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“Just Like When I Was a Liaison”: Applying a Liaison Approach to Functional Library Models

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“Just Like When I Was a Liaison”: Applying a Liaison Approach to Functional Library Models

40-51 minutes

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and

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Abstract

In this exploratory paper we consolidate themes discussed in literature to highlight three principles of liaison librarianship: building relationships, anticipating and meeting needs, and drawing on specialized expertise. These principles capture how liaison librarians approach their professional activities and together comprise what we define as a *liaison approach*. Through stories of our own work as scholarly communication librarians, we explore how a liaison approach can extend beyond subject liaison models to be relevant for librarians in functional roles. In sharing our stories, we prompt academic librarians in a variety of roles to consider how the perspective of a liaison approach might be helpful in their work. We offer this perspective, too, as a new lens through which librarians and library administrators may view organizational restructures, so as to address challenges that may be reproduced or replicated when a library moves from subject liaison model to functional model.

Introduction

Kristin: Three years ago, Western Libraries reorganized from a subject liaison model to a functional model. I was a subject librarian; I am now a scholarly communication librarian. Many times over the past three years, I have remarked to myself and to colleagues that a particular situation was “just like when I was a liaison librarian.”

Emily: I graduated with my Master of Library and Information Science in 2018. I worked closely with Kristin for the final year of my MLIS program, first as a co-op student and then as a library assistant. This was during Western Libraries’ reorganization, and I remember Kristin often remarking that many elements of her new scholarly communication role felt just like being a liaison librarian. I did not fully understand the

similarities until I started as a librarian at Nipissing University/Canadore College, where my own scholarly communication role included subject liaison responsibilities.

Through our work as scholarly communication librarians with subject liaison librarian experience, we have identified a natural connection between approaches to liaison librarianship and functional librarianship. Most literature about liaison librarianship (also called subject librarianship or subject liaison, terms we use interchangeably in this paper) centers on the activities that librarians carry out as liaisons—typically reference services, instruction, and collection management (Jaguszewski & Williams, 2013). Here, we want to focus on *how* liaisons approach these activities and thereby offer a new way for academic librarians to think about our work.

A liaison approach, as we describe and apply it here, is encompassed by three principles: building relationships, anticipating and meeting needs, and drawing on specialized knowledge. In this paper, we briefly review the background of subject liaison librarianship before discussing challenges with subject liaison models and how these challenges have prompted library reorganizations to functional models. We then show how the principles of this liaison approach are evident in the literature, though as best we can determine, we are the first to identify and consolidate them into a defined liaison approach.

To convey how this liaison approach is relevant and important for both subject librarians and librarians in functional roles, we present examples from our work as scholarly communication librarians. We then challenge librarians to think creatively about how a liaison approach may be relevant for other functional librarian roles, in part so that other librarians undergoing a transition from subject liaison to functional-role librarian may, like us, find assurance in knowing that they can maintain a similar approach to their work even with new responsibilities.

In discussing a liaison approach, we do not intend to make any determination about whether the subject or functional model is the better or preferred model, as we recognize that the choice of model may depend greatly on the context and priorities at a given academic library (Hoodless & Pinfield, 2018). One factor likely not considered in reorganizations from subject to functional models is the way in which a liaison approach can be valuable for librarians in functional roles. If a liaison approach is still applicable, then key challenges of the subject liaison model will persist after reorganization to a functional model, so we close with some reflections on those challenges.

This perspective is timely, as academic libraries in various countries are increasingly re-examining their subject liaison models and considering moves to functional models (Banfield & Petropoulos, 2017; Frenkel et. al, 2018; Hoodless & Pinfield, 2018; Raju et al., 2018). In Canada, this has become such a trend that “Navigating the Reorganization” was the theme of the Canadian Association of University Teachers’ 2019 conference for librarians and archivists (CAUT, 2019).

Background of Liaison Librarianship

For decades, many academic librarians have worked as liaisons to individual users or groups of users. In 1967, Michalak described this as a system of “direct linkages with user groups” (p. 257) in order to identify user information needs and develop services to address those needs. In the decades since, liaison librarians have typically worked with users in a particular discipline or subject area, focusing on the value of their subject expertise as they managed collections, offered library instruction, and provided reference services.

There is a wealth of literature about the subject liaison librarian model, since it has been the predominant model in academic libraries in recent decades. Much of the literature focuses on what subject liaisons do, often presented as case studies of initiatives that librarians have undertaken (for example, Chung, 2010; Henry, 2012; Miller, 2011; Olivares, 2010) or examples of how libraries have organized or re-focused their liaison services (Church-Duran, 2017; Frenkel et al., 2018; Kranich et al., 2020). Papers also discuss how the work of subject liaison librarians has expanded, with a particular focus recently on how liaison librarians can take on scholarly communication services, open access advocacy, or copyright support (Brantley, Bruns & Duffin, 2017; Hansson & Johannesson, 2013; Jaguszewski & Williams, 2013; Johnson, 2019; Malenfant, 2010; Miller & Pressley, 2015).

Some literature also discusses liaising with non-academic departments. Hollister (2005) describes his approach to working with colleagues at his university’s career and student services unit, focusing on parallels with the traditional subject liaison activities of reference, instruction, and collection management. Dahl (2007) proposes that librarians liaise with many non-academic units on campus, and suggests how librarians could identify units that would benefit from such interactions and how to initiate formal liaison relationships with them. Miller and Pressley (2015), in the ARL Spec Kit *Evolution of Library Liaisons*, report that over half of survey respondents have liaison relationships with non-academic departments. While these papers discuss liaising with non-academic departments in the context of an overall subject liaison model, we propose that a liaison approach can work equally well for libraries that operate with a functional model.

Challenges of the Liaison Model

Perhaps the most common concern of subject liaison librarianship relates to workload, often framed as challenges of balance and scalability. Issues related to balancing workload include individual liaison librarians’ ability to balance the multiple areas they support as well as the concern that subject areas are not equally allocated among librarians (Frenkel et al., 2018). In terms of scalability, Banfield and Petropoulos (2018), Church-Duran (2017), and Rodwell & Fairbairn (2008), among others, note that subject liaison librarians’ attention is increasingly divided among multiple activities and responsibilities, and that the breadth and weight of these responsibilities is unsustainable. One aspect of this is that as they succeed in working with faculty and students on some activities, these users will want to work with them even more (Brown et al., 2017; Tennant et al., 2006).

Another concern relates to librarian turnover, especially the difficulty in backfilling subject liaison positions and rebuilding liaison relationships when a librarian leaves. As D'Elia and Horne (2018) describe, "when individual librarians left ... essential skills and expertise were lost. Newly hired librarians were required to build faculty relationships and develop their support programs from scratch" (p. 10-11).

Prompted in part by concerns about sustainability, librarians and library administrators at many institutions have re-examined their subject liaison models. Some of these reviews have been a regular feature of organizations and reflect a desire to see liaison programs evolve. At Rutgers University, for example, librarians have periodically reviewed their liaison model since the 1990s (Glynn & Wu, 2003), most recently in 2017 (Kranich et al., 2020). In other cases, liaison models have been examined with the express purpose of considering whether to retain that model (Banfield & Petropoulos, 2017; Barr & Tucker, 2018; Eldridge et al., 2016; Frenkel et al., 2018; Raju et al., 2018). Liaison programs have also ceased due to budget constraints (Jensen, 2017).

Library Reorganizations

There is a trend in recent years for libraries to move to organizational structures based on functional expertise rather than a subject liaison approach (D'Elia & Horne, 2018; Hoodless & Pinfield, 2018). In a functional model, librarians and library staff work in units that each offer a specialized library service, such as collections, teaching, public service, or scholarly communication, to users across all disciplines at the university.

Proponents of this model maintain that it not only allows librarians to hone skill sets that keep pace with expanding user needs, but also ensures "a consistent level of service across the library" (Hoodless & Pinfield, 2018, p. 5). Functional models may make it possible for sufficient focus to be given to every aspect of library service across all academic departments. These models may likewise remove the strain on individual librarians to acquire in-depth knowledge of many services, since expertise in a given service is instead acquired and developed by individuals within specific teams (Hoodless & Pinfield, 2018). However, functional models are also subject to criticism, primarily because of challenges that they present in building and maintaining relationships with users without the subject liaison librarian as the default channel for the library's outreach to faculty (D'Elia & Horne, 2018).

A Liaison Approach in the Literature

The library literature has not specifically discussed a liaison approach encompassed by the principles of building relationships, anticipating and meeting needs, and drawing on specialized knowledge. Nevertheless, these principles are evident in themes within the literature on liaison librarianship.

The principle of building relationships has perhaps received the most attention; many papers have emphasized connections and relationships with faculty and students as the

main reason for the success and value of liaison librarianship. Authors have discussed how subject liaison roles have become “less collection-centric and more connection-focused” (Kranich et al., 2020, p. 297; see also Cooke et al., 2011; Crowe & Jaguszewski, 2010; Kenney, 2015); Filgo and Towers (2020) also discuss this extensively in their paper about the importance of informal connections between librarians and faculty. In addition to papers affirming the value of building relationships from an experiential perspective, research studies also provide empirical evidence. Schlak’s interview participants emphasized the value of strong relationships, “where there is interest and desire to work with liaisons on the faculty end” (2016, p. 416). In a review of their library’s liaison model, Tennant et al. found that “all [faculty] respondents who referred to their liaison by name provided exceptionally positive remarks” (2006, p. 408). It is no surprise that “Make the first step” towards approaching faculty and “Build the relationship” are the first two pieces of advice that Stoddart et al. (2006) offer to new librarians.

Relationships between librarians and faculty are what facilitate librarians’ understanding of faculty and student needs (Daniel et al., 2011; Livingston, 2003; Norris, 2019; Thull & Hansen, 2009). Assessing user needs and working to meet those needs are identified as major components (Gabridge, 2009, p. 15), key expectations (Crowe and Jaguszewski, 2010, p. 130), and “the most important advantage” (Pinfield, 2001, p. 33) of the work of library subject liaisons. “Serving as a library liaison thus offers an opportunity to truly meet the unique needs of a definable group of patrons” (Stoddart et al., 2006, p. 419) and, as Brantley, Bruns, and Duffin (2017) identify, liaison librarians focus on what is most important to faculty and students.

The subject liaison model is founded on the idea that specialized knowledge in the form of subject expertise will help librarians meet the needs of faculty and students (Guttsman, 1973). This has resulted in assertions that librarians should have graduate degrees in a relevant subject (Hérubel, 1991), although there is no consensus about the value of additional degrees (Ferguson, 2016). A common perspective on subject expertise is that liaison librarians are expected to be familiar with literature, language, and resources in a particular discipline, but not to be experts in every aspect of the subject (Norris, 2019; Pinfield, 2001).

According to Barr and Tucker (2018), “what people value most about librarians is their professional ethos, their expertise, and the time they make to understand problems in context” (Recommendations para. 5). They contend that effective liaison work encompasses “caring aspects, intuitive aspects, explorative aspects underpinned by authentic communication and professional expertise” (Recommendations para. 6).

These traits are at the root of the liaison approach we have identified and the principles that we propose encompass liaison work across academic librarianship more generally: building relationships, anticipating and meeting needs, and drawing on specialized knowledge.

In the next section, we use stories from our experiences at two vastly different academic

libraries to illustrate how this liaison approach, as encompassed by the three principles of being a liaison, transcends subject liaison librarianship and can be applied by academic librarians working within a functional model.

A Liaison Approach in Practice: Two Perspectives

In sharing our perspectives, we each draw from our professional experiences: Kristin's work at the University of Western Ontario (Western) and Emily's work at Nipissing University/Canadore College (Nipissing-Canadore). We each start with some brief background about the school and our professional experience. We then provide examples of how the liaison approach described above has been relevant for our scholarly communication work.

Kristin's Perspective: Western Libraries

I have been an academic librarian since 2004. In my current role as Research and Scholarly Communication Librarian, much of my time is devoted to working with journal editors to support library publishing. Until 2018, when Western Libraries was reorganized and the subject liaison role was eliminated, I worked either as a subject liaison librarian or a department head for a unit of liaison librarians. My fourteen years in liaison librarianship have undoubtedly primed me to notice similarities between my current functional role and my previous liaison role. It is also possible that I am seeking out these similarities—consciously or not—as a way of coping with organizational change. Whatever the reason, I have found that noticing and embracing this fundamental similarity between my past and present librarian roles has helped me navigate my library's restructuring and better understand how to carry out my new role.

Western Libraries Context

Western is a large, research-intensive, and medical/doctoral university in London, Ontario, Canada. It has 11 faculties, including a medical school. In 2020-21 it employed 1,310 faculty and had just under 34,000 FTE students enrolled (Office of Institutional Planning & Budgeting, n.d., 2020). Western Libraries employed 46 librarians and archivists, including administrators, and 87 library staff (Western Libraries, 2021).

A Liaison Approach at Western

As a subject liaison librarian, I worked with several subject areas over the years. One formative experience was working as the liaison for Western's mathematics department. The library's math collection was so important to those faculty that they established a library committee with two or three faculty members who were appointed each year to represent the department's interests with the library. Their input and feedback showed me how important it was to listen and get to know them as researchers and library users. I

learned that their needs were not like those of other science faculty, and that I needed to show that I understood and considered their unique needs in order for them to respect and trust my work and my expertise as a librarian.

The elements of liaison librarianship that have carried over to my scholarly communication role are not the specific activities I carried out for subject areas—reference consultations, instruction, collection management—but rather pertain to my approach to these activities.

Building Relationships

As a subject liaison, I typically reached out to faculty when I was taking on a new department, or when a new faculty member was hired. I would introduce myself, explain my role, and describe how I could support their research and teaching while learning about their work and what they wanted from the library.

Similarly, I reached out to journal editors when I took on the role of providing publishing support. This timing coincided with Elsevier’s acquisition of bepress,^[1] which provided additional impetus to meet and talk with editors, since this acquisition prompted my library to move our journal hosting from bepress’s Digital Commons platform to the Public Knowledge Project’s Open Journal Systems (OJS) software. In my conversations with editors, I explained the context for Elsevier’s acquisition of bepress, why this concerned me and my librarian colleagues, and why it mattered to them as editors of open access journals. These conversations were an opportunity to talk about the value of open access, and they helped me learn more about journal operations and editors’ needs. Migrating our journals from Digital Commons to OJS required focused work with each editorial team, and this facilitated our relationship building.

Each faculty member and student has their own way of interacting with a librarian. As a subject liaison, I found that some departments seemed to want little interaction with me, while other faculty members were more proactive in contacting me or more receptive to my offers to help. Working with journal editors, I have likewise come to know who among the editors are more likely to ask me questions and who will work things out on their own.

Anticipating and Meeting Needs

Every faculty member has unique needs—their own approach to classroom teaching, their own ways of searching and working with scholarly literature. For example, as a subject librarian for math, I knew that pure math researchers highly valued print books, so I took that into account in my collection work.

Similarly, every editorial team has their own needs related to their practices and processes for running their journal. While their needs are focused on their journal’s operations, there is a range of needs within this. Some editors want help working with the OJS

platform, while others have questions about editorial policies. Editors have approached me about setting up DOI (Digital Object Identifier) registration or ORCID integration. They have asked about digitizing their journal’s print backfiles. I have also reached out to editors about all of these items, again, taking into account what I know of their operations to balance what would benefit them with what might unnecessarily overwhelm them.

Drawing on Specialized Knowledge

As a subject liaison, I drew on and developed my understanding of the subject areas I worked with, such as the curriculum in their programs and where students would benefit from library instruction, or the major publishers and publication trends for the discipline. This subject expertise was paired with knowledge from librarianship—how to conduct reference interviews, develop search strategies, and manage collections.

In my scholarly communication work, I have drawn on my experience as a journal editor and author to suggest approaches to managing journal processes, policies, and workflows. I have also relied on knowledge specific to librarianship about metadata schema, database indexing, copyright and Creative Commons licenses, and digital preservation, among other examples. Some of this specialized knowledge was new to me; I developed it after I took on support for library publishing. In working with editors, becoming aware of services that other library publishers are offering, and receiving queries from editors about procedures and services, I have identified areas in which to further develop my knowledge and skills.

Emily’s Perspective: Nipissing-Canadore

Upon completion of my MLIS in 2018, I started working as a Scholarly Communications and Research Data Management Librarian at Nipissing-Canadore’s Harris Learning Library. I held this position until May 2019.

I have no doubt that my experience as a student at Western, during which time I worked with Kristin on journal publishing at Western Libraries, influenced the way that I carried out my functional role at Nipissing-Canadore. Nevertheless, my experience shows that the liaison approach we discuss in this paper translates across different academic libraries and contexts.

Harris Learning Library Context

The Harris Learning Library, located in North Bay, Ontario, Canada, serves both Nipissing University and Canadore College. It comprises the Faculty of Arts and Science and the Faculty of Education and Professional Studies. In 2020-21, it served approximately 4,243 FTE students and employed about 380 faculty (OCUL, 2020; NUFA, n.d.). Canadore College is a college of applied arts and technology and in 2020-21 served approximately 2,728 FTE students (OCLS, n.d.). The Harris Learning Library employed four full-time librarians, including administrators, and approximately 18 support staff, all of whom serve

both schools (Harris Learning Library, n.d.). There were five full-time librarians for the duration of my employment at the Harris Learning Library.

I was the first Scholarly Communications and Research Data Management Librarian at Nipissing-Canadore, hired to build a new library service. Being in a small academic library, my role extended beyond scholarly communication work to include subject liaison with the Religions and Cultures department.

The library’s organization is best described as a hybrid model; it does not conform fully to a subject liaison model nor to a functional model. I was the only librarian in a largely functional role, while two of the other librarians focused on the traditional subject liaison activities of reference, instruction, and collection management. There is a recognition within the library, however, that splitting the reference, instruction, and collections needs of the entire campus between two librarians is neither feasible nor sustainable. There were periods when the demand for instruction and reference required all librarians, plus some library assistants, to teach or fill reference appointments outside allocated subject areas.

A Liaison Approach at Nipissing-Canadore

Being the first Scholarly Communications and Research Data Management Librarian, and without a pre-existing relationship with the Religions and Cultures department, I started from scratch to build a presence and grow support for people and activities in each area. Like Kristin, I took the same approach with both, drawing on the principles that encompass a liaison approach.

Building Relationships

In my subject liaison work, I initiated a relationship with faculty in the Religions and Cultures department by sending an introduction email highlighting the collection development, information literacy instruction, and research support that I could provide. Over my first term, I saw the most uptake in collection development services, with faculty recommending texts for purchase based on research priorities or responding to my offers to put copies of instructional texts on course reserve. Their trust in me formed as I followed through with their requests, resulting in an increase in inquiries over time.

While I was building relationships around traditional subject liaison work with the Religions and Cultures department, I was attempting to do the same with other departments and researchers around scholarly communication work, albeit with less success at first. Less than a month into my job, for example, I met with Nipissing’s Dean of Research, excited to brainstorm all the ways we would work together to grow awareness and support for open access on campus. Instead, after ten minutes of sharing my own vision and values, I realized that I had failed to lay the necessary groundwork that would allow him to trust my knowledge and judgment. Before trying to push my own agenda, I needed to take a step back and take time to build a relationship by learning what was

important to him and the university.

Meeting Needs

Knowing that faculty in the Religions and Cultures department valued library collections for teaching and research, I focused my efforts on developing the collection to suit their needs and then communicated those developments with them. For example, while the religion collection was Christian-centric, department faculty researched and taught on topics that spanned a variety of cultures and religions—this disconnect was an issue that faculty and students were vocal about. I therefore allocated most of the annual collection budget to diversifying the collection in alignment with their teaching and research interests.

Similarly, conversations with faculty and the Office of Research uncovered a few key needs around scholarly communications. Some were explicitly expressed, as in the case of needing to learn methods and tools for tracing research impact at the individual and institutional level. Other needs were unexpressed and even unknown to researchers themselves, but were needs that I was able to identify. In particular, many researchers equated open access publishing with predatory publishers when talking with me, revealing a need to debunk common myths about open access. I was able to address their concerns about open access while also sharing with them the multiple reputable routes for making works openly available.

Drawing on Specialized Knowledge

In my subject liaison role, my knowledge of each faculty member’s research and teaching areas—which I gained while in the role—was necessary in order to be able purchase new materials that would be relevant for their scholarship. Additionally, when I was eventually asked to provide information literacy instruction to upper-year classes, I drew on expert search strategies acquired during my MLIS as well as my familiarity with disciplinary databases to teach students new research strategies.

In the same way, I drew on specialized knowledge to answer researchers’ scholarly communications inquiries about open access, predatory publishing, and research impact. I also relied on specialized knowledge to expand the library’s scholarly communications services into journal publishing—which I was already familiar with because of my experience at Western Libraries—institutional repository administration, and supporting researchers in managing their research data. In each of these cases, the service was developed after it became evident that it would fill a gap or meet a need on campus, and after I then acquired the additional knowledge or skills required to provide it.

Reflections on a Liaison Approach

In our work with faculty, journal editors, and campus leaders and researchers, we have

discovered that the value and importance of taking time to build relationships, to be able to learn about their needs and to share our expertise and knowledge accordingly, remain consistent between subject and functional-role librarianship. In sharing our perspectives here, we have drawn similarities between subject liaison and “functional liaison,” though, admittedly, our experiences with scholarly communication and publishing support represent a narrow sample of functional roles. But as we have discussed these ideas with colleagues in various liaison or functional roles, they have responded with interest, saying that these ideas resonate with them. Tweets by other scholarly communication librarians reinforce that we are not the only ones for whom there is a focus on “cultivating relationships” (Vandegrift, 2018). We hope that our experiences will prompt other librarians, in a variety of roles, to creatively consider how the perspective of a liaison approach could be helpful for their work.

It may be especially helpful to think about academic librarianship through this lens at a time when libraries are increasingly re-examining their liaison models and restructuring from liaison to functional models, causing subject librarians to move into functional roles. While librarians may need to acquire practical or technical skills in their new role, they can carry out their work in a similar way; the liaison approach from subject librarianship can be transferred across other academic librarian positions. For librarians undergoing a transition from subject liaison to functional-role librarian, this connection offers an individual change management tactic; it brings reassurance that they can maintain a similar approach to their work even with new responsibilities and a new organizational model.

Yet, because a liaison approach to functional-role librarianship is similar to that of subject librarianship, the key challenges of the subject liaison model may persist in a functional model. Sustainability and workload, in particular, could remain a challenge. With much of a functional-role librarian’s work based on building relationships with users, there still exists the potential for their workload to grow as they succeed in working with faculty or students who then return for continued or additional service. While the work may not grow in variety, it may continue to grow in quantity over time. And when individual librarians leave, there remains a concern that new hires will have to build relationships and programs from scratch. Therefore, while re-examinations of the liaison model have been driven in part by concerns about its sustainability, the functional model will not necessarily eliminate those concerns.

We conclude with a series of questions that could serve as prompts for individual reflection or as the basis for empirical research studies to build on and test the ideas we have presented here. How might instruction or collections work, or other kinds of scholarly communication work, be influenced by a focus on building relationships? Teaching librarians draw on their expertise in information literacy to help meet students’ needs for their coursework; how does their relationship with the course instructor affect the quality of their teaching? Collections librarians benefit from understanding how acquisitions or cancellations will affect faculty and students; how can they effectively build

relationships with the broad group of people who use the library’s collections?

Other questions relate to the structural challenges that may persist following library reorganizations and to new challenges that an organizational restructure may need to account for. We have raised the challenge of sustainability, but what other challenges of the liaison model will persist in a functional model? And how can restructuring plans account for the time it will take librarians to build relationships within the new model? How can librarians and library administrators build on previously established liaison relationships to facilitate this shift? When functional-role librarians are working with users who are broadly distributed across campus, rather than in a neatly defined disciplinary department, what new strategies might be needed to help them learn about those users’ needs? How can restructuring plans ensure that librarians are able to develop the focused skill set that is often stated as a key benefit of functional models?

We have written this paper during the COVID-19 pandemic, a time when library reorganizations have perhaps been overshadowed by the effects of the pandemic on our work lives. Some readers may be at academic libraries that are not considering a reorganization. Still, all of our jobs and working conditions have now changed in some way. During this time of upheaval from the pandemic, we suggest that this liaison approach can be a grounding framework for thinking about how to approach our work—a way to turn our attention from the activities and tasks we need to carry out towards a broader focus on principles that, as we have attempted to show through our examples, endure through changing environments and drive our engagement with users.

Conclusion

In this paper we deem three principles of liaison librarianship—building relationships, anticipating and meeting needs, and drawing on specialized expertise—to be the basis for a liaison approach to library activities. Through stories of our experiences as subject liaisons and scholarly communication librarians, we have shown that a liaison approach can be just as relevant to functional-role librarianship as it is to subject librarianship. With academic libraries increasingly considering reorganizations from subject liaison models to functional models, we offer this new perspective for individual librarians to consider how a liaison approach might be applied in their own role, and for organizations to consider how structural challenges within liaison models may be addressed in functional models.

[1] Many bepress customers were unhappy with news of the acquisition, seeing it as a move by one of the largest commercial publishers to “adopt and coopt open access” (Schonfeld, 2017, para. 1).

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