Librarians Applying Information Literacy Standards as Evaluators of Peer-to-Peer Course Content in a First-Year College Success Course

Do You Want to Chat?: Reevaluating Organization of Virtual Reference Service at an Academic Library

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Columns

Features

Departments

A Thirty-Year Reflection on the Value of Reference

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As RUSA is exploring how, if at all, the word "reference" succeeds in describing what its members do in the twenty-first-century library, it seemed an opportune moment to publish David Murray's column reflecting on reference services. I hope that this column will help us to continue the discussion of how best to describe, in a usable fashion, the complex work that public service librarians are engaged in. I would be eager to feature the work of other writers who would like to contribute to this discussion, and encourage anyone interested in writing on this topic to contact me at btrott@wrl .org. We all agree, I believe, that our work is important to our users, and the challenge is in finding a way to recognize the changes that have happened in that work without abandoning the strengths that brought us to this point. I believe that David's column is a good start to that discussion.—*Editor*

I wrote this article in defense of reference services, broadly defined as "all the functions performed by a trained librarian . . . to meet the information needs of patrons."[1] Actions associated with these functions include advising, answering, finding, evaluating, interpreting, instructing, and promoting, among others. I am not concerned with squabbles about models employed to meet users' information needs (e.g., Should we abandon the reference desk?); implications of the corporatization of higher education for the delivery of reference services (e.g., Can we afford them?);[2] or with zero-sum games that pit traditional services against newer ones (e.g., Must we scale back reference to support digital scholarship?). Inescapable questions all, but I wish to focus instead on the value of reference disconnected from these debates. More to the point, what would library users lose if reference services disappeared? I begin by looking backward nearly thirty years into the first chapter of my own library career to reflect on how far we have come, but more importantly to disambiguate the mutable models and tools of reference from its immutable value. I then identify two pillars of reference work unlikely to disappear no matter how much or how rapidly libraries transform. In the final section I respond to the authors of a recently published ARL report that reframed reference services as librarian-centered rather than user-centered.

In 1987, still in college and knowing very little about libraries, I applied for a part-time job paging books at the Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh (CLPgh). After three months and hundreds of trips up and down eleven flights of Edwardian-era stacks, I landed my second library job: A full-time paraprofessional position in the Telephone Ready Reference Unit (or TRRU).[3] Over the next six years I honed

my reference skills, gaining experience and knowledge that even now redound to the benefit of my patrons. In TRRU, a five-minute countdown began each time the telephone rang. If a patron's question could not be answered quickly it was transferred to a degreed reference librarian in the relevant subject department. The more disagreeable TRRU questions ranged from deadly serious to salacious. One patron I vividly recall requested the number of the nearest domestic abuse shelter. Bar bets abounded. I often hoped my proffered answer would please the tipsy, querulous patron on the other end of the line. It did not always end smoothly. Who, after all, enjoys losing a bet? Fortunately, my senior coworkers and librarian mentors trained me well. Sources consisted of a collection of several dozen classic reference books such as Lois Hutchinson's *Standard Handbook for Secretaries*, a lifesaver for grammar questions. Also available were the paper catalog and an index file of three-by-five cards with then-handy tidbits such as the spellings of *glasnost* and *perestroika*. The index file I relied upon as an oracle of ephemera not otherwise retrievable. These were our tools; the bread and butter of a busy service point referred to by one patron as the "truth squad."

TRRU staff maintained an informal log of questions deemed amusing, thought provoking, or improbable. To wit: "Is the Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh open to the public?" The answer: "Yes," for nearly 100 years by 1992. In fairness, perhaps this patron resided in New York City and had become accustomed to a distinction between lending branch libraries and non-lending research libraries. It never paid to judge. Logged questions we filed under headings such as "animals," "geography," "historical anachronisms," "malapropisms," and "religion." Here are several of my favorite questions, all dating to between 1987 and 1994:

- Is Mount Rushmore natural (carved by the wind) or man-made?
- Why don't islands float, like boats?
- Did Winston Churchill discover America?
- Was General Robert E. Lee the hero of Operation Desert Storm?
- Who invented the wheel?
- Do you have a list of all the pilgrims who sailed on the Niña, Pinta, and Santa María?
- What is the address of Princess Diana, Queen of the Whales?
- Who was the last douche of Venus?
- Where do the birds go to die?
- What was the height and weight of Jesus Christ?

Ready reference, of course, epitomizes the kind of reference work devastated by users' ability to access the web. Or does it? In its first year of operation, 1977, TRRU fielded 65,891 calls. By 1996, nearly two years after the web first dominated the Internet, it handled a whopping 119,262 calls.[4] By 2015, the number of calls dropped precipitously to 27,123, a still-healthy 8,307 (or 30.63 percent) of which consisted of reference queries.[5] Rather unexpectedly, ready reference, purportedly that most outdated of reference modalities, remains relatively healthy deep into the era of Web 2.0 at the Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh and likely at other public libraries across the country.

Why, one might reasonably ask, should this be the case when searching Google is easier than calling the library? The digital divide provides one plausible answer. Too many patrons lack access to the web from home, or to a smartphone and data plan that could provide such access on the go. But the answer best fitting the data is simply that only the lowest-hanging fruit has been plucked from the reference tree. "We get the questions," wrote the authors of a 2010 CLPgh report on reference staffing, "that require a more complex approach whether in context or syntax, searches requiring knowledge of the deep web, and data review requiring more than rudimentary critical thinking skills."[6] Indeed, the definition of ready reference encapsulates how this service manages to stay relevant into the second decade of the twenty-first century. An apparently simple request, upon reflection and further inquiry, might well represent the "opening gambit" of a more complex search once the librarian understands the patron's true information need.[7]

The inchoate quality frequently exhibited by even the simplest reference question is apparent in the sample TRRU questions. "Why don't islands float, like boats?" cries out for a *National Geographic* article on island formation and plate tectonics more than a one-sentence response. The two early American history questions suggest the need to access a chronology or other reference work to straighten out basic facts related to European colonization of the Americas, but only as the first steps of a longer information journey. "Who invented the wheel?" might occasion a referral to an encyclopedia on the history of technology; even better a discussion of the nature and availability of primary sources. The answer to the question about the last doge of Venice is straightforward enough, but Google's algorithms cannot parse "douche of Venus." Try it, although perhaps not with SafeSearch turned off. Ready reference staff today utilize the open web as much or more than any other resource to assist patrons. Google is not the enemy of ready reference after all, so much as its most effective tool, not dissimilar in kind to the index file. While it might entail less effort than calling the library, Google in many instances cannot compete with a well-trained paraprofessional or reference librarian in fulfilling even users' basic information needs.

If ready reference endures, how much more pressing the obligation to prioritize robust reference services in academic libraries? Not doing so, it strikes me, constitutes an abnegation of our service commitment, and, quite frankly, crosses the line into professional malpractice. A reference question I received this semester from an undergraduate history major displays a major leap in complexity and understanding over the sample TRRU questions. "Can you help me," the student asked, "find primary sources about the practice of Western medicine in the Pamir Mountains during the Soviet era?"

The student's query elicited two counterquestions: "Do you read Russian?" and "Have you heard of the Foreign Broadcast Information Service Daily Reports?" Regardless of my initial reaction, a question this thoughtful merited a genuinely useful response. The student, in other words, deserved the opportunity to participate in a time-honored tradition in which one patron engages in meaningful interpersonal communication with one professional reference librarian, sometimes called a research consultation. At the heart of most research consultations lies a reference question. The librarian might help the student choose or refine a research topic; identify key archives and data sets; recommend relevant scholarly monographs, journal articles, and other secondary sources; pinpoint the most useful licensed abstracting and indexing databases; and brainstorm for keywords with which to effectively search the local catalog and WorldCat. The ideal location or medium by which this communication takes place might vary, but the notion that a service so vital (in both senses) might disappear from an academic library worthy of the name beggars belief.

Reference work rests on two pillars unchanged since the mid to late nineteenth century. The first is librarian as academic generalist, often also disciplinary expert, instilled with intimate knowledge of the collection and the meta-knowledge required to make use of that collection.[8] The second is librarian as advisor, consultant, guide, instructor, or teacher.[9] How do these pillars of reference match up against the skills (not tools) required to function as a reference librarian today? RUSA President Anne Houston recently inventoried a set of seven skills employed by contemporary reference librarians: consulting and advising, teaching, interpreting, advocating, programming, user experience, and design thinking.[10] While a couple undeniably "go beyond those included in traditional reference training" (e.g., programming workshops and lectures), the degree to which most remain firmly rooted within the reference tradition is striking. One might reasonably call them iterative, quite possibly additive, but not revolutionary. "The reference librarian," Houston wrote, "has always been an advisor of sorts, pointing people to the right information to meet their needs." On instruction she noted, "The role of the reference librarian is, more than ever, to teach."[11] Interpreting requires "heightened interpersonal skills and an ability to communicate across an increasingly diverse population,"[12] expertise long common, for instance, to academic reference librarians attached to institutions located in diverse urban settings.

Minor digging revealed evidence in support of the contention that the skills utilized by today's reference librarians are not new. A striking early example comes from W. A. Jones, Librarian at Columbia College in New York in 1857:

> The chief duty [of the librarian] . . . is purely critical. In the performance of it, the Librarian is really an instructor, as much so as a professor, though without the title or salary. In History, civil or literary, of Philosophy or Art, in Criticism, Aesthetics, Ethical and Metaphysical Philosophy, Logic, the Evidences of Christianity, Political Economy, he necessarily comes in aid of the professor—as the Library is, as it were, an upper lecture-room for illustration and expansion of the outline designed for the classes. His business is not merely to suggest plans of reading, but actually to discuss a subject.[13]

Jones's crystal-clear assertion that reference work cannot be divorced from disciplinary content is a claim with which I expect most contemporary subject specialist librarians would agree. History professor Arley Barthlow Show in 1896 likewise emphasized the instructional role of the librarian before the assembled members of the Library Association of Central California: "Through instruction in the use of books and of library aids; *through the personal direction of the student in his research* [emphasis added]; through the freedom with which the whole resources of the library are placed at his service; and many such ways, the libraries of our colleges and universities are becoming genuine *workshops*."[14] Perhaps to avoid any possible uncertainty as to his meaning, Show prefaced his remarks, "The librarian is truly a teacher."[15] Reference work takes place across a continuum from simple (ready reference) to complex (research consultations). The "value add" of the reference librarian within this continuum comes from her ability to contextualize information for a particular audience or audiences. Deep knowledge of the collection and how to leverage it, combined with expertise in guiding users on their information journey, persist as the pillars of reference.

In 2013, Jaguszewski and Williams authored an influential report that documented changes in liaison roles at some ARL libraries.[16] The authors leaned on authentic trends to articulate a fairly radical vision. But their vision for reference services is altogether evolutionary. Among surveyed ARL libraries, some liaisons have transitioned away from the reference desk toward "developing easily accessible online materials (e.g., LibGuides, screencasts)," while others are "providing more advanced one-on-one consultations with students, instructors, and researchers who need expert help."[17] LibGuides and screencasts, classic aids to reference work, the authors seemed to perceive as potential *replacements* for the interpersonal communication between patron and librarian outlined above. Also implied, perhaps, is that these aids are novel. Of course such aids have long been a part of the reference librarian's repertoire. Comparing the function and utility of a classic pathfinder with a LibGuide, the adjective "iterative" again comes to mind. Genuinely evolved roles or skills identified in the New Roles in Research Services section of the report—supporting interdisciplinary research, implementing "expertise databases" to enhance collaboration, assisting in the management of the data lifecycle, identifying repositories of available research data—are at best additive and in no way weaken the pillars, importance, or necessity of reference services as we have understood them for well over a century.

Reference librarians, subject specialist librarians, and liaison librarians—pick your preferred position title—conduct neither reference transactions nor in-depth research consultations in a vacuum, or merely to satisfy some itch peculiar to that hidebound breed known as the reference librarian. Rather, in academic libraries it is the students and disciplinary faculty who have and will continue to request a broad spectrum of reference services because in them they find value. Setting aside any attachment to the reference desk, legitimate concerns remain about the impact of the vision offered by Jaguszewski and Williams on the quality of reference services delivered to students and faculty; on the ability of liaison librarians to interact serendipitously with their consituents; and on the potential long-term repercussions for all of the other services academic libraries provide if and when reference librarians can no longer be found in libraries' public spaces.

I resisted the temptation in this article to advocate for (or to argue against) any one model employed to deliver reference services. Such discussions, or so I have observed, obfuscate more often than they illuminate. After all, models of reference and especially the tools of reference come and go, and sometimes come back. I focused instead on the fixed value of reference over time. Protestations to the contrary notwithstanding, the essential character and basic function of reference work has *not* changed since Samuel Swett Green popularized reference in 1876.[18] Although such a statement might scandalize some in a profession whose esprit de corps centers on mastering emerging technologies, rest assured I am no Luddite. I do, however, believe that reference librarians are the inheritors of a great, Progressive-Era tradition worth preserving. Nearly three decades of experience in libraries large, medium, and small, public and academic, convinces me that patrons still need, indeed desire and in many cases demand, meaningful interactions with knowledgeable, well-trained reference librarians (or whatever name we might end up calling ourselves). Users of most libraries still retain access to high-quality reference services, but pressure to deprofessionalize reference appears to be mounting. Whether future users will benefit from such access therefore remains to be seen.

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RUSA Directions

Alesia M. McManus, RUSA President, 2016–17

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As I start my year as RUSA President, I would like to share my thoughts on the health and vitality of RUSA as we move into a new year with aspirational ideas, goals, and plans. RUSA is only as strong as the number of its engaged members. At the time of writing this column (May 2016), we have seen a decline in membership of 4.0 percent from last year. The decline from this same time the previous year (May 2015) was 2.8 percent. The RUSA budget relies significantly on membership dues for revenue and, while we're expecting our deficit to be lower than planned, we are operating with a deficit budget. As a result, in addition to possibly putting a dues increase on the 2017 ballot, we are talking about how to re-energize RUSA so we can operate nimbly and flexibly to support and encourage the greatest possible member engagement.

Our new strategic plan, which Anne Houston discussed in her President's column in the Fall 2015 issue of *RUSQ*, focuses on how we provide value to our members. In particular, our vivid description of the future we desire for RUSA reflects the importance of providing professional learning resources. Goal #1 of the strategic plan is to "offer services, programs and products that maximize the value of membership, making RUSA a good return on investment for its members and encouraging member engagement, recruitment and retention," and one of the objectives related this goal is to "develop and expand educational resources and experiences that are of high value to many members." A key action item this past year was to review the Learning Opportunities and Knowledge Coordination Task Force (LOKCS) report which recommended ways to improve RUSA's support of members' professional learning.

LOKCS established a definition for Continuing Learning as "self-directed learning throughout a member's career to obtain knowledge, learn new skills, and stay up-to-date using multiple methodologies." Key highlights of the report include:

- Promulgating a statement of vision and values for continuing learning
- Strengthening RUSA's organization and communication
- Building a framework for learning
- Focusing efforts on online and added value opportunities
- Enhancing RUSA's bottom line[1]

In the interests for furthering the aims of the report, I am sharing here the vision statement and values for RUSA's continuous learning.

VISION STATEMENT

RUSA members work in and for an international learning community characterized by a culture committed to sharing knowledge, expertise, and experience to benefit the diverse populations they serve. RUSA nurtures learning opportunities and dialogue on timely, relevant, and thought-provoking ideas and knowledge by generating and disseminating professional standards and guidelines, publications, online continuing education opportunities, and conference programming. RUSA creates opportunities for members to translate new ideas into successful practice.

RUSA empowers entrepreneurial members, committees, and sections to create responsive, engaging learning opportunities that anticipate professional development needs of members and others engaged in information service. As an organization, RUSA encourages coordinated, recombinant use of RUSA-generated information and knowledge. A collateral benefit of these efforts is educational programming that generates a dependable revenue stream to allow RUSA to carry out its mission.[2]

VALUE STATEMENT

The Reference and User Services Association's continuing learning services embody the values of:

- RELEVANCE—Learning experiences respond to and anticipate information services practitioners' needs.
- QUALITY—Learning experiences provide value to participants in their work.
- RESPONSIVENESS—Member input guides the ongoing assessment and improvement of RUSA learning experiences.
- COST EFFECTIVENESS— Affordably priced learning opportunities generate revenue RUSA can reinvest in its member priorities.
- ENGAGEMENT—Members create opportunities to share expertise, exchange ideas on issues, and benefit from active learning experiences.

The RUSA Executive Committee and Board will integrate the LOKCS recommendations into our strategic plan action items for the upcoming year. I welcome your comments and feedback on this RUSA initiative. Please send an email message to alemcmanus@ucdavis.edu.

I would like to acknowledge the excellent efforts of the LOKCS task force members: Elizabeth German, Sarah Hammill, Michael Hermann, Todd Hines, Shannon Jones (co-chair), Elizabeth Kline, Emily Kornak, Carolyn Larson, Mary Parker, Jeannette Pierce, Mary Pagliero Popp (co-chair), Jenny Presnell, and James Rettig.

Notes

1. Continuing education offerings serve as a primary source of revenue in the RUSA budget, so providing more robust and relevant offerings could be beneficial to the health of RUSA as a division and well as providing a valuable benefit to the membership.
2. The RUSA Board reviewed and commented upon the Vision and Values Statements for Continuing Learning at its May 15, 2015 meeting.

Assistance Animals in the Library

How One Academic Library Developed Best Practices

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Effectively addressing concerns about assistance animals in any library setting is often problematic due to a lack of awareness about assistance animals in general, which then leads to uncertainty on how to proceed in these situations.[1] Library personnel, regardless of library type, are often unaware of legal definitions of assistance animals. When compelled to respond to a patron complaint about "a dog in the library," many library professionals are uncertain about which questions they may legally ask a patron who is accompanied by an animal. This uncertainty then creates concern about how to act in these situations, and thus, many library personnel may seek to avoid it entirely. However, with knowledge, time, some organizational development, and the appropriate legal vetting, it is possible to establish a best-practices protocol for handling complaints or concerns about patrons with an assistance animal in a library. This article details one such case study at an academic library in the Pacific Northwest.

A brief aside on what this article will not do is necessary before continuing: This article details the design, implementation, and results of an internal workshop, which subsequently led to the creation of a best-practices document intended for use by the staff at an academic library. This article will only provide an introductory overview of the legal classifications of service animals, emotional support/comfort animals, and therapy animals. Though the Civil Rights Division of the United States Department of Justice is very clear on the federal definition of service animals,[2] these definitions—and the corresponding legislation—can vary from state to state.[3] Furthermore, the definitions for emotional support/comfort animals or therapy animals also differ across state and federal lines—one such example is found in Washington State.[4]

ASSISTANCE ANIMALS IN THE LIS LITERATURE (AND BEYOND)

Over the last two decades, universities and colleges have seen increased enrollment of students with disabilities, and these disabilities manifest in different ways, from mobility impairments to neurodiverse learning styles to mental health complications. For more evidence of this enrollment trend, see Lee; Snyder and Dillow; Watkins et al.; and Huss.[5] Within these growing populations of students with disabilities, those students who meet the appropriate disability-related criteria are bringing their assistance animals. These assistance animals can be trained to accommodate a wide

spectrum of disability-related needs; furthermore, some of these animals are trained to perform complex tasks tailored to the distinct needs of a specific individual with a disability. Indeed, because of the complexities inherent in current categorizations of assistance animals, combined with the often disparate legal definitions of assistance animals between state and federal laws, Parenti et al. have argued for a substantial revision to the current legal definitions of assistance animals. Parenti et al. believe that the current legal categorizations of assistance animals do not sufficiently describe the diverse activities and tasks associated with assistance animals that are designed to address disability-related needs, and thus cannot subsequently outline appropriate legal rights and protections.[6]

Before continuing onto the case study, it is important to provide a few definitions for the sake of clarity. This article addresses two types of assistance animals (both of which can be found in most types of libraries). Assistance animals are, first and foremost, not pets. The United States Department of Housing and Urban Development defines an assistance animal as "an animal that works, provides assistance, or performs tasks for the benefit of a person with a disability, or provides emotional support that alleviates one or more identified symptoms or effects of a person's disability."[7] One common type of assistance animal is a service animal. According to the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), the federal definition of a service animal is a "dog that is individually trained to do work or perform tasks for a person with a disability."[8] In a separate provision, the ADA does permit a substitution of miniature horses as a service animal when relevant.[9]

The second type of assistance animal discussed in this article is an emotional support animal (also called an ESA, comfort animal, or therapy animal). An ESA is an assistance animal intended to improve the emotional or mental well-being of its human counterpart.[10] Furthermore, ESAs are *not* limited to only serving people with disabilities, whereas service animals are usually exclusively partnered with individuals with disabilities.[11] It is worth noting that, according to the ADA, ESAs are *not* considered service animals. Thus, the human companions of ESAs should not expect the same rights and responsibilities as those afforded to the companions of service animals.[12]

The scholarly literature on the benefits associated with all categories of assistance animals spans several disability types. Hubert et al.; Ostermeier; and Erin cover how assistance animals can help human companions with mobility-related disabilities.[13] Assistance animals can also benefit individuals with an autism spectrum disorder, as Carlisle; Groomes et al.; Berry et al.; and Smyth and Slevin have documented.[14] Helping with emotional or mental health difficulties and vision and cognition impairments is also within the purview of assistance animals; see Polheber and Matchock; Sehretal; Hersch; and Gee.[15] However, few of these articles provide an overview of definitions and practices associated with assistance animals, and almost none of them specifically reference library settings.[16]

The library and information science literature on assistance animals—scholarly and otherwise—is very limited, with much of it focused upon the presence of therapy animals in library environments. In these scenarios, therapy animals are introduced to the library environment at the specific request of library professionals in order to conduct a program or event. For example, Ann-Marie Biden's article, entitled "Who's the Four-Legged Librarian?," examines the incorporation of a therapy animal in a children's public library space, concluding that every party involved won something important: The therapy animals were successfully introduced to new environment and new behaviors while students were able to spend time with these animals.[17] Other scholars have also commented on the value of having therapy animals in library spaces. For several case studies of this scenario, please see references "It's All in the Delivery" and "Gone to the Dogs" as well as Jalongo and Inklebarger.[18] Smith mentions an exchange about service animals on an electronic discussion list, suggesting that increased knowledge about this topic is desired among access services library professionals.[19]

However, the presence of assistance animals in library spaces introduces a new (to many professionals) set of difficult questions: What are the expected behaviors of an assistance animal? How do service animals differ from ESAs? What should a library professional do in a scenario where the "service animal" is clearly a puppy? Or if the animal is actively jumping upon or barking at another patron? The diversity of both disability types and assistance animal categories raise questions that many library professionals feel unequipped to answer. Amy Hale-Janeke's article, "Pushing the Limits of PR," succinctly summarizes many of ambiguities associated with assistance animals in libraries, concluding that the legal guidance afforded by the ADA does not adequately serve library professionals.[20] Implementing policies or practices that address assistance animal–related concerns is often left to individual libraries.

The inconsistent discussion and implementation of policy or practices around assistance animals can be problematic in multiple ways. It is true that developing a policy or practice requires knowledge, staff time, training (which requires both human and financial resources), legal vetting, and—lastly—persistence. But *not* having such a practice or policy may result in inconsistent, hostile, or confusing experiences for patrons with assistance animals, even at the same service point within the same library. And it was no different for one particular academic library in the Pacific Northwest of the United States. In early May 2014, the personnel at Western Washington University Libraries expressed many of these same questions and concerns to the library administration. In response, a team of library-based stakeholders attempted to address these concerns through the creation of an organizational workshop, which led to the eventual establishment of a best-practices protocol.

ASSISTANCE ANIMALS AT WESTERN LIBRARIES: AN ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITY

Western Washington University Libraries (Western Libraries) is an academic library, featuring a main library encompassing two buildings totaling two hundred thousand square feet, and a collection of over one million volumes which serves over fifteen thousand students. Bellingham, Washington, the home of Western Libraries, is a pet-friendly city, and there are several residence halls that house undergraduate and graduate students nearby the Libraries. Thus, library staff members encounter patrons with service animals, ESAs, *and* pets. Furthermore, in Washington State, it is not easy to determine at a glance which animals are pets and which are assistance animals (which, by law, are *not* pets, and have legal rights and protections). Historically, personnel at the Libraries had expressed confusion and some frustration on how to identify whether an animal was an assistance animal or a pet, and, if necessary, how best to approach patrons with animals within the Libraries.

In order to respond to these questions, the Diversity and Disability Services Librarian volunteered to lead the development and implementation of an informational workshop at the Libraries. The desired learning outcomes for the workshop were:

- To introduce common terms and definitions in order to build a vocabulary around assistance animals, with the desired result of an increased understanding of how service animals serve people with disabilities;
- To review the Americans with Disabilities Act and Washington State legislation in order to increase understanding; and
- To use scenario-based activities, including suggested responses, to discuss best practices in order to develop consistent standards for interacting with patrons who have service animals.

Developing the workshop required addressing several considerations. First was the question of whether the university had a comprehensive and updated policy regarding service and emotional support animals on campus. As a potentially litigious issue, it was important to seek advice and approval from the campus experts and legal representation. Upon investigation, it was clear that there was a university policy that was in accordance with state law.[21] However, while the existing policy was clear on its definition of a service animal and the corresponding rights afforded to the patron with a service animal, the policy did not provide specific advice on how to serve the staff awareness needs at the multiple service points found throughout an academic library. Thus, another consideration required an assessment of personnel support needs. In short, what information did the Libraries' staff members need in order to respond to service animal inquiries or incidents at different service points? In this regard, it was important to examine the information needs of each public service point (e.g., the Circulation Services Desk versus the Research-Writing Studio) and to survey employee types (e.g., student employees needed different training opportunities than permanent employees) in order to create an organizational development plan.

FROM A WORKSHOP TO A BEST-PRACTICES DOCUMENT: A COLLEAGUE-CENTERED EVOLUTION

After a period of needs assessment and legal consultation, and after receiving library administrative approval, the Diversity and Disability Services Librarian developed a workshop which featured a brief overview on state and federal definitions of assistance animals; state and federal laws that governed assistance animals; and organizational policies and procedures (which in this case referred to Western Washington University's campus policy). After a brief presentation on this information, the attendees were divided into small groups, and each of these groups was given a scenario. Each group was advised to examine and discuss their respective scenario, then share the highlights of the discussion with all attendees. After some conversation, each group reported the highlights of this dialogue to the larger group.

The purpose of the scenario exercises was to illuminate the context-specific questions inherent in each setting. For example, do staff members have the right to ask human partners to bring their service animal under control if it is actively menacing another individual (i.e., barking at or jumping upon someone other than their human partner)? Furthermore, what does "actively menacing" look like in a library setting? The value of these group exercises lay in developing a collective consensus among library personnel through the critical (and public) examination of these scenarios. In being presented with a scenario, and with the subsequent critical examination, staff members could voice questions and receive answers on best or preferred practices in a public forum.

After the workshop, a common sentiment arose: "This is wonderful information—but how will I remember all of it?" Essentially, library staff members expressed a concern about being able to accurately recall the best practices two months or even two years later. In response, the Diversity and Disability Services Librarian developed a best-practices document to share with attendees, entitled "WWU Libraries Protocol for Interacting with Service Animals." This document, vetted by legal experts at the university and in compliance with state and federal laws, was made available to all library personnel as a PDF and contained highlights from the workshops in a simple display (readers can find the document at http://libguides.wwu.edu/assistance_animals). Library personnel could refer to the document when specific (and admittedly infrequent) situations arose, rather than being forced to rely upon their memories from

the workshop. In addition, supervisors could insist that a copy of this document be saved on strategic desktops at all public service points, and all staff members could save a copy of the document in their work inbox or on their personal computer.

EMERGING PATTERNS AND CONSIDERATIONS

Anecdotal feedback from post-workshop conversations indicated that library staff members felt that the trainings were very successful in alleviating the ambiguity and myths surrounding assistance animals in libraries. In the subsequent months, colleagues have contacted the Diversity and Disability Services Librarian with additional inquiries. The advantages of hindsight, which affords opportunity to evaluate what could be improved, have yielded several important considerations about the service animal conversation of which all library professionals should be aware:

- *Best Practices and Legal Counsel*: It is crucially important to review and vet all best practices documents associated with assistance animal interactions through legal counsel. For universities and colleges, that will consist of the Equal Opportunity Office and/or university legal counsel. For public libraries, consider submitting the materials to be vetted by local legal authorities, preferably those with a background and some competency in ADA legislation. While developing these practices will alleviate ambiguity and misunderstanding about service animals for library personnel, it is important that the library in question protect itself with appropriate and relevant legal counsel.
- *We're Library Professionals*—Not Medical or Legal Experts: It is important to remember that library professionals are not medical professionals, and thus are not qualified to judge whether a patron *should* have an assistance animal. Respectful dialogue, not judgment, is necessary in these situations.
- *No Formal Policy? Advocate for One!*: What if there is no formal policy available at the organization or library? It seems simplistic to write this, but it is important to ask the appropriate authorities for a governing document. While any resulting policy may only be a simple statement about respecting the needs of patrons with assistance animals, having that policy can alleviate the frustration associated with ambiguity in these situations. Furthermore, with overt guidance, personnel can develop suggested language and practices around a policy.
- *Partner with Library Administration*: For a successful experience, partner with the library administrative team on developing a best-practices document about assistance animals. Administrative support and official approval is an important step in this process, and will provide any resulting materials with the necessary credibility for these practices to manifest.

- *Institutional versus Organizational Policies*: In many instances in academic libraries, the library is merely one organization on campus and is only one stakeholder in the conversation about assistance animals. By and large, institutional policies are in compliance with local and national laws governing service animal interactions, and will likely trump any organizational policies implemented by a library. So while it is important to develop best practices designed specifically for libraries (because of the unique nature of library services and the sheer number of service points available throughout the library), it is equally important to bring those policies into alignment with institutional policies. This ensures that the library is protected, legally and politically, as well as ensuring equitable treatment for all patrons across campus. Furthermore, libraries are not policy-making bodies regarding patrons with disabilities because they lack the legal and medical background necessary for this role; therefore, it is important to partner with experts in this endeavor. For public libraries, it may be useful to examine assistance animal policies available at other public entities.
- *Conflicting Disabilities*: What if a staff member has a severe phobia of dogs, and thus is reluctant to approach patrons with service dogs? Or is allergic to most animal dander? Unfortunately, there seems to be little guidance available on the subject of conflicting disabilities (i.e., when the effects of one patron's disability adversely interact with another's disability). The ADA simply states that people with disabilities who qualify for service animals are entitled to bring them into most settings.[22] However, libraries can develop intra-departmental strategies for serving patrons with service animals while maintaining the well-being of an affected employee. One example is simply asking another colleague to serve the patron with an assistance animal if one is afraid of or allergic to the animal in question. Also, consider reporting the conflicting disability to the organization's Human Resources department, as they may have additional resources or strategies to support affected personnel.

CONCLUSIONS

Throughout the process of developing these training materials and documents, it was important to share widely any resulting products with library staff—especially those who were most affected by these policies. In this specific case study, those were the public services staff. Upon completion of "Best Practices for Service Animal Interactions at Western Libraries," this document was circulated to all employees in the Libraries so that everyone could have a reference sheet. Further trainings were requested during the subsequent months; when taught, these trainings were tailored to the specific audience (e.g., student employees).

Development of best practices at Western Libraries raised awareness about important issues for library personnel *and*

yielded more consistent patron experiences across library spaces. The processes detailed in this case study were admittedly time-consuming, and required a library professional to lead the charge. Furthermore, Western Libraries was fortunate in having on-campus access to legal expertise in order to vet any employed practices—a privilege which some libraries may not have. Despite any potential drawbacks associated with engaging in this process (e.g., lack of time or expertise), it is important that libraries review their practices with regards to patrons with assistance animals. Libraries are in the service business, and thus, they should create inclusive spaces for all patrons, including those with disabilities.[23] In equipping library personnel with the knowledge and practices through these activities, library spaces can become welcoming environments with clear and consistent expectations about assistance animals.

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Work for the Decision Makers

Literature Reviews as a High-Impact Service

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For academic libraries to thrive, they must continue to find new ways to be relevant to their campus communities. In this column, Dustin Fife and Mary Naylor describe the Utah Valley University Library's recent introduction of research services for campus administrators and decision makers—constituents who often are not directly served by campus libraries. This relatively new service already has facilitated increased access to university leaders and provided additional insight into academic affairs. As importantly, it has paid dividends for the library and librarians by raising awareness of what they have to offer.—*Editor*

During the fall of 2014, a senior vice president at Utah Valley University (UVU), a large public institution, asked the library staff to do a literature review for the department of Academic Affairs about high-impact teaching practices in universities. A small group of librarians took on this assignment. They scoured the literature, put together a table that highlighted conclusions for each source, wrote a short summary, submitted it to an appreciative campus decision maker, and discovered a completely new role for the UVU Library.

During the past year, a small team of two librarians and one research assistant completed sixteen literature reviews for various campus partners. These partners include senior vice presidents, associate vice presidents, the Faculty Senate, the Office of Teaching and Learning, and the Department of Academic Affairs. The literature reviews have touched on many different topics, among them open educational resources, undergraduate research, first-generation students, quantitative literacy, and local voting demographics. They were all done for groups involved in highly impactful campus-wide decision making or with new campus initiatives.

The literature review research, including some direct quotes, has appeared in campus white papers, university presentations, administrative addresses, and other visible outlets. More importantly, this service has provided a connection to top campus administrators who often have very little to do with the library, and it supports them in a way that demonstrates the professional value and abilities of librarians.

BACKGROUND

In the early 2000s, some University of Michigan librarians formalized an Executive Research Service (ERS), which focused on proactive research assistance for University executives (Downing et al. 2011). Downing, Desai, and

MacKintosh highlighted three findings that the UVU Library experience confirms. First, they found that their ERS was an effective way to show the value of libraries and librarians to decision makers. "The Service also provides valuable opportunities to show executive officers the depth and range of the campus library and librarians' knowledge and expertise." Second, they found that their research service provided incredible insight into campus affairs. "It also provides the Library with insight into the pressing issues and work of our campus executive officers in ways that would otherwise be hidden to us." Last, they found that this service created an important connection with campus decision makers. "Finally, the service provides valuable links between the campus administration and the Library, and provides many opportunities for the Library and librarians to collaborate on projects and programs beyond what might otherwise be available."[1] In less than a year, the UVU Library experienced all of these findings. The two major examples that are shared in detail in this article show how the UVU Library gained greater access to administrators, acquired insight into future programs and projects, and elevated the stature of librarians in campus life.

THE PROCESS

Utah Valley University Library's administrative team helped develop this new service and has been supportive with time and resources. First and foremost, administrators helped define who this new research service was for. Though the library has subject librarians that can help faculty and students with their personal research, the literature review team was created to focus on campus organizations, decisions, and initiatives—not on individual research. The library administration team helped define expectations and, more importantly, create sufficient resources for the new service to succeed by amending the job descriptions of two librarians and hiring a research assistant. By limiting the scope of the service to campus initiatives and groups, the library administrative team helped control the amount of work done by the librarians.

This new service has evolved through the process of trial and error. The library team did not wait for procedures to be perfectly laid out and assessed. The team went through a fast-prototyping phase that made the strengths and weaknesses of the service readily apparent.

The process utilized by the actual literature review team includes several steps. It is important to always communicate that the librarians are not subject specialists in these areas, but are adept at finding and evaluating resources. Requests for literature reviews come directly to one of the librarians; they are often vague, requiring a traditional reference interview to gather more information about the requester's needs. Requesters are instructed to articulate their needs in the form of research questions. This allows all parties to know exactly what information is being sought. Communication is essential and making sure that there is documentation for requests limits confusion and saves time for everyone involved.

The team builds the literature reviews in Google Docs, allowing for simultaneous editing and virtual collaboration. The literature review is laid out in sections: research question, executive summary, search terms, a table of peer-reviewed sources (sometimes organized around different questions, depending on the review), and a table of trade sources (when appropriate). The tables have five columns: citations, abstracts, links, limitations, and conclusions. This structure allows for easy access to the most important information. The executive summary synthesizes overall trends from all of the sources. The conclusions column allows stakeholders to read the important points from individual sources without having to read hundreds of pages.

This is time-intensive work, and the timeframe is usually dictated by the requester. These documents are often more than 100 pages long and can include dense scholarly sources. Literature reviews are often requested prior to particular events or presentations, so meeting firm deadlines is critical. The current team at UVU has many other duties and, though this work usually fits into their calendars, there have been instances where conflicting duties made for challenging schedules.

EXAMPLES

During the fall of 2015, two literature reviews in particular demonstrated how impactful this service has been. The first literature review was requested by the vice president of the Office of Teaching and Learning (OTL). It was a comprehensive overview of how open educational resources (OER) are being used at universities. When completed, the report was over 130 pages long and included more than forty sources, though many more were reviewed. This report was well received; it created a connection between the two departments that is still evolving and highlighted projects that both departments have pursued collaboratively and individually.

Since completing the OER literature review, the library and OTL have organized an OER Symposium and OER Ideas Fair; they also have presented to the college deans and hosted an OER consultation event with Lumen Learning, a company that helps faculty set up and adopt OER. Each of these events was created to support faculty in the adoption of OER. These events have been institutionally supported and well attended. OTL has used the information from the literature review to support other training for faculty. Additionally, the library was inspired to create a pilot project through which they are incentivizing five faculty members with small stipends to adopt OER. The library and OTL have set a goal of "20 by 2020," focused on getting twenty of the most-enrolled general education courses to adopt OER resources by 2020.

The second literature review was requested by a faculty group that is focused on increasing inquiry-based learning

on campus. This review, which focused on how undergraduate research, scholarship, and creative activities are being used at universities across the United States, was 110 pages long and included more than fifty sources. The research was integrated into a campus white paper, which is being used to justify and institutionalize new faculty-led programs.

The executive summary, written for the literature review, was incorporated into the white paper and the library team became co-authors of the project. Librarians are now being included as the project moves forward from an implementation and systems perspective. This is more important than it might seem. At Utah Valley University, librarians are not faculty. This project, however, demonstrates how librarians can contribute to a faculty-driven project at an incredibly high level. The library's technical services librarian is helping with the creation and management of the project's website, and the authors of this paper have been invited to join the implementation team.

Not all literature reviews have led to such sustained collaboration. The connection and impact is tangible from the team's effort, but often the review is the end of the library's direct involvement.

CONCLUSIONS

Both of these examples are indicative of the value of the UVU research service overall. This new effort has provided the library and librarians with significant opportunities. Conducting the literature reviews has informed the library about upcoming campus programs and initiatives. The service gives the library access to campus administrators and decision makers, and those administrators are now more likely to reach out to librarians with questions large and small. It also has led to librarians being more involved in major campus programs. Because librarians helped with the research, they have, on several occasions, been invited to continue contributing to ongoing programs. Administrators and other groups have consistently praised the work of the librarians and returned to take advantage of the service again.

Literature reviews have been a recent and fruitful addition to services at Utah Valley University Library. They have raised the visibility and impact of the library, while serving important new patrons who will make decisions that affect the library's future. This new research service is a model that may be worth considering by other academic libraries on both large and small campuses.

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Scaling Instruction to Needs

Updating an Online Information Literacy Course

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Scalability is a buzzword in both libraries and higher education these days. As library budgets continue to tighten and technology continues to advance, libraries are flipping classrooms and deploying technology in order to better scale our instructional efforts. The University of Utah is no different. Several years ago, the library moved away from the standard one-shot workshops offered to the University's undergraduate writing requirement course, Writing 2010, and replaced it with an online information literacy course. The transition has largely been successful, both at reducing the number of low-impact one-shot workshops our librarians teach, and also at involving instructors in information literacy. However, changes in personnel, technology, and curriculum prompted a recent revision and updating of the library's information literacy course.

TRENDS IN ONLINE INFORMATION LITERACY

Many academic libraries are harnessing new technologies in order to create effective, scalable methods of instruction. Research has shown that student performance improves as a result of in-person and online instruction.[1] It has also shown that online instruction can be just as effective as in-person library instruction.[2] Online instruction is being adopted by libraries in a wide variety of formats; the literature is filled with articles discussing instructional innovations including independent online tutorials,[3] flipped classrooms,[4] and for-credit online courses.[5] Librarians are also embracing new pedagogical techniques, such as active learning strategies to engage students with information literacy materials, in an effort to make their online information literacy efforts more effective for students.[6] The styles and structure of online information literacy tutorials, modules, and courses are being continually updated to reflect advancements in technology and in pedagogy, and efforts that we considered cutting edge a decade ago can now seem out of date.

BACKGROUND

Writing 2010 is the University of Utah's undergraduate writing requirement course, serving more than 2,500 students each year. In the fall 2014 semester, there were seventy-three sections of Writing 2010 offered by fifty-one instructors, many of whom are first-time graduate student instructors. Writing 2010 is offered in online, in-person, and hybrid formats; in fall 2014, more than 10 percent of Writing 2010

sections were at least partially online. The Marriott Library has provided information literacy instruction in support of Writing 2010 for decades, historically based on a one-shot workshop model. In recent years, the library transitioned to a new model, patterned after the University of Texas's successful train-the-trainer model,[7] which at the Marriott Library involved an online information literacy course embedded in LibGuides and complementary involvement in the Writing 2010 colloquium, a course required for all new Writing 2010 instructors.

THE CASE FOR CHANGE

In 2013, librarian responsibility for Writing 2010 changed hands, and this transition prompted a review of the information literacy portion of the course. While the course was popular with students and with the Writing and Rhetoric Studies Department's Writing 2010 coordinator, there were limitations to the course structure that impeded its complete success. DeWald et al. argue convincingly that successful instructional design must include assessment,[8] but the software supporting the Writing 2010 course, LibGuides, offered only a rudimentary survey feature for assessments. The survey function in LibGuides collected student response data into a spreadsheet that had to be manually disseminated to their instructors, and overall student participation in the assessments was low, leaving instructors and librarians unable to effectively evaluate the course's efficacy.

Another persistent issue involved continuing instructor requests for librarians to conduct one-shot workshops in their classes. When the online course became available, the library ceased offering in-person workshops, instead expecting instructors to rely upon the online course and the train-the-trainer session in the Writing 2010 colloquium. However, a number of instructors continued to make requests for librarian visits to their classes, often noting that they felt uncomfortable answering questions about library research or that they felt that the librarians were better equipped to teach the material.

Finally, the Writing and Rhetoric Studies Department's Writing 2010 coordinator position changed hands, first in the summer of 2013 and again in the summer of 2014, prompting significant changes to the Writing 2010 curriculum. These modifications required accompanying changes to the library information literacy course in order to fully support the newly revised Writing 2010 learning objectives.

UPDATING THE COURSE

The first and most important step toward developing a new information literacy course was connecting it to the Writing 2010 curriculum and its new coordinator. Following Fink's "Backward Design" principles and the University of Utah's Quality Course Framework,[9] librarians developed an alignment grid (see appendix) to map the newly updated Writing 2010 learning objectives onto the ACRL Information Literacy Competency Standards for Higher Education and threshold concepts from the most recent draft Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education. (Note: The ACRL Information Literacy Competency Standards were rescinded by the ACRL Board of Directors at the ALA Annual Conference in June 2016.) The completed alignment grid was then brought to the Writing 2010 coordinator as a visual aid to help the librarians explain how the structure and objectives of the information literacy course we were developing mapped directly onto the department's course objectives. The alignment grid clearly illustrated how the library course is intended to support, rather than compete with, the instructors' learning objectives. This conversation earned us buy-in from the Writing and Rhetoric Studies Department, and it also gave us the opportunity to discuss the new Writing 2010 syllabus and identify areas where the information literacy course could better support Writing 2010 learning objectives.

Another initial step in developing a new information literacy course was selecting a new course platform. When evaluating the existing information literacy course, it was apparent that LibGuides was an insufficient platform for the scale of the course. It was extremely time- and labor-intensive to use the LibGuides survey function to collect student assessment data for over 2,500 students each year, and to disseminate that data to the appropriate instructors. The library convened a working group comprising the library's Writing 2010 information literacy coordinator, a group of teaching librarians, and an instructional designer/librarian. This group agreed to move the Writing 2010 information literacy course into the University's course management system, Canvas. A number of other libraries also have used their course management systems for information literacy instruction.[10] Canvas was the best choice for our library for several reasons: librarians were already familiar with it; it would not require any IT support to implement; it had fairly robust assessment options; and, most importantly, Writing 2010 instructors were being required to use Canvas for their individual sections for the first time. Instructors would be able to copy the information literacy course directly into their own Writing 2010 section courses, making it an integrated part of the larger course rather than distinguished as a separate element.

The next step in updating the course was to develop its structure. The process of aligning Writing 2010 learning objectives with information literacy standards and threshold concepts provided us with a beginning structure, and conversations with the Writing 2010 coordinator helped us determine how many course assignments would be devoted to the information literacy course. The information literacy course working group settled on a structure of five modules, four of which would be directly correlated to a Writing 2010 learning objective. The first module was not assigned a learning objective, but was instead constructed

as a brief introduction to the library and the information literacy course.

Another significant structural change was the choice to incorporate multiple modalities for as many instructional topics as possible. Research has shown that different learning styles can be overlooked in an online environment;[11] a simple strategy toward accommodating multiple learning styles is to offer instruction in multiple formats.[12] In the updated Writing 2010 information literacy course, the library offers students the option between a static LibGuide/web page and a closed-captioned tutorial that was recorded in house, by a vendor, or by another library.

In keeping with another trend in higher education the new information literacy course incorporates badges for a gaming element. Badges are increasingly popular in school, public, and academic libraries for their ability to help illustrate mastery of a skill that is not easily graded.[13] A number of libraries are incorporating badges into online information literacy courses, including the University of Central Florida and the University of Arizona.[14] Canvas comes equipped with several external badging apps, including Canvabadges, BadgeStack, and BadgeSafe. The library chose to pilot the use of Canvabadges, and one of the library's graphic design experts created a badge for each of the information literacy course's five modules (see figure 1). Completing Module 1: About the Library would earn the Novice badge; Module 2: Locate Library Materials would earn the Seeker badge, Module 3: Evaluate Resources earns Inquirer, Module 4: Managing and Citing Sources earns Executive, and Module 5: Reflection earns Crackerjack. In order to encourage student participation in the badging program, librarians requested and received funding from the library administration in order to reward students with a library-branded prize when they earned the final badge.

Finally, one of the most important reasons for updating the course, and one of the biggest challenges to implementing it, was the need for useful assessments that could provide timely feedback to students, instructors, and librarians. Canvas offers a fairly robust quiz feature that provides four different quiz types, each with a dozen question formats. Canvas also can grade automatically many types of quiz responses, providing instant feedback. While research suggests that timely feedback to library web tutorials can improve student performance,[15] we determined that it was not feasible for the Writing 2010 librarian coordinator to respond to 2,500 students per year, and an auto-grading feature was a reasonable, if limited, proxy for librarian feedback. Accordingly, a series of multiple-choice quizzes was developed with each quiz designed to require students to interact with library resources to answer the questions. Although it was not feasible for librarians to respond to student responses, we also implemented reflective assignments in the form of short-answer questions that were graded automatically as credit/no credit. These questions were intended to cause students to think about their topics and their larger purpose within the Writing 2010 course.

Figure 1. Canvabadges for the information literacy course. Image credit: Amanda Crittenden, used with permission.

The information literacy course, rebranded as Writing 2010 Library Instruction, was completed in summer 2014 and feedback was solicited from teaching librarians from around the library as well as from student employees of the library. After receiving positive feedback from all reviewers, the completed course was sent to the Writing 2010 coordinator to be copied into the Writing 2010 Canvas shell course that provided to Writing 2010 instructors in fall 2014.

SIGNIFICANT CHALLENGES

Perhaps the most significant challenge to overcome when implementing the new Writing 2010 Library Instruction course has been the wide variety of instructor expectations and skill sets. These challenges fall into three categories: Canvas support, syllabus changes, and one-shot workshop requests.

Canvas Support

While all Writing 2010 instructors were required to use the content management system Canvas for the first time in the fall 2014 semester, only new instructors enrolled in the Writing 2010 colloquium received any formal Canvas training. Canvas training is offered to all instructors at the University on a by-appointment and drop-in basis, but many returning Writing 2010 instructors relied on librarian instructions and guidance to successfully implement the information literacy course. Most instructors followed the initial plan, which was to copy the information literacy course into their section's Writing 2010 Canvas course, but several instructors instead opted to link their Canvas courses to the information literacy course. The lack of uniform Canvas expertise among all fifty-one instructors led to significant librarian time expenditure in providing Canvas support for the course. Instructor unfamiliarity with Canvas also led to some unfortunate mishaps within the course, including the accidental duplication of modules and quizzes. The Writing 2010 Library Instruction Canvas course has required daily monitoring over the fall 2014 semester to ensure that instructors and students are navigating the course appropriately, as well as significant time expenditure on the part of the librarian to ensure that instructors are receiving the tech support that they need.

INFORMATION LITERACY AND INSTRUCTION

Syllabus Changes

The Writing and Rhetoric Studies Department's Writing 2010 coordinator is responsible for developing the Writing 2010 syllabus, which is used by all first-time Writing 2010 instructors. However, seasoned Writing 2010 instructors historically have been permitted to develop their own syllabi for the course. This means that, while many of the Writing 2010 instructors are using the syllabus that the information literacy module is constructed to support, a number of instructors are not. While the learning objectives for all Writing 2010 classes remain the same, the order in which students progress through the material may change substantially, requiring that the information literacy course and librarian support for the course remain available throughout the entire semester. Additionally, the variation in Writing 2010 syllabi affects the library's research consultation offerings. The library offers drop-in consultation times for Writing 2010 students to supplement the online course each semester, but these consultations are timed to meet the point of need for those students whose instructors are following the standard syllabus. Students whose instructors have implemented significant variations from the standard Writing 2010 syllabus are accommodated on an individual basis, and instructors who have substantially altered the syllabus may require additional support to ensure that the online course works for their class.

One-Shot Workshop Requests

Although the Writing 2010 Library Instruction information literacy course is intended to be a complete replacement for one-shot workshops, each semester there are a number of instructors who request an in-person librarian visit as a supplement to the online information literacy course. This is particularly true in the fall semester, when a number of new graduate students are teaching Writing 2010 for the first time. Approximately one-third of fall semester Writing 2010 courses receive a supplemental in-person librarian visit, based exclusively on individual instructor requests. These visits, taught largely by the Writing 2010 information literacy coordinator but also by teaching librarians throughout the library, typically cover the same material covered in the online course. While these one-shot workshops are redundant, they are valuable to instructors, many of whom are first-time instructors and who express a level of discomfort in teaching about the library. We hypothesize that these fall one-shot workshops serve primarily to teach the Writing 2010 instructors, especially the new instructors, about the library. The number of one-shot workshop requests drops significantly in the spring semester, when only one-fifth of instructors typically request an in-person visit, suggesting that some instructors may feel more comfortable teaching about the library and information literacy once they have seen a librarian workshop. In addition to providing requested one-shot workshops, we have increased the number of librarian visits to the Writing 2010 instructor colloquium,

and we continue to pursue increased involvement with the colloquium as a more time-effective method of increasing instructor comfort with information literacy.

CONCLUSIONS

Flexibility has been crucial as we have developed the new Writing 2010 Library Instruction course. Curriculum, coordinator, and syllabus changes have all required the library to change gears quickly. Canvas's wiki format and the information literacy course's modular design have made it relatively easy to make small adjustments to the course very quickly (e.g., swapping out a segment on Zotero for a segment on NoodleTools the week before classes began). But beyond a flexible course structure, librarian flexibility has been crucial. Working with fifty-one individual instructors, it has been important to respond to each instructor as an individual with their own needs and objectives, and to work with them—whether they need a little extra technology help, or they would really like a librarian to come teach a one-shot workshop for them, or whether their students will need to set up research consultations with a librarian. The time investment over the past several months has been significant, including establishing the new information literacy course and working with instructors and students during the semester, but we are optimistic that the investment now will pay dividends in future semesters, when the information literacy course will only require minor tweaks and updates and when instructors are fully confident in their understanding of Canvas and in their ability to teach their students about information literacy.

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APPENDIX. WRITING 2010 ALIGNMENT GRID

Course Learning Objective/Outcome	ACRL Standard	ACRL Framework	Previous W2010 Lesson	Revised W2010 Module	How Learning Will be Assessed	Teaching/Learning Activity
Conduct secondary research to write in an academic context.	1.2: The information literate student defines and articulates the need for information.	Scholarship as Conversation	Lesson 1	Module 1	Pre-Assessment Quiz	• Video tutorial – Who are your librarians? • Video tutorial – How is library information organized? • Supplementary readings, links
Use database and other online search tools.	2.2: The information literate student constructs and implements effectively-designed search strategies. 2.3: The information literate student retrieves information online or in person using a variety of methods. 2.4: The information literate student refines the search strategy if necessary.	Research as Inquiry; Searching as Strategic Exploration	Lesson 2, Lesson 3 Parts 1 & 2	Module 2	Multiple-choice quiz	• Usearch (video tutorial; subject guide) • Academic Search Premier (video tutorial; subject guide) • Google Scholar (video tutorial; subject guide) • CQ Researcher (video tutorial; subject guide)
Demonstrate knowledge of a variety of online genres and source types.	2.3: The information literate student retrieves information online or in person using a variety of methods.	Information Creation as a Process	Lesson 2 Parts 2 & 3, Lesson 3 Parts 1 & 2, Lesson 4 Part 3	Module 2	Multiple choice quiz	• Usearch (video tutorial; subject guide) • Academic Search Premier (video tutorial; subject guide) • Google Scholar (video tutorial; subject guide) • CQ Researcher (video tutorial; subject guide)
Write using digital media appropriate to the rhetorical context.	4.1: The information literate student applies new and prior information to the planning and creation of a particular product or performance. 4.3: The information literate student communicates the product or performance effectively to others.	Information Creation as a Process	N/A	Module 3	Multiple choice quiz	• Video introduction to digital media issues • Guide on finding images
Identify and use reliable sources that are appropriate to the topic.	3.2 The information literate student articulates and applies initial criteria for evaluating both the information and its sources. 3.4: The information literate student compares new knowledge with prior knowledge to determine the value added, contradictions, or other unique characteristics of the information.	Authority Is Constructed and Contextual	Lesson 3 Part 3	Module 3	Multiple choice quiz	• Video introduction to 5Ws and H test • Subject guide on 5Ws and H test
Use a citation style consistently, attributing words and/or ideas to the appropriate author.	2.5: The information literate student extracts, records, and manages the information and its sources. 5.2: The information literate student follows laws, regulations, institutional policies, and etiquette related to the access and use of information resources. 5.3: The information literate student acknowledges the use of information sources in communicating the product or performance.	Information Has Value	Lesson 4	Module 4	Multiple choice quiz	• Video introduction to citing sources – Why? What does it tell us? • Subject guide on citation management systems • Copyright & plagiarism subject guide • Student code of conduct

Trickery as Marketing Strategy

Mallory Arents

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Sometimes a little subterfuge is necessary to get patrons to think outside the box of what they normally expect from a library. By using different lures, sometimes in disguise, libraries can introduce new patrons to resources and services they had no idea the library could offer. We know we have tons to offer our patrons—we just have to be a little creative in order to make them realize it! Mallory Arents from Darien Library in Darien, Connecticut gives us several great ideas on how to do that.—*Editors*

If you've been to a cocktail party, networking event, or some other social gathering recently, chances are you've answered the question of what you do for a living. And chances are, after you responded "I'm a librarian," you received one of two answers: either, "Oh, I love to read! My childhood librarian used to pile my arms high with books beyond my reading level!" or the less lucky response of, "A librarian? Are you worried that Google/Amazon/e-books are going to destroy your profession?" Try as we might, the general public has very specific ideas of what it means to be a library in 2016. We can fill our buildings with makerspaces, start-up incubators, therapy dogs, and meditation sessions during midterms, but this means nothing if our communities still view us as stodgy old institutions filled with dusty books. Our challenge as librarians is to change the dialogue about what it means to be a library. The quickest and easiest way to do so is to outright trick our patrons.

IF YOU FEED THEM, THEY WILL COME

Trickery in libraries is nothing new. If you've ever offered late-night pizza to students cramming for finals, or served cookies and coffee at a library program, you know what those items really are: a delicious bribe. Sometimes all it takes is a few snacks to lure in an unsuspecting audience and, before they know it, they're taking notes during a financial literacy seminar. Want an active Teen Advisory Board? Leave a trail of cupcakes and you'll soon enough have a group of enthusiastic advocates. Our resources and services directly address our community's needs; let's get them in the door through delicious trickery so they see it too.

At Darien Library, we're always thinking about ways to get our community members to open email blasts. One of our biggest successes was for a Meet the Author event featuring a New England cookbook author. The email announcing her visit had one of our highest open rates, yet had a simple subject line: "LobsterCraft" (see figure 1, next page).
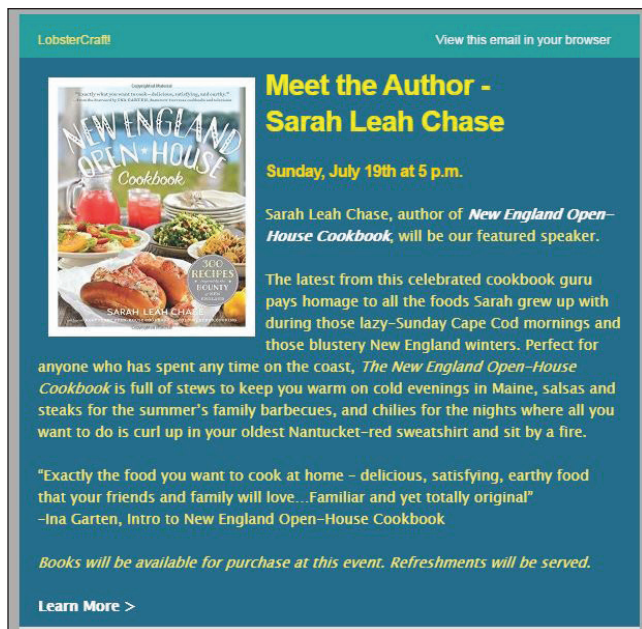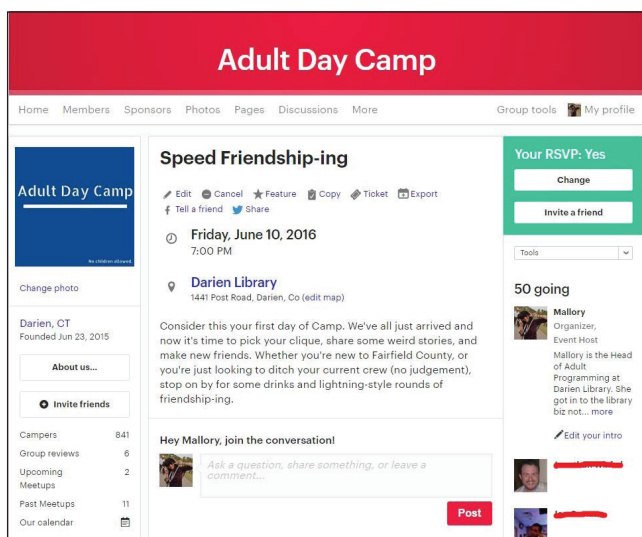
Figure 1. LobsterCraft email blast

Figure 2. Adult Day Camp Meetup group

Unknown to many outside of our small town, LobsterCraft is a full-service lobster-roll food truck that makes residents salivate at just its mention. Opening with "LobsterCraft" gave our patrons the nudge to open and read our announcement and then, subsequently, pack our Community Room for buttery lobster from a food truck alongside a culinary lecture.

IT'S ALL IN HOW YOU SPIN IT

"Database," every librarian's most expensive friend, means nothing to our patrons, and the sooner we're honest with ourselves about that, the better off we'll all be. A treasure

trove for any scholar, these databases immediately lose their value if our patrons aren't utilizing them. To trick community members into using our databases, let's avoid the jargon and instead, go with language geared just for them. Instead of devoting staff time into marketing Mango Languages, why not teach a class on how to learn Farsi? Instead of creating bookmarks for ReferenceUSA, why not ask patrons to sign up for one-on-one assistance with a reference librarian to help conduct market research for their small businesses? Our community members only care about what is immediately useful for them; let's trick them into thinking all of our databases were purchased just for their use.

We were having a terrible time getting patrons to utilize our literary databases or come to classes on downloading e-books. Having an active Book Group community, we decided to focus the message and tailor it just to them. As soon as we announced our "Upgrade Your Book Group" workshop, we had to schedule another three sessions to accommodate the demand. Little did our patrons know, they were getting the same exact e-book class, with the addition of a little literary research thrown in, just repackaged with a pretty little bow.

MARKETING TO MILLENNIALS

One of my favorite methods of trickery is meant to engage that elusive twenty- to thirtysomething set libraries are always trying to attract. While we can plan and host a series of events geared just for that crowd, chances are that young professionals just aren't checking their local library's website to see what's happening on a Thursday or Friday evening. Instead, meet them where they are.

Our library started hosting a series of events we marketed through Meetup.com. Anyone with an interest or hobby can create a Meetup group and local users will be encouraged to join and participate. It's like online dating, except rather than helping users meet a potential romantic partner, it is a way to make new friends based on shared interests. Love hiking? Start a Meetup group and invite people to join you on the trail on Saturday afternoon. Want to learn how to knit? Join a knitting Meetup group that meets weekly at a local coffee shop. If used correctly, Meetup can help build a community, just like a library.

Our Meetup group, Adult Day Camp, has become a destination for an enthusiastic group of new users. Riffing off the idea of summer camp and nostalgia, Adult Day Camp was created with the millennial set in mind. Our monthly events aren't marketed on our website, and you have to dig to see that a library is behind all the fun (see figure 2). By disguising that a library is the one hosting Nerf Blaster Capture the Flag or book groups in bars, we don't have to compete with many people's dated view of what is possible at a library. At the beginning of each event, I introduce myself and explain that Adult Day Camp is a library-sponsored series and watch as understanding washes over everyone's faces. Our new patrons have just been tricked, and they're delighted by

the results. Less than a year in, we're close to nine hundred members who had never before used their local library, and the general sentiment of attendees is complete awe at what can happen when a library gets involved. More than attendance numbers, responses like "I can't believe you can do this at a library!" and "Your library is different . . . 'cooler' is the closest word that comes to mind," will always be our biggest markers of success.

COERCION AS STRATEGY

Trickery comes in many forms. Sometimes it looks like a cheese plate, other times it looks like cleverly disguised research tools, and sometimes it's events on a social media platform. If all other methods have failed, it's time to resort to the Mother of All Trickery: friendly coercion. If your community still isn't buying into the idea that libraries are a unique place built just for them, let's force them into believing just so. Looking to build a coffee and conversation group for older adults? Ask your colleagues who the power users are and personally invite each of them so they feel like they're obligated to attend. Slowly, these patrons will invite their friends, those friends will invite other friends, and then all your coercion will have paid off!

The Grand Rapids (MI) Public Library assigns a reference librarian to each elected city official.[1] Imagine receiving an email saying, "Congratulations! Sally has been assigned as your reference librarian. She is here to help with any research you may need during your term." It puts the library at the forefront of patrons' minds, offering a service they may not even realize they wanted.

Why not try a combination of delicious trickery and friendly coercion? A Pop-Up Library brings everything we love about our libraries and puts it right in front of community members so they have to notice us. Bring your Pop-Up Library to a local business park and work with a food truck to provide lunch. Lunch is on the library, as long as the hungry office workers sign up for a library card first. Soon enough, you'll have a captive audience as you hawk the latest in fiction, discuss library-sponsored business workshops, and conduct some ready reference. Your new patrons will leave with some library love in their heart as well as a full belly.

TRICKERY FIRST, UNENDING LIBRARY LOVE NEXT

Now is the absolute best time to be working in libraries. We're leading pub quizzes in bars.[2] We're hosting sensory storytime for children on the autism spectrum.[3] We are on the front lines in responding to community disasters.[4] It is our job as librarians to respond to these community needs; let's trick our members into seeing the good work we're already doing.

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Librarians Applying Information Literacy Standards as Evaluators of Peer-to-Peer Course Content in a First-Year College Success Course

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Information literacy is a crucial skill in library science. As experts in information literacy, librarians are able to both use and promote techniques relevant to finding, evaluating, and presenting information. They are relied on by end users to provide the most pertinent resources, and are expected to do so as part of their jobs. This study describes how librarians applied their professional background in the evaluation of student peer-to-peer material in order to provide the most appropriate content for an introductory college success course.

Peer-to-peer learning is a fairly new instruction model that encourages active learning, engagement, and student-to-student communication. O'Brien et al. describe peer-to-peer learning as a process where students learn from one another, and student teachers can better reach student learners because of shared perspectives. In simpler terms, it acts as a tool that creates a bridge between teachers and pupils.[1] That said, it is important that the information students are sharing with one another in peer-to-peer learning sessions is accurate and authoritative. The ability to determine accuracy and authority is one of the key tenets of information literacy, and librarians use this skill when they evaluate peer-to-peer content.

Information literacy is a multifaceted topic that academic librarians address on a daily basis. Understanding how information is presented and how it may be interpreted is a basic principle of information literacy, and this skill is commonly taught to first-year students in contemporary higher education. Demonstrating how to effectively evaluate and interpret information is also one aspect of what the college librarian does when assisting freshmen during their transition from high school to college.

Oakleaf and Owen (2010) examined collaborative efforts between high school and college librarians. The librarians' goal was to identify areas of overlap in students' information acquisition skills between senior year of high school and the first year of college in order to enhance these skills and ultimately increase college retention rates. Specifically, the college librarians could use this information in the development of information literacy instruction, course session development, and in the improvement of librarian instruction skills. High school librarians could also use these results to pinpoint the skills needed for college-bound high school students.[2] In this example there were benefits for both library populations: those in high school and those in college.

Smalley (2004) also examined the impact of a school librarian presence on information literacy skills, by studying freshmen at a small open-admission college. The library courses taught at this college drew students from three local school districts, two of which lacked the support for full-time librarians. Students that graduated from these two districts and enrolled in the library research course were compared with those from the district that did have librarians. The students' research skills were assessed and the comparisons were drawn from midterm grades and final grades.[3]

At midterm, 57 percent of the top third of students enrolled in a library research course came from the district with librarians. When final grades were turned in, 66 percent of those from the district with librarians earned As, compared to 43 percent and 37 percent, respectively, for the two districts that did not have librarians.[4]

A similar paper ("What Works" 1997) compiled comments from dissertations on the topic of high school students in the transition from high school to college. The authors of these dissertations found that those students with previous access to an academic library were better prepared to conduct research in college courses, evaluated more resources, and referenced more sources of information in their papers than those without this access and background. High school teachers were found to focus on their individual disciplines and rarely gave a lesson on library use or material evaluation. The task of teaching information use and evaluation was generally left to the school librarians.[5]

These studies all provide strong evidence that librarians serve as instructors of information literacy skills for first-year students At Baton Rouge Community College (BRCC), a two-year college in the Louisiana state capital with an approximate enrollment of nine thousand students, librarians regularly serve as facilitators of information literacy to all students, including incoming freshmen. Traditional methods such as one-shot bibliographic instruction sessions are held, workshops for faculty and students are offered, and a course in basic information literacy and library science is taught every semester. These efforts are very similar to those described in the studies mentioned above, and they also help bridge the information skills gap between high school and college. But beyond these roles, the actual use of librarians as content evaluators of material presented by students in class is an innovative application that was not examined in these studies and has not been attempted.

At BRCC, a three-credit-hour course titled College Success Skills is taught each semester. This course introduces students to college and college life, and builds the skills needed to navigate and succeed in college. Some of the topics covered include how to select a major, how to manage time, how to budget money for college, and how to conduct research effectively and use library resources. Instructors of this course are called college success faculty, just as English instructors are referred to as English faculty, history instructors are called history faculty, etc. The college success faculty have diverse backgrounds of study, with many coming from the liberal arts. The faculty that participated in this study consisted of two members with degrees in psychology, one in English, and one in higher education. The college success faculty wanted to create an online peer-to-peer handbook to be put on the college website and used as a guide for the college success skills class. These instructors also wanted this information to be authoritative, reliable, and not just the voice of student opinion. This project required that students apply information literacy skills learned from their college success class and construct online compositions in the form of digital handbooks. This created an opportunity for a collaborative effort between the college success faculty and the library faculty. Three peer-to-peer student handbooks were reviewed for potential inclusion in the college success course. Because of the unique information literacy skills they possess, the librarians were called upon to evaluate the virtual handbooks, examine the content, and identify which handbook presented the most useful information. The handbook, or combination of handbooks, identified as having the most accurate information could then be placed on the website for in-class use and general consumption by any user visiting the website.

The purpose of this research is to use information literacy standards and an established evaluation tool in order to evaluate and disseminate student handbooks created for peer-to-peer learning. The handbooks were written by students and for students, and their content and nature were considered for inclusion in classroom use and website distribution. The use of peer feedback in the classroom as a learning tool is not without precedent; however, a review of the literature reveals that a professional application of information literacy standards to this feedback mechanism is an educational tool that has yet to be utilized.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The studies described above establish that information literacy skills offer users of those skills an authoritative voice when presenting information. But in order to begin an evaluation of the handbooks, learning processes must be examined, including peer-to-peer learning.

Peer feedback is an active learning strategy that has gained prominence and is being practiced in more classrooms of higher education. Asghar (2010) outlines how Reciprocal Peer Coaching (RPC) was successfully implemented in the physiotherapy courses at Leeds Metropolitan University in the United Kingdom. She begins with a description of the program and illustrates how self, peer, and tutor assessment were essential elements of the program. Through the utilization of RPC, Asghar states that student learning developed in an environment that supported cooperative learning but also had the advantage of tutor support. She adds that students who used RPC techniques developed mutual goals while they simultaneously developed individual accountability for their learning outcomes.[6]

The practice of RPC, as described by Asghar, involved the creation of student groups of no more than four individuals who participated in individual assessment sessions. Prior to the start of each session, the instructor explained what was being assessed and what was expected of each learner in that particular session. At the conclusion of this first part of the session, participants were asked to complete a reflective skills log on what they just learned. Following this RPC exercise, the instructor would then select one individual from each group to demonstrate the skill explained in the assessment. Credit was given to the group as a whole when all aspects of the assessment were fully explained by that one individual.[7]

Asghar reports three outcomes were achieved when these methods were tried at the university level, including motivated learning, learning as a group, and contextualized learning. The author states that each of these outcomes was a driver of learning and the use of RPC methods developed a sense of self-regulation among learners. She concludes that these techniques ultimately helped students develop the skills necessary to be autonomous learners.[8] In this study, peer-to-peer learning was applied through group efforts using traditional classroom models. However, with the rise of blended and on-line learning environments, new opportunities for student-to-student learning have also been created.

Ertmer et al. (2010) report on student reactions to peer learning in a large undergraduate course. The course used in this examination incorporated elements from online learning and face-to-face learning. These authors state that using this blended approach offered them the opportunity to examine the use of educational technology while still incorporating the human interaction element. The technique most readily available to the students that combined these elements was feedback to student discussion posts. The authors add that in an online course environment, little time is available for the instructor to provide the feedback required, and that peer feedback may function as an alternative.[9]

In order to gauge the effectiveness of peer feedback, the authors evaluated student perceptions using a rating system and scale. The students were provided instructions on the rating system and scale, and points for participating in this research. One group was permitted to respond to fellow postings with peer feedback, and the other group was not. The second group only received feedback from the instructor. A series of discussions were then created using the discussion board format on the learning management system Blackboard. Upon completion of the discussion board task, students completed a Likert scale–based survey on their experiences of peer feedback in the discussion forums. The authors report that the peer feedback group rated their experience more positively than their counterparts did theirs.[10] In this example, student perceptions of peer feedback were tracked and were found to be beneficial by participants.

Electronic methods of integrating peer feedback were also used by Willey and Gardner (2010), who incorporated Spark Plus to encourage student peer feedback and assessment. These authors report that these processes were very successful for individual students in achieving the learning outcomes in specific classes. They note that participants found the peer learning exercises increased course engagement and helped them to learn more efficiently.[11]

Ertmer et al. and Willey and Gardner relied on new technologies to incorporate peer-to-peer feedback. Asghar used more traditional classroom methods to incorporate this learning method. All three articles reported excellent participation and greater learning through the use of peer feedback. These are the outcomes that the college success faculty at BRCC were trying to duplicate by assigning their students the creation of a peer-to-peer handbook. The concept was taken one step further by adding the element of evaluations by librarians. Parallel to the Ertmer et al. and Willey and Gardener reports, the processes in this experiment were focused on the use of technology. As more electronic tools for education and peer-to-peer content creation become available, new ways of evaluating these results must also be developed, including the involvement of information professionals. The Asghar report used the traditional learning method of having students present their work to their fellow students. The project in Louisiana was similarly focused, but reached a broader audience through Internet use and involved librarians before distribution.

METHODOLOGY

Copies of three handbooks, identified by the student editors' last names and labeled Handbook One, Handbook Two, and Handbook Three, were distributed to all fifteen college success skills instructors and all five full-time librarians. None of the participants were familiar with the handbook authors, and by using only the student editors' last names, anonymity could be maintained. A modified version of the evaluation rubric created by Peeters and Sahloff was also distributed to each evaluator.

Peeters and Sahloff (2010) designed a rating rubric for evaluating student presentations for a capstone pharmacy course at the University of Toledo (OH) College of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences. The design for this rubric included twenty-five categories with a four-point rating scale for each category. In their paper highlighting this rubric, Peeters and Sahloff emphasize the importance of student evaluations through presentations in education. They state that evaluation of student presentations represents a higher order of learning because students must demonstrate and talk about what they have learned, incorporating aspects of both knowing and doing.[12] This pedagogical concept is in keeping with the goals of peer-to-peer learning, which made it ideal for this study. Additionally, the rubric design was tested to determine reliability. The reliability rating was found to be at 98 percent.

The Peeters and Sahloff rubric also aligns to the first four Information Literacy Competency Standards of the Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL).[13] The first
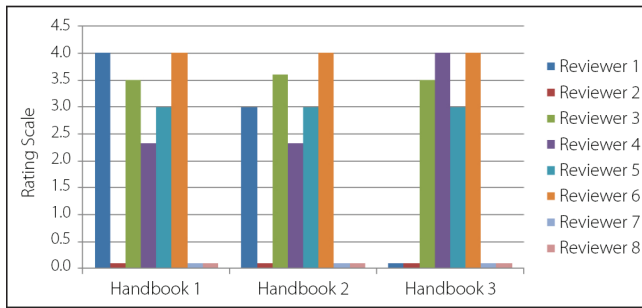
Figure 1. PowerPoint Slide Effectiveness

Figure 2. References

ACRL standard (the student "defines and articulates the need for information") is covered by Peeters and Sahloff's category for evaluating the stated objective of the information, and the category that identifies the opening statement and relevance of the information to the audience. The second standard (the student "accesses needed information effectively and efficiently") is addressed in the category of references and the category of appropriateness of selected literature. Standard three (the student "evaluates information… and incorporates [it] into his or her knowledge base") is included in the rubric's category of balanced representation of material, its category of application of material, and its category of generating discussion, responses, and questions. The fourth standard (the student "uses information effectively to accomplish a specific purpose") is addressed in the "slide effectiveness" category and the "organization of handbook/planned coherently" category.

This rubric was also selected in part because it evaluates Microsoft PowerPoint presentations. The handbooks were created using PowerPoint, so the evaluation rubric complemented the finished handbooks despite their not being actual presentations. Modifications to the Peeters and Sahloff rubric for the handbook evaluation included removal of sixteen category items specific to presentations (for example, good eye contact, spoke with a clear voice, timing). Items related to information imparted (slide effectiveness, content, organization, cited sources, etc.) remained intact and were used by the college success faculty and library faculty in evaluating the student handbooks.

Nine categories from the Peeters and Sahloff rubric were used by both the librarians and the college success faculty in evaluating the handbooks created using PowerPoint. These categories included: PowerPoint slide effectiveness, references, stated objective, opening statement/relevance to audience, balanced representation of material, appropriateness of selected literature, organization of handbook/planned coherently, application of material, handbook generates discussion/responses/questions. A copy of the rubric used in this study can be seen in appendix A.

Participants were asked to rate each handbook using the criteria set by Peeters and Sahloff. The evaluators also had the opportunity to write any comments based on these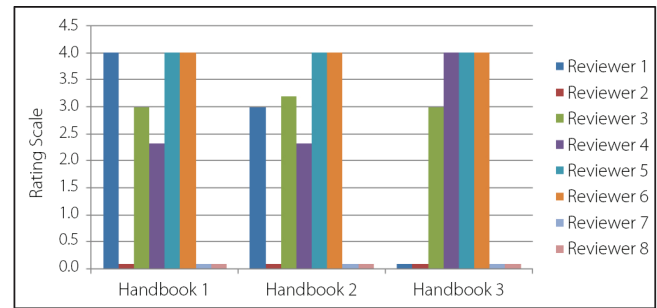 handbooks. The handbooks were evaluated by a total of eight individuals. Four out of five librarians responded for a response rate of 80 percent, while four out of 15 college success skills instructors responded for a response rate of 27 percent. The total response rate was 47 percent.

In order to maintain the anonymity of the evaluators, evaluations were returned from each respondent to the principal researcher and assigned a number before the responses were examined. Response rates and comments were then examined by this study's author and the three handbooks were ranked first, second, or third. The evaluation data were analyzed by the average mean of the nine criteria ratings (evaluators' scores combined) of Peeters and Sahloff for each handbook, and where appropriate, a paired mean comparison, Students T test (Snedecor and Cochran, 1980), was made between the selected average means.[14] Statistical significance was set with an acceptable error of 5 percent.

RESULTS AND FINDINGS

A copy of the modified Peeters and Sahloff rubric is available in appendix A. Each category is examined in the following results and findings using the heading created by the authors for evaluation. It should be noted that reviewer one gave the same scores in each category to handbooks one and two, and gave zeros for handbook three. Reviewer four rated each handbook the same across every rubric category. For the three reviewers that provided comments only (reviewers two, seven, and eight), scores of zero were assigned to their ratings and used in the calculations.

Under "PowerPoint Slide Effectiveness" (figure 1), Handbook One was rated the highest, with only reviewer four giving a non-zero rating lower than 3 points. Only Handbooks One and Three received 4 points from more than one reviewer, and none of the handbooks rated below 2.0 points, excluding ratings of zero. In the comments section, reviewers described Handbook Three as having the most visually appealing presentation of information.

For "References" (figure 2), Handbook One again received the highest rating. Handbooks One and Three each received a rating of 4 points from three reviewers. Only two reviewers gave Handbook Two 4 points. In addition, reviewer four commented that Handbook Two needed to present facts
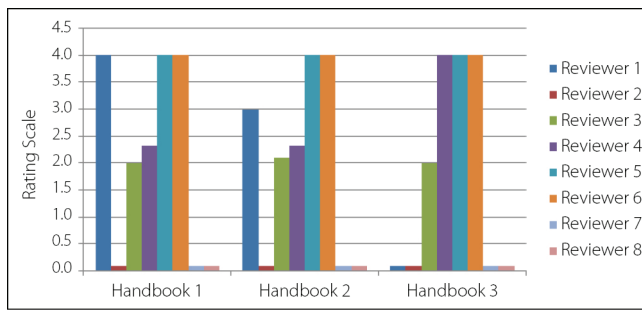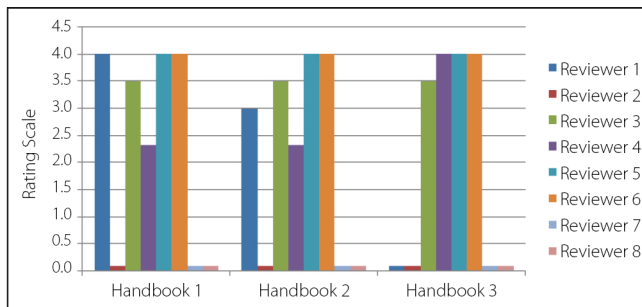
Figure 3. Stated Objective

Figure 5. Balanced Representation of Material

Figure 4. Opening Statement/Relevance to Audience

Figure 6. Appropriateness of Selected Literature

in a more concise format, and that Handbook Three effectively used sources to support individual topics. Reviewer six commented that Handbook Two presented an inaccurate description of the library, which caused the reviewer to question the validity of other statements. Reviewer seven stated that the data provided in Handbook Two regarding transfer credits were confusing, and that the references in Handbook Three were poor. Reviewer eight wrote that slides for Handbook One were crowded with information, which made it difficult to find the cited sources. (See appendix B for written comments.)

Under "Stated Objective" (figure 3), Handbook One scored the highest, and Handbook Two scored above Handbook Three. Handbooks One and Three each received ratings of 4 points from three different reviewers. Handbook Two received 4 points from reviewers five and six only. Reviewer six also commented that Handbook Three provided an objective and then gave detailed information in support of each thesis. Reviewer eight wrote that the objectives were listed in a logical beginning in Handbook Two. (See appendix B for written comments.)

For "Opening Statement/Relevance to Audience" (figure 4), Handbook One received the highest ratings, with a score lower than 3 points from only reviewer four. Handbook Two was next, with reviewers one and three rating it 3 points or above, and five and six each giving a rating of 4 points. Handbook Three was last with only reviewers four, five, and six providing a score of 4 each. There were no written comments for this section.

"Balanced Representation of Material" (figure 5), had

scores with Handbook Two leading and Handbooks One and Three tying. Handbook Three received marks of 4 points from reviewers four, five, and six. Handbooks One and Two each received 4 points from two reviewers (reviewers one and five for Handbook One, and reviewers five and six for Handbook Two). Reviewers one and three both rated Handbook Two at 3 points. Reviewer three rated Handbook Three above 3 points with a 3.1 score, and Handbook One below 3 points with 2.8 score. The remaining scores for each handbook were below 2.5 points. Reviewer six commented that Handbook One lacked a statement about textbooks on reserve in the library. Reviewer eight stated that Handbook Two did not provide a fair and balanced representation of the material, and used outdated information in one chart. Reviewer eight also stated that Handbook Three unfairly described the advising services. (See appendix B for written comments.)

Under "Appropriateness of Selected Literature" (figure 6), Handbook One scored the highest with reviewers one, five, and six giving a rating of 4 points. Reviewers five and six provided a rating of 4 points for every handbook. Reviewer four rated both Handbook Two and Handbook One below 3 points. Comments in this section were mixed, with some reviewers offering contradictory opinions. Reviewer four stated that all the sources referenced in Handbook Three supported the topic for each section discussed. Reviewer six commented that Handbook Two was thorough and that the handbook could be presented as a credible source. However, reviewer seven stated that Handbook Two's information about advising was prejudiced, and was also confused about
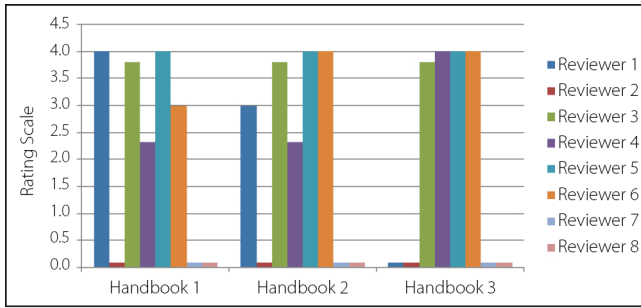
Figure 7. Organization of Handbook/Planned Coherently
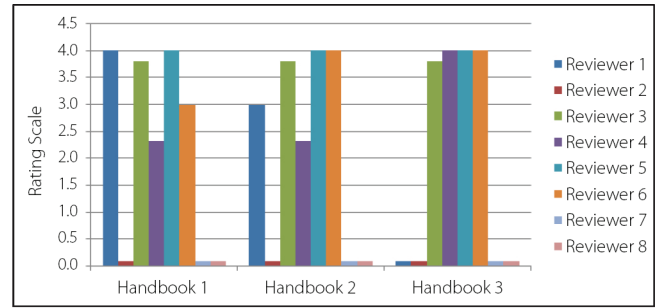
Figure 9. Handbook Generates Discussion/Responses/Questions
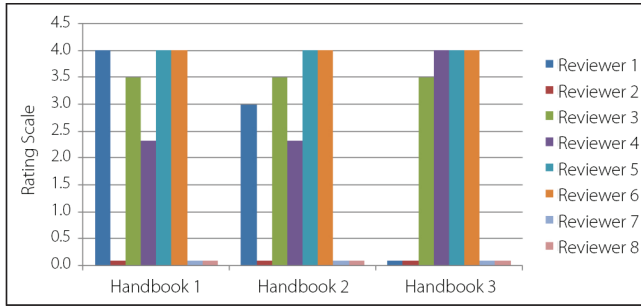
Figure 8. Application of Material

its information regarding transfer credits. (See appendix B for written comments.)

For "Organization of Handbook/Planned Coherently" (figure 7), Handbooks One and Two tied. Reviewers one and five each rated Handbook One at 4 points. Reviewer three gave this handbook 2.32 points, and reviewer six gave it 3 points. Handbook Two received 4 points from reviewers five and six, while also receiving 2.32 points from reviewer three. Reviewer one rated Handbook Two at 3 points. Handbook Three was rated with 4 points by reviewers four, five, and six, while reviewer three gave it 3.8 points. Reviewer four said that Handbook One needed better organization to help with the flow of contents, but noted that Handbook Three was well organized. Comments from reviewer six for Handbook One included a recommendation to break the afterword slide into three or four individual slides. Reviewer eight commented that there was too much text provided on each slide for Handbook One and that Handbook Two was comprehensive and offered a logical beginning. (See appendix B for written comments.)

Under "Application of Material," (figure 8), Handbook One scored highest, followed by Handbook Two, with Handbook Three last. Handbook One received 4 points from reviewers one, five, and six. Handbook One also received 3.5 points from reviewer three, who gave this score to all handbooks. Handbooks Two and Three each received 4 points from reviewers five and six. Handbook Two edged out Handbook Three where reviewer one gave this handbook 3 points, and zero for Handbook Three. Under this category, reviewer six commented that the information in Handbook

Three could be applied to students at any university or college. Reviewer seven stated that the information in Handbook One could be applied as long as it was prefaced by a statement acknowledging that this was the work of students and not the view of the college. Reviewer eight made similar comments on Handbook One. (See appendix B for written comments.)

For the final category of "Handbook Generates Discussion/responses/questions," (figure 9), Handbooks One and Two tied with Handbook Three trailing. Handbook One received 4 points from reviewers one and five, 3.8 points from reviewer three, 3 points from reviewer six, and 2.32 points from reviewer four. Handbook Two received the same total number of points but from different reviewers. Reviewers five and six rated Handbook Two at 4 points, reviewer three gave 3.8 points, reviewer one gave 3 points and reviewer four gave 2.32 points. Handbook Three was rated by reviewers four, five, and six at 4 points, and 3.8 points from reviewer three. There were no written comments for this final section.

Comments from the evaluators for all categories can be found in the appendix. Based on the average score across reviewers and categories, Handbooks One and Two were rated significantly higher than Handbook Three. Handbook One had an average score of 2.12, Handbook Two had an average score of 2.07, while Handbook Three had an average score of 1.89. Nevertheless, despite the higher ranking for Handbooks One and Two, it was generally decided by the librarians and the instructors that rather than publishing an entire handbook, sections could be posted in Blackboard within the appropriate module for that topic. For example: The portion describing time management and organizing your social life while in college could be added to the module on "Time Management." It was also found that Handbook One had highly skewed information related to advising. The advising portion would have to be reworked before posting on Blackboard in order to provide the most accurate information.

The general consensus of the librarians and the instructors was that when posting a handbook section or module on Blackboard, a disclaimer should follow indicating that these are the views of students and that the opinions expressed are not necessarily those of the instructor or the college. Such a policy would help keep the tone of the handbooks neutral.

CONCLUSION

Instructors and librarians alike were in agreement that the overall idea of peer instruction in the form of handbooks for incoming students was excellent. The information supplied by students was found to be useful, and through this opportunity students also gained a sense of ownership in their collegiate educational process. One commenter even noted that the handbooks could be generalized for use at other colleges and universities. The interdepartmental and collaborative nature of this project also enabled the library and the librarians to engage directly in active learning processes occurring on campus. Future studies may examine how institutional cultures change and strengthen as a result of more involvement with the library and multiple departments across campus.

The takeaway from this project was to develop and reinforce the importance of information literacy skills in first-year college students. By creating a platform for students to communicate directly with other students in a dialog that is authoritative, learners gain a hands-on understanding of the information process. The integration of librarians in this environment, with their professional training in how authoritative information is transmitted and received, strengthened the standards by which the students created their handbooks.

Although peer-to-peer learning is primarily done in the classroom, this project offered a way for librarians to participate in this learning strategy. The dynamic formed in this project between instructors, students, and librarians ties three groups together, from which all participants have a vested learning opportunity. Academic librarians are also always looking for new opportunities to interact with students, and this project offers another platform for that interaction. Integrating librarians in peer-to-peer instruction also helps to strengthen and foster learning communities.

Drawbacks to bringing librarians into the peer-to-peer learning model might relate to how students choose to interact with one another. One idea behind peer-to-peer learning is for students to communicate openly with one another in a way they might not feel comfortable using with the instructor or the class a whole. In reference services, librarians may act as gatekeepers of information and can therefore be perceived as intimidating. Bringing this intimidation factor into the peer-to-peer format may cause some students to hesitate to participate within an active learning community. How students respond to librarians in a peer-to-peer setting might be worth investigating. It is important to remember that librarianship is changing, and as libraries move from a more traditional model of service with books in a physical space, to one that handles multiple information types in both physical and digital forms, the role librarians play will also change. Despite potential intimidation factors, librarians working one-on-one with students, embedded librarians in the classroom, and other newly charted roles are bound to expand. The delineation between instructor and librarian is likely to blur.

In this study, despite both the librarians' and instructors' participation, the disparate response rates between instructors and librarians should be addressed. As evaluators, the librarian reviewers returned a higher response than did their instructor counterparts. Of the five librarians asked to review the handbooks, four (80 percent) responded, while only four out of fifteen instructors (27 percent) responded. Ratings from the librarian reviewers also included more comments on the content and how it was structurally conveyed. Fifty percent of the librarian reviewers (two out of four) provided comments in addition to ratings, while only twenty-five percent of the instructor reviewers (one out of four) offered both comments and ratings.

Although there were proportionately fewer responses from the total number of instructors versus the total number of librarians, there was an even distribution among reviewers (that is, four librarians and four instructors). In addition, the librarian participants have professional training on how information is transmitted, received, and interpreted. Given this background, it is logical that this group would offer more information using both of the communication tools provided by this study. The librarians were more vocal in expressing their views, but this should not diminish the value of analysis from the instructors. Further research might explore librarian responses to surveys in general, and how they differ from the responses of other faculty on campus.

The literature review suggests that peer feedback opens the classroom up to active learning, and this project demonstrated how students can actively articulate what they have learned about college life. This study also helped illuminate the changing nature of librarianship and offered an additional role for academic librarians to move the profession forward in the arena of instruction.

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APPENDIX A. HANDBOOK EVALUATION RUBRIC

	1 point	2 points	3 points	4 points
PowerPoint Slides Effectiveness	Slides so poorly constructed they detract from presentation.	Many slides ineffective-too wordy.	Too many/few slides. Poor color, font selection, graphs/tables not described.	Effective slides which enrich the presentation and are easily read.
References	No references listed on slides.	References listed inappropriately (e.g. References listed as slide titles).	Occasional reference missing/inappropriate format.	References formatted appropriately throughout.
Stated Objective	Handbook was not related to assigned purpose.	Some objectives addressed.	Most objectives addressed.	Handbook matched announced purpose and met all objectives.
Opening Statement/ Relevance to Audience	No useful introduction to handbook. Readers have no idea what the handbook is addressing.	Minimal opening statement with little mention of relevance of topic to audience.	Introduction present, may state how topic impacts audience.	Effective opening which states what the presentation is covering and how the topic impacted the author and the reader.
Balanced Representation of Material	Handbook heavy in introduction/background material with little emphasis on application.	Presentation is one sided or biased. Too much emphasis on background.	Balanced inclusion of introduction and background.	Balanced inclusion of introduction and background, presentation of literature, and application.
Appropriateness of Selected Literature	Selected literature does not support theme of handbook.	Significant gaps in literature presented, or selected literature appeared to be biased.	Missing some important portion of the literature without sating the limited scope.	Selected literature supported theme of the handbook and was well balanced.
Organization of Handbook/Planned Coherently	Many points left out, handbook disorganized.	Majority of points glossed over, insufficient depth of topic.	Majority of points covered in depth, some important points may be unclear, minor organization issues.	Thoroughly explains all points. Makes essential points obvious. Well organized.
Application of Material	No application or conclusion provided.	Opinions on application and conclusion presented, but are not supported by data.	Superficial conclusions or opinions presented with limited reference to data.	Valid conclusion presented which were supported by data.
Handbook Generates Discussion/ Responses/Questions	Avoided discussion, or did not stimulate thoughtful questions.	Answers to questions superficial.	Questions were answered somewhat vaguely.	Answered questions appropriately.

APPENDIX B. WRITTEN COMMENTS

Reviewer two wrote:

While they provide good information, I'm unsure if all of them should be added. Maybe if we condense it to one presentation, it would be more receptive to our students.

Reviewer four wrote:

(Handbook 1) Over all, this handbook looks good, but it should have connection and need more organization of contents in order to keep audiences following each topic smoothly. More contents, links, or strategies/practical information should be added (e.g. enrollment services, financial aids, bursar, student ID, IT, disability services, testing center, shuttle bus, add/drop/withdraw classes, etc.).

(Handbook 2) Overall, this handbook looks good and clear in the way of presentation. However, it seems that this handbook provides information in general (For example, "Facts" should be concise and focus on "useful information /issues specific to new students."). It would be better if it provides more contents or information the incoming students really need to know for their success (e.g. enrollment services, financial aids, bursar, student ID, IT, disability services, testing center, shuttle bus, add/drop/withdraw classes, etc.)

(Handbook 3) Overall, it looks good and clear throughout the presentation. This presentation seems to be well organized and designed when compared to another two. All sources used in this presentation support the topics. However, it would be very good source if some information about tutoring services, student ID (how and why), information on add/drop/withdraw classes, etc.

Reviewer five wrote:

I like all of the presentations except for the first because it has too much verbage [*sic*].

Reviewer six wrote:

(Handbook 1) This is an excellent presentation, and I think that students will find the information and recommendations found in it very relatable to their own circumstances. I especially liked the section on friends' and peers' influences. [This handbook should] add info about textbooks on Reserve. The afterword slide is too dense; break into 2 or 4 slides.

(Handbook 2) A "4" indicates content was thorough and could be presented as credible source. But on slide 7, the number of library staff is shown as 15, which is not correct. If the reference for this is BRCC.edu, that page/Web Site needs to be updated. This misstatement of facts makes me question the accuracy of other statements. I tried locating that info on the BRCC Web Site and could not find where that statement is made. Changed this score to 3. I like the images that were used on the slides, but think that the works cited slide is

very hard to read. This is not enough to drop the 4 grade I have given to the PowerPoint slides.

(Handbook 3) Very well organized presentation. Quality of information is excellent. It's presented simply, with the "big ideas" very clearly stated and details that support them. It is visually pleasing-Good design choices! Consistency of slide background was a very good choice. Love the use of quotations and choice of images to match text! Very practical advice is given, such as "get and use a calendar," "write down everything," "prioritize your tasks." This manual is geared to BRCC, but it would be useful for a freshman at any college or university. That it is created by college students with some experience behind it makes it very relatable.

Reviewer seven wrote:

(Handbook 1) Presentation is good. I think it can be used as is, as long as it is presented as a resource prepared by students.

(Handbook 2) A bit prejudicial about advising and should be used with some critical thinking pointers. Also, I don't understand the data that is given on the pages about transferring credits.

(Handbook 3) This presentation fits between the above two, I think. Their references are not very good. I also think that their section on advising needs to be discussed.

Reviewer eight wrote:

(Handbook 1) There is a LOT of text on most of the slides; many have backgrounds so busy that visually impaired students or older adult students may have difficulty reading. In places, I think text may not have been appropriately attributed; does not sound like student voice. Some references difficult to attach to resource listing at the end, i.e. slides 17, 19, and 27. Maybe disclaimer should be added: Views expressed in this handbook are those of the students who are sharing their experiences.

(Handbook 2) "Like the energy and vibe—sounds like student voices. Very comprehensive and logical beginning—includes campus map and pictures of major buildings new students need to know. Most students complain about parking, slide 16. After griping, at least they do recommend taking early classes or coming to campus earlier to find a space. I am very sensitive about advising complaints. This group's treatment was very one sided. It sounded like the negative experience of one student colored slide 17: "Most advisor do not know enough . . . " The slam was even more glaring because of slide 18, lifted verbatim from the BRCC website about Disability Services without attribution. DS is "da bomb" and Advising is the pits in the opinion of this group. Not a fair and balanced treatment. New Student Checklist on slide 19 is no longer accurate. Divider slides are great, as are most graphics, except one on slide 28; very graphic

depiction of suicide. May be offensive or upsetting for some. Liked reasons for going to class. Not so much the suggestion to cut class if really burnt out—after the first cut, it is much easier to skip others. Transfer info for other universities also out of date. The LA Transfer Degree tracks and specific 2+2s created by BRCC and others around specific degrees covers. Great summation, slide 37. Liked the student bios and the group shot at the end with the BRCC Bear.

(Handbook 3) Slide 5 zaps advising—all three quotes about advising are negative; pre-nursing students are very dissatisfied with advising, because the department does not see them individually until they are admitted to the program. Professional advisors try to meet the need, but there are more than 1,000 students in the pipeline, many of whom are very weak students who will need several semesters of prerequisites to be eligible to apply for admission—very easy to shoot the messenger, in this case, us. Perhaps a visit from CADST is in order to present a balanced view and to answer questions. Slides 6 and 8 cover advising in a more fair manner and could be used exclusively to cover the topic. Slide 10 seems to be an attempt to put a positive spin on a slanted intro. As with any multi-step process it tends to be much easier if one begins much earlier—waiting until the last minute is asking for Murphy's Law to apply. Good graphics in the Financial Aid section. Good job in handling Time Management, Study Skills, Library, balancing social and school life and alcohol abuse. Good Summary—wordy, but good. Like the bios— especially the personal advise for new students.

Do You Want to Chat?

Reevaluating Organization of Virtual Reference Service at an Academic Library

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*Authors' contributions were equal;
names are listed alphabetically.*

*Since their inception, virtual reference
services have evolved considerably and
are now a significant component of li-
brary services in many types of library
environments. The current paper reports
on a study undertaken at a research-
intensive academic library that analyzed
and evaluated a decade-old virtual refer-
ence service. The main goal of the study
was to obtain a broad and comprehensive
picture of the current service, grounded in
the actual day-to-day provision, usage,
and organization of the service. The group
of librarians involved in the study devel-
oped a feasible, efficient, and adaptable
methodology for assessing and evaluating
a virtual reference service. The developed
methodology that combines qualitative
and quantitative methods can be used
and applied for a similar evaluation of the
service in any type of library environment.*

SERVICE HISTORY

McGill University is located in Montre-
al, Quebec, Canada, the largest franco-
phone city in North America and home
to people of many languages and cul-
tures. McGill University is an English-
speaking research-intensive university
with a student population of 39,500
enrolled in more than three hundred
programs of study that include the
social sciences, sciences, medicine, law,
engineering, religion, and the humani-
ties, with a strong continuing edu-
cation program offering hundreds of
courses in various areas of interest. Mc-
Gill also has the highest percentage of
PhD students of any Canadian research
university.[1] McGill University Library
offers public services primarily using
a liaison librarian model. Designated
librarians are responsible for meeting
the reference, instructional, and collec-
tion needs of one or more departments.
All branch libraries are located on the
downtown campus, with the exception
of one branch library located on the
Macdonald Campus on the outskirts
of the city. A single service point model
is used in all branches with library
support staff being responsible for an-
swering questions at front-line service
points and librarians being on call for
questions requiring professional skills
to answer. Statistics are taken during
select sampling weeks throughout the
year using LibAnalytics. During the
most recent sampling week (February
15–21, 2016), there were 1,929 ques-
tions asked in person, via email, and
by phone at library service points and
directly to librarians. Additionally, 129
chat and email questions were asked
via the library's virtual reference ser-
vice during the same week.

Virtual reference service has become an important component of the reference services offered at McGill University Library. It is currently offered by fifty-six public services librarians from all branch libraries providing reference assistance in English and French to students, faculty, staff, and the general public. When the service was first introduced at McGill in 2006, QuestionPoint, an OCLC product, was selected as the virtual reference platform. At the time, QuestionPoint was one of the leading products on the market, thereby ensuring expeditious implementation of the service. The primary goal of virtual reference at McGill was the extension of reference services generally offered by phone or in person at service desks. Virtual reference service offers a highly visible access point to users in real time at their point of need. When the service was implemented, it was believed that users, particularly students, would find chat useful since they were already using this form of technology to communicate among themselves. It was also considered a means of offering "ready reference" rather than in-depth subject-specific assistance. It was decided to channel reference questions received via the central library email through the QuestionPoint platform as well. All public services librarians in branch libraries across the system were involved in answering email and chat questions received through the virtual reference platform. To ensure the quality of service, an initial training program for all public services librarians was organized. The implementation of the virtual reference service led to the revision of the library website and subject guides in order to provide better support to users and enable them to find needed resources. Since its implementation, the service has evolved with the subsequent inclusion of chat widgets (called Qwidgets) in selected library resources, including library catalogues, which increased the number of access points to the service.

Between 2009 and 2011, McGill University Library also used Meebo instant messaging software as an additional method of communication. The use of this component of the virtual reference service was discontinued because of low usage numbers and changes in the ownership of the software. The library also experimented with co-browsing, which had the potential to provide librarians with the ability to share the computer screen with the user. However, this practice was discontinued due to technical incompatibilities. There have been other aspects of the service that have been considered over the years but not implemented, such as utilization of a knowledge base, text messaging, and consortium membership.

CONTEXT OF THE CURRENT STUDY

In April 2014, the Office of the Dean of Libraries created a working group to assess various aspects of the virtual reference service as part of the library's immediate priority initiatives for the 2014–2015 academic year. The working group was comprised of two branch library heads and two liaison librarians, including the virtual reference coordinator. The group was mandated to evaluate the quality of the service and the nature and content of the questions received. Based on feedback from librarians at McGill University Library, the mandate of the group was expanded to include an assessment of the QuestionPoint software, service hours, and possible collaboration with consortial partners. After discussing methods for collecting and analyzing the data with the Assessment Librarian over the summer of 2014, a study of virtual reference transactions was conducted by the committee members to assess the service and its staffing model in the fall of 2014. The report, entitled "Virtual Reference at McGill Library," was completed and submitted to the library administration in spring 2015.[2]

RESEARCH OBJECTIVE

The current paper reports the results of an evaluation of a virtual reference service in a research-intensive academic library. The main purpose of the study was not to specifically evaluate the quality of the answers provided in McGill University Library's virtual reference service, but to assess the usage of the service and the current service model, which has undergone some administrative and technical modifications since its implementation in 2006. The objective was to obtain a broad and comprehensive picture of the current service, grounded in the actual day-to-day provision, usage, and organization of the service. The goal of the evaluation was to examine the general quality of the service provided, as measured through an analysis of the hours, software, and adequacy of practitioner's expertise, among other factors, rather than through an analysis based on the quality of responses to individual transactions. In order to attain this objective, a number of research questions were identified and grouped around two common themes: service usage (i.e., who uses the service and how) and service provision (i.e., how the service is provided) (see table 1, next page). Another goal was to suggest possible ways to improve and expand the service.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The volume of literature on virtual reference services attests to their growing popularity. This analysis of the literature starts from the premise that virtual reference services are important, especially in the context of their increasing popularity and reported general user satisfaction.[3] Morais and Sampson note that "chat reference service is a very popular, heavily used, and appreciated service" and Nicol and Crook observe that some libraries are seeing increased use of virtual reference services at the same time as statistics are showing decreased or flattening reference desk use.[4] A systematic review of virtual reference services published in 2011 by Matteson, Salamon, and Brewster identified fifty-nine papers on the topic, the majority of which were from

Table 1. Research questions. To evaluate the virtual reference service and achieve the goals outlined above, the following research questions and sub-questions were formulated.

Research Questions	Research Sub-Questions
How is the service used? Are there any trends that can be discovered?	Which component of the service (chat versus email) is used the most?
	Are the widgets embedded in the catalogues, website, and databases effective as additional access points to the service?
	Who are the main users of the service?
	What is the level of complexity of the questions?
	Do the questions reveal any frequently repeated themes?
	What are the disciplinary areas of the questions?
	Are questions primarily answered by the librarians who begin the transactions or are they referred to another librarian or support staff member?
Is the current service model adequate for the service?	Who should staff the virtual reference service?
	Do librarians have an adequate level of expertise to be able to answer the majority of received questions, including loans-related questions?
	Should the McGill University Libraries implement a consortial model?
	Are the service hours adequate?
	Is the currently used virtual reference service platform adequate for meeting the needs of the service needs?
	Does the current platform fulfil the established set of requirements?
	How does the current platform compare against its four major competitors?

academic library settings. Their analysis of the literature concludes that virtual reference service expectations are high, that services are well-received, and that they are used regularly.[5] At McGill University Library, the team of researchers involved in this study concur that this is a popular service, and the group was tasked with examining its quality to see if major changes to service provision were warranted. These included considering extended hours, having library assistants staff the service, offering the service with more than one person at a time, and joining a consortium. The goal of the current review of the literature, which was focused primarily on evaluation or assessment of virtual reference services within academic libraries, was to examine these issues and formulate research questions based on previous research in this area.

The existing body of literature on this topic employs various methods for evaluating virtual reference service, including examining individual transcripts for quality control, ensuring quality through evaluation of practices and policies, and examining transcripts to identify patterns with the goal of improving service.[6] At McGill University Library, there were no immediate concerns with regard to quality of the service. The group also chose not to evaluate individual transcripts for quality because the study would be selective in nature and may not be representative of the overall quality of service provided. With regard to evaluating practices and policies, up until the current time, McGill University Library has been operating with little written documentation of policies. Therefore, the working group opted not to evaluate the service using this method. Instead, it was decided to employ the third method, similar to other recent studies of analyzing transcripts for patterns in complexity and type of question in order to improve quality. The current study analyzes transcripts and other software-derived metrics to identify patterns in the types of questions asked and in user type, the percentage of questions that were McGill-specific, and the adequacy of service hours.

Evaluating the types of questions posed in the virtual reference environment can help improve the quality of service and can help determine alternative staffing possibilities. For example, Matteson, Salamon, and Brewster's systematic review provides a table with the top question types from a variety of studies.[7] There are questions from a variety of different categories, but research-based questions and known-item searching figure prominently. Morais and Sampson identified that "64 percent of questions were ready reference or instructional in nature; 25 percent sought a known item; 6 percent were policy questions; and 5 percent were related to technical problems."[8] However, other studies report receiving significant numbers of questions about policy or library accounts. For example, Armann-Keown, Cooke, and Matheson report their top categories as being those related to library materials (42 percent) and library accounts and circulation services (31 percent).[9] Rawson et al. concur, noting that although 48 percent were specific search questions (not known-item searches) such as students needing articles on a topic, they also report that there were a large number of policy-related questions.[10] This finding implies that librarians staffing the service must be familiar not only with research-related

questions but also those relating to library policy matters and patron account information.

The level, or difficulty, of questions in a virtual reference environment has implications for its staffing. Chow and Croxton state that there is "a general perception . . . that online chat reference is suitable mostly for simple factual and directional but not reference questions."[11] Cabaniss's analysis discovered that at the University of Washington Libraries, the majority of questions consisted of general information and known-item searches, queries that could be answered by graduate student assistants.[12] However, other studies mention the extent to which instruction is taking place within the chat environment, suggesting that, in many cases, the service moves beyond simply answering factual questions and provides an experience to users that allows them to develop new skills. For example, Matteson, Salamon, and Brewster explain that there is frequently instruction taking place within the virtual reference environment, that users are receptive to instruction, and that librarians use techniques such as walking users through the steps in order to locate information.[13] Moyo and Ward report similar findings.[14] In fact, Moyo emphasizes that certain features of virtual reference, such as the availability of a transcript for the user to consult after the reference transaction and the option for the librarian to provide follow-up information to the user afterward via email, are more conducive to instruction than face-to-face desk reference service or instruction in a classroom setting.[15]

The previous literature is divided as to whether or not the service should be staffed by professional librarians. Several studies are in favor of librarians staffing the service while others discuss ways of staffing with students and library support staff. Bravender, Lyon, and Molaro did a cost analysis of the virtual reference service at a medium-sized liberal arts university with a small percentage of graduate students and concluded that with less than a quarter of questions requiring a librarian to answer, having librarians staff the service was not cost effective.[16] However, other studies suggest that professional librarians' skills are well suited to offering virtual reference service. In their systematic review, Matteson, Salamon, and Brewster assert that "Providing library service via chat technology requires competencies in both communication skills as well as reference skills" and this statement could be interpreted as an endorsement for such a service model.[17] Armann-Keown, Cooke, and Matheson highlight the importance of standardized staff competencies and ongoing training to ensure a consistent level of service.[18] A recent study by Maloney and Kemp on the level of complexity of question in a virtual reference environment provides a good discussion of different types of staffing models for virtual reference. They provide results of their study analyzing the complexity of virtual reference questions at one university library and conclude that the complexity of questions asked via chat is higher than those asked in person at a desk, and that many reference questions offer an opportunity to support the research process.[19] These findings provide further evidence for staffing

virtual reference services with librarians. Furthermore, when a content analysis of chat questions from Georgetown Law Library was conducted by Morais and Sampson, the authors concluded that the "sophisticated level of questions confirms that Georgetown's practice of having professional librarians staff chat reference [was] the right decision" for their institution.[20] The type of clientele an academic library supports is a factor to consider when determining who within the library should staff the virtual reference service.

A second staffing-related question that is discussed in the literature is the use of consortium services, with studies coming to different conclusions on whether consortium-based services or individual library-based services are best. For example, according to Rawson et al., users are satisfied with outsourced chat,[21] whereas several studies favor having the service staffed by local librarians. Bishop and Torrence point out that although having less quality control "is a possible disadvantage of consortium participation given the local nature of chat reference," there are advantages to consortium-based participation such as increased collegiality among institutions.[22] Noting what percentage of questions requires local knowledge may help in decisions about whether or not to use a consortial model for staffing the service. Bishop and Torrence's study analyzed transcripts to determine what percentage of questions required local knowledge to answer and noted that 23 percent of questions were local in nature, while a study from Auburn University Libraries identified that 60 percent of questions required local information to answer.[23] Meert and Given's study comparing the quality of answers provided by the University of Alberta librarians and those in the consortium determined that the local staff met service standards 94 percent of the time, compared to 82 percent of the time for consortia librarians, and that local staff were able to answer 89 percent of questions in real time compared to the consortia librarians who were able to answer 69 percent of questions in real time.[24] These findings have implications for the quality of the service. Powers et al.'s article discusses an academic library's move from consortial to local service in part to ensure high quality service and also to build relationships with faculty and students on campus. In their literature review, they note that there are risks associated with consortium-based virtual reference service, stating that "there have been a number of articles assessing the quality of local chat reference offered within consortia, all coming to the same general consensus—quality of service for local questions is sacrificed in consortial reference."[25] Morais and Sampson's analysis of their chat service led to a similar assertion that the service should be staffed with professional librarians familiar with the local collection.[26] Bishop's work identifies that lack of access to local information can be an impediment to quality virtual reference service in a consortial environment, but can be mitigated by modifying libraries' policies related to sharing local information and enhancing training of consortial staff.[27]

Another area of interest investigated in the literature and related to staffing is the number of questions that are referred

rather than responded to directly. Matteson, Salamon, and Brewster's systematic review reports that the percentage of referred questions in the four studies that investigate referrals varies widely from 3 to 33 percent.[28] Two more recent studies, not discussed in the systematic review, show the percentage of referred questions to be in this range, at 13 percent[29] and 18 percent.[30] The percentage of referred questions is important to investigate since a high rate of referred questions could mean that the quality of the service is not as high as would be desired, and may suggest that the expertise of staff is not adequate for answering questions. High levels of referred questions could also adversely affect the quality of the service, as referred questions likely take longer to be answered than those answered by the staff member on duty.

METHODS

For the present study, several methods were chosen and used in order to answer the research questions:

1. Analysis of a sample of reference transactions to determine the main user groups of the service, the most often used component of service (chat or email), and the effectiveness of widgets embedded in various library website pages, catalogues, and databases as additional access points to the service
2. Qualitative analysis of the same sample of chat and email transactions in order to discover: the level of complexity of the questions, the recurring themes of the questions, the subject areas of the questions, and the adequacy of the level of expertise of librarians staffing the service
3. Analysis of the usage of the service to understand if the actual staffing model is adequate for the service
4. Analysis of a sample of data automatically collected in the platform (number of questions received) to assess the adequacy of the offered virtual reference service in terms of service hours
5. Analysis of internal policy documents related to the virtual reference service
6. Comparison of the main features of widely used virtual reference platforms according to a predetermined set of requirements

In order to perform the first three analyses above, virtual reference transactions from July to October 2014 were sampled. The sample consisted of chat and email transactions from the second week of each month, of which there were 555 in total. After blank and duplicate questions were removed, the total number of questions to be analyzed amounted to 510. The questions were divided between four coders who analyzed the transactions and recorded the data in a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet. The transactions were analyzed and coded using a coding scheme developed by the working group (see appendix). To ensure consistency of analysis and inter-coder reliability, previously coded questions were randomly sampled and coded by another member of the group.

For each question, the researchers noted the data regarding reference transactions that were automatically collected by the software, such as means of communication (either chat or email), means of reception (web form or widget), whether or not a question was referred to another librarian or a staff member, and user type. Also, researchers analyzed the content of the transaction to determine theme, subject area, and the level of complexity (basic, intermediate, advanced) of the questions. The themes of the questions (see appendix) emerged from discussions with the librarians regularly staffing the service. The subject areas were defined according to the existing breakdown of the subjects by major disciplinary areas according to the McGill University Library website. The definitions of each level of complexity were aligned with the definitions used in the reference statistics software for recording in-person, email, and phone reference transactions, as follows:

- basic: responds to a simple question using library information sources (catalogue, website, ready reference);
- intermediate: assists users with intermediate-level questions or support, may require use of several information sources, and often involve user instruction;
- advanced: responds to a user's question using advanced expertise in the service area. Interactions are often multifaceted or interdisciplinary and subject specialists may need to be consulted.

After completing the first stage of data collection, the researchers examined the data to determine if the actual staffing model was adequate for the virtual reference service. In order to understand who should staff the service (librarians, library assistants, or student employees), the distribution of questions by level of complexity was examined. To answer the question of whether or not librarians have an adequate level of expertise to answer the majority of questions asked by library users, the number of referred questions (those reassigned to another librarian or to a service account) was compared to the number of questions answered by librarians who began the reference transaction. A high rate of referred questions could negatively affect user experience of the service and user perception of service quality, and signal a needed change in the staffing model or further training of the librarians providing the service.

To be able to determine if a consortial model of staffing the service should be considered in the future, two factors were considered:

- the distribution of questions specific to McGill University Library resources versus general questions. If there were many general questions, this may warrant use of a consortial model.
- the number of questions asked by members of the McGill community compared to the number of questions
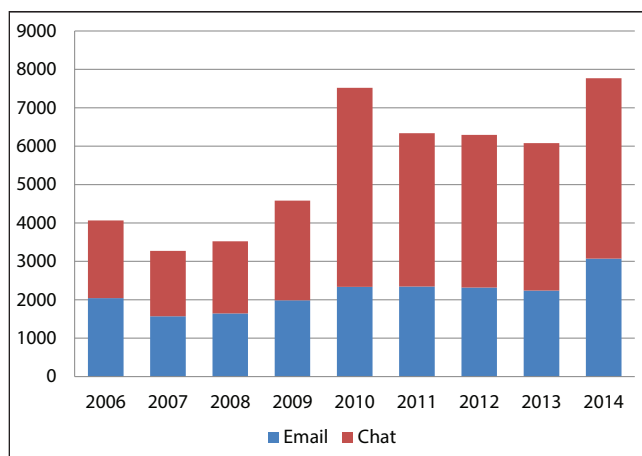
Figure 1. Service usage

received from the general public. Given that the literature shows chat services to be an important form of outreach to the campus community, having a high percentage of questions from within the institution could weight against use of a consortial model.

For the analysis of the adequacy of virtual reference service hours (during the academic year, 10 a.m.–5 p.m. Monday to Friday for email and chat; 10 a.m.–6 p.m. Saturday and Sunday for email only), two typically busy months during the winter and fall terms of the academic year were sampled: February 2014 (twenty days of service) and October 2014 (twenty-two days of service). The data for the analysis was collected from the automatically generated monthly reports of transactions with daily and hourly breakdowns by the number of requests received via both chat and email. The analysis had two goals: to determine if there was a significant number of email questions and chat requests received before and after service hours on weekdays, and if there were a significant number of chat requests received during weekends when only the email service is provided, which could suggest that an extension of service offerings is warranted. The average number of emails received per hour in the course of service hours was compared to the average number of emails received in the hours immediately preceding and following the service hours. To determine the need to extend weekend service to include chat service, the total number of chat and email requests received during weekend days was calculated and compared with the average number of email and chat transactions occurring on weekdays.

To determine if the current platform serves the needs of the service, a list of requirements and desired software and platform features was established. Then, five virtual reference platforms used widely by North American academic institutions, consisting of QuestionPoint (OCLC), LibChat (Springshare), Mosio, LivePerson, and LibraryH3lp (Nub Games), were compared to determine if any of them offered distinctive advantages over the platform that is currently

used by the McGill University Library (QuestionPoint), and if there would consequently be advantages in implementing a different platform. The group created an evaluation grid (see table 2) with twenty criteria to objectively analyze the chosen platforms. The grid was inspired by a similar grid used by members of the CREPUQ-REFD group (Groupe de travail sur la référence à distance de la Conférence des recteurs et des principaux des universités du Québec) but was modified to reflect the goal of the report and to integrate new developments such as mobile apps and open-source software.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The results of the evaluation undertaken with the methodology described above revealed several trends and tendencies, most of which are in accordance with the previous literature. The main goals of the evaluation were to analyze the usage of the virtual reference service and the adequacy of the current service model. The analysis of the data automatically collected in the virtual reference platform and the qualitative analysis of the sample of chat and email transactions demonstrated the trends discussed below. This analysis allowed the group to make some recommendations with regard to future improvements. If a similar analysis is undertaken by other libraries providing a virtual reference service, it will further their understanding of the functioning, day-to-day provision, usage, and organization of the service and will allow them to make recommendations for possible ways to improve and develop the service.

Service Usage

The service is popular and the trend from 2006 to 2014 (see figure 1) shows an overall increase in service usage, which indicates that the virtual reference service should continue to be provided, supported, and actively promoted to incoming and continuing students and staff. The data also show a shift in the percentage of chats versus emails over time, with chat becoming increasingly important (see figure 1). This can be attributed to the implementation of additional access points to the chat service (e.g., via the Qwidget) or users' increased levels of familiarity with chat services. The data demonstrate clear advantages of maintaining both components of the service (chat and email), as well as having additional access points to the service (widgets embedded in the catalogues and databases), and suggest possibly adding other access points to the virtual reference service. Due to the large size of the analyzed sample, these findings may be transferable to other academic libraries of similar scale and could assist them in making an informed decision on which components of virtual reference service should be implemented or retained.

Regarding the main users of the service, members of the university community (students, faculty, staff, and alumni) were responsible for the majority of the questions:

79 percent in total, with members of the general public accounting for a significantly smaller share of questions (86 questions, 17 percent) and with 4 percent of unknown origin. Students constituted the largest category of service users (334 questions, 65 percent of the total number of analyzed questions), with other members of the university community being less significantly represented: faculty (39 questions, 8 percent), staff (9 questions, 2 percent), and alumni (18 questions, 4 percent). Conducting a similar analysis at any type of library would allow its librarians to evaluate how effectively the service reaches each user group and could suggest future marketing and promotion directions, for example to target more actively a user group that shows low levels of service usage.

Service Provision

Two factors that can be used to determine the feasibility and applicability of a consortial model for virtual reference service in a particular library are usage of the service by user type and types of questions received. In the case of McGill Library, the analysis of the transcripts revealed that the vast majority of the questions (69 percent in total) were specific to local resources and services (see figure 2). If a similarly high level of local specificity of both the user population and the themes of the questions is demonstrated by the analysis conducted at any library providing a virtual reference service, a consortial model may not be recommended as it may have important implications for the maintenance of service quality. It would be challenging for the staff of other libraries participating in a consortium to provide high-quality service in the circumstances where the majority of both questions and users are specific to a particular institution. As discussed in the literature review, the adoption of a consortial service model may result in longer waiting times for users due to an increased number of referred questions, and possibly in a higher number of incorrect answers. These decreases in service quality could be even more significant for an institution where the main user group is from within the institutional community and a high percentage of questions are locally specific.

Since there is debate in the literature about whether librarian-level expertise is required for answering questions or whether library assistants and students could participate in delivering the service, it was important to analyze received questions to determine their level of complexity. In the analyzed sample, the level of questions showed a nearly equal distribution between 250 basic questions and 249 intermediate questions (those showing evidence of information literacy instruction or question negotiation), with only 11 advanced queries. Due to this almost even split between basic and intermediate questions, the recommendation was made to keep librarian-only staffing of the service.

This decision to keep librarian-only staffing has also been corroborated by the analysis of the number of referred questions. The majority of questions were answered by the
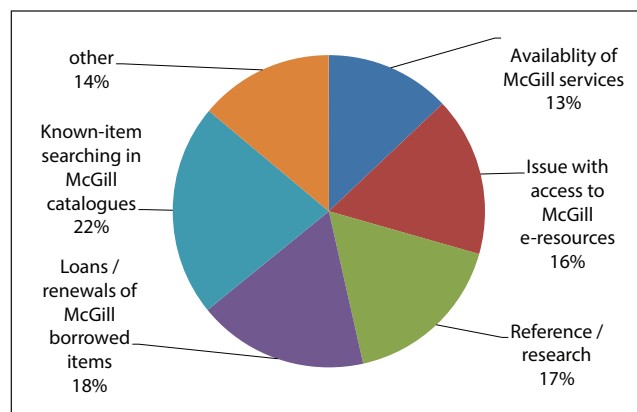

Figure 2. Question types

librarian who began the transaction, with only 17 percent of questions being recorded as referrals to another librarian, a support staff member, or a service email. The analysis of the virtual reference transactions shows a relatively low number of referrals, which suggests that librarians have a level of expertise that is more than adequate to answer most of the questions. This model of staffing has the benefit of quick response time, which may not necessarily be the case if the service model were changed to staffing by students or library assistants, who might not have sufficient expertise for answering most intermediate-level questions. In the context of an academic institution, it may be deemed to be more appropriate to keep librarian-only staffing, as each chat interaction could be used as an opportunity for information literacy instruction, as well as for building and strengthening relationships with faculty and students. In addition, changing the staffing model could require an important reassignment of available financial and human resources required for the service and an establishment of an adequate training program aiming to ensure that high quality service standards are met, which may not be possible in academic libraries in the current economic situation.

Another finding of this study indicates that a significant number of users have difficulty locating known items, with 22 percent of questions falling into this category. Generally, these findings can be interpreted as an indication that information and instructions on how to locate known items, sometimes considered to be too basic and thus not emphasized, should be reinforced in information literacy instruction and on the library website. For example, having step-by-step instructions on known-item searching available via the library website would be one way of enhancing existing services.

The majority of the analyzed transactions (324 questions, 64 percent) pertain to a specific disciplinary area, with the rest falling into a non-attributed or generic category (see figure 3). The high level of subject-specificity of the questions could indicate the need, in many cases, for information literacy instruction to take place during chat interactions, which can be better provided by librarians than by less skilled staff.
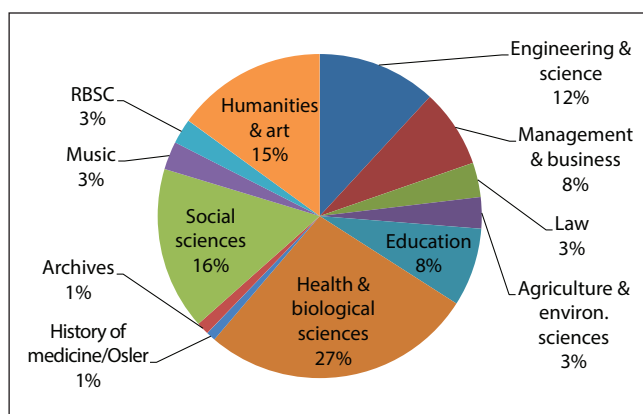
Figure 3. Question subjects

This type of analysis by subject area is useful and could be considered by library staff within the organization to help make informed decisions regarding improvements to website design, information literacy instruction, collection development, and reference services in respective disciplines.

Conducting an analysis of user requests received outside of the present service hours generates the data necessary for making an informed decision with regard to the extension of the service hours. Extending service hours should be undertaken only if warranted by a high number of received requests and if staffing permits. An analysis of the requests for the chat and email service received outside of the current service hours did not provide evidence that the service hours should be extended. It did not demonstrate any significant after-hour or weekend traffic outside of the current chat service hours that would indicate the need to increase or change the service hours.

Analysis of Internal Policy Documents

In analyzing the library's internal policy documents related to the virtual reference service, the working group revealed and highlighted that policy documents with explicit service quality guidelines are lacking and should be developed in order to further enhance service quality. This is not unusual as many academic libraries are in a similar situation, as identified by Pinto and Manso, who state that "most virtual reference services lack the service and quality policies that can help them to develop efficiently."[31] The systematic review by Matteson, Salamon, and Brewster also notes that user satisfaction increases when certain Reference and User Services Association (RUSA) guidelines are adhered to, highlighting that developing policies and procedures around reference interactions is important and can improve service quality.[32] Therefore, developing these policy documents, perhaps based on the document created by RUSA, "Guidelines for Implementing and Maintaining Virtual Reference Services," is a valuable step for any academic library providing virtual reference services.[33]

Analysis of Software

Five virtual reference service platforms used widely by academic libraries (QuestionPoint, LibChat, Mosio, LivePerson, and LibraryH3lp) were analyzed, employing the grid developed for this purpose by the working group (see table 2, next page). According to the analysis, the three current leading virtual reference software platforms in the North American academic library market that provide users with options to interact with librarians via chat and email are QuestionPoint, LibChat, and LivePerson. For QuestionPoint, text messaging involves integration with separate software provided by Mosio, while LivePerson does not provide a text messaging option. LibraryH3lp and Mosio are not complete virtual reference service solutions. LibraryH3lp has some significant drawbacks, such as the lack of an integrated email service and the need for some in-house configuration. Mosio has limited appeal as a stand-alone platform because it is primarily geared toward texting and does not have some basic features available in other systems. QuestionPoint and LivePerson have existed longest on the market, although LivePerson was initially geared toward the corporate market. LibChat is newer on the market, having launched in 2012, and provides similar functionalities to QuestionPoint and LivePerson. One interesting feature of LibChat is its integration with other Springshare products, such as LibAnalytics, to collect valuable statistics on reference interactions. All of the software platforms offer the possibility to integrate widgets into library catalogues and databases. Based on the analysis of the software features presented above, the working group has offered to enhance the existing virtual reference service by integrating a text messaging component into the existing range of access points to the service. In the current conditions, this could be achieved via integration of text messaging software (e.g., Mosio) within the current platform (QuestionPoint).

In general, this method of integrating new components into the existing platform would be preferable as a short-term solution for any library that would like to enhance its current virtual reference service offerings and provide more access points as it would not require a large amount of resources. As a long-term solution for improving and developing a virtual reference service in any type of institution, regular trials of major competitors of the used platform should be undertaken in order to evaluate benefits and disadvantages of their systems. However, the implementation of any other virtual reference platform, especially in a multi-branch library system, could be recommended only if the competitor offered some clear advantages over the current platform, as it would require significant and time-consuming changes to the service.

The current analysis examined a virtual reference service in an academic library context and determined that the service provision model is meeting user needs. The current staffing model ensures that staff members covering the service are able to answer most queries, with question level being evenly split between basic and intermediate, and only 17 percent of questions being referred. Current service hours are meeting needs,

Table 2. Comparison of software

Main Characteristics	Question Point (OCLC)	LibChat (Springshare)	Mosio	LivePerson	LibraryH3lp (Nub Games)
Integration of chat, email, and text messaging	Yes (texting only with Mosio)	Yes	Yes (but primarily for text messaging)	No (no text messaging)	No (no email)
Mobile app	No (but supported on mobile devices)	Yes	No (but supported on mobile devices)	Yes	No (but supported on mobile devices)
Possibility to use institutional scripts	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Possibility to assign questions	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Shared queue by librarians	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Possibility to use widgets in databases and catalogue	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Transcripts send to a user after the chat	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Co-browsing	Yes (but has technical difficulties)	No	No	No (but has desktop sharing)	No
Built-in user survey capabilities	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Consortia use	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Need for users to download a plugin	No	No	No	No	No
Transactions' transcripts saved	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Availability of technical support and troubleshooting	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Hosting on the provider server	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Open source	No	No	No	No	No (but was open source until recently)
Possibility to generate statistical reports	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Possibility to assign levels of access	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Reputation on the market	Good	Good	Unclear	Good	Good
Longevity on the market	Since 2002	Since 2012	Text service since 2007, full service since 2012	Since 1998	Since 2008
Mostly used by public libraries/ academic libraries/private sector	Public and Academic	Public and Academic	Primarily Private sector and medical institutions	Public, Academic and Private sector	Public and Academic

with few questions coming in during non-service hours. All the elements of the current service (i.e., email and chat, as well as widgets) are being used and would be required should a new virtual reference service platform be chosen in the future. Possible areas of improvement include developing policies and procedures around reference interactions to ensure quality, providing more web or in-person instruction on known-item searching (and other areas where there are frequently asked questions), and incorporating newer technologies such as text messaging to improve the service. Improvements such as these will ensure that the service remains responsive and relevant to users in the decade to come.

CONCLUSION

This study examined the model of usage and provision of a non-consortium-based virtual reference service staffed by

librarians from all branches of an academic library within a research-intensive university environment. There are several areas that could be examined in the future in order to gain a broader perspective of the virtual reference service in any type of library, for example surveying users of the service. Although, as mentioned previously, many studies emphasize that user satisfaction is generally very high with regard to virtual reference services, surveying users directly could identify specific areas for improvement that have not been identified thus far. Another further step would be to consider ways of using the data collected through virtual reference interactions to inform website design, structure, and content organization, as well as the design of new library services, or improvement of existing ones.

The findings of this study will be useful to academic libraries in considering the place of virtual reference services among their other reference services. Due to the rapidly changing nature of this field, findings of the studies undertaken even five years ago might show a different picture from the present due to the lower levels of awareness and uptake of the service. Also, given that there is lack of consensus in the literature with regard to the many staffing options for virtual reference services, the current study builds on the literature by providing an analysis of various factors to consider in deciding on an appropriate staffing model for an academic library, such as whether or not the service should be staffed by librarians exclusively and whether or not a consortium-based system would best serve their users.

The current paper demonstrates how a current virtual reference service model can be efficiently evaluated by a local working group comprised of librarians who staff the service. The methods developed for the project can be easily adapted and applied for assessing and evaluating the service in any type of library. The current study builds on the literature by developing a new methodology for analyzing the service that combines the use of automatically collected data and a qualitative analysis of a sample of reference transactions. This method could be useful to other libraries for analyzing their own virtual reference service in order to determine the adequacy of the service provision model in relation to the type and level of questions they receive and their main user groups. Analyzing a virtual reference model of provision and service usage informs a local library community on the current state of the service, produces a document that could be used in the training of librarians or other staff participating in the service, and gives directions and recommendations for future development of the service.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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APPENDIX. QUESTION CODING SCHEME

1. Chat or email
2. Received via Qwidget: Y/N
3. Referred: Y/N
4. Level of questions:
   - Basic: responds to a simple question using library information sources (catalogue, website, ready reference)
   - Intermediate: assists users with intermediate-level questions or support, may require use of several information sources, and often involves user instruction
   - Advanced: responds to a user's question using advanced expertise in the service area. Interactions are often multifaceted or interdisciplinary and subject specialists may need to be consulted
5. Theme of questions:
   - Availability of McGill University Library services
   - Issue with access to McGill e-resources
   - Reference/research
   - Loans/renewals of McGill borrowed items
   - Known item searching in McGill catalogues
   - Other

6. User type:
   - McGill student
   - McGill faculty
   - McGill alumni
   - McGill staff
   - Non-McGill
   - Don't know
7. Subject Area:
   - Archives
   - Agriculture and environmental sciences
   - Education
   - Engineering and science
   - Health and biological sciences
   - Humanities and art
   - Law
   - Management and business
   - Music
   - Social sciences
   - Rare books and special collections
   - History of medicine
   - Don't know/not applicable

Best Free Reference Websites

Eighteenth Annual List

Emerging Technologies Section (ETS)

Contributing members: *Ashley Rosener and Paul Victor Jr., Co-Chairs; Christine Barnes; Georgia Baugh; Ava Brillat; Jessica Cerny; Allyssa Guzman; Laura Eileen Hall; Brian Kooy; Yaniv Masjedi; Autumn Mather; Sue McFadden; Sheena Sewell; Jeremy Walker; and Andrea Hill.*

Welcome to the eighteenth annual "Best Free Reference Websites" list. It is hard to believe that this project has been around since the late 1990s. In 1998, the Machine-Assisted Reference Section (MARS) of RUSA appointed an ad hoc task force to develop a method of recognizing outstanding reference websites. The task force became a formal committee at the 2001 ALA Annual Conference, and is now named the ETS Best Free Reference Websites Committee.

A link to this year's list of winners can also be found on the ETS webpage along with a link to the "Best Free Reference Websites Combined Index," which provides, in alphabetical order, all entries from the current and previous seventeen lists. Succinct and insightful annotations for the Best Free Reference Websites List entries were written by committee members in the years the particular websites were selected for the lists. These annotations provide guidance for using the websites as reference tools. Once again, the committee considered free websites in all subject areas useful for ready reference and of value in most types of libraries.

The committee has established the following criteria for nominations:

- Quality, depth, and usefulness of content
- Ready reference
- Uniqueness of content
- Currency of content
- Authority of producer
- Ease of use
- Customer service
- Efficiency
- Appropriate use of the web as a medium

More detailed explanation of the criteria can be found on the ETS webpage (www.ala.org/rusa/sections/mars/mars pubs/marsbestrefcriteria).

As in previous years, the committee worked virtually, using email and the online bookmarking site Diigo (www .diigo.com). Each member nominated five to seven websites using the criteria specified above and then wrote brief annotations that would assist fellow committee members with reviewing and voting for their favorite nominated websites. The goal of this year's committee was to produce a final list with approximately twenty high-quality reference websites. It was a good year in terms of nominations. More than fifty websites were nominated and voting for the best ones was challenging. After careful review, the committee members

recognized twenty-two new Best Free Reference Websites for 2016. The annotations for winning websites were edited by the co-chairs to ensure that they are of optimal use to librarians and fit the criteria listed above.

BEST WEBSITE WINNERS 2016

American FactFinder, http://factfinder.census.gov

This is a search portal for US census and survey information collected by the US Census Bureau, including demographic and economic information. The community facts feature gives quick demographic information about a city, state, zip code, or county. For more complex or specific searches users can choose between a guided search wizard and an advanced search. The three different types of search make this site appropriate for a variety of users.

Author/Publisher: US Census Bureau
Date reviewed: March 13, 2016

AnnualReports.com, www.annualreports.com

AnnualReports.com bills itself as "the most complete and up-to-date listing of Annual Reports online." Search by company or ticker symbol or browse by alphabetical name, sector, industry, exchange, or index. Once a company is located, its most recent annual report or Form 10-K report can be viewed in HTML or PDF. If it is available, a print annual report will be mailed to a specified address at the user's request. Other information includes a brief description of the company and a short list of similar companies with annual reports on this site. Content is useful for shareholders, investors, company employees, students, and others interested in publically traded companies' financial statements, accomplishments, and goals.

Author/Publisher: AnnualReports.com, a division of IR-Solutions.com
Date reviewed: March 9, 2016

Art UK, www.artuk.org

Art UK provides access to the entire collection of paintings in public ownership at national museums and organizations, local museums, charitable trusts, universities, hospitals, town halls, local libraries, and other civic buildings throughout the United Kingdom. In addition, the site includes works from a number of non-public collections, such as those in the Bishop's Palace (Wells, Somerset, UK) and in Oxford and Cambridge colleges. The vast majority of the works on the site are oil paintings, but works in acrylic and tempera are also included. More than two hundred thousand artworks by 38,370 artists from more than three thousand venues are included. While the majority of artists represented are British artists, a number of artists from other countries are also included, such as Raphael, Claude Monet, and Vincent van Gogh. Project partners include the British Broadcasting Corporation, Oxford University Press, the Public Monuments and Sculpture Association, Culture

24, the Visual Geometry Group at Oxford University and the University of Glasgow.

Author/Publisher: Public Catalogue Foundation
Date reviewed: March 1, 2016

Ballot Measures Database, www.ncsl.org/research/elections-and-campaigns/ballot-measures-database.aspx

The Ballot Measures Database is part of the much larger National Conference of State Legislatures website. This database "includes all statewide ballot measures, starting over a century ago" from all types of state elections: General, Primary, and Special. New ballot measures are added to the database when they qualify to be listed on a state's ballot. They are marked "Pass" or "Fail" as soon as election results are available. Browse by state or topic and limit by date. This is a very useful site for anyone interested in locating state issues that have appeared on a state ballot in the last hundred-plus years.

Author/Publisher: National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL)
Date reviewed: February 24, 2016

Best Commencement Speeches, Ever, http://apps.npr.org/commencement

This web site provides links to over three hundred commencement speeches from 1774 to the present. The speeches can be searched by name, school, or date; or browsed by theme or the name of the presenter. Speech pages include a photograph or illustration of the speaker, the location and year of the speech, a quotation from the speech, the text or a link to the text of the speech on an outside website, and, if available, a video of the speaker presenting the speech. Represented speakers include presidents, politicians, academics, musicians, celebrities, entrepreneurs, journalists, and actors. The site would be useful when needing to write a speech of one's own, to analyze the content of various speeches, or when searching for quotations from speeches.

Author/Publisher: National Public Radio
Date reviewed: January 29, 2016

Cancer Statistics Center, http://cancerstatisticscenter.cancer.org

The Cancer Statistics Center is an interactive website for learning about cancer in the United States. Produced by the American Cancer Society, the site provides statistics on the estimated new cancer cases and deaths by gender, state, and cancer type in the current year; current cancer incidence, mortality, and survival rates and trends; and risk factors (e.g., smoking, obesity) and screening rates by state. The site "aims to serve the needs of cancer control advocates, journalists, government and private public health agencies, and policy makers, as well as patients, survivors and the general public, in order to promote cancer prevention and control."

Author/Publisher: American Cancer Society
Date reviewed: January 29, 2016

CORE—COnnecting REpositories, http://core.ac.uk

The mission of CORE (COnnecting REpositories) is to bring together all open access research outputs from repositories and journals throughout the world and make them freely available to the public. CORE provides free, unrestricted access to research for all through harvesting available open access content. Users can search for CORE articles via a comprehensive search engine on the home page or by browsing the latest additions.

Author/Publisher: Knowledge Media Institute
Date reviewed: February 29, 2016

Digital Public Library of America, http://dp.la/subjects

The Digital Public Library of America (DPLA) is a nonprofit organization that is a registered library in the state of Massachusetts. The DPLA offers users the opportunity to search over a million items from collections in libraries, archives, and museums located in the United States. Searches can be conducted by utilizing the search box on top of the website and the user can make use of available timelines, maps, and virtual bookshelves. Apps are available on the App Library webpage. After registering for a free account, the user can save information on a personal bookshelf for later use. The website works with commonly used browsers. Apps for iOS and Android devices are available on the App Library webpage.

Author/Publisher: Digital Public Library of America
Date reviewed: February 23, 2016

Find a Grave, www.findagrave.com

Find a Grave is a free resource for finding the burial places of famous people, family members, and ancestors. The site's mission is to "find, record and present final disposition information from around the world as a virtual cemetery experience." Burial records can be searched by name or by cemetery. Depending on the person, disposition information may include tombstone photos, birth and death dates, biographies, obituaries, family links, and burial location. The site would be useful for genealogists, history buffs, or anyone interested in locating the final resting place of their favorite celebrity.

Author/Publisher: Find a Grave
Date reviewed: March 1, 2016

Global Terrorism Database, www.start.umd.edu/gtd

The Global Terrorism Database (GTD) is an open-source searchable database of information on terrorist events around the world. The site includes systematic data on domestic as well as international terrorist incidents that have occurred from 1970 through 2014 and includes more than 140,000 cases. The database can be searched or browsed by date, region, country, perpetrator group, weapon type, attack type, or target type. For each incident, information is available on the date and location of the incident, the weapons used and nature of the target, the number of casualties, and when available, the group or individual responsible.

Author/Publisher: National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism
Date reviewed: March 1, 2016

Goodreads, www.goodreads.com

Goodreads provides book recommendations for readers. The website also allows users to list items they have read, want to read, and are currently reading to help keep track of reading lists. Users can browse books by author and view the order of books in a series. Goodreads serves as a social network as well, providing a platform to read other users' book ratings and make book lists to share publicly.

Author/Publisher: Goodreads
Date Reviewed: February 24, 2016

Guide to North American Birds, www.audubon.org /bird-guide

The Guide to North American Birds, part of the National Audubon Society website, describes over one thousand species of birds in North America. Birds can be browsed by species or searched by name or species. Entries provide information on conservation status, scientific classification (family, genus, and species), habitat, photographs, detailed range maps, migration information, and natural history (feeding, breeding, habitat, eggs, young, etc.). Apps are available for iPhones and Android and information can be shared using Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest, and email. An "About" page describes the history and work of the Audubon Society, as well as information about local chapters and birding.

Author/Publisher: National Audubon Society
Date reviewed: February 28, 2016

Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy, www.iep.utm.edu

The Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy is a nonprofit organization that provides open access to detailed, scholarly information on key topics and philosophers in all areas of philosophy. The staff of thirty editors and approximately three hundred authors hold doctorate degrees and are professors at colleges and universities around the world (though mostly from English-speaking countries). Submissions are peer-reviewed by specialists according to strict criteria.

Author/Publisher: James Fieser (Editor), University of Tennessee at Martin and Bradley Dowden (Editor), California State University, Sacramento
Date reviewed: March 13, 2016

JournalTOCs, www.journaltocs.ac.uk

JournalTOCs is a very large collection of free tables of contents for subscription and open access scholarly journals. Over 2,800 publishers are represented, including Elsevier, Wiley, Taylor and Francis, Oxford, Cambridge, the American Chemical Society, Project Muse, and the American Psychological Association. Search by journal title or keyword, browse by subject or publisher, or register for a free account to be alerted when journals you elect to follow publish a new issue. This service is especially useful for scholars, students,

librarians, and others who want to keep up with the articles published in selected journals.

Author/Publisher: School of Mathematical and Computer Science, Heriot-Watt University, Edinburgh, UK

Date reviewed: March 4, 2016

National Parks Service, www.nps.gov

The National Parks Service (NPS) will celebrate one hundred years of stewardship and engagement in August 2016. The website lists basic park information; celebrates park news and events; hosts educational resources; and provides resources such as over 150 webcams located in parks across the United States. The images and descriptions illustrate the breadth of the NPS; added features such as interactives and webcams provide greater content. Additionally, history and the sciences are represented by fact sheets and projects. Teachers have several options, including distance learning, to use in a K–12 curriculum. The "Kids" page offers opportunities for kids to join junior rangers and web rangers. This website is a reference site in that it provides access to the information needed to visit a park and all the activities available.

Author/Publisher: National Parks Service, US Deptartment of the Interior

Date Reviewed: February 19, 2016

National Transportation Statistics, www.rita.dot.gov /bts/sites/rita.dot.gov.bts/files/publications/national_trans portation_statistics/index.html

National Transportation Statistics presents statistics on the US transportation system. Information includes safety statistics (accident, injuries/fatalities, etc.), energy consumption, air pollution, how transportation relates to the economy (gross domestic product), and much more. Besides traditional motor vehicles, the site also includes data for other modes of transportation such as airlines, watercrafts, and railroads. Data is accessible via HTML, Microsoft Excel, or CSV files. The site is updated quarterly.

Author/Publisher: Bureau of Transportation Statistics

Date reviewed: March 13, 2016

NYPL Digital Collections, http://digitalcollections.nypl.org

The New York Public Library has digitized over 650,000 items from their collections and made them searchable in a user-friendly web portal. A variety of different types of media are included in the collection, such as images, text, and streaming video. Contents of the digital collections are extremely varied and include things like images of midcentury Manhattan, cigarette cards, and fashion illustrations. Many of the items in the collection are also available for download, including over 180,000 that are in the public domain. The site is updated daily as more collections are digitized. NYPL also has a number of experimental tools for extracting data from the digital collections that allow users to further explore the materials.

Author/Publisher: New York Public Library

Date reviewed: March 13, 2016

Statistical Abstracts of the United States, www.census .gov/library/publications/time-series/statistical_abstracts .html

This site provides digital copies of the Statistical Abstract of the United States for the years 1878 through 2012, when the Statistical Compendia program ended, with a few omissions (1886, 1890, 1923, 1932, and 1975). Supplements such as the Historical Statistics of the United States, State and Metropolitan Area Data Book, and County and City Data Book are available for some years. The Statistical Abstracts and related supplements are a treasure trove of statistical data useful for students, researchers, and the general public seeking to locate social, political, and economic data for the United States.

Author/Publisher: US Census Bureau

Date reviewed: March 3, 2016

USDA Local Food Directory Listings, www.ams.usda .gov/services/local-regional/food-directories-listings

Maintained by the Agricultural Marketing Service, a division of the United States Department of Agriculture, this site has four directories to search for locally grown food. Users can find nearby farmer's markets, CSA networks, farms, and distributors of locally grown food. Directories are searchable by location, product availability, payment method, and whether or not the market participates in federal nutrition programs.

Author/Publisher: US Department of Agriculture

Date reviewed: March 13, 2016

US Small Business Administration, www.sba.gov

The US Small Business Administration (SBA) is an independent agency of the federal government. It works to provide assistance and aid to small businesses. This site contains educational videos, resource guides, free online classes, and contact information for local agencies. This site is well designed and has a comprehensive search engine.

Author/Publisher: US Small Business Administration

Date reviewed: February 11, 2016

W3Schools, www.w3schools.com

This is one of the premiere reference websites for web developers and designers. In addition to a massive catalog of pages explaining different elements of HTML, JavaScript, PHP, and more, it has built-in tutorials and tasks that users can go through to learn more about web design. There are better places to learn the basics of web design and coding (e.g., Codecademy), but as a reference tool for looking up commands and tools, ranging from very basic to very complex topics, this site has a lot of the information designers and developers need to get started. Furthermore, this site is critically important to both novices and experts.

Author/Publisher: W3Schools—Refsnes Data

Date reviewed: March 1, 2016

Sources
Professional Materials

Karen Antell, Editor

Adults Just Wanna Have Fun: Programs for Emerging Adults. By Audrey Barbakoff. Chicago: ALA, 2016. 136 p. Paper $49 (ISBN: 978-0-8389-1391-8).

Geared toward an underrepresented population in public libraries, this book aims to describe programming for emerging adults—defined by the author as those who are in their twenties to early thirties. The focus is on providing information about emerging adults' use of libraries, demonstrating the importance of programming targeted to this group, and justifying this type of programming to library stakeholders.

The book is divided into three main parts: an introduction that explains the research supporting programming specifically for emerging adults, a middle section detailing actual programming ideas, and a conclusion that discusses how and why to evaluate such programming. The highlighted research points to a need for programming to this age group: The author cites evidence showing that emerging adults rank libraries as less important than older adults do, even though 88 percent of emerging adults reported reading a book in the past year, compared to 79 percent of older adults. In other words, emerging adults are readers, but they aren't visiting our libraries.

The programs that the author describes are all based on play, as research has shown that this is often integral to learning for people of all ages. Because play is such a strong element in learning, the programs proposed in this book are both educational and fun at the same time. The author also encourages programmers not to be afraid to take risks and to learn right alongside their patrons to make it less intimidating for attendees as well as more fun for all.

The programming section is separated into three types of programming: "Get Dirty," which covers creating items both technological and non-technological; "Get Out," which covers programming outside the branch; and "Get Together," which covers programming that encourages participants to engage with one another. Programs are laid out with their length and time, staff and materials needed, cost, steps needed for implementation, and justification of community need.

This book is recommended for libraries interested in developing emerging adult programs, especially if they are seeking research to justify their choices. Purchasers should be aware that the book includes only about six programs per section, so this is by no means a comprehensive guide. In addition, not every program will be appropriate for every library or branch. Nonetheless, this book provides a solid start for those delving into emerging adult programming.—*Teralee ElBasri, Librarian, Chesterfield County Public Library, North Courthouse Branch, Richmond, Virginia*

Excellent Books for Early and Eager Readers. By Kathleen T. Isaacs. Chicago: ALA, 2016. 264 p. Paper $52 (ISBN: 0-8389-1344-4).

Excellent Books for Early and Eager Readers is a standout readers' advisory tool for all children's librarians. Every children's librarian struggles with placing the right book in the

hands of the early and eager reader. In this reviewer's many years as a selector of children's literature, she has not come across a bibliography that fills a need so well.

Isaacs begins her definition of "early and eager readers" by recalling "The Book Whisper," a blogger who calls these children "underground readers" (2). In chapter 2, Isaacs discusses the criteria for what makes a good read for these readers, including various book awards presented for fiction and nonfiction books. She also discusses the parameters that were used in selecting the books in this bibliography. One chapter, focused on transitional reading, provides a list of children's favorites for the reader to explore. The remaining chapters are based mainly on the appeal of the book—type of plot, compelling characters, humor, magic, traditional tales, and historical fiction, among others. For each annotation, the author gives an interest level (that is, younger, middle, or older), the book's Lexile measure, and a genre. The entries are ethnically diverse and include both classic and current literature. A delightful and thorough description of each book, along with comments that place the book in context, will help guide the librarian in the selection for the student or child. Best of all, many sequels are included, with year of publication (unless the series is extensive, like Magic Tree House, for example), so that the librarian can hand the whole series to the eager reader. The book ends with a subject index and an exhaustive author and title index.

This book is of interest to all public and elementary school librarians, as well as parents, grandparents, and caregivers of early and eager readers. Librarians should shelve this must-have book in ready reference so it is easy to grab when parents come in looking for age-appropriate books for young children on a higher reading level.—*Jenny Foster Stenis, Readers' Services Coordinator, Pioneer Library System, Norman, Oklahoma*

Five Steps of Outcome-Based Planning and Evaluation for Public Libraries. By Melissa Gross, Cindy Mediavilla, and Virginia A. Walter. Chicago: ALA, 2016. 120 p. Paper $38.00 (ISBN: 978-0-8389-1404-5).

Most public librarians have pondered how to better report our library's worth and value to our varied constituents, ranging from patrons to library boards to municipal councils, and many of us have wondered how effective some of our programming endeavors actually are. Librarians are good storytellers, and this new book—*Five Steps of Outcome-Based Planning and Evaluation for Public Libraries*—affirms our collective talent while nudging public librarians to "step up our game."

Going beyond the "how we did it well at our library" approach, the authors provide a framework for planning and assessment in clear and concise chapters. To move beyond thinking solely in outputs, the authors outline a five-step approach. They clearly convey that "no matter how many books, computers or chairs a library owns, they have little value unless they are used to effect positive change in the community" (32).

The authors organize their process around the following five phases of outcome-based planning: (1) gathering information, (2) determining outcomes, (3) developing programs and services, (4) conducting evaluations, and (5) leveraging the library's role. The process is accessible and applicable to public libraries of any size. Four appendices provide ready charts and questions to assist a novice through the process.

The primary example used throughout the book is a program to help remedial students comprehend their math homework better. This case might not reflect many public libraries' experiences, but it does illustrate the authors' approach of engaging the community in ongoing conversations and recognizing the importance of intentional initiatives that create value, enhance existing services, and aid in the development of new ones. They emphasize that outcome statements must be well focused and must address a specific target population.

The authors acknowledge that library staff are "brilliant" at creating library programs but usually not as astute in measuring the impact of their programs. How can a library determine whether a program is a success? It is essential to plan evaluation methods concurrently with planning the program itself. The book emphasizes that a variety of evaluation methods should be triangulated to validate the conclusion. Effective evaluation will lead libraries to modify less effective programs or to shutter a program entirely to transfer resources to more responsive programs and services.

In sum, the authors note that "outcome-based planning and evaluation is a way for library heroes to be more effective advocates for their communities" (81)—and that is the bottom line. Public librarians who use the methods outlined in this book are likely to generate an enhanced bottom line to continue their "heroic work," removing the veil from the "best kept secret" in a community (80). Highly recommended for all public libraries.—*Lisa Powell Williams, Adult and Young Adult Services Coordinator, Moline Public Library, Moline, Illinois*

Managing Creativity: The Innovative Research Library. By Ronald C. Jantz. Chicago: ACRL, 2016. 206 p. Paper $44.00 (ISBN: 978-0-8389-8834-3).

In *Managing Creativity: The Innovative Research Library*, author Ronald Jantz succeeds by expertly weaving together empirically derived theory with public and private sector case studies to elucidate what it takes for academic libraries to remain relevant via innovative leadership. Not only has Jantz conducted original, data-driven research to support his arguments, he has also gone a step further and described for readers where they—as present or future library leaders—might begin looking for programs and projects to kick-start organizational innovation.

Jantz pinpoints his target reader ("academic library leaders, future leaders, managers, and administrators") and begins building the case that a top-down combination of

integrated leadership, communicated vision, and dedicated research and development will *jolt* and bolster the role of research libraries, transforming them from "incremental" innovators on campus to agile service providers (xiv). Caution is natural, Jantz argues in part two (of three), especially for those leaders of extended tenure facing today's economic turmoil. Nevertheless, an *exploitative* focus, which favors the refinement of existing services, shouldn't completely crowd out *explorative* activity, whereby smaller units pursue more innovative (albeit unproven) service strategies and implementations.

The private tech sector, with its myriad breakthroughs (such as robotics and open source software), should be viewed as a particularly fertile source for explorative inspiration, claims Jantz. Because potential innovators are able to operate within a deliberately conceived and executed culture of creativity, and because quantitative tools for tracking effectiveness are available (as is the case in the corporate world), today's library leaders can readily establish the "conditions to support innovation" (162) and avoid the pitfalls of institutionalized stagnancy.

Why risk decentralizing traditionally bureaucratic organizations while promoting a looser culture for some employees? If "singular leaders" don't work with an integrated leadership team to foster technology-oriented innovation, Jantz argues, the academic library may cease to function as the crossroads of the university and find itself relegated to a merely symbolic role. The interdisciplinary source material leading Jantz to these conclusions is meticulously documented, and each of the twelve chapters features an extensive bibliography that—along with the body of the work itself—makes *Managing Creativity* an indispensable resource for tomorrow's effective library leader.—*Matt Cook, Emerging Technologies Librarian, University of Oklahoma Libraries, Norman, Oklahoma*

More Storytime Magic. By Kathy MacMillan and Christine Kirker; illustrations by Melanie Fitz. Chicago: ALA, 2016. 200 p. Paper $52.00 (ISBN: 978-0-8389-1368-0.)

This book offers a bounty of fresh materials for both storytime novices and veterans, including songs, flannel boards, rhymes, stories, and recommended book lists to engage the audience. Updating their 2009 *Storytime Magic*, authors MacMillan and Kirker use the same format for this volume, but with new materials. As with the earlier title, chapters have themes, such as "All About Me," "Fairy Tales and Castles," and "The Natural World." The new materials in these chapters are useful when planning storytimes. Some activities and flannel boards are tied to specific books. For example, Toni Yuly's *Early Bird* (2009, 19) is the focus of a flannel board, and an ALA web link is provided for flannel board patterns, which makes it easy to use. Song lyrics listed in the book can be sung to familiar tunes, including childhood favorites. As in the previous book, some American Sign Language is also included.

The opening chapter has been revamped from the previous book. Instead of focusing on programming for different age groups, this updated title opens with general tips for capturing and maintaining the attention of the audience and also focuses on early literacy. Although the authors acknowledge that Common Core State Standards are controversial, they explain why they include them: "The fact is that teachers, students, and parents all over the country are being affected by the implementation of these standards" (3). Songs, flannel boards, and other activities are labeled with an abbreviation for the standard they meet, which is further explained in appendix B, "Common Core State Standards for Kindergarten." These are helpful tools for identifying and communicating the educational components of a storytime. If briefly explained in a storytime, this can also help parents and caregivers know how to model these activities at home.

On page 3, this book also emphasizes "making storytimes accessible to all." Chapter 1 offers an introductory overview of some ways to make storytimes more inclusive to children with disabilities. However, it does not provide an outline for creating a specific program like a sensory storytime. The book also includes an appendix with further resources for storytime planning. This resource is highly recommended to promote early literacy and fun in storytimes.—*Robin Sofge, Alexandria Library, Duncan Branch, Alexandria, Virginia*

The Neal-Schuman Library Technology Companion: A Basic Guide for Library Staff, 5th ed. By John J. Burke. Chicago: ALA, 2016. 232 p. Paper $80.00 (ISBN: 978-0-8389-1382-6).

The aim of the *Library Technology Companion* is to be a portal to information about any kind of technology for staff or patron use that your library might need to achieve its mission. A resource of this type can be helpful in many ways: as a starting point for developing a technology plan, as a means of educating yourself about technology you are considering acquiring, as a roadmap for planning your own or your staff's continuing education, or simply as a handy reference for the questions about technology that arise from time to time. Due to the rapid pace at which technology changes, one of the first things this reviewer examined was how current this new edition is. In that regard, this book really shines. An entire chapter, new to this edition, is devoted to makerspaces. This volume also provides good coverage of emerging trends, addressing questions such as "Should we keep buying DVDs or rely on streaming services?" Readers will find answers in a chapter aptly titled "The Death of Technologies." The book concludes with an overview of technology trends to watch and suggestions about where to hang out (online) to stay informed.

Many of the people who make the technological wheels turn in our libraries every day aren't so good at explaining it to the rest of us. But that's not the case here. Burke's talent for making his subject accessible is a real asset. He provides the answers readers seek without overwhelming them with

SOURCES

unneeded information. Likewise, he engages with multiple topics rather than simply referring readers to the sources listed in the chapter bibliographies. A book described as a "companion" should serve as one-stop shopping, at least for the majority of questions that readers are likely to have.

Does Burke achieve a satisfactory balance between succinctness and depth of coverage? At less than two hundred pages, the book seems a bit skimpy. Most topics could have benefited from a fuller, lengthier treatment. For example, the chapter on social networking is barely five pages long, and one of the review questions at the end is, "Can you find an example of a social media use by a library beyond those offered in this chapter?" This reviewer's response: "Yes, Mr. Burke, I can find lots of them. Let's start with Facebook, which you didn't even mention, and which is much more prevalent in libraries than Twitter, which you barely brought up at all." The failure to capitalize on visual elements was another disappointment. Not everyone has time or the desire to read a lot of text; sidebars would have been a helpful way to organize information. Other than a few tables, the only visual elements breaking the monotony of the text are screenshots, and unfortunately, they serve no informational purpose.—*Dana M. Lucisano, Reference Librarian, Silas Bronson Library, Waterbury, Connecticut*

Putting Assessment into Action: Selected Projects from the First Cohort of the Assessment in Action Grant. Edited by Eric Ackermann. Chicago: ACRL, 2015. 228 p. Paper $52.00 (ISBN: 978-0-8389-8813-8).

Creating, implementing, and managing academic library programs can be a daunting task in itself, but how do academic librarians successfully assess the outcomes of multifaceted, long-term programs? In 2013 and 2014, ACRL began an Assessment in Action (AiA) grant program to monitor the results and outcomes of twenty-seven American and Canadian academic library programs, including programs on information literacy, student collaboration, management of technology facilities, space optimization, and linkage of student retention with research assistance. Edited by Eric Ackermann, *Putting Assessment into Action: Selected Projects from the First Cohort of the Assessment in Action Grant*, provides detailed results of these program assessments. Many other library program assessment books require a working knowledge of research design and statistics, but this well-written volume is accessible to readers without such background knowledge, enabling them to quickly and easily understand and utilize the results from these programs. Each case study contains an extensive bibliography for further reference.

This useful handbook will help academic librarians assess their own programs and, in doing so, provide the best service for their patrons—without having to become experts on research design and statistics themselves. Highly recommended.—*Larry Cooperman, University of Central Florida Libraries, Orlando, Florida*

Sources
Reference Books

Tammy J. Eschedor Voelker, Editor

Africa: An Encyclopedia of Culture and Society. Edited by Toyin Falola and Daniel Jean-Jacques. Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO, 2016. 3 vols. Acid free $294.00 (ISBN: 978-1-59884-665-2). E-book available (978-1-59884-666-9), call for pricing.

Africa: An Encyclopedia of Culture and Society was created to "challenge stereotypes and assumptions and invite the reader into the world of African Studies" (vii) by featuring entries written by over fifty scholars, experts in African Studies or related fields who "have lived in Africa or are Africans, themselves. . . . The voice of Africa's people is alive and well in these volumes" (viii). The originality and diversity of voices represented in this three-volume series is a positive and unique feature of this encyclopedia, but may not be enough to inspire acquisition, for some, in light of questions of the efficacy of these volumes as a quality reference work.

The series begins with a brief thematic and regional introduction to Africa as a continent, including a basic map and chronology, and continues with fifty-four alphabetical country entries. The editors explicitly state that their encyclopedia's "essential purpose is to offer the uninitiated a window into the cultural world of Africa" (vii), yet the language of the introduction and many of the encyclopedia entries themselves are far too dense for readers new to the material, assuming a level of familiarity with geography, history, and terminology that many readers may not have. In addition, the content of the introduction spans nearly the entire history of the continent in a mere ten pages, beginning with the Neolithic Revolution in 16000 BCE and ending with the Republic of Ghana's Declaration of Independence in 1957. Readers versed in African Studies would agree with the authors that "a complete historical background of Africa would be a work of many volumes unto itself, and well beyond the purview of these brief introductory remarks" (xi), yet may still find themselves wishing for broader and more concise contextual information.

The country entries themselves are comprehensive in scope. Each entry begins with an "Introduction" that may include "Geography," "People and Ethnicity," and "Languages," and continues with information in the following sections: "Religion," "Social Customs," "Lifestyle and Leisure," "Employment," "Gender Roles, Marriage, and Family," "Cuisine," "Dress," "Sports and Games," "Festivals and Holidays," "Music and Dance," "Visual Art," "Architecture and Housing," "Literature and Oral Traditions," and "Media." These latter categories uniquely highlight many aspects often underrepresented in other reference works about Africa, and showcase the diversity of cultural experience across the continent. Readers interested in vernacular architecture, traditional and modern art across countries, and cuisine, for example, will be rewarded with detailed information and black and white photographs, and recipes where relevant. However, the narrative style, tone, and cohesion of the information presented can vary widely across entries. Terms are not defined in the text, nor called out for definition by a glossary; subjects are not cross-indexed. References listed at the end of each

entry are also inconsistent in density and quality; suggested further reading on the topic of Algerian author Albert Camus leads the reader to an online biography created by the European Graduate School, the link to which is broken and for which a search on the larger site produced no results.

With so many other comprehensive reference works on Africa available to libraries, including Henry Louis Gates Jr. and Kwame Anthony Appiah's *Encyclopedia of Africa* (Oxford University Press 2010) or John Middleton's older benchmark title *Encyclopedia of Africa: South of the Sahara* (Scribner, 1997) this encyclopedia is recommended primarily to school or public librarians with a corresponding curricular or programmatic focus.—*Kristin J. Henrich, Reference and Instruction Librarian, University of Idaho, Moscow, Idaho*

Border Disputes: A Global Encyclopedia. Edited by Emmanuel Brunet-Jailly. Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO, 2015. 3 vols. Acid-free $294.00 (ISBN: 978-1-61069-023-2). E-book available (978-1-61069-024-9), call for pricing.

This is a three-volume work that tackles the job of giving clear, concise information on the issue of border disputes. The work is divided into three types of disputes: territorial, positional, and functional. It is edited by Emmanuel Brunet-Jailly, who studies public policy and border disputes at the University of Victoria, British Columbia and is the editor of the *Journal of Borderlands Studies* (Taylor and Francis/Routledge). Over fifty scholars from around the world contributed entries for this encyclopedia, which outlines the differentiation between geopolitical, legal, and cultural boundaries in its discussion. One of the first things the editor addresses is a recognition of the limitations of a reference work on ever-changing geopolitical turmoil; new states arise every year, so the work is described as being representational of the kinds of border disputes happening and is not in any way meant to be an exhaustive discussion of current affairs. It is also meant to discuss a very specific aspect of international affairs, and while it does address other complicated geopolitical themes at play, its main focus is clearly on that of borders. This is apparent in the entries on Israel-Jerusalem-Palestine, Israel-Lebanon, Israel-Syria, and similar. Some of the most complex political situations have the shortest entries, likely for several reasons; they are ongoing, some of the contestations fall outside the scope of border disputes, and it could probably be more thoroughly addressed in a more comprehensive work on the topic suggested in the further readings recommendations.

The editor suggests the audience for these volumes includes high school students and undergraduates. While the encyclopedia does not go into as much depth on complex foreign policy concepts as some others—for example, *Border and Territorial Disputes*, edited by Alan Day (Gale 1982), it does give a clear, concise history of the dispute at hand as well as its implications and the most recent status of the events. It also appears to be one of the most comprehensive and current attempts to represent as many relevant border

disputes in one work, and is a very welcome update in the field of international relations. Suggestions for further reading are included at the end of every entry for those who wish to investigate further. The final volume includes a glossary and excerpts from selected primary documents. The organization of entries into three clear thematic volumes is a helpful effort to streamline incredibly complex geopolitical issues into researchable entry points for newer undergraduates who are just beginning to delve into research, as it makes it very easy to browse for topics based on region or type of dispute. The editor opens each volume with a brief discussion of why these disputes are categorized as they are, which gives additional context to the political issues being addressed.

There don't seem to be many comparable reference works on this specific element of geopolitics. The aforementioned *Border and Territorial Disputes* edited by Alan Day covers this area, but over thirty years after its publication date it is missing many of the most important examples of border disputes. It is true that this information will become quickly outdated, but it provides a crucial first stepping stone in exploring territory and border issues within international relations. As there is no end in sight for the occurrence of these types of disputes in the world, *Border Disputes: A Global Encyclopedia* would be a valuable addition to an academic library.—*Amanda Babirad, Research and Education Librarian, Sojourner Truth Library, SUNY New Paltz, New Paltz, New York*

The Central Intelligence Agency: An Encyclopedia of Covert Ops, Intelligence Gathering, and Spies. Edited by Jan Goldman. Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO, 2016. 2 vols. Acid free $189.00 (ISBN: 978-1-61069-091-1). E-book available (978-1-61069-092-8), call for pricing.

This two-volume reference set offers a well-rounded look at the CIA from its inception to the present. As is made clear in the introduction, it is intended to be much more than a straightforward history of the CIA as an organization, but rather a compendium covering the broader spectrum of related topics. It would appear to live up to this claim. It does provide a detailed timeline chronicling the historical highlights, but moves right into over two hundred individual entries comprised of important events (i.e., operations, projects, cases, etc.), key players and names, and other relevant terms (e.g., "Contras," "Handwriting Analysis," "Torture"). Entries are substantial, too, ranging on average between five and ten paragraphs, with many reaching the teens, peppered with black and white images throughout. Naturally, I compared a handful of entries with their Wikipedia counterparts, and can say with confidence that there is no comparison—that is, this encyclopedia wins. (As we all know, this is not always the case.) Included are the usual cross-referenced entries and "Further Reading" suggestions, but what I find especially helpful is the referencing of associated primary documents.

This leads us to volume 2. Here, ninety-eight primary documents are organized chronologically, starting in the 1940s and ending with the 2014 Senate Select Committee

on Intelligence's "Committee Study of the Central Intelligence Agency's Detention and Interrogation Program." I did some sleuthing and not surprisingly, many (probably most or all) of the documents are freely available online at cia. gov, dni.gov, senate.gov, etc. But, as I often say, just because something is online does not mean a researcher will come across it, or even be aware of its existence. Having these documents coupled with the encyclopedia entries makes for a convenient starting point and solid base for a broad range of CIA-related topics.

To my knowledge, the *Encyclopedia of the Central Intelligence Agency* (Facts on File 2003) is the only other encyclopedic volume primarily devoted to the CIA. Aside from being thirteen years out of date, its entries are noticeably skimpier, many being simple definitions. Another comparable reference is *Spies, Wiretaps, and Secret Operations: An Encyclopedia of American Espionage* (ABC-CLIO 2010). For a wider look at everything "American espionage," especially for pre-CIA operations (dating back to colonial times), this title would be worth checking out.

Back to the title at hand. It definitely has something to offer both students (high school through undergraduates) and the general public. If your library is short on CIA-related materials, especially those more general in nature, this set would be a worthwhile addition.—*Todd J. Wiebe, Head of Research and Instruction, Van Wylen Library, Hope College, Holland, Michigan*

Clothing and Fashion: American Fashion from Head to Toe. Edited by José Blanco F. Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO, 2016. 4 vols. Acid free $415.00 (ISBN: 978-1-61069-309-7). E-book available (978-1-61069-310-3), call for pricing.

Clothing and Fashion: American Fashion from Head to Toe is a comprehensive, four-volume, encyclopedic reference guide with more than eight hundred entries that cover American fashions and style from the year 1600 to present day. Organized chronologically as a whole, each volume covers specific eras and provides a historical overview of the eras included.

This work is intended as a resource for both students and scholars interested in the history of clothing in America. The entries are thoughtful and summarize the significance and uses of the garments as well as the textiles used in their production. The treatment is expansive enough that researchers from a multitude of disciplines will find this resource valuable, but it contains enough introductory information to be accessible for beginners in the field. An entry that exemplifies this is "African American Clothing, 1715–1785," because it handles the topic of slavery objectively and manages to focus the entry on how clothing impacted the lives of slaves and served as another means of control over them. This is accomplished using newspaper notices for runaway slaves from this time period, which provide detailed descriptions of both the slave's person and clothing. Providing these primaries resources as evidence enriches the entries and provides a

much needed connection to the lives of the individuals who wore the garments in question.

Although American fashion eras have been covered many times in reference resources, this edition sets itself apart with the way it connects clothing to the daily lives of Americans, major historical events, and historical figures. From the impact of the American Revolution on textiles to David Bowie's influence on fashion and culture, the authors make sure to hit the major influences and show their impact. If there is one area that this resource suffers, it is in the shortage of illustrations. This set has four volumes and almost two thousand pages, but it only has a handful of illustrations in each volume. Many people know what a bustle looks like, but an entry on something as obscure as the Steinkirk neck cloth would have benefitted from an accompanying image or illustration. This resource has more strengths than weaknesses, and selection should be based on your patrons and budgetary constraints.

Overall, this work is an easy-to-use reference resource that provides an interesting historical overview with an objective tone. Given the price of the item, I would recommend this work only for university and research libraries supporting relevant majors.—*Marissa Ellermann, Head of Circulation Services Librarian, Morris Library, Southern Illinois University Carbondale, Carbondale, Illinois*

Crimes of the Centuries: Notorious Crimes, Criminals, and Criminal Trials in American History. Edited by Steven Chermak and Frankie Y. Bailey. Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO, 2016. 3 vols. Acid free $310.00 (ISBN 978-1-61069-593-0). E-book available (9781-61069-594-7), call for pricing.

This three-volume set's biggest strength is its unique focus. While many encyclopedias of crime exist, focusing on types of criminals, locations of crimes, and types of punishments, I have yet to experience a set that focuses on the notoriety of the crimes it discusses. The introduction details the philosophy employed by the editors in choosing the content for this set, noting that they sought crimes that are notorious in the sense of uniqueness, newsworthiness, and timeliness to other political, social, or cultural happenings. A quick search of Amazon confirmed my suspicion that scholarly reference work on these types of crimes has been a niche in the literature that has remained, until recently, largely unfilled.

The set is structured in such a way that it proves quick and easy to utilize. It includes a chronology spanning from 1692 to 2015 that also includes important political, cultural, and social events to help students situate crimes within their historical context. A useful feature, particularly for students unaccustomed to using multivolume reference works, is a full table of contents included in every volume. Another feature that will prove useful for students just beginning research is the "Guide to Related Topics." Entries are grouped by topics such as: bank robbers, crime and sports, hate crimes, labor

relations, unsolved cases, and many others. This allows for quick navigation for students beginning with a topic and desiring to narrow to specific crimes. Further reading suggestions and a sizeable bibliography will also prove useful for further research. Volume 3 includes some fascinating primary documents including newspaper accounts from the time period of the crime, arrest warrants, testimonies, legal opinions, and excerpts from cases.

The credentials of the editors proved impeccable and indicative of scholarly work. However, some entries in the list of contributors gave me pause. While the list is populated with many holders of advanced degrees and relevant first-hand field experience, there were multiple contributors who were currently completing undergraduate or secondary education. As a result of this, I recommend this set for use by undergraduates, and in particular, underclassmen. It is an excellent starting point for research and will undoubtedly prove useful and interesting, but I would not recommend it as a stand-alone resource. This set belongs in any institution with undergraduate programs in the field of criminal justice, and in libraries serving the public or undergraduate students. It could be found wanting for scholarly authority in settings such as graduate or law schools.—*Anita J. Slack, Reference and Instruction Librarian, Ursuline College, Pepper Pike, Ohio*

The Early Republic: Documents Decoded. By John R. Vile. Documents Decoded. Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO, 2016. 309 p. Acid free $81.00 (ISBN: 978-1-4408-4346-4).

This is the newest release in ABC-CLIO's Documents Decoded series, a range of works devoted to collecting noteworthy primary resources. The subjects covered in the series are wide-ranging and include Women's Rights, Presidential Power, the Abolitionist Movement, and the Death Penalty. What makes Documents Decoded books stand out among the plethora of primary resource collections available is that expert commentary and analysis are presented literally alongside the text of seminal primary resources. That is, scholarly observation and historical background annotations are actually printed in the margins of the primary resource text. This is a unique approach that seems more accessible and user-friendly than traditional endnotes, footnotes, or isolated explanations.

The "Early Republic" is defined here as quite simply the first six US presidents. The volume's sources are ordered chronologically and range from 1789 (Washington's Inaugural Address) to 1828 (a South Carolina protest of newly enacted federal tariffs that evince the first stirrings of Southern secession). ABC-CLIO bills the Documents Decoded series as leading users "on a hunt for new secrets through an expertly curated selection of primary resources" (iii). Though the intimation that readers will be the first to discover something previously unknown here seems a bit exaggerated, it is true that much of the material selected in *The Early Republic* is lesser known. While some famous documents are

included, such as the Louisiana Purchase and the Missouri Compromise, other unknown gems like the Declaration of War against the Barbary Pirates from 1802 and 1819's Adams-Onis Treaty, or "His Catholic Majesty Cedes East and West Florida," are on display as well. Even well-known sources like The Star-Spangled Banner can yield surprises. While the original song included here is much longer than the familiar verse sung before American sporting events, the anthem is also the original source of the "In God We Trust" motto that still adorns our currency.

Special features at the end of the volume include a "Timeline of Events" and a six-page list of "Further Reading." The latter is organized by individual personages (Washington, Adams, Jefferson, etc.) rather than by subject, and there are no "see also" references, making further pursuit of a subject here a bit onerous for users.

Overall, the presentation of the material as marginal annotations is appealing and easy to follow. Conversely, of course, the "marginalia" approach is unavoidably a bit shallow. However, the wide range and interesting choice of the primary resources included here makes up for the lack of analytical depth. These two unique features—both the selection and presentation of the material—make this particular source stand out. Recognizing that this should only be considered a starting point for any serious research, *The Early Republic* is appropriate for both high school and college libraries.—*Mike Tosko, Subject Librarian, The University of Akron, Akron, Ohio*

Folk Heroes and Heroines around the World, 2nd ed. Edited by Graham Seal and Kim Kennedy White. Santa Barbara, CA: Greenwood, 2016. 411 p. Acid free $89.00 (ISBN: 978-1-4408-3860-6). Ebook available (978-1-4408-3861-3), call for pricing.

It seems like many recent books and movies are based either on mythic characters or folk heroes. With all the current interest in folk heroes and heroines this book should useful in identifying specific heroes and hero types.

The book begins with a meaty introductory overview of folk heroes and heroines, as well as excellent information on the scholarship on folklore, archetypes, and heroic types. The editors state that the purpose of this work is to present heroism as it exists in folklore. Subjects, real or fictional, were selected for inclusion because they were celebrated in one of the authenticated folklore traditions. The editors chose not to include gods, heroes of literary epics, sport heroes, celebrities, or cultural icons.

For the ease of the user, the book consists of two main sections: the first section has entries on major folk hero types and themes (for example, Beauty and the Beast, Dragon-Slayers, Tricksters, and Outlaws) and the second section provides information about heroes and heroines by continent. Each section is arranged alphabetically and entries vary in length from one to six columns. There are "see also" references and two to six additional reading suggestions for each entry.

Students in high school and college and general readers will find enough information in each entry to satisfy their curiosity. The geographical arrangement of the second section is particularly helpful for users who want to develop an understanding of the folk heroes and heroines from a specific region. A pronunciation guide would have been helpful for unfamiliar names. Special features include several indexes: an alphabetical index which indicates the continent, an index of heroic types, and the general index. There are a few black and white illustrations, and a few highlighted information text boxes.

Although there are books which provide information on folktales and specific types of tales, there is really nothing in print at this price that has the access points of this work. Comparing this current edition to the previous *Encyclopedia of Folk Heroes* (ABC-CLIO 2001) it appears that some articles like the one on John Chapman have been reprinted, although the entry's further reading list has been updated. What is different is the arrangement and the attempt to include more heroines in this edition. The geographical arrangement of the second section is helpful. If you need a quick, ready reference answer for a specific hero, you might try www .pantheon.org/areas/heroes/articles.html for Encyclopedia Mythica.—*Dona J. Helmer, Librarian, Anchorage School District, College Gate Library*

Folktales and Fairy Tales: Traditions and Texts from Around the World. Edited by Anne E. Duggan, Donald Haase, and Helen Callow. Santa Barbara, CA: Greenwood, 2016. 4 vols. Acid free $415.00 (ISBN: 978-1-61069-253-3). Ebook available (978-1-61069-254-0), call for pricing.

Named a Choice "Outstanding Title" in 2008, *The Greenwood Encyclopedia of Folktales and Fairy Tales* has been expanded by the current editors (Anne E. Duggan, Donald Haase, and Helen Callow, Wayne State University) for this equally outstanding second edition. The present work includes approximately one hundred additional entries in volumes 1–3, but the real value of this new edition is a fourth anthology volume that brings together historical overviews and analyses of the folktale and fairy-tale genres from a global perspective.

The anthology complements the entries in the other volumes by providing full-text samplings of important short stories and excerpts of longer tales to give readers the necessary context for comprehending the tradition in which the story falls. For example, the selection of tales in the "Hags, Ogresses, and Fairies" section illuminates the depiction of powerful female characters and their often complex role in the fairy and folk tale tradition, whether for good or for evil. The influence of folk and fairy tales in popular culture is also well covered. The entries are alphabetically arranged with bolded headings covering genres, motifs, characters, national traditions, authors, and a range of other topics. All are written by an international team of subject specialists. An extensive bibliography in volume 4

provides an appropriate array of resources for both scholars and nonspecialist users pursuing further research in this area. The sparse selection of illustrations is somewhat disappointing, but in no way mars the overall richness of the collection. Its breadth, scope, and multicultural perspective make *Folktales and Fairy Tales: Traditions and Texts from Around the World* a leading contender for the definitive reference work in the discipline. Recommended for academic and public libraries.—*Robin Imhof, Humanities Librarian, University of the Pacific, Stockton, California*

The Gilded Age and Progressive Era: A Historical Exploration of Literature. By Wendy Martin and Cecelia Tichi. Historical Explorations of Literature. Santa Barbara, CA: Greenwood, 2016. Acid free $61.00 (ISBN: 978-1-6106-9763-7).

One of the latest volumes in ABC-CLIO/Greenwood's "Historical Explorations of Literature" series, *The Gilded Age and Progressive Era* is a useful and interesting introduction to framing key literary works of this time period in their historical context. Each volume in the series presents a discussion of four or five representative works of a historical era, such as the Harlem Renaissance, the Chicano Movement, the Jazz Age, and the Civil War Era. Each era is accompanied by a historical overview, synopsis and historical context for each work, primary source document excerpts, and extensive bibliographies for further reading.

This series is similar in intent to the "Literature in Context" series from Cambridge University Press, but while the latter's volumes focus on placing an individual author within a social, intellectual, and historical framework, "Historical Explorations of Literature" chooses to concentrate on four or five representative works of the time period, demonstrating how each illustrates a key contemporary concern or trend. For example, Mark Twain's *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court* illustrates the era's rise of industrial technology and social inequality. Charlotte Perkins Gilman's "The Yellow Wallpaper" is explored in the context of women's health and equality issues.

With its emphasis on the integration of literature and social studies curricular standards, *The Gilded Age and Progressive Era* is perhaps most useful to high school teachers and early undergraduate literature instructors. The way the material is presented through "historical explorations" of various topics lends itself well to the formation of lesson plans. Although the reader might wish for the inclusion of more visual material, such as contemporary paintings and photographs, the primary source excerpts offer a depth of context missing from other such handbooks. Librarians should also find this well-researched book, along with others in the series, a valuable source of ideas for collection development, displays, and information literacy projects.—*Jennifer A. Bartlett, Head of Reference Services, University of Kentucky, Lexington, Kentucky*

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How They Lived: An Annotated Tour of Daily Life through History in Primary Sources. By James Ciment. Santa Barbara, CA: Greenwood, 2016. 2 vols. Acid free $205.00 (ISBN: 9788-1-61069-895-5). Ebook available (978-1-61069-896-2), call for pricing.

How They Lived: An Annotated Tour of Daily Life through History in Primary Sources is an excellent two-volume set to start upper elementary, middle-grade, and even early high school students on the path to discovering the excitement and value of primary sources. Ciment, an independent scholar, has crafted a tool that is fairly unique in the field: introducing younger researchers to primary sources from ancient times to the present day. *How They Lived* uses both objects and documents, which will grab the interest of younger students.

Entries are arranged chronologically, with the first entry a photo of Australian cave paintings from around 40000 BCE. Each entry opens with an image of the artifact and its provenance on the left, followed by interpretations on the next page. These begin with "What You Need to Know," providing background information and a description, often including additional information on the maker or author and placing it in time and space. The second box is "A Closer Look," which establishes a wider context, for instance describing how a mortar and pestle reflect the growth of agrarian societies and the development of agriculture, as well as human brain evolution. At the bottom of each pair of pages is a time line, indicating the time period of the subject under discussion.

The first volume covers sources from the ancient and medieval world, with the second volume beginning with 1500 CE. In addition to photographs, one-page documents lead readers to discover, among a host of other topics, how ancient Romans felt about being stood up for dinner (Pliny the Younger was not pleased), how estates were managed in England in 1280 CE, and how St. Petersburg, Russia, was constructed in 1703. The original sources are cited, allowing readers to locate the entire document. The index is extensive and very detailed. Egypt alone covers almost ten inches of column space and nearly an entire page is devoted to England.

Other titles on primary sources for the juvenile audience do exist, of course, but they lack the breadth and scope of this work. Most other works cover a specific time or topic, such as the Holocaust, the reign of Elizabeth I, or a region. *How They Lived* also notably devotes significant coverage to non-Western civilizations.

Teachers and librarians or media specialists could supplement *How They Lived* with websites from various museums and archives, such as the Library of Congress and the British Museum. The British Museum, for example, has a curriculum section which features "Teaching History with 100 objects" (www.teachinghistory100.org), which would work nicely with this title. This kind of pairing would enhance most lessons and assignments.

ABC-CLIO/Greenwood have other titles in the Daily Life through History series, such as Gregory Aldrete's *Daily Life in the Roman City* (Greenwood 2004), and Claudia Durst Johnson's *Daily Life in Colonial New England* (Greenwood 2002), but these cover specific times or events and only a very few are aimed at younger researchers.

This title is highly recommended for public libraries, school media centers, and university collections, where it would make a good starting point for undergraduates and non-history majors, as well as collections focused on teacher training.—*Carla Wilson Buss, Curriculum Materials and Education Librarian, University of Georgia Libraries, Athens, Georgia*

Imperialism and Expansionism in American History: A Social, Political, and Cultural Encyclopedia and Document Collection. Edited by Chris J. Magoc and David Bernstein. Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO, 2016. 4 vols. Acid free $415.00 (ISBN 978-1-61069-429-2). E-Book available (978-1-61069-430-8), call for pricing.

From the genesis of the concept of manifest destiny in the 1840s, through the attainment of statehood for Alaska and Hawaii in 1959, and up to the present day as the world's lone superpower, the locomotive that is our nation has barreled down the twin rails of physical growth and world influence. Powerful, but not omnipotent, America has also learned some hard lessons in playing the role of global policeman. As the editors state in their preface, this work "was conceived partly in response to increased attention to the costs and consequences of American interventionist policies and the nation's position as the world's dominant military force" (xvii). This four-volume set also fills a gap in the reference literature regarding the territorial expansion of the United States, as virtually nothing else has heretofore been published on this specific topic.

Contents are broadly arranged chronologically, from the section entitled "Seven Years' War to the Annexation of Hawai'i" beginning volume 1, up through "The Lone Superpower, 1990–2014," which concludes volume 4. Within each section, representing discrete historical periods of expansion and influence, topics appear in standard alphabetical order. The reader will find biographical sketches of major actors (Ottawa Chief Pontiac, President Andrew Jackson); statements of principle (Monroe Doctrine); wars and rebellions (Spanish-American/Philippine-American Wars); concepts (Dollar Diplomacy, Good Neighbor Policy); legislation (McKinley Tariff Act of 1890); events (Iran-Contra Scandal [1985–1987]); and even discussions concerning aspects of so-called cultural imperialism, such as the influence that American music, movies, and mass media have on foreign populations. The entries are signed by their respective writers and conclude with "see also" cross-references and a short further reading list of pertinent sources. Additionally, each section opens with a three- to four-page narrative historical overview that helps to place the topics of the individual articles into their proper context. Wrapping up each section is a representative sampling of primary documents, such as letters, speeches, essays, andphe like, which, written in the

language of their own time, provide additional insight into the motivations and thought processes of those who "make" history. All four volumes are well illustrated with black-and-white photographs, maps, and historical prints. Special features include chronologies, a glossary, a smattering of sidebars, and a comprehensive bibliography.

The editors are well versed in their field of endeavor. David Bernstein is a visiting professor of history at Denison University in Granville, Ohio. He received his PhD in history from the University of Wisconsin–Madison. Chris J. Magoc is Professor of History at Mercyhurst University in Erie, Pennsylvania, where he teaches courses in American history and directs the Mercyhurst public history program. Between them, they have numerous publications to their credit. As for the contributors, they consist of the standard academic types and the seemingly ubiquitous "independent scholars."

As alluded to earlier, this work appears to be unique in that the only other reference set found concerning the history of American territorial expansion is James A. Crutchfield's two-volume *The Settlement of America: An Encyclopedia of Westward Expansion from Jamestown to the Closing of the Frontier* (M. E. Sharpe, 2011). However, as the title implies, that work only covers the continental United States, whereas the present set under review is worldwide in scope. Aside from this, *Imperialism and Expansionism* is thoroughly researched, engagingly written, and very well documented. One would be hard pressed to find a relevant topic that has not been addressed by one of the 650+ articles or touched upon by the numerous excerpted texts. In short, this is an outstanding reference set on an important, though sadly neglected, aspect of American history. Therefore, this set is highly recommended for purchase by all public and academic libraries.—*Michael F. Bemis, Independent Reference Book Reviewer*

Latinos and Criminal Justice: An Encyclopedia. Edited by José Luis Morín. Santa Barbara, CA: Greenwood, 2016. 506 p. Acid free $100 (ISBN: 978-0-313-35660-5). E-book available (978-0-313-35661-2), call for pricing.

This new reference work brings together a wealth of information from more than thirty scholars hitherto available only in a widely scattered array of academic literature, journalism, and government reports dealing with various aspects of the intersection of Latina/o peoples and the US criminal justice system. In the editor's introduction, José Luis Morín states the need to fill this information void. While called "an encyclopedia," this work is less a traditional A-Z reference source and more a collection of themed essays that thoroughly explore various subjects reflecting the most current research and analysis of issues that encompass scholarship in law, political science, ethnic and gender studies, as well as criminology and sociology. While the book includes an A-Z listing, in many cases the most thorough treatment of a given term or topic is provided in one or more of the nine in-depth essays at the beginning of the book. Cross-references from the A-Z section lead the reader to these essays, all of

which provide extensive source bibliographies for the serious researcher. The thematic essays, for example—"Policing and Latina/o Communities," "Incarceration and Latina/os in the United States," "The U.S. War on Drugs and Latina/o Communities," "Crime and the U.S.-Mexican Border"—are based on historic and current data sources and provide thoughtful, readable and critical overviews of complex topics. However, these characteristics also make the work less of a "look-it-up" ready reference tool—it is not the place to find fast facts or statistics.

Other reference works in law and criminal justice may mention Latina/os, Hispanics, or other related ethnic groups, but within the context of other topics. For example, Joshua Dressler's *Encyclopedia of Crime and Justice* (Macmillan Reference USA, 2002) is more of a technical treatment of the components of the criminal justice system (police, courts, jails, prisons) and is in need of updating. Volume 2 of *The Encyclopedia of Contemporary American Social Issues*, edited by Michael Shally-Jensen, (ABC-CLIO 2010) covers Criminal Justice in depth and includes relevant information but none of its articles are focused specifically on Latina/o communities. John Hartwell Moore's *Encyclopedia of Race and Racism* (Macmillan Reference USA 2009) includes articles on Latina/o and Hispanic peoples, but is focused on broader anthropological, sociological theories of race and racism rather than on concrete aspects of the criminal justice system in the United States. The unique focus, coverage, and currency of *Latinos and Criminal Justice: An Encyclopedia* make this a valuable addition to the scholarly and reference literature.

I recommend the new *Latinos and Criminal Justice* to all university and college libraries and to larger public libraries serving the growing population of Latina/os in all regions of the United States.—*Molly Molloy, Border and Latin American Specialist, New Mexico State University, Las Cruces, New Mexico*

Mental Health and Mental Disorders: An Encyclopedia of Conditions, Treatments, and Well-Being. Edited by Len Sperry. Santa Barbara, CA: Greenwood, 2016. 3 vols. Acid free $320.00 (ISBN: 978-1-4408-0382-6). Ebook available (978-1-4408-0383-3), call for pricing.

This three-volume set includes 875 entries focused on six broad areas: mental disorders and conditions, treatment, tests and assessment methods, common psychological terms and concepts, individuals and organizations, and popular and classic books and movies. It includes a wide variety of entries such as "Addiction," "Jeffrey Dahmer," "Hip-Hop Music," "Carl Jung," "*One Flew over the Cuckoo's Nest*," "Support Groups," "Transgender," the "Wechsler Adult Intelligence Scale (WAIS)," and "Xanax."

"Guide to Related Topics" arranges the entries for improved searching by topics such as "Books, Movies, Music, Internet, and Popular Culture," "Concepts," "Disorders," "Drugs, Natural Remedies, and Other Substances," "Legislation and Legal Issues," "Mental Health Professionals, Positions, and Professional Topics," "Organizations," "People,"

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"Social Issues," "Tests, Experiments, and Classifications," and "Treatment."

The section on classic books and movies seems to be a weakness. Each entry includes a brief synopsis of the work, and some entries include a section titled "Psychological Influence" that is often not related to psychology at all. For example, the "Psychological Influence" entry for *Ferris Bueller's Day Off* includes information that the movie was successful, a classic teen movie, grossed over $70 million, and has an 84 percent rating on Rotten Tomatoes, which is interesting but not related to mental health or psychological influence. At the bottom of the entry we get closer with a mention of "see also: Depression in youth;" however, there is no mention of depression in the synopsis of the film other than a brief mention that Ferris is "unhappy." In an entry for the film *Risky Business*, only a synopsis of the movie is included, with no mention of how this film relates to mental health and why it was chosen to be included in this encyclopedia.

The Recommended Resources section at the end of volume 3 provides readers with information on additional resources for a more complete understanding of the topics discussed in the encyclopedia.

Similar works include the *Encyclopedia of Mental Health*, 2nd ed. (Academic Press 2015) edited by Howard S. Friedman. However, Friedman's work is much longer at two thousand pages and more expensive at nearly $1,300 for the Kindle version and more than $1,300 for the hardcover version on Amazon. In addition, the *Gale Encyclopedia of Mental Health*, 3rd ed., edited by Kristin Key (Gale 2012), includes five hundred topics. Recommended for academic libraries and public libraries.—*Rachael Elrod, Head, Education Library, University of Florida, Gainesville, Flordia*

Modern China. By Xiaobing Li. Understanding Modern Nations. Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO, 2015. 421 p. Acid free $89.00 (ISBN: 978-1-61069-625-8). E-book available (978-1-61069-626-5), call for pricing.

Are you still adding country studies to your print reference collection? If so, you might be interested in the Understanding Modern Nations series published by ABC-CLIO. Along with *Modern China*, ABC-CLIO released *Modern Spain* during 2015. Forthcoming titles will cover Brazil, Mexico, India, Japan, and South Africa. Why these particular countries? It appears that the publisher is pitching titles that they believe will be responsive to the needs of high school seniors and college undergraduates. If you have to write a paper on China, where do you begin your research? Print sources such as *Modern China* can be extremely helpful as a way to scope out your topic, picking up key words which can then make database searching more fruitful.

It is a well-organized subject encyclopedia with thorough coverage of the social sciences and humanities. There is also limited coverage of sports and popular culture. In terms of content and tone, it is comparable to the *CQ Researcher* or *World Book*. Most entries are about two pages in length, with

a list of suggested reading at the end of each entry. The appendices are typical of what you would expect to find in any country study, except that the one called "a day in the life" is kind of unique. Here, you get fictionalized mini-biographies of Chinese people, including factory workers, students, and housewives.

Although high school students will probably be the biggest users of *Modern China*, they are by no means the only people who could benefit from it. Think of your local business community: what about trade delegations planning to visit China? Do you carry Chinese language instruction materials? If so, these patrons might wish to read up on the culture. Do you purchase foreign-language books or English translations of Chinese authors? You can find some information here that would aid in collection development.

Like all country studies in print, this book has a limited shelf life. How long can anything with the word "modern" in the title be considered as such? Nevertheless, it is a great starting point for most reference inquiries on China and is recommended for high school and public libraries.—*Dana M. Lucisano, Reference Librarian, Silas Bronson Library, Waterbury, Connecticut*

Native American Almanac: More than 50,000 Years of the Cultures and Histories of Indigenous Peoples. By Yvonne Wakim Dennis, Arlene Hirschfelder, and Shannon R. Flynn. Canton, MI: Visible Ink Pr., 2016. 656 p. $24.95 (ISBN: 978-1-57859-507-5). E-book available (978-1-57859-608-9), call for pricing.

The authors emphasize early what *Native American Almanac* is *not*: an almanac, an encyclopedia, nor a scholarly work, among other things. It is described as a well-researched "historical overview of Native communities in what is now the United States" (ix). Despite the title, it is heavily focused on the post-contact period. The main arrangement is by geographical region, with an overview chapter and one discussing urban settings. Each chapter is introduced by a regional history, followed by discussion of tribes, their histories, and other information. Brief biographies follow, from one paragraph to a page in length. Appendixes are focused on indigenous people of North America outside of the United States, and special topics, mainly lists. The biographies vary in content but many are intriguing, inspiring, or tragic. They range from widely known individuals, such as Jim Thorpe, to "local heroes" (x) from the 1600s to the present.

Unfortunately, any researcher seeking more information is largely on his or her own. Further reading is provided, but no direct citations. I see this as a shortcoming. Especially when challenging commonly held beliefs, such as the sale of Manhattan to the Dutch (4), supporting one's case through documentation aids credibility. The lack of direct citations makes it challenging to evaluate the assertions and to pursue the topic further.

The choice in the *Almanac* of terms like "Doctrine of Discovery (Destruction)" (2) caused me some confusion

regarding what was standard language. When I encountered "Indian Intercourse Act of 1790" and "Indian Nonintercourse Act of 1790" on page 13, I wasn't sure whether there were two acts, a typographical error, or a message was intended.

Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz's *An Indigenous People's History of the United States* (Beacon 2014) is not written as a reference work, but comparison to the *Native American Almanac* is instructive. Dunbar-Ortiz does not shy away from laden language such as "genocide;" however, she meticulously cites her sources. That and her detailed arguments make it easy to evaluate her interpretations and reasoning in a way not feasible with the *Almanac*. Names are indexed under the familiar and the indigenous terms, either parenthetically or using cross references, while the *Almanac* indexes under current nomenclature only, sometimes including the indigenous name parenthetically.

The Oxford Handbook of American Indian History edited by Fredrick E. Hoxie (Oxford 2016) at $150 is substantially more expensive for a similar sized work. I only examined the digital edition, but more durability would be anticipated in hardcover than the paperbound *Almanac*. Hoxie's volume overtly focuses on the period since European contact. Three sections address "Major Chapters in the . . . Past," "Regional and Tribal Histories," and "Big Themes." Although there is a stated intention of correcting erroneous information and misconceptions, it has a less confrontational tone than the *Almanac*. Citation is thorough and direct, with reference lists in each chapter. Indexing is extensive, but only mainstream names are used. Hoxie and the *Almanac* make no distinction in the index between a major and minor reference, unlike Dunbar-Ortiz. The *Handbook*'s focus is the historical narrative, so biographical information is less prominent. Although in segments, the chapters are substantial and less readily accessed in bite-sized pieces than the *Almanac*. For an audience interested in depth and a scholarly approach, this would likely be the more helpful work.

With the emphasis on brevity and readability, this volume would be most useful in lower level undergraduate and high school settings. Lack of careful editing, weakness in indexing, and the absence of direct citations detract from its benefit to novice researchers.—*Lisa Euster, Reference Librarian, Seattle, Washington*

Youth Cultures in America. Edited by Simon J. Bronner and Cindy Dell Clark. Santa Barbara, CA: Greenwood, 2016. 2 vols. Acid free $189.00 (ISBN: 978-1-4408-3391-5). E-book available (978-1-4408-3392-2), call for pricing.

Editors Bronner and Clark collected more than 160 entries in order to compile *Youth Cultures in America*. The entries in this two-volume set are organized alphabetically and typically range in length from two to six pages. Due to the alphabetical rather than conceptual arrangement, the front matter of each volume includes a "Topic Finder" to assist in navigating the set. In the "Introduction," the editors provide details for the broad selection of entries that range in scope from very general ("animals") to extremely specific ("furry fandom"). The editors explain that they "have presented an array of contemporary groups, expressive forms, locations, and social movements and issues that cast youth cultures into relief" (xvii), including entries related to: body and health, music and dance, sports and games, generational classifications, social movements, and problems of youth. Although the majority of entries are concerned with the shared interests of youth, the length of individual entries are not necessarily consistent with their significance to youth culture. For example, Bronner's interest and research about folklore is evident from the nearly ten-page entry about the topic, while the entry on "Body Image" spans only two pages. Additional features in volume 2 include the following sections: "Selected Bibliography and Websites," "Contributors" with each author's academic affiliation listed, and an "Index."

In specific entries, there appears to be a disconnect between the photo illustration and the content of the entry, as well as a disconnect between some of the content and the "see also" references. For example, in the entry for "vegetarians and vegans" there is not a cross-reference to "straight edge and hardcore" or "punk and anarcho-punk," even though this is a known association. What makes this particularly curious is the fact that the image associated with the entry for "vegetarians and vegans" is a photo of a young man's tattooed legs: one leg has the word "vegan" tattooed on it and the other has "xxx" for straight edge. Another inconsistency is evident in the entry about "animals," in which the author does not mention young adults acting as animal rights advocates, but the photograph featured with the entry is a teen actor who founded Kids Against Animal Cruelty. These inconsistencies are problematic, as well as the unfortunate cover art, which seems to depict youth in stereotypical roles; for example, the main image is of a young man with spiky dark hair and a menacing look on his face, in what appears to be an industrial interior.

In comparison to Steinberg, Parmar, and Richard's *Contemporary Youth Culture: An International Encyclopedia* (Greenwood 2006), this encyclopedia set falls short. Although *Contemporary Youth Culture* has an international focus and is ten years old, the conceptual layout, interdisciplinary nature of the entries, and inclusion of poetry from high school students continues to make it a highly valuable resource for students and scholars interested in studying youth culture.

Youth Cultures in America is recommended as an optional addition to academic library collections.—*Lisa Presley, Reference and Instruction Librarian, Bowling Green State University, Bowling Green, Ohio*