The Gay Librarian: A Comparative Analysis of Attitudes Towards Professional Gender Issues

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Abstract:
Librarianship is a feminized profession, and like teaching, nursing, and social work with which it shares the occupational traits of a "semi-profession," its low status and prestige have been attributed to a negative feminine image. To date, discussion of a corresponding male librarian image, general male issues, and the broader topic of gender issues has been minimal within the profession, while serious discussion of gay male librarians and their professional identity has been virtually nil. This study compares the responses of straight and self-identified gay males to an exploratory survey of male members of the American Library Association. The topics covered by the survey include reasons for entry into the field, the existence and identity of a male librarian stereotype, and gender issues generally, including gender stratification of work and sexual discrimination and/or harassment. Self-identified gay subjects share many characteristics in common with the straight cohort, including the identification of a gay male stereotype and some denial surrounding gender equity issues. On the other hand, the tentative findings of this exploratory study raise the question of whether both gay and straight male subjects overestimate the number of gay men in librarianship. The report concludes with an update on gay issues within the profession since the survey was completed, and recommendations for further research.

Article:
BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY
Cultural and Professional Contexts
The "gender wars" of the late 1980s and early 1990s may differ from their Victorian counterparts only in the subtlety with which patriarchal claims are asserted (e.g., Sowell, 1989), but male rationalization about work place equity can hardly withstand scrutiny in the light of studies which continue to show women disproportionately impoverished and under-represented in positions of authority and power-Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action (EO/AA) legislation notwithstanding (Blau &Ferber, 1986). If they belong to the lower and middle classes, women are handicapped by the dual expectations upon them as homemaker/mothers and incidental breadwinners, roles that are no longer contested as mutually incompatible in the economically stringent 1990s, although taken together, they exact a terrible toll on all women. Indeed, there is a sinister aspect to the media scrutiny devoted to First Lady Hillary Clinton, and there is an inordinate amount of speculation on her "role" in the presidency, as if little parts of her could be compartmentalized, weighed, and packaged separately; not only has she assumed daunting duties in her "advisory" capacity, but she is having to re-create from ideological dust a leadership role established by the First Lady in the Roosevelt presidency and justify that role in terms of her sex. The cyclical natures of gender denial (denying that any equity problems exist), gender avoidance (ignoring problems of gender), and gender backlash (whereby the oppressor claims the disadvantaged status of the oppressed) are all the more threatening for the perpetual naivete with which they are wielded: the same news commentators who scrutinize Mrs. Clinton's professional competence and power also study her wardrobe accessories for signs of acquiescence to "traditional" gender roles, as if statements in her style would betray her. Underneath all the rhetoric about the "new" woman in Washington lies a dualism as old

as Eve, one which threatens to relegate serious speculation about the future of gay and lesbian issues to a secondary, if occasionally more sensational, place.

Nowhere are the inherent relationships between gender roles and gay issues seen more clearly than in that group of professions for many years assigned to the female "sphere." In nursing, teaching, social work, and librarianship, men have traditionally held a disproportionate number of administrative positions, while women, who constitute the numerical majority in these fields, provide the bulk of "line" workers, thus contributing to the derogatory classification of these occupations as "female semi-professions" (Simpson & Simpson, 1969). A plethora of sociological and professional studies has documented the existence of vertical gender stratification and occupational gender segregation in each of these fields, but only in librarianship has inquiry stopped short of the radical gender analysis that would assert the primacy of "service" work (Baum, 1992; Noddings, 1990; Casey, 1993), question the discourse of "male- stream definitions of value" (Harris, 1992, p. 1), and thus, perhaps indirectly, inform the discussion of gay issues in the work place (Carmichael, 1992, p. 413). One might normally expect, for example, that gay male librarians would have a vested interest in the successful outcome of female equity issues, but such a scenario would occur only if these gay men were uncloseted and had an equal stake with women and other oppressed "minorities" in the reform or re-negotiation of the conditions of employment and a larger stake in the re-definition of roles in the ideal social contract. It could not occur in instances where gay males "passed" for straight or profited from a gay *or* straight old-boy network of privilege. While those understandings may seem self-evident, they have never been documented in the profession of librarianship, probably because male librarians have seemingly taken little interest in gender issues. A short-lived Men's Issues Task Force of the Social Responsibilities Roundtable of the American Library Association (ALA), formed in 1982 to find "alternatives to gender-based roles," disbanded after only two years for lack of membership interest.

In the "feminized" fields, "feminization" has been accompanied by professionalization, specialization, and credentialism, all of which have worked to the eventual disservice of females (e.g., Melosh, 1982; Noddings, 1990). Only in librarianship, however, in the flush era following World War II, were conscious attempts made to recruit more men into the profession with the hope of raising salary levels (O'Brien, 1983). The outcome of these efforts was, of course, higher salaries for male librarians and a pattern of rapid male advancement to administrative dominance in the library field, particularly in academic libraries, library education, and even in public libraries-the traditional province of the female library director from 1876 to the 1950s.

Like nursing and teaching, librarianship suffers from a negative "female" stereotype. Stereotype and status concerns are obsessive in all low-status, marginal professions, but whereas Christina Williams (1989) has demonstrated quite clearly that there is a relationship between the drive for male nurses to achieve administrative prominence and their fear of being perceived as homosexual, no such studies have been forthcoming in librarianship. Librarianship is usually analyzed in terms of the generic female stereotype and with reference to a hierarchial pattern of career progressions, by which corporate male values are exalted at the expense of "female" nurturant values (e.g., Garrison, 1979, pp. 226-241); in the library and information field, as in other feminized fields, masculinist values assume the guise of corporate bureaucracy; a bottom-line mentality equates information needs with technological (computer) literacy and depersonalizes the human and psychological components of individual information-seeking in the more heavily feminized public and school sectors. The most prestigious posts are reserved for those in the more highly technological academic and special library fields-the underlying assumption being that women do not work as well with machines as men. Ironically, the idea for using mainframe computer memory to store bibliographical records came from the Head of the Downstate Medical Center Library, State University of New York (later the Medical Research Library of Brooklyn), Helen Kovacs (Kovacs, 1966; State University of New York. Downstate Medical Center Library, 1967), and the Machine- Readable Cataloging format which made this storage practically possible and on which all libraries now rely was devised by Henriette D. Avram of the Library of Congress. Incongruous and inconsistent though the record of librarianship with respect to gay issues may seem, it reflects in part the ambiguity of the professional self- image, which has been formalized through myriad personality, stereotype,

and "image" studies, all of which were conducted with reference to a negative female stereotype (Newmyer, 1976).

Even more fundamental to the gender paradoxes of librarianship is the fact that it was a low-status profession even before women first entered the library work force in 1856 (Stone, 1977, p. 275). Part of the reason for librarians' marginal status was the generally low esteem with which intellectual endeavors not tied to utilitarian aims were held. The Calvinist tradition limited the scope of early American literary endeavors; moreover, even among "enlightened" social libraries like Benjamin Franklin's "Junto," library membership was restricted to males. Men speculated until at least the end of the nineteenth century about the pernicious effects of certain subject matters and literary forms upon the (stereotyped) female "mind" (Garrison, 1979, pp. 67-87; Heilbrun, 1988, pp. 1-31).

Detailed accounts of the lives of early male librarians are rare, and their motivations and aspirations remain virtually inscrutable. Many of them were appointed for political reasons or denominational predilection rather than competence. In the raw New Republic, male librarians seemed to be for the most part scholars interested primarily in their own work and only secondarily in their role as curator of the library collection, probably because it was seen as titular, demeaning, and generally inconsequential work. Thus George Watterson, Third Librarian of Congress, complained of his lot "Because I am but a scribe, and a scribe makes a very small figure in the estimation of a member of Congress or his lady. We of the quill are apt to be considered of the class *vermes,* that crawl in obscurity and are only fit to be trampled on" (Matheson, 1977, p. 58). Library work was not considered particularly "manly" work, and even Ralph Waldo Emerson, whose encomium about a university's greatest need ("a professor of books") later inspired generations of librarians, warned young male students at mid-century against becoming "effeminate gownsmen" (Dubbert, 1979, p. 57). Senator Ingals of Kansas went so far as to label male social reformers of the Victorian era, with whom librarians were by then often classed, as "the third sex" (Hofstadter, 1963, p. 188). "Militant masculinity" (Dubbert, 1979, p. 66) added credence to the scholar's dictum that "all intellectual labor is underpaid" (Grasberger, 1954, p. 35), and the salaries and social expectations of librarians of the first three quarters of the nineteenth century proffered little beyond respectability with a few very notable exceptions.

The two most prominent public librarians prior to 1876, the year the American Library Association (ALA) was formed, were Justin Winsor of the Boston Public Library and William Frederick Poole of the Chicago Public Library. They were primarily historians and city fathers who only incidentally offered practical innovations in the library field. It took the young upstart Melvil Dewey to upset their relative complacency, with schemes for a professional association, a comprehensive and universal classification scheme for library materials, and professional library education. Dewey admitted the first female students to Columbia College's new library school in 1887, and he was dismissed for his efforts. He had established a precedent in creating a pool of relatively cheap female labor, however, which would transform the character of librarianship over the next half-century. In passing, it is interesting to note that President Julius Seelye of Harvard considered Dewey "a tremendous talker, and a bit of an old maid" (Holley, 1967, p. 49). Though no solid historical evidence has substantiated feminist claims that Dewey was a womanizer, as some writers have claimed (Garrison, 1979, pp. 76, 153, 280n), he did have a primary role in opening the field to women on a large scale, so much so that women have occupied between 91% and 81.5% of professional positions since 1890. Throughout the subsequent history of librarianship, librarians have had difficulty in gaining governmental support for their efforts, if for no other reason than the public library became a municipal ornament populated by females, in which male librarians were merely "parcel-boys in the cloak-rooms of culture." Like all non-profit-centered businesses, librarianship suffers in comparison with applied fields in which utility and practicality are immediately evident in profit. The profession is marginal not because the work of the library is not central to productive scholarship and research, but because librarians have failed to make a convincing case for it (Kies, 1989). In part, the low status of librarianship with regard to more "legitimized" (and more heavily male) professions like law and medicine makes gender equity issues seem redundant. It is difficult to assign blame for the profession's image problems exclusively to the nature of the work itself or to the perception of the work as female, since the two are inextricably intertwined. In recent years, the semi-professions have come under

increasing criticism from feminists, and they are, according to literary critic Diane Johnson, "as despised as ever" (Johnson, 1992, p. 16).

Why then ask to what degree gay librarians differ from their straight male counterparts in a feminized profession? Why tackle the existence of a negative *male* librarian stereotype corresponding to the female stereotype? The approach of confronting gender issues directly might go far in restoring some solidarity to the claims of both sexes to professional legitimacy (Carmichael, 1992, p. 416). Such claims cannot be made without reference to a historical legacy, to which the dearth of biographies of librarians, usually two-dimensional panegyrics which make little reference to their psychological complexities, their personal lives, or their sexuality, contributes little (Carmichael, 1991). Librarians, who have been meticulous in preserving the records of civilization, seem to have been equally painstaking in erasing documentary evidence of their personal lives, and the library profession is indeed "poorer for their modesty" (Holley, 1967, pp. xii-xiii). The resolution of gender issues both in the profession and in society at large remains the crucible in which any real sense of "diversity"-the elusive grail of the nineties-will have to be refined.

The Gay Context

The American Library Association (ALA) was the first professional organization to form a Gay and Lesbian Task Force (GLBTF) (Gittings, 1990, p. 1). Organized informally by Janet Cooper and Israel Fishman as the Task Force on Gay Liberation in 1970 (renamedthe Gay Task Force in 1975, the Gay and Lesbian Task Force in 1986, and the Gay, Lesbian, and Bisexual Task Force in 1995) and launched officially in 1971, the impetus for the activities of GLBTF was for fifteen years (1971-1986) provided by a non- librarian, gay activist Barbara Gittings (Dynes, 1990; Bundy & Stielow, 1987, pp. 46, 50, 177; D'Emilio &Freedman, 1988, p. 320; D'Emilio, 1983, pp. 169-171), who focussed the group's energies on the compilation of bibliographies of gay and lesbian materials that refuted misinformation about homosexuality to be found on the shelves of many libraries. While early meetings of GLBTF were sometimes mildly sensational affairs-the 1971 Dallas conference, for example, featured a "Hug-a-Homosexual" booth which attracted national media attention (Gittings, 1990, p. 5)-the main thrust of gay library activism remained bibliographical (Gittings, 1978).

Negative gay and lesbian images in popular literature, the paucity of outlets for gay and lesbian writing and publishing, and Library of Congress Subject Headings which placed homosexuality under the heading "Sexual Perversions" and similar terms, provided topics for discussion and reform (Gittings, 1990; Wolf, 1972). Beginning in 1971, GLBTF also sponsored informal Gay Book Awards to recognize and encourage the publication of quality gay and lesbian fiction and non-fiction, and encourage gay and lesbian studies. The programs of GLBTF, which were open to the gay and lesbian community in the host city at annual conferences, included a gay film festival in 1978 and addressed the whole spectrum of library materials from young adult fiction to gay and lesbian periodicals (Gittings, 1990, p. 8). GLBTF's greatest accomplishment was the pro-duction of a gay and lesbian bibliography, updated annually until 1980 and distributed in thousands to the library community as well as to the general public (p.10). The culmination of these efforts was realized at the 1986 New York ALA Conference when Gittings presented the first official ALA Gay Book Award after more than a decade of petitioning ALA council to endorse the award. Until this point, the award had been given by the task force, which operated on funds derived separately from ALA dues. The 1986 meeting was in some ways a low point in GLBTF history, as attendance was sparse, and many of the conferees had removed their name tags before entering the meeting, as if to protect their anonymity. No doubt, the subdued tone of the audience and the rather forced tone of levity from the podium was exacerbated by the June 30 Supreme Court decision in *Bowers v. Hardwick,* which in effect refused to extend the right of privacy in consensual gay sexual acts, and this information had greeted the conferees from the newsstands as they entered the building in which the GLBTF was convening.

While the activities of GLBTF may have had a profound impact on library collections and created the possibility of open discussion of gay and lesbian issues within the association, the efforts of the organization have been diluted by the sheer size of ALA and the fragmentation of gay and lesbian concerns into a special interest category. From its inception, the ALA record on gay rights was equivocal. The Intellectual Freedom

Committee debated for four years its right to consider the case of Michael McConnell, the first openly gay man to address a general session of ALA about gay rights, under the rubric of its 1939 Intellectual Freedom Statement (Krug &Harvey, 1971, p. 891; Gittings, 1990, p. 14). McConnell, a Minnesota library employee, had lost his job in 1970 when his employer learned that he had applied for a marriage license with his lover, Jack Baker. McConnell appealed the decision in the courts, but lost the case on the basis of his "activist role in *implementing* his unconventional ideas" (Gittings, 1990, p. 6). McConnell continued his appeals to ALA until 1975, then moved on to other work. Some side effects of that early struggle were ALA's adoption of a gay support resolution in 1971 and an equal-employment policy in 1974, but at least one letter published in the association journal questioned the propriety of defending gay rights in the name of professional "social responsibility" (Boaz, 1971). Clearly, the ALA would not don the cloak of gay rights with the same righteousness with which it had finally braved black civil rights in 1964 when the association prohibited ALA officials from participating in southern state association library meetings which were still segregated (Josey, 1987, p. 17). To be fair, it should be noted that the ALA activist stance on civil rights had been painfully slow in coming (DuMont, 1986).

The literature on books and services to gays and lesbians has been growing, although there have been no professional or historical accounts of gay librarians other than Gittings's short histories of GLBTF (1978, 1990). A recent history of ALA social activism in the 1960s and 1970s accords only passing mention to GLBTF among the various "isms" of the period (Bundy & Stielow, 1987, pp. 46, 50, 105, 177). The output of research in librarianship relating to gay and lesbian issues in the profession has also been disappointing, since it has been slanted more towards collections and less towards the sociology of the profession. Research and publication in gay and lesbian librarianship has confined itself to patron needs and access (Whitt, 1990; Creelman &Harris, 1991; Gough & Greenblatt, 1992), bibliographical and literary analysis (Santavicca, 1977; Harsin, 1992), gay and lesbian materials (Alyson, 1984; Gough &Greenblatt, 1990), and librarian attitudes towards selection of gay materials (Pope, 1974) and censorship (Gough & Greenblatt, 1992, p. 61). Even professional discussion of AIDS issues has been bibliographical in scope and relatively muted in light of the pivotal professional role librarians might have claimed with a more proactive stance in promoting public awareness of information about the disease: to date, only one library (Norman, OK) has installed an HIV testing center within its walls. While the bibliographic accomplishments of gay and lesbian librarians have done much to combat "the lies in libraries" (Gittings, 1978), they fall far short of having an impact on the social and professional role that gay librarians play; worse, they have not informed discussions of gender issues, and the activist impetus of the 1970s had been mainstreamed almost out of existence by 1990. In this regard, it is likewise worth noting that the feminist studies of the 1970s and 1980s (e.g., Schiller, 1979; Heim, 1983; Grotzinger, 1983; Hildenbrand, 1985) had little impact on general discussion of professional issues outside the special interest groups to which these discussions were confined (Baum, 1992). Perhaps typical of professionals in the field, gay and lesbian librarians have focussed on material and client needs more than they have their own, and their self-effacement has kept them politically disempowered within the profession, although the ALA officially adopted anon-discrimination clause in an amendment to its By-Laws in 1988.

Naturally, GLBTF activities represent only a small segment of librarians. Although at least one paper has proposed that as many as 50 percent of male librarians are gay (Hoffman & Minz, 1987), no study has either substantiated or refuted that speculation. What is significant is the *belief* that a majority of male librarians are gay and the logical proposition that the social agendas of the ALA necessarily reflect the professional aspirations of librarians as a whole. The assumption that many male librarians are gay may have been fostered by the sensationalism which greets gay sex scandals in the library, such as the 1978 incident at The University of Georgia during which the director, associate director, and four assistant directors were removed from their positions after charges of sexual improprieties *and* bias against female employees, and during which a faculty committee report stated that "homosexual relationships have significantly affected the management and morale of the library" ("Sex bias raised in library inquiry," 1978). As with educators, sex usually gives librarians a bad name; the female stereotype is asexual. Public imagination is fuelled by the downfall of authoritarian figures like librarians, so perhaps the image of male librarians as gay has more to do with wish-fulfillment. At any rate, this paper does not assume an inflated rate of gays or lesbians in library work nor the activities of GLBTF as

atypical of gay organizations in any other profession. Numerically, it may be more accurate to assume that the activities of GLBTF reflect the views of a very small group of the 55,000 librarians able to afford the rather substantial ALA membership fees and able to absorb the even more substantial travel and accommodations expenses associated with conference attendance and participation.

THE MALE LIBRARIAN STEREOTYPE SURVEY
Original Findings

In 1991, the author surveyed a random sample of male ALA members to determine their attitudes towards the following questions:

1. why they had chosen a career in librarianship;
2. whether or not they were aware of the number of women in the field when they entered;
3. what, if any, impact the sexual revolution has had on male attitudes towards gender issues (work place equity, job stratification, the impact of affirmative action/equal opportunity legislation, and the relative advantage/disadvantage of males with respect to females in terms of salary, advancement, and the trappings of privilege);
4. whether or not they had ever been the subject of sexual harassment and/or discrimination from males and/or females;
5. whether or not they recognized a male librarian stereotype which corresponded to the negative female stereotype and, if so, its source and prevalence; and
6. what impact, if any, the technological revolution has had on the perception of librarianship as a profession?

In addition, subjects were asked to supply demographic data relating to age, state of birth, state or region of career, marital status (including categories for "married," "single," "single with partner," "gay," "gay with partner," "widowed," and "divorced"), ethnicity (derived from U. S. Census classifications), position title, and position rank.

The survey, consisting of 19 questions, was pre-tested among male library staff members at Walter C. Jackson Library at The University of North Carolina at Greensboro. Six questions were designed to solicit categorical responses; eight multiple-choice questions solicited elaborations on categorical responses; and five questions provided checklists that yielded rank-order data, including the stereotype list, gathered from scattered references in the image literature and supplemented by suggestions gathered from male and female colleagues in the field. Respondents were also asked to supply additional male stereotypes not on the list of which they were aware and to indicate their attitude towards resolution of the image dilemma from a categorized list of alternatives culled from solutions proposed in recent image literature (Kies, 1989; Special Libraries Association, 1990; Stevens, 1988). Further open-ended-responses to the whole complex of questions surrounding the male stereotype, sex-role stereotyping generally, and males in librarianship were solicited at the end of the survey.

Respondents were chosen by selecting a male name from a specified rank-order (e.g., fourth male name) on each page of the 1990-91 *American Library Association Handbook of Organization and Membership Directory*. A cover letter accompanying the survey guaranteed respondent anonymity and asked for return of the questionnaire. Responses were coded and tallied; categorical responses relating to male advantage in the profession, the existence of the male stereotype, the existence of gender work roles, and the impact of technology on the male stereotype were subjected to Chi-square tests using the Statistical Package in the Social Sciences (SPSS-X) at the probability level of $p < .05$. Detailed results, statistical procedures, and methodological problems were reported in full in an earlier article (Carmichael, 1992). What follows is a brief summary of the results.

The survey yielded an unusually high response rate (482 usable responses, or 73%, out of a total of 655 surveys sent), due perhaps to the fact that two weeks after the survey was mailed (October 7, 1991), Supreme Court nominee Clarence Thomas was charged with sexual harassment by Prof. Anita Hill, and hearings were held from October 9 to October 15, with a degree of press coverage paralleled only by the Watergate Hearings. Two weeks later, on October 25, Senator Edward M. Kennedy, who had remained silent through most of the Hill-Thomas hearings, publicly apologized for his past sexual misconduct. The William Kennedy Smith rape trial began on October 25. These events, the

press coverage, and public discussion surrounding these events no doubt flavored the responses which were received and highlighted the importance of the issues involved.

Principal findings germane to the present study relate to stereotype and gender roles. Nearly two thirds (59.53%) of respondents stated that they believed in the male stereotype, and among these, the most prevalent was a gay male stereotype-"effeminate (probably gay)"-which was identified by 287 (81%) respondents. Male attitudes towards the stereotype were ambiguous; equal numbers of respondents (164, or 37% each) checked responses stating that they were generally false, that the profession should quit talking about them, and that the profession should get a sense of humor about them. As this particular question permitted respondents to choose more than one response, some of the same subjects chose the answers indicating that the profession should get a sense of humor *and* quit talking about the stereotype. With regard to gender issues, a surprisingly large number of men (216, or 45%) denied that men had any advantage in advancement with respect to females, though statistical studies continue to show women earning less money than men in librarianship, especially when the cost of their education is factored in, and also occupying fewer directorships or comparable leadership in the profession than their numerical predominance (roughly 80%) would warrant (Schiller, 1974; Dowell, 1988; Budd, 1990; Feye-Stukas, Kirkland & Myers, 1990; Lynch, 1992). While incidents of sexual harassment were relatively rare, 61 respondents (13%) reported instances of discrimination or harassment, and an additional 24 respondents (5%) reported incidents which did not fall strictly within either category (e.g., exclusion from interior decorating decisions). The objects of these complaints were women in over half of the cases (56%), men in 10% of cases, and both men and women in 30% of cases. The remainder of respondents did not specify a source of complaint.

Because of the exploratory nature of the survey instrument and the small number of questions calling for mutually exclusive categorical responses, statistically significant relationships could be determined between only a limited number of variables. Subjects who believed that there was a male librarian stereotype were more likely to believe that the technological revolution had altered the stereotype ($p = .000$); those who believed that the technological revolution had altered the stereotype were more likely to be gay ($p < .009$) or to have been born in the South or West ($p < .019$).

Most startling of all, perhaps, was the dissonance between the perception that many male librarians are gay-a fact which emerged in open-ended responses and was bolstered by the number of respondents who selected "effeminate (probably gay)" as a male librarian stereotype-and the number of self-identified gay subjects who responded to the survey (44 respondents, or 9%). As stated earlier, there is no substantial evidence that would indicate the presence of large numbers of gay male librarians, though comments received in the present survey, which ranged from bland complaisance about the number of gays to the openly hostile comment that the profession would be well rid of them, indicate that the *belief* that gay males predominate in librarianship is quite strong indeed among straight *and* gay men. While it seems perhaps natural to assume that gay males would be attracted to a non-threatening professional environment in which competitive values were subsumed by a service ethic, gay respondents to this survey are not professionally moribund; in fact, they were more keenly aware of the curative value of technology to the professional image dilemma than the straight cohort, and seemed most open to technological innovation, as well as to the advantages of additional prestige which their minority status *as males* afforded.

The second group of findings related to the degree of gender denial prevalent among male librarians. The researcher had expected to find that male librarians were more open to issues of gender equity than not and to display a high degree of tolerance towards their female co-workers. Such was not the case, however. Although over 88 percent of men stated that they had felt like a minority with respect to females, 259, or 53% of the subjects were currently in administrative positions, slightly over half of these serving as head library administrator or an equivalent position and slightly less than half serving as department or branch head. More-over, open-ended comments, while they included a number of insightful comments about the dilemmas faced by female librarians, also disclosed a remarkable degree of bitterness about affirmative action and equal opportunity initiatives. As one straight respondent expressed his frustration:

Tenure, promotion and work assignments have become increasingly slanted against straight men in particular, and against all men in general, within librarianship. There is an increasing sense that women can underachieve in the sense of fewer grants, papers, hours of duty or difficulty of duty.... But this is supposed to be glossed over because they (women) are:-more "nurturing," "supportive," "sensitive," (these qualities are now preferred over "productive," "capable," "competitive," "insightful," "enterprising," etc.) ...The message "EO/AA Women & minorities are particularly encouraged to apply" has a not-so-subtle under-text: "Get lost! Capable white man! Die! So we can blame you for all our ills!"

While one must be careful about conclusions that can be drawn from this study, due to the nature and design of the instrument, the small number of responses (less than 2% of total ALA membership), and the difficulty of assigning value to qualitative responses, they suggested that the male librarian profile was more troubled and complex than the literature had thus far indicated. Following the backlash against gay librarians in ALA's official journal in the fall of 1992 (clearest examples of which are to be seen in the "Reader Forum" column of *American Libraries* for October and November, 1992, though the debate is ongoing), it was decided to re-examine the data from a comparative perspective between gay and straight males. In the original survey data collection, an arbitrary cut-off date was set so that coding and compilation could be completed. Fifteen additional surveys were received from gay males after the deadline, bringing the total percentage of gay responses to almost 12%. This figure still approximates the widely-accepted Kinsey Institute estimate (8%) of males in the general population who have engaged in same-sex activity over a period of at least three years, a figure which still, according to a recent update, represents the "best estimate available" of gays in the general population (Reinisch, 1990, p. 139). While the method of data collection on marital status obviously leaves self-disclosure as the sole criterion for determining sexual orientation, it should be noted that gay polemic has by no means settled on a conclusive definition of the category "gay," either from the sociological perspective of lifestyle vs. sexual preference vs. sexual acts, or from a more basic biological perspective (Mass, 1990, pp. 132-169).

Responses from self-identified gay respondents were isolated from those of the straight respondents, the percentage of total responses for the two groups were calculated separately, and the difference between percentage response for the two groups tabulated by subtracting the percentage of straight responses from the percentage of gay responses. The resulting percentage, indicated in the right column of the tables which accompany the following discussion, thus indicate a positive variance or a negative variance in gay responses with respect to straight responses. Because of the small numbers involved in the gay sub-sample, no additional statistical tests were run, nor were straight responses received after the cut-off date tallied, since the object of augmenting and isolating the gay responses was to give a fuller picture of the professional profile of gay librarians, and to compare their views of stereotype, status, and gender issues with those supplied by the straight subjects.

The Gay Sub-Sample

Demographic profile of gay male librarians. The demographic profile of gay librarians is remarkably similar to that of the straight sample in most salient respects outside of marital status (see Table 1). The difficulty of establishing discrete categories is evident even in the responses received in the marital status categories, since it includes two "married" men self-described as "gay" and "bisexual" respectively. Moreover, a third respondent made the notation that his partner was recently deceased, which raises the question of whether "widowhood" describes only legal status or also includes an emotional state of being, or both. Slightly more gay men have a partner (57%) than not (42%), but there are 12% more married straight males than gay males with partners. The age range of gay males is younger than the straight cohort. While 5 gay males were 56 or older, nearly half of them are between the ages of 36 and 45. Of course, age differential may reflect generational differences, and younger gay males may simply be more willing to disclose their sexual preference on a questionnaire than older subjects. It is interesting to note also that the gay males show slightly more ethnic diversity than the straight sample or the original combined sample, in which 95 percent of all subjects were white; however, the relatively insignificant numbers of ethnic minorities in the sample reflect the difficulty that the profession has experienced in attracting qualified minorities, particularly African Americans. Part of the problem lies with the limitations of the method of sample selection, since ALA does not track members by sex, and it was often impossible to determine the sex of Asians, Africans, and other foreign nationals, even with outside assistance. Generic names also presented a problem, as several questionnaires were returned as having been mistakenly directed to a female. Even the census categories of ethnicity presented problems for two respondents, since one was Anglo-Indian, while another was a Hispanic who made the notation "white race" beside the checked category.

With respect to rank and position, the gay males hold 16 percent fewer administrative posts than straight males, though only 5 percent fewer are actually head library administrators. Gay males in this sample occupy a greater percentage of department or branch head positions, and 13 percent more gay males work in technical services jobs, a traditionally female domain, but also an area in which knowledge of computer systems and operations has become imperative. Only one gay librarian works with the schools, in the capacity of system-level supervisor; none are school media specialists. While open-ended responses received by straight school media specialists made clear that there is active discouragement of male school media specialists in some locales, legal constraints on teachers and the day-care-scandal mentality may have also discouraged new male entrants in this area, particularly if they are gay (Schneider-Vogel, 1986). Prejudice against gays in the classroom setting,

TABLE 1. Demographic Profile of Sample of Men Listed in ALA *Handbook of Organization 1990/91 and Membership Directory* with Comparative Data for Self-Identified Gay Men in the Sample

	Straight Subjects n^1 (%)		Gay Subjects n^2 (%)		Percent Difference n^2 %-n^1 %
TYPE OF LIBRARY					
Academic	212	(48.40)	31	(52.54)	4.14
Public	131	(29.90)	18	(30.51)	0.61
Special	45	(10.27)	4	(6.78)	−3.49
School	26	(5.93)	1	(1.69)	−4.24
Library Educator	13	(2.96)	2	(3.39)	0.43
Vendor	7	(1.59)	1	(1.69)	0.10
Other	4	(0.91)	2	(3.39)	2.48
POSITION FUNCTION					
Administration	241	(55.02)[a]	23	(38.98)	−16.04
Reference	67	(15.30)	11	(23.73)	8.43
Technical Services	37	(8.45)	13	(22.03)	13.55
Collection Development	22	(5.02)	2	(3.39)	−1.63
Automation	18	(4.11)		--	−4.11
Faculty Member	17	(3.88)[b]	2	(3.39)	−0.49
Circulation	10	(2.28)		--	−2.28
Special Collections	8	(1.83)	2	(3.39)	1.56
Other	7	(1.60)	2	(3.39)	1.79
Government Documents	5	(1.14)		--	−1.14
Youth Services	4	(0.91)	1	(1.69)	0.78
Audiovisual Services	2	(0.46)		--	−0.46

	Straight Subjects n^1 (%)		Gay Subjects n^2 (%)		Percent Difference n^2 %-n^1 %
POSITION RANK [6]					
Head Library Administrator	127	(29.39)	14	(23.73)	−5.66
Functional Specialist	101	(23.38)	17	(28.81)	5.43
Department or Branch Head	99	(22.91)	18	(30.51)	7.60
Other Administrator	68	(15.74)	7	(11.86)	−3.88
School Media Specialist	18	(4.17)		--	−4.17
Library School Faculty	13	(3.00)	2	(3.39)	0.39
Other	6	(1.39)	1	(1.69)	0.30
EDUCATION [4]					
MLIS or equivalent	281	(64.75)	44	(74.58)	9.93
Master of Arts or Science	80	(18.43)	9	(15.25)	−3.18
PhD or DLIS	58	(13.36)	4	(6.78)	−6.58
Bachelor's Degree	6	(1.38)		--	−1.38
Bachelor in Library Science	5	(1.15)		--	−1.15
Certificate of Advanced Studies	4	(0.92)	2	(3.39)	2.47
AGE [2]					
21-35	43	(9.86)	8	(13.56)	3.70
36-45	188	(43.12)	29	(49.15)	6.03
46-55	138	(31.65)	17	(28.81)	−2.84
> 55	67	(15.37)	5	(8.47)	−6.90
ETHNICITY [8]					
White	412	(95.81)	53	(89.83)	−5.98
Black	6	(1.40)	2	(3.39)	1.99
Hispanic	5	(1.16)	2	(3.39)	2.23
Mixed	4	(0.93)	1	(1.69)	0.76
Asian	2	(0.46)	1	(1.69)	1.23
Native	1	(0.23)		--	−0.23

TABLE 1 (continued)

	Straight Subjects n^1 (%)		Gay Subjects n^2 (%)		Percent Difference n^2 %-n^1 %
MARITAL STATUS [2]					
Married	305	(69.95)	--		
Single	73	(16.74)	--		
Divorced	32	(7.34)	--		
Gay[c]	--		25	(42.37)	
Gay w/Partner	--		34	(57.63)	
Widowed	16	(3.67)	--		
Single w/Partner	10	(2.29)	--		
REGION OF BIRTH [22]					
Midwest	147	(35.34)	25	(42.13)	7.03
Northeast	132	(31.73)	16	(27.12)	−4.61
South	79	(18.99)	12	(20.34)	1.35
West	44	(10.57)	5	(8.47)	−2.10
Foreign	14	(3.37)	1	(1.69)	−1.68
REGION OF CAREER [144]					
Multiple	75	(25.51)	5	(8.47)	−17.04
South	71	(24.15)	5	(8.47)	−15.68
Midwest	61	(20.75)	19	(32.20)	11.45
Northeast	50	(17.01)	19	(32.20)	15.19
West	36	(12.24)	10	(16.95)	4.71
Foreign	1	(0.34)	1	(1.69)	1.35

Note. N = 497; [Numbers in brackets] Indicate numbers of missing straight responses; all gay males completed personal data forms.
[a]Includes 18 school media specialists.
[b]Includes 4 academic librarians who have split teaching assignments and library duties.
[c]Includes 2 married men self-described as "gay" and "bisexual" respectively.

particularly at the elementary school level, has been documented extensively (Harbeck, 1992).

On the other hand, gays are more likely to have the professional credential of a Master of Library and Information Science (MLIS or equivalent) than their straight cohort, although 6 percent fewer gays have earned the PhD, and 4 percent fewer have earned a second master's in another field. The greater predisposition towards the master's as the terminal degree in the gay sample may in part reflect the greater number of older straight men. The Bachelor of Library Science was the terminal degree until about 1949, and in some locales was considered an acceptable academic credential long after that date. In other positions, other employment criteria may have been acceptable. It should be noted that two of the gay subjects who had previous working experience in libraries were now working on their doctorates, though here, they were counted in "MLIS" categories.

It was not necessary to control for geographical diversity in selection of the sample, since all regions of the United States were fairly evenly represented. Geographically, the gay men in this sample hail from all parts of the country, but the greatest clusters of them have worked in the Northeast or Midwest. A more meaningful distinction than "region of career" might have been a category which included "urban/rural preference" to test the stereotypical assumption that gay men shun rural life in favor of the "cruising and boozing" and cultural

attractions of big cities (Harry & DeVall, 1978, pp. 155-159). Even the urban/rural dichotomy is becoming more difficult to define, however, as urban residents frequently incorporate small-town values in their lifestyles (Lamar, 1992). A replication of the present study which targets urban areas might yield a higher percentage of gays than does the present sample, though that case may be harder to prove now than in the pre-AIDS era. What does seem demographically significant is that 17 percent fewer gay men have multiple-region careers than do straight men. This finding would seem to suggest either more limited mobility for gay librarians, or a more prominent sense of "place" (i.e., geographic stability) in their lives. Whether they consciously run counter to the conventional wisdom that mobility promotes career advancement (Taylor, 1983) or simply have not yet had the opportunity to move out of the region can not be determined from the data provided.

Entry into the profession. Asked why they became librarians, and whether their family supported their decision, over 23 percent more gay librarians attributed their choice of career to previous experience in libraries, either as a library assistant, a patron in a public library, or as a student (see Table 2). Eleven percent fewer gay than straight librarians chose the profession by accident or happenstance. In most cases, subjects chose more than one category to describe their experience, and several elaborated on their reasons. The open- ended responses make clear the importance of mentorship by librarians in recruiting candidates to the profession. While one gay subject relied on the recommendation of a friend who had recently obtained a degree, in another case, the subject was persuaded by "a junior high school librarian who was astute enough to assess my personality correctly and take me under her wing; made the library a home and a haven for me; gave me a sense of worth. I never wanted to do anything else after that time." In a similar vein, another subject credited an "admired family friend who was a librarian" in promoting his interest in books and travel. Another, the son of a prominent children's author, stated that he liked "to arrange and organize things" and that children's librarians set "ex-amples" for him when he was a child. One gay man had parents who were both librarians and followed their example, while only one was apparently driven by a passion for the materials that libraries contained (in this case, local history). Several others echoed the perspectives of some straight academic librarians who longed for the atmosphere of academe, but eschewed the teaching and publishing pressures of the tenure track. For example, one law student switched to librarianship when the strains became unbearable, but had long-range plans for starting his own business; librarianship served as a way-station at which he could develop his own personal interests.

While the parents of 67 percent of gay librarians supported their decision to become a librarian without apparent reservations, the mother of one gay son "told everybody I was a teacher because to her it sounded more important than a librarian." Another had parents who saw librarianship as a step up from the career in "music

TABLE 2. Entry of Straight (n^1) and Gay (n^2) Subjects into Librarianship

	Straight Subjects n^1 (%)		Gay Subjects n^2 (%)		Percent Difference n^2 %-n^1 %
Reason for Becoming a Librarian[a] (n^1 = 433, n^2 = 58)					
Love of Books	249	(57.51)	30	(51.72)	−5.79
Previous Experience in Libraries	188	(43.42)	39	(67.24)	23.82
Accident or Happenstance	80	(18.48)	4	(6.90)	−11.58
Likely Advancement	56	(12.93)	8	(13.79)	0.86
Interest in Computers	36	(8.31)	4	(6.90)	−1.41
Nonthreatening Environment	28	(6.47)	8	(13.79)	7.32
Failure at Other Work	21	(4.85)	3	(5.17)	0.32
Suggestion of Family or Friend	6	(1.39)	1	(1.72)	0.33
Suggestion of Other Librarian	3	(0.69)		--	−0.69
FAMILY SUPPORTED DECISION (n^1 = 423, n^2 = 59)					
Supported Decision	307	(72.58)	40	(67.80)	−4.78
Supported, But With Reservations	50	(11.82)	11	(18.64)	6.82
Don't Know	47	(11.11)	7	(11.86)	0.75
Did Not Support Decision	19	(4.49)	1	(1.69)	−2.80
Total	423	(100.00)	59	(99.99)	

[a] Respondents checked as many reasons as applied to this item, so percentages do not sum to 100.

theater'' which he had originally wanted to pursue, and about which they ''were not happy.'' Two other librarians were first-generation college graduates, and in one case ''any decision on college was met with awe,'' while in the other, ''they didn't know what librarians did, but they wanted me to do whatever I chose--they always gave wonderful support.'' In at least two cases, the subjects made their decisions autonomously, and did not consult their parents. In two other cases, parents had reservations about the earning-power of librarians, one because they were "afraid I would not be able to support a spouse and/or family" and the other, because the parents did not "consider librarianship to be a high status profession." Given the variety of responses received, and the general support for librarianship as a career in the majority of both straight and gay responses, there is no reason to suppose that their attitudes towards the profession were shaped by family to any significant extent.

The male librarian stereotype. Asked whether they "believed in" the male librarian stereotype, over three quarters of gay librarians responded affirmatively, a positive differential of over 18% over straight responses (see Table 3). One of the points of confusion with this question is that the phraseology suggests possible endorsement of the stereotype, whereas the question should have been phrased to query whether such a stereotype exists. Moreover, the question leaves in doubt the source of the stereotype, and some respondents in the straight group distinguished between public, professional, and personal belief in the stereotype. The gay group as a whole, as original findings indicated, are more likely to believe in the stereotype than their straight counterparts, perhaps because social conditioning as a minority member has made them more sensitive to stereotypes generally. One respondent even anticipated the characterization of the stereotype in the next question by writing: "Gay. It's true!" next to the affirmative answer. In the same spirit, another underlined "yes" twice and added exclamation points. Another qualified his positive response with the observation, "Naturally, I would like to think that I am not a stereotype of any kind." The only comment received with the negative responses referred to a long career in which he had known "too many &varied males in the profession" to form a personal stereotype.

As to the identity of the stereotype, almost 15 percent more gay than straight librarians identified the "effeminate (probably gay)" stereotype, though two pointed out that "gay" and "effeminate" represented two distinct categories, and one of them crossed out the word "effeminate" in his response. Interestingly, the rankings of the stereotypes remained the same in both the gay and straight sub-samples. Ten percent more gay men recognize the "golden boy" who succeeds quickly in the library world ("golden boy"

TABLE 3. The Male Librarian Stereotype

	Straight Subjects n^1 (%)		Gay Subjects n^2 (%)		Percent Difference $n^2\% - n^1\%$
Belief in Male Stereotype (n^1 = 430, n^2 = 56)					
Yes	252	(58.60)	43	(76.79)	18.19
No	122	(28.37)	9	(16.07)	−12.30
Don't know	56	(13.02)	4	(7.14)	−5.88
Total	430	(99.99)[a]	56	(100.00)	
Stereotypes Identified[b] (n^1 = 315, n^2 = 51)[b]					
Effeminate, probably gay	251	(79.68)	48	(94.11)	14.43
Powerless, socially inept; goonish	185	(58.73)	32	(62.75)	4.02
Unambitious, unwilling or unable to succeed in "real" world outside librarianship	171	(54.29)	31	(60.78)	6.49
Scholar; ranges from shy, retiring to "fiery tornado"	159	(50.48)	24	(47.06)	−3.42
Bookman; disavows information science	100	(31.75)	19	(37.25)	5.50
Golden Boy; jumps easily from library school to directorship of library	78	(24.76)	18	(35.39)	10.53
Knows *everything*; agressive, smarty pants	70	(22.22)	17	(33.33)	11.11
Corporate electronics advocate; books are beneath him	43	(13.65)	9	(17.65)	4.00
Promiscuous; ladykiller	20	(6.35)	3	(5.88)	−0.47
Other	43		9		

TABLE 3 (continued)

	Straight Subjects n^1 (%)	Gay Subjects n^2 (%)	Percent Difference n^2 %-n^1 %
Where Stereotype First Encountered[b] (n^1 = 287, n^2 = 49)[b]			
Workplace	80 (27.87)	9 (18.37)	−9.50
In library school	72 (25.08)	9 (18.37)	−6.71
Before library school	70 (24.39)	20 (40.82)	16.43
Have always been aware	70 (24.39)	18 (36.73)	12.32
Casual acquaintances	60 (20.91)	11 (22.45)	1.54
Through public/civic/campus	41 (14.29)	9 (18.37)	4.08
Other	26	8	
Where Stereotype Encountered Most Often[b] (n^1 = 281, n^2 = 48)[b]			
Casual social encounters	164 (58.36)	36 (75.00)	16.64
Other librarians	119 (42.35)	25 (52.08)	9.73
Professionals in other fields	71 (25.27)	12 (25.00)	−0.27
Professional literature	22 (7.83)	5 (10.42)	2.59
Family	13 (4.63)	1 (2.08)	−2.55
Other	38	5	
Attitude Towards Male Stereotypes[b] (n^1 = 398, n^2 = 56)[b]			
They are generally false	153 (38.44)	14 (25.00)	−13.44
Ought to get a sense of humor about them	145 (36.43)	24 (42.86)	6.43
Ought to stop talking about them	91 (22.86)	18 (32.14)	9.28
They are generally true	50 (12.56)	10 (17.86)	5.30
Don't know	31 (7.79)	2 (3.57)	−4.22
They are useful	16 (4.02)	2 (3.57)	−0.45
Other	48	8	

	Straight Subjects n[1] (%)	Gay Subjects n[2] (%)	Percent Difference n[2]%-n[1]%
Has the Technological Revolution Altered the Stereotype? (n[1] = 404, n[2] = 57)			
Don't know	152 (37.62)	15 (26.32)	−11.30
Yes	123 (30.45)	29 (50.88)	20.43
No	129 (31.93)	13 (22.80)	−9.13
Total	404 (100.00)	57 (100.00)	
How Has the Technological Revolution Altered the Stereotype? (n[1] = 181, n[2] = 36)			
Improved image	152 (83.98)	33 (91.67)	7.69
No change	11 (6.08)	1 (2.77)	−3.31
Worsened image	4 (2.21)	1 (2.77)	0.56
Other	14 (7.73)	1 (2.77)	−4.96
Total	181 (100.00)	36 (99.98)[a]	

[a]Does not sum to 100 due to rounding.
[b]Respondents checked as many reasons as applied to this item, so percentages do not sum to 100.

here refers to the "good old boy" system of mentorship in which males give other males preferential treatment), and 11 percent more recognize the smarty-pants/know-it-all type who is more motivated by egotistic pedantry than service ideals in his dealings with the public. One respondent changed the wording of "unambitious: unable or unwilling to succeed in the real world outside librarianship" to "unwilling to challenge the real world." Further comments and elaborations were received in the "ladykiller" category ("you gotta be kidding!") and the "golden boy" category ("as elusive as the Yeti").

Additional stereotypes were supplied by the respondents in the comments section. These included further examples which relate to gay status or character (for example, "Butch (gay)"; "promiscuous; gay; hits on students"; "assume gay until proven otherwise"; and, "effeminate? some, but most gay librarians are circumspect.

MANY male librarians are gay, but hide it. "). Others elaborated on a service-oriented stereotype ("polite, proper and helpful or service- oriented person"); the idealist ("is portrayed as indecisive Casper Milktoast type- a Walter Mitty dreamer!"); the "failed academic"; and a variety of intellectual freaks ("brainy," "brow-beaten, woman- dominated nerd," and "nerdy, bookish type"). One subject from the upper age bracket declared that he had known (and knows) "every single description below-some in massive numbers," and proceeded to elaborate on each of the examples given, but added in the "other" category: "Nice, sensible, ordinary, well-adjusted, unassuming guys who do the job adequately and don't cause a splash. The bulk of my colleagues have been in this category. Real professionals, not great, but good." He also pointed out that the traditional "bookman" and "scholar" was rarer than in the past and that female librarians were now "worse" in exhibiting the negative traits of bibliomania.

As to the source of their first encounter with the stereotype, 16 percent more gay males than straight males had encountered it before they attended library school, and 12 percent more gay males said that they had "always" been aware of it. They encounter the stereotype most often in casual social situations, apparently more frequently than do straight males. Part of the explanation for this discrepancy may lie in the number of straight males who complained of being told by new acquaintances that they didn't "look" like a librarian. It may be that when gay librarians are perceived as

both gay males and librarians in social situations, they are told, as the author of this paper has been on more than several occasions, that they "look" (or don't look) like a librarian. Perhaps in informal gay circles where camp is rife, reference is made to the gay librarian stereotype more frequently and with more humor: one subject reported that his friends "ask if I wear my hair in a bun"-a camp comment on the demeaning female stereotype. Another stated that he first encountered the stereotype in his "general perception, like the hair in a bun, the glasses on a chain." Other sources of first encounters with the professional stereotype were professional conferences, "societal indoctrination," and the media; other sources of most frequent encounters included commercial ads and the media, patron and general public perceptions, library clerical workers, and popular literature. None mentioned either library school or professional literature as sources of stereotypes, as some library stereotype studies have claimed.

Thirteen percent fewer gay librarians than straight librarians state that the male stereotypes are false, but 9 percent more think that the profession should quit talking about them, and 6 percent more think that the profession ought to get a sense of humor about them, some indication, perhaps, of the fact that gay men are more inured than their straight counterparts to the ritual of making a joke out of a slur. At the same time, they are more likely to be aware of the serious damage that stereotyping can inflict on professional and personal self-esteem. One respondent who advocated humor went so far as to assert that a "sense of humor is important *everywhere!* I think the formulation and application of attitudes about people or groups of people is why the U.S. is so polarized and divided." Two other gay males championed the "enjoyment" of the stereotypes since "diversity is healthy for the profession," and "there are not enough of any one type to be detrimental to the profession." At the other extreme, one individual found the stereotypes "angering," while another suggested that "all minorities" have stereotypes. While non-librarians may not take the stereotypes very seriously, as one subject commented, "male librarians reinforce stereotypes by not speaking out [against them] when hearing comments." Two individuals who checked both the "humor" and "quit talking" categories elaborated on their seemingly mutually exclusive choices. One simply stated that there was "a grain of truth behind one or two of them, but in the last analysis it's a waste of time to worry about them." The other response, more serious in tone, decried the adoption of a purely corporate image for librarians, and stated that the profession should build a new image of its own. Ironically, out of 18 open-ended comments received to the question, only one was directed to the existence of "equally destructive" female stereotypes, representing some characteristics which are shared by males.

Thus, while gay librarians seem to be more aware of professional stereotypes than the straight cohort, and especially those that refer to gay sexuality, their attitudes towards professional stereotyping are alternately cavalier and disturbed. Even though research in the field has shown that librarians underestimate the public perception of librarians (Harris &Chan, 1988), gay and straight librarians seem equally confused about whether or not professional stereotyping is inevitable, harmless, or related to more personal, sex-specific traits in which they themselves have a vested interest. While explicit reference to female stereotyping was virtually absent in comments received to the stereotype questions, it cannot be assumed that female librarian stereotyping and the prolific literature surrounding that subject (Wilson, 1982) do not inform the received responses.

Gay men are more receptive to the palliative effects of technology than their straight counterparts. After all, quipped one respondent, "computers are very 'butch,' aren't they?" As others pointed out, computers are associated with the corporate world and with ideals of speed and efficiency. While the general public may be unaware of the effects of the technological revolution on libraries, or are "easily dazzled by technology," computer technology and mechanical skills are usually associated with the male domain. While nearly all gay respondents who answered the technology questions feel that the computer has improved the male librarian stereotype, at least one respondent stated that technology may well replace the "bookworm image" with a "computer-nerd image," but "fortunately, that has not yet happened." The "new" image, according to another man, is still "brainy, but in a different area of expertise." Ironically, the library workers most likely to use the technology on a routine basis are women, particularly in technical service and reference functional specializations (e.g., OCLC cataloging, online database searching, demonstration of CD-ROM products in bibliographic instruction sessions). Those removed from rank-and-file work in the upper reaches of supervision

and administration-particularly in large public and academic libraries-will garner the image benefits. It is not inconceivable that the computer will have no more significance than a typewriter in a futurist scenario of library technology, and only those workers assigned the work of establishing creative linkages between disparate fields of information will accrue the full practical advantage of the "improved" modes of information access. Thus, one lone respondent noted that the technological revolution had indeed improved the male image "unfairly over women."

Gender issues: women in the work place and work role assignment. One unanticipated finding of the original survey was that nearly half of male librarians deny that men have an advantage in advancement and promotion at the work place. Many comments were received which bore explicit reference to the effect of EO/AA legislation on male hegemony in librarianship. Other complaints referred to the physical tasks that men had to perform by virtue of stereotypical assumptions about male roles (cleaning up vomit in the lobby, moving heavy furniture, equipment, and boxes of books, serving as interim repairman on buildings or machines, even tending the grounds and driving bookmobiles in inclement weather). The surveyed male librarians expressed their resentment at being excluded from female conversation and bristled at slighting female comments about male behavior and male chauvinism. Moreover, although incidents of sexual harassment (male and female) and sexual discrimination (usually female) were rare, complaints about gay harassment of straight males were frequent enough to warrant further examination of the gay responses to see what, if any, differences could be perceived between the two groups. Female sexual harassment was also not uncommon, though it was greeted by the straight males who reported it with mixed feelings. How do gay male librarians view these issues?

The quantitative responses of gay males to questions relating to gender issues are remarkably similar to those of the straight cohort (see Table 4). The only areas of substantial difference lie in the realm of advancement, where 14 percent more gay males report that men have an advantage over women, and in the area of administration, where 7 percent more gay males were or are interested in administration, and 11 percent fewer are equally interested in the work itself. In other words, gay males are more likely to see the profession as a venue by which to realize the benefits of being male, e.g., directorships, administrative positions, and larger salaries. Librarianship apparently affords them an environment in which they feel they can afford to compete. A more cynical interpretation of their attitudes might claim that since these are self-proclaimed gay subjects, they have no reason to "distance" themselves from the rank-and-file "female" work of libraries and are frankly materialistic in their aims. One male commented that he was "more interested in administration than [in] any other area of library management," meaning perhaps that he subscribes to the modern paradigm of librarians-as-managers, with the routine work being performed

TABLE 4. Attitudes Towards Gender Issues and Experiences with Sexual Discrimination and Harassment

	Straight Subjects n^1 (%)	Gay Subjects n^2 (%)	Percent Difference n^2 %-n^1 %
Do You Think of the Profession as Predominantly Female? (n^1 = 436, n^2 = 59)			
Yes	285 (65.37)	43 (72.88)	7.51
No	135 (30.96)	16 (27.12)	−3.84
Don't Know	16 (3.67)	--	−3.67
Total	436 (100.00)	59 (100.00)	
Were You Aware of the Number of Females When You Became a Librarian? (n^1 = 436, n^2 = 59)			
Yes	337 (77.29)	43 (72.88)	−4.47
No	69 (15.83)	13 (22.03)	6.20
Don't Know	30 (6.88)	2 (3.39)	−3.49
Total	436 (100.00)	59 (100.00)	
Have You Ever Felt Like a Minority With Respect to Females? (n^1 = 437, n^2 = 59)			
Yes	382 (87.41)	54 (91.53)	4.12
No	46 (10.53)	2 (3.39)	−7.14
Don't Know	9 (2.06)	3 (5.08)	3.02
Total	437 (100.00)	59 (100.00)	
Does Gender Affect Gender Work Role Assignments? (n^1 = 428, n^2 = 59)			
No	234 (54.67)	30 (50.85)	−3.82
Yes	137 (32.01)	22 (37.29)	5.28
Don't Know	57 (13.32)	7 (11.86)	−1.46
Total	428 (100.00)	59 (100.00)	

	Straight Subjects n^1 (%)	Gay Subjects n^2 (%)	Percent Difference n^2 %-n^1 %

Have Your Perceptions of Gender Roles Altered Since Becoming a Librarian?
(n^1 = 429, n^2 = 58)

	Straight Subjects n^1 (%)	Gay Subjects n^2 (%)	Percent Difference
No	301 (70.16)	37 (63.79)	−6.37
Yes	70 (16.32)	13 (22.41)	6.09
Don't Know	58 (13.52)	8 (13.79)	0.27
Total	429 (100.00)	58 (99.99)[a]	

Do Men Have an Advantage in Advancement? (n^1 = 431, n^2 = 59)

No	196 (47.48)	22 (37.29)	−10.19
Yes	165 (38.28)	31 (52.54)	14.26
Don't Know	70 (16.24)	6 (10.17)	−6.07
Total	431 (100.00)	59 (100.00)	

Does the Scarcity of Males Enhance Their Advancement? (n^1 = 429, n^2 = 57)

No	224 (52.21)	26 (45.61)	−6.60
Yes	123 (28.67)	22 (38.60)	9.93
Don't Know	82 (19.11)	9 (15.79)	−3.32
Total	429 (99.99)[a]	57 (100.00)	

Does the Scarcity of Males Hinder Their Advancement? (n^1 = 432, n^2 = 58)

No	294 (68.06)	43 (74.14)	6.08
Don't Know	92 (21.30)	12 (20.68)	−0.62
Yes	46 (10.64)	3 (5.08)	−5.56
Total	432 (100.00)	43 (100.00)	

Were You (Or Are You) Interested in Being an Administrator? (n^1 = 435, n^2 = 59)

Yes	181 (41.61)	29 (49.15)	6.35
Yes, but also in the work itself	148 (34.02)	13 (22.03)	−11.99
No	89 (20.46)	15 (25.42)	4.96
Don't know	17 (3.91)	2 (3.39)	−0.52
Total	435 (100.00)	59 (99.99)[a]	

TABLE 4 (continued)

	Straight Subjects n^1 (%)		Gay Subjects n^2 (%)		Percent Difference n^2 % - n^1 %
Have You Experienced Sexual Discrimination or Harassment? (n^1 = 426, n^2 = 59)					
No	347	(81.46)	43	(72.88)	−8.58
Yes, Discrimination	37	(8.69)	4	(6.78)	−1.91
Nonclassifiable incidents	20	(4.69)	5	(8.47)	3.78
Yes, harassment	18	(4.22)	2	(3.39)	−0.83
Yes, both	4	(0.94)	1	(1.69)	0.75
Unspecified	--		4	(6.78)	6.78
Total	426	(100.00)	59	(99.99)[a]	
Source of Discrimination/Harassment (n^1 = 90, n^2 = 15)					
Female	51	(56.67)	8	(53.33)	−3.34
Male and Female	28	(31.11)	1	(6.67)	−24.44
Male	10	(11.11)	4	(26.67)	15.56
Don't know	1	(1.11)	2	(13.33)	12.22
Total	90	(100.00)	15	(100.00)	

[a]Does not sum to 100 due to rounding.

by paraprofessionals. The only other clarification of views on the desire to be an administrator was received from a man in the upper age echelon who had from the beginning of his career the intention of running his "OWN library-a chance to be creative, and that was where the best salaries were."

Asked whether men had an advantage in advancement, gay males qualified their views in considerable detail, and the qualifications bear the same hallmarks as the straight responses, although they tend to be favorably disposed towards the view that women are still exploited to some extent. With respect to the latter, typical comments were "sexist society-administrators are mostly men," "yes, unfortunately," and "influence of our patriarchal society/culture." Seven individuals (five positive, two negative) qualified their views by library type, the consensus being that in larger academic or "prestige" institutions, men still have an advantage in hiring and promotion. Only one comment was received which noted that women hold the "advantage" in the school library field-a frequently cited fact in the straight sample. One former librarian who is now a vendor answered negatively, but pointed to the fact that "library *vendors* are largely male-dominated, and with a *vengeance!*" More typical negative responses pointed to the fact that "Affirmative Action has taken its toll," or "the current 'diversity' and 'women's' issues makes the ethos 'anti-male', specifically anti-'white' male, even though most would hotly deny it, if confronted with the idea." The bulk of openendedresponses pointed to the fact that the advantages that men once enjoyed are changing in a fashion that is inimical to men. They feel, like the straight cohort, that they are the victims of gender backlash rather than the perpetrators of gender denial.

While nearly three quarters of gay males think of librarianship as predominantly female, as opposed to approximately two thirds of straight subjects, they did not devote the attention to qualifications of the male-female ratio in specific library environments (e.g., public, academic, special, etc.) that straight librarians did. Only one respondent suggested that there were variables by field. Another individual who answered the question negatively contradicted his categorical answer in his open-ended comment: "I *know* it is, but I don't *think* of it as *such.*" The same proportion of gay males admitted that they were aware that the profession was female when they entered it, while more straight males admitted this fact than the number who conceded that

they thought of the profession as female. In other words, the straight librarians do not think of the profession as female although they are aware of the predominance of females in the field; the gay librarians represented here think of the profession as female because they are aware that the majority of librarians are female. Gay librarians seemingly have a less defensive attitude about what a "female profession" represents, perhaps because they share an "underclass" identity with women.

It is interesting to note, too-although the numbers are too small to draw meaningful conclusions based on percentages-that out of a total of 14 gay and straight reports of male sexual harassment, 4 of them were reported by gay males. One could well make the case that a gay male is less likely to misunderstand unwanted sexual advances from a male than his straight counterpart, who may misinterpret signs of friendship from a gay male as a sexual advance. Also, "often what is play between men is regarded as harassment of women by men." The few instances of male sexual aggression are painful to read, in that they reveal the same duplicity and intimidation to which women are subject in similar situations; the victim is made to feel that they must curry sexual favor in order to receive a job, a promotion, or some other sign of approval. One public librarian, for example, reported that a library trustee "hit" on him prior to his interview between the airport and the library. Another subject, an academic librarian, was warned by his supervisor not to invite a student assistant to his home since the supervisor had already staked claims on him. In a more disturbing case, a library school professor harassed a student who had formerly been his academic adviser once certain bureaucratic technicalities defining their relationship had been removed:

One of my male library school professors walked up to me in a public place and pinched my nipple. I had taken only one course with him and he was my faculty advisor my first year in library school; however, I was not in a class with him at the time of the incident. He was also no longer my advisor at the time of the incident. He became angry with me when I switched [faculty advisors]. Every time I have seen him at ALA conferences he has invited me to his room for a drink. Needless to say I always decline these invitations.

There were no reported instances of sexual harassment by females, though this may have more to do with the general tenor of library work itself than the sexual orientation of the various participants involved; one librarian nearing retirement commented that "I have NEVER experienced sexual problems of any kind. (Dammit!)." This comment was echoed by another gay male respondent: "I should be so lucky!" Another former librarian who is now a vendor of library products experienced no problems as a librarian, but had "run across some problems with [a] library vendor."

Sexual discrimination is much more common among these gay respondents than sexual harassment and it takes many forms. The most frequent complaint is an anti-gay bias, such as the female director who thought gays "weak"; one subject who found "difficulty in obtaining advancement"; another who had an overtly homophobic director; and one librarian who did not pass a job interview because he failed to meet employer expectations of sex-typed (i.e, gender-typed) interests. In the latter instance, a gay male applying for a music/arts librarian position was quizzed by his female interviewer on his sports knowledge, and she was "very disappointed." More gay males, however, experience discrimination *as a male* rather than as a gay male, and some of these complaints are hardly distinguishable from those of their straight counterparts. One librarian, who did not list a discrimination complaint, objected nevertheless to the female students at his library school who pushed forward "their 'female' agenda or ideas" in many classes, and similarly, at the work place, he had noticed that "females in the division informally network and reach decisions before including males." Two more dramatic instances are provided by a recent library school graduate who interviewed for jobs as children's librarian at the 1991 Atlanta ALA Conference. There, at the ALA Job Placement Center, he was told by one Florida library director that he had been instructed by his board to hire "anyone for the vacancy ... as long as he didn't hire a male" and in another interview with a Georgia public library, he was subjected to repeated exclamations from his female interviewer over the fact that he was male *and* a children's librarian. "In both of these cases the fact that I have a penis kept me from these positions. I was very angry." These comments indicate some of the difficulties in distinguishing male issues from strictly gay issues in a female profession where male stereotyping is prevalent, if largely unacknowledged, and where job stratification by gender can be rather rigidly enforced.

Out of seven elaborations received in extended addenda to the survey, only three specifically addressed the gay librarian identity. One other subject indirectly alluded to his gay identity by the rather conservative view that, in general, "the stereotypical librarian image is flattering";

Despite being thought of as quiet, physically weak, etc., we are seen as intellectual and educated and generally fair- minded. Let's be happy with that, even though we know that librarians are as anti-intellectual, stupid and mean-spirited as any other group. Furthermore, our perceptions of doctors, lawyers, politicians and city planners ...are very much more severe than ever the opinions of [i.e., about] librarians can be .. . People will accept almost anything, if you do *not confront* them ... I have never required colleagues to make exceptions for me and the result has been complete acceptance of me by both sexes.

In a similarly conservative vein, another gay man expressed his concern about the polarization of American society into competing special interest groups which causes them to "lose sight of the fundamental rights and companion 'responsibilities'" they should be exercising in a "free society. In other words, everybody has an agenda and there is no middle ground ...Professionals, both males and females, should be prepared to handle individual differences in *any* profession today."

Three younger members of the sample expressed their longing for a gay identity in the profession. For one, "becoming a librarian" was a "logical extension of my coming out as a gay man" because he lacked the "aggressive" characteristics to compete in law. He turned down many law schools which accepted him because he saw that professional environment as "unethical" and "vicious:"

I have found librarianship to be exceptionally welcoming of gay men. It is a refuge from the generally unpleasant homophobic work world. At my last job there were 10 men in the technical services division out of about 60 staff. Six of the 10 men were gay and 2 others were "suspect." There were other gay men in Public Services. The gay men provided a social network for each other. One older gay man became my "mentor" and provided me with assistance to get the job I'm currently in. So, librarianship has been a good place for me to feel like I fitted in. It was great to feel like I was a part of a "gay men's network"-I hope to find the same in my current job.

Unfortunately for the profession, perhaps, this man eventually plans to leave the profession, open his own bookstore, and "employ exclusively gays or lesbians." The sense that the "gay network" in librarianship is not strong enough to retain those to whom some more open acknowledgement of their gay identity is important is also apparent in the comments of another young man who asserted that "the male stereotypes of weak and wimpy librarians is closely allied to the attitude in society towards women," and expressed his sense of longing for more positive expressions of professional solidarity and support for his identity than that provided by the annual meetings of GLBTF:

I looked for a positive view/stereotype for gay men as librarians. I wish there were-I would like the profession to have role models in openly gay men to break many of the stereotypes. Having had the first Gay/Lesbian Task Force in any professional organization, it boggles my mind to think how little has been done to change the stereotypes or misperceptions of gay men.

While his comments do not acknowledge the fundamental work of Barbara Gittings and the early workers of GLBTF in promoting positive gay images in literature, they do point to the vacuum created by two decades of bibliographical work which has ignored the social dimensions of the gay librarian identity. Given the per- spective of the Democratic, generally pro-gay "victory" in the fall of 1992, it is easy to understand the companion danger of complacency and backlash that attends token (though official) recognition (Mecca, 1993, pp. 141-142). In one sense, the young man's statement above reflects a disenchantment with the passivity of GLBTF agendas and ALA's generally apathetic attitude about gay issues through much of the period 1970-1990. In the past two years, however, several events have occurred within ALA which both reflect the identity crisis of the gay and lesbian movement in society as a whole and hold some promise of projecting a more proactive stance for gays and lesbians within the profession of librarianship.

ALA, Social Responsibility, and Gay/Lesbian Rights
In the two years since the survey was conducted, gay and lesbian librarians have assumed several new initiatives as the challenge from the socially-conservative Right is echoed in the editorial columns of the library press. In particular, discussion of the censorship challenges surrounding two children's books, *Daddy's*

Roommate and *Heather Has Two Mommies,* in New York and North Carolina brought gay issues back to the forefront in ALA in 1992. These cases, duly reported in the library press, were followed almost immediately by a storm of controversy surrounding publication of a cover photograph of gay and lesbian librarians marching in the San Francisco Gay Pride Day Parade in the July/August 1992 issue of *American Libraries,* the national association journal. The rancor of the ensuing discussion, evident in letters to the editor throughout the fall, left many ALA members disaffected and became the focus of a more general ongoing debate on the social responsibilities of librarians.

Also, power shifts within GLBTF led to a more conscious effort towards structural gender parity within the task force. Since Gittings officially stepped down as leader of the task force in 1986, GLBTF has adopted the policy of electing male and female co- chairs, no doubt to prevent splintering of membership along sex lines. Some female members had already switched allegiance to the Feminist Task Force since they apparently felt discounted and outnumbered by males on GLBTF, or saddled with thankless responsibilities, "looking after" gay males, much as the women of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee did before the feminist movement got under way in 1970-a feeling bolstered by the number of AIDS deaths among gay male librarians. Some lesbians were exhausted from the demands placed upon them by gay coworkers and friends who were suffering from AIDS, and other gays and lesbians had been frankly separatist in their orientation from the beginning (Susan Bryson, interview, March 20, 1993). Without Gittings's pivotal support, some splintering and re-shuffling was inevitable. Gittings represented a pioneering generation of lesbians for whom the chief signifier of oppression was sexual orientation rather than sex. She states that the fact that she was lesbian, not the fact that she was a woman, defined her; therefore, "the first thought that crosses my mind is not whether someone is a man or a woman, but whether or not they are gay [or lesbian]" (Barbara Gittings, telephone conversation, March 18, 1993). For a generation weaned on Betty Friedan, such inclusive attitudes may have seemed quaint, foreign, and inimical to personal growth. Separatism continues to be an inevitable phenomenon in parts of the gay and lesbian communities as a whole (e.g., Hemmings, 1992), and it remains to be seen whether the "common cause" of oppression can bridge the occasionally uneasy gay and lesbian alliance under the disappointingly equivocal tone of lukewarm Democratic support (Markowitz, 1993). In informal conversations, GLBTF Co-Chair Roland Hansen and former Co-Chair Karen Whittlesey-First conceded the importance of the task of bridging the gap between gay and lesbian librarians as GLBTF approached its twenty-fifth anniversary celebration (Roland Hansen, telephone conversation, March 8, 1993; Karen Whittlesey-First, telephone conversation, March 8, 1993), though in this regard, the greatest sense of solidarity may come from resistance to continued harassment of gays and lesbians rather than innate affinities (North Carolina Coalition for Gay and Lesbian Equality, 1992) and from widespread interest in, and editorial support for, gay and lesbian issues/rights in the popular press (for example, Stewart, 1991; "Gays Under Fire," 1992; "Clearances," 1993; Burr, 1993). As proof of the last point, the growth of gay and lesbian publishing, practically nonexistent when Gittings began her campaign for positive gay and lesbian images on library shelves, has become a significant market factor: the 1993 New Orleans GLBTF program "I Read You Loud and Queer: The New Demand for Gay and Lesbian Literature" drew an audience of over 350, many of whom were neither gay nor lesbian.

Moreover, local gay-rights initiatives are now being closely monitored by gays and lesbians on the Internet. Through GAY-LIBN, a listserv for gay and lesbian librarians, members have instant access to legal, political, association, and library news that has an impact on their professional welfare. Gay librarian associations, such as that formed several years ago at The Library of Congress, are also becoming more numerous, more visible, and more vocal in the workplace. Informal gay library school alumni associations are just emerging in various parts of the country, according to 1993 GAYLIBN correspondence.

Finally, GLBTF is ending its quarter-century of sequestered activities within the association through the extramural activities of its members in other arenas. In 1995, the Library History Round Table and the Social Responsibilities Roundtable co-sponsored a program on "The Importance of Gay and Lesbian Library History" to celebrate the twenty-fifth anniversary of GLBTF. Featured speakers included Rose Gladney, editor of the Lillian Smith letters (Gladney, 1993), Brenda Marston, Curator of the Human Sexuality Archives at Cornell University, and Polly Thistlethwaite of Hunter College and the Herstory Archives, whose entry on "Gays and

Lesbians in Library History" appears in the recently-published *Encyclopedia of Library History* (Thistlethwaite, 1994). Moreover, the 1995 meeting of the Association of Library and Information Science Educators in Philadelphia featured a keynote address which questioned the place of social responsibilities in library and information science curricula, with responses by spokespersons for the feminist, class, and gay perspectives. At the same meeting speakers presented results of a national survey of 1993 MLIS graduates on the place of gay and lesbian issues in the curriculum, and their attitudes toward these issues. Therefore, whether or not gay and lesbian professional concerns are really welcome in general forums, spokespersons for these concerns have finally surfaced in the "out" waters of the professional mainstream.

POSTSCRIPT AND SUMMARY

In January of 1993, after three months of letters condemning the association's social activist stance, ALA met in Denver, Colorado, under protest against the state's recently proposed Amendment Two which discriminated against homosexuals, canceled plans to hold the 1998 ALA midwinter meeting in Denver, and adopted a resolution drafted by GLBTF which limited future ALA meetings to locales that "do not explicitly discriminate against lesbian, gay, and bisexual people" (Berry, Fialkoff, St. Lifer, &Rogers, 1993, p. 35). Again, as in 1970, librarians were prescient in forwarding a gay agenda-perhaps because they reflect so well their host society. Just a month after Bill Clinton became the first U. S. President to support gay rights in any form (vowing to lift the ban on gays in the military), ALA President Marilyn Miller's speech before the march on the Denver Capitol became the first specific endorsement of gay and lesbian rights from an ALA official. Miller's statement encompassed both the bibliographic and humanistic ideals of librarianship. "We know how the line can blur between access to information and denial of our human rights," she said. "Any erosion of human liberty can lead to an erosion of intellectual freedom...." A year later, ALA Council voted to withdraw the midwinter 1995 meeting from Cincinnati when a gay-rights protection referendum failed to pass. The American Historical Association (AHA) initiated a similar protest action at the same time, although not without membership dissent (Hamby, 1994). Whatever may be said about the efficacy of such measures, there seems to be a consensus that pro-gay stances are justified by precedents such as the boycott of non-ERA cities by ALA and AHA in the 1970s and the withdrawal of ALA support from states which maintained racially-segregated state library associations in the 1960s. While it may be years before the divergent philosophical views of ALA members about homosexuality are reconciled-if, indeed, they ever can be-no small part of the outcome of that effort will be shaped by the candor and honesty with which gays, lesbians, bisexuals, and straight males and females are able to discuss issues of parity, justice, and gender on more than a superficial level.

Whatever generalizations can be drawn from the present study, it would appear that gender issues and gay issues are overdue for general discussion within and without the profession of librarianship. At a more fundamental professional level, further qualitative studies and surveys similar to the one herein described should be conducted among female librarians: to gauge their attitudes towards gender issues in the profession; to measure the impact of the women's movement, if any, on their attitudes; to assess their perceptions of the role, identity, and contributions of male colleagues; and to tap their feelings about gay and lesbian co-workers. Any profession that assumes the task of defending intellectual freedom must give more than lip service to its ideals. Certainly no other profession possesses the comparable potential to make connections between ideas, worlds, lifestyles, people, and dreams. In order to accomplish that goal, however, the profession's own house must first be in order.

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