Resources *for* College Libraries

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RCL Career Resources Subject Editor for Computer and Information Technology since 2013

Assessment and Engineering Librarian, San Jose State University

Describe your educational background.

I have a BS in Mathematical Science, BA in Computing and Information Science, an MLIS, and a Ph.D. in Information Studies. I also have a certificate in online teaching.

What was your path to librarianship like?

After earning my degree in mathematical science, I went to work in Guyana as a web designer through a Canadian non-profit organization. While I was in Guyana, I volunteered at a high school and realized that there is a disconnect between the user interfaces of software applications and how students must invest additional cognitive effort to conform to the features of the applications. Upon my return to Canada, I enrolled in a Computing and Information Science degree program and became interested in human-computer interaction. I was advised to pursue a Master's degree by one of my professors – and Florida State University's Information Studies program not only had experts in that field, they also gave me a full scholarship. That's where I was introduced to the diverse aspects of librarianship. My fascination with the diversity and interdisciplinarity of the field encouraged me to earn both my MLIS and Ph.D. in Information Studies.

Tell us about a recent professional achievement of which you are particularly proud.

Implementing and analyzing library-wide assessment programs, becoming a member of the library's strategic planning team, becoming the chair of the faculty leadership group, and accepting a lecturer position in the Computer Engineering department at San Jose State University – to name a few.

Describe RCL in three words.

Worth subscribing to.

What are some of the most useful resources for selecting core books in your discipline?

Staying abreast of the ever-changing landscape of technology in industries and academic programs. Seeking suggestions and engaging in conversations with professionals and educators.

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What is the biggest challenge for you in maintaining the RCL subject collection?

Keeping the collection relevant. Because of the constant changes in computer and information technology, generally titles older than five years become irrelevant. I spend a significant amount of time weeding the collection.

If you could select the campus-wide read using a book from your RCL subject, which book would it be? Why?

Storytelling with Data: The Effective Visual Communication of Information by Cole Nussbaumer Knaflic. I love this book because it talks about the art of conveying data through storytelling and displaying appropriate visuals. Visuals designed with context and audience in mind can speak volumes. The focus is not on the complexity of the design, but how clearly it speaks to the audience.

What is your best advice for new subject selectors?

Know your subject area, stay connected with individuals in your subject, and design a workflow that works for you.

Stereotypes about librarians abound. What is the most unlibrarianlike thing about you?

Librarianship is such a diverse field, I do not see anything as unlibrarianlike. I spend most of my spare time (if any) creating artwork in oil, cooking, traveling, and volunteering in the "No One Dies Alone" program at Stanford University providing care for terminally ill patients.

Complete this sentence: "When I'm not in the library, you can find me _____."

…traveling.

You've been shipwrecked. What one book do you want with you to read while you await rescue?

I think I will be so bored, I will read anything at that point.

Is there anything else you'd like to tell us?

What gives me joy is connecting with people.

Storytelling with Data

The Effective Visual Communication of Information

Author	Knaflic, Cole Nussbaumer
Author info	Cole Nussbaumer Knaflic has been analyzing data and using it to tell stories for over a decade, through analytical roles in banking, private equity, and at Google. She delivers presentations... View Author Info
Publication Year	2 Nov 2015
Format	Paperback
ISBN-13	978-1-119-00225-3
ISBN-10	1-119-00225-7

Overview
Summary
Professional Reviews
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Summary

Don't simply show your data–tell a story with it!
Storytelling with Data teaches you the fundamentals of data visualization and how to communicate effectively with data. You'll discover the power of storytelling and the way to make data a pivotal point in your story. The lessons in this illuminative text are grounded in theory, but made accessible through numerous real-world examples–ready (read more)

Professional Reviews

CHOICE   Choice   July 1, 2016

At a time when powerful computing, publishing, and spreadsheet analysis tools are widespread, why are data visualizations–charts, graphs, and data tables–so frequently terrible? According to Knaflic, much of it comes down to a focus on using software instead of telling stories. The author urges readers to focus on

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