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Reflecting on My Year with CIL

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Reflecting on My Year with CIL

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Reflecting on My Year with CIL

When Christopher Hollister asked me to introduce myself to the readership in this editorial, I had no idea of the difficulty I would have reflecting on my feelings since joining *Communications in Information Literacy* (CIL). Simply put, I am humbled and honored to have had the past year onboarding to this editorial team. And so, for this piece, I have chosen to briefly share with you a little of my experience as a new member of this talented and dedicated group of professionals that comprise CIL.

Last year, Chris and Stewart Brower approached me with the proposition to fill Bob Schroeder's editorial position upon his retirement in the fall. While I had never envisioned myself serving as an editor, I became excited as I heard them explain firsthand the vision for the journal and how the editorial team works together to implement its goals. I have been a reader of CIL since my graduate school days and, as an instruction librarian, I considered the journal essential for keeping up with the new research on information literacy. I already had a somewhat inside view of the journal as I had previously worked for Stewart at the University of Oklahoma-Tulsa Schusterman Library for six years and knew Chris from past conferences. At the time the two invited me to join the team, I had only been working a few months in my current position as a Scholarly Communications Librarian at Kennesaw State University in Georgia, and I felt that the new skills I was acquiring would suit the journal. And so, even though I continued to hold some reservations, I knew that serving as a CIL editor would lead to exponential professional growth and was an opportunity that I could not let pass.

The mentorship that Chris and Stewart planned for my onboarding to CIL also helped calm my anxieties. As part of my transition to the team, I was paired with Bob during his last six months with the journal. If you had the opportunity to read the previous editorial dedicated to Bob's contributions to CIL, I think that you will understand the significance of this mentorship. For me, as I considered the various functions of an editor, I needed a person whom I could easily go to with any questions, with whom I could test my own ideas, and who was just incredibly fun – Bob fits this description perfectly.

The first few months after I joined the editorial team, Bob and I had many phone calls, emails, and video chats. Bob included me as he went through his various editorial tasks, and I virtually shadowed him as he contemplated manuscript decisions and conversed with authors, reviewers, and the fellow CIL editors. In addition to sharing his opinions, Bob also encouraged me to formulate my own views, which helped me develop a unique editorial

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voice and perspective. For anyone new to an editorial role, I cannot overstress the value of this mentorship. While a new editor should also consult best practices documents and guidelines for editors and open access publications (and I did study these for many hours), my mentorship with Bob gave me the confidence to take on my individual responsibilities over the summer.

As I consider the entirety of this past year, I am again grateful for all that I have learned by being a part of the CIL team. Even though I am no stranger to the publication process as an author, I think that some things you cannot fully appreciate until you have seen the entire cycle – the expertise and detail that reviewers put toward evaluating each manuscript, the trust that authors give when submitting their works, and the support and knowledge that you receive from a high caliber editorial team. Being a part of this journal provides me with a greater understanding of the value of contributing to one’s profession, and I look forward to continuing this service to the CIL readership.