Editorial

An Introduction

The first editorial is always the hardest, partially due to the weight of following in the "steps of giants" and partially, because there is only one opportunity to make a first impression and set the tenor of future dialogue. Scott Walter, and those who preceded him, have set the bar high and I have a great respect for all they have accomplished as well as feeling a responsibility to continue to meet the high standards that they have set.

So I have spent these few months as Editor-Designate familiarizing myself with the journal. It is critical that an editor get to know the journal, the readership and the reviewers first. Going forward, the journal must reflect the needs and activities of those groups; it must be responsive to what is happening in our profession and in higher education at large and it must be a venue for thought-provoking, professional discourse.

During that learning process, I have also been hands-on with the editorial system and made some changes to reflect the trends and priorities in the profession. This started with a review of all of the subject classifications, as they are the matchmaking engine between author submissions and peer reviewers: these are the terms that reviewers choose as indicators of their expertise and that authors choose as descriptors of their paper submission. The terms were indicative of the evolution of topics, trends and nomenclature over time—although in some cases there was a lot of overlap, i.e., eight terms that described the concept of library instruction in some fashion. The final list of topics, after consultation with the Editorial Board, went from 98 to 56 including the addition of such new activities as Scholarly Communication/Open Access and Data Visualization/GIS among others. The goal is that there will be more effective matches between submissions and reviewers and that they are more representative of the topics of research in the profession.
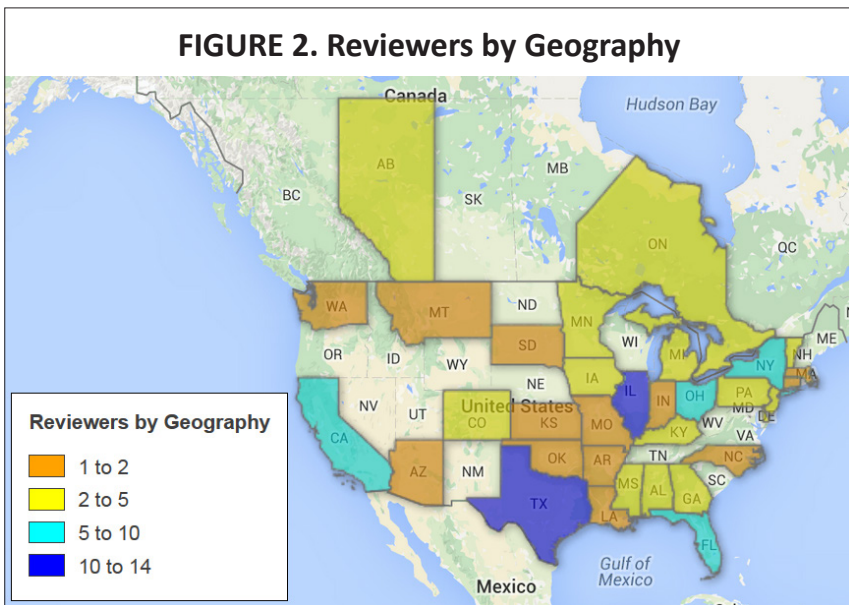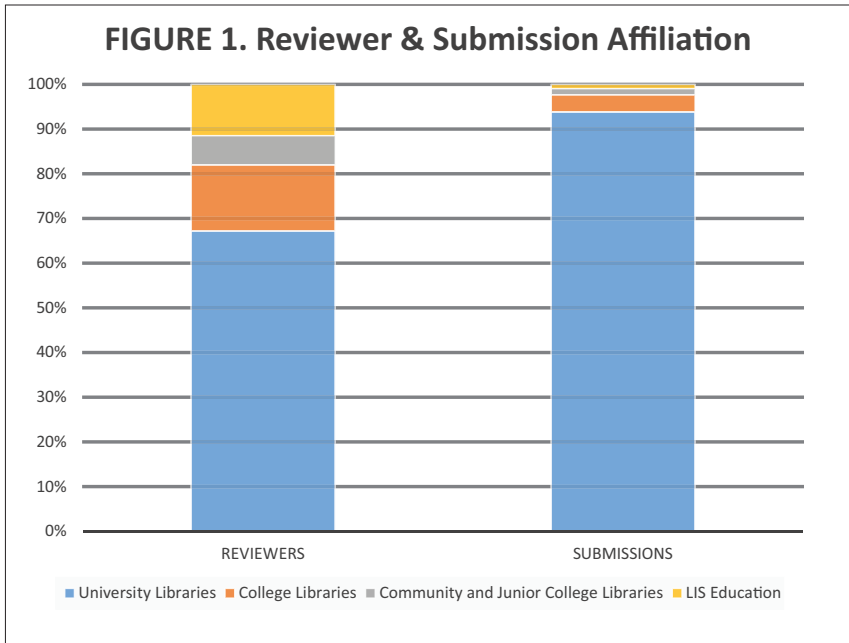
We have also added to our peer reviewer team, enhancing our expertise in emerging areas and increasing the number of reviewers to provide timely feedback. Acknowledging that we want to be responsive to authors and minimize any lag, a quality assessment does take some time. We also want to avoid burning out reviewers with too many requests to review, recognizing that the peer reviewers are volunteering their efforts, fitting it in around professional responsibilities.

The peer reviewers are representative of the values of the profession and of *College & Research Libraries*, their experience and knowledge is fundamental to the identity of the journal. Looking at a brief census of reviewers, they work in a variety of types of libraries and organizations. Based on the subject classifications, chosen by the reviewers, the preponderance have experience in University Libraries, followed by College Libraries and LIS Education (see figure 1).

The same chart reveals that the submissions about University Libraries, by far, exceed the other types of organizations. This is, more than likely, due to librarians in Universities having the expectation or, at least, more opportunity, to do research and publish as well as more occasion to collaborate with researchers in other disciplines or to study and communicate new knowledge or best practices in the profession.
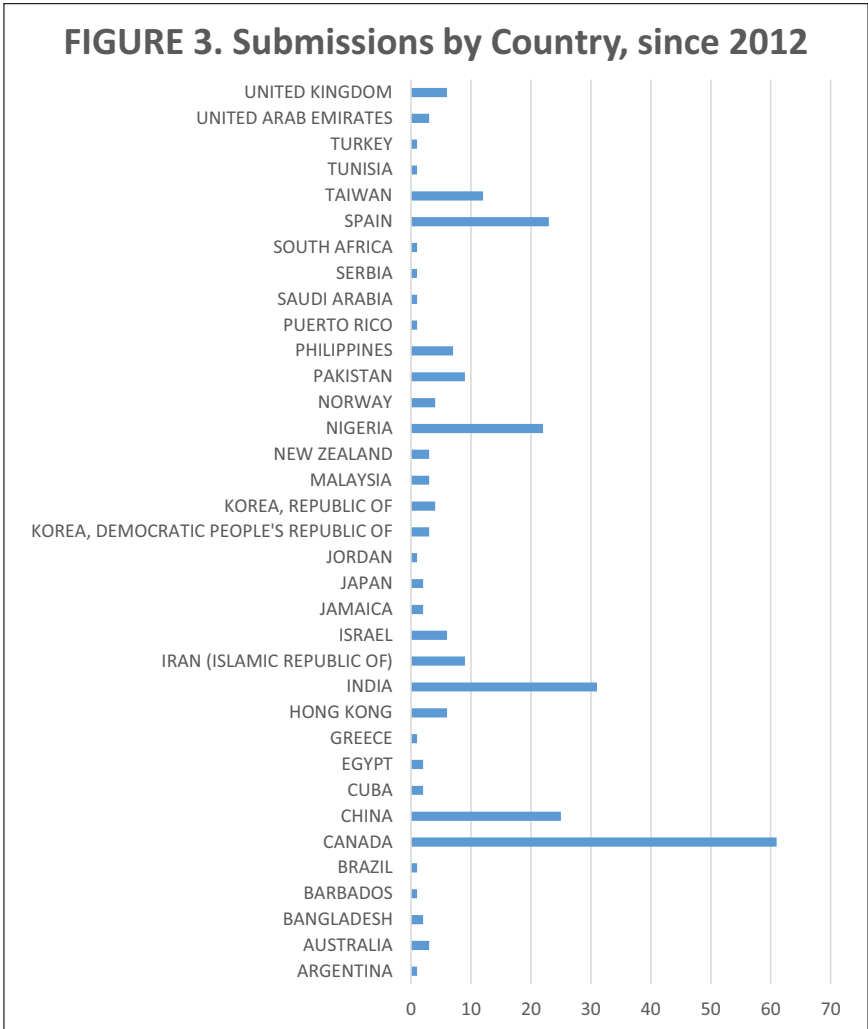
The majority of the peer reviewers are located in the United States, with just a few in Canada, although as the map below indicates, not all states are represented (see figure 2).

While these findings make sense in view of the fact that *C&RL* is an English-language publication, the lack of international representation is thought-provoking

FIGURE 1. Reviewer & Submission Affiliation

A stacked bar chart showing Reviewer and Submission Affiliation with y-axis from 0% to 100% in 10% increments. Two bars labeled REVIEWERS and SUBMISSIONS.

Legend: ■ University Libraries ■ College Libraries ■ Community and Junior College Libraries ■ LIS Education

FIGURE 2. Reviewers by Geography

A map of North America (Canada, United States, Mexico) showing reviewers by geography.

Reviewers by Geography
- 1 to 2
- 2 to 5
- 5 to 10
- 10 to 14

when considering the ongoing conversations around the significance of globalization and diversity in higher education. In addition, looking at the author submissions by country of residence, the majority are also from the US, with the most at 625, followed by Canada although there are a submissions from all parts of the world, in all stages of economic development and from a variety of regimes (see figure 3).
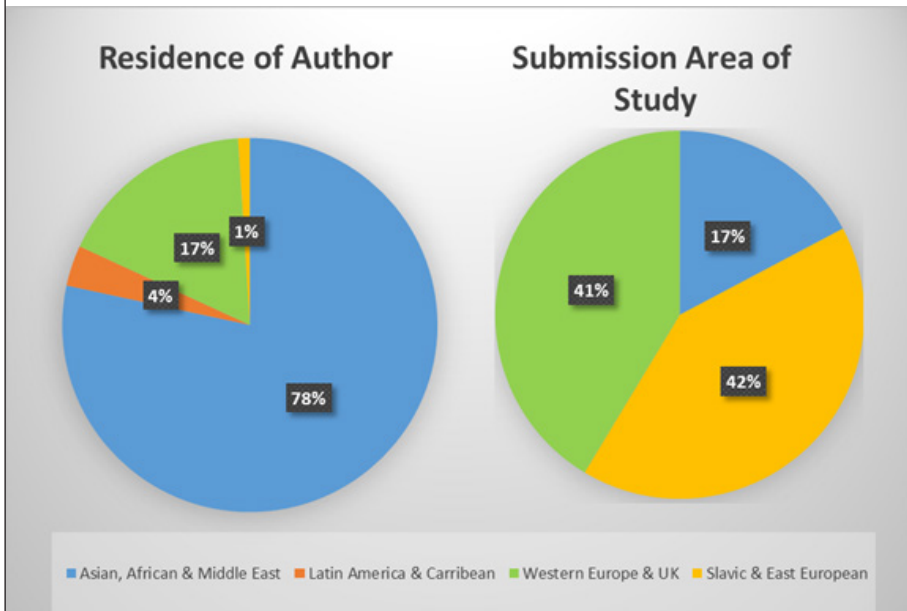
Interestingly, the data on papers submitted that indicated a certain geographic area of study do not align with the data on author's residence. Certainly, it is quite possible

FIGURE 3. Submissions by Country, since 2012

Country	Submissions
UNITED KINGDOM	
UNITED ARAB EMIRATES	
TURKEY	
TUNISIA	
TAIWAN	
SPAIN	
SOUTH AFRICA	
SERBIA	
SAUDI ARABIA	
PUERTO RICO	
PHILIPPINES	
PAKISTAN	
NORWAY	
NIGERIA	
NEW ZEALAND	
MALAYSIA	
KOREA, REPUBLIC OF	
KOREA, DEMOCRATIC PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF	
JORDAN	
JAPAN	
JAMAICA	
ISRAEL	
IRAN (ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF)	
INDIA	
HONG KONG	
GREECE	
EGYPT	
CUBA	
CHINA	
CANADA	
BRAZIL	
BARBADOS	
BANGLADESH	
AUSTRALIA	
ARGENTINA	

0   10   20   30   40   50   60   70

that not all authors tagged their submissions with the geographic variable but that cannot completely account for the difference indicated in figure 4.

It may seem that this month's editorial is preoccupied with looking at the journal's position in a global environment: just chalk it up to a hazard of the profession. In this case, my "day job" is primarily responsible for working with graduate students and faculty in International Affairs, Public Administration and Government and it is the aspect that I love most about what I do: working with researchers to further knowledge; collaborating with faculty in educating their students about how to find, evaluate and use information effectively in the classroom and in life; and empowering students to think strategically about their learning and engagement with the world.

That intersection of learning and scholarship with real-world impact and practice is a model that I have made efforts to incorporate in both my research and service efforts. The majority of my research is grounded in practice and focus on human resources and management in libraries, innovation in library services, and outreach and liaison resulting in several articles and book chapters and 2 co-authored monographs: *Guide*

FIGURE 4. Author Residence vs. Study Area

Residence of Author

Submission Area of Study

1%
17%
4%
78%

17%
41%
42%

■ Asian, African & Middle East   ■ Latin America & Carribean   ■ Western Europe & UK   ■ Slavic & East European

to Ethics in Acquisitions and *Leading Libraries: Creating a Service Culture*. Facilitating access to knowledge and empowering information literacy are values that I have also sought to practice in my service: as an editor I have had the responsibility to steward scholarship, support the scholarly dialogue on significant issues in the profession and empower authors and researchers. Editing *C&RL* is my third experience as an editor: previously, I was co-editor of *Library Leadership & Management*, another ALA publication; then later, I was co-editor-in-chief with Wyoma vanDuinkerken of *Journal of Academic Librarianship*. Both provided valuable experiences and a foundation in all aspects of the editorial process.

In getting to know *College & Research Libraries* and through numerous conversations with the talented people associated with it, a renewed vision for the journal is starting to coalesce. Through dialogue with the editorial board, reviewers and authors as well as the leadership and membership of the association, a number of questions have surfaced around the journal, its positioning and processes:

- Demystify the black box of the editorial/review process (workflow and timing)
- Examine rubric/standards for peer review, particularly with regard to emerging trends (data, new media, technology)
- Explore mentoring of authors (while maintaining integrity of review process)
- Investigate peer review process for best practices (i.e., PRIMO)
- Incorporate more expertise from the ACRL membership

The journal is a platform for researchers, scholars and practitioners in the profession to engage in dialogue. With that in mind, I will be reaching out to the readership (and the non-readership) to discover what librarians need from the journal and how it can meet the evolving expectations of professional communication and contribute meaningfully to scholarship and practice.

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