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The Framework is Elitist

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Abstract: The author questions whether the *Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education* truly adheres to Meyer and Land's Threshold Concept theory and criticizes the Association of College and Research Libraries for their slow action in educating member librarians about how to implement the *Framework*.

The *Framework* is Created

I am not a fan of the *Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education* and have not been since before its adoption in 2015 by the Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL). In 2013, the ACRL Board of Directors charged a Task Force with revising the *Standards for Information Literacy for Higher Education*; that group eventually produced the *Framework* instead of a revised *Standards* document. Early on, I was not quite sure why I disliked the *Framework* other than that it was inherently dismissive of the *Standards*. I was able to easily criticize the convoluted language used in early drafts of the document. Throughout that creation process, I felt mildly horrified at their insistence that the *Framework* demands individual adaptation. This transformation, in one swift stroke, could potentially undo my thirteen years' worth of work based on the *Standards for Information Literacy for Higher Education*. I worried about how I could rewrite student learning outcomes and revise assessment for my

college's entire curriculum, since the inclusion of outcomes was deliberately avoided in the document. I

wondered how many collective hours had been spent by other academic librarians writing outcomes,

creating lesson plans, conducting assessments, defending their work during accreditation processes, and

advocating for library services, all while using the *Standards* for guidance. Worse, I feared that I did not

quite understand the principles behind the new document well enough to speak about it with faculty

members, let alone other librarians. I thought that maybe everyone else was getting it but me.

Recognizing that I was unsettled by the prospect of this momentous change, I was still bothered by

something about the *Framework* that I was unable at first to convey. On the surface, the frames

seemed common-sensical even as they defied proscription and assessment; indeed, they articulated

principles I had been trying to instill in students since the beginning of my academic library career. So

when the final draft of the *Framework* was released in early 2015, I did my best to engage with it, to

read it critically along with supporting documentation such as Meyer's and Land's original articles

describing the Threshold Concept theory. I discussed the *Framework* with my colleagues at Dickinson

College and at other institutions, and participated in webinars, conferences, and listservs, hoping for

some enlightenment. I signed up for an online course. Following the creation of the ACRL's Framework

for Information Literacy Advisory Board in April 2015, I waited patiently for that group to offer courses

and materials that would help academic librarians learn how to engage with the *Framework* through the

Threshold Concept theory.

I waited a long time for that help. Few official communications came from the ACRL following the

release of the *Framework* and the subsequent controversy surrounding it, particularly as the ACRL was

deciding whether to officially adopt the document or simply leave it "filed." That silence was filled by

other groups in the academic librarian community and it was during that period that I drew my

conclusion.

The *Framework* is elitist.

It is also divisive. And counterintuitive.

Before I launch further into this diatribe, I should pause for a moment and say that I think the

Framework is not entirely without merit. I have found it to be useful insofar as the language has helped

me open discussions in the classroom about the principles of research. It has helped me explain to

students what they are expected to be able to do and how librarians can contribute to their intellectual

growth. I have used some of its language sparingly when revising rubrics. But because its introduction

admits that the *Framework* is not intended to be prescriptive but is rather better used "as a guidance

document in shaping an institutional program" (Association of College and Research Libraries,

Framework, 2015), it opened itself up to unhelpful scrutiny that resulted from basing the document on a

conceptual theory that the Task Force all but completely concealed in the final version. The *Framework*,

therefore, became inaccessible to many, and therein lies its elitism.

This critique is based upon nearly two years of observation and much long thought following the

seemingly endless stream of arguments and opinions about the *Framework* expressed via listservs,

conferences, publications, and personal interactions. Initially, my reaction to the *Framework* was

admittedly visceral, but I came to realize that its problems run far deeper, stretching back to flawed

decisions made early on by the Task Force that developed it. This essay explores the creation of the

Framework and its relationship to Threshold Concepts, as well as the ACRL's egregious lack of support

for member librarians following the *Framework's* release and adoption, and, ultimately, the elitist posture assumed by proponents of the document that eventually led to alarming rifts within the academic librarian community.

Early Reactions to the *Framework*

My first shock in regard to the *Framework* came in early 2014, when I showed it to a faculty member from our Economics Department who was familiar with the Threshold Concept theory. "That's stupid," he said after I gave it to him and attempted to explain the document as I understood it. When I asked him to elaborate, all he offered was that the library community's use of the Threshold Concept theory did not conform to its original intent.

I began to develop definite concerns about the *Framework* in March 2015 when I attended an online class unaffiliated with the ACRL, which purported to "translate" it for teaching practices. Rather than deliver on its promise, the class did nothing but repackage all of the other workshops and classes I had attended, including ACRL's Immersion Program, during which we were required to write outcomes, lesson plans, and assessments for the lesson we designed. The only difference was that in the *Framework*-oriented class, we were told to choose a frame as the basis of a lesson instead of a standard.

This trend continued at two other conferences I attended (one ACRL-sponsored), at which sessions including the word "*Framework*" featured prominently. None of the work that resulted from my participation in any of those *Framework* experiences differed significantly from any I engaged in when the *Standards* were the guiding principle. I found this to be terribly frustrating and began to wonder whether any of the leaders of these sessions truly had expert knowledge in the Threshold Concept

theory, or whether they had grappled with the *Framework* in more than a superficial way. My

frustration with the *Framework* was now leaning toward contempt.

The *Framework* and Threshold Concepts

Still, I thought I might be the only one who felt this way, until the May 2015 LOEX conference in Denver

when I attended a talk by Lane Wilkinson of the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga, entitled

"Reconsidering Threshold Concepts: A Critical Appraisal of the ACRL Framework for Information

Literacy" (Wilkinson, 2015). The room was full to capacity and I was relieved to discover that I was not

the only one who had concerns and questions about the *Framework*. Wilkinson criticized the

Framework for not, in fact, adhering to the principles of Threshold Concepts, much as my faculty

member had said. Wilkinson questioned the efficacy of Delphi study upon which the *Framework* was

based, asserted that the *Framework* inhibits assessment, and that it positions information literacy as its

own discipline rather than a set of skills that transcend disciplines. I will not rearticulate Wilkinson's

ideas, but he wrote extensively about the *Framework* on his blog in 2014, taking issue with the

"connection to an intentionally vague, conceptually muddled, agent-relative, and reductionist theory"

(Wilkinson, 2014).

During Wilkinson's session, he made mention that Ray Land had given a talk at the Librarians'

Information Literacy Annual Conference (LILAC) in England a month before that was available online and

which I subsequently listened to. Land's talk was entitled "'There Could Be Trouble Ahead.' Threshold

Concepts, Troublesome Knowledge, and Information Literacy – A Current Debate" (Land, 2015). In an

understated way, Land's comments seemed to me to at least question, if not outright criticize, the

intent of the document: "What are these Frames...entry into?" Land asked. "They're not entry into your

profession and they make that clear…we're not making mini librarians…are they generic thresholds, or where are they taking you in terms of spaces? That's an interesting question" (Land, 2015). It is also a question that has yet to be answered.

Another issue that Land briefly addressed was learning outcomes. He referred to Megan Oakleaf's paper in which she speculated that the *Framework's* Task Force deliberately left out talk of outcomes, key components of our pedagogy for fifteen years, for three reasons: the *Standards* gave us too many outcomes to deal with, the Task Force wanted to compel local adaptation, and that Meyer and Land "have provided little guidance on ways to transform threshold concepts into outcomes" (Oakleaf, 2014). Land said: "Oakleaf's paper on assessing these six threshold concepts seems to revert back to measuring skills and getting outcomes. We're a bit wary about outcomes because they seem a rather corporatist way of…assuming everyone's crossed the same hurdle...they've all passed the module therefore they've met the outcome; therefore they're all in the same space. Our experience is it's not like that at all" (Land, 2015). Therefore, an inherent contradiction arises: we have been asked to adapt the *Framework* locally by writing our own outcomes, while using a document based on a theory whose authors reject outcomes-based assessment in its application.

Escalating Concerns about the *Framework*

Not long after that LOEX conference, I signed up for the acrlframe listserv. The discussions that took place on the list are what finally brought me to the realization that my problem was not necessarily my lack of understanding, but rather a fundamental flaw in the creation of the *Framework* which causes it to contradict itself. The Task Force had ignored inconvenient parts of the Threshold Concept theory, such that it became needlessly difficult for many librarians to engage with the new document. I

criticized ACRL for, at the time, seeming to be unable to reach a consensus about "adopting" or "filing"

the document. I also called on ACRL representatives to respond to the apparent contradictions in the

use of the Threshold Concept theory, and to offer guidance on how best to use the *Framework*.

Specifically, I asked:

- What, in practical terms, does the *Framework* offer me - a teacher in the classroom - that will

    transform my teaching in ways that the *Standards* did not?

- How can I use the *Framework* to demonstrate effectiveness in ways that do not simply look like

    a re-packaging of the *Standards*?

- Who can show me a concrete example of how a set of goals or outcomes or an assessment plan

    developed using the *Framework* differs fundamentally from what the same document might

    have looked like when the guiding ideology was the *Standards*?

ACRL representatives did not engage in this discussion. Other librarians, however, started opining

liberally, and the nature of the discussion on the listserv started to shift alarmingly, exposing a chasm

between two groups of librarians. The first was a group I began think of as "philosopher librarians," and

the other I will call the "practical librarians." Although any librarian can fall into either category or both

depending on what day or time of year it is, or what discussion or task is at hand, distinct and stark

differences appeared along these divisional lines in regard to contributions posted on the listserv. The

"philosopher librarians" generally had Ph.Ds. or other advanced degrees along with the benefits often

associated with large institutions, including faculty status, tenure, and sabbatical options. They were

teachers of for-credit classes at universities. These "philosopher librarians" started to present

arguments about the *Framework* from highly theoretical perspectives. Conversely, the "practical

librarians" may not have had terminal degrees or any other advanced degree besides a master's in

library science. They did not have faculty equivalence, and thus were not eligible for sabbaticals during

which they could spend time researching scholarly theories far beyond those directly related to library

science. In addition to their teaching schedules often made up of many "one-shot" sessions, these

librarians expressed concern about marketing information literacy, ensuring continuity in existing

programs, managing collections, and assessing their services. The "practical" group was concerned with

applying the *Framework* in concrete ways.

Accordingly, my questions to the listserv elicited privately-voiced support from the "practical librarians."

They thanked me for opening the discussion and "saying what was needed," expressing similar

frustrations with the relative lack of guidance from ACRL over how to implement the *Framework*. They

criticized the language of the *Framework*, calling it "esoteric" and, in one email, "standards dressed up in

ball gowns and tuxedos." They also commented on the *Framework's* complexity, saying that they found

application of the *Framework* to be difficult, and that, in using the Threshold Concept to justify rejection

of the *Standards*, the Task Force neglected to address the more utilitarian aspects of information literacy

that the "practical librarians" must attend to daily.

On the other hand, the "philosopher librarians" started weighing in publicly, in a manner that struck me

as supercilious. Following a comment on the acrlframe listserv that some critics of the *Framework* were

"too locked into definitions and rules," the discussion became characterized by lengthy, complicated

theorizing that included statements such as:

> While it is relatively easy to see the influence of university and the ACRL on local norms
>
> of I[nformation] L[iteracy] practice, it is from social constructivist based philosophies,

such as pragmatism, that we also see the influence of the Guiding Questions on the

Enduring Questions (Tuai, December 4, 2015).

It is always the goal of scholarship to seek advancement of knowledge, solutions to

problems, and ultimately to find 'truth.' But, in the wake of Postmodernism and

Constructivism, many see truth as an elusive thing, perhaps impossible to find at all,

since each of us seeks our own meaning, and there appear to be no universals (Badke,

November 20, 2015).

Social Constructivism? Postmodernism? Pragmatism? Enduring Questions in upper case letters? I

started feeling, frankly, stupid. Did I really need to get myself advanced training in theories related to

sociology, philosophy, cultural studies, and literary criticism in order to adopt the *Framework*

successfully? When I found myself opening some online encyclopedias to try to figure out what these

messages meant -- and promptly closing them, though not with as much satisfaction as would have

come with slamming a paper tome -- was when my opposition to the *Framework* cemented and when I

started thinking of it as elitist. Recognizing the credentials of those who led the *Framework* Task Force,

as well as those commenting in these terms, I probably should not have been surprised that the

discussion was turning needlessly ostentatious. I expressed this frustration to the list, ending one rant

saying that implementing the *Framework* should not be this difficult.

I continued the acrlframe listserv discussion by focusing on the contradictions between the *Framework*

and the Threshold Concept theory as described by Meyer and Land. One tenet of the Threshold Concept

theory is that understanding of a Threshold Concept relies on an individual's movement through a

"liminal space," and therefore cannot be taught directly. Rather, grasp of a Threshold Concept is the

"aha" moment following the repeated review of important material (Brunetti, et al., 2015), or "a

conceptual 'building block' that progresses understanding of the subject" (Meyer and Land, 2003).

Passing through a threshold is something a learner does organically, possibly years after the concept is

addressed in various ways in the classroom, as Land noted at the LILAC conference (Land, 2015). The

American Library Association (ALA), ACRL, and other professional organizations repeatedly contradicted

this assumption. First, I observed that a 2015 LOEX conference schedule included numerous instances

of sessions described to the effect of "develop a plan to teach a threshold concept." The ALA was even

so bold as to publish a book entitled *Teaching Information Literacy Threshold Concepts* shortly after the

Framework was released. Another important tenet of the theory is that a Threshold Concept is

transformative, changing a student's point of view, thus making the concept difficult to unlearn. Yet I

would submit that the information literacy frames contain many concepts that certainly can be quickly

unlearned and forgotten. Any librarian who sees a student during the first year and then again in the

senior year could attest to this. I did not understand, I wrote to the acrlframe listserv, how our

professional organizations could be so irresponsible as to endorse training sessions and materials that

reveal fundamental misunderstandings of something that is supposed to guide our core duties. Despite

my opposition to the aforementioned book title, I also asserted that, in direct contrast to the Threshold

Concept theory, the Frames can in fact be taught and "pragmatic librarians" regularly do it.

The ACRL Board Is Obstructionist

All of this was met with continued silence from the ACRL. Its actions regarding implementing the

Framework were likewise disconcerting. In addition to the uncertainty about whether the *Framework*

would be merely "filed" or formally adopted, there was the question about what the ultimate fate of the

Standards would be. That question would be answered in late June 2016 when the Board uncinemoniously and without warning to constituents voted to rescind them.

In addition, the "Suggestions on How to Use the *Framework*" portion of the document demands individual interpretation of the *Framework*, institution by institution, and offers suggestions for implementation that betray a remarkable misconception of the role of the "practical librarian" in many colleges and universities. Part of the original Threshold Concept theory, which Land reiterated at LILAC, holds that Threshold Concepts are usually used at a student's entry into a discipline (Land, 2015). Perhaps in recognition of this, the Task Force suggested that librarians attempt to shift the onus on faculty members to apply the *Framework* to their disciplines (Association of College and Research Libraries, "For Faculty," 2015), as if it is perfectly easy for us to get faculty to discuss the simplest library issues to begin with. While there is certainly the necessity for some local adaptation of any national standard, the ACRL essentially backed away from their members in the middle of the controversy by refusing to take a stance on specifics regarding how the *Framework* should be used. I reacted to this on the acrlframe listserv, saying "The directive that I should take the initiative to adapt the *Framework* to my local institution or consortium is not only frustrating, but it also places a burden of interpreting and implementing conceptual theories on academic librarians who for any number of reasons cannot meet that challenge" (Bombaro, November 17, 2015).

Lane Wilkinson chimed in at this point in the conversation, repeating some of the points he had been making all along in regard to the *Framework* not fitting Meyer's and Land's vision of what a Threshold Concept is. To his email, Trudi Jacobson of the University at Albany replied:

"Lane, I would like to respond to one of your statements, that the *Framework* doesn't fit

with Meyer and Land's own theory. Ray Land was one of the keynote speakers at the

LILAC conference in Newcastle this past April, and Merinda Hensley (member of the

ACRL Task Force that developed the Framework) and I (co-chair of that group) had the

pleasure of speaking with him for over an hour after his presentation. We brought up

some of the issues of concern that had been raised about the *Framework* and its

relationship to their theory, to see what his opinion was. He said that he thought it fit

quite well, and that he himself didn't have concerns" (Jacobson, November 20, 2015).

To find out that possibly critical discussions about the *Framework* were being held in the "back room,"

so to speak, and thus withheld from those who needed most to hear it was, to me, infuriating. My own

conclusions -- supported by Wilkinson's thoughtful analyses -- about Land's public comments seemed to

indicate, if not exactly the opposite, that he at least had questions about how well the *Framework* fits

with the Threshold Concept theory.

Following Jacobson's post to the acrlframe listserv, Lisa Hinchliffe of the University of Illinois at Urbana-

Champagne added:

It would be so helpful though if the viewpoint of Land/Meyer were to make it into some

official ACRL document -- written by Land/Meyer -- on both the T[hreshold] C[oncept]s

as well as documenting the questions that Land did raise (which if not questions about

TC theory per se are still questions about the *Framework* that I've heard others ask as

well). Having a private conversation at a conference reported on via a listserv posting

means this information is available to a very limited group of people and not likely to

prevent this same issue from emerging time and time again (Hinchliffe, November 21,

2015).

Following that, I took issue with the Task Force's assertion that the *Framework* was never meant to be

used in the same way that the *Standards* were, particularly that "neither the knowledge practices nor

the dispositions that support each concept are intended to prescribe what local institutions should do in

using the *Framework*; each library and its partners on campus will need to deploy these frames to best

fit their own situation, including designing learning outcomes" (Association of College and Research

Libraries, "Introduction," 2015). Because the calls for help were ignored, it began to look as though the

ACRL positioned the *Framework* so as to make it nearly unusable by those who cannot reinvent all their

years of library instruction and programming. Many "practical librarians" rely on ACRL documents to

assess programs and to participate in university/college-wide studies and accreditation activities. The

lack of a reasonable replacement for their outcomes forced many of those librarians to keep using the

Standards, which had been under the continual threat of "sunsetting" since the Task Force was

announced, or to look elsewhere for guidance.

The lack of communication from the ACRL, and the particularly notable silence from the Advisory Board

which was formed in 2015 specifically to help member libraries deal with the *Framework*, led to regional

and local associations offering training conducted by people who were largely unqualified to fill those

gaps. Some new articles and educational programs began trickling out, but, I would argue with the

same minimal impact as those that were offered shortly after the *Framework's* release. Trudi

Jacobson's and Craig Gibson's article, "First Thoughts on Implementing the *Framework for Information*

Literacy," is an example of this. Their article recommends the following outcome for the knowledge

disposition regarding information creation: "Students will accurately express the capabilities and

constraints of specific sources in their worksheet entries" (Jacobson and Gibson, 2015). Is this really so different from any outcome that could have resulted from Standard Three, 2a: "Recognizes the cultural, physical, or other context within which the information was created and understands the impact of context on interpreting the information" (Association of College and Research Libraries, 2000)? I would say no.

The Demise of the *Standards*

The ALA began making some attempt at educating members about the *Framework* when it announced a full-day preconference entitled "Crossing the Threshold with Threshold Concepts: Redesigning a Library Instruction Lesson Plan" to take place in June 2016 at its annual meeting. Whether or not constituents were able attend workshops like this assumed, of course, that they were part of an exclusive group of librarians able to secure a slot and afford membership and registration fees for both the conference and the pre-conference, plus a four- to five- day trip to Orlando, FL in the middle of its high tourist season. Unfortunately, beginning with the exclusivity of that workshop, the conference served only to widen the gap between those librarians who were able to engage with the *Framework* and those who were not.

The ACRL's period of long-sustained silence was ended startlingly in June 2016 with the announcement that the Board had voted to rescind the *Standards*, and thus that it would no longer be a part of the official "constellation" of ACRL documents (ACRL Board of Directors, 25 June 2016). With that, the chasm between different types of librarian classes became exponentially worse. To be sure, some member librarians lauded the move, but others, feeling betrayed and abandoned by the ACRL, vociferously expressed shock and outrage. At that point, it was no longer just "intellectual" and "practical" librarians debating the merits of each document, but rather one group asserting that the

Framework should be able to meet everyone's needs, and another maintaining that the *Standards* were critical to their operations and that the ACRL had effectively dismissed their opinions and marginalized their work. In rescinding the *Standards*, the ACRL Board thwarted any chance for reasonable compromise.

Heather Craven of County College of Morris ably expressed the feelings of librarians who felt marginalized and ignored in her post to both the acrlframe and ili-l listservs which said, "…here's the context many of us are operating in: information literacy has at best a tenuous toehold in the curriculum; stakeholders respond to clear, direct calls for benchmarks; faculty may see librarian involvement in pedagogy as inappropriate" (Craven, 5 July 2016). Eric Kidwell of Huntingdon College concurred in a reply and added that four-year and university libraries seem to be ACRL's focus, noting, "All too often (and I am willing to concede unintentionally) the conversation (whatever the topic may be) is directed by and focused upon the large university library setting, frequently leaving out consideration of the small college and two-year libraries" (Kidwell, 5 July 2016).

In retrospect, we probably should have recognized the signs that the *Standards*' days were numbered. When Lisa Hinchliffe explained on the acrlframe listserv her belief that the *Standards* and the *Framework* were able to coexist and complement each other (Hinchliffe, 23 June 2016), she was immediately repudiated by Sharon Mader, the ACRL Visiting Program Officer for Information Literacy, who said that not only could the documents not coexist, but that "what we have right now is an artificial co-existence that is a period of transition to the next stage of growth and development" (Mader, 23 June 2016). This statement, which from a distance looks like insider knowledge, might have served as an impetus for the ACRL Board to announce that they would vote on the fate of the *Standards* and provide members with a final chance to comment on the issue. To that point, Esther Grassian of Pierce College

posted to the acrlframe and ili-l listservs, observing a stark difference in the processes by which decisions surrounding the *Standards* and the *Framework* were made: "This decision contrasted sharply with the process followed by the *Framework* Task Force, inviting comment and holding many open discussions. This has led to the perception that the ACRL Board acted precipitously, without consulting the membership as a whole." (Grassian, 1 July 2016).

The ACRL Doubles Down

I sense now that the creation -- or perhaps exposure -- of this chasm between the "philosopher librarians" and the "practical librarians" was both inadvertent and also deliberate. It was inadvertent in that the Task Force did not intend to exclude any class of librarians by using inaccessible theory or language or by excluding them from decision-making. I also believe that the burdens associated with local adaptation were unforeseen consequences. It may be that the Task Force did not comprehend the gravity of the contradictions inherent in their final product and ignored them, or perhaps they did not recognize them at all, but once the *Framework* was released they had no choice but to double-down and find ways around those contradictions. However, I think the resultant tension was deliberate in that the Task Force did attempt to over-intellectualize a set of behaviors and concepts that probably never required the level of academic scrutiny it received. A frequently-heard complaint in academic librarian circles is that we are treated as second-class intellectuals, rarely accorded the respect from our faculty that we so deserve. I have to wonder, then, was this process -- the Delphi study that was not even completed when the *Framework* was adopted (Townsend, 2016), the scouring of learning theory, and the resultant highly controversial *Framework* -- a poorly disguised attempt to validate librarianship as a scholarly endeavor equal to any other academic discipline; to prove that librarians are not all about skills but also that we can do what Ph.Ds. do, too?

Prior to the *Standards* being rescinded, I used the *Framework* sparingly, though it seems now that all academic librarians have little choice but to transition to it, or to use a document that has been formally rejected by the professional organization that serves to legitimize our work. I do not believe that the *Framework* should be expanded as some have suggested it could be, and I do not believe that it should ever have been considered an absolute replacement for the *Standards*. Instead the ACRL should have called to revise the *Standards*, as was originally planned before the *Framework* was on the horizon, so that academic librarians could have both the practical and conceptual documents they have been requesting. In this way, librarians would be able to continue the theoretical discussions that may resonate in the "philosophical" circles and also with some faculty, while still giving the "practical librarians" a set of statements they can use to satisfy the requirements of lesson planning, self-study, and accreditation.

During a March 2015 webinar, Sharon Mader stated that we should take the process of unpacking the *Framework* slowly (Mader, 2015). That advice was certainly taken to heart. On June 30, 2016, Sarah Clark of Rogers State University said in a Tweet to Merinda Kaye Hensley of the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign that she had "the luxury of doing a dissertation that touched on it, and I'm STILL grappling w/ the implications for practice." How many librarians out there have such luxury? The promise of a "sandbox" has been another source of disappointment for those librarians seeking practical help with the *Framework*, since as of June 2016, the structure for such a database was only just starting to get built (Mader, 8 June 2016). Rachael Nue of Florida Atlantic University further noted on the acrlframe listserv that "The Sandbox is a step in the right direction, but could be too little too late when the rescinding of the *Standards* was executed in a way that only serves to fuel the perception of the *Framework* as being forced upon us" (Nue, 28 June 2016).

In their announcement about rescinding the *Standards*, the ACRL Board stated that it "recognizes that there are librarians who are seeking guidance for using the *Framework* now that the *Information Literacy Competency Standards for Higher Education* have been rescinded." This statement is somewhat disingenuous considering that librarians had in fact been seeking that guidance for nearly two years and were routinely ignored. What the Board failed to recognize was that the problem with the "slow" approach is that, when told that our old principles were going to be summarily taken away, the "practical librarians" rightfully expected an immediate replacement that they could easily adapt to their needs when necessary, without the burdens of completely scrapping old programs and complicated theory inhibiting their progress. Now, they have little choice but to do this, and are left with even less guidance than before.

Most librarians who expressed problems and frustrations with understanding and implementing the *Framework* also recognize and acknowledge that it has proven valuable for others. Unfortunately, those who have been able to devote the time to work substantially with the *Framework* seem to be the only ones whose opinions have been heeded by the ACRL Board, despite its protestations that deliberation regarding the *Standards* was a long and difficult process. Those who have stated that they feel confused and uninformed and who have asked for assistance were not even afforded the courtesy of having their specific concerns acknowledged by ACRL leadership. Reminiscent of the messages we received in January 2015, some librarians were told via the cjc-l listserv, that "the decision is made" and that in order to move forward, we should ourselves create "new standards-like documents that meet the needs of your membership" (Reed, 7 July 2016). The message to ACRL members is that the Board made a decision, is ready to move past it, and now academic libraries need to figure out for themselves how to proceed. What in our profession could be more elitist?

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