

## EBLIP9 Notes and Highlights

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*Editorial*

**EBLIP9 Notes and Highlights**

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The ninth International Evidence Based Library and Information Practice Conference (EBLIP9) was held in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, USA on June 18-21, 2017. The conference theme of *Embedding and Embracing Evidence* reflected the focus on promoting evidence based practice throughout the information professions. The Philadelphia conference followed successful events held previously at Sheffield, Edmonton, Chapel Hill-Durham, Stockholm, Salford, Saskatoon, and Brisbane (once in 2005 and again in 2015).

**EBLIP9 in Philadelphia**

Drexel University was proud to win the competitive selection process to host the EBLIP9 conference in Philadelphia and especially to bring it back to the United States for only the second time. The planners organized content activities, driven by a strong objective of sharing the welcome spirit of this City of Brotherly Love and creating a memorable conference experience.

Keynote addresses, concurrent presentations, and poster sessions were held on the Drexel



Figure 1  
EBLIP9's opening remarks were delivered by Drexel University President John Fry.

campus in its stunning Papadakis Integrated Sciences building. The convenience of assembly in one area added to building community among participants. John Fry, the dynamic Drexel University President, gave a thoughtful welcome. Many attendees tweeted impressions about the conference throughout and included such comments, as “it is great to listen to a university president who gets libraries.”

In addition, two off-campus venues for social events drew attendees to the Center City district by walking, following guided paths, using city trolleys, or hiring cabs. A sudden downpour on Monday did not deter attendees from arriving at the Philadelphia Free Library for the first night reception. With a backdrop view of the city skyline at sunset, the energizing President and Director of the Free Library of Philadelphia, Siobhan A. Reardon, warmly welcomed the attendees. Sunshine accompanied conference attendees on Wednesday as they made their way to an elegant city venue, the Crystal Tea Room, for the conference gala dinner. As one staff member observed, “the success of the conference was evident when the dance floor was filled with energetic moves and lots of laughs” to the pulse of music.

Over 140 attendees registered for EBLIP9 from seven countries: Australia, Canada, Kenya, Norway, Sweden, the United Kingdom (including the Isle of Man), and the United States of America. Unfortunately, the controversy over travel restrictions to the USA had an impact on attendance from outside the country. Some presenters declined invitations to speak at the conference. The conference planners persevered to provide a rich and diverse array of experiences, including three keynote addresses, 41 paper presentations, 13 posters, 1 panel session, 2 sponsor presentations, and 3 workshops. Topics were many and varied, with evidence based practice being critically explored in the context of big data, collection management, decision making, information literacy, leadership, open access, and website design and usability. The full conference program is available online (<http://easychair.org/smart-program/EBLIP9/>). This EBLIP conference continued the tradition of providing excellent opportunities to network, and attendees met colleagues from around the world while enjoying the opening reception, the conference dinner, box lunches, and catered breaks throughout the conference.



Figure 2  
Heather Holmes, Joanne Gard Marshall, Jon Eldredge, Alison Brettle, and Denise Koufogiannakis gather at the opening reception at the Free Library of Philadelphia.



Figure 3  
Line dancing at the conference gala dinner at the historic Crystal Tea Room!

The afternoon before the conference began, preconference attendees opted to attend one of the workshops on developing EBLIP skills, centred in archives and special collections libraries, engaging assessment to show value and make decisions, or learning tips to publish

research on EBLIP. Many conference attendees arrived early to register and to ask for tips for exploring the city—some finding adventure, discovering local history, or sampling from the vibrant food and brew scenes that Philadelphia offers.



Figure 3  
EBLIP9 attendees engage with Patrick Milas and Jenifer Gundry at their poster.

### **Featured Speakers**

The conference featured three keynote speakers. Alison Brettle, Professor of Health Information and Evidence Based Practice in the School of Nursing, Midwifery & Social Work at the University of Salford, opened the conference with her riveting keynote address, *Collecting and Using Evidence Routinely for Advocacy*. Dr. Brettle closes the special EBLIP9 feature section of this issue with a thoughtful commentary based on her keynote.

Yi Deng, Dean and Isaac L. Auerbach Professor at the College of Computing & Informatics at Drexel University, spoke on *Data and the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Economy* and the changes that might impact the professional work of librarians and information professionals.

Pam Ryan, Director of Service Development & Innovation at Toronto Public Library, delivered the closing keynote address to the Philadelphia

audience from office in Toronto, and addressed *EBLIP and Everyday Practice for Librarians and our Libraries*.

In addition to the keynotes, papers, and posters, a panel treated conference attendees to a discussion on *Responding Proactively to "Fake News,"* moderated by Jon Eldredge with Heather Holmes, Scott Walter, and Malin Ogland responding on the panel.

### **Other Crowd Pleasers**

Another tradition, initiated at EBLIP6 in Salford, extended its run at EBLIP9: Poster Madness! In a round of humble and breathless promotion, all poster presenters opted to participate in strict one-minute speed presentations. They certainly delivered, to the delight and support of the audience, and as evidenced by the constant conversations during the two formal poster presentation periods.



Figure 4  
Dr. Alison Brettle delivering the opening keynote.

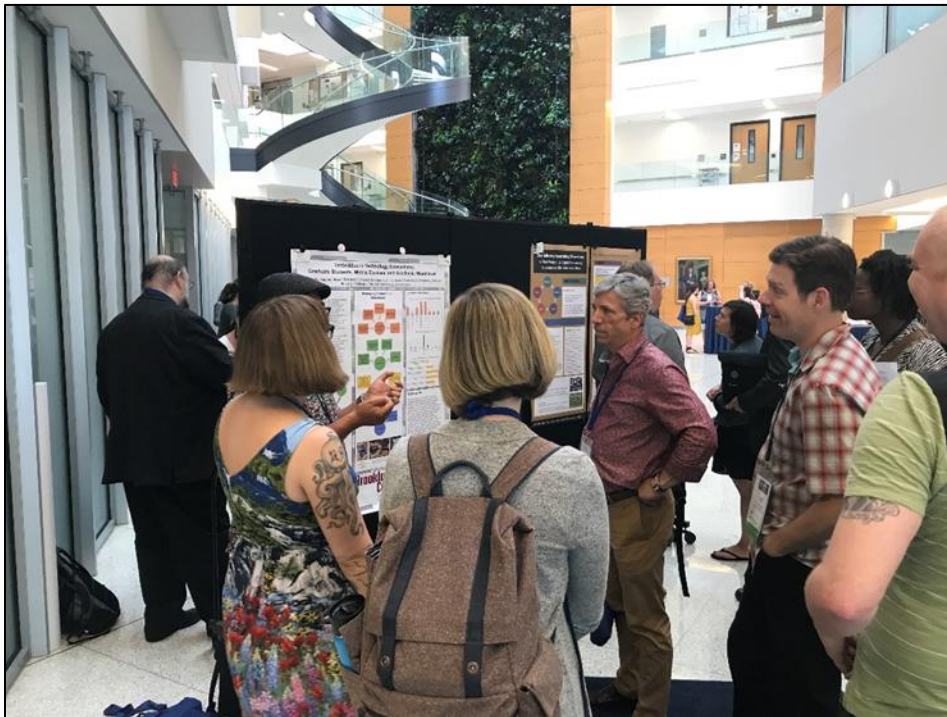


Figure 5  
EBLIP9 attendees engage with Frans Albarillo and Lee Ann Fullington at their poster. The Biowall in Papadakis Integrated Sciences Building is visible in the background.

## Awards

Conference attendees voted to select People's Choice Award winners for paper presentations and for posters. The EBLIP9 winners, three of which have research articles accepted for inclusion in this issue, were:

### *People's Choice Awards for Best Paper*

- **First Place:** April Cunningham & Michelle Dunaway – *Analyzing and Assessing IL in the Framework Era: A Rhetorical Analysis Followed by Exploratory Factor Analysis*
- **Second Place:** Kyla Everall & Judith Logan – *A Mixed Methods Approach to Iterative Service Design of an In-person Reference Service Point*. (See their related article in this issue).
- **Third Place:** Jingying Mao & Kirsten Kinsley – *Embracing the Generalized Propensity Score Method: Measuring the Effect of Library Usage on First-Time-in-College Student Academic Success*. (See their related article in this issue).

## People's Choice Awards for Best Posters

- **First Place:** Savannah Kelly – *First-year Students' Research Challenges: Does Watching Videos on Common Research Struggles Prior to Library Instruction Increase Students' Confidence?* (See her related article in this issue).
- **Second Place:** Lee Ann Fullington & Frans Albarillo – *Embedded in Technology Ecosystems: Graduate Students, Mobile Devices, and Academic Workflows*
- **Third Place:** Rick Stoddart – *The Library Learning Narrative: A Pilot Project to Capture Learning Outcomes at the Reference Desk*

## An Analysis of Conference Content

The guest editors of this feature editorial analyzed the abstracts of the EBLIP9 paper presentations. They determined that the 41 presentations included 24 addressing practice and 17 presenting research. Of these and including the poster presentations, ten were accepted for publication in this special issue of *EBLIP Journal*; three as articles addressing the use of evidence in practice and seven as research articles.



Figure 6

People's Choice Awards for Best Papers: IPC chair Denise Koufogiannakis, Kirsten Kinsley, Jingying Mao, Judith Logan, Kyla Everall, LOC co-chair John Wiggins.



Figure 7  
People's Choice Awards for Best Posters: LOC co-chair John Wiggins, Lee Ann Fullington, Frans Albarillo, Savannah Kelly, Rick Stoddart, IPC chair Denise Koufogiannakis.

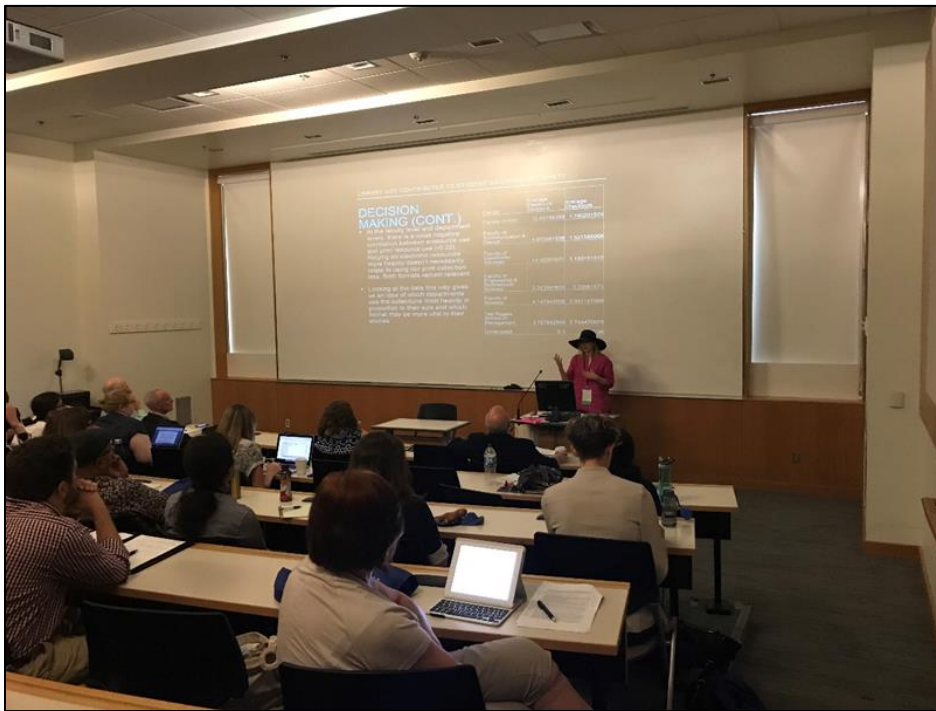


Figure 8  
Dana Thomas presents her paper at EBLIP9.

Conference presentations utilized several different research methods for gathering and analyzing data. Among the most prevalent methodologies were surveys (13), interviews, both focus group and individual (12), statistical

analysis (8), ethnographic methods (6), literature reviews (5), and content analysis (4). Many combined qualitative and quantitative methodologies to present mixed method designs.



Thirty-seven presentations heavily favoured academic library settings, including two describing groups of academic libraries. Also included were one presentation addressing academic and medical libraries, and one on academic and public libraries. Additionally, there were two presentations addressing public library settings, and two addressing school library settings.

The topics and content of the presentations ran the gamut of library programming. The heaviest concentrations examined included library space, such as space use, needs, and design/redesign, and also library collection development, such as pricing of resources, budget decisions, cooperative collection development, demand driven acquisitions approval plan profiles, inclusion of constituents in budget/selection decisions, and user interactions with collections.

Other themes found among conference presentations included library service design, user-focused services, and library use by non-native born patrons and by international graduate students. Reference and research support topics included information literacy and program improvement, user knowledge, LibGuides improvement, creation of online learning objects, reference service design, impact of consultations, and assessment of chat services. Student success, faculty productivity and research success, and communication of library impact to stakeholders were also featured, along with library funding and allocations, and library program impact on school readiness of preschoolers. Presenters also explored supports for librarians and information professionals, with content covering evidence based practice and embedded culture, staff training library and information practice research skills (including support for working with human research subjects), and conscious reflection to inform one's own practice.

## **Selected Publications**

Appearing as research articles in this EBLIP9 conference feature issue are nine papers and one poster presentation.

Susan Gardner Archambault and Alexander Justice used mixed methods to examine the unexpected ways that students used a six year old information commons at an academic institution. Christina R. Hillman, Kourtney P. Blackburn, Kaitlyn Shamp, and Chenisvel Nunez collected and analyzed evidence from multiple sources to develop a survey on campus interest in and use of library space. Nora Almeida and Junior Tidal addressed the concern that too few librarians consider user design preferences and non-critical approaches when designing tools for academic student use.

Eamon Tewell, Kimberly Mullins, Natalia Tomlin, and Valeda Dent used ethnographic methods in their pursuit to improve academic library understanding of student research and study needs to improve the student library experience. Kristin Hoffman, Selinda Adelle Berg, and Denise Koufogiannakis sought to understand factors that affect academic library and information professionals' ability to carry out and disseminate research, looking for correlations between research productivity factors and research outputs, including the potential impact of institutional supports.

Two of the People's Choice Award winners prepared research papers for this issue. Jingying "Jean" Mao and Kirsten Kinsley explored how one might isolate an independent variable and control for other inputs and environmental variables in a scientifically rigorous way when studying success within academic student populations. Savannah Lea Kelly investigated the impact of providing video tutorials in traditional sessions to see if students who viewed tutorials reported higher research confidence levels than those in control groups.

Also included are two papers and one poster presentation focusing on the use evidence in practice in this issue. Stacey Astill and Jess Web explored their local practices collecting data on the in-library reference use of materials. People's Choice Award winners Kyla Everall and Judith Logan pursued the objective of implementing an evidence-based service design framework for a public service point at the University of Toronto's public library. Susan Breakenridge addressed the use of evidence to address information needs of academic library administrations considering or assessing requests for extending operations overnight.

### **Final Words of Thanks**

Reflecting on the success of the EBLIP9 conference, we share our sincere appreciation for the efforts of the international program committee and our on-site volunteers for their dedicated efforts. Particular recognition for our deserving colleagues on the organizing committee is also in order in light of their months of continuous hard work:

- Stacy Stanislaw and Darin Pfeifer, Drexel University
- Denise Koufogiannakis (also Chair of the International Program Committee), University of Alberta
- Rick Stoddart, University of Idaho
- M. J. Tooley, University of Maryland, Baltimore
- Jessica Rossi and Michael Krasulski, Community College of Philadelphia
- Joel Nichols, Free Library of Philadelphia
- Virginia Wilson, University of Saskatchewan

We also are grateful to our sponsors who helped make this event possible through their generous funding: Elsevier; Centre for Evidence Based Library and Information Practice at the University of Saskatchewan; Association of Research Libraries; Association of College and Research Libraries; Pennsylvania Academic Library Consortium Inc.; JSTOR; School of Information Science at the University of Tennessee at Knoxville; Medical Library Association; Clarivate Analytics; and Drexel University Libraries.

The call for expressions of interest to host EBLIP10 went out recently. The selected location will be announced early in 2018. We hope to see you there!