2017

ATG Special Report-The Charlotte Initiative E-Book Symposium

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a student was researching the impact of liberalizing marijuana policies. Passionately pro-legalization, he claimed that a massive increase in marijuana use would have no negative health effects. None of the sources he had consulted were *fake* in the way we understand the term today. But by drawing on small, incomplete, or badly designed pro-legalization studies and ignoring several larger and more carefully controlled cautionary studies, he'd reinforced his false belief that there were no risks to public health of making marijuana widely available.

The point I am trying to drive home here is our students' biggest problem isn't that they occasionally mistake fake news for real news. It's that they so often use *all* types of news to reinforce their existing beliefs. No doubt they've always been selective in what they read and watch, but, in an era where social media and customized alerts have largely replaced national and regional news, many students curate their news sources to such an extent that they expose themselves *only* to news that reinforces their beliefs. As a result, these beliefs persist largely unchallenged — and many of the false ones go uncorrected.

In treating the uncritical consumption of fake news as a symptom of the more fundamental problem of excessive curation, I am suggesting that the market for fake news is shaped less by the opportunism of a few tech-savvy Macedonian teens than it is by the longstanding desire of students, and indeed all of us, to define the world in a way that frees us to believe what we want.[8] As **Sir Francis Bacon** observed nearly 400 years ago:

> The human understanding, once it has adopted opinions, either because they were already accepted and believed, or because it likes them, draws everything else to support and agree with them.[9]

Conceived of in human rather than technological terms, fake news is a problem that falls comfortably within the educator's wheelhouse. As librarians and instructors, we have seen students misusing sources for years; we've read dozens of student papers where sources have been co-opted to validate beliefs that fly in the face of the scientific consensus; and, above all, we've seen how students use information not as a means of learning new things about the world but, instead, as a means of reassuring themselves they know enough already. Our experiences in the classroom, more than tweaks to Facebook algorithms, are what we'll need to mount a successful campaign against the scourge of fake news.

Finally, whether we're feeling anxious about headaches, fake news, or the misuse of information, there is always a temptation to avoid doing things that could intensify our anxiety. As a result, we may resist thinking about, and actively trying to resolve, some significant problems. This is generally a mistake. Because while avoidance may buy us some temporary relief, in the long run, it increases our anxiety. The big cats won't stay away forever. There will come a day when we'll have to confront them. 🐾

Endnotes

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ATG Special Report — Charlotte Initiative E-book Symposium

Charleston Marriott Courtyard, November 6, 2017

by **Rebecca Lenzini** (President, The Charleston Company) <rlenzini@charlestonco.com>

As the website for this symposium noted, "For the past two years attendees of the **Charleston Conference** have heard about **The Charlotte Initiative for Permanent Acquisition of E-books, by Academic Libraries** the **Andrew W. Mellon** funded research grant designed to study the current state of eBooks in the academic market." *http://charlotteinitiative.uncc.edu/*

The two-year project is now coming to a close, with the final report due in December 2017. Participants of the grant are sharing their findings, with the goal of helping to continue the conversations begun during the investigations. As part of that effort, members of the Project Team offered a free symposium to all **Charleston Conference** attendees on November 6, 2017, at the Marriott Courtyard. The symposium presented overview findings from the Environmental Scan Research, as well as Publisher and Vendor Perspectives, and highlights from the four research team findings.

Charles Hamaker, the project's Initial Principal Investigator, kicked off the afternoon by reminding the audience of the original goals of the project which were to example three core principles proposed for eBook licenses:

- Provision of irrevocable perpetual access and archival rights.

- Allowance for unlimited simultaneous users.

- Freedom from any Digital Rights Management (DRM), including (but not limited to) use of proprietary formats, restricted access to content, or time-limited access terms.
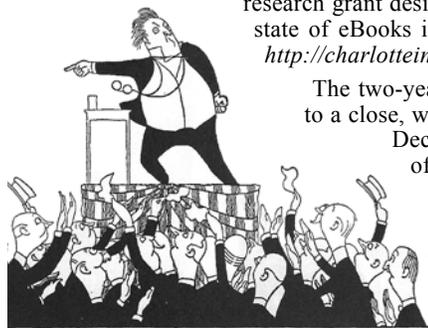
He noted that the project team and working group included a mix of publishers, consortia and libraries, with 26 members participating *http://charlotteinitiative.uncc.edu/ci/project_team*. Among **Chuck's** take-aways, often referenced during the afternoon, was the need to "name names" as well as the need to stop "talking past each other" among the various constituencies.

Following **Chuck**, **October Ivins**, Project Consultant for the grant, noted that two additional topics — ILL and Course Use — had been added to the original "core principles" being studied. She described the iterative process used during the investigation, which combined surveys with interviews. Talking about the publisher survey (conducted from August 2016-April 2017), she was pleased to report that 66 of 162 lengthy surveys were in fact completed. Results showed good support for "no DRM," unlimited simultaneous users, and perpetual access. On the added topic of ILL, however, only 17% showed support. Publishers also noted that Course Selected books represent 80% of revenue and therefore may not be open for more lenient policies.

John Sherer, Director of the **UNC Press**, was next up and reminded members in attendance that an Ithaka study on the cost of publishing scholarly monographs has stated that each book represents an expected loss of $20,000. He also reminded us that 85-90% of publisher sales are still print based. Sherer finds the concept of "prefunding" now under investigation by the **AAU/ARL/AAUP** cooperative to be worth following. He also proposed a "radical" idea, in which all university press books would be available for access for a reasonable fee (X) and where that fee, with a "kicker" (X++) would allow ownership of high use items. With enough participation from libraries, the dollar value of X could be affordable.

Though he was not a member of the grant's working groups, **Michael Zeoli**, who handles Content Development & Partner Relations for **GOBI**, presented a fascinating series of slides illustrating book sales and trends based on data from 27 eBook platforms served by **GOBI**. Among his observations were that eBook collections are on the rise as expected but that the coverage among the collections is quite uneven, primarily due to copyright differences between various providers and their publisher agreements. He also reported that DDA as a percent of total sales has increased dramatically, from 10% in 2012 to 28% in 2017.

Following a break, a series of "Shotgun Highlights and Findings" were offered by members of the research teams and covered the following topics:

- Licensing Principles, **Theresa Liedtka** (**University of Tennessee-Chatanooga**) and **Rebecca Seger** (**Oxford University Press**)
- Course Use, **Liz Siler** (Collection Development Librarian, **UNC Charlotte**) and **Kelly Denzer** (Electronic Resources Librarian, **Davidson College**)
- Platforms & Preservation, **Kate Davis** (Assistant Director, **Scholars Portal**)
- User Experience, **Alison Bradley** (Collection Development Librarian, **Davidson College**)

My favorite personal take-away from these reports was the observation that one benefit of the entire investigation was a greater understanding of issues from each other's points of view and that all involved wanted to continue the conversations and discussions. Completely in the spirit of the **Charleston Conference**! 🦃

ATG Interviews Jon Cawthorne

Dean of the University Library System, Wayne State University

by **Tom Gilson** (Associate Editor, *Against the Grain*) <gilsont@cofc.edu>

and **Katina Strauch** (Editor, *Against the Grain*) <kstrauch@comcast.net>

ATG: Jon, you were just appointed Dean of the University Library System at Wayne State University. What prompted you to take on this challenge? Why Wayne State? Why now?

JC: First, I love **West Virginia University (WVU)**. The people in the **WVU** libraries are exceptionally talented — and held in highest regard on the campus and throughout the state. I'm grateful for my time at **WVU**, and almost every day I acknowledge outstanding work that we accomplished together. The institution is very, very special to me.

The opportunity at **Wayne State University** was too good to pass up for several reasons. At **Wayne State**, I'm dean of both the Library System and the School of Information Sciences (SIS). The combination of these roles offers a rare opportunity to influence and support not just a major research library, but also the future of library education. The School just celebrated 50 years of **ALA** accreditation, but its roots trace back 100 years. Earlier in my career — in 2002 — I began in library administration at the **Detroit Public Library (DPL)**. Detroit was very different back in 2002, and I must

say that I'm thrilled to be back — especially at this time, when the city's transformation is at full throttle. I'm excited about how our Libraries and **Wayne State** can work together for the public good of Detroit, and also for all of Michigan. That's a big part of our mission.

Because beyond **Wayne State's Carnegie** classification[1] as "R1," which means a doctoral institution with the highest level of research activity, we've also been awarded **Carnegie's** Community Engagement classification, which we compete for every five years. I'm proud to say we're among only 1.3 percent of universities that fall into this group. So **Wayne State** is a very diverse, urban institution at a pivotal moment in its history. I'm inspired by the vision laid out by our president and provost. And I know that our Library System team has the talent and tenacity that will — along with our rich portfolio of other assets — will move us forward to being a leader among the world's best research libraries.

ATG: You came from West Virginia University where you served as dean of libraries. What did you learn at WVU that you think will be most helpful in assuring success in your new position?

JC: Well, I learned several things: 1) Libraries are appreciated and respected among administrators, faculty and students; 2) I learned that the people who work in libraries