

**The Construction of Librarians' Professional Identities:
A Discourse Analysis**

by

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Abstract

Librarians, as information specialists, serve an important role in society. They provide low-cost access to information resources, organize the growing amount of information, and help students, job seekers, researchers, families, co-workers, organizations and communities meet their information needs by designing, implementing, and providing information services. In doing so, they not only articulate a specific understanding of information and their communities' information needs, they communicate their professional identity. By focusing on how librarians describe their profession, attention can be drawn to how librarians themselves construct librarianship, and how this construction shapes their interactions with clients, their local communities, other professions, and society at large. This study used a social constructionist-inspired discourse analysis approach to examine the interpretive repertoires librarians used to describe themselves as professionals. Interpretive repertoires are the language resources a group, such as a profession, uses to describe itself and its members. They consist of words and phrases that provide professionals with a shared worldview and sense of self. The analysis focused on how librarians described librarianship, themselves as professionals, and their professional problems in three different types of data sources: journal articles, editorials, and letters to the editor aimed at professional librarians; messages posted to email discussion lists; and research interviews with librarians. The data sources were selected to ensure different professional contexts and perspectives were represented in the overall data set. Five interpretive repertoires were identified: insider-outsider, service, professionalism, change, and advocacy. Throughout these repertoires, librarians described themselves as dedicated service professionals with a unique knowledge base and jurisdictional expertise, and librarianship as a profession dedicated to meeting people's information needs. Being a professional, to librarians, meant upholding the

professional values of librarianship, a natural and inherent ability to provide clients with high-quality information services, a flexible attitude towards change and a desire to embrace technology, the skill to advocate for the profession, and an information expertise based in a combination of graduate level education and experience. Librarians' sense of themselves as professionals was connected to their professional competences, skills, and attitudes, i.e., their professionalism. Clients and their information needs were at the centre of librarians' descriptions of both themselves as professionals and librarianship as a profession. Although librarians made a clear distinction between how they understood themselves and their profession from popular images and stereotypes, they were also concerned that these images would create misperceptions of librarians and librarianship in the minds of clients. They focused instead on demonstrating to clients, through service and advocacy activities, their professional, and the profession's, importance and value. In addition, librarians described a genuine desire to help meet their clients' information needs. Librarians' relationships with certain client groups were affected by this desire to help and the need to have their professionalism acknowledged by clients. These findings offer librarians opportunities to reflect on the relationships they have with their clients, the messages they communicate through their advocacy activities, how they use technology to meet clients' information needs, their relationships with their paraprofessional colleagues, and how they conceive of the library as an institution. There are implications for Library and Information Science educators and professional associations.

Preface

This thesis is an original work by Deborah Hicks. The research project, of which this thesis is a part, received research ethics approval from the University of Alberta Research Ethics Board, Project Name “The Construction of Librarians’ Professional Identities: A Discourse Analysis”, No. Pro00044116, December 8, 2014.

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List of Abbreviations

ACRL	Association of College and Research Libraries
ALA	American Library Association
CLA	Canadian Library Association
DDC	Dewey Decimal Classification
EDAL	Educational Leadership and Administration
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
IL	Information Literacy
LIS	Library and Information Science
MBA	Master of Business Administration
MLIS	Master of Library and Information Science
MLS	Master of Library Science
OCLC	Online Computer Library Center
OPAC	Online Public Access Catalogue
UTD	UpToDate

Chapter One

Introduction

Librarians, as information specialists, serve an important role in society. They provide low-cost access to information resources, organize the growing amount of information, and help students, job seekers, researchers, families, co-workers, organizations, and communities meet their information and leisure needs by designing, implementing, and providing information services. In doing so, they not only articulate a specific understanding of information and their community's information needs, they communicate their professional identity. Public perceptions of librarians, however, are tied to the outdated understanding of librarians as keepers of the books (Online Computer Library Center, 2005). This creates a tension between the work librarians do and public perceptions of librarians that can create barriers to the effective delivery of information services. This tension is precisely why understanding the professional identity of librarians is important. Identity is a social product that is “produced and interpreted by other people” (Benwell & Stokoe, 2010, p. 83), and its study provides insight into what it means to participate in different social groups, cultures, and institutions (Gee, 2005). By examining identity through a discursive lens, attention can be brought to how librarians shape their professional identity and in turn how this identity shapes their interactions with society. Given the important role of librarians in providing information services, such as information literacy education and access to information resources, an understanding of librarians' professional identity will shed light on how the profession contributes to and interacts within their roles as information providers.

Context of the Study

The professional status of librarianship has been a longstanding issue for librarians. Melvil Dewey, often described as the father of modern librarianship, wrote in 1876 that the time had come to speak of librarianship as a profession, not merely an occupation:

The time was when a library was very like a museum, and a librarian was a mouser in musty books, and visitors looked with curious eyes at ancient tomes and manuscripts. The time is when a library is a school, and the librarian is in the highest sense a teacher, and the visitor is a reader among the books as a workman among his tools. Will any man deny to the high calling of such a librarianship the title of profession? (Dewey, 1989, p. 5)

Ever since, throughout contemporary Library and Information Studies (LIS) literature, there have been descriptions of librarianship as a profession. Professional standards, comportment, and even dress are not uncommon topics. The word “profession” is used uncritically and without much thought. Based on its common usage in the literature, it could easily be assumed that librarians do not question their occupation’s status as a profession. This, however, is not the case, as claims to professionalism have been called into question by both librarians and social scientists.

Early attempts to define professions have had a significant influence on how librarians understand their professional status. The professions literature arose in the early 20th century in response to the creation of new occupational categories in the 19th century. Attempts to define these new occupations arose from case studies that focused on developing lists of traits used to define professions (Abbott, 1988) and ever since, these lists of traits have been used by librarians to measure librarianship’s professional status. These list-based approaches to defining professions are collectively known as trait theories and consist of five to eight characteristics that

occupations must meet in order to be considered a profession. The most common characteristics are: 1) knowledge based on abstract and esoteric information, 2) a long period of university-based study to master that knowledge, 3) a service orientation, 4) a high degree of job autonomy, 5) an exhibited commitment to the profession, 6) a well-developed sense of professional community, and 7) a code of ethics that guides practitioner behaviour and defines core values (Leicht, 2005). Other traits include using the knowledge base of the profession to claim authority over not only the knowledge itself but also the clients, and that the public must recognize the status of the profession (Roos, 2001). Librarians have used these characteristics as a checklist, with librarianship falling short of true professional status (Goode, 1961; Lonergan, 2009). As a result, practicing librarians, or practitioners, have used these traits to point out areas librarians can improve upon to become a true profession (Bayless, 1977; Bundy and Wasserman, 1968).

Social scientists abandoned trait theory approaches in the 1960s and 1970s (K. M. MacDonald, 1995). It was argued those approaches reflected political concerns, and a consensus on which traits were core to the definition of profession could not be identified or agreed upon (Abbott, 1988). Instead, social scientists started to examine the processes occupations undertook to gain the social status of a profession, in other words, the processes of professionalization. Librarianship has rarely been the focus of professionalization studies. In the 1960s, it was classified as a semi-profession, meaning it was considered to be a low-prestige profession that had limited autonomy, a poorly defined body of knowledge unique to the profession, and most of its members were female (Etzioni, 1969). As a result, it was of little interest to social scientists. Only Abbott has examined librarianship's professionalization process. Abbott's approach to professionalization focused on how occupational groups create their professional jurisdictions. Unlike previous approaches to professions and professionalism, Abbott's (1988) approach

focused on the context of a profession's work: "This context always relates back to the power of the profession's knowledge systems, their abstracting ability to define old problems in new ways" (Abbott, 1988, p. 30). Specifically, Abbott was interested in how professions laid jurisdictional claims to areas of abstract knowledge and professional practice. He argued librarianship developed in the mid-19th century and was the product of the creation of libraries. Libraries gave librarians sole responsibility for the print resources of a community or organization. In other words, "they had physical custody of cultural capital" (Abbott, 1988, p. 217). Librarians initially claimed jurisdiction over which materials and resources were collected and made available to the public. This led to tensions between librarians and their communities over which materials should be allowed into local collections, specifically, whether or not so-called sensational fiction should be made available alongside great literature (p. 218). Librarians eventually partially ceded jurisdiction over the collection by allowing their communities to have a larger say in which materials were collected and by making greater efforts to include light fiction.

In response to challenges to the scope of their professional responsibilities, under the influence of Dewey, librarians retreated into the technical tasks of cataloguing, bibliography, reference, and retrieval—laying professional claim to access to information. Abbott (1988) argued the influence of Dewey, although powerful, was not the only factor influencing the jurisdictional claims of librarianship. Librarians were also managing large demographic changes that were leading to the rapid growth of libraries. To retain control over their work, librarians had to lay claim to a specific area of knowledge—access to information—as there simply were not enough librarians to make a broader jurisdictional claim.

The structure of the profession also had an influence on the jurisdictional claims of librarianship. Like many other professions, Abbott (1988) identified librarianship as having a strong core (academic and special librarians) and a weak or hazy periphery (public and school librarians). The core drove the profession's jurisdictional expertise over access to information by focusing attention on developing standards to facilitate inter-institutional borrowing of materials. The core's attachment to universities also lent academic librarians prestige and gave additional credence to their focus on information access. Many of the structures of librarianship were put in place to facilitate the work of the core. These structures had a significant influence on the periphery of the profession. For instance, the centralization of cataloguing via the Library of Congress had a beneficial impact for librarians at the core, because it freed them for other tasks, but it reduced the professional level work for public and school librarians.

These structures were further supported by changes external to the profession. Technology, namely the computer, affected the profession in two main ways: it simplified low-status services like circulation and maintaining the catalogue, removing them from the professional purview of librarians, and it standardized descriptive cataloguing and indexing, thus removing professional judgement. Abbott (1988) noted technology itself did not make these changes, librarians did. By the 1950s and 1960s, jurisdictionally, librarians had very little competition; therefore they made few attempts to invade other professional areas—a tactic other professions have used to expand jurisdictional expertise. Abbott argued “[l]ibrarians had no real incentive for structural change other than a desire for social repute” (p. 222). As a result, instead of attempting to take over new jurisdictional areas, librarians emphasized their education, which, Abbott argued, was “irrelevant to professional practice” (p. 222).

The general consensus amongst librarians and social scientists is that librarianship is a profession. Some authors, however, have argued that librarians' pursuit of professionalism has limited librarianship, both financially and intellectually. Estabrook (1981) argued the pursuit of professional status had greatly limited the earning potential of librarians by dividing them from labour unions. In the 1970s, librarians earned 10% less than expected, while during the same period, members of trade unions were the only sector to make gains in their salaries. In addition, attempts at gaining professional status were creating a hierarchy within librarianship, pitting unionized librarians against non-unionized librarians. More recently, Dilevko (2009) argued librarians' preoccupation with professionalism and professional status had de-intellectualized their work and, to re-intellectualize the field, librarians had to remove the education of librarians from universities and instead gain a well-rounded knowledge base that encompassed as many subject fields as possible (including at least one foreign language) and certification in library skills from special institutes.

In the professions literature, the concepts of profession and professionalism have recently been losing ground. Watson (2002a) argued social scientists have conflated the common sense definitions of profession and professional with theoretical understandings, and as a result these theories have lost their utility as a social science concept: "This problem alone can be seen as a good reason to question the use of the term [professional] as an analytical concept. Adding a technical social science sense to the confusing variety of everyday usages is to risk making matters even worse" (p. 95). Dent and Whitehead (2002) added to Watson's concerns by highlighting the social, cultural, and economic changes associated with the postmodern age that have changed what society expects of a professional:

As we search for new meanings and signposts in our constructions of reality, we are increasingly denied recourse to those statuses that have long anchored cultural, class and social differences. One of the anchors of order had been ‘the professional’: someone trusted and respected, an individual given class status, autonomy, social elevation, in return for safeguarding our well-being and applying their professional judgement on the basis of a benign moral or cultural code. The professional no longer exists. (Dent & Whitehead, 2002, p. 1)

Both Watson and Dent and Whitehead acknowledged the concepts of professions and professionalism had improved how “professionalism ‘in action’” was understood (Dent & Whitehead, 2002, p. 2); however, they provided limited insight into how individuals experience, enact, and make sense of professionalism. To address this, Watson (2002a) argued social scientists should focus on professional talk “to examine the way members of certain occupational groups utilize notions of professionalism to achieve certain purposes” (p. 94). Instead of focusing on whether or not an occupation’s claims to professionalism were valid or invalid, Watson’s approach would examine how members of a profession determined who was or was not a fellow professional, how professional and work boundaries were negotiated, and how client-professional relationships were navigated. Watson’s approach to professions and professionalism offers a new way to examine librarianship as a profession. Instead of determining whether or not librarianship meets an out-of-date set of criteria for professional status or focusing on how the profession has historically claimed jurisdiction over areas of work and knowledge, Watson’s approach provides a method for exploring how librarians understand their own profession, professionalism, and professional identity.

Theoretical Framework

This study uses a social constructionist framework to analyse and understand the data collected. Our understanding of objects, ideas, and other people is informed by the discourses that surround them. As we encounter objects, ideas, and other people, we encounter the discourses that construct and represent them. Each object, idea, and person is surrounded by multiple discourses, so understanding and meaning may be constructed in different ways by different people. Identity within social constructionism can be described as a combination of discursive subject positions occupied by a person. Discourses constrain and shape our actions, but do not predetermine them. They provide us with a sense of self, the ideas we hold, and a narrative that we use to talk and think about ourselves. This narrative is not self-generated. Instead, it is negotiated through our interactions with other people and their discursive subject positions. However, not all discourses are equal. Some dominant discourses influence social arrangements and practices, which in turn support the status quo. According to Burr: “Constructions arise not from people attempting to communicate supposed internal states (such as feelings, desires, attitudes, beliefs and so on which emanate from their ‘personality’) but from their attempts to bring off a representation of themselves or the world that has a liberating, legitimating or otherwise positive effect for them” (Burr, 1995, p. 92). In short, all people are discourse-users. Social constructionism is, therefore, interested in “how utterances [both spoken and written] work” and in “analysing the rhetorical strategies in play in particular kinds of discourse” (Schwandt, 2000, p. 197).

Social constructionism is often described as being “mute or agnostic on matters of ontology” (Schwandt, 2000, p.198). What matters to some social constructionists are not real phenomena in and of themselves, but our discursively mediated perceptions and experiences of

these phenomena. As Gergen (1994) wrote: “Whatever is, simply is. . . . Once we attempt to articulate ‘what there is,’ however, we enter the world of discourse” (p. 72); however, as discourse-users, people create accounts of the world that appear factual and difficult to refute (Hibberd, 2005; Potter & Wetherell, 1987). Discourses not only shape how people *think* about the world and make meaning of the phenomena they encounter, but also how to *act* within the world. These actions are the product of discourse, however: “The world is not distinct from the processes involved in representing and interpreting it. Instances of brute reality are social accomplishments” (Hibberd, 2005, p. 5). The way people use discourse to construct the world allows for the possibility of certain social actions. One’s ontology, therefore, is not fixed: “[E]mploying different forms of discourse [does] not commit the speaker to anything ontologically” (Hibberd, 2005, p. 105). Discourses allow people to construct a version of reality that informs the way they act in the world.

Social constructionists use discourse analysis to examine the ways people use language to construct versions of events. By examining how different people construct the same event, a contextual consistency of accounts of a specific topic can be discerned (McKenzie, 2005). Potter and Wetherell (1987) call these contextual consistencies “interpretive repertoires.” Interpretive repertoires are described as “the building blocks speakers use for constructing versions of actions, cognitive processes and other phenomena” (Wetherell & Potter, 1988, p. 172). To elucidate the concept, Edley (2001) used the apt metaphor of books in a public library “permanently available for borrowing” (p. 198). Repertoires, like books in the metaphor, can be drawn upon and used to construct versions of events. Repertoires are linked to social groups, such as a profession. All members of a group draw upon, or borrow, repertoires when speaking about their work or profession. The identification and analysis of interpretive repertoires

involves paying attention to variations in the way a discourse is constructed so that the full scope of the repertoire can be discerned. The professional identity of librarians can be exposed by studying the interpretive repertoires librarians draw upon when they speak or write about their profession. By focusing on how librarians describe their profession, attention can be drawn to how librarians themselves construct librarianship, and how this construction shapes their interactions with clients, their local community, other professions, and society at large.

Defining Professional Identity

Studies examining identity ultimately focus on two questions: “who am I?” and “how should I act?” (Alvesson, Ashcraft, & Thomas, 2008). Identity, within social constructionism, is a “social phenomenon, produced and interpreted by other people, in discourse and other social and embodied conduct” (Benwell & Stokoe, 2011, p. 83). Identity, therefore, is actively constructed within talk and texts and not merely reflected by them. A person can have multiple identities. Zimmerman (1998) identified three identities: discourse, situational, and transportable. People assume discourse identities as they engage in activities, such as speaking with another person. In a conversation, for instance, a person assumes the identity of the current speaker, or storyteller, when talking, but assumes the identity of the listener, or story recipient, when the other person speaks. In both instances, to exist these identities require the acknowledgement of the other person in the conversation. Situated identities occur in specific situations or when a person is engaging in a specific activity. For instance, a person often assumes their professional identity in the workplace; however, situated identities can also be assumed by engaging in the activities and assuming the worldview associated with a situated identity. Therefore, a professional does not have to be in their workplace to assume their professional identity. Lastly, transportable identities travel across and are relevant in various situations. Zimmerman (1998)

called these “tag along” identities (p. 90). They are usually visible or can be assigned to a person by someone else or claimed by an individual—such as gender or race. Each of these identities provides a different answer to the questions “who am I?” and “how should I act?” The context in which each identity is assumed will provide different responses and evoke different actions. A professional identity, therefore, is one of many possible identities a person can have and it is, following Zimmerman’s argument, a situated identity. In essence, a professional identity provides the answer to “who am I?” in specific situations. People’s situated identities are linked through “socially distributed knowledge” (Zimmerman, 1998, p. 94), which provide situated identities with resources required to accomplish their desired agendas or functions—in other words the answer to “how should I act?” For professions, these resources are provided to them through their professional practices.

Kemmis (2010) described professional practices as gaining their meaning and intention from a combination of three kinds of knowledge: the propositional, theoretical, or scientific knowledge unique to the profession; the profession’s craft knowledge, or knowledge of how to do something; and personal knowledge about oneself and in relation to others. In addition to existing as profession specific knowledge in the heads of professionals, Kemmis argued practices have “extra-individual features” (p. 142), meaning that practices are socially, culturally, and historically located and contextualized. Practices provide meaning and intention that guide the activities and identities of practitioners. In other words, they provide the framework to answer who a person is and how she or he should act by offering a particular view of what it means to be a professional and a specific way to act in the world. Professional practices prefigure individual professionals. They are codified in texts and curricula, expressed in social relations with other professionals, accrediting bodies, and educational institutions. These practices are performed

when professionals interact with others. Practitioners will have one understanding of these practices, resulting from their education and professional experiences, but non-practitioners, such as clients and even non-library users, will have a different understanding. How professionals interact with their clients is informed by these different understandings. For example, a library patron in a public library knows that she or he could ask questions of a reference librarian that relate to an information need. Through this interaction, the patron will learn more about the specific discourses of libraries and librarians as the librarian responds to the question. These discourses could be evident through the librarian's use of jargon (referring to the online catalogue as an OPAC or Online Public Access Catalogue), through actions and work processes, and through the "social relations and organizational and institutional goals, roles and rules that apply to their interactions" (Kemmis, 2010, p. 145). Although Zimmerman's (1998) definition of identity implies that identity is only expressed during interactions with other people, it is argued here that identity can be and is expressed whenever the discourses of the profession are drawn upon to either identify one's self as a professional or recognize that identity in another. These discourses can be seen in, for example, depictions of professions in the media, jokes about certain professions, and stereotypes.

Identity is defined here as a description, or representation, of the self within specific practices. A profession provides an individual with a set of practices that can be used to form an identity. This identity, however, is meaningless unless it is recognized by others. Professional practices provide a framework that not only guides the identities of professionals, but also of non-professionals. Through this interaction, whether in the space of professional practice (for example a library) or in popular culture, the practices are performed. Professionals use the discourses of their profession and the organizations for which they work to describe and enact

their identities. It is, however, not limited to use within the institutions and organizations associated with the profession, such as workplaces or professional conferences. Professions have extra-institutional discourses associated with them that professionals interact with outside their immediate workplaces. Professionals can use these discourses to describe themselves to different groups. These descriptions may be in contrast to the dominant discourse (for example, when countering a negative stereotype), but they only have meaning when the discourse recognizes them in some way. A librarian, for example, could not claim to be a medical expert because the discourses of medicine and librarianship do not recognize such an expertise. Lastly, a professional identity governs how the professional interacts with the general public by providing roles to the individuals participating in a professional interaction.

A key feature of the theoretical framework employed for this study is that people do things with language. As Wetherell and Potter wrote: “People do things with their discourse; they make accusations, ask questions, justify their conduct and so on. . . . [Additionally,] when people deploy a particular form of discourse, it has repercussions of its own which may not have been formulated or even understood by the speaker or writer” (Wetherell and Potter, 1988, p. 169). When language is examined for its interpretive repertoires, it is examined for its functions—both intended and unintended. These functions can be explaining or justifying, or they can work on an ideological level to legitimate the social position of a group. Therefore, professional identity is more than simply a description of the self with specific practices—it also serves a purpose, or function, and has different social consequences and implications as a result.

Identity and Discourse Analysis

This study used a social constructionist inspired discourse analysis approach, developed by Potter and Wetherell (1987), which focuses on the interpretive repertoires people use to

account for their actions, beliefs, and even themselves in different contexts. Although not a new approach, discourse analysis is often an overlooked research method in both LIS and Educational Administration and Leadership (EDAL). In LIS, Frohmann (1994) was an early advocate for discourse analysis, particularly the approach advocated by Michel Foucault. Frohmann argued that discourse analysis had the potential to disclose “significant problems and questions” in LIS research (p. 119), particularly in regards to how the theoretical discourses of the discipline constructed information, along with its users and its uses. He highlighted that discourse analysis had the ability to question what LIS researchers understood to be “‘natural,’ ‘given,’ or ‘objective’” (p. 135) and to focus on the constructed nature of identities—especially the identities given to information users by information theorists.

Although Frohmann (1994) did not extend his argument to include how information providers construct their own identities, his work was very influential on future discourse analysis approaches in LIS. Much of the discourse analysis work in the discipline has focused on identifying the discourses of LIS. How information researchers have discursively constructed information users, for instance, has received a fair amount of attention. Tuominen (1997) used a Foucauldian discourse analysis approach to examine how information users and librarians were discursively constructed in the work of Kuhlthau (1993), while Olsson (2005a, 2005b, 2007) examined how information researchers constructed the notion of author and how information users were constructed in Dervin’s (1999) work on sense-making (Olsson, 2009). Other researchers have examined how information-intensive organizations provide information users with identities through their institutional discourses. Hedemark, Hedman, & Sundin (2005) examined how public libraries framed the identities of library users in Sweden, and Given (2000, 2002) examined how information users were discursively constructed by universities. Given, in

particular, focused on how these discourses positioned users in specific, often stereotypical, ways and provided mature students with pre-set identities that often did not match how these students understood themselves.

The information practices of specific user groups have been examined using discourse analysis. The focus of these studies was on how discourses regulated participants' information practices (Carlisle, 2007; Heizmann, 2012; Johannisson & Sundin, 2007; McKenzie, 2002, 2004; Sundin, 2002). Sundin (2002) specifically focused on information practices as tools for the identity construction of nurses. Nurses' need, seeking, and use of information reflected the evolving occupational identity of the nursing profession. Recent changes to the nursing profession, such as the development of a nursing-specific professional and disciplinary knowledge base, offered nurses a continuum of experiences through which they could express some of their professional identity. For example, changes to the profession had created a continuum that placed professional knowledge on a scale from practical to theoretical. Nurses with a traditional identity emphasised the need for more practical, medically-based knowledge in their work, while those with "new" identities emphasised a need for formal nursing-specific knowledge (Sundin, 2002, p. 194). While Given (2000, 2002) examined how institutional discourses provide information users with pre-defined identities, Sundin (2002) examined how individuals' information seeking practices could be understood as an expression of occupational identity.

In EDAL, discourse analysis has been used to explore race and racism (Bryan, 2012), student identities (Colyar & Stich, 2011), teacher identities (Karlsson, 2013), and researcher-teacher relationships (Chan & Clarke, 2014). Similarly to LIS, some of the discourse analysis research in EDAL focuses on how discourses construct the identities of others. Mayson (2012)

examined how senior academic managers constructed the identities of teachers by discursively positioning teaching as being less important than research. Gee (2000/2001) argued that for Education research discourse analysis, especially discourse analysis research that focuses on identity, can shed light on the social interactions and relationships that shape identities and how schools and other institutions, such as universities and businesses, work together to define identities for individuals. In addition, discourse analysis provides a way to challenge the assumptions of teachers' and researchers' "natural categories" (Gee, 2000/2001, p. 120), or fixed ways of understanding children that can influence their futures and provide insight into how individuals, especially children, shape and construct their identities.

As will be discussed in chapter two, professional identity is not a common topic for either LIS or EDAL. In Organizational Studies, however, professional identity is a common topic and discourse analysis is a common methodology for its examination. Discourse analysis has been used to examine how medical ideology and professional identity are socially constructed for physicians (Apker & Eggly, 2004), how professionals use their identities to account for workplace time commitments (Kuhn, 2006), how identity is constructed by human resources service representatives in a call centre (Pritchard & Symon, 2011), how the discourse of professionalism is used by human resources professionals to form their professional identities (Watson, 2002b), and how social work students understand the concept of professional identity (Wiles, 2012). Studies like these demonstrate that a discourse analysis approach to professional identity can provide insight into professional problems and concerns, what it means to be a professional, and how professionals themselves construct their understanding of their profession. Such insights have implications for understanding how professionals comprehend their roles and the services they offer, and the cultural and social origins of professional decision-making. In

addition, these insights can lead to the development of professionally appropriate solutions to relevant problems, which in turn influences professionals' relationships with their communities and client bases.

Research Questions

This study examined the professional identity of librarians by exploring the following questions:

- 1) What are the interpretive repertoires librarians draw upon when constructing their professional identity?
- 2) How do librarians describe themselves and their profession in their professional literature, on email discussion lists, and to a researcher?
- 3) Does the function of this description change depending on the audience or context? For instance, when librarians are talking with other librarians indirectly via the professional literature or directly on email discussion lists? When they are talking to non-librarians (i.e., a researcher)?
- 4) Are the descriptions of librarians and librarianship different for each library sector (public, academic, special, school)? Are the functions of these descriptions different for each library sector?

Significance of the Study

Librarians have a vital part to play in today's society. Information is growing at a rate estimated to be equal to the contents of 37,000 Libraries of Congress per year (Lyman & Varian, 2003) or, as Google CEO Eric Schmidt estimated, more information is created every two days since 2003 than was created between the dawn of civilization and 2003 (Siegler, 2010). Hilbert and López (2011) estimated that between 1986 and 2007 computing capacity grew 58%,

bidirectional telecommunication grew 28%, and the amount of globally stored information grew 23% per year. As of 2007, there was 2.9×10^{20} optimally compressed bytes of information stored (the equivalent to 404 billion CD-ROMs of information), 2×10^{21} bytes of information communicated (every person on Earth communicates the equivalent of six newspapers a day), and 6.4×10^{18} instructions per second were carried out on general-purpose computers (combined that is 25,000 times more powerful than the supercomputer named Watson that competed on the game-show *Jeopardy* in 2011) (Hilbert & López, 2013). As information specialists, librarians are uniquely placed to address this total change in the information world through the provision of information literacy education, information services to the public, and the organization of information. Librarians have been seeking professional status and recognition since Dewey. Many librarians believe that improving the profession's status will lead to financial gains for librarians as well as greater public respect. There is, however, no one way to define professional work. Classic definitions of professions are flawed and essentialist, but the concepts of profession and professionalism still hold deep societal meaning. Alternative approaches to understanding professionalism have attempted to address the flaws of these traditional approaches. This study adds to this literature by examining the specific, situated meaning of profession and professional identity for librarians.

By focusing on how librarians describe their profession, attention can be drawn to how librarians themselves construct librarianship and how this construction influences the delivery of information services, which in turn shapes librarians' relationships with their clients and communities. This research explores not only how librarians conceive of clients, but how they conceive of themselves. It highlights the fact that the professional practices of librarianship are co-constructed by librarians and their users. A deeper understanding of the professional identity

of librarians through their professional literature, email discussion lists, and in research interviews will illustrate how librarians understand their role, the services they offer, and what place librarians feel they hold in society today.

Dissertation Outline

This dissertation consists of six chapters. Following this introductory chapter, the literature review in chapter two examines the existing literature on the professional identity of librarians. Not only has this topic not received much attention in the LIS literature, when it is discussed, the concepts of image and identity are often conflated. Chapter two, therefore, examines how both image and identity are framed in the LIS literature and compares these understandings to the definition of professional identity presented in this chapter. In chapter three, the research methods used in this study are described. As the intent of this discourse analysis is to both identify the interpretive repertoires that frame librarians' professional identities and the social function of these repertoires, the results will be described in chapter four and discussed in chapter five. Chapter six is the dissertation's concluding chapter. It summarizes the major findings and makes recommendations for policy, practices, and possible areas for future research. This is followed by an appendix listing the professional journal articles, editorials, and letters to the editor comprising part of the data set and six appendices providing additional materials related to the study's research design.

Chapter Two

Literature Review

Chapter Introduction

The professional identity of librarians has not been the subject of much recent academic inquiry, nor is it well understood by researchers. As will be explored in this chapter, much of the inquiry that purports to be about the professional identity of librarians is in fact about the professional image, status, and reputation of librarianship. This literature focuses on the perception of librarians and librarianship and exposes little about the professional identity of librarians, except perhaps to inadvertently illustrate that librarians are concerned with their professional reputation. A small body of literature does purport to examine the professional identity of librarians. This literature review begins with an examination of three landmark into the professional identity of librarians. Bennett (1988), Winter (1988), and Harris (1992) each approached the topic of identity differently. Bennett (1988) considered how the inclusion of “information science” changed the disciplinary identity of librarians. Winter (1988) examined how two clashing cultures within librarianship—freedom of information and a culture of control—dictated a particular worldview for librarians. Harris (1992) examined how the feminine nature of librarianship was being undermined by attempts to improve the status of the profession. In addition to these early studies, there is a body of recent work that purports to examine librarians’ professional identity. Much of this literature has been published within the past few years and is focused on the identity construction of LIS students and the connection between faculty status and professional identity for academic librarians. As will be discussed, although these more recent studies claim to be about professional identity, they are in fact about either the socialization of LIS students to librarianship (a separate, if related, topic to professional identity) or about the professional status of librarianship.

This section will be followed by an examination of professional image from three different approaches: the popular image and stereotype of librarians; how librarians see themselves; and the perceived impact that stereotypes have had on the profession, from librarian-client relationships to recruitment. In this section, the small body of literature that purports to examine the professional identity of librarians will be examined. Although the focus of this literature is on professional roles and institutional fit, like much of the other literature examined in the chapter, image is often conflated with identity. In addition to literature on the image and status of librarianship, there is a small, but growing body of literature on one aspect of librarians' professional identity—the teacher identity of librarians. As will be explored, much of this literature is focused on specific roles, or work tasks, and not librarians' overall professional identity.

The next section will explore different approaches to identity found in the literature, including questioning the existence of a professional identity for librarians, arguments about the historical roots of librarianship's identity, and studies such as Tuominen's (1997), that examine how librarians discursively position themselves in relation to library users, which inadvertently sheds light on the professional identities of librarians. Finally, how professional identity is explored in the educational leadership literature will be reviewed. In educational leadership, professional identity is conceived of as a description of the self or as an achievement to be met, but there is rarely an attempt to uncover the repertoires or discourses that principals use to describe their identities, or the function their identities have when they interact with students, community members, teachers, and other stakeholders.

The Professional Identity of Librarians: Three Landmark Investigations

Technological changes, along with the disciplinary shift from “library science” to “library and information science” triggered three landmark investigations into the identity of librarians during the late 1980s and early 1990s—Bennett (1988), Winter (1988), and Harris (1992). Using a hermeneutically inspired discourse analysis approach, Bennett examined how changing the name of “library science” to include “information science” influenced the disciplinary identity of librarianship. Bennett examined “recent, authoritative statements defining library-and-information-science” (Bennett, 1988, p. viii) to study the ideologies that legitimated this shift and subsequent change in disciplinary and professional identity. Professional librarians, Bennett argued, were quick to accept the change in disciplinary nomenclature because librarians, specifically academic librarians, felt they were regarded as second-rate academics whose work was invisible to patrons. The inclusion of information science to the discipline’s name had little to do with including information theories in the profession’s knowledge base and more to do with improving the social status of the profession. Bennett’s study focused on identifying the interpretive conventions of librarianship, or the myths librarians repeat to themselves in their professional literature to help legitimize their professional status. One convention he identified was the belief that by embracing research and developing a science of librarianship, librarians could gain the “academic respectability [that had] been missing in the professional lives of academic librarians” (Bennett, 1988, p. 188). Bennett argued that concerns over the subordinate status of librarianship perpetuated the perception that it was an inferior profession. In other words, it was not faculty members and other non-librarians who understood the status of librarians to be low, but librarians themselves. This understanding was repeated in professional conversations and in the professional literature and was, as a result, reinforced.

Winter's (1988) approach to professional identity focused on developing a new understanding of librarianship as a profession. He argued that standard approaches to the study of professions—specifically trait-based and functionalist approaches—limited the ways librarianship, as a profession, was understood. As an alternative, Winter advocated for a sociological approach to the study of occupation, which he defined as “a type of social group defined by common tasks and routines in the workplace” (Winter, 1988, p. 98), as it was flexible enough to study the work of librarians. He argued an occupation was “a society on a small scale, with role structure, norms, values, and sanctions” (Winter, 1988, p. 130). Within this understanding, professional education and associations take on a greater importance as they introduce and maintain professional culture. Students are first acculturated to their new profession during their education; therefore, professional schools are where professional identity is first formed. Professional associations reflect a more mature professional culture—a culture that, due to its voluntary nature, is more consciously developed than the culture in professional education programs. Winter argued that librarianship had two cultures that often clashed: freedom of information and a culture of control. These cultures were learned and internalized during graduate school through course work and professional enculturation, harmonized by professional associations in standards and competency documents, and codified in work environments in job descriptions and policies. In other words, the cultures were learned in school and put into practice in association and professional work. The professional identity of librarians, therefore, reflected participation in these organizations that generated and maintained cultures, and was expressed by controlling specific aspects of their work, such as reference, materials selection, and subject specialization.

Although Bennett (1988) and Winter (1988) used different terminology to describe their approach to the study of librarianship as profession, their approaches were similar in many ways. Bennett was interested in how interpretive conventions, or “shared ways of making sense of reality” (Mailloux as cited in Bennett, 1988, p. 34), became professional ideas, which in turn became professional ideology. Professional ideologies, for Bennett, legitimated professional worldviews and identities and made them resistant to change. Winter defined culture as profession, or group, specific “ways of thinking, acting, and looking at the world” (Winter, 1988, p. 130). Therefore, like Bennett’s understanding of professional ideology, Winter’s professional culture provided a way of legitimating a particular worldview.

A different approach to the professional identity of librarians being considered around the same time as Bennett (1988) and Winter (1988) was Harris’s (1992) feminist approach. Harris argued that librarianship, in addition to being a female-intensive profession, meaning it had a high proportion of female workers, was a feminine profession because its core value of service was inherently feminine. Like Winter, Harris contended that trait-based and functionalist definitions of professions were insufficient for examining librarianship. Unlike Winter, Harris argued that these approaches to profession overlooked and undervalued female-intensive professions, often describing them as semi-professions, and valuing masculine traits associated with so-called true professions. Many librarians, in Harris’s estimation, were pursuing the higher social status and masculine identity associated with true professions by abandoning their feminine identities and core values. For librarians, this meant focusing on the more administrative and technological aspects of their work and discarding service-based values and activities, such as children’s librarianship, access to information, and reference services. Whereas Bennett and Winter limited their investigations to different theoretical approaches,

Harris used her investigation as a call for action. She argued that librarians, in their pursuit of a masculine status and identity, had lost control over their profession. To gain it back, they had to re-embrace “the old librarianship by restoring to it a brand of female professionalism” (Harris, 1992, p. 163) that valued service over status.

Only one of these landmark investigations, Bennett (1988), was based on research findings. Bennett examined two main texts: *The Study of Information* (1983) and a special issue of *Journal of Library History* (1985), along with additional citations gathered from his primary data sources, specifically an article by Schrader (1984) that examined definitions of information science, and historical documents identified in the primary data sources. Bennett examined how libraries, librarianship, and information science (as it related to librarianship), were described in these sources. Bennett acknowledged that his two primary data sources had a fair amount of overlap in terms of authorship. For instance, both W. Boyd Rayward and Jesse Shera either authored chapters or were the subject of articles in both sources. Although these sources were appropriate for examining the historical and conceptual development of the inclusion of information science to the name library and information science, they were not the most appropriate sources for examining the professional identity of librarians. Bennett’s sources were written by LIS scholars for other scholars. Bennett acknowledged his sources were “primarily academicians and their concern for status has to do with academic disciplinary status” (Bennett, 1988, p. 69); however, he argued concerns over disciplinary status were applicable to professional practice because the status of librarianship was perceived to be questioned. His findings, therefore, were actually about disciplinary identity and extrapolated to the professional identity of librarians. Although the discipline of LIS and the practice of librarianship are intimately linked—practitioners develop their professional identities during their professional

education, for instance—they are sufficiently different that a one-to-one assumption that disciplinary and professional identities are the same is misplaced. Costello (2005), for instance, argued that while professors in professional programs are important role models in the professional socialization of students, peers are equally important. Students gauge “their behavior and performance against each other’s, looking to their peers, as they themselves put it, as ‘mirrors’ or ‘yardsticks’ against which to measure themselves” (Costello, 2005, p. 55). And, whereas the professorial influence is mainly limited to the classroom environment, the influence of peers can be felt both inside and outside the classroom. Once students graduate from their professional programs, they continue to look towards their professional peers, and less to their former professors, for professional role models.

Library and Information Science Education and Professional Identity Development

Professional socialization has been linked to the professional identity development of LIS students. Although there are many anecdotal accounts of why individuals became librarians (King, 2008, Tropea, 2007), there is little research into the motivations of individuals for pursuing LIS education. Two studies from the University of Alabama’s School of Library and Information Studies examine the career aspirations of two Master of Library and Information Science (MLIS) cohorts (Ard, et al., 2006; Taylor, Perry, Barton, & Spencer, 2010). As part of these larger studies, the question “Why Library and Information Studies?” was asked. For many LIS students, previous work experience in libraries was an influence on their choice to pursue LIS education, with 31% citing it as a factor in the 2006 study and 42% in the 2010 study. Although these findings appear to indicate that many LIS students pursue their MLIS education after experiencing pre-professional service, almost equal numbers, 45% and 35% respectively, selected “not applicable” when asked if prior library-related work experience was a factor in

their decision to attend an MLIS program. Hussey's (2009) exploration of the motivations of LIS students with underrepresented and minority social identities to pursue a career in librarianship support Ard, et al.'s (2006) and Taylor, et al.'s (2010) findings. Of her 33 participants, 15 indicated that pre-professional work experience in a library positively influenced their desire to become a librarian. In addition, Hussey (2009) highlighted the influence of past library use and interactions with librarians on her participants' decisions to become a librarian. Knowing why individuals choose librarianship is important for a variety of reasons. First, librarians do not share similar educational backgrounds and other non-LIS experiences; as a result, incoming students do not share a common disciplinary knowledge. In addition, as an undergraduate degree in LIS is not a required prerequisite for an MLIS, acceptance into an LIS program is based upon grade point average, letters of recommendations, and a statement of interest (or similar statement of goals, intent, etc.) and not work experience (Wallace & Naidoo, 2010). There is, then, no shared set of meanings relating to LIS that students have upon entering their LIS education. MLIS programs must provide their students with a shared set of meanings through required and elective courses, social and mentoring experiences, and other more subtle means, such as the way faculty members dress.

LIS education has been characterized as not meeting the needs of the profession it serves (Gorman, 2004). Clark and Gaughan (1979), for example, argued that LIS education provided an inappropriate foundation for the socialization of LIS students. They noted that because LIS students lack a common background and LIS programs accept students based on their educational background and not prior work experience in libraries, LIS programs are at a disadvantage when attempting to socialize their students to librarianship. This disadvantage is further compounded by a generalist approach to education where the specifics of certain kinds of

librarianship, such as public versus academic, are overlooked in favour of generalizable skills. In addition, the limited time spent in MLIS programs (one or two years), the difficulty of becoming involved in professional associations as a student where valuable interaction with peers and professionals can take place, and the limited professional experience of LIS faculty all contribute to the under-socialization of LIS students. Research has indicated that many LIS students wish for more practical experiences as part of their MLIS educations (Cherry, Duff, Singh, & Freund, 2011; Sare, Bales, & Neville, 2012). Hoffmann and Berg (2014) found there was a link between professional identity development and field experience opportunities. They found students used their field experiences as a way to imagine themselves as professional librarians, to adjust their expectations of the profession to its reality, to better understand how their classroom learning applied to a workplace context, and to start identifying with the profession through their temporary student roles. Preer (2006) and Skouvig (2008) suggest that LIS educators incorporate the history of librarianship into LIS curricula to help students develop their professional identity. Preer (2006) argued: “Without the context that history provides, [students] may fail to understand the professional nature of librarianship, its contribution to society, and the values for which it stands” (p. 487). Similarly, Gray (2013) recommended new professionals examine the profession’s historical roots to help them develop a new professional identity that is appropriate for calling “yourself a Librarian in the 21st century” (p. 37).

Professional Image

The professional identity of librarians described by Bennett (1988), Winter (1988), and Harris (1992) is one overly concerned with professional status and the search for ways to improve how others see and understand the profession—whether by embracing information science, masculine professional traits, or through the specialization or control of certain aspects

of the profession, such as reference work, materials selection, and subject specializations. None of these authors actually defined what they meant by identity. While this study understands identity to be a description of the self within specific social practices, the concept of identity Bennett (1988), Winter (1988), and Harris (1992) used could be expressed as the influence of outside descriptions of the profession on librarians' self-understanding. The focus, therefore, was shifted away from how the profession understood and described itself and toward how the profession believed others viewed it. In other words, they conflated identity with image.

The professional image of librarianship is a common topic within the LIS literature. The majority of literature on this topic is written by practitioners and is primarily concerned with how the public's perception impacts the profession's status. Bobrovitz and Griebel (2001), for example, studied whether the stereotypical image of a librarian, specifically librarians being mousy, had changed as a result of increased use of technology in libraries. They asked members of the general public—specifically, randomly selected people walking on the street, elementary children, and community leaders (mayors and other elected officials, media, and business leaders)—about their perceptions of librarianship. Although their findings seemed to indicate the majority of their respondents viewed librarians positively (specifically, the children and the community leaders), the authors argued that the image of librarians was primarily negative, citing evidence that children drew images of librarians with their hair in a bun and glasses, and the individuals they interviewed randomly on the street used the words “books,” “older,” “lady,” and “helpful” to describe librarians. The authors' primary concern was the public did not associate librarians with technology. They worried this would negatively impact librarians' ability to contribute to society and ultimately lead to the profession's demise: “If librarians

collectively and individually fail to change this perception, libraries and the profession as we know it will cease to exist” (Bobrovitz & Griebel, 2001, p. 263).

In the more academically focused LIS literature, there are three different approaches to studying the profession’s image. The first is to examine the various representations of librarianship, such as how the profession is portrayed in popular culture, and popular stereotypes associated with the profession. The second examines how librarians see themselves. The third examines the impact the stereotype has had on the profession from a variety of angles—such as recruiting people to the profession, librarian-client relationships, and the gender dynamics within the profession.

Popular representations of librarians. Much of the literature on the image of librarians is focused on how librarians are represented in popular culture, from film to literature. There are many examples of studies surveying and cataloguing the popular images of the profession, with little critical attention beyond discovering “indications of how the public is viewing us” (Walker and Lawson, 1993, p. 16; see also Dilevko & Gottlieb, 2004; Highsmith, 2002; Maynard & McKenna, 2005; Peresie & Alexander, 2005; Poulin, 2008; Wahrman, 2005; Walker & Lawson, 1993). Often, highlighted is the failure of popular representations to capture the entire scope of librarianship. Posner (2002), for example, contrasted the “know-it-all” stereotype of librarianship, as illustrated in the films *Party Girl* and *Sophie’s Choice* and the novel *The Name of the Rose*, with the areas that, in the author’s estimation, librarians were in fact knowledgeable about, such as how to find, collect, and organize information, and how to work with people. Not uncommon for these kinds of examinations, Posner ended her investigation by recommending various ways librarians could counteract the negative associations of their popular images. Her recommendations included urging librarians to study their images not only to better understand

them, but also deconstruct them to both subvert and embrace these images, encourage librarians to “not be know-it-alls” (p. 123), be proactive in how they help their clients, and support and trumpet “more complicated and realistic depiction of themselves in fiction and in the media” (p. 125). Luthman (2007) extended this type of inquiry by comparing the popular representations with the self-image of librarians as illustrated by an email list discussion. Her investigation was limited (she relied heavily on previously completed analysis of popular culture images and one email list discussion), but, like Posner (2002), she urged librarians to counteract negative portrayals of the profession “with positive behaviour” (Luthman, 2007, p. 778). Neither Posner nor Luthman fully explained what they meant when they encouraged librarians not to be know-it-alls or to only behave positively. But, there was a clear understanding about what a positive image of a librarian should be. Underscoring this view was an assumption of a common librarian identity or even behaviour that could be accurately represented by popular culture and enacted by librarians.

Williamson (2002) contrasted popular representations with the behaviours of actual librarians, comparing the Myers-Briggs personality types of film representations to the real personality types of librarians. Williamson found the distribution of personality types represented in 28 films differed greatly from the actual personality types of librarians. For example, the most common personality type found in real librarians was ISTJ, defined as “quiet, serious, . . . practical, matter-of-fact, realistic, and responsible” (Myers & Briggs Foundation, 2013, para. 1), was underrepresented in film depictions. She argued examining the personality types of fictional characters exposed the stereotypes of librarianship that were in the minds of the characters’ creators. Like Luthman (2007) and Posner (2002), Williamson’s (2002) study was highly flawed (how can the personality of a fictional character be accurately assessed?) and only illustrated the

author's beliefs about the positive personality attributes of librarians, such as helpfulness, idealism, intelligence, and a "phenomenal memory" (Posner, 2002, p. 53).

A different approach to examining the popular image of librarians was put forth by Radford and Radford (1997; 2001; 2003) in a series of articles advocating for a discourse analysis-based approach to the examination of popular images. In their first two articles, Radford and Radford (1997; 2001) used a Foucauldian-based discourse analysis to understand the stereotype of librarians in its wider cultural context with an eye to uncovering why the stereotype existed and exploring ways of changing the image. In their first article, they examined the connection between knowledge, power, and fear in regards to the stereotype of the female librarian (Radford & Radford, 1997). They argued because libraries, in their ideal form, represent places of order, rationality, and intellect, then librarians, as guardians of the library, were seen as god-like because only they could determine the truth of a text based on its location in the library. The old maid, the primary female librarian stereotype, was an attempt to defuse the fear their god-like control over knowledge elicited in users. Because the stereotype was presented as both female and obsessed with order, the god-like power of the librarian was defused and replaced with a powerless (female) and irrational (obsessive) position. Radford and Radford (1997) tied the image of the female librarian as old maid to the low status of the profession. In addition, they argued a discursive approach allowed concerns over the accuracy of the image to be set aside to make room for new questions, such as "who is speaking through the stereotype and to what ends? [And,] how can the image of subservience and powerlessness that it affords to women be challenged and change?" (p. 263).

In their second paper, Radford and Radford (2001) extended their Foucauldian analysis to all popular representations of the profession. In this analysis, they argued that the library building

itself was portrayed as a cathedral, or sacred space, that was “an overbearing and overwhelming place” (p. 309). Within this space, the librarian was again a god-like figure who used her or his gaze to survey the behaviours of library users. Whereas in their first article the discourse of fear transformed the librarian into a powerless, female old maid stereotype (Radford & Radford, 1997), in this second analysis fear transformed the librarian into a police officer, eliciting feelings of fear, horror, shame, and humiliation in library users. Unlike their first analysis where they argued the examination of the stereotype could perhaps change, or, at the very least, challenge the profession’s image, in their second analysis they argued this challenge was not possible because:

The discourse [of fear associated with librarianship] always comes first. It is always one step ahead of any individual action because it is the discourse that makes that action possible. One cannot get behind or beyond the discourse since the act of transgression, indeed its very idea, is made possible by the actual discourse to be transgressed. Any so-called act of transgression must always fall within the parameters of the discourse. It can never fall beyond. (Radford & Radford, 2001, p. 323)

In this light, even positive representations of the profession only gain meaning in opposition to the negative representations resulting from the discourse of fear.

In their final paper, Radford and Radford (2003) used a cultural studies approach, inspired by the work of Stuart Hall, to re-examine the image of the female librarian. The central difference between a cultural studies approach and a Foucauldian-based discourse approach was how the meaning of the image was determined. In a Foucauldian approach, meaning was determined by the discourses that governed it (for example, librarians were only defined in

relationship to the discourse of fear), while meaning for a cultural studies approach is “a dialogue” (p. 57), specifically, there was more than one way to interpret an image or representation. Radford and Radford used the film *Party Girl* to examine how stereotypical images of librarianship could be challenged and changed for the benefit of the profession. In a similar manner to their first discourse-based study (Radford & Radford, 1997), they suggested that a cultural studies approach allowed librarians to move beyond whether or not popular representations were accurate and ask different kinds of questions about popular images: “How is the image placed in the context of other images to create a constellation of meanings? Which of the many meanings in this image is privileged? . . . What power is being wielded through the deliberate use of these (stereotypical) images?” (Radford & Radford, 2003, p. 59). This final article represented a return to a more flexible approach to understanding popular images for Radford and Radford. Gone was the idea that meaning was fixed within the nearly unchanging discourses noted in the second article. And, whereas in the first article, their only advice was to determine the cultural conditions that made the stereotype possible, in this final article they provided advice on how to challenge the stereotype in practice: reverse it by encouraging media to use images of librarians as “young, cool, and hip” (p. 67) and substitute it with images generated by the profession as “smiling, smartly dressed” professionals (p. 67).

Like Radford and Radford (1997; 2001; 2003), Adams (2000) intended to expand ways of examining the profession’s stereotype. By reappropriating the image through parody and mimicry, Adams argued that librarians could define themselves with or against the image and create new meanings from which to develop a “new professional identity from within the framework provided by popular culture” (p. 292). Adams linked the professional identity of librarians with their professional stereotype. Identity for her, as with Bennett (1988), Winter

(1988), and Harris (1992), was image. Adams argued that by challenging the image through parody and mimicry, librarians could shape their own professional identity. This argument implied librarians' professional identity was the same as the profession's stereotype. Adams (2002) wrote: "Revising the loveless-frump stereotype allows unsexed knowledge workers and information managers to retain not only a sexuality but also a sense of a distinct identity as librarians" (p. 298), implying that without the stereotype librarians did not have a professional identity.

The image of librarianship from within. In addition to the examinations of popular representations of librarians, there are studies that attempt to track down the origins of the stereotype. For instance, Dickinson (2003) traced the stereotype of the male librarian to the behaviour of actual male librarians in the 1800s, while Church (2002) offered a summary of perceptions of the profession from the early 18th century to the late 20th century. Church found that the image of the profession had changed greatly over the years and was dependent on who was defining it. For instance, librarians defined themselves as caring, intelligent, literate, and devoted to patrons, while faculty members, despite being respectful of librarians' roles, defined librarians as lesser scholars who did not deserve faculty rank or status. Wilson (1982) argued librarians themselves were perpetuating their stereotype by writing about it in their professional literature and by assuming that non-librarians imagine librarians to be like their stereotype, even if they did not hold such a view. Wilson concluded that librarians needed to learn to take their stereotype "in stride" (p. 191) and to stop perpetuating it in their professional literature.

Whereas Wilson (1982), Dickinson (2003), and Church (2002) focused on the profession's stereotype and how librarians perpetuated or contributed to the meaning of the popular image, Prins and de Gier (1992; 1994; 1995) completed a systematic international study

of librarians' views of the profession. They found librarians perceived the profession in much the same way as the general public did—as a low-ranked profession with a social status located somewhere between primary school teachers and flight attendants. Different countries perceived the image problem of the profession as more important than others. Countries with a developing library system were less concerned about the profession's image and more concerned with the development of a library system. Generally, however, the profession's status was considered to be low and was the result of three factors: the profession's invisibility, specifically, that the public did not “have any idea about what is going on in the information business” (Prins & de Gier, 1992, p. 117-118); LIS programs only attracting second- and third-rate students, as very few people select librarianship for their first choice of study and a MLIS “represents the last chance to become graduate students” (p. 117); and, as quality service was largely dependent on the personal qualities of librarians, the profession lacked its own culture. They argued that the only way for librarians to overcome these factors was for librarians to “feel and act like entrepreneurs” (Prins & de Gier, 1995, p. 61) to ensure that financial stakeholders were aware of the benefits of library services.

The perceived impact of the image on the profession. There is a sense in the professional literature that the image of librarianship has had a negative impact on the profession. Some have argued the image could be a barrier to patrons who need access to library services (Balling, Henrichsen & Skouvig, 2007; Eriksson, 2011; Fagan, 2002; B. MacDonald, 1995); however, much of this work is speculative in nature. Fagan (2002) studied university students' perceptions of librarian roles. Students had a positive impression of librarians; however, they were unaware of librarians' educational backgrounds, areas of expertise, and specific areas of work (for example, Fagan's respondents indicated that cleaning was a

librarian's responsibility). Even though her respondents generally viewed librarians favourably, Fagan still recommended that librarians attempt to change their professional image by dressing "above their university standards, [posting] their degrees in . . . visible [locations], or [adding] degree letters to nametags and nameplates" (p. 141). This recommendation was based, in part, on students' ignorance of librarians' educational backgrounds; however, only a third of respondents agreed with a survey question asking if knowing more about "a librarian's education, skills, job, and personality" (p. 141) would encourage them to ask for help from a librarian. Fagan's advice to librarians, therefore, was disconnected from her research findings. None of her respondents commented on how the librarians dressed and there was limited evidence suggesting improving student awareness of librarians' educational backgrounds would increase not only students' perceptions of librarians but also their willingness to use library services.

How students perceive librarianship does appear to have some influence on who is recruited to the profession. Harris and Wilkinson (2001; 2004) surveyed over 2,000 first-year students on their perceptions of various profession's statuses, including lawyer, reporter/news correspondent, internet researcher, paralegal, animator, systems analyst, librarian, database administrator, announcer/newscaster, physical therapist, computer engineer, and medical records technician. Students ranked librarians as having the lowest social status and lawyers as having the highest status. Harris and Wilkinson suggested that there was an inverse relationship between the status of the profession and the number of women it employed. Additionally, librarianship was understood to be a shrinking profession that had few educational requirements and low earning potential. They argued negative perceptions of the profession, along with the understanding that librarianship was a "woman's profession," had impacted recruitment to the profession: "[Students] expressed a clear preference to work in the private rather than the public

sector in which they believed the majority of librarians are employed. Furthermore, . . . they situate librarianship as a woman's occupation with poor career prospects, little status, and low earning potential" (Harris & Wilkinson, 2001, p. 304).

The gendered stereotyping of the profession has also influenced male librarians' perceptions of themselves. Carmichael (1992) found the stereotype of librarianship as a woman's profession had a "negative effect on the self-esteem of male librarians" (p. 443). He argued the female stereotype of the profession masked male concerns within librarianship and may have even contributed to gender stratification, such as a prevalence of men in administrative positions that was disproportionate to their demographic presence. Hickey (2006) argued that perceptions of male librarians had an impact in the workplace. Using in-depth interviews with three male participants over nearly two years, Hickey found his participants felt they were treated differently in the workplace than their female colleagues, even identifying instances of sexual harassment, tokenism, and lost career opportunities. The perception that male librarians were somehow different from their female colleagues, therefore, had real consequences for the career outcomes and experiences of these male librarians.

Others have focused on how specific patron groups perceive librarians—namely the perceptions of faculty members. These investigations have ranged from examining discipline-specific pedagogical journals for mentions of librarians' instructional roles (Still, 1998) to faculty attitudes towards information literacy development (McGuinness, 2006). Common to these studies was the finding that faculty members were respectful of certain aspects of librarians' work (specifically reference and collection development), but did not consider librarians to have a substantial teaching role. These perceptions of librarians have had an impact on how librarians view faculty. Julien and Given (2002/2003) and Given and Julien (2005),

examined postings to the Bibliographic Instruction/Information Literacy Instruction listserv between 1995 and 2002. Postings about librarians' perceptions of faculty members were by far the most common type of posting at 28.4% per quarter, followed by postings about librarians themselves (18.9% per quarter), and librarians' beliefs about faculty members perceptions of librarians (4.2% per quarter). Faculty were often described negatively as "delinquent children" (Given & Julien, 2005, p. 32) while librarians characterized themselves as "dedicated, caring individuals, who continually strive[d] to meet students' needs—despite their frustrations with faculty members' questionable attitudes" (Given & Julien, 2005, p. 33). Many librarians believed faculty members did not understand their work and, as a result, could not properly appreciate the instruction provided both inside and outside the classroom. Faculty members were characterized as valuing their own research needs over the educational needs of their students, whereas the librarians claimed they held the educational needs of students in high regard. Overall, librarians appeared to value students as clients above faculty members.

The idea that faculty members do not consider librarians to be equals also influenced librarians' self-perception. According to Julien and Pecoskie (2009), librarians perceived themselves to be in an unequal power relationship with faculty. This inequality was often the result of how librarians positioned themselves in relation to faculty members. Through interviews with 56 librarians with instructional duties, Julien and Pecoskie found librarians often characterized their relationship with faculty members as a relationship dependent on gift giving. Faculty members were the givers (of time to teach information literacy skills to students, of trust in librarians' teaching abilities) and librarians were the receivers (of time, of trust). This characterization placed social obligations on librarians (as receivers of gifts) and positioned them in a dependent relationship with faculty members. Throughout their data, participants used

deferential language when describing their relationships with faculty, taking away whatever expertise the librarians might have held in deference to the subject expertise of the faculty. As a result, librarians positioned themselves as “defeated, passive, dependent, and subordinate to teaching faculty” (p. 152). These studies concluded librarians’ self-perceptions of faculty members views influenced not only the relationship between faculty and librarians, but also library services—specifically, information literacy instruction (Julien & Given, 2002/2003; Given & Julien, 2005; Julien & Pecoskie, 2009). All of the studies recommended, in part, that librarians recognize they have different expertise than faculty members and to challenge their own perceptions of faculty members to work together to meet the educational needs of students: “Try not to presume arrogance, bad intentions, or disrespect on the part of faculty . . . Try not to presume that faculty are not committed to [student learning]; . . . this does not mean that they are not willing to be involved” (Given & Julien, 2005, p. 36). These studies illustrate librarians’ perception of their clients are as influential on the profession as popular images and stereotypes.

Professional identity, role, and image. There is a small section of the LIS literature that purports to examine librarians’ professional identities. Often, however, these studies either do not define identity or they offer a definition but do not connect the research findings and theoretical framework to this definition. Thus, there is no coherent understanding of professional identity within the literature and it is often conflated with professional roles or job titles. Freedman (2014) used social identity theory to define identity as group membership. She used this framework to examine the connection between faculty status, tenure, and professional identity for academic librarians. Because academic librarians have institutional (i.e., non-librarian) employers, as professionals they are located in larger social contexts; as these contexts change, the professional roles of librarians change, as do their professional identities. To

examine the connection between faculty status and professional identity, Freedman surveyed librarians about their job titles, role responsibilities, tenure or faculty status, professional activities, and opinions on whether or not librarians should hold faculty status or tenure. Her survey, however, did not examine the larger social contexts in which her participants worked. As a result, this approach limited Freedman's ability to examine professional identity using the social identity theory framework. The analysis of identity was limited to self-reported job titles: "The most frequently cited professional identities were reference librarian, instruction librarian, librarians with academic discipline responsibilities, and library administrator" (p. 552). Although job titles do give an indication of the roles librarians perform, they are not in and of themselves indicative of how a person understands or describes her- or himself as a professional. By linking professional identity only to job title, Freedman (2014) unintentionally removes any agency from librarians' professional identity. Professional identity is the result of one's job roles and titles. As librarians, specifically academic librarians, have limited control over the employment conditions that form their professional identities, such as job title and tenure status, these identities are created for them by their institutional employers. In other words, even though Freedman does not study the professional image of librarians, her findings nevertheless support the notion that professional image and professional identity are conflated for librarians.

Markless (2009) also unintentionally linked professional identity to the perception of others in her examination of how the discourses of professionalism, namely, the discourses of managerialism, technical-rationalism, and social democracy, provided school librarians with pre-defined identities. Markless was encouraging school librarians to understand their identities so they could better position themselves as important members of the school's community and attract the attention of school leaders: "To identify the dominant discourse and to engage with it

will lead others to view us as effective in that domain” (Markless, 2009, p. 24). These pre-defined identities, however, determined which roles and activities these librarians were to perform. By identifying the dominant discourses in their workplace, these librarians would better understand their roles and their place within the school: “If our comfort zone lies within the model of technical-rationalism but the school’s leadership demands more of the activities associated with the social democratic model, the experience is not going to be an easy one” (p. 24). Markless’s analysis removed librarians’ own professional discourses and replaced them with the discourses that dominated their workplaces. Although this approach is more nuanced than Freedman’s (2014), Markless (2009) still defines librarians’ professional identities using extra-professional, institutional discourses. Librarians must conform, or reject, these discourses to form their identities; however, these discourses are not a product of their own professional practices, which means that Markless is describing librarians’ organizational and institutional fit, a fit that is dependent on the perceptions of others, and not their professional identities.

Defining identity as fitting in with others’ perceptions is a common understanding of identity in the LIS literature. Belzowski, Ladwig, and Miller (2013) argued that librarians needed to have a firm sense of professional identity to expand their roles within their institutions. This sense of identity, however, came from faculty perceptions of librarians. For instance: “[W]e began to understand that our work was not as valuable to them as we expected” (p. 4) and “The library profession itself is at risk if we cannot move beyond the guardian-of-the-book identity [that faculty members had for librarians]” (p. 6). Cottam (1987) listed personality traits and characteristics, such as energy and health, self-confidence, and “superior conceptual ability” (p. 37), as the identity traits so-called “intrapreneuring,” or creative and inventive, librarians hold. These identity traits, Cottman suggested, would counter the stereotype of librarians as passive

and risk avoidant. Earlier, it was argued Bennett (1988), Winter (1988), and Harris (1992) conflated identity with image. Identity for Belzowski, Ladwig, and Miller (2013) and Cottam (1987) furthers this conceptual conflation and expands upon it. Bennett, Winter, and Harris mainly focused on the profession's beliefs about how others viewed it, while Belzowski, Ladwig, and Miller and Cottam replace librarians' own professional identities with others' perceptions. In other words, they do not simply conflate the concepts, they equate them. Image is identity and identity is image.

The Teacher Identity of Librarians

There is a growing body of literature on librarians' perception of and experiences with teaching and themselves as teachers. Whereas Julien and Given (2002/2003), Given and Julien (2005), and Julien and Pecoskie (2009) examined how librarians viewed the perceptions of others and the impact of those perceptions on their teaching roles, studies about the teacher identity of librarians examine how librarians understand themselves to be teachers. Davis (2007) argued technology had changed the traditional professional role of librarians from passive and service-oriented to active and outreach- and instruction-oriented. Davis's study, like many of the previous studies examined, was primarily concerned with how the perceptions of others influenced librarians' self-perceptions. Shifting roles, for Davis, had caused an unclear professional identity and feelings of anxiety around the teaching role. Therefore, while the librarians in her study understood themselves to be instructors and educators, the suggestion that faculty members may not share that perception (Davis did not survey faculty members) was enough to cause feelings of anxiety around their teaching roles. Although Davis was primarily interested in the influence shifting professional roles had on librarians' self-perceptions, she did connect shifting roles to professional identity—specifically that the role shifts experienced by

librarians had resulted in an unclear professional identity. Professional identity, for Davis, was linked to role identity. As professional roles change, so does professional identity. In other words, role drives identity. The understanding of professional identity used for this study contests this narrow definition of identity. Although changing roles do impact professional identity, the roles in and of themselves do not cause the shifts in identity. Instead, identity changes as the professional practices around these roles change. What Davis identified as an unclear professional identity is really just shifting roles and has little to do with professional identity.

Walter (2008) examined the teacher identity of six librarians. He found teaching was a central activity for his participants, but their professional education did not adequately prepare them for it. A teacher identity was described as one possible professional identity for librarians to choose. Similarly to Davis (2007), Walter (2008) linked identity to role. Additionally, he linked identity to the perception of others—in this case, students. If students do not recognize and understand the librarians' role as teacher, then they may be unable to appreciate the instruction they are given. The definition of identity Walter used to guide his study was “the way in which individuals think about themselves as teachers” (Knowles as cited in Walter, 2008, p. 55). Walter's definition of teacher identity is similar to the definition of professional identity used by this study (a description of the self within professional practices); however, his study was not focused on how his participants thought of themselves as teachers. Instead, the focus of his study was on the evolution of librarians' teaching roles and how his participants believed that others view their role as teachers. Therefore, even though Walter framed his study as an exploratory study into the teacher identity of librarians, his study was less about teacher identity than it was about changing professional roles and how librarians believed others perceived those roles.

More recently, Julien and Genuis (2011) found instructional work was a central activity for librarians. Unlike Walter (2008) and Davis (2007), who focused solely on academic librarians, Julien and Genuis (2011) surveyed 788 librarians from all library sectors. Many of their participants implied instruction was an integral part of the profession and, as a result, their identities. Again, identity in this study was linked to role. Julien and Genuis were interested in understanding how librarians interpreted and gave meaning to their instructional roles to determine its influence on their interactions with clients during instruction sessions. Although identity was still limited to a specific role in their study, Julien and Genuis pushed the understanding of identity further than either Walter (2008) or Davis (2007), yet their investigation only highlighted that instruction was a part of the overall librarian professional identity.

Do Librarians Have a Professional Identity?

Although the literature reviewed here is more likely to examine the perception, status, and image of librarians or a single aspect of professional identity as it related to a specific role or activity, there is a sense that librarians have a clear professional identity—even if this identity has not yet been described in the research literature. For instance, there is an assumption that there is a professional identity in articles that offer advice to LIS faculty members on ways to introduce students to the history of libraries and professional ethics, and in introductory textbooks to the field (Preer, 2006). Some writers, however, have questioned whether librarians have a professional identity. Oen and Cooper (1988) argued fast-paced, technology-driven changes meant librarians could not establish an identity: “Because it is hard to establish a long-lasting identification with a moving target, information professionals have not yet established a strong identity for themselves” (p. 357). The influence of these rapid changes on librarianship was the

impetus for Cravey's (1991) study examining the occupational role identity of female academic librarians. Unlike the studies examined previously, Cravey did separate occupational image from occupational identity (Cravey used the terms occupation and profession interchangeably). In response to a lack of studies examining the occupational identity of librarians, Cravey developed a large-scale national survey to get a baseline measurement of identity. Cravey's survey, however, was not able to uncover the occupational identity of the librarians. Instead, her survey illustrated academic librarians demographically—white, Protestant, middle-aged, married with no children, with an MLIS from one of three universities from the early 1970s. She was also able to identify common professional concerns and attitudes, such as low pay and an enjoyment of librarianship—which Cravey argued were signs of a positive professional identity. Ultimately, Cravey's study did not uncover the occupational identity of librarians, but provided an alternative image to the one presented in popular culture. Although Cravey did conceptually separate identity from image in her theoretical framework, the methods she chose and the questions she asked her survey respondents were unable to get below the surface image to an understanding of identity.

Similarly, Wilson and Halpin (2006) claimed to be studying the professional identity of librarians during a time of technological change; however, their study focused primarily on professional development, training, skills, and qualifications and professionalism, i.e., the skills and qualifications that mark librarianship as a profession. Wilson and Halpin asked librarians whether they considered librarianship a profession. Their participants responded that they “considered academic librarianship to be an occupation that is performed professionally, rather than a profession” (Wilson & Halpin, 2006, p. 89) especially when compared to the traditional professions of law and medicine. Wilson and Halpin argued that a professional identity was not

important to librarians and that this lack of interest was limiting to the standing of the profession. Although never defined, professional identity for Wilson and Halpin did not mean a description of the self as a professional, but whether or not librarians considered their occupation to be a profession. Their study was not about the professional practices of librarianship and how these influence the central questions of identity (Who am I? And, how should I act?), but about whether or not librarians believed their profession met, or did not meet, traditional standards of profession.

Although very few of the studies examined here that purport to study identity actually do, there are some studies that, perhaps inadvertently, shed light on the professional identities of librarians. For instance, Tuominen (1997) completed a study examining how librarians position themselves in relation to their users. Tuominen analysed the discourse of one influential text on information literacy: Carol C. Kuhlthau's *Seeking Meaning: A Process Approach to Library and Information Services*. In this text, Tuominen argued, librarians were constructed as rational and knowledgeable information experts while users were constructed as uncertain, ignorant, child-like, and in need of direction. The user's subject position was taken for granted and unquestioned in the text and presented as separate from social reality. In this sense, the user had a limited or confused identity as an information seeker. It was the librarian's job to usher the user along to "a coherent identity that helps her effective functioning as an information seeker in a library environment" (p. 359). Tuominen argued that this relationship between librarians and patrons placed the needs of the information seeking system over the user's needs—the exact opposite of what Kuhlthau's book purported to do. Tuominen expressed concern that Kuhlthau's approach to information literacy created an identity *for* the user that misrepresented the actual user experience of information seeking. Tuominen's critique of Kuhlthau was focused on how the

discourses within librarianship framed the identity of users. The identity of librarians can be revealed by examining these discourses. The professional identity described by Tuominen was intimately linked to the identity the profession constructs for its users. If the user was child-like or uncertain, then the librarian was parental, on par with physicians (a profession often assumed to be “better” than librarianship, thus positioning the user as a patient), and expert.

Tuominen’s findings were supported and extended by Sundin (2008). Sundin examined how librarians used web-based tutorials to express their identities as information-seeking experts. He identified four different approaches to information literacy. These approaches placed librarians in four different expert roles with specific kinds of expertise, ranging from expertise in specific information resources to expertise in communication between users and librarians. Sundin argued web-based tutorials acted as a platform for librarians to demonstrate and mediate their expertise to others. Similarly to Tuominen (1997), Sundin (2008) argued librarians used these tutorials to position themselves as information experts and, in doing so, expressed some of their professional identity. Although Sundin did not use the theoretical framework of interpretive repertoire to guide his study, his findings do indicate that members of the same profession can approach a central activity, in this case information literacy, from different perspectives. As he argued: “These approaches entail different versions of librarians’ information seeking expertise and thus, different ways of defining central conceptions such as information, information seeking and user” (p. 40). In addition, these approaches did not exist separately and in fact were often used side by side in a single web tutorial. In other words, using the language of interpretive repertoire, the approaches to information literacy a librarian uses in a tutorial are drawn upon and used depending on the situation and the identity the librarian wants to put forth. That identity is

grounded in the interpretive repertoires of the profession, but will change depending on the context–intended audience, organizational culture, and even intended outcome of the tutorial.

Identity in Educational Leadership

Professional identity is an emerging area of study in the field of educational leadership, most of which focuses on the influence of changing roles on the professional identity of principals. Bredeson (1993) linked professional identity to role identity by examining the influence of educational reform and restructuring on principals' perceptions of their professional roles. Identity in Bredeson's study was defined as internalizing role expectations, as education reforms change role expectations the identity of his participants changed. Although Bredeson used professional identity to frame his study, his study was less about identity than how his participants felt they managed role transitions. The function of professional identity in how individuals managed role change was only hinted at. For instance, some of his participants had difficulty reconciling new role expectations with their self-identity; however, the focus of his study was primarily on personal factors that moderated the effects of role change, such as personality traits (patience) and communication skills, not professional identity.

Scribner and Crow (2012) used a similar understanding of identity to Bredeson (1993) in their case study of one principal's professional identity in a school reform setting. They rhetorically separated role and professional identity from social identity and personal identity to examine how identity motivated an individual to take on and enact a role. Scribner and Crow (2012) identified a variety of identities that their participant claimed as a school leader. Their participant switched identities depending on the context or audience. He described a father identity in relation to the teachers in his school, a role model identity with students, and a rebel identity within his school district. Each identity served a purpose when employed within its

context. For instance, the father identity conveyed “a shared interest and benevolence towards teachers’ professional responsibilities” (Scribner & Crow, 2012, p. 269). Scribner and Crow’s study, however, did not examine the discursive repertoires their participant used to construct his identities. Their study, therefore, only provided insight into how one principal perceived his roles and offered no insights into where the father part of his identity, for instance, came from or the influence this identity had on the teachers in his school. What was the function of the father identity in how he enacted his leadership role? As such, Scribner and Crow’s study only examined the description of identity offered by their participant and not the function of that identity on his leadership practices.

Identity in the Educational Leadership literature is often used less as a theoretical construct to guide research and more as a stage or position that individuals need to achieve to be effective leaders. In Bredeson’s (1993) study, for instance, the participants who had achieved a specific, although undefined, identity were thought to be more capable of managing role change: “[T]heir self-identities had been built up gradually over the years by internalizing the meanings and expectations of the many roles they had played” (Bredeson, 1993, p. 48). Identity as achievement can be clearly seen in Young, O’Doherty, Gooden, and Goodnow’s (2011) development of a leadership identity and problem-framing evaluation tool. This tool was intended to measure a leadership candidate’s abilities in the areas of both leadership identity and problem-framing to assess the impact of a university program’s leadership training. Young et al. described identity as a cyclical process or model. Leaders moved in and out of five different “identities”: leader-in-solitude identity, leader-dictated identity, leader-driven identity, collaborative leader identity, and transformative leader identity. Young et al. came to these stages by asking participants to describe how they would act as a new principal tasked with

addressing issues that impact student achievement. The researchers then divided these responses into categories based on which stakeholders the participants said they would involve in the planning and decision-making processes. This approach only uncovered the participants' views of leadership and not their descriptions of themselves as leaders. Although they never fully defined what they meant by identity in the context of their study, Young et al. claimed to be using a fluid, flexible, and cyclical understanding of identity; however, their conception implied one leadership identity (the transformative leader identity) was more desirable than others. Therefore, their training program could only be considered a success if their students moved along a continuum of leadership identities towards one preferred identity.

More discursively informed understandings of professional identity have been employed in the educational leadership literature. Thomson (2004) wrote a “think piece” (p. 43) on how a discursively informed approach to identity could be used in educational leadership research. Using a definition of identity similar to the one employed in this study, Thomson argued identity provided a conceptual way to examine not only how principals understood themselves as leaders, but also “how the person and their work are being named and framed” (p. 47). Thomson focused her think piece on the process of identification, or “the process through which a person both is seen as and sees themselves as having a ‘specific’ identity” (p. 46). To describe this process, Thomson quoted Stuart Hall: “identification ‘is a suturing together of available resources of language, history and culture’” (p. 46). The study of identity, therefore, is more than the examination of how people produce an understanding of their self. It is also about the discourses and practices that constrain or allow the production of the self. From her perspective as a former principal, Thomson examined which structures and rhetorics she thought had framed her understanding of herself and her colleagues as leaders. These included the framing of school

leadership as heroic and the entrepreneurial governance systems (a set of management tools used to bring the public sector under political control) that have a “managerialist agenda” (p. 51).

These placed the principal in a position where she or he was solely responsible for a school’s success or failure. Thomson argued the discourses surrounding the principalship positioned the principal as the embodiment of the school: “Headmasters are seen by the wider school community to be the school, just as they see themselves to be its embodiment” (p. 45). Thomson argued this approach would move the study of leadership beyond simply descriptive studies or model generations to focus on how the leadership identity of principals is accomplished.

Blackmore, Thomson, and Barty (2006) applied Thomson’s (2004) conceptualization of identity in their study of principal selection procedures in Australia. Their study focused on how the selection procedures responsible for hiring created a normalized principal identity. Only those candidates deemed by the selection procedures to meet this pre-set identity, or “fit,” were given preference. This study did not examine all of the discourses available to principals when they framed their identities, but it did examine one powerful structure that limited and defined, on behalf of principals, a “typical” principal identity. The primary difference between how this study employs the concept of identity and how Blackmore et al. (2006) used identity to frame their study is that the latter focused on how the discourses surrounding the principalship could be employed by non-principals to shape and direct the identities of principals, whereas the focus of this study is on how librarians used these discourses to frame their own identities.

Chapter Summary and Research Contribution

This review opened with the statement that the professional identity of librarians had not been the subject of much recent academic inquiry and thus was not well understood by researchers. Although there are three foundational studies into the identity of librarians (Bennett,

1988; Harris, 1992; Winter, 1988), their studies were more focused on the image of the profession and its impact on the status of librarianship than identity. The professional image and status of librarianship has been the subject of much inquiry within LIS. The literature has focused on the image of the profession in popular culture, the self-perception of librarians, and the influence of image or stereotype on the status of the profession. In some cases, identity and image were conflated to such an extent they were inseparable from each other. Extra-professional or institutional pre-set identities were substituted for librarians' own professional identities. Although many of these studies highlighted the self-perception of librarians, these studies exposed little of the professional identity of librarians except, perhaps inadvertently, as they emphasize that librarians are deeply concerned about their professional status. There is a growing body of literature on the teacher identity of librarians; however, many of these studies were interested in the role identity of librarians and only highlight how librarians understood their roles as instructors and not their overall professional identity.

What this study contributes to LIS is a fully conceived understanding of professional identity that will extend the study of identity beyond specific roles that librarians enact during their course of their work to include how librarians describe themselves as librarians. As conceived in this study, the study of professional identity as a description of the self within professional practices allows the study of librarians as professionals to move beyond how others perceive librarians or how librarians generally perceive themselves. Studying perceptions only allows researchers to examine the surface interactions that librarians have with patrons, whereas identity, as it is conceived in this study, allows the purpose, or function, of identity to be revealed. This understanding of professional identity provides a method for studying how the

professional identity of librarians influences the way, for instance, library services are designed, library policies are drafted, and how libraries are organized.

Chapter Three

Methodology and Methods

Chapter Introduction

This chapter addresses the following: methodological framework, data sources (including research participant recruitment), data analysis, reliability, validation and warrantability, researcher-participant relationship, ethical considerations, and the study's limitations and delimitations.

Methodological Framework

As described in chapter one, this study used a discourse analysis methodology, specifically a social constructionist inspired discourse analysis approach, developed by Potter and Wetherell (1987). This approach focuses on the interpretive repertoires people use to account for their actions and beliefs in different contexts. The intent of this approach is to compare how language resources are used in different contexts to determine their function. Different contexts of language use may evoke differences in the ways repertoires are employed. Following Potter and Wetherell (1987), the term discourse “covers all forms of spoken interaction, formal and informal, and written texts of all kinds” (p. 7). Discourse analysis is, therefore, the study of “language in use” (Wetherell, Taylor, & Yates, 2001, p. 3). Discourses do not simply describe and reflect the world ““out there”” (Coyle, 1995, p. 244) or account for actions and beliefs (Wetherell, 2001). Instead, they are a form of social action. In other words, people use words, both written and spoken, to linguistically construct social reality. The social construction of reality is a discursive action. As Tuominen and Savolainen (1997) argued, discourse analysis is the appropriate methodology for examining discursive action.

There are many different approaches to discourse analysis. Wetherell, Taylor, and Yates (2001) identified six distinct discourse analysis traditions:

- conversation analysis and ethnomethodology;
- interactional sociolinguistics and the ethnography of communication;
- discursive psychology;
- critical discourse analysis and critical linguistics;
- Bakhtinian research;
- Foucauldian research. (Wetherell, Taylor, & Yates, 2001, p. 6)

Each of these approaches defines and approaches the study of discourses differently.

Conversation analysis, for instance, focuses on how social organization is accomplished through language (Wetherell, 1998), while critical discourse analysis examines how discourses contribute to and reproduce social inequality (Weninger, 2008). The approach chosen for this study, developed by Potter and Wetherell (1987), examines the range of discourses, or interpretive repertoires, a person has available to her- or himself, with a focus on how people use these discourses to construct the world around them (Tuominen & Savolainen, 1997). This approach is interested in “broad patterns of language use” (Coyle, 1995, p. 244), not a participant’s mental processes, attitudes, or opinions. In other words, the focus is on what people do with language and not on how language reflects “underlying psychological and social realities” (p. 247).

Therefore, discourse analysts pay attention to how discourses are organized to construct and legitimate accounts rather than to the motives or desires of the speakers (Tuominen & Savolainen, 1997).

Potter and Wetherell’s (1987) approach to discourse analysis examines the interpretive repertoires people draw on when they construct the world and themselves. Interpretive repertoire

is Potter and Wetherell's preferred term for discourses. Potter (1996a) argued this term highlighted both the "off-the-shelf character" of discourses as well as their "bespoke flexibility" (p. 131). Interpretive repertoires are not directive, i.e., they do not tell people how to think or act. Instead, they provide people with a common sense that they can use to account for themselves and the world around them (Wetherell, 1998). As such, the goal of this approach to discourse analysis is to explore the regularities and irregularities of the language resources people employ as they account for themselves (Marshall & Wetherell, 1989). This approach was chosen for this study as it exposes the discourses that librarians use to define and construct their professional identities. The focus of this study is not on the individual identity work librarians undertake to create their self-identity as librarians (Alvesson & Willmott, 2002). Instead, it is on the range of discursive practices and language resources that librarians access, mobilize, and use to construct their professional identity (Alvesson & Willmott, 2002).

Potter (1996a) noted that one of the limitations of his and Wetherell's (1987) interpretive repertoire approach is that "clear and consistent judgements about the boundaries" of repertoires could be difficult to make. To address this limitation, Potter (1996a) and Coyle (1995) recommend sampling enough data to "discern the variety of discursive forms that are commonly used" (Coyle, 1995, p. 247). To ensure a broad range of contexts were examined, data representing three different contexts (articles, editorials, and letters to the editor from journals aimed at professional librarians; email discussion lists; and research interviews) and four different library sectors (academic, public, school, and special), as identified by *The Future of Human Resources in Canadian Libraries* (known as the 8Rs Study¹) (2005), were included in this study. Potter (1996a) draws a clear distinction between "natural interactions" and

¹ The 8Rs are: recruitment, retirement, retention, remuneration, repatriation, rejuvenation, re-accreditation and restructuring (Ingles, De Long, Humphrey, & Sivak, 2005).

interactions “‘got up’ by the researcher” (p. 135); the primary difference being that natural interactions would have occurred even if “the researcher had not been born” (p. 135). The contexts selected for this study represent both naturalistic and researcher-directed data sources. Articles, editorials, and letters to the editor from journals aimed at professional librarians and the email discussion lists represent natural interactions. The interviews provided a researcher-directed interaction. Data gathered from both naturalistic and researcher-directed sources has its benefits and drawbacks. Interview data, for instance, allows for a standard range of themes to be explored with a variety of participants. However, the presence of researcher, the technology used to record the interaction, and the question-and-answer nature of the research interview can affect the interaction and limit the interpretive repertoires employed by the participant (Potter, 1996a). In contrast, data gathered from naturalistic sources is free from the intrusion of the researcher, but limits the researcher’s ability to explore a standard range of themes with a variety of participants. Collecting data from both naturalistic and researcher-directed contexts not only enhances the contextual triangulation of the data for improved generalizability of the findings (Talja, 1999), it also allows for the full range of interpretive repertoires to be exposed.

This approach to discourse analysis emphasizes that researchers complete a careful and close reading of the data and back up their interpretations with evidence from the texts (Coyle, 1995). Data is read and reread and assumptions about the function or purpose of a particular discourse are created, followed up, and discarded. Researchers are encouraged to pay attention to the context of the data and the linguistic features of the data (i.e., the word and grammar choices employed in the data) and to keep in mind that the account being analysed is only one possible version of the account. The goal of the analysis is to determine the inconsistencies in a particular interpretive repertoire. Because interpretive repertoires provide people with a common sense,

seeking out patterns in the consistencies and variations of the interpretive repertoires help researchers discern the function of the repertoire. For the analysis of the data, particular attention was paid to the consistencies and variations in the interpretive repertoires used in both the formal and informal data sources, following Potter and Wetherell's (1987) and Talja's (1999; 2005) methods for analysing interpretive repertoires (described in detail below).

Data Sources

Professional journal articles. To ensure a thorough but manageable data set, the journal articles, editorials, and letters to the editor used in this study were selected from journals widely read by professionals, as determined by subscription rates and Online Computer Library Center (OCLC) reports that listed the top-read journals for public, academic, and college librarians (Online Computer Library Center, 2011a, 2011b, 2011c). In addition, they represented a variety of association and publisher affiliations. In total, nine journals were included in the study. Half of the professional journals selected for this study were identified using the OCLC's series of *Snapshot of Priorities & Perspectives* reports (2011a, 2011b, 2011c) as the top-read journals in the public and academic library sectors. Public librarians identified *Library Journal*, *American Libraries*, and *Public Libraries* (2011c) and academic and community college librarians identified *Library Journal*, *College & Research Libraries*, and *American Libraries* (2011a, 2011b). In addition, journals representing the remaining library sectors (special and school) and Canadian librarians broadly were included. *Feliciter* (ceased publication September 2015), the only national professional journal in Canada, was included to represent Canadian librarians. *Information Outlook*, the magazine for the Special Libraries Association with a distribution of over 9,000, and *Information Today*, a newspaper-style publication that purports to be the "most widely read publication in the information industry" (Information Today, 2013, para.1) and with

a circulation of approximately 8,000, represented the special library sector. Lastly, *School Library Journal*, with an estimated circulation of over 38,000 (School Library Journal, 2015), and *Teacher Librarian*, with over 26,000 readers (Teacher Librarian, 2015), represented the school library sector. To determine what content would be included in the data set, the titles and abstracts of the articles, editorials, and letters to the editor for each journal were examined using inclusion and exclusion criteria. Content was included if it was published between 2010 and 2012 and addressed the topics of librarians, librarianship, professionalism, professional problems, or a combination thereof. News reports, articles discussing best practices, conference reports, library profiles, book reviews, and obituaries were excluded from this study. If there was a question about an article's suitability for the study, the body of the article was examined to determine if it met the inclusion and exclusion criteria. The final data set included 268 articles, editorials, and letters to the editor. Citations for the selected articles, editorials, and letters to the editor were managed using an EndNote library (Appendix A).

Email discussion lists. According to OCLC's *Snapshot of Priorities & Perspectives* (2011a, 2011b, 2011c), email discussion lists were the number one source of professional information for librarians in the public and academic library sectors. And, as Julien and Given (2002/2003) wrote, these discussion lists offer "a glimpse of librarians' unscripted ideas" (p. 65). Five email discussion lists were selected for this study (Table one). The selected lists include: CLA, ILI-L, PUBLIB, MEDLIB-L, and LM_NET. Like the professional journals, the discussion lists had robust subscription rates and were also sponsored by different associations and interest groups. Each was selected because it encouraged active discussion amongst its subscribers, was not a "read only" list used to disseminate information, and had a publicly accessible archive. CLA was the list for all members of the Canadian Library Association. It did not list its number

of subscribers. Its archives were publicly accessible from March 2001. ILI-L is a discussion list dedicated to sustaining a “thriving exchange on instruction and information literacy” (American Library Association, n.d., para. 2). It was founded in 2002 as a continuation of the BI-L discussion list founded in 1990 and has a membership of 5,785, primarily academic librarians. The archives of ILI-L are publicly available from May 2002. PUBLIB, founded in 1992 (Online Computer Library Center, 2012), is a forum for “the discussion of issues relating to public librarianship” (para. 2). MEDLIB-L is a list aimed at medical and health sciences librarians. It has over 2,100 list members and its archives are publicly available from August 1993. Lastly, LM_NET is a worldwide list for school media specialists founded in 2008. It has over 11,000 subscribers. Its archive is publicly accessible from September 2010. Inclusion and exclusion criteria similar to the professional journals were used to determine which messages were included in the study. To provide consistency across the data gathered from the email discussion lists, because the archive for LM_NET was only available from September 2010, it was decided that only messages and discussions from September 2010 to December 2012 would be included. Only messages and discussions that focused on librarians, librarianship, professionalism, professional problems, or a combination thereof, were selected. The subject line of each message was first studied to determine whether or not the posting was appropriate for this study. If the subject line was unclear, then the postings themselves were examined to determine if they met the inclusion and exclusion criteria. All postings in a selected discussion thread were included in the data set. In total, 1,289 pages of discussions were included in the study.

Table 1

Email discussion lists

Email Discussion List Name	Number of Subscribers (approx.)	Library Sector	Sponsoring Organization	Archive Accessibility
CLA	Not listed	All sectors	Canadian Library Association	March 2001 ²
ILI-L	5,785	Academic	American Library Association	May 2002
LM_NET	11,000	School	Independent	September 2010
PUBLIB	Not listed	Public	Online Computer Library Center	February 1993
MEDLIB-L	2,100	Special	Medical Library Association	August 1993

Research interviews. Sixteen interviews with working Canadian librarians representing all four of the library sectors were conducted. In discourse analysis, the size of the sample is secondary to the amount of discourse gathered. The focus is on how language is used, not the language users (Potter & Wetherell, 1987). What is important, therefore, is the size of the discourse sampled, not the number of participants or texts included. The intent is not to have generalizable findings, but well-supported claims that make general statements: “We . . . want to support the general statements that transcend individual episodes. But we want to support the general statements through actual demonstrations, not through sweeping attempts at generalization” (Wood & Kroger, 2000, p. 78). When selecting participants, the goal is to ensure the full scope of the discourse under investigation is sampled.

The sample size, therefore, needs to be sufficiently large to ensure that the claims being made by the researcher can be sufficiently warranted or justified. To ensure that the entirety of

² Data from the CLA email discussion list was collected in May 2013. At that time, the archive for the email discussion list was available via <http://cla.ca>. On January 27, 2016 the CLA Executive Council voted to dissolve the Canadian Library Association. The archive is no longer accessible.

the discourse was sampled, this study used maximum variation sampling. Maximum variation sampling allows researchers to find participants “who cover the spectrum of positions and perspectives in relation to the phenomenon one is studying” (Palys, 2008 para. 9). According to Patton (1990), this technique provides “high-quality, detailed descriptions” that allow researchers to document uniqueness and “shared patterns that cut across cases” (p. 172). This sampling technique allowed the variations in the way the discourse was constructed to come to the fore, while at the same time investigating the whole of the repertoire. The goal was to have enough examples of the discourse to warrant or justify the argument being made. Lincoln and Guba (1985) suggested researchers sample to the point of redundancy and terminate their sampling “when no new information is forthcoming from newly sampled units” (p. 202). The initial sample size for this study was 10 participants. After these initial 10 interviews, a preliminary analysis of the data was completed to determine the amount of variability across the discourses presented. This analysis indicated additional data was required and six new participants were interviewed. The participants were professional librarians from Alberta, Canada. A professional librarian was defined for the purposes of this study as a person holding an MLIS from an ALA-accredited LIS program, or equivalent (Master of Education with a specialization in Teacher-Librarianship), who holds a position at the professional level as a librarian or manager. Librarians without an MLIS degree, or equivalent, or MLIS holders working at the paraprofessional level as a library technician or assistant were not included in this study. It is assumed all librarians who have received their MLIS from an ALA-accredited LIS program, or equivalent, will have had similar educational experiences and similar core or foundational courses. This definition followed the 8Rs Study (2005) description of professional librarian. Participants were selected because they represented a broad range of contexts. Participants

represented one of the four library sectors and had a variety of professional experiences and different personal backgrounds. Of the participants, six worked in public libraries, four in academic libraries, three in special libraries, and three in school libraries (two worked in elementary schools, one in a high school). Fourteen (87.5%) were female and two (12.5%) were male. Three (18.75%) were born in a country other than Canada. All of the participants received their MLIS (or equivalent) from a Canadian university. They had a variety of professional experience levels, from two years to over 35 years. Additionally, some of the participants had only worked for their current organization, while others had worked for various organizations and in a range of library sectors. Topics covered in the interviews included the participants' descriptions of how they entered the profession, their work, their professional activities, and their thoughts on professionalism. Interviews were conducted in a location of the participant's choice (such as the participant's office, meeting room, or cafe) and lasted from one to two hours each. Each interview was recorded, professionally transcribed, and participants were assigned pseudonyms. Ethics approval for this study was granted by a University of Alberta's Research Ethics Board (Appendix B, #Pro00044116).

Recruiting. Participants representing the four library sectors identified by The 8Rs Study (2005) (academic, public, special, and school) were selected using library websites, personal contacts, and referrals from participants who had already agreed to take part in the study. Once identified, participants were sent an invitation to join the study that explained the nature of the study, their rights as a potential participant in regards to privacy, confidentiality, consent, and withdrawal, and the time commitment required of them (Appendix C).

Interviewing. This study followed the ethical regulations for the use of human participants in research as laid out by the *Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for*

Research Involving Humans (2011) and the University of Alberta. In the face-to-face interviews (13), the informed consent letter (Appendix D) was reviewed and signed by both the participant and the researcher before the start of the interview. For interviews that occurred over the telephone (3), the informed consent letter was emailed to the participant prior to the scheduled interview time. Participants were asked to review, sign, and scan the form before emailing the completed form back to the researcher. In addition, the letter was orally reviewed by both the participant and the researcher. This interaction was recorded at the beginning of the interview process. Interviews were digitally audio recorded and professionally transcribed after the interviews. The transcriber was asked to sign a confidentiality agreement in which the transcriber agreed to hold the identity of participants confidential, not to make copies of the audio files, to store the audio files and other related files in a secure location, to return to the researcher or destroy all audio files once the transcription was complete, and to delete any files that contained study-related documents from her computer and any backup drives at the completion of the work (Appendix E). Participants' real names and any other identifying information, such as place of work, were removed from the transcript. Pseudonyms were immediately assigned following interviews and were used subsequently to identify participants and all related data. Participants were sent a copy of the transcript for review. Final versions of the transcripts were kept on the researcher's password-protected computer and physical copies of the informed consent forms are kept in a locked cabinet. Following the *Tri-council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans* (2011), interview transcripts will be kept for at least five years following the completion of the research to facilitate publication of research results.

The interviews followed Potter and Mulkay's (1985) and Potter and Wetherell's (1987) active, or conversational, approach to interviewing participants. While the goal of more

traditional social science approaches to interviewing is to get consistent responses to specific questions for participants, Potter and Mulkay (1985) and Potter and Wetherell (1987) advocated for a more active and interventionist approach to interviewing to illicit a range of interpretive practices: “Analyses which identify only the consistent responses are . . . sometimes uninformative because they tell us little about the full range of . . . resources people use when constructing the full meaning of their social world and do not so clearly reveal the function of participants’ constructions” (Potter & Wetherell, 1987, p. 164). To generate variation in responses, Potter and Wetherell recommended tackling the same issue multiple times in the interview or using follow-up questions that pose alternative views to those initially posited by the participant. Potter and Mulkay (1985) argued that interviews should be used to put conclusions gleaned from more naturalistic sources (data sources that have not been produced specifically for the researcher, such as the email list discussions and published literature used for this study) to the test. The interview guide (Appendix F) was developed using Marshall and Wetherell’s (1989) interview format for exploring the career identities of law students. These questions were designed to illicit the various repertoires that lawyers used when considering their professional identities. The interview format combined questions about how participants understood themselves as professionals with questions about the characteristics that participants felt were required to be a professional in their field. This interview schedule was modified to include questions directly related to conclusions drawn from the professional literature and on the email discussion lists. Specifically, questions about the library as place, participants’ relationship with their clients, and the importance of information resources were added.

Data Analysis

The analysis of the data sets focused on the language resources librarians used to describe themselves, the professional practices of librarianship, professionalism, and professional problems. These language resources were analysed to identify the interpretive repertoires used by librarians when describing their professional identities. The analysis started with careful and repeated readings of the data to discern patterns, following a three-step procedure:

1. Individual units of the data, such as an interview or journal article, were analysed for inconsistencies and contradictions in descriptions of librarians, professional practices, professionalism, and professional problems. As the focus of the analysis was on the context and function of the language resources, this part of the analysis was guided by the questions: What terms or phrases are being employed? In what context are they being used? Why are they being employed? And, are certain language resources given primacy in certain contexts?
2. These inconsistencies and contradictions were then compared to those in others parts of the data to identify recurring context-dependent patterns.
3. Lastly, the assumptions that underlay and supported these patterns were identified (Talja 1999, 2005).

Following Potter and Wetherell (1987), the data was first thematically coded to help “squeeze an unwieldy body of discourse into manageable chunks” (p. 167). Coding, at this stage of the analysis, has a pragmatic, not analytic, intent. The purpose was to organize the data into broad themes to produce sets of instances of occurrence to be analysed at a later date. This initial coding of the data was broad and inclusive. Twenty themes were initially identified and coded by hand (Appendix G). Categories for coding came from the research questions guiding this study

as well as close reading of the data for recurring words, phrases, and ideas. Both topical and analytical coding was completed. Topical coding focused on the topics discussed by interview participants and in the journal articles and email discussion lists. For example, codes such as “administrators,” “advocacy,” “buzz words,” “change,” “employment concerns,” “expertise,” “future of the profession,” “library or information,” “LIS education,” “other identities,” “perceptions of others,” “perceptions of other librarians,” “professionalism,” “roles,” “service,” “technology,” “users,” and “values” all focused on how librarians described these topics.

Analytical coding focused on identifying potential discursive functions in the data. Codes such as “attitudes or orientations” paid attention to the meanings librarians attributed to the topics they discussed. Two codes, “library as place” and “reputation or positioning,” were used to identify both topics and discursive function. A full description of each code is found in Appendix G.

Wetherell and Potter (1988) described this stage of the analysis as “not a matter of following rules and recipes; it often involves following up hunches and the development of tentative interpretative schemes which may need to be abandoned and revised over and over again” (p. 177) and highlights the cyclical process of this stage of the analysis (Wetherell and Potter, 1992). To keep track of this process, as well as for warranting any claims made from the research (see below), a research diary was kept to document each step in the research process.

The analysis occurred after the data had been coded. Discourse analysis relies heavily on the close reading of coded data sets. As stated above, the analysis focused on the variation and similarities both within individual parts of the data, such as an interview or article, and across the data set. Attention was paid to the context and function of the repertoires and regularities of language use. Talja (1999) described the process of identifying interpretive repertoires as “putting together a jigsaw puzzle” (p. 466). Following Potter and Wetherell (1987), each

“chunk,” or coded data set, was examined with two questions in mind: “Why am I reading this passage in this way? What features produce this reading?” (p. 168). In addition, attention was paid to how certain phrases or terms were used, the context of and reason for their use, and the intended (or unintended) function or purpose of their use. The goal of the analysis was to identify when and how each interpretive repertoire was used and in relation to which topics.

Reliability, Validation, and Warrantability

In discourse analysis, the validation of the findings “depends on the verifiability of the researcher’s interpretations” (Talja, 1999, p. 472). Much of the analytic work in discourse analysis takes place while validating the research findings. The notions of reliability and validation as they are understood for more conventional research are not appropriate for discourse analyses. Reliability, for example, usually refers to the ability of a tool or instrument to measure consistently, while validity refers to the truth or accuracy of generalizable claims (Taylor, 2001a). As discussed previously, discourse analysis does not make claims of generalizability or truth. Instead, the desired outcome of a discourse analysis is to have supported claims of general statements. These claims are not considered to be the only truth of an event or phenomenon. Discourses are constructed and, as a result, their meaning shifts and changes as the discourse is used and interpreted (Wood & Kroger, 2000). The researcher through her discourse analysis is presenting one version of the discourse’s meaning. Since conventional understandings of reliability and validation are not appropriate for evaluating discourse analysis, Wood and Kroger (2000) suggested the term warrantability. Wood and Kroger argued that the term warrantability was preferable because it encompassed the notions of trustworthiness and soundness which, in turn, covered both the process of doing a discourse analysis (trustworthiness) and the final presentation or product of the analysis (soundness).

Following Potter and Wetherell (1987), Wood and Kroger argued that warrantability could be achieved not by following specific procedures but by following a set of criteria that look to both the internal and external issues of trustworthiness and soundness, the analysis of the data, and the overall presentation of the final product. The criteria for trustworthiness include a clear and orderly presentation of the data. The reader is the primary evaluator of the analysis. As Potter and Wetherell (1994) wrote: “readers of discourse analytic studies need to be able, to an important extent, to perform their own evaluations of the analytic conclusion” (p. 63). The criteria for soundness includes: orderliness, demonstration, coherence, plausibility, and fruitfulness. An orderly report allows the reader to easily assess both the trustworthiness and soundness of the analysis. Demonstration and coherence allows the reader to see the steps of the analysis for each presented excerpt of discursive material (Potter & Wetherell, 1987). All claims must be shown to be grounded in the text through excerpts taken from the data, and exceptions and alternatives need to be accounted for. In addition to presenting a coherent analysis, claims must be plausible in relation to other knowledge. As Wood and Kroger (2000) stated: “in the case of grounding, one looks for a warrant in the text; in the case of plausibility, one looks to other work for a warrant” (p. 175). Lastly, a claim can be considered warranted if it helps to make sense of other discourses and generates new explanations—if it is fruitful. This means that the claim is not simply plausible in relation to other knowledge, but that it reframes old issues, creates links between previously unrelated issues, and raises new questions (Tracy, 1995 as cited in Wood & Kroger, 2000).

To meet the criteria outlined above, a research journal was kept detailing the decisions made throughout the research process. With the aid of this journal, a detailed account of the research process is presented here so readers can make their own assessment of the study’s

truthfulness. The soundness requirement is met by providing the reader, as much as possible, with the data using examples from the data set and through comparisons to other studies examining the professional identity of other professions. In addition, the use of multiple data-gathering methods provided the analysis with contextual triangulation, which offered reliability to the research findings. According to Talja (2005), “[e]xplicit comparisons between different contexts of discussion ensure that the research does not comprise a case study with restricted generalizability” (p. 15). As will be discussed in the following chapters, librarians used similar language resources to regulate their professional identities in these different parts of the data. The interpretive repertoires used by librarians were similar throughout their professional literature, email discussion lists, and in research interviews.

Researcher-Participant Relationship

As discussed above, interviews were conducted in a conversational style in an effort to elicit a range of responses from participants. One outcome of using such an approach is that the traditional researcher-participant relationship, in which the researcher aims to be neutral and exert little to no bias on the interview situation, is fundamentally changed. Because meaning is socially constructed in the framework used for this study, the interview becomes an instance of meaning-making for both the interviewer and the interviewee. This makes reflexivity on the part of the researcher extremely important. Taylor (2001b) recommended that researchers, particularly discourse analysts, be self-aware of the way they act in an interview and the way the interview acts on them—in short, be aware of their identity as a researcher. Although I have an emerging identity as an academic and researcher, I also have an insider identity as a librarian. My status as an insider undoubtedly influenced my interviews, as I have some understanding of the references and language choices made by participants. The literature on interviewing

(Hammersley, 1996; Taylor, 2001b) recommends that researchers make a choice about how to present themselves prior to conducting the interview. As the goal of the interviews in this study was to elicit informal uses of the interpretive repertoires librarians employ when describing their professional identities, I shared my experiences as a librarian, when appropriate, with my participants. The intention behind this choice was to build trust with participants by disclosing my insider status (Hammersely, 1996). However, because a conversational interview can create a complicated social interaction, following Hammersely's advice, I attempted to "keep focus mostly upon the other person" (p. 180) and only disclosed personal information and opinions as the conversations dictated.

Ethical Considerations

The use of email discussion lists for research purposes opens up a series of ethical issues—specifically the question: Can the Internet be considered a public space, thus making the speech that occurs on it freely available to researchers? Ess and Jones (2004) recommended that researchers consider the expectations established by the particular online venue. For instance: "Is there is [sic] a posted site policy that establishes specific expectations—e.g., a statement notifying users that the site is public . . . etc." (p. 30). They argued "the greater the acknowledged publicity of the venue, the less obligation there may be to protect individual privacy, confidentiality, right to informed consent, etc." (p. 31). Kitchin (2007) and McKee and Porter (2009), however, argued that the distinction between public and private on the Internet was more complicated and the lines between these spaces were often blurred. The blurring of these lines makes unclear the determination of whether informed consent is required for using online data. For instance, the data may be publicly available online, but if the users of the email discussion list believed that they were communicating in a private manner within a community, then informed consent to use

their conversations in the study may be necessary. To aid in deciding whether or not an online communication requires consent to use, McKee and Porter (2009) recommended assessing four different variables relating to the nature of the research: public versus private, topic sensitivity, degree of interaction, and subject vulnerability.

Public versus private. All of the selected email discussion lists (CLA, ILI-L, MEDLIB-L, PUBLIB, LM_NET) had made their archives publicly available, i.e., open to non-list members. And the information pages for all of the discussion lists reminded users of the public nature of the discussion list and urged caution when posting. It was, therefore, determined that the selected discussion lists were public in nature.

Topic sensitivity. McKee and Porter (2009) recommended that the sensitive nature of the research be considered in two ways: the sensitive nature of personal information being used and issues that the community may consider to be sensitive. In the first instance, is the information being sought something that could expose a person to ridicule, or does the information pertain to illegal activity, sexual activity, religious beliefs, family information, etc.? In the second instance, is the information being sought something that the community, in this case the librarians writing to the discussion list, might want to be kept confidential? The degree of sensitivity of the research topic—the professional identity of librarians—is fairly low. As with the interviews, the information that was sought involved how discussion list participants understood themselves to be professional. The focus of the research was on descriptions of librarians and librarianship and perceptions of professionalism. It was deemed unlikely that sensitive information would be offered by list discussants. Additionally, as the professionalism of librarianship is a frequent topic within the field's professional literature, it can be argued that the LIS community does not feel that the topic is of a sensitive nature and should be kept confidential.

Degree of interaction. As the analysis focused on archived materials, there was no interaction between list participants and the researcher. In addition, because the nature of the research was to examine how language was used at a discursive level and not to examine the opinions and attitudes of specific populations, there was no need for the researcher to contact individual list members for further information.

Subject vulnerability. McKee and Porter (2009) argued that researchers using online data “need to consider the effects of ‘bringing the public’ to a particular online site, community, and venue which, because of the sheer size of the Internet, might otherwise have remained unnoticed” (p. 89). The selected email discussion lists were well known and utilized within the LIS professional community (the lists had over 25,000 combined subscribers). In addition to publicly available archives, many of the lists invited anyone from the public to subscribe and link to them from their web pages. Given the openness of these lists, there appeared to be little danger in bringing these lists “to the public.”

Informed consent. Given that these discussion lists have been determined to be public, with low topic sensitivity, degree of interaction, and subject vulnerability, it was decided that acquiring informed consent from all listserv participants was unnecessary. In addition, because this study relied on archived materials, achieving informed consent from all past list participants was impossible as list memberships and email addresses change.

Confidentiality. As achieving informed consent from all potential listserv participants was impossible, steps were taken to protect the personal identity of any participant who posted to the list. Kitchin (2007) argued that because discourse analysis “poses no intrusion upon the speaker-writers, and insofar as the texts are available through a public forum and require no fees or extraneous requirements for membership, we may regard their use as synonymous to working

with public materials” (p. 79), implying that no steps need to be taken to protect the identities of participants. However, as list members did not intend for their posts to be used for research purposes and as direct quotations were used not only for analysis purposes but also to warrant claims, all identifying information was removed to provide discussion lists members with some confidentiality.

Limitations and Delimitations

This dissertation inevitably has limitations. The timeframes used as part of the inclusion and exclusion criteria for the published literature and the email discussion lists may or may not have coincided with participants’ experience levels. The findings, however, suggested the use and function of the interpretive repertoires were consistent across the data set. In addition, the sample population and the email discussion lists had potential limitations. Efforts were made to recruit participants who had a range of professional experiences and personal backgrounds; however, participation in the study may have held greater appeal for librarians already concerned with their professional roles and identity or those from organizational contexts where participation in research, as both a participant and a researcher, is expected. In addition, in the first group of interviews, most of the participants were geographically located in the same city. As a result, there were a limited number of libraries and library systems from which to recruit participants. In such instances, efforts were made to find participants working in other locations. For instance, it was noted early in the interviewing process that four of the six public librarian interview participants all worked for the same large urban library system. To address this disparity, librarians working in smaller public library systems in other parts of the province were recruited. Efforts were made to select email discussion lists that had high subscription rates and active discussions amongst subscribers; however, because some of the discussion lists had a

specific focus, some topics librarians discussed on these lists may be overrepresented in the dataset. The contextual triangulation provided by the rest of the data set, however, enhances the generalizability of the findings by ensuring a variety of topics and contexts were discussed by librarians (Talja, 1999).

This study is delimited by the choice to focus on the identity repertoires that librarians use, not on the experience or the performance of identity by individuals, or individuals' identity work. Identity regulation is the "more or less intentional effects of social practice upon the processes of identity construction and reconstruction" (Alvesson and Willmott, 2002, p. 625) and consists of discursive practices that define and limit identity. Identity regulation can resemble identity control. However, professionals are "not passive receptacles or carriers of discourses but, instead, [they] more or less actively and critically interpret and enact them" (p. 628). Professionals can accept, reject, or resist the discourses that attempt to regulate and control their identities. This occurs at the individual level and is described by Alvesson and Willmott as identity work, which is an interpretive activity that reproduces and transforms a person's self-identity. This research is focused on the repertoires that librarians draw upon to form their identities, and the function that these repertoires have in social interactions, not on how individual librarians accept, reject and use these repertoires and the function of these repertoires in specific social interactions. By examining the discourses, or repertoires, that regulate librarians' identities, this research could provide the foundation for future research into librarians' identity work.

Chapter Summary

This chapter has presented the research design for this study. Specific attention was paid to how the data were collected, the data analysis, the reliability and validation of the results, the

research-participant relationship, ethical considerations, and the study's limitations and delimitations. In the following chapters, results and discussion will be presented addressing the interpretive repertoires identified during the analysis. Chapter six will close the dissertation and make conclusions based on the data collected, using the methodology described above.

Chapter Four

Results: The Identity Repertoires of Librarians

Chapter Introduction

To gather a rich enough data set to identify the interpretive repertoires librarians used to describe their professional identities, three different data-gathering methods were employed. These methods were designed to capture the language resources used by librarians from all library sectors to describe themselves as professionals in a variety of settings, ranging from formally published journal and magazine articles, to informal discussions amongst professionals on email discussion lists, to research interviews. As described in chapter three, a variety of data gathering methods were used.

Data from the journals aimed at professional librarians and the email discussion lists were gathered before interview participants were recruited. To ensure the full range of interpretive repertoires was examined, data from the articles and discussion list posts were first analysed, followed by interviews with participants. As discussed in chapter three, a key aspect of the methodology used in this dissertation was to compare how people use language resources in different contexts in an effort to determine whether or not context affects their function. Preliminary insights gained from the analysis of the articles and discussion list posts were incorporated into the interview guide (Appendix F) to ensure specific topics or ideas were comparable across contexts. Participants were recruited from Alberta and represented a range of professional contexts. Twenty-one librarians were contacted and invited to participate in the study; sixteen agreed to participate and were subsequently interviewed for a response rate of 76%.

In this chapter, I will describe the five interpretive repertoires identified during the analysis phase of study that librarians used to describe themselves as professionals. Using data from all three sources (articles from journals directed toward professional librarians, email discussion lists, and interviews), the repertoires will be described in turn, including their function or purpose, starting with the most prevalent repertoire and moving to the least common (insider-outsider, service, professionalism, change, and advocacy). Attention will be paid to the variation in the repertoire's use between librarians working in different library sectors (academic, public, school, and special) and in different contexts.

Insider-Outsider Repertoire

The most prominent repertoire librarians drew upon when they articulated their professional identity was the insider-outsider repertoire. This repertoire focused on librarians' relationships with their clients and paid particular attention to librarians' expertise and skills and their desire to have their clients recognize librarianship as a profession. Davies and Harré (1990) argued people position themselves and others when they use interpretive repertoires. As people use the linguistic resources available to them, they create narratives about themselves and others. These narratives create identity positions for people that help them better understand the world. Positioning is a common discursive function that occurs when a professional identity is articulated. The insider-outsider repertoire had two main discursive functions and each of these functions positioned both librarians and their clients. Librarians described their professional expertise and skill to position themselves as information insiders. An expert understanding of information gave librarians a professional purpose and value and, through the application of their expertise, they were able to meet their clients' information needs. This had the additional function of positioning clients as outsiders who were naïve or ignorant of information. Clients

needed the insider knowledge of information held by librarians to have their information needs met. If this insider status was not recognized by clients, stakeholders, and other professionals as a result of inaccurate stereotypes or other misperceptions of librarians' expertise and skills, librarians described themselves as outsiders. This outsider status placed demands on librarians to demonstrate their professional value to clients to regain the insider status librarians felt they rightly deserved.

Librarians as experts. In their writing and speech, librarians positioned themselves as information experts: "We're skilled in being able to find information, that's what we do" (Anna, public librarian participant). They described themselves as holding the "keys to the information kingdom" (ILI_L 2011, post to email discussion list), because librarians have a unique understanding of "how information itself works" (ILI_L 2010, post to email discussion list). This knowledge helped librarians engage in a great variety of information-related activities that included finding information for clients, legitimizing new forms of publishing, helping organizations meet their goals and researchers create new knowledge (Smith & Mercer, 2010), avoiding "the next financial meltdown" (Goldberg, 2012, p. 26), and making "the world a smaller place" (Bardonaro, 2010, p. 227). In addition to information, librarians claimed expertise in information literacy, instruction, technology, client needs, their local community, books and library-related skills, and education. Expertise in information acted as the foundation for many of these areas of expertise. For instance, librarians did not base their claims of technological expertise on their knowledge of computer science, but on their knowledge of information. They described themselves as being "first line of defense to make [information technology] things usable" (MEDLIB 2010, post to email discussion list) and as being the only ones capable of navigating the "maze of Internet resources" (MEDLIB 2011, post to email discussion list).

Librarians' technology expertise enabled them to connect their clients to information technology: "[A librarian is the] person that kind of binds that all together to make it work" (Beverly, teacher librarian participant).

The purpose of expertise. The purpose of librarians' expertise was multi-faceted. Librarians use their expertise to help their clients meet their information needs: "Librarians are experts in selecting, organizing, retrieving, and then transmitting—or—'transferring the knowledge' back to the user in a user-friendly format" (ILI_L 2010, post to email discussion list). As this quote illustrates, librarians employed their expertise and skills primarily for the benefit of their clients. Librarians' expertise positioned them as being able to understand technology and information in ways their clients could not: "As a librarian, I understand [the limited perspectives included in a database designed to help students develop critical thinking skills] is a result of the type of sources included in this collection . . . ; however, if a student were to choose this database on his/her own, he/she might come to other conclusions about the available literature" (ILI_L 2010, post to email discussion list). Using their professional expertise to help clients was framed as an obligation for librarians. This obligation was tied to librarians knowing the "right" or "best" information their clients needed to meet their information need: "For the majority of students, . . . learning how to find books will be much more useful to their future information needs than using library databases, because books will still be available to them in public libraries (I hope) after graduation" (ILI_L 2011, post to email discussion list). In this example, the academic librarian positioned herself as an arbiter of her clients' information needs. On behalf of students, she had decided books were a better source of information than databases, as they will continue to have access to books once they have left school. Librarians also used their information retrieval skills to help clients when their clients' own skills failed:

“You can show somebody how to look up literature all they want, they will never be as good at it as you are” (MEDLIB 2012, post to email discussion list). By emphasizing their professional skills, librarians positioned clients as being incapable of understanding or meeting their own information needs. At the same time, librarians were able to position themselves as able not only to find the information their clients required, but as knowing exactly what information their clients needed and the format they needed it in.

Librarians used their information expertise to position themselves as their clients’ saviours. Librarians saved users from “this brave new world” (Quint, 2012, p. 8) in which information was likened to a “tsunami” against which only librarians were equipped to provide clients with “floaties [to] teach [users] how to swim” (ILI_L 2010, post to email discussion group). Their knowledge of the “right” and “best” information for their clients’ needs helped them to save their clients from looking like fools or from feeling the shame of getting incorrect or bad information: “Librarians are there to rescue you from making a fool of yourself by using bad information” (ILI_L 2010, post to email discussion list). Saving users meant helping clients stay up-to-date, teaching users to search properly, and saving users from their own laziness. Academic librarians were particularly focused on saving students from their own ignorance and laziness. One email discussion list post compared university students to arrogant and stupid teenagers having sex in the back of a car, unaware of the potentially life-altering consequences of sexually transmitted infections or pregnancy: “Google is a lot like sex in high school . . . they are going to do it anyway, so you might as well teach them how to do it safely (or in this case, properly)” (ILI_L 2010, post to email discussion list). In this quote, librarians are positioned as a safety net that will save students from their juvenile folly. Teacher librarians also positioned their students as being in need of saving. On the email discussion list LM_NET, one librarian

described her students as “victims” who needed to be matched with a book to be saved—a skill, that she, thankfully, had: “I have to work pretty hard to get to understand the ‘victim at hand’ and then to have an arsenal of books in my head to entice said ‘victim.’ Usually it happens that I can MATCH the kids to the books” (LM_NET 2012, post to email discussion list, emphasis in original).

Librarians had to save their clients from more than just their own ignorance. Clients needed saving from library-related jargon and the boredom of learning library-related skills. Expertise related to the library was described as complicated and uninteresting. Librarians made repeated references to specific kinds of library-related knowledge they claimed even they did not fully understand: “What non-librarian or even non-cataloger would ever think of that term [registers] instead of more obvious terms like handbook or directory, certainly not this librarian” (MEDLIB 2010, post to email discussion list). This positioned certain kinds of library-related expertise as being highly specialized, so specialized that clients had very little hope of understanding it. On the surface, these kinds of comments appeared to suggest there were limits to librarians’ own library-related expertise; however, discursively, these comments served to reaffirm librarians’ knowledge and skills while simultaneously placing them in a saviour role. Librarians’ expertise positioned them to be able to see just how complex libraries were, but also to have insight into how non-librarians understood libraries and information. This enabled them to understand these complicated systems and rescue clients from “the dark side” of libraries (Penny, academic librarian participant). Librarians characterized their library-related knowledge as being important, but boring. One medical librarian on the email discussion list MEDLIB described how she often apologized to medical students during information literacy instruction sessions for teaching them tedious library-related knowledge: “If the class seems bored . . . I’ll

say . . . , ‘I know, library stuff can seem really dry . . . I am a big library geek, I love this stuff, which is why, when you have a question you should always feel free to ask me via email, phone, or just stop by’” (MEDLIB 2011, post to email discussion list). By positioning herself as a “big library geek” this librarian claimed ownership of the “really dry” information she was imparting, while also reaffirming her own expertise. Her claim that she loved “this stuff” gave her students permission to ignore the boring parts because they knew she would be there to help them.

The discursive positioning of librarian-as-savior placed librarians in a protector role that extended beyond “library stuff” to library-related values. Librarians positioned themselves as defenders of core democratic values such as “freedom of speech, access to information, and improved print and digital literacy” (Roberts & Wood, 2011, p. 156). These values were not just the core values of democracy, but of librarianship. Because librarians and democracy shared these values, the world ““hungers for what librarians and libraries can bring””(librarian quoted by Roberts & Wood, 2011, p. 156). Discursively, therefore, librarianship as a profession benefited from librarians positioning themselves as heroes and saviors. Not only did they make the world a better place by supporting important democratic values and saving their clients from ignorance and boredom, they also used their expertise to save the profession itself: “[O]nce again, librarians saved the day. . . .The more often we can each come through like heroes (beyond shelving books) the better for our entire profession” (Harris, 2012, para. 7).

Discursively, claiming expertise served as a way to protect librarians’ professional territory. Although information, broadly defined, was identified as the focus of all librarians’ expertise, the specifics of their expertise were tied to their professional roles. Therefore, information literacy librarians were experts in instruction, teacher librarians were experts in education, cataloguing librarians were experts in organizing information, and reference librarians

were experts in information retrieval. This specialization had the dual purpose of protecting librarians' expertise within the profession, as well as setting librarians apart from their clients, their non-professional colleagues (paraprofessionals), and other professionals. Librarians positioned fellow professionals working in different library sectors as being unable to fully understand each other's work: "It's like someone going to another country, and you both speak English. You're Australian or British—well there's lots of things that are going to be different but there's lots of things that are similar because culturally you have a lot of shared experiences" (Beverly, teacher librarian participant). These differences were often attributable to factors outside the librarians' control, such as different client expectations. There was a sense all librarians shared similar professional values and basic work tasks, such as providing public service; however, the expertise required to be a good librarian in a particular sector was unique: "I know a lot of entry level positions in public libraries are children and youth librarians [I'm] and just not interested in that side of things. Reader's advisory—not really interested. I don't really read fiction. Yeah, it just not would be a good fit for me at all" (Mary, academic librarian participant). This participant linked expertise to personal fit and interest. Her academic expertise was positioned as being a better fit for her personally. Discursively positioning expertise as a personal fit allowed Mary to recognize the value of public librarians' expertise, while distancing herself, and her knowledge from it, thus protecting her own expertise.

Librarians used their expertise to protect librarianship from outside threats. The protective role of expertise can be seen in this quote from MEDLIB by a librarian responding to the possibility of a nurse, with no formal LIS training, working in a position previously held by a professional librarian: "Is she an expert searcher of Medline and CINAHL [medical databases]? I don't mean a simple search but a really complex one. Nurses are trained to think holistically

and in processes. Expert searchers are flexible and hierarchical thinkers” (MEDLIB 2011, post to email discussion list). The nurse is positioned as an outsider who lacks the necessary expertise, in this example about information retrieval, to be a suitable replacement for a librarian. Expertise, therefore, was more than performing the activities of librarianship; it was a way of thinking. Other threats librarians positioned themselves against included technology. Although technology was an area that librarians claimed expertise in, some librarians expressed concern about technology’s effect, or potential effect, on librarianship. However, if a librarian voiced any concern about technology, their concern was often quickly dismissed as fear. This was especially true on the email discussion lists. For instance, in a thread on ILI_L discussing the potential benefits and pitfalls of using Facebook as an unofficial course management software, some librarians voiced concern over Facebook’s privacy policies: “What about the issue of people who object to being forced into using the currently fashionable computer programs designed to mine and store personal information?” (ILI_L 2011, post to email discussion list). These concerns were quickly brushed aside by another discussion list poster as being based in fear: “Sure are a lot of nervous Nellies [sic] on this list. We need [to] embrace Facebook, Twitter and the like [and] not run away like stereotypical libraries [sic] with our heads in the sand” (ILI_L 2011, post to email discussion list). Librarians were quick to respond to this accusation by drawing attention to their comfort with and expertise in technology: “I speak as someone who uses Second Life, blogs etc. etc. with my students so it’s not like I’m nervous of Web 2.0” (ILI_L 2011, post to email discussion list). Technology was not something for librarians to fear because their skills and expertise allowed them to master it: “Should I start to fear Google? Nah, I know better. No machine is a match for me” (Lange, 2012, p. 104).

Expertise and professional legitimacy. By using their expertise to help people, librarians were able to position themselves as valuable in the eyes of important stakeholders, which had the additional benefit of gaining stakeholders' respect. This respect came not just from helping people, but from the specifics of librarians' expertise: "I think it is important to accept and stake claim on being a librarian and what the skills and expertise of bring a librarian involves. Often . . . stating what our expertise is, and owning it, garners respect from colleagues" (ILI_L 2010, post to email discussion list). In this example, simply stating the skills and expertise of librarians was enough to earn the respect of colleagues, specifically faculty members. The respect of colleagues, especially faculty members who were perceived to have more social clout and power than librarians, meant librarians' expertise was recognized by important stakeholders. This recognition legitimized librarians' skills and expertise. The recognition by non-librarians was proof that librarians, and their expertise, had value. On the email discussion lists and in the published literature, librarians would note when influential non-librarians publicly recognized their expertise. Forms of recognition included co-authorship of, or an acknowledgement in, a peer reviewed journal article, a mention of librarians in a newspaper, or the inclusion of an influential librarian on a list of non-librarians: "Kane Consulting, an area social media marketing firm, named Knodl [a public librarian] to its 2010 Twin Cities' Top 25 Most Influential Social Media Professionals on Twitter. She's the sole librarian on the list" ("Tech Leaders," 2011, para. 31). This recognition, however, did not have to be made formally. Simply including librarians in policy decisions, research teams, or even inviting them to attend a meeting was enough recognition to legitimate their expertise: "I believe that by asking me to assist/participate, the team is already acknowledging the skill and expertise that I can bring to

their project and, in my experience, a more formal acknowledgement generally follows” (MEDLIB 2011, post to email discussion list).

The non-librarians who recognized librarianship’s value were highly valued by librarians: “I think it is fair to say that over the past year the UTD [UpToDate, a database for physicians] executive team has listened with an open mind and learned a lot from us about how medical librarians view the world, how we do our jobs, and why we are important players on the healthcare e-resource scene” (MEDLIB 2010, post to email discussion list). This post was in response to a thread in which librarians discussed whether or not updating medical information once every three months was appropriate for a database claiming to be up-to-date and reliable: “But with UpToDate and similar e-resources, I think there is a widespread assumption that the information provided is current and completely reliable” (MEDLIB 2010, post to email discussion list). The first librarian quoted used the willingness of UTD’s executive team to consult with librarians as proof of the company’s value. Similarly, if other professionals supplemented their own expertise with that of a librarian’s, they were described as “smart”: “Smart marketers, attorneys, engineers, and other professionals are willing to delegate information-related tasks to embedded librarians, just as they delegate other tasks, when they see that delegating is the most effective way to accomplish their objectives” (Shumaker, 2012, p. 33). An organization or professional not acknowledging a librarian’s expertise, after being helped by a librarian, was described as “extremely [surprising] and disappoint[ing]” (MEDLIB 2011, post to email discussion list).

Librarians also turned to each other to remind themselves of their expertise and professional value. They linked expertise to self-trust. This was most clearly articulated on the email discussion lists. If a librarian was struggling with a professional decision, such as

censoring a book from the collection, other librarians were quick to suggest that as long as the decision was based in their professional expertise, it was the correct one: “You are the expert, and you can trust your judgment” (LM_NET 2011, post to email discussion list). These reminders functioned as a way to bolster librarians’ self-confidence in their expertise: “BUT BOTTOM LINE HERE, WHO'S THE EXPERT AT YOUR SCHOOL? (Hold mirror in front of face) :)” (LM_NET 2012, post to email discussion list, emphasis in original). These pep talks provided self-legitimacy for librarians’ expertise. Non-librarians might not recognize the expertise of librarians, but other librarians did.

In addition to reminding each other of their professional expertise, librarians positively contrasted the expertise of other professions to librarianship. This served to legitimate the expertise of librarians by placing it on par with other professions. In this example, a librarian compared the possibility of a diagnostic algorithm replacing physicians to online databases replacing librarians: “Of course, we know that is not true, just as it is not true that you can access all the medical information you need without a librarian who can know [sic] the resources . . . and . . . the fine art of conducting a good reference interview” (MEDLIB 2011, post to email discussion list). In this example, the expertise a physician needs to diagnose a disease was positively compared to the expertise needed to conduct a good reference interview. This positive comparison discursively extended to each profession’s clients, meaning a patient’s suffering as a result of illness was positioned as being the equivalent to a client’s suffering as the result of insufficient information. Physicians were the most common profession against which librarians from all library sectors compared themselves; however, academic librarians were also likely to compare themselves to faculty members: “I want to be . . . perceived in the same way that professors are perceived, as somebody who is a wealth of knowledge that you can go to—and you

should feel that you can go to for assistance with whatever” (Mary, academic librarian participant). Physicians and faculty members are both highly regarded professions, require extended periods of higher education, and are known for contributing to society—all traits librarians drew upon when they discursively compared themselves to these professions.

Librarians drew on documents produced by library associations and governments to support and lend legitimacy to their expertise. American teacher librarians, for example, used the legitimacy offered by the Common Core State Standards (2010), a set of standards for educational attainment for all American students, to position themselves as curricular and pedagogy experts. Much of the discussion around the Common Core Standards occurred in *School Library Journal* and *Teacher Librarian* and was focused on determining whether or not librarians should support the implementation of the Standards (e.g., Ballard, 2010), how teacher librarians could best support the Standards in the classroom (e.g., Philpot, 2012), and how to use the Standards to demonstrate the professional value of librarians to stakeholders (e.g., Todd, 2012). References to the Standards were less common on the American teacher librarian listserv LM_NET. Teacher librarians often referred to the Standards’ focus on inquiry as a way to position themselves as pedagogical experts: “We are uniquely suited for this because the Common Core Standards dovetail elegantly with inquiry, and we know inquiry” (Nesi, 2012b, p. 18). Although the Albertan teacher librarian participants did not refer to the Standards, as they had no direct influence on the Canadian educational context, like their American counterparts, they focused on inquiry as a way to position themselves as educators in their schools: “So with one teacher I’m doing an inquiry project that is not really an inquiry project. . . . She thinks [it’s] inquiry. It’s not. . . . So I’m like ‘okay. Well instead of using PowerPoint, why don’t we use Google Presentations? And why don’t we have kids collaborate?’” (Tina, teacher librarian

participant). However, throughout their interviews, the Albertan teacher librarians did make indirect references to the Government of Alberta's Framework for Student Learning (2011) competencies document, which outlined the educational requirements of 21st century learners: "I was on a committee looking at how do we make the library the hub of the school, how do we transform the library so it meets the learning needs of 21st century learners and staff" (Jane, teacher librarian participant). Documents like the Common Core Standards (2010) and the Framework for Student Learning (2011) validated the positions librarians held in school by placing areas of teacher librarian expertise—inquiry and technology—at the core of student learning.

Librarians from other library sectors were less likely to refer to documents created by government to legitimate their professional expertise. Instead, other sectors were more likely to refer to documents created by library associations. For instance, academic librarians drew upon the Association of College and Research Libraries' Information Literacy Competency Standards for Higher Education (2000) and medical librarians used the Medical Library Association's Standards for Hospital Libraries 2007 (2007) as similar proof of their expertise: "If your faculty ask you what IL [information literacy] is, don't hand them the standards, objectives and performance indicators. Those were written for us; we understand what they mean" (ILI_L 2012, post to email discussion list). Standards and competency documents created by library associations linked expertise to key aspects of professionalism, such as the profession's knowledge-base, professional level of practice, and professional commitment. Librarians used documents created by government and library associations as an external validation of their expertise. Unlike the encouragement librarians gave each other on email discussion lists and positive comparisons they made between librarianship and other professions, these documents

provided librarians with objective proof that librarians were experts and that their expertise was important.

Library as locus of expertise. Discursively, librarians connected their expertise to the library as a place and institution. Although they identified as experts in information in all of its forms, the enactment of this expertise was largely limited to the library. Library-related knowledge, such as subject-headings and cataloguing rules, were referred to as “arcana” (PUBLIB 2010, post to email discussion list) only librarians truly understood. This specialized understanding extended to books, databases, and certain library-related technologies, such as e-readers. Even librarians’ technology expertise was connected to the library. Their combined expertise in information and technology positioned them as adding value to technology by “going beyond freely available information . . . and . . . [adding] personal customer service [to technology]” (Knox, 2012, p. 21), qualities librarians argued were often missing from information technology alone. Claims of technological expertise, therefore, functioned as a way for librarians to improve perceptions of the profession by giving “bookishness a new cachet” (Feldman, 2010a, p. 5) and by giving their information expertise new relevance in relation to information technology. Similarly, claims of expertise in books positioned librarians as important and valuable professionals: “Most teachers simply don’t have enough hours in the day to keep up with the books. Parents can’t keep up either. They need LIBRARIANS. Subject matter experts when it comes to books . . . whether on a Nook [an e-reader] or in a book” (LM_NET 2012, post to email discussion list, emphasis in original). As this quote indicates, without their expertise in books and libraries, their clients would suffer.

Some librarians argued against limiting expertise to the library and library-related areas. For instance, some public librarians spoke about community expertise in place of the library or

information expertise: “I feel like, because I go and do programs for adults . . . that there’s sometimes something I can take back from that to the library. So I don’t think it’s just a one way sort of thing that I’m the library expert that does these things” (Erica, public librarian participant). The discursive function of this claim was to remove librarians from the position of expert. In the above quote, Erica may be the one offering the library programs, but she also learns something from the community members she is helping. This contrasts strongly with the post from LM_NET described above where clients were positioned as needing librarians and their expertise, simply to keep up with all the book-based information to which the clients had access. Special librarians argued that removing librarians from the confines of the library offered them new opportunities to use their expertise: “Once you take the librarians out of the library, you would be amazed at how easily their expertise adds value in a new context” (Strand, 2011b, p. 32). Here, the library was positioned as limiting librarians’ expertise because it placed a barrier between librarians and their clients.

Counter-arguments regarding the library as the locus of librarians’ expertise, however, were often pushed against by the dominant discourse of library-related expertise. Public librarians, for instance, were warned against claiming community expertise: “Librarians need to understand that they are not experts on the needs of all community members. As well, librarians should not view themselves as spokespeople for community members with whom they work. Instead, librarians are primarily experts in organizing and finding information” (Williment, 2011, p. 32). In this quote, public librarians were reminded of their areas of expertise and cautioned against expanding or changing that expertise to include the information- and non-information-related needs of their community. Similarly, special librarians were reluctant to accept calls to abandon the library as the locus of their expertise and professional activities. Although non-

library spaces may have offered special librarians new venues in which to demonstrate their expertise to clients, there was the potential they would no longer be recognized as librarians: “Today, it is not unusual for a staff member with a library degree to be using his or her library skills but not be recognized as a librarian” (Schachter, 2011a, p. 26).

Throughout the data, librarians used “library” as a synonym for “librarian”: “Libraries are definitely moving outside their walls” (Bjørner, 2012, p. 16). This metonymic slippage, a figure of speech in which an object or concept is referred to not by its own name but by an attribute or object closely associated with it (“Metonymy,” n. d.), conflated the librarian with the library. Therefore, the activities of librarianship and the expertise of librarians were discursively positioned as the library’s activities and expertise. Importantly, however, through this slippage librarians applied the positive cultural associations of the library as an institution to themselves: “The library is very much a part of my life and when you reject the library, I feel you are rejecting me” (LM_NET 2012, post to email discussion list). The library was the physical proof of librarians’ expertise and work: “I’m proud of what I’ve done. I’m—it’s a tangible—a lot of the things I do are intangible. That is tangible. That is something people can grab on to and I can say and show them ‘I did this’” (Anna, public librarian participant). A consequence of this slippage was that the expertise of librarians was easily overlooked. Therefore, the library can appear to operate without the work and expertise of librarians: “I’m just facilitating access to [the library], I’m not the person that [my clients] need to speak with—they can talk with anybody at [the library]” (Sharon, public librarian participant). This slippage even extended to the Master of Library and Information Science (MLIS) degree—the symbol of librarians’ expertise (discussed below)—and LIS programs. Both the degree and the programs were commonly referred to throughout the data respectively as “library degree” or “library school.” The choice to highlight

the degree's and the programs' connection to the place of the library and not to the larger discipline of Library and Information Science further cements the connection between the library and professional expertise. Both the content of librarians' expertise and the symbols of their expertise were connected to the library, implying librarians' expertise was only recognizable when connected to the library.

MLIS as symbol of expertise. The Master of Library and Information Science, or its equivalents³, was the symbol of librarians' expertise. It was the source of librarians' training and knowledge: "Who but a trained librarian actually grasps . . . the difference between [and] the significance of keywords vs. controlled vocabularies? Who but a librarian with a masters degree can discuss at length the history, challenges and benefits of open access in a world in which you generally get what you pay for?" (ILI_L 2010, post to email discussion list). Having an MLIS made someone a librarian: "I heard [a story about librarians] on the news this morning and wondered if they are really librarians. Apparently some of them are. . . . Those with a masters' degree in library science" (MEDLIB 2011, post to email discussion list). All of the interview participants cited obtaining their MLIS as the moment they felt like a librarian: "We know what [being a librarian] means. It means you have to have a MLIS, right? But the clients, they cannot really tell. They call everybody who works in the library librarians. But [even when I worked as a library technician] . . . I knew the difference" (Jillian, special librarian participant). On the email discussion lists, librarians would ask each other for advice on whether to include their degrees in their email signatures and on business cards: "I don't have my degree on my business cards, but I should. My signature does have them. I think we should put them everywhere; it would certainly give the public a different perspective on what we do" (LM_NET 2011, post to email discussion list). The MLIS was proof that librarians were qualified for their jobs and that

³ Unless otherwise noted, "the MLIS" encompasses "the MLIS, or its equivalents."

they had the necessary expertise to perform the job to a professional level. It also gave librarians an insiders' knowledge about librarianship that simply performing the duties of a librarian could not confer: "Is [this non-librarian working in a professional position] willing/interested in pursuing the master's degree? Or even a paraprofessional certification? I think that many people think we just sit around and read all day and don't need any special training" (MEDLIB 2011, post to email discussion list).

Librarians were very protective of the MLIS degree. Librarians on the email discussion lists ILI_L and MEDLIB separately recounted stories of parents calling to ask about the qualifications required to work as a librarian for their child with intellectual disabilities: "Recently we had someone call wanting to know what it took to be a librarian. When my tech explained about the Master's degree they were very disappointed. It seems they had a special needs daughter and they had thought a Librarian [sic] would be a perfect occupation for her" (MEDLIB 2011, post to email discussion list). These stories were offered as proof that librarianship was a misunderstood and disrespected profession. The MLIS alone, however, was not enough to ensure a librarian had the required expertise to perform their jobs. Expertise was something that had to be gained through experience: "As a new librarian (or 'baby librarian' as my colleagues like to call me) perhaps I am not qualified to comment" (ILI_L 2010, post to email discussion list). In this example, the librarian positions her "baby" opinion, based in her professional expertise gained during her MLIS education, as being less important and worthy of attention than the experience of her more qualified (i.e., experienced) colleagues. By restricting the "qualified" comments to only experienced librarians, a state of being that is never defined, she positioned experience as being more important than expertise.

“Getting” expertise. The public’s misperception of librarians (discussed in detail below) meant only some information users truly understood librarians’ expertise. These individuals and groups were described as being those who “got it” as a result of having experienced a librarian’s expertise first hand. In other words, for librarians’ expertise to be appreciated, it had to be experienced. The experience of working with a librarian had a two-fold effect: The client understood the expertise of the librarian, but they also better understood the limits of their own knowledge or expertise. This was especially true for clients whom librarians considered to be experts, such as faculty members, classroom teachers, and researchers. For example, when librarians positioned themselves as experts regarding students’ needs, both in university and K-12 environments, the librarians were able to show teachers and faculty members how little they knew about their students: “We’re definitely focusing more on . . . trying to find ways of educating instructors on how to integrate more technologies into their assignments. . . . I’ve seen . . . assignments and it’s . . . heavy emphasis on using ten peer reviewed resources . . . and I just think that that’s so ten years ago” (Mary, academic librarian participant). In relation to researchers, librarians positioned themselves as information retrieval experts so vital that without them the researchers they would not be successful: “[The researcher I’m working with is] a content expert and she knows her area but she . . . uses the database at a very entry level. She doesn’t know all the functions with a database. So she . . . can’t do a very effective search. . . . this is where we can . . . help” (Jillian, special librarian participant). The librarian in this example not only highlights her expertise and role in the research process, but she also emphasizes the limits of the researcher’s knowledge. The researcher may know the content, but she does not know how to find it.

Technology was often described as a tool to help librarians demonstrate their expertise to clients: “I can see us as librarians helping faculty more with . . . not just the research side but the ‘how do I use this [software] program?’ and ‘how do I integrate information into the online environment where it’s visible to everyone?’” (Mary, academic librarian participant). By demonstrating their technological expertise, librarians hoped to raise the profession’s profile. Research skills and expertise were also treated as a tool to demonstrate to users the profession’s value. Like technology, expertise in research had the dual benefit of helping clients by improving services and professional practice, and demonstrating to clients the capabilities of librarians to “show that we are more than just librarians, but contributors to the work of the institution—whatever that is” (MEDLIB 2010, post to email discussion list). Librarians used their technological and research expertise and skills to demonstrate to clients that their value as professionals extended beyond their information-related roles.

The purpose of demonstrating their professional skills and expertise was to ensure clients understood the work of librarians. Librarians felt if their work was understood then the important professional roles of librarians would be noticed and appreciated. This need for recognition was reflected in librarians’ reminders to each other in the email discussion lists and in the articles from professional journals that “librarians make a difference” (PUBLIB 2010, post to email discussion list). Having this difference recognized made librarians feel as if they were taken “seriously and that [clients] understand what my job is” (Sharon, public librarian participant). Recognition allowed them to see the effect their expertise had on their clients: “If my life can touch someone else’s life directly I know I have that influence, right?” (Beverley, teacher librarian participant). The discursive function of recognition, therefore, also allowed librarians to see the value of their own work. This self-recognition was often used to counter negative popular

stereotypes and the feeling of being professionally ignored. On the email discussion list LM_NET, the teacher librarians had a regular “Good news Friday” during which they told each other about the positive recognition they received throughout the week. They wrote about “great feelings,” being “proud” of the recognition they were receiving, being “smothered in love,” and feeling “all warm and fuzzy” and “like a rock star” (LM-Net 2010-2012, posts to email discussion lists). These positive feelings gave the expertise and work of librarians an additional form of professional legitimacy—an emotional legitimacy. Their work made both themselves and their clients feel good. Often this emotional legitimacy was from students and their parents. It gave teacher librarians a sense that their work was “worth it” (LM_NET 2011, post to email discussion list)—“it” being professionally ignored by teachers and administrators (discussed in detail below).

Librarians often posited that their expertise was not well understood by non-librarians: “Faculty and academic administrators don’t ‘get’ information literacy” (ILI_L 2011, post to email discussion list). Those who did not “get it,” especially if they were perceived to be in a position of power, such as an administrator or organizational leader, were framed as being out of touch with the “real world” (LM_NET 2012, post to email discussion list). Positioning non-librarians as being out of touch invalidated their opinions about librarians and their expertise. Through their expertise, librarians understood the real world in a way non-librarians could not. It was important for non-librarians in positions of power to get it so that the work librarians did to help their clients could be recognized and supported. For instance, if faculty members supported the information literacy instruction of librarians, then student learning would be improved: “It’s long been my belief that we should be focusing more of our energies on our faculty colleagues if they ‘get it,’ they’ll make sure their students get it” (ILI_L 2011, post to email discussion list).

When non-librarians in positions of power did get it, librarians often credited direct experience with a librarian as the reason: “Finally! Someone outside the profession ‘gets’ it! Wonder if they’re married to a librarian????” (LM_NET 2011, post to email discussion list). Although the experience of working with a librarian is presented as a joke in this example, the humour served as a way to highlight the belief that a non-librarian can only understand the professional value of librarians through a direct, and perhaps even intimate, experience of librarians’ expertise.

The effect of positioning expertise as something that needed to be experienced to be understood was that librarians always had to say “yes” to new opportunities. Some areas of librarians’ expertise, specifically technology and teaching, were positioned as placing new demands on librarians—demands librarians could not ignore. The skills and expertise associated with these areas meant librarians were needed by their clients like never before. Users were positioned as demanding services and expertise that went beyond what librarians were capable of providing: “We all recognize that we cannot possibly be experts on every type of MP3 device or eReader. It is often hard to explain to a patron that you have limited knowledge about their particular device or problem” (PUBLIB 2010, post to email discussion list). These demands pushed at the limits of expertise librarians had set for themselves; librarians were aware of the limits of their expertise, but users were not. Users needed librarians because of their assumed expertise in all types of information. This placed librarians in a position to contribute to the work and lives of the clients and made them the “go to” profession for information: “I have people coming to me asking for stuff. I have people asking for advice . . . I have people coming to me to problem solve” (Jane, teacher librarian participant). This demand gave librarians professional confidence and placed them in a position to help many people. An unintended consequence of librarians always feeling professionally obligated to say “yes” to new opportunities was there

was little discussion of saying “no.” There was only one mention of the potential consequences of saying “no” to an opportunity in the data set: “Are we afraid if we say ‘no’ we won’t be seen as part of the professoriate?” (ILI_L 2010, post to email discussion list). Almost paradoxically, the function of saying “yes” to new opportunities, and by extension not saying “no,” was to control how others perceived librarians’ expertise.

Limits of expertise. Librarians placed limits on their professional expertise by self-policing the kind of expertise they felt their fellow librarians should possess. As discussed earlier, librarians who were new to the profession were positioned as novices whose limited expertise and experience would hurt users. In this example from *College and Research Libraries*, library employers’ perspectives on new MLIS graduates’ areas of expertise were assessed: “[S]ome respondents showed concern that some new hires lacked a basic understanding of cataloging and classification principles and sophisticated search strategies that will allow them to search online sources effectively” (Saunders, 2012, p. 399-400). Often, LIS degree programs were blamed for limiting the expertise of newer librarians by not providing them with an adequate education: “Clearly, library school is not where librarians are acquiring the proficiencies that they later find very important to their work in instruction” (Westbrock & Fabian, 2010, p. 589). Newer librarians rejected this characterization of their limited expertise. Erica, a public librarian participant, suggested that the expertise of new professionals challenged the expertise of established librarians: “[Established librarians] think ‘I’m the expert. I’ve been doing this for five years.’ . . . And so to have somebody [Erica, then a recent graduate] come in and be like ‘I just started, but I think it’s this and this really works,’ I think can be very threatening for some people.” This self-policing of expertise was not limited to inexperienced professionals; it also extended to librarians who were perceived as not using their professional

skills appropriately. This often occurred on email discussion lists when a librarian asked for help searching for information—a skill some librarians felt a professional librarian should not require help with: “It is embarrassing [sic] to us as a profession when TRAINED LIBRARIANS ask basic questions that could be answered easily” (LM_NET 2012, post to email discussion list, emphasis in original). Comments like this implied librarians, as experts, should not require help finding information and, therefore, should not benefit from each other’s expertise. Other librarians pushed back against such claims, arguing that expertise, particularly the kind of expertise librarians had, was improved when librarians worked together: “I guess I could google a lot of these topics and find many suggestions, tips, ideas, and opinions. But . . . [I] look to LM_NET for a community of people who have the unique perspective, expertise, and support for librarians” (LM_NET 2012, post to email discussion list).

Librarians occasionally positioned their expertise as limiting their understanding of information resources and users: “Google can be a great tool, but we librarians and teachers are so quick to dismiss it because it isn’t a costly database. There are actually situations where Google is the best tool for the job—and we need to acknowledge that” (ILI_L 2010, post to email discussion list). In particular, expertise was positioned as obscuring librarians’ understanding of user needs. The function of this positioning was to place librarians at fault for their clients’ failures to find information: “I think a big part of the problem is simply the poor user interface design and search capabilities of ILSs. . . . Few of them are very inviting to patrons who struggle with technology. There are a lot of reasons for that, but in the end we have only ourselves to blame” (PUBLIB 2010, post to email discussion list). Librarians credited their clients with helping them see past their own professional limits: “[They] keep me on my toes” (“Innovators,” 2012, para. 42).

Cost of expertise. Librarians used words such as “cost,” “benefit” (CLA 2012, post to email discussion list), “expense/expensive” (ILI_L 2010, post to email discussion list), “investment,” “quality” (ILI_L 2010, post to email discussion list), and “luxury” (LM_NET 2012, post to email discussion list) to describe themselves and their expertise. There was a literal and figurative cost when the insider status of librarians as information experts was not recognized. The literal cost was tied to the price of information. Information was positioned as a commodity that required librarians’ expertise to access: “The databases are expensive and there are a lot of them, so it makes sense to have experts around to help people when they need it in order to make sure the resources are being used” (ILI_L 2010, email discussion list). Librarians positioned their expertise, and the services they offered as a result of this expertise, as a bargain: “It may come as a surprise to some of us who aren’t apt to look at public library service from the tax payers point of view that public library service is already an incredible bargain” (PUBLIB 2010, post to email discussion list). The figurative cost of ignoring librarians’ insider status was an uninformed society: “I think it’s just having the attitude that you’re willing to do whatever it takes so that kids will succeed. Whatever it takes, right? Because we all pay if they do not succeed. We pay as a society for the rest of their lives and our lives, you know?” (Beverly, teacher librarian participant). By describing the figurative costs of ignoring librarians’ expertise, librarians positioned themselves as a lifeline not only for their clients, but for society at large. Without librarians, the world would get lost in the “bottomless pit” of information (PUBLIB 2010, post to email discussion list).

Librarians, their clients, and recognition. Librarians’ professional expertise may have granted them the status of insider, but a lack of recognition from their clients placed librarians in an outsider position. Librarians described their clients as being not only ignorant of their own

information needs, but of the work of librarians: “Last year I was Reference Librarian and that was on my business card and really? Like . . . students don’t know what reference means” (Mary, academic reference librarian participant). As a result, a large part of a librarian’s job was educating users about what librarians did: “A significant aspect of my job has been educating professors, students, and staff as to what I am and what I do (and also not do)” (ILI_L 2010, post to email discussion list). This ignorance was blamed on misperceptions of librarianship—misperceptions based on popular images and stereotypes. There were discussions of misperceptions throughout the data. Of particular note, however, was a thread of posts on the email discussion list PUBLIB entitled “De-myth-ifying librarians.” Discussion list participants wrote 89 posts under this topic in February 2011. Posts were focused on the various myths about librarians and librarianship that list members had encountered in their careers. The comments ranged from librarians “sit around and read all day,” to all librarians are women and are all sexual deviants, to common popular images of librarians, such as Marian the Librarian (a character from the film *The Music Man* [1962]). There were repeated mentions of family members not understanding what it was librarians did: “The first time I met my son’s mother-in-law . . ., she commented about the fact that I was finishing my MLIS—and wasn’t that ‘a lot of education to sit behind a desk and wait for someone to ask a question?’!!!” (PUBLIB 2011, post to email discussion group).

For librarians, misperceptions meant their work was not understood, which supposed their professional value was lost. This directly connected librarians’ sense of professional value to the public perception of the profession: “And how nice it would be to get a little recognition for that rather than be called lazy and rude and uncaring” (MEDLIB 2010, post to email discussion list). Being misperceived or ignored made librarians feel replaceable and disrespected.

Librarians directly connected misperceptions about librarianship to money. They argued if librarians' skills and expertise were properly understood then library funding and librarians' salaries would be higher: "Do you love your librarian? Say it with raises! :-D" (MEDLIB 2011, post to email discussion list). The ":-D" emoticon is a symbol used to indicate the writer is laughing ("List of emoticons," 2015). Its use in the previous example implies the author of the post knows the likelihood of librarians' pay being improved is remote. As discussed above, librarians suggested not being recognized as information experts had both a literal and figurative cost. Their expertise not only made expensive databases usable, but their expertise was a bargain. Here, misperceptions created other costs for librarians; they affected the compensation librarians received for their work and cost them the esteem of non-librarians.

Librarians described themselves as open, approachable, and dedicated professionals. These characteristics were considered to be the "natural" behaviour of a librarian: "I think naturally, given my family and upbringing, I've really played the role of connector" (Colin, academic librarian participant), because "once a librarian always a librarian" (LM_NET 2010, post to email discussion list). These self-characterizations placed the responsibility for correcting misperceptions on librarians: "I personally feel that the image of librarians and how that image is portrayed, is the responsibility of each librarian. . . . And I know that before some of my patrons met me, they did think that librarians were outdated. I know this because they told me so" (MEDLIB 2012, post to email discussion list). One way librarians could manage the misperceptions of their clients was to become a "brand," meaning they could identify qualities or characteristics unique to librarianship they could use to ensure clients had the correct understanding of librarians and librarianship. For instance, on the CLA email discussion list there was an advertisement for a professional development workshop that promised to give

librarians tips for branding themselves: “[Named librarian] provides a checklist of tips for selecting and supporting the brand we want to project” (CLA 2010, post to email discussion list). In this example, “we want to project” implies there is correct perception clients should have of librarians (i.e., the perception librarians want them to have) and that this perception was something librarians could, and should, control. A successful librarian, therefore, was someone who was able to change the perception of librarianship in the minds of clients: “The same patrons who dug in their heels when I forced them to learn how to obtain online articles for themselves, went on to conferences highlighting working with their librarian . . . and used pictures of me . . . to show that not all librarians are old, stuffy, gray-haired ladies that shush people” (MEDLIB 2012, post to email discussion list).

Librarians described changing clients’ perceptions of the profession as a fight or a battle: “As many have said, this is an ongoing and frustrating situation—dealing with the lack of respect and/or understanding of our vital role that has led to layoffs around the country. . . . PLEASE keep up the good fight and do NOT become discouraged” (LM_NET 2012, post to email discussion list, emphasis in original). By framing client perceptions as a battle or fight, librarians positioned themselves as defensive. Their defensiveness was particularly apparent in relation to their MLIS degrees. Clients’ inability to understand the value of the degree, and what it represented, was a source of frustration for librarians: “We’re told ‘oh yeah, my admin support can find anything I need on the Internet.’ It’s like . . . really? So what value do you put on my master’s degree?” (Dorothy, special librarian participant). Discursively, voicing frustration and speaking or writing defensively functioned as a way for librarians to reclaim some of the professional value they felt was lost or overlooked by clients and their misperceptions. For instance, in this post from ILI_L the librarian described how her or his organizational abilities as

a librarian could hide the intellectual work of a new faculty member: “I’m particularly fond of citing: ‘With a flip of the wrist [librarians] can hide your dissertation behind piles of old Field and Stream magazines.’ (at least out of hearing) to fresh young PhD’s who think they understand how things are supposed to be” (ILI_L 2010, post to email discussion list, quoting Firment, n.d.). In this example, faculty members’ knowledge is positioned as being vulnerable to librarians’ professional abilities. Notably, the librarian who made the post acknowledged she or he would never actually say such a thing to a client or purposefully hide information from their clients. The threat is only made to other librarians in an effort to remind her- or himself and fellow librarians in a humorous way of their professional abilities and skills. This defensiveness, however, also functioned as a way to blind librarians to the expertise of other professions and to the information needs of certain client groups. For instance, in the following example, the librarian rejected questions about the validity of the MLIS degree from potential clients based on their ability to correctly pronounce “library”: “I’ve usually observed this question from illiterate idiots who work for their parents and pronounce the word ‘Li-Berry’” (ILI_L 2010, post to email discussion list). Defensiveness in this example had two functions: it highlighted the client’s need for a librarian (to help them learn the correct pronunciation of library) and it dismissed any negative comments about the MLIS as inconsequential because the person making them was so uninformed she or he could not even pronounce a word correctly. In this example, the librarian’s need to save the face of the profession was greater than the information needs of a potential client.

Librarians versus librarians. Librarians often compared their experiences to those of librarians working in other library sectors. These cross-sector comparisons usually resulted in librarians staking out areas of expertise and comparing levels of respect from client groups.

Public librarians were most likely to claim service as their area of expertise, academic librarians claimed information literacy and research, teacher librarians claimed instructional expertise, while special librarians claimed the respect of their clients. Such claims led librarians to create stereotypes for each other: “All academic librarians think that public librarians aren’t as dedicated and educated as they are. All public librarians think that academic librarians are snobs who don’t know what it's like to work in the real world” (PUBLIB 2011, post to email discussion list). This cross-sector stereotyping, however, was often abandoned when positive external perceptions directed towards another library sector could be used to bolster clients’ perceptions. For example, teacher librarians would often use positive discussions of academic librarians from non-librarians to strengthen their own professional claims: “This link will take you to . . . [a] story in InsideHigherEd that supports the role of the professional librarian in colleges and universities. I’m certain the same case could be made for all educational levels” (LM_NET 2011, post to email discussion list). It was not uncommon for teacher librarians, academic librarians, and special librarians to use positive perceptions of public librarians as a way to improve the positioning of their own library sector. This served a similar discursive function as the metonymic slippage of using library in place of librarian. By comparing themselves to public libraries and librarians, those working in other library sectors could discursively transfer the positive cultural associations of public libraries and librarians to themselves.

Largely missing from the discourses surrounding the professional experiences of librarians was the effect of transportable identities on how librarians understood themselves as professionals and how this influenced their relationships with their clients. Zimmerman (1998) described transportable identities as “tag along” identities (p. 90). Transportable identities are usually visible to others and can be assigned or claimed by individuals—such as one’s ethnicity or

gender. Librarians were reluctant to include their transportable identities as part of their professional identities. This was particularly apparent in the speech of the interview participants. For instance, Nathan, a public librarian participant, spoke at length about how his identity as a man had little influence on who he was as a librarian: “I hate anyone suggesting that a white man is discriminated against in any way. And so the ways that I am discriminated against are subtle and the only function is to remind you how disadvantaged other groups are” (Nathan, public librarian participant). When discussed, transportable identities were most often described in relation to clients and their needs. Sometimes transportable identities were credited with providing librarians with specialized knowledge or expertise that enabled them to better serve their clients, other times they were credited with helping others with similar identities understand librarianship differently: “As an African American teacher-librarian, I see the effect I have on students, particularly students of color. It never fails that at least one African American student will ask me in a whisper, ‘You actually like to read all the time?’ or say, ‘You don’t look like a librarian’” (Auguste, 2010, p. 42). Librarians were aware that discussions of transportable identities were missing from their professional discourses. This recognition, however, had no apparent influence on improving the discourses around transportable identities. With the exception of a joke from a male librarian that all librarians were female, there was no mention of any transportable identities on the email discussion lists.

Sector specific perceptions and misperceptions. Librarians working in different library sectors did articulate different relationships between themselves and their clients. Public librarians had the most straightforward relationship with clients. They rarely differentiated between client groups, instead choosing to focus on “the community.” Although, as discussed previously, there was some discursive push back surrounding this term. Public librarians were

concerned that negative perceptions of the profession, such as seeing librarians as authority figures, interfered with their ability to build relationships with community members. For public librarians, changing perceptions was tied directly to public funding. For instance, Sarah Sogigian, a *Library Journal* Mover and Shaker from 2010, spoke about the importance of including teenagers in library programming not just for the benefit of the teenagers, but for the benefit of libraries and librarians: ““Why should we expect them to support libraries as adults, if we don’t support them as they grow up?”” (“Teen Queen,” 2010, p. 35).

Librarians working in other library sectors had more complex relationships with their clients. Each remaining library sector had primary client groups that librarians felt were disrespectful of their professional skills and expertise. For academic librarians, this group was faculty members. For special librarians, it was the professions they were supporting. For teacher librarians, classroom teachers and administrators were the groups perceived to be disrespectful of their professional skills and expertise. Librarians positioned themselves against these client groups. The discursive function of this positioning was different for each sector.

Academic librarians understood themselves to be partners and collaborators with faculty members. They positively compared the requirement for an MLIS to work as a librarian to the requirement of a PhD, or other advanced degree, to work as a faculty member: “Besides, an advanced degree qualifies academic librarians to rub shoulders with other faculty on campus” (ILI_L 2010, post to email discussion list). The degree meant they were not only eligible to participate as full members of the scholarly academy, including full tenure and research privileges, but they were also equal partners in educating students. If faculty members were perceived to be receptive of this role, librarians framed their relationship with faculty members positively. Collaboration, however, had to be initiated and directed by the librarians: “I also

don't think it's really the professor's job to understand what librarians do, I think it's our job to teach them. Isn't it part of a librarian's job to work in collaboration with professors?" (ILI_L 2010, post to email discussion list).

The function of framing their work with faculty members as a partnership or collaboration was to reinforce librarians' place in the academy. Being full members of the academy came with many positive professional benefits, but the most significant one, for librarians, was improved student perceptions of librarianship and libraries: "This partnership should strengthen any ties and make the professor more willing to bring their students to the library" (ILI_L 2010, post to email discussion list). Although academic librarians positioned themselves as partners with faculty members, this partnership was not always recognized or reciprocated. When this occurred, faculty members were positioned as ignorant of their own information needs and those of their students, as well as being unaware of the important work of librarians and unable to see past popular stereotypes. Librarians argued faculty members viewed classroom time as more important than librarians: "I've laid out suggestions for development of campus wide [information literacy] programs only to be told that these plans are too big to implement. They would take time away from classroom instruction time" (ILI_L 2011, post to email discussion list). By framing faculty-student interactions as "classroom instruction time," the educational component of the faculty-student relationship was downplayed. This framing turned classroom time into a resource librarians wanted, but faculty members owned.

Missing from academic librarians' descriptions of their relationships with faculty members was an acknowledgement of the differences between faculty members and librarians, specifically educational and workload factors (including research and teaching expectations of faculty members). Librarians expected faculty members to view them as equal partners in student

education; however, they were reluctant to recognize the role of faculty in this endeavour. Although, there was some acknowledgment from librarians that faculty members had heavy workloads, in the published literature, academic librarians' work was often positioned as more difficult and more important than faculty members. In *College and Research Libraries*, Coker, vanDuinkerken, and Bales (2010) wrote a detailed defence of tenure and faculty status for librarians. This article suggested librarians lacked the same time, funding, and respect as their faculty colleagues but, if these factors were addressed, librarians would have the same research, teaching, and service output as faculty members. They placed the blame for any imbalances not on the differences between master's and doctoral degrees or societal expectations of the two professions, but on "hostile administrations" (p. 417).

Teacher librarians described a similarly complex relationship with teachers and administrators. Teacher librarians described teachers as not recognizing teacher librarians as colleagues, not respecting their time, not understanding the work of teacher librarians, and not understanding their own or their students' information needs. However, unlike librarians in other library sectors, teacher librarians had a dual professional identity. They positioned themselves both as teachers and as librarians. Not having their teacher identity recognized by fellow teachers was particularly challenging for teacher librarians: "My fellow teachers . . . were SHOCKED that I had a student teacher. Librarians are TEACHERS not SUPPORT STAFF" (PUBLIB, post to email discussion list, emphasis in original). In response, teacher librarians routinely gave each other advice on how to highlight their teaching roles and professional identity to garner the respect of their teacher colleagues: "Use the words 'teacher' or 'teaching' in everything we do with pretty much everyone we work with. An easy first step is to simply use the job title 'teacher librarian'" (Ray, 2011, p. 64).

A more immediate concern for teacher librarians was the perceptions of school administrators. Teacher librarians believed they were off “The Powers That Be’s agenda” (LM_NET 2010, post to email discussion list) and feared their positions would be cut from school budgets: “But you know if you come down to it and you need to cut, where are you going to cut? You’re not going to cut a teacher in front of the classrooms. You’re going to cut someone who’s not sitting there with kids in front of them” (Tina, teacher librarian participant). This fear was not unfounded. Both Canadian and American teacher librarians were losing their positions as a result of increasingly tight school budgets. Discursively, this fear positioned teacher librarians as invisible: “It’s hard to be a visible anything . . . when you aren’t even seen” (Kuon & Weimar, 2012, para. 20). In response to feeling invisible, they encouraged each other to help administrators “get” their role as educators by demonstrating their professional value through technology, reclaiming their teacher identities, and collaborating with teachers and administrators.

The relationships special librarians had with their clients were largely dependent on the context in which the librarian worked. As a result, there is some overlap between how special librarians described their relationships with clients and the descriptions by librarians from other library sectors. Generally, special librarians described a more positive and respectful relationship with clients: “Librarians are often most valued because of their skills in online searching” (Matarazzo & Pearlstein, 2011, p. 18). An aspect of this positive relationship was special librarians took pains to understand the work of their clientele: “You just have no idea what the patient care environment is like, . . . until you have done it. It made me realize how rushed they really are . . . and how utterly ridiculous it can be to expect them to learn to use the catalog” (MEDLIB 2011, post to email discussion list). Unlike academic and teacher librarians who

understood their role as supporting student learning, special librarians understood their professional purpose as supporting the “personal, corporate or institutional goals” (Abram, 2010, p. 35) of the organization they worked for. As a result, special librarians positioned themselves as collaborators with their clients in achieving organizational and research goals. This collaborative relationship between special librarians and their clients differed from the relationships academic and teacher librarians described with their clients in that special librarians collaborated with their clients, while academic and teacher librarians collaborated with other professionals on behalf of their clients. This collaborative discourse highlighted the respect special librarians received from their clients; however, it also had the effect of retaining special librarians’ outsider status. Although special librarians were respected by their clients, they were not considered to be colleagues and co-workers. Instead, they were support staff: “Her [nurse becoming a librarian] ‘status’ will change. Even though she was once a ‘part of them’, now she is a part of another group and might be considered an ‘outsider’ and ‘doesn’t know what she is talking about’” (MEDLIB 2011, post to email discussion list). In this example, the professional medical staff were positioned as the insiders with specialized knowledge. The professional knowledge of librarianship was positioned as less important than the medical knowledge. As a result, simply working in a library changed librarians’ level of respect from clients.

Insider-outsider repertoire conclusions. The insider-outsider repertoire focused on librarians’ relationships with their clients, with particular attention to librarians’ expertise and the need to have clients recognize librarianship as a profession. Librarians positioned themselves as information experts. This expertise was grounded in the library and resulted from a combination of their MLIS degrees and their professional experiences. The discursive function of their expertise was to position librarians as important and valued professionals. Clients were

positioned as incapable of understanding or meeting their own information needs. Librarians positioned themselves as having insider knowledge of information, technology, instruction, and research that enabled them to meet client needs. Clients had to experience librarians' expertise to truly appreciate it. By experiencing librarians' knowledge and skill first hand, clients could finally understand their work. Librarians felt if their work was understood, then their important professional role would be noticed and appreciated. Librarians placed a strong emphasis on having clients recognize their professional value. When clients failed to appreciate their expertise, librarians positioned themselves as outsiders. The result was that librarians dwelled on client misperceptions of librarianship.

Certain topics had different discursive functions depending on the context of their use. For instance, when librarians positioned themselves as insiders, they positively compared their expertise to the expertise of other professions. As insiders, librarians did not require the direct recognition of other professions to maintain their insider status. However, if the profession they were comparing themselves to was understood to misperceive librarians, then librarians positioned themselves as outsiders. A similar discursive complexity surrounded the MLIS. It was the symbol and source of expertise. As a result, it was supposed to grant academic librarians access to the scholarly academy. When the degree failed to grant academic librarians the access they felt they deserved, they were once again reminded of their outsider status and position. Finally, when positioned as insiders, librarians were able to dismiss the negative opinions of non-librarians as being out of touch and unimportant. However, these same opinions were considered to be valuable and important when librarians understood them to be costing them professional prestige and organizational funding.

Librarians placed much of the responsibility for both their insider and outsider positions on themselves. Their expertise granted them an insider status and only librarians could correct the client misperceptions that gave them their outsider status. Although there were some differences in how librarians from different library sectors spoke about their insider and outsider situations, there was an overall consensus that librarians were responsible for their own professional positions. Similarly, although some topics were more prevalent in some parts of the data set than in others, such as transportable identities being rarely mentioned on the email discussion lists as compared to the speech of the interview participants or in the articles from professional journals, there was a consistency in how the language resources emerged across the data set for this repertoire.

Service Repertoire

The service repertoire focused on the information service activities librarians provided for their clients. These activities included public services (for instance, reference, instruction, and reader's advisory), technology services (from helping people with e-readers to providing public access computers), the organization of information (from cataloguing to knowing how information on the web was organized), providing access to information (books, journals, DVDs, specialized databases, and the Internet), and professional service (such as publishing in journals, association membership and participation, and mentoring other professionals). Similarly to the insider-outsider repertoire, relationships with clients were central to this repertoire; however, in the service repertoire the focus was on the performance of information services on behalf of clients. Clients were positioned as a passive audience in this repertoire. Through the act of providing services, librarians positioned themselves as dedicated, caring, and responsible professionals.

Service as an activity. Throughout the data set, librarians described the ways they helped their clients. These activities spanned a continuum from one-on-one interactions with clients at a reference desk, to instructing information literacy classes, to providing public access computers and access to the Internet, to developing a collection of books and other resources. The focus of these services was helping clients meet their information, educational, and entertainment needs; however, informational needs were always given primacy. Service activities were often presented as a list: “Librarians are frequently the explorers of new technologies, sharing what they learn with their patrons. Librarians are also teachers . . . this role also encompasses instruction on the dangers of copyright infringement, intellectual property rights, and academic integrity and plagiarism” (Coker, vanDuijnhoven & Bales, 2010, p. 412). Service provided librarians with their sense of professional self: “We like this stuff and we like to help people. . . . To me, this is what makes a librarian great—going the extra mile to find what the user wants or needs” (Gregory, 2010, p. 30). In other words: “We like books and technology, but we also like people” (Tkacik, 2012, p. 42). Librarians used words and phrases such as “we” and “as librarians” to draw attention to the entire profession. As a result, all librarians “like people.” Service, therefore, was more than an activity performed by librarians; it was also a state of being for the entire profession. As a state of being, service was presented as an inherent quality librarians possessed: “Providing great customer service can’t be required or even taught. It has to come from somewhere inside a person because they want to help others” (Tomka, 2010, p. 18). In other words, service was something librarians were “naturally good at” (Anna, public service librarian). These statements about the intrinsic nature of service for librarians were presented matter-of-factly and without question.

The centrality of service for librarians' professional sense of self was so strong that equivalencies between librarians and tools designed to help people find information were made: "Librarians are the original search engine"⁴ (PUBLIB 2011, post to email discussion list). In this example, librarians were equated with the technical and algorithmic qualities of search engines. This statement, made during an email exchange regarding defining reference service for non-librarians, was not challenged by discussion list participants. The tacit acceptance that librarians were search engines had the function of connecting librarians' sense of self to the tools they used to provide service to users (discussed in detail below); therefore, not only was service a state of being for librarians, this state of being was embodied in the tools librarians used to provide these services.

The main concept that librarians used to describe their service relationship with their clients was helping: "I see my role as helping people find things" (Dorothy, special librarian participant). Helping implied service and assistance, but also guidance, support, comfort, and going above and beyond the expected. Anna, a public librarian, described a time she was helping a client from another library, i.e., not a member of her local community, find information: "So even though it wasn't my job, I took what little information they did have and I put it in Google and I found a full citation within probably about five minutes. . . . And they wrote back and go 'Wow! How did you find that? I've been searching in Google and I couldn't find anything.' And then I tell people, that's what we do." Here "what we do" refers both to finding information and

⁴ Although the exact origin of the phrase is unknown, "Librarians are the original search engine" has become a popular saying amongst librarians. Currently, it can be found on coffee mugs, t-shirts, journals, aprons, buttons, and it is even the slogan of at least one public library's virtual reference service: <http://www.stratford.library.on.ca/askspl>. Often the saying is presented in a multi-coloured font reminiscent of the Google logo. This choice of font reinforces the notion that librarians are the tools they, and their clients, use to find information.

to helping people. As this client was not a member of her local community, she had no direct responsibility to help, but as a librarian, helping was what she “did.”

Service was also described as a responsibility and duty for librarians: “When I describe my position to people, I let them know that I share responsibility with a colleague for the service in the service points in [my library branch]. . . . But ultimately I feel that I own responsibility for the overall service of that service point” (Emma, public librarian participant). If this responsibility was interfered with, often as a result of limited resources or budget cuts, librarians became frustrated because they were not able to help their clients in a way that met their expected standards: “We’re not helping them in providing reference or research or current awareness . . . we’re trying to help them keep abreast of what’s going on in their subject area. I mean, to me these are all things that are advantageous for people” (Dorothy, special librarian participant). This frustration was connected to the idea of failure. Librarians did not want to fail to meet their clients’ information needs and expectations: “Somehow I feel like I failed if the patron turns down my suggestion for what I feel may be a perfect fit. Even if the patron likes my suggestions and checks them out, I still don’t feel like I’ve been truly been successful if the patron reads the books and ends up not liking them” (PUBLIB 2012, post to email discussion list). Failure and frustration acted as catalysts for librarians to develop new services: “I’ve been planning to implement . . . a sort of reader’s advisory by appointment. . . . I think it would [remove] some of the pressure that comes with those ‘I just want you to hand me three books NOW’ interactions” (PUBLIB 2012, post to email discussion list, emphasis in original).

Not all librarians described being comfortable with providing services. For example, Colin, an academic librarian interview participant, expressed some discomfort about providing services because he was not convinced he could provide the same high quality service as his

colleagues: “I see some of the librarians that we have on staff, and I really admire the time they spend with students, the length they will go to, to make things clear . . . I’d like to be that way too, but it’s more of a stretch.” Although Colin did occasionally work in a public service capacity, the focus of his job was administrative (he worked as the Library Director for a small university in Alberta, Canada). He described his administrative role as one that participated in the overall provision of service, albeit indirectly: “I think naturally I’m a bit more about seeing the potential in a person . . . and then, you know, bringing that idea to the attention of another person or introducing a person to another person who I think shares their interests and passion.” Therefore, even if Colin was not personally offering service, or even comfortable offering service, he understood his role as an administrator as being a service role, only his clients were his employees.

There was some disagreement between sectors over whether or not all librarians performed the same service activities: “In public libraries they do reference so they do—I don’t know if they do as in-depth . . . but they probably do. . . . It’s just we’re more—the difference, I guess, is we’re used to spoon feeding people more than maybe the public library or academic” (Dorothy, special librarian participant). The hesitation in this example was characteristic of how librarians described the differences in the ways librarians in each sector delivered services. There was an assumption each sector was different, but under closer scrutiny there was an admission that while the specific service activities performed by each sector were probably different, the values and intent that drove the services were the same.

The purpose of service for all librarians was straightforward: helping clients. This help ranged from helping an organization meet its goals (“Providing services that contribute to good business decisions may be the single most powerful thing that libraries can do to add value to the

organization” [Ard, 2012, p. 17]), to helping people become productive members of society (“We must help immigrants access America’s opportunities, whether they are seeking citizenship, starting a business, or learning English” [Spackman, 2010, p. 25]). By focusing on the purpose of service, librarians staked a claim on what they believed was their role in society—helping people to understand, and contribute to, the world around them: “I do think that individuals really do have a right to know the truth and . . . often they need assistance to find [it], because the truth is kind of this ideal. But there needs to be people who can help others . . . find their way to some understanding” (Colin, academic librarian participant).

Missing from discussions about the purpose of service was the organization of information as a central service activity. Although the organization of information was often included in descriptions of information services, it was rarely connected to the reason for providing services. Cataloguing, the primary way librarians organized information, was a rarely discussed topic in the data set. Teacher librarians, for instance, debated on LM_NET whether or not they should allow paraprofessionals to catalogue library resources. The argument in favour of retaining the responsibility as a professional activity was that high-quality catalogue records improved students’ ability to access the resources. Here the organization of information was a tool to help clients access information, but the emphasis was on accessing the information, not organizing information. Even cataloguers themselves saw their future as librarians in direct interactions with clients: “The notion of catalogers being ‘just’ catalogers is gradually being replaced by a philosophy that all library staff be crosstrained and have hands-on experience working directly with library users” (Wong, 2012, p. 54). The phrase “catalogers being ‘just’ catalogers” in this example highlights how unimportant the organization of information was in

the service repertoire. Even librarians whose traditional job it was to organize information were seeking expanded service roles and opportunities.

The limits of service were the subject of much debate for librarians. Librarians were often in favour of expanding services as much as possible. Some academic librarians, for instance, claimed the entire list of 22 information literacy standards developed by the Association of College & Research Libraries (ACRL) as part of an academic librarian's responsibility (Association of College & Research Libraries, 2000): "If part of information literacy is to teach students how to use information ethically, then providing detailed information about avoiding plagiarism and creating citations is clearly within the library's purview" (ILI_L 2012, post to email discussion list). Therefore, teaching citation rules and discussing plagiarism, considered by the Standards themselves to be the responsibility of a writing centre or faculty members, were also the responsibility of librarians. Other academic librarians expressed concern that embracing the entire list of information literacy responsibilities was beyond librarians as they lacked the time and resources to properly teach students: "It isn't possible to teach students all they need to know in the space of a single IL [information literacy] session" (ILI_L 2011, post to email discussion list). Client expectations and concerns over saving face with clients were also cited as limits to providing services. Sharon, a public librarian participant, described having to learn to say no to clients when she first started working as a librarian: "When I started . . . I had a really hard time figuring out when I should say no and how to say no . . . I don't want them to like . . . get mad at me." Managing client expectations was a great concern for librarians, especially public librarians: "There are some questions we won't answer. They come in three varieties: medical, legal, and tax. We're not being mean or hard to get along with. We just don't want to take your situation and make it worse than it already is by offering opinions we're completely

unqualified to give” (PUBLIB 2011, post to email discussion list). As can be seen in this quote, managing client expectations was not about imposing arbitrary limits on public services; it was about ensuring clients received high-quality services that positively affected clients’ lives.

Service and technology. One of the primary motivations for librarians to use information technology (IT) in their work was the potential it had to improve services: “Driven by a zeal to improve service, academic librarian Sue Polanka dove into investigating technologies that would serve library users” (“Change Agents,” 2011, para. 1). Librarians framed the possibilities technology offered service as exciting: “My fondest wish is to spend a few years implementing an infobutton manager [a link in a clinical information system that anticipates a physician’s question about a medical case and connects to pertinent resources] here in our EMR [electronic medical records]. There are just so many wonderful challenges out there—it is a very exciting time for all of us. . . . I am charged up and see such great possibilities ahead” (MEDLIB 2011, post to email discussion list). As this last quote indicated, the excitement and possibilities associated with technology were tempered by challenges. The opportunities which technology offered librarians included expanding services to remote users, freeing librarians from more mundane tasks to help clients one-on-one, and making library-related help available when and where clients needed it. Public and teacher librarians often credited technology, specifically computers, for making libraries the lifelines for communities: “There are people out there that don’t have access to a computer, but we’re providing that service” (Anna, public librarian participant). They also gave technology credit for attracting the notice of certain client groups—most often teens and students: “One thing I try to do in presentations is to show off the bells and whistles most databases have that Google doesn’t—emailing articles and including citations; creating folders to save into; EBSCO and others offering to read the article out loud, including

changing the accent, which always gets a laugh. Students seem to be impressed with this stuff” (ILI_L 2010, post to email discussion list). Some of the challenges associated with technology included managing the different technological abilities of clients, being familiar with a broad range of technologies to help clients, and fewer in-person service opportunities. Librarians often described technology as a distraction, not just for clients, but also for librarians themselves: “Today, even the most extroverted librarians are not making eye contact with people in their libraries. . . . Librarians at public service desks are not looking at patrons, but their computer screens” (Manley, 2011a, p. 64). Technology-related client demands were also blamed for distracting librarians from other needy clients: “We try to help patrons with all technical issues, as long as doing so doesn’t take away from our ability to help other patrons for extensive periods of time” (PUBLIB 2010, post to email discussion list). Therefore, while technology had the potential for expanding services to clients, it also could limit them.

Technology was positioned as a “must” for librarians: “Libraries today must continually incorporate new technologies and deliver an array of information and service in ways that are useful and convenient for patrons” (Hoek, 2011, p. 21). The driving force was client demands. Clients were using more and more technology in their daily lives; therefore, librarians “should be really good at technologies” (Jillian, special librarian participant). The challenge was ensuring librarians used technology in a manner that was consistent with their professional values: “In an ideal world, librarians would not filter the Internet but instead focus on educating students on how to find and evaluate information—teaching young people to be their own best filters” (Maycock, 2011, p. 9). The technology-related services librarians offered clients, therefore, were more than just the provision of computers and access to the Internet and proprietary databases. It was teaching clients about the benefits and limitations of technology.

Librarians positioned technology as being the best way for librarianship to shift and change to meet future client demands. In other words, technology was understood to be an agent for change. For example, *Library Journal* annually publishes Mover and Shaker profiles of up-and-coming people connected to libraries and librarianship, including librarians, paraprofessionals, and representatives of companies that supply goods and services to libraries (“LJ Movers & Shakers,” 2015). Throughout the profiles included in this study, any librarian who was perceived to be using technology in an innovative way was described as a leader in providing library services. For example, Carolyn Coulter, a 2012 *Library Journal* Mover and Shaker, was described as “exud[ing]” the ““library of the future”” because she believed in “providing services with tools that patrons are already using” (“Tech Leaders,” 2012, p. 58). Technology was credited for changing librarians’ understanding of traditional services. For instance, being able to include an instant messaging application in an online course was credited with changing how librarians understood the provision of embedded services: “There’s an eclass component to many of these courses. And so that’s another place that the librarian’s part of that—like we’re in that, or I’m in that anyway, in courses. . . . And so kind of—we’re embedded that way” (Penny, academic librarian participant). The discourse of technology-as-change-agent, however, was often challenged by suggestions that technology was not changing how librarians offered services: “It’s kind of like, the same sorts of things that you were doing before, whether it’s reference—you’re still communicating with the people whether you’re communicating by voice or by email or you know, it’s the same sort of thing” (Olivia, special librarian participant).

By challenging the status of technology-as-change-agent, librarians positioned technology as just another tool that helped them meet client needs: “Remember ‘The right book for the right person at the right time’? Well now we need to think in terms of ‘The right

technology for the right problem at the right time” (PUBLIB 2010, post to email discussion list). In this example, technology is linked to other resources that librarians use to meet clients’ information needs—books. Technology, therefore, was not going to meet changing client needs on its own. Technology only had value when it was being used by a librarian to address an information need. Aaron Tay, a *Library Journal* Mover and Shaker from 2011, argued technologies had the potential to be ““shiny tools”” that helped librarians meet client needs, but what was more important was using the tools to ““improve the lives of our users”” (“Tech Leaders,” 2011, para. 48).

Client, patron, user or member? Clients were the primary focus of the service repertoire: “The reality is that librarianship would not exist if there were not people who need [the library], and/or us” (PUBLIB 2011, post to email discussion list). Each library sector had a preferred descriptor for clients. Academic librarians, for instance, had a preference for the terms library user or student; public librarians preferred patron, customer, member, or community member; special librarians used client; teacher librarians preferred to use student or teacher. The choice of descriptor appeared to be a matter of preference for each library sector, as there were terms, notably client, user, and patron, common across the sectors. The use of different terms functioned as a way for each library sector to differentiate itself from other sectors. As discussed above, in the insider-outsider repertoire, librarians believed the work they performed was different from the work done by librarians in other sectors; however, even though the words they used to describe their clients were different, the intended purpose of service was the same. The choice of descriptor was often an indication of which client group the librarians had the most direct contact with. Academic librarians, for example, often only referred to students as their clients. Mary, an academic librarian interview participant, suggested that this was due to the fact

she only ever had contact with students in the library: “I rarely see faculty members in the library. Pretty much never, and I never see faculty members come to the reference desk” (Mary, academic librarian participant).

Each sector appeared to deliberately choose the word they used to describe clients specifically to highlight the services they offered. For example, public librarians were most likely to describe their clients as customers. According to Emma, a public librarian interview participant, this choice was deliberate: “I think we provide customer service, I do. And I relate it to . . . retail service or the service that I got when I was in Mexico, and it is service to customers.” The choice of terminology, however, also highlighted which client group each library sector felt the most responsibility to provide services for. Nathan, a public library interview participant, argued the term customer did not adequately describe the relationship he had with his clients: “I don’t like the connotation that [clients are] piñatas waiting to get the money whacked out of them, you know? We’re there for their benefit so I don’t like the term “customer” because it shifts—to me, it shifts the paradigm.” The paradigm shift Nathan described was about moving the focus from meeting the information needs of known clients to attempting to address the needs of community members who were not yet clients, or as Erica, a public librarian participant, described it: “The goal is to find the ones who don’t know, the ones who don’t have that awareness or connection. And so those are the ones that I sort of spend my time going and finding.” Public librarians were the only librarians in the data set to write or speak about attempting to expand their services to non-clients. Librarians from the other library sectors tended instead to focus on their known client groups: “Libraries are for the Members” (CLA 2012, post to email discussion list). The difference between the sectors can, in part, be explained by the different missions of each library type. Public librarians, for example, often have a

mandate to meet the information needs of their local communities, while special librarians are mandated to meet the information needs of a specific organization or group. For special librarians, non-primary clients take time away from their ability to help their principal clients: “It may have been more about the students being clueless (as [named librarian] points out), but that doesn’t change the fact that [when] a librarian is trying to help a student access materials ‘out there in cyberspace’ and it can impact our ability to serve our primary patrons [hospital staff]” (MEDLIB 2011, post to email discussion list). Teacher librarians’ focus on clients was different from the other library sectors. Although, like special and academic librarians, they tended to focus on known client groups—students and teachers in their school—they too were interested in turning non-library users into clients. However, for teacher librarians, non-clients were students who did not read. Teacher librarians were very focused on creating new and different ways to encourage children to read: “I guide [them] making sure they select a book to meet the requirements and then if they want a second book that can be free [i.e., a book of their own choosing], or anything they want. It has worked wonders for our non-readers” (LM_NET 2010, post to email discussion list). If they were able to make a non-reader into a reader, then teacher librarians had adequately served their clients and, in the process, converted a non-library user into a primary client.

Service as professionalism. In this repertoire, professionalism was synonymous with service. Providing services for clients was a manifestation of librarians’ professionalism: “One does not become a librarian to do nothing or to get rich but to be ‘one of the good guys’ to help and yes to make this world a little better” (MEDLIB 2010, post to email discussion list). Through the provision of service librarians could enact one of their core professional values—service⁵: “the

⁵ The American Library Association (2004) included service as one of 11 core values: “We provide the highest level of service to all library users . . . We strive for excellence in the profession by maintaining and enhancing our own

values that I take with me in terms of being an academic librarian are . . . wanting to help students better themselves, wanting students to be able to get the best jobs possible that are out there, helping students find themselves and where they fit” (Mary, academic librarian participant). The core value of service gave the profession value: “This service commitment benefits more than individuals—it benefits small business people, communities, and democracies. So it is a very important discipline” (ILI_L 2010, post to email discussion list). A commitment to service, therefore, was what made librarianship a valuable profession—not the specific services in and of themselves. This position was clearly articulated by the interview participants in their responses to the question: “Are resources or relationships more important in librarianship?” (Appendix F). All 16 participants responded they thought relationships were more important than resources. As Hildy (academic librarian participant) described it: “With a good relationship you can, to a certain extent, work around the resource issue . . . if you build a relationship with your users, they will come to you when they can’t find the resources and you will find a way to get the resources for them.” Jane (teacher librarian participant) simply responded that “the relations and the services I provide” were the most important part of her job. Both of these examples directly connect service with relationships. Without relationships, librarians could not provide services. Without services, librarians would cease to be good at their jobs and would, ultimately, lose their professionalism: “I think a good librarian keeps the people in mind and doesn’t put the resources over them. . . . Whatever that leads you to do I think makes you a good librarian if you’re sort of keeping the people in the forefront” (Erica, public librarian participant).

When connected to the idea of professionalism, service was positioned as a skill:

“Reference Librarian as ‘piano man,’ who has the skill to play a response to any question using

knowledge and skills, by encouraging the professional development of co-workers, and by fostering the aspirations of potential members of the profession” (ALA, 2004, ¶ 10).

his instrument: the reference collection . . . but the librarian can play any instrument [i.e., any information resource]” (PUBLIB 2011, post to email discussion list). At first glance, positioning service as a skill appears to contradict the notion that service was an activity librarians were naturally good at (described above); however, service-as-skill and service-as-an-inherent-quality both share a performative quality: “How on earth are children going to learn to use the library if they don’t ask the nice librarian? . . . I smile brightly and assure people that I answer questions for a living, so give me a chance to show my stuff” (PUBLIB 2011, post to email discussion list). In this quote, service was presented as the librarian’s natural state of being (“I answer questions for a living”). The librarian wanted to perform the skills (“show my stuff”) that were the result of this state of being. Although the specific skills of service may be learned at some point during a librarian’s education or career, once the librarian has learned the skills, service becomes a professional state of being that can be performed for the benefit of clients.

As part of their professionalism, librarians also served librarianship by attending and providing professional development opportunities, attending and giving conference presentations, belonging to a professional association, serving on committees, and mentoring other librarians. Service to the profession was just another manifestation of librarians’ dedication to clients: “I think we’re all about sharing information and it’s not just sharing information with our users, it’s about sharing information amongst ourselves” (Hildy, academic librarian participant). Service to the profession was framed as improving librarianship for the benefit of clients: “Information professionals are proficient at learning from each other. One of the best ways to better understand your own information users is to see how other librarians are serving their customers” (Schachter, 2010d, para. 10). Librarians blamed LIS programs for not sufficiently preparing them for all service roles. As a result, clients suffered and librarians had to

turn to the profession to learn additional service skills: “Given this dearth of education focused on special librarianship, it is up to students and professionals to learn from experience and to share the lessons they learn with others” (Nelson, 2011, p. 16). This educational deficiency had the discursive function of placing the lessons learned from the experiences of fellow librarians above the lessons learned during the professional education: “I think that I learned as much from other librarians as I did from my coursework, and connecting with them gave me some mentors that I still use” (MEDLIB 2011, post to email discussion list).

Service and the library. In the insider-outsider repertoire, a metonymic slippage occurred in which the word library was used as a synonym for librarian. A similar metonymic slippage happened in the service repertoire; however, it had a different discursive function: “On the whole I think libraries are fairly cognizant of the library in the life of the user” (ILI_L 2012, post to email discussion list). In this example, the library is both the location where services occur, but also the entity that offers services through its employees. In the service repertoire, librarians became agents of the library. This idea can be clearly seen in the following example: “The library as warehouse for books worth sharing. Only after that did we invent the librarian. The librarian isn’t a clerk who happens to work at a library. . . . The library is a house for the librarian” (PUBLIB 2011, post to email discussion list). It is via the library that librarians can offer clients service. The library is where librarians and their services belong.

In addition, the library as place was a service that librarians offer their clients: “At the heart of what we do . . . is we share. . . . what does that mean? It’s materials, it’s expertise, it’s space, it’s ideas, it’s creating that space for people to be in, so that’s the heart of what we do” (Emma, public librarian participant). In other words: “Librarians provide [the] ‘service’ of the library” (Christofle, 2012, p. 52). The library was a physical manifestation of librarians’ service.

It was the sum of their efforts: “Libraries are about service—not books. Information where & when you want it with librarians as professional guides” (MEDLIB 2010, post to email discussion list). In this usage, the physical space of the library was irrelevant to the services librarians offered. As long as a librarian is providing service, there will be a library. In this sense, the library belongs with the librarian: “Of course, I use ‘library’ loosely here as I don’t just mean physical space but a program that teaches our students the value of seeking information and using it appropriately, the joy of passing hours reading and the correlation between reading and retaining more and more information” (LM_NET 2011, post to email discussion list).

The connection between librarians, the library, and service was made clear in the text and speech of special librarians. Unlike the other library sectors, special librarians often discussed alternative names for the space of the library: “I have the lovely task of renaming the Library to not include the word Library . . . What I’m looking for are ideas that you’ve heard, are using etc. for new titles that would encapsulate, training or education, information, resources or knowledge expertise (or all if it exists)” (MEDLIB 2011, post to email discussion list). These “lovely tasks” were usually the initiative of non-librarian employers and provoked a lot of discussion, especially on the email discussion lists. Many librarians argued in favour of retaining the word library as they connected it to maintaining librarianship’s importance: “We must define the hospital library as one that is staffed by a credentialed librarian . . . To make a real library (rather than a lounge/reading room), it takes the attention to the resources, the people who use those resources, and the mission and goals . . . that an onsite professional will provide” (MEDLIB 2011, post to email discussion list).

The library was one of the primary ways teacher librarians could provide their clients with services. As stated above, they understood their primary responsibility was getting students

to read. As a result, teacher librarians placed a lot of emphasis on their collection. The library and the collection were synonymous for teacher librarians. Getting students into the library meant they would access the collection, which meant they were becoming readers. A disused library meant the collection was underused, which meant students were not reading the books: “They are old, smelly, ratty, unread, unappreciated, out of date, stereotype-promoting, allergy inducing, germ-laden vessels that are not rare, valuable, or otherwise desirable and I daresay that they can be easily replaced by clean, new, relevant, inviting, hygienically-safe, informative, politically, imaginative books that kids will love to read” (LM_NET 2011, post to email discussion list). Collections were there to serve the needs of students. Accessing the collection, therefore, took on a great importance for teacher librarians: “If the cataloging is subpar, then their access to the materials are very limited due to access points” (LM_NET 2012, post to email discussion list). However, for teacher librarians, even accessing information was secondary to the important benefits that information could bring to students: “Today I received a letter . . . in which [I was] informed . . . that there is . . . a new LCSH [Library of Congress Subject Headings], ‘Children of sperm donors.’ . . . This is so exciting! What this means is that children who were conceived this way will be able to identify books about being a donor offspring” (LM_NET 2012, post to email discussion list). The library and the collection were about enabling students to find information to help them become readers and further their education.

Service and diversity. Completely missing from the interviews and the email discussion lists was any mention of the effect of transportable identities on service. In these data sources, not only were the transportable identities of librarians not discussed, but neither were the transportable identities of clients. Clients were often presented as homogeneous groups. For instance, public librarians mainly wrote and spoke about “patrons” or the “community.”

Although, community does imply a heterogeneous group with differing information needs librarians need be aware of, these needs were not connected explicitly to transportable identities, just to library users and non-users. In the published literature included in the data set, one transportable identity of librarians, namely ethnicity, was linked to ensuring clients from marginalized and underrepresented groups received services: “First Nation librarians take on the responsibility of meeting community needs, which range from offering materials to assisting patrons in their pursuit of connecting to their culture” (Crawford, 2011, p. 54). A diverse workforce, therefore, would allow librarianship to better meet the needs of clients: “Few would disagree that a diverse work force makes us better stewards of the communities we serve” (Angell, Evans, & Nicolas, 2012, p. 45). Providing clients from marginalized and underrepresented groups with information services was one way for librarians who were also from these marginalized groups to contribute to society beyond their professional roles: “I realized that several patrons—especially those from underrepresented populations—were taken aback when they realized I [an African-American] could be a librarian. . . . I believe customer service is beneficial in making patrons, especially those with diverse backgrounds, feel more welcome and less apprehensive about asking for assistance” (Angell, Evans, & Nicolas, 2012, p. 46). The focus in this example was not on providing information to clients, but creating a welcoming place where clients felt comfortable asking for help.

Service repertoire conclusions. Service was positioned as the core activity and purpose of librarianship. Service was broadly defined as helping clients meet their information needs and the focus of this repertoire was on descriptions of specific service activities that provided librarians with their sense of professional self. Service was understood to be a state of being for librarians. As a result, it was something librarians were intrinsically good at performing. By

positioning service as the natural state of the profession, librarians used service to stake a claim on their professional role in society—to help people find information so that people could improve their lives, the organizations they worked for, and society at large. By accepting the responsibility of helping clients meet their information needs, librarians discursively conflated themselves with the tools they used to provide service, namely information technology and the library. To provide their clients with high-quality service, librarians framed information technology as a tool they could not ignore. Technology would not only improve the services that librarians provided, it would also help them meet emerging client demands. The service repertoire had a very consistent use of language resources among librarians working in different library sectors and across the different sources of data. Although librarians from different library sectors used different words to describe their clientele or offered their clients different services, the underlying purpose of the services was the same—helping clients.

Professionalism Repertoire

The professionalism repertoire shares some commonalities with the insider-outsider repertoire, such as its focus on comparing librarianship to other professions, the importance of the MLIS, and a respect for librarians and librarianship. The function, or purpose, of the professionalism repertoire was to highlight the qualities and characteristics that librarians believed made librarianship a profession. Whereas the insider-outsider repertoire at times had a defensive tone, the professionalism repertoire emphasized librarians' professionalism. There was a sense of pride, although frustration with LIS programs and with paraprofessional coworkers was evident. The overall purpose of this repertoire was to remind librarians themselves that they had chosen a noble profession with a strong knowledge base, as symbolized by the MLIS, a unique way of thinking, and a unique set of core professional values.

The Master of Library and Information Studies. As discussed in the insider-outsider repertoire, the MLIS held a deep symbolic value for librarians. It was the symbol for librarians' expertise. It held a similar function in the professionalism repertoire. The basis of the MLIS's symbolism rested in the fact that it was the basic educational requirement for working as a professional librarian: "[I] decided to start chipping away at my master's so I could become a proper librarian" (MEDLIB 2011, post to email discussion list). The MLIS was the source of librarians' ethical judgements and their professional knowledge base: "I feel my degree has [given] me . . . a foundation in ethics and principles of librarianship. I think about things like privacy . . . I don't always get it right, but these 'rules behind the rules' are part of what I try to fulfill" (PUBLIB 2011, post to email discussion list). The degree was considered the foundation upon which the professional practice of librarians was built: "I would be ill equipped to do any aspect of my job without the professional foundation build [sic] by standard of practice to stand on" (ILI_L 2010, post to email discussion list). Individuals working in so-called professional positions without the required degree were not considered to be real, or "proper" librarians: "When I replied that I had taught even 2nd graders who lived in this area how to find things by Dewey, the person (*I will not give him the title Librarian as I don't believe he had a degree*) expressed surprise that anyone could even begin to understand Dewey" (LM_NET 2010, post to email discussion list, emphasis added). The function of capitalizing librarian, in this example, was to emphasize the importance of librarians as professionals. In addition, it has the rhetorical function of turning librarian into a proper noun, shifting librarians from being a class or group into a thing (*The Chicago Manual of Style*, 2010). Commonly, proper nouns are used in relation to job titles; however, in this example, the email discussion list commenter is not referring to a specific job title, but to the object—Librarian. This transforms the process of becoming a librarian

into a state of being. Once you earn your degree, you are a Librarian and are imbued with the knowledge to understand and instruct even second graders in Dewey Decimal Classification (DDC).

For librarians, the MLIS served as a means within the profession to denote who was and was not a librarian: “Although I’d received intensive training for [my position as a student library assistant], I always think back and realize how little I knew compared to how much I learned in my MLIS degree” (ILI_L 2012, post to email discussion list). All of the interview participants indicated they only truly felt like a librarian once they received their degrees, even if they had worked in a professional position before the degree was formally conferred: “I did not call myself a teacher librarian until I got my Master’s. [Using the title librarian] was almost frowned upon by teacher librarians until you were truly qualified” (Beverly, teacher librarian participant). The degree was the “proof” that librarians were competent and had a minimum understanding of professional values and basic skills, something their non-degree holding coworkers presumably did not possess: “Managers are looking for good decision-making ability, team abilities, customer service ethics, flexibility, change adaptability . . . a degree is the least of the proof” (PUBLIB 2011, post to email discussion list). The proof the degree offered was that librarians had not only the necessary skills, but also the necessary professionalism to perform their jobs: “It’s not just about an individual’s skills, it’s about an individual’s professionalism” (PUBLIB 2011, post to email discussion list). A high level of professionalism was required because “the job is a lot more complicated than it seems. In order to teach, make policy and build collections you need to understand the theory behind the structure” (ILI_L 2010, post to email discussion list). In addition, the job requirements of librarians needed both a depth of knowledge and a range of professional skills and expertise to complete: “[The degree is] why I can handle

genealogical, astronomical, gastronomical and agricultural information needs with equal authority and depth. It's also why I can present the information with the appropriate range and granularity for a given question and patron" (PUBLIB 2011, post to email discussion list).

The MLIS was a source of debate and concern for librarians. Some were concerned that treating the degree as the factor that separated librarians from their non-librarian colleagues made librarians arrogant and entitled: "One of the problems in the library world is that too many librarians think that having an MLS [Masters of Library Science] entitles them to something (jobs, duties, respect, etc.), when they should be spending a LOT more time working on their skills and knowledge" (PUBLIB 2011, post to email discussion list, emphasis in original). Others reminded librarians that experience was just as important a determinant of one's professionalism as the degree: "Yes, the degree technically makes you a librarian, but you will learn more on the job" (Berry, 2011a, p. 28-29). The value of the degree was also a source of concern for many librarians. During the time period covered by this study, there were threads on the email discussion lists devoted to helping librarians explain to clients why being a librarian required a graduate degree. These conversations were particularly prominent on ILI_L, an email discussion list used primarily by academic librarians. Given their tension-filled relationship with faculty members, described in the insider-outsider repertoire, it is perhaps not surprising that academic librarians were particularly concerned with justifying their graduate degrees to faculty members. Academic librarians had a vested interest in demonstrating to faculty that their professional degree was on par with a PhD. Academic librarians' concerns around faculty perceptions of the MLIS were presented in two ways—arrogance and contrition. For instance, one librarian described how she responded to inquiries about her degree: "I just go for the truth: Librarianship is a Power Trip fueled by the degree" (ILI_L 2010, post to email discussion list). The MLIS was

positioned as the origin of the power trip. By stating that her opinion was “the truth,” the librarian asserts that it is fact and dismissed any inquiries about the relevance or value of an MLIS. Other librarians argued such approaches were potentially harmful to the professional reputation of librarianship: “I would rather give them a concise, upbeat, . . . snapshot at what librarians do . . . , rather than just silently ignore their snarky question. . . . Or . . . make the stereotype worse, by mentioning how a librarian flipped them the bird, when asked about the degree requirements” (ILI_L 2010, post to email discussion list).

Public and teacher librarians focused on the value of the degree for their work. Unlike academic librarians, who rarely questioned the values of the degree itself, public librarians were divided on the value of the MLIS. Some public librarians felt the MLIS was an unnecessary hoop for them to jump through. They argued the skills they used on a daily basis were learned outside the MLIS. As a result, they could not see its value: “I am not so sure that the day-to-day duties required of a public librarian justify an MLIS. If anything, the drafts of policies I have written, the PR [public relations], the web content, the social and professional outreach—these call more on my English BA than anything” (PUBLIB 2011, post to email discussion list). Some public librarians blamed the degree’s lack of applicability in their daily work on the “simplicity” of the degree: “Library graduate programs are simple; in fact, they are easier than many Bachelor programs” (PUBLIB 2011, post to email discussion list). Others felt they learned more from practical work experiences than from MLIS coursework: “My MLS courses did not prepare me for librarianship as a whole . . . I think that can be said of most professions—you get the groundwork but not the meat and potatoes of the profession from classes, you become a professional by working at it” (PUBLIB 2011, post to email discussion list).

For academic, public, and special librarians, the MLIS is considered to be the entry level degree for librarianship. Teacher librarians, in contrast, have a variety of degree options available to them. Often the state or province determines the qualifications required to work as a teacher librarian. In Alberta, for example, a Master of Education in teacher-librarianship or an MLIS (in addition to a BEd and certification as a teacher) qualifies a teacher to work as a teacher librarian, although neither graduate degree is required; however, in many American states an MLIS, or certification as a school media specialist, alongside teacher certification, are acceptable qualifications (Jesseman, Page, & Underwood, 2015). For teacher librarians, their graduate LIS education was a supplement to their teacher education: “Teacher librarians . . . must have initial teaching qualifications and should have post-grad librarianship qualifications because teaching is the core of their role and you can’t supervise students without holding teaching qualifications unless you, yourself, are supervised. Not all ‘teacher librarians’ have the post-grad qualifications” (LM_NET 2011, post to email discussion list). In this example, by placing teacher librarians in quotation marks, any claims to professional status are called into question. In other words, without the necessary librarian qualification of a “post-grad” degree, these teacher librarians are not “real” librarians. In addition, although teacher librarians in both countries face precarious employment situations as a result of budget cuts to schools, many American email discussion list participants argued possessing an MLIS instead of an alternative teacher librarian qualification gave them flexibility in their career options: “I love the flexibility that my MLIS gives me. Things aren’t going so well for the schools these days, and it’s comforting to know I have options” (LM_NET 2012, post to email discussion list).

In contrast, the teacher librarian interview participants expressed a different relationship with their Master of Education in teacher-librarianship. In addition, all three participants laid

equal claim to their teacher identities as separate from their teacher librarian identities. They were teachers before they were librarians because “teaching is the first part” (Jane, teacher librarian participant). In other words, for the interview participants, their librarian identity supported and extended their teacher identity. Because their teacher librarian roles often involved working with both students and other teachers, all of the interview participants described their librarian roles as extending their reach as teachers. Not only were they supporting the learning of all the students in their school, as opposed to the learning of specific students in a single classroom, they were also able to support the learning, often pertaining to technology, of their fellow teachers: “I’m a teacher of teachers first and foremost. . . . That is what I do” (Beverly, teacher librarian participant). Tina indicated that her Master of Education in teacher-librarianship improved her teaching: “I took [the lessons I learned in my degree] back with me to the classroom. So in that way I became a better teacher.” However, the spilt focus between teaching and teacher librarianship often left the interview participants frustrated: “In some ways I’m not as good a teacher. And that’s because I’m split. So instead of all my attention, all my focus being on these 30 kids in my classroom, it’s also on all the other things that I need to do—and I’m very scattered” (Tina, teacher librarian participant).

Librarians argued a graduate degree gave librarianship credibility in the eyes of non-librarians. They compared the MLIS to other graduate degrees: “Why do you need an MBA to work in a business?” (ILI_L 2010, post to email discussion list). This quote was a posted on ILI_L about “elevator speeches” academic librarians use to explain the value of the MLIS to faculty members. Rhetorically, by responding to an inquiry about the value of the MLIS by comparing it to an MBA (Masters of Business Administration) as the degree necessary to working in a business, this question transfers all of the reasons why an MBA is necessary onto

MLIS holders. However, this analogy potentially had the opposite effect if the listener questioned the utility of an MBA in business. The credibility the MLIS gave librarians also extended to the library: “If we are going to present libraries as a resource for authoritative and professionally vetted information, I think we have a responsibility to have that MLS at the desk” (PUBLIB 2011, post to email discussion list). In essence, the MLIS acted as a calling card for librarians’ professionalism and ability to provide high-quality services, meaning when an MLIS-holding librarian was the one providing services in the library, that librarian’s professionalism made the library-as-resource more valuable.

Librarians believed the MLIS gave them skills that could transfer easily to other fields: “I maintain that the principles that should be learned in library school are more transferable to other types of employment than are many other degree programs” (PUBLIB 2012, post to email discussion list). This created a tension around what librarians thought should be taught in LIS programs and what they believed was being taught. Throughout the data set, librarians debated and considered the merits of LIS programs teaching so-called traditional library-related knowledge and skills, such as cataloguing and reference service (i.e., the skills required to work as a traditional librarian) versus new skills and knowledge that would prepare students to become “information professionals”: “A lot of what’s being taught in library schools is not librarianship, it’s these other areas of information management which is great” (Hildy, academic librarian participant). Some librarians argued that new responsibilities for librarians, such as information literacy, were getting overlooked in LIS programs, leaving librarians underprepared for their professional roles: “In library school we are taught what information literacy (IL) means, but we are not necessarily shown how to teach it well. . . . We are . . . thrown in headfirst and blindfolded [to IL roles]” (Booth, 2010, p. 41).

Regardless of their perceived shortcomings, librarians' educations were credited with providing them with a librarian way of thinking: "Grad school does not really teach you how to be a librarian (you typically get trained to do certain institution-specific tasks on the job), rather the degree teaches you how to think like a librarian and still be able to talk to others so they understand you" (ILI_L 2010, post to email discussion list). Being able to "think like a librarian" allowed librarians to establish "a rapport with patrons" (Saunders, 2012, p. 392) and use their professional skills in a thoughtful manner: "I see . . . school librarians deeply engaged in learning. They are strong in building and delivering services. They are 'doers.' However, I also see thoughtful practitioners who examine the why" (Lankes, 2012, p. 12). The MLIS, therefore, not only gave librarians the skills they needed to work as a librarian, it also gave them a way of thinking that allowed them to become a professional. This way of thinking gave them a unique perspective on the world. It allowed librarians to make sense of information and technology and help them meet their clients' needs: "I think this is why I got the job because I'm the bridge. . . . I can talk to technical people . . . but I can bring it to a level that other people can understand . . . I can explain it to other people who don't [get it]" (Anna, public librarian participant). Librarians positioned this perspective as being specific to librarianship and enabled them to help their clients find information without their having specific subject knowledge: "We can organize information by multiple means and grasp the implications of many sorts of search vocabularies. We are masters of the intricacies of databases to the extent of being able to troubleshoot users' problems even when we have never studied the subject matter involved" (ILI_L 2010, post to email discussion list). In other words, librarians' graduate educations allowed them to navigate subject matter they did not fully understand to help a user find information they needed: "One quote I remember from library school is that 'it's not about knowing the answers, it's about

knowing how to ask—and how to ask better—questions” (ILI_L 2010, post to email discussion list). In this repertoire, therefore, professional expertise was likened to a way of thinking, whereas in the insider-outsider repertoire it was likened to a unique knowledge base. The differences between expertise-as-a-way-of-thinking and expertise-as-knowledge-base were captured in this example of a MEDLIB post from a librarian who used to work as a nurse: “The hardest part to me has been doing structured searching. . . . Librarians who aren’t medically trained sometimes do a better search than I can because they aren’t so distracted by what they already know . . . because sometimes they don’t know anything at all about what they’re looking for” (MEDLIB 2011, post to email discussion list). It was a way of thinking, not a knowledge base that separated a librarian with a medical background from a librarian with only a MLIS.

A librarian way of thinking was described as a global view that allowed librarians “to think more broadly [and] not just about what goes in [their] little world” (Beverly, teacher librarian participant). This positioned librarians as being able to tackle any problem that came their way: “I would say that librarians are very well-trained chameleons because I think with our training we’re able to adapt ourselves to whatever is coming our way. So we are facilitators, we’re enablers, we’re educators, we’re service providers” (Olivia, special librarian participant). It also had the effect of extending librarians’ professional roles and identities beyond their day-to-day work activities. Being a professional meant acting, and thinking, like a professional even when not at work: “If I get a reference question at 11 o’clock at night, . . . I have no problem dropping whatever I’m doing and [answering it]” (Hildy, academic librarian participant).

Amongst teacher librarians there was some disagreement over the definition of a professional way of thinking. This was apparent in their discussions on LM_NET over the usefulness of Dewey Decimal Classification for organizing school libraries. During the time

period covered by this study, teacher librarians in the United States started experimenting with alternatives to DDC. Some teacher librarians used a modified BISAC system (Book Industry Standards and Communications) which arranges categories alphabetically instead of arranging related knowledge systematically (Fister, 2010). Other teacher librarians created their own organizational system, called Metis, which uses whole-language labeling and child-friendly categories (Kaplan, Dolloff, Giffard, & Still-Schiff, 2012). Some teacher librarians argued not using DDC in school libraries meant teacher librarians were now free to do “their own thing” based on their own personal ways of thinking: “one librarian might think . . . a book should be filed in one area while another librarian thinks it should be filed in another” (LM_NET 2012, post to email discussion list). It was argued that by abandoning DDC, librarians experimenting with alternative classification systems were replacing their professional ways of thinking with their personal ways of thinking: “In my humble opinion, ‘leaving Dewey behind’ is watering down the profession. I am certainly not opposed to some great new filing system . . . but I do believe that as a profession it needs to be something we are trained to do and follow” (LM_NET 2012, post to email discussion list). This had implications for both the teacher librarians and their students: “You can’t read your patron’s [sic] minds. If the new shelf arrangement is FOR THE STUDNETS [sic] then survey them before making a drastic, laborious, modern change. Students only know 1 system” (LM_NET 2012, post to email discussion list, emphasis in original). The admonition that teacher librarians cannot “read [their] patron’s minds” implied that someone exercising a professional way of thinking does not make assumptions about clients’ information needs. Therefore, a professional way of thinking was to use a well-tested and trusted organizational system. The librarians could then be sure their way of thinking did not interfere with their clients’ way of thinking. Teacher librarians who had moved away from DDC were

quick to point out their actions were not unprofessional: “Not everyone who moves outside of Dewey is acting arbitrarily or unprofessionally. . . . [W]e were extremely careful to ground our decisions in the way that our students think; we set general principles, wrote them down, and held ourselves to them” (LM_NET 2012, post to email discussion list). For these teacher librarians, a professional way of thinking involved not staying with a system that did not serve the needs of their clients, but thoughtfully and systematically changing a broken system to one that met their clients’ information needs.

Professional values. Librarians described upholding the values of librarianship as a “professional obligation” (Selby, 2012, p. 38). The most frequently mentioned values were access to information, intellectual freedom, privacy, equal treatment of all clients, and service. Of these values, privacy, access to information, and freedom of expression were the most frequently mentioned values in the data set. Librarians made reference to values, in part, to highlight their professionalism: “I use discretion in what I disclose [sic] and do attempt to protect privacy. Part of being a professional is having some sort of professional ethics and common sense” (PUBLIB 2011, post to email discussion list). Formal statements of core values, however, such as the American Library Association’s *Core Values of Librarianship* (2004), were only mentioned once in the data set: “Once a book is in our collection it is against the library profession to tell a user they cannot read a book. It goes against point 5 of the Library Bill of Rights” (LM_NET 2012, post to email discussion list).

Values were something librarians embraced seriously. For some librarians, these professional values even took precedence over personal values: “Do I really want little Janie coming to storytime and walking past a computer with hardcore pornography on it? No I don’t. And so as a person, I don’t want—I don’t actually want that unfettered access to information. As a

librarian I do” (Nathan, public librarian participant). Librarianship’s core values were a source of pride for many librarians: “In some fields . . . a declaration [about the importance of collecting pornography and erotica for clients] would be controversial. In the library science field, this declaration is accepted. It has always been the duty of conscientious librarians to defend controversial literature” (Coker, van Duinkerken, & Bales, 2010, p. 417).

There was, however, some disagreement over which values were core to librarianship. Some public librarians on PUBLIB, for instance, argued that privacy was not a major concern for them: “Privacy is not an issue unless you blab to everyone” (PUBLIB 2010, post to email discussion list). Others commenters on PUBLIB, however, suggested that it was not a librarians’ professional role to determine the level of privacy a client received: “IMHO [in my humble opinion], we shouldn’t be qualifying people for certain levels of information” (PUBLIB 2011, post to email discussion list). In addition, there were debates over whether or not certain activities, such as writing an anonymous blog or making “inappropriate” comments on an email discussion list, were considered professional. Some librarians argued that the core value of freedom of expression gave librarians not only the right, but also the responsibility, to uphold this value, even to criticise other librarians: “[Criticising other librarians] is not ‘unprofessional,’ it is our professional duty” (Berry, 2010, p. 10).

Teacher librarians used the values of librarianship to support their teaching. As teachers, they had to model ethical and democratic behaviours to their students, but as teacher librarians they described feeling that they were held to an even higher standard: “As school librarians we tend to have a teacher side, which is a little more protective of the students we have gotten to know, and we have a librarian side that fights for freedom of all information and no censorship in any form” (LM_NET 2012, post to email discussion list). As a result, teacher librarians struggled

over certain ethical issues, such as the differences between weeding a collection, selecting appropriate materials for a collection, and censoring materials in a collection: “I’ve been struggling with where to draw the line between censorship and selecting appropriate material for my collection lately, and I could use some advice” (LM_NET 2011, post to email discussion list). Often the advice teacher librarians gave each other was to trust their own professional judgement (“If you have a bad feeling, it is based on your knowledge and expertise, so you should listen to yourself” [LM_NET 2011, post to email discussion list]) and to use the tools of librarianship to their best advantage: “In a library we have a selection policy that determines which books are made available for students and which are not. Once a book is in our collection it is against the library profession to tell a user they cannot read a book” (LM_NET 2012, post to email discussion list). The phrase “against the library profession” highlights the tension some teacher librarians felt as they tried to act as advocates for their students in their roles as both teachers and librarians. As teachers, they wanted to protect their students from unnecessary harm. As librarians, they wanted to ensure their students had unfettered access to information. As a result, they had to go against the values of one profession, on occasion, to uphold the values of the other. This sentiment can be seen in this example: “I agree that these books aren’t necessarily appropriate for elementary age kids, but I also feel it’s not the place of the librarian to tell them what they can or cannot read” (LM_NET 2012, post to email discussion list). As a librarian, this teacher librarian did not feel it was her or his place to stop a child from reading a particular book; however, by specifying that this was not the place of a librarian, and not a teacher librarian or even just a teacher, the author of the post implies that a teacher could act as a censor.

Other professions. Librarians often compared and contrasted their professionalism to that of other professions in an effort to transfer that profession’s status onto themselves. For

librarians, the primary difference between librarianship and other professions was the lack of certification or licensing processes: “If the profession had a process/method of sanctioning librarians—then [sanctioning librarians for the poor management of libraries] might be possible. But, unlike the ABA [American Bar Association], there is no process for enforcing ethics and standards” (PUBLIB 2010, post to email discussion list). However, in almost every other way librarians claimed to be equal to their fellow professionals. Academic librarians, for instance, positively compared their professionalism with that of faculty members. This positive comparison acted as justification for equivalent academic status for librarians: “Academic librarians, like all faculty members, are what they do: in other words they profess their calling through action, and the best librarians make great ‘contributions to learning and scholarship—which is after all, what our colleges and universities are about’” (Holley, 1985, as cited in Coker, Van Dunikerken, & Bales, 2010, p. 407). Positive comparisons allowed librarians to claim solidarity with other professions, especially in the face of change: “I feel a certain sense of solidarity with physicians who are confronting similar challenges related to the larger ideas of technology & humanity” (MEDLIB 2012, post to email discussion list). Librarianship, therefore, was just like other professions.

Because librarians were not beholden to legislation to maintain their professional skills, they had to work harder than other professions to maintain their professionalism: “Within many of the legislated professions [like law or medicine], there are requirements for practitioners to maintain their currency by completing a number of continuing education credits annually. . . . I believe that continuing education is fundamental for any professional, and librarians are not exempt” (Tesky, 2010, p. 36). Librarians described this dedication to the professionalism as being specific to librarianship. Not only did they have a unique knowledge base, but as a result

of their professionalism they felt they had a better public image than other professions: “I notice when you tell people you’re a librarian, there’s always a positive response, always, right? If you tell them you’re a lawyer, you don’t get quite the same response” (Anna, public librarian participant).

Rhetorically, librarians compared librarianship to other professions to justify their professional choices: “The nursing managers and directors wear suits, so why shouldn’t I?” (MEDLIB 2012, post to email discussion list). In this example, the librarian directly compared her or his professionalism to that of a nursing manager. Like a nursing manager, a respected professional, a librarian should wear a suit. And by wearing a suit the librarian would be seen as being just like a nursing manager. A similar equivalency is made in this quote from an email discussion list when a librarian argued in favour of a particular approach to teaching information literacy: “If librarians in higher education step away from the searcher to content continuum, we’ve essentially abrogated our responsibility as educators. . . . I will bet you money that the behaviorists in our Psych. dept. aren’t giving their students just what they’re already familiar with; neither are the scientists, . . . nor the historians” (ILI_L 2010, post to email discussion list). In this example, the librarian was arguing for a particular approach to information literacy instruction. By drawing upon the professionalism of not one but three different scholarly disciplines, the librarian was able to present her or his argument as the common sense professional choice. This is further supported with the phrase “I will bet you money.” By claiming her or his assertions about faculty were a sure bet, the librarian makes an argument for a particular approach to information literacy difficult to dispute.

Not surprisingly, teacher librarians most often compared themselves to teachers: “As a profession, we need to rise up and define ourselves as the teachers we are” (Ray, 2012, p. 53).

Often, they rhetorically drew parallels between their work as librarians and their work as teachers: “The mission of librarians is to improve society through facilitating knowledge creation in their communities. . . . Teachers, after all, seek to facilitate knowledge creation” (Lankes, 2012, p. 9). These parallels were used to highlight the unique professional roles of teacher librarians: “School librarians are not simply teachers in a different kind of classroom; they provide a unique and increasingly important kind of knowledge facilitation beyond books and information literacy” (p. 9).

The comparisons between librarianship and other professions also had a practical purpose. Special librarians, for instance, often compared their salaries with those of other professionals. They argued that other professions, like nursing, did not have to fight as hard as librarians for salaries that matched their professionalism and professional status. This was understood to be a sign that librarianship was not a well-respected profession: “I have had to fight for my salary increases and job level adjustments, and have been fed quite a bit of BS—pardon my frank language—by HR people about what my level is and why it has to be so” (MEDLIB 2011, post to email discussion list). A lack of respect for librarianship was directly linked to fewer talented people entering the profession, which put librarianship’s professionalism at risk: “We always tell ourselves that we have wonderful jobs and we should be thankful and take a hit on the salary. I think this is one of the reasons (many others) that there are fewer people going into librarianship” (MEDLIB 2012, post to email discussion list). Librarians were concerned about their professionalism in part because they wanted the respect of their clients: “A lot of librarians walk around with huge chips on their shoulders because they don’t feel that they’re respected as professionals” (ILI_L 2010, post to email discussion list). Many librarians argued there was no “inherent respect for librarians” (Nathan, public librarian participant).

Librarians credited this to a lack of public knowledge of librarianship: “A little bon mot I like to toss around . . . is that the reason I became a young adult librarian and not a teacher was I craved the low salary and lack of respect given to teachers, but also wanted to be part of a profession many people assumed was dying out” (Farrelly, 2010, p. 27).

“As a professional . . .” The professional status of librarians was a concern for many librarians. On the email discussion lists there were regular debates over whether or not librarianship was in fact a profession. These debates were so common that one email discussion list commenter stated: “In a vision, I have seen that the Rapture will come to pass **only** when librarians stop debating whether or not we are professionals, working in a profession. Which means, I think, that we will all be here for a **very** long time, indeed” (PUBLIB 2011, post to email discussion list, emphasis in original). Librarians wanted to be professionals, with all the rights and responsibilities that the status of profession entailed, but they were insecure about whether or not librarianship met the formal definitions of a profession:

I don't really understand the meaning of the word [professional], you know? I— you go through your life, your career, and you say ‘Yeah, I’m a professional librarian.’ I don't think the word has had a lot of—it hasn't done much for me. Like I don't really know what it means. I think okay, professional, we have a professional association, called a professional association. I don't understand. We don't have to be a part of the association to be a librarian. So it doesn't grant us our licence. We don't have to get ourselves certified or renew that licence. I don't know why librarians began calling themselves professionals and I don't know the evolution of the term ‘professional’ in the context of librarianship in relation to how that term evolved in other professions where—like profession I think of as

what you profess to be. Well yes, I say I'm a librarian, that's my profession.

Vocation, calling, all these things have to do with your voice and I think, 'yeah, I think that's part of what I say.' (Colin, academic librarian participant)

Colin's think-aloud attempt at justifying his professional status was indicative of much of the confusion around librarianship's status as a profession. Librarians were generally aware that librarianship did not meet some of the traditional definitions of professions, but, as Colin's final assertion that he was, in fact, a professional attests, they still considered themselves to be professionals.

Throughout the data set, librarians used variations of the phrases "as a professional . . .," "as a librarian . . .," or "as an information professional . . ." Librarian and information professional were used interchangeably, with special librarians being the most likely to describe themselves as information professionals. Throughout the repertoire, information professional was often used to separate special librarians from their non-librarian professional colleagues and highlight the information aspects of their work; however, the interchangeable nature of both librarian and information professional in their text and speech, indicates that special librarians still, to some extent, identified as librarians. For instance, in a study of librarians working in the biomedical field, Glenn and Rolland (2010) noted that most of their study participants "identified themselves as librarians, though these factors were not necessarily reflected in the job titles" (para. 11).

In some cases the phrase "as a librarian . . .", or its equivalent, implied a particular worldview: "I am not saying Facebook is evil; I am saying that using it for something it is not designed for (longer-term course management) has issues we should look at as information professionals before blindly jumping in" (ILI_L 2011, post to email discussion list). In this

example “as information professionals” suggested librarians were able to understand certain kinds of technology in a way that other non-professionals could not. The phrase “as librarians . . .”, and its equivalents, was used to draw attention to common professional characteristics all librarians, regardless of sector or job title, were assumed to share: “Being a librarian I would need the evidence (:” (MEDLIB 2010, post to email discussion list). In this example, the backwards smiley-face emoticon further reinforced the notion that all librarians must share this same trait.

The phrase “as a professional” was used to highlight specific professional responsibilities or obligations librarians felt they had, such as keeping up to date with technological developments, joining professional associations, and even overcoming personal dislikes or preferences to serve clients: “I don’t find books useful. But I try not to put a value judgment on it from my own personal perspective” (Mary, academic librarian participant). This phrase also set librarians apart from their clients: “As professionals, we are obligated to hold ourselves to a higher intellectual standard than we hold our own customers” (PUBLIB 2011, post to email discussion list). The phrase “as a professional” was also used to justify holding unpopular professional opinions and ideas: “I would hope, though, that opinion can be kept as that and not labeled as ‘rant.’ That’s just demeaning, pejorative, and belittling of my role as a professional” (MEDLIB 2010, post to email discussion list). By evoking a professional status, the librarian speaking or writing was able to make statements about controversial topics or hold unpopular opinions. Additionally, a professional status allowed librarians to claim an objective point of view: “I’m aiming [for] clear and professional” (MEDLIB 2011, post to email discussion list). This objectivity provided their opinions with an added level of authority. A professional status allowed librarians to position their personal and professional opinions as professional statements.

Other librarians might not like or approve of the controversial opinion, but because it was made by a professional they were not allowed to dismiss it out of hand. This rhetorical usage also allowed librarians to separate their professional selves from their employee selves and enabled them to make statements their employers might or might not agree with or support: “I’ve had someone attack me before by emailing my boss and saying that she should approve what I post—this is entirely my personal and professional opinion” (MEDLIB 2010, post to email discussion list).

Paraprofessionals. In the professionalism repertoire, librarians positioned themselves as being different from their paraprofessional coworkers. This difference was attributed to a professional mindset or point of view that librarians had and paraprofessionals did not, and could not, have: “Non-MLS staffers can be very good at their *job,* but they often do not even think about librarianship as a *profession* . . . they tend to be wedded to ‘the way we do things here,’ . . . [unlike] librarians, who are expected to be tuned into best practices and the big issues of librarianship” (PUBLIB 2011, post to email discussion list). The difference in mindset was attributed to the MLIS: “The education I received at FSU [Florida State University] is invaluable to my position” (LM_NET 2011, post to email discussion list).

Paraprofessionals were understood to be a necessary and important component to the library staff: “If a page is good at collection development, let the page help with it. If a clerk is really good at answering reference questions (or making book suggestions), that’s great—let them utilize that skill, for everyone’s benefit” (PUBLIB 2011, post to email discussion list). However, because they lacked the professional mindset of librarians, there was a sense that while paraprofessionals could provide good public service, their work still required professional supervision because the “buck [stops] with [librarians]” (PUBLIB 2011, post to email discussion

list). Interview participants were particularly concerned about the possibility that their professional mindset may make them appear arrogant to their paraprofessional coworkers: “People want to imply that being a librarian you’re actually better. . . . It’s simply not true. Others may have more expertise, life experience, they may have more educational credentials that are not directly applicable to the position that they’re in, but actually have prepared them more” (Colin, academic librarian participant); however, they acknowledged their degree did in fact separate them from their paraprofessional colleagues:

I’ve only been a librarian for two years, there’s some people who’ve been the library assistant for 20 years and they have a really good understanding, . . . a really great skillset, and history and wisdom that you don’t want to discount. . . . I try to see my role as more of modeling and mentorship and leadership. . . . As opposed to sort of saying, ‘Well, you know, I’m a librarian because I have a fancy degree and you can just listen to me because I say so’, I try to come at it from ‘this is what I can model, this is what I can show you, this is what I can share with you that you may not have had the access to.’ (Erica, public librarian participant)

As Erica’s quote highlights, librarians struggled with acknowledging the important contribution paraprofessionals made in providing public service, as they viewed this service with the professional point of view their graduate educations afforded them. In Erica’s case, her MLIS not only placed her in an employment position where she supervised the work of her paraprofessional coworkers, but also provided her with insights into clients’ information and service needs that 20 years of experience could not provide library assistants.

In the data set, there were repeated mentions of a perceived increase in advertisements for paraprofessional positions that stated an MLIS was a “strongly preferred” qualification (ILI_L 2012, post to email discussion list). Discussions about these advertisements were accompanied by a sense of fear that professional positions were disappearing: “Some in the profession are concerned that one day there will no longer be the special title of ‘librarian,’ the latter having been replaced with ‘library assistant,’ ‘information professional,’ and other similar names” (Lange, 2010, p.32). In this example, “information professional” was considered to be a verboten title that would one day contribute to the demise of librarianship because it lacked the “special” qualities of librarian. The interview participants in this study similarly rejected the title information professional. All claimed that information professional was too vague a descriptor for their work. Emma, a public librarian participant, stated that to her, information professional implied only being able to help people find information and she was “really good at other things within the context of librarianship.” Hildy, an academic librarian participant, was less equivocal in her rejection: “I don’t know. It just doesn’t—it’s not. . . I don’t know. It doesn’t . . . no. Never do. Never think about it. Just doesn’t occur to me.” Her uncertainty with the title information professional was followed quickly by a reassertion of her librarian identity: “[Librarian is] a title that works for me, it’s what I do.” Jillian, a special librarian participant, argued that information professional was more encompassing of all library workers: “I think information professionals covers it—like we have technicians, we have librarians in here. So I kind of feel it covers everybody,” while Penny, an academic librarian, described information professional as “an umbrella term.” Three of the participants, Mary (academic librarian), Olivia (special librarian), and Sharon (public librarian) said they only used the title when interacting with non-librarians: “I would use [information professional], I think, with other people other than [librarians]” (Olivia).

Whereas Nathan, a public librarian participant, indicated he only used the title with other librarians as a “guilt trip or a call out when someone’s doing something—when someone’s failing to do something.” When asked what “failing to do something” meant, Nathan responded: “Provide the level of service that I think everybody should get when they walk into a library.” In other words, when other librarians failed to provide what Nathan considered to be professional level service. In the professionalism repertoire, information professional was not the identity claimed by librarians when describing themselves. It was used, when necessary, to highlight librarianship’s professionalism or to be inclusive of paraprofessionals. Although never stated, using information professional to include paraprofessionals implied the term librarianship only belonged to professional (i.e., MLIS or equivalent holding) librarians.

Library as tool. The focus of the professionalism repertoire was on librarians as professionals: “When I say I do library work, I mean I use all the skills that I gained through my professional education as a librarian” (Olivia, special librarian participant). As a result, the metonymic slippage that occurred between librarian and library in the insider-outsider repertoire and the service repertoire was largely missing from the professionalism repertoire. In this repertoire, the library was positioned as a tool librarians could use to enact their professionalism and professional values: “Librarians could then . . . act with purpose through the medium of the library (staffing, collection, programming) to make [the] statement [about equality, dignity, access and opportunity for all clients] true” (PUBLIB 2011, post to email discussion list). By using their professional judgement and skills, librarians were responsible for creating libraries that met the needs of their clients: “It’s all about building a library that is appropriate for the students you serve, maybe not the ideal library you wish you had. You are the expert, and you can trust your judgment” (LM_NET 2011, post to email discussion list). In this example, the

librarian's professional judgement was positioned as being more important than her or his personal preferences. By acting professionally, not only do librarians demonstrate their professionalism to clients, but they also meet their clients' service needs. One interview participant, Nathan (public librarian), used the metaphor of the library as tool repeatedly in his speech: "I am the library. . . . [if I] deliver an iPad [presentation] which . . . will help kids . . . navigate digital environments . . . that's the value. The value isn't that it might get them to come to the library. The value is in what I'm doing." Nathan's professionalism was evident not just in how he provided the service of the iPad presentation, but in the reasons for delivering the presentation. Nathan did not require the library to act like a professional. Instead, by acting like a professional, he metaphorically became the library. Through his professionalism, he became the tool through which his clients had their information needs met and through which they could see the value of librarianship.

Transportable identities. The role of transportable identities in the professionalism repertoire differs from its use in the insider-outsider and service repertoires in one important way: the librarian identity itself becomes a transportable identity: "I'm not just a librarian when I get paid: I'm a librarian all of the time" (Bird, 2012, p. 58). Following Zimmerman (1998), a professional identity is a situated identity, which occurs in specific situations or when a person is engaging in a specific activity. In the professionalism repertoire, the professional status of librarianship extended librarians' professional identities past the bounds of their professional context. By transforming their professional identities into transportable identities, librarians pushed at the boundaries of when and where it was acceptable to "feel" like a librarian. In the Movers and Shakers profiles in *Library Journal*, librarians repeatedly referred to librarianship as a "true calling" ("Called to Serve," 2010, p. 25) and described feeling like a librarian regardless

of the context: “Now, says Sanchez, ‘no matter where I am, I see myself in the role of librarian’” (“Operation Literacy,” 2010, p. 26). By describing librarianship as a calling and a role that existed beyond the workplace, the situated nature of librarians’ professional identity was erased. Similarly, librarians also transformed other non-librarian professional identities they claimed, such as a teacher identity for teacher librarians, into transportable identities: “I don’t see being a teacher librarian really isn’t that much different than being a teacher. It’s just who I teach now is a little bit different, it’s broader—instead of just teaching students, I teach staff as well” (Jane, teacher librarian participant).

Importantly, the professionalism repertoire was the only repertoire in this study where the gender identity of librarians, as a group, was made explicit: “It’s just a weird part of our profession it’s that you automatically go to the female pronouns” (Nathan, public librarian participant). Gender was used to explain differences between librarians’ salaries and the salaries of other non-librarian professionals (“Let’s not forget gender when we discuss librarians’ salaries. Fields dominated by women pay less than those dominated by men” [MEDLIB 2012, post to email discussion list]) and to explain librarians’ unwillingness to advocate for the profession: “I don’t think we sell ourselves enough. I think we sell ourselves too short and I think it’s partially because we’re a bunch of women” (Anna, public librarian participant). Colin, an academic librarian interview participant, was particularly aware of the potential of being identified by non-librarians as possessing feminine qualities, which, for Colin, meant non-librarians misidentified his sexual orientation:

As a male librarian, I think one part of your identity as a professional and as a person is your sexual identity, your gender identity and the perceptions of that. And as a non-homosexual male librarian, I feel like I’m a bit in the minority

within the profession. I guess in the sense of the minority of the full profession of women. (Colin, academic librarian participant).

His concern was not that other librarians would misidentify his sexual orientation, but that non-librarians would identify him as a homosexual: “Being a male librarian but not being gay, it’s almost like—there’s just so many levels that it just doesn’t make any sense. Like [non-librarians are] like ‘Oh you’re a librarian but you’re not a woman. But you’re not gay.’” Colin suggested these perceptions somehow affected his professionalism: “I’ve found it difficult . . . to find professional role models. And whether that has to do with being a non-gay male librarian, I have no idea.” Although he was reluctant to directly connect perceptions of his sexuality to his ability to find a role model, Colin implied there was a correlation between these misperceptions and his ability to explore his professionalism with the help of a mentor.

Race or ethnicity was mentioned only once in the data set as having an effect on librarians’ professionalism. Anna, a public librarian interview participant of African descent, stated that while her ethnicity did not affect how she understood herself to be a professional, it did appear to affect how other librarians understood her professionalism: “I think to be honest sometimes it [my ethnicity] works in my favour because people remember me. . . . I think in a white female dominated profession, it has an effect where I stand out and I make an impression and I offer a unique perspective.” Her ethnicity, therefore, set her apart from other librarians; however, Anna attributed her information technology background with setting her apart equal measure: “I think it’s something inherent in being an IT professional. You don’t have a choice. You adapt or die.”

Professionalism repertoire conclusions. The professionalism repertoire focused on the qualities librarians believed made librarianship a profession, with specific attention to the MLIS,

professional values, librarians' relationships with paraprofessionals, and the library as a tool to enact and demonstrate librarians' professionalism. Librarians believed that they were professionals, even if they were aware that librarianship did not meet some traditional definitions for a profession. In response to the perception that librarianship may not be technically a profession, librarians focused on the symbolic aspects of the MLIS as the educational requirement to enter the profession. The MLIS was positioned as the sole criterion for being a professional librarian—above even working as a librarian. In essence, the MLIS was what made a librarian a librarian. The MLIS was credited with providing librarians with a professional way of thinking that enabled them to retain a global perspective and be adaptable to client needs. This way of thinking was also the primary characteristic that separated librarians from their paraprofessional coworkers. This repertoire also highlighted the differences between teacher librarians and librarians working in other sectors. Teacher librarians positioned their teacher identities alongside and occasionally above their teacher librarian identities. The additional education required to work as a teacher librarian and the professional values of librarianship were seen as supports for their teacher identities. In essence, within the professionalism repertoire, teacher librarians' librarian identity enhanced their teacher identity. Librarians' language choices in this repertoire had a variety of rhetorical effects. By positively comparing themselves to other professions, librarians were able to justify many of their professional choices and values. Phrases, such as “as a professional,” highlighted the professional obligations of librarianship and allowed librarians to separate their employee selves from their professional selves. Librarians were concerned that misperceptions about their professionalism were having an effect on future job prospects, as indicated by a perceived increase in job advertisements listing an MLIS as a preferred qualification for paraprofessional positions. They rhetorically

protected librarianship by rejecting the descriptor “information professional” in favour of librarian. The most significant difference between the professionalism repertoire and the insider-outsider and service repertoires was that the library was a tool librarians used to demonstrate their professionalism to clients. As a result, the metonymic slippage between librarian and library was missing from the professionalism repertoire. Additionally, the professional identities were transformed from situated identities to transportable identities. This expanded the contexts in which librarians could lay claim to their professional identities and gave their professional identities a larger social significance.

Change Repertoire

The change repertoire had two main discursive functions: to highlight the shifting professional roles of librarians, with particular attention to the influence of user expectations in these shifts, and to position librarians in relation to changes occurring outside of the profession. The future of librarianship was a common topic in this repertoire. The changes occurring both within and outside the profession were understood to have a significant influence not only on the services librarians offered, but also on the role of libraries, and by extension on librarians themselves, both in their day-to-day activities and in their role in society. Connected to this repertoire was the notion of time. Librarians used time as a linguistic resource to describe themselves as professionals in relation to this period of change.

Types of Change. Librarians identified many different types of change as having an effect on librarianship. These changes ranged from the specific, such as technology (i.e., e-readers) and the economy, namely decreased budgets which were affecting librarians’ abilities to purchase materials for their collections, to the broad and difficult to characterize changes such as “the global nature of information” (Griffey, Houghton-Jan, & Neiburger, 2010, p. 28). Changes

of all types were described in a variety of ways. Words and phrases such as “turbulence” (Schachter, 2012a, p. 26), “difficult” (ILI_L 2012, post to email discussion list), “the beast that never sleeps” (LM_NET 2011, post to email discussion list), “scary” (Quint, 2010b, p. 7), “trying” (Brannock, 2010, p. 44), “bottomless pit” (PUBLIB 2010, post to email discussion list), “seismic shift” (LM_NET 2012, post to email discussion list), and “white water” (PUBLIB 2011, post to email discussion list) were used to highlight the challenges that changes of all varieties offered librarians. In contrast, words and phrase such as “new normal” (discussed in detail below), “exciting” (“Marketers,” 2011, para. 30), “dramatic” (Schachter, 2012b, p. 29), “momentous” (Heinze, 2010, p. 12), and “promising” (Schachter, 2012b, p. 29) were used to evoke a sense of possibility and opportunity for librarians and librarianship as change loomed.

Technology, specifically information and communications technology (ICTs), was identified as having the most significant effect on librarianship: “The world of information has always been in a constant state of flux. As technology continues to changes [sic] the world of information, it is preferable for information professionals and the institutions they serve to adapt rather than perish” (LM_NET 2011, post to email discussion list). Technology was perceived to have affected every aspect of librarianship: “I think the focus of librarianship is kind of shifting in [a technological] direction a bit more. We’re definitely focusing more on [digital and media literacy] and trying to find ways of educating instructors on how to integrate more technologies into their assignments” (Mary, academic librarian participant). The all-pervasive nature of technological change was generally considered to have a positive effect on librarianship because technology-based service was understood to be the profession’s future: “I think the future of libraries is putting more of our resources toward technology,” (“Innovators,” 2012, para. 10). The more technology-based services that librarians offered, the more they would keep up with

changing client expectations. Librarianship would thus remain a relevant profession: “We need to be early adopters of technology and social networking opportunities. Few of us, however, seem to know how best to position ourselves for enduring success” (Schachter, 2010d, p. 26). Technology, however, was also perceived as a challenge for librarians as it affected client expectations around what services librarians were and were not able to provide: “We’re supposed to be digital by default. We’re providing access but we’re not going to do the actual nitty gritty for people. So [management is] shrinking our collection, they want everything to be digitized, [but] you can’t digitize everything” (Dorothy, special librarian participant).

Whether or not librarians had adequately kept up with technological change was a source of dispute amongst librarians. Some argued librarians had failed: “We (as a profession) did not work hard enough to insure [sic] that we kept up with technological changes, particularly after the 1980s. . . . We can’t pretend to be information experts when we aren’t a part of the development of improved information management strategies and technologies” (PUBLIB 2010, post to email discussion list). As a result, librarianship, as a profession, lagged behind “the rest of the world” (PUBLIB 2010, post to email discussion list) in terms of its ability to offer cutting-edge technological services that met evolving client expectations and information needs. In contrast, other librarians argued the profession had kept up with changing technologies and client demands: “The little-known reality is that librarians have not only endured but actually embraced each new wave of communications technology, and are barely recognizable from their rubber-stamp and card-catalog days” (Manley, 2011b, p. 88).

Often, when librarians wrote or spoke about change, they were not specific about what kinds of changes they were discussing. In these instances, change often meant the present time was different from the past. A common phrase was “these difficult economic times”: “I think

there's a big gap in many people's minds about the value and impact of librarians' work. I hope that we can continue discussing and honing in on the value of the MLS/MLIS to ourselves as well as to many others, especially during these difficult economic times" (ILI_L 2012, post to email discussion list). This phrase drew attention to contemporary economic circumstances, while highlighting the differences between the present day and the past, when it seemed the economy was manageable. By phrasing change as a time period, librarians positioned themselves as passive recipients of the effects of these changes. Discursively, this positioned librarians as only being able to react to change, not to influence or alter it. In the above example from ILI_L, the phrase "these difficult economic times" was used to highlight the barriers librarians must overcome to convince non-librarians about the value of librarianship. Changes beyond librarians' control made even larger the "big gap" in understanding librarians' work.

Reactions to change. In librarians' reactions to change they employed rhetorically self-sufficient arguments in their speech and writing. Rhetorically self-sufficient arguments are common sense arguments that are forwarded to the listener or reader with little justification. Often these arguments are presented as being so reasonable that the audience finds them difficult to argue against (Potter, 1996b). The most common self-sufficient argument librarians employed in relation to change was positioning change as the "new normal" for librarians. This rhetorical position had two effects. First, by describing change as normal, librarians could end any potential opposition or criticism of change before it started. Normal implied change was the status quo. Secondly, change was shifted from something unexpected and potentially frightening to something that was "inevitable" (Alire, 2010, p. 6). This enabled librarians to discursively claim control over the changes they were experiencing and offered a discursive counterpoint to the passivity of phrases such as "these difficult economic times." Change was not something that

happened to librarians, but something librarians could manage: “Viewing [change] as a new normal helps a bit. The game has definitely changed for us. While I didn’t cause the shift and am not responsible for all the decisions that are impacting students and teachers, my challenge now is how to respond to it” (LM_NET 2012, post to email discussion list). Librarians positioned themselves as well-suited to meeting the needs and demands that came with the new normal: “It has been my continued experience that librarians, as a lot, are highly resourceful and very creative when it comes to solutions. Perhaps rather than screaming and clawing at an inevitability that we should work with the tide and see how we can produce positive change” (MEDLIB 2012, post to email discussion list). These needs and demands were understood to be opportunities for librarianship: “Welcome or not, change often brings with it opportunities to do things differently and, ideally, better” (Heinze, 2010, p.12). At the same time, librarians acknowledged that the opportunities change offered to librarians meant work: “It looks like this ‘opportunity’ is all about colossal amounts of work” (Nesi, 2012b, para. 10). Librarians positioned themselves as being the only profession that could understand and take advantage of the new normal on behalf of clients. In this example, Mary, an academic librarian, positioned herself as being the only professional who was able to see the limitations in students’ assignments: “I’ve seen [students’] assignments and it’s all heavy, heavy emphasis on using ten peer reviewed resources and citing your sources properly and not having any spelling or grammatical errors and I just think that that’s so ten years ago! . . . We’re trying to be the drivers of this change in a different direction” (Mary, academic librarian participant). She was able not only to see but to understand the new normal of the changing information environment and, as a result, was better positioned than the faculty members creating the assignments to meet the changing educational needs of students.

The ability to see and understand the new normal gave librarianship a renewed importance in society: “We need librarians more than we ever did. What we don’t need are mere clerks who guard dead paper. Librarians are too important to be a dwindling voice in our culture. For the right librarian, this is the chance of a lifetime” (PUBLIB 2011, post to email discussion list). This renewed importance helped librarianship to stay “relevant” (Bell, 2010, p. 38). Rhetorically, the consequence of arguing against change as the new normal was to concede that librarianship was an irrelevant profession: “Without a clear understanding of our mission—the why we do things—librarianship has two choices: become increasingly irrelevant, performing tasks no longer needed, or lurch from new trend to new trend in hopes that these new functions will somehow work” (Lankes, 2012, p. 8). This desire to remain relevant also extended to libraries: “We absolutely must redefine the term *book* so that libraries are not identified only with a nostalgic past, if we are to have any hope of capturing our share of dwindling public dollars” (Roberts & Wood, 2011, p. 156, emphasis in original). The consequence of not staying relevant included the loss of libraries, but more importantly the dissolution of the profession: “We must be open to change or we will be become completely defunct” (LM_NET, 2012, post to email discussion list).

Librarians used phrases such as “now more than ever” (Booth, 2010, p. 40), “it’s time” (MEDLIB 2010, post to email discussion list), and “time to bite the bullet” (LM_NET 2011, post to email discussion list) as a call to action against perceived threats to the profession’s future: “This is the worst time to be a school librarian and the best time to be one. Our profession is under daily threat of extinction” (Nesi, 2012b, p. 18). In this example, by highlighting both the good and bad of the current time period, librarians had an urgent choice to make—either allow the profession to become extinct or fight for librarianship’s survival. This reference to time provided

a sense of action and movement to librarians' reactions to change and threats. Librarians had to move with the times.

The self-sufficient argument of the new normal masked an undercurrent of uncertainty towards change that was found throughout the data set. Some librarians felt the changes they were witnessing might have “dire” consequences for the profession, especially if librarians did not pursue the opportunities presented to them: “Our discipline is in flux and many in our profession have pronounced dire futures for one and all” (ILI_L 2011, post to email discussion list). Economic and technological changes were the two most cited causes of anxiety and uncertainty amongst librarians. Technology functioned as competition to the roles now performed by librarians, and a poorly performing economy was blamed for budget cuts and an inability to keep up with client demands: “The outlook for librarian jobs is not good, and has not been good for quite some time now. It may rebound in the future, or it may not. I suspect that the chance of a good rebound is going to be dependent on whether the library world can catch up to the rest of the online world. Right now, we are lagging dramatically” (PUBLIB 2012, post to email discussion list). The combined effect of a poor economy and rapid technological change on future job prospects was a particular concern for teacher and special librarians. Librarians in both sectors expressed fear that their jobs would be cut and that their skills and expertise would be replaced by technologies: “Just something to keep in mind as we move into the electronic age. I imagine those of us in special libraries will have to continue to justify our positions” (MEDLIB 2010, post to email discussion list). As a result, teacher and special librarians were very concerned with advocating for their positions and justifying their existence: “My response to that is: in these bad economic times many of my colleagues are facing the prospect [sic] of their positions being cut and their libraries staffed with aides. How do we justify the need for our

professional expertise to administrators if we are not improving reading skills and reading levels?” (LM_NET 2011, post to email discussion list).

An uncertainty towards change was positioned as the expected reaction of librarians when faced with shifting situations and client expectations: “There’s probably lots of room for change and as a profession, we haven’t always been proactive even though we always seem to be changing” (Kate, public librarian participant). Librarians, however, became irritated with other librarians whom they felt were resistant to change or exhibiting what were perceived to be stereotypical reactions towards change. This irritation was particularly prevalent in the speech of the interview participants. Hildy, an academic librarian participant, for instance, stated: “If you don’t like change, you’re in the wrong profession. And if you think things are going to stay the way they’ve always been, you’re in for a big surprise and you’re not going to be very happy.” A similar sentiment was repeated by Beverly, a teacher librarian participant: “You have to thrive on change, and risk-taking.” Librarians resisted the idea that their expected attitude towards change had to be based in fear and uncertainty by offering an alternative: flexibility. Mary, an academic librarian participant, described a good librarian as someone who “is adaptable to change and will look at new things that are presented to them and look at ways they can use them.” By focusing on flexibility and adaptability, librarians were able to shift change from something that would have an unknowable and possibly frightening effect on librarianship to something that was expected and welcome: “Expect change. . . . Be . . . flexible as libraries and adapt to a just-in-time rather than just-in-case means of information delivery to users and the tools they use to access information” (Liebst, 2011, p. 230). Discursively, focusing on librarians’ flexibility served a purpose similar to describing change as the new normal. Both discursive strategies were attempting to normalize change to give librarians a sense of control over it. As described above,

part of the discourse of uncertainty towards change was a generalized fear of the future of librarianship. By encouraging librarians to be flexible towards change, the future became something librarians could proactively prepare for: “What follows are a dozen actions librarians can take that can lead to fitter, future-proofed libraries” (Bell, 2010, p. 38).

Two primary strategies to ensure librarians altered their attitude towards change were posited by librarians throughout the data set. The first was strategy was to encourage LIS programs to change how they recruited and educated MLIS candidates: “I think we need to draw people into the profession with different skills and different mindsets . . . there’s different needs and there’s different ways of thinking about it, and you’re going to need to change” (Erica, public librarian participant). As described above in the professionalism repertoire, some librarians were highly critical of LIS programs. In the change repertoire, any mention of LIS programs altering their curriculums to meet the evolving needs of librarianship was greeted with pleasure: “I’m glad to hear that Library schools are starting to shift the traditional view” (ILI_L 2010, post to email discussion list). The second, and more common, strategy to manage shifting attitudes towards change was to call for additional managerial support for front-line professional staff: “This level of change takes strong support and dedicated leadership from administrative leaders” (Malenfant, 2010, p. 73). Managers and leaders were considered to be important components not only in the organizational management of change, but in encouraging librarians to become flexible and adaptive towards change. How library managers and leaders were portrayed in the journal articles was different from their portrayal in the rest of the data set. In the journal articles, librarians in leadership and management roles were positioned as supportive of and necessary for change management: “We need leaders to embrace change and can implement a vision that will transform public libraries” (Poole, 2012, p. 7). In contrast, within

the email discussion lists and the interviews, strong management and leadership were described as missing from many change management processes. As a result, managers and leaders were positioned as impeding librarians' ability to meet changing user demands: "Sigh. Maybe some day our administration will ALLOW social media sites: currently, ALL such sites are blocked on our network" (MEDLIB 2010, post to email discussion list, emphasis in original).

Throughout the data, management and leadership were positioned as separate from librarianship. Even librarians who worked as managers described their managerial role as being separate from their librarian role: "When I was manager, . . . I didn't spend a lot of time on the front desk, and some staff took issue with that" (Emma, public librarian participant). In the change repertoire, this separation between managers and librarians allowed librarians to distance themselves from changes that were unsuccessful. It was not the librarians' fault they could not offer cutting-edge technical services, it was management's fault because they would not "ALLOW" it. Some librarians, however, pursued their MLIS because they wanted to be a manager. Anna, a public librarian participant, for instance, previously worked in various paraprofessional positions before becoming a librarian. When asked why she pursued her MLIS, she responded: "I knew what I wanted to do. I wanted to be management." Librarians new to the profession were the most likely to say they wanted to be managers. This was, in part, the result of their MLIS educations: "When I was working on my MLIS . . . my management professor told the class that we'd all likely be managers within five years" (McLean, 2012, p. 65). But, it was also, in part, a logical extension of the service work many librarians felt they already did: "I do see librarianship as leading into that management. I think that comes out of that information sharing, modeling leadership . . . value that I have [as part of my] professionalism" (Erica, public librarian participant). This desire to become a manager was largely about being able to affect

change: “A small town public library director can, and often does, have significant influence because she/he works directly with the taxpaying public” (PUBLIB 2011, post to email discussion list).

Changing professional roles. Librarians linked economic, technical, social, and cultural changes occurring in the world to their changing professional roles. Position descriptions and advertisements for jobs were often used to illustrate the changes in librarians’ roles: “Job descriptions call for advanced degrees on the masters level, technological abilities and computer skills. . . . The ability to negotiate online licenses, manage web pages, and deal with the newer informatics technologies . . . are all skill [sic] which are above and beyond the old professional standard of medical librarian” (MEDLIB 2011, post to email discussion list). These job descriptions were referenced not only to highlight changing roles, but also to demonstrate to other librarians the need to continually evolve librarians’ professional skill sets: “It is probable that SOME library positions will require different degrees in the future, but not all. What is really needed is more skills that fall outside of the typical set of skills taught in library school” (PUBLIB 2012, post to email discussion list, emphasis in original). The direct cause of professional role change was often identified as changing client expectations: “To meet . . . changing needs, many libraries are focusing their energies on adapting and reinventing the reference service model to suit current patrons. . . . Some libraries have implemented roving reference and other outreach models, which bring the service away from the desk and out into the stacks, or even outside the library itself, to meet users where they are” (Saunders, 2012, p. 390). Changing client demands meant new services and new services required new skills: “Such changes in the service model and delivery necessarily entail different skills, competencies, and knowledge than the traditional emphasis on familiarity with particular reference resources and

negotiations of the face-to-face reference interview” (Saunders, 2012, p. 391). Often, changing client demands were positioned as opportunities for librarians to pursue: “I think that’s a great direction that we’re going in, you know, and looking at all sorts of creative ways and it doesn’t have to be . . . , only . . . the librarian as instructor expert or . . . , expert searcher . . . , who you come to when you need help” (Penny, academic librarian participant). However, there was some resistance to this discourse, especially from teacher and special librarians who, as described above, felt they had little direct control over how changes were implemented and managed. Dorothy, a special librarian participant, described the expectations of her clients and her employer as a burden. Although she wanted to meet the information needs of her clients, she felt her employer was forcing her to change how she offered services in such a way that her clients’ expectations were not being, and could not be, met:

The problem . . . is we can’t do reference, research or current awareness. . . . The most we can say is ‘if you have a reference question . . . you can call us and we can try and help you through this search. But we can’t do the actual search for you.’ . . . [What my employer] said [was everyone] has gone to university and they all know how to do their own research. (Dorothy, special librarian participant)

By intervening in how she delivered service, Dorothy’s employer removed what it meant to be a special librarian for Dorothy by replacing her professional expertise about how to best deliver services to her clients with the expectation that people could do their own research, which in Dorothy’s opinion, was unrealistic and unprofessional. Other special librarians described the need to keep up with change as a burden (“I feel like my job is changing, and I am struggling to keep up with the changes in technology” [Farmer, 2011, para. 35, quoting a research

participant]) and that change rarely made their work easier or better (“Most of [the ‘improvements’] seem to make it harder and longer to do our work” [MEDLIB 2010, post to email discussion list]).

The changing place of the library. In a manner similar to the word slippage within the service and insider-outsider repertoires, there is a metonymic slippage between the words library and librarian in the change repertoire: “Libraries that can achieve flexibility will be better adapted for the future” (Bell, 2010, p. 38). Notably, this metonymic slippage was largely confined to the published literature in the data set. Unlike the insider-outsider repertoire, the function of this slippage was not to transfer the goodwill felt by clients for the library onto librarians, nor did it serve the same function as in the service repertoire, namely to discursively limit the work of librarians to the library. The function of this slippage in the change repertoire was to transfer to the institution of the library the desired qualities of flexibility and adaptability towards change that librarians were expected to have. By transferring these qualities to the library, not only would librarianship survive as a profession, but the place many librarians worked, and the location the work of librarians was discursively tied to, would also survive. The role of the library, however, was also expected to change. Many librarians spoke and wrote about the need to remove themselves from the library to better meet their clients’ information needs: “Kids don’t shlep to the library to use an out of date encyclopedia. . . . You might want them to, but they won’t unless coerced. They need a librarian more than ever (to figure out creative ways to find and use data). They need a library not at all” (PUBLIB 2011, post to email discussion list). In this example, the librarian’s expertise and skill were now the draw to the library for children writing a report for school, not the resources, and by extension, not the library. For the

library-as-place to remain relevant, the flexibility, adaptability, and expertise of the librarian had to be highlighted.

Change repertoire conclusions. The focus of the change repertoire was the tension between the fear of uncertainty and the need to embrace opportunity for professional survival. Change was perceived to have affected all aspects of the profession, from client expectations, to professional roles, to the delivery of service. Librarians used the rhetorical device of self-sufficient arguments to position change as a new normal that could be controlled. The function of this rhetorical device was to normalize change and challenge what were perceived to be traditional passive reactions to change. Librarians argued that effective management and leadership were needed to adequately meet the demands of change. There were some similarities in how language was used in the change repertoire and in other repertoires. Most notably, like the insider-outsider repertoire and the service repertoire, there was a metonymic slippage between library and librarian; however, the function of this slippage in the change repertoire was to transfer the qualities of flexibility and adaptability from librarians to the institution of the library. Missing from this repertoire was any significant difference between how the repertoire was used by librarians in different sectors and any difference in its usage between the different types of data. Although certain topics were more prevalent in the speech and writing of different sectors and in different parts of the data set, the overall function of this repertoire was consistent throughout the different sectors and the whole data set. Transportable identities did not play a role in the change repertoire. Neither the transportable identities of librarians nor the transportable identities of clients were discussed. Both client groups and librarians were presented as homogeneous groups.

Advocacy repertoire

In the advocacy repertoire, librarians highlighted their desire to ensure non-librarians understood the value of librarians, libraries, and librarianship. This repertoire shares many similarities with the other repertoires examined thus far. For instance, similarly to insider-outsider repertoire, this repertoire is concerned with librarians' relationships with their clients. However, in the insider-outsider repertoire, the focus was on librarians' need to have clients recognize their professional skill and expertise, whereas in the advocacy repertoire the focus is on particular ways to achieve this recognition. The focus of many of the other repertoires, such as service, professionalism, and clients, are topics also discussed in the advocacy repertoire; however, the discursive function of these topics is markedly different. The function of these topics in the latter, specifically service, is that they act as a discursive anchor for librarians' identities. For instance, in the service repertoire, service is positioned as librarians' core activity. It maintains a similar purpose in the advocacy repertoire; however, in the advocacy repertoire, the specifics of the services were unimportant. Instead, the act itself of providing service was a type of advocacy of librarians and librarianship. In other words, by providing a service, librarians not only fulfilled their professional purpose, they also ensured that clients were aware of the value not only of the services they were receiving, but also the value of libraries and librarians. The focus on using the topics of other repertoires to enhance the public recognition of librarianship is what separated the advocacy repertoire from the other repertoires.

The purpose of advocacy. Librarians advocated for libraries and librarianship in general, for library services such as specific library programs, public services—including reference service, reader's advisory and information literacy instruction—and even simply the provision of computers to their clients, and for specific members of their communities. Librarians focused

much of their advocacy efforts on promoting library and information services. In other words, as one ILI_L email discussion list post stated, this focus on service was about “letting [the community] know about all the things the library can do for them” (ILI_L 2011). Librarians were able both to promote the services themselves and highlight their professional value to their communities: “We need to work together to ensure that the public need for the services libraries—and librarians—provide are valued and protected” (CLA 2011, post to email discussion list). Public librarians tended to focus on the role of libraries and librarians as community services: “A good public library is part of a healthy community” (Kate, public librarian participant). School and academic librarians focused on their role in student achievement. And special librarians focused on their roles as leaders and as value-added service providers for their organizations.

Librarians offered many different reasons for why they should advocate, but value, in all its connotations (importance, significance, worth, respect and esteem, and attraction) was the core reason offered. One of the stated purposes of service was to communicate to clients the value of librarianship: “We buy books, they check books out, they use them, and return them for others to use. If people are not using our resources, or we cannot demonstrate use of electronic resources, our library funding is doomed” (MEDLIB 2010, post to email discussion list). Being able to demonstrate to stakeholders and funders that clients were using their services was an important “added bonus” to providing services. Librarians in sectors perceived to be under threat of financial cuts, namely teacher, public, and special librarians, were most likely to highlight the need to use service as a way to advocate for the profession: “We’re here to help and as times get tougher, our patrons have come to rely on us for a lot more than novels and DVDs. We’ll count on them remembering at levy time what we’ve done for them when they really needed us” (PUBLIB 2010, post to email discussion list). Showcasing the value of services provided

librarians with a way to show clients how the library fit into their daily lives. It also made the work of librarians visible, encouraged people to visit libraries and fostered love for them once they were there, and “prove[d] [a service’s] worth” (ILI_L 2011, post to email discussion list). By highlighting a service’s value, librarians were able to highlight their devotion to their clients. As Prielipp (2012) stated: “Libraries need to get the message out that we do all of our work out of devotion to those we serve” (p. 25). This idea was echoed in the speech of the interview participants. For Beverly, a teacher librarian, devotion to her work was something only her students and their parents would witness, but, ultimately, she believed her work would serve as a way to advocate for librarianship by having a real influence on society at large: “I can’t change what the Minister of Education’s going to do, but I can change the people’s lives that I can come in contact with. We know that we all pay if people are not literate in this society.” Service, therefore, was the vehicle Beverly could use to get herself a seat at the table with policymakers, which would in turn support important services.

The profession itself was also a focus of advocacy activities. Librarians wanted the profession to be understood as unique and valuable by non-librarians, and to position librarianship as an attractive profession for job seekers and students. To highlight the profession’s uniqueness, librarians focused on advocating for the knowledge and expertise of librarians: “Show your support for everyone affected by these cuts including colleagues in the public service, researchers who rely on librarian and archivist expertise and access to specialized collections, members of the public who benefit from continued access to these services” (CLA 2012, post to email discussion list). This focus on expertise enabled librarians to advocate for themselves as information specialists: “Librarians must communicate that librarianship ‘has its own foundations and theory and practice, its own ethical constructs, its own literature and its

own type of academic preparation” (Coker, VanDuinkerken, & Bales, 2010, p. 411, quoting Hill, 1994). This advocacy allowed librarians to challenge popular stereotypes of the profession, to consciously “build a professional image” (CLA 2010, post to email discussion list), and “to speak passionately and well” for librarianship (ILI_L 2010, post to email discussion list).

Through earning respect for the profession, librarians hoped to build trust with stakeholders and community members by highlighting the professional skills and expertise of librarians: “[Ensure that everyone knows] you are the bridge to meeting their information needs” (Matarazzo & Pearlstein, 2011, p. 19). This trust was essential to gain “acceptance into ‘the club’” (Matarazzo & Pearlstein, 2011, p. 18) to avoid “being cut” (LM_NET 2011, post to email discussion list). This fear of “being cut” included funding cuts, which would affect their ability to offer important services. Not only would this result in clients and communities looking elsewhere to fulfill their information needs, it was also perceived to have a negative effect on clients’ perceptions of the profession. In other words, if librarians were undervalued, then the profession was at risk and clients would suffer: “I really feel like we cannot afford to not become more pro-active in marketing ourselves, and making our presence (and importance!) known in the community. We do extraordinary things for our patrons” (PUBLIB 2010, post to email discussion list). Building trust also provided librarians with an opportunity to highlight their skills as a reason to advocate for higher wages and additional funding.

Show and tell. The specifics of how librarians should advocate for their causes comprised the largest section of the data for this repertoire. The email discussion lists, for instance, offered many examples of librarians soliciting advice from each other on how best to market to and communicate with specific audiences. The advice librarians offered each other regarding advocacy best practices fell into two broad categories: show and tell. Showing as an

advocacy technique usually involved activities such as gathering statistics (circulation, gate count, number of resources, etc.) to document “the contribution libraries make” (CLA 2011, post to email discussion list), having a business plan to show stakeholders, creating effective signage for services in the library, changing the library’s layout, making presentations to stakeholders, and even training and instruction opportunities for clients and stakeholders. Showing offered librarians a concrete way to demonstrate the value of library services to clients. Mary, an academic librarian participant, stated that having a real project, and not simply an idea, was the only way to attract the attention of faculty members: “Once I have a concrete project, concrete initiative to promote and show them, I think that’ll start to open up the doors for more contact with them.” The showcasing of services was not about the services themselves. It was about visibly demonstrating professional knowledge and expertise as a way to show clients the “transformational experience of interacting with a librarian” (Abram, 2010, para. 17). The services were tools that librarians used to demonstrate how flexible the profession was in meeting client needs. To this end, throughout the data set, words and phrases such as “advance” and “showcase” were used. Mercer (2011), for example, suggested that librarians could not effectively advocate for service, like open access, until librarians themselves availed themselves of the “opportunity” to use it in their own work: “Librarians would have opportunities to use these services and, in doing so, would become better equipped to promote them to those outside the library organization” (p. 450). Such words and phrases evoked a sense of achievement and forward momentum in helping clients meet their information needs and educational and business goals.

In contrast to showing, telling was about delivering a message or telling a story to client groups. It was not about dazzling “stakeholders with powerful stats” (“Futurista,” 2010, p. 51),

but just listening “to what [clients] need” (Tina, teacher librarian participant) and emphasizing how libraries and librarians “will positively influence people’s lives” (Schmidt, 2012, p. 22). Specific advice on how best to tell people about services and librarians included: developing an elevator speech; speaking to the media; using social media (blogs and Twitter); attending community meetings; giving clients flyers, bookmarks, and library-related survival kits; and even providing games designed to inform clients about services. The purpose behind these activities was twofold: to ensure the public knew about librarians and their activities and the services they provided, and to develop relationships with clients and other stakeholders. These relationships were understood to be vital to advocacy efforts because they could create lifelong library supporters: “Readers continue to be our best advocates and most vocal supporters of public funding for libraries. It’s a mutually beneficial cycle. Strong public libraries support and foster the reading public, and the reading public supports its libraries” (Feldman, 2010, p. 6). The best way to enlist these advocates was to use language that was “consistent with the culture and business context” (Matarazzo & Pearlstein, 2011, p. 18). This advice was most often given by and directed towards public and special librarians, especially towards special librarians working in a business context. By using non-library specific language, librarians were trying to position themselves as being aware of their advocates’ information needs and priorities and, similar to the action words used as part of the showing advice, demonstrate librarians’ focus on and flexibility towards user needs. By focusing on their clients’ needs using language from non-library contexts, librarians positioned themselves as having common concerns and interests as their communities. They were able to highlight the professional qualities of librarianship that resonated with non-librarians, such as quality, reliability, and trust.

Advocacy as obligation. Advocacy was described by librarians as an obligation, a necessity, and the core of a librarian's work. Tina, a teacher librarian interview participant, stated: "I've accepted that I'm now in a role that needs to be constantly re-advocated over and over and over." Advocacy was an obligation because the talent, value, and expertise of librarians, and by extension the social importance of libraries, were no longer enough to garner the attention of important stakeholders: "Executives need to learn more about our profession, and we as a profession need to learn more about demonstrating our value" (MEDLIB 2011, post to email discussion list). Advocacy was described as sharing one's passion for librarianship, specifically for spreading the "good word" (MEDLIB 2012, post to email discussion list) about library service: "Take the opportunity to speak passionately and well for your profession!" (ILI_L 2010, email discussion list post). Throughout the data, discussions about advocacy were often accompanied by the words "must," "necessary," and "need," which provided the discussions with a sense of importance and urgency. The data from the journal articles provided many examples of this sense of urgency. For instance, librarians "must play the game" (Abram, 2012, p. 31), "we need our communities to support the existence . . . of their local libraries" (Galston, Huber, Johnson, & Long, 2012, p. 50), and "advocacy is essential if we are to take charge of our fate" (DiMattia, 2011, p. 15). This strong and active language made advocacy a central activity for librarianship, alongside other traditional professional activities such as teaching and reference services: "I do not want to discourage anyone from teaching, I am pointing out that we as professionals need to put a higher value on what we do and need to make others aware of our needs so that we can perform our teaching responsibilities at the highest level" (ILI_L 2011, post to email discussion list). In this example, the service activity, teaching, cannot be performed to its "highest level" without advocating for librarians and their professional needs. Although

service retained its position as the core activity of librarianship in the advocacy repertoire, it appeared that without advocacy for librarians and the services they offered, there would be no services, or at the very least, these services would not be offered at their highest level.

Advocacy was positioned as the one activity that would “save” librarians and librarianship from being overlooked and ignored by clients and other stakeholders: “[Advocacy is] what will save us” (LM_NET 2012, post to email discussion list). Due to its rescue potential, the activities of advocacy, such marketing techniques, were described as essential skills all librarians had to possess: “[S]uccessful informationists must possess expertise in library information and subject matter as well as the ability to be proactive. The latter isn’t always easy to find. ‘Underselling yourself is a big risk’”(Kho, 2011a, p. 36). Librarians were encouraged to conceive of advocacy as a skill they had to develop to ensure librarians and libraries were visible to their communities, and that librarians were effective and successful professionals. The significance of advocacy, as a professional activity was never questioned. For instance, Erin Meyer, a 2011 *Library Journal* Mover and Shaker, when asked to speak about her position as a manager for her university’s research centre and student outreach office, described her role in terms of advocacy not management: “‘I feel like I’m a salesperson for the best product in the world,’ she says. ‘And who can turn me down when what I’m selling is free?’” (“Marketers,” 2011, para. 13). Management and leadership positions were often described as being primarily advocacy roles: “If we do not create leaders who understand the importance of advocacy, we cannot be successful” (Caplan, 2010, p. 5). Advocacy’s potential to position librarians as community and organizational leaders and help the profession survive economic downturns and technological changes was recognized by librarians in all library sectors.

Stakeholders, influential people, and policy makers. The intended audience for advocacy efforts was where the most variation occurred in the discourse between the various library sectors (public, academic, school, and special). Teacher librarians, for instance, directed their various advocacy efforts towards government officials, most often at the local and state or provincial levels; school administrators, including superintendents and principals; parents; and the local media. Public librarians advocated to their broad client bases (e.g., parents); officials and elected representatives at all levels of government; business and community leaders; library boards; and Friends of the Library groups. Academic librarians spoke to faculty members, students, and university administrators. Special librarians directed their attention toward their organizational clients, senior management, colleagues, and those outside their institutions. Although the specific audiences were different, the audience did fall into three similar non-exclusive categories: stakeholders, influential people, and policy makers. Stakeholders included clients and colleagues. Influential people included parents of students, library administrators, library boards and Friends of the Library groups, business and community leaders, key players outside the organization, and the media. And, policy makers included government and elected officials, senior managers, university and school administrators, and library administrators.

Often the intended audience of advocacy efforts was not clearly articulated by librarians. Sometimes advocacy was intended to sway the minds of “people,” “the nation” (often described as “the public” or “citizens”), “the world,” the “powers that be” (LM_NET 2010, post to email discussion list), and “opinion leaders” (DiMattia, 2011, p. 15). By only referring to these groups in a vague and broad manner, librarians were able to treat these groups as a cohesive whole. For instance, “[Going on medical rounds with physicians is] great for promoting the library to people who may not have otherwise known or used the library and it enables me to

better serve my patrons” (MEDLIB 2011, post to email discussion list). In this example, “people” could mean patients, physicians, nurses, pharmacists, medical students, and perhaps even the family members of patients, all of whom could conceivably be present during medical rounds. In addition, by referring to the intended audience generically as people, the librarian was able to separate her or his clients from the intended audience of the advocacy activity. Similarly, broad descriptions were offered about named target groups. In the text and speech of academic librarians, for instance, faculty members were often referred to as a unified group:

“I do talk to the faculty to convince them to take advantage of my classes” (ILI_L 2011, post to email discussion list). As this quote illustrates, although faculty were a named stakeholder for academic librarians, they were often treated as an undifferentiated whole; therefore, all faculty members, and not just the ones failing to use the librarian’s services, needed to be convinced to take advantage of the librarian’s classes. Regardless of the intended target group, all audiences were described as equally difficult to engage: “The biggest challenge in marketing the library is that they tend to ignore our emails or whatever we sent out with announcements” (Strand, 2011, p. 42). In response to this lack of attention, librarians focused on the importance of helping target audiences “get it” (ILI_L 2011, post to email discussion list) and turning these “people” into advocates for libraries and librarianship who “take advantage” of librarians’ services (ILI_L 2011, post to email discussion list).

The limits of advocacy efforts were a concern for librarians. Liana Juliano, a *Library Journal* 2010 Mover and Shaker, stated she directed her advocacy efforts towards tribal libraries, i.e., libraries on Indian reservations in the United States of America, because “I feel like there is no one to advocate for the tribal library, so I have made it my job to do so” (“Tribal Counsel,” 2010, p. 47). When librarians were able to identify the limits of their advocacy work, they often

shifted their discussions from whom to advocate *to*, to whom to advocate *for*. The groups that librarians advocated for were clients for the most part, namely those who were perceived to be less able to advocate for themselves—children, teenagers, students, and under-served and underrepresented community members. The stated purpose of advocating for certain groups was to ensure these groups had the information skills, including basic literacy skills, and the resources they needed to be contributing members of society: “[O]ne responsibility of the teacher-librarians is to advocate for an information skills curriculum in order to assure appropriate learning experiences for all children” (Jones, Zambone, Canter, & Voytecki, 2010, p. 66).

Advocacy and the library. When services were the focus of the advocacy repertoire, the terms librarian and library, or librarians and libraries, were used interchangeably in the text and speech of librarians throughout the data set. This was not because the primary location for services was the library. Discursively, librarians were the library and the library was librarians. In the following quote, the “we” referred to is libraries, not librarians. It is the library that is sending a message to its users, not the librarians: “I think [my library] is a leader within the profession. I know we are. We are well ahead of what many libraries are doing with community network. We truly are a leader in that regard. . . . I don’t think we’re—we’re good at bragging about it” (Emma, public librarian participant). This metonymic slippage between libraries and librarians was common and often done unconsciously. Beverly (teacher librarian participant) spoke about her dedication to advocating for the profession by highlighting the role of libraries: “And that’s why I’ve been such a strong advocate for the profession itself. I’ve really spent the last 15, 20 years working very hard towards that, trying to see that libraries get recognized.” Through the library, the librarian was the “connection to the entire world of knowledge” (Abram,

2011, p. 34). As discussed in the service repertoire, perhaps the most significant service many librarians felt they provided was the library itself in its entirety through its collections (both physical and online), programs (including information literacy instruction), and services (from photocopying to reference services). In a similar manner to the service repertoire, the function of this language choice in the advocacy repertoire was to highlight the role of librarians as service providers and the library as the primary tool they use to provide service. However, in the advocacy repertoire, this discursive connection was not just about evoking the positives of the library. It also served as a reminder about the importance of librarians, and the services they offer via their libraries, to their communities.

The metonymic slippage librarians employed to discursively position themselves as the library and the library as librarians when they discussed advocating for services disappeared in the language used by librarians when they spoke and wrote about advocating for librarianship as a profession. Instead, librarians rhetorically separated themselves from the library. Librarians and the library were no longer one and the same: “Remember, you are marketing your expertise, as well as branding the Library and what it can offer” (MEDLIB 2010, post to email discussion list). Unlike the example described above where “we” referred to a library, here the library is referred to as “it” and the expertise of the librarian as something that should be promoted separately from “what it can offer.” In this part of the repertoire, this separation functions as a way to move public perceptions of the profession away from stereotypical images and reaffirm librarians’ professional skills and expertise. Without the skill and expertise of the librarian, there would be no library. For example, in this post to the email discussion list ILI_L, the writer described how he advocated for librarianship by giving an “elevator speech”: “The calm exterior of the library is . . . because people trained in dozens of facets of the profession work to make it

effective in ways that remain hidden to most people. As with many professional level degrees the complex training results in a mastery that is deceptively smooth on the surface” (ILI_L 2010, post to email discussion list). By focusing on the “calm exterior” of the library, this discussion list poster highlighted the services librarians offered (in this example the library itself) and the professional expertise that “results in [the] mastery” of the service, i.e., the library. Only highly trained and well-educated professionals could accomplish such a feat of “deception.” By using this as his elevator speech when speaking with influential clients, this librarian was able to give these clients a glimpse behind the curtain of professional expertise and separate his mastery from the “deceptively smooth . . . surface.”

Advocacy repertoire conclusions. The advocacy repertoire focused on librarians’ desire to have non-librarians understand the value of the library, library service, and librarianship as a profession. It shared certain rhetorical and discursive functions with other repertoires examined in this study. Like the insider-outsider repertoire, the advocacy repertoire focused on the relationship librarians had with their clients. In the advocacy repertoire, however, the focus was not on positioning librarians as information experts, but on the tactics librarians could employ to ensure clients saw their professional value. Librarians wanted librarianship to be recognized by non-librarians so that librarians could receive tangible benefits, such as increased salaries, in addition to public recognition of the uniqueness of librarianship as a profession. In a manner similar to that of the service repertoire, the advocacy repertoire focused on the services librarians offered their clients. In this repertoire, however, service was in and of itself an advocacy activity. By providing high-quality services to their patrons, librarians naturally advocated for librarianship. Because advocacy was about ensuring clients and non-clients understood the value of librarianship, advocacy was positioned as a skill set all librarians must possess. It was placed

alongside service as a core activity for librarians and, as such, was considered to be a vital part of offering high-quality service to clients. The similarities the advocacy repertoire shared with the insider-outsider repertoire and the service repertoire were echoed in the metonymic slippage between library and librarian. When employed in relation to service as an advocacy activity, librarians used the words interchangeably. The effect of this was to transfer the positive societal understandings of the library on to librarians. However, when used in relation to advocating for librarianship as a profession, the slippage between librarian and library disappeared. In a similar manner to the professionalism repertoire, the library, in these instances, became a tool that librarians could use to ensure clients understood the value of librarians. Transportable identities played a limited role in the advocacy repertoire. Librarians did write and speak about advocating for underrepresented clients groups; however, the transportable identities of librarians themselves were not discussed in this repertoire. There were very few differences between how the repertoire was used by librarians working in different library sectors. The primary difference was to whom the librarians directed their advocacy messages; however, how and why they advocated was similar in all sectors.

Chapter Five

Discussion: Librarians' Professional Identity Construction

Chapter Introduction

The previous chapter described the five primary identity repertoires of librarians: insider-outsider, service, professionalism, change, and advocacy. This chapter will provide a synthesis of the findings and explore how these findings support, contradict, or both, other research into the professional identity of librarians and other professions. This chapter will be organized around the two foundational questions of identity: who am I? and, how should I act? The five repertoires described in chapter four each provide librarians with answers to these questions. In addition, attention will be paid to differences in the identity repertoires articulated by librarians working in the different library sectors, the place of the library in the identity construction of librarians, and the effect of transportable identities on how librarians articulate their professional identities.

Who am I?

Central to explorations of identity is the question “who am I?” As Nelson and Irwin (2014) wrote, this question is important to explorations of identity because “occupational members engage in ongoing negotiation as to the roles and obligations that accompany their occupation, how these roles and obligations are distinct from those of other occupations, and what meaning occupational members attach to these roles and obligations” (p. 893). For librarians, the answer to “who am I?” is based on their understanding of what it means to be a professional. As this study has indicated, there is no one single answer to the question of “what is a profession?” (and by extension, what is a professional?). They have been concerned about the professional status of librarianship since the 19th century. Librarians have looked to various sociological definitions of professions and often have found librarianship to miss the mark of

true professional status (Goode, 1961; Lonergan, 2009). However, even those who feel librarianship may not be a full profession have argued that librarians are, or at the very least should be, professional in their outlook and conduct (Diamond & Dragich, 2001; Honea, 2000; Sears, 2006). To address the “who am I?” question for librarians, this section will explore the role of librarians’ professionalism and expertise in their identity repertoires, the symbolic importance of the Master of Library and Information Studies in librarians’ identity construction, librarians’ relationship with their paraprofessional coworkers, and lastly, the relationship librarians have with their professional image. This section will then be followed by a discussion of how librarians address the other central question of identity: “how should I act?”

Librarians’ professionalism and jurisdictional expertise. Central to librarians’ professional identity was an understanding that librarians were, in fact, professionals. Librarians were aware librarianship did not meet traditional trait-based definitions of a profession; however, librarians believed that they exhibited the competences and skills expected of professionals. Librarians were professionals because they exhibited professionalism. For librarians, professionalism meant upholding professional values, a service orientation, flexibility towards change, advocating for the profession, and information expertise. Svensson (2006) found that for members of professional associations, professionalism was frequently linked to general concepts such as “knowledge,” “competence,” and “skill” (p. 588). Although these terms lack an occupational specificity, they did imply a practical utility. The knowledge being referred to was not a profession’s theoretical knowledge, but its craft knowledge. Svensson’s findings suggest that there is a common sense definition of professionalism. The discursive function of this common sense definition of professionalism, however, can be highly contextual. For instance, Fournier (1999) argued the service company at the centre of her study provided its employees

with a highly contestable version of professionalism that invoked a kind of moral conduct from its employees. Specifically, professional conduct was linked to entrepreneurial activities. However, Thursfield (2012) found two different discourses of professionalism at work for trade union organizers in the United Kingdom. The first reflected more traditional understandings of professionalism that focused on ideas such as service and professional values. The second was a managerialist form of professionalism that focused on meeting performance targets and creating organizational efficiencies. Thursfield's participants resisted the managerialist discourse of professionalism by using the language of service and values, while rejecting the language of managerialism, namely recruitment and retention targets. Similarly, Pritchard and Symon (2011) found human resource professionals drew on both localized and broad-based understandings of professionalism to define their professional activities. Librarians also drew on multiple understandings of professionalism in their speech and texts. Librarians used a common sense definition of professionalism that was similar to the one Svensson (2006) identified. This definition allowed librarians to focus on the aspects of their professionalism that both made them similar to and different from other professionals. As could be assumed, the primary difference between librarians and other professionals was the jurisdiction of their professional expertise. Librarians claimed to have professional expertise about information—specifically how to find, access, and use information to help clients meet their educational, research, business, and entertainment needs (discussed below). However, the similarities librarians claimed with other professions, such as a service orientation, holding core professional values, and a dedication to their profession, meant librarians' claims to professionalism were based on more than the jurisdiction of their professional expertise. They were able to claim a professional status because they exhibited the same characteristics as other professionals.

Fournier (1999) argued discourses of professionalism have been used by governments and employers to provide a disciplinary logic to the actions, behaviours, and identities of occupational members. Through discourses of professionalism, they understand that to be recognized as a profession, occupational members must act in certain ways to demonstrate their professional competence and gain public trust. Discourses of professionalism, therefore, give professions a disciplinary logic. Although appeals to professionalism through comparisons to other professions provided librarians with an external disciplinary logic, librarianship also has its own internal disciplinary logic. Librarianship's internal disciplinary logic was based largely on librarians' information expertise. By claiming information as their area of expertise, librarians laid claim to a professional jurisdiction for librarianship. As information experts, they argued they were uniquely placed to understand different information-related issues and topics, such as information technology, information literacy, and information retrieval, in a way their clients could not. According to Abbott (1988), a profession is an occupation that can lay claim to a specific area of expertise. By laying claim to information as their area of expertise, librarians claimed a professional jurisdiction. Abbott argued librarianship's expertise was initially based in the library, specifically in the ways a library could be used to access information, including classification, cataloguing, and reference. This study found that librarians now claim a broader range of information expertise as their professional jurisdiction; however, the library still discursively functions as the locus of their expertise. As a result of this expanded professional jurisdiction, the specific tasks librarians identified as part of their professional domains had increased. In addition to the information retrieval and reference services Abbott identified as part of librarians' traditional professional domain, librarians described tasks relating to technological expertise and information literacy instruction as part of their professional domain. This study

also found the traditional professional tasks of classification and cataloguing received almost no attention, perhaps because fewer professional librarians are performing cataloguing tasks. As Cox and Myers (2010) found, librarians working as cataloguers are more likely to hold management positions supervising paraprofessionals' cataloguing work. Cox and Meyers suggested budgetary constraints were the reason fewer librarians were employed as cataloguers. Therefore, although librarians still claimed jurisdiction over the organization of information, the professional tasks associated with that domain were less prominent in the data.

At the same time, some expanded jurisdictional claims, especially those around information literacy, appeared to be a partial response to budget shortfalls that threaten librarians' jobs. O'Connor (2009b) argued to demonstrate to university and school officials that librarians were as important as classroom faculty, librarians had to prove that they could offer an expert service to students that extended beyond the classroom. Therefore, librarians defined information literacy as a lifelong skill that librarians, as teachers, were positioned to teach. This positioning was designed, in part, to challenge stereotypical images of librarians (O'Connor, 2009a) and to reclaim their educational mission (Abbott, 1988; O'Connor, 2009b). At the same time, it expanded librarians' area of expertise and professional jurisdiction. In this study, academic and teacher librarians were primarily the ones who positioned information literacy as part of their overall information expertise. Their particular skills related to instruction or education were associated with their professional roles. In this study, librarians used their information expertise, and not just information literacy expertise, to protect librarianship from outside threats, such as budget cuts. Librarians separated the tasks of librarianship, and the various roles associated with these tasks, from their understanding of librarianship's professionalism. In this study, librarians often linked their expertise to a way of thinking about

information. Librarians argued that while their specific job tasks (i.e., the activities of librarianship) could be performed by anyone, what made these activities “professional” was the professional-level understanding of information and information services that only librarians could bring to the activities. The function of this was, in part, as O’Connor (2009a) suggested, to counter popular stereotypes of librarianship. However, the more prominent discursive function was to have clients understand and recognize their professional value based on their actual accomplishments and expertise. In other words, to save their jobs, librarians had to demonstrate to clients that librarianship was more than just a set of activities anyone could perform. It was a way of thinking about information that ensured clients received professional-level service.

Throughout this study, technology was claimed by librarians as an area of professional jurisdiction. Technology was a tool librarians could use to demonstrate their expertise to clients, the best way to meet clients’ service expectations, and a means to counter misperceptions of librarians and librarianship. Technology has had a significant influence on librarianship’s jurisdictional claims to professional expertise. Recently, Nelson and Irwin (2014) examined how librarianship’s occupational identity shifted between 1980 and 2010 from one focused on the organization and retrieval of information to one based on connecting people to information. During this period there were a series of dramatic technological changes that had a significant impact on how librarians performed their professional tasks. The most significant of these changes were the creation of the Internet, the development and subsequent popularity of the World Wide Web, and the creation of search engines. Initially, these technological developments misaligned with librarians’ understanding of how best to find information; librarians believed they knew how to help clients find the one correct answer to their problem. However, by 2010 librarians were more focused on helping clients access the information they had found

themselves using search engines. Nelson and Irwin identified four discursive responses librarians had to technological changes that occurred consecutively during the time period covered by their study: describe and question; differentiate; engage; and leverage. Librarians' occupation identity, in turn, transitioned first from masters of searching to masters of interpretation, then to teachers, and finally to an identity of being connectors of people and information. At the same time, librarians shifted their relationship with technology from one where they defined themselves against technology to one where technology was appropriated as a core part of their professional identity.

This study found that librarians had not transitioned from masters of search to connectors of people and information as completely as Nelson and Irwin (2014) suggested. Librarians still had a clear idea of what the best information looked like for their clients and a conviction that they, as information experts, should help their clients find that information. This help could range from searching on behalf of the client (a service most often discussed by special librarians), to teaching the client how to correctly find the information her or himself, to creating information systems that clients could use intuitively to connect to the information they were seeking. In addition, technology was still positioned as a threat to librarians' professional standing. Librarians policed each other's language for insecurity around technology and knowingly laid claim to technology as an area of expertise to improve public perceptions of librarianship and demonstrate to clients their professional worth.

The differences between this study and Nelson and Irwin's (2014) study could be explained, in part, by the data used by each study. Nelson and Irwin relied solely on published literature from two journals aimed at professional audiences: *American Libraries* and *Library Journal*. Although both publications are widely read by librarians in all library sectors, they do

not represent a full range of contexts for the discourses librarians draw upon when constructing their identity. In their examination of the discourses scientists use to account for their work, Gilbert and Mulkey (1984) found that different social contexts evoked different accounts. Specifically, the formal context of a published article evoked a different account than the informal context of a research interview. Depending on the context, the same event could be accounted for in completely different ways. Therefore, although Nelson and Irwin's (2014) data set covered a large time period and included perspectives from all library sectors, they did not include an account of the influence of technological change from a variety of contexts. By including both research interviews and email discussion lists alongside published articles in nine journals aimed at professional librarians, including *American Libraries* and *Library Journal*, this study was able to draw its conclusions from a broader range of contexts. Nelson and Irwin only focused on formal accounts of how librarians' interacted and thought about technology. Missing from their analysis, for example, was librarians self-policing regarding how technology was described and debates over whether librarianship had adequately kept up with technological change.

Sundin (2008) also examined the discourses surrounding librarians' use of information technology, specifically how librarians used information technology to articulate their information seeking expertise. In web-based information literacy tutorials, Sundin identified four different approaches to information seeking expertise articulated by librarians: the source approach, communication approach, process approach, and behavioural approach. Like Nelson and Irwin (2014), Sundin (2008) noted that each approach has dominated the LIS literature at different historical times; however, as he stated: "it is important to note that the approaches are even more blurred in the actual practice of user education" (p. 38). In other words, just because

an approach is dominant or trendy, it does not mean all librarians will follow that approach. This research supports Sundin's insight. Librarians' claims to information expertise were wide-ranging and these claims enabled librarians to become saviours, protectors, educators, researchers, and fellow professionals. However, not all librarians claimed all of these roles and some roles were highlighted and valued over others. For instance, in relation to technology, some librarians claimed their information expertise meant they had to embrace all new technologies for the benefit of their clients while others called for a more cautious approach to technology, also for the benefit of clients. Regardless of how they enacted this expertise, librarians could use it to meet their clients' information needs, which gave them professional purpose and value.

The jurisdictional claims of librarians are wide-ranging, although they all connect to information, whether information retrieval, information organization, information literacy, or information technology. This study found that librarians' jurisdictional claims went beyond specific professional tasks or roles. Their sense of professionalism came directly from their jurisdictional expertise. In response to perceived threats to the profession, or technological and societal changes, librarians focused on what they believed made librarianship unique and valuable—their jurisdictional domain, namely their information expertise. Although librarians compared themselves to other professions to prove their professionalism to themselves, they focused on their jurisdictional expertise when they wanted to highlight their professionalism to others.

The symbolism of the Master of Library and Information Studies. The central symbol for librarians' professionalism and expertise was the Master of Library and Information Studies (or its equivalents). Possessing an MLIS was the credential that made a person a librarian, as it was the basic qualification required for most librarian positions and its pursuit

provided librarians with the foundation for their professional practice. Librarians cited their MLIS as what separated them from their paraprofessional coworkers. Not only did it grant them access to positions with greater authority, it gave them the necessary professional values and ways of thinking to make professional level decisions and provide professional level service. Symbolically, it was proof of librarians' professionalism and expertise. When this proof was overlooked or ignored, librarians became defensive about the degree's value. The symbolic importance of the MLIS is, in part, explained by librarians' reliance on trait-theory approaches to determine librarianship's professional status. As discussed in chapter one, trait theory approaches to professions decide whether or not an occupation is a profession by determining if it meets a list of predetermined characteristics. A common characteristic of a profession according to most trait theory approaches is a long period of study to master the profession's knowledge base (Leicht, 2005). Although these approaches to identifying and understanding professions were largely abandoned by researchers in the 1970s (K. M. MacDonald, 1995), librarians still draw on the lists of trait-based theories of professions in their periodic examinations of librarianship's professional status (e.g., Goode, 1961; Lonergan, 2009). Current thinking on professional credentials regards them as a way for occupations to self-regulate who enters the profession (Brown, 2001) and as a mechanism for establishing a formal trust with clients (Gilmore, Hoecht, & Williams, 2005; Zucker, 1986). Misztal (2002) argued that professionalism "with its proliferation of formal requirements and the spread of education and training" (p. 30) was one of the traditional ways an occupation could guarantee clients' trust and gain professional status; however, as Dent and Whitehead (2002) argued, the social and cultural assumptions that underpinned professions in the 20th century no longer hold sway in the 21st century. As a result, professions have to find new ways of establishing client trust. Misztal (2002) and Fournier

(1999) argued that professions are now turning to the discourses of professionalism, accountability, and managerialism to regain lost public trust. These discourses act as disciplinary mechanisms that regulate and standardize professions to create professionally competent members (Fournier, 1999). Librarians, however, still hold their graduate educations in high esteem. Although, as discussed above, librarians do have their own internal and external discourses of professionalism, the MLIS acts as librarianship's primary disciplinary mechanism. It retains its significance for librarians because it is still a traditional indicator of professional status. The MLIS is a credential that represents librarians' professional skills and knowledge. As such, it is the formal proof that librarians can apply their professional expertise and judgement on behalf of their clients and their information needs. In addition, the MLIS is proof that librarians are competent professionals who can conduct themselves in an appropriate manner. In this sense, the MLIS discursively acts as a disciplinary mechanism for librarians' professional conduct.

The theoretical knowledge of a profession taught in professional education programs, along with the profession's norms and values, is the primary disciplinary function of professional education. In an examination of the nursing profession in Sweden, for example, Sundin (2003) argued the shift to a "scientification" (p. 176) of nursing's knowledge domain changed, or disciplined, the nursing profession away from a practical orientation to a theoretical orientation. This disciplinary shift occurred as a result of educational reforms that nursing underwent in Sweden to improve its professional status. For librarians, the professional knowledge, norms, and values, as represented by the MLIS, serve a similar disciplinary purpose. The professional values learned during the MLIS courses were considered to be the foundation of a librarian's worldview. These values enabled librarians to make professional decisions which separated them from their paraprofessional coworkers. In other words, by instilling the profession's ways of

thinking, core values, and norms into LIS students, the MLIS, specifically graduate education, acts as a disciplinary mechanism by teaching students how to act like a professional.

The symbolism of the MLIS, however, was accompanied by dissatisfaction with LIS educational programs. LIS programs were blamed for not adequately preparing LIS graduates for the workplace, which resulted in limited professional expertise and poor service to clients. Librarians' dissatisfaction with LIS programs is not a new finding. Burnett and Bonnici (2006) noted that the tension between librarians and LIS programs is a persistent theme in the history of LIS education. Budd and Connaway (1998) noted there are competing claims between LIS educators and librarians about the future of LIS education, with the librarians represented by professional associations. Budd and Connaway argued that through statements on education and professional competencies, LIS professional associations attempt to claim authority over "not only matters of practice, but on matters of education" (p. 174). More recent examinations of librarians' satisfaction with LIS programs reveal similar tensions. Tilley and Walter (2016) recently voiced concerns over the future directions of LIS education, while Jaeger, Bertot, and Subramaniam (2013) argued LIS programs are inadequately preparing LIS graduates to meet the information needs of diverse populations. Saunders' (2015) examination of librarians' perspectives on LIS education found that librarians expect LIS programs both to train students for their day-to-day work lives and educate future librarians in the profession's knowledge base. Saunders noted "LIS faculty will be hard-pressed to develop curricula that meet the needs of students and employers" (p. 447). There is even evidence that LIS students themselves believe there is a divide between what they learn in the LIS classroom and the practice of librarianship. Hoffmann and Berg (2014) noted that students "clearly saw the workplace, not the classroom, as the venue for learning how to do activities associated with librarianship" (p. 228).

In the insider-outsider repertoire, it was noted that although the MLIS symbolized librarians' expertise, possessing an MLIS alone was not sufficient to guarantee a librarian was in fact an information expert. Expertise was something that had to be gained through experience. Therefore, the expertise of a new librarian was valued less than the expertise of an experienced librarian. Discursively, critiques of LIS programs served a similar purpose. Although LIS programs provide the symbolically important MLIS degree that librarians need to be professionals, new professionals cannot be as valuable as an experienced professional because their overall education was somehow lacking. At best, new graduates cannot be fully formed professionals, as they only possess the profession's basic theoretical knowledge. At worst, new graduates do not even fully possess the profession's theoretical knowledge base, as LIS programs do not teach it to the profession's satisfaction. Therefore, by critiquing LIS programs, librarians position experience (or craft knowledge, to use Kemmis's, 2010, description) above the profession's theoretical knowledge when deciding who can be considered a professional librarian. New graduates may be librarians by virtue of holding an MLIS, but they are not yet fully professional. Following Fournier (1999), critiques of LIS programs act as another disciplinary process for librarians since "being a professional is not merely about absorbing a body of scientific knowledge but is also about conducting and constituting oneself in an appropriate manner" (p. 287). For librarians, that can only occur through experience.

In the data set, librarians acknowledged the important role paraprofessionals played in the day-to-day running of libraries; however, they also believed there were significant differences between themselves and their paraprofessional coworkers—namely, the MLIS and the professional mindset a graduate education provided librarians. In the research and professional LIS literature, there is a noted tension between librarians and paraprofessionals (Rodgers, 1997).

This tension has been attributed to technology, reduced library budgets, and unclear professional designations (Cox & Myers, 2010; Fragola, 2009; Hill, 2014; Litwin, 2009). Recent research has identified a convergence of professional and paraprofessional roles, especially for cataloguers. Cox & Myers (2010) surveyed both professional and paraprofessional cataloguers and discovered that the primary difference between their work centred on expectations around service and research—namely, professional librarians had to participate in more service activities and perform and publish more research than their paraprofessional coworkers, although paraprofessionals also had some service and research expectations associated with their positions. And, as discussed above, a consequence of these converging roles was librarians were increasingly working in managerial roles. Litwin (2009) argued that such role convergences were having a negative effect on the professionalism of librarians, specifically on librarians' ability to provide high-quality service to their clients, because they were no longer the frontline workers in libraries. Although there is evidence that professionals' and paraprofessionals' roles are converging, this study highlighted that librarians believed there was a difference between themselves and their paraprofessional coworkers, based not on the differences between their work roles, but on a professional mindset resulting from their MLIS education. By focusing on a professional mindset, and not on differences in work roles, librarians found another use for the MLIS as a disciplinary mechanism. The primary difference between its use as a disciplinary mechanism in relation to new LIS graduates and to paraprofessionals was its focus on experience. Whereas LIS graduates required experience in addition to their MLIS to be considered professionals, for paraprofessionals the lack of both an MLIS and the professional mindset attributed to its possession separated the work of librarians from the work of

paraprofessionals. This was particularly important in instances of role convergence where the daily tasks of professionals and paraprofessionals were beginning to resemble each other.

Professional identity not the profession's image. Concerns about a profession's image are common amongst all professionals. Accountants (Warren and Parker, 2009), pharmacists, (Yanicak et al., 2015), teachers (Weber & Mitchell, 1996), and commercial airline pilots (Ashcraft, 2007) have all indicated their profession's public image has had both negative and positive effects on their professions. For instance, Weber and Mitchell (1996) asked 64 pre-service teachers to draw self-portraits of themselves as teachers. During their analysis Weber and Mitchell found that pre-service teachers who identified as progressive, non-traditional teachers often drew themselves in controlling and traditional situations, such as standing in front of a blackboard with neat rows of students sitting in front on them, framed by the authors as a negative stereotype. Weber and Mitchell indicated that their participants were surprised by the inclusion of traditional imagery in their self-portraits, suggesting that there was a tension between the idealized version of progressive teaching desired by the teaching profession and the reality of traditionally informed classroom practices. Ashcraft's (2007) examination of commercial airline pilots indicated that pilots' popular image of being "commanding, civilized, rational, scientific, technical, heterosexual, and paternal" (p. 18), an image deliberately built and maintained by the airline industry to ease passenger anxiety, is an integral part of pilots' professional identity. This image was so integral to white male pilots' professional identity that the introduction of more female and ethnic minority pilots to the profession caused some pilots to feel a sense of loss and "expose the manly joys of flying as mere myth or artifice" (p. 26).

As described in chapter two, the professional image of librarianship was a common topic within the LIS literature. The majority of literature on this topic was written by practitioners and

was primarily concerned with how the public's perception influenced the profession's status. It was argued in chapter two of this dissertation that many researchers and librarians conflate librarianship's image with librarians' professional identity. This preoccupation with the profession's image in the overall LIS literature, however, was not reflected in the data set. Librarians made a clear distinction between who they were and how others perceived them. They repeatedly expressed concerns that misperceptions about librarianship interfered with their clients' abilities to see the value of their work and their professionalism. Librarians placed responsibility on themselves to counter these misperceptions through advocacy work and their personal behaviour to ensure that clients understood, or "got," the value of librarians as professionals. In her dissertation exploring the meanings of profession and professional identity for librarians, Garcia (2011) identified misconceptions about what librarians do as the primary driver for how librarians spoke about themselves as professionals. In her study, librarians expressed a deep insecurity about the profession's stereotypical public image; they attempted to counter this image by articulating the actual work responsibilities of librarians and connecting those responsibilities to professional values.

This study supports and adds to Garcia's (2011) findings. Garcia limited her exploration of librarians' professional identity to interviews with 32 public and academic librarians, although only 26 of her participants held an MLIS (or its equivalent). In addition, she completed 64 hours of observation in a public library and 12 hours in an academic library. Missing from her study was an examination of librarians' professional identity from all library sectors and in different contexts; however, the primary difference between the findings presented in this study and Garcia's findings is the centrality in Garcia's study of client misperceptions in the identity repertoires of librarians. For Garcia, these misperceptions drove the way librarians spoke about

their professional identity. In contrast, in this study, librarians' professionalism and expertise were central to their identity. Librarians did not possess information expertise just to counter misconceptions about librarianship. They were members of a profession that happened to have negative stereotypes associated with it. Countering those negative images was one of many aspects of their job, but it was not the primary factor in their identity construction. The profession's image was only directly addressed in the insider-outsider repertoire. Although one of the functions of this repertoire was to counter misconceptions of librarians by clients, the primary function of the repertoire was to highlight how librarians' information expertise could help clients, which in turn positioned librarians as important and valued professionals.

In this study, librarians expressed concern that client misperceptions about librarianship had real consequences for the profession, specifically in relation to professional salaries and cuts to funding for libraries. This concern is supported by the LIS research literature. Harris and Wilkinson (2001; 2004), for instance, found that librarianship was perceived by first-year undergraduate students to have a low social status, which was negatively affecting recruitment to librarianship. In addition, client misperceptions can also affect how librarians understand themselves. Various studies have demonstrated that academic librarians' perceptions of faculty, namely that faculty often misperceive the work of librarians, can negatively influence librarians' self-perceptions (Julien & Given, 2002/2003; Given & Julien, 2005; Julien & Pecoskie, 2009). Librarians, however, were less aware of the effect their perceptions or misperceptions regarding their clients had on their ability to meet their clients' information needs. Each library sector, with the exception of public librarians, had a professional client group that they positioned themselves against. Academic and teacher librarians positioned themselves against faculty members, teachers, and administrators. And, although the specific professional groups against which

librarians positioned themselves changed for special librarians depending on the context in which they worked, it was not uncommon for special librarians to feel their colleagues regarded them as outsiders. Each library sector described these professional groups differently. Academic librarians, for instance, described faculty members as an undifferentiated whole. As a result, all faculty members were ignorant of librarians' expertise and skill, unaware of their own or their students' information needs, and all required convincing to use the services librarians offered. Research from the health sciences has indicated that inter-professional stereotyping can affect collaboration between professions (Ateah et al., 2011; Cook & Stoecker, 2014; Mandy, Milton, & Mandy, 2004). Like practitioners in the health sciences professions, librarians often have to work closely with allied professions to meet the needs of clients, whether those clients are their fellow professionals or if they are shared clients. It is notable that all of the professions librarians position themselves against are allied professions they often work with to meet the information needs of other clients. Frequently, however, the information needs of these allied professionals/clients are overlooked. Although librarians are well aware of the effects that misperceptions of other professionals have on librarianship's literal and figurative value, librarians appear to be less aware of how their perceptions of allied professions affect how they work with and provide service to these professionals. There is some evidence that librarianship is attempting to address this disconnect. For instance, teacher librarians are working to highlight their teaching role to gain the attention and trust of teachers and administrators (e.g., Ray, 2012), special librarians highlight the collaborative nature of their relationships with clients, and academic librarians are attempting to bridge the "librarian-faculty gap" ("Bridging the Librarian-Faculty Gap," 2015, p. 3) through large scale surveys of both faculty and librarians to see where their views of library services converge and diverge. These attempts to address the disconnect

between perceptions and client needs highlight the centrality of service in librarians' identity construction. Information expertise is only useful for librarians if they can put it to use helping people. As will be discussed below, the answer to "who am I?" only provides half of what it means to be a librarian. In the next section, the answer to the other core question of identity, "how should I act?", will be explored. This will be followed by an examination of sectoral difference in librarians' identity construction, the discursive place of the library in the identity repertoires of librarians, and the effect of transportable identities on librarians' professional identity.

How should I act?

In addition to exploring the question of "who am I?", examinations of identity also centre on the question "how should I act?" This question focuses on how one's professional identity affects one's professional actions. As Ashcraft (2013) argued, there is an assumption that the nature of professional work somehow speaks for itself and is not socially constructed. For librarians, the answer to "who am I?" has a direct influence on the answer to "how should I act?" As professionals with a worldview based in their jurisdictional expertise and core professional values, librarians position service and advocacy activities at the centre of their professional activities, and hence their identities. These activities, in conjunction with their way of thinking, affect not only how they perform their day-to-day activities as librarians, but also how they react to change and interact with clients. This section will explore how librarians answer the question "how should I act?" by exploring service and advocacy as professional activities in librarians' identity repertoires, and by examining librarians' professional attitudes and their relationships with clients.

The activities of service and advocacy. Both advocacy and service to clients were framed as obligations for librarians. To be a librarian, you had to perform both activities. That librarians have a strong dedication to service (Koehler, Hurych, Dole, & Wall, 2000), was apparent in the data examined for this study. Librarians identified service as their professional *raison d'être* and the central activity of their professional lives. The primary concept librarians used to describe service to clients was helping, a word VanScoy (2013) described as “vague” but “most closely associated with being useful to the user in some way” (p. 274). The ways in which librarians helped their clients were myriad. Service was defined broadly and included public service, information literacy instruction, technology services, access to information, the organization of information, and service to the profession. The role of service in librarians’ professional sense of self, particularly public services such as reference and information services and information literacy instruction, has received a considerable amount of attention in the LIS literature. There have been examinations of the characteristics of a good reference librarian (Bronstein, 2011; Quinn, 1994), investigations of librarians’ emotional connection to their work (Davis, 2007; VanScoy, 2013), studies of public service work as a calling (Burns & Bossaller, 2012; Lasocki, 2000), and explorations into librarians’ experiences of teaching (Julien & Genuis, 2011; Walter, 2008). Many of these studies support the findings reported in chapter four, such as service as a calling or an activity librarians should be naturally good at (Burns & Bossaller, 2012; VanScoy, 2013), that service is a duty for librarians (Julien & Genuis, 2011), and that, for some librarians, determining the limits of service could be challenging (Westbrook, 2015).

Examinations of service as part of librarians’ sense of self, such as the studies described above, often take for granted that all librarians either directly, or indirectly, perform service activities. In other words, these investigations focused their attention on examining how

librarians related to service activities, not how these activities in and of themselves constructed librarians' professional identities. Garcia (2011) found that self-defining the specific activities that librarians perform was central to the professional identity of her participants. She noted that librarians made a clear delineation between librarian and non-librarian activities. Although they performed both, certain activities, such as "talking with patrons, answering reference questions, working with or building the collection, teaching, leading programs, or taking care of other library projects" (p. 109), i.e., service activities, were considered to be more pleasurable than non-librarian activities such as organizationally mandated activities (for instance an employee-of-the-month lunch). This study also found that librarians identify librarian-related activities as central to their professional identities. Although it was clear that librarians found these kinds of activities pleasurable, librarians' primary motivation for providing service was to give themselves a professional sense of self. All librarians, regardless of their position, help people. Therefore the most direct answer to the question "how should I act?" for a librarian was "help people." Even librarians uncomfortable providing service understood its importance to their professional identity. Recall, for instance, that Colin (academic librarian participant) described feeling less capable than his fellow librarians of providing direct public service to clients; however, he framed his role as a library director as enabling others to provide high-quality service. In essence, he served the librarians so they could serve their clients.

The advocacy activities librarians engaged in were directly connected to librarians' desires to have their clients see librarianship as a valuable profession. They were, in a sense, about helping the profession. The relationship between librarians and their communities was central to the advocacy repertoire. The discursive function of the advocacy repertoire, when used in relation to clients and communities, was to reposition librarians as community and

organizational leaders worthy of their both clients' trust and a seat at the decision-makers' table. This function is in line with how other professions are managing the societal trends influencing the traditional understanding of professionalism (Dent & Whitehead, 2002; Fournier, 1999; Karseth & Nerland, 2007). By making a difference in their clients' lives, or by advocating on behalf of others, librarians were attempting to demonstrate to stakeholders their commitment to their needs and their trustworthiness as professionals. If clients did not respond positively to these messages, there were consequences for the profession, ranging from an inability to recruit diverse and talented people as MLIS students to the end of the profession itself. Advocacy efforts, therefore, were about more than attracting the attention and interests of others in an effort to support the profession and its services. They were also about creating and maintaining the relationships that librarians need to sustain their profession's status and the public's trust. Clients may need the services librarians market and offer, but librarians require their clients and communities to recognize their professionalism.

The service and advocacy repertoires are the most overtly action-oriented of librarians' identity repertoires; however, there is an action-orientation found throughout the other repertoires. In the insider-outsider repertoire, for instance, librarians spoke and wrote about the need to demonstrate their value to clients and stakeholders. Therefore, while librarians speak and write frequently about who they are, they only truly become a professional, and a librarian, when they *act* like a librarian, i.e., when they help people. Their information expertise, for instance, was only important as long as it could be used to help clients meet their information needs. Librarians' particular kind of information expertise, however, did affect how they performed service activities. Nelson and Irwin (2014) argued that librarians were unable to see the potential of the Internet in its early days because their expertise in non-Internet searching made it difficult

for them to understand the opportunities the Internet afforded. This study found librarians still strongly believe that their information expertise provides them with particular insights into how best to find and use information. This belief shaped how certain information-based services were offered by librarians. For instance, Mary's (academic librarian participant) understanding of her information expertise had a direct influence on the kinds of services she offered her clients. Her expertise gave her strong beliefs about how students used online sources and, as a result, she focused on creating online services for students and convincing faculty members to alter their assignments to better address students' needs. Her expertise certainly informed the kinds of services she offered her clients, but it was her desire to help that determined how her expertise was employed.

Relationships with clients. As discussed above, librarians required their clients to recognize and value their professionalism. Librarians were unable to answer the question "who am I?" without this recognition. To gain this recognition from clients, librarians tried to demonstrate their professional value, expertise, and importance through the provision of high-quality services. In essence, by looking to their clients to help provide the answer to "who am I?" librarians inadvertently answered the question "how should I act?" Inevitably, this response held consequences for the kinds of relationships librarians had with their clients. Earlier, the influence of clients' perceptions of librarianship on librarians' self-perceptions was discussed; however, librarians' relationships with their clients were shaped by more than just their clients' perceptions. They were also shaped by librarians' genuine desire to help their clients with their information, education, research, and entertainment needs. This created a tension in librarians' relationships with their clients. Librarians required their clients' recognition, but this need for recognition tainted some of the relationships librarians had with their clients. For instance,

through the provision of service, special librarians contributed to the running of their organization; however, because they felt their professional skill and expertise were not recognized, their relationships with their clients could be strained. Similar tensions in librarian-client relationships were found in all library sectors. This tension affected how librarians acted because librarians looked to their clients not only for professional recognition, but for direction regarding the kinds of services librarians should offer, the kinds of technologies they should adopt, and even whether librarians were successfully meeting their professional obligations.

Abbott (1988) noted librarians had ceded some of their jurisdictional territory to client demands early in their professionalising process. This assertion has been supported with more recent research. For instance, some researchers have indicated that client expectations play an important role in the services librarians offer (Bronstein, 2011; Given, 2000) and in shaping how librarians see themselves as professionals (Burns & Bossaller, 2012). Burns and Bossaller, for instance, noted that client needs mediated librarians' use of technology: "They identified the user as the reason for their professional existence and felt that while the current communication and technology environment does much to increase access to informational sources, it also does much to separate them from their users" (p. 614). The current study found that client expectations were a driver for librarians' decisions around information technologies. And, as VanScoy (2013) also noted, the fear of failing to meet a client's information needs acted as a motivator for many librarians. Librarians, in this study, struggled to manage client expectations around technology, mostly so their clients did not become disappointed in the service they received from librarians. However, meeting (and managing) client expectations also benefited librarianship. Fournier (2000) suggested that professionals use expertise and service as a way to construct boundaries between themselves and their clients. These measures enable professionals

to distinguish themselves from their clients: “Professional status comes from inventing an ‘other’ . . . from which professionals can then ‘work’ to distinguish themselves” (p. 76). As client-librarian relationships have been characterized thus far, librarians appear to grant their clients a large stake in how their professional identities are constructed. In other words, client expectations, and not professional values, practices, and expertise, guide professional identity; however, Fournier’s analysis shifts this perceptive. By placing clients’ service needs at the centre of their professional identity construction, librarians are able to shift the boundaries of their professional identity in response not only to changing client expectations, but also to changing economic, technological, and social trends. Nelson and Irwin (2014) revealed a similar shift in boundaries in their study of librarians’ identity and technological change. In this study, the boundary shifting described by Fournier (2000) was seen in how librarians positioned client expectations and needs. Although they gave client perceptions and expectations a lot of power in the construction of their professional identities, they also returned to their information expertise and innate ability to provide service as a movable boundary between themselves and their clients. As a result, librarians were able to retain their service identity even in the face of change.

Professional attitudes. Fournier (1999) wrote that appeals to professionalism can be used to regulate not just “the way one performs one’s job but the ‘sort of person’ one needs to be to become a . . . professional” (p. 297). Although Fournier focused most of her discussion on what constituted professional conduct, it is argued here that the disciplinary effect of professionalism also extends to professional attitudes. As discussed in chapter three, the identity repertoires of librarians are not deterministic in nature. Librarians can accept, reject, or resist the discourses that regulate their identities. However, librarians do not accept, reject, or resist these discourses in isolation. Librarians negotiate their professional identities in relation to clients, as

described above, but also amongst themselves. One way librarians negotiated with each other was by controlling their fellow librarians' reactions and attitudes towards certain topics. For instance, as described in chapter four, the ability to provide high-quality service to clients was a skill all librarians were supposed to possess and be naturally good at. Even librarians whose positions were focused on non-public service activities, or who might feel uncomfortable providing service directly to clients, were likely to describe themselves as service providers. Where this intra-librarians identity negotiation most notably occurred was in relation to librarians' attitudes towards technology and change. When discussing change, particularly technological change, librarians employed rhetorically self-sufficient arguments to limit and control how other librarians could react to change. For instance, by framing technological changes as the "new normal," librarians were able to position change as the inevitable status quo. Librarians rarely pushed back against such rhetorical framing of technological change. When they did, by expressing concerns that certain technologies may threaten core professional values such as privacy, for example, these librarians were met with irritation and were presented with an alternative attitude they were encouraged adopt—flexibility.

In a review of the professional literature surrounding librarians' changing roles in relation to the Internet, Melchionda (2007) found their attitudes fell into two broad categories: seeing the Internet as a threat to librarianship and seeing the Internet as an opportunity. Similarly to this study, these attitudes had their roots in a sense of uncertainty about the future of librarianship and a feeling that the Internet marked a turning point, or revolution, for librarianship—in other words, a new normal. Results from Huvila, Holmberg, Kronqvist-Berg, Nivakoski and Widén's (2013) examination of the attitudes and competencies expected of librarians in relation to the concept of Librarian 2.0 also support this study. Using a co-word analysis approach to content

analysis, Huvila et al. noted that words such as “disoriented,” although rarely used, were still being employed to describe anxious attitudes towards Librarian 2.0, indicating that even though technologies are ubiquitous in librarianship, “information technology is still . . . a central challenge for librarians” (p. 202). In contrast, words and phrases that indicated specific outcomes, such as “Internet competent,” were the most common. The authors suggested that these outcomes-based words indicated a desired future state for librarianship and reflected a wish for more proactive attitudes towards change. In this study, it was found that some librarians were concerned that if they expressed any resistance or anxiety, they would be perceived as having stereotypical reactions towards change. Flexibility, therefore, was offered as an alternative way to perceive change. Huvila et al. also found that adaptability was an attitude librarians desired for and from each other.

Earlier, it was mentioned that librarians can accept, resist, or reject the discourses that inform their professional identities. Therefore, although flexibility and adaptability may be the attitudes towards change that librarians want their colleagues to have, just having this professional desire does not mean their colleagues will actually have those attitudes. Librarians resisted these more deterministic aspects of their identity repertoires in a variety of ways. Some librarians used aspects of other repertoires to challenge the profession’s discourses around change. Recall, for instance, the discussion in the insider-outsider repertoire around “nervous Nellies” and social media applications. One librarian in that exchange rejected being positioned as a “nervous Nellie” not by embracing the discourse of flexibility and adaptability, but by using the discourse of professional values. They were not afraid of technology; they were concerned about their clients’ privacy. Through this kind of resistance, librarians challenged the dominance of their professional discourses. They were not, however, completely successful in this

resistance. By challenging the dominance of one identity repertoire with another, librarians replaced one version of the “‘sort of person’ one needs to be to become . . . a professional” with another (Fournier, 1999, p. 297). The “sort of person” each repertoire encouraged librarians to be has a direct effect on how these kinds of professionals act. Both types of professionals are attempting to meet their clients’ information needs as they understand them. One does this by embracing technology; the other by resisting it. Both are acting professionally according to the discourses of librarianship; however, their actions are potentially completely opposite from each other in intention and result. Therefore, although the answer to the question “who am I?” does directly influence the answer to “how should I act?”, how these answers are manifested in the actions, beliefs, and identities of individual librarians will vary.

Sectoral differences

In his examination of librarianship’s process of professionalization, Abbott (1988) noted that librarianship had developed a strong core (academic and special librarians) that drove the jurisdictional expertise of its weak, or hazy, periphery (public and teacher librarians). He argued the attachments academic librarians, in particular, had to prestigious institutions like universities gave their particular professional interests and areas of expertise, namely a focus on facilitating access to information, additional intra-librarian authority. As a result, academic librarians were able to put into place professional structures, such as the centralization of cataloguing, that benefited them and freed them to tackle other tasks, but these new professional structures also had the effect of reducing the professional level work of public and teacher librarians. In other words, the processes of professionalization created distinct sectoral differences in librarianship. This idea is further supported by articles like Salamon’s (2015), Sears’s (2006), and Honea’s (2000) that treat their often very narrow section of librarianship as somehow separate from the

profession as a whole. For instance, Salamon (2015) suggested Middle Eastern studies librarians were not just librarians with specialized skills and subject knowledge, but instead had their own unique professional identity. Other studies have further supported the idea that librarianship is an amalgam of different professions by examining how it has become increasingly more differentiated in an effort to meet evolving client needs and societal and technological changes (Cox & Corral, 2013; O'Connor, 2009a; 2009b; Winter, 1996).

This study found that most librarians agree with the idea that there are differences between the work of librarians in different sectors, as they often positioned their work as being different from that of librarians in other sectors; however, when these assumptions were questioned or challenged, these same librarians would concede that perhaps the differences were minimal. Despite these expressions about nominal differences, there are specific work tasks that do differentiate librarians in different sectors. Some academic and teacher librarians, for instance, are more likely to engage in activities related to information literacy, while some public librarians may perform more activities related to reader's advisory; however, how these activities inform answers to librarians' central questions of identity are often very similar. The similarities between the sectors can most clearly be seen in their mutual willingness to use positive news about other library sectors as proof of the value of their own professionalism. Not only did these comparisons discursively transfer the positive aspects of one library sector onto all library sectors, they also served to highlight, at least at the level of discourses and repertoires, the similarities between the professional identities of the different library sectors. Two of the library sectors, academic and teacher librarians, however, used parts of librarianship's identity repertoires in a manner that set them apart from the other sectors. This was evident in academic

librarians' relationships with faculty members and teacher librarians' dual professional identity of librarian and teacher.

Academic librarians and their relationship with faculty members. Academic librarian-faculty relationships have received attention both in this study and in the LIS literature. Academic librarians view faculty members in conflicting ways—as impediments to helping students, but also as necessary and important collaborators in meeting student needs. Although faculty members are themselves a primary client group for academic librarians, their specific information needs are often overlooked, at least discursively, in favour of students' needs. These aspects of academic librarian-faculty relationships, however, are not what set them apart from the relationships librarians in other sectors have with their clients. What sets it apart is how academic librarians compare and contrast themselves with faculty members. All librarians, to some extent, compare their professionalism to other professionals. As was discussed in chapter four, the most common non-faculty referent groups were physicians and lawyers, and librarians working in all library sectors were likely to draw upon the professionalism of these groups when seeking to define their own or librarianship's professionalism. Only academic librarians, however, drew upon the professional qualities of faculty members, a professional group academic librarians both work with to meet other clients' needs and serve in a client relationship, to define their professionalism.

Common to studies that examine this relationship is the finding that faculty members were respectful of certain aspects of librarians' work (specifically reference and collection development), but did not consider librarians to have a substantial teaching role (McGuinness, 2006; Still, 1998). Other studies have examined the unequal relationships librarians have with faculty members. Julien and Pecoskie (2009) found librarians often characterized their

relationship with faculty members as dependent on gift giving. Christiansen, Stompler, and Thaxon (2004) found an asymmetrical disconnection between librarians and faculty, meaning each group recognizes they have limited contact with each other, but they experience the disconnection differently. Namely, librarians are more aware of faculty members' work, and "are continually striving to increase contact" (p. 118), while faculty members do not have a clear understanding of librarians' work. Christiansen, Stompler, and Thaxon noted the consequences of this disconnection were different for each group. Librarians believed faculty were dismissive or unaware of their areas of expertise and that faculty's lack of contact with librarians interfered with the librarians' ability to effectively help students. In contrast, faculty members were aware of the disconnection between themselves and librarians, but did not view it as problematic.

As discussed in chapter four, academic librarians wanted to be considered full members of the scholarly academy, with full tenure or faculty status, research privileges, and recognition that their teaching roles were equal to those of faculty members. Although there have been discussions about tenure for librarians since the early 20th century, universities only began granting tenure, or faculty status, to librarians in the 1970s (Coker, vanDuinkerken, & Bales, 2010). According to a recent survey of American research universities, only 52% of universities currently grant librarians faculty status (Walters, in press). Although the definition of faculty status can change between institutions, Walters identified a five-tier hierarchy:

Tier 1: professor ranks, scholarship, and equivalent salaries

Tier 2: faculty status and tenure

Tier 3: faculty senate and sabbaticals

Tier 4: peer review and research funds

Tier 5: [service on university-wide] committees [other than faculty senate].

(Walters, in press, p. 6)

There is a clear thread in the literature written by academic librarians debating the benefits and drawbacks of faculty status, including literature that focuses on defining and explaining the benefits of faculty status for librarians (Hill, 2005; Hosburgh, 2011; Loesch, 2010), that defends the need for faculty status (Coker, vanDuinkerken, & Bales, 2010), and that examines the effect of faculty status on salaries and contract terms (Vix & Buckman, 2012). This literature highlights one of the findings of this study: academic librarians want to be viewed as equals to faculty members. Faculty status or tenure is the symbol of this equality. In other words, faculty members act as a referent group against which academic librarians construct their identities.

In an examination of reference group theory and its implications for LIS, Dawson and Chatman (2001) defined two kinds of reference groups: normative and comparative. A normative group is one that people are motivated to join or gain acceptance from, while a comparative group acts as a point of reference against which one can evaluate or compare oneself. For academic librarians, faculty members act as a comparative reference group. Although they do look to faculty members for approval of academic librarianship's professional value, i.e., they want to gain the acceptance of faculty members as proof of their professional value, the primary discursive function of academic librarian-faculty member relationships is one of comparison. Recall Mary's (academic librarian participant) assertion that as a professional she wanted to be "perceived in the same way that professors are perceived." For Mary, being considered to be the same as faculty members would mean she had successfully been compared against her desired referent group. She did not want to become a professor; she wanted to remain a librarian. But, she did want her profession and professionalism to be positively compared to that of a faculty

member. Dawson and Chatman's analysis of reference group theory primarily focused on how individuals used reference groups to make self-appraisals and comparisons, particularly in relation to their information behaviours; however, research into professional role identity has also used this concept to examine how a profession can shift reference groups in relation to changing roles. In a study examining the ways nurses rhetorically legitimize new work roles, Goodrick and Reay (2010) found that nurses used comparison referent groups to define what nurses did. They observed that as nursing roles changed, so did the referent groups against which they defined themselves. Specifically, as health care became more physician-dominated, nurses shifted from comparing themselves to nursing aides to comparing themselves to physicians. This shifting identity referent allowed nurses to legitimate their new professional roles. This study did not identify a shift in academic librarians' comparative reference group despite changes in their roles over the decades. This is perhaps because faculty members have continued to hold the social status and value that academic librarians desire. By comparing themselves to faculty members, librarians could gauge whether or not they had successfully met this standard.

As stated above, most librarians have referent groups against which they compare their professionalism. What sets academic librarians apart is how the relationship defined by the referent group status affects the ways academic librarians conceive of faculty members as clients. Special librarians working with the health professions, for instance, drew on physicians and other health care professionals as a comparative referent group. For instance, special librarians drew on referent groups when discussing their salaries. This comparison, however, rarely obscured physicians' status as special librarians' clients. Instead, special librarians were much more likely to view physicians as collaborators and seek out ways to better understand their work to ensure physicians received highly-quality service. In contrast, academic librarians

often deemphasized faculty members' status as clients. Academic librarians were much more likely to refer only to students as their primary clients, implying that the information needs of faculty members were less important than students' needs. In their daily practices, librarians do address the information needs of faculty members. Most academic library web pages, for instance, have links to resources intended to support faculty. For example, the University of Alberta's website includes links to publishing resources and measuring research impact (University of Alberta Libraries, 2016). Faculty members' information service needs, from support for managing research data (Arlitsch, 2014), to helping scholars measure the impact of their research (Helmstutler, 2015), to ensuring clinical and adjunct faculty are able to access library resources (Brennan, 2015), are regular topics in the LIS literature. However, especially when compared to students, faculty members as clients play a small role in academic librarians' professional identity construction. They clearly see deep value in their work as librarians and believe that they are contributing not only to students' education but to the scholarly endeavours of both the faculty members and their profession. Academic librarians see clear parallels between their work and the work of faculty members. In other words, while academic librarians do not want to *be* faculty members, they would like to be *like* faculty members. As Dawson and Chatman (2001) argued, affiliations are sought because a referent group is perceived to have a desirable social status. Academic librarians want to enjoy the same social status and respect they believe faculty members have.

Teacher librarians' dual professional identities. As was discussed in chapter two, many librarians, particularly academic librarians, have a teacher identity (Julien & Genuis, 2011; Walter, 2008). For librarians working in academic, public, and special libraries, this teacher identity was primarily related to specific work roles. In other words, librarians with instructional

roles were likely to include these roles as part of their professional identity (Julien & Genuis, 2011). This study found that for academic, public, and special librarians, their instructional roles were discursively placed alongside other service roles. Teaching, specifically teaching information literacy skills, was another service activity librarians engaged in to help meet clients' information needs. For teacher librarians, however, their teacher identity held an equal place alongside their librarian identity and extended beyond their instructional roles. Even activities more commonly associated with librarianship rather than teaching, such as collection development and cataloguing, were understood to be an extension of their teacher identities. Recall, for instance, the debates on the email discussion list LM_NET over the use of the Dewey Decimal Classification in school libraries. The debates were not about the utility of the DDC for the running of the library, or whether it was the best system to meet students' information needs, but whether it was the best system to teach students how information was classified, and to prepare them for their lives outside of school. Although ensuring students' information needs were met was important, these debates were more concerned with the educational utility of the DDC. In other words, these debates were about how best to prepare students to be productive members of society.

In the LIS literature, teacher librarians' distinctness from the teaching profession is well noted. Teacher librarians are often described as "lone wolves" in schools because they "rarely have peers to consult with who do the same work" (Branch & de Groot, 2013, p. 111). As a result, teacher librarians describe feeling alone and invisible in their workplaces (Hartzell, 2002), suffering from what Van Deusen (1996) described as an insider-outsider role on the teaching team. Van Duesen's use of insider-outsider is slightly different from its use in this study. In this study, librarians were insiders because they had a unique professional expertise and outsiders

when this expertise was not recognized by clients. For Van Deusen, teacher librarians were insiders because they participated in team teaching meetings where curriculum and instruction topics were discussed, but outsiders because they were not considered to be fellow teachers. Hartzell (2002) argued that teacher librarians contribute to their own professional isolation by mostly publishing in journals and presenting at conferences aimed solely at teacher librarians, and not at the teaching profession at large. A similar isolation was described by librarians in this study. Teacher librarians expressed dismay at not having their teacher status recognized by their fellow teachers and discussed strategies for ensuring both teachers and school administrators recognized their expertise and skills—both as teachers and librarians. In this study, the most common strategies discussed were how to use technology to help teachers in the classroom, how to reclaim or reassert their teacher identities, and how to collaborate with teachers and school administrators. Research has indicated that collaboration is a strong component of teachers' professional identities (Cohen, 2008). Teacher librarians have this in common with their teacher colleagues; however, this study found teacher librarians often felt their desire for collaboration was not reciprocated by their teaching and administrative colleagues. In response to this rejection, teacher librarians often turned to each other for advice and support. This finding supports previous research into teacher librarians. Branch and de Groot (2013), for instance, described the various ways Canadian teacher librarians sought out interaction with and support from other teacher librarians both online and in face-to-face interactions. They identified formal and informal face-to-face meetings and email, with a particular emphasis on email discussion lists, as the primary ways teacher librarians sought support from each other.

This study found that the discursive function of claiming both a librarian and a teacher identity was to try to mitigate this isolation. This was especially important when teacher

librarians felt they were being overlooked by school administrators. Poor administrative support has been identified as a source of teacher librarians' sense of isolation (Hartzell, 2002) and past research has indicated that if a teacher librarian feels supported by her or his school administrator, then she or he will likely feel less isolated in the school (Oberg, 2006; Ritchie, 2011). Throughout this study, teacher librarians made repeated references to the precariousness of their positions. They were aware that because school administrators did not regard them as important as classroom teachers to the education of students that their positions were at risk of being cut. Therefore, by highlighting their teacher identities they could demonstrate to school administrators that they were not stereotypical librarians (Hartzell, 2002; Oberg, 2006) but instead were specially trained teachers with an important role in the education of children. They used documents such as the Common Core State Standards (2010) and the Framework for Student Learning (2011) to illustrate and highlight their role in education. Teacher librarians argued that these documents provided them with a clear educational role that used not only their skills as a teacher, but also required their expertise as a librarian to implement.

Teacher librarians also highlighted their teacher identities because many of them had backgrounds as classroom teachers. In a survey examining the reasons why University of South Carolina students and recent graduates became school library media specialists (a common descriptor for teacher librarians in the United States), Shannon (2008) found 70% of survey respondents (123 of 174 total) had previous experience as classroom teachers. They saw teacher librarianship as a way to leave classroom instruction but still remain teachers. Similarly, all three of the teacher librarian interview participants included in this study understood teacher librarianship as a way to expand their teaching role; however, posts to LM_NET indicated that

some American teacher librarians placed greater emphasis on their librarian identities, citing more flexible career options as the reason.

What sets teacher librarians apart from academic librarians is that teacher librarians do not want to be *like* teachers. They *are* teachers. Teacher librarians claim a dual professional identity not because they believe it will improve their social status—although they do hope it will affect their employment status—but because they believe they are entitled to do so. They understand the library to be their classroom and the entire student body, teaching staff, administrators, and even parents, to be their students. Their role is supported by formal government documentation and, when properly supported by school administrators, has been demonstrated to improve student achievement (Lance & Hofschire, 2012; Lance, Rodney, & Hamilton-Pennell, 2000; Ontario Library Association, 2006; Todd & Kuhlthau, 2005). This dual professional identity not only sets teacher librarians apart from their teacher colleagues and school administrators, but it also sets them apart from their fellow librarians.

The Rhetorical Function of the Library in Librarians' Identity Repertoires

Libraries, as physical entities, are the places librarians work, a service they offer clients, a location for services and programs, a place to house books and technology, a social gathering place for community members, and a quiet place for clients to learn, read, and conduct research. This study found the place and space of the library plays an important, but subtle, role in the identity repertoires of librarians. As Barlow (2008) asked: “What other profession shares the same name with the building in which they work?” (p. 314). However, the connection between the library as place and librarians' professional identity goes beyond simply sharing a name. Throughout the data examined for this study, librarians used the terms “library” and “librarian”

interchangeably, although the discursive purpose of their usage changed depending on the context.

The general connection between professional identity and place has received some attention in the professions literature. Elsbach (2003) and Rooney et al. (2010) examined how the physical space of the workplace influences identity construction. Elsbach (2003) found that the depersonalization of the workplace could negatively affect a person's sense of personal and social distinctiveness and status. Rooney et al. (2010) examined the meaning of the workplace for organizational members and how this meaning influenced the way employees responded to organizational change. Larson and Pearson (2012) expanded Elsbach's (2003) and Rooney et al.'s (2010) examination beyond the workplace to study the connection between occupational identities and the location of work at the city or regional level, finding that place played a large role in framing how their participants understood themselves.

What separates the findings of this study from the research described above was that the librarians' connection was both to the library as a physical place and to the library as an institution. As an institution, the library is the "embodiment of a collective intellectual heritage" (Mak, 2007, p. 209). It is considered to be a "unique place that facilitates the kind of concentration necessary for doing serious scholarly work" (Antell & Engel, 2006, p. 552) and is a place that is free of judgement, costs nothing to enter, and provides a safe environment for those who visit (Alstad & Curry, 2003). Budd (2008) argued members of the public expect libraries to exist. In other words, the existence of libraries is taken for granted and, as institutions, libraries are "invisibly visible": "it's there but we don't pay much attention to it" (p. 39). When librarians slip between library and librarian in their text and speech, they are drawing on these associations of the library-as-institution. Like libraries, librarians are the embodiment of

cultural heritage and intellectual thought, they facilitate serious scholarly work, and they provide low cost, judgement-free help.

Like the library-as-institution, librarians felt they were an “invisibly visible” profession (Budd, 2008, p. 39). As described in the advocacy repertoire and the outsider portion of the insider-outsider repertoire, librarians were concerned about not having their expertise and professionalism recognized by clients and the general public. In the insider-outsider repertoire, for instance, librarians used the metonymic slippage between librarian and library to directly draw on the positive cultural associations of the library-as-institution; however, a consequence of this discursive usage was that the work and expertise of librarians were ignored. As a result, libraries could appear to function without the skill and effort of librarians. However, as Budd (2008) stated: “[The library] is a product of [librarians’] thought, [their] creative constructions, and [their] exchanges” (p. 43). This sentiment was echoed in the professionalism repertoire, and in the advocacy repertoire when the focus of advocacy activities was the profession itself. In both cases, the metonymic slippage between library and librarian was largely missing from the text and speech of librarians. In these instances, the library became a tool librarians used to demonstrate their professionalism. This finding is supported by Barlow’s (2008) exploration of the connection between librarians’ professional identity and library buildings. Barlow explored how librarians working in three different universities used the construction or renovation of library buildings to communicate something about academic librarianship to clients. She argued the librarians in her study designed their new library spaces in such a way as to “prove something about their professional worth to all who might listen” (p. 303). Librarians, as demonstrated in this study, discursively commit a similar act when they slip between library and librarian when referring to themselves. They use the qualities associated with the library-as-

institution to prove to their clients and the general public that librarians have the professional qualities of service, expertise, and flexibility towards change.

The metonymic slippage between library and librarian throughout the data, and even its absence in the professionalism repertoire, functioned as a way for librarians to transform their workplace into their exclusive professional domain. By discursively slipping between their professional title and their institutional affiliation, librarians laid claim to their workplace in a way that made it uniquely theirs. The library was both a product of their highly skilled labour and a symbol for their professionalism and dedication to service and change. In many ways, this metonymic slippage acted as another way for librarians to separate themselves from their paraprofessional coworkers. As discussed in the professionalism repertoire, librarians rejected the identity of information professional when discussing their professional status, preferring instead the term librarian. For librarians, information professional was a title that could encompass all library employees; therefore, by rejecting information professional as their preferred professional title, librarians were able to reserve librarian for themselves. In a similar manner, by discursively laying claim to the library in their speech and texts, librarians made the library their professional domain. Librarians acknowledged the work of paraprofessionals within the day-to-day running of the library-as-organization; however, by metonymically slipping between librarian and library when referring only to librarians, they excluded paraprofessionals' contributions to the library as an institution.

The Role of Transportable Identities in the Professional Identity of Librarians

In this study, the transportable or social identities of librarians were largely absent from the data set. Transportable identities were only directly mentioned in two of the repertoires: service and professionalism. In the service repertoire, the expression of transportable identities as

part of librarians' professional identity was often limited to specific work roles, such as how the ethnic and sexual identities of librarians enabled them to provide better service to clients from marginalized and underrepresented groups. The gender identity of librarians was only explicitly mentioned in the professionalism repertoire and provided librarians with an explanation for why the profession was underpaid and under-respected when compared to male-dominated professions. In the remaining repertoires (the change, advocacy, and insider-outsider repertoires) transportable identities were largely absent.

The effect of a missing or limited role for transportable identities in the identity repertoires of librarians was the discursive dominance of white and female perspectives within the profession. Past research indicates this discursive dominance has had a significant effect on the careers and self-perception of non-female, non-white librarians. In a survey examining the effect of the gendered stereotype of librarians on male librarians, Carmichael (1992) argued that the female stereotypes of librarianship had contributed to gender stratification within the workplace. This stratification occurred by segregating male librarians from the traditionally female work of cataloguing and children's librarianship, deemed to be inappropriate for male librarians, and directing their work towards more "appropriate" areas of work, such as administration. Although this study did not examine the effect of librarians' transportable identities on their workplace roles or career advancement, it did illustrate that librarians were reluctant to include their non-librarian identities as part of their professional identity. They did, however, acknowledge that their transportable identities could affect how clients understood librarianship as a whole. Therefore, although transportable identities were not credited with affecting how librarians conceived of themselves as professionals, they were credited with affecting how others understood librarianship. This was clearly seen in the service repertoire

where librarians' transportable identities, namely their ethnic and cultural identities, were credited with enabling them to create warm and welcoming environments for clients from marginalized and underrepresented groups.

There has been a lot of attention in the LIS literature on the need to recruit and retain people from marginalized and underrepresented cultural and ethnic groups to librarianship (Hastings, 2015; Kandiuk, 2014; Kim & Sin, 2006) and on the workplace experiences of librarians from such groups (Alabi, 2015; Edwards & Fisher, 2003; Gonzalez-Smith, Swanson, & Tanaka, 2014; Hall, 2012). Often, this literature focuses on the need to ensure the demographics of librarianship reflect the diversity found in local library communities and on how the discrimination many librarians from these communities feel in their non-professional lives is also experienced in the workplace; however, this literature rarely focuses on the effect that improved diversity will have on the discourses of librarianship itself. Hussey (2010) offers a rare exception in an examination of concept of diversity in librarianship, arguing that commonly used words like "diversity" and "difference" are too ambiguous and do not challenge existing power structures. Research into the interplay between transportable and professional identities in other professions has indicated that professionals with non-dominant transportable identities can experience what it means to be a professional differently from their colleagues whose transportable identities resemble the cultural majority. This research ranges from examining the dominance of the discourse of professionalism on the emotional labour of African American youth workers (Froyum, 2013), to how members of minority groups manage their professional identity construction (Atewologun & Singh, 2010; Costello, 2004; Schnurr & Zayts, 2012; Slay & Smith, 2011), to how organizations can contribute to the construction of their members' gender and ethnic identities (Foldy, 2012). Although this study did not focus on the relationship

among librarians' professional and transportable identities, it did find that some participants felt their transportable identities set them apart from other librarians. As a result, they suggested their professionalism was considered to be different from that of other librarians, either as a result of being unable to find a suitable mentor or because their non-white identity made them stand out from their white colleagues, which drew additional attention to their professional actions. Further research needs to be completed to shed light on the interplay between librarians' professional and transportable identities.

Research into other professions has suggested that professions can be dominated by particular racial and ethnic discourses. Kaiser (2002) argued physicians encourage medical students to adopt a "rigidly defined, fixed professional identity" (p. 104) that perpetuates patriarchal social systems and limits creative expressions of self among physicians. Similarly, McKinley (2002) argued Maori women who worked as scientists were forced to abandon their ethnic identities in the workplace to be perceived as professional scientists, while Dombeck (2003) found the image of nurses as feminine affected white female and white male, and African American female nurses differently. Specifically, although the white female nurses resisted the popular image of nursing the most, if they were able to conform to it, they perceived themselves as good women, professionals, and employees. The white male nurses were disturbed by the image, but they did acknowledge that being a minority in their profession provided them with benefits, such as being mistaken for physicians. The African American female nurses had to contend with both the feminine stereotype of nursing and contend with racist images of black women as servants. As a result, African American female nurses "were always assumed to know less and *be* less, not only less than other professionals, but also less than their White colleagues in nursing" (p. 362, emphasis in original). In contrast, Van De Mieroop (2012) found that second

generation immigrants believed their ethnic identities were largely irrelevant for their professional identities. Van De Mierop suggested a lack of emphasis on their ethnic identities was one way for these workers to minimize their differences from Western norms.

Studies like those described above have not included librarians. There is, however, a small body of theoretical examinations of the racial discourses of librarianship. Espinal (2001) and Honma (2006) proposed different ways to examine the effect of librarianship's racial discourses on librarians from marginalized and underrepresented cultural and ethnic groups. Espinal (2001) proposed whiteness theory as a way to overcome the racial domination of whites in librarianship. Borrowing from anthropology, Espinal defined whiteness theory as the examination of the cultural dominance of white cultural practices, i.e., mainstream practices and culture, from non-white perspectives. Espinal argued the predominantly white cultural practices of librarianship have received little attention from LIS scholars or librarians themselves and suggested scholars and librarians examine the racial make-up of library staff in both management and service positions, how materials by non-white authors are collected and classified, how library services are measured, and even the everyday culture and behaviour of librarians, to understand and challenge these cultural practices.

Similarly, Honma (2006) argued the white racial normativity of librarianship needed to be challenged. Honma chose to focus not on the cultural practices of librarianship, but on the cultural purpose of libraries as institutions, specifically public libraries. Historically, he argued, public libraries in the United States were designed to support particularly white understandings of democracy and citizenship that create distrust for marginalized and oppressed groups. By understanding the foundations of libraries as institutions, Honma argued scholars could better understand how libraries today perpetuate racial inequalities, while at the same time promoting

multiculturalism and diversity. Supporting the findings of this study, Honma argued that most recruitment and retention initiatives for librarians from such groups were focused on ensuring the service needs of marginalized and underrepresented groups were met. This approach, he argued, overlooked the cultural dominance of white understandings of librarianship that libraries as institutions perpetuated. Honma argued that simply changing the racial demographics of librarianship would not in and of itself “solve the problem of white privilege in LIS” (p. 13). Instead, he argued librarianship needed to incorporate marginalized voices into its professional discourses to open up “new spaces of epistemological possibility” (p. 18). In addition to Espinal’s (2001) and Honma’s (2006) theoretical examinations of librarianship’s racial discourses, there is a growing body of literature from librarians offering practical advice on how to challenge the cultural dominance of whiteness in librarianship by changing interviewing and hiring processes (Galvan, 2015), on changing mentoring programs to better meet the needs of librarians from marginalized and underrepresented cultural and ethnic groups (Hathcock, 2015), and encouraging librarians to consider the needs of librarians from these communities in the profession alongside the service needs of clients from marginalized and underrepresented cultural and ethnic groups (Hall, 2012).

This study lends empirical support to Espinal’s (2001) and Honma’s (2006) theoretical examinations of the cultural dominance of whiteness in librarianship. The effect of the cultural dominance of particular racial and gender discourses in librarianship is that non-female, non-white perspectives on librarianship were limited and the roles for non-white, non-female librarians were prescribed. The discursive effect of this transformation was the whiteness and femininity of librarianship became assumed. Although the identity repertoires of librarians are not rigidly defined and fixed, as revealed by the breadth and depth of the repertoires examined in

this research, the results of this study do suggest the identity construction processes of librarians with marginalized and underrepresented social identities and those of male librarians may be more limited than those of their white, female counterparts. Although there was no evidence that librarians felt they had to abandon their transportable identities to be perceived as professionals, as McKinley (2002) suggested Maori scientists were forced to do, there was some evidence that librarianship was experienced differently by non-white, non-female librarians.

Chapter Summary

This chapter provided a synthesis of the study's findings and discussed these findings in relation to research into the professional identity of librarians and other professions. The identity repertoires of librarians provided them with answers to the two central questions of identity: who am I? and how should I act? Librarians based their professional identities in their common sense understanding of professionalism, their jurisdictional expertise, and their desire to be of service to their clients. The MLIS and the library as an institution had very influential symbolic roles in librarians' identities. Librarians believed their expertise and worldview set them apart from other professionals and from their paraprofessional colleagues. And contrary to opinions and research results revealed in the literature reviewed in chapter two, librarians understood their professional identity to be distinct from the profession's popular image. Although librarians were concerned with misperceptions of librarianship held by their clients, this concern was largely based in worries about the consequences of such misperceptions on librarianship's professional status. For librarians, the act of providing service, both directly and indirectly, was as important to their professional identities as their professionalism and expertise. Service activities provided librarians with their professional sense of self and informed their professional attitudes and

worldview. Through service activities, librarians were able both to help their clients and to demonstrate their professional value.

Most of the time, librarians used the same identity repertoires when constructing their professional identities, regardless of the library sector they worked in. This study noted that academic librarians and teacher librarians used some of librarianship's identity repertoires in a way that set them apart from the other library sectors. Academic librarians viewed a primary client group, faculty members, as a reference group against whom they compared themselves. This reduced the role that faculty members played as clients in academic librarians' identity construction. Teacher librarians had a dual professional identity in that they considered themselves to be both teachers and librarians. This made teacher librarians feel isolated—especially from their teaching colleagues. Lastly, it was noted the identity repertoires of librarianship were dominated by white and female perspectives. This had the effect of limiting the voices of librarians with marginalized and underrepresented social identities and male librarians in that profession's discourses. It was noted that additional research was required into how librarians' transportable identities and their professional identities interplay.

In the final chapter of this dissertation the findings described in chapter four and discussed in this chapter are summarized. Librarians described themselves as dedicated service professionals with a unique knowledge base and jurisdictional expertise, and librarianship as a profession dedicated to meeting people's information needs. Being a professional, to librarians, meant upholding the professional values of librarianship, a natural and inherent ability to provide clients with high-quality information services, a flexible attitude towards change and a desire to embrace technology, the skill to advocate for the profession, and an information expertise based in a combination of graduate level education and experience. Librarians' sense of themselves as

professionals was connected to their professional competences, skills, and attitudes, i.e., their professionalism. In addition, the study's research contributions are examined. By illustrating that clients and their information needs were at the centre of librarians' descriptions of both themselves as professionals and librarianship as a profession, this study expands the LIS literature examining librarians' professional identity by moving beyond examinations of other's perceptions of librarians and librarians' self-perceptions. The professional practices of librarianship are co-constructed by librarians and their users. Lastly, recommendations for practice and policy and future research directions are discussed.

Chapter Six

Summary of Findings, Research Contributions, and Recommendations

Chapter Introduction

This dissertation has explored the interpretive repertoires librarians used to construct their professional identity. This exploration focused on how librarians working in academic, public, special, and school libraries used language to describe who they are and what they do as professional librarians. In this final chapter, the major findings from this study are briefly summarized, organized according to the four research questions posed in chapter one. Following this summary, the study's research contributions, and recommendations for practice and policy are discussed. Lastly, future research directions are explored.

Summary of Major Findings

Librarians' identity repertoires. The first question guiding this study was: What are the interpretive repertoires librarians draw upon when constructing their professional identity? In chapter one, interpretive repertoires were described as consisting of the language resources that members of a group, such as a profession, draw on to construct versions of events, actions, and beliefs (Whetherell & Potter, 1988). In other words, interpretive repertoires are the language resources a group uses to describe itself and its members. Interpretive repertoires consist of words and phrases that provide professionals with a shared worldview and sense of self. They create a community of like-minded people based on shared meanings. By examining how different group members construct the same event, action, or belief, a contextual consistency of accounts, i.e., an interpretive repertoire, can be discerned (McKenzie, 2005). This study was concerned with the professional identity repertoires of librarians. The analysis focused on how librarians described librarianship, themselves as professionals, and their professional problems in three different data sources: journal articles aimed at professional librarians, messages posted to

email discussion lists, and research interviews with librarians. The data sources were selected to ensure different professional contexts and perspectives were represented in the overall data set. Five interpretive repertoires were identified: Insider-outsider, service, professionalism, change, and advocacy. A summary of each identity repertoire follows. The repertoires will be summarized in the same order they were presented in chapter four.

Insider-outsider repertoire. This repertoire was the most prevalent repertoire in librarians' text and speech, meaning it had the most data associated with it. When librarians employed this repertoire, they were focused on their relationships with their clients, especially in relation to their information expertise and their need to have clients recognize librarianship's value as a profession. This repertoire highlighted the important role librarians bestowed upon their clients in their identity construction. Librarians grounded their expertise in the library as an institution, their graduate educations, and their professional experiences. Their expertise enabled them to help their clients with their information needs, saving their clients from ignorance. This expertise was supported not only by the recognition of clients they worked with on a daily basis, but also by formal documents created by library associations and governments. And, when it was supported, librarians' expertise gave them professional legitimacy. This enabled librarians to position themselves as important and valuable professionals with an insider's understanding of information, while at the same time positioning clients as unaware of their own information needs. Librarians felt they were only recognized as valuable professionals when their work was noticed and appreciated. As insiders, they were able to ignore inaccurate misperceptions of librarianship and focus on demonstrating their expertise to clients through the provision of high-quality services. When clients failed to adequately acknowledge librarians' expertise, librarians positioned themselves as outsiders. This had the effect of preventing librarians from accessing

certain professional realms. For example, academic librarians felt when their professional status was not accurately discerned by faculty members, they were excluded from the scholarly academy.

The primary discursive effect of this repertoire was on how librarians frame their relationships with their clients. Librarians divided clients into two broad groups: those who understood librarianship's value (i.e., those who "got it") and those who did not. When clients validated librarians' expertise through hiring librarians, including them in important organizational decisions, seeking out their expertise to help with a work project or meet an educational need, or even to help them find information for pleasure, then librarians described positive and mutually fulfilling relationships with their clients. When clients overlooked librarians' expertise, often by believing inaccurate misperceptions of the profession, librarians believed clients were unable to understand the value of their work, making librarians feel replaceable and disrespected. This had the effect of creating negative relationships with clients, with some librarians even describing such relationships as a fight or battle.

In this repertoire, librarians were very defensive of their professional status, territory, and expertise. Professional expertise was positioned as something that set librarians apart from their clients, paraprofessionals, and other professions. Expertise would protect librarians from outside threats, such as technology or non-librarians taking over librarians' jobs, and as an asset that set librarians apart from their clients. To maintain this defensive positioning, librarians would regulate the way their fellow librarians spoke about potential threats, especially in relation to technology. Similarly, librarians often turned to each other for support when they felt undervalued by clients. In these instances, instead of directly criticizing how other librarians spoke or wrote about a specific topic, librarians would encourage each other through reminders

of their professional expertise. This encouragement also had the effect of maintaining librarianship's defensive position because it reinforced librarians' professional self-worth, even when the profession's worth was threatened by clients' misperceptions. Librarians spoke and wrote about the cost to clients of not recognizing librarians' expertise. This cost was both literal and figurative. The cost to clients was their information needs were not met. There was also a cost for librarians when their salaries and library budgets were kept low. The effect of this defensive positioning was that librarians placed a lot of responsibility on themselves for both their insider and outsider status. Librarians had to demonstrate their expertise to clients through their words and actions. Only by showing clients how valuable and important librarians as professionals were could any misperceptions be counteracted.

Throughout the repertoire, librarian and library were used synonymously. This had the discursive effect of positioning the activities of librarianship and the expertise of librarians as the same thing as the library's expertise and activities. In addition, it transferred the positive cultural associations of the library as institution to librarians. A consequence of this metonymic slippage was that libraries appeared to function without the expertise of librarians. Largely missing from this repertoire was the effect of librarians' transportable identities on their professional identity. Librarians were aware that discussions of transportable identities were missing from their professional discourses; however, there were few attempts to include them. When they were discussed, transportable identities were described as giving librarians specialized knowledge or expertise that enabled them to better help their clients.

Service repertoire. The service repertoire focused on the information services and other service activities librarians provided for their clients. Similar to the position of clients in the insider-outsider repertoire, clients were central to the service repertoire; however, clients were

positioned as a passive audience in the service repertoire. Through the act of providing services, librarians positioned themselves as dedicated, caring, and responsible professionals. The services that librarians described in this repertoire were wide-ranging and included direct services, such as reference service and information literacy instruction, and indirect services, such as providing public access computers and subscribing to proprietary databases for patrons to access. The focus of service was helping clients meet their information needs and the act of providing services gave librarians a sense of professional self. Service was a duty and responsibility for librarians and its place in librarians' identity construction was so central that service was often described as something librarians were naturally good at.

Librarians placed client expectations at the centre of the service repertoire. They wanted to meet client expectations in whatever manner possible while still maintaining standards for high-quality services. Technology was understood to be a tool librarians could use to meet clients' service expectations. Technology was positioned as a "must" all librarians had to embrace, a change agent necessary to future-proof librarianship, but a potential distraction from client needs; however, the potential technology held for providing high-quality services always outweighed any potential concerns.

In the service repertoire, the word library was also used as a synonym for librarian; however, it had a different discursive function than in the insider-outsider repertoire. In the service repertoire, librarians became the agents of the library. Librarians were able to offer services to clients via the library; therefore, the library is where librarians and their services belonged. Additionally, the library was in and of itself a service librarians offered clients. In other words, the library was a physical manifestation of librarians' service.

Notable absences from this repertoire were a focus on the organization of information as a service for clients and any discussion of the effect of transportable identities on service. The organization of information as a topic missing from the data set may be due to a shift in how librarians are providing services to clients. It is becoming more common for librarians to provide access to information organized by others, such as through proprietary databases, and fewer libraries are cataloguing their own materials because they rely instead on companies, such as OCLC, to catalogue and organize the majority of their collections on their behalf. Potential reasons why transportable identities are missing from the data are more complex. As with the discussions in the insider-outsider repertoire, librarians' transportable identities were only discussed in relation to how they could benefit clients.

Professionalism repertoire. This repertoire focused largely on the qualities that made librarianship a profession and librarians professionals. The overall purpose of the repertoire was to reinforce librarians' beliefs that librarianship was a robust and noble profession with strong core values and an important and unique knowledge base. In this repertoire, a lot of attention was paid to the characteristics many librarians believed made librarianship a profession, specifically the requirement for a graduate education. The MLIS was credited with providing librarians with their professional knowledge base, core values, and ability to make ethical decisions. The MLIS served as a way for librarians to denote who was and who was not a librarian and enabled librarians to separate themselves from clients, other professionals, and, most importantly, their paraprofessional colleagues. Librarians felt a graduate degree gave them added credibility with non-librarians, as it was a guarantee of professionalism and high-quality service. Most importantly, the MLIS was credited with giving librarians a librarian way of thinking that offered a unique perspective on the world and enabled them to meet clients' information needs.

Librarians often compared and contrasted their professionalism with that of other professions. Positive comparisons offered librarians proof that librarianship was just like any other profession and provided justification for certain decisions, such as pursuing additional professional development, dressing in a particular manner, and even determining how certain services, such as information literacy instruction, were performed. There were practical reasons for comparing librarianship to other professions—improved salaries and professional respect. Librarians wanted to be professionals. This was evidenced through use of the phrase “as a professional . . .” (and its variations). Such phrases highlighted librarians’ responsibilities and unique worldview. They also served as an additional rhetorical device to set librarians apart from their paraprofessional colleagues.

The metonymic slippage between library and librarians identified in the other repertoires was absent in the professionalism repertoire. In this repertoire, the library was positioned more at arm’s length as a tool librarians could use to further their professionalism and showcase their professional status, professionalism, and values to clients. The library, as a result, was the end product of librarians’ professionalism. Without the skills and abilities that librarians as professionals possessed, there would be no library.

The place of transportable identities also set this repertoire apart from the others identified in this study. Importantly, in this repertoire, librarians’ professional identities, normally a situated identity, were turned into transportable identities. This transformed librarians’ professional identities from an identity most often enacted in specific situations and contexts into an identity that librarians could take with them regardless of the situation. Librarianship, therefore, became more than an occupation. It became a calling. Additionally, the professionalism repertoire was the only repertoire where the gender identity of librarians, as a

group, was discussed; although, similarly to the other repertoires examined, librarians' racial and ethnic identities received very little attention.

Change repertoire. The change repertoire had two main discursive functions: to highlight shifting professional roles and to position librarians in relation to changes occurring outside the profession. Librarians identified many external and internal changes affecting librarianship, including changing client expectations, shifting professional roles, information technology, and societal and cultural shifts. Librarians had very distinct linguistic resources in the change repertoire, notably their use of time as a linguistic resource and their use of rhetorically self-sufficient arguments. Librarians' descriptions of change as a time period enabled them to position themselves as passive recipients of change. They were only able to react to changes and not influence them. In contrast, their use of self-sufficient arguments positioned change as normal and inevitable and as a force librarians could control and manage. These rhetorical strategies managed librarians' attitudes towards change. On the one hand, they gave librarians a renewed sense of professional importance during changing times and served as a call to action. On the other hand, they masked librarians' uncertainty towards change.

The metonymic slippage between library and librarian identified in the insider-outsider, service, and advocacy repertoires was also present in the change repertoire, although it was largely confined to the published literature. Its function in the change repertoire was to discursively transfer from librarians to the institution of the library those desired qualities of flexibility and adaptability toward change that librarians were expected to have. The hope was that by ensuring libraries were flexible and adaptable, they would survive future uncertainties and changing client expectations. Notably, there was no mention of transportable identities in the change repertoire.

Advocacy repertoire. In the advocacy repertoire, librarians highlighted their desire to make certain that non-librarians understood the value of librarians, libraries, and librarianship. This repertoire was focused on specific actions librarians could take to ensure librarianship's value was recognized, including simply providing high-quality service to clients. Topics discussed by librarians when they employed the advocacy repertoire were similar to topics discussed in other repertoires; however, what set the advocacy repertoire apart from the other repertoires was its focus on using the topics of other repertoires, such as technology, service, or professionalism, as methods for enhancing the public recognition of librarianship.

Both services and the profession were the objects of librarians' advocacy activities. Librarians pursued advocacy activities to communicate the value of libraries, librarians, and librarianship to community members, with the goal of improving public perceptions of the profession and its services. Advocacy efforts made the work of librarians visible to non-librarians and showcased librarians' devotion to their clients. The intended outcome was improved respect for the profession so that librarians could maintain stakeholders' trust in the library-as-institution and librarianship as a profession. Like service, advocacy was described as an obligation for librarians. Without advocacy efforts, librarianship would be overlooked by clients and stakeholders. This could affect budgets, salaries, and public perceptions. Advocacy, therefore, was positioned as a skill all professional librarians had to hone for the benefit of clients and the profession.

Similar to the other repertoires examined in this study, library and librarian were used synonymously in the advocacy repertoire; however, the discursive function of this metonymic slippage changed depending on the topics being discussed. When discussing service activities, the function of the slippage mirrored that of the service repertoire. This type of slippage

highlighted the role of librarians as service providers and the library as the primary service they provide; however, when the librarians discussed librarianship as a profession, the slippage shared similarities with its use in the professionalism repertoire. The library was rhetorically separated from librarians in these instances in an attempt to shift public perceptions away from stereotypical images of librarianship. Transportable identities had a limited role in the advocacy repertoire. While librarians wrote and spoke about the transportable identities of clients and the need to advocate for underrepresented client groups, the transportable identities of librarians themselves were not discussed.

How librarians' describe themselves and their profession. The second question guiding this study was: How do librarians describe themselves and their profession in their professional literature, on email discussion lists, and to a researcher? Librarians described themselves as dedicated service professionals with a unique knowledge base and jurisdictional expertise, and described librarianship as a profession dedicated to meeting people's information needs. Being a professional, to librarians, meant upholding the professional values of librarianship, possessing a natural and inherent ability to provide clients with high-quality information services, demonstrating a flexible attitude towards change and a desire to embrace technology, having the skill to advocate for the profession, and achieving an information expertise based on a combination of graduate level education and experience. Librarians' sense of themselves as professionals was connected to their professional competences, skills, and attitudes, i.e., their professionalism. Being a professional, therefore, meant acting and thinking professionally. For librarians, this meant maintaining a global perspective to understand the role of information and technology in the world and possessing a librarian way of thinking that enabled them to help their clients both when directly serving them and when designing

information services. The way librarians thought of themselves as professionals had a direct effect on how they acted as professionals. Librarians maintained that, regardless of their position, service was their professional *raison d'être*. Service was so central to librarians' understanding of their professional identity that even advocacy activities designed to promote specific services were, at the discursive level, about serving the profession as a whole by changing public perceptions of librarianship and recruiting strong candidates to the profession.

Librarians compared and contrasted themselves with other professions and their paraprofessional coworkers to support and maintain their understanding of their professionalism. Although librarians were concerned that librarianship did not meet traditional definitions of a profession, they nevertheless claimed equal status with professions, such as law and medicine, that do meet these traditional criteria. Occasionally, librarians even claimed librarianship's so-called semi-professional status made librarians better professionals as they had to work hard to maintain their professionalism without outside support. Librarians, however, attempted to distance themselves from their paraprofessional colleagues. Although librarians acknowledged paraprofessionals were necessary for the day-to-day running of libraries, they credited their graduate educations and professional mindsets as setting them apart from their non-professional coworkers. The language resources that librarians used in relation to paraprofessionals appeared to be inclusive. They used the broad term "information professional" when they wanted to include the work of paraprofessionals in the running of libraries; however, they reserved "librarian" only for those with the necessary graduate degree and professional mindset.

Clients and their information needs were at the centre of librarians' descriptions of both themselves as professionals and librarianship as a profession. Although librarians made a clear distinction between how they understood themselves and their profession and how librarians are

portrayed in popular images and stereotypes, they were also concerned that these images would create misperceptions of librarians and librarianship in the minds of clients. They focused instead on demonstrating to clients, through service and advocacy activities, their own professional importance and value, and that of the profession. In addition, librarians described a genuine desire to help their clients meet their information needs. Librarians' relationships with certain client groups were profoundly affected by this desire to help and the need to have their professionalism acknowledged by clients.

The library also held a central place in librarians' description of themselves as professionals. The specific discursive functions of the library changed depending on its use (see above); however, the library, as both a workplace and an institution, discursively served as a representative for librarians as professionals. This was evidenced not only in the metonymic slippage between library and librarians that occurred throughout the data, but also in librarians' description of LIS programs as "library schools" and concerns around limiting librarians' expertise to library-related information services.

Librarianship was described as something that had to be protected by librarians. It had to be protected from non-librarians working in professional positions; technology; social, cultural, and economic changes; and the uncertainties these changes could bring. What was being protected, however, was not a thing or an object, but a set of activities and practices that librarians defined as belonging to them. These activities and practices went beyond the activities librarians shared with their paraprofessional colleagues. Instead, they were, to use Kemmis's (2010) terminology, activities that required both the profession's theoretical and craft knowledge to perform. Simply performing the activities of librarianship did not make someone a librarian, but neither did simply possessing the required theoretical knowledge, as symbolized by the

MLIS. Librarianship was a set of practices that required both education and experience to properly perform. The interplay between education and experience was often misunderstood and misperceived by non-librarians. As a result, non-librarians did not understand the unique qualities of librarianship as a profession. There were real life consequences resulting from these misunderstandings, such as low salaries for librarians and reduced operating budgets for libraries.

The discursive functions of librarians' identity repertoires in different contexts. The third research question guiding this study was: Does the function of this description change depending on the audience or context? For instance, when librarians are talking with other librarians indirectly via the professional literature or directly on email discussion lists? When they are talking to non-librarians (i.e., a researcher)? As described in chapter one, the context in which an identity is assumed will provoke different responses and evoke different actions. This study did not find librarians' accounts of themselves as professionals varied significantly between the different data sources. What it did find, however, was that certain topics or aspects of a repertoire were more common in some sources of data than in others. For example, formal documents supporting librarians' claims to expertise, such as the Common Core State Standards Initiative (2010), were more likely to be discussed in the published literature than in the other data sources, and transportable identities were most likely to be discussed by interview participants and in the published literature, but were only mentioned once on the email discussion lists.

Context, however, did influence which of the five identity repertoires librarians used to describe themselves as professionals. As discussed above, librarians used the profession's theoretical and craft knowledge in their identity construction. What has not been discussed,

however, is the third kind of knowledge Kemmis (2010) identified as informing a professional practice—knowledge of oneself as a professional and in relation to others. Librarians often cited their local contexts as informing the choices and actions they made as professionals. For instance, librarians often cited their local context as the reason for their “nervous Nellie” approach to technology. In these contexts, they were more likely to employ the professionalism repertoire to justify a professional choice, whereas their less nervous colleagues were more likely to employ the insider-outsider repertoire. Local contexts were also where librarians’ transportable identities informed their professional identities. Although these transportable identities were not included in the overall professional identity repertoires of librarianship, they were a factor in how librarians with marginalized and underrepresented social identities served clients with similar social identities.

Sectoral differences. The final question guiding this study was: Are the descriptions of librarians and librarianship different for each library sector (public, academic, special, school)? Are the functions of these descriptions different for each library sector? Analysis of the data revealed that the overall description of librarianship was very similar for all library sectors. All librarians described librarianship as being a service-oriented profession with a unique knowledge base. Where the differences between sectors were most noticeable was in the topics discussed by librarians. These topics were often connected to what the librarians working in each sector believed the purpose of librarianship was. For instance, while public librarians believed they had a very broad purpose, to meet the information, educational, research, and entertainment needs of their entire local community, special librarians identified a more focused purpose, to help the organizations they worked for meet their goals by addressing the work-related information needs

of employees. Although the topics that librarians discussed varied by sector, the way they discussed these topics was discursively similar.

Client relationships were at the centre of all library sectors' professional identities; however, how this relationship was characterized changed depending on the context and library sector. Public librarians served the broadest range of clients and client groups. They often described their clients broadly as the community, which had the discursive effect of treating all client groups as a homogenous whole. The remaining library sectors had fewer client groups to serve; however, their relationships with certain client groups could be strained. Special librarians, for instance, generally believed they had positive relationships with their clients based on mutual respect and collaboration to meet organizational goals; however, depending on the context in which the librarian worked, they sometimes felt their clients were disrespectful of their professional knowledge and skills. The discursive function of how academic librarians described their relationship with faculty members set them apart from librarians working in the other library sectors. Faculty members were both a client group and an identity referent group for academic librarians. Academic librarians wanted to enjoy the same social status and respect they believed faculty members enjoyed. This reduced the role faculty members as clients played in academic librarians' identity construction.

Teacher librarians were set apart from librarians working in the other library sectors not by variations in how they used the language resources of librarianship, but because they had a dual professional identity. Teacher librarians were both teachers and librarians. This affected how they understood activities more commonly associated with librarianship. In other words, teacher librarians were not just meeting the information needs of their clients; they were educating them to prepare them to be productive citizens.

Research Contributions

This study extends our understanding of librarians as professionals. Librarians' professionalism, and librarianship as a profession, have been the object of past studies; however, as discussed in chapters one and two, much of this literature has focused on librarianship's professionalization processes (Abbott, 1988; Winter, 1988), the shifting focus of the profession from a library to an information science, technology, or management focus (Bennett, 1988; Harris, 1992), and the professional socialization of LIS students (Ard, et al., 2006; Hoffman & Berg, 2014; Taylor, et al., 2010). These past approaches have added to our understanding of what Dent and Whitehead (2002) described as "professionalism 'in action'" (p. 2). By examining librarians' professional identity repertoires, this study extends this work by providing insights into how librarians' understanding of themselves as professionals affects how they navigate client-librarian relationships, how they design and provide information services, how they advocate for themselves and their clients, and how they determine what professionalism means for librarianship. In addition, this study expands the LIS literature on librarians' professional identity by moving beyond examinations of how others perceive librarians or how librarians perceive themselves. As described in chapter two, this is the primary approach to examining librarians' professional identity in the LIS literature. In this approach, the opinions and perspectives of non-librarians act as a foil against which librarians understand their identity. Librarians' identities are defined in opposition to a negative popular image or clients' misperceptions. In other words, in these approaches, librarians' identities are constructed in reaction to other people's ideas and opinions about librarians and librarianship. This study found that although librarians did occasionally define themselves in opposition to negative stereotypes

and misperceptions, the relationship between librarians' professional identity construction and their clients was more complex than the literature previously had suggested.

This study employed a discourse analysis approach, developed by Potter and Wetherell (1987), to examine librarians' professional identity construction. This approach examines the interpretive repertoires people use to account for themselves in different contexts. To ensure a broad range of contexts were examined, this study used data from three different sources: journal articles, editorials, and letters to the editor from journals aimed at professional librarians; email discussion lists; and research interviews. The diversity of the data used sets this study apart from other studies in LIS that use a discourse analysis approach. Studies that examine the disciplinary discourses of LIS, such as those by Frohmann (1994), Tuominen (1997), and Olsson (2005a, 2005b, 2007, 2009), rely largely on data derived from published sources, while studies that examine the discourses that regulate people's information practices tend to rely on research interviews (Carlisle, 2007; Heizmann, 2012; Johannisson & Sundin, 2007; Sundin, 2002). Including data from a variety of sources allowed for contextual triangulation of the data, which offered reliability to the research findings, and allowed the variations within and amongst the identity repertoires to come to the fore. This diversity of data sources unveiled what was perhaps this study's most surprising result: a lack of variation in the interpretive repertoires between the different library sectors. Given that there are distinctions in the work librarians from different sectors perform, it could be assumed that there would have been more variation between their identity repertoires. However, as this study highlighted, librarians' profession identity is not based on work experience alone. Instead, it is a combination of their education, experience, interactions with clients, and professionalism.

Additionally, this study expands and builds upon theories of professional practice and identity. As described in chapter one, this study used Kemmis's (2010) framework of professional practice to shed light on librarians' professional identity and combined it with Alvesson, Ashcraft, and Thomas's (2008) definition of identity as addressing the questions "who am I?" and "how should I act?" and Zimmerman's (1998) descriptions of identity locations (discourse, situated, and transportable). Kemmis (2010) defined professional practices as socially constructed between professionals and their clients. These practices are based in three kinds of knowledge (theory, craft, and self knowledge) and provided professionals with the basis upon which to construct their professional identities. The first kind of knowledge Kemmis described was the propositional, theoretical or scientific knowledge unique to the profession. This is the knowledge upon which professionals base their expertise. And, when combined with their educations and core values, their professional expertise formed the basis of their worldview. For librarians, this knowledge was vital to how they answered the "who am I?" question of identity (Alvesson, Ashcraft, & Thomas, 2008). The second kind of knowledge Kemmis described was the profession's craft knowledge, or knowledge of how to do something. For Kemmis (2009), this knowledge is largely evident in what professionals' "do," i.e., their professional activities or work. In this study, this knowledge was evident in how librarians answered the "how should I act?" question of identity (Alvesson, Ashcraft, & Thomas, 2008).

This study did not examine how librarians performed their craft knowledge in their professional spaces. Instead, it examined the prominent role librarians gave to their professional activities and work in their identity construction. Librarians positioned experience, i.e., knowledge gained from performing the activities of librarianship, as being equal to, and sometimes more important than, their professional expertise. The professional identity of

librarians, therefore, is a combination of both expertise and experience; however, both expertise and experience are meaningless until they are combined with Kemmis's (2010) third area of professional knowledge: personal knowledge about oneself and in relation to others. The social constructionist approach this study used highlighted the complex role clients have in librarians' identity construction. The activities of librarianship are inherently social. As information specialists, librarians address the public's information needs through information services, such as information literacy education, the organization of information, and research support.

Librarians do not perform these activities in isolation. Although the discourses and practices of librarianship provide librarians with one perspective of their work, their clients, "who are co-participants" in these practices and discourses (Kemmis, 2010, p. 143), may have another perspective of these same activities based on their personal contexts and experiences. Clients' perceptions of librarianship, as well as their information needs, held a central place in librarians' identity construction. Although sometimes librarians reacted negatively to clients' misperceptions of the profession, for the most part clients had a positive effect librarians' identity construction. Librarians placed their clients' information needs at the centre of their identity construction. In other words, the professional practices of librarianship are co-constructed by librarians and their users. Although expertise and experience formed the basis for librarians' professional decisions and activities, client need provided the reason or justification.

Kemmis (2010) grounded his understanding of professional practices in Schatzki's (2002) approach to practice theory. In this understanding, practices prefigure individual action: "Practices have shapes that precede particular actors and actions, and that envelop them (like gloves, perhaps) as they perform a practice" (p. 148). In this sense, Kemmis's (2010) understanding of professional practices is similar to Alvesson and Willmott's (2002) notion of

identity regulation, described in chapter three, and Fournier's (1999) discourses of professionalism, described in chapter five. For both Alvesson and Willmott (2002) and Fournier (1999), an organization's discourses regulate, or shape, its members' thoughts, actions, and identities. This study highlighted the role information expertise, LIS education, and appeals to professionalism had in the identity regulation of librarians. What sets this study apart from Alvesson and Willmott (2002) and Fournier (1999) was its focus on how librarians themselves created, sustained, and challenged the discourses of their profession. Both Alvesson and Willmott (2002) and Fournier (1999) focused on how organizational discourses regulated the identities of their organizational members. Neither extended their analysis to an entire profession. Although professionals are members of individual organizations, their professional discourses extend beyond organizational constraints. The extra-organizational nature of librarianship's professional discourses was evident in the similarities in the overall description of librarianship between library sectors. This is not to suggest that libraries as organizations do not play a role in librarians' identity construction and regulation. This study found that the library had a largely symbolic role in librarians' identity construction. As a symbol, the library represented who librarians were, i.e., they were dedicated and flexible service professionals, while the skill and expertise they used to run the library was a demonstration of how, as professionals, librarians act. For librarians, the library was not just a place of work; it was their exclusive professional domain.

Following Zimmerman (1998), professional identity was defined as a situated identity. As a situated identity, it provided the answers to "who am I?" and "how should I act?" through librarianship's professional practices. The data largely supported this framework as librarians' professional identities were most often presented as situated identities. Within the

professionalism repertoire, however, the librarian identity itself became a transportable identity, meaning the professional status of librarianship extended librarians' professional identities past the bounds of their professional context. According to Zimmerman, a transportable identity is a "tag along" identity that can be assigned or claimed by an individual—such as gender or race (p. 90). Therefore, by claiming their professional identity as a transportable identity, librarians transform their professional identity from one that is primarily enacted in relation to work-related contexts and situations to one that librarians can draw on to inform the answers to "who am I?" and "how should I act?" regardless of the situation or context. This gives librarians' professional identity an added salience, or prominence, meaning that it is likely librarians will invoke their professional identities in diverse situations and context. This added salience may be why librarians occasionally reacted defensively to client misperceptions. Misperceptions were viewed as a threat to a salient identity. Librarians were unable to see their preferred answer to "who am I?" reflected back to them by their clients. As a result, the response to "how should I act?" was defensive. Drawing attention to the salience of librarians' professional identities may help librarians better understand their interactions with clients. For Zimmerman, transportable identities play a secondary role to situated identities. He noted that although transportable identities "tag along" regardless of the context or situation, their effect may or may not be felt, whereas situated identities are "brought into being" with the intent of pursuing specific agendas and engaging in specific activities. Situated identities, therefore play an active role in a person's identity construction while transportable identities play a more passive role. He argued that although a transportable identity may be apprehended, meaning that during an interaction those involved may be aware "at some level" that they and the people they are interacting with can be classified in a particular way, the more significant effect of transportable identities occurs after

the interaction, as they may “affect how participants subsequently describe or evaluate the interaction” (p. 91). This study suggests that professional-identity-as-transportable-identity has an immediate effect on how librarians interact with other people. When librarians employed the professionalism repertoire, they evoked their professional identity as both a situated and transportable identity, which gave both identity locations an active role in librarians’ identity construction.

Recommendations for Practice

Alvesson, Ashcraft, and Thomas (2008) suggested that the reason scholars should inquire about professional and organizational identities was that it may provide solutions to practical problems, help professionals reflect on their practices, reveal organizational and professional problems that might otherwise be overlooked, and shed light on group and social relationships at work. These areas of inquiry not only add to the research literature on professions and organizations, they suggest recommendations for professionals’ daily practices. This study has the potential to have direct outcomes for librarians’ professional practice.

Provide solutions. Although the focus of this study was not on identifying problems with librarians’ professional practices, it did highlight a few areas where alternative approaches to practices could be beneficial, the most significant area being librarians’ dissatisfaction with LIS programs. There is a longstanding divide between the expectations of librarians and the ability of LIS programs to meet these expectations. As noted in chapter five, librarians’ dissatisfaction with their graduate programs is not a new finding; however, this study did contribute to understanding the symbolic role of the MLIS in librarians’ identity construction. The MLIS was more than a requirement to work as a librarian. It acted as a symbol for librarians’ professional jurisdiction, placed them on par with other professionals, and, most importantly, gave them their

worldview. The literature on the librarian-LIS program divide is replete with advice on how to overcome it. A common recommendation is to bring librarians and LIS faculty members together to discuss how the graduate programs can meet the profession's needs (Saunders, 2015). The potential solution this study offers to this problem goes beyond bringing librarians and LIS faculty members together for discussions. It is important that LIS programs and faculty members understand librarians' professional attachment to their degrees. The degree represents librarians' expertise and skill. Although they focus on curricular matters and program limitations when they voice their dissatisfaction, the source of their frustration is the belief LIS programs are not interested in the locus of their expertise—the library. LIS programs should make clearer the connection between the curricula taught in the program and how LIS faculty members' research agendas can benefit librarians' professional practice. It is not uncommon for librarians to call on LIS programs to ensure their research directly supports professional practice (Tilley & Walters, 2016). This is not being suggested here. What is being suggested is that LIS programs should illuminate the connection between faculty research and professional practice. Librarians claim information as their jurisdictional expertise—if LIS programs and faculty members can demonstrate to librarians how their research improves librarianships' professional practices, then perhaps some of librarians' dissatisfaction with their LIS programs could be assuaged.

As discussed in chapter five, librarians' dissatisfaction with LIS programs was based on the notion that LIS programs do not adequately prepare LIS graduates for the workplace. They argued a lack of preparation resulted in new graduates having limited professional expertise; however, as was described in the insider-outsider repertoire librarians thought professional expertise could only be gained through experience. In chapter five, critiques of LIS programs were described as a disciplinary mechanism for librarians. By positioning experience above

education in relation to new LIS graduates librarians were able to delimit who was or was not a professional by defining the characteristics, behaviours, and conduct that made an MLIS holder a librarian. Given that librarians credit their professionalism to both their educations and professional experiences, it is important for librarians to create opportunities for new and soon-to-be MLIS graduates to gain valuable non-classroom experiences that will help them develop as professionals. Such opportunities could include working with LIS programs to develop high-quality field or practicum experiences (Cooper, 2013; Hoffman & Berg, 2014), creating mentoring opportunities for both MLIS students and new librarians (Phillips, 2014), or post-degree residency opportunities (Brewer, 2010). Such opportunities have been proven to increase the professional competences of new LIS students and recent MLIS graduates as well as helping students and new graduates more clearly see the connection between the more theoretically-focused learning that occurs in the classroom and their work as librarians. It is, however, equally important for librarians to recognize that LIS programs cannot meet all of librarianship's educational and training needs. Recognizing the dual roles of education *and* experience in the development of librarians as professionals will hopefully help alleviate some of the tensions felt between librarians and LIS programs. In addition, it is important for librarians to acknowledge that LIS programs have a broad range of information professions they are responsible for preparing students for, such as knowledge management, records management, and archives. Meeting the education and training needs of all these information professions is challenging. The foundation for librarians' professional identity is laid during their MLIS degrees. In other words, the MLIS enables LIS students to start to answer the question "who am I?" But, these students can only begin to answer "how should I act?" once they have entered the workplace. It is

arguable that the MLIS, or its equivalents, plays an equally important role in the professional identity construction of other information professions.

Reflection. By highlighting the linguistic resources librarians use to construct their identities, this study provides librarians with an opportunity to reflect on who they are and what they do. Other studies have also made this suggestion. Notably, Tuominen (1997), Julien (1999), and Olsson (2009) all recommended librarians rethink the way they describe their clients, while Julien and Given (2002/2003), Given and Julien (2005), and Julien and Pecoskie (2009) all recommended librarians reflect on their perceptions of faculty members. This study draws attention to the complex role clients play in librarians' identity construction. Librarian-client relationships were central in the insider-outsider, service, and advocacy repertoires, although each repertoire characterized these relationships differently. For instance, in the insider-outsider repertoire, clients were given an active role in librarians' identity construction. The perceived behaviour of the client determined how a librarian positioned her- or himself. In the service and advocacy repertoires, librarians acted on behalf of clients. Clients were a necessary component of these repertoires, meaning without their clients, librarians could not perform these central aspects of their jobs; however, clients were positioned as the passive beneficiaries of librarians' service and advocacy skills. Reflecting on the complexity of this relationship will help librarians improve services for all clients. For instance, in addition to reflecting on how they perceive faculty members as a way to meet the educational needs of students, as Julien and Given (2002/2003), Given and Julien (2005), and Julien and Pecoskie (2009) recommend, librarians should also reflect on how their perceptions affect their ability to provide faculty members with information services. Perhaps by meeting the information needs of faculty members, librarians

would demonstrate the full range of services they offer and skills they possess, and faculty members may be more willing to share classroom time.

Teacher librarians may also want to reflect on their dual professional identity and start developing connections with both librarians and teachers. Past research suggests teacher librarians contribute to their own professional isolation because they publish in journals and present at conferences aimed solely at teacher librarians (Hartzell, 2002). In addition, a lack of support from school administrators has been demonstrated to increase teacher librarians' feelings of isolation (Oberg, 2006; Ritichie, 2011). This study recommends that teacher librarians explore alternative ways to open up conversations with classroom teachers and school administrators about how teacher librarians are also teachers. As this study has demonstrated, the focus on inquiry-based learning found in Common Core State Standards (2010) and the Framework for Student Learning (2011) provides teacher librarians with a starting point for these conversations. In addition, teacher librarians should highlight the components of their professional identities that they share in common with teachers, such as collaboration. By focusing on how they not only have the professional skills to meet the educational needs of students, as outlined in government policies, but that they also share a similar professional worldview with their teaching colleagues, teacher librarians may be able to garner further support for their professional roles.

This study also draws attention to how librarianship's professional values, educational requirements, and knowledge base interact to provide librarians with a shared worldview. Librarians believed their worldview gave them a unique perspective and enabled them to meet their clients' information needs. Professional associations, such as the American Library Association, often enshrine this worldview in policy documents, such as the *Core Values of Librarianship* (2004). The findings from this study could be used by librarians to facilitate a

discussion around whether or not such documents accurately reflect the profession's worldview. This is particularly important regarding documents aimed at defining profession-wide values and competencies. For instance, the ALA's *Core Competences of Librarianship* (2009) seeks to define the "basic knowledge to be possessed by all persons graduating from an ALA-accredited master's program in library and information studies" (p. 1). In this document, advocacy is mentioned twice—in relation to the need for librarians to understand the importance of advocacy for "libraries, librarians, other library workers, and library services" (p. 2), and to the "principles and methods of advocacy" to promote and explain reference and users services (p. 4). This study found that advocacy for clients was as important in librarians' identity construction as advocacy for libraries, librarianship, and librarians. Given that advocacy was one of five identity repertoires for librarians, perhaps it should have its own section in documents such as the *Core Competences of Librarianship*.

As the data for this study demonstrated, librarians do reflect on their professional practices in their published literature and on their email discussion lists. Past research has indicated that librarians use blogs, Twitter, and other social media to reflect on learning and professional practices (Branch & de Groot, 2013; Powers, 2009). All of these venues provide librarians with excellent ways to reflect on their practices on their own and in a group, but most of these options take place virtually. To supplement these virtual options, library associations and employers could help librarians create spaces for professional reflection by facilitating and supporting communities of practice (Belzowski, Ladwig, & Miller, 2013), creating professional development opportunities that include reflective components (Yukawa & Harada, 2011), offering peer coaching and mentoring (Sinkinson, 2011), and creating journal clubs (Fitzgibbons, 2015) and intellectual communities (Jacobs, Berg, & Cornwall, 2010). Librarians are aware of

the benefits of reflective practices for their professional lives. Providing additional online and in-person opportunities to engage in these practices will improve librarians' professional practices and their ability to meet their clients' information needs.

Overlooked problems. Librarians credited their professional identities with giving them a particular worldview. This worldview was focused on clients' information needs and figuring out how best to use librarians' information expertise to meet these needs. Discursively, this worldview was dominated by white, female perspectives. This has caused professional problems for librarians and librarianship, some of which were identified in chapter five. Espinal (2001) and Honma (2006), for instance, both identified a lack of spaces for librarians with marginalized and underrepresented social identities to discuss their experiences within the profession. And there is a growing body of literature offering practical advice on how to include marginalized voices in librarianship's discourses (Galavan, 2015; Hall, 2012; Hathcock, 2015). The findings of this study suggest that one way librarianship can include the voices of librarians with marginalized and underrepresented social identities in its professional discourses is for librarians to consider how they can best serve their professional needs. Librarianship is, by its own definition, a service profession. Although the majority of the service repertoire focused on meeting clients' information-related needs, there was a component of the repertoire that focused on how librarians could serve the profession itself. Meeting the needs of librarians with marginalized and underrepresented identities, whether through changing hiring and recruitment practices, including the voices and experiences of such librarians in LIS curricula, or increasing mentoring opportunities, would provide a space within the profession to include non-dominant perspectives.

Serving the professional needs of librarians with marginalized and underrepresented identities will improve the profession in a variety of ways. It will ensure that librarians are using

their core professional skills relating to service to meet their own professional needs. This will reinforce the importance of these skills and provide librarians with new places to practice them. Including different perspectives in the profession's discourses will help to illuminate blind spots in librarians' professional practice that inadvertently overlook the needs of certain client groups. It will expand librarianship's worldview. Librarians place a lot of emphasis on their worldview in their identity construction. This worldview was based, in part, on the profession's core values. Including more diverse perspectives in the profession's worldview will help librarians better address their core values because they will have a better understanding of what these values mean not only to themselves as professionals, but to their clients.

Relationships at work. This study provided additional insights into the previously noted tensions between librarians and their paraprofessional coworkers. Role convergences between librarians and paraprofessionals have been identified as a source of this tension. This study found that librarians were able to soften this tension within themselves by focusing on their professionalism. The causes of role convergence, namely reduced library budgets and unclear professional designations (Cox & Meyers, 2010; Fragola, 2009; Hill, 2014; Litwin, 2009), are likely not changing, which means the tensions between librarians and paraprofessionals are also not going to disappear. Librarians are quick to point out the important contributions paraprofessionals make to the everyday running of libraries. Librarians frame these contributions as being necessary for the day-to-day running of the library as an organization. Reference questions have to be answered, programs have to be run, and books have to be catalogued. In addition, librarians have a clear understanding of how their professionalism contributes to meeting clients' information needs. This understanding extends beyond the practicalities of what needs to be done to ensure the library, as an organization, is working efficiently. Therefore,

while librarians also answer reference questions, run programs, and catalogue books, the reasons for these activities extend beyond the running of libraries as organizations. This is a subtle but important distinction. Clear channels of communication are important during periods of role convergence. By communicating with paraprofessionals about who they are and what they do as professionals, librarians will be able to start a conversation about not only the challenges of role convergence, but also how librarians and paraprofessionals can work together to meet the needs of their clients. Such conversations will also provide paraprofessionals with the opportunity to share with librarians their occupational worldview. This could improve the working relationships between paraprofessionals and librarians, as well as have implications for how libraries as organizations are run, especially during times of transition (James, Shamchuk, & Koch, 2015).

Policy Recommendations

As a profession, there are few public policies that regulate the actions of librarians. Instead, librarians rely on their professional associations and educational programs to develop policies that regulate who can enter the profession, how and what they are taught, and that guide their professional behaviours. This study provides important information for LIS education policy makers. The identity repertoires of librarians highlight what librarians feel is most important about themselves as professionals and about librarianship as a profession. These qualities can form the basis for curriculum development, renewal, and evaluation efforts. For instance, is a service orientation apparent in a program's goals? Or, are there courses that support skill development of the profession's advocacy point of view? Highlighting that librarianship is a profession with a strong knowledge base, service orientation, and unique worldview, and that librarians are flexible, dedicated, and client-focused professionals will ensure that LIS education connects with the broader community. Incorporating identity

repertoires in LIS program goals, courses, and evaluation processes will demonstrate to prospective librarians not only what their future profession is like, but also who they will be expected to be once they join that profession and how they may transform it to address the future needs of their communities. A strong professional identity has been connected to increased professional commitment (Freidson, 2001). Preer (2006) has suggested that examining the history of librarianship and libraries is one way to encourage LIS students to develop their professional identity. The findings of this study suggest that incorporating opportunities for LIS students to discuss and examine their emerging identity throughout the curriculum would also be beneficial.

Lastly, the findings presented here illustrate the need to continue recruiting people with marginalized and underrepresented identities to expand the profession's discourses. Not only are the predominantly white and female discourses of librarianship potentially discouraging people with marginalized and underrepresented identities from joining the profession, these discourses may also be limiting their ability to fully contribute once they have joined it. Notably, this study found that marginalized and underrepresented identities of librarians were only expressed in relation to specific work roles, such as service to populations with similar social identities. This may act as a kind of internal disciplinary mechanism for librarians with marginal and underrepresented identities. By recruiting more diverse candidates to LIS programs, there will be more librarians with diverse social identities to take up different work roles. This will bring new and diverse perspectives to bear on all aspects of librarianship and challenge the current professional points of view. This will benefit both the profession and the clients they serve.

Future Research Directions

In addition to examining the identity repertoires of librarians, this study also uncovered areas relating to librarians' professional identity construction that require additional research. These areas relate to the interplay of professional identity and transportable identities in librarianship and librarians' relationships with both librarian and non-librarian administrators.

As discussed in chapter five, this study adds empirical support to theoretical examinations of the cultural dominance of whiteness in librarianship. What it was unable to examine was how librarians with marginalized and underrepresented social identities experience what it means to be a librarian. Research into other professions has indicated that people from marginalized and underrepresented groups do experience what it means to be a professional differently from their colleagues with transportable identities that resemble the cultural majority. Some research has even suggested that discourses of professionalism are used to control the emotions and behaviours of employees from marginalized or underrepresented cultural and ethnic groups. Froyum (2013), for instance, suggested that discourses of professionalism could mute the voices of African American employees by policing their behaviour and emotions. In her study of African American youth workers, African American employees were expected to sublimate their emotions and opinions in the workplace and any deviation from this was labelled unprofessional. Although the workplace experiences of librarians from marginalized and underrepresented groups have been examined (Alabi, 2015; Edwards & Fisher, 2003; Gonzalez-Smith, Swanson, & Tanaka, 2014; Hall, 2012; Hussey, 2009), how librarians with marginalized and underrepresented identities experience what it is like to be a professional and the effects of librarianship's identity repertoires on the actions and self concept of these librarians has not received any attention. Future research into this area will shed light on the effect of

librarianship's identity repertoires on how librarians with marginalized and underrepresented social identities construct their professional identities.

In addition, future research should examine the effect of librarians' national identities and contexts on their professional identities. Past research has demonstrated that there is a connection between professional identity and place, specifically geographical place (Larson & Pearson, 2012). Although efforts were made to include data that reflected both Canadian and American librarians' professional identity, the analysis did not uncover discernible differences between how Canadian and American librarians constructed their professional identity. Given the cultural similarities between Canada and the United States and the fact that LIS programs in both countries are accredited by the American Library Association, some similarities in librarians' professional identity repertoires were to be expected. However, each country does have different historical circumstances and contexts that could affect how its citizens construct their identities, including their professional identities. For instance, how do the discourses of race, racism, and nationalism in both countries affect LIS programs' recruitment efforts? By examining these discourses within different social contexts, we will be able to see the effect of these larger discourses on librarians' identity construction. Such research will provide a more complete picture of librarianship's role in society.

Librarians' identities as managers and leaders are not well studied. In the LIS literature, leadership is often mentioned in relation to the changes libraries and librarianship are facing (Phillips, 2014); however, in chapter four, it was noted that in the change repertoire management and leadership were positioned as being separate from librarianship. According to Jange (2012), commitment and dedication, strong interpersonal and communication skills, and caring for colleagues and coworkers are the top leadership qualities librarians feel a library leader should

have. Given that these qualities mirror the “service-orientation of librarianship” (Phillips, 2014, p. 338) it is perhaps surprising that leadership did not play a larger role in librarians’ identity construction. Perhaps, as Phillips (2014) highlighted in a review of the LIS leadership literature, this is because leadership is narrowly defined concept in the LIS literature. Often, as Phillips’ review noted, management and leadership are often used synonymously in the LIS literature, transformational leadership is the dominant leadership style discussed, and there is a lack of consensus around what leadership skills librarians should possess to be effective library leaders. Phillips described leaders as being those who “maintain an understanding of what the mission and goals of an organization are and how these can be fulfilled” (p. 337). This characterization of leadership shares many commonalities with the service, professionalism, and advocacy repertoires. Given these commonalities, future research should pay attention to librarians’ conceptions of leadership and their understandings of themselves as leaders. Why, for instance, do librarians discursively separate management and leadership from librarianship given that they include many leadership qualities in their identity repertoires? Would a broader range of approaches to leadership in both the LIS research literature and the librarianship professional literature help to bridge this divide?

In addition, the role of managers and leaders in the identity construction of librarians is not well studied. As discussed in chapter five, role convergence between librarians and paraprofessionals has encouraged many librarians to take on management roles. It is likely that in the future, more librarians will continue to work in management positions as technology and library budgets continue to narrow the gap between the work tasks of librarians and paraprofessionals. Further research into librarians’ relationships with their managers, and into

librarians' roles as managers, will shed light on how managers and leaders construct librarians' identities and how librarians enact their management roles.

Conclusion

This examination of librarians' professional identity construction makes a valuable contribution to the LIS and professions research literature. Librarians have an important social role. As this study demonstrated, how librarians conceive of and enact this role is greatly influenced by how they construct their professional identity. While past studies have examined librarians' professional image, the self-perceptions of librarians, and the influence of popular images or stereotypes on the status of the profession, there have been very few studies that examined how librarians construct their professional identity. Using multiple data-gathering methods enabled this study to examine the language resources librarians use to describe themselves as professionals and librarianship as a profession. Five identity repertoires were identified: insider-outsider, service, professionalism, change, and advocacy. Each of these repertoires had a different discursive function that affected how librarians thought of themselves as professionals and how they enacted their professional roles. Findings demonstrated that librarians described themselves as dedicated service professionals with a unique knowledge base and jurisdictional expertise, who were flexible in relation to change, and who had a desire to ensure clients understood their value as professionals.

Librarians and LIS educators will benefit from the dissemination of these findings. The insights and information revealed offer librarians opportunities to reflect on the relationships they have with their clients, the messages they communicate through their advocacy activities, how they use technology to meet clients' information needs, their relationships with their paraprofessional colleagues, and how they conceive of the library as an institution. It is hoped

that LIS educators will be able to incorporate these findings into their teaching to help LIS students with their own professional identity development. Hopefully, these findings will stimulate discussion about what it means to be a librarian and prompt further conversations for these students about how to include diverse perspectives to broaden librarianship's professional discourses.

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Appendix A

Professional Journal Articles, Editorials, and Letters to the Editor Included in the Study – Listed by Alphabetically by Journal

American Libraries

- Alire, C. (2010). New normal for libraries. *American Libraries*, 41(5), 6.
- Angell, K., Evans, B., & Nicolas, B. (2012). Reflecting our communities. *American Libraries*, 43(1/2), 45-47.
- Beall, J. (2011). Librarians and the threat to free political speech. *American Libraries*, 42(9/10), 33.
- Bell, S. (2010). Fit libraries are future-proof. *American Libraries*, 41(10), 37-39.
- Booth, C. (2010). Build your own instructional literacy. *American Libraries*, 41(6/7), 40-43.
- Galston, C., Huber, E. K., Johnson, K., & Long, A. (2012). Community reference: Making libraries indispensable in a new way. *American Libraries*, 43(5/6), 46-50.
- Goldberg, B. (2012). What's new in LIS schools. *American Libraries*, 43(7/8), 24-26.
- Griffey, J., Houghton-Jan, S., & Neiburger, E. (2010). Freedom and technology. *American Libraries*, 41(11/12), 28.
- Hoek, D. J. (2011). Must we abide? *American Libraries*, 42(3/4), 21.
- Manley, W. (2010a). Conservatives among us. *American Libraries*, 41(10), 56.
- Manley, W. (2010b). Quirkiness "r" us. *American Libraries*, 41(5), 56.
- Manley, W. (2010c). Why librarianship endures. *American Libraries*, 41(9), 56.
- Manley, W. (2011a). Approachable you. *American Libraries*, 42(3/4), 64.
- Manley, W. (2011b). My professional heroes. *American Libraries*, 42(5/6), 88.
- Manley, W. (2012a). Is God really a librarian? *American Libraries*, 34(9/10), 56.
- Manley, W. (2012b). Taking care of business. *American Libraries*, 43(1/2), 88.

- Manley, W. (2012c). Your mileage may vary. *American Libraries*, 43(7/8), 56.
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- Smith, S. D. (2010). Reaching out to undergraduates: Recruitment via internship. *American Libraries*, 41(9), 39-41.
- Smith, S. E., & Mercer, H. (2010). It's the content, stupid. *American Libraries*, 41(1/2), 48-51.
- Smith, S., & Pickett, C. (2011). Avoiding the path to obsolescence. *American Libraries*, 42(9/10), 40-43.
- Spackman, A. (2010). Our conservative ideals. *American Libraries*, 41(4), 25.
- Wong, E. (Y.-L.). (2012). Cataloging then, now, & tomorrow. *American Libraries*, 43(5/6), 52-54.

College & Research Libraries

- Coker, C., VanDuinkerken, W., & Bales, S. (2010). Seeking full citizenship: A defense of tenure faculty status for librarians. *College & Research Libraries*, 71(5), 406-420.
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Vinopal, J. (2012). Project portfolio management for academic libraries: A gentle introduction. *College & Research Libraries, 73*(4), 379-389.

Westbrock, T., & Fabian, S. (2010). Proficiencies for instruction librarians: Is there still a disconnect between professional education and professional responsibilities? *College & Research Libraries, 71*(6), 569-590.

Wirth, A. A., Kelly, M., & Webster, J. (2010). Assessing library scholarship: Experience at a land grant university. *College & Research Libraries, 71*(6), 510-524.

Feliciter

Bird, A. (2012). A tale of leadership from a librarian in wild rose country. *Feliciter, 58*, 56-58.

Bordonaro, K. (2010). International activities of Canadian librarians. *Feliciter, 56*, 227, 229.

Brockmeyer, D. (2011). Jack of all trades, master of one: Librarianship. *Feliciter, 57*, 44-46.

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Appendix B

Ethics Approval Documentation

Notification of Approval

Date: December 9, 2013
Study ID: Pro00044116
Principal Investigator: Deborah Hicks
Study Supervisor: Jose da Costa
Study Title: The Construction of Librarians' Professional Identities: A Discourse Analysis
Approval Expiry Date: December 8, 2014
Sponsor/Funding Agency: SSHRC - Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council SSHRC

Thank you for submitting the above study to the Research Ethics Board 1. Your application has been reviewed and approved on behalf of the committee.

A renewal report must be submitted next year prior to the expiry of this approval if your study still requires ethics approval. If you do not renew on or before the renewal expiry date, you will have to re-submit an ethics application.

Approval by the Research Ethics Board does not encompass authorization to access the staff, students, facilities or resources of local institutions for the purposes of the research.

Sincerely,

William Dunn, Ph.D.
Chair, Research Ethics Board 1

Note: This correspondence includes an electronic signature (validation and approval via an online system).

Appendix C

Email Invitation to Join the Study

My name is Deborah Hicks and I am a doctoral student at the University of Alberta. I am conducting research into the professional identities of librarians, in a study entitled: “The Construction of Librarians’ Professional Identities: A Discourse Analysis.” I was hoping to speak with you about your work and life as a librarian.

The purpose of this study is to investigate the professional identities of librarians. Librarians, as information specialists, serve an important role in the information age. New ways to organize, access, and use information are being developed every day; as a result, the work of librarians has changed. This study asks the following question: What impact, if any, have these changes had on the professional identity of librarians? Given the important role of librarians in providing information services, such as information literacy education and access to information resources, an understanding of librarians’ professional identity will shed light on how the profession contributes to and interacts with the knowledge society, and enables the public to access the information they need to contribute to society. The principal investigator for this project is a PhD student with the Department of Educational Policy Studies at the University of Alberta. Any findings from this study will appear in a report to be read by the researcher’s dissertation committee and her co-supervisors, Dr. Ann Curry and Dr. José da Costa, and will be published in academic journals and presented at conferences.

Procedures & Confidentiality

As the purpose of this study is to learn more about your professional identity, if you agree to participate, you will be asked questions about your experiences and opinions about your work as a librarian. You will be interviewed at least once for one to two hours. If required for clarification purposes a second interview may be scheduled at your convenience. Interviews will take place face-to-face at a time and place that is convenient to you and will be recorded (voice only).

All your responses will be kept strictly confidential. Any identifying information, such as your name and the organization for which you work, will be removed from the transcript resulting from our interview and will not be included in any publication that might come from this study. Please be aware that although direct quotations may be used in the writing of the report, your anonymity will be ensured by the use of a random name chosen specifically for this study and attached to any documents resulting from our interview. Interview recordings and transcripts will be kept on a password protected computer accessible only by the researcher.

Risks & Benefits

The risks of participating in this study are no more than the risks of everyday life. You do not need to talk about anything that makes you feel uncomfortable. You might not experience direct benefits from participating in this project; however, as the aim of this research is to provide insight into the professional identity of librarians, your participation in this study will help address a gap in the Library and Information Studies (LIS) literature. There is no reimbursement of expenses incurred during participation in this study.

Freedom to Withdraw

Participation in this study is voluntary and you may withdraw from the study up to one week following our interview or upon the approval of your final transcript without penalty or explanation. During the interviews themselves you may refuse to answer a question, request that the interview be stopped at any time, and ask that the recording device be stopped. If you choose to withdraw, any data collected will be destroyed and your participation in the study will remain confidential.

If you have any questions, would like further details, or would like to schedule a time to speak, please contact me at deborah.hicks@ualberta.ca or (780) 637-9950. My co-supervisors, Dr. Ann Curry (macurry@ualberta.ca) and José da Costa (jose.da.costa@ualberta.ca) are also available should you have further questions regarding the study.

Sincerely,
Deborah Hicks

The plan for this study has been reviewed for its adherence to ethical guidelines by a Research Ethics Board at the University of Alberta. For questions regarding participant rights and ethical conduct of research, contact the Research Ethics Office at (780) 492-2615.

Appendix D

Informed Consent Form

The Construction of Librarians' Professional Identities: A Discourse Analysis

Principal Investigator: Deborah Hicks

The purpose of this study is to investigate the professional identities of librarians. Librarians, as information specialists, serve an important role in the information age. New ways to organize, access, and use information are being developed every day; as a result, the work of librarians has changed. This study asks the following question: What impact, if any, have these changes had on the professional identity of librarians? Given the important role of librarians in providing information services, such as information literacy education and access to information resources, an understanding of librarians' professional identity will shed light on how the profession contributes to and interacts with the knowledge society, and enables the public to access the information they need to contribute to society. The principal investigator for this project is a PhD student with the Department of Educational Policy Studies at the University of Alberta. Any findings from this study will appear in a report to be read by the researcher's dissertation committee and her co-supervisors, Dr. Ann Curry and Dr. José da Costa, and will be published in academic journals and presented at conferences.

Procedures & Confidentiality

As the purpose of this study is to learn more about your professional identity, if you agree to participate, you will be asked questions about your experiences and opinions about your work as a librarian. You will be interviewed at least once for one to two hours. If required for clarification purposes a second interview may be scheduled at your convenience. Interviews will take place face-to-face at a time and place that is convenient to you and will be recorded (voice only).

All your responses will be kept strictly confidential. Any identifying information, such as your name and the organization for which you work, will be removed from the transcript resulting from our interview and will not be included in any publication that might come from this study. Please be aware that although direct quotations may be used in the writing of the report, your anonymity will be ensured by the use of a random name chosen specifically for this study and attached to any documents resulting from our interview. Interview recordings and transcripts will be kept on a password protected computer accessible only by the researcher.

Risks & Benefits

The risks of participating in this study are no more than the risks of everyday life. You do not need to talk about anything that makes you feel uncomfortable. You might not experience direct benefits from participating in this project; however, as the aim of this research is to provide

insight into the professional identity of librarians, your participation in this study will help address a gap in the Library and Information Studies (LIS) literature. There is no reimbursement of expenses incurred during participation in this study.

Freedom to Withdraw

Participation in this study is voluntary and you may withdraw from the study up to one week following our interview or upon the approval of your final transcript without penalty or explanation. During the interviews themselves you may refuse to answer a question, request that the interview be stopped at any time, and ask that the recording device be stopped. If you choose to withdraw, any data collected will be destroyed and your participation in the study will remain confidential.

If you have any questions, would like further details, or would like to schedule a time to speak, please contact me at deborah.hicks@ualberta.ca or (780) 637-9950. My co-supervisors, Dr. Ann Curry (macurry@ualberta.ca) and José da Costa (jose.da.costa@ualberta.ca) are also available should you have further questions regarding the study.

Please note that you may keep a copy of this letter as part of your records.

Thank you for your time and participation in this study.

Sincerely,

Deborah Hicks
Department of Educational Policy Studies
University of Alberta
Email: deborah.hicks@ualberta.ca
Phone: (780) 637-9950

The plan for this study has been reviewed for its adherence to ethical guidelines by a Research Ethics Board at the University of Alberta. For questions regarding participant rights and ethical conduct of research, contact the Research Ethics Office at (780) 492-2615.

Participant Consent Form

The Construction of Librarians' Professional Identities: A Discourse Analysis

Two copies of this Consent Form are provided. Please sign both copies, and keep one copy for your records.

I, _____ consent to participate in this study.

1. I have the right to withdraw from the project up to one week after the interview. If I choose to do so, the information I provide will be returned to me and not used in the project.
2. I agree to be initially interviewed for no more than 2 hours, which will be audio recorded.
3. I agree that the researcher may contact me for a follow up interview for the purposes of clarification regarding my initial interview responses.
4. I understand that the interview may be transcribed and used only for the purposes of this research project.
5. My identity will be kept confidential and a pseudonym used in all documents shared publicly.
6. The research will endeavor to ensure that no harm will come to me through my participation in this project.
7. The data gathered during the interview will be held by the researcher in a secure location and destroyed five years after the completion of the study (as required by the University of Alberta).

As a participant in this study:

- I have read the information letter
- I understand the purpose and procedures of the study
- I understand the risks and benefits of participating in the study
- I have had an opportunity to ask questions and discuss the study
- I understand that I can refuse to answer interview questions, stop the interview at any time, or ask for things that I said to be edited or deleted without negative consequences to me.

I consent to be interviewed. I understand that the interview will be audio-recorded and that the information collected during this interview will be used for educational and research purposes only.

Both researcher and participant will possess one signed copy of this information and consent form. The participant is to keep one copy for their records.

Participant's Signature:

Date:

Researcher's Signature:

Date:

Appendix E

Confidentiality Agreement

Project title - **The Construction of Librarians' Professional Identities: A Discourse Analysis**

I, _____, the transcriptionist have been hired to transcribe audio recorded interviews.

I agree to -

1. keep all the research information shared with me confidential by not discussing or sharing the research information in any form or format (e.g., disks, tapes, transcripts) with anyone other than the *Researcher*.
2. keep all research information in any form or format (e.g., disks, tapes, transcripts) secure while it is in my possession.
3. return all research information in any form or format (e.g., disks, tapes, transcripts) to the *Researcher* when I have completed the research tasks.
4. after consulting with the *Researcher*, erase or destroy all research information in any form or format regarding this research project that is not returnable to the *Researcher* (e.g., information stored on computer hard drive).
5. hold in strictest confidence the identification of any individual that may be inadvertently revealed during the transcription of audio-taped interviews, or in any associated documents.

(Print Name)	(Signature)	(Date)
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Researcher

(Print Name)	(Signature)	(Date)
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The plan for this study has been reviewed for its adherence to ethical guidelines and approved by Research Ethics Board at the University of Alberta. For questions regarding participant rights and ethical conduct of research, contact the Research Ethics Office at (780) 492-2615.

Appendix F

Interview Guide

Pre-Interview Procedures

- Introduce project (see below)
- Outline procedures (length of time, audio recording set up)
- Review ethical considerations
- Ask participant if there are questions or objections about the proposed procedures and/or ethical considerations
- Sign informed consent forms

Introduction

The purpose of this study is to investigate the professional identities of librarians. Specifically, I am interested in your identity as an information professional. What, in your opinion, does it mean to be a librarian? We'll be exploring your thoughts about and experiences of being a librarian over six broad categories: job title and roles, spaces services and people, career path, librarianship, professionalism, and work-life balance.

Job Title and Roles

1. Can you describe what it is you do?
2. What title do you give yourself?
 - a. Is this the same as your organization title? If not, why not?
 - b. Do you use the term "librarian"? When? Why? Why not?
 - c. Are there certain situations when you choose one term (like librarian) over another (like information professional)?
3. Have you ever called yourself a librarian?
 - a. (Alternate question if answer to question 2b is "information professional"): Have you ever called yourself an information professional?
4. When did you first call yourself a librarian/information professional?

Spaces, Services, and People

5. What is your relationship with the physical space in which you work?

- a. Do you spend a lot of time there?
 - b. Do you associate yourself with this space?
 - c. Do your clients associate you with it?
6. Can you tell me about the people who use your organization's services?
- a. How do you characterize your relationship with these people? An educator? Facilitator? Community builder? Guide? Service provider? Helper?
 - b. What word do you use to describe them? Why?

Career Path

- 7. How long have you been a librarian?
- 8. How did you decide you wanted to be a librarian?
- 9. Is it as you imagined?

Librarianship

10. If you were to describe to your family or friends what a "librarian" does, what would you say?
- a. In your opinion, what are the core values of librarianship? Are they applicable to your job?
11. How can you tell you're doing a good job?
12. How would you describe a good librarian?
13. How would you like to be seen as a librarian?
14. Do you think what you do as a academic/ public /special/teacher librarian is different from what other librarians do in their jobs?
- a. In your opinion, do all librarians, regardless of the environment they work in, have the same or similar core values? How are they similar or different?

15. Would you like to see librarianship change in anyway?

16. Are resources or relationships more important in librarianship?

Professionalism

17. Do you consider yourself to be a professional?

18. What does being a professional mean to you?

19. Do you distinguish between yourself and your paraprofessional colleagues? How?

20. Do you believe your clients/patrons see a difference?

a. If yes, what differences do you think they see? Why?

b. If no, why don't you think they see a difference?

21. Tell me about your relationship with the other librarians in your organization?

a. What is your professional relationship with your manager like?

b. If you supervise people, what is your relationship with them like?

c. With other librarians in your organization?

d. If you work alone, other non-information professional colleagues in similar organization positions?

Work-Life Balance

22. How important is your career to you?

23. What other things are important to you?

24. How do these things fit in with your work?

25. What role does your personal background play in your professional life?

26. What other plans or hopes do you have for your professional future?

27. Is there anything we have not covered that you would like to add?

Appendix G

Coding Scheme

- **Administrators** - Descriptions of library administrators, leaders/leadership, and directors.
- **Advocacy** - Descriptions of the formal and informal advocacy work librarians do.
- **Attitudes or Orientations** - Descriptions of librarian-specific attitudes and approaches to professional issues. Separate from professional values. Unique characteristics of the profession.
- **Buzz Words** – Business, trendy, tech-inspired language.
- **Change** - Descriptions of professional and societal changes perceived to be affecting librarians and the practice of librarianship.
- **Employment concerns** - Recruitment, salaries, role demands, organizational structure.
- **Expertise** - Descriptions of professional expertise perceived to be unique to librarians and librarianship. Knowledge base of the profession. Skills.
- **Future of the Profession** – Descriptions of threats to, solutions for, predictions for, etc. the future of librarians and librarianship. Including discussion of recruitment to the profession and whether or not the profession will survive into the future.
- **Library as Place** - Descriptions of the library as place as it relates to librarians. Includes phrases that personify the library and descriptions that directly equate the library as place with librarians.
- **Library or Information** – Descriptions of the value of “library/librarian” over “information/information professional” (and vice versa) with implications for librarians.

- **LIS Education** - Descriptions of the impact LIS education had on librarians' sense of professional identity including ways in which the programs have failed graduates.
- **Other identities** - Mentions of non-professional identities as they related to librarians and librarianship - race, ethnicity, gender, class, etc.
- **Perceptions of other librarians** - Descriptions of how librarians working in other sectors view other librarians.
- **Perceptions of Others** - Descriptions of how librarians perceive non-librarians' view the profession. Includes stereotypes, popular images, as well as the perceptions of users (faculty, students, teachers, etc.).
- **Professionalism** - Descriptions of the qualities that characterize librarianship as a profession. Includes comparisons with other professions. Foundations of the profession. Professional development.
- **Reputation or Positioning** - Descriptions that focus on the reputation and credibility of librarianship and librarians. Includes descriptions of librarians positioning themselves in relation to others .
- **Roles** - Descriptions of "what librarians do," role change, and role definitions.
- **Service** - Descriptions of service activities (teaching, meeting information needs, professional association membership, research), philosophies, choices, and user experiences.
- **Technology** - Descriptions of how and why librarians use technology.
- **Users** - Descriptions of how librarians see and understand their users.
- **Values** - Descriptions of professional values.