PaLA | College & Research Division (CRD)

Pennsylvania Libraries: *Research & Practice*

The Life Cycle of a *PaLRaP* Article

And Other Updates

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In addition to being a labor of love, editing and publishing *Pennsylvania Libraries: Research & Practice (PaLRaP)* continues to be a learning experience for all involved. How do we find authors and peer reviewers? How do we select the best manuscripts to accept and help the authors express themselves clearly and effectively? What is the best way to convey good copyediting and layout practices and explain the intricacies of our publishing platform, Open Journal Systems (OJS) by the Public Knowledge Project (PKP)? How can we encourage readership of *PaLRaP* and make the journal sustainable—financially, administratively, and creatively?

One way to manage our responsibility in producing *PaLRaP* has been to provide details on how we approach our work. We do so in our periodic editorials and in presentations around the region. Part of the *PaLRaP* educational campaign involves communicating and documenting workflows, for ourselves as much as for our editorial team and authors.

In a 2013 presentation at the Pennsylvania Library Association (PaLA) annual conference, we wanted to illustrate the work, thought, and time involved in publishing a single article from start—encouraging a manuscript submission—to finish—alerting our publisher of the availability of new content, having it reviewed, and then finally clicking the "publish" button. Just one article can take the *PaLRaP* team five months or more to usher through the editorial process. On the next page, you will see a timeline for the average manuscript—what we call the life cycle of an article.

Imagine that process happening with multiple manuscripts simultaneously with editorial team members, reviewers, and authors doing the work in the midst of other professional and personal responsibilities. Imagine, too, that the above represents the ideal life cycle. Sometimes the editorial process does not go as planned. It can take time to find the most appropriate peer reviewers for the manuscript; to revise the work; to review the revisions; to revise further; and then to perform the initial copyediting work. This can extend the editorial process for weeks, meaning that some articles do not get published as quickly as we would like.

Life Cycle of a *PaLRaP* Article	
• Solicit manuscripts	ongoing
• Author submits manuscript	ongoing
• Editors read/evaluate submission	<2-3 days
• Secure peer reviewers	<1 week
• Peer review	3-4 weeks
• Communicate decision to author	<2-3 days
• Author revises the manuscript	1-4 weeks
• Copyedit	2 weeks
• Editors review copyediting	<1 week
• Author reviews copyediting	1 week
• Layout performed; galley created	1 week
• Editors review galley	2-3 days
• Author reviews galley & proofreads	1 week
• Corrections made to galley	1 week
• Editors proofread galley and metadata	1 week
• Publish	1 week
Approximate total time from start to finish	16 to 22 weeks

Yet, *PaLRaP* aims for quality, not quantity. As co-editors, we are committed to working with our authors intensively to help them find the most interesting story to tell and to tell that story in an engaging way.

The time we take to help authors craft each article might be considered a luxury by some. Nevertheless, we believe that our efforts to provide high-quality articles—through rigorous peer review, developmental editing, and precise copyediting—are a necessity for our authors and our readers. We are determined to make *PaLRaP* the best journal possible, and we hope that you will agree that these efforts are necessary and useful to attain this goal.

To the Future—*PaLRaP* Welcomes a New Co-Editor

Beginning in January 2015, **Anne Behler** will be joining the *PaLRaP* team as a co-editor. Anne is an Information Literacy Librarian and serves as the Instruction Coordinator on Penn State's University Park campus where she has worked since 2005. Anne holds a degree in English literature from Susquehanna University and a Master of Science in Library Science from Clarion University. Anne has published in professional journals, including *The Reference Librarian*, *Electronic Journal of Academic and Special Librarianship*, and *Reference & User Services Quarterly*. She has also authored several book chapters including "The Penn State University Sony E-Book Project" in Sue Polanka's *No Shelf Required: E-Books in Libraries* (2010). We look forward to the experience and expertise Anne will bring to the journal.

We Would Like to Thank the Academy

At the recent Pennsylvania Library Association (PaLA) annual conference in Lancaster, PA, *PaLRaP*'s co-editors each received a 2014 Certificate of Merit for our work in developing *Pennsylvania Libraries: Research & Practice.* We are happy to accept the award in acknowledgement of our contributions, and it pleases us to be recognized by our peers.

We believe that *PaLRaP* has been successful due to the combined efforts of many people. Each one brings different abilities to the table—Tom Reinsfelder, for example, had the vision to found the journal and contributes his intellect and understanding of the research process (not to mention a superior ability to fine-tune an American Psychological Association-formatted reference list); John Barnett's background in publishing, scholarly communication, and outreach means that he enjoys editing manuscripts, working with authors to help them find the best way to express their message, and communicating with them about the development of their work. Both of us look forward to meeting with colleagues at professional meetings and encouraging potential authors to put their experiences into words.

But *PaLRaP* is more than just two co-editors: It represents the work of many—our news co-editors, our copyeditors, our peer reviewers, and our layout editors; our sponsor, the College & Research Division of the Pennsylvania Library Association; our publisher, the E-Journal Publishing Program of the University Library System, University of Pittsburgh; and, of course, our authors, who are willing to share their expertise and knowledge.

In This Issue

In our current issue, we welcome an excellent commentary by Linda Neyer, a story of how an academic librarian working with a school librarian, and others, came together to save a high school librarian position that was scheduled for elimination.

The two research articles in this issue both come from authors at Penn State Harrisburg. The first, by Bernadette Lear, explores the experiences of Pennsylvania libraries during and after the devastating flood of 1936, while the second, by Gregory Crawford, provides readers with some additional insight and data to consider when we think about the relationships between student library use and important factors such as retention and graduation rates.

Practice articles in this issue cover topics such as problem-based information literacy; the challenges with, and opportunities for, archiving webpages of an institution; and one success story where the library worked closely with faculty to downsize their physical collections. Finally, as with all of our issues to date, readers can learn about several items of interest from our colleagues across Pennsylvania in the "Noteworthy" section.

#PaLRaP

Because we are still a fairly young publication we need your help to spread the word about the articles you read in *Pennsylvania Libraries: Research & Practice.* Use the hashtag #PaLRaP (or #palrap, if you prefer) on Twitter and in other social media. Doing so is a great, simple way to share the professional expertise of our librarian-authors with your colleagues in Pennsylvania and beyond.

In addition, hashtagging *PaLRaP* generates more interest in our journal. Upon the publication of every issue, our publisher, the E-Journal Publishing Program at the University Library System, University of Pittsburgh, tweets about each article, as do others in the College & Research Division of PaLA. We also publicize the issue through

various online discussion lists in Pennsylvania and nationally. As a result, we see a spike in our reader statistics using Google Analytics.

You can help us increase readership by tweeting and blogging about the articles we publish and the ideas we put forward, posting about our articles via Fcebook and Google+, sharing information on LinkedIn and discussion lists you belong to—even just talking about articles you have read when you are at meetings or having informal professional conversations with colleagues.

We are not all about the numbers, however. We want readership to increase so that we get the ideas and experience of Pennsylvania's librarians out into the wider world, build knowledge and expertise, and improve professional practice, not just at home but everywhere.

This is one of the things almost all library colleagues enjoy—sharing our knowledge, freely and generously, and improving library research and practice. We are glad to do our part through *PaLRaP.*