

Urban Library Journal

Volume 21

Issue 2 *Selected proceedings from the 2015 LACUNY
Institute: Privacy and Surveillance: Library Advocacy
for the 21st Century.*

Article 1

9-11-2015

Notes from the Editor

Junior Tidal

New York City College of Technology, CUNY

Follow this and additional works at: <http://academicworks.cuny.edu/ulj>



Part of the [Library and Information Science Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Tidal, J. (2015). Notes from the Editor. *Urban Library Journal*, 21 (2). Retrieved from <http://academicworks.cuny.edu/ulj/vol21/iss2/1>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by CUNY Academic Works. It has been accepted for inclusion in Urban Library Journal by an authorized editor of CUNY Academic Works. For more information, please contact AcademicWorks@cuny.edu.

Notes from the Editor

This is a special issue of Urban Library Journal. It contains selected proceedings of the LACUNY 2015 Institute held on this past May at John Jay College. This issue also marks an editorial change with the departure of co-editor, Bronwen Densmore. Bronwen's expertise will be missed, but I would like to wish her well on her future endeavors.

This year's LACUNY Institute, entitled Privacy and Surveillance: Library Advocacy for the 21st Century, examined the role of libraries and the civil liberties of our users. The conference featured two great speakers including Rainey Reitman, Activism Director for the Electronic Frontier Foundation and Chief Operating Officer and Alison Macrina of the Library Freedom Project. More information about the Institute can be found here:

<http://2015lacunyinst.common.gc.cuny.edu/>

with additional presentation slides stored on the Academic Works site: http://academicworks.cuny.edu/lacuny_conf_2015/.

Protecting user privacy and upholding confidentiality has been an integral to the mission of libraries. The American Libraries Association (ALA) has stated that patron privacy has been crucial in free-speech and inquiry since 1939. Libraries uphold patrons' privacy by allowing the freedom for open inquiries, such that users have no fear of being scrutinized for the information they seek. Librarians have gone to great lengths from protecting patron privacy, from destroying patron borrowing records, posting famous "The FBI has not been here" signs, to ALA filing briefs against the PATRIOT Act at the Supreme Court. A month after the 2015 LACUNY Institute, portions of the PATRIOT Act expired 14 years after it had been passed.

Today, the idea of “privacy” has certainly changed with the proliferation of social media and eBooks. Users freely volunteer personal information through social networks. Websites such as goodreads and LibraryThing allow users to share what they’re reading. Integrated library systems, discovery tools, and online catalogs contain some of these features, where users can leave comments or ratings. eBooks and other digital content can be tracked, which has formed the basis of the patron driven acquisition model of collection development.

These technological changes can complicate the role of libraries in protecting patrons’ information, yet libraries are already adapting to them. such as creating guidelines for eBooks, educating users about using information ethically, and obviously, holding events such as the LACUNY Institute to communicate about these issues. There are also resources available such as the aforementioned Library Freedom Project and ALA’s Privacy Toolkit to better understand privacy and libraries.

The selected conference proceedings in this issue include:

Sarah Lamdan’s presentation, “Librarians as Feisty Advocates for Privacy,” looks closer at the discussion of social media and privacy.

“Social Media, Privacy, and the Academic Classroom” by Julia Michelle Frankosky examines threats against academic freedom and privacy in the classroom.

Alycia Sellie looks at rights and restrictions of eBooks in “The Walled Gardens of Ebook Surveillance: A Brief Set of Arguments Against DRM in Libraries.”

Junior Tidal
Urban Libraries Journal Editor