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## Building Bridges, Creating Partnerships, and Elevating the Arts

### » Developing the Rutgers University Art Library Exhibition Spaces

BY MEGAN LOTTS

**W**hen I began my position as Art Librarian for the Rutgers University Libraries (RUL), I was looking for ways to connect with the departments with which I liaise. I also wanted the Art Library to further engage the Rutgers and local communities by elevating the scholarly research happening in the Arts across the Rutgers campuses. Because of my role as a liaison to the departments of Art History, Landscape Architecture, and the Visual Arts, I was interested in innovative ways to connect with the faculty, students, and staff from these departments.

From my own experiences as an artist, and my previous work curating the Morris Library Rotunda Art Space at Southern Illinois University in Carbondale, I knew that space for showing artwork on a college campus is a limited resource, and can be a

great way to connect with the overall campus community as well as a way to promote crossdisciplinary collaboration. In addition, having been a Fine Arts student for eight years prior to receiving my MLIS, I knew that many students studying the Arts are not privy to the value of academic libraries and that one way to get these students into the libraries is by providing exhibition spaces for the viewing and display of artworks.

In February 2013, I revitalized and began curating the Rutgers University Art Library Exhibition spaces (RALES) located on the main floor of the building (**see Figure 1**). In two and a half years, this teaching gallery has hosted 27 exhibitions by students, faculty, and staff of the Rutgers campuses, as well as a few local and out-of-state artists. There has been little cost other than time required to curate the space, and most of the resources used to hang the work have been provided by the artists. This space was

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*Study shows children living in poverty less  
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#### INTEGRATING LIBRARY SERVICES BETWEEN TWO URBAN INSTITUTIONS



Figure 1: Rutgers Art Library Exhibition Space. Photo by Megan Lotts.

created not only to connect with my liaison departments, but also to help students learn what goes into an exhibition, from creation of the work to its public viewing, marketing, and reception. This space also provides an opportunity for individuals to view artworks in person, as opposed to studying an image in a book.

But perhaps one of the most impactful aspects of RALES is that it has created a deeper connection to individuals within the Arts in addition to building new bridges across the campuses and introducing RUAL to many new potential partnerships.

### THE RUTGERS ART LIBRARY EXHIBITION SPACES

RALES are galleries run at little fiscal cost. The physical space consists of two 8-foot tall walls. One wall is 26 feet long and the other 13 feet long. The track system used to hang artwork is older but suffices for present exhibitions, using “S” hooks and wire or fishing line. The Art Library also has four exhibition cases with working locks. Artwork is also located in nontraditional spaces throughout the Art Library, as long as the installation does not cause damage to the walls or produce a fire hazard. In the case of artist Ojore Lutalo (see Figure 2), he used a lower wall at the entrance of the Art Library to display work for an exhibit in conjunction with Marking Time: Prison Arts and Activism Conference.<sup>1</sup> The Art Library has also hosted digital exhibits on the E-display, which can

also be an interesting way to highlight work created by artist in a digital format.

Each individual artist or collaboration of artists is responsible for installation and de-installation of their artwork, and sign a waiver noting that RUAL are not liable if something were to happen to their work. Thus far the exhibition spaces have had no issues of theft or vandalism. However a few pieces of artwork have fallen off the wall and had to be re-hung.

Exhibitors are encouraged to submit a press release and an artist’s statement if they so desire. These documents are used for publicity on the RUAL social media sites and sent out to the Art Library listserv, which compiles the contacts of individuals and organizations who are stakeholders in the arts on the Rutgers campuses and in the state of New Jersey. I provide support when creating press releases and publicity if necessary.

In one instance, I worked closely with Toni Eisman, a sophomore from the Rutgers Mason Gross School of Visual Arts (MGVA) for her untitled exhibition of paintings. As this was her first solo exhibition, she had no prior experience in preparing the required documents, and also needed physical assistance in helping hang her paintings (see Figure 3). Eisman showing her work in the Art Library, introduced many MGVA students to RALES, which has inspired further connections between the students and myself, as well as built stronger ties between the Art Library and the students we serve.

Following her exhibit at the Rutgers University Art Library (RUAL), Eisman was invited to show her work at the Kilmer Library Exhibition Space.

The publicity created for each exhibition, including images of the art works, are used in the RALES research guide, which documents past exhibits and events that have happened in RUAL.<sup>2</sup> This guide is a collaborative guide created by me and often



Figure 2: Work by Ojore Lutalo. Photo by Megan Lotts.

maintained by the Art Library intern. The Art Library internship is a position that provides an opportunity for graduate students in library school to add a line to their curriculum vitae by learning the LibGuides content management system as well as learning how to curate a library gallery space and create their own exhibition.

### FINDING ARTISTS AND CURATORS

Finding artists and curators for the exhibitions at the library was initially slow. However, once the space had a few exhibits and some good publicity, it was much easier to find individuals who were looking to share their work. In the case of RALES, the space became more popular as I began talking it up the space while working with students and faculty. But it was the exhibit SIGHT/SITE by Jennifer Burkhalter, then in her second year in the master's degree program at Rutgers Department of Landscape Architecture, whose work was instrumental in putting RALES on the Rutgers map. Burkhalter installed large charcoal drawings, three-dimensional collages, and mixed media pieces that were a study of the Yew Garden located at Rutgers Gardens (see **Figure 4**). At the reception for this exhibit, roughly 25 individuals from the Landscape Architecture Department (LAD) attended and learned more about Burkhalter's work at well as about many of the other materials and services found in RUAL. Following Burkhalter's reception, the Daily Targum, the local campus newspaper, ran a piece "SIGHT/SITE exhibit looks at U. nature" by Sabrina Restivo.<sup>3</sup> In addition following the



Figure 4: Reception for SIGHT/SITE by Jennifer Burkhalter. Photo by Megan Lotts.

exhibition, the Art librarian was approached by three more graduate students from LAD to exhibit their work at RALES.

Burkhalter's exhibit was one of the first strong connections I was able to make with LAD, which has since led to a larger collaborative project with Legos, starting embedded reference hours within the department, as well as serving as a member of a recent LAD faculty search committee.

After hosting multiple exhibits and needing some fresh artists, on July 1, 2014, I sent out a "call to artists" email, which included a fact sheet about RALES on the

dimensions of the space and images of the walls and exhibition cases. The email was sent out via the Art Library listserv as well as the RUL listserv with hopes that all the RUL liaisons, faculty, and staff would distribute widely. Within hours of sending the email, I began getting inquiries about RALES, and within one week, the September 2014-August 2015 exhibition series was scheduled. Since the "call to artists" sent out in 2014, I have been able to populate the exhibitions spaces without sending out additional calls. In short, now that RALES has become an active and popular place to view static and nonstatic forms of art, I am beginning to see an increase in engagement with the departments I liaise, as well as a new population of individuals that would not generally visit the Art Library. Regularly individuals and organizations from the Rutgers community contact the Art Library in hopes to form new partnerships that help elevate the scholarly research being created in the Arts.

### BUILDING LIAISON RELATIONSHIPS AND CONNECTING TO THE GREATER CAMPUS COMMUNITY

RALES have been an excellent way to connect to departments with which I liaise, and to the greater Rutgers campus community. The spaces have provided an opportunity for students in the Visual Arts and the Landscape Architecture department to exhibit their work. However RALES has also provided many opportunities for Art History



Figure 3: Toni Eisman, sophomore from the Rutgers Mason Gross School of Visual Arts. Photo by Megan Lotts



Figure 5: Build your own protein and reception from the Protein Data Bank exhibition. Photo by Megan Lotts.

students, faculty, and staff to come to the library to view and discuss the works of art on display. In one instance, RALES hosted the exhibit *From Island to Ocean: Caribbean and Pacific Dialogues*, by Juana Valdes and Fidalis Buehler, in collaboration with the Rutgers Center for Cultural Analysis (CCA). It was only because of the partnership with CCA that we were able to host this exhibit, because the Art Library does not have a budget to pay for the cost of shipping art work. However with funding provided by CCA and space provided by the Art Library, we were able to host the exhibit and an accompanying daylong symposium, including talks by the artists.

One graduate student from the Art History Department noted, “Valdes work is quite charming, and it’s nice to see the Art Library host installation art for a change.” These exhibits have also been a way to connect and engage with individuals on campus who might not otherwise visit the Art Library, such as individuals from the CCA.

Since February 2013, RALES has hosted 27 exhibitions. In one instance, I was approached by Maria Voigt from the Research Collaboratory for Structural Bioinformatics (RCSB) consortium, who wanted to show an

exhibit using images and information from the Protein Data Bank Archive.<sup>4</sup> The Art of Science was an outstanding example combining the Arts and Sciences, and highlighted the importance of Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Math learning on the Rutgers campuses. The exhibition included a hands-on activity in which viewers were able to build their own protein by using supplies and directions provided by the RCSB (see Figure 5).

The reception brought in more than 40 scientists to RUAL, and for many of them, this was their first time visiting the Art Library. Following the exhibition, myself and the Rutgers Chemistry and Physics Librarian Laura Palumbo were invited to tour the RCSB, a space neither of us had visited before, to meet many of the individuals who worked within this consortium on the Rutgers campuses and contributed to the exhibit. Not only did the Art Library benefit from hosting this exhibit, but so did Palumbo, who was able to further connect with individuals with whom she is a library liaison.

Lastly, RALES has been a catalyst in forming the Rutgers Kilmer Library Exhibition Spaces and providing many experiences for the Art Library interns (AKA future

librarians), to learn more about developing partnerships, and curating and preparing exhibitions for a library.

## CONCLUSION

In conclusion, RALES have expanded conventional ideas of how gallery space can function in an academic library. RALES has been an exciting way to connect with the greater campus community and has created many new partnerships for RUL within the Rutgers community as well as the greater city of New Brunswick.

Hosting exhibitions in the library can be a way for library liaisons to form deeper connections with the individuals and departments they work with, as well as learn more about the research needs of their students, faculty, and staff. RALES has also shown that one does not need a lot of money to have an exhibition space, but one does need time and labor, as well as an individual to coordinate the space.


Above all, however, the RALES have provided an opportunity to embrace the ephemeral experience of studying the arts, which is something that a book cannot provide. ■

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## FOOTNOTES:

- <sup>1</sup> Institute for Women on Research, <http://irw.rutgers.edu/programs/conferences>.
- <sup>2</sup> Megan Lotts, Rutgers University Art Library, <http://libguides.rutgers.edu/eventsandexhibits>.
- <sup>3</sup> Sabrina Restivo, “SIGHT/SITE exhibit looks at U. nature,” *The Daily Targum*, February 10, 2014, [www.dailytargum.com/article/2014/02/sightsite-exhibit-looks-at-u-nature](http://www.dailytargum.com/article/2014/02/sightsite-exhibit-looks-at-u-nature).
- <sup>4</sup> RCSB Protein Data Bank, [www.rcsb.org/pdb/home/home.do](http://www.rcsb.org/pdb/home/home.do).



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# Helping Members of the Community Manage Their Digital Lives

## » Developing a Personal Digital Archiving Workshop



BY NATHAN BROWN

**M**adonna once sang “we are living in a material world.” While that may still ring true, she might also now sing that we are living in a “digital world.” It has been estimated that 93% of all new information is born digital.<sup>1</sup> Whether we realize it or not, we create digital materials on a daily basis. Emails, text messages, voicemails, social media “status updates” or “tweets,” documents, etc. — the list can go on and on. Because of the immense amount of digital information and its fragility, digital materials are very much at risk; more so than paper and analog materials. Files can be deleted, hard drives can crash, websites can disappear — there are many ways in which we can lose our digital materials. As with physical materials, it’s likely that many of us have digital materials that are important to us and that we do not want to lose. Whether it be digital music files that we have paid money for, a trail of emails that may serve as evidence in an office dispute,

or simply a digital file that has an emotional attachment, there are various reasons why we want to hang on to our digital materials.<sup>2</sup> Because of this, it’s necessary to practice what is being called personal digital archiving. Personal digital archiving consists of saving and archiving digital materials and managing them so they will be available for future use. While this is not always easy, it is vital if we want to maintain our digital lives.

The fear of losing our personal digital records is nothing new. Adrian Cunningham, now working as the director of the digital archives program at the Queensland State Archives in Australia, offered this warning in 1999, “I believed then and still believe now that the issue requires urgent attention. We cannot afford to postpone dealing with the challenge of electronic personal records until tomorrow. This is because important personal records are increasingly being created in electronic form only. Waiting for a solution rather than working towards a solution effectively consigns into limbo those vital electronic personal records that

are created during our period of inactivity. Make no mistake: there is an electronic records time bomb ticking away out there in the land of personal records, and it is up to us to start working out how we are going to defuse it before it blows us all away.”<sup>3</sup>

Because of the prevalence and fragility of digital materials, and because practically everyone today is actively building collections of personal and/or professional information, the responsibility to educate library users about personal digital archiving should fall on library shoulders. Libraries and librarians have the means and knowledge (or can gain the knowledge) necessary to inform our users how to successfully build, search, and organize their own personal and scholarly information collections.<sup>4</sup> Traditionally, libraries have helped individuals care for physical items — that tradition should now extend to digital items as well.<sup>5</sup>

What, then, can libraries do to help their users organize and maintain their digital lives? One way of doing this is hosting a personal digital archiving workshop. Before we

dive into how to develop such a workshop, let us first look at some of the literature relating to personal digital archiving.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

The area of personal digital archiving has essentially branched out from the overall field of digital archiving, where there have been concerns for some time now regarding the sustainability of digital materials. Several scholars began making warning calls in the mid to late 1990s. Rothenberg notes the fragility of our digital records, even going as far to say that the “record of the entire present period of history is in jeopardy,” and offers some suggestions, as well as a call for further research on how to better preserve digital records.<sup>5</sup> The potential for living in a “digital dark age” is addressed by Kuny, although he also lists areas where institutions and individuals can help fight off the impending doom.<sup>7</sup> As stated earlier, Cunningham also offers a warning, but also pushes strategies for maintaining digital records.<sup>8</sup>

As the idea of personal digital archiving began to take hold, more literature arrived specific to individuals maintaining their digital materials, and offered solid overviews of personal digital archiving. Beagrie’s “Plenty of Room at the Bottom? Personal Digital Libraries and Collections” has become one of the most heavily cited articles in the field. He looks at the main issues surrounding personal digital archiving and what current research was being done at the time. The article is also one of the first to address digital estates — something we’ll look at in our discussion of developing a workshop.<sup>9</sup> One of the leaders in the field, with multiple publications to her name, is Catherine C. Marshall. Marshall has produced several overviews of personal digital archiving. In 2008 she addressed both challenges faced and potential solutions for those challenges;<sup>10</sup> a year earlier she had looked at personal information management over the course of an individual’s lifetime, including examining several case studies and scenarios that everyday people might

encounter.<sup>11</sup> An all-encompassing look at the field can be found in a chapter of the book *I, Digital: Personal Collections in the Digital Era*, where Marshall examines what personal digital archiving entails.<sup>12</sup> Williams, et al., also provides a good overview of the subject, connected to studies done as part of the Digital Lives Research Project;<sup>13</sup> while Jones’ *Keeping Found Things Found* is another monograph length discussion of personal digital archiving.<sup>14</sup>

Another area of study within personal digital archiving reflects a greater context within library science and information studies as a whole: that of user studies regarding personal digital archiving. Marshall, et al., explores how people are archiving their digital belongings and the risks we are facing, as well as barriers to effective personal archiving; the authors also present ideas for how to develop a better service model for personal digital archiving.<sup>15</sup> Kaye, et al., looks at both physical and digital personal archives, examining the reasons and needs that drive archiving behavior.<sup>16</sup> Boardman and Sasse<sup>17</sup>, as well as Copeland, also look at user behavior. Copeland’s study is aimed specifically at public library users and encourages public libraries to take the lead in helping their users manage their personal digital information.<sup>18</sup>

Scholars have also taken looks at archiving methods for specific digital materials. Whittaker and Sidner<sup>19</sup>, as well as Luke-sh<sup>20</sup>, both discuss strategies for archiving email, while Marshall looks strictly at Internet-based information.<sup>21</sup> These are just a few examples — of course the overviews discussed earlier also look at methods for specific digital items. Along with Copeland’s aforementioned study of public library users’ digital preservation practices, which also urges the need for public libraries to assist users in their personal digital archiving endeavors, Copeland and Barreau also offer an examination of what role public libraries should play in assisting patrons with their personal digital information, and how they can best approach that assistance.<sup>22</sup>

One can see that much has been written in this field. My hope is to contribute to the existing scholarship by offering some tips on developing a personal digital archiving workshop. I have developed a workshop geared towards an academic audience, particularly faculty, but the principles are the same and can be modified to fit other audiences as well.

## DEVELOPING A PERSONAL DIGITAL ARCHIVING WORKSHOP

When developing a personal digital archiving workshop, the first thing to do is to determine the audience. Who will the workshop be intended for? Will it be an academic audience? People at a public library? This will influence how the workshop is designed, although most of the basic principles are the same regardless — the delivery and different materials in need of archiving will likely change depending on the audience. Along with determining an audience, it might also help to think about a few questions with the audience in mind. The first question: what kinds of digital materials do people have? Try and determine what they might be archiving and where they might need help. A few examples of materials for an academic audience could be documents and presentations, data sets, lecture notes, emails and other digital correspondence with colleagues, and video and audio recordings. Certainly a general audience will have some of these materials as well, and other items you might consider including in a workshop for a public library would be photographs, websites, social media, text messages, financial records, gaming information, music and video, and e-books. The list could go on and on. Second, how do people store their digital belongings now? Third, what motivates them to maintain personal digital information? This is the why question. Think about the reasons your audience would want to safely archive and maintain digital information.<sup>23</sup> Lastly, what are some challenges impeding personal digital archiving?<sup>24</sup> These challenges can



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vary, but perhaps the two most common are time and money. Archiving digital materials is time-consuming, and it can be expensive to purchase storage devices. These are just a few questions to consider; certainly there are others, but thinking about these questions and developing an understanding of your audience and its needs will go a long way in developing a successful workshop.

Identifying resources is a logical next step. As we've seen, much has been written on the subject of personal digital archiving and there are a variety of resources to assist in developing a workshop. Perhaps the best place to start is the Library of Congress. The LOC has a webpage devoted strictly to personal digital archiving. This page contains archiving tips, as well as downloadable materials that could be used as handouts at a workshop. A very useful resource on this page is the NDIIPP publication "Perspectives on Personal Digital Archiving." This publication, a compilation of blog posts from the LOC blog *The Signal*, brings together writings of some of the major players in the personal digital archiving field.<sup>25</sup> The site offers scanning basics, as well as tips on the archiving of certain digital materials, including photographs, audio, and video, to name a few. There is also a link provided to a "Personal Digital Archiving Day Kit," which provides more great resources for organizing an event. Apart from the Library of Congress website, there are many other resources available, some of which have been previously discussed. There are numerous books, articles, conference proceedings and more to assist in developing a workshop.

How you make use of your resources, and the approach you decide to take in developing your workshop is up to you. However, it might be good to begin by discussing four steps to getting started. The first step is to identify. Determine what you have, and where it is located. There are many types of digital materials, and you will likely have items spread across multiple platforms. The second step is to decide. What do you want to keep? What can you get rid of? It is possible with today's storage possibilities to keep everything, but at least take the time to examine your materials to see if everything needs to be kept. The third step is to organize. Come up with a good filing system that makes sense to you and will allow items to be easily retrievable. Include descriptions as well, particularly for photographs, so they can be identified.<sup>26</sup> The fourth and final step is to save. Save copies on multiple media formats

and in multiple locations, if possible. Make sure to manage these devices as well, as they can become obsolete as the years pass.<sup>27</sup> These four steps, as explained by Butch Lazorchak, are designed for preserving digital photographs, but the principles can apply to any digital material.

Getting back to the first step listed in the preceding paragraph, some more discussion regarding identification of materials may prove beneficial. Again, determine where you might have any digital files — computers (desktop, laptop, tablet); removable hard drives; flash drives; Internet (personal websites, bookmarks, photo sharing sites, social media, email accounts, online gaming information, etc.); phones; cameras; CDs; floppy disks; and any other platforms, including ones that may be obsolete. Items found on older formats may be retrievable, but it may require expert help, which can be expensive. Once you determine what you have, and where you have it, this makes it easier to decide what you want to keep and what you might be able to part with. After determining this, and developing a file naming system that makes sense, it's time to save your materials. Files should be backed up in separate locations (if possible) on at least two different types of storage devices. If you can, keep a storage device at home, and one in another location such as your workplace, a friend or relative's house, a safety deposit box, or other secure location. Of course, this may not be possible for everyone, and that's understandable. One option that those unable to keep devices in two locations can look at is that of cloud-based services. However, research into what might be the best service is recommended, as the cloud has its positives and negatives. Security is always a concern with using a cloud service, as is reliability. Will that service still be around in the coming years? Other storage options include computers, removable hard drives, flash drives, CDs, photo hosting sites, etc. Be diverse in your storage — no device is 100% reliable. Flash drives are easy to lose. CDs degrade over time. Photo hosting sites — much like cloud storage — can prove unreliable, and can be expensive. Keep these things in mind when deciding how best to store your digital materials. A good rule of thumb to remember is the "3-2-1 rule" used by professional photographers. Make three copies of your items, save your materials onto at least two different types of storage media, and save one of those storage media devices in a different location from where you live.<sup>28</sup>

Along with saving and storing your digital materials, you also want to ensure that you are managing them so that they will remain easy to retrieve and use as the years pass. Check your devices often to ensure files are still usable. Remember that devices become obsolete; it is recommended that files be moved to a new storage device every 5-7 years. In some cases it may need to be sooner if it is obvious a device is becoming obsolete. A common practice for many people is to buy a new removable hard drive every time a new computer is purchased — typically this is done in that 5-7 year timeframe. Terry Kuny does a wonderful job of summing up our attempts to archive our digital lives, expressing that it can be done, but external influences, such as time and money, can hinder those efforts:

In an abstract sense, the preservation of digital materials is not complex. As long as the relationship between hardware, software, and humanware (organizations and people) is maintained, a kind of 'preservation nexus' exists and a digital object can be preserved forever. The problem is the centrifugal forces such as time and money that pull each of these elements away from each other; software and hardware becomes outdated, migrating information may require expensive recoding, and organizations lack resources to address the problems. This creates an environment where the object is basically left in a digital limbo; trapped in an obsolete format or captured on an unreadable medium or lacking the administrative capacity, resources, or willingness to refresh the data.<sup>29</sup>

If we exercise caution, and make the effort to preserve our digital materials, they can theoretically last decades or longer. There is always the possibility of losing digital files, no matter how well we take care of them, but they can also be preserved long-term if the proper steps are taken.

There are a few other items you might want to consider including when developing a personal digital archiving workshop. Some people may be interested in converting physical items, such as photographs, letters, etc. to a digital format. It may be beneficial to include information on scanning basics, providing guidance on scanners, scanner setting, and file formats. There are many places to go for information on scanning basics, but again, the Library of Congress is a good place to start. Mike Ashenfelder of the LOC offers scanning guidance in a blog post for *The Signal*, while the Library offers an excellent website, "Sustainability

of Digital Formats Planning for Library of Congress Collections.”<sup>30</sup> The Sustainability of Digital Formats website has very technical information, and may be more than what a general audience needs, but valuable tips and guidance can be taken from it and used in a workshop.

Something else you might want to consider including in a personal digital archiving workshop is a discussion of digital estate planning. Much like a physical estate, when somebody passes away, family members or others left behind may have to deal with digital assets. Again, the first step is to identify what is there, particularly important financial, business, or legal records. Create a list of devices that contain materials to be preserved, and identify what should be kept, what should be deleted, and to whom items go. It is also important to document URLs, usernames, passwords, etc. and keep them in a safe place that can be accessed by a designated “digital executor” — which should be identified in a legal will. Jefferson Bailey and Mike Ashenfelder provide solid guidance in their articles published in *Perspectives on Personal Digital Archiving: National Digital Information Infrastructure and Preservation Program*.<sup>31</sup> It may seem strange to talk about digital estates, but the reality is this will likely become more important as the years pass by and people acquire more digital assets.

This is a basic overview of what can be included in any personal digital archiving workshop. Take the time to research what you want to address and tailor your workshop to your audience. Keep in mind, when addressing digital materials, that it’s also a good idea to make physical copies of important items — documents, photographs, etc. Certainly most people will not want or need to make physical copies of everything, but for those items most important to them, this is a good practice. The hope is that libraries can reach out and assist our communities with managing the growing influx of digital materials. Hosting workshops and informing them of the best ways to do that

is a great way to achieve this goal. Good luck and have fun! ■

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#### FOOTNOTES:

<sup>1</sup> Andrea J. Copeland, “Analysis of Public Library Users’ Digital Preservation Practices,” *Journal of the American Society for Information Science and Technology* 62, no.7 (2011): 1288.

<sup>2</sup> For more information on our reasons for wanting to keep digital materials, see Copeland, “Analysis of Public Library Users’ Digital Preservation Practices,” 1295.

<sup>3</sup> Adrian Cunningham, “Waiting for the Ghost Train: Strategies for Managing Electronic Personal Records Before it is Too Late,” *Archival Issues* 24, no. 1 (1999): 56.

<sup>4</sup> Ellysa Stern Cahoy, “The Challenge of Teaching Personal Archiving,” in *Perspectives on Personal Digital Archiving: National Digital Information Infrastructure and Preservation Program*. Library of Congress, 2013: 76.

<sup>5</sup> Copeland, 1298.

<sup>6</sup> Jeff Rothenberg, “Ensuring the Longevity of Digital Documents,” *Scientific American* 272 no. 1 (January 1995): 42. The article was later published again in 1999 in an expanded version entitled “Ensuring the Longevity of Digital Information.”

<sup>7</sup> Terry Kuny, “A Digital Dark Ages? Challenges in the Preservation of Electronic Information,” *International Preservation News* no. 17 (May 1998).

<sup>8</sup> Cunningham, 1999.

<sup>9</sup> Neal Beagrie, “Plenty of Room at the Bottom? Personal Digital Libraries and Collec-

tions,” *D-Lib Magazine* 11, no. 6 (June 2005). <http://doi.org/10.1045/june2005-beagrie>

<sup>10</sup> Catherine C. Marshall, “Rethinking Personal Digital Archiving, Part 1,” and “Rethinking Personal Digital Archiving, Part 2,” *D-Lib Magazine* 14 no. 3/4 (March/April 2008). <http://doi.org/10.1045/march2008-marshall-pt1>; <http://doi.org/10.1045/march2008-marshall-pt2>

<sup>11</sup> Catherine C. Marshall, “How People Manage Information over a Lifetime,” in *Personal Information Management*, edited by William P. Jones and Jaime Teevan. Seattle, WA: University of Washington Press, 2007.

<sup>12</sup> Catherine C. Marshall, “Challenges and Opportunities for Personal Digital Archiving,” in *Digital: Personal Collections in the Digital Era*, edited by Christopher A. Lee. Chicago, Society of American Archivists, 2011.

<sup>13</sup> Peter Williams, Jeremy Leighton John, and Ian Rowland, “The Personal Curation of Digital Objects: A Lifecycle Approach,” *Aslib Proceedings: New Information Perspectives* 61 no. 4 (2009): 340-363.

<sup>14</sup> William P. Jones, *Keeping Found Things Found: The Study and Practice of Personal Information Management*. Burlington, MA: Elsevier, 2008.

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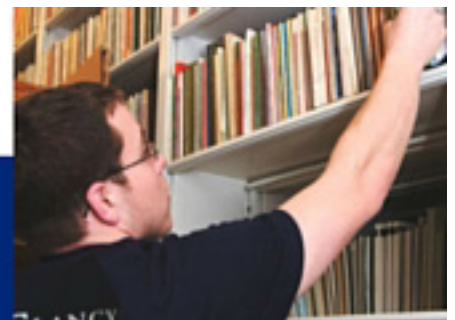
<sup>18</sup> Andrea J. Copeland, “Analysis of Public Library Users’ Digital Preservation Practices,” 1288-1300.

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<sup>25</sup>The PDF of "Perspectives on Personal Digital Archiving" can be found here. The Signal is another great resource.

<sup>26</sup>For more information regarding file organization, see the Paradigm website. The entire site has good information relating to digital preservation and personal digital archiving.

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<sup>29</sup>Kuny, 5.

<sup>30</sup>Mike Ashenfelder, "Personal Digital Archiving: The Basics of Scanning and also Sustainability of Digital Formats: Planning for Library of Congress Collections.

<sup>31</sup>Jefferson Bailey, "The Big Digital Sleep," pp. 26-28, and Mike Ashenfelder, "When I Go Away: Getting Your Digital Affairs in Order," pp. 29-30 in *Perspectives on Personal Digital Archiving: National Digital Information Infrastructure and Preservation Program*. Washington, D.C.: Library of Congress, 2013.

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# First Grade Student Library Card Ownership Linked to Library Visitation

» Study shows children living in poverty less likely to have library cards.\*

BY DEANNE W. SWAN

Public libraries provide critical resources and experiences for young children, increasing access to books and computers as well as providing meaningful learning opportunities. This role is particularly important for children living in poverty, whose limited resources are related to lags in academic achievement.<sup>1,2</sup>

One rite of passage for young children is the acquisition of their first library card. Not only does it provide greater independence and access to literacy and information, but it also signifies the next step in increased responsibility and self-efficacy. However, there is little empirical evidence about the impact of library card ownership in young children. Are there differences between children who do or do not have a library card? In this analysis, we used data from [the Early Childhood Longitudinal Study, Kindergarten Class of 1998-99 \(ECLS-K\)](#), from the U.S. Department of Education's National Center for Education Statistics (NCES). The ECLS-K provides nationally representative data on children's development and early educational experiences. This study followed children from kindergarten through eighth grade. In the present analysis, we focused on children's library card ownership in the first grade.

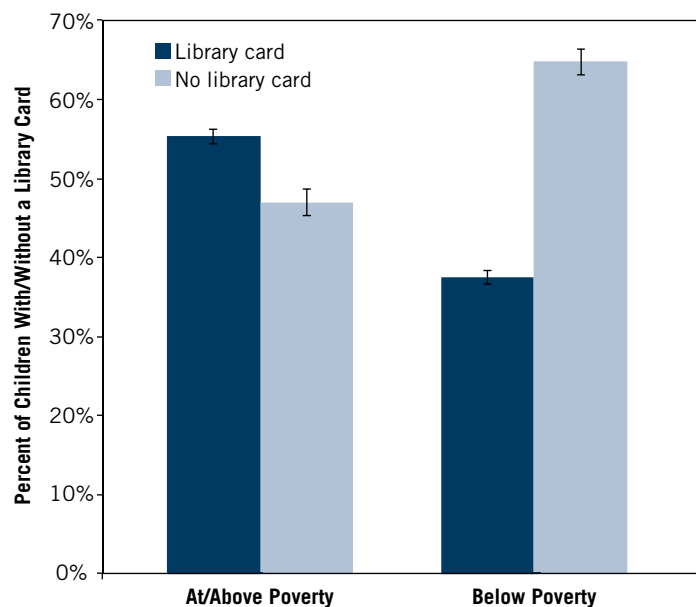
## WHO HAS A LIBRARY CARD?

Half of all children in the study (50.2 percent) had library cards in first grade. However, this rate is not consistent across

all demographics (see Table 1). The most powerful demographic predictor of library card ownership in first grade was poverty (see Figure 1). Rates of library card ownership differed significantly by poverty status. More than three out of every five children living below the poverty level (62.2 percent)

did not have a library card in first grade. First grade children who were living at or above the poverty level were more than twice as likely to have a library card than their more impoverished peers (OR = 2.03, 95% CI = [1.74, 2.37]).

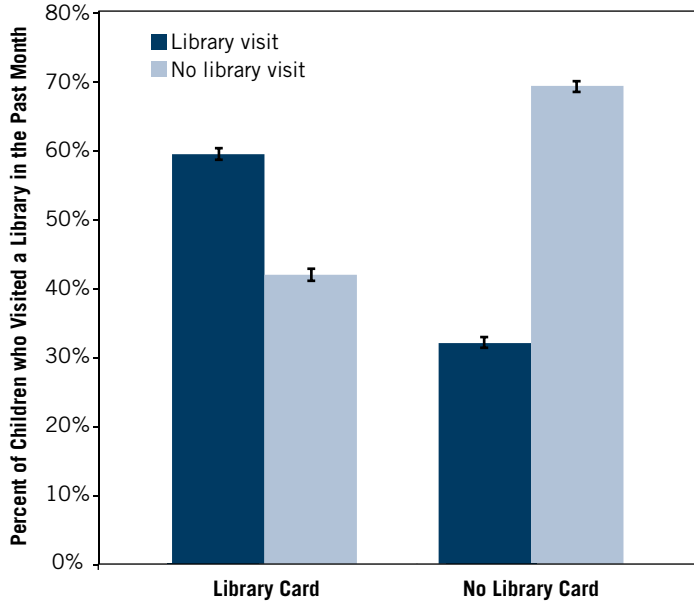
Figure 1. Percent of First Grade Children Who Have a Library Card by Poverty Status



Analysis by Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS)  
Data Source: Early Childhood Longitudinal Study, Kindergarten Class of 1998-99 (ECLS-K), National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), U.S. Department of Education  
Note: Statistics adjusted for complex sample design using cluster (C4TPWPSU), strata (C4TPWSTR), and weight (C4PWO) variables.

» One rite of passage for young children is the acquisition of their first library card. Not only does it provide greater independence and access to literacy and information, but it also signifies the next step in increased responsibility and self-efficacy.

**Figure 2. Percent of First Grade Children Who Visited a Library in the past Month by Library Card Ownership**



*Analysis by Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS)  
 Data Source: Early Childhood Longitudinal Study, Kindergarten Class of 1998-99 (ECLS-K), National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), U.S. Department of Education  
 Note: Statistics adjusted for complex sample design using cluster (CATPWPSU), strata (CATPWSTR), and weight (C4PWO) variables*

**LIBRARY CARD OWNERSHIP IS RELATED TO LIBRARY VISITATION**

Overall, 45.2 percent of first graders had visited the library in the past month. Like library card ownership, visitation rates differ based upon children’s characteristics. Most importantly for the present analysis, library visitation varied based upon whether or not a child had a library card (see Figure 2). Almost 60 percent of first grade children who had a library card had visited the library within the past month. In contrast, only one-third (31.7 percent) of children who did not have a library card visited the library, a rate that is half that of their library card holding peers.

Although library visitation is related to income and socioeconomic status, the effects of children’s library card ownership on visitation were still present and profound.

First grade children who had a library card were more than twice as likely (OR = 2.81, CI = [2.55, 3.10]) to visit the library within the past month as children without a library card, even after controlling for the effects of socioeconomic status (SES). (Note: Socioeconomic status (SES) is a composite measure that included children’s household income, parental education, and parental occupation.)

**CONCLUSIONS**

This brief analysis indicates that children who are living in poverty are less likely to have a library card than their more affluent peers. Furthermore, children who do not have a library card are less likely to visit the library, thereby missing out on the rich learning opportunities offered by libraries. Prior research<sup>3</sup> indicates that going to

the library can have a positive effect on academic outcomes in reading and science, particularly for children living in low-SES households. Public libraries reach millions of children each year,<sup>4</sup> providing valuable educational programming and materials. These resources are available with equal access to all children, who simply need to use their library card as the key. ■

\*Article courtesy of Institute of Museum and Library Services.

**ABOUT THE AUTHOR:** Dr. Deanne W. Swan, formerly the Senior Statistician with the Institute of Museum and Library Services, is currently Senior Technical Advisor, National Center for Education Statistics, U.S. Department of Education.

*The views expressed in the article do not necessarily represent the views of the U.S. Department of Education.*

**FOOTNOTES:**

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# Integrating Library Services Between Two Urban Institutions

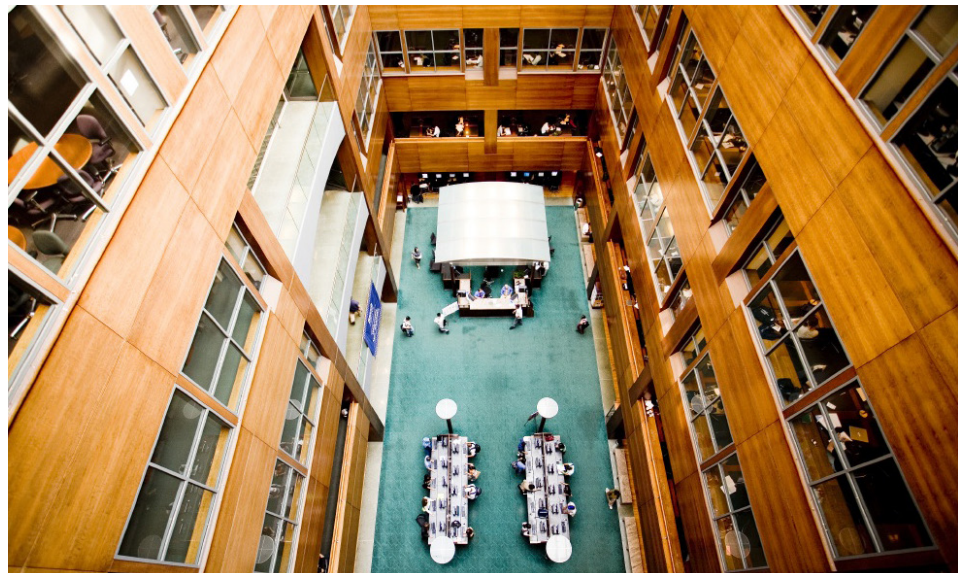
BY JOSEPH HARTNETT

In 2006, an intra-institutional partnership was formed between the William and Anita Newman Library at Baruch College, City University of New York (CUNY) and the CUNY School of Professional Studies (SPS) to provide library services to the university's first entirely online degree program, the CUNY Online BA in Communication and Culture.

I was designated as the primary liaison between the Newman Library and The SPS. Our chief librarian and I collaborated in planning beginning in the summer of 2006. The initial question was: What changes needed to be made in order for a face-to-face library to begin supporting distance learners?

Today, there is no shortage of information about libraries that support distance learners. The literature includes many accounts of institutions that promote and provide point of use access to online resources, reference services, research consultations, interlibrary loan services, and electronic course reserve services.<sup>1</sup> There is also a body of research that details the wants, needs and expectations of faculty, students, and librarians involved with distance learning and the means by which to assess such services.<sup>2,3,4,5</sup>

In 2006, the literature was not as vast. The circumstances under which our library embarked upon providing these services were unique, as we were asked to initiate support for online students from an external school with a library oriented to face-to-face interactions with its primary constituents. We did not know exactly what to expect, and like many libraries at the time



*The atrium at William and Anita Newman Library at Baruch College, City University of New York (CUNY)*

that were faced with the task of supporting distance learners, we built our own model after surveying the options other libraries offered, and in consultation with the ACRL guidelines. Like SPS, we were “flying the plane while building it.”<sup>6</sup>

## BACKGROUND

CUNY is the largest urban college system in the United States and is composed of 23 individual colleges and institutions throughout the city of New York. In 2004, the university hired a new executive vice-chancellor of academic affairs who was a proponent of online learning, having previously developed online programs at the University of Massachusetts.

The CUNY SPS is one of the newest schools in the CUNY system. It was founded in 2003 as an entity of the University Graduate Center to meet the needs of working

adults, and offers a range of non-degree, continuing-education programs.

In 2006, SPS would become the university hub for distance learning when it launched the university's first entirely online degree program, the CUNY Online BA. The program was designed by a consortium of CUNY faculty in order to provide opportunities for students who had “stopped out” of college, rather than dropped out, i.e., those who had earned over 30 credit hours and left college in good academic standing. SPS was aware of thousands of students enrolled previously at CUNY who met this profile and launched the degree to help meet the demands of those who needed to complete their studies. The majority of those “distance” students enrolled would, in fact, be local New York City students.<sup>7</sup>

Baruch College, home to the Newman

Library, is a centrally located, four-year senior college located in Manhattan that serves 18,090 students.<sup>8</sup> Baruch offers a wide range of undergraduate and masters' degrees, and has an award-winning library with a large collection of electronic resources and services.

In 2006, our chief librarian was approached by CUNY Central offices about the possibility of designating the Newman Library as the home library to the CUNY Online BA. The SPS was interested in providing its students with the same suite of library services that are available to students at Baruch College.

As the program had not yet been launched at that time, we had our share of concerns about its potential to be a source of confusion for all parties involved, in terms of access, and information technology support.

Despite these concerns, the library stood to benefit from being involved in the historic launch of CUNY's first online degree program, and ultimately, the library had the opportunity to work with the most experienced online faculty at the university. SPS would serve as a test case for the development of services for both online and traditional on-campus students at Baruch College. Distance learning at Baruch in 2006 was still nascent, but it had been targeted in the college's strategic plan as an area for growth.

The two colleges appeared to be well matched to form a partnership, as both institutions shared the university's mission statement to provide educational access and excellence to citizens of the City of New York. Both were centrally located and physically proximate. Baruch had a long history of service to commuter students, as we are located in downtown Manhattan and do not have a typical live-in campus.

An agreement was drawn up between both parties for the library to accommodate the 300 students expected to enter the program in the fall of 2006, and we began to design support services for them.

## PLANNING

In the summer of 2006, we met with the program's founding faculty consortium to gain an understanding of how they envisioned that the library services would support the program's online curricula, as well as to answer questions about services the library offered the Baruch community at the time.

The faculty told us that, in addition to providing the SPS community with access

to electronic resources, including eBooks, it would be essential that these resources be available readily and redundantly. The program would be offered completely within the confines of Blackboard, and it would be useful for a library presence to exist there, as well as on the web. The faculty also wanted a video tutorial that provided an overview of the services available.

We also met with SPS administrators and IT staff, Baruch IT staff, and the CUNY Office of Library Services to work out technical details to ensure that CUNY Online BA students could be identified properly and given borrowing privileges across the CUNY system. This involved assigning users ID cards with unique library numbers that met CUNY library standards, and working with CUNY central to assign a new institutional prefix for SPS to attach to them. As SPS had no previous experience in assigning library ID numbers, we referred them to a vendor who could provide them and showed them how to associate the numbers with student records in their student information system, so that they would eventually make their way into the CUNY library system, Alen. In this way, the library would have the ability to tie fines to the registrar in case a block needed to be put into effect.

The other major issue in providing library privileges to SPS would be to set up remote access by having SPS pass along login information to the library to add to our proxy server for activation; however, this was not of immediate concern, as before we could allow access, SPS needed to have students.

## ALIGNING AND UPGRADING SERVICES

We began to look at the ways in which other schools provided library services to distance learners. We found that many with existing online learners offered toll-free numbers for reference services, fax services for document delivery, and home delivery options, as well as chat and phone reference services. We also sought guidance from the 2004 ACRL Guidelines for Library Services for distance learners,<sup>9</sup> and began to develop our own model to fit the unique needs of SPS, while taking into account CUNY's urban setting.

A dedicated webpage was created on the Newman Library website for students in the CUNY Online BA program. The site

contained a simple, customized set of links, including a direct phone number to my office, so that students could obtain immediate and informed help. The goal was to keep the number of links to a minimum for clarity, and to offer immediate value to the program during a time when the Newman Library's website contained an overabundance of what would be, for this user group, superfluous Baruch-specific information. The page contained links to the A–Z list of databases, the journal-finder tool, the university book catalog, and the library's Ask a Librarian service that offers 24 hour chat and email reference services, as well as directions to the library. The same information was also added to the Newman Library tab page in Blackboard.

The recommendation of the ACRL Guidelines that book delivery services be available for this population was met and made possible via the fortuitous, coincidental fall 2006 university-wide launch of a new patron-driven book delivery service among





investigate federated search tool solutions in the hope that providing such a service would allow access to the more than 200 databases to which we subscribed. Within a year, we launched 360 Search to accommodate both populations.<sup>10</sup>

#### OUTREACH

With these services in place, the next step was to create an online instructional video to introduce students to the library and its many resources and services.

Based upon previous discussions of what should be presented as essential links on the webpage, we developed a script and translated it into storyboards.

We were concerned that our efforts to build services would be of no avail if students did not know, or care to know, about the library, which certainly seemed possible, as there was no intrinsic physical connection between SPS and the Newman Library, and it would be very easy for SPS students to feel marginalized.

We worked with Baruch College's Media Services group to produce a live video that portrayed a real person (gulp, me) in a real library. During the planning process, we tried to imagine what has an immediate impact on first time visitors to the Newman Library. In our experience at Baruch, we knew from previous LibQUAL survey responses that students found that the building itself plays a major role in forming initial impressions. "Library as place" was the dimension of service quality in which we come closest to meeting the desired level of service.

Thus, we wanted to represent the Newman Library as a physical place, and took steps to feature the building onscreen. When it was finished, the video was eight minutes long and divided into five individual modules: Accessing the Library through Blackboard; Searching the Book Catalog; Accessing Books; Accessing Databases; Logging in, and Reference Services. When it was completed, we created a link to the video and posted it on the CUNY Online BA Library Services page and our Blackboard tab.

We also envisioned that the best way to reach students would be by engaging the faculty first. The literature indicated that doing so is beneficial, as faculty members who are aware of library resources are more likely to include assignments that

involve library research.<sup>11,12</sup>

Equipped with the information we had gathered in our meetings with faculty, as well as that provided by SPS administrators, we contacted every faculty member individually by email and asked for his/her phone contact information. When communicating with them, we noted the class that they would be teaching, and identified existing library resources that might be useful. We explained that the library offered an electronic reserve service and that we would be more than willing to accommodate requests to place items on reserve in a flexible manner, and that they should direct requests to make use of the service to me. I also asked that they contact me directly with reserve requests, rather than funneling them through Baruch's reserve desk.

Just prior to the launch, we provided their offices with a library services brochure that listed the fall hours, as well as my personal business card, which would be included as well in a package of CUNY Online BA material that would be mailed to enrolled students. The only thing left to do prior to the launch was to load the student authentication information into Baruch's proxy server as soon as SPS provided it. It seemed that everything was in place.

#### IMPLEMENTATION: LAUNCH PROBLEMS

We received the authentication information from SPS the day before classes began, as planned. I passed it along to our library systems contact and asked for immediate access. We were told that SPS would have to wait a day or so for access, like everyone else. They explained that there was no pressing need for students to have remote access, as they would not yet have any assignments that required such access. We had to remind them that the CUNY Online BA was making a much-anticipated launch and that students would be eager to obtain access, as many faculty had placed course materials on our electronic reserve system that students would be unable to view without access.

The next day, SPS sent us another list of students to load into the system. In fact, we continued to receive multiple requests per week to load student information into our proxy server for nearly a month thereafter, as SPS continued to enroll and unenroll people. This was a source of great displeasure to our systems contact, who informed us that Baruch students usually have to wait for this information to be provided to

CUNY libraries (CUNY Libraries Inter-Campus Services: CLICS).

This service allowed CUNY students to search for physical books in the university catalog and request their delivery to the CUNY library of their choice. This platform appeared to be well suited to meet the book delivery needs of the locally distant CUNY Online BA population.

After deciding upon the services and the methods we would use to deliver them, we updated everything on the Newman Library website that SPS students would have occasion to use and made sure to revise the language presented there to accommodate SPS. This included updating our authentication page, so that it included language that referred SPS students who needed password assistance to the SPS IT helpdesk, and alerting the Baruch helpdesk to do the same for SPS students if they accidentally called Baruch.

#### COLLECTION CONSIDERATIONS

We looked next at options that would provide a better solution for offering eBooks than we had at the time, as our offerings were scattered across multiple platforms. Based upon what we learned from the faculty, we purchased the potentially expandable ebrary Academic Complete package, which would ultimately make thousands of eBooks accessible via the book catalog to support the curricular needs for both student populations. As SPS students were not on campus physically, and we knew it would be difficult to offer individual database workshops for this community, we began to

them, especially if they register late. We were told that our expectation that SPS would receive on-demand loading of proxy numbers was unreasonable, considering the fact that Baruch students did not receive such immediate service. We again pointed out that, in this case, equal treatment of SPS students would be equivalent to providing them a disservice, given their unique access needs as students in an online program.

The constant requests to add and drop students to and from our proxy server also made it difficult to keep an up-to-date roster, which we needed to ensure that the total number of SPS students enrolled did not exceed our number of licensed users.

To address these issues, we eventually came to an agreement with SPS that proxy requests would be processed on a number of specified dates throughout the semester, and that the roster list provided would be complete, so that previous rosters could be disregarded. These proxy uploads would be turned over directly to Baruch systems, and we would obtain a separate list of students' email addresses for outreach purposes.

#### **ACCESS SERVICES NEEDS EMERGE**

In the meantime, our faculty outreach efforts appeared to be effective. My nonbureaucratic approach of having electronic reserve requests emailed directly to me soon had me operating something akin to my own SPS reserve system in an attempt to deliver a service that, in fact, was not yet offered.

Access services would emerge as a key in providing support for the program. I moved into an office located in the Access Services department, in order to be able to help and, at the same time, ensure that SPS requests were not comingled with Baruch requests. Making requests for off-campus faculty to have items placed on electronic reserve in 2006 was a convoluted process. It required filling out an electronic form with the citation information for the items they wanted to make available to their students, together with information about the course. Then, they either had to provide the material to the reserve department in a separate email, or drop off the material physically and fill out a paper form. There was no way to attach materials to the electronic form.

Although my approach to receiving requests was working, it quickly became labor intensive, as faculty frequently made additions, deletions, and adjustments to their class pages. The files that faculty sent to be

placed on electronic reserve were often too large for my email address to accept or had file names impossible to match with citations. We were also asked to locate materials in the collection to be made available electronically, and faculty physically mailed personal materials for us to scan. At the end of the semester, we would need to inform faculty members that their materials would be deactivated and to remind them that, if they taught the class again, they needed to alert us prior to the new semester.

Our experiences led eventually to the development of a new electronic reserve form that was able to accommodate online faculty. After experimenting unsuccessfully with a new form in collaboration with a web designer, we found a way to repurpose the survey software Qualtrics, for which Baruch already has an institutional license. Qualtrics allowed faculty to upload materials and associate them with citations in a single request. It also allowed us to offer an express request option through which faculty could ask that material that had been on reserve in previous semesters be reactivated without having to fill out an entirely new form or giving the impression that faculty had to request everything a second time. In our experience, we found that new faculty members were often hired to teach classes that had been offered previously, and they needed access to the items that had been associated with those classes. With that in mind, we created an option in Qualtrics to request that materials be made available for preview and planning purposes when the semester was not in session. By the end of the first semester, 10 of the 17 classes offered had items placed on reserve.

#### **FACULTY VIDEO NEEDS**

Through reserves, we began to receive many requests from SPS faculty for the ability to share streaming video with their classes via e-reserve. Such requests could not be met by simply placing a DVD on reserve and lending it to students with a set of headphones. At the time, the library did not have a standardized method to address such requests. To accommodate these requests, we investigated and located the rights holders for the media in question and sent letters asking for permission to show it to a specific number of library users within the confines of our electronic reserve system.

We were surprisingly successful in obtaining permissions in the absence of a standardized procedure. In doing so, we

learned that, in many cases, rights holders themselves lacked a standardized way to deal with such academic requests. In some cases, we found we already had the license to a streaming service that gave us the rights to stream material. Based upon our experiences, we eventually dedicated a media librarian who specializes in central management of these requests, not only for SPS, but for Baruch as well. By 2012, we had hired a new head of Access Services, and an electronic reserves coordinator who would manage these functions moving forward.

#### **RAPID GROWTH OF SPS**

The CUNY Online BA was soon joined by other degree programs offered by the SPS. A number of degrees in subject areas in which Baruch already had strong collections appeared, including, but not limited to, SPS's Online BS in Business (2008), Online MS in Business Management (2009), and Online BAs in Sociology (2011) and Psychology (2012).

Further, a host of other degree offerings became available that were new to us, such as the MA in Applied Theatre, the MA and BA in Disability Studies (2008 and 2012), the Online BS in Health Information Management (2011), the Online MS in Data Analytics (2014), and the Online BS in Nursing (2014).

This rapid expansion of SPS programs was, as described by Bowen (2015), made possible by the unique structure of the school, which has a governance model that supports growth. Development committees at SPS tend to work more harmoniously in implementing program proposals than do those at more traditional colleges. Rather than areas of study being formed as departments, at SPS, they consist of program committees. This structure has helped the Newman Library meet collection demands for these programs, thanks to direct access to curricular documents and syllabi in the very early stages of development, and direct access to faculty. This has allowed us to build our collection directly around the curricula.

#### **DISCUSSION**

Many of our initial questions with respect to where to begin, what services to provide, and how to serve distance students best might be answered more easily in today's literature. Nonetheless, the experiences we had when faced with a sudden influx of distance learners gave us something of

» **The process also requires advocacy. Online learners have unique needs, such as the need for immediate access. All of the planning that we undertook prior to launching the online library services would have been of no value if the users of the system we were building were unable to access it.**

a crash course in developing such services, and doing so allowed us to identify some unique problems and pose some unique solutions that did not exist in the literature then, and still do not. Thus, our experiences may be beneficial for librarians working with distant learners either externally or at their home institutions.

In retrospect, the real question in our particular situation was not what changes we needed to make in order to achieve the desired ends of equal service, but rather the means by which we could make those changes happen, considering that the users who required the services are not the core population and the library worked perfectly as it was. In our experience, those means were not only technological, but rather required a flexible attitude and strong advocacy. Indeed providing library services to distant learners requires resources. Our investments in ebrary and the federated search tool 360 Search were useful and is something that other librarians have done. Bower & Mee<sup>13</sup> pointed out that during the collection development process, they preferred full text electronic resources when building their collection. When we invested in ebrary and the federated search tool, we knew that these resources would benefit all library users, as the lines between distance and campus users are becoming increasingly blurred.<sup>13</sup>

It should be noted that resources include staffing. My move to the Access Services suite was not unprecedented. Matesic<sup>14</sup> (2009) described having done the same thing in an effort to change the existing services at her institution and invest the time in becoming familiar with the processes in order to better change them. Ezell<sup>15</sup> (2013) also described his experiences in the dual roles of resource sharing and distance librarian. Farkas in an interview with ALCTS Newsletter Online<sup>16</sup> further described the primary functions of distance library services as being access services and electronic course reserves (2012).

The process also requires advocacy.

Online learners have unique needs, such as the need for immediate access. All of the planning that we undertook prior to launching the online library services would have been of no value if the users of the system we were building were unable to access it. While we were well aware of the upcoming launch and the pending influx of new users, it was not clear immediately that these users would require expedited services, and the focus on providing equivalent services actually translated to a disservice. This example is of value to any library providing services to distant learners and is not reflected in the literature. One should not assume that access needs are being met with existing internal processes.

Care needs to be taken in order to accommodate these needs. It should be noted that this example also illustrates the fact that the work performed in support of online learners (especially those from different schools) can easily be invisible to other library constituents. Librarians who support distance learners need to advocate strongly and in advance for these needs with IT support services. Nickel & Mulvihill<sup>17</sup> (2010) expressed the need for librarians supporting distance students to advocate for them to the rest of the library.

Librarians who advocate for the transitioning to new services require flexibility. Our approach, in which we simply asked faculty to email us with their needs for electronic course reserve services that could support distance users allowed us to develop a body of knowledge about what faculty wanted. It also allowed us to consider using Qualtrics to develop a highly customized form to accommodate their requests most effectively. In her study, Thomsett-Scott identified electronic reserve services as the most well-known and used library service (2009). Diaz<sup>18</sup> (2012) described libraries that use open-source software to control the costs of providing course reserves, while Poe and McAbee<sup>19</sup> described the launch of the platform Docutek (2008). There does not appear to be any mention in the literature of

repurposing software to accommodate such services. Libraries with a preexisting license to adaptable software may consider using it to meet their needs.

Finally, the process involves a personal touch. Our approach in featuring the library as a place with a real librarian and a direct phone number, is also consistent with the approaches of other librarians who offer distance library services.<sup>20</sup>

### **BENEFITS**

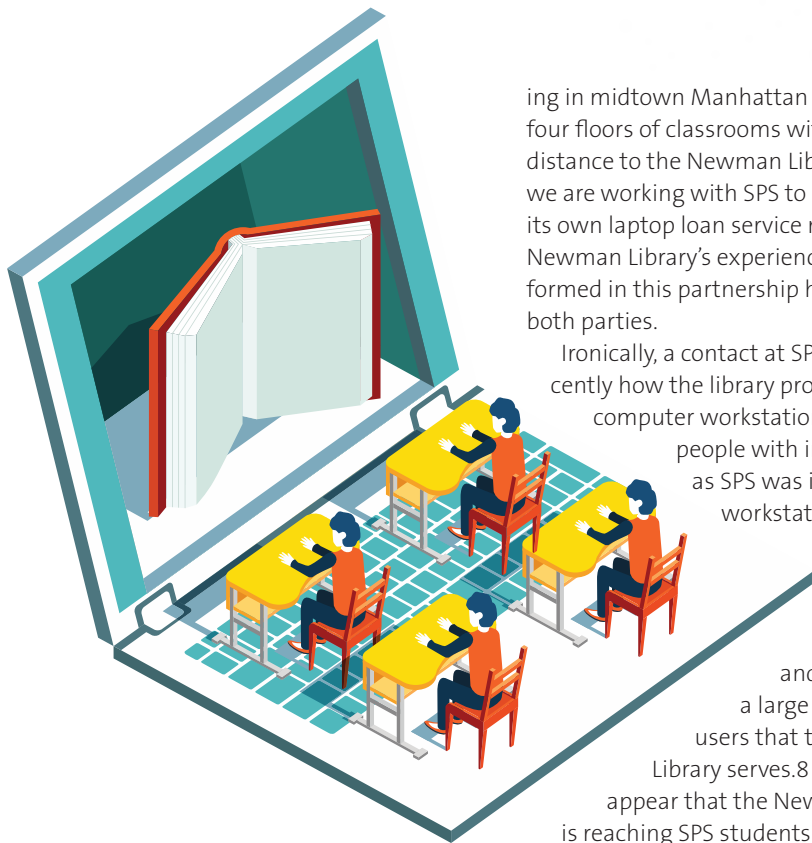
Working with SPS has been beneficial for the Newman Library because of the experiences we have gained. When we first began, we imagined that we would be able to leverage the services we developed to support Baruch students. In 2013, Baruch College unveiled its Strategic Plan 2013–2018, which calls for at least 20% of its classes to be offered online or in a hybrid format within the next five years.<sup>21</sup>

Since 2006, we have been able to develop and streamline many access and streaming media course reserve processes, and we have already seen the benefits of these efforts. When Baruch launched a film minor in 2010, the library was prepared to accommodate the program based on our experience with SPS faculty.

Working with SPS has also benefitted our collections, not only in the beginning, when we invested in the eBooks and federated search platforms, but in terms of the resources we have been able to collect in support of the programs offered.

We do not currently have programs in all of the disciplines that SPS offers. By supporting such programs, we have gained not just experience but also resources that accompany them that we otherwise would not have required. Some SPS programs, such as nursing, are multidisciplinary. The Nursing program's resources help support Baruch's natural sciences faculty. They also help support Baruch's Health Policy Program, and the MBA in healthcare. Each SPS program that we do not have at Baruch nonetheless helps support other programs.





ing in midtown Manhattan in 2013, with four floors of classrooms within walking distance to the Newman Library. Currently, we are working with SPS to help it create its own laptop loan service modeled on the Newman Library's experience. Relationships formed in this partnership have benefitted both parties.

Ironically, a contact at SPS asked us recently how the library provides access to computer workstations that support people with impaired vision, as SPS was installing new workstations at its own campus. Today, SPS has almost 2,600 students and constitutes a large portion of the users that the Newman Library serves.<sup>8</sup> While it would appear that the Newman Library is reaching SPS students effectively, as these students report the highest use of library electronic resources in the university, and that "statistical relationships exist between student GPA and their use of e-resources," much remains to be done.<sup>8,22</sup>

#### LIMITATIONS

Despite the success of the SPS programs, we cannot pinpoint the specific reasons for their success, and we do not know whether or not their effectiveness is associated with our activities, or those of the SPS faculty. We have been privy regularly to survey data provided to us by SPS and CUNY, and via information gathered from faculty and students every semester, though we have yet to undertake a targeted study of our own to identify the factors related to the success of SPS. Meeting the information literacy needs of the SPS population remains a challenge, as the ability to provide classroom instruction has been limited to the instructional resources and video modules we have produced, course-related lectures, and workshops we have provided for those programs that meet in person, via discussion boards in Blackboard, and via the provision of reference services at various points of need.

#### FURTHER RESEARCH

There is room for more embeddedness, although it is a challenge for one person to be everywhere, and the literature has indicated that "going it alone" is not the best approach.<sup>23,24</sup> The single person "super liaison"

model we use to support all of the SPS departments has been beneficial in developing a physical sense of support, although there are limitations to working alone.<sup>25</sup>

As mentioned previously, serving as the liaison between the SPS population and the library has involved not only advocating for the library with SPS, but equally, to advocating for, and communicating the requirements of the new user population to the existing library constituents, and making their existence known. To manage this more effectively, monthly meetings among librarians have been instituted to address the needs of this unique student group.

With respect to meeting the future needs of Baruch students, some of the benefits of having worked with a new school and new faculty and having access to curricular materials very early on may not necessarily match when we begin to provide access to pre-existing departments accustomed to the old ways.

The ability to identify distance learners is a known problem for libraries that offer services to distance programs.<sup>26</sup> We were fortunate not to have this problem, as we are working with an external population that has a unique prefix associated with its library ID numbers. Knowing this in advance might allow us to find a way to identify Baruch online students and faculty in need of customized services and outreach more effectively.

Based upon the experiences we have gained in providing library services to the SPS, it appears that the Newman Library will be ready to accommodate the needs of the Baruch College community fully in the near future. ■

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One of the programs has allowed us to serve students with disabilities better. The launch of the MA in Disability Studies in 2009 required processing many electronic reserve requests that needed to be entirely OCR readable. We worked with Baruch's Office of Services for Students with Disabilities to find a more optimal method than what was offered at the time to make texts readable with assistive technology. In doing so, we developed a solution (in this case, the reserve desk was able to obtain a license for Adobe professional and develop a workflow process so that the reserve desk could do it again). SPS students and faculty affiliated with the program often inquired about assistive technology at the library, and our strengthened relationship with the assistive technology manager led to a better library-wide understanding of the services available to students.

While Baruch College unveiled its Strategic Plan 2013–2018 to expand into the virtual realm and offer classes online or in a hybrid format, paradoxically, SPS has become more brick and mortar in nature, having moved into its own dedicated build-

» **Despite the success of the SPS programs, we cannot pinpoint the specific reasons for their success, and we do not know whether or not their effectiveness is associated with our activities, or those of the SPS faculty.**

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