

Doing these Spotlights is actually one of the more pleasant aspects of my role as *C&RL* editor. It is a time to reflect on the works that authors have done and discuss common threads of trending topics. This particular issue is full of a number of compelling articles, so it was actually a little difficult to select a direction to riff on.

That said, there are actually two articles that address anxiety, and given that the past year has been nothing but anxiety-inducing, it seems natural to focus on that. In addition, one of most viewed articles in *C&RL* (it has consistently been in the top three most viewed articles) is “Shame: The Emotional Basis of Library Anxiety” by Erin L. McAfee, which tells me that there is definitely a lot of interest in the topic.

The May issue features an effective balance on the topic with one article examining the anxiety from the library teaching side and one from the student learning side:

“Effects of an Augmented Reality Library Orientation on Anxiety and Self-Efficacy: An Exploratory Study” by Samantha Kannegiser. This quasi-experimental study builds on research on mitigating library anxiety, the relationship between anxiety and self-efficacy, and the effects of augmented reality (AR) experiences on anxiety and self-efficacy. It investigates if an AR library orientation impacts incoming undergraduates’ self-reported indicators of anxiety and self-efficacy as compared to a traditional orientation. Two groups of incoming students participated in an orientation; one group received the traditional model and the other participated in an augmented reality version. By comparing pre- and post-survey results, this study determined that the AR orientation had a significant impact on students’ perceptions of librarians’ desire to help them.

I was talking to a colleague about this—particularly about library teaching self-efficacy—and conjectured that librarians may be one of the only professions where their efficacy may actually exceed their self-efficacy. Lundstrom, Fagerheim, and Van Geem’s study may suggest a reason for this.

“Library Teaching Anxiety: Understanding and Supporting a Consistent Issue in Librarianship” by

Kacy Lundstrom, Britt Fagerheim, and Stephen Van Geem. Teaching roles in academic libraries can be accompanied by a great deal of anxiety. This study surveyed librarian attitudes toward their teaching role and librarians’ experiences with teaching anxiety. Sixty-four percent of librarians participating in the survey said they experienced teaching anxiety, including 65.10 percent experiencing physical symptoms and 73.43 percent of librarians who experienced teaching anxiety experiencing psychological symptoms. Findings indicate tension between sustaining a work-life balance and managing physical and psychological symptoms. Based on these findings, the researchers propose supports that can help mitigate the adverse effects of teaching anxiety on library instructors.

Charles also looks at librarians’ engagement in teaching through engagement with an online graduate course in Education:

“Closing the Transactional Distance in an Online Graduate Course through the Practice of Embedded Librarianship” by Leslin Charles. Using the practice of embedded librarianship, a professor from the Graduate School of Education and the Education librarian at Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey collaborated to investigate its impact on the inherent transactional distance that exists in an online graduate course. Using Michael G. Moore’s three relational distances existing in the online environment—“teacher-student,” “student-student,” “student-course content”—the authors added two areas—“instructor-librarian” and “student-librarian”—that can close the transactional distance in online courses. Through course activities, structure, and access to the embedded librarian and specific library resources, students had increased opportunities for engagement, thereby reducing transactional distance.

One particular article is timely. With protests and riots, winter storms, and forest fires, pandemics and economic downturns—it is affecting everyone, and libraries are not exempt. O’Neill and Kelley offer up:

“Delivering Bad News: Crisis Communication Methods in Academic Libraries” by Brittany O’Neill and Rebecca Kelley. This exploratory study analyzed the specific crisis communication methods of academic libraries. A survey was sent to library staff at Association of Research Libraries member colleges and universities

---

Wendi Kasper is *C&RL* editor and policy sciences librarian at the Texas A&M University Policy Sciences and Economics Library, email: warant@tamu.edu

to describe if, who, when, and how they communicated bad news to their stakeholders for major, minor, and emerging crises. The findings show that respondents used multiple communication strategies, which varied based on the crisis. The data show that libraries communicated journal and database cancellations and health and safety emergencies more slowly than access issues and were more likely not to communicate those crises at all. Respondents also more frequently chose to communicate journal and database cancellations only when asked, as compared to other crises. While access issues and health and safety emergencies were primarily communicated through social media and the library's website, stakeholders received communication about journal and database cancellations primarily through targeted emails from library liaisons, face-to-face meetings with faculty, and the library's website. These findings suggest that respondents communicated more quickly for minor crises but were more hesitant for crises that may have presented the potential for reputational harm. The varied responses between crisis types often conflicted with best practices for whether to deliver bad news and, if so, when and by whom. These findings indicate a need for academic libraries to develop comprehensive crisis communication plans that emphasize timeliness and transparency.

There have been a number of studies recently about pay gaps and equity, and Li's study provides a specific examination of how salary in libraries is correlated with different demographic factors.

"Racial Pay Gap: An Analysis of CARL Libraries" by Yanli Li. Using data from the 8Rs CARL Libraries Practitioner Survey in 2014, this study assesses the impact of race on the earnings attainment process based on a sample of 392 CARL library practitioners. It determines that there is a significant salary disparity between visible minorities and nonvisible minorities. Racial differences in job characteristics account for a larger portion of the explained racial salary gap than individual and labor market characteristics. The effect of race on salary is shown to be weaker for librarians than for support staff.

And lastly, as data seems to be on the tip of everyone's brain, there are a couple of articles on data that will provide a good foundation on the topic with an approach to user behavior with the construction of personas and an analytical look at the literature on Big Data:

"Using Personas to Visualize the Need for Data Stewardship" by Live Håndlykken Kvale. There is a current discussion in universities regarding the need for dedicated research data stewards. This article presents a set of fictional personas for research data support based on experience and requests by experts in different areas of data management. Using a modified Delphi study, 24 participants from different stakeholder groups have contributed to the skills and backgrounds necessary to fulfill the needs for data stewardship. Inspired by user experience (UX) methodology, different data personas are developed to illustrate the range of skills required to support data management within universities. Further, as a competency hub for data stewards, the development of a research data support center is proposed.

"Big Data: Opportunities and Challenges in Libraries, A Systematic Literature Review" by Panorea Gaitanou and Emmanouel Garoufallou. Currently "Big Data" is an emerging field that presents several information technology challenges regarding the capture, storage search, structure, and visualization of this data. The real challenge for organizations is to find ways to extract value from it and provide better services to their clients. The data generated in academic and other institutions is vast and complex. Libraries face new challenges as they seek to determine their role in the handling of Big Data within their organization and use it to develop services. Thus, in most organizations, libraries will not have the knowledge to build new services unaided. Furthermore, libraries have always been information handlers and technology adopters. Therefore, Big Data technologies will certainly affect their context. The purpose of this paper is to explore all these issues through a systematic literature review, unveiling the theories that underpin the paper's argument. It attempts to answer several research questions, such as how librarians are involved in the Big Data era? And what are the future research developments of Big Data within the library context? The study considered only papers published between 2012 and 2018 in English and presents the collected literature by grouping them according to the type of library each paper refers to. Thus, it identifies new and evolving roles in the context of all types of libraries. In addition, the study presents several interesting tables, which aim to help librarians locate relevant articles that will inform their practice and guide service development for users of large and complex datasets. *✍*