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Book Reviews-Monographic Musings

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Book Reviews — Monographic Musings

Column Editor: **Regina Gong** (Open Educational Resources (OER) Project Manager/Head of Technical Services and Systems, Lansing Community College Library) <gongr1@lcc.edu>

Column Editor's Note: *Summer is upon us once again and for those of you like me who work throughout the summer, it's a time where we finish off projects, do our research writing, or prepare for the coming academic year. For us here in Michigan, where it seems summer is way too short, I look forward to making the most of it just hanging out with family and friends and travelling. Of course, June is the time for the ALA Annual Conference and this time, it goes back to Chicago again.*

Anyway, since this is our ALA Annual issue, we have all ALA publications (except for one) that we are reviewing in this column. ALA Publishing is a vital part of ALA and ALA Editions continues to be the leading publisher for us in the library and information services community. I hope you consider buying these books for your library or even for your own personal use.

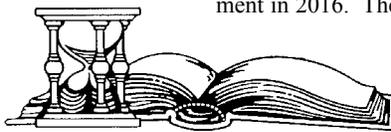
If you enjoy reading and wouldn't mind reviewing a book or two, contact me at <gongr1@lcc.edu>. May you all have a relaxing, enjoyable summer and happy reading! — RG

Farmer, Lesley S. J., and Safer, Alan M. *Library Improvement Through Data Analytics*. Chicago, IL: Neal-Schuman, 2016. 9780838914250. 184 pages. \$75.00.

Reviewed by **Ashley Fast Bailey** (Director, Collection Development and Workflow Solutions, Central US, GOBI Library Solutions) <abailey@ybp.com>

Libraries are looking for applicable ways to optimize their operations despite tight budgets. In today's landscape, libraries are looking to articulate their relevance and demonstrate their value. *Library Improvement Through Data Analytics* uses the basics of Six Sigma as a model that can be applied to library settings to provide a way for improved processes and highlight the measurable aspects that can benefit libraries. **Dr. Lesley Farmer**, Professor at **California State University, Long Beach** and coordinator of the Library Program, and **Dr. Alan M. Safer**, Professor at **California State University, Long Beach** in the Department of Mathematics and Statistics, write about how data driven decision making can make the case across various projects and departments in the library. This work contains the information and various case studies illustrating the benefits of quantitative data analysis for library improvements.

Farmer and Safer begin the work with an overview on various types of data analysis tools and the goals of each. Outlining various processes for analyzing data, they land on how Six Sigma techniques and how data is needed in the library decision process. Going into part two of this work, Six Sigma becomes the framework focus. Chapters three through seven outline the Six Sigma processes. Beginning with defining the process, the authors relate this into the realm of libraries. By looking at what one wants to improve, the stakeholders, choose the relevant data, and making decisions, the basis for data collection and analysis is laid. Step two measures the current situation. By matching the objective and the data, a library and project team can begin to collect the relevant and needed data. **Farmer and Safer** provide tables and illustrations to show this process. The third step, analyzing the existing processes involves analyzing the collected data. By doing this patterns and causes of the issues are found and then steps to start to improve those are outlined. They provide various methods in this section to conduct this examination. Step four is to improve the process. At this point, there is a baseline and then measuring the impact of proposed changes and improvements can be measured and evaluated. Testing and continued analysis, as well as working with staff and stakeholders in the changes is done. The last step after changes



have been made and implemented, there is ongoing support to ensure that the process can be scaled and is sustainable. With this step also comes evaluation.

Part three of *Library Improvement Through Data Analytics* moves into the practical aspects of working with project data. After **Farmer and Safer** have gone over the Six Sigma process, they begin to get into working with the data collected. Starting with cleaning the data, and providing examples and ways of doing so, they deliver examples and figures to illustrate this process. After data clean up, statistics enter the equation. If chapter eight is on cleaning up the data, then chapter nine focuses on how to use it. Ideally the data is used to answer questions or test hypotheses.

There are numerous ways to analyze data and **Farmer and Safer** go into details on various types of research techniques pertaining to this subject. Based on the research goal of the project, there are many methods employed to analyze the data. A large section of this work contains examples of these techniques and illustrations to go along with the explanations. **Farmer and Safer** wrap up with a section on software available to help with projects. Part Four of this work contains case studies. These practical applications of the techniques and data analysis of the previous three sections allow the reader to see real library examples of using these techniques to answer questions and provide solutions to real life case studies. From topics on facilities to staffing to digitization, the examples are great real life applications of the first three parts of this title.

Library Improvement Through Data Analytics is a book designed for those who want to learn about data analytics and see the applications of the various methods within the lens of the library. **Farmer and Safer** write in an easy to understand and comprehend manner. For someone wanting to learn about these tools, or gain a better understanding of these methods, this is a good book to meet that need.

Schmidt, Krista, and Tim Carstens. *The Subject Liaison's Survival Guide to Technical Services*. Chicago: ALA Editions, 2017. 9780838915028. 95 pages. \$40.00.

Reviewed by **Christine Fischer** (Head of Technical Services, University Libraries, UNC Greensboro) <cmfische@uncg.edu>

This slim volume is a practical overview of technical services activities that is designed to inform subject liaisons about functions that may influence their work. The genesis of this title was a **Charleston Conference** presentation given by **Schmidt and Carstens** in 2014. **Schmidt** serves as Reference Librarian-Science Liaison at **Western Carolina University's (WCU) Hunter Library**, while **Carstens** was serving as Associate Dean of Library Services at **WCU** upon his retirement in 2016. The lack of such resources in the library literature and the value of an extended exploration of the topic for both practicing subject liaisons and graduate students inspired the publication.

The introduction provides a clear outline of the volume, and it defines the scope of the book while pointing out several topics for further conversations between liaisons and their colleagues in technical services. A glossary provides definitions of terms and acronyms. Resources are listed in the bibliography, and a thorough index is included.

Schmidt and Carstens offer an overview of collection development by focusing on aspects important to subject liaisons such as understanding how it is implemented and who is involved, becoming familiar with the library's collection development policy, and managing and selecting resources. They describe the role of technical services colleagues in providing reports, usage and financial data for resources, and budget information. The authors discuss the advantage of understanding timing

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and deadlines for order placement, when regular collection development and budget reports are generated, and what the expected turnaround time is for various workflows in the department.

Descriptions of acquisitions activities provide details of ordering, receiving, and processing. The authors explain that by understanding workflows, subject liaisons know what to expect and are better able to respond to questions that faculty and other users might have about new and continuing collection resources. Cataloging topics cover original and copy cataloging, standards, and the act of enhancing catalog records to improve the user experience. The final chapter discusses collection maintenance, including weeding and withdrawal of both physical and electronic collections. The authors make clear that this activity can be sensitive for library staff as well as faculty, and they offer ideas to help the process go smoothly.

Communication is a theme repeated throughout the book; by taking the initiative and talking with contacts in technical services, the subject liaison learns about collection development, acquisitions, and cataloging functions, thus informing their work with faculty and others requesting resources. By establishing comfortable working relationships with individuals in technical services, the liaison is more likely to approach members of the department with questions or issues.

A creative and useful feature is lists of “Questions You Should Be Asking” that appear at strategic points in the text. After learning about a topic, the reader is presented a list of questions that can be asked of colleagues in technical services to provide context for the conventions and policies that apply to the local situation both within the library and on campus. These detailed lists could also be helpful to new technical services staff getting to know their department. In addition, highlighted paragraphs offer practical tips about issues the subject liaison may encounter such as knowing the difference between budget cuts and reversions.

Subject liaisons new to working in academic libraries and graduate students interested in serving in that role will benefit from this description of technical services activities as they apply to the liaison librarian. This resource could also benefit technical services librarians as they help to orient new subject librarians to collection development and related activities in their library.

Solomon, Laura. *The Librarian's Nitty-Gritty Guide to Content Marketing.* Chicago, IL: ALA Editions. 2016. 978083914328. 120 pages. \$50.00

Reviewed by **Frances Krempasky** (Electronic Resources Management Librarian, Lansing Community College Library) <krempf@lcc.edu>

Libraries, much like other organizations and businesses, are enthusiastically embracing social media to promote their programs and services to their users. Libraries announce each new program or database with much fanfare via their webpages, blogs and Facebook posts. Yet, while new content is added, it is not often updated. Having a social media presence is better than having none, right? Not so, according to **Laura Solomon**, library services manager for the **Ohio Public Library Information Network** and author of *The Librarian's Nitty-Gritty Guide to Content Marketing*. Library patrons want to interact with us, and want to trust that we are keeping our social content current. She advocates the “Youtility” idea of content marketing. Youtility is “marketing upside down. Instead of marketing that’s needed by companies, Youtility is marketing that’s wanted by customers. Youtility is massively useful information, provided for free, that creates long-term trust and kinship between your company and your customers.” (p.3-4).

Solomon defines content marketing as “anything you create that helps tell the story of your business or organization.” It includes all online content such as webpages, newsletters, blogs, images, Twitter, etc. In the first chapter, aptly titled, “Get over yourself,” **Solomon** recommends that libraries let go of the ego involved in marketing

and promotion. Libraries need to create content that is appealing and worthwhile to patrons so that they can engage with it fully, share it, and comment on it. **Solomon** details how content marketing, by using social media tools, is one way that libraries can make a personal connection with their customers and garner more support for the library. She discusses the characteristics of effective content marketing: strategic, relevant, focused on a particular audience, goal based, and an ongoing process. The goal of content marketing is to solicit action.

The move to content marketing from solely content promotion includes changes in methodologies too. **Solomon** outlines how to build “personas” from your core audience to help fine-tune content marketing strategies. Ideas about how to make content marketing relevant and effective are also discussed, including linking a plan to library goals. In order to assess content assets, libraries should perform a content audit and create an editorial calendar for all library content. With careful planning, content marketing can be successful. A library can change its perception, and move forward to build trust with its user base.

Writing for the web is very different from writing for print. The author details the steps in content creation, from the headline, to the tone of the content, to telling “a story” to users. The content must be interesting and shareable. Studies show that people share content that is positive, longer, and includes visuals. In terms of formatting, the content needs to be easily read or “scannable” for users. Information content can be “chunked,” and sentences and paragraphs less wordy. Also, include bulleted or numbered lists so content is easily scanned.

A chapter that I found particularly helpful was “Are you actually succeeding?” **Solomon** discusses measuring your effectiveness in terms of content marketing tools, how to figure out ROI (return on investment), and choosing metrics. Using engagement metrics such as Facebook likes, comments, and shares, is one way of measuring effectiveness. One item that I found immediately useful was the example of one library’s “Digital Strategy document,” which is a tool for ongoing assessment of the content strategies that you are employing.

Solomon’s guidebook is a good resource for anyone just starting a content marketing plan or evaluating a current plan. While the tone of the book is somewhat casual and thus the “nitty-gritty” moniker, the amount of material covered is impressive. Each chapter includes “Words of wisdom from the field” from professional marketers. These tips offer a new perspective for libraries about content marketing. As the electronic resources management librarian at my library, I find this book particularly helpful in marketing and promoting our databases. I look forward to using the tools **Solomon** suggests for assessing our current promotion methods. Both public and academic librarians will find this book useful and informative when embarking on their own content marketing strategy.

Suber, Peter. *Knowledge Unbound: Selected Writings on Open Access, 2002–2011.* Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2016. 9780262528498. 456 pages. \$32.00

Reviewed by **Steve Sowards** (Associate Director for Collections, Michigan State University Libraries) <sowards@msu.edu>

This hefty volume assembles forty-four essays by the most prominent American advocate for open access (OA) covering an important decade. In his other existence as a philosophy professor, **Peter Suber** writes around issues of ethics, and the ethical benefits of OA sit at the core of many of these pieces.

Suber has written voluminously and regularly about OA for many years: his own online bibliography at https://cyber.harvard.edu/~psuber/wiki/Writings_on_open_access runs to 20 pages if printed. The essays gathered here appeared first in **Suber’s** *Free Online Scholarship Newsletter*, which became the *SPARC Open Access Newsletter*. **Suber** archives these newsletters from 2001 to 2013 at <http://legacy.earlham.edu/~peters/fos/newsletter/archive.htm>, 168 in all, and many of them containing more than one entry. It is helpful, then, to have **Suber’s** own selection of essays that he still regards as most important. This is a book suitable for browsing, in part because the analytical and expository text

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can be dense, and in part because it is rewarding to bump up against **Suber's** sharp and sometimes unexpected insights.

The selected pieces date from 2002 to 2011, and especially 2004 to 2008. This was the crucial era of the **Budapest Open Access Initiative**, the first **Creative Commons** licenses, the appearance of the **Directory of Open Access Journals**, the launch of new publishers like **PLOS**, and intense debates about OA mandates for publications paid for by public **NIH** grants. The essays are grouped into eight sections, defining OA and its benefits, analyzing publishing and funding models, and rebutting critics.

The last two sections ("More on the Landscape of Open Access" and "Bits of the Bigger Picture") may be the most entertaining and thought-provoking. **Suber** brings his substantial powers of analysis to bear on diverse topics such as the special features of publishing in the humanities, retrospective OA "unbinding" of key publications (not unlike the work of **Knowledge Unlatched** today), challenges in making ETDs (electronic theses and dissertations) available through Open Access, and historical lessons for OA publishing that can be found in other "sender pays" delivery systems such as postage stamps and broadcast media.

MIT Press published this work both in print format and as an Open Access eBook, freely available in PDF for viewing, downloading and

searching. The frequent URLs do not display as clickable hot links, and in fact, many of those links are no longer valid. The URLs have not been checked, updated or modified, and some of them lead to dead ends. This book accompanies the same author's *Open Access* (MIT Press, 2012), which operates as more of a purpose-built handbook to the topic.

A brief glossary defines ten core terms. These include not only the difference between "green" and "gold" OA reflecting the choice between repositories and journals, but also "gratis" and "libre" OA reflecting the presence or absence of fees and limits based on licenses or copyright.

The index helpfully uncovers concepts that are scattered across the essays (and are not always apparent from the essay titles). Prominent recurring themes include: barriers to access; authors and their rights; the varieties of competing and complementary books and eBooks; aspects of copyright; embargoes as a point of argument; funding sources for publishing and OA publishing; details about "green OA" and repositories; the scholarly journal environment; the roles and burdens of libraries; the development of the OA movement; the National Institutes of Health as a crucial arena for OA developments; peer review; publication fees; and the article submission process.

In an era in which OA concepts are largely taken for granted — even if implementation is still contested — it is worthwhile to return to some original precepts and forecasts about the purposes, challenges and rewards of Open Access. 🐦

Wryly Noted — Books About Books

Column Editor: **John D. Riley** (*Against the Grain* Contributor and Owner, Gabriel Books) <jdriley@comcast.net>
<https://www.facebook.com/Gabriel-Books-121098841238921/>

Shakespeare & Co, Paris: A History of the Rag & Bone Shop of the Heart. Edited by **Krista Halverson** with a foreword by **Jeanette Winterson** and an epilogue by **Sylvia Whitman**. (ISBN: 979-10-96101-00-9 Published 2016 by the Bookshop Itself.)

The original **Shakespeare and Company** bookshop was founded by **Sylvia Beach** in 1919 and it operated both as a bookstore and a lending library. It is most famous for acting as a salon for the "Lost Generation" and was a regular haunt of **Hemingway**, the **Fitzgeralds**, **Ezra Pound**, and **James Joyce**. **Sylvia Beach** even published **Joyce's Ulysses** when no other publisher would touch it. That first incarnation of the bookshop closed in 1941 when Paris came under Nazi occupation and never opened again. Under its inspiration, **George Whitman** opened a bookshop and lending library named **Mistral** in 1951. That bookshop changed its name to **Shakespeare and Company** in 1964 with the blessing of **Sylvia Beach**. It also happened to be the 400th anniversary of **Shakespeare's** birth. This book is the story of that shop.

Everyone has an image of **Shakespeare and Company** in their mind, whether they have been there or not: **Sylvia Beach** chatting with the half blind **James Joyce**, the **Shakespeare** head logo at Kilometer Zero Paris, or perhaps they have a personal memory from a visit there. **George Whitman** had a unique approach to running his shop, which he char-

acterized as "a socialist utopia masquerading as a bookstore." And it certainly lived up to that name. **Whitman** (purportedly a distant cousin of **Walt Whitman**) let visitors live in the shop in exchange for a few hours of book shelving or counter work. He called these visitors "Tumbleweeds" and also required that they read at least one book a day and write a two page autobiography. These brief autobiographies make up nearly half of the book. The shop was open nineteen hours a day, seven days a week and during that time you could find spontaneously performed live music, poetry readings, and general cavorting by members and hangers on of the Beat Generation. **Whitman** knew **Lawrence Ferlinghetti** from when he was a student at the **Sorbonne** and his bookshop was the inspiration for **Ferlinghetti's City Lights** bookshop in San Francisco.

Besides the *Tumbleweeds'* autobiographies, which consist largely of their experiences at the bookshop and in Paris, there is an illustrated retelling of the history of **Sylvia Beach's** shop. The book is full of many color photographs and paintings from **George Whitman's** shop and reminiscences written by **Whitman** himself that were originally meant to make up his autobiography "Rag and Bone Shop of the Heart" taken from a line of **William**

Butler Yeat's poem "The Circus Animals' Desertion."

One key to the bookshop's success, other than **Whitman's** bibliomania and generous heart, was the fact that there were no public libraries in Paris at that time. **George** operated a lending library as much to make a little money to keep the shop afloat as to not part with his precious collection of books. He also kept the shop in the black by selling the books of **Henry Miller**, which were banned in the U.S. and **Joyce's Ulysses**, which was still banned in Ireland!

This is a book for anyone who loves books and literature and bookshops. **Shakespeare and Company** is the **Shakespeare** of all bookshops. Luckily for us the shop is still open and is now run by **Whitman's** daughter, **Sylvia**. When she took over in 2002 she made vast improvements to the shop, such as bringing in a cash register to replace the wooden cash box

that served for over forty years and she added a telephone to replace having to run out to the pay phone booth to make calls.

Those of who have been lucky enough to visit recall the unique qualities of that iconic bookshop. I remember entering the shop one cold November afternoon in 1971 and being offered a glass of Beaujolais Nouveau by

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