



Essay

A Reminiscence and A Celebration

Stephen P. Weiter, *Emeritus Editor-in-Chief, Retired*

ABSTRACT

This essay is a look back at the founding of the *Journal of New Librarianship* and the success it has achieved over the past ten years. The essay acknowledges the contributions of those many people on the editorial board, the peer reviewers, and the contributors who have made the journal a successful Open Access publication.

KEYWORDS

Open Access, Congratulations, Success, Thank You, Eleventh Edition, Tenth Year, Twentieth Issue

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It's difficult, looking back to the start of a project and attempting to accurately remember what your thought process and goals were at the outset. It's easy to conflate later goals and objectives with the original ones, and to claim milestones as objectives only after they have been achieved. Some memories are quite clear, however. I knew I wanted to start an Open Access journal in the Library Sciences; I knew that I wanted it to be completely free of fees to both authors and readers. Aside from that, I don't think I knew very much.

When Matthew Kopel, David Lankes, and I started discussing starting this journal in 2015, we talked about bringing in authors from outside academic libraries, and about non-textual submissions and other non-traditional journal content. We committed to the Creative Commons CC-BY licensing levels as our default standard for content.

I've always maintained that there is a very thin line between "having a vision" and "seeing things." I am sure we had no certain illusions that the journal would still be around in 2026 — although I know I hoped that it would last. I held that hope despite a bumpy launch, and some early struggles to refine the peer review process. We had also seen some other early attempts at Open Access publishing fizzle out. Yet, we managed to assemble an incredible team, got the first issue published in 2016, and kept building from there.

When I retired, I did not want to see the Journal end just because my career was winding down. I had been an editorial board member of another earlier OA journal that suddenly ceased. I wanted those who had made the Journal a success to have the chance to keep it going. And oh! Have they! Members of our Editorial Board kept the Journal alive, relevant, and publishing valuable content into a new decade.

And so here we are, and the *Journal of New Librarianship* — a barrier free, open-access, peer-reviewed journal that charges neither authors nor readers for content, is celebrating its TWENTIETH issue, its ELEVENTH volume, and its TENTH year of publication. Given the many very talented hands that have had a role in the Journal's success, I am not surprised, but it is very gratifying to see the Journal continue as it has. Along the way it has gained recognition as worthy of a listing in *Ulrich's* and of inclusion in the *Library of Congress Archives*.

The *Journal of New Librarianship* not only survived but continues to thrive in today's challenging academic environment. And the Journal continues to be relevant while keeping its commitment to diversity, equity, and a plurality of opinions.

All that success is due to the contributions of a very dedicated and talented Editorial Board, many of whom have been with *JoNL* since day one. Those "veterans" have also consistently recruited new members and fresh outlooks, and new creativity that helps to provide the spark that drives the engine that is the free flow of information. The *JoNL* has also benefitted from the tireless efforts of volunteer peer reviewers. Those folk continue to do an often-thankless task of providing feedback. They are the backbone of the Journal.

Lastly, much credit for the success of the *JoNL* has to go to the very many fine authors and content creators who have chosen to publish with us over the years. Special thanks to those who published in the Journal in the very early days, when it was unclear if tenure credit for publishing in an unheralded OA journal would be granted, or even if we would be around very long. We had to earn your trust, and you took some big risks in trusting the Journal in its nascent stages. Your faith in this team has (I hope) been rewarded.

My sincerest, heartfelt thanks to everyone who has contributed in every way to making this project a lasting success.

According to Liu, Hu, et.al., many journals cease publication after three or four years.¹ The Journal of New Librarianship has far exceeded that standard. This publication has shown that high quality, peer reviewed articles can be published and shared at no cost to the authors and end-users of that information. I raise a glass to toast the success of the Journal of New Librarianship, and hope that it continues to provide that shining example for another ten years – and longer.

References

- Liu, M.; Hu, X.; Wang, Y.; & Shi, D. (2018). Survive or perish: Investigating the life cycle of academic journals from 1950 to 2013 using survival analysis methods, *Journal of Informetrics*, 12 (1), 344-364. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.joi.2018.02.001>.
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