



OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS **Navigating Research**

How academic users understand, discover, and utilize reference resources

#NavResearch



BOOKLIST ONLINE'S **TOP SHELF REFERENCE**

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Welcome to a bonus August issue of *Top Shelf Reference*! We had so much great content that we had to spread it across two issues. Look for another Real-Life Reference column from Nicolette Sosulski, a Refer Madness selection from Chad Comello, and, of course, a word from our sponsor.

Top Shelf Reference turns three years old this fall, and I'm so proud to have brought this snapshot of practical, real-world reference topics to *Booklist* readers. I've moved on to a new position outside of ALA, but please, feel free to contact [Bill Ott](#), editor and publisher of *Booklist*, with any questions or content suggestions you may have for this newsletter. Your feedback will be invaluable, I'm sure, to the next Reference and Collection Management editor.

All the best,

—Rebecca Vnuk

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Reference: A Changing Use Case and Growing Need

In a newly published [white paper](#), Oxford University Press has found that although recognition of "reference" as a distinct category is declining, the underlying need for this type of contextual information remains significant. A series of in-depth interviews and surveys with librarians, researchers, and students has found that the modern researcher is looking for resources that offer guidance to a field of study, bridging the gap between introductory works and increasingly specialized resources. Both librarians and faculty agreed, however that students do not necessarily recognize overviews of scholarship as "reference" content, or even know where to seek such resources, their utilization thus relies on their visibility and discoverability.

[Download our free white paper to learn more >>](#)

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Real Life Reference: When the Patron Is Your Child

by Nicolette Warisse Sosulski



“Mommommmmmmm . . .”

“Yes?”

“We are doing the Global Reading Challenge at school and they need coaches and I know you are probably too busy but if we do not find more coaches we can’t do as many teams and it is only some meetings and you could come during your lunchtime and you would be better than other parents because you are a librarian if only you could do it.” (Dang, where did this kid get the guilt thing? I would have done it anyway!)

[READ MORE](#)

Refer Madness: Word Nerd

by Chad Comello



There’s an older woman, a regular at my library, who comes to the desk with many different questions but saves the crossword ones for me. This delights me greatly. I am by no means an expert cruciverbalist, but I do love words and the satisfaction that accompanies a conquered crossword puzzle. Looking up definitions is a common reference-desk task for librarians, one that might annoy a few. But as a word nerd, I see it as a gift, and an easy way to learn something new.

[READ MORE](#)

Professional Reading Roundup: Summer 2017

by Rebecca Vnuk

Professional reading materials are reviewed exclusively on *Booklist Online*, and to make sure you haven’t missed any, we present a roundup of some of the titles reviewed from November 2016 to July 2017. Be sure to click through to read the full reviews.

[READ MORE](#)



#twitterreference

by Rebecca Vnuk

Librarians rarely just sit while out at the reference desk. Even when there's not a patron in front of them, they're often furiously typing away at something on their computers. It's likely that they're searching for the answer to a previous question, working on the latest collection report, tweaking a new public desk schedule . . . or perhaps they're tweeting. Let's take a peek.



Kristen Arnett
@Kristen_Arnett

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at a gas station in Delaware and overheard a woman and a man arguing over Whitesnake lyrics – I assisted, as is my right as librarian

10:24 AM - 14 Jun 2017

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At any given moment 23% of librarians are attending a webinar; of those, at least 12% are paying attention

9:20 AM - 21 Jul 2017

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4 67 284



Marie R.
@eleneariel

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I swear I spend half of my day pushing in chairs. #librarylife

2:17 PM - 13 Jul 2017

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3 10 42



Robin Bradford
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We need a Carla Hayden librarian of Congress action figure, right? It's not just me?

11:09 PM - 17 Jul 2017

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10 51 256



The Surly Librarian
@SurlyLibrarian

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I still can't get over the fact that people with a Master's degree can't figure out the difference between 'reply' & 'reply all'

2:47 PM - 21 Jun 2017

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1 35 169



Lousy Librarian
@LousyLibrarian

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"I think I did this wrong."
"No, if you're trying to set a world record for most tabs open in a single browser, you've done spectacularly."

9:48 AM - 25 Jul 2017

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10 117

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