

From the Editors

When Rebecca approached me about having the Virginia Chapter of the Association of College & Research Libraries (VLACRL) edit a peer-reviewed issue of *Virginia Libraries* with the theme “open,” I thought she meant anything would go. I was intrigued when she explained instead of the theme being open to anything, she hoped librarians would look at the word “open” and find a professional connection. The word geek in me loved it.

My first connection was “open access” and many of the authors in this issue also explored this route. Their articles do a wonderful job examining different aspects of open access publication, and I hope you learn as much as I did from their pieces.

Libraries are a symbol of openness. All of our stuff—the books, the journals, the DVDs, the computers, the space—is meant to be shared. You give a library money, and it is going to use the funds in some way to benefit the greater community.

As a professional community, librarianship feels incredibly open. It is easy to become involved in ALA, ACRL, or a myriad of other library organizations. And if the existing structures don’t suit your needs, it’s simple to create your own task force, working group, committee, etc. VLACRL exists because a bunch of librarians took the time to get together in Charlottesville and say, “We want more.” Many librarians have given their time over the years to make VLACRL successful.

I believe the future of libraries is in openness. As a support service, a library’s success depends on responding to and communicating with our learners. On academic campuses, we need to be part of the institution-wide conversations, and know what are the needs, wants, and desires of the faculty, staff, and students. We need to figure out how we can be part of their goals. We need to be open to new ideas. But equally important, we need to be open about our needs, wants, and desires—and our limitations, too. Personnel, time, and resources cannot be infinitely scalable. Through open and honest conversations with our learners, we can define and build relationships that are mutually beneficial.

My challenge to you as readers is to consider how else “open” plays into librarianship.

Candice Benjes Small, VLACRL Chair 2013–2014

Bringing this issue into the world has certainly challenged my assumptions and ideas about how “openness” interfaces with librarians, libraries, and librarianship. Although I knew that discussions about openness go much further than open access, I was unaware of the many directions that libraries are moving in and the many roles that libraries are claiming within the world of openness. The six articles that comprise this issue all focus on very different aspects of openness, but agree on the critical role that libraries play in educating others and leading community conversations about engaging in the world of information, copyright, and access.

The six articles accepted for this issue touch on four specific themes related to “openness”: teaching and learning, collections, scholarly publishing, and policy. Interestingly, not one of these articles focuses solely on one of these themes; rather, the authors of the articles in this issue discuss the intersections of these topics. Molly Keener (Wake Forest University), for example, discusses both copyright policy and the way that she integrates it into information literacy workshops in her article on contextualizing copyright for the classroom. Along the same lines, Anita R. Walz (Virginia Tech) also discusses copyright policy, but in the context of identifying, using, and creating Open Educational Resources.

Similarly, each of the articles in this issue represents a practical viewpoint, offering readers specific ways to change or enhance their own professional practice. Craig Arthur (Radford University) offers perspectives on the changing landscape of open access (OA) publishing and how scholars can identify high quality OA publishers and publications. Offering readers specific collection management guidance, Adelia Grabowsky (Auburn University) writes about the impact of OA publications on collection management and the challenges of rethinking traditional collection management strategies in order to address new formats and processes.

Finally, the articles in this issue all look ahead, offering readers a window into the future of our profession. Gene Springs (The Ohio State University) and Ashley Faulkner (Texas A&M University) each write about the role of MOOCs, or massive open online courses, in the future of higher education and libraries. Springs offers

**All of our stuff—
the books, the journals,
the DVDs, the computers,
the space—is meant
to be shared.**

an in-depth evaluation of how “open” the materials used in MOOCs may or may not be, and Faulkner identifies the many different roles that libraries and librarians can and should embrace in the world of MOOCs.

While the four themes of teaching and learning, collections, scholarly publishing, and policy describe the content of this issue, the real goal of this issue is to engender new discussions about “openness” within our community of Virginia library and information professionals. Candice challenged you to consider other ways that “open” impacts librarianship; I challenge you to think about the role that you play in your organization and how you can bring “openness” to your specific context. As you read through this issue, look for at least one takeaway. How will the insight that these authors share change the way you interact with your colleagues and your community? Remember, the future is wide open!

Rebecca K. Miller, *VLACRL Chair 2014–2015* 

Acknowledgements

Many different individuals made this special issue of *Virginia Libraries* on exploring openness possible. The editors would like to acknowledge the support and hard work of the individuals who labored behind the scenes on this issue.

Brian Craig of Virginia Tech created the original cover art for this issue.

The 2013–2014 and 2014–2015 officers of the Virginia Chapter of the Association of College & Research Libraries offered valuable support and creative contributions to the development of this issue.

The following professionals served as peer reviewers for this issue:

Michael W. Andrews, ITT Technical Institute
 Brian Burns, Hampden-Sydney College
 Dave Ghamandi, University of Virginia
 Mindy Gipson, Williamsburg Regional Library
 Heather Groves Hannan, George Mason University
 Genevieve Innes, George Washington University
 Megan Kinsley, University of Virginia
 Wendy Mann, George Mason University
 Esther Onega, University of Virginia
 Ophelia Payne, University of Virginia
 Olivia Reinauer, Tidewater Community College
 Jennifer Resor Whicker, Radford University
 Marilyn Scott, Virginia Commonwealth University
 Philip Young, Virginia Tech

Finally, we must acknowledge the encouragement, patience, and dedication of our fearless Executive Director, Lisa Varga.

Many thanks to each of these individuals and to everyone else who contributed time, energy, and effort to this issue. We appreciate you and your hard work! 

New Directions for *Virginia Libraries*

After sixty years of publication as a quarterly print journal, *Virginia Libraries* is moving in a new direction. As noted in every issue, the journal was originally designed to: “develop, promote, and improve library and information services and the profession of librarianship in order to advance literacy and learning and to ensure access to information in the Commonwealth of Virginia. The journal, distributed to the membership, is used as a vehicle for members to exchange information, ideas, and solutions to mutual problems in professional articles on current topics in the library and information field.”

The journal has had a remarkable run, and the archives will remain available online at: <http://scholar.lib.vt.edu/ejournals/VAlib/index.html>.

We’re excited about the first peer-reviewed issue of *Virginia Libraries*, which is this very issue! We are also taking this opportunity to reshape the journal into an annual single-issue, peer-reviewed print journal, which will continue to be kept in the online archive. At the same time, we see the Virginia Library Association website growing into a more robust platform for sharing timely news and information from our members.

With this in mind, we are forming a new Ad Hoc Website Content Committee to review the Association’s website. This committee will work with the VLA Executive Committee and the VLA Executive Director to develop policies and procedures for maintenance of the website, including the creation of new content that best meets our members’ needs. If you are interested in serving on this committee, please contact Lisa Varga (vla.lisav@cox.net) or Shari Henry (shenry@arlingtonva.us).

We look forward to continuing to work with you all to enhance our professional communication and develop innovative publishing practices that support and nurture our community of library and information professionals.

With many thanks,
 The 2014–2015 VLA Executive Committee:

Suzy Szasz Palmer, President
 Martha Hutzler, President-Elect
 Shari Henry, Second Vice President
 Cindy S. Church, Secretary
 Nathan Flinchum, Treasurer
 Kevin Smith, Past-President
 Rebecca K. Miller, Chapter Councilor
 Lisa Varga, Executive Director 