Final Report
Keeping it REAL - Research in Academic Libraries
November 18, 2016

Section 1: Introduction and Overview

Keeping It REAL: Research in Academic Libraries was initiated by UBC iSchool Associate Professor Heather O'Brien and developed in consultation with four academic librarians: Applied Sciences Librarian Holly Hendrigan (SFU), Liaison Librarian and Flexible Learning Coordinator, Erin Fields (UBC), Education Librarian, Jo-Anne Naslund (UBC) and Grants and Awards Librarian, Christine Walde (UVic Libraries). The committee's goals were to establish a free regional workshop for academic librarian researchers and foster a research culture among participants. As a working group, planning began in March 2016, followed by program development meetings in May, July, and September. Working collaboratively, we created a program of events based on our collective experiences, observations, and interests in research, and contacted a range of speakers from across and outside our institutions. In budgeting for this event, all projected costs were to be divided equally across all participating institutions.

Keeping It REAL was held on November 18, 2016 at UBC. Because the event was limited to 60 people, registration was made available online to all participating institutions on a first-come, first-served basis, and followed up by a call for registrations through the BCLA-Academic Librarians listserv to attract librarians from across the region. A small number of seats were reserved for iSchool students. Registration filled up quickly, selling out the event, and a wait list of interested attendees was created.

On the day of the event, librarians from our participating institutions and across the region engaged in the day's program. In addition to working professionals, students from the SLAIS program at UBC's iSchool also attended, taking notes and live- tweeting while getting to know the critical issues facing working librarians and archivists. The structure and format of the day allowed for a variety of sessions, including roundtables, panel presentations and some hands-on activities, resulting in a fulfilling and productive day of meeting and engaging with colleagues around research and academic librarianship.

Section 2: Workshop Program /Description and Content

The *Keeping It REAL* program involved presentations by faculty from the UBC iSchool and academic librarians from Simon Fraser University, University of British Columbia, University of Victoria and Vancouver Island University. The day started with a review of research experiences, then a discussion of theory and research methods, followed by sessions on the importance of grants as a catalyst for research, developing a culture of research, and finally thinking ahead to future research. A summary of the sessions is provided below.

Research Rewind

This session considered some important aspects of library research, including coming up with ideas, research ethics considerations, experiences of peer review and the dissemination of research.

- **Lisa Goddard (UVic)** discussed her experience of coming up with ideas for research. She alerted librarians to the fact that conference papers are a great first step to performing research and helping build their professional network, while drawing ideas specifically from their work. She talked about the importance of finding a research partner and about not worrying about having a long term plan.
- **Heather O'Brien (UBC iSchool)** presented the ethics review process and highlighted what could be described as research versus quality improvement studies. She recommended that participants visit the Tri-Council Ethics Tutorial (TCPS 2).
- **Erin Fields (UBC)** shared her first experience of peer-review and how the feedback did not match the intent of the proposed presentation. She highlighted the complexity of doing humanities-based research and finding a space and voice for this type of research engagement in a field that is/was dominated by practical application.
- **Jennifer Douglas** (**UBC iSchool**) shared information about publishing a journal article based on her experience as journal editor for *Archivaria*. Practical tips included clearly identifying the intended audience; finding and exploring similar research journals, following submission guidelines carefully, and persisting if your article is not accepted. Articles should be grounded in the research, have a strong methodology, provide new contributions to the topic and meet submission guidelines.

Theory and Methodology Briefs

In this session, eight roundtable briefs were shared regarding research theories and methodologies. Participants were given the opportunity to visit two of the roundtables. Based on the notes recorded by participating SLAIS students are short summaries of the roundtables that were offered. Participants discussed the importance of these methodologies, drawbacks and questions to consider about their use.

- **Shailoo Bedi (UVic): Photo-narrative/Visual Ethnography**
  Shailoo provided information about the theoretical background and use of photo narrative/visual ethnography as a research method and its application in examining how students experience space in a university library. Students characterized their own opinions about a library space by taking photos in real-time followed by interviews.

- **Baharak Yousefi (SFU): Intersectional Feminist Frameworks**
  Baharak is currently co-editing a book on *Feminism in Library Leadership*. She discussed intersectionality and feminist goals and how they provide perspectives/actions that move towards justice and equality. Their use may help distil the disconnection in LIS

practices between what we say we should do and what we actually do. Power structures and systems that exist within libraries need to be talked about as they relate to feminist concepts, including how to critically analyze structures such as LOC subject headings, Google image searches, ethics review, impact of seeking permissions, and provision of access to resources.

- **Anne Doyle (UBC): Indigenous Methodologies @ UBC Xwi7xwa Library**
Anne discussed the work of Kovach, using the term "methodologies" and the need to disrupt the binary vision of indigenous vs. non-indigenous people. Methodologies included place-based work with culturally specific ways of being. She also referred to barriers in undertaking indigenous research and dominant conversations about indigenous research. Applications to LIS research include redesign of archival descriptive systems to incorporate indigenous perspectives.

- **Dean Giustini (UBC): Evidence-based Library and Information Practice (EBLIP)**
Dean described the work of Dr. Denise Koufogiannakis who is a leading librarian in Canada in EBLIP, which has its' origins in medicine. It is an approach to practice that promotes the collection, interpretation and integration of valid, important and applicable user-reported, librarian-observed, and research-derived evidence to solve library questions.

- **Deborah Hicks (UBC iSchool): Discourse Analysis**
Deborah talked about discourse analysis and its use in her dissertation on the professional identity of librarians. Discourse analysis is the study of language in use. In librarianship this involves looking at the different ways we describe ourselves and our work. She described micro-conversation analysis and how people structure their world and their social interactions compared to macro-conversation analysis that affect the structures of our society and involve issues of power.

- **Julie Jones (SFU): Systematic Reviews**
Julie spoke about Systematic Reviews, which are traditionally used as a research methodology within the health and hard sciences. Most easily described as a study of studies, she described how systematic reviews differ from literature reviews and outlined the steps involved in the systematic review process. Systematic Reviews provide opportunities for librarians as co-authors because of their search expertise.

- **Eric Meyers (UBC iSchool): Media Literacy**
Eric stated that media literacy as presented by David Buckingham, a UK scholar, offers a conceptual framework that is useful for considering information literacy and reframes how information is both searched and found, and as a result, how it is used. He outlined four main elements of Buckingham's conception of media literacy and how these can be used to analyze participatory media use.

- **Holly Hendrigan (SFU): Oral History**
  Holly provided an overview of oral history as a methodology where an interviewer has a structured conversation with someone who has lived through an event of historical importance. It typically involves recording a series of interviews on the same event, and archiving these recordings in a stable repository for others to use as secondary research data. Potential uses in libraries include preserving institutional memory and supporting community based research.

Grant Writing as Research Catalyzer

Christine Walde, Grants and Awards Librarian, (UVic)

Christine talked about grant writing and how it can play an important role in catalyzing research. Academic librarians can serve as partners, participants, practitioners or primary investigators in the grant application process. She discussed the advantages of librarians being on grant-funded research teams, and that in fact certain Tri-Council grants, such as SSHRC's Knowledge Synthesis grant, recommend having a librarian as part of the research team. In addition to professional rewards, writing a research grant forces the applicant to create a creative chain of inquiry to understand both the practical and theoretical research questions. Grants written by librarians for the library, serve to advance the discipline.

Holly Hendrigan, Liaison Librarian, (SFU)

Holly described her oral history project that began at SFU without funding and initially involved 10% of her time. After conducting her interviews, she quickly created a record and deposited the audio files in Summit, SFU's institutional repository. She then applied for and obtained an 8 month study leave plus a grant for transcription and indexing assistance. In collaboration with a web developer funded by SFU's Digital Humanities Innovation lab, she "upgraded" the collection using the OHMS (Oral History Metadata Synchronizer) application and added searchable metadata. The [TechBC Memory Project](#) now has been moved from Summit to Digitized Collections.

Accelerating Research—Enabling a Research Culture in the Library

Dana McFarland & Kathleen Reed (VIU), Jessica Mussell & Alex Burdett (UVic)

Four panelists spoke about three themes that they had identified as important in enabling a research culture in their respective libraries. The themes identified were: 1) the power of collaboration, 2) research as an extension of the liaison role, and 3) growth and development as a librarian researcher. The **power of collaboration** with colleagues, faculty, or individuals outside the library, makes research more manageable and helps divide up the workload. Collaborations, especially with those outside of the library, can lead to innovation and bring ideas from outside the discipline. **Research as an extension of the liaison role**, helps create a

culture of research as librarians conduct their own research, liaise and collaborate with faculty, work with graduate students in a more personal and authentic way, and deposit their research in their institutional repositories. The **growth and development as a librarian researcher** is reflective of the dynamic nature of the profession. Librarians inquire into their professional practices in a world that is constantly shifting. By choosing research projects that are relevant to the librarian's working environment, and by providing data and supporting evidence, they are enabled to act as professional change agents. Enabling a culture of research offers the potential to generate new ideas, enhance day-to-day information and reference activities and consider possibilities for new and continuing career choices.

Library Research in 2030: The Future
Erin Fields (UBC)

Erin led the participants in a discussion of future trends related to academic librarianship, including digital environments, AI, and immigrant/refugee users. The participants were then asked to work in groups to develop a table of contents for the "Journal of Academic Librarianship" in 2030. The purpose of this activity was to allow a space for future thinking and to end the entire day on a positive and humorous note. The groups shared their responses with all participants.

Section 3: Feedback/Survey

The REAL organizing team collected feedback via Survey Monkey and received twenty three responses, for a 42% response rate. The feedback was positive: 87% felt was very good to excellent, and the content presented was helpful. 86% were very happy with both the catering (morning and afternoon coffee and snacks, plus lunch) and the venue. As an opportunity to network, 56% were highly satisfied and 46% were somewhat satisfied. 78% are likely to attend a future workshop.

Most (78%) ranked the Theory and Methodology sessions the most useful; followed by Research Rewind and Voices by the Island. 91% would like to see more in-depth sessions on theory and methodology. Comments on this theme included:
- *Research methods refresher requested--more time at each theory and methodology table; opportunity to visit more tables*
- *Really would have liked a chance to connect with MORE of the researchers presenting different methodologies and different research. I propose a regular meeting called "This is How We Do It". the chance for librarians to present their research with a focus on Methods -- what it is, what they did, how they did it, how it came about etc. (could include some of the stories of granting, leave, ethics approval, partnerships, etc.).*

Participants also noted a need for mentorship:
- *I guess I would have liked to have time to discuss my research ideas and have people tell me how the best way to approach it would be*

- *We need more about HOW to do it. We need mentors. We need established researchers to involve novices in their next project. Academics learn by mentorship in their supervisors' lab -- we don't have the equivalent, so we need to build something that will achieve the same function of making us all Highly Qualified Personnel!*

One participant noted the importance of "buy-in from admin" with respect to practitioner research. Another needed information on research ethics in projects that involve multiple institutions, as well as further information on submitting work for publication. Another was interested in "how BC libraries are doing in the context of the CARL/ARL landscape."

Attendee and participant Dana McFarland from VIU wrote a thoughtful blog post on the day that included the delightful slides from the "Voices from the Island" panel. She noted the contributions of the SLAIS student volunteers and is developing her ideas on scholarly engagement and communication via non-traditional channels.

Overall, the organizing committee was pleased with the event and felt confident that the day's sessions provided evidence of an increasing number of academic librarians who are interested in developing research programs in concert with their professional practice.

Section 4: Recommendations

In conclusion, based on the feedback from participants and our experience in collaboratively planning and implementing our first *Keeping It REAL: Research in Academic Libraries* workshop, the REAL organizing team recommends five short and long-term actions that could be pursued in order to develop and sustain future professional learning in the area BC academic librarians and research. These recommendations include the following:

1. Recommend distributing a copy of the *Keeping It REAL: Research in Academic Libraries Workshop* report to: Jonathan Bengtson, University Librarian, UVic; Melody Burton, Acting University Librarian, UBC; Gwen Bird, University Librarian, SFU; as well as to Lea Starr, AUL Research, UBC; Gordon Yusko, Assistant Director, Community Engagement, Irving K. Barber Learning Centre, UBC; Luanne Freund, Acting Director, UBC iSchool; Adam Farrell, ALS Chair; Daphne Wood, 2016-2017 BCLA President; Katherine McColgan, Manager, Administration and Programs, Canadian Association of Research Libraries; Kristin Hoffman, 2016-2017 Program Chair, CARL Librarians' Research Institute; and the executive of the BC Research Libraries Group for consideration and feedback.

2. Recommend that the model of funding and contributions from participating partners for this workshop be flexible to anticipate future extensions of support. While each participating institution promised up to $2000 each in cash contributions, the total expenses for the 2016 workshop were only $2002.92 ($500.73 per partner) which went mainly towards catering. All other costs were donated or in-kind. Moving forward, we feel that we need a minimum budget of $2000 to run a successful event, but that we

could require as much as $4000 if we include travel, accommodation, per diem and an honorarium for a keynote speaker to come to Vancouver or Victoria. We would like to recommend that the partner institutions commit to this potential range of expenses for future iterations of *Keeping it REAL*, with the understanding that the committee would communicate any budget changes to library administration leaders.

3. Recommend that a provincial research in academic libraries event be held annually. Eventually, hosting the program could rotate between BC academic libraries; however, initially SFU, UBC, UVIC and the UBC iSchool could continue to take the lead for 2017. It would be the preference of the committee for 2017 for academic librarians at the partnership institutions to rotate and share responsibilities for delivering the program and organizing the event.

4. Recommend that a one day workshop for 2017 focus on a single research area/methodology. We opted for a "breadth" model of methodologies and approaches for our first event but discovered that participants are interested in exploring greater "depths" in a subsequent workshop. Collaborate with the UBC iSchool to draw on their expertise in this area.

5. Recommend the development of a sustainable model and necessary infrastructure to continue the professional learning of BC academic librarians regarding research. This could involve the establishment of a provincial working and/or planning group consisting of individuals from the UBC iSchool and/or library associations such as BCLA, ALS, CAPAL and CARL and/or BC Research Libraries Group. It would also involve contacting BC alumni of the CARL Librarians' Research Institute to seek out their ideas, recommendations and help.

Respectfully submitted March 1, 2017 by:
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