

RE-ENVISIONING THE MLS:
PERSPECTIVES ON THE FUTURE
OF LIBRARY AND INFORMATION
SCIENCE EDUCATION

ADVANCES IN LIBRARIANSHIP

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ADVANCES IN LIBRARIANSHIP VOLUME 44A

**RE-ENVISIONING THE
MLS: PERSPECTIVES ON
THE FUTURE OF LIBRARY
AND INFORMATION
SCIENCE EDUCATION**

EDITED BY

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EDITORS' INTRODUCTION TO THE *ADVANCES IN LIBRARIANSHIP* SERIES

Through a combination of economic changes, political forces, and technological changes, libraries now are in a position of meeting the ever-increasing community needs and filling roles that otherwise would go unmet in key areas of economic and workforce development, health and wellness, education, civic engagement, and fostering and supporting open governments, among much else. Despite the often decreasing financial support, the growing political pressures to reduce support for public goods such as libraries, and the voices claiming that Google has made libraries obsolete, libraries of all types – public, school, academic, and special – have never been more innovative, more community focused, and more in demand than they are now.

Libraries play significant roles in digital literacy and digital inclusion, online education, provision of social services, employment skills, and even emergency response. They are creating partnerships with local government agencies and nonprofits to address local needs. They adopt and innovate with new technologies and expand their services and materials through new channels provided by emerging technologies, from online reference to the curation and management of digital resources. At the same time, libraries serve as a primary support structure for social justice and human rights by fostering and promoting inclusion, access, and equity for individuals, for their communities, and for society as a whole.

The *Advances in Librarianship* book series offers a completely unique avenue through which these major issues can be discussed. By devoting each volume – often in the range of 100,000 words – to a single topic of librarianship, the series volumes devote a great amount of consideration to a single topic. By including contributors who are library professionals, administrators, researchers, and educators from many different places, the series volumes bring an unparalleled range of voices to these topics of librarianship. And by exploring these topics as broad issues with a wide range of societal impacts, these volumes not only inform those within the library profession, but also community members, policy makers, educators, employers, health information professionals, and others outside of libraries who are interested in the impacts of libraries.

The ability to address current and future issues from both practice and research perspectives at great depth makes this series uniquely positioned to disseminate new ideas in libraries and to advocate for their essential roles in communities. To ensure the most current and future utility, each volume includes contributions in three areas: (1) current best practices and innovative ideas, (2) future issues and ways in which they might be prepared for and addressed, and (3) the large-scale societal implications and the way in which the focus of the volume impacts libraries as a social institution.

This volume of *Advances in Librarianship* is the first part of a two-volume set exploring innovative approaches to library and information science (LIS) education. Bridging the voices of educators, professionals, and current students, these two volumes offer a wide range of perspectives and cover a variety of educational issues. This first volume examines issues of degree accreditation; outcomes assessment and measurement in programs; preparing and supporting new professionals; and new approaches to the incorporation of theory, advocacy, and political engagement into the LIS curriculum. Across these two volumes, each reader will find some views they agree with and some they disagree with, but all of the chapters offer many important points to consider as the curriculum of the field continues to evolve along with the people, institutions, and societies that our field serves.

Ultimately, volumes in this series share innovative ideas and practices to improve overall library service and to help libraries better articulate their vital and myriad contributions to their communities. The range of library impacts can be seen in the recent volumes in the series, which have explored such important topics as library services to people with disabilities, libraries as institutions of human rights and social justice, the unique roles and contributions of rural and small public libraries, and efforts to promote diversity and inclusion in the field. Forthcoming volumes will be devoted to library services for LBGQT populations and the pedagogical roles of academic libraries, among other vital issues. As fewer venues publish materials related to library practice, education, and research and many of the journals formerly devoted to library research have shifted their focus to information issues, the *Advances in Librarianship* book series is an unwavering venue devoted to documenting, examining, exchanging, and advancing library practice, education, and research.

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