**7/27/2016**

**So Company Call-Out:**

* Woot! [This is Richard’s team](http://www.fastcoexist.com/3062003/how-citizen-centered-design-is-changing-the-ways-the-government-serves-the-people). Sarah Brooks was so geeked-out by their work at a meeting yesterday that she kept leaning over to say, “I’ve been dreaming about this since my first day at VA.” We often see the we-don’t-like-change bits, so it’s fun to see the holy-crap-they’re-doing-this bits. The story also shows the Vets’ journey map, which if you haven’t seen it, is worth seeing—especially as it will likely eventually fit into the Vets.gov work.

**Open Data**:

* The Toronto Public Library shows in real time what patrons search for while at the library, [reports Torontoist](http://torontoist.com/2016/07/what-toronto-public-library-patrons-search-for-in-real-time/). Recent searches include “how to learn,” “Batman v. Superman DVD,” and “how men have sex.” No word on whether the same person made all three requests.
* Co-operatives UK’s IT program leader explains how he took a century’s worth of data and created an open, searchable web portal, [reports SmartDataCollective](http://www.smartdatacollective.com/eran-levy/425834/bi-case-study-building-open-data-portal).

**Open Government**:

* The Sunlight Foundation [has created a map](http://sunlightfoundation.com/blog/2016/07/20/analyzing-the-state-of-cities-bulk-data-offerings/) that shows which U.S. governments have open-data policies. Seems like, at some point, this will become a political flashpoint if economies grow because of open data.
* After Brexit’s note of nationalistic tendencies, London has launched a campaign to market its openness, from open data to open government to diversity to willingness to collaborate, [reports Londonist](http://londonist.com/2016/07/londonisopen-in-more-ways-than-you-think).
* Arlington County was named the top digital county in the country for its open-government commitment, security and citizen engagement, [reports ArlNow](https://www.arlnow.com/2016/07/21/arlington-named-no-1-digital-county/).
* The President’s former chief technology officer argues that when the government makes data assessable, that gives such transparency authority and may cause private companies to contribute, [reports CRN](http://www.crn.com/news/applications-os/video/300081405/former-white-house-deputy-cto-makes-case-for-open-data-in-government.htm).

**Plain Language**:

* The Conversationalist, after offering some examples of Zelda-esque writing, [wonders if there’s hope](http://theconversation.com/redetermining-paradigmatic-norms-is-there-any-hope-for-academic-writing-62968) for academic writing.

**Tech Politics**:

* No matter whom is elected in the fall, the government is already committed to open data with a bi-partisan effort in Congress, a new law and several initiatives from the current administration, [reports Huffington Post](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/joel-gurin/a-presidential-priority-u_b_11085974.html). The Center for Open Data Enterprise will publish in October a nonpartisan open-data transition report for the incoming administration.

**Geek Jobs**:

* The Office of DC Pensions is hiring a [data management specialist](https://www.usajobs.gov/GetJob/ViewDetails/445239500), as is the [U.S. Treasury](https://www.usajobs.gov/GetJob/ViewDetails/445243300).

**Vet Love**:

* [Backchannel highlights](https://backchannel.com/inside-the-obama-tech-surge-as-it-hacks-the-pentagon-and-va-8b439bc33ed1#.40lhomsg2) the problems Vets have had accessing information and filing applications through the Internet in a piece about how the U.S. Digital Service is trying to make quick fixes to systems across the government.
* If a Veteran can’t raise the funds he needs, a therapy-goat program is at risk, [reports Military.com](http://www.military.com/daily-news/2016/07/23/therapy-goats-at-risk-if-veteran-cannot-fund-farm-upgrades.html?utm_source=Sailthru&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Military%20EBB%207-25-16&utm_term=Editorial%20-%20Military%20-%20Early%20Bird%20Brief). “His family of four also has nine dogs, including a certified therapy Pug; about 30 ducks; one mini- horse; seven cats; 100 chickens; and a guard llama, Ragels said.”

**What We’re Reading**:

* Meditation changes brains in a multitude of ways, as some So employees have noted, and [Medium cites](https://medium.com/the-coffeelicious/the-brain-on-meditation-a0948ba98d9d#.kgsk1383z) the science to show it in a piece about why industry is beginning to buy into the practice.