

# PUTTING COMMUNITY IN SCHOLARLY COMMUNICATION

## PARTNERSHIPS WITH PUBLIC LIBRARIES

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### INTRODUCTION

Although they have distinct missions, public libraries and academic libraries serve overlapping populations and can leverage their institutional strengths through collaboration. These diverse partnerships include sharing resources through consortia, joint-use libraries, and shared programming, such as introducing students to public library collections as resources for theses.<sup>1</sup> For the scholarly communication librarian, collaborating with public libraries provides opportunities to educate about the ethical and legal use of information, advocate for the promotion and use of open resources and pedagogies, and interact with communities, particularly in rural areas, that are traditionally underserved by academic libraries. We'll share two personal examples of the intersection between scholarly communication and public libraries.

### SPEAKING TO LOCAL BUSINESSES

Durango, Colorado, is home to both Fort Lewis College and a patent and trademark resource center (PTRC) housed at the Durango Public Library.<sup>2</sup> In its rural location, Durango includes a number of traditionally underserved populations and is near the Southern Ute Reservation, the Ute Mountain Ute Reservation, and the Navajo Nation.

Partnerships between scholarly communication librarians and public patent and trademark librarians are naturally complementary. Scholarly communication librarians deal frequently with copyright questions, while the public librarians field questions about patent and trademark searching. While both are experienced in intellectual property research, neither provides legal advice to their patrons. Even in public libraries without PTRCs, many provide support for local businesses through a business librarian, who is often experienced in some level of patent and trademark searching.

Durango's PTRC librarian and I (Eric) were invited to speak about intellectual property issues to both the La Plata County Economic Development Alliance and the Durango

Chamber of Commerce. This required repackaging the standard academic presentation on copyright into language and examples appropriate for small business owners. The background discussion on copyright—definition, duration, bundle of rights—turned to asset management and how businesses create copyrighted material on a daily basis. Discussion of using copyrighted material legally and ethically—licensing, fair use, infringement, work-for-hire—morphed into talk about risk management strategies for businesses using copyrighted material, including examples of background music in restaurants, art and photos from the web being used for advertising, and work-for-hire issues with contractors hired by the businesses. By reshaping an academic copyright presentation into business terms, I was able to raise the awareness of copyright issues and provide outreach to a segment of the local community outside of the traditional realm of the scholarly communication librarian.

## OPEN ACCESS 101 FOR STATE AND REGIONAL LIBRARY ASSOCIATION CONFERENCES

Public libraries serve as research centers for their communities, particularly serving K–12 students whose schools may not have libraries, media centers, or professional librarians on staff. In less densely populated areas of the country where there are fewer colleges and universities within a given geographic area, public libraries may also be the most available partners for broader scholarly communication initiatives.

In many states, the majority of attendees and presenters at local library association conferences are public library personnel simply because there are more public libraries than other types of libraries. While scholarly communication–related presentations are now common at academic library conferences, they are less so at conferences attended primarily by public libraries. As an active Arizona Library Association member who regularly attends the annual conference, I (Anali) can testify that no presentations had been given on any topic related to scholarly communication at any conference in the organization’s history.

In order to address this gap, I submitted a presentation proposal entitled “Open Access 101” to the Arizona Library Association Annual Conference and indicated that it was intended for inclusion on the public library track. It was accepted, and the presentation was well received. That same year, I also copresented a slightly revised version of the same presentation to the Mountain Plains Library Association Annual Conference in South Dakota.

Both presentations provided a basic overview of open access: defining open access, types of open access content, current relevant legislative actions, searching for open access content, and ideas for advocacy. I gave examples of how open access to scholarly work would benefit specific user groups such as teachers, students, small businesses, patients, and hobby or citizen scientists. Finally, I suggested strategies for including open access content in public library collections and provided sample elevator pitches for different audiences. By adapting an open access presentation to a public library audience, I was able to raise awareness of the existence and usefulness of open access resources to library professionals across the state.

## TAKEAWAYS

There are many possibilities for public libraries to benefit from open access and open education tools and resources. For example, public libraries can augment their collections and resources by

- including the Directory of Open Access Journals in database lists to increase the discovery of open journal resources;
- including open textbooks and other openly licensed works in public library catalogs;
- using Unpaywall or the Open Access button with ILL requests or on library computers to reduce access barriers for patrons; and
- incorporating journal quality indicators as part of information literacy or research instruction and reference assistance.

Similarly, academic libraries can incorporate scholarly communication issues into public services and programming by

- supporting community author groups (author rights outside of the context of academic publishing);
- educating business development groups on intellectual property issues and the legal and ethical use of information;
- empowering public/academic makerspace programming with copyright and intellectual property information; and
- intersecting with citizen science initiatives.<sup>3</sup>

While public libraries may not have the ability to have a scholarly communication expert on staff, partnering or consulting with their local university's or college's scholarly communication librarian for programming can benefit both parties. Partnering with public libraries can inspire academic librarians to think beyond serving their institutions to develop broader, inclusive goals of providing needed resources to everyone in their community. By leveraging public libraries' strong relationships with their communities, these partnerships allow us to expand the scholarly conversation to include more diverse experiences and viewpoints and truly promote the inclusiveness and egalitarianism that all libraries strive for.

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- Carey, Elaine, and Raymond Pun. "Doing History: A Teaching Collaboration between St. John's University and the New York Public Library." *College and Research Libraries News* 73, no. 3 (2012): 138–41. <http://crln.acrl.org/index.php/crlnews/article/view/8721>.
- Engeszer, Robert J., William Olmstadt, Jan Daley, Monique Norfolk, Kara Krekeler, Monica Rogers, Graham Colditz, et al. "Evolution of an Academic–Public Library Partnership." *Journal of the Medical Library Association* 104, no. 1 (2016): 62–66. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4722645/>.
- Overfield, Daniel, and Coleen Roy. "Academic and Public Library Collaboration: Increasing Value by Sharing Space, Collections, and Services." Presentation, ACRL 16th National Conference, "Imagine, Innovate, Inspire," Indianapolis, IN, April 10–13, 2013. [https://alair.ala.org/bitstream/handle/11213/18066/OverfieldRoy\\_Academic.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y](https://alair.ala.org/bitstream/handle/11213/18066/OverfieldRoy_Academic.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y).
- Richards, Maureen. "Stronger Together: Increasing Connections between Academic and Public Libraries." *Collaborative Librarianship* 9, no. 2 (2017): 135–58. <https://digitalcommons.du.edu/collaborativelibrarianship/vol9/iss2/10>.

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Many times during presentations, audience members will ask for your opinion on specific situations. How does the audience for your presentation (public vs. academic) affect the opinions or advice that you give regarding intellectual property questions?
2. Can you think of a different example of a public library initiative that would benefit from scholarly communication–related advocacy?
3. What conflicting tensions or competing priorities exist between public libraries and academic libraries that might serve as obstacles to a partnership?
4. What do you think you could learn from partnering with your local public library?
5. What skills or knowledge could you provide that would benefit your local public library?

## NOTES

1. Marmot Library Network, home page, <https://www.marmot.org/>; Phoenix Public Library, “South Mountain Community Library,” <https://www.phoenixpubliclibrary.org/locations/smcl>.
2. US Patent and Trademark Office, “Patent and Trademark Resource Centers,” <https://www.uspto.gov/learning-and-resources/support-centers/patent-and-trademark-resource-centers-ptrcs>.
3. Darlene Cavalier et al., eds. *The Librarian’s Guide to Citizen Science* (Tempe: Arizona State University Library, February 2019), [https://s3-us-west-2.amazonaws.com/orrery-media/misc/CitSci\\_Librarians\\_Guide\\_02\\_22\\_r1.pdf](https://s3-us-west-2.amazonaws.com/orrery-media/misc/CitSci_Librarians_Guide_02_22_r1.pdf).

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Cavalier, Darlene, Caroline Nickerson, Robin Salthouse, and Dan Stanton, eds. *The Librarian’s Guide to Citizen Science: Understanding, Planning, and Sustaining Ongoing Engagement in Citizen Science at Your Library*. Tempe: Arizona State University Library, February 2019. [https://s3-us-west-2.amazonaws.com/orrery-media/misc/CitSci\\_Librarians\\_Guide\\_02\\_22\\_r1.pdf](https://s3-us-west-2.amazonaws.com/orrery-media/misc/CitSci_Librarians_Guide_02_22_r1.pdf).

Marmot Library Network. Home page. <https://www.marmot.org/>.

Phoenix Public Library. “South Mountain Community Library.” <https://www.phoenixpubliclibrary.org/locations/smcl>.

US Patent and Trademark Office. “Patent and Trademark Resource Centers.” <https://www.uspto.gov/learning-and-resources/support-centers/patent-and-trademark-resource-centers-ptrcs>.