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Introduction

Karen Muller
Hillsboro Public Library

Chris King
Hillsboro Public Library

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Introduction



In this era of Big Data it would be tempting to think that we could just put the vast amount of statistics we possess into the computer and someone—possibly Nate Silver—would come along and make sense of it. But the data are often missing or incomplete. We often find ourselves trying to evaluate something that defies our ability to evaluate it.

The Spring 2013 issue of the *OLA Quarterly* asks librarians how they define and approach the problem of measuring performance and success.

Meredith Farkas examines how ACRL wants to measure the value of Academic Libraries, and develop a way to evaluate the impact of bibliographic instruction on student success. Sarah Jesudason and Paula Walker share the insights they have gleaned from the Tigard Public Library's yearly patron survey. Rick Stoddart discusses the new OLA Library Assessment Round Table. Aimee Meuchel shares how she changed the focus of the summer reading program to creating life-long readers and not a race for statistics. Laura Mikowski reflects on 18 years of Children's librarianship and the many subjective measures of personal and professional success. Finally, Bob Schroeder takes a lighthearted look at the difficult task of assessing instruction quality.

Co-editors

Karen Muller

Technical Services and Collection Development Manager
Hillsboro Public Library

&

Chris King

Adult Collection Development Librarian
Hillsboro Public Library