by Rachel Isaac-Menard & Graham Cairns

Embedding Librarianship in the Scholarly Communication Process and the Modern Workplace

In February 2013 *Feliciter* published an article by Amanda Peters entitled *New Media and New Collaborations: Librarians and Academics Together.* The piece documented a new initiative by the scholarly journal *Architecture_MPS* to embed librarianship into the running of an academic journal and to ensure ever-closer working relationships between academics and librarians in research outputs.

In it Peters quoted the Association of College & Research Libraries (ACRL) list of the top ten trends (2012) in academic libraries, which included "scholarly communication," "information technologies," "communicating values," and "user behavior and expectations."[1] Her article outlined innovations of the then-young journal *Architecture_MPS* in this regard.

At the heart of this journal is a unique collaboration between academics and librarians that involves the librarians supporting authors' research for publication with the journal, the setting up and running of a Resource Repository that contains materials relevant to the journal's themes, and what was then an intern training scheme for MLS graduates. Now, approaching two years later, these academic-librarian initiatives have received funding from the American Library Association (ALA), they have published their first collaborative book, and the intern scheme is run as a for-credit program with library schools in ALA-accredited library programs focused on training students for the changing world of work for today's librarians.

ALA Support

One of the features of this journal is that it "hosts" research projects. Currently, this is a pilot project based on academic research from the primary editor. However, the idea behind these "host projects" is that the journal's librarian team (called the Information Services (IS) Committee) offers research support to the academic in question. As part of this, the head of the librarian team, Rachel Isaac-Menard, has applied for and received funding from the ALA through the Carnegie Whitney Grant to put together an open access webliography and research guide based on the host project.

What this means is that the essential role that she, as a librarian, is playing in the development of this academic project is being recognised and fore-fronted.

First Collaborative Book

The journal publishes articles monthly in an open access online format. It also has an editorial team that produces multi-authored volumes on its themes: architecture and its relationship with other disciplines (namely the social sciences, media studies, and political science). The librarian team at the journal works with the editors of these volumes very closely (and also offers research support to individual authors as necessary). This effectively takes the research support services offered by academic librarians to their faculty colleagues inside a university to a new arena: the independent peer-reviewed journal.

In April 2014 the first book to come out of this type of working relationship was published: *Design for a Complex World: Challenges in Practice and Education*, issued by Libri Publishing, Bristol. The role of the librarians in the production of the materials for this book is credited on the first page. It is hoped that it will be the first of many such publications and academic-librarian collaborations to be seen in print.

For-Credit Librarian Internship Program

The world of work for graduates from MLS programs today is changing radically. In addition, job prospects are bleak. According to Stephanie Maatta, author of the Placements & Salaries Survey (2013), out of 1,898 respondents to the graduate survey only 898 (representing 52 percent) of the MLS graduates from 2012 have found work in permanent professional librarian positions within a year of graduating.[2] There are fewer jobs for traditional librarians, and many

recent graduates are finding jobs in non-traditional positions. Library science skills are transferable to different careers paths, and these graduates are using their information science expertise to find work in non-traditional positions.[3]

In this context the librarian internship program set up through the IS committee of the journal *Architecture_MPS* is important in a number of ways. Firstly, the journal is virtual and thus allows students and recent graduates located in out-of-the-way places access to a training opportunity. Being remote, it also helps prepare interns for the changing workplace in which work is conducted increasingly outside the traditional office environment. As indicated by the Placements & Salaries Survey mentioned above, more and more trained librarians are working (and will work) in non-traditional library settings—and will transfer their skills to more non-traditional roles. This is precisely what this internship entails.

Interns at *Architecture_MPS* do a variety of things, all of which entail the use of the skills they learn in library school, but none of which are applied in the traditional library setting. For example, interns source materials required by the authors and editors of the journal for articles and books. This is similar to a research support role, but it is done remotely in this case and operates outside the typical context of librarian/faculty involvement.

Interns also get involved in outreach through the use of social media. This includes sourcing and selecting news stories, information on events, new books, and publications that may be of interest to the journal's readers. They "transfer" their skills to find and evaluate information. They also learn how valuable social media platforms such as Facebook and Twitter can be for outreach, and many have subsequently applied it in library outreach activities.

Interns have also been involved in putting together materials for the Resource Repository of the journal, some of which will be sent for archiving to relevant international bodies in the coming years (the Library of Congress, the British Library, etc.). This involves them transferring the skills of a subject librarian in a traditional academic librarian role to this online publishing context. Once they have searched for relevant materials, they then disseminate news about the resource through various outreach activities (social media, listservs, etc.).

Future Developments

The academic-librarian experiment at the heart of this journal continues to explore new ways forward. It is on the lookout for future collaborations with library associations such as ALA and CLA. It will launch its next host project in 2015 and will link up its new researchers with new research support librarians, and it hopes to extend its librarian internship program into a workshop/teaching model. The idea behind this would be to teach a course or workshop on the transferability of librarian skills in the new, changing world of work. The journal's Information Services team will continue to examine how we can promote the importance of librarianship in academia and the publishing sector.

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Notes

1. ACRL Research Planning Review Committee, "2012 Top Ten Trends in Academic Libraries: A Review of the Trends and Issues Affecting Academic Libraries in Higher Education," *C&RL News* 73, no. 6 (2012), 316, accessed September 25, 2014, http://crln.acrl.org/content/73/6/311.full.
2. Stephanie L. Maatta, "The Emerging Databrarian: Digital and Data Management Roles Reach Critical Mass among Recent MLS Graduates," *Library Journal* 138, no. 17 (2013), 26-33.
3. Melissa Fraser-Arnott, "Library and Information Science (LIS) Transferable Competencies," *Partnership: The Canadian Journal of Library and Information Practice and Research* 8, no. 2, 1-32.