Contextualizing Ourselves
The Identity Politics of the Librarian Stereotype

Nicole Pagowsky and Miriam Rigby

Librarians are in the business of presentation.[*] Whether we are presenting information or presenting ourselves to the public, it is a constant of the profession. And all of our constituents—especially our served communities—judge our presentation, consciously and subconsciously, as to whether they can see us as reliable, authoritative, approachable sources of information. Therefore, it is only natural for us to turn a reflexive eye on ourselves, analyzing our presentation-of-self. Librarians have done this in droves—from image-based blogs and reflective essays to a selection of scholarly works addressing librarians in popular culture and other dimensions of librarian-representation. What is rare, however, is the application of ethnographic research and the incorporation of theory from the broader social sciences into our examinations of how librarians present themselves and how they are perceived.

We, the editors, come to librarianship through anthropological and sociopsychological discourse communities that provide us with the lenses through which we frame our understanding of our profession. Through these lenses, we have engaged with librarianship to make sense of how we can do our best work; to study how others perceive us, stereotype us, and understand us; to better address the ongoing critiques and discussions of the value of libraries. Articulating the value of libraries and librarians is the zeitgeist of 21st-century librarianship; one does not need to look far to find articles about the fading importance of libraries or about yet another

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* Throughout this chapter, we will be using the terms *librarian* and *information professional* interchangeably as these issues apply to many in a broader sense of the field, although *librarians* specifically tend to be what are addressed in much of the literature related to our topics.

library being closed due to deprioritization in budgets. Value concern has been the subject of myriad conferences and publications. And with valuing comes examination of librarians, both serious and flippant, which often pulls from classic librarian stereotypes, whether appearance-, attitude-, or skill-based.

We have been fascinated by these discussions and the resulting engagement by our colleagues in person and online. On the one hand, there is a sense that the stereotype discussions are exhausted, and though there is excellent work being done in the realm of stating the value of libraries and librarians, there is a common sentiment that we should not have to state and restate our value so regularly. Yet, on the other hand, these discussions invariably become wonderfully passionate and multifaceted arguments on the demographics, presentation, and purpose of librarianship—topics that are important and, we argue, will continue to carry weight as long as there is any question as to the value of librarianship and libraries. In response to these discussions, and stemming from our predispositions to sociocultural inquiry, we have explored venues of presentation-of-self, first with Nicole Pagowsky's venture into counteracting stereotypes, vis-à-vis sartorialism, with the *Librarian Wardrobe* blog since 2010 and subsequent invited lectures on the topic.[*] Miriam Rigby wrote on presentation-of-self in an essay for *College and Research Libraries News* on outreach and networking with faculty as well as in a chapter on how to approach outreach as a new subject librarian in the forthcoming book *Sudden Selector's Guide to Anthropology Resources*.[1] Additionally, these topics have been addressed in our joint projects of a series of conference and webinar panels on librarian stereotypes.[2]

To provide more background, *Librarian Wardrobe* catalogs how information professionals dress for work via a primarily photograph-based blog, with the majority of content being self-submitted. On its face, the blog demonstrates clothing choice; however, its underlying purpose is to

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[*] Nicole Pagowsky, *Librarian Wardrobe* (blog), 2014, http://librarianwardrobe.com; presentations and lectures include LIM College's Fashion Symposium in NYC, Museum of Contemporary Art Tucson, and Maricopa County Library District Staff Day.

visually clarify that there is no longer a unifying stereotype for librarians: librarians dress differently and have varying interests and job descriptions. Many Internet searches for librarian style, images of librarians in general, or pictures of specific items of clothing (stereotypical or not) lead a variety of individuals to the blog, librarians and non-librarians alike, which implies stereotypes are still fixed in the public mind if there are searches for "librarian glasses," "shushing librarian," "librarian shoes," "hipster librarian style," and "sexy librarian."† If our stereotypes have focus on clothing, then to some degree we must dissect our clothing. In *The Language of Fashion*, Roland Barthes posits,

> Clothing allows man to "assume his freedom," to constitute himself as he chooses, even if what he has chosen to be represents what others have chosen for him…. Clothing is very close to this phenomenon; it seems that it has interested writers and philosophers because of its links with personality, of its capacity to change one's being for another; personality makes fashion, it makes clothing; but inversely, clothing makes personality. There is certainly a dialectic between these two elements.[3]

Clothing, and the rest of one's appearance, communicates. Art and design theorist Malcolm Barnard examines semiotics, noting, "Fashion and clothing are ways in which inequalities of social and economic status are made to appear right and legitimate, and therefore acceptable, not only to those in positions of dominance, but also to those in positions of subservience. The term used to describe this situation is hegemony."[4]

The structures of power need to be examined, challenged, and reconfigured if we are going to take hold of our image and have more control over our identity. Positioning current, everyday images of librarians in the public eye is one way in which to dispel notions of shushing spinsters, which—perhaps surprisingly to some—still exist. Typically, the focus of librarian image in the discourse has been directed toward popular media,

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† All are actual search terms that have directed people to *Librarian Wardrobe*, though it is not certain how some of these terms led readers to the blog.

but it is useful for librarians to examine how we present ourselves in an on-going basis and how this presentation impacts public perceptions. More-over, library use is not the only thing affected by stereotype impressions; other relevant issues to consider include professional status, pay, and inte-gration in campuses and communities.

A number of articles provide scholarly insight on the topic, as we will discuss in brief and which the chapter authors of this volume weave into their analyses to great effect. Noteworthy books are rarer. A few recent ex-amples of books touching on issues of the presentation of librarianship include Ray Tevis and Brenda Tevis's 2005 book, *The Image of Librarians in Cinema,* which looks at how librarians have been represented in film.[5] Ruth Kneale's *You Don't Look Like a Librarian* from 2009 explores librar-ians' perspectives on stereotypes and presentation, comparing representa-tion in pop culture with anecdotes.[6] Moving away from popular culture and media studies, William C. Welburn, Janice Welburn, and Beth McNeil explore the collaborative nature of advocacy in academic libraries through their edited volume, *Advocacy, Outreach and the Nation's Academic Librar-ies.*[7] And Lauren Comito, Aliqae Geraci, and Christian Zabriskie provide an actionable resource for library advocacy and valuing with *Grassroots Library Advocacy*, demonstrating ways in which to improve visibility, rela-tionships, and messaging to the public for all types of libraries.[8]

Looking back over the decades, we find that books of in-depth schol-arly engagement with similar issues of image emerge about every 10 years, sometimes in flurries. In the early 2000s, a solid engagement of librarian image and activist librarianship was provided by K. R. Roberto and Jessa-myn West with *Revolting Librarians Redux: Radical Librarians Speak Out.*[9] The early-to-mid-1990s offered a number of titles, including the Inter-national Federation of Library Associations and Institutions–sponsored contribution of *The Image of the Library and Information Profession: How We See Ourselves* and Mary Jane Scherdin's *Discovering Librarians: Profiles of a Profession.*[10] One more decade back, we encounter another flurry with Pauline Wilson's 1982 volume, *Stereotype and Status: Librarians in the Unit-*

ed States and Kathleen de la Peña McCook's 1983 *The Status of Women in Librarianship: Historical, Sociological, and Economic Issues.*[11] These related topics continue to be relevant.

Our vision for *The Librarian Stereotype: Deconstructing Presentations and Perceptions of Information Work* is to revitalize this conversation with a strong focus on empirical research and a mix of historical, anthropological, sociological, and literary analysis of the presentation of information professions. This work fills a gap in the literature, going beyond a documentation of popular culture stereotypes of librarians and how to craft a personal brand to a scholarly examination of how these stereotypes exist in this decade, what they mean, and how to use and shape them advantageously for the profession. As *deconstructing* is used in the title of this book, we can look to Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak in her study of Jacques Derrida's notion of the term, where Spivak states, "[Deconstruction] is constantly and persistently looking into how truths are produced."[12] Examining truth production is what we are hoping to do from the discussions within and beyond this book.

The discussion surrounding librarian stereotypes has questioned whether studying perceptions has any impact on decreasing barriers to library use and improving the status of librarianship. In the article "Images and Perceptions as Barriers to Use of Library Staff and Services," Tracey Green stresses that it is not so much the stereotype, but rather users not fully understanding what librarians *do* that creates barriers to public use and detriment to librarians' status; further, she argues that the value of information needs to be in the spotlight for the subsequent valuing of libraries and librarians.[13] Although the value of our work should take the spotlight, when librarian stereotypes have a strong presence, they activate heuristics, or mental shortcuts, for defining what librarians do. Abigail Luthmann, in "Librarians, Professionalism and Image: Stereotype and Reality," agrees that the focus should be turned toward what librarians do and that most stereotype-related angst is misfocused and based on self-victimization, which serves to further promulgate circulating stereotypes.[14] Lu-

thmann interprets this anxiety as unnecessary because stereotype obsession comes from within the profession rather than externally, and it would be more useful to respond with positive behavior. Freeing ourselves as a profession from this anxiety would be immensely beneficial to both our image and self-esteem, but we argue that anxiety and self-examination are two separate issues, the latter of which we should be engaged in. Both Project Information Literacy and the ERIAL Project have demonstrated how these points resonate for academic libraries through ethnographic and large-scale studies of students' research habits, showing that students do not typically understand what librarians do or how they can get help.[15] Lack of knowledge or misunderstanding in this capacity further impedes students in actually using the library and asking for help from librarians, feeding into a cycle of stress and confusion. This feeling of being lost and overwhelmed is referred to as "library anxiety," and it plays a role in how users interact with the library and librarians.[16] Considering user anxiety and role of the library, Gary Radford, in "Flaubert, Foucault, and the Bibliotheque Fantastique: Toward a Postmodern Epistemology for Library Science," draws the user into the issue of power relations, demonstrating how negative stereotypes of librarians can translate into negative (self-)expectations for users: "This stereotype may, at first glance, seem trivial and unimportant, but … such images serve to reinforce, in their very triviality and harmlessness, a particular network of power relations that connect the librarian, the user, and the text."[17] Henceforth, the relationship between the stereotype, the librarian and library, and the user "does not, and cannot, lead to a satisfying and productive library experience."[18] Users' exposure to these stereotypes can wind up reinforcing library anxiety, resulting in a snowball effect.

Clearly, informing users about the library and creating greater awareness about what librarians do can help allay this fear, but it also must be understood that users having anxiety—or simply negative impressions of librarians—may be intentionally avoiding the library and its positive messages based on their standing perceptions. Taking a proactive and

multifaceted approach would be more effective. Responding with positive behavior will reach users who are already engaging with us. However, if we limit ourselves to this tactic alone, we risk missing many nonusers for whom the library is foreboding, anxiety inducing, or seemingly irrelevant and who may continue to know of libraries and librarians only through our stereotypes. Although from within the profession these stereotypes seem clearly outdated and irrelevant, this is not necessarily true for the public. Changing the conversation about the roles of librarians and the function of libraries should coincide with improving librarian image and status to dissolve lingering public assumptions of who librarians are and what librarians do. When considering how image influences perceptions, we can see that there is a lot more at play regarding stereotypes when we look to gender studies, sociopsychology, and anthropological perspectives.

Decades of social science research has tackled issues of how people present themselves and how people interact, and some of this has been applied within library and information science. Noted sociologist Erving Goffman stands out as a particularly prominent theorist, and though his work has been expanded upon by others since the 1960s and 70s, his groundwork on how people present themselves and interact with others remains fundamental and highly applicable to the day-to-day life of librarians. Marie Radford incorporates Goffman's analysis of "footing" and rituals of interaction into her 2006 article "Encountering Virtual Users: A Qualitative Investigation of Interpersonal Communication in Chat Reference."[19] Terrence Epperson and Alan Zemel similarly draw on Radford's work and directly upon Goffman in their analysis of language use in chat reference interactions.[20] Likewise, in chapter 9 of this volume, in her analysis of tattoos and library workers, Erin Pappas incorporates Goffman's work on how context affects an individual's self and presentation thereof. Goffman describes how an individual does not have one single "self" that they present in all situations.[21] For instance, the self presented to close friends may differ from what is presented to family; presentation of self shifts even more significantly as the distance from a core group increases.

The self presented can also shift for each individual interacted with depending on the context in which the interaction takes place.

This translates into our work as librarians, whether in public services or otherwise, as people enter into interactions with us already burdened with expectations. How we present ourselves shapes those expectations and our ongoing relationships—both positively and negatively. And whether one is actively concerned or not with occupational stereotypes or personal image and presentation, these influence how others see us and interact with us. Written while the author was a student of library science in 1988, Mary Land's article "Librarians' Image and Users' Attitudes to Reference Interviews" explored the detrimental nature of librarian stereotypes and how users' perceptions affected their use of libraries and librarians.[22] A major barrier is even identifying who is a librarian as they are not necessarily distinguishable from any other library worker or even from any other adult in the library. After identifying a librarian, other factors influencing user-success and confidence include "approachability, identity, warmth, openness, and body language of the librarian."[23]

This suggests that even active users, who are already in a library with research questions, carry preconceived notions that might hinder or help their access to information, depending on what they encounter and how librarians presents themselves. We risk losing the engagement of potential lifelong users of libraries if we fail to present ourselves as welcoming, accessible, engaged, and savvy. Imagine, then, how this carries over to people who are less aware of the usefulness of librarians. If we cannot communicate our value through librarian imagery seen beyond the walls of our libraries, then we lose that many more users who know of us only through stereotype and hearsay.

Consider further those questioning whether to fund a library or a competing service. If library-related stereotypes mislead potential donors, our trustees, or government agencies, we risk losing necessary funding and related support. Library workers are outspoken when it comes to intellectual freedom and other issues that affect library users, but we have not

been nearly as vocal on our own behalf. Some good work is being done by a number of bodies within librarianship already, and we must be ready to join and support their efforts as well as push other causes forward. OCLC's report, *From Awareness to Funding: A Study of Library Support in America,* addresses the need for library advocacy and evaluates how advocacy and marketing campaigns can best influence those who fund libraries—especially voting taxpayers.[24] The intertwining of our image and value thus extends to the "value" of librarianship on a monetary level; our image must communicate our value to those who fund us. Some donors may be happy to will their estates to their vision of a large book warehouse, but they, over the course of time, are dying off. The first library super political action committee (super PAC), EveryLibrary, is leading the charge in library advocacy in the United States, and its fundamental message is that the public's perception of "librarians" (meaning anyone working in a library) drives behavior at the polls.[25] EveryLibrary is taking this understanding and its fundraising power as a super PAC to help spread positive librarian image campaigns and help small library groups around the United States in their local ballot initiatives.

Concerns over value and advocacy can feed right back in to our anxiety; even more so in women-dominated professions, in which perception anxiety is commonplace.[*] In James V. Carmichael Jr.'s trailblazing article "The Gay Librarian: A Comparative Analysis of Attitudes towards Professional Gender Issues," he explains that "stereotype and status concerns are obsessive in all low-status, marginal professions."[26] Discussion surrounding status and stereotypes of librarians enters into gendered space and touches on problems with inequality in women-dominated professions as a whole. Marie L. Radford and Gary P. Radford astutely state in "Librarians and Party Girls: Cultural Studies and the Meaning of the Librarian" that "[stereotyping] creates a regime of representation that ultimately constricts the power and economic status of a gendered profession—librarianship."[27]

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[*] *Female-dominated* might be more grammatically correct, but here as well as in the rest of this chapter, we are focusing on gender-referencing terms, rather than sex, as one does not have to be biologically female to identify as a woman.

Looking at the American Library Association–Allied Professional Associa-
tion's (ALA-APA) median salary comparison chart, adapted from the Bu-
reau of Labor Statistics, it is clear that women-dominated fields, even when
requiring more advanced education, have lower pay and status than those
dominated by men.[28] This should not be surprising, but it is something that
needs to be within our awareness to understand the effect stereotypes have.
Melissa Lamont echoes this concern in "Gender, Technology, and Librar-
ies" by highlighting that "the association of women's positions with lower
wages and prestige serves to sustain the occupational segregation and jus-
tify the subtle discrimination that hinders women."[29] Lamont also notes the
problem with symbolic representations of gendered fields, where "some-
times perception creates reality."[30] This speaks to both being aware of our
stereotypes and the importance of diversity.

Considering respect for women in a professional capacity, the Rad-
fords further note in their research on stereotypes and power relations
(through the lens of Foucault), "There is a clear relationship between the
representation and treatment of women and the low status of the library
profession."[31] The Radfords argue that gendered, constructed "systems of
difference" maintain hegemony.[32] Furthermore, it is essential to dig deeper
into the stereotype to discover how it is perpetuated, who is hurt by it, and
how can it be challenged and changed; we must "analyze the systems of
power/knowledge that go to the very heart of what it means to be male
and female, powerful and marginalized, valued and devalued."[33]

Naturally, women-dominated professions tend to face battles mirror-
ing (first-world) feminism's overarching concerns. In the case of informa-
tion work, we are dealing with asserting our value in a profession, which,
on the face of it, is devalued due to stereotypes of subservience and caring.
And this is how our worth is defined to the public. In an effort to provide
solutions rather than just highlight the problem, ALA-APA points to a sug-
gested course of action: first, "We must overcome the stereotype of the
library worker as the selfless, dedicated and devoted worker, who is in the
profession to do good and who will accept any pittance of pay;" second,

we need to better inform the public of what librarians do and the special skills, education, and experience that are needed to be a successful librarian; and third, pay equity is a battle we should continue fighting, particularly because it is one way (among many) in which women are discriminated against.[34] As we similarly stress, the APA-ALA suggestions illustrate a multifaceted approach because stereotypes, perceived value, and public understanding of what librarians do are all intertwined.

Although these positive efforts exist and have been expanding in recent years, there are also efforts that are detrimental. In trying to create distance from stereotypes, librarians at times wind up hypocritically policing each other (e.g., why is he or she dressing too sexy, he or she looks too frumpy, he or she looks like a hipster, he or she looks so smug, I or we could do it better, he or she does not deserve that award/press/recognition). This kind of in-fighting makes it more difficult to bring librarianship and our value as professionals into a positive light in the public's eye and even our own. Is it any wonder that the information professions carry self-esteem issues and anxiety if we are constantly flagellating ourselves? It is also not surprising that when librarians have the opportunity to present themselves, the focus shifts off of their message and on to how they look. Even in positive feature stories where the true intent of the piece is to promote librarians for what they do, the focus instead turns so heavily on how the featured librarians (especially when they are women) look or do not look or should have looked that individuals get reduced to physical attributes only.

Discounting abilities and accomplishments to instead focus on appearance, whether intentional or not, is not unique to librarianship; there is plenty of harassment directed toward women online as well as objectification in other occupations.* Considering image-based commentary about

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* See "Internet Harassment of Women: When Haters Do More than Hate," www.npr.org/2014/01/08/260757625/internet-harassment-of-women-when-haters-do-more-than-just-hate; "Female Athletes Judged by Sex Appeal," http://abcnews.go.com/Technology/story?id=119952; "Focus on Hillary Clinton's Appearance Sparks Criticism," http://now.org/update/focus-on-hillary-clinton-s-appearance-sparks-criticism.

librarians has come from both the public at large and within the field, the latter especially proves we have some work to do. Audre Lorde makes the charge in "The Master's Tools Will Not Dismantle the Master's House" that women should take a united front and work together for feminism's success from a perspective of intersectionality:[*] "As women, we have been taught either to ignore our differences, or to view them as causes for separation and suspicion rather than as forces for change. Without community, there is no liberation, only the most vulnerable and temporary armistice between an individual and her oppression…. In our world, divide and conquer must become define and empower."[35] This powerful statement applies to our efforts in making librarianship better respected: we should be working together to demonstrate our value and garner greater respect from our relative communities, whether it be in neighborhoods, on university campuses, in corporations, or online.[†]

Lest we think the problems and divisiveness surrounding image in information professions are unique, it is useful to note that other professions, and even ones that are not traditionally women-dominated, ponder questions of image and presentation as well. Our conversations perhaps feel more prevalent due to our closeness to them, but it is mostly a case of a filter bubble (or information avoidance) that we may miss these conversations happening outside of librarianship.[36] Throughout academia we find many discussions on the topic, both casual and scholarly. Fashion blogs are kept by academics and professionals as diverse as historians, pharmacologists, and lawyers.[37] For the 2013 annual conference of the American Anthropological Association, the prominent anthropology blog *Savage Minds* posted in true anthropological style a somewhat tongue-in-cheek, yet thorough analysis, "Conference Chic, or, How to Dress Like an Anthropologist," featuring observant gems such as "The unisex pan-ethnic

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[*] Briefly described, *intersectionality* signifies overlapping systems of oppression.

[†] Not just women librarians but all librarians should be working together to improve our collective status as these concerns affect us all; however, this does not mean ignoring important differences between us, including the need for improving diversity in LIS and giving a greater voice to those not in the dominant group(s).

scarf is a must" and "There is a way in which disheveled chic is the perfect style for anthropologists. It can match any situation."[38]

In recent years, the *Chronicle of Higher Education* has run articles exploring "The Academic Wardrobe," "Looking like a Professor," and even a humorous take on RateMyProfessor.com's chili pepper indicator of professor hotness.[39] Some of these articles might suggest a need to conform to particular styles to succeed in particular fields. Yet there is also visible push-back from early career academics trying to reconfigure traditional styles and stereotypes, such as the article "Wearing Me Out."[40] Among many astute observations, the author writes, "If we have too-strict rules about what our colleagues should look like, we may exclude people who don't look exactly like most of us." Publishing anonymously as "Female Science Professor," the author indexes the genuine pressure and possible ridicule she faces relating to these issues. *Inside Higher Ed* has also broached the subject regularly—"Those Really Smart Clothes," "The Well-Dressed Academic," and "Why I (Usually) Wear a Tie."[41] Regarding a *New York Times* feature on stylish professors, "Class Acts,"[42] Dr. Tanisha R. Ford contemplates the power of privilege, or the lack thereof, on dress and adornment in the Ivory Tower:

> The reality is that scholars of color, women, and other groups whose bodies are read as non-normative have never been able to check their race, gender, religion, or sexual orientation at the door…. Our professionalism and our intellectual competence are largely judged by how we style ourselves … [and so we use] our fashion sense to define ourselves, our professionalism, and our research and teaching agendas on our own terms.[43]

We will return to engaging with privilege, but for now it is key to note that much of the discussion of appearance in academia stems out of structures of power and the (de)construction of traditional "norms."

Academic studies from across the humanities, social sciences, and sciences have also taken a reflexive look at appearance in academia. Social psychologists Nalini Ambady and Robert Rosenthal found that it took ap-

proximately 30 seconds (or less) of silent video to judge how a high school teacher would be evaluated in end-of-term evaluations.[44] Another study out of the field of communications found correlations between graduate student teaching assistants' appearance and student engagement.[45] We might compare both to how image and presentation affect how library users encounter librarians as Jennifer Bonnet and Ben McAlexander study in "First Impressions and the Reference Encounter: The Influence of Affect and Clothing on Librarian Approachability."[46] Additionally, a recent study published in the *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* on the evaluation of musicians' performances found that judgments of a performance's quality based solely on audio were significantly different from judgments based on audio and visual input, with image strongly impacting judgments of otherwise identical performances.[47] A 2002 article, "Posing as Professor: Laterality in Posing Orientation for Portraits of Scientists," found that even the direction in which a person faces in their faculty portrait could convey a more "scientific" appearance.[48] Being interested in how people look and display themselves is human and timeless, as is working to maneuver the system.

In thinking about who is and is not considered a "librarian," a lack of privilege conflicts with choice regarding one's ability to ignore stereotypes and others' perceptions. Numerous bloggers have taken on these issues, and considering dress as being one avenue in which we write our identities and they are read by others, these examples look to clothing. Being able to not concern oneself with this reading or writing is a privilege, and *Feministing* blogger Juliana Britto Schwartz examines how people of color (particularly women) are required to assimilate into Western, white culture when dressing for work. She says, "For [women of color] who face judgments around being tacky or aggressive, their clothing must do everything possible to counteract those stereotypes."[49] Cat Smith explains, in considering abled and disabled bodies, that "what passes for a self-aware rejection of fashion on one person will be seen in a completely different way on another body" and that fashion can be used as "a way of challeng-

ing ableist assumptions of disabled people's place in the world."[50] In this quote she is referring to Eddie Ndopu's account of presenting himself as a "black queer crip," as he identifies himself:

> Clothes are deeply imbued with the insidiousness of power relations when attached to the bodies wearing them. A hoodie carries the threat of violence when it clads the bodies of young black and brown male-identified and masculine of center people. Wearing the niqab and/or burka catalyzes the white saviour industrial complex to step in and declare euro-western conceptions of womanhood as the universal benchmark of gender based equality, denying Muslim women their agency. In my case, sweats and clothes labeled "frumpy" engender pity. And that is why I refuse to wear them in public.[51]

For those not part of dominant culture groups, identity often needs to be hidden or negotiated in order to assimilate.

When considering white privilege specifically, Peggy McIntosh describes this as "whites are taught to think of their lives as a morally neutral, normative, and average, also ideal, so that when we work to benefit others, this is seen as work which will allow 'them' to be more like 'us.'"[52] In a study on appearance management and border construction to disassociate oneself from certain groups, Anthony Freitas et al., found study participants echo Ndopu's sentiment. The study's authors explain that "several African American males reported the need to be cautious about being mistaken for gang members [and] Asian American students often expressed the desire to appear different from recent immigrants."[53] For marginalized groups, demonstrating who one is *not* through self-presentation can be just as urgent as demonstrating who one *is*.

The urgency of group association or disassociation for humane treatment is very real. Tressie McMillan Cottom, looking at how poor people get ridiculed for spending beyond what is assumed to be their means on status symbol items to disassociate themselves from a lower socioeconomic class, writes, "Belonging to one group at the right time can mean the dif-

ference between unemployment and employment, a good job as opposed to a bad job, housing or a shelter, and so on…. [Appearing] presentable as a sufficient condition for gainful, dignified work or successful social interactions is a privilege."[54] Kristin Iverson explains that the concept of *normcore** and lack of concern over identity "is just a case of powerful people flaunting their power by willingly ceding it …and the truth is that some people don't need to worry about their identities because their status is secure."[55] Body size is another stigmatization polarized by privilege. Melissa McEwan argues, "For fat women, being stylish isn't a luxury…. Fat women have all kinds of narratives about sloppiness, laziness, dirtiness to overcome. Sometimes [high-heeled shoes] are a crucial part of looking 'put together' in a way that sufficiently convinces people that we care about ourselves, that manages to counteract pervasive cultural narratives that fat people don't care about ourselves."[56]

It is not only fat women, as McEwan notes, but all women with marginalized bodies who "may strongly relate to the idea of having to be 'put together' in order to be treated as human beings."[57] There are many other groups that do not have the privilege of not caring about fashion or self-presentation. The elderly—again, women in particular—is one example, as aging comes with a loss of power. From this, M. Elise Radina et al., in studying the Red Hat Society, note that "not surprisingly, women experience higher degrees of negative stereotyping and stigma as they age than their male contemporaries."[58] The Red Hat Society uses clothing and presentation-of-self to reclaim power and lessen stigma.† And of course trans* individuals encounter a great deal of stigma attached to their identity. And whether transitioned or in considering gender/queer issues, Mimi Thi Nguyen questions gender presentation, particularly for those whose

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* *Normcore* is a new nonfashion fashion movement and neologism where the ideal is to appear unfashionable and unconcerned with presentation in order to have greater human connections; see the K-Hole Trend Report under "Youth Mode" at http://khole.net.

† According to its website, the Red Hat Society "has become the international society dedicated to reshaping the way women approaching 50 and beyond are viewed in today's culture," see http://redhatsociety.com/press/letter-to-the-media.

clothing options might not comfortably house or reflect their gender(s) or body type: "For whom is 'self-expression' through clothes or style difficult, unavailable, or even undesirable? What *other* gender presentations, sexual identities, and embodied states can point us suggestively toward alternative ways of inhabiting our clothes and the uncertain stories they tell?"[59] Presentation of self should not have to dictate an either/or existence, particularly so for those not in positions of privilege.

Librarian perspectives on identity and presentation also echo broader concerns with privilege. Chris Bourg, self-identifying as butch, reflects on the improbability of one-size-fits-all wardrobe advice and points out, in considering others' expectations for identity and dress, that "part of being different is always wondering."[60] Cecily Walker, a librarian also writing on identity and intersectionality in librarianship, states, "We can have conversations about purple hair and tattoos and whether they don't represent a professional image, but we shouldn't have them without drawing parallels between these superficial differences and the (in some case) immutable differences that we are born with, or that are central to our identity."[61]

Walker's statement demonstrates the need to recognize these issues, especially when we are working to increase diversity. As Minh-Ha T. Pham makes clear in *Ms. Magazine*, "Fashion, like so many other things associated primarily with women, may be dismissed as trivial, but it shapes how we're read by others, especially on the levels of gender, class, and race. In turn, how we're read determines how we are treated, especially in the workforce."[62]

Through this reflection and understanding how presentation-of-self and clothing choice are impacted by identity and privilege, we pointedly argue that although "not caring" or "not worrying" about (the librarian) stereotype would certainly be ideal, it is not possible for many individuals to do so. Being antifashion can influence a state of "false neutrality," which causes harm through what Dean Spade explains as "foreclos[ing] people's abilities to expose the workings of f*cked up systems on their bodies as they see fit."[63] It can rob us of agency.

Considering how to improve perceptions of librarians, it is important to first examine how and why these perceptions are formed. When there is an unknown, it is common to use heuristics to fill in the blanks, and once these impressions are made, it can be very difficult to reverse them. It is nearly impossible for one to enter a completely unknown situation without expectations or some form of stereotype. Library users who have seen librarians presented in popular culture or who have had impactful experiences in their own lives will depend on heuristics to inform their understanding of a new situation or a new person: the library and librarian in question.

Social psychology professors and researchers Richard E. Nisbett and Lee Ross have explained the "representativeness heuristic" as a means by which individuals explain the unknown; when pertaining to groups of people, a "goodness-of-fit" schema is subconsciously used to relate recognized traits to established categories.[64] When a known stereotype is available, this is what can be used to substitute for lack of understanding. For users who avoid the library, their idea of librarians will be based on what they already know. Whether this is as harmless as assuming librarians wear a lot of cardigans or the more detrimental idea that librarians are irrelevant or even both, previous impressions will carry weight. Once established, these impressions can be inexorable, proving difficult to reverse and particularly so when considering the impact of self-fulfilling prophecies. Sociologist Robert Merton explains this as "a *false* definition of the situation [that evokes] a new behavior which makes the originally false conception come true."[65] Merton notes this as a cause of forced behaviors resulting from stereotyped groups too consciously attempting to not fit their assigned stereotypes.[66]

In the recent decade, blogs have become a popular venue for explorations of the topics of presentation and fashion. Beyond the innumerable sartorial photo blogs, there are also many photo blogs focusing on people who are deemed striking, sometimes for their fashion but often for much more. The blog *Humans of New York* (*HONY*) is a significant example from

which many other "Humans of *" blogs have sprung.[67] Further, *HONY* creator and photographer Brandon Stanton also captures poignant statements from his subjects, breaking down barriers of image and stereotype as viewers get a peek beyond the pose. Engaging the public to break down these types of barriers is crucial not just for librarianship but on a much broader scale as well.

An example from librarianship would be the aforementioned publicly viewable Internet policing of how other librarians look: in an effort to avoid certain stereotypes remaining in the spotlight, this instead highlights infighting and essentially the act of shushing (each other) on a grander scale, enforcing what the public might have wrongly assumed to be traits of librarians initially. Robert Rosenthal and Lenore Jacobson, in their highly influential study, *Pygmalion in the Classroom*, discuss motivation for prophecy fulfillment.[68] Counterintuitively, when expectations (even negative or harmful ones) are in place and the reverse occurs (even if the reverse has a beneficial outcome), it causes some form of physical, emotional, or psychic pain. Hence, met expectations lead to satisfaction. In relation to evolutionary advantage, Rosenthal and Jacobson note, "Man has a vested interest in his predictive accuracy."[69] Therefore, we argue that focusing only on response through positive messages and information about what librarians do will essentially fall on deaf ears for those relying on heuristics to inform their interest in libraries. To break free from self-fulfilling prophecies that are a result of stereotypes, Merton advises that "only when the original assumption is questioned and a new definition of the situation introduced, does the consequent flow of events give the lie to the assumption. Only then does the belief no longer father the reality."[70] He makes it clear that self-examination, challenge, and change go hand in hand, and we consequently maintain that self-study is essential in improving the status and perception of librarians.

Stereotypes, in conjunction with heuristics, can additionally be integrated into knowledge structures through thin slicing, or person-perception. This area of research comes from the social sciences where *thin slicing* refers to making judgments from first impressions based on nonverbal

behavior in a very short span of time. Nalini Ambady notes in "The Perils of Pondering: Intuition and Thin Slice Judgments" that "the literature on nonverbal behavior suggests that evaluative judgments based solely on nonverbal cues are biologically based and occur automatically, outside awareness, without drawing on conscious, cognitive processing resources."[71] This demonstrates that we make snap judgments of each other before a person might even have a chance to speak, and because these evaluative judgments are automatic and instant, they rely on preexisting knowledge structures (heuristics, stereotypes) to help us quickly assume how to understand another person or group of people. Therefore, we argue that how we are perceived through how we look, or are assumed to look, is not irrelevant and does in fact play a role in our resulting determined value.

Mimi Thi Nguyen, from the blog *Threadbared* and an associate professor of gender and women's studies and Asian American studies, expresses that "the stories we create around persons from their clothes often say more about us, and about the larger social, political, economic discourses and practices that inform our world-views both consciously and unconsciously, than about the persons we are looking at."[72] In considering how we present ourselves and how our values are espoused through presentation, realistically or stereotypically, it is worth understanding how we are actually perceived by the public and what these perceptions mean, whether the basis is looks, values, abilities, or all of the above. Only then can we determine how to reverse these stereotypes, as it will be difficult to defeat the persistent imagery fueling these perceptions without a unified and repetitive front.[*]

As many of the chapters in this volume elucidate and expand upon, there are a variety of librarian stereotypes, each of which does its own work on the public perception of information work, whether for positive or negative. Traditional stereotypes include the dichotomies of stuffy and/

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[*]   Patrick Sweeney, serving on EveryLibrary's board of directors, points out that numerous literature on effective campaigning stresses the importance of repetition in imagery and messaging; see http://pcsweeney.com/2014/02/12/the-slate-article-campaign-math-and-why-that-article-doesnt-matter.

or effeminate man and the spinster prude or highly sexual woman. These images are well ingrained in the public consciousness and are the context we navigate while we work to present ourselves and the value of our work. As Erving Goffman, discussed briefly earlier, wrote in *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*, "When an actor takes on an established social role, usually he finds that a particular front has already been established for it."[73] Goffman spoke in terms of how individuals fit into roles and into groups, but the concept carries over to attempts to break free of these established images.

On the flip side of this issue, the original intent of a message can be easy to miss if taken out of context and through one's personal frame of reference. This of course can apply to messaging regarding the value of librarians. Thus, in establishing new images, old images must be reengaged for reference to point out how the new image is different. Jacques Derrida wrote, "Every sign, linguistic or nonlinguistic …can be cited, put between quotation marks; in so doing it can break with every given context, engendering an infinity of new contexts in a manner which is absolutely illimitable."[74] To follow Derrida, we can imagine how librarians' attempts to fight stereotypes can be taken out of their intended context and fed right back into their construction or any multitude of new contexts unintended. One therefore cannot ignore the public perception of libraries and information professions when working to convey their value. Knowing how the audience—whether the public, fellow librarians, trustees with funding, or administrators with power over the future of a library—will encounter the message should strongly influence how it is framed. Working from within the context of stereotype returns us to the Radfords' analysis of how to counter stereotypes in "Librarians and Party Girls." Citing Stuart Hall, they argue that we can reverse stereotypes and substitute positive images in the media to challenge negative images.[75] The Radfords suggest that to reverse the stereotype "would involve media images of librarians as the reverse of their stereotypical images, that is, as young, cool, and hip."[76]

It would be nearly impossible to write about librarian stereotypes and skip over the new addition to our menagerie of images: being "hip." Most notably in 2007, *The New York Times* (*NYT*) published the article "A Hipper Crowd of Shushers" to highlight librarian image with the backdrop of social events and activist work in New York City.[77] But is being reimagined as hipsters truly beneficial to the status of the profession, and does this persona align with the portrayal the Radfords described? This *NYT* article continues to receive unencouraging reactions in LIS online forums, even seven years later. The term *hipster* has taken on an even more negative connotation within the last decade, where many prefer to maintain distance from the descriptor. The 2010 n+1 publication *What Was the Hipster? A Sociological Investigation* revealed derisive definitions and reactions, including Rob Horning pondering, "Or is the hipster a kind of permanent cultural middleman in hyper-mediated late capitalism, selling out alternative sources of social power developed by outsider groups[?]"[78] This is appropriate considering that some iterations of hipsterdom have appropriated other cultures to serve the needs of upper-middle class whites.[*] The negative responses to the *NYT* article could be attributed to disdain for the notion of a hipster. However, when considering the Radfords' perspective, a more accurate reason for distancing might be that this stereotyping works to divide librarians by exclusionary tactics, demonstrating that a select few are hip, rather than librarianship as a profession. Much of hipster hatred comes from an "us versus them" dichotomy, and so this type of portrayal can have the opposite effect from what was intended.

Additionally, we are at a point where the term *hipster* has become essentially nullified, no longer having meaning because it is describing an age range rather than a delineated subculture.[79] It may also simply be an issue of generational change in librarianship. There have been countless books, articles, video segments, and portrayals in other popular media about how millennials are an awful generation, characterized by hipness. This cer-

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[*] For example, see NPR's coverage of Urban Outfitters being sued for appropriating the Navajo Nation trademark: www.npr.org/2012/04/05/150062611/navajo-nation-sues-urban-outfitters-over-trademark.

tainly is not a new type of characterization; Gen X slackers and boomer hippies were similarly discussed as they each entered the workforce. Yet purposeful invocation of hipster imagery for libraries might serve a more innocuous use in an effort to appeal to harder-to-reach library users of this demographic. One reason librarians have more recently been associated with the hipster stereotype may be due to an attempt to increase appeal to the 20- to 30-year-old crowd libraries are hoping to serve.[†] And it is in this type of scenario that the Radfords' call to align librarianship (as opposed to a select few librarians) with the hipster image might indeed carry out a shift in perceptions. Regardless, with these more recent connotations of "hip," it is good to be cautious in what this signifier might represent.

A more pressing concern with the association between librarians and hipness, particularly within the diversity-starved field of LIS, is that the current, popular notion of a hipster often excludes persons of color and those of lower socioeconomic status as well as anyone else not fitting a youthful, able, cisgender existence.[‡] This narrow assumption of what a hipster is defines one-who-is-hip in the 21st century through stereotype. The exclusivity of this stereotype, not to mention the other negative traits associated with it, is detrimental to working for increased diversity within librarianship and our users. This is a recurring problem with all of the librarian stereotypes: they show internally within the field and externally to the public that librarians either "are" or "are supposed to be" a certain way, reflective of dominant culture norms. In parallel, this sends a message about what librarians "should" look like and brings us further into the semiotics of dress and other sociological perspectives on presentation.

Those not fitting into the majority demographic should not need to alter themselves or their presentation-of-self for greater inclusion in librarianship; expecting such alterations is in fact a barrier to increasing diversity. Similarly, in focusing on who gets left out of being assumed to

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† See Chicago Public Library's "Not What You Think" campaign: www.prlog.org/10139260-its-not-what-you-think-chicago-public-library-launches-new-awareness-campaign.html.

‡ And other demographics that might not be as visible or could address intersectionality.

be an information worker because they *do not* fit the stereotypes, we also need to be careful of excluding by force those who *do* fit the stereotypes. In policing ourselves for how we should not look, we create hostility and further librarianship's problematic self-esteem issues, which does an additional disservice to us internally and in the eyes of the public. We argue that it would be more effective to be positive and supportive of each other, thereby turning the focus to self-examination for an understanding of how to replace negative, stereotypical images and their restrictions with positive, realistic images to the public.

In self-examination, we may also find the root of many librarians' visceral reactions to seemingly unending discussions of librarian stereotypes and public representation; these reactions may be strongly tied to individuals' senses of identity and individualism. In "Shattering the Myth of Separate Worlds: Negotiating Nonwork Identities at Work," Lakshmi Ramarajan and Erin Reid, professors at Harvard Business School and Boston University respectively, explore how the decline of career stability and other influences "are now blurring the distinctions between work and nonwork life domains such that many workers, their organizations, and their occupations must now renegotiate the relationship between work and nonwork identities."[80] If work and nonwork identities are more intertwined, as Ramarajan and Reid argue, then any representation of a librarian, positive or negative, stereotypical or not, becomes a representation not just of one's career (and therefore work identity) but also potentially a representation of who a person sees as oneself at one's core.

Ramarajan and Reid's discussion of the merging of work and nonwork identities appears then to be especially appropriate to apply in the case of librarianship's tempestuous job market.[81] When a person lands a professional-level position, notably after a period of unemployment or underemployment, they may be particularly enthusiastic about claiming their work identity. If they then are confronted with messages that say they must conform to someone else's conception of that work identity, it can be seen as an attack on their sense of self. So in the information professions, we

are navigating particularly tricky ground between both work and nonwork identities and identities and image. Even librarians who do not see their nonwork identity as strongly tied to their careers may still find discomfort in discussions of what their work image should and should not be. Stereotypes co-opt an individual's agency in their presentation-of-self, and in an already unstable time, being reminded of a lack of control is threatening and evokes more uncertainty.

But much like spoken and written language, clothing and appearance communicate different messages in different contexts. Though we cannot necessarily control the contexts in which we present ourselves, we can be aware of them and encounter them on our own terms.[*] Librarians who would argue that how they look is unimportant and that what they do is what communicates their value are not necessarily wrong in their ideology, but the context matters as do the conscious choices we make in how we encounter our contexts. In *Ideology: An Introduction*, literary theorist Terry Eagleton explains ideology in much the same manner: "Ideology is a manner of 'discourse' rather than 'language,' [and] exactly the same piece of language may be ideological in one context and not in another; ideology is a function of the relation of an utterance to its social context."[82] For example, if librarians visiting a cat shelter proclaim that they love cats, few would find it to be an ideological statement. On the other hand, if they said that they love cats while introducing themselves at a library event, it would carry a different weight. Embracing a stereotype to make it your own can signal validation of stereotypes to others. And on the reverse side of the same matter, the Radfords address librarians who position themselves as unique via monikers such as "Leather Librarian" or "Renegade Librarian," stating, "It remains to be seen if these images will succeed in their challenge to the stereotypes, for in a sense they serve to reinforce the

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[*] See *Fierce Fashion Futures* on Tumblr as an example of approaching fashion through activism: "Fashion is media and politics at the same time. Fashion is life and art at the same time. Every day we communicate something about who we are, who we want and what kind of world we want with our clothes and our bodies," Fierce Fashion Futures, "About Us," http://fiercefashionfutures.tumblr.com/about.

stereotype by proclaiming, in essence, 'we are librarians, but we are the exceptions to the stereotype.'"[83] Posing as individually in opposition to a stereotype can reinforce it for the rest of the group.

Further, no matter one's ideology regarding librarian image and how one situates oneself within it, by being engaged in information professions (and one might argue, in humanity), we are inherently entangled in the issues of presentation and representation. In their article "Enclothed Cognition," Hajo Adam and Adam Galinsky address the ways in which clothing influences people, finding that it has an impact both on those whom one encounters as well as on the wearer's own behavior.[84] But it is not just the appearance of an item of clothing that affects the wearer and the observer. Adam and Galinsky experimented in giving the same white lab coat to subjects and describing it varyingly as a "painter's coat" or a "doctor's coat" to different effect. "Participants who wore a supposed doctor's coat and participants who wore a supposed painter's coat were in fact wearing the same coat and had the same physical experience, yet, their performance on an attention-related task differed depending on the coat's symbolic meaning."[85] Extrapolating to the information professions, how we are presented has an effect on the work we do and what people expect of us; the respect we afford ourselves and that users afford us and the subsequent expectations on all sides are strongly affected by what "coat" we wear. Of course, there are no easy answers, and it was in contemplating all of these aspects of the librarian stereotype and its effects that we arrived at the idea for this book and sought out a broad range of chapter topics to tackle many of the issues from a variety of angles.

This book's chapters present a wide range of research genres and foci, attempting, in breaking down librarian stereotypes, to not fall victim itself to any stereotype of "information science literature." We have made an effort to include pieces that both focus on specific instances of librarian-presentation such as tattooed librarians and librarians in pornographic novels as well as broader discussions of issues in the occupation, calls for change, and suggestions of how to work toward that change. Each reader will likely

spot gaps in our scope—as every reader has their own perspectives and interests. The ways in which our occupation is portrayed by others and by ourselves and our professional organizations are myriad; what do people expect from librarians and what do we want them to expect? Correspondingly, the ways in which librarianship is not portrayed are equally of interest and concern; what or who is missing in the image of librarianship? This book is intended to promote the conversation on librarianship today, its history, and its future, encouraging study of the many facets of the public face of the occupation and its institutions—how it is perceived and how we are actively affecting it. There are two important questions that we encourage everyone to ask again and again and to ask in different ways to grow the discourse to include each reader's personal concerns: How are we and others perpetuating the profession? And how does this impact the libraries and librarianship of the future?

In this themed volume, you will find a wealth of views and a wide range of ideas and approaches to looking at the issues surrounding stereotyping in information work. We have organized the order of the chapters to provide flow and some scaffolding in concepts. Readers began their journey with James V. Carmichael Jr.'s foreword, "Embracing the Melancholy: How the Author Renounced Moloch and the Conga Line for Sweet Conversations on Paper, to the Air of 'Second Hand Rose.'" Since his entrance into the field as a librarian and continuing as a faculty member at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill School of Information and Library Science, James has provided poignant research on librarian stereotypes, examining implications regarding gender and LGBTQ issues in librarianship. His contributions to the field in these areas of study are known for high-impact articles beginning in the 1990s such as "The Male Librarian and the Feminine Image: A Survey of Stereotype, Status, and Gender Perceptions" and "The Gay Librarian: A Comparative Analysis of Attitudes towards Professional Gender Issues."[86] A number of our authors cite James's research, and we feel it has come full circle to have his work, written 20 years ago, still be so rel-

evant today, and he continues to provide highly insightful and important research to the field.

With this first chapter, we have framed the context from which the rest of our chapters emerge. In chapter 2, "Academic Librarian Self-Image in Lore: How Shared Stories Convey and Define our Sense of Professional Identity," Sarah Steiner and Julie Jones construct a folklore analysis of the tales librarians tell regarding work, demonstrating the resultant impact on self-perspective and what it means to be an information professional. In chapter 3, Gretchen Keer and Andrew Carlos examine why librarians have historically been obsessed with stereotypes and explore what might have propelled perception anxiety to this level with "The Stereotype Stereotype: Our Obsession with Librarian Representation." Ayanna Gaines follows in chapter 4 with "That's Women's Work: Pink-Collar Professions, Gender, and the Librarian Stereotype" and takes an in-depth look at the struggle for pay equity and status of feminized professions, providing context for librarianship by comparing it with fields encountering similar obstacles. In chapter 5, "From Sensuous to Sexy: The Librarian in Post-Censorship Print Pornography," David Squires addresses the evolution of the "sexy librarian" stereotype and its impact on libraries and their users through an analysis of pornographic novels.

In chapter 6, "Rainbow Warriors: Stories of Archivist Activism and the Queer Record," Terry Baxter examines the transformation of archives and activists through the co-emergence of queer archives and archivist activism. Chapter 7, "Unpacking Identity: Racial, Ethnic, and Professional Identity and Academic Librarians of Color," is Isabel Gonzalez-Smith, Juleah Swanson, and Azusa Tanaka's investigation of perceptions of librarians of color within librarianship, looking to self-study and implications for expanding racial and ethnic diversity in the library workforce. Dorothy Gambrell pairs her artistry with Amanda Brennan for chapter 8, "Librarians and Felines: A History of Defying the 'Cat Lady' Stereotype," a graphic rendering of the mingled stereotypes of librarians and cat aficionados. With chapter 9, "Between Barbarism and Civiliza-

tion: Librarians, Tattoos, and Social Imaginaries," Erin Pappas explores tattoos and the body of the librarian through an anthro-linguistic analysis of how librarians talk about their tattoos and how these permanent art forms become a site in which the profession's anxieties play out. With chapter 10, "At the Corner of Personality and Competencies: Exploring Professional Personas for Librarians," Lauren Pressley, Jenny Dale, and Lynda Kellam look into assumed and real personas of librarians, linking personality with professional abilities and expectations. Chapter 11, "Student Perceptions of Academic Librarians: The Influence of Pop Culture and Past Experience," is Melissa Langridge, Christine Riggi, and Allison Schultz's examination of student perceptions of librarians based on exposure to popular media and previous interaction with libraries. The chapters are rounded off with Annie Pho and J. Turner Masland's chapter 12, "The Revolution Will Not Be Stereotyped: Changing Perceptions through Diversity," discussing librarianship's complicated history between public perceptions and diversity; they offer actionable suggestions on how to improve both users' relationships with librarians and libraries' efforts for greater diversity. And last, K. R. Roberto, noted cataloger and coauthor of *Revolting Librarians Redux: Radical Librarians Speak Out*, looks to the future of librarianship with challenges and opportunities ahead in his afterword.[87]

This book aims to capture images of both the general state of affairs for information work and its presentation, as well as multiple microcosms of presentation within the world of librarianship, and to explore these particular topics in greater detail. There is much work to be done to reconfigure both librarian stereotypes and the conditions that perpetuate them. Rather than offering a conclusive statement, or an encapsulation of all of the aspects of the value of librarianship and the issues we face as individuals and as a community, we hope that this book reignites the discussion and launches us into productive conversation and action.

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