Hi, my name is Sara Colglazier, and I'm here from Mount Holyoke College. I titled my lightning talk: "My new favorite hat is my CIA hat--that is, my Collection Intelligence Agent hat" and, you know, it's not just a hat I really enjoy wearing, it's also one I find that I am wearing more and more often! So what do I mean by "wearing my CIA hat"--besides trying to put a fun spin on what I do. Well, I don't know about at your library or wider institution, but at Mount Holyoke College data-driven decision making has really taken off. In fact, it seems to be the name of the game now. And while I'm most definitely not up there with the decision makers, I feel I too get to play (to an extent) by being asked to contribute to the process; that is, I am involved in the process insofar as I am asked to provide and make intelligent the data needed for those so-called "data-driven decisions."

- Are our electronic journal subscriptions worth their cost? Can you provide cost-usage and related data regarding our e-journals?
- How many print with online journal subscriptions do we have, what are they and what are the in-house usage stats for the last 3 years for those titles?
Or I get an email:
- Department X is willing to review its subscriptions and standing orders, we need ...
Or, regarding a different area of the collection and looking at updating it:
- Which VHSs should we replace with DVDs, withdraw, stream? What do we have in VHS and how often have they circulated in the past X years? ...
- What are our Standing Orders, we need to decide which to retain? When did we last receive a volume? What did it cost? etc.
- And, obviously weeding projects love lists and circulation data. For example, not so long ago, I was asked for "a spreadsheet of all the titles in the reference collection (sorted by call number, and displaying call number, title, author, date)." In the end, I did not send my colleague just one spreadsheet--just with the information she requested--but also I sent her a second one, which I thought she would find even more useful, namely one that listed each title with all its items and their status. I mean the title information was not going let her know that one title has 64 volumes vs. another one that is merely a single volume.
- Oh, and then there are things like new programs and initiatives that need to be evaluated. For example, whether or not they can be declared successful, in a general sense. But also workflow kinks can be uncovered in this way so that they can be tweaked going forward helping to make the program or new initiative a success. I'll give you an example: last fall we implemented a print PDA, Patron-Driven-Acquisitions, program, and naturally we are curious how well it is going. Has it taken off? What sort of books are being requested? Who is requesting them? What sort of patterns are we seeing in connection with time between records being loaded, books being requested-ordered, order-receipt turn-around time, continued book availability as records age? Do users actually circ out the books they have us order via PDA? Do PDA books circ more than books ordered on approval? by liaisons? via patron suggestion? ... Actually nobody has asked me to do those last mentioned comparisons--yet--but I can so see it in my future.

And because the allotted 11 1/2 minutes seemed to allow for it, I thought I'd briefly touch on a non-system practical matter. It's something I have to keep reminding myself about. I may swoon over lots of data, and data in all its glory may look good to me, but it's not everyone's taste, and sometimes it needs some introducing.
So, for example, raw the data may look like this:
ppt 1: Raw the data can appear unintelligible

And then you start working it so that to it starts making sense:
ppt 2: With some work it starts making sense (a little color never hurts)

And then, besides dishing out the whole kit and caboodle of all the data requested, you may, especially

for big, complex reports (where many questions are being asked of the data), choose to summarize aspects in bite-sized chunks first:
ppt 3: Sometimes it's best to lead with summarizing bite-sized chunks

I also try to keep in mind that data elements that may be important for me in creating the report can be irrelevant or even meaningless for the people for whom the report is intended. Similarly elements they may consider important and defining may not play an essential role for me in the report creation. So, my point is, remember your audience and present accordingly, which may even include presenting the same data sliced and diced in various ways:
ppt 4: Same data sliced and diced differently

Maybe this is all old hat to you. And maybe not. And even if it is, I would still like to urge us all to start wearing our CIA hats proudly and demonstratively, because, while I--we--may not be making the ultimate collection development decisions, we can still be part of the action. And not just part of. Really, we are essential to data-driven decision making. And we should seize this opportunity to shine and even show off our worth a bit. Because we are the ones who can provide the data to inform and support those data-driven decisions. And not just the data in its raw form, but also with added value, such as context, synthesization, even additional data aspects or elements that those needing to make the decisions haven't thought of or maybe even know to ask for. I mean, who better than we? We create much of the data, or, at the very least, enter, load, and transmit it; we manage it; we manipulate it. We know where and how it lives, and how it interacts in our systems and between our systems. So we know where and how to find it, how to extract it, and how to refine it. And if not, then we can learn.

In fact, that is another great aspect of wearing my CIA hat. It gives me license to learn all sorts of new stuff ... about our collection, our data, our systems, different programs. And I really appreciate that. Wearing my CIA hat makes my job so much more interesting and fun.

To wrap up: We may be told it is no longer the collection we serve; it's all about the users. And that we should be service oriented and think of our users as customers. Well, by extension, why not start thinking of your library's decision makers as customers, too, and make them your customers. Put a fun spin on what you do--even if it is just all in your own mind--imagine putting on your CIA hat, and then let the decision makers know you are happy to spy on the collection for them. In this way, we too can be part of the data-driven decision-making game. We can help determine what in our collections has value to or for our users, and how to make our collections continue to be valuable to our users in the future.
And you know, one last thing, since people have figured out that I am CIA, I feel like I have come in from the cold.