

2019

Bridging the Gaps: Finding Creative Solutions to Unmet Needs in a Growing Library Publishing Program

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Recommended Citation

Lovett, Julia and Rathemacher, Andrée, "Bridging the Gaps: Finding Creative Solutions to Unmet Needs in a Growing Library Publishing Program" (2019). *Technical Services Faculty Presentations*. Paper 64.

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A photograph of a suspension bridge spanning a deep forest valley. The bridge is made of wooden planks and is supported by cables. A large group of people is walking across the bridge. The forest is lush and green, with many trees and foliage. The sky is visible in the background, showing a blue sky with some clouds.

Bridging the Gaps: Finding Creative Solutions to Unmet Needs in a Growing Library Publishing Program

[capilano suspension bridge.](#)
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Our Project

- Conduct an assessment of the University of Rhode Island Libraries journal publishing program, supported by the Libraries through our Bepress repository
- Opportunity to get feedback and streamline program
- Particularly interested in where editors are finding “creative solutions” to keep their journals going
 - Provide ideas for other OA journal publishing programs on tight budgets
 - Indicate where more support is needed

Background - Publishing @ URI

- One librarian and one staff involved in publishing services (small piece of all of our jobs)
- Maintain contract with Bepress
- Coordinate the journal setup
- Assist (often extensively) with migrating content and metadata from other systems
- Apply for DOAJ listing
- Apply for ISSN
- Maintain Crossref contract and train editors in creating DOI's
- Respond quickly to questions and problems

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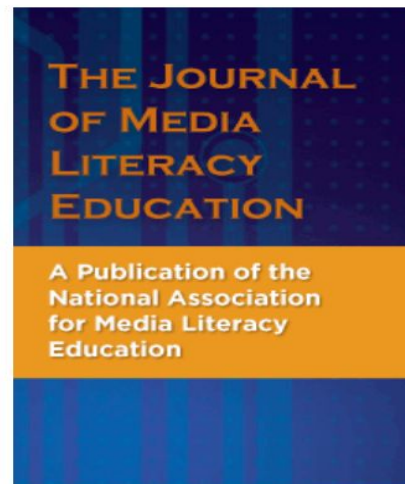
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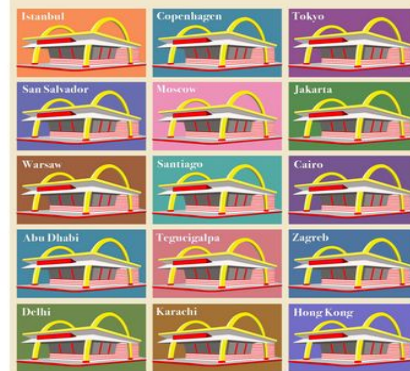
See the [Aims & Scope](#) for a complete coverage of the journal.

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Editorial

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Welcome to the *Journal of Feminist Scholarship*

The *Journal of Feminist Scholarship* is a twice-yearly, peer-reviewed, open-access journal published online and aimed at promoting feminist scholarship across the disciplines, as well as expanding the reach and definitions of feminist research.

Editors

Executive Editor: Heather M. Turcotte, University of Massachusetts Dartmouth

Co-Editor: Anupama Arora, University of Massachusetts Dartmouth

Co-Editor: Anna M. Klobucka, University of Massachusetts Dartmouth

Co-Editor: Jeannette E. Riley, University of Rhode Island

Project Design

- Sent out requests for interviews to all editors and other individuals identified as having a significant role in the journal
- Conducted 3 focus groups with 9 total interviewees (representing all 5 journals)
- Asked questions including:
 - What is your role in the journals?
 - What services do you value? What services are lacking?
 - What resources have you used, outside of the Libraries, to support the journal?
 - How has editing an OA journal influenced you?

Common Themes - what's working?

- Library support during setup and a “point of crisis” is highly valuable
- Bepress tech support is responsive and accommodating
- The platform is generally viewed favorably
 - Journal metrics; shareable dashboard
 - Flexible
 - Easy to use



Common Themes - what's *not* working?

- Copy editing is burdensome - this was the **#1 complaint**
- Templating and layout is onerous (done outside of the platform)
- Lack of time and energy to keep things going, too much work and too few people (“our editor is headed for a nervous breakdown”)
- Lack of indexing (e.g. in Scopus)
- Creating DOI's and complying with Crossref's requirements can be difficult, even though DOI's are valued
- One-time resources to establish the journal, but no resources to keep updating and adding new features

What other resources have bridged the gaps?

- Funding:
 - Small institutional grants or startup money
 - Funding from other institution (JFS)
 - Editors paying out of pocket
- Labor:
 - Volunteers from the scholarly community or parent organizations
 - Freelance or volunteer help, e.g. for design and templates
 - Student workers (paid, either hourly or wrapped into TAship)
 - Students doing unpaid internships or independent studies for credit

What other resources have bridged the gaps?

- Tools:
 - Constant Contact (email and marketing) - paid for out of pocket
 - Grammarly Pro - paid for out of pocket
 - Recite Works - free



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Editor wish list - What additional services do they want?

- Help with copy editing (#1 complaint), designing templates, other “editorial assistant” types of tasks
 - Freeing up the editors to work on content
- Guidance on indexing in Scopus, Web of Science, and perhaps others
- Creating a pipeline for students to be involved in journal production and marketing
 - Note: editors had conflicting experiences with student workers
- Promoting the journal; reaching out to readers, reviewers, and potential authors

How has editing an OA journal informed your career as a scholar?

- Making connections with other scholars and communities, often on a global scale
- Opportunity to mentor new authors
- Learning from new content and improving their own writing



Screenshot of JMLE
global download map. 4-25-19

Unexpected takeaways

- Even though we “only” have five journals, they are all serving a real need of creating new knowledge and fostering connections
- Lively cross-pollination of ideas and questions; do we need an “editor coffee hour”??
- Interviewees were passionate about their journals and enthusiastic participants. *“This was better than therapy!”*



[Lucky's Doughnuts at 49th Parallel Roasters Café](#) | Main Street, Vancouver. Flickr user Rick Chung, RickChung.com. [CC BY-NC-ND 2.0](#)

Next steps

- Provide more opportunities for editors to communicate with each other and the library
- Improve journal documentation and training based on feedback
- Look into creating a pipeline for URI students to participate in journal production
- Explore feasibility of assisting with specific requests (indexing, DOI help, copy editing, etc.)
- Better demonstrate the value of the library publishing program to administrators

Questions?

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