

Between the ending and the beginning

As I write this *C&RL* Spotlight, which is to be published in January, it is the beginning of December. I can't help but think about endings and beginnings and the space between them. I suppose that it is natural to be reflective at this time of year and to think about what we have experienced and what we have accomplished and what it means moving forward.

Certainly, *College & Research Libraries* has seen some changes in the past year: migration to a new publication platform, a pilot for developmental peer review, the creation of a LibGuide for authors and reviewers, the introduction of a new social media editor and strategy, and the investigation of representation on our editorial board and in our reviewer pool.

Plans are that this momentum will continue into the new year with the implementation of a new submission management system with backend workflow for the journal, preparation of a couple of special issues, the creation of a submission template, and other efforts.

Much of this has been accomplished because I have had the good fortune to have time for reflection, research, and writing during this fall semester on research leave. The responses to my being on leave are varied—some people ask how I am enjoying my time off, as if they think I am sipping pina coladas and watching Netflix all day, while others congratulate me and comment how lucky I am to have the luxury of the time to research and write.

Isn't it interesting the words they choose—the “luxury” of time? As if having the time dedicated to reflection, planning, and writing is an indulgence that is not necessary. The

notion that time to reflect, plan, and, yes, write, is a luxury, one that is less important than our “real jobs.” In conversation with new librarians, they also lament that lack of time to think about their projects and efforts, to regroup and learn from them, to plan how to move forward.

Because one of the values in our profession is service and meeting other's needs, we often sublimate our own needs or priorities to do what others want or need us to do. I spoke not too long ago with a librarian I used to mentor, and he lamented that there was so much to do, too many meetings, too much email to read and reply, and too much work to get done that he couldn't work on a project that he was in the middle of and really excited about.

It is not merely about having the time and head space to do research. This “luxury” of time to pause and reflect is a necessity—being reflective about the work we do, the new efforts we try, and being able to learn from our successes and from our failures.

So, in the space of this breath between the ending and the beginning, I have a New Year's wish for you all—that you give yourself the luxury of time this year:

- time to breathe and think;
- time to reflect and learn from past experience;
- time to contemplate new challenges;
- time to consider and ask difficult questions;
- time to rediscover what you value; and
- time to plan how you want to make a difference.

Because keeping up with email or attending meetings is unlikely to make a difference in the world.

Making a difference is one of the primary drivers of the journal. It is typified by this month's guest editorial. There is no denying that data is on everyone's mind, and it was planned to be the subject of an editorial this year. Then I read a paper on data that

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resounded—it was a call to arms for libraries and librarians to take a more active role in the data replicability issue. It was so compelling, I called the author, and we chatted about this issue and the importance of libraries engaging on this issue, both at the ground level in partnerships with researchers and at an institutional and professional level.

“The Reproducibility Crisis and Academic Libraries,” authored by Franklin Sayre and Amy Riegelman, lays out this issue better than I could and effectively pushes the boundaries on the role libraries play. They have defined the issues, identified standards, and offered best practices. This guest editorial serves, in my mind, as a call to other libraries and librarians to jump into the bigger issues facing higher education and play an active role. It may be a role that is not traditional for libraries, it may be one that requires we learn other disciplinary norms and have hard conversations and stretch our skills.

Another article in the January issue of *C&RL* that tackles a difficult question is “Format Aside: Applying Beall’s Criteria to Assess the Predatory Nature of both OA and Non-OA Library and Information Science Journals” by Joseph D. Olivarez, Stephen Bales, Laura Sare, and Wyoma vanDuinkerken. The initial preprint of this article coincided with some dialogue around Beall’s list and predatory journals. I applaud the authors of the article and Beall, as well, for having the courage to address a controversial and highly publicized issue that reaches far beyond libraries. It can be very intimidating to join a dialogue that is so controversial, but, I would argue, it is beneficial to scholarly discourse and to improving practice. Furthermore, I see it as a responsibility of this journal.

The articles in the rest of the January issue are an effective and innovative survey of best practices around collections, data management, and the application of information literacy in critical contexts:

“The Practice and Promise of Critical Information Literacy: Academic Librarians’ Involvement in Critical Library Instruction” by

Eamon C. Tewell offers critical information literacy as a way of thinking and teaching that examines the social construction and political dimensions of libraries and information. Using a survey and follow-up interviews with 13 librarians, this paper illustrates some of the many ways that librarians incorporate this approach, as well as the potential advantages and difficulties of doing so.

“Worth the Wait? Using Past Patterns to Determine Wait Periods for E-books Released after Print” by Karen Kohn asks if there is an optimal wait period for e-books that balances libraries’ desire to acquire books soon after their publication with the frequent desire to purchase books electronically whenever feasible. Analyzing 13,043 titles received on its e-preferred approval plan in 2014–15, it looks at the delays from the publication of print books to publication of their electronic versions. The analysis finds that most books on the approval plan are published electronically within a week of the print. Recommended wait periods are provided for different subjects.

“Factors Affecting the Use of Print and Electronic Books: A Use Study and Discussion” by Amy Fry outlines a study assessing and comparing the rate of use of nonreference print and electronic book collections acquired during the same time period at one academic library. The author found that 74 percent of print titles acquired in 2008–2009 had been used within their first six years in the collection, and that 27 percent of print books acquired between 2008 and 2014 had been used between July 2013 and November 2014. By contrast, only 12 percent of the e-books acquired between 2008 and 2014 were used during the same 17-month period.

“Collections as a Service: A Research Library’s Perspective” by Julie Linden, Sarah Tudesco, and Daniel Dollar examines the monographic acquisitions program from multiple angles, including circulation, expenditures, approval plans, and e-book usage.

There are also suggestions for additional metrics to evaluate collections as a service, as well as questions posed to frame an ongoing research and assessment agenda.

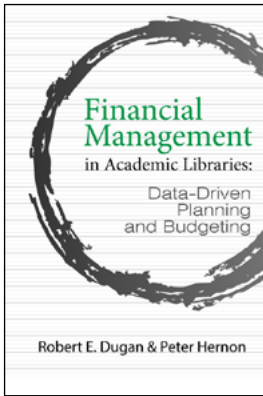
“Librarians’ Perspectives on the Factors Influencing Research Data Management Programs” by Ixchel M. Faniel and Lynn Silipigni Connaway examines librarians’ research data management experiences, specifically the factors that influence their ability to support researchers’ needs. Findings from interviews with 36 academic library professionals in the United States identify five factors of influence: 1) technical resources, 2) human resources, 3) researchers’ perceptions about the library,

4) leadership support, and 5) communication, coordination, and collaboration.

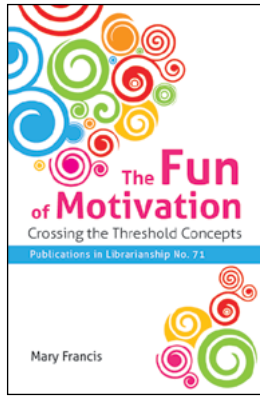
“A Collaborative, Trilateral Approach to Bridging the Information Literacy Gap in Student Writing” by Trena Napier, Jill Parrott, Erin Presley, and Leslie Valley presents a trilateral case study among librarians, faculty, and writing center administrators, emphasizing the intersection of programmatic partnerships, assessment, and pedagogical best practices. Our research shows a trilateral approach to information literacy increases efficacy and a sense of shared responsibility in support of student research where traditional bilateral approaches fall short. *FR*



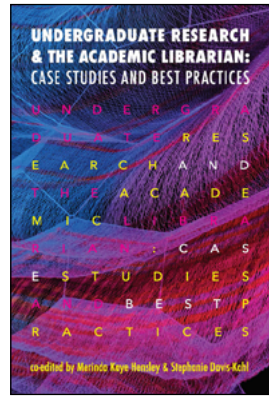
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