

From Peer to Manager:
Preparing to Lead at the Beginning of Your Career

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Abstract

This article surveys selected literature on leadership theory and management preparation in libraries. It then discusses one librarian's first experience in management and lessons learned.

Introduction

Many library and information science graduates think little about managing at the beginning of their careers. Yet in the flat hierarchy of the academy, those new to the profession are often called upon to serve as managers of departments and institution-wide projects. For librarians who do not officially hold the title of manager, a host of supervisory duties may await them in their first professional positions. Unfortunately, the traditional LIS curriculum does not adequately prepare graduate students for the level of management responsibility assumed in many entry-level positions. In my case, as a junior librarian at Indiana State University, I immediately assumed responsibility for supervising a team of student workers, and I was called upon to serve as Acting Chair of Special Collections, supervising staff and peer librarians. In an academic library, the person who is your peer today could be your subordinate tomorrow, your boss next year, and finish up as your peer again because of tenure, staffing shortfalls, sabbaticals, fellowships, and part-time professional positions. In this paper, I will recount how I went from being a member of a department to managing that same department at a mid-sized, public university and review literature pertaining to library leadership and management.

Methodology

In order to provide context for the discussion of my experience as a new manager, a search of library literature was conducted to discover how library leadership and management are defined, how leadership theory is applied in libraries, and how individuals at other academic institutions are preparing for management positions. Research terms used during the search include “academic libraries and leadership,” “academic libraries and middle management,” and “academic libraries and career development.” Recalled materials included in this literature review cover the period from 1990 through 2013.

Literature Review

Leadership and management are terms that are often used interchangeably; however, the literature indicates there are distinct differences in theory. Those in management are frequently identified by their functional responsibilities within the organization, such as budget preparation and personnel management (Chang & Bright, 2012; Farrell, 2013; Galbraith, Smith, & Walker, 2012; Giltstrap, 2009; Hernon, 2003; Kalin, 2008; Mosley, 2004; Rooney, 2010; Westfall, Johnson, & Royse, 2013). In contrast, leadership is regularly identified by the soft skills required to influence people, such as creating vision, trust, and a healthy work environment (Albritton, 1990; Bennis & Goldsmith, 1994; DeLong, 2009; Ellis, 2005; Gaynor, 2004; Giltstrap, 2009; Kalin, 2008; Kouzes & Posner, 2012). Similarly, leadership is also expressed as a process that is self-reflective and may be learned and improved upon (Albritton, 1990). In *Developing Leadership and Skills: A Source Book for Librarians*, those in leadership roles are defined as self-aware, and they continually pursue opportunities for personal growth.

Much has been written about leadership theory. Some authors used a behavioral approach to examine leadership and have published lists of descriptive qualities one should work to obtain in order to be an effective manager or leader (Bennis & Goldsmith, 1994; Gaynor, 2004; Hernon, 2003; Sheldon, 1991). Yet others dispute the usefulness of lists since no individual can achieve all traits and skills attributed to success (DeLong, 2009; Feldmann, Level, & Liu, 2013; Galbraith, Smith, & Walker, 2012; Kalin, 2008; Rath & Conchie, 2008; Rooney, 2010). Shared Leadership, or Team Based Leadership, is another leadership theory applied to the field of library and information science (Cawthorne, 2010; DeLong, 2009; Giltstrap, 2009). This theory of leadership empowers individuals at all levels of an organization to be involved in the decision making process (Cawthorne, 2010; DeLong, 2009). In addition, some scholars interpret

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs as a method to motivate the individual or team within an organization (Albritton, 1990; Ellis, 2005; Gaynor, 2004). Maslow asserts there is a universal hierarchy of needs that include physiological needs, safety needs, love needs, esteem needs, and self-actualization. While Bennis & Goldsmith (2001), Kouzes & Posner (2012), Rath & Conchie (2008), and Sheldon (1991) do not cite Maslow's hierarchy, they do emphasize that successful motivational leaders create a stable environment of trust. Safety and stability (trust) are positioned at the second level of Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, and according to Rath & Conchie (2008), trust, compassion, stability, and hope are the four basic needs of followers.

In 2009 Donald Giltstrap advanced research in leadership theory with the publication of his extensive historiographical analysis of theories in organizational leadership and their application in libraries. He states that early Behavioral and Cognitive Theory applied to leadership focuses on skills and traits, and he continues the discussion with an examination of other organizational leadership theories such as Shared Leadership and Transformational Leadership. Transformational Leadership supports followers "[...] to find purpose beyond individual wants and needs while searching for collective transformation of the organization through their interaction and learning with others" (Giltstrap, 2009, p. 61). Rather than approach library leadership through the lens of a single theory, Giltstrap advocates for a synthesized approach to organizational leadership, exploring the intersection of multiple theories.

Succession planning, or preparing the next generation of managers, is another topic with which scholars are concerned. While some authors describe leadership as an indispensable component of management (Gaynor, 2004; Hernon, 2003; Mosley, 2004), the literature also recognizes those in a position of leadership need not have a management title, and that leadership opportunities may occur at all levels in the organizational hierarchy (Cawthorne, 2010; DeLong,

2009; Galbraith, 2012; Giltstrap, 2009; Kalin, 2008). In her article, Kalin states that “you can be an excellent leader without being an administrator, but you cannot be an excellent administrator without being an excellent leader” (p. 262). Providing practical opportunities, such as attendance at leadership institutes and mentoring, for individuals to discover innate strengths and their own brand of leadership is an important method of preparation for management and leadership (DeLong, 2009; Feldmann, 2013; Galbraith, 2012; German, Owen, Parchuck, & Sandore, 2009; Kalin, 2008; Mason & Wetherbee, 2004; Rath & Conchie, 2008; Rooney, 2010; Weiner, Breivik, Clark, & Caboni, 2009). However, with shrinking budgets and staff, providing the financial support to attend leadership institutes and finding time for mentoring is becoming more problematic (Rooney, 2010).

Experience

When I was a new librarian, my dean called upon me to fill in as Acting Chair of Special Collections while my immediate supervisor, the Chair of Special Collections, went on sabbatical for six months. The Special Collections department is divided into three divisions: University Archives, Digital Initiatives, and Rare Books. As Acting Chair, I directly supervised two full-time librarians, one part-time librarian, the University Archivist, and three library assistants. At the time I received this appointment, I had held my position as Metadata Librarian for just over a year and had no prior managerial experience or leadership training. As the literature indicates, managers must perform the daily administrative duties to run a department; however, I believed my time as Acting Chair would be mostly consumed with aspects of the position such as attending meetings, generating reports, and project planning (Farrell, 2013; Rooney, 2010). Instead, I spent a considerable amount of time developing new leadership skills, such as motivating staff and promoting a positive work environment (Albritton, 1990; Bennis &

Goldsmith, 1994; DeLong, 2009; Ellis, 2005; Gaynor, 2004; Giltstrap, 2009; Kalin, 2008; Kouzes & Posner, 2012).

During my transition to managing the Special Collections department, I hired a librarian to cover my position as Metadata Librarian. Since the position was temporary, no search committee was involved and I was solely responsible for interviewing and hiring for the position. Although she had no prior academic experience, the librarian I hired had experience in cataloging and picked up working with metadata very quickly. As she was new to academe and this was a temporary appointment, I felt it was important to assign her projects that she could use for future job searches. Using a shared leadership approach, we worked together to design projects that would benefit the department and provide her with a finished product (Cawthorne, 2010; DeLong, 2009). After working with her for a brief period I discovered she thrived while working independently, and I allowed her to do so. By the time her position ended she had created a digitization plan and digital exhibit for an extensive collection.

While Acting Chair, I supervised a staff member who had recently been moved from Rare Books to University Archives due to organizational restructuring. This individual was very unhappy about the transfer after working more than a decade in Rare Books and was having a difficult time making the transition. We discussed continuing education opportunities in which he was interested, and I advocated for him to receive library funding and time on the job for studying. This interaction taught me the value of understanding his needs and reinvesting in his job skills and appeals to Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs as a method of motivation (Albritton, 1990; Ellis, 2005; Gaynor, 2004). Today, this staff member is more satisfied and prepared to be successful in his new position. These are just a couple of instances in which I was challenged to care for the professional development of those reporting to me. Some staff worked very well

independently, while others needed more guidance and encouragement. I learned on the job about the importance of supporting the individual's strengths, selecting the right team members, and being aware of staff needs (Rath & Conchie, 2008). Having no management experience or preparation, I modeled my behavior and decision making after managers whom I respect.

Conclusion

While the above are two positive examples of my management experience, there are other aspects of the position that did not come instinctively, such as working with donors and creating reports for the ISU Foundation. I also attended meetings of the Deans Advisory Council, for which I felt unprepared. Some form of training or preparation, if only on a small scale, would have been helpful. In my situation, it is unlikely I would have been able to attend leadership training recommended in the literature (Feldmann, Level, & Liu, 2013; Kalin, 2008; German, Owen, Parchuck, & Sandore, 2009; Mason & Wetherbee, 2004; Weiner, Breivik, Clark, & Caboni, 2009). However, another important component of succession planning is establishing a mentor/mentee relationship (Gits, 2008), and I had a strong mentor on the management team in my library. After reading the literature for this article, I understand my management style includes elements of Shared Leadership Theory and appealing to the needs of those I supervise as indicated in Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs. I also recognize how important reading the literature is in preparing to enter management. For individuals moving into their first management position, I would recommend reading through the literature and finding a mentor. This will be especially helpful for those who cannot attend courses on management or leadership institutes.

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The Classification of Censorship:
An Analysis of Challenged Books by Classification and Subject Heading

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Abstract

Using the 2010 edition of the American Library Association's *Banned Books Resource Guide*, this study analyzes the classifications and subject headings of all reported book challenges during the years 2000 to 2010. Classifications and subject headings were identified by cross-referencing each challenged book with the online card catalogs of several major U.S. public library systems. The most frequently challenged subjects are identified, as well as the reader audiences most affected by these challenges. This study also reviews the related literature on the subject of book challenges, such as ALA's statistics on challenged books, as well as research based on these statistics.

Introduction

Nearly 6,000 challenges to library materials were reported to the American Library Association's (ALA) Office of Intellectual Freedom during the years 2000 to 2009 (ALA, 2013c). Though steep, this number only accounts for 15% of such challenges. According to Doyle, most go unreported and can only be estimated (as cited in Kidd, 2009, p. 198). The abundance of documented and undocumented challenges to library materials raises questions about the effects and prevalence of censorship as well as the role of intellectual freedom in practical library services.

Using the 2010 edition of ALA's *Banned Books Resource Guide*, this study analyzed the classifications and subject headings of challenged books from 2000 to 2010. Classifications and subject headings were determined by the way in which each title was cataloged in large American public library systems. The intention of this study was to identify particular intended reader audiences and subjects that were censored at higher rates than others.

Literature Review

The question of how to select, rather than censor, was first articulated in the academic library science community in Lester Asheim's seminal 1953 essay "Not Censorship but Selection." In this article, Asheim describes the differences between censorship and selection as "an amusing word game" (para. 1). Although librarians may be inclined to think of themselves as selectors, Asheim challenges this belief by suggesting librarians use subjective reasoning during the selection process. Censorship can easily stem from a librarian's assumptions regarding an author's intent, a reader's

response, or a community's values. Asheim (1953) describes the slip of subjective selection:

When a book attacks a basic belief or a way of life to which we are emotionally attached, its purpose will seem to us to be vicious rather than constructive; dangerous rather than valuable; deserving of suppression rather than of widespread dissemination. (section 5, para.1)

Rather than decide what is "best" for their communities, Asheim asks librarians to select without censoring.

The ALA has contributed an extensive springboard of data through which researchers can objectively study challenged books in the United States. Since 1983, Robert Doyle has compiled lists of banned and challenged books for ALA's Office of Intellectual Freedom (Doyle, 2010, p.7). Composed of reports from schools, libraries, and the media, Doyle's work is published every three years as *The Banned Books Resource Guide* and is included on ALA's website and in the *Newsletter on Intellectual Freedom* (2013b). These lists are organized by title, author, year, and decade. Also available are charts that organize challenges by reason, initiator, and institution (see Figures 1-3). Using this data, parents and adults who find an item's content unsuitable for children and young adults have been identified as the primary challengers of library books. The top three reasons for challenging books between 1990 and 2010 are the inclusion of sexually explicit material, material unsuitable to the intended age group, and offensive language. Other reasons included the presence of violence, racism, and homosexuality.

The ALA's data on banned and challenged books has been helpful to several research projects, including those conducted by Rickey Best (2010), Carly Akers (2012), and Ann Curry (2001).

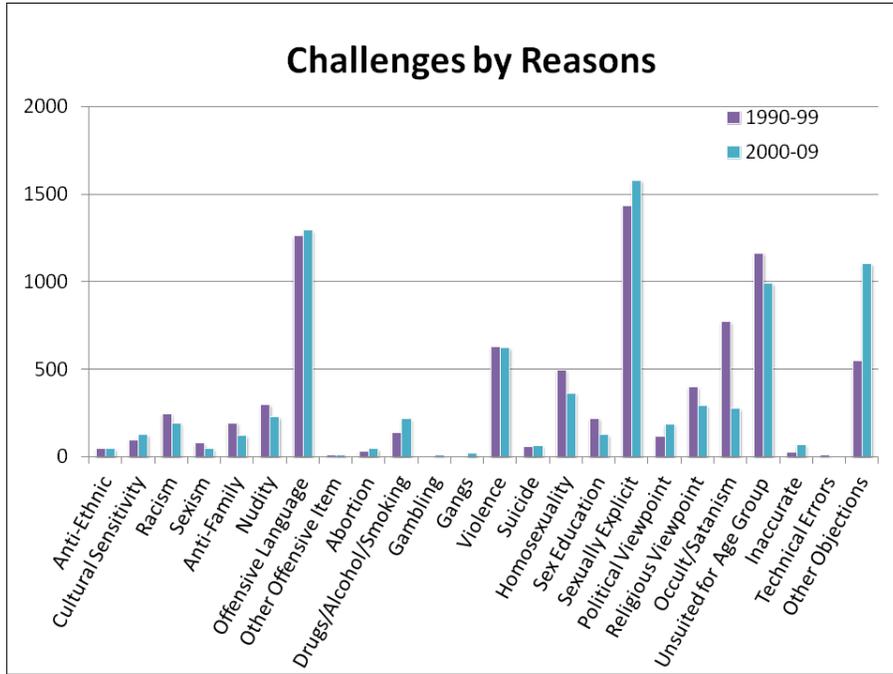


Figure 1. Challenges by reasons. Reprinted from Challenges by Reason, Initiator & Institution for 1990-99 and 2000-09 by ALA Office of Intellectual Freedom. Retrieved June 12, 2014. Copyright 1996-2014 by American Library Association. Reprinted with permission.

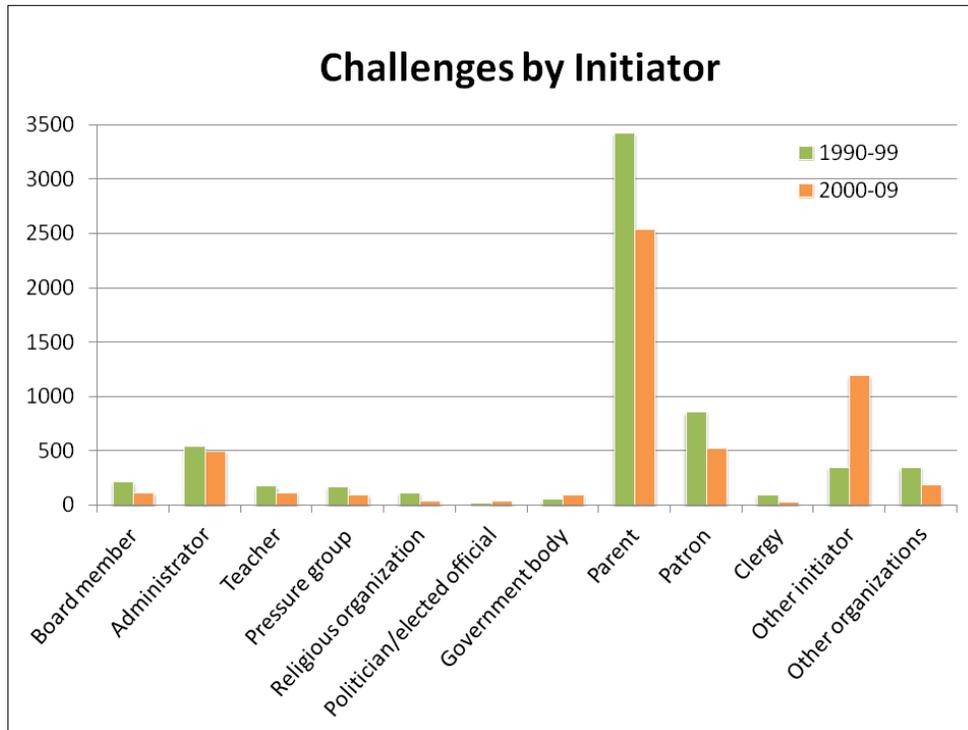


Figure 2. Challenges by initiator. Reprinted from Challenges by Reason, Initiator & Institution for 1990-99 and 2000-09 by ALA Office of Intellectual Freedom. Retrieved June 12, 2014. Copyright 1996-2014 by American Library Association. Reprinted with permission.

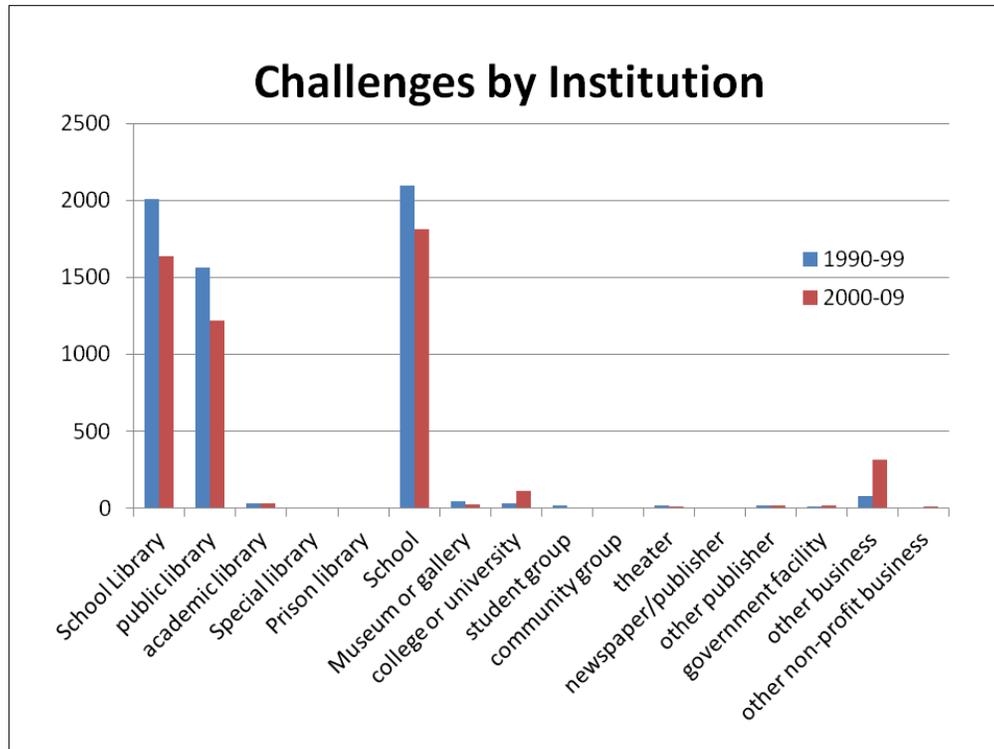


Figure 3. Challenges by institution. Reprinted from Challenges by Reason, Initiator & Institution for 1990-99 and 2000-09 by ALA Office of Intellectual Freedom. Retrieved June 12, 2014. Copyright 1996-2014 by American Library Association. Reprinted with permission.

Using the ALA’s list of Top Ten Challenged Books of 2007, Rickey Best analyzed the accessibility of challenged books in U.S. academic libraries in comparison to U.S. public libraries. Best (2010) states, “Although academic libraries are generally free from the challenges of items faced by school and public libraries, issues concerning selection remain” (p.18). With the use of *WorldCat*, libraries holding copies of the ten books in question were categorized. Academic libraries (specifically institutions with a bachelor’s degree program or higher) made up 7.85% of the libraries in this study, and approximately 30% of libraries with the challenged titles were academic libraries (p. 24).

Eight out of the ten challenged books in Best's study are either children's or young adult books. Since many of the academic libraries in this study do not offer programs that include these titles in the curriculum, Best (2010) speculates that the academic library "reinforces the concepts of intellectual freedom by supporting the mission of higher education to promote individual enrichment and community engagement" (p. 30).

In her 2012 study, Carly Akers examined whether classic books were challenged more than contemporary books during the years 2000 to 2010. By cross-referencing Doyle's *Banned Books Resource Guide* (2010) to the *Banned and Challenged Classics* list on ALA's website (2012), she identified which books challenged from 2000 to 2010 were classics. After finding that contemporary books were challenged more often than classics during this period, she researched whether there were any differences in why the two types of literature were challenged. She found that classic books were challenged more for racism, whereas contemporary books were challenged more for suicide and being "unsuited for age group" (2012, p. 392-393). However, both types of books were primarily challenged due to sexually explicit content.

Ann Curry utilized ALA's studies to further her research on the impact of relocation on juvenile and young adult literature. In her 2001 study, Curry references a qualitative and anecdotal study in which 30 Canadian and 30 British library directors were interviewed on the subject of challenged books from 1990 to 1993. When asked how they handled a challenge to a book, "a surprising number alluded to relocating problematic material to a different, if equally accessible, location after a complaint" (p. 28). For example, a challenged juvenile book might be moved to the young adult section,

whereas a controversial young adult book may be reclassified as an adult book. Others methods included moving an item to a different branch or to a closed stack.

Curry compiled a list of juvenile and young adult books that had been challenged during the years 1984 to 1999 in American and Canadian school and public libraries. Two hundred and twenty books matched this description, and all were cataloged in British Columbia public libraries. Although she compliments British Columbian librarians on “their collection management courage” (p. 30), she is quick to point out that 15% of the challenged young adult titles were cataloged as adult fiction, which “indicates that approximately one in seven copies of the controversial titles on the research list has been ‘mis-shelved’” (p. 30).

Each of these studies documents repeated attempts to censor books for children and young adults. This study builds upon the findings of Best (2010), Akers (2012), and Curry (2001) by identifying the classifications and subject headings that were most commonly challenged from 2000 to 2010.

Methodology

According to Doyle, 664 book challenges were reported between the years 2000 and 2010. To determine the classifications and subject headings of each challenged book, Doyle’s list was cross-referenced with the online catalogs in major public library systems. These library systems were chosen based on their large collections and their prominence in the United States and included the New York Public Library, Chicago Public Library, San Francisco Public Library, and Los Angeles Public Library. The catalogs were searched in this order to identify the title’s classifications and subject headings. In cases in which the title was not cataloged at any of these library systems, the

title was located at a public library using OCLC's *WorldCat*. Seventy-two percent of titles were cataloged in the New York Public Library; only 4.5% were identified using *WorldCat*.

The classifications used in this study included Adult Fiction, Adult Nonfiction, Young Adult Fiction, Young Adult Nonfiction, Juvenile Fiction, Juvenile Nonfiction, and Children's Picture Books. Young adult books are typically intended for adolescents between the ages of 12 and 18. Juvenile books are characteristically read by children under the age of 12. Picture books are similarly intended for young readers; however, the majority of picture books are intended for children of preschool age (Reitz, 2013).

If a challenged title was cataloged as more than one classification and had more than one subject heading, then all classifications and subject headings were included. For example, if a title was classified as Young Adult Fiction as well as Adult Fiction, then both of these classifications were included in the sample.

Additionally, many of the books on Doyle's list were challenged more than once during the ten-year time span. In this case, each challenge was counted separately in this analysis. The book *Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets*, for example, was challenged 22 times from 2000 to 2010. In the New York Public Library, it is cataloged as both Juvenile Fiction and Young Adult Fiction. As a result, this study included 22 challenges to Juvenile Fiction and 22 challenges to Young Adult Fiction for this one title. In addition, this title had five subject headings. Each subject heading was included 22 times.

All data was collected in an Excel spreadsheet and organized by classification and by subject heading. The sum of each challenged classification and the sum for each challenged subject heading were identified using these charts.

Limitations

As mentioned earlier, the majority of challenges go unreported. This study only used reported challenges documented in the 2010 edition of *The Banned Books Resource Guide*. Additionally, challenges may have been reported after the book was published. Therefore, it can be assumed that many challenges that occurred between the years 2000 and 2010 are not included in this study.

This study was also affected by the subjective nature of classification and subject heading systems. As Curry found in her 2001 research, public libraries have a history of relocating challenged young adult books to the adult section in order to mitigate a controversy. Therefore, a book marked as a young adult title in one library system may be marked as an adult book at another.

Other inconsistencies must be acknowledged as outliers. For example, 30 of 31 copies of the book *Anastasia Again* by Lois Lowry were cataloged as Juvenile Fiction at the New York Public Library. One copy at the Harlem Library was cataloged as Young Adult Nonfiction. Although a specific title may be of interest to more than one age group, it is unique for a single copy of a title to be cataloged one way when that title is consistently cataloged another way. This may have been a decision made by a different cataloger or a cataloging error, or it is possible that this branch had unique criteria for its collections. For future studies, locating one library that contains all the challenged titles may yield more consistent results. Alternatively, reviewing the chosen library's collection

development manual and interviewing its catalogers may reveal insight into why certain titles are cataloged under specific classifications.

Results

After tallying the number of challenges to these specific classifications, as shown in Figure 4, the classification challenged the most was Young Adult Fiction, which was challenged 361 times. Adult Fiction was challenged 235 times; Juvenile Fiction, 195 times; Adult Nonfiction, 113 times; Young Adult Nonfiction, 49 times; Juvenile Nonfiction, 30 times; and Children’s Picture Books, 28 times. Because so many of the challenged titles are cataloged as more than one classification, the number of challenges by classification exceeds the total number of book challenges.

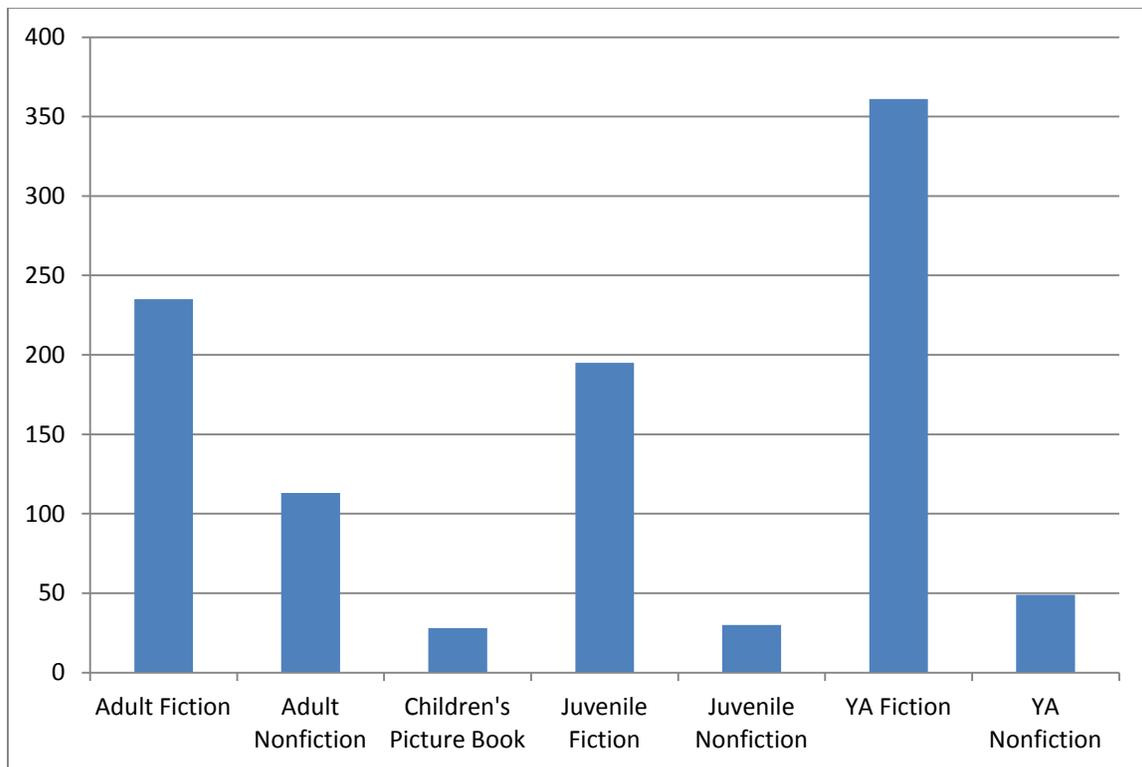


Figure 4. Number of challenged classifications.

The subject headings listed in each catalog were included in this set of data. There was a total of 2,198 challenged subject heading entries. These were organized

alphabetically. Some subject headings were grouped based on their similarities. For example, the subject heading *African Americans – Biography* was placed under the general *African Americans* subject heading.

The top 25 subject headings were identified and organized into Table 1. The top five sub-headings are listed under each heading when applicable.

Table 1

Top 25 Challenged Subject Headings

<u>Subject Heading</u>	<u>Number of Times Challenged</u>
Schools	105
Wizards	93
Teenagers	80
Teenage girls	25
Death	17
Teenage boys	6
Drug use	2
Emotional problems	2
Magic	78
Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry	72
High school	70
Students	19
Harry Potter	66
African Americans	63
Biography	9
Women	8
Color	4
Families	4
Ohio – Lorain	4
Sex	50
Sex instruction	30
Sexual health	7
Sex role	3
Sex customs	2
Sexual ethics	2
Friendship	45
Homosexuality	43
Orphans	41
Interpersonal relations	32
Race relations	28
Diary fiction	21
Families	21

Male friendship	19
Maya Angelou	18
Runaways	18
Children	11
Teenagers	6
Witches	18
Women	17
Gays	16
Men	8
Teenagers	2
Fathers	1
Musicians	1
Determination	16
Boys	15
Fathers and daughters	13

Conclusion

Based on the research reviewed earlier, it is not particularly surprising that Young Adult Fiction was the most commonly challenged classification. However, certain books contained subject headings that could be scrutinized as outliers. One that stood out more than others was the *Harry Potter* series by J. K. Rowling. More than 13% of the 424 titles challenged between the years 2000 and 2010 were from this series. As shown in Table 2, ten out of the top 25 challenged subject headings were listed as subject headings for the challenged *Harry Potter* books. Most apparent were *Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry* and *Harry Potter*. A future study might remove these outliers, although the sheer volume of challenges made to these titles may be relevant to the research on censorship.

Table 2

Challenged Subject Headings of Harry Potter Series

<u>Subject Heading</u>	<u>Number of Challenges</u>
Wizards	88
Harry Potter	85
Magic	72

Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry	72
Schools	50
Orphans	38
Determination	16
Friendship	16
Teenagers and death	16
Witches	16

On the other hand, many of the smaller trends found in this study are relevant to note. For example, books with the ninth most commonly challenged subject heading *Sex* are predominantly cataloged as nonfiction titles. Out of these, the majority are classified as either Young Adult or Juvenile Nonfiction. (See Figure 5.)

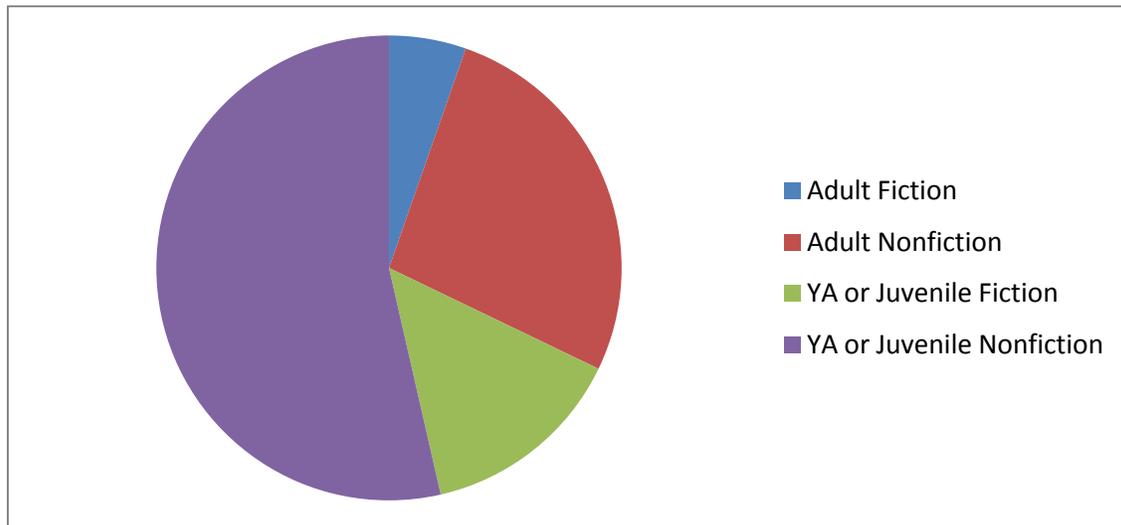


Figure 5. Sex as challenged subject heading arranged by classification.

The third most commonly challenged subject heading was *Teenagers*. This subject heading includes *Teenage girls* as its largest subheading. As shown in Figure 6, 15 of the 25 challenges with this heading are classified as nonfiction. These include *Deal With It! A Whole New Approach to Your Body, Brain, and Life as a gURL; A Girl's Life Online; The Notebook Girls;* and *Real Girl/Real World: Tools for Finding Your True Self*. All of these titles address female sexuality and sexual orientation. Interestingly, only a

small percentage of challenged books with the subject heading *Teenage boys* are cataloged as nonfiction. Although *Teenage boys* was only challenged six times, just two of these challenges were made against nonfiction titles.

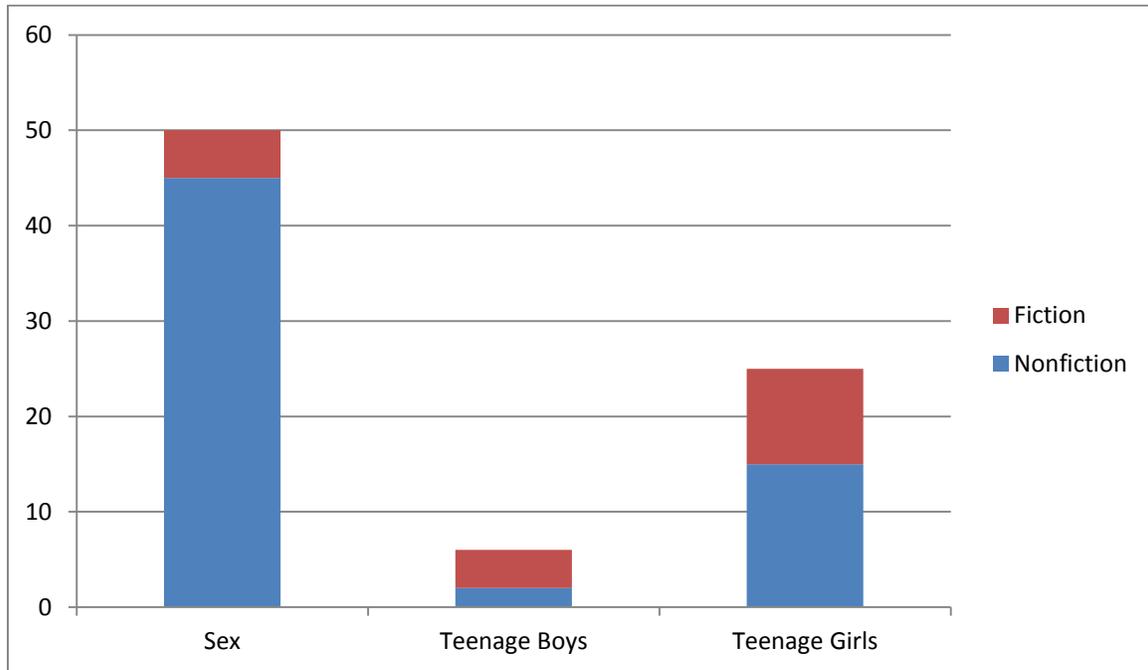


Figure 6. Challenged subject headings arranged by classification.

Nonfiction books that address sex and sexuality were more commonly challenged when the intended readers were young adults and, specifically, teenage girls. A future study might evaluate how many books with these subject headings and classifications were published before the year 2010. Although the number of challenges made to nonfiction books about sex and sexuality intended for teenage girls greatly exceeds challenges to similar books intended for teenage boys, there may have been many more books written for teenage girls on this subject before 2010.

Only one ethnicity or race was listed in the top 25 challenged subject headings: *African-Americans* (see Table 3). Sixty-three challenges were made to this heading or a

derivative of it, such as *African Americans – Biography*. Once again, further research may better explain this disparity.

Table 3

Subject Headings Arranged by Race or Ethnicity

<u>Subject Heading</u>	<u>Number of Challenges</u>
African Americans	63
Mexican Americans	10
Native American Indians	6
Japanese Americans	3
Haitian Americans	1

Although this study found that challenged books primarily affected young adult fiction readers during the years 2000 to 2010, a wide range of other readers and subjects were impacted. Young adult fiction books that feature witchcraft and wizardry made up a large percent of books challenged. To a lesser degree, nonfiction titles with the subject heading *Sex* were challenged much more than their fiction counterparts. More pointedly, nonfiction books about sex intended for teenage girls were challenged more than those for teenage boys. Books with the subject heading *African-Americans* were challenged far more than those with subject headings featuring any other race or ethnicity. These trends in book challenges raise questions about the general nature of censorship in the 21st century and may relate to suppression in other fields, such as law and popular culture. Regardless, librarians who are aware of which subjects and classifications are prone to objections may better prepare for future book challenges.

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Upcycling MSLS Coursework into Publishable Content

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Abstract

New librarians face a variety of barriers to publication, such as time constraints, lack of priority given to scholarship, and lack of experience. This article proposes that new librarians can more rapidly generate publishable material by exploiting a rich mine of their own high-quality writing: their MSLS coursework. Writing with intention can help library students plan assignments for publication, while a careful revision process will ensure successful upcycling. By leveraging the research and writing effort exerted while studying for the master's degree, new librarians can quickly build a strong foundation for their early-career publications.

Introduction

New librarians have historically published the least of all librarians (Watson, 1977, p. 379), yet publishing early in one's career is crucial for establishing a professional reputation, supporting promotions and tenure, and contributing new perspectives into the library literature. New librarians have an advantage over more experienced librarians: a stack of recently completed homework and papers that they completed during their master's degree studies in library science. Based on research, recent first-hand experience in an MSLS program, and observations of successfully published new librarians, this article recommends that new librarians leverage their academic work into publication opportunities. By upcycling existing writing, new librarians can more quickly create publishable content and establish a habit of scholarship more quickly.

Literature Review

Barriers to Publication by New Librarians

In 1977, Watson found that only 18% of all publications in library science literature, including book reviews, were written by librarians with five or fewer years of experience (p. 379). Watson's study only included academic librarians and is in need of a more current study, but it is still a useful benchmark. More current research into the publishing patterns of librarians present a variety of barriers that librarians face when considering publication.

Lack of time to tackle research and writing is one such barrier (Baro & Ebhomeya, 2012, p. 212; Hemmings, Rushbrook, & Smith, 2005, p. 65; Shenton, 2005, p. 149; Lamothe, 2012, p. 160). It is understandable that librarians have difficulty finding the time to write and research. While in school, new librarians have the burden of schoolwork, employment for income, internships, and applications for jobs post-graduation. Following graduation and while

beginning a professional career, new librarians in any type of library must contend with service requirements for promotion and retention, in addition to continuing to learn and develop as a professional at their job.

Another obstacle is the prioritization of service to the library and to the library community. Service-oriented librarians often choose to spend scarce extra time on activities that more clearly support patrons, rather than on publishing and writing (Herron & Haglund, 2007, p. 74). Librarians make that call, but administrators may also discourage publishing by making it the least important of a librarian's responsibilities (Herron & Haglund, 2007, p. 74). Even academic librarians, for whom publication is required for tenure or promotion, experience less of the publish-or-perish dynamic apparent elsewhere in academia (Hart, 1999). When publishing is not prioritized by the librarian or administrators as a valuable use of time, it is not performed, and as a result, "research and publishing requirements may seem insurmountable" (Tysick & Babb, 2006, p. 94).

Most librarians have a sophisticated understanding of the research process and of writing techniques but have less experience with the publication process (Baro & Ebhomeya, 2012, p. 213). When Herron & Haglund (2007) spoke to reference librarians, they found knowledge about publishing was the average librarian's second biggest weakness, behind only instruction experience. Despite the need for education in these topics, only 2% of librarians they surveyed had recently attended training in scholarship or publishing (p. 75). This lack of knowledge makes it difficult for new librarians to successfully plan for publication and also may instill a fear of failure (Stilwell, 2006).

Support for New Librarian Writing

One of the best tools for encouraging new librarian scholarship is the gift of time. Within academic librarianship, requirements of publication can be the biggest factor in establishing a lifelong professional habit of scholarship (Fennewald, 2008, p. 107). New librarians at any type of library can request that scholarship be included in their formal job responsibilities to establish the sense of obligation to publish. Supervisors can encourage a balance between scholarship and service by not overwhelming new librarians with library, community, or professional committee assignments (Palmer & Matz, 2006, p. 373). Supervisors can also help ensure that new librarians have regular time for writing, so that librarians do not have resort to less effective bursts of binge-writing (McKnight, 2009, p. 116). Financial support for conference travel and other research expenses, of course, is also beneficial (Fennewald, 2008, p. 111).

Collaboration can also be an effective means of supporting scholarship and publication by new librarians (Nall & Gustavson, 2010). By working in collaboration with other librarians, the burden and stress of publication are reduced. Studies also suggest that collaboration increases both an article's overall quality and its odds of being published (Lamothe, 2012, pp. 160-161).

Mentoring by experienced librarians is immensely useful in many situations, including helping to keep the new librarian on track with his/her publication goals (Tysick & Babb, 2006, pp. 95-96). Similarly, peer-support programs can help create a supportive culture of scholarship (Palmer & Matz, 2006, pp. 372-373) and offer a venue for informal peer-reviews and copy-editing (Fennewald, 2008, p. 110). Peer-support programs can take the form of a scholarly writing group, either with other librarians (Tysick & Babb, 2006) or with members of the community and/or campus. Such writing groups may offer dialogue and mutual support for the

writing process or opportunities for writing alongside colleagues in a quiet and dedicated environment (Exner & Houk, 2010).

Discussion

Proposed Model: Upcycling Master's Coursework

The strategies outlined above are excellent, but they all assume librarians are writing professional publications from scratch. This article proposes that new librarians exploit a rich mine of their own high-quality writing: their MSLS coursework. New librarians can upcycle completed course assignments by rewriting, refreshing, and expanding in order to form a strong foundation for their early-career publications. “Upcycling,” a term popularized by authors Michael Braungart and William McDonough in 2002, is used to indicate the repurposing and simultaneous elevation of an item, as distinct from recycling or simply repurposing. In this article the term “upcycling” is used because it clearly indicates that with effort assignments can be made into something both new and more usable, rather than simply being reused exactly as currently written.

Over the course of their studies, MSLS students do a lot of writing. Despite use of new teaching methods in library science education such as evidence-based practice, inquiry-based teaching, and service learning, written assignments still appear as a common measurable student output (Most, 2011; Cahil & Richey, 2012; Brown, 2012). These written assignments vary in format and length, but the author found that they often fall into one of three categories: major original research, minor class assignments, and major class assignments.

The first type of writing, major original research, will not occur very often. This type consists of cumulative theses, master's papers, honors papers, etc. It includes original research and/or synthesis and fills a gap in the existing library science research literature. The second type

consists of short, non-substantive pieces. These minor class assignments often merely demonstrate the author's basic understanding of concepts or thoughts on a topic and will rarely be material suitable for peer-reviewed articles. However, these minor pieces can serve as small building blocks in a larger published work, or provide some content for venues such as a personal blog. Finally, MSLS students also complete major class assignments. These pieces include extensive literature reviews, researched opinion pieces, and case studies. Such assignments can be used on their own or serve as large building blocks for a future published work.

Planning for Upcycling

MSLS students can plan for publication by embracing and seeking out opportunities for robust writing and research. Only 10% of library science programs require a thesis or similar capstone research project for graduation (Tysick & Babb, 2006, p. 94), and such programs will often offer alternatives to the thesis, such as creating an online portfolio. A student with an eye for the future will recognize the publishing opportunities that arise from original research and will choose to undertake a capstone research paper.

When choosing topics for their written coursework, potential authors should keep in mind the most common types of published articles: literature reviews, reports of research projects, implications of the research, and methodological analyses (Shenton, 2005, p. 144). Intentionally writing with one of these broad genres in mind will allow a completed assignment to more easily be converted into an article.

Another way in which planning can help writers optimize their coursework is by imagining individual assignments as building blocks. The author has seen prospective authors leverage this technique with success; one semester's essay can serve as the introduction to

another semester's literature review, which can be used to support a major research project later. This process is easier if a student enters an LIS program with a chosen field of study so that the student can then tailor courses and assignment topics to support a particular research interest. However, an early research plan is absolutely not required in order to create publishable work while in school. A student who is unsure of his/her field of study will create a diverse portfolio of assignments while exploring different aspects of library and information science.

Though it can seem presumptuous to do so, writers may benefit from informing their instructor if they intend to use a course's written assignment for publication (even if just as an entry on one's own professional blog). Grading papers is a time-consuming activity, and faculty favor technical comments over substantive feedback when grading papers (Stern & Solomon, 2006). However, if informed that the student not only seeks but intends to use substantive feedback, instructors may offer more notes on how to effectively revise the piece or may suggest publishing venues.

Careful forethought and planning while completing coursework will allow potential writers to more quickly move through the process of revising their coursework and submitting it for publication.

Revising the Coursework

When revising a master's thesis or similar long piece of piece of writing, the author will want to tighten the style and content of the research paper. A professional reader will be less interested in details than were instructors, and the detail given in an academic thesis may seem like padding to both the reader and an editor (Luey, 2008, p. 39). However, if the article has been created by combining several different class assignments, the author's priority when revising should be ensuring consistent tone and voice. Individual assignments can provide a

foundation, but one must create singular and cohesive message, flow, and purpose when combining them (Brause, 2012). In either case, when writing or revising a lengthy formal research article, it is very helpful to recruit assistance from an academic advisor or a mentor.

No matter what type of assignment is being revised or the publication for which it is targeted, the bibliography must be updated, and the author should do a literature review to ensure that no relevant research has been newly published.

Students may conduct research while assisting a senior faculty member, in which case the faculty member will usually be denoted as the primary investigator and make publication decisions (Shenton, 2005, p. 150). In these cases, or when research is conducted with any kind of research funding, care should be taken to determine ownership of the data and results of the research before any publication is sought.

Some MSLS course assignments may be team-written. Writers wishing to use a team-written article for publication must be sure to properly cite classmates as co-authors and try recruiting them to help revise the work into publishable form. Team writing is a common and effective way to leverage a strong professional network in order to publish an article with less individual effort (Nall & Gustavson, 2010).

Students must also be cautious of publication when the assignment includes a case study, active learning, or service-learning component. These types of assignments are becoming more common as instructors seek to tie classroom learning to the real world, and as students take more internships for credit (Chupp & Joseph, 2010, p. 191). Even if the work does not qualify as research and therefore fall under the purview of the school's Institutional Review Board, there are ethical concerns in publicly publishing information about a library without consent. In these cases, prospective authors will want to obtain the permission of the library, supervisor, and

others involved in the study. Sometimes the piece can be anonymized to disguise the library described, but if it cannot, or if the library will not give permission to reuse the piece, then the writer should not attempt to publish it.

Publication of Upcycled Work

As initial revisions near an end, the author must choose where to submit the article first. Just as students produce many types of work while in school, there are many types of professional publication opportunities. The rest of this article is dedicated to a discussion of some of the common venues students may use to publish their work, but potential authors should also consult Hahn and Jaeger's excellent article on academic library research, particularly their overview of publication venues (2013, pp. 240-241). Shenton also has an excellent list of ways to identify prospective journals, including reference checking, word-of-mouth, and shelf-browsing (2005, pp. 147-148). Authors seek publishers, but often publishers will seek authors for particular theme issues, conference presentations, and books. Students interested in publishing or presenting their work should subscribe to professional listservs, through which calls for such opportunities are often sent. Corey Seeman's blog (2014) is another good way to keep abreast of such calls.

Very few periodicals allow simultaneous submissions to various venues, so authors should start with the most prestigious. Once a journal is chosen, the article should be revised yet again to match the journal's submission guidelines. There are many good resources available in the library literature to help authors navigate the entire submission and editorial/peer-review process, and so the process will not be discussed here. However, in the encouraging words of McKnight, "[y]ou submit a thoroughly developed and polished draft. The version you first

submit is not the final version that will appear in print. Reviewers and editors will help you revise it” (2009, p. 115).

Peer-reviewed journals. Scholarly, peer-reviewed journals are most commonly known for major research articles. “In academic circles, refereed journals are regarded as far more prestigious and authoritative than non-refereed” (Shenton, 2005, p. 145). Peer-reviewed articles are usually extensive and polished descriptions of original research. Not all peer-reviewed journals are equal, however. Journals have varying levels of prestige based on the number of subscriptions they receive, the quality of the articles, and the percentage rate of their acceptance. Prospective authors can find the impact factors and acceptance rate of journals through the database *Web of Science* and through the journal’s own homepage. Journals with higher impact factors and lower acceptance rates will be more discerning when considering article submissions.

Peer-reviewed journals do offer publishing opportunities for smaller articles and less formal research. Examples of peer-reviewed articles outside of scholarly research are editorials or opinion pieces that are based on existing literature and the expertise of the author. Some journals also accept review articles that summarize existing literature or methods. For an overview of review article types, see Grant & Booth’s excellent summary of the topic (2009). Lastly, journals may also print “work in progress” articles, which summarize the initial results of ongoing research, without as much content as a formal research article. Though a work-in-progress article offers an additional publication opportunity, authors should be careful that such writing does not delay them from actually completing their research and thus being able to present more valuable information (Shenton, 2005, p. 149).

Other venues. Outside of scholarly journals, there are many opportunities to publish in non–peer-reviewed journals and newsletters. These venues are perfect for work that is not appropriate for a peer-reviewed journal yet contains information of value to the library or other communities: “[r]efereed journals are often read mainly by researchers and academics, and, if authors are looking to disseminate their findings to actual practitioners, they should appreciate that many of these people are more likely to read lighter weight journals and magazines, which are typically not refereed” (Shenton, 2005, p. 145). Publishing in these venues can be a less stressful and quicker way of getting your work read. Many American Library Association (ALA) units have non–peer-reviewed publications that accept submissions multiple times a year. A complete list of ALA publications, excluding state association periodicals, is available on the association’s website (“American library association periodicals,” 2014).

An alternative to journals and newsletters is a professional blog. Blogs are rapidly becoming popular with researchers as a way to publish research and quickly disseminate it the public (Volkh, 2006), and librarians are no exception. For shorter writing samples, librarians should consider maintaining an individual professional blog that can be part of an online portfolio. For longer items, authors can submit items to established professional librarianship blogs. Blogs can be specific (e.g. House, 2014) or broad (e.g. “In the library with the lead pipe,” 2014) in scope.

Finally, authors should consider presentation opportunities as a venue for professional productivity. Opportunities for presentations are readily available at a variety of conferences. Local regional conferences, state association conferences, and national and international conferences all put out calls for presentations. As with publication venues, not all conferences are equal: it is easier to get a session accepted at a small regional conference than at the ALA

Annual Conference. Not all presentations are equal either. Poster sessions are a great way to present reviews of existing research, early-stage original research, and small case studies. Panels or discussion groups are an opportunity to bring together people with related expertise to dialogue about a particular issue or challenge. Formal presentations of differing lengths may be used to provide a summary and the implications of original research, present complex solutions to existing problems, or outline a major library case study.

Conclusion

New librarians face a variety of barriers to publication, including time constraints, lack of priority given to scholarship, and lack of experience. Administrator support, collaborations, and peer support/writing groups can support new librarian writing, but new librarians can also increase their early-career scholarship by upcycling completed school assignments. Whether starting from major original research, major class assignments, or minor assignments, new librarians can rewrite, refresh, and combine their MSLS coursework into publishable content.

Writing with intention can help library students plan assignments for smaller publication opportunities, or for building blocks in a larger publication. Current MSLS students can also seek out original research opportunities in order to have fodder for peer-reviewed articles. The revision process for turning coursework into publishable material includes consideration of co-authors and primary investigators, advisors and mentors, and privacy concerns. Longer works such as a thesis or capstone project must be condensed, while pieces that have been combined must be edited for cohesiveness. The bibliography of any revised piece will need to be updated before submission.

New librarians face challenges during the formative years of their professional career. By leveraging the research and writing effort they exerted while studying for the master's degree,

particularly if they used thoughtful preparation while in school, new librarians can rapidly generate publishable material and contribute their voices to the literature of the library and information science profession.

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***Fundamentals of Library Instruction.* Monty McAdoo. Chicago: ALA Editions, 2012. 128 pp, ISBN 9780838911419 (pbk.).**

Reviewed by Jessica Critten, First Year Programs Librarian, Ingram Library, University of West Georgia

Monty McAdoo's *The Fundamentals of Library Instruction* packs a lot of information about the history of library instruction, the construction of lesson plans and learning objects, and the development of a teaching self into its scant 112 pages. This book claims to be for instruction librarians of all stripes and levels of experience, and this bears true. New instruction librarians with little to no point of reference get a very useful and holistic introduction and context to this aspect of librarianship, and experienced librarians get exposure to unique struggles their teaching peers in other environments face. This book is also relevant to any librarian for whom certain terminology or background might have been glossed over or taken for granted in library school. In particular, McAdoo's deconstruction of types of instruction in libraries is valuable, as too often "bibliographic instruction," "library instruction," and "information literacy instruction" are terms wrongly interchanged.

In his discussion of "Predelivery Considerations," the author rightfully emphasizes how important is it to be mindful of goals and objectives when planning an instruction session. That said, instead of focusing so much on balancing competing interests when designing a learning object, it would have been worthwhile to see a more practical overview of instructional design basics.

Assessment is a challenge for many instruction librarians, as they so often have to respond to institutional calls to demonstrate value while being mindful of their own needs to evaluate personal effectiveness. McAdoo's chapter on assessment gives the reader a step-by-step guide to this complicated process and thoughtful suggestions about how to deal with problems.

Many criticisms of the book's broad but relatively shallow scope could reasonably be answered by evoking its title and mission: to cover fundamentals. McAdoo gives a brief overview of different learning theories, but they are not discussed in such a way that the reader might apply or synthesize them. Information literacy as a whole is similarly glossed over despite how central it is to most instruction programs. In that this book is meant as a primer for novice instruction librarians, it is reasonable that it should focus on the instructor herself. However, this de-emphasizes the student in the instruction scenario to a certain extent; the book devotes only four pages to "How Students Learn."

Overall, this book very competently accomplishes what it sets out to do and would be a very practical way to start building a strong foundation of concepts, history, and awareness of common problems for new instruction librarians. Those interested in a more in-depth look at instruction, however, would be well served to also seek out supplemental information about learning theory, instructional design, student-centered learning, and even critical approaches to library instruction for added context.

Making Sense of Business Reference: A Guide for Librarians and Research Professionals.
Celia Ross. Chicago: American Library Association, 2013. 186 pp, ISBN 9780838910849.

Reviewed by Susan A. Schreiner, Access Services Librarian, Pittsburg State University, Kansas

“No one is safe from business reference.” With this succinct introduction to the preface, Celia Ross plunges into the reality of the modern information provider. Demand for business reference is growing, and the average librarian does not necessarily have the educational or professional expertise to meet these demands. Ross wrote the book because of her unplanned and slightly surreal journey to becoming a business librarian and her desire to help others on the same path whether intentionally or unintentionally.

The book does not assume a business background or experience with business reference. It is written in easy-to-understand language without undefined jargon or acronyms, and the author supplements practical information with real-world examples and business questions. Each of the 12 chapters ends with a section called “Start Making Sense!” that challenges readers to utilize the skills and resources covered in the chapter by doing basic searches at their own institutions.

The first two chapters discuss the generalities of starting the research process by discussing the business reference question and the resources, both free and fee-based, that can be used to answer it. Reiterating the basics of performing the research interview, Ross also warns readers to be aware of the pitfall of business research—sometimes it is just not possible to answer a question because the type of information the patron wants does not exist. She offers practical solutions for dealing with this too-frequent scenario. This is followed by an introduction to business reference databases with descriptions and when to use them.

The next eight chapters deal with what she calls “The Core Four,” the four general types of information for which most patrons are looking. These include (1) Company information, (2) Industry information, (3) Investing/financial information, and (4) Consumer information/business statistics. Chapters three through five study company and industry information, from finding company histories to determining an industry’s classification codes to gathering a corporation’s annual report. Chapters six and seven explore investment and consumer data and provide quality data for investors and business owners who are perhaps not traditional researchers. Chapters eight through ten look at other areas of business reference that are frequently queried by providing details on statistical needs, international companies’ data, and small business questions. These eight chapters are the heart of the book and provide vast amounts of resources in an easy-to-find presentation.

The last two chapters provide a variety of other useful resources, most notably listservs, governmental resources, major libraries, and blogs where difficult questions can be routed to numerous experts for help and advice. Ross provides some key business and reference resources for baseline collection development. Finally, she reminds the information professional to take a moment to really look at a difficult question and utilize the resources and skills provided in the book to determine the proper path for finding answers.

The last third of the book, simply titled “Stumpers,” provides more than 50 pages of sample business reference questions and answers. Eight subcategories break down the questions along similar subjects as chapters three through ten, although the “Company Finance” and “Investment Research” chapters are combined under the heading of “Finance & Investing” and an additional section labeled “Miscellaneous” is added. For added depth to learning business reference, it would be a strategic idea to review each chapter’s Stumpers after reviewing the chapter. This will both test knowledge gained from the chapter and give concrete examples of how to break down difficult business questions. Finally, a helpful index allows the reader to find information by specific database or resource, as well as by subject area.

While an extremely useful tool for new librarians providing either business or general reference in almost any setting, this book also will help experienced business librarians find answers to the increasingly difficult reference questions they encounter. Providing direct answers and resources, as well as search strategies and a variety of helpful hints, this book is a must-have for any information professional needing to navigate through the complex world of business databases, governmental resources, and the Internet.

***The New Professional's Toolkit*. Bethan Ruddock. London: Facet Publishing, 2012. 237 pp, ISBN 9781856047685 (pbk.).**

Reviewed by Kimberly Miller, Research & Instruction Librarian for Emerging Technologies, Albert S. Cook Library, Towson University

As a familiar refrain for new library and information science professionals, “what I didn’t learn in library school” remains a large gap to fill in the ever-evolving world of libraries, archives, and other information specialties. Many new professionals quickly realize that although graduate or other professional education provides a foundation for work in the information sciences, more specialized, practical knowledge is required for day-to-day work and long-term success in their chosen field.

In *The New Professional's Toolkit*, Bethan Ruddock’s goal is to help new professionals address these gaps in training by providing practical advice, anecdotes, and resources to take initial steps to further professional development. *Toolkit*’s readable chapters cover an expansive array of issues that cut across library and information science specialties in a straightforward and entertaining manner. Beginning with project management and ending with professional involvement and career planning, Ruddock calls upon the experiences of a variety of information professionals to demonstrate knowledge, skills, and abilities that are vital for 21st century information science work. Other topics include teaching; training and communication; evaluating and assessing user needs; marketing; technology and online engagement; finding funding and demonstrating value; budgeting and negotiation; information ethics; and professional development, networking, and self-promotion. The companion website (<http://lisnewprofs.com>) also includes information about each of the book’s contributors, links to resources, and a blog related to the experiences of new professionals.

At the core of each of the twelve chapters is an assemblage of “How to...” and “Case Study” sections written by new and experienced information science practitioners, including librarians, archivists, and researchers. While the case studies provide inspirational anecdotes and examples of successful programs, experiences, and projects, the “How to...” sections provide more practical advice or resources for professionals seeking to improve their skills or gain knowledge in a particular area. Much of the more practical information is useful in providing tangible suggestions and resources new professionals may not have discovered on their own. This array of practical content helps the book appeal to a wide audience of librarians, archivists, and other information professionals and students, while the variety of authors and experiences bring unique voices and perspectives into a single volume, adding to the book’s interest and value.

Perhaps the most valuable tools included in the *Toolkit* are the bibliographies and reflective prompts included at the end of each chapter. References and further readings included for each chapter comprise websites, articles, books, and professional organizations that provide the reader with a clear path for pursuing the topics addressed in the chapter. In addition, prompts in the “Over to you...” reflections encourage readers to personalize and apply information in the chapter to their own practice. These sections help the reader transform each chapter’s information into actionable next steps in professional development.

Toolkit has an international focus, with contributions from librarians, archivists, and other information professionals from the United Kingdom, United States, Canada, the Netherlands, Greece, and Australia; that said, the bulk of the material is aimed toward professionals in the UK and Britain. Although many of the themes and listed resources are of interest to a broader international audience, readers from outside the UK may not find some of the information about career advancement and development (for instance, information about preparing for CLIP Chartership) applicable to their professional goals.

It would be difficult for a single book to provide comprehensive, in-depth coverage of the extensive list of topics included in the *Toolkit* and still remain accessible for a variety of new professionals. Rather than overwhelm the reader, the *Toolkit* provides an accessible entry point for librarians, archivists, and other new information professionals to begin engaging with important aspects of the profession that are vital to career development, job growth, and professional fulfillment.

***Working in the Virtual Stacks: The New Library and Information Science.* Laura Townsend Kane. Chicago: American Library Association, 2011. 184 pp, ISBN 9780-838911037.**

Reviewed by Laura Costello, Head of Library Materials & Acquisitions, Teachers College, Columbia University

Working in the Virtual Stacks is an update to Laura Townsend Kane's *Straight from the Stacks: A Firsthand Guide to Careers in Library and Information Science* (2003). This new volume focuses on developments in librarianship over the past decade through a collection of interview-based essays. The book features some recognizable figures in the library community, such as Jessamyn West, Sarah Houghton, and Michael Porter, but also focuses on other librarians and information professionals who hold fascinating positions and have important insights into the new landscape of librarianship. These essays together present a comprehensive look at current and emerging library roles, many of which are highly specific and technology focused.

The essays in the book examine librarians in roles as subject specialists, technology gurus, teachers, entrepreneurs, and administrators. While *Straight from the Stacks* used library type (academic, public, special) to organize essays, *Working in the Virtual Stacks* reflects technology and changes over the past several years that mean librarians' professional lives are no longer well defined by the library where they work. This is especially apparent in the "Librarians as Entrepreneurs" section; most of the librarians examined in this chapter are not affiliated with a particular institution, but they are still doing important work to define best practices in the profession.

Many of the librarian career stories feature professionals who began their careers in the 1980s and 1990s as libraries began to embrace technology and who were drawn into leadership roles through their interest in and expertise with emerging digital skills. The book also features librarians who entered the profession much earlier and who have acted as advocates and change makers as libraries have adapted to the technology developments of the last 30 years. The importance of continuous professional development is emphasized here; many of the experienced librarians cited "staying up to date with technology" as the foundation of their success.

Working in the Virtual Stacks is an informative read for early-career librarians and library students. It features a hearty dose of historical context for the profession along with detailed career stories of librarians in leadership roles. The focuses are so diverse that most librarians will find role models and road maps among them. However, if the past 10 years have been any indication, these focuses will continue to shift as new leaders come of age in the virtual stacks.