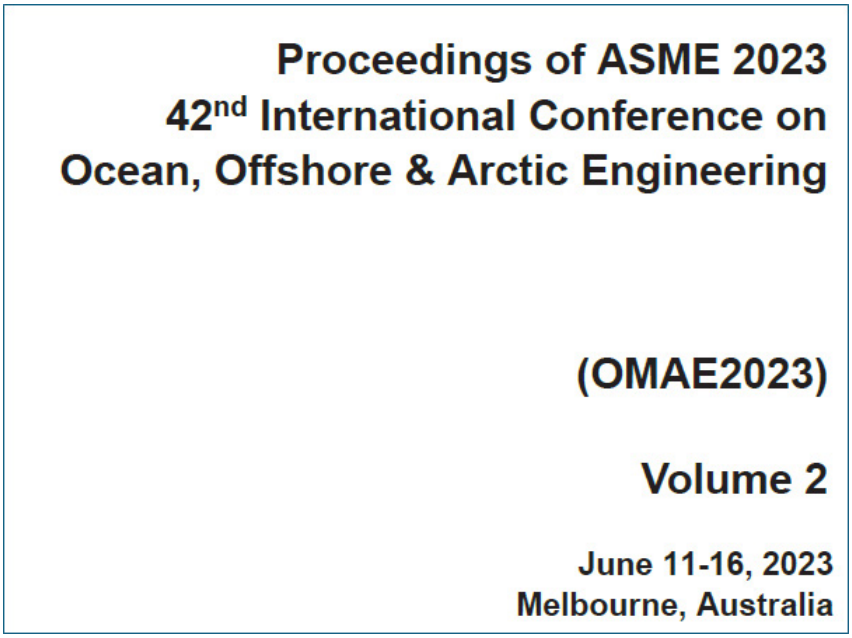

Figure 2: Title page of example volume.

CatalogerGPT provided the following erroneous output for title field shown in Figure 2:

=245 10$aProceedings of the 2023 Ocean, Offshore, and Arctic Engineering Conference (OMAE2023)$nVolume 2 :$bJune 4-9, 2023, Melbourne, Australia.

The ISBN listed on title page verso for the example if 978-0-7918-8684-7. But CatalogerGPT generated the following erroneous output for the ISBN field:

=020 \\$a978079188

Revising a previously generated record to include in the prompt required time and cataloging knowledge (Figure 3). However, this extra effort reaped rewards by producing more reliable MARC output.

```
=LDR  04543nam a2200409li 4500
=008  241209t20232023nyua\\\\ob\\\\10\\0\eng\d
=040  \\$aTXI$beng$erda$cTXI
=020  \\$a9780791888687
=050  \4$aTC1505$b.I58 2023 v.2
=111  2\$aInternational Conference on Ocean, Offshore, and Arctic Engineering Conference$n(42nd :$d2023 :$cMelbourne, Australia)
=245  10$aProceedings of the ASME 2023 42nd International Conference on Ocean, Offshore & Arctic Engineering (OMAE2023)$nVol
=264  \1$aNew York, N. Y. :$bThe American Society of Mechanical Engineers,$c[2023].
=264  \4$c@2023.
=300  \\$a1 online resource$billustrations.
=336  \\$atext$btxt$2rdacontent
=337  \\$acomputer$bc$2rdamedia
=338  \\$aonline resource$bcr$2rdacarrier
=500  \\$aProceedings include peer-reviewed papers from the 2023 Ocean, Offshore, and Arctic Engineering Conference, held in Melb
=504  \\$aIncludes bibliographical references.
=505  0\$aCollision and Crashworthiness: Numerical Simulation of Ship Collision Scenarios -- Damage Assessment of FPSO Structur
=520  \\$aThe proceedings of the 2023 Ocean, Offshore, and Arctic Engineering Conference (OMAE2023) Volume 2 focus on structure
=588  0\$aSome metadata was created with AI assistance on December 9, 2024.
=650  \0$aOffshore structures$xReliability$vCongresses.
=650  \0$aStructural analysis (Engineering)$vCongresses.
=650  \0$aMooring of ships$xReliability$vCongresses.
=650  \0$aRenewable energy sources$xReliability$vCongresses.
=650  \0$aRisk management$vCongresses.
=650  \0$aHydrodynamics$vCongresses.
=650  \0$aShips$xHydrodynamics$vCongresses.
=655  \7$aConference papers and proceedings.$2lcgft
=710  2\$aAmerican Society of Mechanical Engineers.$bOcean, Offshore, and Arctic Engineering Division.
```

Figure 3: Example MARC record.

Not surprisingly, extra care needed to be taken with the model record because any inadvertent errors, such as with subfields, would be faithfully copied. In the 245 field below, $r should be subfield $c.

=245 10$aProceedings of the ASME 2023 42nd International Conference on Ocean, Offshore & Arctic Engineering (OMAE2023)$nVolume 2 :$bJune 11-16, 2023, Melbourne, Australia /$rConference sponsor: Ocean, Offshore and Arctic Engineering Division.

Here the generated field faithfully followed the model record to transcribe an erroneous $r in the 245 field.

=245 10$aProceedings of the ASME 2023 42nd International Conference on Ocean, Offshore & Arctic Engineering (OMAE2023)$nVolume 1 :$bJune 11-16, 2023, Melbourne, Australia /$rConference sponsor: Ocean, Offshore and Arctic Engineering Division.

Apart from human introduced mistakes in the model, wrong subfields were sometimes generated, such as in this conference heading:

=111 2\$aDesign of Medical Devices Conference$n(2024 :$dMinneapolis, Minn.)

The subfields in the heading should be:

=111 2\$aDesign of Medical Devices Conference **$d**(2024 ***:$c***Minneapolis, Minn.)

Specifying very narrow instructions seemed to limit the model to generating a minimal record, lacking fields that were not explicitly mentioned, as if micromanaging the model constrained it (see Figure 4).

Please catalog records using the attached PDFs and the following criteria:
1. Do not include 001 field
2. Do not include 245 $h or 245 $c
3. Do not include 082
4. Do not include 490/830 (ASME Digital Collection)
5. Do not include 090
6. Include 588 field: Some metadata was created with AI assistance on {today's date}.
7. Create 505 fields using all the titles, but not the section heading or the authors, such as: $a UMBRELAA: Design of a variable-sized left atrial appendage occlusion device for stroke prevention -- Blood pressure prediction from photoplethysmogram signal using artificial intelligence –
8. Include 655 Conference papers and proceedings.$2lcgft
9. Include 300 $billustrations
10. Include a 111 field with the appropriate subfields, such as: $aDesign of Medical Devices Conference $d(2023 : $cMinneapolis, Minn.),
11. 264 should be New York, N. Y.
12. 040 should be $aTXI$bengl$erda$cTXI

Figure 4: Prompt with narrow instructions.

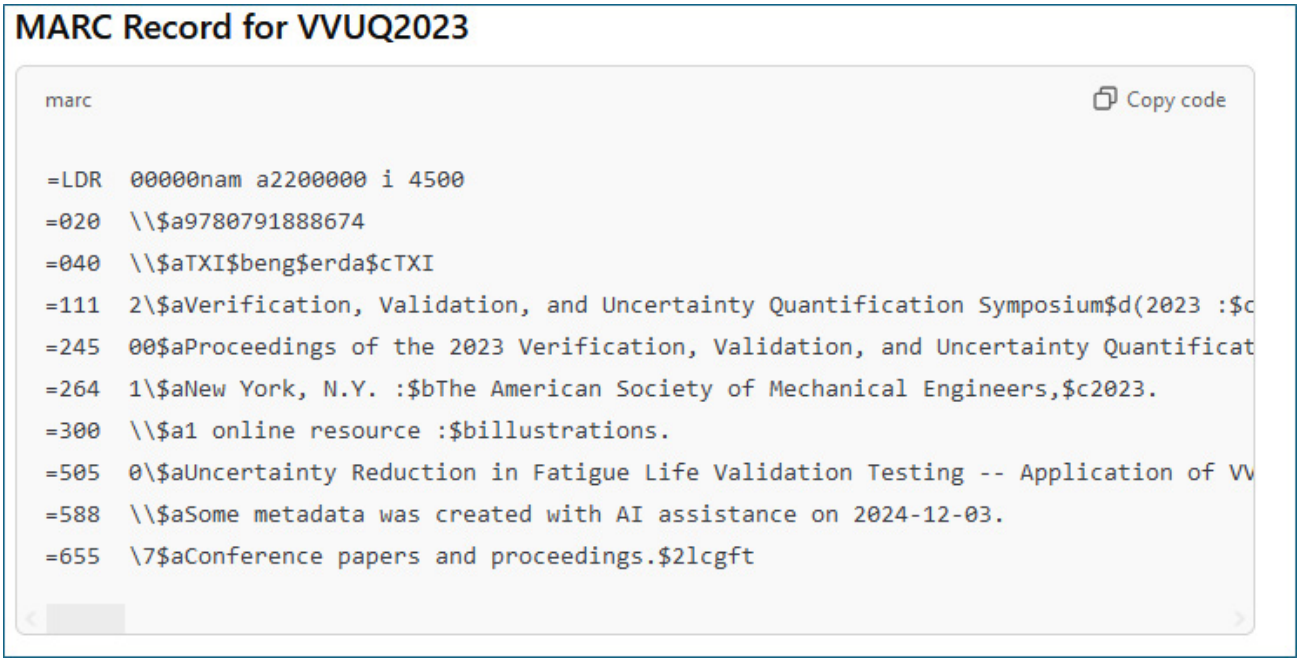

Figure 5: Generated minimal record.

The fields missing from the generated MARC record (Figure 5) included:

- Call number (050 field)
- 33x fields that are standard in current records (336, 337, 338 fields)
- Notes about bibliography (504 field)
- Summary (520 field)
- Subject headings (6xx fields)
- Sponsoring organizations (710 field)

We had high hopes about the possibility of obtaining a granular table of contents incorporating titles and authors of individual conference papers (metadata that normally would be too time-consuming for catalogers), but that exploration proved problematic:

- The model would transcribe the first page of the table of contents and would need continuous prompting for subsequent pages.
- It would often hallucinate titles of papers, requiring too much work reviewing and editing the records.

Even requesting *valid* Library of Subject Cataloging Headings did not necessarily result in authorized ones. Just when the prompt seemed refined enough to declare "finished," another error would pop up in the record. At least pointing out an error yielded a gratifying response (Figure 6).

What was the best prompt? It turns out that prompt engineering can also be delegated to CatalogerGPT—as shown, a question asking about what prompt to use and the resulting long response (Figure 7 and supplemental document).

In contrast to the nineteen words generated by the directive prompt (Figure 4), the open-ended question from Figure 7 produced a verbose response of 827 words excluding the MARC records. It also seemed a bit repetitive to include both an "ideal prompt" and

Figure 6: Pointing out error and CatalogerGPT response.

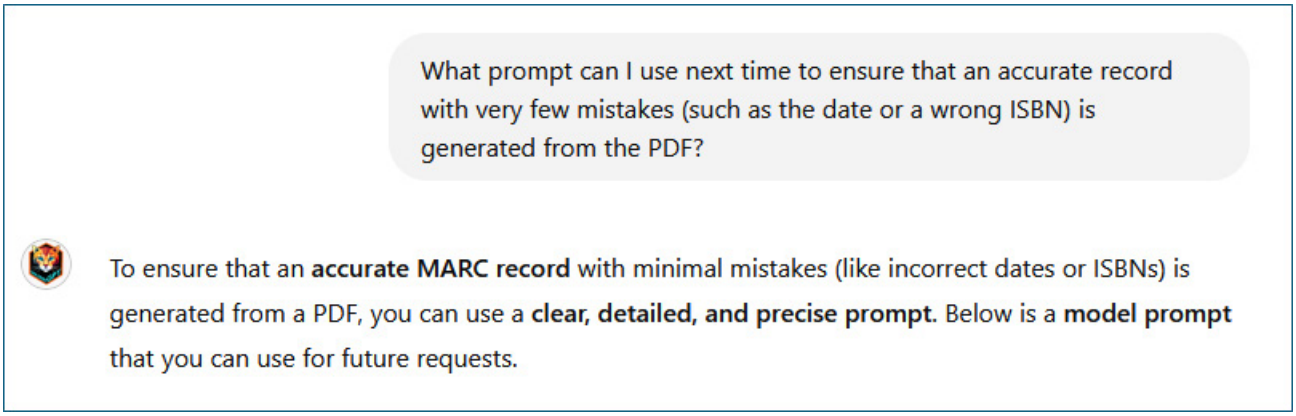

Figure 7: Open-ended question about better prompt.

an "example prompt" in its answer. It's also clear that CatalogerGPT did not generate the featured MARC records from a vacuum but incorporated much of our previous prompts and example records in them. Catalogers will still need use their cataloging expertise in prework regardless.

Was this the prompt to end all prompts? Nope. Subsequent prompts still required continual tweaking, including emphasizing that the ISBN in particular should be accurate.

Evaluation of the Output (Oracle Answer)

Did the cataloging oracle live up to expectations and generate a good enough catalog record that saved time? It depends on your expectations.

Drafting a record via generative AI proved helpful but required constant vigilance to ensure the accuracy of transcription fields (title, ISBN) as well as the relevance of the access points. Due to the limit of three a day, the routine for this project included generating MARC records each day, importing them into Connexion cataloging software, and revising them. The review included checking the following fields:

- ISBN and title field (critical for identification)
- Call number
- Conference heading
- Table of contents

- Subject headings (via OCLC, controlling the headings revealed which ones were valid at a glance)
- Access point for the organization as well as the sponsoring committee
- Date of the metadata note was often wrong: "Some metadata was created with AI assistance on 2024-12-20"

The jagged technological frontier visualizes the boundary at which AI can be an asset versus a detriment for the user.[7] Due to the inaccuracies of the generated MARC records in this project, MARC record generation barely landed on the favorable side of this frontier *if* using an effective prompt. However, even these records could not be trusted without a cataloger in the loop. Admittedly there is an art to cataloging, but it must be grounded in reality-based adherence to standards and norms, not one of creative writing.

There can be a steep learning curve to gaining the expertise of a cataloger, which by one recent estimate requires three to five years of experience to obtain.[8] An experienced cataloger who uses all the tools of their trades (deriving records, macros, quick editing) can often catalog accurately and rapidly, particularly if the records are uniform enough. I do not routinely catalog in my current position, but in fifteen minutes, I was able to draft nine ebook conference volumes—three times more than CatalogerGPT would allow per day. By the end of the project, some of the records had been generated via generative AI and some through manual processes. All records needed further enhancement and review.

Yet framing expert catalogers against untrustworthy AI is an oversimplification and overlooks the advantages of a beneficial partnership. While the project proved more time consuming than anticipated, it still provided an enlightening exploration of the capabilities and limitations of a specialized generative AI at this current time. These models demonstrate clear potential to assist catalogers in their work but only under close supervision. These results also agree with several other research articles that concluded that LLMs could be useful in drafting records but still required human oversight (preferably with enough cataloging knowledge to efficiently evaluate the output).[9,10]

Conclusion

These AI tools could be especially helpful for generating potential subject headings and summaries in those areas that the cataloger lacks subject matter expertise with the caveat that any generated fields would still need to be validated.

Based on my experience, I have the following suggestions for any metadata worker considering such a project with LLMs.

1. Decide what fields are important and emphasize these in the prompt.
2. Create a model record (either from scratch or revising an initial draft generated by the LLM).
3. Use a prompt similar to the one CatalogerGPT suggested (supplemental document) or ask for suggestions on an effective prompt.
4. Prepare to review output records, particularly if they will be submitted to a cooperative cataloging database.

Hopefully, such suggestions can assist other catalogers and metadata workers in reaching an effective prompt in fewer attempts than this project (more than twenty-five prompts), thus compensating for some of the energy consumption expended.

Notes

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2. Jeehyun Davis, "Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Academic Libraries: A Leadership Perspective," *College & Research Libraries News* 85, no. 8 (September 11, 2024): 347, https://doi.org/10.5860/crln.85.8.347.

3. Program for Cooperative Cataloging Task Group on Strategic Planning and AI, *Final Report of the PCC Task Group on Strategic Planning and Artificial Intelligence*, February 6, 2023, accessed December 26, 2024, https://www.loc.gov/aba/pcc/taskgroup/TG-Strategic-Planning-AI-final-report.pdf.

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5. MarcEdit Development, "HowTo: Editing Your First Recordset," November 30, 2022, https://marcedit.reeset.net/howto-editing-your-first-recordset.

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7. Fabrizio Dell'Acqua, Edward McFowland, Ethan R. Mollick, Hila Lifshitz-Assaf, Katherine Kellogg, Saran Rajendran, Lisa Krayer, François Candelon, and Karim R. Lakhani, "Navigating the Jagged Technological Frontier: Field Experimental Evidence of the Effects of AI on Knowledge Worker Productivity and Quality," *SSRN Electronic Journal* (2023), https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.4573321.

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10. Shoichi Taniguchi, "Creating and Evaluating MARC 21 Bibliographic Records Using ChatGPT," *Cataloging & Classification Quarterly* 62, no. 5 (July 3, 2024): 527–46, https://doi.org/10.1080/01639374.2024.2394513

Craig Gibson

Thanks for the Learning

Remembering Susan Whyte

"Find Thyself a Teacher." — *The Talmud*

The library world has lost one of the bright lights of the profession and a teaching librarian of exceptional talent and influence. Susan Whyte died on August 14, 2025, after a five-year battle with multiple myeloma and two stem cell transplants that overcame even her strong spirit. This tribute is a celebration of her life and legacy, and while it presents a personal perspective, it reflects the experiences and remembrances of many whose lives she touched.

In 1994, I first met Susan Whyte, a librarian of rare talents, uncommon wisdom, and a great heart. She was co-organizer of the first-ever LOEX of the West conference—that year at Willamette University in Oregon. At that conference, I became acquainted with her and her great enthusiasm for teaching and building relationships at Linfield College, where she was at that time an instruction librarian. I would learn over the next three decades how much influence she had among students and colleagues at Linfield and elsewhere across the country. She was a dynamic force through her teaching, mentoring, and guiding and a stellar example of servant leadership for many.

Teaching with Susan

Susan and I became colleagues in the ACRL Immersion Program in its earliest years as a cohort of faculty built that program, and often saw professional roles and lives transformed. Susan believed that the integrity of the teacher is most important in developing personal connections with students—and imparted that vision to Immersion participants. Susan first awakened me to the wisdom of Parker Palmer, who most cogently expressed these ideas from his own experience—his "dark night of the soul"—and his recovery and discovery of himself as a whole human being beyond the divisiveness, the competitiveness, the reputation signaling, and the "culture of critique" of the academy. Susan's affinity for Palmer was a natural one because of her own Quaker upbringing and values of seeking wholeness through moral intuitions and a deep inwardness that illuminates the self and others through collaboration and mutual truth seeking. She was a natural disciple of Palmer—and a brilliant one.

The Immersion experiences with Susan showed me not only the depth of her intuitions and ability to inspire librarians to become better but also her great sense of fun, role modeling of risk taking, and the necessary uncertainty—and creativity—of teaching. Clearly, anyone

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who could engage in the opening plenary of Immersion with silly props like a hammer and robot's head, wandering among the assembled participants to the recorded music of "If I Had A Hammer" to illustrate the behaviorist approach to teaching was quite capable of risk taking and instigating some laughter among librarians at the start of an intensive week. It was a necessary tone-setting activity that all of us were involved in, and Susan was our stellar role model in the risk taking—and the necessary personal connections—that the best teaching requires.

One of the most telling moments for the Immersion faculty would come at the end when we were saying farewells to each other after that intensive week of laughter, some tears and missteps, and feeling ourselves growing, along with the participants. We would simply say, "Thanks for the learning."

Mentoring, Teaching, and Leading

Susan's journey saw her become the director of the library at Linfield College for 20 years, a vital member of the ACRL New College Library Directors Mentoring Program, and an ACRL Board of Directors member. In her continuing role as library director, guide and mentor to her staff, and student advisor, she contributed to student success in ways that transcend the conventional meaning of the phrase often used in the academy. Susan developed bonds with students that helped them discover their best selves beyond any information literacy or research classes she taught by herself or in partnership with faculty. After winning a campus teaching award at Linfield, she described her philosophy of teaching in a *College & Research Libraries News* article,[1] based on her undergraduate education at Earlham College and under the influence of Evan Farber, who was an early example for the profession of intellectual engagement and partnerships between faculty and librarians.

Reading with Susan

Among all of my colleagues, Susan was a reader of uncommon breadth, depth, and intuitiveness. Conversations with her about her reading were a gift in themselves—she was a catholic reader of fiction, nonfiction, poetry, and journalism.

On one occasion, we found that we'd both read Wallace Stegner's *Crossing to Safety*. "Yes, Wally Stegner," she said, "one of our finest novelists." She saw in him not just a "Western" writer but one who wrote about universal truths discovered and strengths gained found in long-term friendships across decades. In *Crossing to Safety*, two academic couples first meet in graduate school and build a friendship across varied institutions and landscapes into old age, with all of the triumphs and trials that the academic life brings to anyone deeply involved in it. Ultimately, it is the friendship that matters most, and ephemeral matters fade away in the annealing process of experience and enlarged perspectives. Just as in teaching relationships with students, Susan saw the importance of maintaining ties and friendships with colleagues that transcended passing crises, tensions, and uncertainties. It is always, she believed, about the relational dimension and helping friends and colleagues become their best selves. We all "cross to safety" in the academy when we build community that deepens others and also ourselves.

A recent book about the travails of higher education—now in more challenging, even perilous times than ever—confirms what I always only partly understood about Susan's beliefs and her living out her professional credo. Digital humanist Kathleen Fitzpatrick's *Generous Thinking: A Radical Approach to Saving the University*[2] calls for a reorientation toward community within and without—among faculty, staff, and students on campuses and more lively connections with the larger community, alumni, friends, former students, and interested citizens. The "generous thinking" of which Fitzpatrick writes is a shift for the academy as a whole—in changing the culture from fragmentation to wholeness and to mutual responsibilities and benefits. It imagines a process of mutual learning at scale. It is a bold departure from the typical reward system of the academy that Susan, others, and I often discussed—and one in which librarians could participate as teachers and partners.

Susan was always a generous thinker in her own way, searching for community and for opportunities to learn and to mentor others and calling upon others to learn along with her.

The Long View

The last time I would ever see Susan was in early December 2019—in the "Before Times," as we often think of them now. I visited with her over lunch in Cincinnati when she was there visiting relatives, and I caught up on her travels and her life in retirement, glad to hear that former students from Linfield would often come to visit her. As we enjoyed the lunch, we were waited on by a young woman tentative in her manner, who told us her family were refugees from Syria and that they had escaped the terrors of that country to come to America. Near the end of the meal, Susan reached out, took her by the hand, and said, "You're a brave and courageous young woman, and we're very glad that you're here in this country. We wish you all the best in everything."

Susan always enlarged the circle of empathy.

Susan's life is a testament of faith in the power of individual human beings to make a difference in the lives of others—through teaching, mentoring, guiding, leading, and, sometimes, just through good conversation and listening—much needed in these times. She is an example for a fraught and divided academy and a profession in search of something beyond the latest technological trend or social cause. The enduring verities for Susan were about forging the human bonds and bringing out the best in each other.

In his *Education*, American historian Henry Adams famously wrote, "A teacher affects eternity. He can never tell where his influence stops."[3] Of course, I would change the gender in this statement for Susan but not the truth of it.

Now she has crossed to safety, and now she has gone home.

Thank you, Susan, for the learning.

Notes

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3. Henry Adams, *The Education of Henry Adams* (Random House Publishing Group, 1999).

American Educational Research Association. *Access:* https://www.aera.net/.

Founded in 1916, the American Educational Research Association (AERA) seeks to advance educational research, practice, and policy. Their website's easy-to-navigate structure and comprehensive content make it an indispensable resource for education scholars and students alike. The site is structured around six main sections that include news and announcements, events such as annual meetings and webinars, professional development, governance and elections, policy statements, and community and professional resources.

The website functions as an advocacy hub, frequently sharing major policy statements and updates about AERA's legal actions, federal advocacy efforts, and collaborations with other organizations, such as the STEM Education Coalition, to defend the integrity of educational research. AERA Highlights provides the latest news about the organization and education research. Organized chronologically, the news and announcements address current research policy and funding, calls for grant proposals, and publications calls for AERA journals such as *Review of Research in Education* and *AERA Open*.

Previous webcasts of AERA lectures and events, such as the Brown lecture series in education research, are available through the site. Site visitors can also view videos of prominent sessions from the organization's annual meetings. Moreover, AERA's Online Paper Repository serves as an open-access clearinghouse of full-text papers presented at the annual conference. Users may search the papers by author or subject area such as curriculum studies or postsecondary education.

Opportunities for professional growth are another core feature of the website. AERA offers multiple professional development opportunities to serve researchers at different career stages. With assistance from the National Science Foundation, AERA's grants program provides research funding for graduate students, faculty, and other doctoral-level scholars. Focusing on the most recent developments in educational research, AERA's Virtual Research Learning Center provides access to introductory and advanced courses on research methods and data analysis. An online jobs board is available for those seeking employment opportunities in education research.

Serving as an informational resource and a professional networking platform for the global educational research community, the AERA website is a valuable tool for researchers, educators, and policy advocates for up-to-date information on educational research, funding, professional development, and policy advocacy. Academic librarians can use the AERA website as a reliable tool to support education faculty and students by locating resources that directly inform teaching, scholarship, and program accreditation. — *Michele Frasier-Robinson, University of Southern Mississippi, Susan.FrasierRobinson@usm.edu*

Center for Democracy & Technology. *Access:* https://cdt.org/.

According to its website, the Center for Democracy & Technology (CDT) is "the leading nonpartisan, nonprofit organization fighting to advance civil rights and civil liberties in the digital age." Its mission is fivefold, with all its principles advocating for and protecting digital citizens, both socially and governmentally, as technology progresses at the speed of

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light. The CDT website is a collection of material related to the cause, including information about the organization, writings on modern digital issues related to the areas of focus, and collections of topical resources, ranging from the digital response to the coronavirus pandemic to what the center has deemed as "Techsplanations," defined as an "educational entry point" to the automated world.

The CDT website is impeccably organized, with four clear and concise menu items. First, Who We Are is a hover menu that leads to different webpages that give introductions to contributors, the international offices of the CDT, and more. Second, Latest is a one-click webpage that leads to the collection of latest insights, organized by date. This page makes it clear that the website is consistently and thoroughly updated, with multiple resources posted per week and sometimes per day. Third, Areas of Focus is a hover-menu listing topics that span from "Cybersecurity & Standards" to "Free Expression." Each topic leads to an overview of that subject area for the center, curated collections of related resources, and any interactive tools or databases the center has developed. Fourth, Collections are groups of resources organized by issue, covering a broader range of topics than the Areas of Focus section and featuring writings and reports on each subject.

The importance of the work done by CDT cannot be overstated, especially in our current digital and political climate. The CDT website is a thorough, organized, and clear collection of works that allows users to easily navigate through the plethora of information that the organization has created and aggregated. It is an invaluable resource for beginner, intermediate, or advanced digital rights research. Academic librarians may find the CDT website especially useful for guiding students and faculty to credible, current resources on digital rights and technology policy. Its structured collections and searchable databases make it a strong reference point for research support and curriculum integration. — *Sydney Orason, University of Alabama at Birmingham, sorason@uab.edu*

Invisible Histories. *Access:* https://inv*i*siblehistory.org/.

Invisible Histories is a nonprofit archival collection of queer histories in thirteen Southern states. Although primarily an online, digitized collection, it also features exhibits, classes, and other programming throughout the South. In addition, Invisible Histories provides opportunities for educators and archivists to participate in various "teach-ins" to share their own knowledge, work, and experiences.

The website contains a rich array of archival materials but also serves as a central space to grow and promote LGBTQ+ collections. The website provides detailed instructions on how to donate collections, whether to community archives, university archives, or Invisible Histories. Furthermore, there is a database of physical collections. With the current climate of federal and state actions targeting both academia and queer existence, having a central nongovernmental database is essential.

The impressive depth of the collections is highlighted through user-centered, well-designed pages that are engaging, and even fun, to explore. A good example is the section on zine archiving, which features a Mississippi-based Southern Memory Workers zine, fittingly one about the practice of archiving zines. Another notable area is the Born This Way digital archive that ensures the preservation of queer TikTok, Instagram, and other social media content.

Geared toward the ground-up DYI archivist, Invisible Histories nonetheless will be useful for those of all experience levels to learn more about preserving queer history in a time where erasure of that history is a real threat. This resource can help academic librarians strengthen LGBTQ+ collections by providing models of inclusive archiving, guidance on donation practices, and access to a centralized database of queer histories in the South. It also offers programming and teach-ins that librarians can adapt for instruction, outreach, and community engagement. Highly recommended for those new to archiving, new to LGBTQ+ collections, or generally interested in the preservation of community created content. — *Bart Everts, Rutgers University, bart.everts@rutgers.edu*

Scott B. Weingart has been named the inaugural chief technology officer at the Library of Virginia. Joining the library's senior leadership team, Weingart will provide strategic vision and operational leadership for the library's information technology and digital initiatives, including digital collections, web applications, digital engagement, and the management of critical systems like Alma, Primo, and Rosetta. The divisions maintain and provide access to more than 130 million digital collection files.

Weingart brings more than a decade of leadership experience in library technology, data strategy, and digital scholarship. He most recently served as chief data officer and inaugural director of the Office of Data and Evaluation at the National Endowment for the Humanities, where he shaped policy for national humanities initiatives, led multimillion-dollar grantmaking and contracting activities, and built strategic partnerships across government, nonprofit, and philanthropic institutions.

Eyal Ben-Yehuda has been named physical sciences librarian in the Penn State University Libraries' Physical and Mathematical Sciences (PAMS) Library on the University Park campus.

Melissa Correll recently joined Penn State Abington Library as a research and instruction librarian.

Amy Hathaway has joined Binghamton University as the director for access services.

Jesse Koennecke was recently appointed senior assistant dean for collections and technology at Binghamton University.

Zhaohui Liu has been appointed librarian for Asian studies at the Penn State University Libraries.