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Expanding the Perimeter

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About Author

Tamarack Hockin is Editor-in-Chief for the SLIS Student Research Journal, and an MLIS student at SJSU's School of Information focusing on digital assets and services.

This issue of the *SLIS Student Research Journal* (SRJ) is the first which I have the privilege to introduce as the Journal's Editor-in-Chief, and I am particularly honored to introduce the first publication in SRJ's new reviews section. *Overcoming Information Poverty: Investigating the Role of Public Libraries in the Twenty-First Century* (McKeown, 2016), is deftly reviewed by Vasudeva whose analysis showcases how critical reviews add to the scholarly conversation by contextualizing a work within the literature of the field. Researchers and practitioners interested in public libraries and information literacy will benefit from reading this review.

Our first article in the peer review section is a literature review and analysis of Big Deal subscription models for packaged electronic serials by Sjoberg. Sjoberg found that the transition involved in breaking up these subscription packages, and subsequently losing access to some database collections, is most often successful when consultation and a combination of evaluative methods are used. However, Sjoberg notes a gap in the literature regarding longer-term repercussions or successes, and that while cutting up these expensive Big Deal packages can be done, "the process that follows e-journal cancellations is less clearly addressed in the literature" (p. 7). Concluding that "there is no one-size-fits-all approach to the evaluation of e-journal subscriptions" (p. 10), Sjoberg urges serials librarians and others involved in collection development to focus on communication with stakeholders and customization of their approach to decision-making.

Our second peer-reviewed article is an especially timely piece in light of the recent #WeNeedDiverseBooks movement: Ting examined diversity in children's books, beyond "foods, festivals, and customs" (p. 1), and whether children are finding themselves represented in the characters and themes of the novels they read. Ting found not only that there is a need for more diverse books (in comparing population to representation), but there is a need for further, rigorous research concerning whether and how children may benefit from a diversification of representation in their books and novels. Most poignantly, Ting notes that "it does not matter how many great, diverse books are on the shelf of the library if children do not read them" (p. 6), thus urging researchers to continue investigating the motivations of child readers, and how to better connect readers with diverse books.

This issue of *SRJ* features an invited essay contribution from Dr. Swygart-Hobaugh who elucidates the specialization of data services in academic libraries. Drawing parallels to other facets of reference services, Swygart-Hobaugh discusses a leveled service framework for parsing the myriad ways *databrarians* (p. 3) may serve their users. Within this exposition of the work and skillsets of databrarians, Swygart-Hobaugh concurrently designates data services a "strange beast" (p. 1) and yet posits that data services are in many ways "a natural extension of the established roles of academic librarians" (p. 3). Swygart-Hobaugh's essay brings us into close quarters with data librarianship, demystifying data services, and explicating the connection between librarianship and research data.

This contradiction of data services as both strange and natural as propounded by Swygart-Hobaugh is perhaps a microcosm of a broader question concerning what exactly defines the perimeter of LIS. As Swygart-Hobaugh's piece implies, librarianship encompasses a diverse array of specializations; new roles are

expanding the multitudinous ways in which the profession is defined by its work. The many manuscripts submitted to *SRJ* during the past months have also borne testament to the diversity of LIS specializations as represented in the MLIS, and by this necessity the *SRJ* is also a diverse forum. This issue of the Journal addresses collection development, literature, literacy, professional ethics, shifting service roles, and perceptions of the profession. Defined as both a practicing profession and a theoretical discipline (Bates & Maack, 2010), and further as a *meta-discipline* applicable to all subject matters (Bates, 1999), LIS research seems to incorporate its contradictions by broadening and expanding the scope of its perimeter.

The scope of the *SRJ* reflects the multifaceted nature of the field, and the Journal welcomes submissions of manuscripts on the widest diversity of topics in LIS. In the absence of a strong thematic niche, what most coheres the *SRJ* is its quality of writing, research, and the discourse advanced by its authors. By strength of its editorial team, the *SRJ* aims to highlight graduate scholarship believed to showcase research and writing which advances the scholarly conversation of the field. The *SRJ* provides the opportunity for graduate scholars to join the myriad conversions of our profession, and is proud to once again welcome new voices in this twelfth issue of publication.

Acknowledgements

I hope that our readership finds something new and of value in this twelfth issue of the *SLIS Student Research Journal*. Thanks to our authors for moving the conversations forward, and in new directions. Acknowledgement and thanks to *SRJ*'s exceptional editorial team for their diligent work in reviewing submissions and developing the Journal's new reviews section. Special thanks to our outgoing Managing Editor, Gina Nichols, for her exceptional organization, and to our long-suffering Faculty Advisor, Dr. Anthony Bernier, for his guidance and training.

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