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SRJ: Leading the Genre-Defying LIS Profession

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About Author
Greta Snyder is honored to be the current SRJ Editor-in-Chief though Spring 2020. Snyder writes the SJSU iSchool Career Blog and is passionate about student outreach, professional development and the value of research to improve professional practice. Snyder graduates this Fall 2019 from SJSU iSchool with her MLIS and looks forward to launching her LIS career.
**SRJ Leading the Genre-Defying LIS Profession**

The Library and Information Science profession continues to present an infinite variety of places and ways to practice. The possibilities might be endless, but the values and principles we take into the field must be constantly evaluated, defined and debated. What better way to interrogate our core assumptions and the current demands than through rigorous scholarship and relevant research? Being able to align your values with your professional practice and articulate resources and research to give veracity and traction to your strategic objectives and future directions will make you a better LIS professional. Per the 2019 SJSU iSchool “MLIS Skills at Work Report: A Snapshot of Job Postings Spring 2019,” 68% of jobs seek communication skills and 22% specifically cite research skills as required--making the value of SRJ, the only fully graduate-student run, double-blind peer-reviewed academic journal focusing on publishing graduate student research in the LIS field all the more palatable. A commitment to life-long learning and the personal pursuit of professional development emerge as crucial keys to success in the constantly evolving LIS profession. So, do not fall behind, read our 19th issue: stay curious and keep asking how you can expand the concept of LIS as a profession and the impact you make every day.

We are thrilled to publish an invited contribution from Dr. Deborah Hicks, SJSU iSchool Assistant Professor, that provides a sneak-peak at her prescient research into an emerging and crucial LIS topic: “Debating Diversity; How Twitter Facilitates Professional Discussions.” Hicks, recently awarded a grant for research into this crucial arena of discourse on the nature and influence of Twitter in the context of the LIS field, shares some compelling questions the research will address. Hicks’ contribution discusses the potential of Twitter as a professional tool for increasing inclusion and embracing diversity in the LIS field. Speaking to the profession’s values of diversity and intellectual freedom, Hicks identifies the need for professional organizations to articulate these professional values within the context of emerging forms of online communication and community-building tools, such as Twitter. Hicks’ research will contextualize and tease out core debates within the LIS profession regarding Twitter as a platform and how to align professional values with social media engagement. Hicks’ work could not be any more on point with key questions in our field and professional community and it is a true pleasure to share a preview.

Author Ali N. Sadik-Ogli’s evidence summary reviews a pioneering 2018 study focusing on the circulation and collection of zines from the perspective of zine authors themselves. This study addresses the value of inclusive circulation and collection that incorporates a broader perspective of types of records and content, such as born-digital, self-produced and limited-edition physical productions. In the increasingly virtual and fluid world of artistic and culture production, expanding our vision as LIS professionals of how to increase equity of access while ensuring proper attribution and means for supporting creators is a delicate balance worthy of exploration.

Author Lisa Lowdermilk’s compelling article examines the understudied fiction writing information community. Lowdermilk’s synthesis of literature on
the topic indicates that networking between writers and sharing archives of fictional writing would enrich the information resources for building community through a shared understanding of the creative process and therefore empower a community of current and future storytellers.

Does the concept of genealogical plagiarism interest you? Me too. Author Katherine Richers’ article exploring ethical concerns in genealogical records emerges to address a very prescient topic in the context of an era of emerging mechanisms of big data, artificial intelligence, and increasingly digital health records. Richers raises the question of how the LIS field can be proactive in establishing standards for awareness and education on the topic in order to ensure increased access while upholding the integrity of information and the value of sharing records with the intention to make the past accurately visible through the presence of ethical record keeping.

Author Michelle Leasure analyzes the value of game-based learning as an innovative pedagogical technique in the academic library setting. Leasure specifically looks at the University of Alabama Libraries’ Project Velius and Barlow’s indie video game Her Story, which unintentionally created a perfect blueprint for a narrative-driven, completely immersive library instruction tool. In an era where college students are increasingly “digital natives,” Leasure’s article suggests crucial future directions for libraries to integrate game-based learning into information literacy programming and instruction to increase inclusion and accessibility.

Public libraries are increasingly stepping up as community advocates for public health and social service resource centers. Author Heather Elia’s article draws attention to the history of public libraries supporting the physical, mental, and social health of their patrons and deep dives into an analysis of the role public libraries currently play in public health and community wellness. Elia’s look at the role of public libraries and library professional organizations in addressing the recent opioid crisis adds to the dynamic discourse on such a crucial LIS topic for professional practice.

Author Emily Mercer’s article focuses on the ethics of recordkeeping and archiving for non-profit organizations (NPOs) whose primary missions revolve around civil and human rights, education, the environment, animal protection, or human services. Mercer argues that if these NPOs seek LIS professionals to develop mission-aligned record keeping and sharing strategies this will improve the current and future impact and effectiveness of these NPOs. Mercer’s ability to identify emerging ways for LIS professionals to make a positive impact and effectively expand beyond traditional spheres makes this a must read.

Mercer’s article takes us home by tying together the themes of this issue: best practices in the increasingly cross-discipline, genre-defying LIS field for cultivating diversity, inclusion, equity of access, and community building, and accounting for emerging and digital forms of media and records in archival work, collection management and in professional communication with a constant look to the future while preserving the past with integrity. The breadth of graduate student and practicing professional research included in this issue demonstrate that SRJ remains committed to escape velocity by publishing innovative research.
and asking crucial forward-thinking questions to forward the LIS field and our professional practice every day. SRJ’s passion for pushing the boundaries of how our chosen genre-defying profession can amplify our impact through intellectual exploration and research and sharing and leads us with 2020 vision into our 10th anniversary in 2021. We look forward to celebrating with you, our readers and supporters, and encourage graduate students to submit original research, literature reviews, book reviews, critical essays and evidence summaries. Our anniversary milestone will not be complete without you.

Acknowledgements

I could not end this editorial without waxing poetically about what a superb privilege it has been working with the SRJ’s undercover hero, Managing Editor Rachel Greggs. Greggs’ truly remarkable aplomb, grace, sense of humor, and editing abilities truly made this issue’s quality content milestone possible: with six graduate student submissions published we have now shattered the glass ceiling. I credit this achievement to Greggs’ exceptional leadership and our entire editorial team’s thoughtful and constructive review and feedback to authors. We are truly lucky to have so much talent, passion and dedication on our side; thank you to our phenomenal editors Channon Arabit, Claire Goldstein, Esther Momand, Phyllis Pistorino, Terry Schiavone, and Havilah Steinman.

Dr. Anthony Bernier, our fearless Faculty Advisor, joins Greggs on the SRJ podium of unsung heroes. Bernier’s dedication to furthering student scholarship and professional practice in the LIS field is truly visionary. No amount of celebratory emojis could account for Bernier’s positive influence on student development through SJSU iSchool and in the MLIS program. I remain eternally grateful for Bernier’s insight and guidance in journal outreach efforts, student-centered approach and focus on the future for the LIS profession.

A final profound thank you the Editorial Board, led by iSchool Director Dr. Sandra Hirsh and Associate Director Dr. Linda Main, and to all the faculty and staff at the iSchool that grant our team such professional insight into cultivating graduate scholarship and crucial LIS research at the SJSU iSchool. Our team remains committed to the values of our advisory board who see the opportunities, possibilities, and power of an LIS career and the significance of contributing to research in the field to further our professional practice.

References

December 2019

Understanding Diversity and Intellectual Freedom as #corevalues

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Understanding Diversity and Intellectual Freedom as #corevalues

Keywords
Twitter, diversity, intellectual freedom, equity, American Library Association, ALA, inclusive, professional practices, LIS professionals, librarianship, public libraries, values, community

About Author
Dr. Deborah Hicks, assistant professor at the San José State University School of Information, was recently awarded $5,000 through the Central Research, Scholarship and Creative Activity Grant Program for her project “Debating Diversity; How Twitter Facilitates Professional Discussions.” Hicks, whose research has been published in Library Quarterly, Library Trends and other LIS journals, as well as in her book, Technology and Professional Identity of Librarians: The Making of the Cybrarian (2014), received her PhD in Educational Administration and Leadership from the University of Alberta, her MLIS from Dalhousie University, her MA from York University, and her BA from the University of King’s College. She currently teaches INFO 204 Information Professions in the Master of Library and Information Science program at the iSchool.
Librarianship has a long history of grappling with its stated commitment to diversity. Although the American Library Association’s (ALA) first policy on diversity, “Equity At Issue,” was only drafted in 1986 (Figueroa, 2018), efforts to make the profession more diverse and to create more inclusive spaces for staff and clients have been around much longer (see for example, the history of the Black Caucus of the American Library Association, 2018). Currently, there is little doubt that librarianship is committed to diversity as a core value. This commitment is made evident through the Spectrum Scholarship Program aimed at improving diversity among leaders in the field, recruitment efforts to improve the diversity of the profession’s demographics, professional standards directed towards increasing cultural competencies among information professionals, and countless programs and services aimed at meeting the information needs of underrepresented members of our communities. However, there are recurring questions about the success of such measures. Critics have focused on how professional practices have reinforced racism historically (Schlesselman-Tarango, 2016) and in contemporary librarianship (Alabi, 2015).

Many of these critiques highlight a tension within librarianship over its core values of diversity and intellectual freedom. Gibson, Chancellor, Cooke, Dahlen, and Lee (2017), for instance, question whether librarianship can be both neutral and still meet the needs of people of color. In other words, they are asking if librarianship can uphold its values of intellectual freedom and diversity at the same time. Recently, Twitter has served as a platform for librarians to publicly debate the profession’s core values, particularly diversity and intellectual freedom. These debates not only echoed the tensions identified in the library and information science literature, but they have also resulted in changes to professional approaches to diversity issues.

An excellent example of how these tensions manifest in our professional discourses is the recent debate over the ALA’s revision of “Meeting Rooms: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights.” In February 2018, a working group of the ALA’s Intellectual Freedom Committee (IFC) was tasked with reviewing the association’s intellectual freedom documents. After extended discussion among members of the IFC and invitations for comment from the ALA membership, a draft of the revised interpretation was presented at the ALA Council Forum in June 2018. The final approved revision included hate groups among those who could use library meeting spaces:

Public libraries are bound by the First Amendment and the associated law governing access to a designated public forum. A publicly funded library is not obligated to provide meeting room space to the public, but if it chooses to do so, it cannot discriminate or deny access based upon the viewpoint of the speaker or the content of the speaker’s speech. This encompasses religious, political, and hate speech. If a library allows charities, non-profits, and sports organizations to discuss their activities in library meeting rooms, then the library cannot exclude religious, social, civic, partisan political, or hate groups from discussing
Although there was some limited debate about the inclusion of hate groups during the Council Forum (see LeRue, 2018 for a full timeline of events), the majority of the public debate around this revision occurred on Twitter after it had been approved, with the conversations coalescing around the hashtags #NoHateALA and #IStandWithALA. In August 2018, in response to fierce online opposition, the ALA Council voted to rescind the revised interpretation and sent the draft back to the IFC (“ALA Council Rescinds,” 2018).

A more recent example of the tensions at the center of our core values was the Toronto Public Library’s (TPL) decision to rent theater space to Megan Murphy – a writer and speaker well-known in Canada for speaking out against the rights of transgender women. The event drew protesters (Winsa, 2019), a change.org petition to cancel the event (Leung, 2019), and garnered international attention (“Megan Murphy,” 2019). Many librarians and library associations applauded the decision to continue the event, arguing it promoted intellectual freedom and free expression (see, for example, CFLA-FCAB, 2019). However, this support was contested by organizations such as the Toronto Public Library Workers Union (2019), the York University Faculty Association’s librarians and archivists (krisjoseph, 2019), and groups of unaffiliated librarians (Bird, n.d.), who wrote open letters condemning the decision to continue the event. Not surprisingly, the event generated its own hashtag on Twitter (#TakeBackTPL).

These debates highlight how librarians are currently attempting to collectively define and understand their core values. The different outcomes of these events strongly suggest that there is no immediate end to these debates or tensions. They reflect larger societal tensions and have been at the core of our professional work for a long time. Elmborg (2016) describes how the controversial nature of the profession’s core values has been around since their initial articulation in 2000. Many of the critiques he outlines are grounded in how the core values have been articulated by the American Library Association, specifically that the values are grounded in a neo-liberal rhetoric that focuses on the economy and job growth. Others have argued the ALA’s definitions are too simplistic. Mathuews (2016), for example, says the ALA’s various statements of diversity, as found in the Library Bill of Rights (1996) and the Code of Ethics (2008), focus on diversity through the lens of representation, which only addresses one part of a much more complex issue. Dresang (2006) suggests that the seemingly clear-cut value of intellectual freedom, namely the “freedom to think or believe what one will, freedom to express one’s thoughts and beliefs in unrestricted manners and means, and freedom to access information and ideas regardless of the content or viewpoints of the author(s) or the age, background, or beliefs of the receiver,” (p. 169) is not so clear-cut in practice, due in part to legal interpretations and public opinion.
These events also highlight the power of Twitter as a platform for professional discussions. Traditionally, librarians have been published in magazines and journals and gather at professional conferences to discuss, debate, and find consensus around core values, controversial topics, and the future directions of the field. Social media platforms, such as Twitter, have provided additional ways for librarians to explore and consider these issues. What distinguishes social media communication is its fast pace and the opportunity for open dialogue among geographically dispersed people. In addition, the use of affordances such as hashtags mean that ideas and discussions can spread organically throughout a community (Saxton, Niyirora, Guo, & Waters, 2015). There is a clear expectation that librarians should be using Twitter for connecting with other librarians and keeping “tabs on developing issues” (McLaughlin, 2018, p. 57); however, research into how librarians use social media is limited. Although the #critlib Twitter community, an activist community within librarianship focused on social justice issues, has received some attention within the literature (Almeida, 2018; Coombs & Rhinesmith, 2018), most research is focused on how libraries are using Twitter to interact with clients (Shiri and Rathi, 2013). Research focusing on allied professions has demonstrated that Twitter, in particular, provides an online space for community development and relationship building among professionals (Gruzd, Takhteyev, & Wellman, 2011).

I will be examining both the current debates surrounding the profession’s core values and how librarians use Twitter to connect in my grant-funded research project: “Debating Diversity: How Twitter Facilitates Professional Discussions.” My earlier research into librarians’ professional identity highlighted the important role upholding the values of librarianship plays in the profession’s identity. In fact, upholding the values of librarianship has even been described as a “professional obligation” (Selby, 2012, p. 38). In my earlier data set, privacy, access to information, and freedom of expression were the most frequently mentioned values. For some librarians, these professional values even took precedence over personal values, which one of my public librarian participants described in the following way: “Do I really want little Janie coming to storytime and walking past a computer with hardcore pornography on it? No I don’t. And so as a person, I don’t actually want that unfettered access to information. As a librarian I do.” This work will build on my past research by examining the events surrounding the ALA’s revision of “Meeting Rooms: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights” and its subsequent debates on Twitter. This approach was chosen because the depth of data required to complete the study allows the complexity surrounding the case to be captured, namely the interactions, communications, relationships, and practices which occurred during the event (Mills, Durepos & Wiebe, 2010). It is particularly suited to the study of professional communities (Hamilton & Corbett-Whittier, 2013). This project will address two critical gaps within LIS. First, it will provide an increased awareness of how librarians understand the core values of diversity and intellectual freedom. By incorporating empirical evidence from practitioners, this project will bring added nuance to the discussions that already surround these values in the LIS literature. This will not only add additional clarity to this specific debate, but also
to how debates within librarianship connect to and reflect similar conversations occurring in higher education (Rawlinson, 2019), the tech industry (Moorhead, 2019), and other allied professions and sectors. Secondly, it will also generate an understanding of how librarians use Twitter to build community. There is little doubt that librarianship is committed to diversity as a core value. Similarly, there is little doubt that librarians use social media to stay connected with each other, learn from each other, and stay up-to-date on the trends and issues facing librarianship. By providing clarity to librarians’ understanding of diversity and intellectual freedom as core values, this project will add context and nuance to core debates within the profession.
References


The Information Behaviors of Fiction Writers: A Systematic Approach to an Understudied Information Community

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The Information Behaviors of Fiction Writers: A Systematic Approach to an Understudied Information Community

Abstract
Within the context of creative information communities in general, fiction writers remain a relatively understudied community. This article seeks to rectify that gap by highlighting the information behaviors of fiction writers, including the ways in which they network, as well as the processes they use when writing. In doing so, it reveals that fiction writers of all genres have many experiences in common, such as the "seed incident" that serves as the starting point when writing fiction. In addition, it examines fiction writers' impact on readers, with the implication that everyone—writers and non-writers alike—would benefit from understanding fiction writers' information behaviors. Most importantly, this literature review argues that further research on writers' authorial archives would greatly enhance our understanding of this group's information behaviors. These archives are arguably the single most valuable tool to understanding both fiction writers themselves and the writing process in general.

Keywords
fiction, writers, information behaviors, information communities, authorial archives

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Thank you to Professor Steven Tash for his feedback on this literature review. I thoroughly enjoyed taking INFO 200 with him.

About Author
Lisa Lowdermilk is a copy and content writer, public speaker, and oncology data specialist. She is passionate about writing in all its forms.

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Fiction writers thrive on information. Whether it’s getting the word out on their latest book or acquiring inspiration for their work-in-progress, fiction writers would cease to exist without information. Complicating their need for information, however, is the fact that the process of writing is different for every writer, and understanding how to tap into one’s creative potential remains hazy. However, studying fiction writers’ information behaviors can help both aspiring and pre-established authors identify areas of commonality amongst themselves, as well as ways to overcome obstacles and reach their full potential. This review sheds light on fiction writers’ information behaviors, the importance of networking amongst writers, the non-verbal “interaction” between readers and text, the ways fiction writers enrich our understanding of the world around us, the debate over plotting versus “pantsing,” the similarities between authors, and how authorial archives can enhance our understanding of the writing process. Lastly, this review identifies gaps within this field currently and suggests areas of future study.

Literature Review

The first study examines 10 core documents. Desrochers and Pecoskie (2015) selected these documents with the aim of understanding the information behaviors of writers, as well as guiding readers towards other literature that could lead to additional breakthroughs within this field. This approach is an unusually systematic way of studying such a creative field and contrasts with the more informal interview employed by another fiction writing researcher. Desrochers and Pecoskie (2015) examine the notions of legitimation, consecration, and professionalism. These notions state that writers generally need to be published (legitimation), be recognized by other writers and critics for their authorial abilities (consecration), and write full-time, preferably maintaining membership within writing associations while doing so (professionalism) (Desrochers & Pecoskie, 2015).

This school of thought is important for identifying areas of further research, as the fiction writing community is very difficult to study. This difficulty stems from the fact that it’s not always easy to define what a “fiction writer” is. Indeed, Desrochers and Pecoskie (2015) note that writers’ information-seeking behaviors can be studied within the context of creative groups in general (e.g. musicians, actors, etc.). Naturally, this lack of distinction makes it difficult to draw conclusions on writers specifically. It’s also important to note that fiction writers can now arguably achieve professional status through digital means (Twitter, fan fiction websites, etc.) (Desrochers & Pecoskie, 2015). Thus, the aforementioned “professionalism” requirement—while important—may not apply to all fiction writers. That is, some writers may not write full-time or maintain membership within writing organizations but still earn income and achieve recognition as writers. Researchers looking for a broad overview of fiction writers in general should probably ignore this distinction, while those looking for a more accurate view should keep it in mind but not fixate on it.
The other studies described in this paper present their findings in a less formalized way but offer important insights on common subtopics within the fiction writing community nonetheless. One such subtopic is the idea that networking with other writers is crucial to authorial satisfaction and success. Flanders (2015) describes multiple communities for writers, including The Creative Penn and The Insecure Writers Support Group. Both of these communities are run by best-selling authors and aim to help budding writers network, gather inspiration, and most importantly, maintain hope that their dream is achievable. As Flanders (2015) notes, community is especially important to writers, due to the isolated nature of writing. Strictly speaking, one person could write a novel from start to finish alone. However, anyone who reads the acknowledgements section of a novel knows that many people are typically involved in the writing process, including other writers (e.g. writing groups), agents, editors, publishers, etc., as well as friends and family. Part of the reason we view writing as such a solitary process is because these names rarely (if ever) appear on the cover of a published book. But make no mistake: writing is as much of a team effort as playing soccer or putting out a fire.

Flanders’s point about the importance of networks for writers is further explored in Gouthro’s (2014) article “Who Gets to be a Writer? Exploring Identity and Learning Issues in Becoming a Fiction Author.” This article explains the importance of technology in making connections (Gouthro, 2014). Less than a century ago, the idea that a budding American author could instantly communicate with an Australian author would have seemed like something out of a science fiction novel. Now, however, authors can market their works (even their works-in-progress) globally and use digital technology to meet authors they would never have heard of without said technology. And if that’s not enough, fans and aspiring writers can ask their beloved authors questions and potentially get a response within minutes.

Despite all of these perks, digital technologies are not without their drawbacks. As Wilkins (2014) notes, the need for authors to use social media to market their books presents a significant obstacle to writing productivity. While there is no easy solution to this problem, keeping a balanced perspective on social media and recognizing both its benefits and drawbacks is key to authorial success.

Another subtopic explored by fiction writing researchers involves the non-verbal “interaction” between readers and fiction texts. Specifically, Spindler (2008) describes how authors may purposefully write texts with open-ended meanings, thereby encouraging readers to read between the lines and draw from their own backgrounds to interpret the text. Although such interactions are far more ambiguous than, say, a face-to-face conversation with a best-selling author, they nonetheless reinforce the idea that writing is a dynamic social process that derives value from its fans as much as it does from its creator. Without readers, a novel—no matter how well-written—is little more than a collection of words.

Taking this interaction between writers and text one step further, Kirklin and Richardson (2001) address the unique issue of how fiction can benefit professionals outside the arts and humanities. Considering that the arts and sciences have so long been viewed as separate—sometimes even competing—
entities, the idea that artists have much to teach scientists is very compelling. Kirklin and Richardson (2001) argue that the arts—including fiction writing—can provide insight into patient suffering and increase physicians’ empathy for the people they care for. Although empathy technically cannot be taught, fiction and other arts can shed light on the human condition and the importance of empathizing in a way the sciences cannot. That statement is not meant in any way to diminish the value of the “hard” sciences—rather, it is meant to illustrate that art and science complement one another quite nicely.

The idea that fiction has much to teach readers about the natural world is echoed in Matthew Hollow’s (2010) “Writing Science Fiction: A Beginner’s Guide for Historians.” In this piece, Hollow (2010)—drawing on evidence from Widdicombe (2009)—argues that writing science fiction is very similar to writing historical fiction in the sense that both draw thought-provoking parallels with the past and future alike. By extension, one might argue that examining the time period and cultural context in which a writer pens a story might reveal insights into the world around us. In other words, fiction and nonfiction may not be such diametrically opposed realms, after all.

A very different but equally important debate within the community of fiction writers is the issue of authors who meticulously outline every scene and writers who write by the seat of their pants. For simplicity’s sake, the outliners will henceforth be referred to as the “plotters,” while the spontaneous writers will be referred to by the colloquial term “pantsers.” John Grisham, a notorious plotter, outlines his novels before starting them, noting that the more thorough his outlines are, the easier it is for him to write (as cited in Igarashi, 2015). Considering what a daunting venture novel writing is, Grisham’s approach appears to be the recipe for success. After all, academic writers who meticulously outline their research papers tend to produce clearer, more profound research than those who spontaneously “wing” their thesis, main points, etc.

However, writers like Haruki Murakami—who take great joy in freewriting and discovering the story as they go—produce novels just as insightful and mesmerizing as their outlining counterparts. Murakami explains his approach with his novel *Hard-Boiled Wonderland and the End of the World*: “If you plan everything, you’d be kidding your subconscious. So, I don’t plan anything” (as cited in Harding, 1994). Murakami’s approach calls to mind the struggling author who relies on flights of inspiration to finish a novel. Indeed, one would think that this approach would make for an unreliable writing schedule and result in few novels being produced over time. However, the prolific Murakami has authored dozens of works, including novels, short stories, and essays, defying the assumption that only plotters can be prolific. Thus, both plotters and “pantsers” have equally valid approaches to writing. Experimentation is the best way to determine if plotting or “pantsing” is more effective for an individual writer.

Despite differences in how they plan their novels, authors describe several similar incidents within the writing process in Doyle’s (1998) interview with five writers. Now, as Doyle (1998) herself notes in this interview, these five writers’ experiences may not be representative of the writing population as a whole.
However, it’s relatively safe to say that Doyle’s (1998) findings can likely be generalized to a larger population, as the “seed incident,” (i.e., an event in the author’s life that is sufficiently unusual to merit writing about) and other characteristics described in this study are common to all writers. Since so much of what goes on during the writing process is nebulous and difficult to study quantitatively (as one might study, say, a revolutionary cancer drug), interviews are a necessary methodology when studying the fiction writing community.

Studies like Doyle’s (1998) interview have led other researchers—including Hobbs (2006)—to investigate relatively unexplored areas of the fiction writing process, including writers’ literary archives. This study discusses characteristics of writers’ archives, including notes, drafts, and other products reflecting the written work in its unfinished form. It also provides intriguing insights into how writers’ works evolve over time, how they stay organized (one writer uses color-coding), and more (Hobbs, 2006). Unfortunately, due to the incomplete and—subjectively speaking—flawed nature of these archives, many writers are understandably reluctant to share them with others. “As one prominent Canadian writer recently commented… ‘I am rather reluctant to have [my unedited work] displayed, as those pages can resemble an exam paper in which one received a D-’” (as cited in Hobbs, 2006, p. 110). Such reluctance to share these literary archives naturally creates a gap in information on the pre-writing processes within the fiction writing community—a gap that can only be addressed with further study.

Fortunately, some authors are willing to share their authorial archives. Brandon Sanderson, Dan Wells, Howard Tayler, and Mary Robinette Kowal (2016) cohost an excellent podcast called Writing Excuses, which offers advice to budding speculative fiction writers. One of the most notable features of this podcast is the authors’ willingness to expose flaws within their writing. In episode 4.31, the prolific Sanderson shares a novel he wrote as a teenager with the intent of exposing what he did wrong. Specifically, Sanderson notes that he used too many adverbs, as well as an ineffective dialogue tag. His fellow podcasters interject and identify potential solutions to strengthen his writing. This idea of using the authors’ work as a learning tool (and identifying what the authors do right as well) continues in later seasons, with an in-depth examination of Kowal’s novel Ghost Talkers in episode 11.44.

Indeed, this idea was so well-received, the authors even released Shadows Beneath: The Writing Excuses Anthology. In addition to the excellent stories within this anthology, the authors also included their brainstorming, first drafts, edits, essays describing the writing process, transcripts of writing workshop sessions, and more (Sanderson, Kowal, Wells, & Tayler, 2014, Welcome to The Writing Excuses Anthology). In other words, this anthology is a work by writers for writers. Just as importantly, it is one of few works that shows just how messy the process of writing a book truly is.

**Compare and Contrast**
As for how the scholarly and professional works compare, the scholarly works (i.e., the study of 10 core documents, as well as the works of Spindler, Flanders, etc.) tend to be broader in scope and present more generalized findings within the fiction community, whereas the professional works (e.g., Murakami explaining his approach to writing, the Writing Excuses podcast, etc.) tend to offer advice from writers seeking to help other writers. (Spindler, 2008; Widdicombe, 2009; Hollow, 2010) illustrate how fiction provides insight into the world around us. Conversely, Sanderson, Kowal, Wells, and Tayler (2016) typically focus more specifically on fiction itself and how writers can improve their craft in their podcast Writing Excuses. In writer jargon, the scholarly works tell the reader about the findings within the fiction writing community, whereas the professional works show the reader these findings through their authors’ firsthand experiences. Both works consistently illustrate the importance of networking with other writers. Overall, the two types of sources complement one another nicely and provide much insight into the nebulous field of fiction writing.

**Conclusion**

The fiction writing community in general is a relatively understudied information community. As Desrochers and Pecoskie (2014) note, LIS studies have typically focused on other creative communities, with surprisingly little research being conducted on fiction writers. Thus, it’s important to verify that studies done on other creative individuals can indeed be generalized to fiction writers before drawing conclusions. Although research has been done on various aspects of the fiction writing community—including information needs, networking, subtext, plotting, and more—much work remains to be done on literary archives, including what Hobbs (2006) dubs the “psychology of archives” (p. 116)—or the relationship between authors themselves (i.e., the frame of mind from which they’re writing, cultural context, occupation, and other influencing factors)—and the texts they produce. With authorial permission, examining writers’ archives could reveal an enormous amount of information about written works, including authorial intention, unique struggles encountered throughout the writing process, and so much more. Authors like the aforementioned Writing Excuses crew do an excellent job of diminishing this gap, but the practice of authors sharing their archives must become more commonplace for more generalized insight to be gained. Because awareness of fiction writing and the work that goes into it could help budding and established fiction authors alike, more widespread adaptation of this trend is ideal.
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Genealogical Plagiarism and the Library Community

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Genealogical Plagiarism and the Library Community

Abstract
Plagiarism is regarded as an academic crime, but can affect hobbies that rely on research and information sharing such as genealogy. The issue is well-known within the genealogy community. However, information professionals who aid genealogists in their research may not know enough about the issue. How can the library field respond constructively to the issue of uncontrolled plagiarism in genealogy? While the genealogy community condemns plagiarism and offers resources to correct it, current library practices concentrate on services and not on plagiarism education in the genealogy context, concentrating more on copyright and legal problems. The library field can help professionals respond to uncontrolled plagiarism in genealogy by studying the issue. Recommendations for further action include more research on the information-seeking behaviors of genealogists, training information professionals to give both copyright and plagiarism attention and an increase in workshops to educate genealogists on citation.

Keywords
genealogy, plagiarism, information seeking, online communities, digital literacy

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Genealogy is a popular hobby in the twenty-first century. Television shows such as *Who Do You Think You Are* and *Finding Your Roots* connect public personalities with their own private stories. Genealogists can be found as freelancers on Fiverr or on Ancestry.com asking other users for suggestions on how to find a great-aunt who vanished in the 1920s. While the genealogy community proliferates online, the local library remains a valuable source for the hobby. Besides providing access to records and holding workshops that teach amateur genealogists successful strategies for finding the information they need, librarians can also educate genealogists about ethical concerns such as plagiarism of research and photos. This raises the question of how the library field can react constructively to uncontrolled plagiarism in genealogy.

The current standards in the library and the genealogy communities may not be enough to affect the issue of plagiarism of research. A comparison of current standards from the genealogy and library communities on how to handle plagiarism to how genealogists in the online community view the issue of plagiarism is needed to determine gaps in professionals’ knowledge. After highlighting the gaps, it is necessary to discuss the importance of intellectual honesty in professional life and what more can be done to educate information professionals on the problem so that they can help their genealogist patrons more effectively.

When one plagiarizes, one “steal[s] and pass[es] off (the ideas or words of another) as one's own : use[s] (another's production) without crediting the source” (“Plagiarize,” 2019, para 1). Plagiarism is thought of as the ultimate academic crime, but plagiarism can be a problem in professional life and in research-oriented hobbies like genealogy. The advent of the web is also important in a discussion of plagiarism in genealogy as the web has made information sharing easier. What this means for information professionals is that besides guiding genealogists in the use of databases and other sources for records, information professionals can educate genealogists on ways to credit their sources properly. Uncontrolled plagiarism erodes trust in information sharing and hinders genealogists’ goals. Librarians can help restore that trust.

**Literature Review**

While genealogy is often a subject in library and information science scholarship, little research exists on plagiarism in genealogy. Relevant sources are more likely to be found in the library community and the genealogical community. Both communities have ethical standards regarding information sharing; these can be found through professional associations and blogs by community members. The American Library Association has its own committee focusing on genealogy. The committee “provides a forum serving the interests of genealogists and of librarians whose work is in, or related to, the field of genealogy…its objective is to train and assist librarians, especially in history departments and public libraries, who provide service to genealogists” (“Genealogy Committee,” 2019, para 1). Genealogists and those who serve them in the information profession have a voice in a major library organization. Since the committee is supposed to aid librarians who work with the genealogy community, they should address ethical concerns somewhere in their guidelines.
The committee’s webpage has a section titled “Genealogy Guidelines and Standards.” These consist of guidelines for establishing local collections, for developing genealogical services and collections and for establishing criteria for a unit on genealogical research in schools of library and information science. The section on local collections does not have ethical standards beyond access policy. The section on developing beginning genealogical collections has more promising material. As part of necessary services, information professionals focusing on genealogy should help patrons find the information they need and instruct them on how to do so (“Guidelines for developing a core genealogy collection,” 2007). They should also refer genealogists to appropriate libraries and other institutions if their institution does not have the research materials they need. Guides should be provided for accessing research materials (“Guidelines for developing a core genealogy collection,” 2007). The guidelines cover rules for information sharing and access, but not plagiarism or how to keep patrons from committing it.

The committee’s section on establishing a unit on genealogical research in schools of library and information science lists the study of “ethical and legal issues relating to genealogical librarianship” as a course objective (“Guidelines for a unit or course of instruction in genealogical research,” 2007, para. 2). Besides being conscious of the ethics of librarianship and genealogical research, “librarians should be aware of any local, state, or Federal laws that apply to genealogical research and publishing, especially relating to the issues of records access, privacy, and copyright (“Guidelines for a unit or course of instruction in genealogical research,” 2007, para. 11). Copyright and privacy are acknowledged here, but not plagiarism. The “Consumer Issues” section mentions that librarians ought to be familiar with commercial genealogical databases in order to answer patron questions (“Guidelines for a unit or course of instruction in genealogical research,” 2007). This would be an opportunity to include plagiarism as an explicit ethical concern, but the opportunity is not taken.

The Board for Certification of Genealogists, a nonprofit founded in 1964 for credentialing genealogists (“About BCG,” 2017), has a Code of Ethics. Under this code, a genealogist is meant to protect the public, the client, the profession and people who provide DNA samples. In protecting the public, the genealogist is supposed to quote accurately, cite their sources, present their fees and abilities accurately, keep genealogical information confidential unless they have permission to share it and not “publish or publicize” anything they know to be false (“About BCG,” 2017). In protecting the client, genealogists are supposed to reveal potential conflicts of interest, take on paid research commissions only after they have clarified their fees and the scope of the project with the client, explain honestly why a project may not be feasible within the time or budget allotted, and not publish their research without the client’s consent (“About BCG,” 2017). This set of standards alludes to plagiarism through citation and accurate quoting. Like the training guidelines from the American Library Association’s committee on genealogy, the opportunity for constructive ways to handle uncontrolled plagiarism in genealogy is not explicitly taken.

The last two sections of the code focus on protecting the profession and protecting those who submit DNA samples. To protect the profession, the
genealogist should expose genealogical fraud but not ruin another genealogist, should not pass off someone else’s work as theirs and should cite others’ material properly. In protecting those submitting DNA samples, the genealogist would explain the risks (like ethnicity surprises) and how privacy is not guaranteed. The genealogist would also follow the terms of the person’s consent (“About BCG,” 2019). These standards more explicitly deal with the common definition of plagiarism without naming it.

The sampling of standards shows that plagiarism does not seem to be as major of an issue as copyright. However, plagiarism in the online genealogy community is well documented. Ancestry.com used to offer a search engine called OneWorldTree that connected users’ trees as a database until 2013 (“Ancestry.com OneWorldTree,” 2013). A new version, FamilyTrees, currently exists, and trees can be set as public or private. Users who have set their tree to private can be contacted for guest access to their trees. Users could remove their trees from OneWorldTree if they wished (“Ancestry.com OneWorldTree,” 2013). While some users found OneWorldTree useful for filling in information, others objected due to the potential for plagiarism of their more detailed research. Marks (2013) hated the idea of sharing personal family photos via OneWorldTree because he treated them as heirlooms. Close family members could access them, but not casual researchers who were not family. He took pride in the work he performed for family tree research. OneWorldTree also fostered sloppy research through the potential for plagiarism. The Ancestry Insider gives examples of recurring problems with the program: “in my opinion, like Ancestral File before it and New FamilySearch's Family Tree after it, OWT suffers from unmerged-duplicates, incorrect merges, endless loops and known inaccuracies” (“OneWorldTree Ancestry.com Dendrology 101: OneWorldTree®,” 2008). When a service doesn’t protect its users, they lose trust in it. When users abuse each other’s trust in a hobby that relies on information sharing, the hobby becomes less enjoyable.

Users appear to be concerned with both plagiarism and copyright. Russell (2014) and Tanner (2014) explain the legal implications of plagiarizing trees and research while The Ancestry Insider breaks down the passages that an author has said to have copied and compares them to passages in the original sources (“More accusations of plagiarism leveled at Barry Elwell,” 2016). Grossberg (2004), as a history journal editor, discusses the impact of plagiarism on professional research. He has seen both sides: “grappling with charges of plagiarism led me to identify with the victims and to share their sense of being wronged” (Grossberg, 2004).

Like Marks (2013), hard work in genealogy is a point of professional and personal pride for Grossberg. Author Barry Elwell was accused of stealing from guides put out by FamilySearch and Rootsweb (“More accusations of plagiarism leveled at Barry Elwell,” 2016). Eastman (2016) suggests that the internet is to blame. The internet is a tool; the actions of users and companies are promoting plagiarism.

Plagiarism can be a major ethical crime in professional life as well as in a hobby. Bennett (2016) voices her own concerns about plagiarism as a student of the National Institute of Genealogical Studies: “I guess since it is a real fear it makes me think about the issue even more. At times, I feel like I may be in the
minority on this point, though” (Bennett, 2016, para. 9). She implies that, in her experience, genealogist peers do not seem to be that concerned with plagiarism. This is not reflected by the content of the community materials. One could argue that in the genealogical community, the amateur members care more about plagiarism than the associations, and therefore provide sources for peers like Bennett.

**Discussion**

As mentioned earlier, very few scholarly sources appear to exist about plagiarism in genealogy. Plagiarism in genealogy is known in the community, but professional associations have not quite caught up to their level. Copyright ethics and plagiarism are different issues, but copyright ethics seem to have the most scrutiny. Standards in both communities focus more on copyright possibly because of the legal implications as well as the moral and ethical implications, but plagiarism should not be ignored or downplayed. Users are concerned about plagiarism, but users and services such as Ancestry.com commit or foster plagiarism.

**Conclusion**

Plagiarism in genealogy deserves more study in the library and information science field. Increased study could help the field react to plagiarism in genealogy with methods responsive to their audience. Aiding amateur genealogists in ethically researching and citing their information acts as outreach. Information professionals looking to attract more genealogists to their institutions can hold workshops on relevant topics. They could adapt their finding aids to use keywords that would retrieve more specific information for genealogists. Performing user research for creating information retrieval systems can determine what users want. Workshop subjects can include search strategies and digital literacy as well as proper citation. These workshops could be appropriate for other demographics such as students, drawing more patrons to the library. Research shows that genealogists form their own search networks. Surveys about how genealogists using the web view plagiarism safeguards by professional services could inform prevention efforts, as well as surveys for family history researchers seeking to determine motivations behind plagiarism in genealogy.

Raising awareness among the library community about plagiarism in genealogy is part of the library community’s duty to its users. In the American Library Association’s Code of Ethics, librarians are meant to respect intellectual property rights: “we respect intellectual property rights and advocate balance between the interests of information users and rights holders” (“Professional Ethics,” 2008). By educating genealogists and related researchers on proper citation methods and what qualifies as plagiarism, we are keeping to the ethics laid out by the American Library Association. Information sharing is valuable; mentoring other genealogists should not cease because of fears of plagiarism.
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Her Story: Accidental Library Instruction

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Her Story: Accidental Library Instruction

Abstract
Game-based learning is a relatively new pedagogical method that typically targets students of the current and upcoming generations. Librarians have gradually begun experimenting with gamifying elements of library and research skills instruction to varying degrees of success. While some case studies and theoretical analyses are available currently, more published data will be necessary to evaluate and direct the development of game-based library instruction in the coming years. This paper explores attempts to use game-based learning techniques in library instruction courses and sessions, specifically highlighting Project Velius (developed by the University of Alabama Libraries) and its similarities to the commercially successful game Her Story, which was created for purely entertainment purposes but manages to present as an effective library instruction tool nonetheless. This examination suggests that academic libraries may be more capable in this arena than commonly believed, and the author ultimately recommends that academic libraries further embrace this pedagogical trend.

Keywords
Library Instruction, Game-Based Learning, Gamification, Education, Games, Academic Libraries

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Her Story: Accidental Library Instruction

Her Story is an Indie (developed independently rather than through a large production company, in this case by Sam Barlow) video game that was released in 2015. The core of the game is a fictional police database containing clips of archived video footage of interviews from a cold case. The player assumes the role of detective, hunting down the clips and attempting to piece together the story to solve the case. It was nominated for and won several awards, including Game of the Year (Barlow, 2014a).

For the purposes of this paper, however, the most interesting aspect of Her Story is the core gameplay mechanic. The entire game takes place within the fictional police department database, and all the player can do is search the database for video files and play said files when they find them. This fictional database functions like most real databases, using keyword searches and Boolean operators to return results appropriate for the query. At the start of the game, the player has only the name of the woman being interviewed and the vague idea that this is a “missing person” case; everything else must be gleaned from found video clips and then plugged back into the database to unearth more results (Barlow, 2015). In short, the player is researching this narrative and discovering new avenues to investigate as they go, much as an academic scholar would research any other topic.

Without intending to, Barlow created a highly successful, narrative-driven, completely immersive library instruction tool. While the game alone obviously fails to cover the entire content of a full library instruction course or session, it does have the advantages of engaging players (learners) on its own merits and encouraging organic discovery-based learning. Traditional library instruction techniques unfortunately tend to lack these qualities, leading to a disconnect between the current pedagogy and current and future generations of library users and students. Librarians have not been blind to the development of game-based learning as a new pedagogy and have experimented with incorporating games into one-shot sessions and introductory activities, but they seem to have mostly limited themselves to these smaller efforts rather than fully embracing and investing in larger projects. One notable exception is the University of Alabama Libraries’ Project Velius, which will be compared to Her Story in terms of scope, intention, and effectiveness in order to examine the potential gains if libraries were to more fully invest in game-based learning. Librarians cannot afford to hesitate any longer at this juncture between traditional pedagogy and newer, game-based methods; in order to remain relevant and reach current and future library users effectively, librarians should draw inspiration from fully-realized projects like Her Story in order to develop and implement their own immersive, organic library instruction tools.

Teaching Information Literacy and Research Skills Today

Library instruction is a key component in most academic librarians’ job descriptions, and it tends to consume a significant portion of their working time. After all, the primary purpose of most academic libraries is to serve the students and faculty in their research pursuits. Additionally, there is a well-documented
correlation between students’ understanding and use of library resources, higher graduation rates, and higher GPAs upon graduation (Omeluzor, Akibu, Dika, & Ukangwa, 2017, pp. 7-9). Furthermore, many academic libraries rely on student and faculty usage statistics and success rates to justify and secure funding, so ensuring that the academic community is both aware of library resource offerings and is comfortable using them has become very important.

Unfortunately, recent studies and anecdotal reflections both suggest that students’ motivation and engagement with library instruction is declining. Buckley, E. Doyle and S. Doyle (2016) have connected this disturbing trend, along with similar statistics demonstrating a decline in class attendance, difficulties prompting engaging discussions in class, and even a rise in plagiarism and cheating incidents, with a disconnect between traditional pedagogical methods and the upcoming generation of students. “Generation Z” students seem to prefer highly social, fast-paced, technology-infused learning environments (Buckley et al., 2016, pp. 1-3). This conclusion has been borne out of several similar studies from around the world, including Zhang, Robb, Eyerman, and Goodman’s (2017) examination of international students in higher education, as well as Omeluzor, Akibu, Dika, and Ukangwa’s (2017) study of modern academic library instruction in Africa. In fact, in the latter study, their primary concluding recommendation was for librarians to adopt more modern methods of delivering content by using information and communication technologies (ICT) more frequently.

The fact that modern students are largely “digital natives” has a profound impact on how they learn and how they approach problems or tasks generally; it also seems to be creating a significant psychological roadblock to engagement with library instruction. A common thread across studies of modern library instruction students has been that they seem to believe they already know how to use the internet to gather research effectively (Buckley et al., 2016, pp. 3-4). Most of them have been using Google since they first discovered the internet, so they feel library instruction is something they simply do not need. It is not uncommon for this misconception to bleed over into faculty perceptions of library instruction, or even to the perceptions of the librarians themselves. In Fundamentals of Library Instruction, McAdoo (2012) notes that “just because a student has some proficiency with a computer does not necessarily mean he can use those skills to locate and retrieve relevant information” (p. 100). There is a world of difference between aptly Googling simple questions and efficiently combing through scholarly literature to find relevant research. The question is how to keep modern students engaged enough to learn the more specialized skills that library instruction can offer.

**Game-Based Learning**

Gamification is simply the application of game elements to other non-game aspects of life, and it is rapidly becoming a popular buzzword in many industries. Corporations in the retail and entertainment industries have been using gamified elements to drive sales and increase loyalty among customers for decades, and
Educators have increasingly begun incorporating gamification strategies to keep students engaged and increase student understanding of instructional content.

Because game-based learning is still very much a developing pedagogical method, some of the vocabulary can be confusing. “Game-based learning” is an umbrella term for two different pedagogical methods: gamification and “Serious Games” instruction (Kaneko, Saito, Nohara, Kudo, & Yamada, 2018, p. 570). Serious Games instruction is having a learner play a game through which they acquire the full curriculum or content; the entire learning experience is contained within the game in these scenarios. Because this is a radically different approach to education, experiments using this technique are few and far between and tend to be limited to online or distance learning environments. Gamification is the far more immediately attainable and broadly applicable method, wherein some game elements are incorporated into an otherwise traditional learning environment. These game elements could be as general as teamwork and/or competition, or they could be as specific as leveling-up systems, point accrual with rewards, and/or rank and achievement systems. (Kaneko et al., 2018, pp. 570-571).

There are numerous benefits to gamifying learning experiences, as outlined by Gee (2007) in *What Video Games Have to Teach Us About Learning and Literacy*. For each individual learner, games offer the chance to learn by doing, encouraging experimentation and active, discovery-based learning. Numerous studies have proven that this sort of active, participatory learning often leads to more lasting knowledge and greater understanding than traditional lecture-style teaching. Additionally, games with teamwork elements foster a learning community, allowing students to build support networks with their peers that they can turn to if they encounter a difficult concept or problem. Games with intense competitive elements can draw in competitively-motivated students, encouraging them to further apply themselves in order to get ahead (Gee, 2007). These benefits may be amplified for distance/online learners in particular, as they often struggle with self-motivation and self-regulation as far as assignments and deadlines are concerned. The built-in scaffolding inherent to a multi-level game allows for big projects to be broken up into smaller tasks with more manageable deadlines, and if the game is enjoyable, motivation and willingness to participate can be expected to increase (Kaufmann, 2018, p. 129). Distance learners also often report a sense of isolation from their fellow students and the greater academic community, which can be remedied to some extent by social elements within games. Most games also incorporate and facilitate quick feedback loops, which can encourage communication with and familiarity with instructors (Kaufmann, 2018, p. 130).

In addition to the benefits provided for students, gamification also lends itself to great assessment opportunities for librarians, beyond the typical post-experience quizzes and self-reporting. Due to the nature of multi-level games, students typically will have to demonstrate mastery of the current content in order to earn points or move forward to the next level, so progression through the game can serve as an assessment marker in and of itself (Smale, 2011, p. 39). General competencies like critical thinking and inquiry skills are usually difficult to accurately measure, but can often be evaluated by observing gameplay.
interactions. This sort of “stealth assessment” has the additional benefit of not being obvious to students, which often produces more accurate data than self-reported responses or response collections in which the students are aware they are being tested (Kaya, 2010).

Even given these many positives associated with game-based learning, there are some negatives as well. Funding is almost always a concern for libraries of all types and developing gamified elements and/or full library instruction games (physical or especially digital) can be very expensive. As L. Martin and W. Martin (2015) succinctly note, library instruction games are not exempt from the old adage “fast, cheap, and good: pick any two” (p. 644). Additionally, some games will have accessibility challenges. Any digital game relies on the assumption that players have the technology to run the game and are familiar enough with said technology to play comfortably, and that may not always be a valid assumption, especially in less affluent areas. Beyond that, the tools used to create some games (notably early versions of Adobe Flash Player) predate ARIA (Accessible Rich Internet Applications) standards and so may be difficult for players with disabilities to enjoy (Martin & Martin, 2015, p. 653). Lastly, game-based learning itself may not prove effective for all students. Each individual is different, and for some people, competitive elements decrease motivation rather than increase it, particularly if they start the game off poorly and feel rapidly defeated (Van Roy & Zaman, 2018, p. 294). However, on the whole, the potential benefits outweigh the potential problems, especially since careful design can help mitigate some of these issues.

Applications of Games in Academic Libraries

Incorporating games into the information literacy instruction offerings at an academic library is not a new concept; in fact, the first documented use of a digital game in this capacity dates back to 1982 and the simple but then-innovative game Citation (Robertson & Jones, 2009, p. 261). Simple games, like Wordle for keyword generation skills and Jeopardy for general knowledge quizzing, are the most frequently incorporated because they can be presented as mini-activities within one-shot instruction sessions. As long as a librarian has access to a computer with projection capabilities and the internet, these types of games are quick and inexpensive to put together, and both the students and the instructors can quickly understand the rules and gameplay so it doesn’t unduly bog down the rest of the session (Porter, 2012, pp. 71-73).

Some libraries have taken this concept further and developed longer, more immersive games to push library instruction. Scavenger hunts, for example, are a popular introductory gaming activity often used to acquaint new incoming students with the library and its resources. While this could be a one-time game during orientation proceedings, librarians at Carthage College in Wisconsin partnered with their Student Affairs department to create a semester-long scavenging game called Get A Clue, which was loosely based on long-term game shows like The Amazing Race (Margino, 2013, p. 336). Students formed teams and accrued points by completing voluntary tasks that rotated out each week for an entire fall semester. Get A Clue was largely successful, especially
among first-year students. University of Florida librarians have created library-specific missions to be included in *Humans Vs. Zombies*, an enormously popular game played on college campuses nationwide (Johnson, Buhler, & Hillman, 2010). These missions featured tasks to be completed much like a scavenger hunt, but some of them were more involved in that students were required to actually create accounts with citation aggregators and the library’s e-reserves platform, among other things.

Academic libraries have also been experimenting with digital or virtual games (closer to what might be considered a typical video game) in recent years. Several more casual games built around Adobe Flash Player have been developed, including Lycoming College’s *Goblin Threat*, which focuses on avoiding plagiarism and understanding copyright, and the Carnegie Mellon Libraries’ *Within Range*, which teaches players how to use the Library of Congress call number system (Margino, 2013, p. 338). Some university libraries have successfully mixed social media aspects into these types of games, as seen in the University of Michigan’s *BiblioBouts*. In *BiblioBouts*, students submit articles that answer given prompts or questions and then vote on and comment on other students’ submissions (Markey, Leeder, & Hofer, 2011). Perhaps the most complex library instruction game of this type yet attempted is the University of Michigan’s *Defense of Hidgeon*. This Black-Plague-themed game is essentially a virtual board game that attempts to familiarize students with the complete research process, from topic selection to beginning cursory research to in-depth database navigation and source evaluation. While the intentions were good, this particular game was too complex to be truly successful, as several students found themselves lost or confused and many were not engaged enough to continue playing without being coerced by their teachers (Markey et al., 2009).

Perhaps the most interesting and successful game-based learning attempts thus far, at least in the world of library instruction, have been alternate reality games (ARGs). ARGs use the real world as context for the game, incorporating regular communications devices (cellphones, email, etc.) as controls. The Rose Library at James Madison University developed a mystery-themed ARG as an introductory teaching tool specifically for incoming engineering students (Giles, 2015). This game, *Mystery at the Library*, invited students to follow a series of scavenger-hunt-like clues through existing library resources and platforms to solve a mystery. Because there was no game board, virtual gaming interface, or even launch-point website, this game was extremely budget-friendly to create; the only cost was the time of the librarians who worked on it, since each piece of the game was an already-existing library resource (Giles, 2015, p. 174). Furthermore, Giles specifically notes that “while it is possible that multimedia elements, more elaborate props, or the use of actors might have made the game more entertaining, none of the survey respondents suggested such additions” (p. 175). They were able to achieve solidly favorable results, particularly in students’ knowledge of and use of RefWorks, by developing a technology-based, narrative-driven game.

*Project Velius and Her Story*
As documented by Battles, Glenn, and Shedd, the University of Alabama Libraries created a web-based ARG in 2010 called Project Velius. Before they begin explaining their project, they state that “the difference between Call of Duty, World of Warcraft, or any other popular commercial title and any game developed by a library or academic institution is a gulf that even generous grant funding cannot span” (Battles et al., 2011, p. 115). The point is well-taken that libraries cannot create video games at the same scale as massive production companies, but they may be closer to that mark than they realize. Her Story sold hundreds of thousands of copies to people who were interested not because they had been assigned the game as homework, but because the game was engaging on its own merits. It was created by one game developer, one actress, and one musical composer. Project Velius reached a much smaller audience, but the two games have a great deal in common.

The University of Alabama team explains that they chose to create an ARG because there are no clearly defined rules or pre-known winning conditions; instead, the player learns how to play the game as they go, discovering the rules and mechanics as they discover the underlying narrative (Battles et al., 2011, p. 118). Her Story cannot be an ARG because specific software was created for it, but nonetheless, players are only presented with the fictional police database and the first clip to begin the game. Everything else must be learned as the player progresses. The Project Velius team decided early on that strong character development would be necessary to keep players engaged, so they worked for the better part of a year to create a fully actualized Twitter account and WordPress blog for their fictitious main character (Battles et al., 2011, p. 120). Similarly, Her Story is a game fully based in the narrative and the main character. The developer, Sam Barlow, kept a blog about the game’s development, in which he says, “I will go deep on story [and] explore authentic and true characters” (Barlow, 2014b, para. 2). Both games encourage the same discovery-based learning process, and both games recognize the attention-keeping power of a strong narrative and strong characters.

The most significant similarity is the educational value of both games. As previously mentioned, whether Her Story intended to teach library instruction or not, it does an excellent job of requiring players to master the art of database searching with keywords and Boolean operators, and also requires players to experience part of the research process in refining searches and discovering new avenues of investigation. The University of Alabama Libraries stated that players responding to surveys after playing the game overwhelmingly reported increased knowledge of library services as well as general enjoyment of the game (Battles et al., 2011, p. 128).

Project Velius was the University of Alabama’s first attempt at creating a game to teach library instruction, and the factor that separates them the most from Her Story’s success is the degree to which they tried to hide the game in real life. They chose to have the game move forward in real time, which wasn’t a quick enough progression for many players, and they stopped playing after the first week or so of the semester when the game was originally scheduled to continue over eight weeks (Battles et al., 2011, p. 128). Rather than focusing so intensely
on disguising the fact that *Project Velius* was a game at all, they would have been better served (as demonstrated in *Her Story*) to focus on hiding the educational content within the game.

**Conclusion**

Game-based learning is an innovative pedagogical technique that has the potential to address some of the growing disconnect between modern students and traditional teaching methods. There are several ways of gamifying educational content requiring varying degrees of financial and time investments, but most have proven to be worthwhile endeavors thus far, offering several benefits to students and instructors alike with relatively few drawbacks. Academic libraries should continue to experiment with gamification, and perhaps most importantly, publish their results. While the literature is not bereft of works on gamified pedagogy, there are relatively few published explanations or reflections on attempts to incorporate gamification within library instruction. Additional examples and case studies would help the profession as a whole through the trial-and-error portion of working with new pedagogical methods.

Of the currently available published case studies, the gamified learning attempts are mostly smaller, more contained efforts requiring relatively little investment. There are commercially successful examples available (like *Her Story*) from which to draw inspiration and guidance, and libraries should not feel intimidated by their newness in the arena of gaming. Larger-scale gaming projects may require more investment upfront, but they can be recycled for many years and may yield significantly better results in terms of user engagement with the material and retention. In short, they are worth the risk. *Project Velius* was very similar to *Her Story* in many ways, and that was a first-attempt game created back in 2010. Imagine what kinds of games academic libraries might be capable of creating almost a decade later.
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Public Libraries Supporting Health and Wellness: A Literature Review

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Public Libraries Supporting Health and Wellness: A Literature Review

Abstract
The purpose of this literature review is to examine the ways in which public libraries are supporting the health and wellness needs of their communities. Although public libraries are not commonly thought of in association with healthcare, research shows that many libraries are partnering with other community organizations and healthcare professionals to provide programs and services intended to address the health and wellness needs of their patrons. Using scholarly journals, as well as trade and news publications, the author investigated numerous methods of health-themed service provision, including: consumer health information, embedded professionals, visiting health services, mental health support, wellness-based programming, and responses to the opioid crisis. Details on these programs are provided in this review so that readers can build upon existing ideas when considering their own health and wellness service offerings. Future work connected with this topic should involve a discussion of how to increase successful partnerships between libraries and other health-based organizations, how best to obtain funding for health and wellness public library initiatives, and how to publicize library health and wellness offerings to maximize their utilization by the public.

Keywords
health, wellness, public libraries, consumer health information, opioid crisis, social services

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About Author
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On July 12, 2018, two library staff members at Emily Fowler Central Library in Denton, Texas saved a man’s life. By performing CPR and using an automated external defibrillator on an unconscious patron, they kept the man alive while waiting for paramedics to arrive (Perez, 2018). Librarians across the country are also “saving lives in the stacks” by being trained to use Narcan to counteract opioid overdoses in their workplaces (Ford, 2017). These are just two examples of public libraries supporting the health and wellness needs of their communities; there are many more. Although public librarians are not medical professionals, and public libraries are not medical buildings, they nevertheless have a long history of supporting the physical, mental, and social health of their patrons.

Morgan et al. (2016) argued that although public libraries are not often given a seat at the table when discussing community wellness, they are “well positioned to be partners in building a culture of health.” Indeed, public libraries possess multiple characteristics that make them ideal participants in the public health arena: they are trusted institutions, widely used by the public, and exist in most communities around the country, whether urban, suburban, or rural (Philbin, Parker, Flaherty, & Hirsch, 2019).

A review of scholarly and trade publications from the past six years, as well as recent news stories, highlight the role of public libraries as providers of community health and wellness information, services, and programs. The current trends in the literature are to share best-practices for how public libraries are forwarding community health, to highlight the challenges of providing health-based services, and to identify the barriers preventing librarians from offering these services, including a lack of knowledge and comfort on the part of librarians in offering these services. The literature also tends to focus on questions raised both within and outside the LIS profession about whether public libraries should be involved with public health concerns at all, and if so, how.

Regardless of the challenges, public libraries are increasing their efforts to promote health and wellness in their communities, especially in the following areas: consumer health information provision, embedded professionals, mental health, health-based programs, and the opioid crisis. Successful programs and services at individual libraries result from strong partnerships with local health-based organizations, as well as collaborations at a national level to address wide-ranging health concerns like the opioid epidemic.

**Consumer Health Information Provision**

As the Reference and User Services Association (2015) has made clear in their guidelines on health and medical reference, librarians are not healthcare professionals and should not “interpret or make recommendations regarding diagnoses, treatments, or specific health care professionals or health care facilities.” Yet public libraries are locations that patrons often go to in order to seek health care information. According to a Pew Research Center survey, 73% of people aged 16+ believe that libraries are important to people looking for health information, and 42% who have used a library’s technological resources have done so to pursue health-related inquiries (Horrigan, 2015). As many as 93.8% of librarians encounter health-related questions at the reference desk (Luo & Park, 2013). It is the duty of library staff to respond to users’ requests and provide
“assistance with identifying and finding relevant, credible, and authoritative sources to answer users' questions” (Reference and User Services Association, 2015). Thus, librarians should be prepared to help patrons identify and locate quality resources when answering consumer health information queries.

Several studies indicate that barriers to providing this type of assistance often include lack of comfort or knowledge on the part of library staff surrounding authoritative health information sources (Luo & Park, 2013 and Rubenstein, 2016a). One way to overcome these obstacles is through successful public library partnerships with academic institutions and/or local healthcare organizations (Clifton, Jo, Longo, & Malone, 2017, Engeszer et al., 2016 and Ports et al., 2015). Working in conjunction with external partners such as a medical center, health library, or a local department of health can lead to outcomes where public library staff become better trained to respond to, and more comfortable answering, patron questions related to health and wellness.

Another way that librarians are increasing their expertise in answering consumer health information requests is through the Medical Library Association’s Consumer Health Information Specialization (CHIS) certification program. Librarians with CHIS certification are more confident and prepared when directing patrons to authoritative health resources (Clifton, Jo, Longo, & Malone, 2017, Ports et al., 2015, Rubenstein, 2016a, Rubenstein, 2016b, and Rubenstein, 2018). These librarians often become the resident experts on medical questions in their libraries and are valued both by patrons and other staff members, with whom they share what they learned in their CHIS courses (Rubenstein, 2016b).

**Embedded Professionals**

As stated earlier, public librarians are not healthcare workers, and most know when they have reached the limits of their professional abilities on health-related requests. In recent years, several public libraries have addressed the health and wellness needs of their patrons by hiring social workers, nurses, and other professionals as an official part of the staff to address issues that librarians may not be qualified to tackle.

Social workers as public library employees are not an entirely new idea. In 2009, the main branch of the San Francisco Public Library became the first library in the country to hire a psychiatric social worker as a full-time member of their staff (Knight, 2010). Since then, an estimated 30 additional public libraries have followed suit (Janis, 2018). Homelessness is frequently, although not exclusively, the topic that most public library social workers deal with, whether directly through outreach and casework, or more fundamentally through exploring and addressing the institutional and systemic causes of homelessness in a given community (Dankowski, 2018). Social workers may provide support to other vulnerable populations, such as low-income individuals seeking to access social services like food stamps and Medicaid. Many social workers offer training to library staff in how to sensitively interact with patrons with a variety of needs (Dankowski, 2018 and Janis, 2018). Library social workers may serve in a supervisory capacity, overseeing other social workers on staff, or even hiring formerly homeless patrons as peer counselors to assist with their work (‘Great

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In addition to dealing with homelessness and poverty, social workers may be expected to address the mental health needs of patrons and their families (Steiner, 2018).

Social workers are not the only health and wellness professionals to find their place on a public library staff. The Pima County Public Library in Tucson, Arizona has hired a registered nurse to assist patrons at the main library building (Monaghan, 2016). A partnership between the public library and the Pima County Health Department, the Library Nurse Program developed to realize the following goals: perception by patrons and staff of the library as a “safe and welcoming” place, and provision of “health-promoting education and services” to library patrons (Malkin & Feingold, 2014, p. 560). The public health nurse helps to achieve these goals by providing intervention when patrons become disruptive or need medical care. She also trains other library staff in ways to help de-escalate problematic patron encounters, administers flu vaccines, helps patrons sign up for health insurance, and works with other community partners to institute an afterschool snack program for approximately 300 children.

Challenges that libraries face when considering hiring embedded professionals include a lack of qualified health providers in the community, difficulties in liaising with local health departments (Malkin & Feingold, 2014), as well as concerns about patrons’ privacy (Dankowski, 2018). Successful programs with embedded professionals have involved strong partnerships with local social service providers and a concerted effort in getting to know specific community needs (Dankowski, 2018 and Steiner, 2018).

Mental Health

Mental health is another area in which libraries are supporting their communities. With nearly 1 in 5 U.S. adults suffering from mental illness (National Institute of Mental Health, n.d.), it stands to reason that a public library’s patron population will be comprised of those with mental health conditions who seek to access the library’s space and resources.

A public library that provides a safe, open, and welcoming atmosphere is often seen as a “therapeutic landscape” (Brewster, 2014, p. 94) by those with mental health issues – a calming, comforting place to go when feelings of distress threaten to overwhelm them and an empowering location to seek education, resources, and community. Library staff’s supportive behavior towards people with mental illness plays an important role in promoting this sort of beneficial atmosphere.

Some public libraries have been proactive in providing mental health and wellbeing information services, working collaboratively with other local organizations to support community mental health projects and sponsoring weekly discussion groups to reduce loneliness and isolation (Lungley, 2016). In other public libraries, staff are unsure how best to deal with patrons experiencing mental health crises, especially when those patrons become disruptive or combative (Peet, 2019).

A solution to this lack of knowledge/comfort in interacting with mentally ill patrons is Mental Health First Aid training for library staff. This training helps participants identify the signs of mental illness and substance abuse with the
intent of destigmatizing these conditions and providing guidance in how to initiate conversations with patrons who may be in crisis and need referral to mental health services (Hubert, 2018). Although not meant to be a substitute for professional mental health treatment, Mental Health First Aid has been used successfully by public libraries to defuse difficult patron interactions and assist both adults and teens with mental health concerns (Throgmorton, 2017).

Other libraries offer more casual mental health assistance. Luck Public Library in Wisconsin offers a weekly mindfulness program hosted by a library staff member (Ruhlmann, 2017). The program, called “Breathe,” is a guided practice that requires no prior experience and is open to everyone (Luck Public Library, n.d.). Many libraries use the services of therapy dogs—canines that are specially trained to provide psychological support—as a calm and friendly listening ear for young readers, although other libraries have extended their therapy dog programs to reach teens as well (Whittall, 2017).

Regardless of the level of mental health support a public library offers, the literature highlights the importance of making connections with local mental health organizations (Berk, 2015, Lumley, 2016, and Peet, 2019). It is important to note that there may be challenges from other patrons, administrators, and funding authorities, who feel that the library is not the proper place to be addressing mental health issues beyond calling security when a patron is disruptive (Berk, 2015 and Peet, 2019). However, the literature shows that patrons with mental illness benefit when library staff are caring, non-judgmental, and provide support within appropriate boundaries (Berk, 2015, Brewster, 2014, Lumley, 2016, Peet, 2019, and Throgmorton, 2017).

Health-Based Programs

One of the most common ways that libraries support community health and wellness is by offering health-based programs and materials to their patrons. There is an almost infinite numbers of ways that public libraries, of all sizes and in all locations, can support wellness through the programs and resources they offer. The benefits not only include the improved health of the community, but attracting new users to the library (Lenstra, 2017 and Pyatetsky, 2016).

Library staff cite many reasons for providing health-based programs: as a response to national and regional trends in the library profession, in reaction to patron preferences and needs, and as a result of their staff members’ personal interest in the physical activity (Lenstra 2018). Patron needs may come into play in regions known for high obesity rates and lack of healthcare (Flaherty & Miller, 2016) or in communities where activity levels are not equal across demographics (McCarty, 2018).

According to a 2014 survey, approximately 48% of public libraries offer programs geared towards helping patrons understand specific health and wellness topics (Bertot et al., 2015). Such offerings include weight-loss programs (Flaherty & Miller, 2016), healthy cooking demonstrations (Ewen, 2018 and Pyatetsky, 2016), pre-natal classes and sessions on cancer (Wahowiak, 2018), workshops on living a healthy lifestyle and disease prevention (Luo, 2018) and more. The success of these programs is often dependent on strong partnerships with local and regional health organizations (Luo, 2018 and Wahowiak, 2018), including
city and county health departments, hospitals, other health centers, and the National Network of Libraries of Medicine.

Although most commonly associated with foundational, digital, and information literacy, public libraries are beginning to address kinetic or physical literacy as well. Physical literacy is supported by movement-based programs for all ages, which can be offered casually — in the form of a bean-bag toss in the children’s area or a mini basketball hoop in the teen section— or more formally through weekly fitness classes for adults (Carson, 2015). Movement-based classes in public libraries run the gamut from yoga, which is the most frequently offered (Lenstra, 2017), to more unusual activities like Punk Rock Aerobics and Zombie Survival Fitness (Pyatetsky, 2016). Other popular programs include movement-based early literacy sessions, Story Walk® activities, gardening, and dancing (Lenstra, 2017). Collaborations with outside organizations in the community—including running stores, universities, and fitness instructors—are as important for the success of movement-based programs as they are for informational programs (Flaherty & Miller, 2016; Luo, 2018; McCarty, 2018).

In addition to providing activities for a variety of ages, from toddlers to senior citizens (Lenstra, 2017 and Luo, 2018), it is crucial for libraries to vary their program formats to reach as wide an audience as possible. Library staff must be mindful in working to overcome the barriers to attendance presented by differing health needs and fitness levels and being inclusive in terms of demographics like race and ethnicity (Luo, 2018). Public libraries must also navigate the challenges associated with offering health related programs, including logistical and financial considerations, worries about liability, and the potential that administrators might not view health-related programs as being the province of a public library.

**Opioid Crisis**

One aspect of health and wellness that has been in the media recently is the response of public libraries to the opioid crisis. Increasingly, library staff have had to deal with concerns such as discarded needles and drug usage in the building. Overdoses and fatalities from the use of opioids in libraries has led many public libraries to respond by stocking Narcan—a drug that can reverse the effects of an opiate overdose—and by offering training to their staff about how to use it (Bump, 2018, Correal, 2018, Ford, 2017, Freudenberg, 2019, and “Libraries become unlikely front”, 2018.)

Besides offering staff training on the use of Narcan, other libraries are offering community programs and hosting speakers to educate the public about opiate addiction (Dankowski, 2019 and “Library Notes,” 2018). Some libraries are even providing Narcan training sessions to the general public (Brown, 2018 and Freudenberg, 2019).

As with other ways of supporting health and wellness in public libraries, much of the literature on the opioid crisis highlights the importance of strong community partnerships in dealing with this public health issue (Dankowski, 2019, Freudenberg, 2019, and OCLC, 2018). Collaborations with medical professionals, addiction counselors, local departments of health, and state
government agencies increase the impact that public libraries can make in this arena (Freudenberger, 2019.)

The trend of public libraries addressing the opioid crisis is seen by many as an essential step in supporting community health. However, the practice is not without its critics. Some library staff have been criticized by their peers for choosing to administer Narcan, claiming it’s “not part of the job” for librarians to be responsible for life-or-death medical treatment (Ford, 2019). Librarian Fobazi Ettarh is concerned about mission creep in libraries, especially as it pertains to Narcan administration. She has argued that the education librarians receive does not include medical or social work training. Ettarh also argues that libraries as institutions are not designed to support librarians through the trauma they might face by dealing with issues like opioid overdoses or fatalities (Ford, 2019).

In spite of these concerns, the role of public libraries in combating the opioid crisis is considered so crucial that the Institute of Museum and Library Services has awarded OCLC a nearly $250,000 grant to “collect and share knowledge and resources to support public libraries and their community partners” in addressing this public health issue (OCLC, 2018). OCLC will work with the Public Library Association to develop case studies, a white paper, webinars, and other materials related to the topic for public library use.

Conclusion

Public libraries have been contributing to the wellness of their communities for some time, and opportunities to offer these kinds of health-based services have increased in recent years. Some of the most frequent offerings include consumer health information provision. The use of embedded professionals, such as social workers, nurses, and peer counselors, has become popular. Public libraries work with outside organizations to promote both mental and physical wellness. The opioid crisis is a recent area of concern, and an increasing number of public libraries are beginning to include the potentially life-saving administration of Narcan among their service provisions. The scholarly, trade, and news literature shows that public libraries are an important resource when considering the health and wellness needs of a community. Public librarians should advocate for a seat at the table in community conversations about public health. Recommended future work connected with this topic should involve a discussion of how to leverage successful partnerships between libraries and other health-based organizations, how best to obtain funding for health and wellness public library initiatives, and how to publicize library health and wellness offerings to maximize their utilization by the public.
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Mission-driven recordkeeping: The need for RIM staff in U.S. nonprofit organizations

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Mission-driven recordkeeping: The need for RIM staff in U.S. nonprofit organizations

Abstract
As a robust and growing industry, often with strong ties to communities served, there is much potential for nonprofit organizations to harness powerful and rich databases of cultural information not found in any other sector. Yet research shows that in most cases, nonprofit organizations operate on limited budgets, tight deadlines, and may see the task of properly managing records as counter-productive to the mission of the organization. This research examines the systems of recordkeeping in nonprofit organizations in the U.S. and argues that record keeping staff must be considered an essential component for a nonprofit organization to survive and thrive.

Keywords
nonprofit organizations, records management, databases, knowledge management, mission-driven work

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About Author
Emily Mercer is a Master of Archives and Records Administration candidate at San Jose State University, and resides in Portland, Oregon.
The nonprofit sector is a robust and growing industry in the United States. According to McKeever (2018), the number of registered nonprofit organizations (NPOs) in the U.S. grew to 1.5 million, at a rate of 10.4% from 2005-2015. Interestingly, during the recession of 2007-2009, employment in corporate jobs decreased by 6.2%, whereas employment in the nonprofit sector increased by 4.4%, suggesting that the nonprofit industry is resilient to market fluctuations (Friesenhahn, 2016). In 2015, $985.4 billion was contributed to the U.S. economy from nonprofits (McKeever, 2018). In 2017, there was a high employment rate in NPOs, with about 12.5 million jobs, making up 10.2% of private sector employment (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2019). However, research from the San Jose State University School of Information analyzed job openings for information professionals in 2019 and found that nonprofit organizations had just 1% representation among employers seeking information professionals (SJSU School of Information, 2019). This essay explores the social and the practical aspects of this problem, and proposes that the work of dedicated Records and Information Management (RIM) staff can be a powerful solution to improving the U.S. nonprofit sector as a whole. Improving the stewardship of these records makes an organization more effective and increases the chance of discovery for future generations. As a note of clarification, many archival, special collection, and historical societies operate as nonprofit organizations. This essay, however, focuses specifically on NPOs whose primary mission revolves around issues not directly related to recordkeeping or archiving, such as those working on civil and human rights, education, the environment, animal protection, or human services.

A Knowledge Management Approach to Records and Information Management

The International Organization for Standardization (ISO) defines records management (which, for the purposes of this research, is used interchangeably with RIM) as a:

“field of management responsible for the efficient and systematic control of the creation, receipt, maintenance, use and disposition of records, including processes for capturing and maintaining evidence of and information about business activities and transactions in the form of records” (ISO, 2016, p. 3).

Through effective records management, an organization (nonprofit or for-profit) is able to more effectively achieve their mission with intentional planning and follow-through with workflows surrounding information and data. In the nonprofit sector it can be argued that information is an NPO’s most powerful strength. Academic research has looked at this topic from a variety of perspectives, such as implementation of general technology in NPOs (Merkel et al., 2007; Saidel & Cour, 2003) and communication models among and within NPOs (Goecks, Voida, Voida, & Mynatt, 2008; Vaast, 2004). Much of the research has investigated the domain of knowledge management (KM) in NPOs (Hurley & Green, 2005; Iverson & Burkart, 2007; Iverson & McPhee, 2002; Matzkin, 2008; Renshaw & Krishnaswamy, 2009).
KM is explored here as a related topic to RIM, and is defined by Kinney (1998) as “[t]he process by which an organization creates, acquires and uses knowledge to support and improve the performance of the organization” (p. 2). KM can be understood from two different perspectives: information-based, and people-based (Iverson & McPhee, 2002). Information-based knowledge management is concerned with the documentation of practical processes that emerge from a given workplace. People-based KM relates to the intangible skills that are developed over time and in social, less quantifiable situations. These forms of knowledge can also be known as explicit and tacit, respectively (Renshaw & Krishnaswamy, 2009). Both perspectives of the KM field can provide valuable insight into NPO recordkeeping practices, but the information-based approach is often overlooked in KM literature. Iverson and McPhee speculate that this is because of the belief that this approach reduces complex knowledge to mere data and ignores social context. Though both are concerned with upholding a process which allows NPOs to produce the most value from the shared knowledge of NPO workers and members.

**The Social Aspect of NPOs**

Social context is at the core of mission-driven work (Goecks et al., 2008; Hurley & Green, 2005; Iverson & McPhee, 2002; Klassen, 1990; Merkel et al., 2007; Vaast, 2004). Goecks et al. (2008) speak specifically about the fundraising domain of NPOs and comment on existing technology capitalizing on the fundamentally collaborative nature of NPOs. Hurley and Green (2005) remark that the only way that KM principles can excel in the nonprofit industry is to discourage “knowledge hoarding” and encourage workplace values around collaboration and knowledge sharing. Iverson and McPhee (2002) discuss KM within communities of practice (COPs), and define a COP as “a set of people who share a concern, a set of problems, or a passion about a topic, who deepen their knowledge and expertise in this area by interacting on an ongoing basis” (p. 260). NPOs are under the umbrella of COPs, and Iverson and McPhee (2002) discuss the ways in which management must cultivate collaboration in order for COPs to reach their full potential. COPs build complex communication networks of various stakeholders centered around strongly held values and share knowledge organically. Merkel et al. (2007) describe the work of NPOs as “fundamentally social,” and argue that one must submerge themselves in the network of connections in order to advance professionally in the nonprofit sphere.

Two important terms are introduced by Iverson and Burkart (2007). “Reification” is the process of documenting a previously abstract thought or workflow for subsequent retrieval. “Commodification” is a resulting process of reification whereby information becomes a product which can be copied and shared. As previously discussed, NPOs are very much driven by ideals, and employees of NPOs are fueled by the personal connections they make within their network. Iverson and Burkart (2007) believe that reification and commodification could lead to isolation, however, detracting from the face-to-face interactions that are so crucial to the work of an NPO, and also stifling creativity in the workplace. This concept points to an important possible factor in the reluctance of NPOs to consider RIM as high priority. From research on volunteer coordinators, a
sentiment emerged that interaction with volunteers was the “real” work of their role, and that the data entry and maintenance required to keep accurate lists and schedules for volunteers was considered a hindrance (Voida, Harmon, & Al-Ani, 2011). As an alternative, Iverson and Burkart (2007) propose an integration process which continually ties reified information back to organizational missions, uses limited work-flows, and provides ample opportunity for human contact. With this alternative, the business process surrounding the information workflow might be unique for an NPO, as compared with a for-profit business, but the NPO can still derive value from having a systematic and thoughtful approach to the handling of information.

The Practical Information Needs of NPOs

Approximately 40% of NPOs rely on volunteers, and research from one study shows that 62% of volunteer coordinators employed at NPOs have little to no training in information management (McKeever, 2018; Voida et al., 2011). As a result, these volunteer coordinators have created “homebrew” databases, leading to redundancies, duplications, and lost data (Voida et al., 2011). Many of these databases involve computer applications which were not designed for records management, and/or paper files. Approximately 33% of participants from this study work for an NPO which has implemented an enterprise level database, but none of these participants have fully migrated all of their data. They feel that they are unable to fulfill the role of both human resources coordinator and database administrator, and furthermore, do not enjoy database administration. One participant said they feel guilty delegating this task to a volunteer (Voida et al., 2011).

Most studies on NPO RIM methodology only focus on specific points within the data collection workflow (Benjamin, Voida, & Bopp, 2018). Benjamin et al. (2018) examine the full lifecycle of data at NPOs, and NPOs as agents within a larger data ecosystem. Similar to other studies, Benjamin et al. (2018) find that the NPOs they studied work in fragmented data systems, resulting in redundancies and inefficiencies. The records created and used by NPO employees on a daily basis may be poorly maintained, leading to inefficiencies in mission objectives, and also affecting the availability of these records for archival uses. Other obstacles NPOs face are problems of scale and an inherent ad hoc nature to the work (Klassen, 1990).

Referring back to Iverson and McPhee (2002), we again see examples of the belief that people-centered relationships and records-based data are mutually exclusive. There is nothing inherently contradictory in these domains, however, and in fact, each could support the other. The complex and multifaceted aspects of evolving relationships captured in the form of a database such as a CRM (customer relationship management system, or constituent relationship management in the case of NPOs) have the potential to allow NPOs to work more efficiently by holding this complex data in streamlined and accessible forms.

The Unique Advantage of Specialized RIM Staff

Leaders in the RIM field contend that communication and relationships are a fundamental aspect of their work, just as they are for programmatic NPO staff. As
a contributing author to *Leading and Managing Archives and Records Programs*, Chosky (2008) considers that the records manager uniquely has the ability to communicate, advocate for, train, and receive buy-in from employees at all levels within an organization, as the records management program touches all aspect of an organization’s workflow (Dearstyn, 2008). Chosky comments on the interpersonal skills required to effectively interface with a range of different styles and needs, while also delivering a functional records management system which is in compliance with federal government regulations. The information professional not only can take the pressure off of other staff who predominantly work in a direct service capacity, but can also have the training and aptitude to communicate with other members of these communities of practice on their own terms. A records manager employed at an NPO could be fully responsible for creating a RIM program which integrates reified information to organizational missions, limiting workflows, and making space for interaction, just as Iverson and Burkart (2007) suggest.

Lastly, it is important to address a prevailing notion that NPOs must spend as little as possible on overhead and administrative needs. This kind of thinking could prevent nonprofit leadership from seeing the potential of a designated RIM staff. However, Pallotta (2013) makes a powerful argument that this belief is outdated and keeps the nonprofit sector from growing to transformational levels. He states “it makes us think that overhead is a negative, that it is somehow not part of the cause. But it absolutely is, especially if it’s being used for growth” (Pallotta, 2013, n.p.). Pallotta calls for a change in thinking which allows nonprofits to dream big, and invest in staffing and administration, because this will ultimately have a greater impact towards the mission of the organization. RIM staff can ensure that an NPO’s information organization, compliance, security and accessibility saves staff valuable time, as well as ultimately saving money for the organization.

**An Archival Approach**

The records created and maintained by nonprofit organizations in the United States often have significant value for understanding cultural and historical events. The information contained within these records may have important future cultural, social, and scientific use. Many NPOs are working on improving sociopolitical, environmental, or educational conditions. As such, they are typically very close to the causes and conditions of their mission-driven work. Nonprofit organizations allow a unique perspective on American life: tracking movements of social change and self-organizing individuals who volunteer personal time and resources and are driven by ideology rather than commerce (Klassen, 1990). Approximately 25% of U.S. adults volunteered 8.8 billion hours, with a value of $195 billion, according to McKeever (2018). Most NPOs are operating on limited resources/staff and tight deadlines, which results in missed opportunities for effective preservation of records with archival value. Where preservation efforts are outside of the scope of an NPO’s ability and budget, a designated RIM professional would be able to ensure that records are well curated with metadata intact and facilitate transfer to an archival repository, so that future researchers can gain value from the knowledge contained within.
Conclusion

Information is a tremendous asset. It improves strategy, strengthens connections with stakeholders, and gives work greater meaning. The culture of the nonprofit sector is centered around relationships formed, and just as face-to-face interpersonal relationships are considered an essential part of nonprofit work, so too should the planning, creation and maintenance of the information these nonprofits keep. This research emphasizes the challenges that NPOs face, while managing informational assets, focusing on the problem from two perspectives of knowledge management: information-based and people-based. RIM professionals have unique qualifications that blend well with the culture of NPOs and could help the organization grow to new levels. This will not only have value to the NPOs themselves, but also to society at large through NPO donations to archival facilities.
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Zine Authors’ Opinions about Public and Academic Library Collections of Their Work

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Zine Authors’ Opinions about Public and Academic Library Collections of Their Work

Citation

Structured Abstract

Objective
Hays addresses the emerging phenomenon of zine collecting by public and academic libraries from the viewpoint of zine authors themselves.

Setting
Hays defines zines as intentionally nonprofessional, handmade paper publications that are written, edited, and published by the authors themselves in small print runs and sold for little, if any, profit. These factors make them both “unique and personal to the author” as well as “complicated ephemeral materials for library collections” since “their authors are often hard to track down, issues come out irregularly…often contain no bibliographic information, and…come in various paper sizes” (p. 61). Reflecting these difficulties, Hays found an admittedly limited amount of existing literature on the subject and only 113 existing institutional zine collections, which demonstrates how the field is a new phenomenon that is still growing.

Design
Hays’s study concentrates on the most common academic and public library collections practices for circulation policy and access (including the type of library and its location), cataloging methods, and online metadata usage in contrast with the zine creators’ most common concerns as identified in the literature review, such as acquisitions policies, privacy with regard to the use of real names versus anonymity, and the granting of permissions for research or instructional use. The study’s research design was approved by the College of Staten Island’s institutional review board.

Subjects and Methodology
Between December 2015 and August 2016, Hays distributed an anonymous survey through online channels that were likely to reach zine makers such as We Make Zines, an online social media community for zine writers; a zine writers electronic mailing list; Facebook pages dedicated to zine writing; and Twitter. It was also distributed in person at several zine festivals, including the NYC Feminist Zine Fest and the Chicago Zine Fest. All of the 150 respondents were over eighteen years old and self-identified as zine writers, a fact that was confirmed through a question about how many zines they actually wrote. Although American libraries were the focus of the study, participants did not need to identify as living in the United States, and Hays notes that libraries collect zines from around the world.
Findings

Despite the potential privacy concerns mentioned above, the study found that most zine authors (83%) actually prefer to be included in publically circulating collections instead of restrictive academic libraries. Most of the authors were also comfortable with having their zines used in classes or other work by professors and researchers, along with having their bibliographic information available and accessible online. Of course, the dissenting voices who disagreed with these approaches, such as the 7% who did not want to attach their real names to their zines in bibliographic records even though they had originally been published without pseudonyms, were quite forceful and adamant about maintaining their privacy and preventing the public from finding or accessing their work.

One of the most interesting findings in the study was the fact that the majority of zine authors preferred that their work remain in their original print-only format without digitization, yet another majority of authors would also accept digitized, online access--but only if the library asked for permission first because they often have neglected to do so in the past. Regardless of the circumstances, however, 59% of the respondents ultimately would always want their zines to be included in a library collection, and Hays considers this attitude to represent a positive response, at least from a librarians’ point of view.

Commentary

Hays acknowledges that her study represents the first of its kind, and it was therefore conducted out of convenience to include only a small segment of contemporary zine authors, a population whose real numbers remain unknown. Regardless, the article is quite thorough. It provides an interesting history of zines as originating among science fiction fans in the 1930s and later as a phenomenon that expanded with the punk scene of the 1970s and again with the riot grrrl fanzines of the 1990s, which is also the decade when the first institutions started collecting them. This recent timeline creates the interesting situation in which many of the zine authors are still alive but had never thought of their ephemeral publications as being the kinds of materials that might be preserved for archival posterity or the ramifications that such preservation and greater public access might represent. Moreover, many current zine librarians were once also zine creators. In this regard, the personal nature of many zines could compromise their now-older creators’ lives and professions in the present, even while many of the authors still philosophically espouse free and easy dissemination and access to all information.

Hayes’ study is so recent that it does not appear to have been cited by anyone, yet. However, this novelty represents its greatest strength, since it addresses a burgeoning field of archival collecting in an important area of pop cultural media resources that continues to expand daily. It also provides hope with regard to obtaining the support and cooperation of this particular community of authors for the continued preservation of their uniquely creative and ephemeral products, while also outlining several different ways to address the community’s special concerns about privacy and access to their work. Even so, in the conclusion, Hays acknowledges the limitations of this broad, initial study and recommends that future studies address specific zine topics or subgroups, such as the attitudes about
identity that are inherently represented by zine authors who either exclusively use or do not use pseudonyms for their publications.