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Egalitarian Teams in Action: Organizing for Library Initiatives

Cover Page Footnote

Information about this case study was first presented at the 2017 LACUNY Institute.

Egalitarian Teams in Action: Organizing for Library Initiatives

Linda Miles, Miriam Laskin, and Kate Lyons

Abstract

In 2006 Peter Senge, who coined the term the learning organization, wrote, “As the world becomes more interconnected and business becomes more complex and dynamic, work must become more ‘learningful’... It’s just not possible any longer to figure it out from the top, and have everyone else following the orders of the ‘grand strategist’” (p. 4). Senge documented the need for professions and organizations that can change, that can quickly adapt, be nimble, learn, and find new opportunities in the changing information landscape. Libraries are not immune from this kind of pressure. In this case study, first presented at the 2017 LACUNY Institute, three library faculty members describe a team with the salient characteristics of commitment and nimbleness, a team that aims to be this new, “non-traditional” team, one that is in alignment with best practices for change management and learning organizations, and with the work of Etienne Wenger and others on Communities of Practice (CoPs). After describing the team’s background and formation, this case study presents the results of a mid-year survey, along with a list of the team’s work and accomplishments, as evidence of productivity and team members’ satisfaction. Specific benefits and challenges of the team’s structure and processes are discussed. Finally, best practices for this type of committed and agile teamwork are drawn from the CoP literature and this case study, and some of the ways this “learningful” experience may impact faculty as individuals, and what that may mean for the future of the library, are considered.

Keywords: community of practice, academic libraries, teamwork, collaboration, productivity, learning organizations

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Introduction

[I]t's hard not to imagine a future where the majority of libraries cease to exist—at least as we currently know them. Not only are they being rendered obsolete in a digital world, the economics make *even less* sense. (Siegler, 2013)

For a decade or two while the Internet (and ubiquitous and mobile computing) took its hold on our daily lives, talk of the demise of physical library spaces became commonplace. Quotations like the one above were everywhere, and it seemed like technology was causing many institutions, not just libraries, to not just adapt once but to become organizations that can change and adapt easily. Senge, who coined the term “the learning organization” wrote, “As the world becomes more interconnected and business becomes more complex and dynamic, work must become more ‘learningful’... It’s just not possible any longer to figure it out from the top, and have everyone else following the orders of the ‘grand strategist’” (2006, p. 4). Senge documented the need for organizations and professions that can change, that can quickly adapt, be nimble, learn, and find new opportunities in the changing information landscape. Given that libraries’ missions are rooted in the information landscape, it follows that libraries are not immune from the need to be learning organizations.

The authors are three members of the five-person library faculty team constituting the core of the “Hostos Media Literacy Movement” at Hostos Community College, a happy and highly productive team. The team’s salient characteristics are commitment and nimbleness, which means that the team combines dedication, enthusiasm—even zealousness—with a kind of nimble-mindedness or agility—an ability to take in new information and change direction quickly and appropriately. The team formed in December of 2016 and almost six months later has produced scholarship, conducted outreach, and developed curriculum for teaching. The team has managed to be both learningful and “aligned.” Senge describes the aligned team as having “a commonality of purpose, a shared vision, and understanding of how to complement one another’s efforts. Individuals do not sacrifice their personal interests to the larger team vision; rather, the shared vision becomes an extension of their personal visions” (2006, p. 218).

The Hostos Media Literacy Movement team aims to be this new, “non-traditional” team, one that is in alignment with best practices for change management and learning organizations, and with the work of Etienne Wenger and others on

Communities of Practice (CoPs). The goal is for the team to be successful and, because the members of the five-person team represent 50% of the library's small full-time faculty, model relationships that can extend beyond the team, to the entire library department. As a kind of organizational behavior sandbox, team members can use this experience to experiment with their roles and be productive, committed, and adaptable themselves, in ways that will ultimately benefit the entire library, an organization that needs to be as adaptable and flexible as possible.

This article will describe the team—our background and how we formed—and present the results of a team survey created in May 2017, just over five months after the team's inception and after the team had planned and implemented quite a number of projects. These results, along with a list of the team's work and accomplishments, are offered as evidence of productivity and team members' satisfaction. In addition to describing the team and the assessment of the team's success, this article will also describe specific benefits and challenges team members commented on in the survey and in meetings: the benefit of overall increased morale/motivation, benefits in the way we structure our meetings and work to promote shared responsibility and decision making, the benefit of personal growth and learning, and the significant challenge of time management. Finally, discussion of best practices for this type of committed and agile teamwork will be drawn from the CoP literature and this case study, and we will consider some of the ways this learningful experience may impact us as individuals and what that may mean for the future of the Hostos Community College Library.

Forming as a Community of Practice (CoP)

Among common work experiences for academic librarians is service on committees, task groups, or teams. Collection building, maintenance, and services to our patrons generally require collaborative effort and, as professionals practicing together, coordination of effort helps make our libraries comprehensible for our constituents. Often such groups are designed to accomplish a specific function within an organization or are called into existence to tackle a specific problem, usually by organizational leaders. Librarians traditionally participate in group work, however they are most often either assigned or recruited to serve on teams. As shifts in technology and information cycles accelerate, and as students, faculty, and institutions work to keep pace, new models for convening and organizing collaborative efforts may help librarians and other stakeholders more effectively

support crucial initiatives. The way a team forms can impact its ability to be nimble and learningful. The Hostos Media Literacy Movement team formed following the model of Communities of Practice (CoPs), and this method of formation was likely a key building block for the team's success.

A number of researchers working at the nonprofit Institute for Research on Learning during the 1990s began to develop theories and models related to CoPs (Brown & Duguid, 1991; Lave & Wenger, 1991; Wenger, 1998). Beginning with an anthropological lens, they observed informal groups and networks where learning takes place. As their work evolved, new models for learning emerged. CoPs may have a fairly egalitarian structure. Belonging is determined by engagement, rather than assignment; if you are engaged together, learning in community, then you are members. When new problems arise, improvised solutions and new knowledge come from the community of practitioners, grounded in the work environment, rather than via simple adaptation of received knowledge (i.e., formal training or manuals) (Wenger, 1998). According to Etienne Wenger (1998), a CoP is a joint enterprise “defined by the participants in the very process of pursuing it. It is their negotiated response to their situation and thus belongs to them in a profound sense” (p. 77). For Wenger (1998), the coherence of a CoP derives from its practice (p. 49), which has three dimensions: 1) *mutual engagement*, along with an ability to form relationships and respond to each other; 2) deep understanding of, and commitment to, the *joint enterprise*; and 3) the ability to comprehend and shape the future of a *shared repertoire* of knowledge, concepts, processes, and materials (pp. 136-7).

Our team exemplifies self-selected, egalitarian structure and committed mutual engagement in a joint enterprise. During the waning days of 2016, several Hostos library faculty began talking together about media literacy in response to recent studies depicting alarming rates of media illiteracy and anecdotal information gleaned from interactions with students within the library. And we were not alone. Discussions flared on social media and listservs as librarians began sharing information about resources and initiatives developed to support media literacy efforts at their campuses. One Hostos librarian emailed the faculty an article (Domonoske, 2016) about a report from the Stanford History Education Group (Wineburg & McGrew, 2016) summarizing the performance of middle-, high school, and college students on online and social media information evaluation exercises. The issue was added to the agenda for a library faculty meeting, and the five of us came together to form an ad-hoc committee. We had no mandate from above; this was a truly grassroots effort.

We are a team of five female faculty members, with a mix of junior and senior faculty. There is not a large power differential, with two associate professors and three assistant professors. Four members have tenure, while one is beginning the tenure track. Our chief librarian is generally supportive, but otherwise not involved. During our initial meetings, we developed an unspoken “charter;” we had no written or stated outcome, but a shared desire to make change in the world by affecting what we could—working to increase media literacy skills and knowledge in our community. The subject is complex and, without a clear outcome or goal, we came to terms with the open-endedness of the enterprise. We started to envision a multi-year, multi-pronged, sprawling umbrella initiative with both short-term and long-term components. What had begun as a fairly unruly collective, simply sharing concerns and ideas, started to coalesce organically around a structure that derived from the specifics of our students, our institutional context, and our individual and collective strengths. Our shared dedication to the enterprise is what holds us together and also what gives us flexibility and resilience. Roles of team coordinator and liaisons to disciplinary faculty and a variety of other campus entities emerged early and were taken up by individual members based on interests and strengths. We rely on collective brainstorming and discussion as ideas for new initiatives emerge, but each individual team member is empowered to select the projects in which she wishes to invest time and effort.

The team has developed a unique shared repertoire of modes of working, processes, procedures, and materials or assets. We function via periodic face-to-face meetings combined with asynchronous virtual collaboration using both email and cloud computing. Using a folder in Google Drive, we are able to organize and make accessible our CoP’s shared repertoire of materials, including drafts, flyers, and handouts, in addition to meeting notes and other documentation. Among our most effective strategies is live note-taking during face-to-face meetings, where the coordinator opens the agenda in Google Drive, projected for the group to see, and makes note of decisions and specific team members’ task responsibilities. Consensus decision making is time consuming and complex, but this mode of documentation helps ensure shared understanding of details and helps keep everyone accountable to the decisions we make as a team. During the intensive period leading up to a complex week-long series of events, we also developed an online “task tracker,” basically a table in an online document, where all team members could post updates for their assigned tasks and monitor progress as all the pieces fell into place. Additionally, we use Google Drive for collaborative writing projects, from conference presentation proposals to journal article submissions. Because a lot of our work happens asynchronously, we depend on a shared sense of responsibility to the

enterprise and rely individually on our own time management techniques. Email communication between meetings is used to clarify certain issues, share new information or opportunities, and send reminders.

Wenger, McDermott, and Snyder (2002) posit organizational knowledge management as a primary goal for CoPs. Knowledge is best managed via CoPs because it is dynamic, social, generated through lived experience, and both explicit and tacit (pp. 8-11). Companies that effectively nurture productive learning are most likely to compete successfully in the marketplace and attract and retain the top talent (pp. 6-7). Although our CoP is not commercially focused, productivity combined with increased team member satisfaction are central to our success.

Evidence of Success: Our Accomplishments

The Hostos Media Literacy Movement team made headway in developing curriculum and resources around media literacy that could be used in courses and deployed for on-campus events. We planned and implemented media literacy-centered activities at Hostos. Simultaneously, the group conducted outreach to faculty and staff to discover courses and events where team members could join forces with others to integrate media literacy instruction. We also found opportunities for scholarship that allowed us to both reflect on our work and share our experiences with, and get feedback from, a wider audience of colleagues, beyond Hostos. As we write our thoughts, we're reinforcing our shared ideas, which in turn strengthens the group's shared mission. Documenting, writing, and reflecting became priorities for us, and our participation in conferences and our submission of articles reflects that resolution.

The group planned and participated in a campus-wide "teach-in," proposed and supported a themed "Provost's Luncheon" for college faculty, facilitated reflective discussion as part of a full-day faculty development training, staffed an interactive table as part of Hostos Teaching Day, and sponsored a week of activities and events for our first annual April Fools' Week. Planning is underway for a faculty development workshop that will be part of the 2017-18 Hostos Teaching Institute, an outreach campaign targeting Hostos faculty, and an internal repository of tools for teaching media literacy collaboratively in the classroom (learning outcomes, rubrics, lesson plans, etc.). Team members have presented at two conferences on topics that range from integrating an interactive media literacy module within the learning management system to the dynamics of agile teamwork. One

collaboratively authored article has been submitted for journal publication, and a second is in progress. This high level of productivity has come as a surprise to team members.

Survey Results: Benefits and Challenges

During May of 2017, after almost six months of operation, we surveyed all five team members to assess progress toward our goals and affective responses to our modes of teamwork. This survey is an instrument of self reflection, rather than an objective measure of effectiveness, but the results have helped us determine new directions and areas that would benefit from increased focus. They also provide groundwork for continued reflective practice. The first of two quantitative measures posed the question, “AS A TEAM, how effectively have we...” and asked team members to rate our progress on fourteen items using a 4-point Likert scale. Results are largely positive. With five team members scoring fourteen items, there were 70 selections made. “Somewhat effectively” was selected 50% of the time (35 out of 70 selections), “extremely effectively” was selected 37.1% of the time (26/70), and “somewhat ineffectively” was selected 12.9% of the time (9/70). None of the fourteen items scored “not effectively at all” (see Figure 1). Seven of the items scored either somewhat or extremely effectively (zero ineffective selections). Of those seven, three scored highest: “...come up with creative solutions & ideas,” “...set and followed priorities,” and “...kept track of details.” We also feel we have done well in solving unexpected problems or challenges, forming a cohesive group, and making decisions. We have done somewhat less well at developing our mission. We scored ourselves lowest on whether we have “...taken into account our context and our students” or “...communicated clearly” as a team.

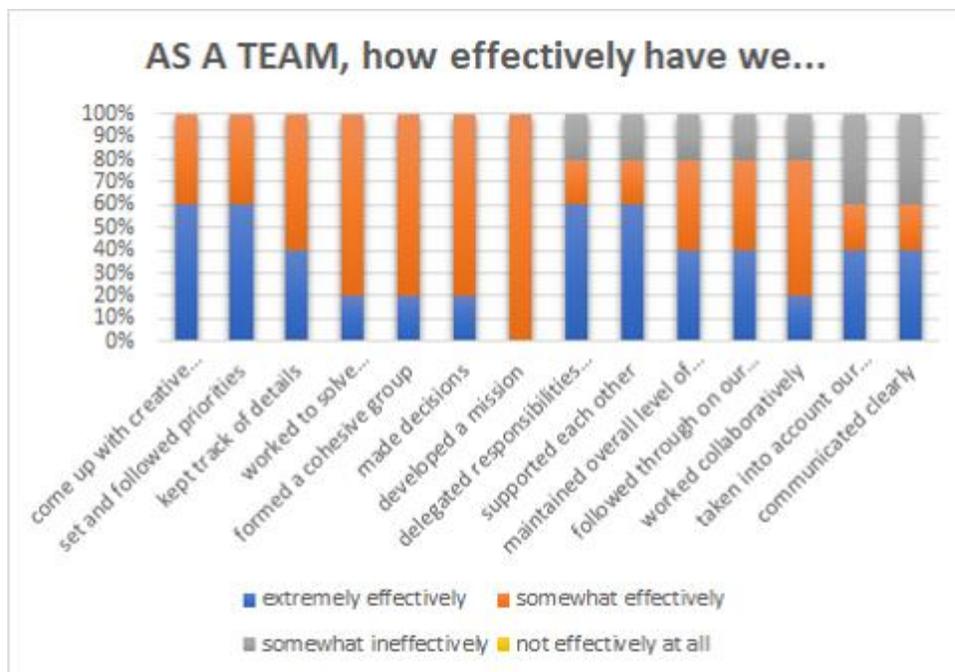


Figure 1: Survey Q1: AS A TEAM, how effectively have we...

The second quantitative measure asked, “AS AN INDIVIDUAL, how have you felt (for whatever reason) about...” to rate nine items on a 4-point Likert scale. Again, there is some variation between items, but data are generally favorable. “Somewhat positively” was selected 46.7% of the time (21 out of 45 selections), “very positively” was selected 40% of the time (18/45), and “somewhat negatively” was selected 13.3% of the time (6/45). No items scored “very negatively” (see Figure 2). Three of the nine items had zero negative selections. Of those, one scored highest: “...our process of collaborative decision making.” We are only somewhat less positive about “...our asynchronous online collaboration” and “...the open-endedness of our overall project.” Six items scored a single “somewhat negatively” response, indicating some areas for improvement: task delegation, our face-to-face meetings, the overall approach we are taking to tackle media literacy problems on our campus, multitasking, and balancing logistical and creative work. Each of these five items scored two “very positively,” two “somewhat positively,” and one “somewhat negatively.” Our communication channels scored lowest with only one “very positively,” three “somewhat positively,” and one “somewhat negatively.”

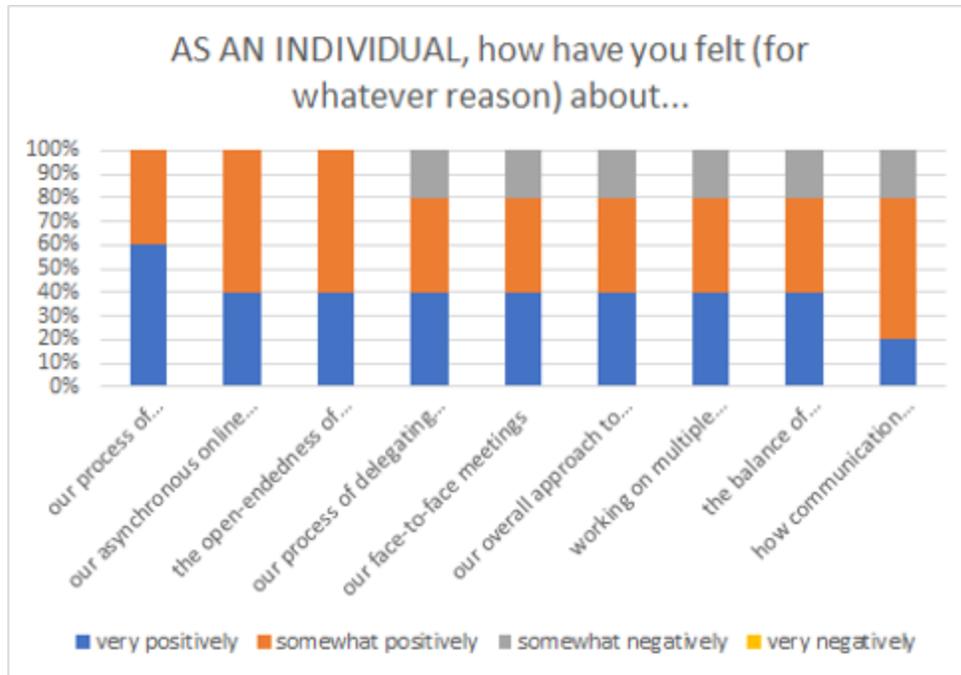


Figure 2: Survey Q2: AS AN INDIVIDUAL, how have you felt (for whatever reason) about...

Reviewing these results using a matrix with a teamwork continuum (very effectively ← → somewhat ineffectively) paired with an individual affective continuum (very positively ← → somewhat negatively) (see Figure 3), certain relationships become apparent. Several responses to the qualitative portion of the survey (discussed below) reveal some of the challenges posed by the process of consensus decision making (the items in red in Figure 3), but, taken together, respondents scored decision making as both very positive, personally, and as somewhat effective, as a team. The discrepancy between these positions may indicate recognition of the difficulty in reaching consensus paired with a positive affective response to hard won success. Respondents were split on setting priorities and task delegation, which each comprise a significant portion of overall team decision making. Setting priorities is one of the things team members feel we do very effectively, while some feel, as individuals, somewhat dissatisfied with task delegation. This may indicate an area for improvement, but still, taking into consideration both continua, decision making items rated more positively than negatively. There is a small differential between affective responses to asynchronous work—(somewhat positive) and face-to-face meetings—(somewhat negative) as indicated in green in Figure 3. Some frustration with face-to-face team meetings also stands out in the qualitative data (discussed below), and together these have spurred team members to work toward more proactively shifting certain

types of discussion and decision making to channels of asynchronous communication.

very effectively	←-----	-----→	somewhat ineffectively
creativity setting priorities tracking details	handling the unexpected team cohesiveness decision making	developing our mission	focus on institutional context & students communication
very positively	←-----	-----→	somewhat negatively
decision making	asynchronous work open-endedness	delegation face-to-face meetings overall approach to media lit on campus multitasking logistical-creative balance	communication

Figure 3: Matrix of results from Q1 and Q2

The quantitative data clearly indicate difficulties communicating, with a somewhat ineffective team rating for communicating clearly and a somewhat negative affective response for our communication channels (in pink in Figure 3). Results indicate that team members largely agree that this is an issue, although we may have been previously unaware of the degree of dissatisfaction among members. Potential solutions have not been discussed to date, but may include categorizing and tagging different types of communication according to function, regularly scheduling emails, etc. Perhaps a larger issue for the team is a second cluster of related items appearing toward the negative end of the matrix: maintaining focus on our institutional context and student population, our overall approach to media literacy at Hostos, and developing our mission (in blue in Figure 3). In a highly productive teamwork environment there is a danger of losing track of the bigger picture in order to keep up with day-to-day planning and implementation challenges. We consider shared commitment to the team mission critical to our success and these survey findings suggest a need for increased and regular consideration of these issues.

Our survey concluded with four qualitative questions, asking team members to discuss the items from the quantitative measures that they consider most important, experiences that have been most satisfying and most frustrating, and their strategies for managing the workload. Among the most striking findings were

an emphasis on satisfaction from increased morale and motivation, dedication to the mission, and the team's modes of working. The most mentioned challenges focused on time management and workload issues. Comments reinforced the way our shared mission continues to drive the work, and how that sense of commitment draws on our personal or civic selves as well as our professional selves. Dundon and Pattakos (2012) write about how finding meaning in the workplace increases motivation. Writing about authentic leadership and its benefits, they explain, "When tough times arise, employees can also remind themselves of the greater meaning of their work and thus build resilience" (p. 12). This aligns with comments from our survey. "The most satisfying part of the process has been sharing our concerns and common dismay about the current [U.S. presidential] administration, which advocates confusion and media illiteracy," wrote one respondent. Finding meaning in the team's projects mitigated the time management difficulties that arise from juggling this new area of work along with already full schedules. For example, team members commented, "It is the passion behind the work that keeps the work going," and "I love the way our team keeps coming back for more."

Comments also reveal that individuals get a lot of satisfaction out of participation in the CoP and the specific ways we work. We articulated overall satisfaction with the way we structure our meetings and work to promote shared responsibility. Among other elements, respondents described the co-ownership of the process, multitasking, and rates of productivity in positive terms. Communication and follow-through on commitments were mentioned as important for keeping frustration "in check a little bit." One respondent appreciated the conscious attention paid to CoP processes, "I...like how we're not only reflecting on the tasks at hand, but also reflecting on our process and sort of repairing/noticing teamwork as we go." Another individual mentioned professional growth, "I think [this] is a great way for us to develop as educators." Despite these indications of satisfaction with the CoP, some comments point to areas of work that might be improved.

Respondents expressed great satisfaction from accomplishing so much, and a majority of team members consider following through on the commitments we make to one another to be among the most crucial elements of teamwork. This may be why time management struggles are by far the most frequently cited area of frustration, particularly since we have taken on this work without a reduction in our other faculty obligations. For example, "I think the feeling of juggling many 'balls' to keep them all in the air [is most frustrating]," wrote one respondent. "That is, besides our responsibilities as library faculty, we wanted to do so much more at the same time. It was hard to keep everything going." The challenge of time

management seems closely related to the frustration voiced by some of our members about our face-to-face meetings. We met together eight times during just over five months of activity, but for one respondent, it felt more like a weekly or bi-weekly occurrence. These meetings may be the most efficient forum for consensus decision making, but it is difficult work. As one team member wrote, “The face-to-face meetings are SO important to getting the work done, but they are frustrating and exhausting, too.” It can be discouraging to sit in a room with colleagues and review a packed agenda. “Sometimes these meetings and tasks feel like one more thing that I am going to do half-hearted and halfway. There is no time or maybe I’m burnt out...” One team member expressed regret that there is not enough time for more open-ended discussion, but a second finds it frustrating when discussions “go off course.” As a team we have already begun post-survey discussions about the kinds of work we do face-to-face versus asynchronously, and are taking steps to try to prioritize certain functions early in meeting agendas to allow for more general discussion among interested team members at the end of the sessions. We are not likely to fully resolve our collective issues with time management, but will use these survey findings as a spur to innovate.

CoP Best Practices

One question that remains is to what extent, and through what actions, can individuals or organizations deliberately design conditions favorable for development of effective learningful CoPs? Also, what practices might enhance the performance of existing CoPs? Wenger (1998) employs a gardening metaphor to describe a kind of institutional cultivation. “Communities of practice are about content—about learning as a living experience of negotiating meaning—not about form. In this sense they cannot be legislated into existence or defined by decree,” he writes. “They can be recognized, supported, encouraged, and nurtured, but they are not reified, designable units” (p. 229). Best practices gleaned from both the literature of CoPs and team experience may provide insight for those hoping to cultivate or develop their own teams.

Wenger, McDermott, and Snyder (2002) outline seven principles for managed CoP cultivation (pp. 49-63). 1) Allow for dynamic evolution. Every situation is different. Leaders may want to start with simple organization structures (e.g. regular meeting times) prior to charter or mission development, as when “Physical structures—such as roads and parks—can precipitate development of a town” (p. 53). Also, over time, shifting membership may “pull focus of the community in

different directions,” since mission ownership is so critical (p. 53). 2) Commingle both insider and outsider perspectives and 3) allow for participation at different levels, core group, active, and peripheral. Insiders contribute deep organizational and domain knowledge, but outsiders help members see new possibilities. 4) Allow for both “public” and “private” exchange. There are different kinds of spaces for learning and working together: “public” spaces or events that provide opportunities for peripheral participation in the work of the community, and “private,” including informal, day-to-day, “back channel” interactions. 5) continual focus on value. The specific benefits of community work—to individual team members and to the wider institution—may evolve over time. Rather than concrete goal setting at the beginning, “communities need to create events, activities, and relationships that help their potential value emerge and enable them to discover new ways to harvest it” (p. 60). 6) Combine reliance on routine practices and past success with what is new and exciting. Familiarity and confidence provide safe spaces for open exchange, but grappling with novel ideas or modes of working can increase engagement and strengthen community. Finally, 7) Create a community rhythm, with regular activities, such as meetings, and milestones, such as special events. A unique repertoire of effective practices is likely to emerge through local (or perhaps “situated,” since some CoPs are virtual) CoP processes, but familiarity with specific cases and successful practices could prove useful.

It may be that teams managed from above will miss out on some of the beneficial characteristics our team experienced. We aim to operate as a team of equals—each of us participates at will, we individually invest in the projects that most interest us and, to a large extent, we are governed by consensus decision making. A first step for an individual in a leadership position may be to develop a sharper sense of awareness of staff needs or concerns, an ability to “recognize” a potential CoP—as Wenger (1998) suggests (p. 229). If a leader is interested in enabling a specific CoP team, she may want to provide encouragement from a distance, rather than participating herself. For direct participation, a ceding of status—to the extent possible—may be necessary. However, it is possible that CoP teamwork does not lend itself to accomplishing tasks mandated from above. The Hostos Media Literacy Movement team arose on its own, with the approval of the chief librarian, rather than as a mandate handed down. In that moment, a cluster of favorable conditions arose. Team members already felt a connection between the team’s mission and their personal dedication to the values of librarianship. Popular and professional discourse was teeming with concern about “fake news” and the social moment. Team members managed to successfully juggle other responsibilities with this new area of work, and the team’s successes gave members the resilience to persevere

when projects required long hours or frustrating tasks. Even when a leader can create favorable conditions for such a team to spring up on its own, there is no clear path to certain success, particularly if a specific outcome is envisioned. As Cox (2005) points out, reviewing research on a specific CoP (Brown & Duguid, 1991), “vary the conditions and the resulting counter-community, if one emerged at all, might be very different” (p. 530). Individuals seeking to develop a CoP with her or his peers may be in a stronger position.

Our Hostos media literacy CoP developed spontaneously from recognition of shared concerns, rather than via deliberate cultivation, but along the way we have developed a number of best-practice recommendations for engaging in committed, agile, and learningful CoP work. 1) Articulate for each other, explicitly, why you are doing this. Our team members identified commitment to a shared mission as central to both success and satisfaction. At the same time, survey results indicated a need or desire to focus more clearly on why we are in the room at all. We need to take time for continued discussion of our mission, and to more consciously tailor our efforts to the specifics of our institutional context and our student population. 2) Begin by dreaming big. The CoP serves as a safe place for brainstorming and contributing thoughts and ideas, no matter how crazy they may seem at face value. There will be opportunity later in the process to select the initiatives for focus, but unfettered brainstorming allows for the emergence of more creative ideas. 3) Be supportive, flexible, and forgiving. This happens individually, but as a team it adds up to increased agility. Work to do your fair share and meet your commitments. Have each other’s backs. But also realize that some projects may ultimately need to be scaled back, postponed, or cancelled, *and that’s okay*. 4) Pay attention to logistical (vs. marketing) communication. At Hostos, we are targeting outreach to disciplinary faculty, who ultimately will serve as educational partners in our media literacy efforts. We work to cultivate a certain level of peripheral belonging among library colleagues—they should feel that they are part of the “movement,” even if their commitment is not the same as that of core members. Also make sure your leadership is aware of team developments. Our chief librarian did not recruit us or give us a charge, but when she is familiar with our efforts she can be a great ally in the campus community. Most crucially, each team member should pay attention to emails and online task trackers—they are only effective when we pay attention and contribute to them. Finally, 5) Be practical. Use or develop a repertoire of nuts-and-bolts practices that will work best for you—in our case these include heavy reliance on agendas to maintain forward momentum, collaborative note-taking to keep all members accountable to the decisions we make together, and reminding ourselves to listen as much, or more, than we speak.

Summary and Conclusions

Participation in the Hostos Media Literacy Movement has strongly affected individual team members as faculty librarians. The process of finding and developing community is a social process of identity formation (Brown & Duguid, 1991; Lave & Wenger, 1991; Wenger, 1998), and learning collaboratively and drawing productively from a shared repertoire will inevitably influence development of team members' professional practice and sense of self. As difficult as it has been to incorporate this new area of responsibility into our day-to-day schedules, the mission-driven nature of the activity and the intense engagement with colleagues has had a focusing and revitalizing effect. As one team member put it, "This team renewed my energy and re-balanced my mental needs." As individuals, we have selected roles within the initiative that we feel speak to both our interests and strengths. Productivity, proficiency, and confidence are elevated. We are happier at work and we anticipate that the strong increased motivation we have felt during our initial six months as a team will "spill over" into other areas of work in the library. Our learningful CoP and ongoing reflective practice is also helping us to develop as collaborators, and is sharpening our team building skills. Within the movement, librarians at Hostos are relating with each other in new ways. This gives one survey respondent "hope that we can work together positively and collaboratively in the future," expanding the positive aspects of CoP practice to new areas.

E-books may one day replace print monographs, and more and more information may be accessible primarily online, but the core values expressed in the American Library Association's Bill of Rights (<http://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/librarybill>) are persistently relevant. The current political and social climate, bedeviled by "fake news" accusations and extreme partisanship in the media, has created an opportunity for librarians to renew their image as reliable partners for information literacy. As technology and society change, libraries need to be ready to adapt and change. According to Banks (2016),

Librarians can play a vital role in helping everyone, of any age, become critical and reflective news consumers. One positive outcome of the current furor about fake news may be that information literacy, for media and other types of content, will finally be recognized as a central skill of the digital age.

Libraries are evolving, and librarians and staff will be called upon to shed old responsibilities and take on new challenges. Maintaining morale, even as our institutions and areas of work shift drastically, and helping individuals engage profoundly with the new opportunities that arise, will require learningful libraries led by individuals who value learning.

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