

***Becoming an Embedded Librarian: Making Connections in the Classroom.* Michelle Reale. Chicago: American Library Association, 2016. 128 pp. ISBN 9780838913673.**

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In *Becoming an Embedded Librarian*, Michelle Reale, the English department liaison librarian at Arcadia University, recounts her experiences embedding within English thesis courses. Reale draws upon her experiences to challenge librarians to reinvent their practice and shed the auxiliary relationship to faculty. Librarianship is a profession in transition; as times change, so must the practice. The theme of relationships, especially those that librarians foster with faculty and students *outside* the library, is a constant throughout the book. In addition to being a theoretical and practical how-to-guide for embedding in the academic classroom, Reale's book provides encouragement and inspiration for others interested in the rewarding practice of embedded librarianship.

The book begins with a focus on a longstanding identity crisis confronting academic librarians: the difference in how teaching faculty and librarians perceive the role of an academic library. Misconceptions from faculty about the role and function of librarians inhibits connections, creating barriers to collaboration. Reacting to perceived passivity to counteract stubbornly persistent misconceptions about the profession, Reale encourages self-promotion and "personal branding" by librarians to bridge divides and form partnerships with faculty beyond the library and in the classroom. When discussing her philosophy of personal branding, Reale notes, "I have always believed that the best advertisement for what we do is to do it, and engage in it the best way possible every single day" (p. 71).

Embedded librarianship is a practice that aims to correct the ineffectual "one-shot" instruction arrangement common to traditional library teaching. While most one-shot instruction sessions are not enough to reinforce skills and instill long-term retention of knowledge, embedding in the classroom affords librarians direct exposure to students' experience, perspective, and practice. One of the book's strengths is that it presents the first-person narrative of an embedded librarian. Reale does more than create a how-to-guide for librarians to embed in the classroom: she tells a story with herself at the center. With candor and insight, she relates her failures and successes, emphasizing process rather than achievement: "Embedding, by its very nature, can be *planned*, but not *scripted*. In other words, one learns as one goes along, but it is better to set goals and methods that will encourage success, though of course, not guarantee it" (p. 53).

The concise and well-organized chapters are arranged in an accessible structure, each tailored to a specific component of embedding. After first introducing and analyzing the issue, each chapter concludes with a tangible list of strategies for the reader and a summation of final thoughts that reinforce important points. Whether you are new to the practice and concepts or possess experience as an embedded librarian, *Becoming an Embedded Librarian* offers value to all librarians with a passion for moving themselves out of the library. As the title highlights, the target audience is librarians interested in embedding in the classroom. However, as Sandra Crenshaw (a professor in whose course Reale was embedded) acknowledges in the foreword, teaching faculty may also find considerable value in the book as well: "What happens is



amazing. The shared struggles of the students, teacher, and librarian...evolve into a more complex, stronger community..." (p. xi).