RECRUITING AND RETAINING LGBTQ-IDENTIFIED STAFF IN ACADEMIC LIBRARIES THROUGH ORDINARY METHODS

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In Brief

While the American academic library field works hard to include all patrons and materials that represent less dominant populations, it should be more mindful of inclusivity in its own workforce. Particularly, the field does nothing to explicitly recruit or retain LGBTQ-identified librarians. The author proposes practical remedies to these problems that directly respond to workplace studies on interpersonal difficulties LGBTQ-identified librarians and others have cited as barriers to happiness in the workplace, and argues toward more inclusive LIS education and financial support. Most importantly, the author hopes to convince others to abandon the tired rhetoric that positions the library field's "feminization" as a misunderstanding and damaging consequence to be combated, and instead replace it with feminist conversations about the gendered aspects of the field.

Introduction

The Library and Information Science (LIS) field is its own worst enemy in terms of recruitment and retention of underrepresented employees. While the field has sufficient scholarship on diversity in collections, censorship issues, and how to provide programming for patrons from various backgrounds, LIS articles rarely discuss successfully recruiting and retaining librarians who come from less dominant cultures or are underrepresented within the field. The small amount of scholarship that does exist on this topic is excellent, though limited to visible minorities. Particularly, the field lacks recruitment and retention strategies for academic librarians and staff who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ).

I argue that the way the LIS field discusses the gendered nature of library work constitutes a microaggression in itself, and that the field does not do enough to recruit and retain academic librarians who identify as LGBTQ. My argument is built on several foundations. First, "Current Research on Recruitment and Retention" reviews the scholarship that proves that comfort and safety at work are the most important factors in retaining employees in academic libraries. For those who are not members of America's dominant culture, the issue of comfort and safety is both more urgent and pronounced; this section expands on the literature that discusses the issue for people of color. Second, "How Microaggressions Ruin Positive Workplace Culture" explains the current scholarship on microaggressions directed toward people of color in the library workplace, and includes scholarship from other fields that discuss microaggressions toward LGBTQ-identified employees. Third, "LIS Scholarship and Anti-Feminist Rhetoric" discusses the LIS field's characterization of the "feminization" of librarianship as a detrimental act, and how this view is a sexist, aggressive behavior in itself. Finally, "Practical Methods for Improvement" describes feasible tactics both individual libraries and the global LIS field can practice in order to be more thoughtful toward these issues. I suggest that all these changes be made every day, in the quotidian aspects of our work, in order to lead to a permanent cultural shift.

Current Research on Recruitment and Retention

Scholarship on LIS management practices demonstrates that internal workplace forces are more significant than external forces in keeping librarians happily employed in the academic library field. Though much of the opinion-based scholarship deals with budget cuts, lack of respect for

the field from non-librarians, and other forces outside of a library's control, a wealth of empirical evidence suggests that the most important factor in retaining librarians is an internal factor: a positive workplace environment. Libraries spend large sums of money on the hiring process for new librarians, as Jones argues, but they rarely spend any money or time on acclimating the new librarian into the new work environment, much less acclimating the library to the new employee. ((Dorothy E. Jones, "'I'd Like You to Meet our New Librarian': the Initiation and Integration of the Newly Appointed Librarian." *The Journal of Academic Librarianship 14*, no. 4 (1988): 221-224.)) Given Kawasaki's argument that the initial period for an incoming librarian is the most significant time in the new-hire's career in terms of deciding how they feel about their work, we should focus much more on this early period. Even if a successfully-retained librarian stays at a library they dislike, the librarian likely has formed an attitude that decreases workplace satisfaction and inhibits successful performance. ((Jodee L. Kawasaki, "Retention-After Hiring Then What?" *Science and Technology Libraries 27*, no. 1-2 (2006): 225-240.))

Some studies that focus on worker attitude exist, though the exact number of academic librarians who quit their job after being hired is unknown. In 2001 the Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL) formed the Ad Hoc Task Force on Recruitment and Retention Issues to address what they termed a "top issue" in the field. The Task Force surveyed librarians and asked how long one worked in the field, what type of college library they worked for, what their reason for leaving was, and so forth. But, despite the Task Force's effort, individuals who have left the field infrequently want to participate in the research. What data the Task Force collected tellingly showed that 44.4% of librarians who left academic libraries entirely to go into other

fields stated that work environment was the reason for their departure; another 27.8% cited salary, and 16.7% cited respect for the field from others. Luzius and Ard note that a poor workplace environment ultimately contributes to a lack of ability to attract new and interesting people to librarianship. ((Jeff Luzius and Allyson Ard, "Leaving the Academic Library." *Journal of Academic Librarianship 32*, no. 6 (2006): 593-598)) Albanese's survey about workplace satisfaction never directly asked a question about "workplace environment," instead opting to bank on external reasons; but when Albanese asked "Which attributes contribute most to success?" his survey participants responded with a resounding 68% for interpersonal skills, and only 2% for budget. ((Andrew Richard Albanese, "Take this Job and Love It." *Library Journal 133*, no. 2 (2008): 36-39.))

More specifically, scholarship on retaining librarians of underrepresented communities echoes the two sentiments that studies reveal: positive workplace culture and climate keeps happy and productive employees, and underrepresented groups face more varied issues related to workplace culture. Andrade writes that the problem typically begins after potential librarians decide to enter library school, even before they enter the job market. Few library schools have any classes related to diversity training, what it means to be culturally competent, or similar issues that may affect the workplace environments of new librarians. ((Ricardo Andrade and Alexandra Rivera, "Developing a Diversity-Competent Workforce: the UA Libraries' Experience." *Journal of Library Administration 51*, no. 7-8 (2011): 693-694.)) This deficit results in a group of people on the job market who are untrained in several significant elements of workplace professionalism.

To illustrate this point, surveys such as the ClimateQUAL at the University of Arizona cited by Andrade ((Andrade and Rivera, 692-727.)) and Williams II ((James F. Williams II, "Managing Diversity."

Journal of Library Administration 27, no. 1-2 (1999): 27-48.)) indicate that low scores in "interpersonal justice and work unit conflict" prove the main reason for workplace unhappiness, and that the highest amount of unhappiness in these categories came from "individuals who did not associate themselves with the dominate culture." ((Andrade and Rivera, 696.)) Similarly, Love writes that library "employees in the workforce who are not part of the dominant culture have struggled with subtle demands to 'adapt and fit in,'" ((Johnnieque B. Love, "The Assessment of Diversity Initiatives in Academic Libraries." *Journal of Library Administration 33*, no. 1-2 (2001): 77.)) rather than with appreciation of who they are. This is a huge factor in retention because an employee who feels unwelcome can create an adversarial environment with the administration, often leading to a less productive employee who wants to leave rather than to increased performance. As Love says, "Change has come at such an alarming pace to every aspect of work life except diversity" ((Love, 78.)); the sentiment in this quote reflects the amount of talk in the academic library field about changes in technology, roles, and instruction, and the minimal talk about adaptation to increased diversity of staff within the academic library workplace. Love cites a 1994 study that lists internal barriers to job satisfaction in a workplace as "negative attitudes, discrimination, prejudice, stereotyping, racism, and bias," ((Love, 83.)) all of which fall within workplace climate descriptions similar to those used in Andrade's study.

Alire describes how a lack of leadership possibilities also leads to low retention of ethnic and racial minority employees. The secondary benefit of having underrepresented populations in leadership positions is that not only is the individual growing their career, but they are more likely to retain the minority employees under them and aid in recruitment by taking on "the

additional responsibility of identifying and developing emerging minority leaders." ((Camila A. Alire, "Diversity and Leadership: The Color of Leadership." *Journal of Library Administration 32*, no. 4 (2001): 98.)) Similarly, Neely and Peterson write that retaining librarians of color should involve shadowing existing leaders and nomination for awards that will assist in promotion, which does not currently occur enough. ((Teresa Y. Neely and Lorna Peterson, "Achieving Racial and Ethnic Diversity Among Academic and Research Librarians: the Recruitment, Retention, and Advancement of Librarians of Color, a White Paper." *College and Research Libraries 68*, no. 9 (2007): 562-565.))

Damasco and Hodges echo the sentiment that workplace culture is the largest problem facing, specifically, librarians of color. They cite a study from the Association of Research Libraries (ARL) that concluded that African-American academic librarians who reported being unsatisfied with their jobs mentioned "feelings of isolation, [inadequate] library diversity programs, working conditions, [lack of] support from peers" ((Ione T. Damasco and Dracine Hodges, "Tenure and Promotion Experiences of Academic Librarians of Color." *College and Research Libraries 73*, no. 3 (2012): 281.)) and other issues of that nature. Their survey-takers complained that isolation at work led to tokenism, including frequent instances of being asked to lead diversity programing, or being given titles such as "diversity specialist," though these types of involvement were not acceptable contributions for the tenure and promotion process. They also reported general discouragement from peers, hostility, and disparate expectations of people of different cultures in their workplace. Some scholars, such as Simmons-Welburn ((Janice Simmons-Welburn,. "Diversity Dialogue Groups." *Journal of Library Administration 27*, no. 1-2 (1999): 111-121.)) and Majekodunmi, ((Norda Majekodunmi, "Diversity in Libraries: The Case for the Visible Minority Librarians of Canada (VimLoC Network).

Canadian Library Association 1, no. 59 (2013): 31-32.)) suggest dialogue groups, staff trainings, and open forums to discuss issues such as these in the workplace.

How Microaggressions Ruin a Positive Workplace Culture

The singular study on microaggressions and workplace culture is Alabi's 2015 survey about the occurrence of racial microaggressions in the academic library workplace and the consequences of these actions. ((Jaena Alabi. "Racial Microaggressions in Academic Libraries: Results of a Survey of Minority and Non-Minority Librarians." *The Journal of Academic Librarianship 41*, no. 1 (2015): 47-53.)) The survey was circulated via several listservs in 2011 and completed by 139 participants of various races and ethnicities. ((Jaena Alabi, "'This Actually Happened: an Analysis of Librarians' Responses to a Survey about Racial Microaggressions." *Journal of Library Administration 55*, no. 3 (2015): 182-184.)) The results suggest that frequent microinsults, microinvalidations, and other forms of microaggressions often left people of color in the academic library workplace feeling isolated and finding their work environment to be hostile. Even survey participants who did not identify as minorities expressed surprise at some of the comments made by co-workers. In "'This actually happened': An analysis of librarians' responses to a survey about racial microaggressions," Alabi includes comments from the survey that illustrate how some participants felt that current efforts toward retention and recruitment were insincere. Alabi writes, "Eight comments focused on issues related to recruitment and retention. One non-minority respondent said, 'I think there needs to be a bigger push for minorities to enter library school and encourage librarianship as a career,'" and another wrote, "In my experience, attempts at 'increasing diversity' are still quite superficial.'" ((Alabi, 187.)) More poignantly, a participant stated, "'Racism is a major issue in

libraries. We've closed it off as a viable career path because it relies on shared cultural values and access to cultural and material capital.'" ((Alabi, 187.)) And finally, one participant commented that, "'The reason that many African American and Latino Librarians leave this profession is because of the constant lack of emotional intelligence that is needed in the work place today [...]. Academic Libraries are very poor examples of pushing forth Diversity candidates for positions at the administrative level for Minorities'" ((Alabi, 187.)) (capitalization in original). Though these statements are made in regard to race, they also speak to diversity in general in the academic library field, and can be used to point to some universal issues. Because no survey on LGBTQ microaggressions has been done in librarianship, this survey can apply, as can additional research from other fields. This research reveals that microaggressions are the route through which academic librarians who live outside of the dominant culture realize they are not welcome in the profession, despite the liberal mask the profession wears.

Microaggressions are a particular type of discrimination; they are different from outright violence, and they fall within subtle or accidental statements or behaviors that reveal one's heterosexist attitudes. Nadal, Whitman, Davis, Erazo, and Davidoff write:

> Microaggressions are behaviors and statements, unconscious or unintentional, that communicate hostile or derogatory messages, particularly to members of targeted social groups… Because people in contemporary times do not engage in overtly hostile or consciously biased behavior toward marginalized groups, some people believe they neither hold biases against other groups nor participate in discriminatory behavior; in fact, many individuals may report that discrimination no longer exists. ((Kevin L. Nadal, Chassitty N. Whitman, Linsey S. Davis, Tanya Erazo, and Kristen C. Davidoff,"Microaggressions Toward Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, and Genderqueer People: A Review of Literature." *The Journal of Sex Research 53*, no. 4-5 (2016): 488.))

Or as Platt and Alexandra explained, microaggressive "discriminations stem from systemic, deeply ingrained social justice problems such as privilege, inequities in power, stereotyping, and societal biases." ((Lisa Platt and Alexandrea Lenzen, "Sexual Orientation Microaggressions and the Experience of Sexual Minorities." *Journal of Homosexuality 60*, no. 7 (2013): 1012.))

LGBTQ microaggressions fall within many categories, but can be characterized by common themes. Nadal, Whitman, Davis, Erazo, and Davidoff write that a microinsult is something such as, "you're too pretty to be a lesbian." ((Kevin L. Nadal, Chassitty N. Whitman, Linsey S. Davis, Tanya Erazo, and Kristen C. Davidoff, 490.)) Invalidating reactions to daily experiences (such as suggesting someone is overreacting); applying dominant social norms to all relationships; erotizing people based on their identity; and making assumptions of sexual pathology also constitute forms of microaggressions toward LGBTQ-identified individuals. A difficult and ill-recognized microaggression can also be the denial or defensiveness of the aggressor.

Another difficult aspect of studying LGBTQ microaggression is the lack of scholarly sources in any field on this topic—LGBTQ-focused research has lagged behind other research. Seventy-three articles with key topics related to "race" and "microaggressions" show up in databases, but only five articles show up related to "transgender" and "microaggressions." ((Kevin L. Nadal, Chassitty N. Whitman, Linsey S. Davis, Tanya Erazo, and Kristen C. Davidoff, 492.)) From the few studies conducted on academic campuses, we can extrapolate some information about academic libraries. Nadal, et al., write that when college students who identified as lesbian, gay, bisexual, or queer were surveyed, 96% reported experiencing interpersonal microaggressions and

98% reported experiencing environmental microaggressions, while only 37% reported blatant discrimination due to sexual orientation. ((Nadal, Whitman, Davis, Erazo, and Davidoff, 494.)) Relatedly, Tetreault, Fette, Medlinger, and Hope write that in a survey conducted about perceptions of the LGBTQ climate on campuses, LGBTQ-identified people viewed environments free of overt heterosexism positively because of a lack of violence and lack of attention generally to LGBTQ issues. ((Patricia A. Tetreault, Ryan Fette, Peter C. Meidlinger, and Debra Hope. "Perceptions of Campus Climate by Sexual Minorities." *Journal of Homosexuality 60*, no. 7 (2013): 950.)) The standard for a positive environment consisted of a lack of negatives rather than of blatant cultural inclusiveness, such as expecting a campus to provide resources and actually *welcome* LGBTQ for who they are.

Research also suggests that microaggressions have a more dangerous impact on mental wellbeing than overt discrimination. Nadal, et al., write, "Results further indicated that microaggressions were predictors of most self-acceptance and distress, while blatant discrimination did not significantly relate to either variable." ((Nadal, Whitman, Davis, Erazo, and Davidoff, 494.)) This particularly matters for the workplace because, as Buddel notes, LGBTQ-identified people come into a workplace with pre-existing stress: before even meeting new coworkers LGBTQ-identified people must deal with "identity management" and "sexuality disclosure." An employee entering a new workplace does not know what the consequences of coming out or revealing certain preferences may be. Buddel writes that Degges-White and Shoffner's 2002 Theory of Workplace Adjustment

> describes four facts that people negotiate as they transition into the workplace: 1. Satisfaction describes the ability to engage meaningfully with coworkers; 2. Person-environment correspondence refers to the degree of congruence between the person and the work environment; 3. Reinforcement value refers to the extent that the workplace fulfills a psychological need; 4. Ability refers to the degree of skill and

> personal trait congruence with the workplace. ((Neil Buddell, "Queering the Workplace." *Journal of Gay and Lesbian Social Services 23*, no. 1 (2011): 139.))

All of these categories, each necessary for a person to adjust to a new workplace, are at risk if (1) there are no other openly LGBTQ people; (2) there are no LGBTQ people in leadership; (3) microaggressions are present in the workplace; or (4) the workplace neither attempts to adapt to the new person, nor makes an effort to ease the new person's adjustment.

LIS Scholarship and Anti-Feminist Rhetoric

Unlike much of the research already discussed, Nectoux's book of personal narratives written by LGBTQ-identified librarians in 2011, titled *Workplace Issues for LGBTQ Librarians*, is less empirical and more personal, and it provides a great diversity of different identities and workplace issues to consider.

One such anecdote comes from Phillips, who shares that the reason he pursued academic librarianship was because the university he attended had accepted a non-discrimination policy that included sexual orientation (but not gender identity), so he decided that he could pursue academic librarianship as a field, as it seemed universities were growing in this way. ((Joseph Phillips, "It's Okay to be Gay: A Librarian's Journey to Acceptance an Activism," in *Workplace Issues for LGBTQ Librarians*, ed. Tracy Marie Nectoux. (Duluth: Library Juice Press, 2011), 38.)) But he cites having to work with only straight colleagues on LGBTQ-related scholarship and being forced to use his social media accounts in his professional life (thus automatically outing him), as ways his job lacked sexual-identity-related issues awareness. Ciszek writes from the perspective of a library administrator who remains closeted, fearing being out will hinder advancement in his field.

(Phillips, 86.)) He cites that a supportive network, both in one's individual library and nationally, is the most important element to being out at work. ((Phillips, 87.)) Roberto discusses the difficulties in transitioning (female-to-male in this case) at work in a library. He describes the double life lived between different subsets of librarians, and he worried that at conferences their two separate groups would interact. He describes the awkwardness of being on the job market while transitioning, but notes that LGBTQ allies at his particular library helped him get and keep his job. ((K.R. Roberto, "Pronoun Police: A Guide to Transitioning at Your Local Library," in *Workplace Issues for LGBTQ Librarians*, ed. Tracy Marie Nectoux. (Duluth: Library Juice Press, 2011), 121-127.)) In these cases and others, interpersonal relationships were the crux for success in the workplace.

These anecdotes also provide evidence that many academic library environments provide neither a comfortable nor a supportive workplace for many LGBTQ-identified people. But what is of greater interest to me is that LIS scholarship that engages with notions of gender shows hostility and backward thinking by continually arguing that the field itself *suffers* from being associated with that which is feminine and that which is homosexual, and that this association renders the field illegitimate. This scholarship often focuses on the male librarian stereotype and the embarrassment and struggles to which male librarians are subjected for working in a "female" profession. This literature does not discuss gender equality or recruiting more diverse people into the workforce—it is heterosexist writing concerned only that people might mistake straight men for gay men (feminine ones at that), and a repeat of the antiquated idea that what is feminine is naive and shameful. This literature is written not as a critique of equating femininity and homosexuality with negativity, but rather with the expressed intention of proving that the field is

not feminine, and *not* homosexual. Further, it is written by and for librarians, with little input from or attention to cultural forces outside of the field. As Dickinson writes, "the possibility remains that such stereotypes never really found strong footing in the public consciousness," and that "the image of the effeminate or gay male reference librarian was more entrenched within the library profession itself than it was outside of it." ((Thad E. Dickinson, "Looking at the Male Librarians Stereotype." *The Reference Librarian 37*, no. 78 (2003): 106.))

The study referenced by Dickinson, James Carmichael, Jr.'s "The Male Librarian and the Feminine Image: a Survey of the Stereotype, Status and Gender Perceptions," sought to disprove that men only wanted administrative positions and to prove that men, in fact, shared with women the "negative (feminine) stereotype of the profession while being immune from it, thus profiting from its existence in terms of preferential treatment and consideration because they were men." ((James V. Carmichael, "The Male Librarian and the Feminine Image: A Survey of Stereotype, Status, and Gender Perceptions." *Library and Information Science Research 14* (1992): 416.)) He also sought to prove that male librarians suffered from "low self-esteem" ((Carmichael, 417.)) on account of their public image. In gathering the results, he notes that "The most prevalent stereotype is 'effeminate (probably gay)'" ((Carmichael, 422.)) and commenters wrote various statements about how they were presumed gay until proven straight (which is the same scenario as being assumed straight until coming out as gay, which affects gay people in every facet of life). Not surprisingly, ten percent more of the gay-identified respondents showed awareness of the feminine stereotype than did straight respondents. ((Carmichael, 423.))

When this study was repeated (with a smaller sample size) by Piper and Collamer (2001), they concluded, "The greatest puzzlement was that respondents acknowledged that there were more women in the field than men, but did not consider librarianship a women's profession… male librarians are currently quite content with their role, with respect to gender issues, in the library world." ((Paul S. Piper and Barbara E. Collamer, "Male Librarians: Men in a Feminized Profession." *The Journal of Academic Librarianship 27*, no. 5 (2001): 410.)) Even given such clear research results, more scholarship continues to be published that frets over the supposed abuse and shame men face in librarianship. Hickey's (2006) study focused on how male librarians fare working in a "non-traditional work environment," or rather, in a work environment where there are more women than men. His study participants reported feelings of social isolation, ((Andrew Hickey, "Cataloging Men: Charting the Male Librarian's Experience Through the Perceptions and Position of Men in Libraries." *Journal of Academic Librarianship 32*, no. 3 (2006): 290.)) criticism for not understanding how to organize a teatime, ((Hickey, 291.)) and anxiety in dealing with issues related to personal identity formation. A major flaw with his study is that the anecdotes relate common workplace issues (e.g., a supervisor picking favorites) more than anything directly related to gender issues. There are many other examples of questionable research and assertions. Blackburn's 2015 "Gender Stereotypes Male Librarians Face Today" worries over how heterosexual male librarians must feel hurt and thus avoid the LIS profession because they risk being thought of as feminine or gay. Blackburn writes, "Men in nontraditional professions such as nursing and librarianship have become targets for stereotyping, creating a vicious cycle. Men assume the stereotypes are valid, they avoid taking the jobs, and the profession continues to see fewer males

entering the workforce, creating a self-fulfilling prophecy of low employment rates." ((Heather Blackburn, "Gender stereotypes male librarians face today" *Library Worklife: HR E-News for Today's Leaders*. (2015). http://alaapa.org/newsletter/2015/09/08/genderstereotypes-male-librarians-face-today/)) Her logic suggests that what is distinctly feminine is by nature negative, and should be taken out of the profession so that men who are uncomfortable with that which could be viewed as feminine or homosexual will join the profession. Critical discussions of gendered aspects of the field would do better to critique the systems that associate what is feminine and homosexual with what is unlearned, illegitimate, and shameful. We should avoid becoming more "masculine" in order to solve this issue, but more aware and culturally competent, instead.

Practical Methods for Improvement

One major difference between tackling recruitment issues for librarians (and potential librarians) who identify as LGBTQ, and for librarians of color, is that there are no identity-based initiatives at either the individual library level or the national LIS field level for LGBTQ-identified people, as there are for people of color. There are programs related to librarianship, like the Martin Duberman Visiting Fellowship at New York Public Library, which funds a scholar using the LGBTQ sources in their archive, or the American Library Association's (ALA) Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender Round Table, which discusses information needs and serving patrons who identify as LGBTQ, but neither is specifically about librarians themselves. The LIS field has taken commendable steps that result in people of color feeling more welcome in library school and in entry-level positions after graduation. According to Haipeng ((Li Haipeng, "Diversity in the Library: What Could Happen at the Institutional Level." *Journal of Library Administration 27*, no. 1-2 (1999):

145-156.)) and Acree, Epps, Gilmore, and Henriques, ((Eric Acree, Sharon K. Epps, Yolanda Gilmore, and Charmaine Henriques. "Using Professional Development as a Retention Tool for Underrepresented Academic Librarians." *Journal of Library Administration 31*, no. 1-2 (2008): 45-61.)) part of the commitment to recruiting new graduate librarians in underrepresented populations into an academic library can involve offering them something that makes them feel wanted for who they are. Many schools have residency programs for ethnic minority librarians, such as Cornell University, Iowa State University, University of Michigan, Ohio State University, and Yale University, among others. ((Haipeng, 146.)) These programs are good for recruitment because they offer librarians a chance to develop collections based on their interests, participate in workshops that may increase retention, and earn fellowships with high-quality benefits. The librarians already employed by these universities also have the opportunity to show their support for this type of recruitment and learn from these newly-recruited students. The ALA's Spectrum Initiative, which provides financial aid to students of color for three years and includes annual reports from the student, participation in a longitudinal study, and support to attend the Spectrum Institute, is described as the largest diversity initiative in the field. ((Teresa Y. Nealy, "Diversity Initiatives and Programs." *Journal of Library Administration 27*, no. 8 (1999): 125.)) This type of opportunity has significant value because it not only helps fund a student's education, but it also supports research related to the needs and satisfaction levels of the award-winners. Symbolically, it serves as an important welcome sign to people of color interested in librarianship.

Similar residencies for LGBTQ-identified librarians would be an excellent addition to the field. These residencies would give these librarians an opportunity to take leadership roles, meet other

librarians like themselves, and have special professional accolades when entering the job market. Scholarships such as the Spectrum Initiative opportunities would give LGBTQ-identified people encouragement to be out and pursue the field. Such scholarships could follow the Spectrum Initiative structure to ensure ongoing retention in jobs and in the field as a whole. Importantly, unlike people with disabilities, people of racial minorities, members of religious groups, those who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer –and many others identities-- are not protected classes of people by the United States government, though some of these categories are protected to some level in some states, counties, or cities. ((“Know your rights: transgender people and the law.” American Civil Liberties Union. (2016). https://www.aclu.org/know-your-rights/transgender-people-and-law)) Trying to find employment where one feels comfortable enough to come out is a precarious position. People cannot choose to come out or stay closeted on their own terms, as with transgender people who have changed their name or sex on their birth certificate, a fact that will be involuntarily revealed if a background check is done by the employer. Further, LGBTQ-identified people often have to break from their family of origin if that family does not support them, so a program such as the Spectrum Initiative would provide much-needed financial aid and emotional support for things like education and career training, as well as a sense of security within the field.

Another tactic that could be employed at the individual library level is producing academic library job advertisements written to recruit LGBTQ-identified librarians (as Williams, II argues doing for people of color ((James F. Williams II, “Managing Diversity.” *Journal of Library Administration 27*, no. 1-2 (1999): 27-48.))) by broadening the job descriptions to include enticements that might attract

people outside the dominant culture. He writes, "the hiring opportunity should be looked upon as a means to move the library to the next level of excellence by creating a post that is broad in scope, flexible," ((Williams II, 44.)) and allows for someone from an unconventional background to feel empowered to apply. He writes that, "when creative use of the vacancy becomes the norm in academic library recruitment programs, it establishes another norm that opportunities in our library are no longer static, but dynamic." ((Williams II, 44.)) This strategy would apply to all populations outside of the dominant culture. If the workplace is truly inclusive, signals or direct statements could be placed in the job advertisement to specifically recruit underrepresented applicants and alleviate the worry that they may end up in a hostile environment.

Also on the individual library level, as Simmons-Welburn ((Janice Simmons-Welburn, "Diversity Dialogue Groups." *Journal of Library Administration 27*, no. 1-2 (1999): 111-121.)) and Majekodunmi ((Norda Majekodunmi, "Diversity in Libraries: The Case for the Visible Minority Librarians of Canada (VimLoC Network)." *Canadian Library Association 1*, no. 59 (2013): 31-32.)) suggest, interpersonal issues within the workplace can be improved through understanding. They argue for communication and education. Dialogue groups and forums about issues affecting minorities can be useful at staff trainings, though existing research only extends to visible minorities. This type of initiative can also be extended to LIS graduate programs. Since nearly all programs require a core class introducing students to the field of librarianship, that class could include substantial discussions of cultural competency, workplace ethics and attitudes, and the field's commitment to inclusive behaviors. Library scholarship and training emphasizes accepting patrons who come to the reference desk as they are, on not judging their questions, and on including a variety of interests

in the collection; yet simultaneously the field fails to foster these same attitudes among colleagues who work together at least 40 hours a week.

In terms of future scholarship, more quantitative studies need to be conducted on how many people in libraries identify as LGBTQ; how many people are out in the workplace; and what types of workplace behaviors and attitudes make LGBTQ-identified librarians and staff feel as if they are not included, or make them feel fearful, or hated. Identifying what microaggressions happen in academic libraries and general academic workplaces is another area of necessary research, especially since academic communities so often see themselves on the outside of—or beyond—issues related to discrimination. Because of the accidental nature of microaggressions, they are very likely to happen in the academic workplace, as the scholarship has proved.

Finally, LIS scholarship must immediately move away from publishing about the supposed shame of working in a profession associated with the feminine and the homosexual (an association largely managed and perpetuated by librarians themselves). The topic shows antiquated, sexist, self-hating, and self-perpetuating thinking; the notion that a male librarian must be worried about being perceived as homosexual is an unacceptable, contemptuous sneer toward what it is and what it means to be homosexual. The implication is, in no uncertain terms, that being feminine (or being a woman) or being homosexual is something about which to feel bad and something from which to distance oneself. As this line of scholarship stands now, if left uncorrected, the real enemy of recruitment and retention of LGBTQ-identified librarians will be the attitudes embedded in the field itself.

Conclusion

In addition to the practical steps we can take to recruit LGBTQ-identified people into the LIS field, we must also retain them and keep them satisfied, or even thrilled, with the field that they have chosen. In order to accomplish this goal, we must become critics of more than our collections, archives, and budgets, but also critics of our daily behavior and contributions to scholarship. We must be mindful of the goals of feminism when we are selecting the language to use when we describe the gendered aspects of the field, and the language and behavior we use around our colleagues or would-be colleagues. We must be mindful of the disparity of opportunities and safety among different types of people when we suggest new scholarships, initiate new workshops, and assist in decisions about whom to promote. These shifts are not the type that are made by showing allegiance to a particular activist group or participating in a single training; these shifts take place every day in the mundane and quotidian aspects of our work.

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