

# Against the Grain

---

Manuscript 8370

---

## Little Red Herrings – Patience and Fortitude

Mark Y. Herring

Follow this and additional works at: <https://docs.lib.purdue.edu/atg>



Part of the [Library and Information Science Commons](#)

---

This document has been made available through Purdue e-Pubs, a service of the Purdue University Libraries.  
Please contact [epubs@purdue.edu](mailto:epubs@purdue.edu) for additional information.



Take a closer look at....

## The CHARLESTON REPORT

*Business Insights into the Library Market*

**You Need The Charleston Report...**

*if you are a publisher, vendor, product developer, merchandiser, consultant or wholesaler who is interested in improving and/or expanding your position in the U.S. library market.*

**Subscribe today at our discounted rate of only \$75.<sup>00</sup>**



The Charleston Company

6180 East Warren Avenue, Denver, CO 80222

Phone: 303-282-9706 • Fax: 303-282-9743

### Rumors

*from page 6*

back to 1978, and recent award winners include **David W. Lewis** (2018); **Loretta Parham** (2017); **Susan K. Nutter** (2016); **Robert A. Seal** (2015); **Tim Bucknall** (2014); **Patricia Iannuzzi** (2013); **Paula T. Kaufman** (2012); **Janice Welburn** (2011); **Maureen Sullivan** (2010); **Gloriana St. Clair** (2009); **Peter Hernon** (2008); **Lizabeth (Betsy) Wilson** (2007); **Ray English** (2006); **Ravindra Nath (R. N.) Sharma** (2005); **Tom Kirk** (2004); **Ross Atkinson**, (2003); and **Shelley Phipps** (2002). Watch for *ATG's* interview with **Kaetrena** coming soon!

[www.acrl.org](http://www.acrl.org)

[gobi.ebsco.com](http://gobi.ebsco.com)

**David Parker** has a great interview with **Steven Bell** in the upcoming (v.31#2, April 2019) issue of *ATG*. It's about – **Open Educational Resources: The Rise of the Library and Navigating the "Spectrum of Affordability."** Very relevant to the subject of this (v.31#1, February 2019) guest edited issue by **Gwen Evans** of **OhioLink**.

Was poking around **Linked in** and saw that **John Dove** has a new advisory role. Turns out that the role is at **Mapping Scholarly Communications Infrastructure** which is an effort

*continued on page 15*

## Little Red Herrings — Patience and Fortitude

by **Mark Y. Herring** (Dean of Library Services, Dacus Library, Winthrop University) <[herringm@winthrop.edu](mailto:herringm@winthrop.edu)>

Is there anything more glorious than the Beaux-Arts **New York Public Library**? I don't mean just for librarians, but for anyone. Stop and think for a moment what this grand edifice has done in such a short time. Begun in 1897, the **Stephen A. Schwarzman Building**, or more typically, the Main Branch of the **NYPL**, is of course an iconic fixture in Midtown Manhattan with, as seen below, **Patience and Fortitude** guarding the tree of

knowledge since 1911. (I felt an even greater sense of connection when I realized the lions' marble is pink marble from Tennessee, home to my family for more than thirty years). From the **NYPL's** Renaissance style to **Edward Laning's** *Prometheus Bringing the Gift of Fire* in the Rotunda, to the magnificent main reading room (also seen below), the **NYPL** with its myriad programs is really more than a mere library when you think about it.

**NYPL** may be responsible for more writers, critics, pundits, professors, and playwrights than any other facility in the country (though there are sure to be disputants about that claim).

One display I saw while there recently was a small one of more than two dozen books under a glass cloche, as it were. These were the written contributions to which the **NYPL** provided their intellectual birth in the last twelve months alone. Not many large universities can claim as much, a point only rivaled by our national library. Moreover, writers such as **Robert Caro**, **Stacy Schiff**, **Betty Friedan** and **E. L Doctorow** have nurtured their works though the intellectual incubation of the **New York Public Library** and ultimately to the light of day.

As I walked into the building again, I was struck by the dozens of names that grace the archways up to the Rose Reading Room. Obviously many are well known, not the least of which are the founders, **Samuel Tilden**, **John Astor**, and **James Lennox**, the last two, incidentally, who originally named the lions after themselves (fortunately **Mayor LaGuardia** renamed them **Patience and Fortitude**). Now some will certainly complain that these names evoke the robber baron era of the early 1900s (especially since **Astor** is considered one of

*continued on page 12*



For decades it was home to just about every culture and ethnicity seeking to advance their knowledge at a time when formal education may not have been possible. Legal immigrants found a way to learn their new language and understand their new culture. Aspiring writers found an intellectual respite for their writing and research. Would-be professors found a way to equip themselves for any task at hand. The

## How Libraries Can Lead: An Introduction ... from page 1

relationships with publishers and their relationships on campus, are ideally placed to spearhead efforts to relieve financial pressure on students. A recent survey of university and community college students found 36% to 46% percent suffered basic needs insecurity (food or housing).<sup>2</sup> In another widespread survey, 66% of student respondents said they didn't buy required texts at least once due to cost, and just under 50% said the cost of textbooks caused them to take fewer courses or not register for a specific course. Adverse effects on grades or completion were also tied to prohibitive cost.<sup>3</sup> This is a critical issue for our students, and one in which libraries are actively addressing in leadership roles on campus.

What goes into the cost of a textbook? What's driving the cost of textbooks? How do publishers approach textbooks (or potential "course adopted" monographs) when they are pricing eBook packages? What's the role for open access monographs from established presses? What's the business model for open textbook publishing houses or library publishing initiatives? How can commercial textbook costs be mitigated on campus in a sustainable manner? How do libraries help faculty find and assess options, either library materials or initiatives designed to promote OER? What's the faculty opinion on these initiatives? It's important we all begin to ask these questions, and look closely at how academic libraries can assist in discovering, and in many cases, providing, the

### What is Inclusive Access?

- Digital-only course materials from commercial publishers
- Access of the first day of class
- All enrolled students (with an opt out process)
- Integrated in Course Management System and billed automatically to students through the bursar

### What is OER?

While definitions vary, at their core, Open Educational Resources are freely accessible, openly licensed text, media, and other digital assets that are useful for teaching, learning, and assessing as well as for research purposes. — Creative Commons

Open Education "...is the simple and powerful idea that the world's knowledge is a public good and that technology in general and the Web in particular provide an extraordinary opportunity for everyone to share, use, and reuse knowledge."  
— The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation

solutions. At **OhioLINK**, we often say "Students first." We take our role in affordable learning seriously and we are appreciative of the opportunity to bring more information to the readers of *Against The Grain*. This special issue purposefully presents a variety of perspectives on textbooks and affordable learning; we sincerely hope you find it helpful to your own strategies and efforts. 🌱

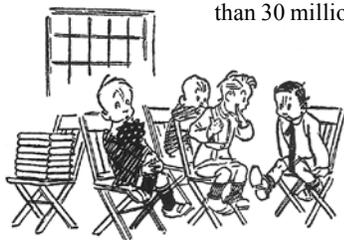
### Endnotes

1. **David Ernst**, "Open Education: A Commitment to Mission," Presentation at the OER Implementation and Policy Summit for MHEC States, Chicago IL November 28, 2018. [https://www.mhec.org/sites/default/files/resources/201811OERSummit\\_presentations\\_1.pdf](https://www.mhec.org/sites/default/files/resources/201811OERSummit_presentations_1.pdf)
2. **Goldrick-Rab, S., Richardson, J., Schneider, J., Hernandez, A., & Cady, C.** (2018) Still Hungry and Homeless in College. Wisconsin HOPE Lab. Madison, WI. <https://hope4college.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/Wisconsin-HOPE-Lab-Still-Hungry-and-Homeless.pdf>
3. Florida Virtual Campus. (2012). 2012 Florida Student Textbook Survey. Tallahassee, FL. [http://www.openaccesstextbooks.org/pdf/2012\\_Florida\\_Student\\_Textbook\\_Survey.pdf](http://www.openaccesstextbooks.org/pdf/2012_Florida_Student_Textbook_Survey.pdf)

## Little Red Herrings from page 8

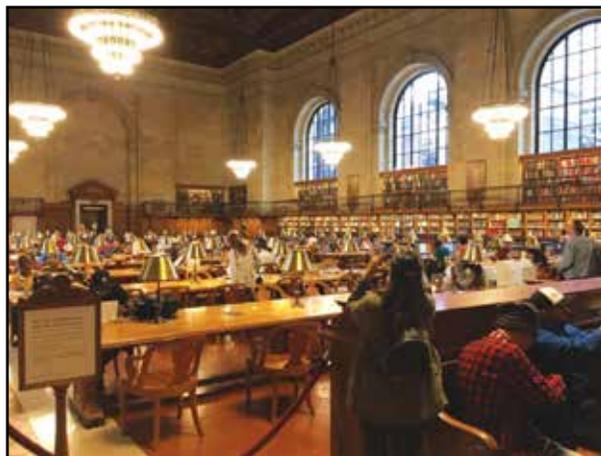
the original big four robber barons). While the evilfare of robber barons on the whole cannot be gainsaid, we can recognize at least some of the good some of them did.

As my eyes lingered over the names of the original donors, I marveled at the foresight and generosity of so many of them. **Samuel Tilden** deserves, of course, singular notice, bequeathing his estate and, through the brilliance of one of his trustees, **John Bigelow**, the rescue of the **Astor** and **Lenox** libraries and their absorption into the **NYPL**. While **Tilden's** estate (almost \$70 million in today's dollars) assured the success of **NYPL**, future donors made certain its perpetuation. According to the library's website, the building cost \$9 million to complete, or nearly \$260 million in today's dollars. Even with our billionaires — **Gates**, **Zuckerberg**, **Buffet**, **Ellison**, **Page**, **Koch**, **Waltons**, and **Bezos**, to name only a few — is there any confidence we could count on them — any of them — to undertake such a structure today? I think it highly doubtful.



The philanthropists who built the **NYPL** have left it to a generation that no longer understands why we need libraries when you can carry (an ersatz) one in the palm of your hand. What's more, they have no stomach for their continued, and admittedly expensive, upkeep. This leaves me with a melancholy sense of loss. In some ways, just as medieval scribes poured their souls into illustrated manuscripts, giving their lives, literally, to preserve and prescribe knowledge, so also those philanthropists at the turn of the last century did the same in their own way: poured their fortunes into magnificent libraries which now, more than 100 years later, are still serving millions — more than 30 million at **NYPL** alone — every year.

Patience and Fortitude are perfect symbols for what has become one of the most glorious libraries in the world. And as I think about it, maybe the **NYPL** really is "only" that, a library, because it does what any library must



do: open to all its patrons worlds they never dreamed of, until they dreamed them there.

### Sources

<https://www.nypl.org/help/about-nypl/history>

<https://www.6sqft.com/reading-between-the-lions-a-history-of-the-new-york-public-library/>

<https://www.smithsonianmag.com/arts-culture/wondrous-complexity-new-york-public-library-one-americas-largest-180965131/> 🌱