

Librarians of the Future

WHAT DOES THE FUTURE HOLD FOR LIBRARY PROFESSIONALS?



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A little bit about me

HOW IT STARTED...

- From bookseller to Library cadet
- New Professionals Network
- Teaching ALL THOSE CLASSES
- Online learning spaces
- Design Thinking
- Projects projects projects
- Information and Digital Literacies
- Shaping culture and development



Librarians of the future

”Oh you must get to read so many books!”

There’s no doubt that Library careers look very different than they used to. It’s very common to have qualified librarians working alongside colleagues with qualifications in marketing, IT, or management.

The information we manage is in different formats than it used to be.

There is increasing emphasis on space, and Library as place.

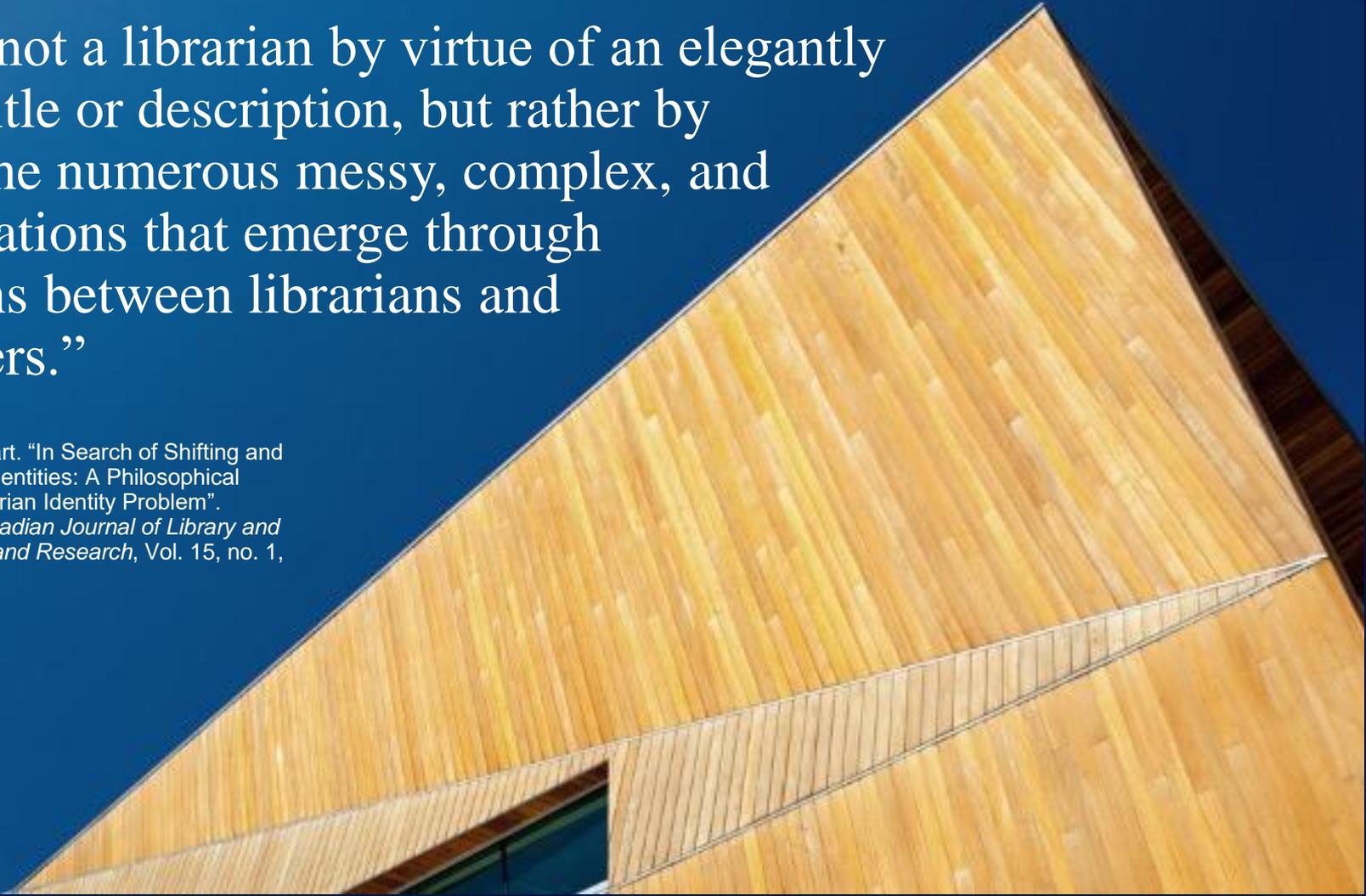
Libraries have been trying to redefine what our relevance is in the age of Google since before I became a librarian.

So what is our core value in a post 2020 world?
And how do we as library workers help to define that?



“...one is not a librarian by virtue of an elegantly lofty job title or description, but rather by virtue of the numerous messy, complex, and unique relations that emerge through interactions between librarians and library users.”

Klein, S., and B. Lenart. “In Search of Shifting and Emergent Librarian Identities: A Philosophical Approach to the Librarian Identity Problem”. *Partnership: The Canadian Journal of Library and Information Practice and Research*, Vol. 15, no. 1, Feb. 2020.



Eyes on the horizon

TURNING OUR ATTENTION TO THE FUTURE

The ease of instantaneous access to information belies the density of the modern information landscape, and our clients (academics, students, and community members) continue to value our expertise in critically navigating this landscape.

Recent years have seen more focus on areas like digital dexterity, digital scholarship, research impact, open access and open research, knowledge management, content strategy and UX.

What next?





You'll never be 100% ready

BUT YOU CAN DO YOUR BEST TO BE PREPARED



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Active librarianship

EVIDENCE BASED AND ENGAGED

The term active librarianship isn't new – it's been around since at least the 1980s – but what it means continues to evolve as our landscape changes.

Active librarianship looks like:

- Taking an evidence based approach to your work
- Engaging in professional learning networks and other PD opportunities
- Continually re-evaluating where we provide value
- Looking beyond the boundaries of the Library you work within



Professional Learning Networks

ENGAGING IN THE PROFESSION

Professional learning networks can be as formal or informal as you wish. In essence, they refer to engaging with other people in your area of interest for the purpose of sharing knowledge and facilitating learning connections.

They are frequently cross-institutional and are typically non hierarchical and mediated by technology.

Professional Learning Networks (PLNs) are a fantastic way to broaden your perspective and contribute to the professional dialogue.



Rethink our value

HAS IT CHANGED?

The core business of libraries seems to be relatively constant – the provision and organisation of information resources including books, journals, and archival materials; the provision of reference instruction and assistance; and increasingly the provision of spaces and technology.

Depending on the context of your Library, specialised skills like research support, technology support, and community engagement will also be core skills embraced by library professionals.

While those skills will continue to be constant – how are they changed by the changing environment?



Get Collaborative

BEYOND YOUR ORGANISATION

If you only work inside your own team, things can get a bit insular.

Collaborating with staff from other Library teams, units within your institution, or staff external to your institution provides really valuable perspective and encourages you to look outside the scope of your immediate environment.

What are other teams or libraries doing that might benefit your own Library?

What are other industries doing that we could be embracing?

Look for opportunities to expand your influence beyond your immediate work environment.



Bridging the Gap

WHAT IS THE LIBRARY'S ROLE?

There is also a tendency for libraries to step into areas that aren't currently being embraced – to fill an identified gap.

This has risks and benefits, including:

- Allowing for innovation and expansion
- Bringing your professional perspective to contribute to a new arena
- Stepping on toes/challenging institutional structures
- Diluting the value proposition of the Library

Emotional and social intelligence are hugely important skills when stepping into unfamiliar waters.



Mentoring partnerships

BUILDING BRIDGES TO THE FUTURE

Mentoring provides enormous benefits for both mentors and mentees.

Mentoring can be beneficial for mentees by:

- Helping define areas for growth
- Identifying personal strengths
- Providing strategic perspectives
- Thinking critically about career development



Fresh perspectives

BENEFITS FOR MENTORS

Openly discussing career experience and strategies for progressing can often give the mentor a fresh perspective on an established career.

The CAVAL program also provided several opportunities to connect with other mentors, building my professional network and creating a space for discussions at mentor level.

Mentoring also inspired me to take stock and recognise the value that I had built up over my career to date.



The future of LIS mentoring

IS IT MORE OR LESS IMPORTANT?

Mentoring will absolutely continue to be important as the LIS environment evolves, but the way the partnership has traditionally worked may be slightly different.

More emphasis on transferable experience will become a part of contemporary LIS mentorship – focusing on the fundamental issues that affect staff regardless of their area of expertise.

Specialised expertise will always be relevant when a mentee is looking for someone to guide them down a particular path, but don't let that be the only defining factor when choosing a partnership.





The only constant is change



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