An Exploration of Academic Librarians as Researchers within a University Setting

by

Maureen Babb

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Library and Information Studies

School of Library and Information Studies

University of Alberta

Abstract

This thesis explores the role of academic librarians as researchers, according to the perceptions of academic librarians themselves, as well as non-librarian faculty. Data collection included surveying 60 participants, including 30 librarians and 30 non-librarian faculty from six Canadian universities, interviewing two librarians from one Canadian university for a pilot study, interviewing 15 librarians and seven non-librarian faculty members from eight Canadian universities, and conducting a document analysis of the collective agreements from 12 Canadian universities. Interviews were conducted after survey results had been analysed, and were informed by the results of those surveys. Interviews solicited more detailed and nuanced information than the surveys. Survey data were analysed using descriptive statistics, interview data were analysed using conventional content analysis, and the collective agreements were analysed using manifest content analysis. Librarians were found to regularly engage in research, and research was considered to be an important duty of librarians, though not their primary duty. Research carried out by librarians was considered important for the profession, while often simultaneously considered extraneous to the individual jobs of librarians. Librarian research was found to confer a variety of benefits by contributing to the discipline in which the research was conducted, improving professional practice, and by encouraging trust and communication between librarians and non-librarian faculty. Non-librarian faculty were found to be largely unaware of librarian research, though generally encouraging of it despite this lack of awareness. Librarians generally wanted to engage in research, frequently to a greater degree than they were practically able to. A lack of formalised support for librarian research was common, even at universities where research was an expectation for librarians, particularly with regard to time allotted for research, funding opportunities, and research mentorship and education. This lack of

support was reflected in many collective agreements that contained vague language that had potential to minimize support for, or even hamper, librarian research. All participants indicated that librarians must be free to conduct research. Ultimately, librarian research was found to be highly valuable, yet under threat. In order to support librarian research, universities can ensure that librarians have the time, financial and institutional support, and education necessary to conduct research. In addition, librarians must advocate for their right to conduct research in order to make supervisors and university administration more aware of the value of librarian research. As well, librarian research will grow in a climate of research and peer support at Canadian universities.

Preface

This thesis is an original work by Maureen Babb. Elements of this thesis required ethics approval. This thesis was completed in phases and received ethics approval from the University of Alberta Research Ethics Board on three occasions for surveys, pilot interviews, and interviews, respectively. These ethics submissions were linked:

1. Project name: "The Perception of Academic Librarians within a University Setting"

   No.: Pro00041633

   Date: 8/29/2013

2. Project name: "The Perception of Academic Librarians within a University Setting"

   No.: Pro00042463

   Date: 9/13/2013

3. Project name: "An Exploration of the Perception of Academic Librarians as Researchers within a University Setting"

   No.: Pro00060082

   Date: 12/1/2015

Ανδρα μοι εννεπε, μουσα, πολυτροπον, ος μαλα πολλα

πλαγχθη, επει Τροιης ιεπρον πτολιεθρον επεπσεν

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank first and foremost Dr. Michael McNally and Dr. Tami Oliphant from the School of Library and Information Studies at the University of Alberta, who were endlessly patient and kind with me during the writing of this thesis — your advice, support, and humour was invaluable. I would also like to thank Dr. Toni Samek, also of SLIS, whose insights during the development of this thesis strengthened it considerably. Dr. Kathleen Hunter and Dr. Belinda Parke from the Faculty of Nursing at the University of Alberta served as much as research mentors to me as anyone in my own faculty, and I am tremendously grateful to have learned research techniques from them that were applied to this thesis. Thane Chambers, librarian at the J.W. Scott Health Sciences Library at the University of Alberta deserves my thanks as well, for her knowledge and support of this thesis.

Thanks as well to each and every friend of mine who was there for me in the middle of the night when I was freaking out about this thesis, who told me that you believed in me when I didn't believe in myself — I couldn't have done it without you. Thank you to Josh, who didn't appear until late in the process, but who encourages me to be better. And thank you as well to my family for their support while I worked through this.

Table of Contents

List of Tables

Chapter 1: Introduction

Active participation in research is frequently an expected duty of academic librarians, as is the ability to facilitate and support research within the larger institution. At the University of Saskatchewan, for example, librarians are expected to engage in research as a component of their job, if they expect to be promoted or granted tenure.[1] At the University of Manitoba, engagement in scholarship is required for librarians to advance to certain ranks.[2] While the precise definition of scholarship is unclear in the collective agreement, research is included under scholarship's aegis at the University of Manitoba. The American Library Association (ALA) lists in its core competencies document that all librarians should be familiar with qualitative and quantitative research methodologies, while other academically oriented organizations, such as the Canadian Association of University Teachers (CAUT) and the Canadian Association of Research Libraries (CARL) more explicitly state that academic librarians can and should undertake academic research.[3] ALA accredited library schools provide their students with education on research design, and many academic librarians regularly conduct research themselves.[4] University administrations may also consider research a core competency of librarians.[5] Research may therefore be considered an important component of the academic librarian position.

---

[1] University of Saskatchewan, "University Library Standards for Promotion and Tenure," 2011.

[2] University of Manitoba, "Collective Agreement," 2013a.

[3] American Library Association, "Core Competencies of Librarianship," 2009; Canadian Association of Research Libraries, "Core Competencies for 21st Century CARL Librarians," 2010; Canadian Association of University Teachers, "Academic Status and Governance for Librarians at Canadian Universities and Colleges," 2010.

[4] Henry & Neville, "Research, Publication, and Service Patterns of Florida Academic Librarians," 2004; Hildreth & Aytac, "Recent Library Practitioner Research: A Methodological Analysis and Critique," 2007; Sorsensen & DeLong, "Librarian Research Competencies in Canadian Large Research Libraries," 2016; Tomaszewki, Poulin & MacDonald, "Publishing in Discipline-Specific Open Access Journals: Opportunities and Outreach for Librarians," 2013.

[5] University of Saskatchewan, "Core Competencies for University of Saskatchewan Librarians," 2013.

The nature of research activities undertaken by academic librarians varies widely, and includes studies completed for the purpose of improving library functions and services, academic research in the field of library and information studies (LIS), academic research in other fields — typically an area of the librarians' subject expertise — and collaborative research conducted with faculty members outside the library. Research, broadly defined, that is conducted in libraries may be published in peer-reviewed or non-peer-reviewed journals, in books, in conference proceedings, or not published at all, and used only to inform local library policy and practice. Even when narrowly defining research as original, empirical work that is published in peer-reviewed journals, librarians regularly conduct research.[6] Despite the diverse research activities that librarians participate in, knowledge of such activities is often limited or entirely unknown to non-librarian faculty, which can lead to a perception that they do not value the research skillset of librarians, or strained relations between librarians and non-librarian faculty.[7] That librarians are capable of assisting non-librarian faculty in their own research endeavors is something that non-librarian faculty may be unaware of. The lack of familiarity in this regard negatively affects not only non-librarian faculty attitudes towards academic librarians, but additionally hampers non-librarian faculty in that they remain unaware of ways in which librarians could aid and improve their own research endeavors. Librarians have neither their skills employed to their full potential, nor are they recognized for the research they do conduct by non-librarian faculty. In addition, there are broader consequences from this lack of understanding, as some academic librarians have found their academic freedom under threat; a reality that affects librarians' ability to perform their jobs effectively, and that can prevent librarians from conducting research.[8]

---

[6] Hildreth & Aytac, 2007.
[7] Divay, Ducas & Michaud-Oystryk, "Faculty Perceptions of Librarians at the University of Manitoba," 1987.
[8] Turk, "Academic Freedom for Librarians: What is it, and Why Does it Matter?," 2010.

Attitudes towards research may then be seen to significantly impact the research reality of librarians.

This study explores the perceptions of academic librarians as researchers according to librarians and non-librarian faculty alike. Attention was paid to discrepancies between the perceptions of the two groups in order to develop an understanding of the realities of librarian research, how librarian research is utilized and by whom, and how the research and research abilities of librarians are perceived. Understanding if, and how, librarians are perceived as researchers should be considered a first step towards improving perceptions and encouraging more efficient use of librarian research skills — in both research carried out by librarians and in using those skills to facilitate the research activities of non-librarian faculty.

Research Questions

- How do academic librarians perceive their own status as researchers and the status of their own research?

    o Do academic librarians perceive themselves as researchers and/or academics?

    o What is the perceived value of librarian research?

- How are academic librarians perceived as researchers in a university setting by non-librarian faculty?

    o Do non-librarian university faculty members perceive academic librarians as researchers/academics?

    o To what degree are non-librarian faculty aware of the research capabilities of librarians?

        o   To what extent do non-librarian faculty employ the services of librarians in their

             own research?

To answer these research questions, this study employed a sequential mixed-methods approach that first surveyed librarian and non-librarian faculty, then followed with interviews of the same groups. The semi-structured interview schedule was informed by the results of the survey, and later interview questions were informed by earlier ones. The collective agreements from 12 Canadian universities were examined to determine the opportunities for, and expectations surrounding, research activities for librarians at these universities. These collective agreements are, in general, lacking sufficient detail regarding expectations of librarian research. The combination of these various methods allowed for deeper insights than any single included method used alone would have done. Methodology will be discussed in greater detail in chapter three.

Definitions

Because the expectations, positions, and general standing of librarians can vary between different institutions, and because participants expressed differing concepts about certain terms, the following key definitions are used throughout this work.

Academic: For the purposes of this study, an academic is an individual who is required to conduct research regularly and publish their findings in a peer-reviewed journal as a major expectation of their position within the institution. Research is a central duty of an academic.[9]

Academic Librarian: For the purposes of this study, an 'academic librarian' is a Master of

---

[9] This definition developed according to the findings of the pilot interviews, which made it clear that a distinction between 'academic' and 'researcher' was required, and that the pilot interview participants thought of academic in this regard.

Library and Information Studies (MLIS) holding or equivalently degreed librarian who works in an academic library at a university.[10]

Academic Library: 'A library that is an integral part of a college, university, or other institution of postsecondary education, administered to meet the information and research needs of its students, faculty, and staff.'[11] In this study, only librarians in university libraries are addressed.

Faculty: 'The teaching and administrative staff and those members of the administration having academic rank in an educational institution.'[12] In this study, the academic institution in question is a university. Faculty is a formal designation determined by an institution, and librarians do not always fall within this category. Whether or not librarians are considered faculty may affect the research-related expectations of their position. The term *non-librarian faculty* is used to refer to faculty members who are not librarians.

Research: For the purposes of this study, research is broadly defined as generating or discovering new knowledge, or solving problems of a theoretical or practical nature, thus including both basic and applied research as well as more general scholarship.[13]

Researcher: An individual who undertakes research as part of their position, but is not expected to do so with the explicit intention of publishing the findings in a peer-reviewed journal and is not bound by a publish-or-perish obligations, making it distinct from the *Academic* definition above. Research is permitted or required as part of a researcher's duties.[14]

---

[10] Colleges, which are not as research intensive as universities, were not included in this study, and are therefore not included in this definition.
[11] Academic Library, n.d..
[12] Faculty, n.d.
[13] Harman, "Research and Scholarship," 2007.
[14] This definition developed according to the findings of the pilot interviews, which made it clear that a distinction between 'academic' and 'researcher' was required, and that the pilot interview participants thought of researchers in this regard.

Significance

Academic librarians possess a detailed understanding of information organization and knowledge of complex search techniques that represent a specialisation in the effective retrieval of resources, which facilitates their research and the research of others. In addition, in recent years, there has been an increased focus on Evidence-Based Librarianship (EBLIB) in library practice.[15] Applying EBLIB to librarianship practice requires not only regular consultation of the LIS literature to ensure best practice, but also research undertaken by librarians with the intent of improving practice in their own specific context.[16] However, the direct applicability of this last form of librarian research to a specific situation means that much of it is not published in professional journals or other accessible platforms, as its relevance beyond the local situation may not be considered.[17] Despite this potential minimization of publication, research is often considered a regular and integral component of quality academic librarianship.

Non-librarian faculty possess a general lack of awareness regarding the skillset and education or knowledge of librarians, especially as it relates to engaging in or facilitating research.[18] This lack of awareness can lead to strained relationships between librarians and non-librarian faculty.[19] Non-librarian faculty may, for example, fail to recognize the research capabilities and roles of librarians and therefore resent the inclusion of librarians in faculty organizations, believing that they have no place in such bodies alongside academics. In contrast,

---

[15] Kennedy & Brancolini, "Academic Librarian Research: A Survey of Attitudes, Involvement, and Perceived Capabilities," 2012; Marshall, "Linking Research to Practice: the Rise of Evidence-Based Health Sciences Librarianship," 2014.

[16] Eldredge, "Evidence-Based Librarianship: an Overview," 2000.

[17] Henry & Neville, 2004.

[18] Divay, Ducas & Michaud-Oystryk, 1987; Kotter, "Bridging the Great Divide: Improving Relations between Librarians and Classroom Faculty," 1999.

[19] Cooke et al., "Evaluating the Impact of Academic Liaison Librarians on Their User Community: a Review and Case Study," 2011; Gilman & Lindquist, "Academic/Research Librarians with Subject Doctorates: Experiences and Perceptions," 2010; Kotter, 1999.

librarians may resent the devaluation of their professional abilities by non-librarian faculty and by administrators and their inability to educate others about their value. This devaluation and these strained relationships can, in turn, lead to decreased funding for academic libraries, an unwillingness to accept librarians as faculty members, diminished opportunities for librarians to collaborate with other faculty on research projects, a lack of attention to librarian needs within the collective agreements governing librarians, and a perception that librarian research is not important to the scholarly enterprise or to improve service. Further, these attitudes may combine into a belief that librarians are easily replaceable by information technology professionals or by library technicians; that the duties of librarians are not such that they require the education provided in an MLIS program.[20] Improving awareness of the role and capabilities of librarians as they apply to research is therefore a desirable goal.

Raising awareness in this regard can only begin by developing an understanding of how librarian research is perceived by librarians and non-librarian faculty alike. Such an understanding may be based upon an exploration of what librarians and non-librarian faculty consider to be the value of librarian research, of what hinders and what facilitates librarian research, and of what the general perceptions of librarian research are. These insights inform attempts at raising awareness for the value and necessity of librarian research by highlighting both areas of merit and areas of particular concern in the attitudes regarding and policies governing librarian research. The findings of this study contribute to the literature on library research and the perceptions thereof, especially from the point of view of non-librarian faculty, which is only minimally addressed in the literature. Even when the views of non-librarian faculty are addressed, those views are typically obtained second-hand from librarian perceptions

---

[20] Cooke et al. 2011.

and not from non-librarian faculty themselves. Divay, Ducas and Michaud-Oystryk's 1987

article is an exception to this general trend, as it directly sought out non-librarian faculty

perceptions of librarians.[21] The Canadian context of this study will additionally contribute to an

understanding of the status of librarian research in a Canadian setting.

---

[21] Divay, Ducas & Michaud-Oystryk, 1987.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Research in Academic Librarianship

Librarianship is a profession that covers a variety of areas and library settings but even when narrowed to specifically academic librarianship, the duties of librarians are diverse. For academic librarians, the following areas are typical of professional practice: reference service, collection development, management, data management, instruction, and liaison duties — service to the community and/or university, and research or other scholarly activity. Accreditation requirements for Master's programs in library and information studies (LIS), as well as relevant professional associations, underscore the importance of research within LIS education and practice of the discipline and profession.[22] Some universities in Canada note in their collective agreements with librarians that research is acceptable or encouraged, and research or scholarly activity is sometimes necessary for consideration for promotion or tenure. These issues will be discussed in more detail throughout the thesis.

The value placed on research in academic librarianship impacts the profession directly; librarians' perceptions of the value of academic librarians conducting research has seen an uptick in recent years, with EBLIB's increased importance being only one example.[23] Academic librarians regularly conduct research, whether it is related to EBLIB, LIS more broadly, or other fields entirely, as is the case with librarians who work on research teams in the healthcare fields, or librarians who publish independently in non-LIS fields.[24] Such research is conducted either in an independent or collaborative capacity. Many librarians conduct research for the purposes of

---

[22] ALA, 2009; American Library Association, "Standards for the Accreditation of Master's Programs in Library and Information Studies," 2015; CARL 2010; CAUT 2010.
[23] Kennedy & Brancolini, 2012; Marshall, 2014.
[24] Henry & Neville, 2004; Hildreth & Aytac, 2007; Sorsensen & DeLong, 2016; Tomaszewki et al., 2013.

quality improvement that is never published. This type of research is performed on a regular

basis. A study by Finlay et al., however, suggests there has been a drop in the number of

publications by practicing librarians in recent years, according to their analysis of 20 LIS

journals published between 1956 and 2011.[25] The authors were unsure if this was indicative of

librarians conducting less research, or merely an indication that librarians were presenting their

research in other venues, such as blog posts.[26] LIS literature on the topic of librarian research

falls into the broad areas of outlining the necessity of librarian research, the ability of librarians

to conduct research, and the perceptions and institutional support of librarian research. Many

academic librarians consider research an integral and essential element of their library duties.[27]

Henry and Neville indicate that research in libraries can be done to improve patron experiences,

and there is a suggestion that therefore, not all library research is even published. Academic

librarians may be conducting considerably more research than is evident from the LIS

literature.[28] Academic librarians contribute to scholarly literature regularly, as they are often

expected to make such contributions as part of their employment, just as other, non-librarian

faculty are (though not necessarily with the same frequency).[29] The research skills that librarians

possess should not be considered only useable in regard to research that librarians themselves

undertake — their education, searching capabilities, and general skillset, including instruction in

research methods, knowledge of information organization, and ability to navigate content in an

array of disciplines, suggests that librarians can be a significant asset to non-librarian faculty

members in their own research endeavors.[30] While it is the case that some librarians feel

---

[25] Finlay, Ni, Tsou & Sugimoto, "Publish or Practice? An Examination of Librarians' Contributions to Research,"
2013
[26] Finlay, et al., 2013.
[27] Sorsensen & DeLong, 2016; Watson-Boone, "Academic Librarians as Practitioner-Researchers," 2000.
[28] Henry & Neville, 2012.
[29] Watson-Boone, 2000.
[30] Perkins & Slowik, "The Value of Research in Academic Libraries," 2013.

unequipped, and others disinclined, to conduct research, it is apparent that research is a regular element of academic librarianship.[31]

Perceptions and Treatment of Librarian Research

Despite research being an important component of academic librarianship, it is often undervalued and unsupported. This, combined with a general lack of awareness regarding librarian research often results in a lack of institutional support.[32] This lack of support is lamented by Jacobs and Berg, and is the impetus for their proposal to enhance the research culture for Canadian librarians.[33] While few studies have been done that examine how librarian research or librarian researchers are perceived by non-librarian faculty, Kotter suggests that non-librarian faculty are typically unaware of what librarians do, and the skills they possess.[34] Divay, Ducas, and Michaud-Oystryk's study of faculty perceptions of librarians at the University of Manitoba found that faculty recognized librarians only as service professionals, and were unaware of their position as researchers.[35]

Another study, in which Fagan explored student perceptions of librarians, indicated that students lacked awareness of librarians' roles altogether.[36] As with Kotter and Divay, Ducas, and Michaud-Oystryk, Fagan acknowledges that librarians have something of a general image problem.[37] The poor perceptions of librarians by students in Fagan's study suggests that students, at no point in their academic career, are being explicitly informed of the capabilities of librarians.

---

[31] Hildreth & Aytac, 2007; Kennedy & Brancolini, 2012; Sorensen & DeLong, 2016.
[32] Fox, "Finding Time for Scholarship: a Survey of Canadian Research University Libraries," 2007; Powell, Baker & Mika, "Library and Information Science Practitioners and Research," 2002; Sorensen & DeLong, 2016.
[33] Jacobs & Berg, "By Librarians, for Librarians: Building a Strengths-Based Institute to Develop Librarians' Research Culture in Canadian Academic Libraries," 2013.
[34] Kotter, 1999.
[35] Divay, Ducas & Michaud-Oystryk, 1987.
[36] Fagan, "Students' Perceptions of Academic Librarians," 2003.
[37] Fagan, 2003.

This, in turn suggests that professors are not imparting such knowledge to students — if they are even aware of the capabilities of librarians themselves — and that librarians are doing a poor job of articulating their value. A more recent study suggests that some faculty attitudes towards librarians have changed since Kotter's 1999 article; particularly that faculty currently highly value liaison librarians.[38] However, faculty seem to value these librarians most for their aid in copyright and institutional repository issues, yet still lack a deeper understanding of the capabilities of librarians, particularly the capabilities of some librarians regarding conducting or facilitating research.[39]

This lack of awareness among faculty of librarians' research capabilities was also discovered in an examination of the perceptions of libraries and librarians in subject-specific, pedagogical journals.[40] Still explored if librarians were collaborating with other faculty members to instruct students on the use of library resources and research instruction. Acting on the premise that if collaborative behaviour was found between faculty and librarians, it would be found in regards to teaching within the various disciplines. Still examined pedagogical literature for references to librarians or library-related terms. Her findings indicated that less than 0.5% of the 13,016 articles in these journals even mention libraries or librarians, despite the fact that many articles within the journals lamented the inability of students to perform basic research.

Librarians seem to face an image problem not due to lack of ability, but due to lack of awareness of their knowledge and skills. Kotter suggest that this might be mitigated with outreach efforts on the part of librarians, and that such outreach efforts could improve awareness of librarian research skills, facilitate collaboration between librarians and non-librarian faculty,

---

[38] Cooke et al., 2011.
[39] Cooke et al., 2011.
[40] Still, "The Role and Image of the Library and Librarians in Discipline-Specific Pedagogical Journals,"1998.

and calm strained relations between librarians and non-librarian faculty.[41] Monroe-Gulick,

O'Brien and White discuss the possibility of improving understanding of librarian knowledge

and research skills via embedded librarians acting as research partners for non-librarian faculty

in fully collaborative work.[42]

From a librarian point of view, the lack of awareness of librarian research and capabilities

is plain. Gilman and Lindquist explore librarian perceptions of research by asking librarians

with advanced subject degrees in addition to their MLIS, how they were treated by other faculty,

and how their advanced degrees impacted their library work.[43] These librarians suggested that

while the degrees do aid them in the execution of their library duties, and generate increased

respect from other faculty, they do not necessarily achieve a level of respect they feel they

deserved from non-librarian faculty. Nor did they feel that they had enough opportunities to

perform subject-specific research — that is, non-LIS research which is related to the field of their

other advanced degree instead. The finding that librarians do not receive enough research time,

especially as compared to other faculty, appears elsewhere in the literature.[44]

Expectations for Librarian Research

In a climate where others are unaware of librarian research and where librarians have

difficulties communicating the value of the research they do, it is unsurprising that librarians find

their research undervalued and unsupported. At a first glance it may appear that research is

valued highly within the practice of academic librarianship but the reality is more complex. In

general, it is accepted that librarians are encouraged to conduct research, and that conducting

---

[41] Kotter, 1999.
[42] Monroe-Gulick, O'Brien & White, "Librarians as Partners: Moving from Research Supporters to Research Partners," 2013.
[43] Gilman & Lindquist, 2010.
[44] Fox, 2007; Powell et al., 2002; Sorensen & DeLong, 2016.

research is valuable to the profession. For instance, an American study found that while research was encouraged for academic librarians at between 60-80% of institutions, research was required at only 17.8% of them.[45] In a more recent Canadian study, Sorensen and DeLong reported that 64% of universities surveyed identified librarian research capabilities as important to making hiring decisions, and that 44% of librarians conducted research as part of their job.[46] On the surface, then, it appears that research is supported within academic librarianship and academic institutions; however, multiple structural barriers exist for librarians engaging or wanting to engage with research.[47]

An analysis of the collective agreements governing librarians at Canadian universities outlines many of these barriers.[48] Librarian research is rarely given special provisions within the collective agreements; it tends to be combined with other librarian job requirements. Furthermore, collective agreements often fail to account for the distinction between the research roles of librarians. Often collective agreements contain language that states librarians are required to engage in "research or other scholarly activity" without outlining the distinction between the two. Such language does not actually encourage nor reward librarian research, as other activities may take precedence over conducting research. Likewise, many collective agreements use ambiguous language when discussing research, such as suggesting that support *may* be provided to librarians undertaking research endeavors. However, the unspoken alternative is that librarian research *may not* be supported. [49] Furthermore, the current situation in academic institutions is in flux — fiscal strain is common, and measures are increasingly

---

[45] Park & Riggs, "Tenure and Promotion: A Study of Practices by Institutional Type," 1993.
[46] Sorensen & DeLong, 2016.
[47] Fox, 2007; Powell et al., 2002; Sorensen & DeLong, 2016.
[48] Harrington & Gerolami, "Highs and Lows: An Examination of Academic Librarians' Collective Agreements," 2014.
[49] Harrington & Gerolami, 2014.

being taken to monetize university activity. [50] This climate of strain can influence which aspects of a university obtain funding and which do not.

This lack of attention to and support for librarian research is particularly problematic as it relates to the status of academic librarians. Many academic institutions grant librarians faculty or academic status, but whether or not librarians should be granted faculty status has been a subject of much debate. [51]

Academic standing is vital for academic librarians to function effectively, due to their roles in providing services to manage and disseminate knowledge and to support teaching and research at post-secondary institutions.[52] Most academic librarians in Canada possess academic status.[53] Their collective agreements are often merged with the larger faculty collective agreements. One of the most important aspects of academic status is the academic freedom associated with it. Academic freedom, defined by CAUT as "the right, without restriction by prescribed doctrine to freedom to teach and discuss; freedom to carry out research and disseminate and publish the results thereof […]", is essential to academia and the pursuit of knowledge, and librarians, independently of whether or not they engage in conducting research, require academic freedom to perform their jobs effectively.[54] While the collective agreements of Canadian academic librarians typically stipulate that librarians are entitled to academic freedom, those same agreements may indicate that librarians are required to obtain permission from their

---

[50] Turk, "The Corporate Campus: Commercialization and the Dangers to Canada's Colleges and Universities," 2000.
[51] Coker, vanDuinkerken & Bales, "Seeking Full Citizenship: A Defense of Tenure Faculty Status for Librarians," 2010; Galbraith, Garrison & Hales, "Perceptions of Faculty Status among Academic Librarians," (in press); Hill, "Constant Vigilance, Babelfish, and Foot Surgery: Perspectives on Faculty Status and Tenure for Academic Librarians," 2005; Hoggan, "Faculty Status for Librarians in Higher Education," 2003; Werrell & Sullivan, "Faculty Status for Academic Librarians: A Review of the Literature," 1987.
[52] CAUT, 2010.
[53] Jacobs, "Academic Status or Canadian Academic Librarians: A Brief History," 2014.
[54] Canadian Association of University Teachers, "Academic Freedom," 2011; Turk, 2010.

superiors to conduct research, or may be required to build the research into their job description in order to be able to do it.[55] Such restrictions undermine academic freedom, and as such, academic librarians in Canada as a whole may not be considered as having academic freedom in practice, even if they appear to have it in theory. This disparity is particularly ironic, as it is often the academic librarians on the forefront of the battles to ensure the maintenance of academic freedom in academic settings that are increasingly beholden to corporate or political interests.[56]

In 2013, a committee at the University of Alberta proposed dividing librarian job duties according to whether they did or did not carry out research. Those that did not conduct research would have no access to tenure, and would instead be specialized scholars that retained their right to academic freedom. This proposal also stipulated that librarians in the tenure-track stream would devote no less than 15% of their time to research or scholarship.[57] Certainly this report is not the first to propose two streams of librarianship for researching and non-researching librarians, although elements of the proposal were later taken into consideration during collective bargaining.[58] However, suggestions for a two-stream model do not adequately address the difficulties that librarians can and do face with regard to their ability to conduct research. Struggles such as the CAUT investigation at McGill which included concerns that librarians were not granted academic freedom or freely able to research,[59] or the most recent contract

---

[55] Harrington & Gerolami, 2014.
[56] Samek, "Librarians and 'Information Justice'," 2007.
[57] A Joint Committee of AASUA and Administration (on behalf of the Board of Governors), "Report of the Renaissance Committee," 2013.
[58] Jackson, "Image and Status," 1999; Martin, "Visions: Raising Our Professional Expectations with a Two-Track Approach to Librarianship," 1993; Ruess, "Faculty and Professional Appointments of Academic Librarians: Expanding the Options for Choice," 2004.
[59] MAUT Librarian's Section, "Report to CAUT on the Status of the Resolution Process for the Problems Faced by McGill Librarians Regarding Collegiality and Academic Freedom," 2012.

negotiations at McMaster, which centred around academic freedom, demonstrate the difficulties librarians may face in conducting research.[60] Regrettably, the academic freedom of academic librarians is often actively or passively under threat.[61] When there is a lack of understanding about what librarians do, including from those they work most closely with (students, non-librarian faculty, administrators), it becomes easier to justify the demonstrated lack of support for librarians.[62] Librarian positions are pushed towards easier-to-quantify, more task-oriented roles that are ultimately detrimental to the scholarly community for the sake of financial concerns.[63] Librarians can fear that they may be replaced by more cost-effective library technicians or IT specialists. This is not an unreasonable concern; in recent years, the question of the need for librarians has been raised at several institutions such as Western University, and at certain institutions, librarians are embroiled in struggles for their right to academic freedom.[64]

While there is a significant body of literature on the perceptions of academic librarian research, very little of it has explored this from the perspective of non-librarians. The literature focuses on an American perspective, which cannot be applied wholesale to the Canadian context. Much of the literature focuses on the readiness of librarians to conduct research, or on the relevance of research for indicating librarians' warranting the entitlements and responsibilities of tenure as non-librarian faculty. Support for librarian research at an institutional level is discussed only minimally. Discrepancies between the research abilities of librarians and the perceived abilities of librarians are addressed in the literature and indicate a strong incongruity between them. The literature indicates that librarian research is often undervalued and poorly

---

[60] Canadian Association of Professional Academic Librarians (CAPAL), "Open Letter of Support for Librarians at McMaster University," 2015.
[61] Stewart, "Academic Librarians are Under Attack," 2009; Turk, 2010.
[62] Stewart, 2009.
[63] Stewart, 2009; Turk 2010.
[64] Stewart, 2009.

respected by non-librarian faculty and university administrators. The perception of academic librarians as researchers then, is critical to maintaining or improving the status of academic librarians within academic institutions. A perception of librarians more reflective of their education, research capabilities, and research practices should be fostered in academic institutions.

Chapter 3: Methodology

Methodological Framework

This study employed a sequential mixed-methods framework with data collection spread over three non-consecutive phases. The first phase involved surveying librarians and non-librarian faculty regarding their perceptions of library research. The second phase consisted of semi-structured interviews informed by the data already obtained from the surveys and the literature review. This phase included a pilot study comprised of semi-structured interviews with two librarian participants. The questions from the pilot study were then used to develop and modify the interview questions to be used in the semi-structured interviews. The third phase involved analysis of the collective agreements and associated documents (such as guidelines for promotion and tenure) of 12 universities; six research-intensive universities, so defined by being U15[65] members, and six universities with less emphasis on research, so defined by not being U15 members. As collective agreements govern the duties of librarians, analysis of these agreements was undertaken to provide context for and to deepen the understanding of the state of librarian research at Canadian universities beyond only the perceptions of librarians and non-librarian faculty. Phases two and three occurred concurrently.

A mixed-methods approach to the study allows for the attainment of a broader perspective than would be obtained through a wholly qualitative or wholly quantitative study. Consequently, methods have been used to effectively integrate the various qualitative and quantitative elements. [66] Data in this study is treated as linked data; each set of data — surveys,

---

[65] U15 is a Canadian organization of research universities dedicated to advancing and supporting university research in Canada and enhancing Canadian university research on the world stage.
[66] Leedy & Ormrod, "Practical Research Planning and Design," 2013.

interviews, and analysis of collective agreements — was analysed independently but were considered in concert at the interpretation level of research, though earlier phases of research informed later ones.[67] After all analyses were completed, the findings were considered together to provide an overarching picture of the perceptions and realities of librarian research at the Canadian universities included in this study.

Surveys and interviews are frequently used in conjunction, as interviews allow participants to reveal more in-depth perspectives. Conducting interviews after the survey data has been collected and analysed allows for the interview questions to identify and address areas of particular interest or concern.[68] Descriptive statistics and other data generated and analyzed from the survey results were employed to develop and inform the questions asked in the interviews. The mixed methods structure including surveys, interviews, and document analysis which allows for triangulation of data than would be possible with only any one of those components.

Emphasis in the analysis during all phases was placed on understanding the status of and attitudes towards librarian research, within both academic libraries and the larger academic community, on understanding how librarian research is viewed, and on understanding what hinders and what facilitates librarian research in that setting. Ethics was obtained through the University of Alberta for all phases.

---

[67] Sandelowski, "Combining Qualitative and Quantitative Sampling, Data Collection, and Analysis Techniques in Mixed-Method Studies," 2000.
[68] Greyson, Surette, Dennett & Chatterley, "'You're Just One of the Group When You're Embedded': Report from a Mixed-Method Investigation of Research-Embedded Health Librarian Experience," 2013; Sandelowski, 2000.

Methodology

Surveys, interviews, and document analysis of the collective agreements were undertaken in order to explore the perceptions of academic librarians as researchers, as outlined in the research questions.

Phase One

Surveys participants were recruited from six Canadian Universities: the University of Alberta, the University of Calgary, the University of Manitoba, the University of Regina, the University of Saskatchewan, and the University of Winnipeg. Later, in the interview phase, recruitment was expanded to include participants who were purposively sampled from McMaster and McGill Universities, as these represent Canadian institutions at which academic freedom and other considerations necessary for librarian research have been of concern in recent years.[69]

Non-librarian faculty participants were drawn from academic departments representing the humanities (classics[70]), the social sciences (anthropology), and the sciences (biology). These particular departments were chosen as the researcher had education in all these fields. Departments representing professional programs, such as medicine and law, were not considered in this study, as these departments often have a different relationship with those librarians than other academic departments. Health librarians are often regular members of research teams, and work more closely with researchers in the medical fields than their compatriots in other disciplines. For example, Cochrane review guidelines indicate the necessity of working with a search specialist and inclusion of librarians as co-authors has been shown to improve the quality

---

[69] CAPAL, 2015; Flaherty, "Price of a Bad Review," 2013; MAUT Librarian's Section, 2012.
[70] Classics is a sub-field of larger departments at several universities. When this was the case, faculty were drawn from the larger department, as it was not always possible to identify those that were specifically classicists.

of reviews in medical fields.[71] Consideration of such identifiably different roles librarians play in these fields would significantly broaden the scope of the study, and so have been excluded.

Librarians were selected from libraries that service the academic departments from which the non-librarian faculty were sampled. For instance, at the University of Alberta, librarians were recruited from just two of the ten libraries at the University — the Rutherford Social Sciences and Humanities library and the Cameron Science library, as these are the libraries responsible for the departments of classics, anthropology, and biology.[72] The email addresses of individuals fitting these inclusion criteria were acquired from the websites of the respective universities and compiled into two lists: *Librarians* and *Non-Librarian Faculty.*

Two distinct, but similar surveys were constructed to elicit the perceptions of librarian research and research capabilities from both librarians and non-librarian faculty.[73] The surveys were similar in structure and content, but adapted to be relevant to each group. The surveys were constructed according to the questionnaire design methodologies outlined by Dillman,[74] Evans,[75] Morris,[76] and Peytchev, who give consideration to survey formatting and deployment.[77] A professor from the University of Alberta's School of Library and Information Studies and a librarian from the University of Alberta J.W. Scott Health Sciences Library tested survey questions. Survey testers completed a non-interactive version of the survey and provided the

---

[71] Higgins & Green, "Cochrane Handbook for Systematic Reviews of Interventions," 2011; Rethlefsen, Farrell, Trzasko & Brigham, "Librarian Co-Authors Correlated with Higher Quality Reported Search Strategies in General Internal Medicine Systematic Reviews," 2015.

[72] In some instances, it was the case that these libraries included librarians who also served the professional disciplines that were otherwise excluded from the study. In other cases, it was not possible to determine which librarians worked in which libraries. In these situations, the researcher erred on the side of inclusion.

[73] See **Appendix I**

[74] Dillman, "Internet, Mail, and Mixed-Mode Surveys: The Tailored Design Method," 2008.

[75] Evans et al., "Developing Valid and Reliable Online Survey Instruments Using Commercial Software Programs," 2009.

[76] Morris, "Evaluating REMS Tools: Issues in Survey Design," 2009.

[77] Peytchev, Couper, McCabe & Crawford, "Web Survey Design: Paging versus Scrolling," 2006.

researcher with feedback regarding confusing questions, preferred order, and other general impressions of the surveys. Surveys were then revised according to the feedback provided from the survey testers. Survey questions are available in **Appendix I.**

Next, invitations to participate in the surveys were sent to librarians and non-librarian faculty via email. The surveys were administered through the commercial survey tool *FluidSurveys*. Survey invitations were sent out with the *FluidSurveys* tool between the 13th and 15th of September, 2013. Surveys were formally closed on October 29th, 2013, but had ceased having respondents by October 10th, 2013. The surveys were respectively sent to librarians and non-librarian faculty at six Canadian Universities (the Universities of Alberta, Calgary, Saskatchewan, Regina, Manitoba, and Winnipeg). Survey invitations were sent to 493 non-librarian faculty and to 138 librarians. Reminder invitations were originally intended to be sent out a week after the initial contact; however, due to a technical error between the *FluidSurveys* address book and the researcher, it became impossible to send reminder invites to those who had not completed the surveys without inviting *all* participants to engage in both surveys, regardless of which they were supposed to complete.

There were 30 responses to each survey, resulting in a response rate of 6% for non-librarian faculty and 22% for librarians. The discrepancies in response rate are likely indicative of librarians being more invested in the topic of the study than the non-librarian faculty. (In fact, a small number of non-librarian faculty emailed the researcher specifically asking not to be contacted further regarding the study.)

The division of disciplines of the non-librarian faculty respondents indicate that the respondents are not representative of the overall sample contacted. Biology in particular is

underrepresented, while classics is overrepresented. These divisions are as follows (percentages are rounded):

Table 1 – Non-Librarian Faculty Survey Demographics

	Humanities/ Classics	Social Sciences/ Anthropology	Sciences/Biology	Other[78]
% of Non-Librarian Faculty Invited	16%	27%	58%	---
% of Respondents	35%	35%	27%	3%

The division of librarian respondents could not be compared to the overall sample contacted as not all library websites indicated which librarians were employed in which libraries. Nonetheless, the division of librarian respondents is as follows:

Table 2 – Librarian Survey Demographics

	Humanities and/or Social Sciences Library	Sciences Library	General Academic Library	Other
% of Respondents	46%	21%	21%	11%

The majority of non-librarian faculty (58%) that responded to the survey have been employed as faculty at their institution for ten years or more. This may indicate that the responses obtained are not representative of newer non-librarian faculty members. By contrast, librarian respondents were most heavily divided between having been employed as a librarian at their current institution for between 1-5 years (46%) and those who had been at their institution for longer than ten years (39%). Responses of the librarians may then indicate perceptions more indicative of the whole profession.

---

[78] This "Other" category likely arose from a situation where a faculty member from another department is affiliated with one of the consulted departments in some way.

Analysis of the open answer survey responses began with the first returned survey. Responses were examined to identify trends and patterns within the responses of the individual surveys, with an eye to informing the interview questions for the next component of the larger study. Formal quantitative analysis began once the surveys were closed. Analysis of the data predominantly involved descriptive statistics, and descriptive comparisons were also made between responses to questions of the two surveys that addressed the same topics. Answers to these questions were compared in order to identify differences in the responses, and therefore the perceptions of, the participant groups. Open questions required qualitative analysis. Open-ended responses were analyzed to identify commonalities and differences across both sets of surveys, in order to contrast the perceptions of librarians and non-librarian faculty. Survey analysis also informed the development of interview questions.

Phase Two

Participants who completed the surveys were invited, at the end of their respective survey, to indicate their willingness to participate in the interview phase. This approach generated limited response from librarians, and no response at all from non-librarian faculty. Out of 30 librarians who completed the survey, nine indicated their willingness to participate in an interview. Participants for the pilot interviews were selected from these nine responses. Two pilot interviews with librarians were conducted, and questions were altered according to the findings of these pilot interviews. Original pilot interview questions are included in **Appendix II.** The modified interview questions are included in **Appendix III.** Questions of both the pilot and final interviews attempted to address the issues laid out in the research questions.

A round of invitation emails was distributed to librarians and non-librarian faculty at eight Canadian universities (the Universities of Alberta, Calgary, Saskatchewan, Regina,

Manitoba, Winnipeg, as well as McGill and McMaster) on January 24th, 2016, requesting that the recipients reply if they were interested in being contacted about participating in the interview phase. Emails for librarian and non-librarian faculty were once again obtained from public contact information available on university websites. Initially, reminder emails were to be sent one week after the initial mailing, as this has been shown to increase response rates.[79] However, response from the initial mailing was sufficient such that a reminder email was deemed unnecessary. It had been decided prior to mailings that no more than 24 interviews would be conducted. Twenty-seven individuals responded to express their interest in participating in the study (16 librarians and 11 non-librarian faculty). Four interested individuals did not respond to attempts by the researcher to arrange an interview. Specific dates and times for the interviews were determined via email consultation with the participants. One interview did not occur as a result of persistent scheduling conflicts. A total of 22 interviews were completed, with 15 librarians and 7 non-librarian faculty. Recruitment formally closed on February 13th, 2016, but was functionally closed by February 5th, 2016. All interviews took place between February 1st and 12th, 2016. Interviews were conducted in person when possible and preferred by the participant, and were completed via telephone in all other instances. Interviews ranged from 10 – 40 minutes in length, with the vast majority running between 15 and 20 minutes. Interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed verbatim. Identifying information was removed during the transcription phase, and all participants were assigned a pseudonym.

A total of 189 librarians were emailed regarding participation in the interview component of the study. Sixteen librarians responding indicating their interest, and 15 librarians ultimately participated, giving librarians a response rate of 8%. It was not always possible to determine if

---

[79] Dillman, 2008.

librarians worked in a humanities, social science, or science library, if the university had such distinct libraries at all, and so no further breakdown of librarian responses has been included.

Six hundred and ninety-eight non-librarian faculty members were emailed, and while 11 initially replied to indicate interest, only seven non-librarian faculty were interviewed, giving non-librarian faculty a response rate of 1%. Invitation emails were sent to all members of the selected university departments — for this reason, biology consisted of the largest share of emails sent out, as the number of biologists at the selected institutions was significantly higher.

Humanities professors represented six (86%) of the non-librarian faculty interviews conducted, though they consisted of the smallest percentage of those non-librarian faculty initially emailed. Details of non-librarian faculty demographics are included in **Table 3** below.

Table 3 – Non-Librarian Faculty Interview Demographics

Department	Number of Emails Sent Out (% Share)	Number of Interviews (% Share)	Response Rate
Anthropology	170 (24%)	0 (0%)	0%
Biology	356 (51%)	1 (14%)	0.2%
History/Classics	172 (25%)	6 (86%)	4%
Total	*100%*	*7 (100%)*	*---*

Six (86%) non-librarian faculty responses were from U15 universities, as were 13 (87%) librarian responses. This is reflective of the percentage of emails sent to U15 universities in comparison to non U15 universities, as 608 (87%) invitations were sent to non-librarian faculty and 161 (85%) invitations were sent to librarians from U15 institutions.

Pilot interviews[80] and later interviews[81] were analysed in the same manner. However, the pilot interviews were treated as a separate data set for the purposes of analysis, as questions differed significantly between the pilot interviews and the final interviews. Analysis of both the pilot interviews and the subsequent interviews began immediately after the first interview was conducted, so that analysis of the earlier interviews could inform the direction of later interviews, capitalizing on the information obtained. Questions were added to both librarian and non-librarian faculty interviews that addressed whether the views of the participants were likely to be reflective of their peers as well. Conventional content analysis was employed in order to identify major themes and concepts in the interviews. [82] The first few interviews for each participant group (librarians and non-librarian faculty) were open coded, and a modifiable coding framework was developed, which was employed in the analysis of later interviews.[83] The pilot interviews were open coded, but did not inform the coding framework. A coding framework was not used in analysis of the pilot interviews, as the sample-size was too small to justify its use at that point. Once coding was completed, themes were analysed across interviews, both within participant groups and between them. This particular method of analysis was selected as it allowed for the organic identification of codes through the use of the initial open coding, but streamlines the process as the coding continues.[84] Additionally, this process was familiar to the researcher, as it had been used by the researcher in a previously undertaken study.[85]

---

[80] Pilot interview questions are included in **Appendix II**

[81] Final interview questions are included in **Appendix III**

[82] Attride-Sterling, "Thematic Networks: An Analytic Tool for Qualitative Research," 2001; Cresswell, "Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design," 1998; Hsieh & Shannon, "Three Approaches to Qualitative Content Analysis," 2005.

[83] The coding framework for non-librarian faculty interviews may be viewed in **Appendix IV.** The coding framework for librarian interviews may be viewed in **Appendix V**.

[84] Attride-Sterling, 2001; Cresswell, 1998; Rich, "Inside the Black Box: Revealing the Process in Applying a Grounded Theory Analysis," 2012.

[85] Hunter, Murphy & Babb, "Benefits and Challenges Faced by a Nurse Practitioner Working in an Interprofessional Setting in Rural Alberta," 2014.

Phase Three

Collective agreements or equivalents and associated documentation, such as standards for promotion and tenure, for librarians were purposively selected from the eight universities from which interview participants were recruited, as well as from four additional universities; Brandon University, Brock University, Concordia University[86], and MacEwan University. The addition of these four universities allowed for a broader perspective on how Canadian universities govern the work of librarians, including research. This sampling process allowed for maximum case variation. In addition, these universities were selected because their inclusion allowed for an equal distribution of the research-focused U15 universities and other universities that are not considered research intensive, and therefore a comparison between U15 and non-U15 universities. While not the focus of this thesis, the consideration that research intensive universities may differ from non-research intensive universities with regard to librarian research is an important matter. Additionally, this distribution of collective agreements allows for some empirical work on the state of research in librarianship at much smaller or newly minted universities, a topic that is not the focus of this thesis, but is no less worthy of consideration.[87] The collective agreements and equivalent documentation were examined using manifest content analysis, a method which analyses text for specific content, for references to research as part of librarian duties, expectations, and promotion or tenure requirements.[88]

---

[86] Concordia University, Montreal
[87] MacEwan University did not become a university until 2009
[88] Potter & Levine-Donnerstein, "Rethinking Validity and Reliability in Content Analysis," 1999.

Chapter 4: Findings

Findings are organized according to information source — collective agreements are discussed first, followed by librarian data and non-librarian faculty data. This is followed by a brief summary and discussion.

Collective Agreements

At Canadian universities, librarians are governed by collective agreements that lay out the duties, responsibilities, and roles of librarians at their institutions. Harrington and Gerolami conducted an analysis of the collective agreements of 24 CAUT member universities to determine the rights and responsibilities of academic librarians within Canada.[89] They noted that analysis of collective agreements is rarely done, despite the critical part that collective agreements play in defining the role of librarians at academic institutions. At the same time, librarians are often discontent with the manner in which collective agreements address, or rather, do not address, issues of particular concern to librarians. An example of this is the distribution of workload, which differs significantly between librarians and other faculty. Many librarian collective agreements are shared with other faculty, and librarians fear that their concerns are overshadowed during bargaining.[90] Consequently, analysis of university collective agreements governing the work of librarians is an effective means by which to explore the state of librarian research at these institutions. The collective agreements and related documents (such as standards for promotion and tenure) from 12 Canadian universities were analysed. Analysis of the collective agreements is discussed below. Highlights from these collective agreements are

---

[89] Harrington & Gerolami, 2014.
[90] Harrington & Gerolami, 2014.

given in **Table 4 – Details of U15 Collective Agreements** and **Table 5 – Details of Non-U15**

Collective Agreements below.

Table 4 – Details of U15 Collective Agreements

University	Collective Agreement Type	Years covered	Academic Freedom	Research	Provisions for Research	Language Concerns
McGill University	Librarian[91]	(unclear – revised 2015)	Yes (Not stated in agreement, but acknowledged in a statement by McGill's Secretariat)[92]	The academic duties of librarians may include research	No explicit provisions for research	The academic duties of librarians "may" include research. The allocation of the academic duties of librarians is determined by the dean or director of libraries.
McMaster University	Librarian	2011 – 2015	No (Point of contention in latest collective agreement negotiations; latest collective agreement not yet available)	Notes that librarians may engage in research as an aspect of "professional activity" in which librarians are expected to engage	Freedom to pursue research is dependent on arrangement with superiors. Librarians are eligible for research leave. 25% of librarian time is to be devoted to professional service and professional activity	Research is included under the broader category of "professional activity"
University of Alberta	Librarian	(unclear)	Yes	Notes that librarians may engage in research; not required, enforced, or supported	No explicit provisions for research, though research leave is available; must request inclusion of research in job description	"May" participate in scholarly research, or request such projects be assigned to them.

---

[91] McGill does not possess a collective agreement proper. McGill's "Regulations relating to the employment of librarian staff" (2015) has been used in lieu.
[92] McGill, "Statement of Academic Freedom," 2016.

University	Collective Agreement Type	Years covered	Academic Freedom	Research	Provisions for Research	Language Concerns
University of Calgary	Faculty	2013 - 2015	Yes	Not outlined as a duty of librarians – role of librarians is not clearly outlined in this collective agreement	Librarians may be entitled to research leave	"The criteria respecting librarians shall be established by the vice provost"
University of Manitoba	Faculty	2013 - 2016	Yes	Librarians are expected to conduct and publish research. Evidence of quality research is required for promotion to certain librarian ranks.	Duties of librarians (including research) are to be "assigned fairly and reasonably" to ensure their ability to engage in all aspects of their duties.	Duties are to be assigned "fairly and reasonably." At many (but not the highest) librarian ranks, a record of research may be substituted for "relevant experience judged to be of equal value."
University of Saskatchewan	Faculty	2014 – 2017	Yes	Research, scholarship, artistic works are required of all librarians. Publication in peer-reviewed outlets is the primary standard for this	Librarians are required to develop a cohesive and sustained program of research	---

Table 5 – Details of Non-U15 Collective Agreements

University	Collective Agreement Type	Years covered	Academic Freedom	Research	Provisions for Research	Language Concerns
Brandon University	Faculty	2015 - 2019	Yes	Librarians are expected to "engage in scholarship/research (or equivalent)." At rank *Professional Associate IV*, research is explicitly required.	Research leave is available to tenured individuals.	Research scholarship may be replaced with something "equivalent" at most librarian ranks.
Brock University	Faculty	2014 - 2017	Yes	Librarians are encouraged to engage in research or scholarly activity, but it is not required. Quality research or scholarship required for promotion to certain ranks.	10% – 20% of a librarian's time may be devoted to scholarly activities. Research leave is available to librarians.	---
Concordia University	Faculty	2012 - 2015	Yes	Research and scholarship required.	Research leave and sabbatical is available to librarians. Research and scholarship is considered part of a librarian's mandatory duties.	Distinction between research and scholarly activity unclear. Duties shall be assigned in a "fair and equitable manner."
MacEwan University	Faculty	2014 - 2017	Yes (Negotiated after the rest of the collective agreement)	Evidence for potential for scholarly activity is sought in the hiring and promotion process, but research is to be conducted only when "appropriate and necessary."	Up to 15% of a librarian's time may be devoted to research, when said research is considered "appropriate and necessary."	Librarians may not devote more than 15% of their time to scholarly activity (including research) and then only when "appropriate and necessary".

University	Collective Agreement Type	Years covered	Academic Freedom	Research	Provisions for Research	Language Concerns
University of Regina	Faculty	2014 – 2017	Yes	Listed as a possible duty of librarians	Librarians eligible for research leave and sabbatical, research conducted is factored into librarian performance reviews	Research is listed as a possible librarian duty alongside "scholarship" and "creative or equivalent professional activities"
University of Winnipeg	Faculty	2013 - 2016	Yes	Listed under the rights and responsibilities of librarians as a right	Eligible for research leave, permitted to devote a reasonable amount of time to research, librarians granted 12 research days/year	Research always described as "scholarly and/or professional activity." Librarians are permitted to devote a "reasonable" amount of time to research.

The collective agreements analyzed fell into similar patterns and displayed similar areas of concern to those identified by Harrington and Gerolami. Librarian agreements are often included as an addendum to faculty agreements, the language surrounding librarian research is vague, and the collective agreements underscore a general lack of formal support for librarian research. It was not the case, however, that every collective agreement reflected every one of these problems; notably, the University of Saskatchewan reflected none of these problems. This may be a result of the University of Saskatchewan's mission statement, which directs the university to foster interdisciplinary research.[93] Nonetheless, little appears to have changed for academic librarians since Harrington and Gerolami's 2014 analysis, though six of the collective agreements analysed have been updated during that time period.

Generally librarian collective agreements are subsumed under larger faculty collective agreements, in which librarians are given a section of the larger collective agreement — only three collective agreements were exclusively librarian agreements. The degree to which the librarian sections in larger faculty agreements detail the librarian role (and more specifically, the librarian role as it pertains to research) vary dramatically. The University of Manitoba, for example, provides an extremely comprehensive discussion of librarian roles and research expectations within their collective agreement.[94]

> *Academic librarians shall be responsible for and have the right and opportunity to pursue research in library and information science and/or other relevant academic disciplines and to make scholarly contributions. Academic librarians shall endeavour to publish the results of their scholarship.* **(17.A.2.3)**[95]

---

[93] University of Saskatchewan, 2011.
[94] University of Manitoba, 2013a.
[95] University of Manitoba, 2013a.

Conversely, the University of Calgary collective agreement seems to mention librarians only with the goal of marking them as distinct from other faculty members, devoting no more than a handful of sentences to their role and needs.[96] The promotion and tenure standards document associated with the collective agreement at the University of Calgary, which discusses research requirements of other faculty, says of librarians:

> *The criteria respecting librarians shall be established by the Vice Provost (Libraries and Cultural Resources) in consultation with and with the approval of a majority of the Libraries and Cultural Resources Academic Council subject to the subsequent approval of the Provost & Vice-President (Academic).* **(3.14.2)**[97]

The University of Alberta and McMaster University are exceptions to this general norm as both institutions provide unique collective agreements that pertain specifically to librarians.[98] While an independent collective agreement would seem by definition to engage more with specialised librarian concerns, it does not necessarily indicate more provisions, focus, or clarity regarding librarian research. For example, librarian research is discussed explicitly in the faculty/librarian collective agreement of the University of Manitoba but it is hardly discussed at all in the librarian-only agreement of McMaster, which discusses research *only* under the broader category of "professional activity."

> ***"professional activity"*** *includes research and publication (writing, editing, refereeing or reviewing books, articles, or reports); grant preparation; participation at conferences (contribution through presentations to professional or scholarly associations/meetings); conference management (planning, organizing or conducting professional programs, workshops, seminars or conferences); teaching (over and above the teaching or instruction responsibilities set out in their Position Responsibility Statement); and, consulting for external organizations.* **(3.01)**[99]

---

[96] University of Calgary, "Collective Agreement," 2015.
[97] University of Calgary, "Procedures Pertaining to Appointment, Promotion, and Tenure of Academic Staff," 2009.
[98] McMaster University, "Collective Agreement," 2011; University of Alberta, "University of Alberta Librarian Agreement," 1998.
[99] McMaster University, 2011

While the quote from the McMaster collective agreement above gives a clear description of research, it is unclear in many collective agreements what constitutes research, scholarship, scholarly activity, or professional activity. The majority of the collective agreements or equivalents do not include a strict definition of research, and do not clarify the distinction between 'research' and 'scholarly activity.' In cases where research *is* defined, there is not a standard definition. Some collective agreements specify that "research" should be of a standard that is publishable in a peer-reviewed journal, while others define research and scholarly activity together which allows for a much broader definition of research. In most cases where research is defined at all librarian research is not marked as distinct but rather adheres to the same standards for research required of faculty. Likewise, this faculty research is not necessarily defined. Lack of clarity in the language of the collective agreements can make it challenging to develop meaningful expectations for librarians regarding conducting research.

In all but four of the collective agreements, research is listed as a possible, but non-mandatory duty of librarians. Concordia University, the University of Saskatchewan, and the University of Manitoba are the only universities to *require* their librarians conduct research, while the University of Calgary does not provide enough information in their collective agreement to determine the status of research there.[100] Research in the collective agreements often falls under the larger aegis of scholarly or professional activity, and noted as being interchangeable with 'equivalent' activities. As with the findings regarding definitions of research, such equivalencies are rarely defined, as demonstrated in the University of Regina's collective agreement:

---

[100] Concordia University, "Collective Agreement for 2012-2015," 2012; University of Calgary, 2015; University of Manitoba, 2013a; University of Saskatchewan, "2014-2017 Collective Agreement," 2014.

The duties of a librarian shall normally include:
a) position responsibilities consistent with the status of a professional librarian and associated with serving the needs of the University Library and the University community including instructional activities;
b) scholarship, research, and creative or equivalent professional activities; and
c) service. (16.1.2)[101]

Non-librarian faculty covered by the collective agreements are required to engage in research, save in those disciplines where creative outputs are produced in lieu of research (e.g. theatre departments where performance art is the output of choice). Collective agreements without such a requirement for research explicitly position librarian research as low priority compared to that of non-librarian faculty. Librarian research may be replaced by other duties such as conference management or teaching.

Collective agreements often stipulate that only limited time is available to be devoted to research or their equivalencies. Brock University allows between 10-20% of a librarian's time to be devoted to scholarly activity, which includes research, for example.[102] Even collective agreements that are more generous with allotted research time have language surrounding that provision, which is problematic. For instance, the University of Winnipeg states that librarians are entitled to devote a "reasonable" amount of time to conducting research, without any clear indication of what constitutes "reasonable." Nor is it clear whether or not that reasonable amount of time is limited to or *in addition to* the 12 research days a year that librarians at the University of Winnipeg are entitled to. What is explicitly clear in the University of Winnipeg collective agreement, however, is that librarian research is absolutely not a principal responsibility of librarians — the principal responsibility of librarians at the University of Winnipeg is to "support the teaching and research needs of the university community."[103]

---

[101] University of Regina, "Collective Agreement 2014-2017," 2014.
[102] Brock University, "Collective Agreement between Brock University and the Brock University Faculty Association (BUFA)," 2014.
[103] University of Winnipeg, "Collective Agreement," 2013.

Similarly, the University of Manitoba, an institution with one of the more research-oriented collective agreements, stipulates that librarian duties are to be assigned "fairly and reasonably," leaving the question of how much time librarians are permitted to devote to research fairly open-ended.[104] At MacEwan University, no more that 15% of a librarians' time may be devoted to research (or other scholarly activities), and even then such use of time is only "when appropriate and necessary."[105] It is unclear what manner of research would constitute "necessary" research, but it is clear that such a stipulation severely curtails the academic freedom of librarians to choose their research topics, despite the fact that academic freedom is stipulated for librarians at the institution.

These are not the only language ambiguities that exist throughout the collective agreements — hand-in-hand with the way that librarian research is shuffled in alongside other librarian duties, making it only a *possibility*, is the language that is used to indicate librarian participation in research. Librarians often "may" engage in research, a point also noted by Harrington and Gerolami.[106] The flipside of this is that is that librarians also *may not* engage in research, if it is not desired either by the librarian or by their supervisors, for any reason. This presents librarian research not only as a secondary priority, but as something of so little importance that it may be disposed with altogether. Many collective agreements speak of equivalencies as being an alternative to conducting research, which, as highlighted above, allow for librarian research to be replaced. In addition, equivalencies to research are rarely defined in the collective agreements, leaving a great deal of ambiguity about what manner of duties may be conducted in place of research.

---

[104] University of Manitoba, 2013a.
[105] MacEwan University, "Collective Agreement," 2014.
[106] Harrington & Gerolami, 2014.

In other cases, it is not the language describing research that is vague, but rather, the description of librarian duties as a whole. As noted earlier, the University of Calgary is extremely limited in its description of librarian duties; they are only noted as being "established by the Vice Provost."[107] Such an open-ended description of librarian duties is rife with potential for misuse, and places the professional fate of librarians in the hands of a single individual; one who may or may not be understanding of and sympathetic to librarian research needs.[108]

A great deal of variety existed in the various collective agreements or equivalents with regard to their inclusion of provisions for facilitating the research of librarians. Three collective agreements contained statements to the effect that appropriate time must be set aside for librarians to engage in research or scholarly activities, though this was far from standard. Two of the agreements provided no guaranteed research provisions for librarians at all, while many others indicated only that librarians were eligible for research leave or sabbatical. The provisions for research conducted by librarians might be more intangible as well; the University of Winnipeg collective agreement states the ability to engage in research is a *right* of librarians at the institution.[109]

In addition, the place of research in tenure and promotion requirements was not standardized. Research was valued differently at different universities, with some explicitly mentioning research for tenure and promotion and others making no mention of it whatsoever. Several collective agreements are vague in their discussion of 'equivalencies' for research for librarians at lower ranks but not for those librarians at the highest librarian ranks within the

---

[107] University of Calgary, 2015; University of Calgary, 2009.
[108] The Vice Provost (Libraries and Cultural Resources) in this case is the university librarian; this does not necessarily imply that the Vice Provost is or always will be sympathetic to librarian research needs, as not all librarians favour librarian research.
[109] University of Winnipeg, 2013.

institution. These higher ranks sometimes not only explicitly require that the librarian has conducted research, but that the research is respected within the field. In some cases, the librarian may even need to be a well-respected scholar in their own right. For example, the University of Manitoba, the University of Saskatchewan, and Brandon University have such stipulations.[110] Brock University has a similar statement, but still allows for equivalencies in place of research.[111] MacEwan University considers the potential of a librarian to produce competent scholarship in their hiring and promotion procedures.[112] This indicates that some of the vagueness in the language outlining librarian research within the collective agreements or equivalents is perhaps intentional. This raises questions about how librarian research is perceived at the institutions, and suggests that those perceptions may be in conflict. On the one hand, the university and library administration may want librarians to conduct research, while on the other hand, they may be unwilling to commit to *ensure* that it occurs or is supported. Research is considered valuable enough to be an expectation for librarians, yet at the same time is not considered important enough to be explicitly inventoried among the necessary duties of librarians within most of the collective agreements. Librarian research is therefore nominally valued, but the supports for it may not exist, and ensuring research support for librarians is often not a priority at many institutions.

This discrepancy between expectations of engaging in research and the realities of research support can result in stress and conflict between academic librarians and the institution that they work for. For example, in 2010 at McGill University, a motion was brought before CAUT to censure McGill for its ill treatment of its librarians. Grievances centred around a

---

[110] Brandon University, "Agreement," 2011; University of Manitoba, 2013a; University of Saskatchewan, 2014.
[111] Brock University, 2014.
[112] MacEwan University, 2014.

failure by McGill to grant librarians academic freedom as well as a lack of systematic support for librarians wishing to conduct research. The consequences were that librarians were prevented from conducting their duties properly and effectively.[113] The seriousness of this event cannot be overstated, and is evident in the multi-year investigation that occurred at McGill, and in the 28 changes that the University was required to undertake before CAUT removed its threat of censure. Some of these changes included ensuring librarians' right to academic freedom, ensuring that librarians do not require their supervisor's permission to engage in scholarly activities, and ensuring that librarians receive recognition for their scholarly work.[114] In a 2010 letter from the then-Executive Director of CAUT James Turk, the value and necessity of academic freedom for librarians and the necessity of librarians to be able to conduct research was outlined in response to the upsets at McGill.[115] The lack of clarity surrounding librarian research in the collective agreements is not in line with the needs of librarians identified by Turk.

One of the issues raised by librarians at McGill was that they were expected to engage in research and scholarly activity, but were effectively prevented from doing so by the university administration. For example, not all librarians were presented with the same opportunities for research and scholarly activities.[116] At McGill, this was further compounded by the degree of control of supervisory staff where, contrary to the principles of academic freedom, librarians were neither free to choose their own research topics, nor to present their research findings at conferences without supervisory approval of their presentations, which could be altered on the

---

[113] MAUT-LS Working Group, "Problems Faced by McGill Librarians Regarding Collegiality and Academic Freedom," 2010.
[114] MAUT Librarians' Section, 2012.
[115] Turk, 2010.
[116] MAUT Librarians' Section, 2012.

whim of the supervisor. Consequently, some librarians conducted research in secret and outside

of their regular hours in order to avoid such supervisor censure.[117] Such breaches of the

academic freedom of librarians are egregious, and demonstrate a lack of understanding of the

scholarly needs of librarians, and of the benefits to service that research can provide. It is

alarming, then, that a number of collective agreements contain clauses that promote an

environment similar to the one that led to the call for censure at McGill. At the University of

Alberta, for example, provisions for research are only included in certain librarian contracts;

they are not universally available.[118] The University of Calgary's deferral of delineating

librarian duties to the Vice Provost implies a great deal of supervisory control over whether

librarians may conduct research or not, although the same collective agreement does stipulate

that librarians are to operate with academic freedom.[119] At McMaster University, a librarian's

supervisor must approve research topics; however, the most recent negotiations for a collective

agreement at McMaster centred heavily around ensuring that librarians had academic

freedom.[120] At MacEwan University, librarians may have their research topics assigned to them

by administration, or they must receive the permission of the administration before engaging

with a research topic.[121] Academic freedom for librarians at MacEwan University was finalised

only after the rest of the collective agreement was written, and stipulations for academic

freedom exist in a later document, distinct from the collective agreement.[122] Although these

librarians have academic freedom in theory, the collective agreement that was agreed upon has

severe limitations for academic freedom with regard to research that continues to require

---

[117] MAUT-LS Working Group, 2010.
[118] University of Alberta, 1998
[119] University of Calgary, 2015.
[120] CAPAL, 2015; McMaster University, 2011.
[121] MacEwan University, 2014.
[122] MacEwan University, "Memorandum of Agreement," 2015.

supervisory approval for research that is to be completed only "when necessary."[123] Whether or not it is the case that librarians at these libraries face a situation as unacceptable that those at McGill did is unclear, but what is clear is that the collective agreements do not necessarily protect the librarians' rights to academic freedom, nor to an environment where research may be supported or carried out at all.

When comparing the six U15 universities to the six non-U15 organizations, it is surprising and disheartening to note that, in general, U15 universities have notably less in the way of research provisions and expectations for librarians outlined in their collective agreements than their non-U15 counterparts. While this pattern does not hold true for all collective agreements and associated documents analysed, and while the wording of the collective agreements may not reflect the functional reality at any given institution, it is nonetheless alarming that universities that pride themselves on their research records and production of knowledge place such low priority on librarian research or even librarians' ability to research and the academic freedom for librarians to select research topics.   It is unclear why this is the case — it may be related to the need for librarians to provide research support for non-librarian faculty at these institutions, or it may be a function of librarians not holding faculty status at half of the U15 institutions.

From this analysis, it is clear that librarian research is undervalued in the collective agreements of universities in Canada, and that the language that governs librarian research and academic freedom is often convoluted and unclear. This is almost certainly detrimental to librarians wishing to engage in research and who may be prevented from doing so due to vaguarities in the language of these documents. This is especially true as collective agreements

---

[123] MacEwan University, 2014.

may place undue power over librarian research in the hands of the supervisors of librarians, who may not be sympathetic to or supportive of librarian research. The situation that occurred at McGill in recent years only serves to demonstrate that academic freedom is not a given for academic librarians at Canadian institutions, nor is the opportunity to conduct research a given. The importance of and provisions for librarian research varies widely between institutions, and librarians may face many obstacles in order to engage in research. Issues that arose in the collective agreements were reflective of those identified in participant data.

Librarians

Perceptions of librarian research and librarians as researchers were obtained via surveys and interviews, with both librarians and non-librarian faculty. In this section, librarian perceptions of librarian research reflected to a degree the issues identified in the collective agreements, as well as highlighting a number of additional considerations.

Surveys

The librarian survey[124] indicated that librarians regularly conduct research as part of their duties, and that they see the value in conducting that research. Seventy-nine percent of respondents indicated that they conducted LIS research as part of their librarian duties, with an additional 7% indicating that they were unable to conduct such research, but that they would like to. Fifty-nine percent indicated that they conducted research in other fields, with an additional 10% indicating that they would like to have the opportunity to engage in such research. Sixty-seven percent of respondents indicated that conducting research was a required component of their jobs, either as part of their job description, or as a requirement for promotion. The remaining 43% indicated that research was encouraged, but not required. The

---

[124] See **Appendix I** for survey questions

bulk of librarian respondents (79%) reported publishing their research regularly. A small majority (56%) of respondents felt that the amount of research already conducted by librarians was adequate, but a comparable amount (41%) of respondents felt that librarians should conduct more research than they already do. Importantly, the bulk of librarians (76%) felt that librarians should hold faculty status. However, librarians seemed to hold a dim view of research rigor within the LIS profession, with 66% indicating that they did not consider the field to be as rigorous as other disciplines.

Collaborative behaviour with non-librarian faculty was highly regarded, with 89% of respondents indicating that they would like to engage with non-librarian faculty on collaborative, non-research projects, such as teaching projects, and 100% indicating their willingness to engage with non-librarian faculty on collaborative research. This last result was of particular interest as even the librarians who outright rejected LIS research and had stated they had no desire to do research felt that they would be interested in engaging in collaborative research. Eighty-nine percent of respondents identified themselves as possessing skills that they believed could aid non-librarian faculty in their own research.

Respondents were asked to identify the three primary duties of an academic librarian. These results were sorted and tallied using the method outlined earlier.[125] Fourteen categories were identified in the librarian data. The three primary duties of an academic librarian according to librarians are:

1. Teaching and Teaching Support
2. Research
3. Collection Management

---

[125] Page 25

These results indicate both that research is seen as an important element of library work, and that it is secondary to the service role of librarianship. Research was acknowledged by librarians as important, but librarians passionately rejected the notion that it should supersede service aspects of the profession:

> *"I think it would be a bad idea to advocate for academic librarians to aspire to the same research roles as faculty. Librarianship is a service profession, so research should be secondary, if at all present."*

> *"We are a service profession first and foremost."*

Responses indicated that librarians differentiate between different types of academic librarians and that research was more appropriate for some categories than others. Additionally, responses indicated that librarians felt frustrated with a lack of support for conducting research:

> *"Unfortunately, research will be the first thing to go when librarians have to pick up more duties when colleagues leave and are not replaced. It is already difficult to find the time to do research, and I fear it will get worse."*

Pilot Interviews

Two pilot interviews were conducted with librarians that self-identified as participating in research.[126] Analysis of the interviews identified seven major themes — *Service First, Research is Essential to Good Service, Librarians as Researchers not Academics, Librarians Bring a Skillset to Collaborative Research, Librarians as Bridges, Conducting Research Raises Faculty's Opinion of Librarians* and *Lack of Research Support for Librarians at a System Level.*

<u>Service First</u>

The importance of service was identified as a major theme within the data. Both participants emphasized the service-based nature of the profession of librarianship. The role of service was sometimes at odds with the research duties of librarians. However, this concern

---

[126] Pilot interview questions are included in **Appendix II**

only arose in (hypothetical) situations where research was prioritized over service, not in situations where research was included within the overall duties of librarians.

> **Frank:** *I think that as long as you cannot take away that it's a service profession that deals with the public [then librarians should engage in research].*

Regardless of whether librarians conducted research or not, service came first.

Research is Essential to Good Service

Good service cannot exist without research, both participants pointed out. Quality improvement studies and in-house research were identified as major informants to effective evidence-based practice. Being unable to engage in research to promote evidence-based practice was a source of frustration. Participants indicated that engaging in research, particularly high-level collaborative and individual research in any field, dramatically improves librarians' ability to serve faculty effectively:

> **Jane:** *I think the more involved you are in research, [...] the better perspective you have on what [non-librarian faculty are doing. [...] When we get together at a faculty meeting, I know what they're talking about, and it just makes me a better librarian.*

Librarians as Researchers, not Academics

Both librarians interviewed in the pilot alluded to or explicitly stated that while librarians were researchers, they should not be considered academics.

> **Jane:** *We're not a publish-or-perish environment, it's just an expectation that you'll be engaged in that sort of [research] activity.*

This was partially due to the types of research conducted by librarians; while both participants discussed high-level research that they are involved in, they clarify that, while research is required, the definition of that research is quite broad, and includes the sort of in-house research that Jane referred to as 'quality improvement' and Frank identified as 'applied.' Participants felt that the manner of research librarians conducted was not subject to the same

49

academic rigor and lacked the 'purity' of research found in other disciplines, and therefore could not necessarily qualify librarians as academics.

Librarians Bring a Skill set to Collaborative Research

Librarians were identified by both participants as possessing skills that could assist faculty with their research. Frank expressed frustration that these skills were not appreciated by faculty:

> **Frank:** *[Non-librarian faculty] should see us as kind of partners in [research]. [...] I don't know if they see us being able to help THEM.*

In contrast, Jane discussed several projects where the faculty sought her out to engage with them on research projects precisely because they were aware of the skills she possessed as a librarian.

Librarians as Bridges

Librarians were seen as able to engage in and facilitate collaborative research because the interdisciplinary nature of librarianship serves as a bridge between disciplines. Librarians perceived themselves as being able to help non-librarian faculty when those faculty members were working with resources outside their own area of expertise. This perception held whether the librarian was an expert in the area or not.

Conducting Research Raises Faculty's Opinion of Librarians

Participants believed non-librarian faculty thought better of librarians and their abilities when they were aware that librarians conduct research. This lack of awareness, however, was a source of frustration for participants.

> **Frank:** *On the research side, I'd say they [non-librarian faculty] don't know we do research. [...] I would like them to definitely take advantage of what we can do.*

50

Jane, on the other hand, as a librarian who engaged in regular collaborative research and as such interacted with faculty who were aware of her research prowess, discussed how she believed her involvement in research had raised her status according to the faculty.

<u>*Lack of Research Support for Librarians at a System Level*</u>

Both participants discussed and expressed frustration that while as librarians at their institution they are required to conduct research as part of their job, there was little research support for them at an institutional level. While their institution was informally friendly to librarians wishing to engage in research, there were repeated comments from both participants that they lacked the time or funding to engage in research.

Pilot interviews indicated that librarians identified themselves first as service personnel, though also as researchers, whose research improved practice and scholarly communication, yet was under supported by their institution. The themes identified in the pilot interviews were expanded upon and explored further in subsequent interviews. The next section presents findings from subsequent librarian interviews.

Interviews

Seven major themes were identified in the librarian interview data — *Doing Research and the Desire to do Research, Research as a duty and a Responsibility, Research as Extra, Support and Challenges, Freedom to Research, Beneficial on Multiple Axes,* and *Faculty Relations*.

<u>*Doing Research and the Desire to do Research*</u>

The interview data indicate that librarians regularly conduct research, with participants referring to both their own research and the research of their librarian colleagues. Thirteen librarian participants indicated that they conducted research, and an additional participant

51

indicated that she would like to conduct research. Only one librarian expressed a personal

disinterest in conducting research. The kind of research discussed most often by librarian

participants was of an applied nature, and participants suggested that this was the most common

type of librarian research.

> **Natasha:** *It's more efficient and effective [...] for librarians to focus their research on their professional practice [...] solving problems that you're encountering in your day-to-day job as a librarian through your research seems to be the most efficient thing.*

Ten librarians discussed conducting or wanting to conduct non-applied research as well.

> **Angie:** *I would like to see librarians at this university [...] stretch beyond research that more resembles project assessment or quality assurance into "let's do a project where part of our goal from the beginning is to rigorously generate new, original knowledge to contribute to the world."*

The vast majority of participants described their belief that academic librarians in

general possessed a drive and a desire to do research; an academic curiosity that results in a

passion for research. Participants spoke of the desire to conduct research not only as a part of

their librarian role, but on a personal level as well.

> **Trish:** *I'd love to be doing research full time because I love it.*
>
> **Peter:** *We go into academic librarianship for a reason. We're interested in difficult questions and we're interested in intellectual challenges.*

This passion, participants note, is critical to librarians successfully engaging in research

— without a passion for research, research is likely to fall by the wayside. Librarians were

careful to note, however, that that passion is not enough to *ensure* that research is undertaken.

External factors ensuring that librarians are able to do research are required as well. These will

be discussed in later themes.

The research interests of librarians were found to be quite diverse, and included areas of study within LIS as well as within an array of other disciplines. Participants expressed research experience and interest in areas as diverse as music research and LGBTQ health, for example. Librarians felt some apprehension about subject research, particularly if they conducted research in a field that they did not serve as subject librarian for. This manifested both as a need to defend their research in non-LIS subject areas that they were not responsible for, and as an acknowledgement that they may not feel comfortable conducting non-LIS research.

> *Darcy: [...] unless I was invited, I don't know that I would do my own research on the subject of nursing.*

At the same time, however, participants were aware that forcing librarians to focus their research efforts only on LIS areas or on the areas that they were subject specialists for would be both undesirable and untenable, especially considering how such positions are assigned and/or reallocated. Additionally, they recognized impositions placed on research topics as curtailing academic freedom. Librarians felt that their subject research was valuable, as was their LIS-based research, and while they did not want to be limited to the areas of study for which they liaised, they did express a desire to be able to work in the field of their liaison duties, at the very least in a collaborative manner.

> *Wanda: I've found with most university libraries that I've worked at, subject designation shifts around. So it's not like a history librarian forever. So maybe somebody's a fine arts librarian and then moves to history and is doing research in fines arts, not necessarily LIS, well does that mean that person would have to change their research program? That would be nuts.*

Despite the passion and desire to conduct research, participants did express some practical concerns regarding librarian research such as worries that they did not receive adequate research education in their librarianship education and concerns that the quality of librarian research may be lesser compared to research in other disciplines.

Jeri: *I don't think that a lot of librarians are prepared to do research properly.*

However, this feeling was not shared across all participants; the majority took it as a given that librarians possessed the appropriate skills and abilities to conduct research.

Darcy: *I mean obviously [librarians] have the skills to be researchers.*

This was backed by an expectation of academic rigor for librarian research discussed by some participants — those who raised the issue of quality described an expectation of peer review for librarian research, and noted that subpar research would be identified as such.

Participants noted that librarians will often strive to conduct research regardless of whether or not it is required of their position, and expressed frustration when provisions did not exist; as participants felt conducting research is an important means by which to contribute to the discipline. As such, many librarians indicated that they would prefer to be doing considerably more research than they currently are. Participants were irritated with the difficulties they encountered in being able to conduct research and with the scope of their research projects.

However, despite their desire to conduct research, their experience with research, and their belief that conducting research is a critical element of the academic librarian discipline, nearly all participants were careful to note that not *all* academic librarians had a desire to do research, or indeed did do research.

Natasha: *Some [librarians] are very enthusiastic about [doing research], and some not so much at all.*

This divergence in librarian attitudes towards research can make the requirements guiding librarian research difficult to construct, as will be discussed in themes below.

Research as a Duty and a Responsibility

Participants felt strongly that undertaking research was part of the responsibilities in the field of academic librarianship, regardless of the specific details of a given job. Participants considered research critical to the role of academic librarians and to the discipline of academic librarianship. Participants were quite plain in stating that librarian research *should* be done. Librarian participants outlined their belief that the discipline of librarianship requires competent and regular research in order to move forward, to remain current, and to thrive. Who better, participants asked, to conduct this research than the practicing librarians immersed in the field?

Librarians who conducted research were viewed as being more informed about the profession, and as contributing to the profession beyond the confines of their specific position or institution. Librarians feel a responsibility to the discipline, and it is this grander responsibility that drives their belief that librarians should conduct research. This idea connecting research and librarians' responsibility to the discipline speaks to the professionality of librarians. It follows that a lack of research, interest in research, or an inability to do research speaks to deprofessionalization of academic librarianship, and a potential dilapidation of the field were it to cease. Librarians owe research to the discipline as a whole.

> ***Peggy:*** *I think as academic librarians, if we want to keep the academic status, [we] should be thinking more deeply about what we do, what our practices are, and that type of thing. A part of our work, [...] is adding to the literature.*

Many librarian participants also noted that conducting research can often be an *unspoken* requirement of a librarian's position, regardless of their actual job description. While certainly some librarians indicated that research is an explicit part of their jobs, this was not always the case. Research for librarians was often placed in a state of limbo. It could be expected while not being technically required. Without being explicitly outlined in their job description or

55

expectations, conducting research can nonetheless be tied to salary, tenure, promotion, and status at an institution.

> **Peggy:** *But the unspoken — there's always an unspoken requirement — is that yes, you do need to have [done research] to gain tenure.*

The fact that research may be informally required in this manner is a source of discomfort for librarians. Positioning the requirement of research as strictly informal allows it to be both lauded and expected, while at the same time identifying it as "optional" such that its undertaking need not be formally provided with support in any regard. It is important to note that within this conflict, participants never indicated a belief that research should *not* be linked to salary, tenure, promotion or status; rather, they lambasted the lack of support for it despite the importance placed upon it, and they resented the seemingly informal recognition of that importance. Participants did not waver from their conviction that research was a responsibility to the discipline, and they expressed interest in seeing a formal recognition of the importance of librarian research and an increased degree of support for it.

However, because participants were aware that some librarians were disinclined to conduct research, there was hesitancy about being too bold in formalizing the recognition and requirements of librarian research. The firm statement that librarians not be *required* to conduct research was therefore echoed by many librarian participants. This lack of a desire for a requirement for research may be borne of practicality as well — several participants suggested that in an ideal world, there would be time regularly set aside for research, but that other duties often precluded this possibility. Participants were aware that requiring research in such a climate would prove extremely problematic for librarians.

There was a pervasive view across the librarian interviews that librarian research was, practically speaking, something extra — however much of a duty to librarianship it may be. That is, when research is considered in the context of a specific *job*, research is considered something that librarians do *on top of* their duties, instead of as *part of* their duties. Librarian research is of secondary priority to the other tasks entailed in being a librarian. Despite the low priority placed on research in workplace situations, librarian research is still considered very *necessary* by librarian participants. Research may then be thought of as a responsibility of librarians, but it doesn't necessarily follow that it will be included in, or even permitted as part of, the given job description of a librarian. A conflict may therefore be seen between librarian-as-role and librarian-as-job, wherein librarians are regularly placed in positions where they cannot contribute to the profession via research.

> *Angie: I consider research to be an important part of what I do, but I do not consider research part of my position in a technical sense.*

Under these circumstances, librarian research often winds up being lumped in with other librarian activities that are outside the primary responsibilities, such as community commitments or teaching. Research then may be further marginalised, as any librarian duty conducted outside of the primary responsibility may be considered as good as, and therefore interchangeable with, any other like duty. The operational and service aspects of the job were found to take precedence for librarians, for it is those aspects of the job that *must* be done, or the immediate functioning of the library and the patrons will suffer, something that librarian participants considered to be unacceptable. Regular librarian research was identified as important to the long term success of the library and the discipline of librarianship — the focus on the day-to-day librarian duties over research may be conceptualised as an issue of triage.

While librarians agreed that it should not be the case, they nonetheless indicated that prioritising the operational and service aspects of librarianship so completely often led to sacrificing research time. This was compounded by the fact that these aspects of the job cannot be scheduled, as they are inherently unstructured, and often urgent to the patrons the librarians are serving.

Despite the importance librarian participants placed on librarian research, they were aware that research had the potential to be seen by supervisors or by librarians disinclined to engage in research, as *interfering* with librarian duties.

> **Maria:** *From a manager's point of view [...] if we give academic librarians more time for research, it means that there's less time for the performance of their functions, and these days, with tough budget situations, I think we'd be hard-pressed to do what we need to do if more people were away doing research.*

The positioning of research as an extra facilitates this manner of thinking, making it difficult to claim as a duty of librarianship, even when librarians consider it such. Librarian participants were clear that *if* research is a duty of librarians (and they believe it is), then time *must* be made for undertaking research, and it must not be viewed as interfering with other librarian duties. This may require a fundamental shift in how librarian research is perceived and considered.

Related to the ease with which library research was able to be set aside for other duties, librarian participants noted a distinct lack of pressure or incentives to conduct research.

> **Darcy:** *The stakes are quite low. You're encouraged to publish, but if you don't, [...] nobody keeps your feet to the fire in that regard.*

This lack of encouraging research makes it easier for research to be put off or left undone altogether, even if librarians would prefer not to set it aside. Participants indicated not

only a desire for more support for research, but a desire for more pressure or incentives to conduct it.

Participants indicated concerns that if research remains conceptualised as extraneous to the 'standard' librarian duties, it is liable to be phased out of librarian positions altogether. In reaction to this possibility, two participants brought up the concept of multiple streams of librarianship, with one stream having a research component as a focus and the other stream lacking a research component altogether.

> *Natasha:* *We've had a discussion before, between librarians, that it might be nice to have two streams of librarians. One stream could focus purely professional practice, and then another could be the professional practice and research stream.*

Participants did not discuss the potential long term implications of such a move, they merely viewed it as a possible step that made practical sense, given the current position of librarian research and the attitudes of some of their less-research-inclined librarian colleagues. Ultimately, this possibility could be thought of as an attempt to formalize the reality that some librarians did not want to conduct research. It is worth noting, however, that that this dual-stream possibility ran counter to the ideal that many librarian participants expressed that research is a duty of librarianship. In some ways, it reflected the participants' unease with the views of their colleagues who did not wish to undertake research, without disrespecting their colleagues' opinions. Consequently, it is a practical solution that did not reflect the ideals of the participants.

Support and Challenges

According to participants, conducting research is a delicate balance for librarians, and requires the existence of certain supports and the navigation or avoidance of many barriers. Supports included special provisions for conducting research, while challenges that librarians

faced with regard to their research were multiple and varied. One participant discussed the

manner in which librarians identified themselves as being constantly "on-call." The requirement

of being available for consultation at all times for patron requests if one is to be a good librarian

makes it difficult to both prioritise one's own research and to set aside significant blocks of time

in which to conduct their own research. The addition of supports such as regular research days

were viewed as tremendously beneficial for librarians conducting research.

> *Natasha: 15% [of time is set aside for research] on paper [...] but in reality often you get interrupted and if you're a conscientious librarian it's hard to ignore the emails from our users, from our faculty and students who need help and need it right away.*

Additionally, the communal environment of the library itself can be a difficult place to

focus in, and a refuge may be necessary or desirable for librarians to be able to conduct research.

> *Peter: [...] you don't want the day to day workings of the library around you when you're trying to write [...]*

Supervisor attitudes towards research are extremely important. Research may flourish

under those supervisors sympathetic to librarian research, and will flounder under those

indifferent or hostile towards it. Supervisors and the degree of supervisory control over librarian

research can be a significant challenge to librarians' ability to conduct research, as discussed by

Steve:

> *Steve: [...] so I requested, [...] "the next two days, I'm going to work from home so I can get through this particular stage [of my research]", and I was challenged quite strongly by my supervisor. And [...] she had said that at the higher levels of library administration that that was just a forbidden activity. [...] then it turned into "Well, you're not actually given time to do research so you can't. You don't need to be at home, you need to do it at work."*

In addition, supervisors may have significant influence over the *type* of research that

librarians are able to conduct as well, as occasionally librarians require supervisory permission

to work on a specific research project, or to receive funding for a project, with Peter noting that

"some librarians find it harder to get permission." Institutional support too was critical to the

success of librarian research. Alarmingly, participants often found such support lacking

altogether, or ambivalent in nature.

> **Peter:** *There's not necessarily a lot of actual support and guidance from the library as a whole, institutionally, to support us, so most of us [...] have to find our own way.*
>
> **Steve:** *I'd say probably institution-wide [...] that [research is] not really supported at the higher levels of library administration, but it's not NOT supported. So it's not actively [...] encouraged, but it's not frowned upon either.*

Support shown by large-scale library organizations, such as CARL (Canadian

Association of Research Libraries), was appreciated by participants. While only three librarian

participants mentioned library organizations, these organizations were identified as important

forces in valuing librarian research.

Positive reinforcement and support from peers regarding research was critical to

participants. A positive atmosphere of peer support created a climate of research and an

encouraging research environment. Peer support was especially important in situations where

institutional or formal research support was somewhat lacking. Conversely, a lack of peer

support could be detrimental to librarian research.

> **James:** *I find that there isn't really a culture of [research] here, [...] when I apply for funding, I end up having to go to the history department and get them to sign off on my proposals, because we don't have a research committee.*
>
> **Peter:** *I think the main support [for research] has been from a peer-to-peer level rather than at an institutional or at a library local level.*

Financial support was found to facilitate librarian research. However, budgetary

concerns of the university were ever-present and posed a major challenge to the possibility of

obtaining that financial support. Eleven participants did note, however, that funding was

available to them, particularly in conjunction with research leaves. This financial support for

research was greatly appreciated by librarians that had access to it, even if many wished it was

more significant. In some cases, funding was not available to librarians at all as commented on by Karen:

> **Karen:** *In terms of financial support there isn't—we don't [have any].*

Money was a primary limiting factor in how librarians discussed the possibilities for their research. A majority described what they would ideally like librarian research to look like, while at the same time viewing it as wholly untenable, frequently due to financial concerns.

> **Darcy:** *some years there's money to go around and some years there isn't [...] if we don't get money, it's not because we're not doing good research, it's because there was no money.*

Financial concerns also influenced hiring decisions in terms of covering research leaves. In the current climate, research was difficult to do and easy to resent, when no one is hired to replace librarians on leave, and other librarians must cover their duties as well as their own.

Sufficient time for research represented the single biggest challenge to research identified by librarian participants — nearly every librarian lamented a lack of time in which to conduct research. Even those rare few that felt comfortable with the amount of research time available to them would have *preferred* to have more research time available to them. Specifically, librarians felt they were unable to set aside the necessary *concentrated* blocks of time in order to effectively conduct research. Research days, and control over schedules, including working from home were found to be particularly valuable, when present.

Furthermore, participants generally felt that being able to devote around 25-30% of their time to research would be an ideal, recognizing that the 40% often granted to non-librarian faculty would be inappropriate for them. While their ideal percentage of time put aside for

research would be 30%, many participants noted that even a much lower percentage would be desirable in comparison to what they currently received or were able to set aside for research.

> ***Angie:*** *I don't think I manage to spend even 10% of my time on research. But if you think about what's 10%? That's one day every two weeks. That would be—to me that would be amazing if I could manage to find that much time. […] I think 10% doesn't sound like that much, but were talking about academic librarianship here, not being a faculty member. So to me 10% actually seems quite luxurious, yet possibly realistic as well.*

A lack of clarity in the librarians' collective agreements was also cited as a potential challenge for librarians to conduct research. Without specific provisions in the collective agreements for research, librarians could be denied the opportunity to work on research projects. Some librarians noted, however, that the vagueness of the collective agreements could occasionally work in favour of librarians conducting research, especially when confronting supervisors who opposed it.

Librarians often find themselves in a position where they need to defend the worthiness of their existence to the academic community at large. Conducting research can help the librarians defend their work, but makes it all the more frustrating that there exist so many challenges to librarian research. Formal research supports that were identified as being desirable included research mentors, peer-support groups and the setup of a system that pointed researchers immediately to those that would be able to aid them in the minutiae of the research process. For example, librarians with access to research leaves were generally more content with the research situation at their university. Conversely, participants noted that an expectation of regular research without formal research supports was especially awful, and made the research process unnecessarily convoluted and difficult.

> *Jessica: For people who are on contract, not in a permanent position, it's a really scary situation because you want to do research so you can show you have the capacity to do it so you can get a continuing position, but you're not offered any time to do it.*

This conflict between the research expectation and the lack of formal support provided by either the institution or the library was itself a barrier to librarian research.

Beyond the possibility of formal research support, librarians recognized a wide array of arenas in which wider informal support would aid the research process. Several participants expressed a need for librarians to receive additional research education, either in their initial LIS Master's studies, or at a later point, at professional development days within their new positions.

> *Jeri: I do not think that the Master's degree that we're expected to take necessarily prepares us, at least not in my experience, and not in the experience of many of my colleagues, […] to go into a job and do research. […] as students, […] we are not encouraged to learn how to properly research or conduct research on our own.*

Of great importance to nearly every librarian participant was a general desire to see consistency between what was expected of librarians with regard to research and the support that was provided to them to be able to conduct that research

Effective librarian research can only occur when the challenges outlined above are mitigated, and librarians would prefer that they were mitigated to a greater degree than they currently are. Additional supports must be implemented and institutionalized in order for librarian research to flourish. While some of these challenges and supports can be formally removed or introduced, respectively, others, such as the development of a research culture and mentality, are informal in nature and would require significant effort and a shifting of mindsets to introduce.

An important aspect of librarian research was the *allowance* of librarians to engage in that research. Librarian participants linked their ability to engage in research with access to academic freedom. Academic freedom was noted as being necessary for librarians to select and pursue their research topics, and to feel confident in their ability to do so. Academic freedom was highlighted as being essential to not only research, but to the job of academic librarians in general. This view was held by all librarian participants.

> ***Trish:*** *I almost don't know what to say, 'cause [academic freedom] just, it HAS to be there.*
>
> ***Wanda:*** *I think librarians should be able to undertake any research that they wish. That is what academic freedom is about. So it's either we have academic freedom or we don't have academic freedom.*

However, participants did not always feel certain that they would be granted academic freedom if they raised a contentious issue in their research. A minority of participants worried that their academic freedom would be curtailed in such a situation. The concern appears to be a justifiable one; two librarian participants described challenges they had experienced to their own academic freedom. Another described challenges to the academic freedom of librarians that he had witnessed in years past at his institution.

> ***Wanda:*** *I've had to change research. […] In some ways it looks like I [have academic freedom], but it has been challenged.*

Such challenges typically arose at a supervisory level, and one librarian described circumventing the issue in the future by simply avoiding discussing his research intentions with his supervisor.

Librarian participants spoke at length about the value of librarian research, indicating that it was worthwhile for a variety of reasons. The various benefits of librarian research affected the library and its ability to serve the academic community in a number of very real ways, both intangible and tangible. Participants discussed the benefits of increasing knowledge, improving practice, improving academic communication, increased confidence and competence for librarians, and improving the reputation of the university. These multiple benefits are particularly important in an academic climate where librarians are increasingly being asked to prove their worth, a point which was alluded to in the librarian interviews.

> **Darcy:** *when budgets are being made and things have to get cut […] you need somebody advocating […] of president level and vice-president level saying 'no you can't, the library has this much impact on the faculty or this much influence on them' or, 'creates this much, or it contributes to the research that the library outputs' and if there's nobody there to say that, then it's really easy for them to say 'oh well, the library has to lose 4% of its budget'*

According to participants, conducting research improves knowledge in the field of LIS, and in other subject areas in which librarians choose to conduct research. In many ways, this contribution of knowledge to the field(s) is the most obvious benefit of librarian research.

> **Trish:** *Well, I just think that as librarians, we need to be doing research to improve our practice, and so, through doing research, we're learning more about what we do, and we're able to contribute back to the knowledge base for other librarians, professionals in our field, in order to make our practice and our profession better.*

Contributing to any field can only serve to enhance and improve that field, and for librarian participants who felt a need to enhance librarianship, research is an effective mechanism by which to do so. Beyond improving the field(s) in which librarians conduct research, participants were eager to note that librarians engaging in research helps to improve knowledge exchange and connection between disparate disciplines. This mirrors findings in the

pilot interviews. Such knowledge exchange or potential for knowledge exchange is facilitated

due to the position of libraries as a nexus at which many academics converge — working with

librarians who are well-versed in research and are intimately familiar with theory and techniques

in their area and others can help bridge the knowledge between disciplines and prevent

development of academic silos.

> *James: [...]in the social sciences there's, in these different silos the theorists have come up with a lot of different language for essentially describing the same thing, so you can say "well you know, in environmental psychology, they talk about it this way, but in sociology, they talk about it this way,"*

Conducting research made participants better able to connect and communicate with the

academic clientele of the library, better able to speak the "language" of research. Librarian

participants believed that when non-librarian faculty are aware of librarian research, trust and

communication between the groups is facilitated — non-librarian faculty are confident that

librarians are able to understand their needs. In this regard, librarians can be seen to improve

their practice by engaging in research; librarians are better able to engage with the patrons, and

service to patrons therefore improves.

> *Natasha: There's the credibility issue as well; how can they see me as a support in this area if I am not a researcher and don't understand their issues?*

Librarian research has more direct implications for improvements to practice as well,

considering that a great deal of librarian research is applied in nature. Applied research is

undertaken with the specific goal of improving library practice, and therefore has an immediate

and direct impact on practice within the library. It was felt that practicing librarians were in the

best position to conduct that applied manner of investigation. Participants indicated that using

research to consistently reflect on and improve practice demonstrates the way in which research

can be used in libraries. Furthermore, participants felt that policies of libraries are likely to

change in the face of research conducted by librarians. Thirteen participants claimed that they too benefited by engaging in research — conducting research and continually improving the field may be thought of a mechanism by which librarians remain current, and to ensure the libraries themselves remain current as well.

> **Trish:** *We can't just sit back as practitioners, and wait for someone to tell us what to do. […] It's totally tied to our practice […]. We need to go through a systematic process to understand something.*

For participants, conducting research was linked to improved librarian competence, and a greater confidence in their own skills. Their research-related skillset is improved because, as researchers themselves, they develop an insider's understanding of the research process. Further, they are able to apply their broader librarian perspective to the research process, and can apply that knowledge to aiding non-librarian faculty and other academic patrons with their own research, as illustrated by James:

> **James:** *Because we are educated in and think deeply about how knowledge is organized, we are in a position to interrogate knowledge organization (and therefore, assumptions) in other fields.*

The insider perspective regarding research is especially important when one considers the role that librarians play in research instruction. Librarians indicated they were often responsible for modelling research to patrons, especially introducing graduate students to certain aspects of the research process, and being a point of aid for newer faculty members. It is critical in light of this situation that librarians have a nuanced and detailed understanding of the research process in order to effectively serve their clientele. So too should librarians have an understanding of the processes that surround research, such as applying for grant funding or submitting to journals — their understanding of these processes are significantly improved when they, themselves, are regularly engaging in such activities.

Steve: *at a large research institution, [...] we librarians that are also active researchers, and [we need to be to] understand the research process if we're supposed to be modelling that to students and faculty.*

Participants also identified a benefit, when they engaged in research, to librarians as individuals, claiming that it improved their worldview and enhanced their confidence.

Wanda: [...] if we're talking about life-long learning as librarians, as most of us do and should, then we need to be doing that ourselves. And that's for our own benefit, and again for the library, the university, and society as a whole.

It was suggested by some participants that librarian research would have the added benefit of bringing prestige to the institution, through the acquisition of significant grants or research awards, or through the production of significant research. Participants were quick to note, however, that seeking prestige should never be the reasoning behind encouraging librarians to engage in research. Higher research output and increased external grant funding were also identified as potential benefits that librarian research could confer upon the institution.

Ultimately, according to participants, librarian research conveys a wide array of benefits. When librarians undertake research, the field of LIS and potentially other subject areas are improved, as is practice within the library. Librarians who conduct research are better able to relate to and communicate with patrons who conduct research, and are better able to provide instruction for those new to the research process. Librarians benefit personally from conducting research, and there is potential for the institution to benefit as well.

Faculty Relations

Participants were initially hesitant to discuss how non-librarian faculty felt about librarians and librarian research because they were concerned about putting words into the mouths of others, and that they would present an unflattering portrait of the group at large. As

such, their views as expressed within this theme must be considered with the understanding that librarians were not certain their perceptions were accurate. Nonetheless, this theme represents how librarians believed non-librarian faculty viewed them.

Generally speaking, librarians believed that non-librarian faculty were unaware of librarian research, and did not think of librarians as researchers or scholars in their own right. While there were exceptions, they believed that non-librarian faculty viewed them only as a research support service, and not as a group that was familiar with research from an insider's perspective.

> **Trish:** *In many cases, [...] we're considered as those who help researchers, but maybe not researchers ourselves.*

One participant cynically noted that this perception may be fuelled by *hope* that librarians were only a research support by faculty who did not want to provide a co-author credit to librarians while requesting librarians provide services such as literature reviews.

> **Jessica:** *I feel like people in the STEM subjects wouldn't want to give [co-author credits] up [...] to librarians. [...] say a librarian does a systematic search for somebody, and [...] they see it as a service, rather than an academic collaboration.*

The perception that librarians were not researchers was a view that librarian participants felt was unjustified, given how many of them did regularly conduct research. Four participants related stories wherein non-librarian faculty who discovered the participant conducted research were extremely surprised at the revelation.

> **Peter:** *Most faculty I talk to tend to be surprised at first that we're academic staff. They're surprised that we publish our own papers in most cases.*

Despite a general sense of discontent from librarians regarding the ignorance of their non-librarian faculty colleagues regarding their research, nearly all participants felt strongly that

70

that ignorance was not the fault of the non-librarian faculty, but rather, the fault of librarians for failing to educate their colleagues in this regard.

> *Claire: We haven't done a good job of informing [faculty] about the research that we can do, and because not every librarian does research.*

Librarians felt it was their duty to educate non-librarians about their research role, and that greater attempts must be made on this front. Close relationships with non-librarian faculty were identified as a mechanism by which this perception could be countered, though this was limited in its range, and relies on personal interactions.

> *Trish: Where librarians have developed very good relationships with certain faculty members, [...] those faculty members come to know what the librarian does, and know them a little bit more than the service that the librarian does for them on their research.*

Encouraging librarians and non-librarian faculty to work together was likewise identified as a means of countering the perception that librarians do not engage in research. Increased visibility of librarians, and especially librarian research, was pointed to as being a desirable and underutilized means by which the perceptions of librarians could be improved.

Non-librarian faculty awareness of librarian research was linked to their having increased respect for librarians, with a majority of participants noticing a difference in attitude between those faculty members who were aware of their research and those that were not. Nine participants noted a positive difference in how faculty behaved towards them after learning of their research endeavors. Faculty knowing about librarian research also increased the likelihood of faculty and librarians working together on projects, both research-oriented and otherwise. In short, librarians were viewed more as valuable colleagues when non-librarian faculty were aware of their research activities than was otherwise the case, as noted by Peter:

> *Peter:* *As I have started to get [...] my own studies [...] accepted for publication, and that comes up in conversation with faculty [...] they have started to [...] have more confidence that we could help them.*

Librarians held a positive view of collaboration with non-librarian faculty members, and were of the impression that non-librarian faculty shared this view, particularly if they were aware of librarian research. A majority of librarians mentioned, and were hopeful about engaging in, collaborative research with non-librarian faculty.

> *Jessica:* *I would like to see a lot more collaborative research.*

Participants sought to improve perceptions of librarians and make non-librarian faculty more aware of librarian research. Such a change, librarians felt, would improve relations between librarians and non-librarian faculty, particularly in the arenas of respect and collaboration.

> *Jessica:* *[Faculty] think they are the leading scholars in whatever they are studying. And so I don't think they see us as being able to help, because what would we know that they don't, right? But what they don't see is the skills we can help them develop, and that's really too bad.*

Such a change in view, however, would require formal support from the library and institution, and would require an increased focus on the visibility of librarians. Additionally, it would require a shift in the thinking of some librarians; as participants noted, a number of *librarians* do not think of themselves as more than research support for non-librarian faculty members, and this self-perception must change to reflect the reality that librarians do conduct research. Such an outlook, however, must be cognisant that librarians *do*, and must continue to, provide research support. This is especially true as providing research support is one of the primary ways in which librarians and non-librarian faculty interact, with some non-librarian faculty looking to librarians as experts and methodologists.

> *Peter: I find [...] that [librarians are] becoming methodologists, research specialists. So people won't just ask us to do the searches for them, but they'll ask us to take them through the process to make sure they're doing everything properly.*

Participants claimed that librarians must continue to establish that they provide research support without suggesting that that is *all* they are capable of doing; by educating non-librarian faculty that librarians are researchers in their own right. While there are certainly a limited number of non-librarian faculty that are aware of the role of librarians as researchers, according to some participants, that awareness is rare, and must be expanded.

Non-Librarian Faculty
Survey

Unsurprisingly, responses to the non-librarian faculty survey[127] indicated a general lack of awareness of the role of research in academic librarianship; questions which related to this area were consistently answered by over 50% of respondents with answers that contained the phrase "I don't know." This lack of knowledge extended to knowledge regarding the duties and publication habits of librarians, as well as the general state of research in LIS. This finding is consistent with previous studies that have indicated that non-librarian faculty are generally unfamiliar with the duties of librarians, particularly the duties that involve research activities.[128]

Despite this lack of awareness of the current state of research practice engaged in by academic librarians, non-librarian faculty felt strongly (74%) that whatever amount of research was already undertaken by librarians was an appropriate amount of research. This may initially seem to indicate that non-librarian faculty are indifferent to librarian research, especially when combined with the knowledge that 47% of respondents felt that librarians should be classified as

---

[127] See **Appendix I** for survey questions
[128] Divay, Ducas & Michaud-Oystryk, 1987.

academic support staff. This does not appear to be the case, however, as when asked to freely

identify the three primary roles of librarians, one of the top three choices was considered to be

conducting research. Questions in the survey directly inquiring if librarians should conduct

research reflect this attitude as well — respondents overwhelmingly felt that librarians should

conduct research within the LIS field, though responses were divided on whether librarians

should conduct research outside of the LIS field. This division does not appear to extend to

attitudes on collaborative research and activities. Non-librarian faculty felt overwhelmingly that

they would be interested in collaborating with librarians on research projects (81%) and projects

that are not research activities (93%). Additionally, non-librarian faculty felt confident that

librarians possessed skills that would be able to aid them in their own research activities (85%).

The survey asked respondents to identify what they believed to be the three primary

duties or roles of an academic librarian; responses to this question were open answer and

required additional analysis. Fourteen categories were identified within the data. The categories

were then tallied to determine which of these categories were identified most frequently.

According to non-librarian faculty responses, the three primary duties of an academic librarian

are:

1. Research Support

2. Facilitating Access to Information

3. Research

This ordering of the duties of librarians may reflect the seemingly contradictory attitudes

identified elsewhere in the survey that simultaneously seem to value research in librarianship

and yet be uncomfortable with the idea of librarians as faculty — similar to librarians, the

respondents to the survey think of librarianship as a service-first profession. Research, though

viewed as valuable, is considered secondary. This idea, that engaging in too much research

could be detrimental to the service aspect of the librarian profession, appears in responses to

Question 13, which asked the respondents if they had any additional thoughts regarding the

survey:

> *"I think there is a concern amongst faculty and librarians alike that demands that they function more like standard academics and channel more of their energies into research and publishing, there will be less time for them to perform their traditional service and educational functions, especially in a time of cutbacks when there are fewer faculty to do more work."*

Three different respondents identified distinctions between types of librarians, presenting

the idea that some librarians may be considered academics, but not all. Three respondents also

acknowledged the general ignorance of non-librarian faculty regarding the true nature of library

work, and encouraged education on the topic to change opinions. Findings identified in the

survey were probed more deeply in the non-librarian faculty interviews.

Interviews

Eight major themes were identified in the non-librarian faculty interview data: *Awareness of*

Librarian Roles, Collaboration, Research Facilitation, Applications of Librarian Research,

Value of Librarian Research, Librarians Outside the Academic Community, Librarians as Part

of the Academic Community, and *Suggestion that Librarians Should be Researchers (but it's*

hard).

Awareness of Librarian Roles

Non-librarian faculty frequently expressed their lack of familiarity with what it is that

librarians do and stated that they were not knowledgeable enough on the subject to provide

meaningful insights, or they worried that their opinions lacked a comprehensive understanding

of librarian duties. Sometimes non-librarian faculty felt so strongly about their own ignorance

that they refused to offer their opinions on a subject at all.

Dottie: I'm not really qualified to say [what research librarians should be doing]. I know librarians work on a range of different things, but I would take it that they would know best where the needs lie [...]

When non-librarian faculty expressed awareness of librarian research, it was often noted that such awareness was due to personal and friendly relationships with librarians. Without those close connections, these participants would have been unaware of the role of research in academic librarianship.

Clint: It's just an accident I know what [name of librarian] does, because he's a personal friend and we used to talk about his work.

This is particularly noteworthy as a slim majority (four) of the participants indicated that they were likely to have closer ties with the library and with librarians than their peers. Three indicated having spent long service periods on university library committees, which implies that many faculty would be even less aware of librarian roles and librarian research than those interviewed in this study.

Tony: I might be particularly passionate about [librarian research] just because I do have an interest in the history of the book, so that field is an area of my own keen interest and specialisation.

Clint: [...] there aren't as many people who have worked as closely with librarians as I have.

Nonetheless, non-librarian faculty felt strongly that their views were reflective of their peers — or that they would be, if their peers ever thought about librarian research. Some participants conceded that their peers most likely did not think about librarian research, as exemplified by Sam:

Sam: Those [faculty] who stop to think about it [would agree with me], yes. But I don't think very many do.

Overall it is clear that non-librarian faculty are unaware of the research component of librarian duties, something that is most effectively combatted with the construction of strong relationships between librarians and non-librarian faculty.

Collaboration

While interviews indicated that collaborative work frequently occurred between librarians and non-librarian faculty, it was clear that such collaborative work was not collaborative *research*. Rather, collaboration occurred in the forms of teaching, collection development, or other, more service-based elements. Participants were careful to note, however, that research collaboration between librarians and non-librarian faculty *did* occur, and that such collaborations were extremely beneficial; it was merely the case that they, personally, had not engaged in collaborative research with librarians.

> **Tony:** *And certainly in the field of bibliography, sociology of the text, history of the book, those sorts of things, you'll certainly have a lot of collaboration.*

Despite the fact that none of the participants had engaged in collaborative research with librarians, they did express interest in the possibility of doing so in the future. One participant indicated that he had broached the topic of conducting collaborative research with librarians at his institution before, though nothing had yet come of it.

> **Reed:** *[...] so I would say to date I haven't [engaged in collaborative research with a librarian], but it's not out of the question that I would in the future and that I have had these conversations about trying to do something.*

While collaboration between librarians and non-librarian faculty at present is more of a possibility than a reality, it is one that provides substantial appeal to non-librarian faculty.

Research Facilitation

Another primary form of interaction between librarians and non-librarian faculty was the research facilitation of non-librarian faculty. This often arose in the forms of collection development and management, and tracking down difficult to find materials. There was also awareness that employing librarians' search skills would ensure that materials relevant to the research of the non-librarian faculty were not missed.

> **Tony:** *But, so yes, I collaborate with [librarians] in the sense that I work with them to facilitate my own research.*

Access to materials was seen by participants as critical. This was especially true in the changing face of access to materials in a digital age. Librarians were responsible for ensuring that non-librarian faculty were familiar with the technology required to access library resources effectively.

> **Reed:** *I've talked to librarians about materials, I've worked with them on being introduced to different technologies, there's a lot of change in the academic technology landscape [...] in information services. [...] I've mostly interacted with librarians, I think, in trying to bring me up to date with the latest technological developments.*

Academic freedom was also highlighted as necessary for librarians in order to engage in the research facilitation of non-librarian faculty. Without it, there was a fear that the aid librarians provided would be subject to censorship.

> **Reed:** *I think [...] it's important that librarians are also granted academic freedom so that they can also help build the collection and work with us [...] in providing as much information as possible, not subject to censorship or whatever.*

Librarians are considered a regular part of the research process for non-librarian faculty as they provide access to materials, aid in acquiring difficult-to-obtain sources, and insights into the information structure of disciplines, though they are not a regular part of non-librarian

faculty's research teams. This was especially true with regard to newer researchers and graduate students as several participants identified librarians as critical to effectively developing the research skills of these groups, and in some cases lamented any movement away from this role.

> *Foggy: I find that [librarians are] really really REALLY good with graduate students, with Master's students, with young PhD students who are still getting the research process down.*

According to non-librarian faculty, librarians are a part of a university's research milieu, providing valuable services in the way of collection development, access to information and resource retrieval. They can also play a critical role in introducing new researchers to the research process.

Applications of Librarian Research

Applied research conducted by librarians was identified as an area of interest for non-librarian faculty. The majority of those interviewed indicated that research that directly affected library practice, and particularly in ways that were relevant to the ability of non-librarian faculty to use the university's resources, was considered critical and necessary.   Additionally, participants found applied librarian research to be lacking; non-librarian faculty were interested in seeing librarians more regularly undertake this type of research.

> *Foggy: [...] I think research on libraries, therefore, and how libraries function, and the role of libraries in the 21st century, I think that's extremely important, and I think that's something that librarians are in a unique position to undertake.*

It must be noted, however, that not all non-librarian faculty shared this positive outlook regarding the applied research conducted by librarians. This concern is discussed further in the *Librarians Outside the Academic Community* theme.

Special collections, especially rare book collections, were another area that non-librarian faculty were interested in seeing librarians conduct research in. As curators, custodians, and those ultimately responsible for ensuring the fullest use of these collections, librarians were viewed as the most appropriate group to regularly conduct research on them. Concerns were expressed that without librarians paying intellectual attention to special collections, those collections would fall into obscurity and disuse, the knowledge within them to be lost for decades.

> **Tony:** *I mean this is why we make discoveries in libraries now, because the libraries may have preserved material, but [if] that material's not being made accessible and interacted with by a researching public, an intellectual public, then it simply lies dormant for generations.*

It is likely that the emphasis placed on special and rare books collections by these participants is reflective of the fact that the majority of non-librarian faculty participants themselves work with rare books and special collections in their own research, much of which is historical. However, this may indicate a specific area of potential research collaboration between librarians and non-librarian faculty that can be capitalized on in the future.

Value of Librarian Research

Basic research was identified by non-librarian faculty as worthwhile and desirable for librarians to engage in. As a majority of participants pointed out, research conducted by librarians can only serve to enhance the field, regardless of whether the field in question is LIS or some external subject.

> **Dottie:** *There's all sorts of value [to librarians conducting research]. First of all, subject areas advance in all sectors, in all intellectual sectors, and of course there is no advance if people do not have the freedom and capacity to [research] in those areas.*

Moreover, the act of conducting research allows librarians to remain appraised of, and contribute to, developments in the field. Non-librarian faculty also expressed a belief that librarians must behave as more than mere curators of information; that they must understand and study information and the nature of it, in order for libraries to be effective, and to ensure that the information held in libraries is used to its full potential. Without continuous professional development and research by librarians, libraries run the risk of falling into obsolescence.

> **Tony:** *If [librarians] don't [conduct research] they will simply become civil servants and the library itself, it would not be a place of research, it would just be a holding ground.*

The importance of this could not be overstated by non-librarian faculty, as quality information and information management affected them directly, as well as the academic community and scholarship as a whole. Whereas librarians conducting research was believed to be likely to produce only good things, librarians not conducting, or not being able to conduct research, was believed to actively produce harm. Such harm existed in the forms of lost knowledge, improperly used library resources, barriers to effective practice within the library, and a distancing of librarians from best practices and the cutting edge of their field.

Librarians who conducted research (particularly non-LIS subject research) were also identified by non-librarian faculty as existing in a uniquely 'safe' collegial space. Non-librarian faculty identified competition with their departmental colleagues for funding and support as a source of stress — one which librarians, existing outside of their department, did not contribute to. As such, researching librarians served as a necessary part of the academic community that allowed non-librarian faculty to engage in collegial behaviour. As non-librarian faculty repeatedly stressed the importance of a strong academic community for the production of quality

research, this particular and unique value of researching librarians cannot be overlooked in the face of increasingly competitive and underfunded universities.

> *Matt: It makes the whole greater than the sum of the parts. Because the nature of librarians, they're beautifully positioned to enhance the value of what I do, without necessarily being viewed as being the same. Equal, but not the same.*

Finally, librarians conducting research was found to foster collegiality and respect between librarians and non-librarian faculty. Understanding between the two groups was considered greater when librarians engaged in research, and non-librarian faculty believed that librarians would be better able to aid them in their own research if they conducted research themselves.

> *Reed: If [librarians are] working on research themselves, they'd be more sympathetic to understanding the needs and concerns of other researchers so, if someone is actually an active researcher, I feel like I can talk to them more easily and they'll understand some of my concerns or issues.*

Librarian research was identified as being valuable in a variety of ways, from contributing to the discipline in which the research occurs, to improving the larger academic community. Communication is also improved between librarians and non-librarian faculty when librarians engage in research.

Librarians Outside the Academic Community

In some, though not most, cases, librarians were considered to be external to the academic or scholarly community at a given university.

> *Reed: I have the impression sometimes that my colleagues often think of librarians as just assistants to them, and not as independent researchers on their own, or as independent colleagues.*

While few non-librarian faculty participants considered librarians to be external to the academic community, nearly all indicated awareness that not all librarians conducted research. Participants identified a variety of reasons that librarians might not be conducting research, including a lack of desire or a lack of ability, either due to insufficient education or barriers in the workplace. Most participants did not believe that this precluded librarians generally from being members of the academic community, but one participant believed that librarians who did not conduct research could not be considered members of the academic community at the university. The possibility of two streams of librarianship was proposed by this participant; those who engaged in research and should be considered members of the academic community, and those that were more service-oriented and should not be considered members of that same community. Only librarians in the research stream would be eligible for tenure and faculty or academic status, and would be permitted academic freedom.

> **Sam:** *Or the elimination of tenure for librarians given that tenure signifies the protection of academic freedom, which I don't think they require if they're not required to do original research.*

It was not merely whether or not research was conducted that had the potential to place librarians outside of the academic community, but also the nature of the research conducted. Although it is a minority opinion, only one participant expressed this sentiment, it was suggested that applied research, that is, the sort of research frequently conducted by librarians, was not always considered to be a valid form of research. Therefore, according to this view, conducting exclusively applied research could push librarians outside of the academic community as such research runs the risk of being earmarked as trivial or not contributing meaningfully to a discipline.

This view of librarians as outside the academic community is also reflected in non-librarian faculty members' confidence in librarian abilities. Participants expressed having low expectations of the capabilities of librarians with regard to research and research-related activities. Those who expressed such views indicated that these low expectations were relatively recent developments, and that in previous decades they had found librarians to be more capable and able to help.

> **Sam:** *I don't think their expectation of the library is very high. I don't think it plays as important a role in the scholarship they undertake as it used to.*

This theme ran contrary to another theme identified in the results.

Librarians as Part of the Academic Community

In spite of the previous theme, the majority of non-librarian participants identified librarians as an important and valuable component of the academic community at a given university, regardless of whether or not the librarians conduct research. This said, undoubtedly librarians conducting research improves non-librarian faculty's perceptions of librarians as part of the academic community. Librarians could be considered the equals of non-librarian faculty, though not their equivalents, given their divergent duties. Doing research was linked to this status.

> **Foggy:** *Well, I think [doing research] helps [librarians] think of themselves as academics, which they should, who are on equal footing with the faculty of an institution.*

Non-librarian faculty who considered librarians to be a part of the academic community expressed the belief that not only were librarians a part of the community, but that they were in fact essential to a function and vibrancy of that academic community.

Foggy: I think research librarians are an invaluable resource. I think they're a major part of the functioning of any university, [...] particularly in the humanities.

Research was identified as only one form of intellectual labour that librarians engaged in that earned them a place in the academic community. Librarians who did not conduct research were still considered by participants to be an important element of the academic community. Conducting of research, though, strengthened the connection between librarians and the larger academic community. Non-librarian faculty felt that librarians who conducted research better understood their concerns and were more able to interact with them on their own level. Publications were the primary mechanism by which non-librarian faculty became aware of librarian research. Non-librarian faculty acknowledged that librarians were more likely to conduct research when research was expected of them, and if there is no push to do research, it may be seen as more trouble than it is worth. Further, there was an understanding that while many librarians conduct research, many do not want to or cannot conduct research for a variety of reasons. Difficulties identified included setting aside time to conduct the research, or to transform it into a presentable or distributable format. Non-librarian faculty overall believed that research alone cannot dictate whether or not librarians have a place in the academic community, or deserve academic freedom or tenure because librarians must be responsible for the intellectual management of the information that they curate.

Foggy: I believe [librarians] should be considered the equivalent of faculty, they should be on the faculty pay scale, they should have tenure, absolutely, they should have complete freedom in what they research and what they do because they are academics and they—simply because they're not in the classroom and perhaps some of them do not regularly publish as much as regular academics, does not mean that they are not fulfilling a very very important academic role.

When considering their views on the role of librarians in the academic community, the familiarity that these non-librarian faculty had with librarians in comparison to their peers is

significant. It must also be noted that even amongst this group, it was not universally the case that all participants felt non-researching librarians deserved tenure or academic freedom, as noted in the *Librarians Outside the Academic Community* theme. According to participants, librarians are an important element of the academic community and help to maintain a healthy research environment. This environment is only enhanced when librarians conduct research.

Suggestion that Librarians Should be Researchers (but it's hard)

Non-librarian faculty firmly believed that librarians should be researchers, or at the very least, should be permitted to do research unhindered. That librarians had freedom to research was extremely important to non-librarian faculty participants, many exhibiting disgust or dismay that librarians were not always permitted such freedom. However, while participants were careful to frame their support of librarian research as freedom *to* research, most also indicated that they felt librarians *should* be conducting research.

> **Dottie:** *I think it's a little self-evident that librarians should be researchers.*

The focus on freedom to research over need to research was based in an awareness of the existing university climate and attitudes towards librarian research. Non-librarian faculty were keenly aware that librarians regularly faced barriers performing research such as lack of time, lack of funding, or lack of supervisory or institutional support.

> **Reed:** *The person who's a liaison [librarian] with the institute has just been upset recently, the last couple of years, about how she's not able to do much of anything of her own because of increased responsibilities because of budget cuts and retirements and things.*

The reasons non-librarian faculty valued librarian research varied considerably, but all non-librarian faculty participants agreed that it was both valuable and desirable. Reasons given for value ranged from a desire for librarians to earn their tenured positions to simply believing

86

that research will, of itself, be beneficial and that the ability to conduct it ought to be a right for librarians. LIS subject and external subject research was generally more highly regarded than applied research, though the latter was still typically considered valuable. Librarian research was believed to improve librarian practice and the library environment, as well as the academic environment and community in general.

> *Matt: [...] that's what research is about. This time spent thinking, thinking deeply about what is it that you're doing [in practice] and where can it go, instead of just jumping on the latest bloody bandwagon about the nature of information use and dissemination.*

However, despite the varied and multitudinous advantages of librarians conducting research espoused by non-librarian faculty, non-librarian faculty were profoundly aware that research is not and *cannot* be the primary duty of librarians, and that therefore, mandating that librarians *must* conduct research was considered both untenable and undesirable by the majority of participants.

> *Dottie: I don't think all librarians necessarily want to engage in research. I don't think it should be an obligation if they don't [want to].*

In general, non-librarian faculty believed that librarians should be able to conduct research and that their conducting research should be encouraged and valued, but that they should not be *forced* to. Further, non-librarian faculty indicated that introducing strict rules related to ensuring the undertaking of librarian research could be difficult to accomplish.

> *Foggy: It's hard to say "you have to undertake research in order to hold down this job." I think — well, put it this way: In theory I like it, in practice it might be hard to implement.*

One participant suggested that even discussing the possibility of enacting such a rule was a taboo subject, difficult to even talk about.

> *Sam: I think [university administrations would] rather see [librarian research] go away actually, as a question. So you [the interviewer] might find yourself facing a little adversity if you proceed with or pursue this line of inquiry [the topic of the thesis].*

There was a desire on the part of most participants to see librarians conduct more research than they currently are. Such a desire was motivated by a belief that research improved the library field and improved practice, as well as being beneficial to the librarians themselves and the larger institution. In some cases, the desire to see librarians conducting more research stemmed from a belief that librarians must conduct research to earn their place as academics.

> *Matt: I have seen some [librarian research], and—but I'm a little mystified that there's not more.*

Whatever the reasoning of the participants, and whatever the functional realities of possibility of implementing it, participants felt that librarians should be conducting research. Indeed, participants would prefer to see considerably more librarian research undertaken.

Summary and Discussion

In general, and as expected, librarians are much more aware of the role that research plays in librarianship than non-librarian faculty. In surveys, non-librarian faculty were often unable to answer questions that related to the nature of librarian research, and some comments made by non-librarian faculty indicated that they believed that most librarians conducted little to no research. In interviews, non-librarian faculty expressed a general lack of knowledge regarding librarian research. This appears to run contrary to the reports of librarians, who indicate conducting research regularly, many of whom needed to conduct research as per their job description.

When non-librarian faculty demonstrated awareness of librarian research, this was largely the result of close, personal relationships between librarians and non-librarian faculty.

Relations, information-sharing, respect, and collaboration were found to be improved between groups when non-librarian faculty were aware of the research activities of librarians. Librarian research was considered a key feature of a healthy academic community.

Both groups indicated that librarianship was a service-first profession and that librarian research must be made to fit into that reality, and not infringe on the service role of librarians. Despite this, there was a strong current of belief that librarians should be conducting research and that the research outputs, as well as the more intangible benefits of librarian research, marked it as a worthwhile pursuit. While it must be noted that the participants of this study frequently identified themselves as more invested in librarian research than their peers might be, the consistently positive attitude to librarian research demonstrated by interview participants cannot be ignored. Participants also expressed frustration that librarian research was not more common than it currently is. The fact that librarian research could be difficult to conduct fed heavily into this frustration, especially on the part of librarians, who felt those hindrances to their ability to research very keenly.

Both librarians and non-librarian faculty noted that the ability of librarians to conduct research was often hindered. Barriers primarily occurred as a result of a lack of structural support by the libraries, by supervisors, or by the institution at large. These structural barriers to librarian research were its biggest threat, as attitudes towards research by librarians and non-librarian faculty were generally positive. Encouragement and support for librarian research were identified as needs to combat these obstacles to librarian research.

Both groups linked the relative lack of librarian research to the possibility of deprofessionalization of librarians. This is not mere imagining; the deprofessionalization of librarians has been attested to in the literature, and combatting deprofessionalization is a regular

concern of library organizations.[129] There was fear that difficulty in conducting research would lead only to a further devaluation of said research, making it even *more* difficult to conduct, and minimizing its importance to the field of librarianship. Such devaluation would lead to the gradual removal of the myriad benefits of librarian research to the field of librarianship and to the larger academic community. Participants did not wish to see this occur, and hoped to see more support for librarian research in the future.

Ultimately, librarian research was seen as valuable by both librarian and non-librarian faculty participant groups. Numerous benefits that improved librarian practice and the academic community were identified. Nonetheless, librarian research faced many barriers and participant groups agreed that additional support was required to overcome these barriers, many of which existed at a systematic level.

---

[129] Canadian Association of Professional Academic Librarians, "Benefits of Membership," 2016; Canadian Association of University Teachers, "Librarians Confront Threat to Profession," 2009; Litwin, "The Library Paraprofessional Movement and the Deprofessionalization of Librarianship," 2010; Pappas, "Understanding the Worth of the Professional Librarian in the Research University or Institution," 2012.

Chapter 5: Conclusions

This thesis sought to address a set of research questions aimed at understanding the perceptions of librarian research across Canadian university settings. These research questions are discussed below, followed by a brief discussion of the implications of the findings.

Do non-librarian university faculty members perceive academic librarians as researchers/academics?

Non-librarian faculty do not typically perceive librarians as either academics or researchers. This is largely due to a general lack of awareness about librarian roles and duties — even non-librarian faculty members who were aware of the fact that librarians conducted research were unclear about the nature and quantity of librarian research, as well as how that research related to their role as librarians. However, non-librarian faculty generally felt that librarians *should* conduct research, for the enrichment of the university's academic community, intellectual maintenance of library collections, and the currency of the field of librarianship. However, a significant number of non-librarian faculty survey respondents felt librarians should be classified as academic support staff, indicating that a positive view of librarian research is not universal.

To what degree are non-librarian faculty aware of the research capabilities of librarians?

In general, non-librarian faculty are extremely unaware of the research capabilities of librarians, especially when it comes to knowledge about librarians conducting their own research. Even faculty who were aware to some degree of librarian research admitted that they were still ignorant on the topic, and were not necessarily aware of their skills in this regard. As such, non-librarian faculty did not always feel comfortable commenting on the research capabilities of librarians. Non-librarian faculty felt generally confident, however, that librarians

could aid them in their own research — though there were some exceptions to this belief. This confidence in librarian abilities existed even though not all non-librarian faculty participants employed the services of librarians in this regard. Librarians felt that non-librarian faculty viewed librarians as valuable research supports, but were unlikely to view them as researching colleagues, with the associated researching skills, in their own right.

To what extent do non-librarian faculty employ the services of librarians in their own research?

Non-librarian faculty viewed librarians as a support resource for their own research. Librarians were viewed as particularly important for research support in regard to newer faculty members and graduate students — those researchers who were still new to the research process. Non-librarian faculty were more likely to work with and employ the services of librarians in their own research when they were aware that librarians conducted research. Most librarians and all non-librarian faculty expressed interest in working collaboratively on research projects. However, very few participants had engaged in such collaboration, indicating an area in which librarians and non-librarian faculty could perhaps work together more fruitfully.

How are academic librarians perceived as researchers in a university setting by non-librarian faculty?

Librarians are not perceived as either academics or researchers according to non-librarian faulty. The former is acceptable as librarianship is a service-based profession, but the latter is complicated because librarians do conduct research. This lack of awareness regarding librarian research and the general research capabilities of librarians can be detrimental, as librarian research was found to improve librarian practice and to enhance the field of librarianship, and to improve scholarly communication. Ignorance regarding the existence and necessity of librarian

research could hamper the ability of librarians to conduct research, as it can lead to a perception of librarian research being unimportant and therefore disposable or of extremely low priority.

Non-librarian faculty considered librarians a key part of a high-quality academic community. Librarians are aware of this role.[130] In an academic environment that increasingly focuses on achievements such as high research output and obtaining lucrative research grants, the community connection that librarians, particularly researching librarians, provide, is helpful to the maintenance of a healthy academic community. Librarians who are researchers themselves may provide a welcome oasis where faculty who wish to discuss or seek aid with their research may do so, without fear of competition that may be present in their own departments.

Non-librarian faculty participants expressed a strong belief that librarians should be conducting research, and in greater quantities than they currently do. This indicates non-librarian faculty support for librarian research, even when awareness of librarian research is lacking.

Do academic librarians perceive themselves as researchers and/or academics?

Librarians do not perceive themselves as academics, identifying themselves as belonging to a service-first profession. By and large, librarian participants did identify as researchers and felt that they should be able to conduct research unhindered. Unfortunately, librarians often felt unsupported in their research. Several barriers to the ability of librarians to conduct research were identified by participants. Barriers existed in the form of lack of time to conduct research, and lack of support from supervisors or from the institution as a whole. Often librarians were expected to conduct research, with no associated support system for that research. Some

---

[130] Association of College & Research Libraries, "Changing Roles of Academic and Research Libraries," 2006.

librarians felt unprepared to conduct research as well, finding they lacked education in their MLIS programs or through professional developments.

Many of the barriers discussed were reflected in the language of university collective agreements governing librarians, indicating that these barriers exist at a system level within institutions. The degree to which barriers existed varied between institutions. Librarians recognized that not all librarians could be classified as researchers, as some librarians did not conduct research and indeed, may not *want* to conduct research. Nonetheless, participants in general felt that librarians should be entitled to conduct research, with the support of their institution and colleagues. It was often the case that librarians wished to be able to conduct research to a greater degree than they were currently able to. It was felt that the position of librarian should be a researching position — though it could not be considered the case that it necessarily *was* a researching position at present.

What is the perceived value of librarian research?

Librarian research was identified as having a wide array of benefits. Researching librarians contributed to a sense of academic collegiality within an institution, and could help to bridge understanding between disciplines when they aided faculty with research or acted as part of a research team. Conducting research also improved librarian service, as it ensured that librarians were intimately familiar with the research process in general, and therefore more able to assist those conducting research themselves. Research in LIS had the additional benefit of contributing the field of librarianship (and potentially improving service via the production of evidence that may be employed in evidence-based practice). Contribution to the field in which the librarian had conducted research (which may not necessarily be LIS) is the most obvious benefit of librarian research. Importantly, librarian research was identified by librarians as being

a duty owed to the field of LIS, and it was highlighted as necessary to the continued success of the field.

How do academic librarians perceive their own status as researchers and the status of their own research?

Librarians view research as essential to the discipline — the ability to conduct research should be accessible to librarians, though it was acknowledged that not all librarians wished to conduct research. Librarians did not often feel that such accessibility to conduct research was available to them, as they encountered regular and systematic barriers that hampered their ability to engage in research. Librarian participants did therefore view the position of librarian as a researching one, but recognise that the research component of the position is under threat, as the positions are not often conducive to research in practice. This discrepancy regarding librarian research is often mirrored in the expectations presented to librarians as research is often informally required of librarians, or is required for promotion or tenure, yet lacks formal support from the institution, and may not be realistically possible depending on the structuring of librarian duties. In this way, librarian research is often considered both necessary and extraneous. This discrepancy is evident in both the perceptions put forth by librarian participants and in the language of the collective agreements.

Implications

Librarian research was linked to concepts of a duty to the field of librarianship and was associated with a wide variety of benefits to the field at large, to librarians as individual practitioners, and to librarian practice in general. The benefits of librarian research identified in this study are reflected elsewhere.[131]

---

[131] Perkins & Slowik, 2013.

Tied to the importance of librarian research are concepts of academic standing for librarians; this was particularly true for non-librarian faculty, some of whom believed that if librarians did not engage in research, than they did not require either academic standing or academic freedom. This is concerning in light of the sometimes dubious relationship librarians have with academic freedom according to some of their collective agreements. When librarians can be said in a collective agreement to have academic freedom while at same time requiring supervisory approval for research, as is the case at MacEwan University, or when there has been a history of the academic freedom of librarians being overtly threatened, as at McGill and McMaster, attitudes that call into question the right of librarians to academic freedom cannot be ignored. Librarians in this study made it clear that academic freedom is essential to all aspects of their job. Librarians conducting research may be an effective mechanism of safeguarding the academic freedom of librarians, as it is widely accepted that academic freedom is required for conducting competent research – responses in this study indicate, however, that it is not universally felt that librarians require academic freedom if they are not conducting research. It is important to consider how librarian research impacts the perceptions of librarians from those external to the profession. This consideration is especially relevant given the push towards librarian deprofessionalization in the financial crunch many universities are facing, and considering that those that make decisions regarding the library are not themselves librarians. For example, the University of Manitoba recently cut 40 library assistant positions, resulting in a situation where already overworked librarians and the remaining library assistants are required to take on the duties of those staff let go — including duties that are not the professional purview of librarians.[132] Awareness of librarian research increased respect for librarians, and

---

[132] Hudson, "Open Letter to AESES Members," 2016.

made it more likely that non librarian faculty would seek out librarians for help with their own research, help with instructing students in research activities, or for collaborative research. The profile of librarian research must therefore be raised. The need for librarians to raise awareness of their profession has appeared in the literature before.[133]

There appears to be non-librarian faculty support for librarian research even in an environment of ignorance regarding it. Non-librarian faculty who *were* aware of librarian research owed this familiarity to close, personal relationships. In the present climate, librarians who wish to raise awareness regarding librarian research may endeavor to seek out and develop such relationships; however, such personal relationship building is inadequate to combat the widespread ignorance on a systematic level. Jacobs and Berg developed a plan for a Librarians' Research Institute[134] in order to advance research education and initiatives for academic librarians.[135] This institute has since been implemented by CARL, and continues to enhance support for librarian research at the association level, building a community of librarian research.[136] Proceedings of the Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL) 2013 conference discuss using embedded librarian positions to raise the profile of librarian research skills amongst non-librarian faculty.[137] These types of initiatives can improve perceptions of librarian research.[138]

---

[133] Spalding & Wang, "The Challenges and Opportunities of Marketing Academic Libraries in the USA: Experiences of US Academic Libraries with Global Application," 2006.
[134] The Librarians' Research Institute is a workshop that provides research training for Canadian academic librarians and facilitates networking between researching librarians
[135] Berg, Jacobs & Cornwall, "Academic Librarians and Research: A Study of Canadian Library Administrator Perspectives," 2013.
[136] Canadian Association of Research Libraries, "Librarians' Research Institute," 2016.
[137] Monroe-Gulick et al., 2013.
[138] Monroe-Gulick et al., 2013.

The conflicting ways in which librarian research is positioned, as both a critical duty and also as extraneous, is deeply troubling and for many librarians. The inconsistency hampers librarian research and thereby can prevent the benefits of such research from occurring. Perhaps most damagingly, the perception that librarian research is a force that works *in opposition* to the day-to-day functioning of the library and harms library practice. Conversely, evidence-based librarianship is an approach that demonstrates how librarian research can inform and improve practice.[139] Librarian researchers frequently use their research to improve specific services that exist within the library such as exploring the effectiveness of, and improving, information literacy education for university students or using evidence-based research to develop and implement new library services and tools.[140] It is therefore alarming that librarian research is then presented as being a hampering force, when the evidence suggests librarian research improves librarian practice in the long run.

Changing attitudes requires confronting additional challenges beyond the mechanical aspects of changing policy or organizational structures, though such mechanical changes are crucial as well. The systematic barriers to librarian research such as lack of library or institutional support, lack of time for librarians to conduct research, and lack of financial aid, have been identified in other studies previously.[141] Extensive systematic changes are required to improve the state of librarian research. The support of supervisors is important for librarian research. The value of librarian research can be reflected with both financial support and policy changes. Additional preparation for research activities may be needed in MLIS programs, as

---

[139] Eldredge, 2000.

[140] Baker, "Library Instruction in the Rearview Mirror: A Reflective Look at the Evolution of a First-Year Library Program Using Evidence-Based Practice," 2006; Rae & Hunn, "Assessing the Impact of Embedding Online Academic and Information Library Resources into a First Year Business Course," 2015; Reed, McFarland & Croft, "Laying the Groundwork for a New Library Service: Scholar Practitioner & Graduate Student Attitudes toward Altmetrics and the Curation of Online Profiles," 2016.

[141] Fox, 2007; Powell et al., 2002; Sorensen & DeLong, 2016.

there were concerns that the current preparations for research within librarian programs were inadequate. Considering the emphasis placed on research in the *ALA Standards for Accreditation*, it is disappointing that practicing librarians felt underprepared to conduct research.[142] In the workplace, librarians may also require access to professional development programs on the subject of conducting research, if they need to make up for a deficiency in their research education. Several participants discussed the value of introducing research mentor positions. Mentorship is a key component of the CARL Librarians' Research Institute, and speaks to the value of such positions.[143] Such mentorship positions exist at universities with a heavy interest in librarian research — the University of Saskatchewan, for example, recently began a research mentorship program for its librarians.[144] Institutions that wish to encourage librarian research may wish to formalise such positions, or institute them more regularly. Considering the current paucity of such research mentorship programs in Canada, and considering their effectiveness, implementation of such programs would be extremely beneficial.[145]

Time, especially reasonable blocks of time, are necessary for librarians to effectively conduct research. Research leaves are appreciated by researching librarians, but more so when institutions ensure that the day-to-day duties of a librarian on research leave are covered in such a way that other librarians do not resent taking on a great deal of extra work. Allotting research days to librarians is also an effective means of encouraging librarian research. The overall amount of time given over to research for librarians was generally considered to be inadequate

---

[142] ALA, 2015.
[143] CARL, 2016.
[144] Wilson, "Librarian Research: Making it Better?," 2016.
[145] Alcock, "Formal Mentoring Programs can Provide Organizational and Professional Benefits, but are Few and Far Between in Canadian Academic Libraries," 2015; Harrington & Marshall, "Analyses of Mentoring Expectations, Activities, and Support in Canadian Academic Libraries," 2014.

and a barrier to good research. Making accessible between 10 and 30% of time for research

would be a comfortable ideal for librarians. Discussions regarding providing such time for

librarian research have arisen in the literature before, and Fox in particular considers the

practicalities of allotting such research time.[146]

Access to financial support from their institution would help librarians to conduct

research. Some librarian participants indicated research grants were accessible to them through

their university.   The University of Manitoba, for example, makes funding accessible to

librarians, with the intention that the funding should be used to develop research to the point that

it may be used to apply for Tri-council funding as well.[147] Participants indicated that such grants

were not available across the board, however, and even when funding was accessible to

librarians, it was likely to be inadequate. To facilitate librarian research, grants can be made

available or provided with additional funding where they do exist, when possible.

Librarians feeling free and able to conduct research is important. Concerns that their

research will be stymied, denied or altered by their supervisors or by the institution negatively

impacts librarian research — something which unfortunately affects many librarians at present.

A culture of research can be developed in which research is supported and promoted, and

possible to accomplish. The work undertaken by Jacobs and Berg was an attempt to create a

Canada-wide community of librarian research.[148]

Ultimately, librarian research at Canadian universities may be considered highly

valuable, yet under a degree of threat.   Steps must be taken to improve the lot of librarian

research, the perceptions thereof, and to foster the development of a research culture within

---

[146] Fox, 2007.

[147] University of Manitoba, "University Research Grants Program (URGP) General Guidelines," 2013b.

[148] Berg & Jacobs, 2013.

libraries and the larger institution or risk losing the myriad benefits that research provides to librarianship and to the larger academic community. Librarians are researchers, and it is important moving forward that they be regarded as such within the academic community.

Chapter 6: Limitations

This thesis included a number of limitations, some due to the need to keep the size and scope of the project manageable, and others due to the project design, number of respondents, or nature of the data collected. It is important, however, to note these limitations in order to maintain awareness of areas in which this thesis is confined, and/or to highlight areas where further research is warranted.

The majority of respondents in the survey and all respondents in the interviews expressed a positive view of librarian research — considering the nature of the recruitment processes and the topic of the study, it is likely that those who were most invested in librarian research were the people to respond, while those with less interest in the subject may have been less likely to respond. This hypothesis is supported by the statements made in interviews in which many librarians noted that certain of their librarian colleagues had no interest in conducting research, and yet only one librarian interviewed reflected that mindset, and only did so with regard to himself, personally. Likewise, survey responses displayed a negative attitude towards librarian research infrequently, but such negative attitudes were not at all evident in the more detailed interviews. As such, it is likely that the findings of this study predominantly reflect the views of those most interested in the promotion of librarian research, and may not be truly reflective of the views of the academic community at large.

Response rates were considerably higher from librarians than from non-librarian faculty, even when overall numbers of participants from each group were similar, as occurred in the survey phase. This self-selector bias suggests that results are particularly weighted towards the views of librarians, and that views of non-librarian faculty are underrepresented. As with the point made earlier, it is likely that non-librarian faculty who responded were those with a vested

interest in non-librarian research, a point supported by the statement from nearly every librarian suggesting that non-librarian faculty had poor opinions of librarian research or librarians as researchers, or at the very least, lacked awareness of librarians' research role, contrasted with non-librarian faculty interviewed typically expressing very positive opinions of librarians as researchers and their research. It is highly unlikely that the views of the non-librarian faculty expressed in this study are reflective of the views of the larger community of non-librarian faculty.

Humanities faculty were overrepresented in both the survey and interview component of the study compared to their social science and science counterparts, for reasons that are not clear. The study results then should be considered even less reflective of the views of faculty outside of the humanities. Similarly, certain universities were over-represented in the survey and interview participants, while other universities provided far fewer responses. The details of this are not discussed in depth in this thesis in order to protect participant confidentiality. Consequently, it is noted that the results are more indicative of attitudes and realities at certain universities than others and it is indeed the case that support for and attitudes towards librarian research vary significantly between institutions.

In both the surveys and the interviews, non-librarian faculty participants were those that had been faculty for quite some time, rather than those fresh to their profession. As such, the views of the non-librarian faculty in this thesis cannot be said to be representative of newer faculty members. Librarian survey responses tended towards librarians relatively new to the profession, though this bias was somewhat mitigated by the diverse range of professional experience of interview participants.

The study design is heavily weighted sampling towards U15 universities. Given the research focus of these universities, this must be kept in mind when considering the results of this study, even if the collective agreements do not suggest that U15 status necessarily indicates improved attitudes towards librarian research.

It can also be noted that the wording of collective agreements do not always reflect professional realities regarding the culture of librarian research at an institution. As discussed earlier, this can be a problem in and of itself as the state of librarian research may be subject to the whims of high-ranking individuals within libraries or institutions. So too may the cultural climate towards research at libraries or institutions have a significant impact on librarian research. However, such discrepancies between what is stated in the collective agreements and the perceived reality may mean that the state of research at the universities explored via the collective agreements is not accurately reflected in the analysis, as data was not obtained from participants at all of the twelve institutions from which the collective agreements were pulled. Furthermore, the data were not systematically analyzed to determine how collective agreement language was enacted in day-to-day work life within the context of the institutions from which collective agreements were sampled. As such, a meaningful analysis of how collective agreements in terms of librarian research are enacted within library systems and within the context of the broader university cannot be obtained.

In the surveys, the nature of the questions asked placed attention on librarian research and may therefore have encouraged respondents to think of such research more than they otherwise would have. This in turn may have affected their answers, causing them to cast librarian research in a more favourable light and to place the concept in a position of greater importance than they would otherwise. This point was raised by one non-librarian faculty

survey respondent who felt "forced" to admit that librarians did research, as the questions suggested that librarians *did* conduct research, when their responses would otherwise have not reflected this.

Finally, while data saturation was reached for librarian interviews, the same cannot be said of the non-librarian faculty interviews. This was related both to number of respondents — non-librarian faculty had a low response rate, especially for those outside the humanities — but also regarding the contents of the data. Librarian interviews reached a point where speakers mirrored what previous participants had said in either the surveys or the interviews. Responses from non-librarian faculty never reached that level of familiarity, and the interviews did not reflect all non-librarian faculty perspectives expressed in the surveys. The findings of this study cannot be universally applied, even to Canadian university libraries, though the results may be used in concert with other studies to identify issues surrounding librarian research, and to develop mechanisms for improving the ability of librarians to engage in research.

Chapter 7: Areas of Future Study

The results of this study indicate where additional research is warranted. This study excluded the interactions of academic librarians with professional disciplines such as medicine and law. However, the perception of librarian research in those fields is worth considering, especially given that a number of participants identified the research relationship between librarians and non-librarian faculty in medical fields to be superior to those in their own disciplinary area. Such an exploration may provide insight into the ways in which librarians in other fields may promote their research potential and work more effectively as part of a research team.

Due to the low response rate from non-librarian faculty, further exploration of the perceptions of librarian research from the perspective of the sciences and social sciences may also provide relevant insights.

Participants in this study were pulled only from well-established universities, but the state of librarian research at newly minted universities should be considered, especially as newer universities are often converted colleges at which research had previously not been a focus. The seemingly contradictory collective agreement of MacEwan University, which appears to both encourage academic freedom for librarians and place heavily stipulations and supervisory controls upon librarians conducting research serves to demonstrate the urgency for such analysis. Similarly, this study was heavily weighted towards U15 universities. Conducting a similar study that focuses on non-U15 institutions may be beneficial.

During their interviews, librarians frequently noted that they believed their interactions with non-librarians would, or did, improve when non-librarian faculty were aware of librarians'

research activities. Future studies could explore how the improvement of these relationships plays out and how librarians might promote their own research roles to non-librarian faculty.

Some librarians and non-librarian faculty expressed concerns about the quality of librarian research, an area worthy of further study, though one that has already been addressed to a degree.[149] Particular consideration might be devoted to the possibility that librarian research is often a response to a fear of deprofessionalization, and the effect that that may have on librarian research.

The possibility of universities instituting two streams of librarianship — one where librarians have a research focus in their duties, and one without a research requirement — is a model that was raised by a few participants in both interviews and survey responses. The concept has been raised before.[150] The possibility of such division of librarians should be an avenue of future study, with particular attention to how such a division could be implemented, and the long term impact it may have on librarians at any given institution, or in the profession in general. For example, when proposed in the Renaissance Committee Final Report at the University of Alberta, a stipulation of the research track librarians was that they needed to devote at least 15% of their time to scholarship.[151] Considering the lack of time that participants in this study were able to devote to research — one stating that being able to devote even 10% of one's time to research would feel "luxurious" — particular attention must be paid to *how* researching librarians could devote more of their time to research. Additionally, institutions considering this two stream possibility must take into account that a lack of librarian research may not mean a lack of librarian *interest* in research; rather, it may reflect a lack of *ability* to

---

[149] Hildreth & Aytac, 2007.
[150] A Joint Committee of AASUA and Administration (on behalf of the Board of Governors), 2013; Jackson, 1999; Martin, 1993; Ruess, 2004.
[151] A Joint Committee of AASUA and Administration (on behalf of the Board of Governors), 2013.

conduct research. If conducting research into the implementation of two librarian streams, a study of how librarians placed in the research stream will be selected may be advised. Related to this, a small number of librarians indicated that they did not feel that library schools necessarily prepared librarians for academic positions that required research — as such, an exploration of this perception, and of the manner of research instruction librarians receive in their master's education may be in order. Studies of this have been undertaken before, but more in-depth analyses may be required.[152]

Nearly every librarian interviewed expressed concern over their ability to conduct research. This was frequently due to time constraints, but was also occasionally due to other concerns, such as the attitudes or degree of control held by supervisors, and the general culture towards research in their library or institution. This mirrors findings from other studies.[153] An in depth analysis of barriers to and facilitators of librarian research would be insightful, particularly with regard given to degree of supervisory control, workplace culture, and allocations within the librarians' collective agreements and supporting documents. Means of effectively facilitating librarian research could be pursued as a line of inquiry, including an exploration of the research education available in MLIS programs.

Though not directly related to librarianship, interviews with non-librarian faculty highlighted an increasing sense of competition between departmental colleagues, stemming from budget cuts and restructuring of institutions' priorities. This has resulted in a declining sense of academic collegiality, which positioned librarians as "safe" individuals to discuss their research, when their own departmental colleagues were not. The degree to which this loss of

---

[152] Sorensen & DeLong, 2016.
[153] Sorensen & DeLong, 2016.

collegiality is occurring in universities can be explored, as can the impact of this loss within

academia.

References

A Joint Committee of AASUA and Administration (on behalf of the Board of Governors). (2013). *Report of the Renaissance Committee.* Retrieved from http://www.renaissance.ualberta.ca/~/media/renaissance/RenaissanceCommitteeFinalReport.PDF

Academic Library. (n.d.). In *ODLIS.* Retrieved from http://www.abc-clio.com/ODLIS/odlis_A.aspx?#academiclib.

Alcock, L. J. (2015). Formal Mentoring Programs Can Provide Organizational and Professional Benefits, but are Few and Far Between in Canadian Academic Libraries. *Evidence Based Library and Information Practice 10*(2), 167-169.

American Library Association. (2009). *ALA's Core Competencies of Librarianship.* Retrieved from www.ala.org/educationcareers/sites/ala.org.educationcareers/files/content/careers/corecomp/core competences/finalcompstat09.pdf

American Library Association. (2015). *Standards for Accreditation of Master's Programs in Library and Information Studies.* Retrieved from http://www.ala.org/accreditedprograms/sites/ala.org.accreditedprograms/files/content/standards/Standards_2015_adopted_02-02-15.pdf

Association of College & Research Libraries. (2006). *Changing Roles of Academic and Research Libraries.* Retrieved from http://www.ala.org/acrl/issues/value/changingroles

Attride-Stirling, J. (2001). Thematic networks: an analytic tool for qualitative research. *Qualitative Research 1*(3), 385-405.

Baker, L. (2006). Library instruction in the rearview mirror: A reflective look at the evolution of a first-year library program using evidence-based practice. *College & Undergraduate Libraries 13*(2), 1-20.

Berg, S., Jacobs, H. & Cornwall, D. (2013). Academic librarians and research: A study of Canadian library administrator perspectives. *College & Research Libraries 74*(6), 560-572.

Brandon University. (2011). *Agreement.* Retrieved from https://www.brandonu.ca/hr/files/BUFA.pdf

Brock University. (2014). *Collective agreement between Brock University and the Brock University Faculty Association (BUFA)*. Retrieved from https://brocku.ca/webfm_send/33840

Canadian Association of Professional Academic Librarians. (2015). *Open Letter of Support for Academic Librarians at McMaster University.* Retrieved from http://capalibrarians.org/wp/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/CAPAL-Nov12-2015-MUALA-1.pdf

Canadian Association of Professional Academic Librarians. (2016). *Benefits of membership*. Retrieved from http://membership.capalibrarians.org/benefits

Canadian Association of Research Libraries. (2010). *Core Competencies for 21st Century CARL Librarians.* Retrieved from www.carl.abrc.ca/doc/core_comp_profile-e.pdf

Canadian Association of Research Libraries. (2016). *Librarians' Research Institute.* Retrieved from http://www.carl-abrc.ca/strengthening-capacity/workshops-and-training/librarians-research-institute/

Canadian Association of University Teachers. (2009). *Librarians confront threat to profession.* Retrieved from https://www.cautbulletin.ca/en_article.asp?ArticleID=2944

Canadian Association of University Teachers. (2010). *Academic status and governance for librarians at Canadian universities and colleges.* Retrieved from http://www.caut.ca/about-us/caut-policy/lists/caut-policy-statements/policy-statement-on-academic-status-and-governance-for-librarians-at-canadian-universities-and-colleges

Canadian Association of University Teachers. (2011). *Academic Freedom.* Retrieved from: www.caut.ca/about-us/caut-policy/lists/caut-policy-statement-on-academic-freedom

Concordia University. (2012). *Collective agreement for 2012-2015.* Retrieved from http://cufa.net/agreement/collective-agreement-for-2012-2015/

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.

Cooke, L., Norris, M., Busby, N., Page, T., Franklin, G., Gadd, E., & Young, H. (2011). Evaluating the impact of academic liaison librarians on their user community: A review and case study. *New Review of Academic Librarianship 17*, 5-30.

Cresswell, J. W. (1998). *Qualitative inquiry and research design*. Sage Publications: Thousand Oaks.

Divay, G., Ducas, A. M., & Oystryk, N. M. (1987). Faculty perceptions of librarians at the University of Manitoba. *College & Research Libraries 48*(1), 27-35.

Dillman, D.A., Smyth, J.D. & Christian, L.M. (2008). *Internet, Mail, and Mixed-Mode Surveys: The Tailored Design Method* (3rd ed.). New Jersey: John Wiley & Sons.

Eldredge, J. D. (2000). Evidence-based librarianship: an overview. *Bulletin of the Medical Library Association 88*(4), 289-302.

Evans, R., Burnett, D., Kendrick, O., Macrina, D., Snyder, S., Roy, J. & Stevens, B. (2009). Developing Valid and Reliable Online Survey Instruments Using Commercial Software Programs. *Journal of Consumer Health on the Internet 13*(1), 42-52.

Faculty. (n.d.). In *Merriam-Webster*. Retrieved from http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/faculty

Fagan, J. (2003). Students' perceptions of academic librarians. *The Reference Librarian 37*(78), 131-148.

Finlay, S. C., Ni, C., Tsou, A., & Sugimoto, C. R. (2013). Publish or practice? An examination of librarians' contributions to research. *portal: Libraries and the Academy 13*(4), 403-421.

Flaherty, C. (2013). Price of a bad review. *Inside Higher Ed.* Retrieved from https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2013/02/08/academic-press-sues-librarian-raising-issues-academic-freedom

Fox, D. (2007). Finding time for scholarship: a survey of Canadian research university librarians. *Libraries and the Academy 7(*4), 451-462.

Galbraith, Q., Garrison, M., & Hales, W. (in press). Perceptions of Faculty Status among Academic Librarians. *College & Research Libraries.*

Gilman, T. & Lindquist, T. (2010). Academic/research librarians with subject doctorates: Experiences and perceptions, 1965-2006. *Libraries and the Academy 10*(4), 399-412.

Greyson, D., Surette, S., Dennett, L., & Chatterley, T. (2013). "You're just one of the group when you're embedded": report from a mixed-method investigation of the research-embedded health librarian experience. *Journal of the Medical Library Association: JMLA 101*(4), 287.

Harman, G. (2007). Research and scholarship. In J. Forest & P. Altbach (eds.), *International handbook of higher education* (pp. 309-328). Springer Netherlands.

Harrington, M. & Gerolami, N. (2014). Highs and lows: An examination of academic librarians' collective agreements. In J. Dekker & M. Kandiuk (eds.), *In solidarity: Academic librarian labour activism and union participation in Canada* (pp. 151-169). Sacramento, CA: Library Juice Press.

Harrington, M. R., & Marshall, E. (2014). Analyses of mentoring expectations, activities, and support in Canadian academic libraries. *College & Research Libraries 75*(6), 763-790.

Henry, D. B., & Neville, T. M. (2004). Research, publication, and service patterns of Florida academic librarians. *The Journal of Academic Librarianship 30*(6), 435-451.

Higgins, J. & Green, S. (eds.). (2011). *Cochrane Handbook for Systematic Reviews of Interventions* v. 5.1.0 [updated March 2011]. The Cochrane Collaboration. Retrieved from: http://handbook.ochrane.org

Hildreth, C. R., & Aytac, S. (2007). Recent library practitioner research: A methodological analysis and critique. *Journal of education for library and information science*, 236-258.

Hill, J. S. (2005). Constant vigilance, Babelfish, and foot surgery: Perspectives on faculty status and tenure for academic librarians. *Portal: Libraries and the Academy 5*(1), 7-22.

Hoggan, D. B. (2003). Faculty status for librarians in higher education. *portal: Libraries and the Academy 3*(3), 431-445.

Hsieh, H. F., & Shannon, S. E. (2005). Three approaches to qualitative content analysis. *Qualitative health research 15*(9), 1277-1288.

Hudson, M. (2016). *Open letter to AESES members.* Retrieved from http://www.umfa.ca/pdf/miscellaneous/LettertoAESESmembers_RE_joblosses.pdf

Hunter, K. F., Murphy, S. R., & Babb, M. (2014). *Benefits and Challenges Faced by a Nurse Practitioner Working in an Interprofessional Setting in Rural Alberta.* Final report to funding agency: Alberta Health, March 31, 2014.

Jacobs, H. L., & Berg, S. A. (2013). By librarians, for librarians: Building a strengths-based institute to develop librarians' research culture in Canadian academic libraries. *The Journal of Academic Librarianship 39*(3), 227-231.

Jacobs, L. (2014). Academic status for Canadian academic librarians: A brief history. In J. Dekker & M. Kandiuk (Eds.), *In solidarity: Academic librarian labour activism and union participation in Canada* (pp. 151-169). Sacramento, CA: Library Juice Press.

Jackson, M. G. (1999). Image and Status. In *Advances in Librarianship (Advances in Librarianship, Volume 23) Emerald Group Publishing Limited 23*, 93-115.

Kennedy, M. R. & Brancolini, K. R., (2012). Academic Librarian Research: A Survey of Attitudes, Involvement, and Perceived Capabilities. *College & Research Libraries 73*(5), 431-448.

Kotter, W. R. (1999). Bridging the great divide: improving relations between librarians and classroom faculty. *The journal of academic librarianship 25*(4), 294-303.

Leedy, P. D. & Ormrod, J. E. (2013). *Practical research planning and design*. (10th ed.). Pearson: Boston.

Litwin, R. (2010). The library paraprofessional movement and the deprofessionalization of librarianship. *Progressive Librarian 33*, 43-60.

MacEwan University. (2014). *Collective agreement.* Retrieved from http://acifa.ca/wp-content/uploads/2013/09/GMUFA-2014-2017-March16-2015-Update-FA-Collective-Agreement-FINAL-signed-Feb-12-2015.pdf

MacEwan University. (2015). *Memorandum of agreement.* Retrieved from http://macewanfa.ca/public/download/documents/20970

Marshall, J. G. (2014). Linking research to practice: the rise of evidence-based health sciences librarianship. *Journal of the Medical Library Association: JMLA 102*(1), 14.

Martin, S. (1993). Visions: Raising Our Professional Expectations with a Two-Track Approach to Librarianship. *Journal of Academic Librarianship 19*(1), 24.

MAUT Librarians' Section. (2012). *Report to CAUT on the status of the resolution process for the problems faced by McGill librarians regarding collegiality and academic freedom.* Retrieved from https://www.mcgill.ca/maut/files/maut/issues_resolution_update_2012-04-10.doc

MAUT-LS Working Group. (2010). *Problems faced by McGill librarians regarding collegiality and academic freedom.* Retrieved from https://www.mcgill.ca/maut/files/maut/discussiondocumentmay2010.doc

McGill. (2015). *Regulations relating to the employment of librarian staff.* Retrieved from https://www.mcgill.ca/secretariat/files/secretariat/employment_of_librarian_staff_regs_relating_to_the_.pdf

McGill. (2016). *Statement of Academic Freedom.* Retrieved from https://www.mcgill.ca/secretariat/statement-academic-freedom

McMaster University. (2011). *Collective Agreement*. Retrieved from http://www.workingatmcmaster.ca/med/document/MUALA-CA-2011-2015-(Feb2013)-1-42.pdf

Monroe-Gulick, A., O'Brien, M. & White, G. (2013). *Librarians as Partners: Moving from Research Supporters to Research Partners.* Retrieved from http://www.ala.org/acrl/sites/ala.org.acrl/files/content/conferences/confsandpreconfs/2013/papers/GulickOBrienWhite_Librarians.pdf

Morris, L. A. (2009). Evaluating REMS Tools: Issues in Survey Design. *Therapeutic Innovation & Regulatory Science 43*(6): 735-747.

Pappas, C. (2012). Understanding the worth of the professional librarian in the research university or institution. In B. Crowley (Ed.), *Defending professionalism: A resource for librarians, information specialists, knowledge managers, and archivists* (pp. 91-105)*. Santa Barbara, CA: Libraries Unlimited

Park, B., & Riggs, R. (1993). Tenure and promotion: a study of practices by institutional type. *The Journal of Academic Librarianship 19*(2), 72-77.

Perkins, G. H., & Slowik, A. J. (2013). The value of research in academic libraries. *College & Research Libraries*, *74*(2), 143-158.

Peytchev, A., Couper, M., McCabe, S., & Crawford, S. (2006). Web Survey Design: Paging versus Scrolling. *The Public Opinion Quarterly, 70*(4), 596-607.

Potter, W. & Levine-Donnerstein, D. (1999). Rethinking validity and reliability in content analysis. *Journal of Applied Communication Research, 27(*3), 258-264.

Powell, R. R., Baker, L. M., & Mika, J. J. (2002). Library and information science practitioners and research. *Library & Information Science Research*, *24*(1), 49-72.

Rae, S., & Hunn, M. (2015). Assessing the Impact of Embedding Online Academic and Information Literacy Resources into a First Year Business Course. *Evidence Based Library and Information Practice 10*(4), 95-112.

Reed, K., McFarland, D., & Croft, R. (2016). Laying the Groundwork for a New Library Service: Scholar-Practitioner & Graduate Student Attitudes toward Altmetrics and the Curation of Online Profiles. *Evidence Based Library and Information Practice 11*(2), 87-96.

Rethlefsen, M., Farrell, A., Trzasko, L. & Brigham, T. (2015). Librarian co-authors correlated with higher quality reported search strategies in general internal medicine systematic reviews. *Journal of Clinical Epidemiology 68*(6), 617-626.

Rich, P. (2012). Inside the black box: Revealing the process in applying a grounded theory analysis. *The Qualitative Report 17*(25), 1.

Ruess, D. E. (2004). Faculty and professional appointments of academic librarians: Expanding the options for choice. *portal: Libraries and the Academy 4*(1), 75-84.

Sandelowski, M. (2000). Combining qualitative and quantitative sampling, data collection, and analysis techniques in mixed-method studies. *Research in Nursing & Health 23*(3), 246-255.

Samek, T. (2007 October). Librarians and "information justice". *Academic Matters* 24-25. Retrieved from http://www.academicmatters.ca/assets/AM-Oct-2007-Issue.pdf

Sorensen, M., & DeLong, K. (2016). Librarian Research Competencies in Canadian Large Research Libraries. *International Information & Library Review 48*(2), 143-149.

Spalding, H. H., & Wang, J. (2006). The challenges and opportunities of marketing academic libraries in the USA: Experiences of US academic libraries with global application. *Library Management 27*(6/7), 494-504.

Stewart, P. (2009). Academic librarians are under attack. *CAUT Bulletin 56*(10). Retrieved from https://www.cautbulletin.ca/en_article.asp?articleid=2958

Still, J. (1998). The Role and Image of the Library and Librarians in Discipline-Specific Pedagogical Journals. *The Journal of Academic Librarianship 24*(3), 225-231.

Tomaszewski, R., Poulin, S., & MacDonald, K. I. (2013). Publishing in discipline-specific open access journals: Opportunities and outreach for librarians. *The Journal of Academic Librarianship 39*(1), 61-66.

Turk, J. L. (Ed.). (2000). *The corporate campus: Commercialization and the dangers to Canada's colleges and universities.* Toronto, ON: James Lormier & Company, Ltd., Publishers.

Turk, J. L. (2010). *Academic Freedom for Librarians: What is it, and Why Does it Matter?* Retrieved from https://www.mcgill.ca/maut/files/maut/2010.08.25_mcgill_librarians/pdf

University of Alberta. (1998). *University of Alberta librarian agreement.* Retrieved from http://www.hrs.ualberta.ca/MyEmployment/~/media/hrs/MyEmployment/Agreements/Academic/Librarian.pdf

University of Calgary. (2009). *Procedures pertaining to appointment, promotion, and tenure of academic staff.* Retrieved from https://www.ucalgary.ca/hr/files/hr/apt_manual_current.pdf

University of Calgary. (2015). *Collective Agreement.* Retrieved from https://www.ucalgary.ca/hr/files/hr/tucfa_collective_agreement.pdf

University of Manitoba. (2013a). *2013-2016 Collective Agreement.* Retrieved from umfa.ca/pdf/collective_agreement/20132016/2013_2016_UMFA%20Collective_Agreement.pdf

University of Manitoba. (2013b). *University research grants program (URGP) general guidelines.* Retrieved from https://umanitoba.ca/research/ors/media/Guidelines__URGP.pdf

University of Regina. (2014). *Collective Agreement 2014-2017.* Retrieved from http://www.uregina.ca/hr/assets/docs/pdf/employee-relations/APT-collective-agreement-2014-2017-final.pdf

University of Saskatchewan. (2011). *University Library Standards for Promotion and Tenure*. Retrieved from http://library.usask.ca/info/libstandards.pdf

University of Saskatchewan. (2014). *2014-2017 collective agreement.* Retrieved from http://www.usaskfaculty.ca/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/2014-2017-Collective-Agreement.pdf

University of Saskatchewan. (2013). *Core competencies for University of Saskatchewan librarians.* Retrieved from http://library.usask.ca/info/files/CoreCompetenciesUniversityLibrarians2013.pdf

University of Winnipeg. (2013). *Collective agreement.* Retrieved from https://www.uwinnipeg.ca/hr/docs/uwfa/Web%20Final%20UWFA%20RAS%202013-16%202.pdf

Watson-Boone, R. (2000). Academic librarians as practitioner-researchers. *The Journal of Academic Librarianship 26*(2), 85-93

Werrell, E., & Sullivan, L. (1987). Faculty status for academic librarians: a review of the literature. *College & Research Libraries*, *48*(2), 95-103.

Wilson, V. (2016). Librarian Research: Making it Better?. *Evidence Based Library and Information Practice 11*(1), 111-114.

Appendices

Appendix I — Survey Questions for Librarians and Non—Librarian Faculty

Survey – Librarians

This study explores the role of academic librarians as researchers from the perspective of both academic librarians and other faculty. Research in the context of this survey refers to research suitable for publication or presentation. Survey results are anonymous. You may decline to answer a question or choose not to complete the survey at any point.

1. Are librarians at your institution able to become tenured faculty?
   a. Yes
   b. No
   c. Librarians are eligible for tenure or equivalent, but are not faculty
   d. I don't know
2. What role do you think librarians should play within your institution?
   a. Faculty
   b. Academic Support Staff
   c. Other: [small text field]
3. Do you conduct LIS research as part of your duties at your institution?
   a. Yes, regularly
   b. Yes, on occasion
   c. No, but I would like to
   d. No, and I do not want to
4. Do you conduct research in fields other than LIS?
   a. Yes, regularly
   b. Yes, on occasion
   c. No, but I would like to
   d. No, and I do not want to
5. Are you *required* to conduct research as part of your duties as a librarian at your institution?
   a. Yes, research is required of all librarians
   b. Yes, research is required to attain tenure and/or promotion
   c. Research is encouraged, but not required
   d. Research is permitted, but not encouraged
   e. No, research is actively discouraged
6. Do you regularly publish your research?
   a. Yes, in peer-reviewed journals or books
   b. Yes, in non-scholarly journals or books
   c. Yes, in both peer-reviewed and non-scholarly journals or books
   d. No, my research is used for internal purposes only
   e. No, I do not conduct research
7. Librarians at your institution...
   a. Should conduct more academic research than they currently do
   b. Conduct an adequate amount of academic research already

    c.   Should conduct less academic research than they currently do

    d.   Should not conduct academic research

8. Do you believe that research in LIS is held to the same level of rigor as research in other disciplines?
    a. Yes
    b. No
    c. I don't know

9. Have you ever collaborated with a non-librarian faculty member on a research project?
    a. Yes, and I would again
    b. Yes, but I wouldn't do it again
    c. No, but I would be open to the idea
    d. No, and I would not be open to the idea

10. Do you think that you possess skills that would allow you to aid faculty members in the Sciences, Social Sciences or Humanities with their research?
    a. Yes
    b. No
    c. I don't know

11. Have you collaborated with non-librarian faculty on projects that are not research activities? (E.g.; Teaching classes or developing assignments)
    a. Yes, and I would like to again
    b. Yes, but I would not like to do it again
    c. No, but I would like to
    d. No, and I would not like to

12. What do you consider the three primary duties or roles of an academic librarian to be?
    a. [Small text field response]
    b. [small text field response]
    c. [Small text field response]

13. Do you have any additional thoughts on the topics addressed in this survey?
    a. [Text field. 1000 characters]

14. How long have you been a librarian at your current institution?
    a. <1 year
    b. 1-5 years
    c. 6-10 years
    d. >10 years

15. Which type of library do you work in?
    a. Sciences library
    b. Social Sciences and/or Humanities library
    c. General academic library
    d. Other

16. What is the rank of your position? (e.g. Librarian III, tenured)
    [Text field]

Survey – Non-librarian Faculty

This study explores the role of academic librarians as researchers from the perspective of both academic librarians and other faculty. Research in the context of this survey refers to research suitable for publication or presentation. Survey results are anonymous. You may decline to answer a question or choose not to complete the survey at any point.

1. What role do you think librarians should play within your institution?
   a. Faculty
   b. Academic Support Staff
   c. Other: [small text field]
   d. I do not believe my institution should have librarians
2. Do librarians at your institution conduct research related to the field of librarianship as part of their duties?
   a. Yes, regularly
   b. Yes, on occasion
   c. No, but they should
   d. No, and I don't think they should
   e. I don't know, but I think they should
   f. I don't know, but I don't think they should
3. Do librarians at your institution conduct research related to fields *other than* librarianship?
   a. Yes, regularly
   b. Yes, on occasion
   c. No, but they should
   d. No, and I don't think they should
   e. I don't know, but I think they should
   f. I don't know, but I don't think they should
4. Do librarians at your institution publish their research?
   a. Yes, in peer-reviewed journals or books
   b. Yes, in non-scholarly journals or books
   c. Yes, in both peer-reviewed and non-scholarly journals or books
   d. No, library research is used for internal purposes only
   e. No, librarians at my institution do not engage in research activities
   f. I don't know
5. Librarians at your institution...
   a. Should conduct more academic research than they currently do
   b. Conduct an adequate amount of academic research already
   c. Should conduct less academic research than they currently do
   d. Should not conduct academic research
6. Librarians at your institution are...
   a. Better researchers than librarians at similar universities
   b. Researchers on par with librarians at similar universities
   c. Worse researchers than librarians at similar universities
   d. I'm not able to compare librarians across universities
7. Are librarians at your institution able to become tenured faculty?
   a. Yes

b. No

c. I don't know

8. Do you believe that research in the field of librarianship is held to the same level of rigor as research in your discipline?

    a. Yes

    b. No

    c. I don't know

9. Have you ever collaborated with a librarian on a research project?

    a. Yes, and I would again

    b. Yes, but I wouldn't do it again

    c. No, but I would be open to the idea

    d. No, and I would not be open to the idea

10. Do you think that librarians at your institution possess skills that could aid you in your research?

    a. Yes

    b. No

    c. I don't know

11. Have you collaborated with librarians on projects that are not research activities? (E.g.; Teaching classes or developing assignments)

    a. Yes, and I would like to again

    b. Yes, but I would not like to do it again

    c. No, but I would like to

    d. No, and I would not like to

12. What do you consider the three primary duties or roles of an academic librarian to be?

    a. [Small text field response]

    b. [small text field response]

    c. [Small text field response]

13. Do you have any additional thoughts on the topics addressed in this survey?

[Text field. 1000 characters]

14. How long have you been a faculty member at your current institution?

    a. <1 year

    b. 1-5 years

    c. 6-10 years

    d. >10 years

15. What is your discipline?

[text field]

16. What is the rank of your position? (e.g. Full professor)

[Text field]

Appendix II — Pilot Interview Script

1. Can you tell me what sort of librarian you are?

2. Do you conduct research as part of your duties as a librarian?

    - No: are you comfortable with not doing research?

    - Yes: Can you tell me, in general terms, what sort of research you do in your position?

        - (If research outside LIS area): Do you feel that conducting research in a field outside LIS impacts your library duties?

        - Are you comfortable doing research as part of your job?

        - Is research a required part of your job?

        - Do you consider research to be an important part of your job? Why or why not?

3. What sort of research, if any, do you think should be undertaken by academic librarians?

        - Do you think this research would be published? Where?

4. What are your feelings about the quality of research in LIS?

        - Do you feel it is as rigorous as research in other fields? As useful?

        - Do you use LIS research with any sort of regularity as part of your librarian duties?

5. At your institution, do you feel that librarians are adequately supported if they do undertake research? Financially, temporally, emotionally?

6. Librarianship has a large service component to it. What do you think is or should be the relationship between the service component and the research component of academic librarianship?

6.5. Providing research support for non-librarian faculty can be a service component of library duties. Do you think there is a relationship between conducting research and providing research support?

7. Have you ever collaborated with a non-librarian faculty member on a research project?

        Yes: - would you do it again?

            - how did such a project fit in to your duties as a librarian?

        No: - would you like to?

8. How do you think non-librarian faculty perceive academic librarians, generally?

        - Do you think their perception is accurate?

        - How would you like for academic librarians to be perceived by faculty?

9. Are librarians at this institution faculty?

        - Do you think they should be?

- (if yes): do you think non-librarian faculty members consider librarians to be 'true' faculty?

10. Do you, personally, consider yourself to be an academic or researcher?

Yes: - is this role related to our independent of your position as a librarian?

11. Do you consider academic librarians in general to be academics or researchers?

12. Is there anything you would like to add that I haven't addressed in these questions?

Appendix III — Final Interview Scripts for Librarians and Non-Librarian Faculty

Questions for Librarians

1. Can you give me a description of your position at this institution?

2. Do you conduct research as part of your duties as a -X- librarian?

    NO - why not?

      - would you prefer to be doing research as part of your position?

    YES - what sort of research do you do?

      - is research *required* as part of your position?

      - do you consider research to be an important part of your position? Why/why not?

3. At your institution, do you feel that librarians are supported if they choose to engage in research? (Financially, structurally, socially)?

    NO - Can you talk about the ways in which support is lacking?

    YES - Can you talk about the sort of support you receive?

      - Are there any areas in which support is better or worse than others?

4. The collective agreement at your institution grants librarians -X- status, and indicates that your time should be allotted in -X- ways, with -X- % of the time devoted to research or scholarly activities. Would you say that this is indicative of your reality at this institution?

5. (For institutions where librarians have academic or faculty status only). At your institution, librarians have -X- status, indicating that they should have academic freedom. Do you feel that librarians are afforded academic freedom in practice?

    NO - Can you elaborate on how you feel you don't have academic freedom?

      - Do you feel that this affects your ability to do your job as a librarian? How so/not?

    YES - Can you elaborate on how academic freedom is valuable to your job?

6. What sorts of research, if any, do you think should be undertaken by librarians at your institution? Why?

7. What is the value (or lack of value) in allowing or encouraging librarians to do research?

   - (probe on collaborative research between librarians and non-librarian faculty ONLY IF it is brought up by the participant.)

   - How much of a librarian's time should be given over to research?

8. Do you librarians are perceived by non-librarian faculty as researchers?

   - How do you feel librarians *are* perceived by non-librarian faculty?

   - Do you feel that knowing you do research would impact how faculty interacts with you?

8.5 Do you feel librarians generally want to do research?

9. Is there anything you would like to add that we haven't touched upon already?

Questions for Non-Librarian Faculty

1. Can you describe your position at this institution?

2. Can you tell me about the ways you interact with librarians at your institution?

3. Librarians at your institution are granted academic freedom. Do you feel that having academic freedom is important for librarians? Why or why not?

4. To the best of your knowledge, do librarians at your institution conduct research?

5. Have you ever engaged in collaborative research with a librarian?

   NO - Would you?

   YES - How did it go? Would you collaborate with a librarian again?

6. What sorts of research, if any, do you think should be undertaken by librarians at your institution? Why?

7. What is the value (or lack of value) in allowing or encouraging librarians to engage in research?

8. Do you consider librarians researchers? Do you think research should be a part of the duties of librarians?

8.5. How do you feel other faculty perceive librarians?

9. Is there anything you would like to add that we haven't already addressed?

Appendix IV — Non-Librarian Faculty Interview Coding Framework

	CODE	DEFINITION
1	**Demographics**	Demographic information on the participant; what sort of professor they are, how long they've been a faculty member, etc.
2	**Discussing Collections**	Statements relating to the role of librarians in developing collections and/or indicating that librarians and non-librarian faculty work together in the development of library collections
3	**IT Specialists**	Statements indicating that non-librarian faculty identify librarians as IT support specialists
4	**Classroom Instruction**	Statements indicating that librarians instruct students in a classroom setting and/or indicating that this is a point of collaboration between librarians and non-librarian faculty
5	**Research Seminars**	Statements indicating that librarians conduct research instruction or seminars for advanced undergraduate and graduate students
6	**Advertise the Librarians**	Statements indicating that non-librarian faculty make an effort to advertise the value of the librarian role to students and/or peers
7	**Access to Materials**	Statements indicating that non-librarian faculty rely on librarians to facilitate their access to information, for their own research or otherwise
8	**Libraries are Laboratories**	Statements indicating that libraries themselves are sites of research and knowledge production for non-librarian faculty members
9	**Academic Freedom for Academics**	Statements indicating that librarians are entitled to academic freedom, as they are members of the academic community

	CODE	DEFINITION
10	**Intellectual Labour**	Statements indicating that the work of librarians requires intellectual labour
11	**Insights in the Field**	Statements indicating that librarians contribute in meaningful ways to the scholarship of fields aside from librarianship
12	**It Would Just be a Holding Ground**	Statements indicating that without the intellectual and academic role and skills of librarians, libraries would become merely places where information was stored, without any meaningful access or structure to that material
13	**Some Do**	Statements indicating that librarians engage in research
14	**Being Denied These Opportunities**	Statements indicating that librarians struggle to be able/be permitted to do research
15	**I Get to Know Librarians**	Statements indicating that non-librarian faculty make an effort to connect with librarians at their institution
16	**Facilitate my own Research**	Statements indicating that non-librarian faculty engage with librarians in order to facilitate their own research
17	**Co-Authored Papers**	Statements discussing the reality or the possibility of co-authored papers or joint research projects between librarians and non-librarian faculty
18	**Overlap Between Academic Work and Library Work**	Statements indicating that scholarly work and more general library work is undertaken at libraries, and that there is significant overlap between the two
19	**A Lot of Collaboration**	Statements indicating that collaborative research or research-related work occurs between librarians and non-librarian faculty

	CODE	DEFINITION
20	**Appreciation of Collaborative Research**	Statements indicating support for the value of collaborative research between librarians and non-librarian faculty, at either a personal or a cultural level
21	**A Really Great Opportunity**	Statements indicating that librarians can or should conduct applied research in the field of LIS and/or digital humanities
22	**Working with our Rare Books Collections**	Statements indicating that librarians can, should, or do conduct research on rare book collections or other special collections
23	**Facilitating Collaboration**	Statements indicating that non-librarian faculty facilitate research collaboration between their graduate students and librarians
24	**Building New Knowledge**	Statements indicating that it is valuable for librarians to engage in research as it facilitates knowledge creation
25	**We as Humanities Scholars**	Statements indicating that scholars in the humanities have a close relationship with librarians
26	**I Might be Particularly Passionate**	Statements indicating that the participant feels their views on librarians and librarian research may differ from the opinions of their peers, due to their personal and distinct relationship with the library or with librarians
27	**They Would Have Similar Opinions**	Statements indicating that participants believe their opinions on librarians and librarian research are reflective of the views of their peers
28	**They Publish Scholarship**	Statements indicating that librarians publish research of an academic calibre
29	**Need Those Skills**	Statements indicating that the sort of applied research conducted by librarians is important and necessary

CODE		DEFINITION
30	**I Haven't Dealt With Her as Much**	Statements indicating that non-librarian faculty do not collaborate with librarians on their own research
31	**I Just Don't Know What it is**	Statements reflecting a lack of awareness or knowledge about librarian research on the part of non-librarian faculty
32	**They'll Understand Some of my Concerns or Issues**	Statements indicating that librarians conducting research themselves will allow them to better understand the needs of non-librarian faculty with regard to their research
33	**I Would Take Them More Seriously**	Statements indicating that non-librarian faculty would hold librarians in higher esteem if they conducted research, or that non-librarian faculty could relate to librarians more readily if they engaged in research
34	**I do Think of Them as Academics**	Statements indicating that non-librarian faculty consider librarians to be academics/part of the academic community, even if they do not consider them to be researchers
35	**More on the Service and Teaching Side**	Statements indicating that librarians' focus is more on service and teaching than on research
36	**Assistants to Them**	Statements indicating that non-librarian faculty consider librarians to be assistants rather than researchers or peers
37	**Library Committees**	Statements indicating that non-librarian faculty participants served on or worked with library boards or committees
38	**It's Just an Accident**	Statements indicating that non-librarian faculty only know about librarian research because of personal relationships or experiences with specific librarians, not because they know about librarian research in general

	CODE	DEFINITION
39	**Not Much**	Statements indicating that the participant does not interact with librarians often
40	**The Equivalent of Check Out Personnel**	Statements indicating that librarians have been deprofessionalized and/or that the deprofessionalization is negatively affecting the ability of non-librarian faculty to interact with librarians
41	**A Lot of That Work has Devolved to Me**	Statements indicating that deprofessionalization of librarians has had deleterious effects for non-librarian faculty
42	**Helps Them Think of Themselves as Academics**	Statements indicating that librarians conducting research benefit from it personally and/or that it allows them more comfort in their academic role
43	**Research Can Only Enhance**	Statements indicating that librarians conducting research can only enhance them and what they do in any regard
44	**It's Hard to Hold People to That Standard**	Statements indicating that it is difficult or unnecessary to require that librarians conduct research
45	**Librarians Should be Researchers**	Statements indicating that non-librarian faculty believe librarians should conduct research
46	**Only for Those who Undertake Original Research**	Statements indicating that academic freedom and/or tenure should only be awarded to librarians who conduct original research
47	**Very Few**	Statements indicating that librarians generally do not conduct research
48	**Less Capable of Doing Research**	Statements indicating that librarians lack the capacity or skillset to do research

	CODE	DEFINITION
49	**I Don't Think Their Expectation of the Library is Very High**	Statements indicating that non-librarian faculty do not have high expectations of the capabilities of librarians
50	**I'm Not Talking About Research to Produce a Policy**	Statements indicating that applied research conducted by librarians should not be considered true research
51	**They'd Rather See it Go Away**	Statements indicating that the question of librarians conducting research is controversial or taboo to discuss

Appendix V — Librarian Interview Coding Framework

	CODE	DEFINITION
1	**Demographics**	Demographic information of the participant; what sorts of librarian they are, how long they've been a librarian, the university they work at, the faculties they work with, etc.
2	**Part of a Research Team**	Statements related to the librarian being part of a research team or committee, or being a collaborator on grants
3	**Research Support for Faculty**	Statements related to providing research support for subject faculty
4	**My Own Research on the Subject**	Statements regarding the participant or other librarians conducting (or not conducting) non-LIS subject research
5	**Research in LIS**	Statements regarding the participant or other librarians conducting (or not conducting) LIS research
6	**Part of Our Job**	Statements relating to research being a required part of the librarian's job, or being a central part of the job, even if it is not required
7	**Supported by the Library**	Statements indicating that the library supports librarian research or does not support it
8	**Research Leaves**	Statements discussing librarian research leaves
9	**Budgetary Issues**	Statements relating to budgetary issues of the library or university affecting librarian research
10	**Good Research**	Statements indicating that librarians engage in quality research or that librarian research is *not* quality research, or statements relating to the quality of librarian research as perceived by librarians or non-librarian faculty

CODE		DEFINITION
11	**Peer Encouragement**	Statements indicating that librarians receive support from their peers with regard to research or statements indicating that they do not receive this support
12	**Institutional Support**	Statements indicating that librarians receive or do not receive support from the larger university/institution with regard to research
13	**People are Interested**	Statements indicating interest in the participants' research from their colleagues
14	**The Stakes are Quite Low**	Statements indicating that there are few consequences if librarians do not conduct research
15	**You Have to Have Published Something**	Statements indicating a requirement for librarians to have published research
16	**Publications not Tied to Research Leave**	Statements indicating that what librarians publish need not be directly related to their research leave.
17	**Peer-Reviewed is Expected**	Statements indicating a need for librarian research publications to be peer-reviewed
18	**Time for Research**	Statements relating to the time that librarians allot/are allotted for research. This may relate to allotted time in the collective agreement, the time that librarians themselves devote to research, or the time that librarians would *like* to see devoted to research, or the time that is *taken* for research
19	**Academic Freedom**	Statements indicating that librarians are provided adequate levels of academic freedom
20	**Their Research is not Aligned with the Faculty's**	Statements indicating that librarian research is distinct from subject faculty's research

	CODE	DEFINITION
21	**Not Always Thinking About Librarianship all the Time**	Statements indicating value to conducting research outside of LIS
22	**Impact on the Profession**	Statements related to the impact or lack of impact that librarian research has on the librarianship profession
23	**Impact in the Faculty**	Statements relating to the impact librarian research has or can have in faculties outside of the library
24	**People Know What You're Doing**	Statements relating to those outside the library being aware of the kinds of research and research support librarians provide and therefore being able to advocate for the benefits the library provides.
25	**Research Pay Off**	Statements relating to the value that librarian research has with regard to decisions made about the library by the larger institution. Statements indicating that librarian research has "business value."
26	**Promoting Our Worth**	Statements discussing how librarians promote (or do not promote) their worth to those outside the library.
27	**Preaching to the Choir**	Statements indicating that publishing in LIS journals is not an effective means to raise awareness of librarian skills beyond the discipline.
28	**We're Well Respected**	Statements indicating librarians command respect from the faculty
29	**Not Equal Collaborators**	Statements indicating that, even if librarians are considered helpful and supportive, they are not considered equal collaborators in research by non-librarian faculty, or as equal researchers
30	**Obviously we Have the Skills**	Statements indicating that librarians possess the skills to conduct research, or the skills to aid in collaborative research

	CODE	DEFINITION
31	**There's a Place for us There**	Statements indicating that there is a place for librarians to conduct research in collaboration with faculties outside the library
32	**I do Conduct Research**	Statements indicating that librarians conduct research (general), or that librarian research is varied
33	**We May do Research**	Statements indicating that librarians are permitted, but not required, to do research
34	**Very Much Professional**	Statements relating to librarians conducting applied (evaluation, assessment, pedagogy, etc.) within the library or relating to publications etc. that arose out of projects that were not initially intended to be research projects
35	**Outside of the Primary Responsibilities**	Statements indicating that librarian research is considered less important than other librarian duties
36	**Important Despite the Official Agreement**	Statements indicating that the participant considers librarian research to be important
37	**Research Fund**	Statements relating to funding or lack thereof for librarian research endeavors
38	**Social, Cultural & Structural**	Statements indicating that research support is tied to the social, cultural, and structural climate of the library and/or library supervisors and administration
39	**Ability to do Research Challenged**	Statements that reflect scenarios where the participant was prevented from doing research or where their ability to conduct research was challenged
40	**Not Clear in the Collective Agreement**	Statements reflecting a lack of clarity in the participant's collective agreement, or a desire for additional clarification of the research role

	CODE	DEFINITION
42	**A Bit of Quiet**	Statements relating to the provisions required for conducting research (aside from time)
43	**Don't Ask Permission**	Statements reflecting librarians' need to move outside the rules or circumvent their supervisors/the administration in order to conduct research
44	**Benefit to Faculty & Students**	Statements reflecting the idea that librarians need to understand and conduct research in order to be useful in their role aiding faculty and students with their research, or statements indicating that librarian research confers benefit on the faculty or students
45	**Benefit to the Individual**	Statements reflecting a benefit to librarian research on the level of the individual
46	**Benefit to the Institution**	Statements reflecting a benefit to librarian research on the level of the institution
47	**Downsides**	Statements discussing the downsides of librarian research
48	**Health Sciences Model**	Statements indicating that models for incorporating or administering librarian research may be effectively pulled from other disciplines
49	**Many Librarians Don't Want to**	Statements indicating that librarians do not wish to conduct research, or do not want to be required to conduct research
50	**As Academic Librarians**	Statements indicating that research is critical to the academic librarian role
51	**Doesn't Occur to Most Faculty**	Statements reflecting a lack of awareness from faculty that librarians conduct research

	CODE	DEFINITION
52	**It Makes a Huge Difference**	Statements reflecting the idea that faculty awareness of librarian research raises their opinions of librarians or alters how they perceive and interact with librarians
53	**A Certain Amount of Appeal**	Statements indicating that librarians wish to conduct research
54	**Attacking Academic Freedom**	Statements reflecting threats or perceived threats or potential threats to academic freedom
55	**It Would be a Challenge**	Statements indicating librarians may have difficulty conducting research (for reasons aside from time considerations or being explicitly challenged about their research), or statements indicating librarians have not been prepared or are not equipped to conduct research
56	**Two Streams of Librarians**	Statements indicating that two streams of librarians — one that includes research and one that doesn't — would be ideal
57	**Faculty That are Very Well Aware**	Statements indicating that faculty are aware that librarians conduct research
58	**What Would we Know that They Don't**	Statements indicating that faculty do not see librarians as helpful to them
59	**The CARL Level**	Statements indicating librarians receive research support from province- or country-wide organizations, such as CARL
60	**Book Reviews**	Statements indicating that librarians publish material that is not research, such as book reviews