Introducing *C&RL*'s Generative AI Policy

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As the use of generative artificial intelligence (Gen AI) tools expands, journals, editors, reviewers, and authors continue to evaluate their practical and ethical applications within the broader research landscape. *College & Research Libraries* (*C&RL*) is no exception. Its newly formed policy took several months of discussion and planning. Once the *C&RL* editorial board decided a policy was needed to navigate expectations of Gen AI's use in its author submissions and editorial work, a small working group of three editorial board members formed to assess the current climate and conversations within academic publishing.

The group, comprised of this editorial's authors *C&RL* Editor Designate Michelle Demeter, *C&RL* Book Reviews Editor Melissa Lockaby, and *C&RL* Editorial Board Member Adrian Ho, spent the summer and fall of 2024 conducting a literature review across academic journals and publishers to examine authorship guidelines, data collection and analysis procedures, and journal editorial responsibilities related to Gen AI. Some of the journals included in our review included the *Journal of Academic Librarianship*, *Journal of Librarianship and Scholarly Communication, Science*, as well as a close review of the Committee on Publication Ethics' (COPE) Position on Authorship and AI Tools. Our review and subsequent analysis led to the development of a small set of recommendations regarding *C&RL*'s guidance for authors, reviewers, and editors that was codified into a policy and approved by the *C&RL* Editorial Board (15 votes "yes"; 1 abstention) in March 2025.

While Gen AI tools (such as ChatGPT, Microsoft Copilot, and Claude) may make writing easier, their use complicates the reviewing and editing processes. Reviewers and editors have always needed to be alert for "traditional" scholarly integrity concerns of plagiarism, but the enhanced ability of Gen AI to "create" text cobbled together from online newspapers, articles, books, journals, and other information resources has complicated scholarly publishing in unexpected ways. What has not changed is the requirement for academic publications to uphold the rigors of scholarly research and writing, which is contingent upon the trust between writers, reviewers, and editors.

With these issues in mind, *C&RL*'s working group set out to answer a number of questions regarding the journal's editorial process and ethics. What is *C&RL*'s stance on authors submitting manuscripts generated by AI tools? Should authors be permitted to use AI tools for editing purposes, including checking spelling, grammar, and/or performing translation? Is

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AI-generated data acceptable? Should peer reviewers or editors employ Gen AI tools when evaluating a submission or perhaps when proofreading their reviews? What other concerns do we have as an editorial board? How have other academic journals addressed these concerns?

To this end, the working group focused on two specific recommendations:

1. Authorship of all submitted manuscripts (including all content and data collection/analysis) should be human.
2. Peer reviewers and editors should not use Gen AI tools when evaluating a manuscript or writing a review.

This editorial provides an overview of the questions and process by which we worked through in order to arrive at these conclusions. It is our goal that prospective authors, and current reviewers and editors will find some clarity and transparency in how the *C&RL* Generative AI policy was crafted with the understanding that it will be revisited as Gen AI technology and applications evolve.

Authors

Our readers expect quality content from professional experts within their respective areas across academic and research librarianship. As such, any submitted article should follow a number of standards, including the expectations that the writing is the author's original work, is free of plagiarism, includes proper citations, offers practical or theoretical value to the understanding or advancement of academic librarianship, and is of high quality (though the last point is admittedly subjective but falls within the purview of the editors and reviewers to determine). As noted in our Author Guidelines, *C&RL* has maintained these standards, along with the understanding that authors are responsible for the accuracy of any statements or data within their submitted and/or published work.

Because generative AI does not "create" original work, it cannot be considered an author of a manuscript. Because *C&RL* accepts only "original publications," the use of Generative AI blurs the distinction between what is original work versus aggregated information produced as Gen AI output. Additionally, there are no guarantees of data accuracy, integrity, or research design because generative AI tools cannot be held morally responsible for their output.

Chief among the queries raised by the editorial board was the looming issue of how to enforce a policy for a tool whose usage cannot be confirmed and cannot be held responsible for its output. Ultimately, the editorial board determined that it has always been incumbent upon authors to be held responsible for the work they submit to a journal, and *C&RL*'s stance on this issue has not wavered. If an author chooses to use a generative AI tool in a support role, such as during the prewriting phase (e.g., ideation process) or as an aid to improve the author's original writing (e.g., translation, editing, revision), its use does not need to be noted. The thought process behind this decision is analogous to a situation wherein an author might hire a copy editor or translator, or employ a spelling or grammar checker in Microsoft Word. In these situations, we do not ask authors to note the application of such tools or assistance, and it did not seem that the use of generative AI tools in these instances warranted notation. However, it is again emphasized that authors are responsible for any mistakes or errors found in any manuscript submission.

There was notable discussion among the editorial board members regarding whether generative AI should be permitted when crafting a literature review. It was agreed that authors may find sources to evaluate through an AI query, and anything considered should be

rigorously checked to ensure they exist, are applicable to the developing study, and of course cited correctly. However, that initial query is where the line should be drawn; Gen AI tools should not be used to craft the text of the literature review, which is an essential (though often disparaged or dreaded) component of scholarly articles.

The literature review often requires patience and focus to effectively evaluate what may be an extensive range of established scholarship to provide foundational grounding of one's research, while simultaneously identifying support and gaps relevant to one's current research project. Some authors may experience anxiety that perhaps they have forgotten a critical study or are struggling with how to best synthesize a massive amount of information on their topic. However, it is precisely these challenges wherein authors wrestle with the previous literature and the impact this legacy of scholarship has created that make the literature review important. Relying on AI tools thus diminishes active engagement with the literature, which then prevents the author and reader from fully understanding or appreciating the article's contributions within the larger scholarly conversation.

An exception regarding the use of Gen AI, which will be discussed in more detail in the next section on Data, is for manuscripts studying the implications or applications of generative AI or AI-generated data as a topic within academic librarianship. As the applications of Gen AI expand within database search functions and summaries, as well as within library reference services, collection development, and access services to name a few, we at *C&RL* anticipate a number of burgeoning areas of study examining how the use of these technologies are impacting user behaviors and our own workflows as librarians.

Data

Many of the big publishers (Sage, Taylor & Francis, Wiley) and university presses (Oxford, Cambridge, MIT) already have policies in place or statements issued addressing Generative AI usage that authors are required to follow. While some guidelines are brief, just a paragraph, others are the equivalent of two or more pages. Although artificial or synthetic datasets may have advantages, eliminating the need to seek IRB approval or anonymize collected data, there is a lack of accountability or, potentially, accuracy in their use. However, review of other academic publisher policies did not consider the benefits of manufactured data to override the ethical implications or lack of veracity. While only two or three publishers the working group looked at explicitly barred the AI-generated data or its manipulation, at least five[*] stated that authors were ultimately responsible for their articles and that Gen AI could not be held accountable for any part of the research or paper.

The editorial board took this to mean that Gen AI cannot conduct empirical research since its output is not based on observation and Gen AI tools are not able to produce a human value-laden analysis or interpretation. Additionally, the potential to "hallucinate" or fabricate data raises issues of accuracy, reliability, and applicability. Can results stemming from fabricated data be generalized or offer tangible evidence of what is occurring in libraries, classrooms, or real-world settings?

Ultimately, applying what we found from the published policies we studied, we decided to adopt what the majority of other journals were doing. AI-generated data would be barred unless the technology itself was the subject under study. For example, examinations of AI

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[*] Other publisher Gen AI policies considered: American Association for the Advancement of Science, American Chemical Society, Elsevier, Springer, *Journal of the American Medical Association*.

and the user experience, the accuracy of AI content, AI algorithms, or other such research inquiries would be valid as long as researchers were evaluating the findings. Researchers have an ethical responsibility to gather data from legitimate and human-initiated methodologies (e.g., observations or surveys), as well as to provide a human interpretation of results. Fabricated data cannot, necessarily, provide substantiation or confirmation of a theory; nor may the study be replicated.

Reviewers and Editors

As the use of Gen AI has become more common in scholarly communication, there have been discussions about applying Gen AI to peer reviews for academic publications. For example, it has been suggested that journal editors and/or peer reviewers use Gen AI to refine and/or restructure their comments to make their feedback more constructive, or to maintain a positive and professional tone. Such use of Gen AI is thought to be especially helpful to editors and peer reviewers whose first language is not English. Additionally, it is argued that Gen AI can relieve peer reviewers of having to evaluate the quality of writing in terms of grammar, spelling, and clarity of meaning. Thus, peer reviewers would be able to focus more on examining the validity and reliability of the research documented in the manuscript.

Although Gen AI can provide assistance in the peer review process, it is noted that its application to scholarly publishing can be contentious and problematic. Traditionally, peer reviews are performed by individuals who are members of an academic or professional community who possess the expertise and critical thinking skills required to evaluate the quality of a submitted manuscript. While Gen AI can swiftly supply information on various topics, it cannot replicate a peer reviewer's cognitive prowess and/or moral capacity and thus is unable to evaluate manuscripts in a professional or insightful manner. Moreover, the output of Gen AI is dependent on its training data. If a Gen AI tool was trained on biased, incorrect, and/or outdated data gathered from certain geographical locations only, the tool would not be able to review manuscripts objectively and its feedback may include misinformation and even perpetuate biases. It is possible that the tool would not be able to discern the novelty or significance of the study being reviewed.

It has been demonstrated that Gen AI tools may provide different responses to the exact same prompt input at different times or by different people. The lack of consistency with its responses thus raises concerns about Gen AI's reliability as a potential reviewer. Furthermore, one well-known problem regarding the use of Gen AI tools is its proclivity toward generating "hallucinations" or false output. Its tendency to fabricate facts and bogus citations has been widely reported in professional literature and mass media. If an AI-generated review includes false information about a manuscript, it will not do justice to the author and may give rise to negative impact on the editor's evaluation of the manuscript.

In addition to the above-mentioned shortcomings of Gen AI, there are other issues that warrant careful consideration before a journal uses Gen AI for peer review. One significant ethical concern is the consequences of uploading an unpublished manuscript into an AI tool for review without an author's consent. Doing so may allow the AI tool to train itself on the uploaded content while also making it immediately available to any related query prior to its formal acceptance for publication by the journal. This unethical and unauthorized sharing of an author's unpublished work would result in a serious breach of confidentiality.

From the research community's perspective, using Gen AI to review manuscripts can ease the demand for finding sufficient peer reviewers. However, it would deprive colleagues of an opportunity to participate in their own profession's scholarly and editorial process. As a consequence, it may make it harder for author librarians to develop an understanding of academic journal publishing and to sharpen the skills required for evaluating research within the field. It will also reduce opportunities for service to the profession as an editor or reviewer. Meanwhile, some journal publishers might rely on Gen AI for peer reviews in order to reduce the turnaround time with a sacrifice in the quality of the reviews. This might also result in allowing journals to misleadingly promote themselves as "efficient" publishers in an attempt to attract more submissions and to publish more articles. Overall, such practices would harm the academic library research community and the scholarly communication ecosystem in the long run.

Thus, it is recommended that peer reviewers not employ Gen AI tools for their reviews because peer review requires prudent decision-making based on the reviewers' expertise, experiences, and critical thinking. While the technology can assist peer reviewers in some aspects of checking their reviews for grammar or spelling, the review process should be driven by human reviewers who are able to be held responsible for the evaluation of manuscripts.

Conclusion

Overall, the *C&RL* Gen AI policy seeks to clarify ethical and practical author expectations surrounding the use of Gen AI while emphasizing transparency and accuracy of the authorship and editorial process. Because we created *C&RL*'s policy relatively later than other journals, the editorial board benefitted from having more time to see how generative AI has been employed in research while examining the policies of other journals. Even though having a broader understanding of how authors and editors have been applying these tools made it easier for the *C&RL* editorial board to develop its policy, the process for developing the *C&RL* policy still resulted in several insightful discussions and revisions. While this policy has been added to the journal's Author Guidelines, it is crucial to note that this policy is not set in stone. It is expected that as advances are made in Gen AI technology that the editorial board will revisit the policy as needed to maintain clarity and expectations. Finally, if you are a potential author and are uncertain about whether your potential submission complies with this policy, or you have other inquiries regarding the use of AI tools or applications in your research or manuscript, please contact *C&RL*'s Editor directly. Bear in mind much of the landscape is still evolving, and editorial guidance may be fluid, but it is within those conversations that we all learn and ultimately support the quality of academic and research librarianship.

What We Talk About When We Talk About "First-Generation Students": Exploring Definitions in Use on College and University Websites

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First-generation students (FGS) are a population that has received increasing attention, but the term "first-generation student" has been inconsistently defined. Such inconsistency creates challenges not only for research, but for students themselves, many of whom may find they meet the FGS definition in one institutional context, but not another. In this study, we analyze how the term "first-generation student" is defined on the public websites of colleges and universities in the United States and Canada and discuss implications for students and academic libraries.

Introduction

A 2017 *New York Times* article on the complexities of determining who meets the definition of "first-generation student" highlights multiple cases where the boundaries of the category become unclear, including a student whose father has a master's degree, but who was raised by other relatives who did not attend college; a student whose sole degreed parent died when he was a toddler; and a student who may qualify as *both* first-generation and a legacy student because, while neither parent has a college degree, her grandmother attended the institution (Sharpe, 2017).

First-generation students (FGS)—those who are the first or among the first in their families to attend college and/or earn a college degree—have received increasing attention from higher education and library and information science researchers. Understanding the experiences of FGS and interrogating institutional infrastructure and library services from their perspectives, can identify areas where prior knowledge of—and comfort with—academic norms are assumed, and can assist in eliminating barriers for all students, particularly those who have been historically underserved (Arch & Gilman, 2019; Stallworth & Maurici-Pollock, 2023). Many institutions now provide targeted resources and support, including scholarships and other financial aid, to this population.

Multiple academic libraries, alone or in partnership with others on campus, now offer targeted programs and services for FGS, including instruction sessions, customized research

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assistance, first-year orientations, specialized collections, liaison librarians, and networking events (see Barbrow et al., 2020; Deng, 2021; Graf, 2019; Graham et al., 2021; Graves et al., 2021; Ilett, 2019). But who is a "first-generation student"? Those attempting to research or design resources for FGS have found that attempting to articulate who belongs in this population and who does not can be remarkably complex. Attempts to define FGS must deal with the multiple structures families take, as well as with the varied experiences with postsecondary education a student's family members may have. As a result of this complexity, the scholarly literature uses multiple definitions of FGS, which complicates what we know about this population. Those most impacted by this complexity, however, may be FGS themselves. These students, who are often unfamiliar with the category or unaware of their own FGS status until their initial encounters with higher education, may struggle to reconcile official definitions of the term with their own lived experiences. This may result in confusion or tension, particularly when students' biographies do not map neatly onto institutional definitions of the boundaries of the FGS category (Bettencourt et al., 2020; Bowker and Star, 1999).

Literature Review

Exploring the definitions of "first-generation student" used in higher education provides a background for this article. Preliminary results from a study of university library websites found that, among those who offer services or resources for FGS, few provide a definition of the term (Bernier et al., 2021). This study's main questions are: Who are "first-generation students"? How are they defined? What criteria are used to determine who counts as being a "first-generation student"? Examining those definitions has the potential to provide an idea of who higher education deems to be categorized as "first-generation" and who is excluded.

The term "first-generation student," in use since at least 1979, began to appear widely in the literature on higher education in the early 2000s (Gable 2021; Nguyen & Nguyen, 2018). The term has been used to define—often vaguely and inconsistently—a category of college and university students who have little or no prior family experience with higher education (Ilet, 2019; Nguyen & Nguyen, 2018). A search for the term online uncovers multiple possible definitions, some of which emphasize the additional support available to those identifying as FGS. *College Terms You Need to Know: A Complete Guide* defines the term first-generation as "students who are the first in their families to attend college or whose parents didn't complete a college degree" (CollegiateParent, 2022). *The Ultimate College Terminology Guide* provides this explanation of "first-generation student": "to qualify as a first-generation college student, learners must be the first individual in their immediate family to pursue higher education. These learners often qualify for additional financial aid" (Best Colleges, 2022).

While there are definitions for FGS in some college terminology guides, other sources, such as *Education USA* and the *U.S. Higher Education Glossary* provide no definitions of the term (Narayan, 2011; United States Dept. of State, n.d.). In the United States, federal eligibility guidelines for funded TRIO programs—which are programs "designed to identify and provide services for individuals from disadvantaged backgrounds" (U.S. Dept. of Education, 2023)— define FGS as: "individuals both of whose parents did not complete a baccalaureate degree," or in the case of students who "resided with and received support from only one parent," those whose sole supporting parent did not complete a degree (Higher Education Act of 1965, 2011).

The exact definition in use at any individual college or university, however, may vary. The Center for First-Generation Student Success FAQ, notes that the definition of FGS is

complex, and that institutions use different definitions; it recommends that students "ask your admissions counselor, academic advisor, or a faculty member to learn more" (NASPA, 2020). Couture et al. (2021) note that the definition can vary even *within* a university. Given these varied definitions, it is unsurprising that students may be unclear whether they qualify as FGS.

The "First-Generation Student" Definition in Research
The inconsistency in defining FGS also extends to academic literature; in the past several years, a myriad of definitions have been applied in studies of this population, with little consistency between research studies; reviews of literature on FGS have found up to 18 definitions in use by researchers, most of which in some way rely on education levels of a student's parents to determine whether a student is first-generation (LeBoueff & Dworkin, 2021; Nguyen & Nguyen, 2018; Peralta & Klonowski, 2017; Toutkoushian, 2018).

While it may seem straightforward to determine first-generation status based upon parental education, researchers highlight several nuances. "Parents" could refer to biological parents, stepparents, adoptive parents, foster parents, and/or godparents, for example (Stallworth & Maurici-Pollock, 2023; Toutkoushian et al., 2018). Some definitions include or exclude the educational experience of other family members, such as siblings, and may or may not account for students raised in family structures other than two-parent households (Ilet, 2019; LeBouef and Dworkin, 2021; Stallworth & Maurici-Pollock, 2023). "Education" can also refer to a variety of higher education experiences including the level of education (e.g., undergraduate or graduate), type of degree (e.g., two-year, four-year, Master's, Ph.D.), and whether the degree program was completed (Ilet, 2019; Stallworth & Maurici-Pollock, 2023; Toutkoushian et al., 2018). There are additional complexities when it comes to defining first-generation *graduate* students, as the term may encompass both students who are the first in their family to pursue or obtain *any* level of higher education, as well as those who are specifically the first to pursue or obtain an advanced degree (Guillen, 2021; Stallworth & Maurici-Pollock, 2023). Further complicating matters, the FGS designation has at times been extended to include those students who are the first in their families to get a degree from an institution within the United States (NASPA, 2020; Stallworth & Maurici-Pollock, 2023).

The many ways in which the term FGS has been defined and operationalized raises methodological concerns for research on FGS. Much of the existing research assumes a binary between FGS and non-FGS (i.e., continuing-generation) students which, in conjunction with inconsistent definitions of FGS, makes it difficult to make accurate comparisons and to determine whether—and to what extent—meaningful differences between first- and continuing-generation students even exist (Deng, 2022; Nguyen & Nguyen, 2018; Spiegler and Bednarek, 2013; Toutkoushian et al. 2018; Toutkoushian et al, 2021).

As a result, some scholars have adopted, and added to, a growing list of definitions which recognize levels, degrees, or a continuum of first-generation status to acknowledge important differences in resources and cultural capital between students (Darrah et al., 2022; Patfield et al., 2020; Spiegler and Bednarek, 2013; Toutkoushian et al., 2018). One such example is the scale developed by Darrah et al. (2022) ranking FGS from Level 1 ("Parents or guardians attended some college (but did not complete)") to Level 4 ("No one in immediate or extended family attended or completed college"), with those at the highest level identified as being in most need of additional assistance. Yet even definitions with this degree of nuance contain

assumptions about family relationships and structures, as well as the knowledge and cultural capital that are likely to be transmitted by family members, and these may or may not match students' lived experiences.

A compounding issue is that first-generation status is sometimes conflated with other variables and identity categories. Ilett's (2019) critical review of library literature on FGS finds that the use of phrases such as "minority and low-income/first-generation students" often makes it "unclear whether all the listed categories apply to all students being discussed" noting that often the term often operates as a kind of "cipher" for students of color and/or working-class students (pp. 3–4). Nguyen and Nguyen (2018) also note a conflation of FGS status with identity categories including race, ethnicity, social class, and geographic origin. Additionally, while FGS populations are heterogenous and include multiply-marginalized individuals—and indeed, FGS status is often the result of communities' historical exclusion from academia—there has been a historic lack of intersectional research that examines how FGS status, race, gender, class, and other aspects of student identity interact to shape students' experiences with higher education (Arch & Gilman, 2020; Bettencourt et al., 2020; Hodge, 2022; Nguyen & Nguyen, 2018).

Unfortunately, research on FGS also frequently uses deficit framing, which focuses on the skills and resources FGS lack (Barbrow, 2020; Brinkman & Smith, 2021; Graf, 2019; Ilet, 2019; LeBouef and Dworkin, 2021). Often, even the names used for such conflated categories, such as "disadvantaged," "nontraditional," "at-risk," and "nonelite," reflect this deficit framing (Dworkin, 2021; Ilett, 2019; Lee & Kramer, 2013). Such framing illustrates Spiegler and Bednarek's (2013) argument that FGS is not only a constructed identity group, but a constructed *risk* group. This framing may not only lead students to avoid the FGS identity as potentially stigmatizing but may negatively impact the experience of FGS if librarians and other educators view them as "a problem that needs to be solved" (Ilett, 2019). Recent research has begun to shift to an asset-based approach for understanding FGS, which recognizes the unique knowledge, skills, and assets FGS bring to campus (Arch & Gilman, 2020; Folk et al., 2018; Hands, 2021; Ilett, 2020; Stallworth & Maurici-Pollock, 2023).

The Challenges of the "First-Generation" Definition for Students
The challenge of categorizing FGS not only impacts the research, of course, but also the students themselves when the category of FGS is adopted by institutions, embedded in academic support infrastructure, and used to determine access to resources or define the boundaries of community. The potential benefits, as well as the potential stigmatizing effects, of identifying FGS as a group in need of additional support and targeted services–particularly when these are shaped by deficit framing—are noted areas for further study (Arch & Gilman, 2020; Bettencourt et al., 2020; Spiegler & Bednarek, 2013). The potential for the category to create torque—"the twisting that occurs when a formal classification system is mismatched with an individual's biographical trajectory, memberships, or location" (Bowker & Star, p. 223)—for students whose lived experiences make them difficult to sort neatly into FGS or non-FGS, also warrants further exploration.

While FGS are often eligible for additional financial aid and institutional support—including, increasingly, targeted library support—accessing these resources requires eligible students to first recognize FGS as an identity category, and then to be able and willing to identify themselves as FGS (Bettencourt et al., 2020). For this to occur, students need to know which definition(s) of

FGS have been adopted by their university (or the segment of it with which they are interacting), and to determine whether they fit the FGS definition. This can be complicated for the multiple students whose biographies mean they meet some definitions of FGS, but not others.

The suggestion, noted earlier, that students ask a counselor, advisor, or faculty member for help in determining FGS status in a particular context (NASPA, 2020) assumes both that these individuals will be able to provide accurate help, and that a student is likely go to these authority figures to seek clarification in the first place. However, both assumptions are at odds with the research on FGS information-seeking behaviors, which consistently finds that these students avoid seeking help, and that they value self-reliance and independent problem-solving (Arch & Gilman, 2020; Couture et al, 2021; Graf, 2019; Tsai, 2012).

While other studies have examined the ways in which the term "first-generation student" is defined in academic literature, our research focuses on how the term is defined in spaces that students can easily access themselves, specifically, on the public-facing websites of colleges and universities. We sought to answer the following questions:

- RQ1: How is the term "first-generation student" defined on the public-facing websites of colleges and universities?
- RQ2: What criteria are used to define a student as "first-generation"?
- RQ3: Is there consistency across institutional websites in the way the term "first-generation student" is defined?

Method

We began by looking at the websites of the parent institutions of the 118 academic libraries that were members of the Association of Research Libraries (ARL) as of April 2022. We chose this sample for our initial analysis because it includes both private and public institutions across both the United States and Canada, serving both undergraduate and graduate students.

Throughout May and June of 2022, we searched university websites using Google, applying the following search strategy: "first-generation students" OR "first-generation college students" OR "first-gen students" OR "first-gen college students" site:[university.edu]', limited to the first page of search results. This strategy retrieved results regardless of hyphenation in the text. We examined the text of each result for a definition of the term "first-generation student," and we excluded definitions found in news articles, event announcements, and publications located in institutional repositories, archives, or hosted journals. If a page contained a qualifying definition of the term "first-generation student," we recorded the URL and wording.

Our search resulted in 174 qualifying definitions found on the sites of 94 institutions. These included formal definitions that had been adopted by an institution, as well as less formal definitions that were used by a single university program or organization. We found most definitions on pages for programs or services targeting FGS; the pages of university admissions departments, counseling centers, study abroad programs, and resources for parents and faculty members also yielded multiple definitions. Only one qualifying definition was found on a library page. Many institutions defined "first-generation student" in more than one way across the retrieved results from their sites, and some even had more than one definition on the same webpage.

A conceptual content analysis was conducted on the wording of each definition to understand which criteria were used in defining "first-generation student," as well as which criteria, and unique combinations of criteria, appeared most often. An initial round of inductive

coding was conducted to develop a codebook, followed by two subsequent rounds of coding on all definitions. At least two researchers examined each definition. When disagreement or questions arose, researchers met and came to a consensus on how to code the text, bringing intercoder reliability to 100%.

Results

Across the sites in our sample, we found that there are at least 87 unique definitions of "first-generation student" in use on ARL university websites. Each definition differed in some substantial way from others in its criteria for which students qualify as "first-generation students." The definitional criteria found are detailed below.

Family Members Considered

Definitions differed regarding which family members' educational attainment would be considered in determining a student's first-generation status.

Parents, Guardians, and Other Caregivers. Of the definitions that mentioned the education levels attained by specific family members, the majority—104 (59.77%)—referred to the student's parents. In addition, 44 (25.29%) contained language that assumed a two-parent or two-guardian family structure, using phrases such as "neither parent" or "both parents." Some definitions were more expansive in addressing differences in family structures. Fifty-one (29.31%) definitions specifically mentioned guardians or caregivers; three definitions (1.72%) specifically included adoptive parents; and one (0.57%) also included "other custodial family members." In contrast, one (0.57%) definition was more restrictive, as it mentioned that only biological parents' education would be considered.

"First in Family." Some definitions were less specific about which family members' educational attainment would be considered in determining whether a student is first-generation. Fifty-six (32.18%) defined FGS as the first in their family to attend college/obtain a degree; eight (4.6%) specified that an FGS is the first in their *immediate* family to do so, with immediate family not further defined; and seven (4.02%) used phrasing like "in the first generation" or "among the first-generation," suggesting that the educational attainment of same-generation family members is not considered. Six (3.45%) definitions used "among the first" or "one of the first" in the family, or similar phrasing and one (0.57%) considered a student's "closest family members." Significantly, one (0.57%) defined FGS as "the first in [their] family *or support system* to go to college" (emphasis added).

Excluded Family Members. Some definitions explicitly excluded the education attained by specific family members from consideration in determining FGS status, most often a student's same-generation siblings who had graduated from or are currently enrolled in college. Thirteen (7.47%) defined students as FGS even if they had siblings currently in, or who had graduated from, college. Non-custodial parents were also excluded at times, with eight (4.5%) definitions specifically mentioning not considering the educational levels of non-custodial parents, parents with whom a student did not live, or parents who did not support the student. A further two (1.15%) definitions specifically did not consider parents about whom a student has no information, and one (0.57%) mentioned excluding the educational levels of cousins.

Other Family Situations. A handful of definitions included students who do not or did not live with their families, such as students in foster care or those experiencing homelessness. Two (1.15%) definitions included students who are/were in foster care or wards of the

state; one (0.57%) included students who "did not regularly reside with or receive support from a natural or adoptive parent prior to age 18." One (0.57%) definition included students who are/were homeless youth.

College Attendance vs. Degree Completion

FGS definitions also varied in whether they included students whose parent(s) or other considered family member(s) had attended college but not completed a degree, or whether they included only those whose considered family member(s) had not attended college or pursued a degree at all. A handful of multi-part definitions covered both situations. One hundred and ten (63.22%) defined FGS those whose considered family member(s) have not earned, obtained, or completed a degree, and 80 (45.98%) defined as FGS those whose considered family member(s) have not attended college or pursued a degree at all.

Type of Degree Obtained or Institution Attended

Of those definitions that specified a type of degree (i.e., beyond "college degree"), 101 (58.05%) specified a four-year institution or a bachelor's degree or higher; one (0.57%) specified an undergraduate degree (with no further specification); and one (0.57%) specified attending college and/or professional school. Less common were definitions that excluded students with family members who have associates degrees, or who have pursued other postsecondary education or training. Six (3.45%) definitions specified any postsecondary education or experience; three (1.72%) specified a two-year institution or an associate's degree or higher; and two (1.15%) specified any education or technical training beyond high school.

While programs, resources, and definitions specifically addressing first-generation *graduate* students were rare, three (1.72%) definitions defined FGS at the graduate level as those who are specifically the first among their considered family members to pursue a graduate, professional, or advanced degree.

International Institutions

Twenty-three (13.22%) definitions included as FGS those whose parent(s) or other considered family member(s) have attended college and/or obtained degrees from institutions outside the country in which the university is located, here in the United States or Canada. One of these, from a U.S. institution, also specifically defined FGS as a U.S. student.

Time Frame of Family Members' Degree Completion

A small number of definitions considered the time frame of family members' degree completion, and included in the FGS definition those whose parents or other considered family members have a college degree, but did not pursue it directly after high school. Four (2.3%) definitions included as FGS those whose considered family member(s) completed a degree "later in life"; one (0.57%) included as FGS those whose parent(s) or guardians(s) did not complete a degree within six years of their own high school graduation; and one (0.57%) included as FGS those whose parents completed a degree after the student was born.

Students' Resources, Past Experiences, and Prior Knowledge of Higher Education

A small number of definitions included criteria for FGS status directly addressing students'

lack of resources and/or lack of experience with or knowledge of higher education. For example, five (2.87%) included students' lack of exposure to or knowledge of higher education; three (1.72%) mentioned students' need for additional resources; two (1.15%) included as FGS students who "have a similar life experience" as those who otherwise fit the FGS definition. Similarly, one (0.57%) definition included students who lack "personal or familial experience navigating institutions of higher ed"; one (0.57%) included students "looking for a place to build community and support"; and one (0.57%) included students who lack family support for their decision to attend college.

In addition, some definitions conflated FGS with class status by including low-income and working-class students in the definition. Two (1.15%) definitions included low(er) income students, and one (0.57%) included students from working-class or non-white collar backgrounds.

Other Criteria
A handful of other criteria were found that do not fit neatly into any of the above categories, including 12 (6.90%) definitions that explicitly allowed FGS to self-identify. Other outlier definitions were as follows: one (0.57%) included those who are FGS "at the time of application"; one (0.57%) defined FGS as undergraduate students; one (0.57%) excluded students when both parents' educational status is unknown; and one (0.57%) included those who "want to be an ally to and support" FGS. Table 1 shows the nine combinations of definitional criteria that appeared most frequently in the sample, along with example wording for each.

TABLE 1		
Most Common Combinations of Definitional Criteria		
Criteria	**Example Wording**	**Frequency**
First in family, attend	"the first person in your family to attend college"	32
Parents, guardians, complete degree, 4-year	"student whose parent(s) / legal guardian(s) do not have a bachelor's degree or higher"	11
Parents, 2-parent lang., complete degree, 4-year	"students with neither parent having a four-year college degree"	10
Parents, complete degree, 4-year	"A first-generation student means your parents did not complete a 4-year college or university degree"	9
Parents, guardians, 2-parent lang., complete degree, 4-year	"neither parent or guardian completed a four-year college degree"	9
Parents, guardians, siblings excluded, complete degree, 4-year	"one whose parent(s)/legal guardian(s) have not completed a bachelor's degree. Even if an older sibling is pursuing a bachelor's degree or has already earned their degree, you are still considered a first-generation student"	4
First in family, attend, 4-year	"the first in their families to attend a four-year college/university"	4
First in family, complete degree, 4-year	"students who are or will be the first in their families to earn a bachelor's degree/graduate from a four-year college"	3
Parents, guardians, 2-parent lang., complete degree, 4-year, US/Can institution	"a student, faculty, or staff member with neither parent or guardian having graduated with a 4-year degree or higher, in the United States"	3

Eleven other unique combinations of criteria each appeared twice in the sample. All others appeared only once.

As evidenced by the number of different definitions found, "first-generation student" is a category with porous and inconsistently defined boundaries. While FGS are commonly described as the first in their families to attend college, the following are some examples of students who may or may not find themselves included within the FGS population depending on the specific criteria in use in a particular context:

- A student with one or more parents with an associate's degree, but none with a bachelor's degree,
- A student with one or more parents who attended a four-year institution, but did not graduate,
- A student with a degreed parent with whom the student has no relationship,
- A student with one or more non-parent family members, such as siblings or grandparents, who already have degrees or are currently attending college,
- A student with parents who have advanced degrees, but who is the first in their family to attend college in the United States,
- A graduate student whose parent has a bachelor's degree, but who is the first in their family to attempt an advanced degree.

Discussion

The researchers have found at least 87 different definitions of "first-generation student," but few specify the level of the student (i.e., undergraduate or graduate). The number of definitions alone could be confusing for students, and this research does not even include definitions from every institution in the United States or Canada. Is it necessary to have numerous definitions to define a group of students? With definitions that differ at each institution, this can be confusing for students to determine how to self-identify. In addition to the confusion caused for students, this sheer number of definitions can create challenges for academic librarians in defining and reaching out to FGS populations, determining their needs, and measuring the impact of resources and services developed for them. For researchers studying FGS, the number of definitions also creates a barrier, especially when recruiting students to participate in studies and deciding how to define them. Why are students asked to self-identify as FGS if they qualify as being one at one institution and not at another institution?

A surprising amount of variance exists in how colleges and universities define "first-generation student" on their public-facing websites. Definitions differ in how they contend with the complexities of defining a family, a parent, or a generation. Definitions also differ regarding what familial higher educational experiences disqualify one from FGS status, ranging from having any educational experience beyond high school to—in the context of graduate studies—having obtained an advanced degree. Interestingly, while most institutions in the ARL sample were in the United States and many of these appeared to be recipients of TRIO funding, only two definitions included FGS criteria that matched the official criteria for TRIO eligibility. Some otherwise similar definitions failed to explicitly account for the circumstances of students raised by a single parent. In context this may seem to be a minor difference, but in practice this may mean the difference between a student being deemed eligible to access resources meant for FGS or not, as was the case for the student with the deceased degreed parent profiled in the *Times* (Sharpe, 2017). Examining the criteria and

wording included in definitions of FGS can help in identifying sites of tension and torque, as well as in interrogating the assumptions inherent in the construction of FGS as an identity category.

Who Do We Talk about When We Talk about Family?

A student's FGS status is defined by their family members' lack of educational experience, but definitions vary in which family members' educational attainment is considered or, in some cases, explicitly excluded from consideration. Most often, if a definition names specific family members, it specifies a student's parents. Around 30% of definitions in our sample were worded to accommodate the family structures of students raised in single parent households, or by one or more non-parent guardians or caregivers. Multiple definitions, however, contain wording such as "neither parent" or "both parents" which assumes a two-parent, or two-guardians, household. This assumption may leave students raised by single parents, or in blended or multigenerational families struggling to reconcile the definition with their own family structures.

Assumptions about students and family structure are also evident when we consider which family members are *not* named in FGS definitions. For example, explicit mention of the educational attainment of students' grandparent(s) was not found in any definition. Also not found was any explicit mention of a student's own spouse and/or adult children, who, if present, would be members of a student's immediate family, and whose experiences with higher education could inform a student's own trajectory. A handful of definitions did acknowledge that some students pursue a degree later than immediately after high school and/or after they themselves have become parents but do so by counting among the FGS population those whose *parents* have pursued degrees "later in life" and/or after the student was born.

When definitions specifically excluded family members, they almost always referred to either non-custodial parents, or siblings who had already enrolled in or completed college. In the latter case, all siblings in the same generation are considered FGS, regardless of other siblings' educational attainment, though studies have found that for younger siblings, older siblings who had attended the same or a similar school were strong sources of support and information (Bettencourt et al., 2020; Gable, 2021).

A small number of definitions explicitly counted students who did not reside with or receive support from members of their families of origin, regardless of the educational attainment of those family members, as FGS. These definitions included students who are/were in foster care or those who are/were homeless youth. All other definitions assumed a relationship between the student and parent(s), guardian(s), or other family members, which is another aspect shaping the FGS category that warrants further interrogation.

Not all definitions were specific about who counted as being in a student's family or which family members' educational attainment were considered. In fact, the first in their family to attend college, without further specification, is the most common way FGS are described. Some definitions use the narrower phrases "immediate family" or "closest family" without further specification, while others only specify that a student needs to be "among the first" or "one of the first" to be considered FGS. In one case, the phrase "family or support system" was used as an acknowledgement that a student's closest ties and sources of support may not be limited to their family.

What Do We Talk About When We Talk About Higher Education and Educational Achievement?

Definitions varied in what educational experience FGS's qualifying family members could have. Over 60% of definitions included as FGS those whose considered family members may have attended an institution of higher education, but did not complete a degree. This means that, by many definitions, some FGS do have family members with experience applying and being accepted to college, even if they did not finish.

Definitions also varied regarding which institutions or types of degrees were considered. When a type of degree or type of institution was specified, most definitions found in our sample from four-year research universities specified that a student's considered family members did not attend a four-year institution or obtain a bachelor's degree. Substantially less common, but still present in our sample, were definitions worded to exclude students with family members with other types of postsecondary educational experience, such as earning an associate's degree or attending a vocational or trade school.

While graduate students or studies were rarely referenced in definitions, three include graduate students as FGS if they are the first among their considered family members to earn or pursue an advanced degree. Finally, around 13% of definitions include as FGS those who are specifically the first of their considered family members to earn a degree from an institution in the United States and/or Canada, an acknowledgment that these students may have a family history of engagement with higher education in general but still lack family experiences with the cultural norms and hidden curricula of North American institutions.

What Else Do We Talk About When We Talk About "First-Generation Students"?

For researchers and institutions, a student's first-generation status often serves as a proxy for a lack of resources and/or experience with, or prior knowledge of, higher education. A handful of definitions spoke specifically to this lack, although some definitions did conflate categories, as noted by Ilett (2019), by including low-income and working-class students under the first-generation umbrella.

FGS definitions included a handful of other criteria. One definition spoke directly to the temporal aspect of the category, noting that FGS were those who met the FGS definition "at the time of application." Under the wording of at least some definitions, the lived experiences of a student's other family members could potentially disqualify them from FGS status between application to and graduation from college.

Some definitions allowed students to self-identify as FGS, and some, including definitions found on the websites of Brown University and George Washington University, invited students to do so based on their own perceived lack of prior exposure to, or knowledge of, navigating higher education. Such maximally inclusive definitions broaden the reach of programs and resources for FGS by allowing students who would fail to meet stricter criteria to access and benefit from them. However, such inclusivity has also led to criticism that loose definitions allow otherwise privileged students to take advantage of assistance meant for those with fewer resources and use FGS status as a "power-up" (Barnett, 2022). Sima (2022) notes that a failure to make a distinction between "first-generation" and "low-income" can lead to students in the latter category feeling further stigmatized in programs and spaces meant to assist them when those spaces are dominated by their higher-income, first-generation peers.

On the other hand, less inclusive definitions risk excluding students who have similar challenges as those who do meet stated criteria and would benefit from the resources available (Gable, 2021).

Overall, the basic assumptions that underlie the FGS category include that students have a relationship with their family of origin (often specifically, their parents), and that students whose family members lack experience with higher education will differ from continuing-generation peers in their knowledge of and comfort with higher education, as well as the resources and support they can draw from during their college experience. However, these assumptions may not map neatly onto students' lives. Additionally, as discussed earlier, emphasis on students' first- or continuing-generation status alone ignores the impact of students' other intersecting identities on their higher education experience. It may also render invisible the impact of social systems outside the family and other sources of knowledge, support, and cultural capital that may be accessible to some FGS students but not others, such as the elite private high schools attended by some students in Jack's (2016) study of low-income undergraduates at an elite university.

With so many different definitions of what it means to be a "first-generation student," is the term useful as a category and as a way of understanding students' needs, identities, and relationships with higher education? And if so, what is the most appropriate definition? We believe that, yes, it is useful, but that it is also important to examine the work that "first-generation student" as a category is doing in each context.

This research has implications for academic librarians because they serve a broad student population, including FGS. As Graham et al. (2021) found, academic libraries play a role in student success for FGS. Providing services and resources to better assist these students is valuable; however, a lack of clarity over who qualifies as FGS could create barriers for students or exclude those who need the extra support. Providing services and resources for FGS shows that academic libraries are committed to supporting these students, contributes to existing diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) initiatives, and demonstrates that the academic library is aware of, and cares about, the needs of FGS. Such work contributes to FGS's success and possible retention.

Conclusion

This study examined how the term "first-generation student" is defined on the public-facing websites of a sample of four-year research universities in the United States and Canada. Planned follow-up studies include examining the use and definition of the term at other types of institutions serving large numbers of FGS—including community colleges and tribal colleges—as well as examining how the term has been defined and operationalized in the library literature. In addition, we are examining the current services academic libraries are offering to FGS and the role academic libraries can play in serving the information needs of FGS pursuing advanced degrees.

The experiences of FGS are a useful area of study for librarians, even though the concept itself is difficult to rigidly define and is currently defined in a wide variety of ways on student-facing websites. The sheer number of definitions found in this sample demonstrates the lack of consistency with which the category has been defined and understood.

For academic libraries developing programs and services for FGS, this study's findings suggest that the complexity of the FGS category may create a barrier to targeted students ac-

cessing these services because they not know if they qualify as FGS. For researchers, the number of FGS definitions also creates a barrier, especially when recruiting students to participate in studies, asking them to self-identify, and deciding how to define and categorize participants. All these barriers make it difficult to determine the extent to which differences actually exist between first- and continuing-generation students' experiences and information needs.

The challenges and torsion this definitional inconsistency potentially creates in students' lives, particularly for those students who may qualify as FGS in one definition but not in another—something our results show is possible even within the same institution—warrants further research. The fact that, as research shows, FGS often have difficulties related to help-seeking in the context of higher education, which may make them reluctant to seek out additional clarification if uncertain of their own status, further exacerbates these challenges. For academic libraries and other institutions on campus seeking to serve FGS, it is important to consider the inconsistency of the definition and how it potentially impacts students' understanding of whether they are entitled to access services and support available and marketed to FGS.

Seeking to understand the academy from the perspective of those who lack a family history of experience with it can help identify areas where our own infrastructure requires or privileges that experience. FGS programs can provide students with needed community and support and can help them to make sense of their own academic experience. However, the category itself may also serve as a barrier to those who fall outside it. Furthermore, *any* definition of FGS is an imperfect proxy for a student's knowledge of, and comfort with, academic norms, and many definitions do not encompass other aspects of a student's identity or other sources of influence and support beyond a student's own family.

Our findings lead us to make the following recommendations for libraries considering offering targeted support to FGS and to LIS researchers hoping to learn more about them. First, define the term "first-generation student" in the context of the library and acknowledge the definition is complex. An expansive definition that acknowledges different types of family structures and lived experiences may serve as less of a barrier to students who would benefit from resources and programs targeting FGS.

Second, focus on your own institutions and infrastructure and identify ways they may require or privilege prior knowledge of academia. For example, does navigating the library website require prior knowledge of terms that may be unfamiliar to someone without a history of engagement with higher education? If so, can this be changed? Are there other assumptions about students—such as that students live on campus, can rely on financial or academic help from their families of origin, or are unlikely to be parents of minor children—that may disproportionately, but not solely, impact FGS and that underlie what services are being offered and how they are delivered? Identifying and removing barriers, rather than creating specialized services to help particular groups overcome them, has the potential to help students beyond FGS.

Third, because definitions of FGS—including those tied to access to federal aid and other resources—can vary, provide guidance for students, potentially in the form of LibGuides or other online resources, that can help FGS navigate this definitional landscape. This could, for example, help students from single-parent families determine if they meet the official definitional criteria for TRIO-funded programs in the United States. There is also the potential for academic librarians, in their role as information professionals, to provide guidance and support to their own institutions for creating a consistent definition of FGS across campus.

For research on FGS, provide a clear definition of FGS to participants and to readers because our study's findings suggest it is likely that both groups that both have encountered varied definitions of FGS. Consider developing an approach like Darrah et al. (2022), who studied multiple levels or categories of FGS. For example, do the experiences of FGS whose considered family members have not completed a degree but have some college experience differ from those whose family members have no college experience at all?

Finally, remember that FGS are a heterogeneous group and that FGS status is only one part of a student's identity. Students' experiences with academia and academic libraries may also be profoundly shaped by race, gender, socioeconomic status, age, (dis)ability, and other demographic variables. Our study points to a need for more intersectional research, including additional research exploring: a) how the FGS term functions in higher education and to what extent the category itself may function simultaneously as an identity, a useful concept for examining inequities, and a barrier to student support; b) to what extent students who are uncertain about whether or not they meet the criteria for FGS opt-in, self-select out, or are excluded by others from partaking in resources or community meant for FGS, and to what extent this is correlated with other axes of systemic marginalization and privilege; and c) how libraries' adoption of the FGS category for targeted support and outreach impacts the student experience.

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Assessing the State of Publicly Available Library Accessibility Information: Guidelines Based on a Review of Policies at SUNY Libraries

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Policy language plays a central role in ensuring that academic libraries are accessible and inclusive to patrons with disabilities. However, relevant accessibility information is often missing from publicly available library policies. This article uses findings from a content analysis of SUNY libraries' public collection development and accessibility policies to gain insight into current trends and develop best practices in the creation of accessibility policy language. Further, it also offers tools and principles for evaluating existing policies.

Introduction

According to recent reports by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), over 19% of undergraduate students report having a disability (NCES, n.d.) and just one-third of college students with disabilities disclosed their disability to their institution (NCES, 2022). As a result, a significant number of students may not be receiving the services they require or may not be aware of services that are tailored to their specific needs. Libraries can provide better support if they develop and maintain public policies with clear language regarding accessibility. Providing this information on the library's website, which acts as a digital front door, is essential to be transparent and welcoming to all patrons (Power and LeBeau, 2009, p. 56) and allows disabled patrons to plan their visits (Brunskill, 2020).

This study examines two essential policies that libraries need to have to facilitate accessibility: the collection development policy (CDP) and the accessibility policy. The study analyzes documented accessibility policies and CDPs within State University of New York (SUNY) libraries for accessibility elements. A CDP outlines the framework and criteria for selecting materials and should explicitly address considerations and procedures relating to accessibility when acquiring electronic resources (Levenson, 2019, p. 213). Libraries must also have an accessibility policy or page, which should include a description of all library

operations and services supporting accessibility, on its website (Vaughan & Warlick, 2020, p. 2).

This study examines a wide range of SUNY academic libraries' current practices with the goal of generating useful observations, and ultimately best practices, applicable to other libraries. A variety of SUNY colleges and universities can be found throughout the state, including research universities, liberal arts colleges, technical colleges, health centers, and community colleges. This breadth of institution types, and the many different research needs served by these libraries, makes SUNY a useful sample for evaluating these types of policies. Moreover, as with many large library systems, SUNY has enacted a system-wide accessibility mandate requiring all its libraries to be accessible to persons with disabilities, which offers an opportunity to explore the initial impact of this type of mandate. This study examines how SUNY libraries have incorporated accessibility guidelines into their publicly available policies to comply with these requirements, and to improve accessibility. The insights from this study have been used to develop recommended best practices both for evaluating existing policies and developing new or improved policy language. Those interested in implementing policies and procedures that support accessibility can find practical insights and strategies from this analysis and the resulting best practices.

Background

SUNY is the public higher education system for the state of New York, with over 60 campuses spread throughout the state. It includes "a mix of 29 state-operated campuses and five statutory colleges—including research universities, liberal arts colleges, specialized and technical colleges, health science centers, land-grant colleges—and 30 community colleges" (SUNY, n.d.-a). In total, these campuses offer over 4,000 undergraduate majors and grant over 96,000 degrees each year (SUNY, n.d.-b). Each campus has its own leadership, infrastructure, and services, including libraries. Although these libraries regularly collaborate on projects, each has its own policies, collections, and services to meet the unique needs of their communities. The flexibility of the system leads to significant differences in how policies are written and applied.

In June of 2019, the SUNY Trustees adopted the Electronic and Information Technology (EIT) Accessibility Policy, which applies to all campuses with a goal of "ensur[ing] appropriate campus and system-level commitment to support equal and integrated access to all of its programs, services, and activities, particularly for individuals with disabilities, especially in the realm of electronic and information technologies" (Office of Information Technology, 2019). Each institution was tasked with developing an Accessibility Plan to achieve this goal, leading many SUNY libraries to seek to improve accessibility processes, policies, and documentation. These efforts included the 2020 formation of the SUNY Library Accessibility Cohort, of which the authors served as inaugural members (SUNY Library Services, 2022).

In light of this recent policy, the aim of our study is to identify and analyze current accessibility practices in SUNY libraries' publicly available collection development and accessibility policies by conducting a content analysis of these policies. We collected all collection development and accessibility policy language from these libraries and used a standardized set of questions to analyze and categorize each library's approach. This data was then used to identify trends within the SUNY system, to compare the policies of SUNY libraries to those of outside institutions, and to identify best practices for libraries interested in making policy improvements.

Literature Review
Accessibility in Libraries
Accessibility in all aspects of library operations is essential for equitable and inclusive access to information and education, which the American Library Association (ALA) has identified as a core component of the Library Bill of Rights (2018). This commitment is codified in many institutional mission statements and mandates, such as SUNY's EIT accessibility policy. Beyond this mission-driven commitment to access, higher education institutions have a legal obligation to make their libraries accessible under state and federal law, including the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (1990). Failure to comply with these requirements can result in legal enforcement by the Department of Education and/or legal action taken by individuals with disabilities (e.g., Regents of the University of California & Disability Rights Advocates, 2013).

Though approaches to accessibility vary significantly between libraries, the major components of accessibility include spaces, services, web presence, and both print and electronic collections. It is often particularly complex for a library to ensure it meets the obligation of having its electronic collections accessible to all users (DeLancey & Ostergaard, 2016, p. 181). As part of SUNY's EIT accessibility policy, institutions are required to follow industry standards and best practices when purchasing and renewing e-resources. A recommended method is to check that e-resources adhere to web accessibility standards, such as Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act and the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C) Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) (Schmetzke, 2015). Whenever possible, libraries should review a Voluntary Product Accessibility Template (VPAT) which describes how the product complies with accessibility requirements and is provided by many vendors, particularly those that work frequently with academic libraries (Falloon, 2017, p. 141).[*]

Policies
Library policies play a crucial role in not only the operation of the library but also the way patrons understand the library. At its core, "a policy is actually a type of position statement. It explains the organization's stand on a subject and why there's a rule. It tells the reader how the organization intends to operate" (Campbell, 1998, p. 1). As Nelson and Garcia (2003) noted in their book *Creating Policies for Results: From Chaos to Clarity*, "library policies define what a library values" (p. 8). As such, publicly posted policy language serves as an important way of codifying and communicating library values to both library staff and members of the wider campus community. These dual purposes are both relevant to the role that policies can have with respect to library access for disabled patrons. As Bodaghi, et al. found in their 2016 study, "the lack of a written and clear policy regarding the types of support librarians have to provide for VIPs [visually impaired persons] caused them to feel guilty to request more help from the librarians" (p. 91). This highlights the importance of carefully considering what information is conveyed through policies, particularly regarding accessibility. Most library accessibility policies address accessibility of library spaces and services, while only a minority provide information pertaining to the accessibility of databases and collections as part of their accessibility and collection development policies (Brunskill et al., 2021, p. 944; Pionke, 2020, p. 233; Power & LeBeau, 2009, p. 59; Schmetzke, 2015, p. 133).

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* A completed VPAT is called an Accessibility Conformance Report (ACR), but the acronym VPAT will be used for this article as it is generally used to refer to both the template and the completed reports.

Collection Development Policies

In addition to library accessibility policies, information pertaining to the accessibility of databases and collections should also be included in collection development policies (CDPs). A CDP "is a plan that guides the library's selection of materials, deselection, and treatment of materials once acquired or obtained through contracts and licenses" (Johnson, 2018, p. 82). Academic libraries can utilize CDPs to communicate their "collection priorities, initiatives, goals, and cooperative agreements" (Pickett et al., 2011, p. 166) internally among library staff and externally to their communities, including fulfilling accreditation and reporting requirements (Gregory, 2019, p. 29; Torrence et al., 2013, p. 163). Additionally, libraries can use them for training purposes (Mangrum & Pozzebon, 2012, p. 109), to help ensure that selectors understand the collection's focus (Osa, 2003, p. 134), and to maintain consistency in procedures (Gregory, 2019, p. 29).

By clearly describing rationales for the collection's goals and practices, CDPs can enable libraries to demonstrate accountability to their communities (Pickett et al., 2011, p. 166), defend themselves against external challenges to their methods, protect against pressure to obtain or remove specific materials (Gregory, 2019, pp. 31-32), and preserve intellectual freedom (Garnar & Magi, 2021., pp. 37-39). Furthermore, a visible policy can clarify why certain items cannot be purchased (Johnson, 2018, p. 87) or why previously purchased items are canceled, for example inaccessible electronic resources (Falloon, 2016a, p. 8).

In scholarly literature, CDPs are widely acknowledged as indispensable tools for academic libraries (Levenson, 2019, p. 207). Even so, studies reveal that many academic libraries lack CDPs or refrain from making documentation public (Levenson, 2019, pp. 208-209). Moreover, many libraries with CDPs do not update them frequently, only reviewing them every five years or more (Clement & Foy, 2010, p. 15; Torrence et al., 2013, p. 162). A policy from five to ten years ago is outdated and will not address newer formats, current priorities and philosophies, and collection limitations (Levenson, 2019, p. 210), particularly in the case of e-resources.

Creating and maintaining a CDP can be difficult and cumbersome (Snow, 1996, p. 193). The absence or neglect of such a policy is generally attributed to a shortage of staff, funding, time, and/or resources (Straw, 2003, p. 84). Some libraries without policies contend that it is safer not to publicize their internal guidelines (Vickery, 2004, p. 340). Critics of CDPs describe them as unnecessary (Snow, 1996, p. 191), static (Hazen, 1995, p. 29), "too prescriptive or too vague" (Mangrum & Pozzebon, 2012, p. 109), and difficult to adapt to more contemporary collection building practices and influences (Horava & Levine-Clark, 2016, p. 98). In his article weighing the merits of CDPs, Vickery (2004) states that "in practice most libraries either do not have an up-to-date policy document, or do not make effective use of it when they do have one" (p. 337).

Interestingly, among libraries with CDPs, the policies vary widely (Gregory, 2019, p. 29), from traditional, comprehensive plans to brief statements (Horava & Levine-Clark, 2016, pp. 97-98). As Horava and Levine-Clark (2016) confirmed, some libraries have simplified or eliminated their policies to be more agile in their decision-making (p. 101).

In addition to traditional print monographs, the administration of electronic resources should be governed by a comprehensive CDP that is publicly disclosed and continually updated (Johnson, 2018, p. 92; Mangrum & Pozzebon, 2012). Johnson (2018) recommends that CDPs include factors specific to e-resources, such as selection criteria, accessibility for people with disabilities, and for-

mat preferences (p. 92). Professional organizations, such as the ALA, have also emphasized the importance of including accessibility in the selection process (Schmetzke, 2015, pp. 115-116). In 2009, the Council of the American Library Association recommended that "all libraries purchasing, procuring, and contracting for electronic resources and services require vendors to certify that they comply with Section 508 regulations, Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 2.0, or other criteria that become widely accepted as standards of accessibility evolve" (pp. 1-2). In determining whether products meet these standards, Levenson (2019) noted: "Vendors in compliance with these standards should be able to supply their Voluntary Product Accessibility Template (VPAT) for consortia or individual institution subscriptions and purchases. This is an integral criterion to include in the CDP regarding the selection of e-resources" (p. 213). It is important to recognize that ongoing changes in web accessibility best practices and evolving legal requirements may also necessitate regular CDP reviews and updates (Levenson, 2019, p. 213).

Best practices recommend including accessibility criteria, statements, and technical requirements in a CDP, which clarifies how libraries approach e-resources and how vendors can comply (DeLancey & Ostergaard, 2018, pp. 8-9; Ostergaard, 2015, pp. 162-163; Schmetzke et al., 2015, p. 172). Unfortunately, research indicates that libraries often overlook accessibility when selecting resources and implementing policies (Schmetzke, 2015, p. 133). Schmetzke's 2015 study confirmed that libraries often neglect to incorporate accessibility elements into their CDPs (p. 133). A 2019 LYRASIS survey of over 1,000 galleries, libraries, archives, and museums revealed that only one-third of respondents had an accessibility policy for acquiring e-resources (Ashmore et al., 2020, p. 215). A study from 2018 determined that 20% of libraries surveyed had a policy, but most respondents reported that they only obtain accessible materials "some of the time" (Peacock & Vecchione, 2020, pp. 4-5).

Accessibility Policies

While libraries vary in how they share accessibility information with patrons, one common approach is to have a dedicated space for this information on their websites. For example, a 2016 survey of Association of Research Libraries (ARL) members found that posting on the library's website was the most common way of sharing information about accessibility (Spina & Cohen, 2018). In total, 94% of the surveyed libraries reported having accessibility information on their website (Spina & Cohen, 2018). Therefore, it is unsurprising that studies on library accessibility information have focused on examining what is included on these web accessibility pages rather than solely on information formally labeled as a policy.

An early example of such a project is the 2009 study by Power and LeBeau, which found that only slightly more than half of the websites surveyed included details on services for disabled patrons that "were easy to find and provided important basic information" (p. 60). A 2011 study of websites of libraries that are members of the Association of Research Libraries (ARL) found better results, with 88% of libraries having a disability services webpage, but did find that the actual content of those pages was widely variable (Cassner et al., 2011). A later review of ARL member websites in 2021 found only a slight increase to 93% having a disability services webpage. That study went on to conclude that:

> users with disabilities at ARL libraries who are trying to assess whether they will be able to successfully navigate the library space and find a suitable place to study, or get assistance other than book retrieval and information about accessibility

software, will typically not find the needed information on libraries' accessibility webpages. Indeed, they might not be able to even locate the accessibility page to begin with, given that fewer than half had a link to it from their homepage that was not concealed within a dropdown menu, and almost a quarter did not link to it from their homepage at all (Brunskill et al., 2021, p. 946).

Another recent study of library accessibility webpages, focused specifically on four-year degree granting institutions in Virginia, found that, "[o]f the 40 libraries examined in this study, only 11 (27.5%) included policy or program content related to library accessibility for patrons with disabilities on their official websites in the summer of 2018" (Vaughan & Warlick, 2020, p. 4). Taken together, these studies show that there is wide variation across institutions in how accessibility is addressed on their website, if it is addressed at all.

The importance of this publicly posted information can hardly be overstated. As Brunskill (2020) has argued, it can "help reduce barriers to access by allowing users with disabilities to review information about the library's accessibility resources, services, and facilities without requiring them to disclose information about their disability" (p. 769). During Brunskill's interviews with students with disabilities, "[m]ore than one participant indicated that the lack of needed information could lead them to either avoid visiting the library altogether or could lead to their being overwhelmed or frustrated once they arrive" (p. 778), demonstrating how publicly posting this information can have a direct impact on who feels welcome in the library.

A library accessibility policy can refer to any policy language that covers accessibility for disabled users from web accessibility to the accessibility of library facilities. As with all policies, these documents set the tone for how accessibility is addressed at the library. As Ashmore, et al. (2020) have noted: "[p]olicies are key to creating the framework to make accessibility a priority for libraries" (p. 215). In addition, policy language "can inform day-to-day decision making for practitioners, thereby reducing uncertainty and resulting in more seamless access to resources for users with disabilities" (Rosen & Grogg, 2019, p. 40), which is particularly important given that studies have shown "a lack of awareness of disability-related issues" (Oud, 2019, p. 177) among library employees and a lack of confidence in how to respond to inquiries regarding accessibility (Pionke, 2020).

Despite the impact these policies can have, they are not universally adopted at all institutions or with respect to all work done in libraries. While no comprehensive study has been conducted across all academic libraries in the United States, several smaller-scale studies have found that, despite its import, many libraries still lack accessibility policy language. The 2019 LYRASIS survey found that fewer than 30% of respondents had formal policy language regarding any types of digital content covered by the survey (Rosen & Grogg, 2019). A study of academic libraries in the Northwest concluded that "the libraries and universities considered often lacked a comprehensive policy to facilitate library services being able to meet those [accessibility] needs" (Peacock & Vecchione, 2020, p. 4). Furthermore, a 2020 study focused on institutional repositories found that only 25% of respondents had policy language around accessibility or even accessibility standards for content in institutional repositories (Anderson & Leachman, 2020).

Research Questions

Based on our review of the literature and our knowledge of the SUNY libraries, we developed the following research questions to guide our content analysis:

1. Have the libraries in our study made their own practices around accessibility publicly available through formal policies or other public, online documentation?
2. Do the libraries in our study address the accessibility of materials in their CDPs? For those that do, how is accessibility addressed?
3. Which types of accessibility information do libraries publicly address on their websites?
4. Does the nature of the online accessibility information shared by the libraries in our study differ from previous research findings found in the literature on this topic?
5. Based on our findings, what are the best practices for publicly sharing accessibility information on a library website?

Methods

Defining "Policy"

Though clear definitions of both collection development and accessibility policies are available throughout the literature, we found that, in practice, it was sometimes difficult to determine whether the language on a given webpage technically constituted a policy. Information about library practices and procedures often appeared without language clearly designating it as official policy; pages containing accessibility policy language, for example, might simply be titled "Accessibility," and CDP language might be included on a LibGuide labeled "Library Materials," for example. We chose to evaluate as library policy all language about library practices and procedures made available to users, whether or not the library labeled it "Accessibility Policy" or "Collection Development Policy." Though we had access to some internal policies, because accessibility information is most valuable when available to users with accessibility needs, only policies that were publicly available on a library's website were considered in this study (Brunskill, 2020, p. 769).

Collecting Policies

To ensure the assembly of a comprehensive list of policies, we thoroughly browsed each SUNY library's website and used Google searches to seek out policies that might be buried on the institution's site.[*] For example, to locate the CDP for SUNY Oneonta, one author would first click through all potentially relevant menus that branched from the library's homepage. Whether or not they located a CDP via that method, that author would then conduct a Google search for phrases such as "Oneonta library collection development" (without the quotation marks), review the results and rephrase the query until they were confident they had found all posted policy language. We collected links to all policies in a spreadsheet; at this stage, the authors included all "edge cases"—pages and documents about accessibility or collection development that may or may not ultimately be considered a "policy." At some institutions, multiple pages were relevant to accessibility and/or collection development, and we collected all links. To evaluate all policies on a level playing field, we used the Internet Archive Wayback Machine to collect snapshots of all pages linked in the spreadsheet as of May 2022.[†]

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* We did not evaluate SUNY's five statutory colleges in this study–four Cornell schools and colleges and the New York State College of Ceramics at Alfred University–as the SUNY EIT Policy does not apply to them.

† The Wayback Machine was unable to archive a small number of sites reviewed. In these cases, we reviewed the live webpage instead of an archived copy.

Evaluating Policies

Next, we used Google Forms to evaluate the content of these archived pages (see form text in Appendix). We inductively developed and honed each form by testing it against several different policies, evaluating the accuracy and appropriateness of the form content, and adjusting the content as necessary over several iterations. The form questions were initially drafted based on our collective expertise and experience in library accessibility within the SUNY system. Additionally, throughout this inductive process, we drew on studies such as Brunskill (2020), Brunskill, et al. (2021), and Ezell, et al. (2022) to ensure the questions were comprehensive and reflected general best practices identified in the literature. Questions from the final CDP review form include topics such as: "Is accessibility for users with disabilities mentioned explicitly?" and "Are VPATs specifically mentioned in the policy?" Questions from the accessibility policy review form include topics such as: "Is physical space accessibility covered?" and "Is circulating equipment and software covered?" Both forms included space for the addition of contextual remarks.

Each web page was reviewed and evaluated by two of the three authors. All evaluations were then reviewed for consistency: all three authors reviewed any discrepancies between evaluations and determined the most accurate assessment based on a re-review of the page and the contextual remarks in the original form response. During this process, we identified and excluded from the results several webpages which we determined did not include policy language, and which therefore did not align with the policy evaluation metrics in the forms.

Limitations

Availability of Policies

Although we decided that the optimal approach to this study was to evaluate only publicly available policies, this method has potential drawbacks. It is conceivable that some libraries have substantial accessibility standards or practices that are still works-in-progress or under review, and these efforts are not credited or acknowledged via our methods. Similarly, we only evaluated library policies but, when a library did not have a policy, we did not investigate why. At some institutions, the development and publication of policies—and particularly accessibility policies—may be seen as being under the purview of another unit on campus, rather than as a library-specific project. While we would argue that library-specific policies are of great value, as discussed in the literature review, we again may be eliding campus or unit-wide standards and efforts with the specificity of our parameters.

Defining "Accessibility"

One issue discovered across multiple CDPs was the ambiguity of the word "accessibility," which has multiple meanings not always clarified by context. This term is used to refer both to accessibility for disabled users and to accessibility in a variety of locations, such as references to accessing resources off campus. While in many cases the surrounding context makes the meaning clear, this is not always the case. As an example, the CDP of Reed Library at the State University of New York at Fredonia includes the statement that: "The primary criterion for selecting any item is its relevance to Fredonia's undergraduate and graduate curriculum. Other concerns when we evaluate information resources include their content, accessibility, and viability" (2022). For purposes of this study, we interpreted this as a reference to accessibility for disabled users, although that cannot be definitively determined in context. Such

ambiguity in language means that various readers of this policy, particularly those who are not library employees, may interpret the policy differently.

Asking the Right Questions

Lastly, we recognize that our assessment was only a first examination of what we considered "essential" to any given accessibility or CDP. Despite developing our assessment forms inductively and repeatedly testing our content evaluations before applying them to our entire policy dataset, we ultimately discovered that several policies mentioned accessibility elements we had not addressed in our questions, including service animals, emergency evacuation procedures, and sensory spaces. Future policy evaluations could examine how institutions make available accessibility information about these and other elements and determine if it is a best practice to include some, or all, the elements in policy language.

Results and Best Practices
Availability of Information

Ultimately, of the 59 SUNY campuses included in this study, we determined that 32 had a publicly available accessibility policy. Thirty-two campuses—though not necessarily the same campuses—also had a publicly available CDP. Seventeen campuses had both an accessibility and collection development policy, and 12 had neither policy. Just over half of campuses (31) had only one policy or the other.

The fact that so many institutions do not have any publicly available accessibility information was a significant finding. Given the vital role of policies in setting and communicating library values (Nelson & Garcia, 2003, p. 8), an absence of relevant and publicly available policy language could result in library decision-makers overlooking accessibility considerations. In addition, some patrons might conclude that the library does not prioritize accessibility and inclusion. Moreover, the existing evidence that patrons with disabilities do value and rely on the public availability of accessibility information (Brunskill, 2020), suggests that the absence of this information may deter some patrons from visiting the library or using its services. This means that, even if some libraries included in this research do have internal policy language related to accessibility considerations, this is likely insufficient to adequately serve all patrons.

Institution Type

Because SUNY includes so many different types of institutions, each with a library designed to meet the needs of the institution's specific programs and students, we were able to identify trends in how different types of institutions approach collection development and accessibility policy creation. Our study demonstrated that SUNY community colleges were significantly less likely to have publicly available collection development or accessibility policies than other types of institutions: only 13 out of 30 community colleges in the SUNY system had each type of policy, whereas over half of the nine doctoral degree granting institutions, 13 comprehensive colleges, and seven technology colleges had each type of policy.

Additionally, we noted that libraries at doctoral institutions (n = 7) were less likely than other types of institutions to include specific information about the accessibility of resources in their CDPs, with only two such institutions mentioning accessibility in those policies, and only one specifically addressing the accessibility of e-resources. Given the importance of research

collections, and particularly e-resources, for these types of institutions and the programs they offer, this seems potentially problematic and worthy of more study.

Commonly Covered Topics in Accessibility Policies

Of the elements we assessed, the one most frequently included in accessibility policies was instructions for requesting accommodations, with 31 of the 32 campuses including this information (see Figure 1). A large majority of policies also included library-specific contact information (n = 30), information about in-library accessibility equipment or software (n = 29), and information about the accessibility of physical spaces (n = 28). These findings are an important first step towards creating generalizable guidelines regarding the type of accessibility information that is relevant to most types of libraries and to a broad range of library patrons. While these commonly covered topics are far from the only important accessibility information that should be included in this type of public documentation, they do suggest some of the minimal guidance that should be considered by all libraries when creating accessibility policy language.

FIGURE 1
Elements Included in Accessibility Policies (n = 32)

Number of policies that include this element
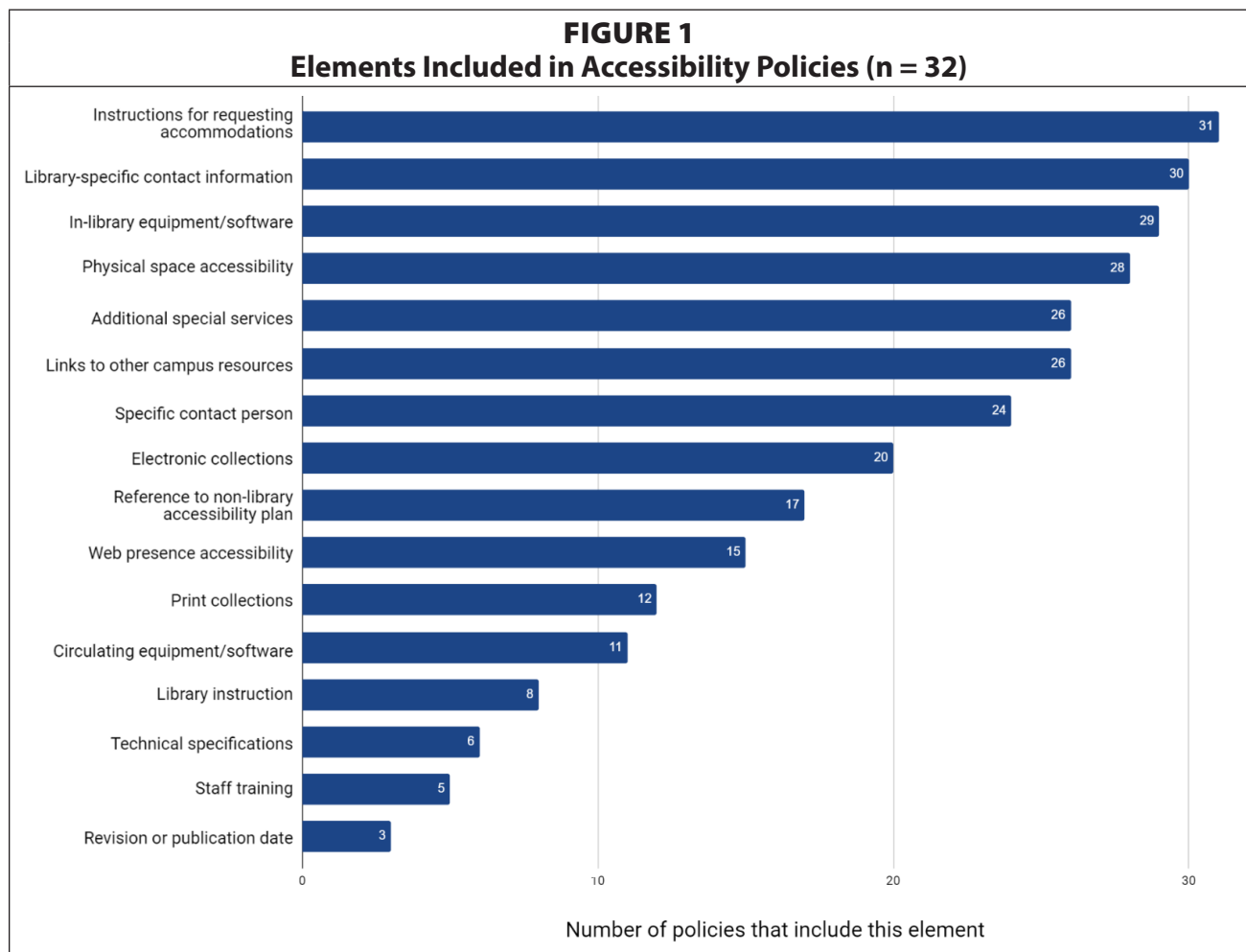
Topics Rarely Covered in Accessibility Policies

At the other end of the spectrum, most policies did not include a revision or publication date (n = 3), making it difficult for a user (or researcher) to determine how up to date the policy

language is. Only a few policies referenced staff training around accessibility issues (n = 5) or any specific technical standards to which library content adheres (n = 6). Explicitly stating the disability awareness and accessibility training that each staff member has received allows patrons to know what service level they can expect at the library.

Of the training topics and resources that were mentioned across these policies, most were focused on digital accessibility, though three specifically mentioned Project ENABLE, which offers both resources and free, self-paced online training modules and certifications on topics related to accessibility and disability inclusion in libraries, and whose stated goal is to "raise the level of librarians' understanding of and sensitivity for the library and information needs of students with disabilities" (Project ENABLE, n.d.). Only one institution specified how many staff members had completed accessibility training and none specified specific individuals or roles with this training. Given Pionke's (2020) findings that librarians generally feel that they do not have adequate knowledge and training to serve patrons with disabilities, this training demands greater attention in both the professional development of library staff and publicly posted accessibility policies. While these libraries not mentioning staff training does not necessarily mean that staff are not trained, the omission leaves patrons uncertain of the service level they will receive at the library and could therefore discourage them from visiting.

Only eight campuses included information about library instruction in their policies; this information varied significantly from brief mentions that library instruction accommodations were available, to detailed information about the specific technology used in library classrooms, and even to having a designated contact person for library instruction accessibility questions. Although eight out of 32 policies mentioning library instruction represents a higher percentage than found in studies by Ezell et al. (2022), and Graves and German (2018, pp. 565-567), it is nevertheless a disappointingly low percentage given the importance of library instruction at these campuses. As Graves and German note, it is vital that libraries provide information about both the accessibility of instruction spaces and how to request accommodations. In their words, "[s]tudents taking part in library instruction as a part of the information literacy program should be able to discover if the library has the capacity to fulfill their learning needs" (p. 571). Without this information, students may arrive at the library only to discover that library instruction is inaccessible to them, that it is too late for accommodations to be made, and that they may, therefore, be excluded from fully participating in that instruction.

Accessibility Language in CDPs

It is more difficult to generalize about the results of our assessment of CDPs (see Figure 2); of the elements we assessed, the most frequent item included (a stated preference for either electronic or print materials) was represented in fewer than half the policies (n = 17). Only 11 policies explicitly mentioned accessibility for people with disabilities. No policies (n = 0) specifically mentioned VPATs. As discussed in our literature review, these assessments are critical to evaluating the accessibility of vendor-provided digital material. This suggests that a consideration of accessibility is a gap in many CDPs across a variety of types and sizes of institutions and is an area needing more development.

In a particularly noteworthy omission, only six of the CDPs reviewed mentioned the accessibility of e-resources for people with disabilities. Some of these referred to campus

FIGURE 2
Elements Included in Collection Development Policies (n=32)

Number of policies that include this element
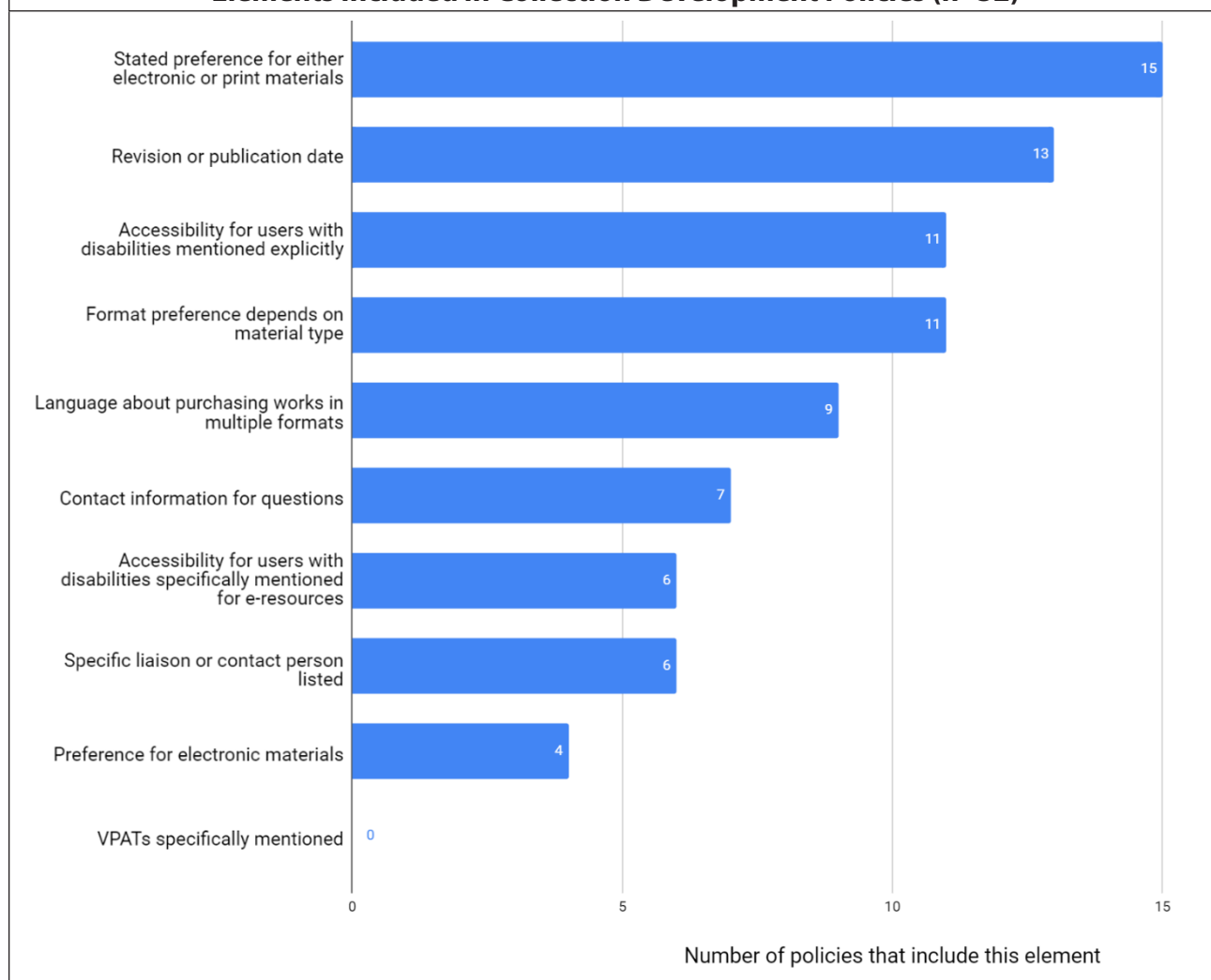
standards or SUNY's EIT policy, but none specifically referenced web accessibility standards or VPATs. Since VPATs are a common tool used to track accessibility features and issues in electronic resources, the authors were surprised to find that VPATs were never specifically addressed in the CDPs reviewed. This was particularly notable given that approximately a third of CDPs mentioned accessibility for users with disabilities, and at least some institutions specifically addressed VPATs in their accessibility policies. As discussed above, the literature persuasively argues that CDPs demonstrate libraries' priorities, goals, and standards, and that they set a process for collection development work for evaluating new acquisitions. The fact that two-thirds of the SUNY libraries with publicly available CDPs do not discuss accessibility at all, and none of them discuss VPATs, could be interpreted—both by those working in the library and by patrons reading the CDPs—to mean that library do not prioritize these topics.

Incorporating strong language around VPATs, and about specific web accessibility standards, into CDPs can help guide library personnel selecting items for purchase and can demonstrate to patrons how the library approaches accessibility. Weber State University's Stewart Library has a public draft CDP that demonstrates how VPATs can be integrated in a meaningful way. Their draft CDP includes an accessibility section which states:

> Purchased and licensed resources must be as accessible as possible and particularly address the needs of patrons with disabilities. VPAT (voluntary product accessibility template) compliance should be a minimum requirement, with very few exceptions. Exceptions should come with discounted pricing to address the cost of remediation and individual accommodations (n.d.).

Alternatively, some libraries specify the web accessibility standards with which electronic resources must comply. Grand Valley State University Libraries' (2022) CDP, for example, states:

> At minimum, licensed content and platforms comply with the Level AA criteria of the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0 by the World Wide Web Consortium's Web Accessibility Initiative. Content and platforms which are not compliant must show reasonable progress toward compliance, or otherwise hold the library harmless should an Authorized User file a complaint.

These types of robust accessibility statements demonstrate the library's stance on accessibility, provide guidance to library personnel reviewing resources, and offer clear information for outside parties interested in knowing more about the accessibility levels they can expect.

Collection Development Policy Language About Formats

In our analysis, we checked whether libraries noted a preference for electronic or print formats in their CDPs. Over half of the libraries (n = 17) did not list such a preference. Of those 17 policies, many indicated that it depended on the type of material (n = 11). Some specified a preference for electronic formats (n = 4), although only one of those four libraries cited accessibility as a factor in that preference. It would have been more helpful if we had specified whether the format preference applied to journals or monographs. Following up with libraries that indicated a preference would help determine whether accessibility is an important reason for such a preference. Twenty-eight percent of libraries (n = 9) included language about purchasing materials in multiple formats, which can help to accommodate learners with disabilities and different learning styles (Association of Specialized, Government & Cooperative Library Agencies, 2001).

Clarity and Simplification Are Key

This review of policy language demonstrated that virtually all accessibility policies would benefit from a clearly organized structure and overall simplification. Very few policies had a clear and consistent approach to organization, such as grouping information by function area or physical location within the library. Among those that did section the text by topic, the naming and organization of those sections was often arbitrary. In many cases, information was distributed across multiple webpages or tabs, requiring multiple clicks to find all relevant information tracked through the study instrument. This lack of organization could be particularly challenging for individuals with specific types of disabilities, and for those who use assistive devices that rely on page structure to navigate information efficiently. It could also hinder library employees looking for policy language from answering questions quickly, for example, at a library service point. Compounding the issue, pages and tab names

were often vague and did not clearly indicate the information that would be located there without navigating to it again, necessitating more clicks and increasing the likelihood that users might miss key information.

It is quite evident that consolidating relevant content onto a single page whenever possible, as well as labeling pages and tabs clearly are key to presenting an effective and usable accessibility policy. A recommended best practice, supported by existing studies (e.g., Brunskill, 2020), is to develop an outline of the information with distinct headings and subheadings to simplify navigation both visually and for assistive technologies. In many cases, this would also make it easier to find the relevant language using a search engine. A good example of well-organized accessibility information is the Michigan State University Libraries (n.d.) website. Each page in the navigation menu is clearly labeled and the content on each page adheres to a clear outline structure. Making these types of changes can improve clarity for all patrons and is particularly helpful to those using assistive tools, such as screen readers.

Options to Ask for Help Are Often Included in Accessibility Policies
Nearly all the libraries studied included contact information in their accessibility policies. All but two policies included a library-specific contact—such as an email that goes to a group responsible for accessibility, or the contact information for a specific service point—for questions about accessibility and related topics. Moreover, 24 of the policies included the contact information for a specific individual within the library who could assist with these inquiries, which is consistent with the best practices outlined in the literature (e.g., Longmeier et al., 2022, p. 835). Twenty-six of the policies also offered links to other related services on campus, such as non-library locations with assistive technologies, the campus disability services office, or other accessibility resources available at the institution.

By contrast, only a quarter of CDPs included contact information. While this study did not investigate the reason for this discrepancy, it may be because CDPs are updated less frequently or are seen as having a primarily internal audience. Some SUNY libraries may have recently added a library-specific contact for accessibility questions in their accessibility policies—because the Library Accessibility Guidelines, issued in the wake of the SUNY's EIT Policy, require it (SUNY EIT Accessibility Committee, 2019)—but did not extend the same considerations to CDPs. This lack of contact information, however, makes it difficult for patrons to follow up with questions or concerns about accessibility, particularly when accessibility information is not included in the CDP either.

Eligibility for Accommodations
In our review of 32 policies, we found that a large majority of accessibility policies (n = 31) included generic information (e.g., a contact email address) about how to request accommodations either in the library or on campus more broadly, but very few policies specified who would be eligible for such accommodations or what the request process entailed. This may be, in part, because other departments control accommodations on some campuses; nevertheless, providing this information, or clearly linking to it, would help patrons to determine whether they qualify for the supports they need to use the library.

Maintenance of Up-to-Date Policies
Many policies did not include either a publication or revision date, making it difficult to

determine whether they had been updated recently. Only 9% (n = 3) of accessibility policies included a date. This is consistent with the outcomes of Ezell et al. (2022), who found that nine percent of accessibility pages they surveyed listed the last time the page was updated (p. 232). By contrast, around 40% (n = 13) of CDPs listed a date, perhaps because CDPs are generally more formal documents. Of these, approximately half (n = 6) were updated within the last five years, while the other half (n = 7) were updated within the last six to 12 years. Of those CDPs without explicit dates, some were clearly outdated.

It is best practice for every policy to have a publication or revision date to ensure it remains current. Review and revision are essential for keeping policies effective and reflecting changes, especially for e-resources. If a policy becomes outdated and does not reflect accurate information and current practices, it should be removed from public view. Additionally, it is a best practice to include language about the frequency with which policies should be reviewed.

As an interesting anecdotal observation, some of the CDPs we reviewed were only available in PDF format, which can pose its own accessibility problems for people using some assistive technologies. None of the accessibility policies we examined appeared solely as PDFs.

Additional Areas for Future Study

By necessity, this study analyzed policy language at SUNY libraries at a specific moment. As SUNY's EIT Policy has only been in place since 2019, and as many of the policies reviewed are either undated or were last updated prior to that time, a potential future avenue for research would be to review policies again in few years to see whether they change in response to the EIT Policy. At the time of our review, only a little more than half of the SUNY libraries had accessibility policy language on their public-facing websites, and only about a third of them had public-facing CDPs that specifically mentioned accessibility for users with disabilities. A follow-up study could determine whether the EIT Policy is successful in increasing these numbers. Additionally, as discussed in the limitations section above, other accessibility topics could have been added to this study and would be interesting avenues for future research.

Another topic that is ripe for further research is why libraries rarely mention VPATs in CDPs and what techniques they use to evaluate the accessibility of electronic resources as part of the collection development process. It would be helpful to know whether those charged with writing and updating CDPs omit VPATs because they believe that VPATs are more appropriately discussed in accessibility policies, or if those responsible for collection development lack awareness of VPATs. It would also be useful to examine how accessibility is or is not considered in collection development decisions, including what standards and tools are used to evaluate electronic resources prior to subscription. While this study observed that VPATs are not mentioned in any SUNY library's publicly available CDP, it was not possible to determine from this research whether VPATs or any other accessibility standards are regularly considered during the review of electronic resources.

It would also be useful to research the rationale for leaving out specific references to VPATs or web accessibility standards. For example, it is possible that some libraries specifically chose to focus on the SUNY EIT accessibility policy language as an indirect reference to the specific tools they use to ensure accessibility; however, this study's methodology did not allow for a determination of these types of motivations. Further research in this area could

fill in this gap in knowledge. For example, a future project to interview librarians at each of these institutions could add additional insights into the reasons for specific choices and allow for further evaluation of non-public policy language.

Conclusion

While our research finds that many SUNY libraries offer valuable accessibility information on their websites, it also reveals opportunities for ongoing improvement at SUNY libraries and beyond. For libraries with publicly available CDPs and accessibility policies, this study highlights the importance of continually reexamining, enhancing, and updating policy language and procedures. Our analysis and the questionnaires we developed through this project can provide a starting point for evaluating existing policy language and for creating a process for continued improvement. For libraries that do not currently have publicly available accessibility language, our research emphasizes the importance of this language, demonstrates its adaptability for libraries of all sizes and types, and offers some concrete best practices to jumpstart the process of creating this documentation.

For SUNY and other systems or library consortia, this research and the related best practices may also indicate a need for model language that libraries can use in writing accessibility-related policies, or for documentation that helps walk librarians through the process of creating this type of policy language. Furthermore, librarians may benefit from consulting disability services on campus and students with disabilities when developing these policies. By offering accessibility information on their website, libraries have the opportunity to demonstrate that they prioritize accessibility and to create a welcoming environment for all library users.

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Appendix. Review of Collection Development Policies

Email

What school's policy are you reviewing?

Is accessibility for users with disabilities mentioned explicitly?

     ☐ Yes
     ☐ No

Comments?

Is accessibility for patrons with disabilities specifically mentioned for e-resources?

     ☐ Yes
     ☐ No

Comments?

Are VPATs specifically mentioned in the policy?

     ☐ Yes
     ☐ No

Comments?

Is there a preference for print or electronic in the policy?

     ☐ Yes, preference for print
     ☐ Yes, preference for electronic
     ☐ Yes, depends on format*
     ☐ No

If yes in the question above, is accessibility listed as a reason?

     ☐ Yes
     ☐ No

Comments?

Is there any language about purchasing works in multiple formats?

     ☐ Yes
     ☐ No

Additional comments about the format language?

Is contact information provided for questions?

     ☐ Yes
     ☐ No

Is a specific liaison or contact person listed?

     ☐ Yes
     ☐ No

Comments on the contact information?

Is there a date on the policy?

     ☐ Yes
     ☐ No

Is there a policy publication/revision date on the policy? (time stamps, such as those on Springshare, do not count)

Additional Comments?

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* Our form used the word "format" throughout the analysis process. When reviewing our results, we realized we had not noticed that this should more precisely read "material type"—that is, whether an item is a serial, book, reference item, etc.

Review of Accessibility Policies

Email

What school's policy are you reviewing?

Is physical space accessibility covered?

    ☐ Yes

    ☐ No

Comments?

Is web presence accessibility covered? (i.e., website, related systems like LibGuides, social media, etc.)

    ☐ Yes

    ☐ No

Comments?

Are print collections covered?

    ☐ Yes

    ☐ No

Comments?

Are electronic collections covered? (i.e., databases, ebooks, streaming video, etc.)

    ☐ Yes

    ☐ No

Comments?

Is in-library equipment and software covered?

    ☐ Yes

    ☐ No

Comments?

Is circulating equipment and software covered?

    ☐ Yes

    ☐ No

Comments?

Are special services or supports covered? (i.e., book retrieval, additional support, format conversion, etc.)

    ☐ Yes

    ☐ No

Comments?

Is library instruction covered?

    ☐ Yes

    ☐ No

Comments?

Are technical specifications listed? (i.e., WCAG conformance levels)

    ☐ Yes

    ☐ No

Comments?

Are instructions about how to request accommodations included? (i.e., who is eligible for book retrieval, access to specialized materials, help with assistive technology, etc.)

    ☐ Yes

    ☐ No

Comments?
Is staff training covered?
    □ Yes
    □ No
Comments?
Is library-specific contact information provided for questions?
    □ Yes
    □ No
Comments?
Is a specific liaison or contact person within the library listed?
    □ Yes
    □ No
Comments?
Are there links to other on-campus resources?
    □ Yes
    □ No
Comments?
Is the policy arranged by disability type or library functional area or some other system?
    □ Disability Type (i.e., specific resources for autistic patrons or blind patrons)
    □ Library Functional Area (i.e., organized by library service point or department)
    □ Physical Area (i.e., floor, branch, etc.)
    □ Unclear
    □ Other:
Does the policy mention any non-library accessibility plan?
    □ No, None of the below
    □ EIT Accessibility Plan
    □ Campus-wide Accessibility Plan
    □ Other:
Is there a policy publication/revision date on the policy? (time stamps, such as those on Springshare, do not count)
    □ Yes
    □ No
If there is a date, what is the date on the policy?
Additional Comments?

A Bibliometric Study of Art Exhibition Reviews: Intersectionality, Implications, and Impact across Academic and Research Collections

Emilee Mathews

A limited number of interlocking institutions provide career opportunities within contemporary visual art, which affects both who is seen and written about. This paper compares the proportions of recent art exhibition reviews and catalogs to artists' race and gender, and how that is reflected in library collections. Overall, publications covered women artists, particularly White women, more frequently than men. In contrast, library collections skewed heavily toward including White men. The study's findings are useful not only for art library collection development, but also demonstrates one way—distinctive because of its subject focus and intersectional approach—to evaluate library collections.

Artist, activist, and educator Pindell describes how the exclusivity of the "closed circle which links museums, galleries, auction houses, collectives, critics and art magazines" acts as a gate-keeping mechanism, which leads to a lack of opportunity for artists of color to show their work (1997, p. 7). Galleries and magazines perform specific roles in elevating art to the public: their endorsement confers status. Galleries represent artists, akin to agents who represent actors and other creatives. Artists contract with galleries to promote their work; the galleries, in turn, receive a portion of the sales profits. Gallery representation is crucial to many artists' success as it provides exhibition opportunities; the resultant exposure helps artists not only sell work but also opens more career opportunities in the future (Bhandari & Melber, 2017, pp. 148–59). Magazines include content on topics they consider to be of interest, and then circulate it more widely to their readers, thus extending its impact (Allen, 2016, pp. 13–14, 15).

Art exhibition reviews are a nexus between galleries and magazines. These reviews are published in major magazines and newspapers, and they guide public understanding of artists' work. Also, they are often the main evidence available for scholars to analyze regarding contemporaneous critical reception. Likewise, exhibition catalogs promote and document shows and are at times the only record of what works were included in a show. More highly produced catalogs include curatorial essays, interviews, installation views, provenance, bibliographies, and other significant scholarly information. As such, these publications are essential to the study of art and are a major information source collected by art libraries (Back, 2018; Jones, 1978; Jones & Scott Gibson, 1986).

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Pindell has called for "A statistical study relative to artists of color and art magazine articles and reviews" to understand implications of relative gallery representation (1997, p. 7). Building on a decades-long history of activism—by Pindell and others—that holds the art world accountable to increased opportunity equity, this study focuses on the role of periodicals and catalogs in contemporary art and, by extension, on the role of libraries that collect such materials. The study builds on an existing dataset, which captures the demographics of artists represented by top tier galleries in the 2016–2017 New York art season (Case-Leal, 2017) via a census of reviews, as well as exhibition catalogs, to assess media coverage proportionality. The project measures whether there are significant differences in distribution for a particular race or gender of artist and uses intersectional approaches to detect how race and gender interrelate. This study's investigation of the data explores the following questions: Is there a discernible difference in the artists' shows proportion versus the frequency of reviews they receive? What approaches distinguish periodicals in their respective coverage? How do periodicals with an available library subscription model perform in comparison to those that are freely available online? Finally, do exhibition catalogs held in library collections equitably reflect the field of artistic production encompassed by these gallery shows?

By isolating and illuminating one of the links in the "closed circle" Pindell discusses, the research questions interrogate who is celebrated in the art world in publications and, in turn, explores what is captured in library collections.

Literature Review
Diversity Audits
Diversity audits of collections vary but generally measure the extent to which library collections provide access to a broad spectrum of topics and authors. In reviewing the literature, this study evaluated researchers' reasoning regarding the importance of this form of assessment; the diversity they analyze; the subjects and formats they focus on; and further recommendations for collections.

Rationales for diversity audits encompass multiple aspects of the academic and research library mission. Pickett (2009) discussed how indexing Black studies scholarship in Web of Science not only supports faculty through tenure and promotion, with their highly used impact metrics, but also legitimizes the discipline. Vega García (2000) exposed the inability of Association of Research Libraries (ARL) members to support Latino/a studies research, demonstrating a pattern of consistent collections gaps. Manuell et al. (2019) highlighted the impact for design faculty both at their institution and more broadly across their country. Emerson and Lehman (2022) and Ciszek and Young (2010) considered students' experience of the library in augmenting and extending student learning outcomes, as well as their overall sense of belonging. Tillay and Chapman (2019) contextualized the library's role in the information lifecycle and concluded that libraries not capturing information limits discoverability for future creators. Stone (2020) juxtaposed the collection with student demographics at his specific institution; Ciszek and Young (2010) highlighted the increase of diverse students, faculty, and disciplines in higher education. Many authors compared trends in their collections against the U.S. census, arguing that collections should aim toward proportionality of current demographics (Emerson & Lehman, 2022; Mathews, 2021, 2022; Stone, 2020; Vega García, 2000). Some also contrasted their findings with the specific demographic characteristics of the most comparable profession (Mathews, 2021, 2022; Stone, 2020).

Studies surveyed race/ethnicity (Pickett, 2009; Vega García, 2000), gender (Ingold, 2007), or both to varying degrees (Emerson & Lehman, 2022; Mathews, 2021, 2022; Stone, 2020). Additionally, sexuality (Emerson & Lehman, 2022; Stone, 2020), nationality (Manuell et al., 2019; Stone, 2020) and publication location (Manuell et al., 2019) added dimensionality to the question of what counts as diversity in the literature. All these studies audited the researchers' library collection across identity characteristics; however, the studies rarely provided intersectional information (i.e., indicate the authors' race and gender simultaneously). For example, Mathews' (2021, 2022) articles investigated women in architecture, including their race and ethnicity, meaning that the study did not capture information about men of color. To help differentiate overlapping factors of diversity, the current study uses not only race *or* gender in its analysis, but explicitly combines race *and* gender, thus creating specific categories for women of color, men of color, White women, and White men.

Many diversity audits examine content creators, as opposed to subjects, despite inherent challenges. As Price stated: "The author's race and ethnicity among other characteristics are important factors to know to build an inclusive collection, but we have few ways to easily assess this information accurately" (2022, p. 98). This puts researchers in the position of either finding a pre-existing dataset or trying to assemble their own, which adds author bias. Emerson and Lehman (2022) also questioned the ethics of who is or is not centered in a diversity audit. Tilley and Chapman (2019) avoided the pitfalls inherent in categorizing identity characteristics by using lists of women-directed films available on the web to determine how women are reflected in their library's DVD collection. If there were any doubts, Emerson and Lehman (2022) indicated the characteristic as unknown, particularly for sexuality and for race. Like Emerson and Lehman, Manuell et al. (2019), Mathews (2021, 2022), and Stone (2020) assembled similar methodologies which each examined websites and other information repositories wherein their subjects (i.e. the artists) were likely to self-identify race, gender, sexuality, or other identity characteristic; however, unlike Emerson and Lehman (2022), they did incorporate assumptions in their respective datasets.

Regarding article subject matter, a few studies examined diversity audits and the arts. Stone (2020) addressed play publishing and the respective demographics of playwrights. Manuell et al. (2019) evaluated their university's monographic holdings across art and design; and Mathews (2021, 2022) studied architectural trade periodicals and their respective coverage of featured firms with women in leadership.

The literature analyzes an array of formats: monographic (Ciszek & Young, 2010; Emerson & Lehman, 2022; Manuell et al., 2019), DVDs (Tillay & Chapman, 2019); and playscripts (Stone, 2020). A few audited periodicals. Vega García (2000) investigated Latino/a studies and African American studies periodicals holdings in ARL member institutions and determined that the former lags behind the latter. Pickett (2009) found that Web of Science has a smaller portion of Black studies titles than those of women's studies titles, despite affirming the periodicals' eligibility compared against Web of Science's inclusion criteria. Pickett's study was influenced by Ingold's (2007), which compared women's studies journals across several key gender studies databases, and established no outstanding frontrunner given the complexity of length of coverage, full text, and level of indexing. Mathews (2021, 2022) looked at article-level subjects, rather than periodical topics or holdings.

All researchers found varying degrees of insufficiency in their library's diverse holdings and all suggested recommendations to improve the collection's paucity. Proposals included

greater accountability for both libraries and publishers (Ingold, 2007; Pickett, 2009); increasing the amount of information known about content creators both in library authority systems as well as freely available resources such as Wikipedia (Tillay & Chapman, 2019); guidance on how policies and priorities could be shaped in future (Ciszek & Young, 2010; Emerson & Lehman, 2022); looking outside of mainstream sources (Emerson & Lehman, 2022; Stone, 2020); and providing a public-facing statement to overtly define diversity, as well as how the library plans to implement inclusion (Ciszek & Young, 2010). Emerson and Lehman (2022), Manuel et al. (2019), and Mathews (2022) recommend collaborating with the community to create and disseminate these resources and approaches.

Art Librarianship

Art librarianship professor and scholar Jones devoted several sections to finding exhibition information in her guides to art research methodology (1978, pp. 121–24; 1986, pp. 90–108). Museum and academic art librarians examined exhibition files, archives, and objects (Deutsch & McKay, 2016; Korkut, 2009; Melton, 1996; Wildenhaus, 2019), discussed the persistent significance of exhibition catalogs (Back, 2018; Kam, 2014); and made suggestions for how to incorporate into instruction and outreach (Beene et al., 2020). Fujita developed a digital bibliography to capture significant press on Black artists, including but not limited to reviews, that would not be included in article databases and print periodicals (Freeburg, 2020). Only one article explicitly addressed art exhibition reviews as its main subject: Wang and Ho's (2017) bibliometric analysis studied 20 years' worth of art exhibition reviews, over 40,000 from nearly 2,000 journals in the Arts and Humanities Citation Index. They found that a majority were published in English, predominantly by single authors, and most within five journals (pp. 63–64).

This literature review found no other art librarianship literature connecting exhibition publications to demographic proportions. This study offers a preliminary investigation of what such a study might look like and posits a replicable method for pursuing such analysis.

Materials and Methods

The Case-Leal (2017) dataset enabled me to use already attributed information about galleries and artists to build a dataset of publications about those groups.[*] The original dataset used a census approach to collect demographic attributes of approximately 1,600 artists who were represented by the top 45 New York galleries. I chose this dataset because it extensively documented major galleries in New York (i.e., an art capitol), was relatively recent, had been published and undergone review, and appeared to be in a machine actionable format.[†]

The dataset emerged from a class project on the arts and New York: students conducted research to measure demographic characteristics of artists represented by the chosen galleries (Vertanian, 2017). If they could not affirm race and gender through existing sources, they offered

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[*] Case-Leal's website on archive.org only has .png files showing the data. It also stated that source data could be provided upon request and provided an email address, unfortunately I received a bounce back in response to my inquiry.

[†] Please see the open-source dataset (Mathews, 2023) to compare information gathered in the Case-Leal dataset, against that which I provided with the help of a research assistant.

their best judgment.‡ Upon publication readers wrote in to correct mistakes, establishing some degree of intercoder reliability (Vertanian, 2017). I observed some lingering inconsistencies in the Case-Leal dataset, and corrected as part of this study's dataset (approximately 3% of artists).§

I also adjusted demographic category choices in the Case-Leal dataset. Man and woman replaced male and female as indicators of encultured gender rather than biological sex. The race/ethnic indicators at times described region of birth rather than race or ethnicity (e.g., Middle Eastern) and had no option for mixed race. I established metadata fields to better analyze the demographic information: I added all those who did not carry the White racial attribute into a new grouping called artists of color; and last, I documented an individual's intersectional identity, which included women of color, men of color, White women, and White men.

Publications Identified

Since the galleries were New York-based, I scoped the publications geographically as well to focus the study while still recognizing the importance of New York as both an art and publishing capital. An art librarian with over a decade of collection development and reference experience, I am familiar with art publications; for example, *Art in America, Art Newspaper, ARTnews,* and *Artforum International* all reputably purvey art information. Generalist newspapers and magazines such as *The New York Times* (*NYT*), *New Yorker*, and *Village Voice* also cover art exhibitions regularly. After consulting a list of major New York metropolitan area newspapers and testing for existence of reviews, I also included *Wall Street Journal (WSJ)* and *New York Observer.* However, in the contemporary media landscape, traditional newspapers and magazines no longer monopolize reporting on significant culture. After investigating for cogency, location, time period, and presence of reviews, I also included the arts and culture news websites *Timeout NY* and *Brooklyn Rail*, as well as art specific websites *Art F City, Artnet News, Hyperallergic,* and *Whitehot.* In all, this totaled 15 publications.

I hired a research assistant with a subject background in studio art and library science to gather information for 175 grant hours. The research assistant assembled a full list of exhibitions held by each of the selected galleries for the 2016–2017 art season—defined as September 1, 2016, to June 30, 2017—that also took place in the New York metropolitan area.¶

After confirming the show's eligibility for the dataset as described above, the research assistant searched for articles across individual titles. They accessed subscription-based newspapers through Ethnic Newswatch, Altpress Index, Access World News, as well as standalone newspaper archives such as *NYT* and *WSJ.* They keyword-searched exhibition title, gallery, and artist name, and limited date range to January 1, 2016, to December 31, 2017, to encompass upcoming, contemporaneous, and retrospective reviews. On average, they spent 60 minutes searching and recording information per show.

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‡ "Gender and race determination is not representative of how that artist self-identifies. When available, we looked at indicators used by publications (artist's writing, gallery statements, and press), but in the absence of this, race and gender were recorded based on how they were perceived by the reviewing author." https://web.archive.org/web/20170617002654/http://www.havenforthedispossessed.org/

§ McCormick et al.'s (2017) findings suggest that the process of using external evaluators to determine demographic identity is fairly accurate: approximately 80% accurate for race and 90% for gender. Judged by that measure, the Case-Leal dataset outperforms expectations for accurately attributing demographic characteristics.

¶ Some galleries have multiple locations across various metropoles (e.g., Gagosian and Hauser & Wirth) or may have temporary locations, such as participation in fairs (e.g., Art Miami Basel).

The research assistant also searched for the show in OCLC Worldcat to verify whether the gallery also produced an exhibition catalog. I vetted each potential catalog by ascertaining either in the catalog record or inspecting the bibliographic information in a physical copy of the monograph to state a variation of "this catalog was produced to accompany the show" with the corresponding artist, show, gallery, location, and dates. See Figure 1 for an example in a catalog record.

FIGURE 1
Exhibition Catalog Record Screenshot from the Dataset in OCLC*

More Author/Title Info:	[Prabhavathi Meppayil].
Physical Description:	14 pages : color illustrations ; 25 cm
Subjects:	*Faceted Application of Subject Terminology* Meppayil, Prabhavathi, 1965- Art, Indic Exhibition catalogs 2000-2099 *Library of Congress Subject Headings* Meppayil, Prabhavathi, 1965- Exhibitions Art, Indic 21st century Exhibitions *Répertoire de Vedettes-Matière* Meppayil, Prabhavathi, 1965- Expositions Art de l'Inde 21e siècle Expositions
Genre:	Exhibition catalogs. Exhibitions. Expositions.
Notes (General):	Catalog of an exhibition held at Pace, New York, October 28-December 23, 2016.
Bibliography:	Includes bibliographical references and index.
Database:	WorldCat
OCLC Number/Unique Identifier:	965756262

Note: Pertinent information is highlighted with a blue box. In the Notes (General) field, it reads: "Catalog of an exhibition held at Pace, New York, October 28–December 23, 2016."
*https://worldcat.org/en/title/1035249364.

Galleries Searched

To ensure the galleries in this study's data characterized the broad spectrum of demographic proportions and to provide flexibility with grant hour allotment, I sampled the galleries searched based on rankings provided by the Case-Leal (2017) dataset, from most to least racially and gender diverse. Through the sampling process, this study includes 16 of the original 45 galleries from the Case-Leal data.

Results

The Case-Leal data included 514 living, individual artists represented by the 16 galleries

investigated in this study; 145 of those artists had shows in the 2016–2017 season, and solo shows comprised 117.* To align artist demographic most closely to article coverage, the article dataset only included articles that featured solo shows and only reviewed that specific show. This resulted in a dataset with 133 articles.

Research Questions

This study's research questions were: 1. Is there a measurable difference in the artists' shows proportion versus the frequency of reviews they receive?; 2. Are there specific newspapers and magazines more or less likely to review exhibitions by women artists and/or artists of color?; 3. What changes between periodicals with an available library subscription model, in comparison to those that were freely available on the web?; 4. How do exhibition review findings compare to exhibition catalogs held in library collections?

Research Question 1: How Do Shows Compare to Reviews, Contextualized with Artists' Demographics?

The most frequent review publishers were *Artforum International*, *Artnet News*, *Brooklyn Rail* and *NYT*. These four publications totaled 76 articles out of the 133 total articles in the dataset: 59.1% despite encompassing 26.7% of titles under review. See Figure 2 for a comparison across these top publications, with demographic characteristics for all artists who had shows in each

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* There were 114 unique artists. Within the scope, three artists had two solo shows each: Carrie Mae Weems, Meleko Mokgosi, and Roxy Paine. I use the number 117 to calculate percentages in the Results section.

FIGURE 2
Shows Compared to Reviews in Top Publications
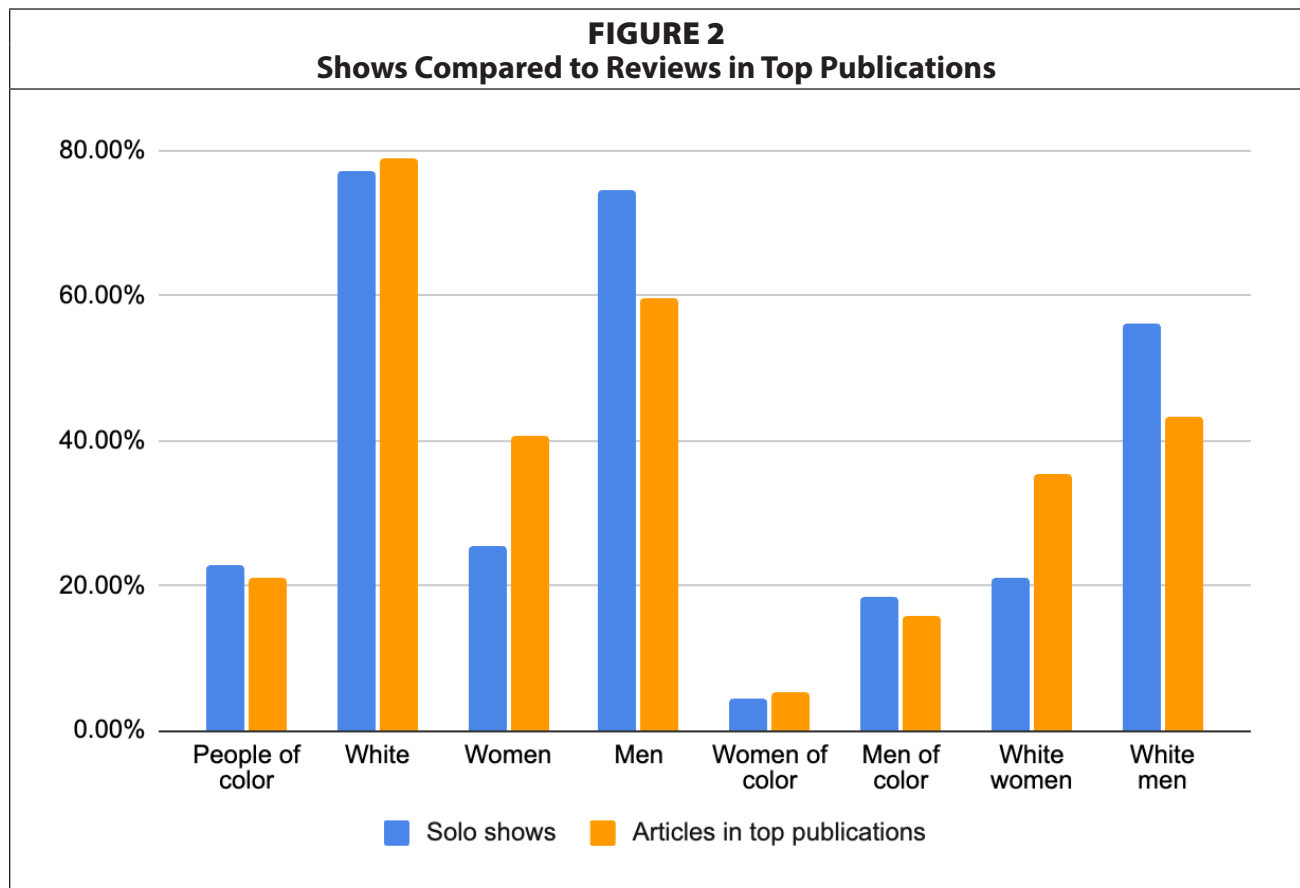
category. The data closely matches some proportions. For example, people of color and White artists maintained proportionality within a percentage point. However, women's reviews, in comparison to shows, rose dramatically from 25.6 to 40.8%, and men's reviews symmetrically decreased. White women enjoyed the greatest percentage boost; their share expanded from 21.4 of all shows to 35.5% of articles within the dataset. Regardless, the sheer numbers still align with White men: with 55.6% of the shows, and 43.4% of total reviews.

The article dataset averaged 1.1 articles per show (see Figure 3). Concentrations emerged: women's shows are more likely to be covered than men's of all races, with 1.8 reviews on average versus 0.9. By contrast, there was little appreciable difference across races which all adhered to the overall average. Yet, when considered intersectionally, White women had the highest average number of reviews, and White men the least, at 1.8 and 0.9, respectively; women and men of color showed smaller distributions at 1.6 and 1.0 each.

FIGURE 3
Average Reviews Separated by Demographic Category.
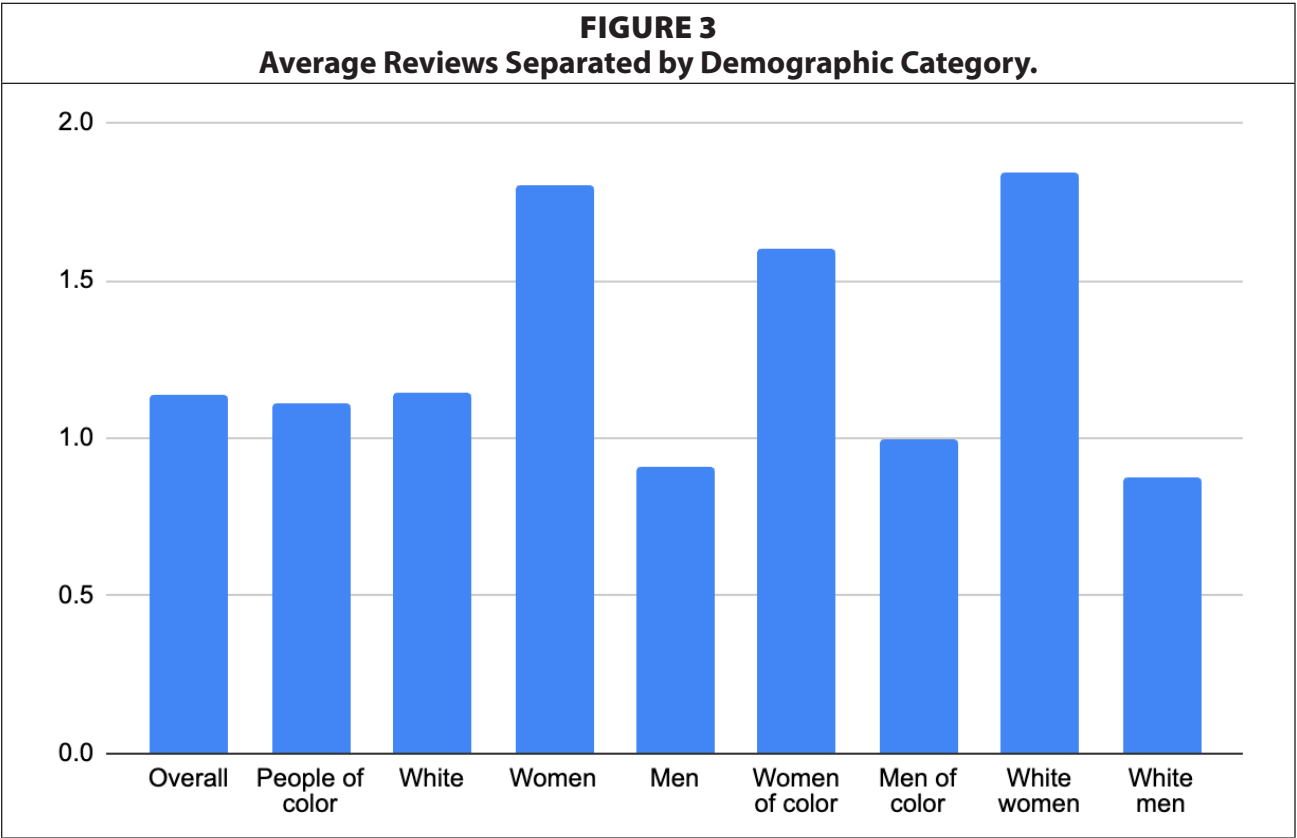
Figure 4 examines shows that received zero, one, and two reviews. Out of 117 solo shows, 47 went unreviewed in the publications investigated. White artists and men were least likely to be reviewed. By contrast, shows by people of color and women were more likely to receive at least one or two reviews. Nearly all the artists who received three or more (eight was the highest amount in the dataset) reviews for their shows were White.

While 58.5% of artists who had a show during the season received at least one exhibition review, demographics varied by 29 percentage points. Publications covered women of color most frequently, at 80% of shows reviewed, and White men the least, at 50.8%. All women averaged 78.1%, and White women 76%. By contrast, men averaged 53.5% across race and ethnicity: White men at 50.8%, and men of color 63.6%. Overall, White men are least likely to

FIGURE 4
Shows that Received Zero, One, and Two Reviews considered by Artist's Identity Characteristic
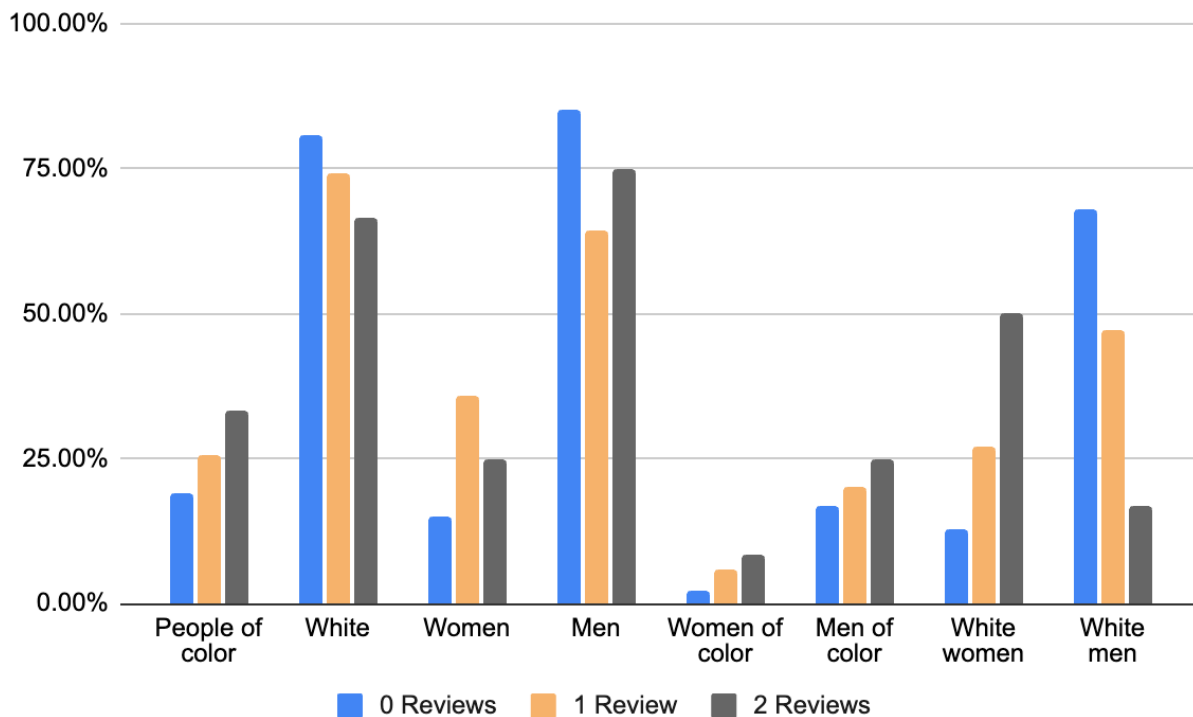
receive a review for their show in the publication dataset, with one show out of two reviewed, and women of color the most likely, with four out of five shows reviewed.

Research Question 2: Are There Specific Publications that are More or Less Likely to Review Underrepresented Artists?

Generally, the top publications covered artists of color at a rate of 1–3% less than the overall average for their shows. Few publications that covered artists of color extensively were also top publications, except for *Hyperallergic*; see Figure 5 for a comparison of top periodicals reviewing artists of color, with women and men of color receiving their own analysis. *Art in America*, *Art Newspaper*, *ARTnews*, *New York Observer*, *Village Voice*, and *Whitehot* did not write about artists of color at all within the dataset.

Two publications dramatically increased artist of color proportions for articles versus shows: *Art F City*, with 66.7%; and *New Yorker,* at 50%. Both publications reviewed men and women of color equally; *Hyperallergic* only covered men of color, and *Brooklyn Rail* favored men of color, whereas *WSJ* only reviewed women of color. By contrast, women of color had 4.3% of shows, and men of color had 18.8%. This suggests a wide range of editorial choices, some of which may be deliberate, others coincidental.

Research Question 3: How Do Periodicals with Subscription Models Perform Versus those Freely Available Online?

Contrasts surface between publications available through a library subscription versus those with web-based access (see Figure 6). Close to 20 percentage points separate articles about

FIGURE 5
Proportion of Articles about People of Color across Publications Most Likely to Publish Reviews about Them
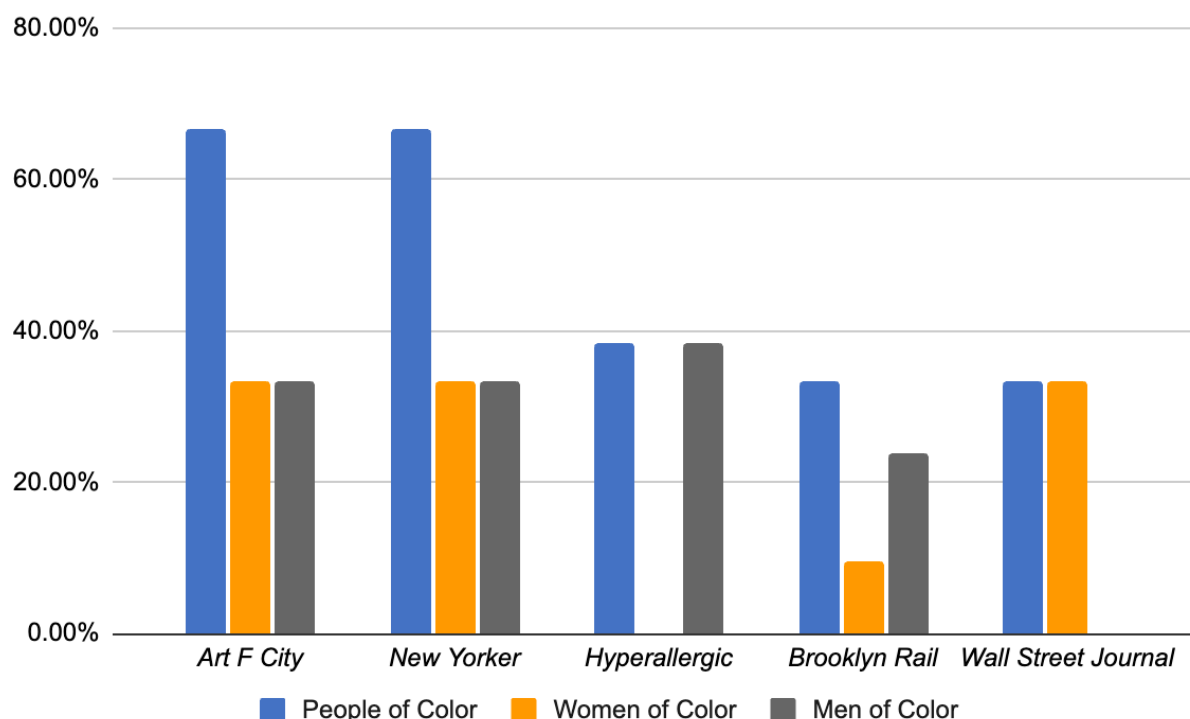
artists of color in web publications (30.9%) versus library-based (13.8%). Concordantly, 86.2%, or approximately nine out of every ten reviews, in library publications are written about White artists. The most striking comparisons between library and web publications are reviews about men of color, whose coverage made up one in four articles in web publications, in contrast to one in thirteen for library publications.

Albeit disproportionately low for artists of color, library publications feature women artists more frequently than men: women of color are nearly identical and White women's proportion of reviews jumped 8%. White men also receive eight percentage points greater share in library publications (38.2% versus 47.7%). In sum, the types of periodicals available through traditional collection development models are most likely to favor White artists in their exhibition reviews.

Research Question 4: How Does Frequency of Reviews Contrast with Exhibition Catalogs?

Galleries produced exhibition catalogs for 24 out of 117 solo shows. Most catalogs accompanied White men's shows, with an increase in catalogs for women of color (see Figure 7). Men of color's catalogs were disproportionately low: 8.3% of catalogs versus 18.8% of shows. Yet those concentrations morph once compared to how many libraries have these catalogs per OCLC holdings: White artists' proportions modestly rose from 86.3% to 88.7%; and while women of color's catalogs expanded compared to shows (8.3% versus 4.3%), their coverage in library holdings are at 1.6%. Numbers reinforce the picture: out of the 24 catalogs, 1,118 have holdings per OCLC; 662 libraries own White men's catalogs, but just 18 collected those about women of color.

FIGURE 6
Comparison Between All Articles in Top Publications, Articles in Web-Based Publications, and Articles in Publications that are Available to Libraries through Subscription, Analyzed by Race and Gender

- Articles in top publications
- Articles in web-based publications
- Articles in publications subscribable by libraries
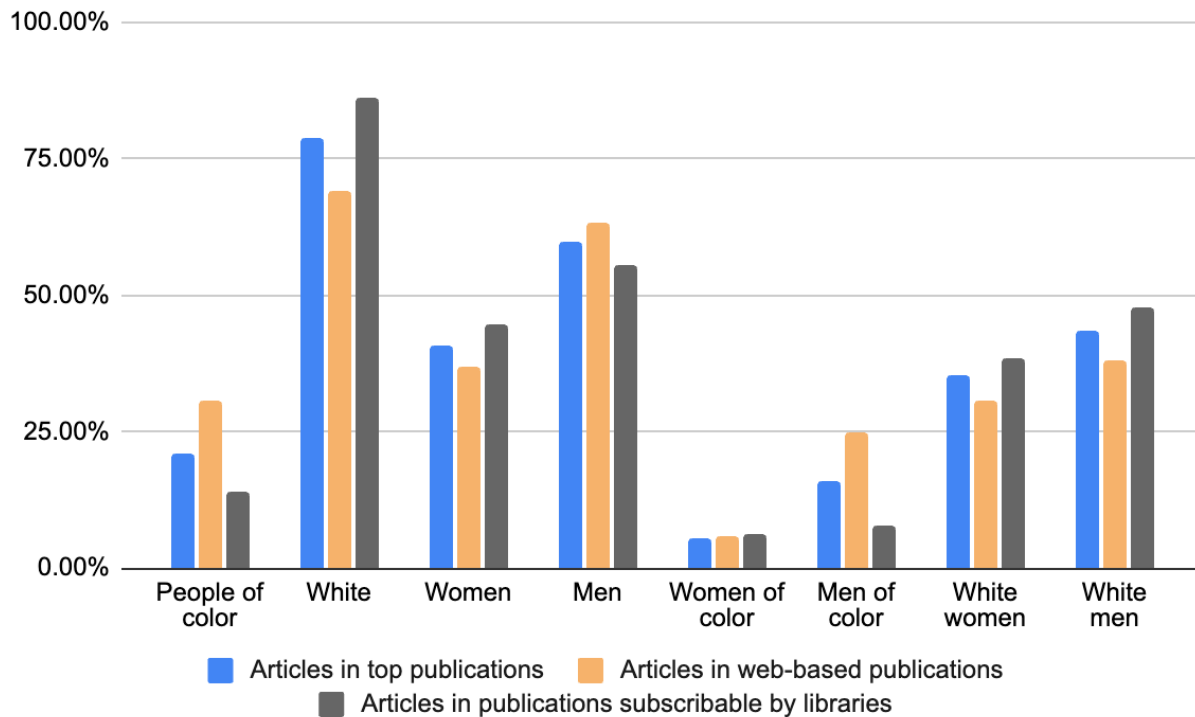
FIGURE 7
Comparison between Solo Shows, Exhibition Catalogs Produced to Accompany Shows, and OCLC Holdings, Parsed by Demographic Category

- Solo Shows
- Exhibition Catalogs
- Exhibition Catalog Holdings in OCLC
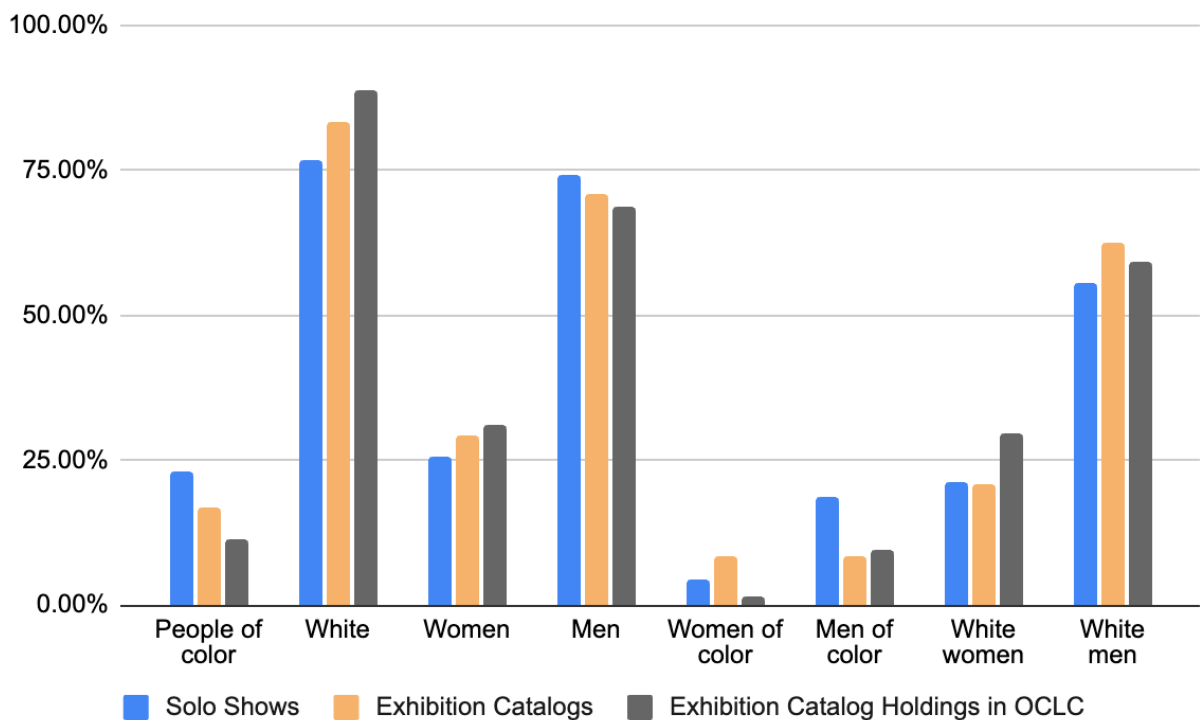
Discussion and Implications for Library Collections

Several conclusions may be drawn from this investigation. Overall, publication coverage did differ across demographic characteristics. White artists received the largest proportion of shows as well as averaging a similar number of reviews per exhibition as their artists of color colleagues. Women artists showed less frequently even though they received more reviews on average. An intersectional approach revealed that proportions of women and men across race and ethnicity varied even more. Men of color surpassed their women of color colleagues in total shows whereas they received the second least reviews of any demographic category. Meanwhile, women of color received a greater average number of reviews and were the most likely to receive at least one review out of everyone in the dataset; however, fewer magazines covered their shows in the dataset compared to White artists and only four out of the 70 (5.7%) shows received a review. White men received the largest proportion of shows. Although they averaged the fewest reviews per exhibition and were the most likely to go unreviewed, they still had the overall largest amount of press coverage, with one in three articles reviewing their shows in the article dataset.

Significantly, coverage shifts dramatically between periodicals. For example, within the dataset, most of the reviews in *Art F City* were about artists of color whereas *Art Newspaper* only covered White men. Analyzing the types of access granted to the periodicals makes it clear that those with subscription models favor White and men artists, further limiting the proportionality possible within a library collection. Exhibition catalogs reinforce that tendency, heavily favoring White men's shows, as well as their respective library holdings.

The group that had the most consistently favorable metrics across indicators was White women artists; they had higher than average reviews per show and the second largest number of shows. For example, White women and artists of color (men and women combined) had a very similar number of shows: White women had 25 shows, artists of color had 27 (see Figure 2). White women held the advantage in number of reviews per show in the article dataset (1.9 versus 1.2; see Figure 3); and had 14% more coverage in top publications (see Figure 2). Furthermore, they enjoyed substantially larger proportions in both library-based periodicals (see Figure 6) and their percentage of holdings in OCLC compared to their numbers were above any other group (Figure 7).

This study's findings are comparable to those of Emerson and Lehman (2022) and Stone (2020) who found that women creators' work comprised approximately one-third whereas creators of color's percentage hovered around the 12–13% mark. Looking at the closest equivalent in this study (i.e., exhibition catalogs), monographs about women artists made up 35.1% of holdings and artists of color 10.2%. By contrast, Tillay and Chapman's (2019) findings showed only 4% of films in their collection were directed by women.

Regarding Pindell's call for a statistical study on the link between magazines and galleries, this study highlights how a lack of gallery shows for artists of color leads to fewer reviews, as exhibitions are needed for reviews and catalogs. Still, it is possible to work toward Pindell's larger mission of breaking open the "closed circle" of art world establishments. Moreover, despite limitations of existing subscription models and monographic holdings, libraries can—and should—help open art information for a broader set of experiences and voices to preserve the creative record more equitably.

Libraries can apply two approaches to achieve this: enhancing traditional library collection acquisitions and expanding libraries' expertise to include, while moving beyond, owned

or licensed collections. Libraries can adjust collection development practices to proactively gather more diverse content. For monographic acquisitions, several tools can help. In art specific collection development, Worldwide Books monitors topics and regions in their database of holdings. Analogously, GOBI's approval profiles can be set up to auto ship materials within the art and architecture LC classifications with identity-based interdisciplinary descriptors such as Black studies. Yet as Stone (2020) and Emerson and Lehman (2022) point out, moving beyond mainstream publishers' and vendors' stock and tools is necessary to collect a broader swath of materials about and by diverse creators. One can augment the above strategies by working with vendors who distribute publications from underrepresented areas of the world; for example, Karno Books encompasses Latin America and specializes in art and architecture. Using information from lists such as Case-Leal (2017), Tillay and Chapman (2019), or other studies can help librarians to move beyond typical acquisition models. With the Case-Leal dataset, it is possible to evaluate galleries by the proportion of diverse artists in their rosters. For example, art librarians can acquire more catalogs from galleries such as Jack Shainman and Galerie Lelong, who represent the highest concentration of artists of color and women artists, respectively.

Libraries can and should expand the number of titles in their collections to reflect a more diverse proportion of authors and topics. Furthermore, a more expansive view of libraries could serve to expand their role in discoverability beyond what is acquirable for the collection or what conforms to prevalent cataloging practices. For example, some libraries catalog open access resources, although this presents challenges in upkeep in case of cessation or migration. Stone's (2020) Tagpacker project linked to holdings in the library catalog but enhanced metadata separately to add author identity, character identities, and other aspects to contribute useful information for researchers. Fujita's project compiling information about African American artists through Zotero is also relevant here: as Fujita explains, this approach allows her "to capture all the more recent content that wouldn't be in databases." (Freeburg, 2020, para. 2).

Research guides can highlight a more expansive set of resources on a topic rather than only featuring library holdings. For example, I started a series of research guides highlighting diverse creators called #FromMarginToCenter.[*] These used the Libguides platform but were not limited to library resources; the guides emphasized topic-first discovery rather than organized by mode of access. Whether Wikipedia (Tillay & Chapman, 2019), Tagpacker (Stone, 2020), Zotero (Freeburg, 2020), or Libguides, curation of research resources should expand beyond what is acquirable or describable by the library, because not all research falls into these categories. They also signal the library's public-facing commitments; can serve as a road map to increasing diverse holdings, as Ciszek and Young (2010) and Emerson and Lehman (2022) recommend; and engage with the community the library serves, to foster dialogue and empower patrons (Manuel et al., 2019; Mathews, 2022).

Conclusion

Diverse collections positively impact academic and research libraries' ability to meet changing research and teaching needs. Such collections support faculty, students, and other researchers in key disciplines (Freeburg, 2020; Ingold, 2007; Pickett, 2009; Vega García, 2000); increase students' sense of belonging (Emerson & Lehman, 2022); reflect the creative record more eq-

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[*] https://www.library.illinois.edu/arx/about/frommargintocenter-initiative/

uitably (Freeburg, 2020; Tillay & Chapman, 2019); and expand collections to reflect changing demographics in the student body, the higher education sector, comparable professions, or respective countries (Ciszek & Young, 2010; Emerson & Lehman, 2022; Mathews, 2021, 2022; Stone, 2020). Librarians must work toward proactively cultivating a diverse, inclusive, and just resources for, by, and with our communities.

Acknowledgement

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Respecting Privacy of Thought in DEI Training

Kristin Antelman

In the same way that libraries defend the privacy rights of library users so should they respect library workers' privacy of thought. Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) training, as it has been approached in recent years, impinges on privacy of thought and cognitive liberty. It is possible to see the profession's shift away from a privacy-defending approach to DEI training to a privacy-threatening approach through the concept of cultural competence, which is the subject of two American Library Association guidelines a decade apart. Because workplace trainings are an expression of an organization's philosophy of control, it is management's responsibility to foster privacy by design in the library. The right to freely choose the beliefs that comprise a library worker's worldview, and disclose them only as they choose, is freedom of thought. The right not to have one's beliefs interfered with without their consent is cognitive liberty. Each is a privacy right and must be defended in the library.

Introduction

The privacy of library users is a foundational library ethic and is reflected in libraries' professional practice across all library types.[1] Librarians also understand that remaining responsive to our communities means being culturally aware.[2] In recent years these two theoretically compatible priorities—upholding privacy and strengthening cultural competence—have, in practice, come into conflict due to DEI trainings' precepts, which embrace an approach to cultural competency that fails to respect library workers' privacy of thought.

The American Library Association (ALA) issued two guideline documents, a decade apart, to support library workers in the development of cultural competency skills: *Diversity Standards: Cultural Competency for Academic Libraries* ("Diversity Standards")[3] in 2012, and *Cultural Proficiencies for Racial Equity: A Framework* ("Cultural Proficiencies") in 2022.[4] Comparing the two documents demonstrates how academic library cultural competency training moved from being anchored in library values and services to engaging with contested social and political topics that probe—and challenge—the personal views and beliefs of individual library workers.

Managerial organizational control practices commonly seen in academic libraries can exacerbate threats to workers' privacy. When library administration respects the separation of public and private spheres it defends its library workers' privacy, upholds library values and principles, and enables the library to be effective in its mission.

Privacy of Thought and Cognitive Liberty

Privacy of thought is an instinctively understood concept because everyone experiences it every day. Most would consider being forced to share private thoughts an invasion of privacy. In this way, the idea that privacy of thought should be considered a human right feels intuitively correct. How this intuition is reflected in society via laws and culture, however, is inseparable from the influence of Enlightenment ideas about how we understand individual liberty, as well as the realms in which society has an interest and those it does not.[5] These ideas originated in the West but they are not, of course, only Western ideas. They are universally accessible and are the foundation of international human rights law and advocacy. Freedom of thought and conscience were introduced as human rights in the United Nation's Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948), which declared in Article 18: "Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion," and in Article 19: "Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference."[6] Developed with the leadership of Eleanor Roosevelt, the unifying, non-religious language of the UN Declaration has served as the conceptual and moral foundation for defending human rights ever since.[7]

Freedom of thought is an irreducible philosophical and moral proposition about the meaning of freedom itself. Boire writes:

> The right to control one's own consciousness is the quintessence of freedom. If freedom is to mean anything, it must mean that each person has an inviolable right to think for him or herself. It must mean, at a minimum, that each person is free to direct one's own consciousness; one's own underlying mental processes, and one's beliefs, opinions, and worldview.[8]

Freedom of thought (i.e., protecting the inner sphere), and freedom of speech (i.e., protecting the expression of thoughts), are complementary. As Bublitz writes, "In human rights theory, the freedom to hold opinions without interference is intimately tied to the freedom of their expression. Whereas freedom of speech and expression is restrictable on various grounds, the protection against interferences with opinions is considered absolute, i.e., it does not allow for exceptions."[9] Because privacy of thought precedes expression, it is, by definition, even more fundamental to democracy and a free society than is freedom of speech. In America, it is also linked to other essential freedoms, including freedom of, and from, religion. Where they exist, legal protections for freedom of thought and related freedoms give citizens the tools they need to defend their human rights. Richards writes of freedom of thought: "At the level of law, if there is any constitutional right that is absolute, it is this one, which is the precondition for all other political and religious rights guaranteed by the Western tradition."[10]

Collectively, these freedoms are linked by the concept of the right to privacy. While the word "privacy" does not appear in the US Constitution, the Supreme Court has long found implied protections for it since the "right to be let alone" was defined by Justices Warren and Brandeis in their 1890 article, "The Right to Privacy."[11] Privacy is an essential legal concept. In an open society the boundary dividing public from private must be widely understood, and accepted, both by the individual and the state, as "it relates to the balance of power between the state and the individual."[12] Boire elaborates the legal protections for freedom of thought by dividing them into three rights: the right to keep your thoughts and opinions private; the

right not to have your thoughts and opinions manipulated; and the right not to be penalized for your thoughts and opinions. These are all privacy rights. Violating any one of these three rights violates a person's freedom of thought as "[T]he right of each person to autonomy over his or her own mind and thought processes is central to First Amendment jurisprudence… people must be treated as ends not means."[13] Legal protections for privacy of thought are thus a bulwark against instrumentalism, that is, prioritizing social or political uses of people over their inherent self-determination.

Legal scholars have also elaborated the related concept of cognitive liberty. As defined by Farahany, "Cognitive liberty encompasses freedom of thought and rumination, the right to self-access and self-alteration and to consent to or refuse changes to our brains and our mental experiences."[14] More generally, "[c]ognitive liberty or a right to mental self-determination guarantees individuals sovereignty over their minds."[15] The goal of these scholars is to achieve enactment of a new international human right. Farahany writes, "Recognizing an international human right to cognitive liberty would make it a clear legal priority to protect our mental experiences as much as our other physical ones."[16] These goals are natural extensions of the elaboration of freedom of thought and conscience as human rights.[17]

The concepts of privacy of thought and cognitive liberty, and the boundary between public and private life that they define, serve as the conceptual foundation for human rights, but also for legal protections for employees in the public sphere of the workplace. For example, the contractual relationship between employer and employee does not extend to the employer having access to an employee's private thoughts and beliefs, nor to the right to attempt to manipulate or penalize the employee for them. Indeed, one of the fundamental goals of labor rights activism since the Industrial Revolution has been to defend the boundary between the public and private spheres and to protect the private sphere from encroachment by employers. It is a boundary that requires constant defense by workers even after having attained established precedence in law.[18]

DEI Trainings and Privacy of Thought

Over the past decade, and accelerating rapidly after 2020, academic libraries have implemented various diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) initiatives, including staff training programs. The stated goals of all DEI trainings include, broadly speaking, increasing understanding of diversity, equity, and inclusion issues with the objective of developing cultural competency skills to better serve the library's mission. While these are valid goals, the trainings' content and manner of delivery can cross the line from supporting the library's mission into violating workers' privacy of thought and cognitive liberty.

There is already considerable research showing how ineffective DEI-related trainings are,[19] and even that they are counterproductive, increasing feelings of racial animosity among co-workers.[20] However, efficacy and ethics are distinct, even if they are regularly intermingled. Akin to policy debates about state-sponsored torture, the argument that efficacy should be secondary to the question "is it the *right thing to do*" is a viable position to take on ethical grounds. Professional ethics, distinct from personal morality, defines the "right thing to do" in the workplace. DEI trainings risk violating privacy of thought when they mix and/or conflate efficacy, ethical behavior, and personal morality. For example, if a training presumes that an individual's personal beliefs are linked via unconscious bias to negative outcomes in the workplace and that it is therefore ethical for the employer to try to influence those beliefs; or

if a training presumes that a person's morality is so closely linked to reducing systemic racism that it justifies intervention in the workplace. Regardless of employer confidence in the idea that there is a link between personal morals or beliefs and bias or systemic racism, any training violates workers' privacy when it seeks to reveal, influence, or penalize someone for their morals or beliefs rather than their behavior at work.

Identity-based DEI training engages with amorphous and ideologically-laden topics such as the causes of racial inequalities and why "dismantling" white supremacy culture is required to eliminate them.[21] Abstract ideas such as these are examples of what Lifton calls "thought-terminating clichés;" that is, a proposition that is both unfalsifiable and "relies on disabling the recipients' critical faculties to cause itself to be replicated."[22] That DEI training materials are often accompanied by glossaries reflects a recognition that the words and concepts of the DEI lexicon, such as equity, inclusion, anti-racism, and white supremacy, carry specific meanings that are substantially different from their commonly understood meanings in the broader society. The language of DEI is both dogmatic and squishy. Redefining words is disorienting to people[23] and, in a training context, can cause sympathetic people to feel inadequate, a message that is reinforced by reading assignments and being told "educate yourself." As Bruckner said, "like any ideology, this discourse is at first presented in the register of the obvious."[24] These rhetorical techniques serve to create epistemic closure.[25] That is, they build a false consensus based on a set of propositions that are presented as facts, followed by goals emanating from those propositions, that people can then be "trained" on. This is what Redstone calls the "Settled Question Fallacy," meaning that "certain questions have definitive and clear answers when they, in fact, do not."[26] The ability of DEI trainers to keep up with ever-fluid linguistic norms and nuances also serves as a filter to identify library workers who do not devote the same energy to that purpose, or who lack the class- or education-based advantages to keep up. Getting someone to use words differently from what they believe they mean, or to repeat phrases that are not their own and that they do not really understand, is manipulative behavior and is a violation of that person's freedom of thought.

Some aspects of DEI trainings also pose specific legal and compliance challenges for library administrators. *Cultural Proficiencies* states, "Libraries … must remain committed to collecting demographic information about the workforce but must also adjust categories as constructs change with respect to racial/ethnic identity."[27] However, doing so may conflict with law-based policies against discriminatory treatment of workers, as well as their privacy rights. If active participation at a DEI training is required or effectively required, compelled speech is potentially legally relevant as well since the employer has material power over the employee. An example is the common practice of asking each person in a group training to state preferred pronouns, even if a participant does not agree with that practice. DEI trainings may also be legally vulnerable as "ideological content" or "captive audience" meetings. Labor law dictates that the employer may not "coerce workplace ideological listening."[28] Several states have enacted Worker Freedom Acts to protect employees against being forced to attend workplace captive audience meetings that engage in political or religious proselytization.[29]

Any training program that "ask[s] that you look within yourself and change your deeply held beliefs, or 'prejudices'"[30] is entering a worker's private mental space. The most common example is training on unconscious, or implicit, bias. Leaving aside the extensive—and at best inconclusive—research about what unconscious bias is, how it can be measured, and whether it predicts behavior,[31] an employee's "unconscious" beliefs are not an appropriate

concern for their employer. In the workplace, employees should not feel pressured to share, or "interrogate," anything about their inner selves or beliefs for the simple reason that those are private. The "21-day challenges" that some libraries and universities implemented in the summer of 2020 reflect the idea popularized by Robin DiAngelo that not thinking or talking sufficiently about racism was itself evidence of racism.[32] For example, the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill's 21-day challenge stated: "Until we learn to talk about race, even in a work environment, we are complicit in complacency and upholding oppression;" and the training included the prompt: "Reflect on a time in a work environment where you chose to avoid discussing race. What kept you from speaking—Anxiety? Fear? Frustration? Fatigue?"[33] Or perhaps privacy? This staff exercise also asked library workers about their reading choices. "What are the last five books you read? What is the racial mix of the authors?"[34] That is private information on which no employer, but especially a library, should be either explicitly or implicitly judging its employees. Another example is in a self-assessment component of a DEI training at the University of Virginia in which library staff were given a questionnaire that asked how often they demonstrate ninety-six DEI-related "competencies" on a scale from "Rarely" (in all cases this ranking would be interpreted as either ignorant or morally bad) to "Almost always" (educated or morally good). For example, one question read: "If a white colleague tries to shift the focus to one of their marginalized groups, I effectively acknowledge the dynamic and redirect the conversation back to race and racism." (Suggesting a redirection back to race and racism here implies that other marginalized groups are not appropriate DEI topics). Another question was: "I am aware of the racist biases, assumptions, and stereotypes that impact my thoughts, judgments, decisions, and actions"[35] (a statement that implies that prejudice exists whether acknowledged or not). Even if your employer does not see your responses, these ninety-six questions are presumptuous and invasive. Asking about a person's thoughts in this way violates privacy of thought, not to mention being an unhealthy mindset for employer and employee alike.[36] Respecting library workers' cognitive liberty means recognizing and respecting their privacy rights by not asking morally-loaded questions about personal reading, thoughts, feelings, and attitudes.

How the concept of identity is addressed in a DEI training is directly related to interference (or not) with workers' privacy. Identity-centric trainings essentialize identity by generalizing about broad and poorly defined categories (e.g., BIPOC) within which there is clearly such great diversity of opinion as to render any generalization a political argument rather than information, or insight. What a person thinks about their own identity is particular and complex and spans their private and public lives. What anyone chooses to share about their identity is a personal decision. Identity inheres in the individual, of course, but it is informed by personality, family, community, cultural or religious background, plus innumerable other factors.[37] While identity has meaning in society apart from what an individual may choose for themselves, it is presumptuous and instrumentalist to employ someone else's identity, as you happen to perceive it, in a workplace training.

Central to cognitive liberty is a person's right to hold their own worldview. A worldview encompasses core values, beliefs, and opinions that shape how you interpret the world.[38] A worldview frames how a person engages with new information and how they are predisposed to form new opinions on political or social issues.[39] A worldview is shaped by parents, family, friends, faith leaders, and social networks. Often a person's worldview is also shaped through education, as they learn more about the world and discover what they care about.[40] In

the context of the library as workplace, an employee's worldview may even conflict with the core values of librarianship. For example, a library worker may privately believe that certain books are so offensive that they should not be held even by a university library. However, as long as that employee does his job according to the library's policies and not according to his personal views, he should not be subject to criticism or "reeducation." A person's worldview is private; no library administrator should even know their employees' worldview, unless they choose to share it.

Identity-centric library DEI workplace trainings advance an unapologetically specific worldview, one that clearly represents a progressive left political perspective. That it is a comprehensive worldview is evident in its multipurpose use of a few common themes, which are presented as axiomatic in DEI trainings.[41] Among them are: the central importance of identity, almost exclusively race and gender identity; that truth can only ever be subjective and is an expression of power; that words can be harmful and so must be controlled; and that there is a unity of interests among oppressed groups against oppressor groups.[42] That it is a worldview is also evident in DEI training's explicit call to be an ongoing process of education and reeducation, and a "lens" through which libraries should view everything they do and how they do it.[43] The worldview is expressed in strikingly similar language related to libraries' social justice purpose across trainings, library mission statements,[44] the 2023 revision to core competencies for librarians,[45] and the 2021 addition to ALA's Code of Ethics.[46]

Identity-centric trainings are politically partisan, and therefore inappropriate for the library (or any workplace), not because they highlight race and racism as they might manifest in the library, university, or society but because they posit one specific worldview that makes claims about social issues only tenuously related to library jobs. For example, the DEI definition of "equity"[47] as provided in the *Cultural Proficiencies for Racial Equity: A Framework* includes specific institutional and public policy strategies to prioritize equal outcomes over equality of opportunity. That strategy is certainly legitimate to advocate for in the public sphere. It is also a radical political position in the American liberal tradition.[48] It is not a truth. It represents an argument about the best means to advance a social goal on which there is widespread consensus in society (i.e., reducing racial disparities across meaningful metrics related to human flourishing). The ways in which one might achieve that goal is a topic for the academic seminar, scholarship, journalism, and public policy debates. But when one correct or "true" path is asserted in a training framework, it is indoctrination.[49] This is contrary to library professional practice around inculcating critical thinking skills in students. It is not ethical to ask library workers to sit through training on topics that are politically charged, and that are not concretely related either to the work of the library or rules for workplace behavior. Just as library workers in a non-denominational library deserve a workplace free of religious activity, so all library workers deserve a workplace free of political activity.

Tolerance

Tolerance enables people to work productively side by side in a diverse society or workplace. Weissberg writes, "Tolerance, classically understood, permits the very possibility of civil society."[50] Tolerance means accepting that people have different beliefs, and worldviews, and choosing to be civil when encountering people whose views you dislike or find objectionable. While its boundaries are historically and socially informed, tolerance is ultimately a personal decision based on one's own conscience; it cannot be demanded. As Weissberg says, "Judg-

mentalism inheres in the concept.… The window of acceptability varies by person, by society and over time…. It is thus meaningless to speak of tolerance as an abstract, transcendent virtue or a personality trait."[51] To be tolerant does not mean you must remain silent—much less agree—in response to what you find objectionable. Doing so sacrifices your own right to moral judgment, your own cognitive liberty. Yet, DEI ideology, in positing "truths," *does* ask that you agree with what you might find objectionable. This is at the heart of why it violates privacy of thought.

As Gebert, Buengeler and Heinitz write: "The term [tolerance] has come to imply the demand to appreciate dissimilar values as positive and to endorse them."[52] This line of thinking suggests that, even after a DEI training participant is subjected to peer pressure to endorse views they might disagree with, "tolerance" will demand that they become an activist on behalf of those ideas and, "Anything short of such intrusive activism… does not constitute tolerance."[53] *Cultural Proficiencies* says: "each person, regardless of title or position, has the power to influence their community by modeling antiracist practices, advocating for BIPOC communities, and becoming actively involved in committee work, leadership, and governance of library associations."[54] Equating activism with tolerance is, in fact, the opposite of tolerance: in its most extreme case it is coercion, enforced by social norms or fear of losing one's job. As "the freedom not to listen arises from the freedom of thought,"[55] support for tolerance in a training situation should mean any individual could easily object or silently opt out without the presumption that they are intolerant or racist. This may not be true in typical DEI trainings, however. As Keizer notes of the culture of participation in DEI training: "exposure is always thought to be virtuous and privacy always implies having something nasty to hide."[56] Soft coercion in the name of tolerance, or "inclusion," is not simply disrespectful of the individual but damages the social fabric of the workplace because it can lead to negative consequences beyond the training.[57] If it is considered unacceptable to opt out, or to remain silent,[58] the reality of differences of beliefs between people, and tolerance of those differences, has the potential to become an impulse to remediate wrong-thinkers' "misguided" beliefs. As Gebert et al. write, "This transformation from the demand to bear to the demand to endorse increases the likelihood that people consider any non-endorsement of different values intolerant and socially sanction it."[59]

What the concept of tolerance can do is to serve as grounding for an ethical path to diversity training that respects privacy of thought. What Gebert et al. term the "tolerance-centered diversity model" "aims to protect social and personal identities from potential imposition that arise from some trainers' manifold dogmas."[60] Tolerance-centered diversity trainers abstain from making superiority claims, or using language that is emotionally manipulative; they exhibit epistemic humility with the goal to "seek to find out what people think" rather than "impress on them what they can think";[61] and they do not give greater moral weight to the opinions of people with some identities over others.[62] Most importantly, they communicate the need to "interpret one's own values as preliminary, socially constructed, and historically contingent rather than as definitive truth."[63] This model was characterized by Lukianoff and Haidt as a "common humanity" approach, as opposed to "common enemy."[64] As described by Montiel-Overall, common humanity training is concerned with actions and not personal thoughts. It does not draw workers into topics unrelated to the library. Instead, it unites workers behind their common purpose in doing the work of the library. In other words, it respects the library worker's cognitive liberty by design.[65] Tolerance-centered or common humanity

training does not violate privacy of thought because its starting point is the recognition that each person holds beliefs and values that are uniquely their own, that may or may not be predictable based on their visible identities, and that ultimately are not relevant to creating a well-functioning library.

Cultural Competence

The ideological transformation of DEI-related library training is evident when comparing the two documents ALA published a decade apart related to cultural competency skills development. ALA's Association of College & Research Libraries (ACRL) addressed application of the concept of cultural competency to library practice in its 2012 document, *Diversity Standards: Cultural Competency for Academic Libraries*.[66] Ten years later, in 2022, ACRL rescinded those standards in favor of a new document, which was developed by a joint ALA-Association of Research Libraries task force, *Cultural Proficiencies for Racial Equity: A Framework*.[67] The new framework, like its predecessor, is intended to serve as a resource for trainings and other cultural competency-related programming in academic libraries.

The term "cultural competency" emerged in the 1990s, largely supplanting the terms "multicultural competence," "cultural diversity," and "diversity awareness."[68] As defined by Mestre, "Cultural competency is a developmental process that evolves over an extended period and refers to an ability to understand the needs of diverse populations and to interact effectively with people from different cultures."[69] ACRL's Racial and Ethnic Diversity Committee, which authored the 2012 *Diversity Standards*, adopted the definition of cultural competence used by the National Association of Social Workers. The selection of this definition was apt, as it is well-aligned with library values and mission. The definition of cultural competence was:

> a congruent set of behaviors, attitudes, and policies that enable a person or group to work effectively in cross-cultural situations; the process by which individuals and systems respond respectfully and effectively to people of all cultures, languages, classes, races, ethnic backgrounds, religions, and other diversity factors in a manner that recognizes, affirms, and values the worth of individuals, families, and communities and protects and preserves the dignity of each.[70]

Embedded in the cultural competency concept is, self-evidently, the concept of culture. Montiel-Overall, in writing about cultural competency, defines culture as "acts and activities shared by groups of people and expressed in social engagements that occur in their daily activities."[71] *Diversity Standards* (2012) defines culture as "customary beliefs, social forms, and material traits of a racial, religious, or social group; a set of shared attitudes, values, goals, and practices that characterizes an institution or organization."[72] These definitions use clear language that show library trainers and workers why the development of cultural competency skills is important for improving library practice and services. The definitions also point to the need for sensitivity regarding privacy (e.g., "respectfully," "protects and preserves the dignity of each").

Montiel-Overall characterizes the three domains in which library workers develop cultural competencies: the cognitive (i.e., insights into and sensitivity to cultural differences); the interpersonal (i.e., desire to know, interact, communicate); and the environmental (i.e., language, transportation, housing).[73] Her framework, which is used in *Diversity Standards*,

identifies concrete goals reflecting cultural competence, such as responding to the information needs or service model expectations of non-English speakers, enabling physical access to libraries, and offering culturally-relevant programming. Because the overarching goal of developing cultural competency skills is to increase library use and improve library services,[74] she stresses that cognitive, interpersonal and environmental cultural competencies are most effectively developed not through training but through engagement, that is, through individual interactions and embeddedness. The conception of cultural competency skills development in Montiel-Overall and *Diversity Standards* is outward rather than inward facing, is grounded in library practice, and does not encroach on library workers' privacy of thought.

An acknowledged risk of applying the cultural competency concept is stereotyping (also known as the generalization fallacy), which attributes to individuals identified characteristics of the group(s) to which they belong or are presumed to belong, such as labeling a person as "marginalized" or "oppressed" if they are a member of a group that is characterized as such in some context. Leigh Wilton et al. write that, "[s]ocial psychological theory and research has long warned about the potential pitfalls of overemphasizing social identity, including racial identity, in interpersonal or intergroup contexts."[75] "Multicultural" training has been shown to lead to "increased belief in race essentialism," with participants "more likely to see out-groups as homogeneous."[76] Research has also found that "individuals who received a high prevalence of stereotyping message expressed more stereotypes than those who received a low prevalence stereotyping message."[77] One librarian interviewed for a study of cultural competency talked about how she mitigated the risk of stereotyping in her work: "The only way to really combat unconscious bias is to try not to make judgments about who you're looking at or what their background is."[78] Making generalizations based on a person's identity characteristics also violates the DEI "intersectionality" precept, "deny[ing] the intersections between the various cultural categories, such as age, gender, socioeconomic status and ethnicity."[79] In other words, it renders less visible the very differences to which cultural competency skills development aims to make library workers more sensitive.

Montiel-Overall also discusses ways in which the common humanity approach can enable a training program to resist stereotyping. For example, by "building cultural appreciation" and an "ethic of caring."[80] She explains how it remains possible to discuss issues of identity in the context of library services using an individualist rather than collectivist approach. No underlying theory is required because the goal is not to analyze or transform abstract systems and structures, but to build on workers' existing knowledge about how to better understand their library community.

Cultural competence training can be resistant to stereotyping if the trainers themselves practice cultural competence by respecting participants' own beliefs and privacy. *Diversity Standards* itself exhibits cultural competence as a guidance document. It is practical and concrete, written in clear, non-ideological language that is accessible not only to engaged ACRL members but to everyone. Any academic library today could readily adopt the 2012 *Diversity Standards* as a guide for trainings that respect workers' privacy of thought.

Diversity Standards' successor, *Cultural Proficiencies for Racial Equity: A Framework* (2022), as its title reflects, dramatically narrows the concept of cultural competency to an exclusive focus on race and racism.[81] The document's stated goal is to serve as a "guide for developing *personal*, organizational, institutional, and system-level knowledge and understanding of the nature of racism and its many manifestations.… to provide the grounding needed to effect

change in *thinking*, behavior and practice"[82] (emphasis added). The target audience is primarily the individual and their psychology (e.g., "Library workers must hold themselves accountable individually"[83]) not the library staff as a whole or library services. The language is explicitly fluid because "EDI-centered language is frequently evolving and rooted in identity."[84] Despite including a glossary that defines terms such as colonialism, imperialism, social justice, and whiteness, the document does not provide a definition for either "cultural proficiency" or "culture." The framework proposes a staff exercise to "research" other glossaries created by anti-racist organizations to "build consensus around those definitions."[85] Even if library employees were to undertake that exercise, the intended meaning of the DEI terminology may remain confusing to the average library worker because many of the words and phrases are defined differently from their everyday meanings.[86] Using this kind of abstract language with alternative definitions serves to separate the initiated from the uninitiated.[87] Public librarian Barkovich makes the point that "[a] spirit of elitism can be as toxic and corrupting to a public institution as racism and sexism."[88] Using terminology that is not your own has the potential to de-individualize you, or to encroach on your ability to think about these topics independently or critically. As Vaclav Havel points out, the ritualization of language leads to the ritualization of thought.[89]

The "methodologies of self-assessment" section in *Cultural Proficiencies*, like other DEI self-assessments, violates privacy of thought because it encourages (or requires) workers to provide private information unrelated to library jobs.[90] Staff are advised to take the Implicit Association Test (IAT), an instrument designed to measure stereotyping[91] because "individuals have been conditioned to practice implicit, internalized forms of racism that *we need to address*"[92] (emphasis added). The goal is not to prevent biased behavior, however. The document correctly notes that the IAT is not intended to predict behavior and, research shows, it does not.[93] Instead, the stated goal for library employees to take the IAT is "to identify power and privilege in the LIS profession."[94] To advance that goal, however, would be an undertaking well beyond the means of a staff training exercise.

Cultural Proficiencies introduces a set of broad historical topics for engagement within a training context; for example: imperialism and colonialism, mass incarceration, disparities in access to healthcare, the achievement gap in education, and disparate outcomes for "BIPOC populations."[95] None of these topics has more than an indirect link to library work. The four competencies to be developed through use of this framework, represented as a "competency continuum," do not make the framework's link to library work any clearer. The competencies are: awareness of racial identity; manifestations of racism; commitment to countering racism; and analysis of racialized outcomes.[96] Compare those to the competencies in *Diversity Standards*, all of which are related to library work: cultural awareness of self and others; cross-cultural knowledge and skills; organizational and professional values; development of collections, programs, and services; service delivery; language diversity; workforce diversity; organizational dynamics; cross-cultural leadership; professional education and continuous learning; and research.[97] In comparing the competencies proposed by the two documents it is hard not to conclude that ACRL discarded a practical and still-relevant guide for library administrators and workers in favor of a framework that engages—confusingly and ideologically—with topics tangential to the library as workplace, and that violate library workers' privacy of thought.[98] Cultural competency is a desirable workplace training goal when it is closely bound to the library objective of improving library services. *Diversity Standards* states:

"If libraries are to continue being indispensable organizations in their campus communities, they must reflect the communities they serve and provide quality services to their increasingly diverse constituencies."[99] *Diversity Standards* speaks the language of common humanity, in Appiah's words, the "identity that should bind us all."[100]

Managerialism

At all workplaces managers employ various types of organizational control. Examples include culture management, and concertive and normative control,[101] each of which will be considered in the context of DEI trainings. Library administrators carry the responsibility to ensure that the use of organizational control in their libraries adheres to professional ethics, including protecting library employees' privacy. Workplace training, as a visible expression of an organization's philosophy of organizational control, is one place to look to see how a library administration is respecting workers' privacy.

Fleming and Spicer analyze how organizations deploy one type of organizational control: "culture management" programs.[102] In so-called high-commitment organizations, culture management practices, such as expected demonstrations of loyalty to the employer, can impinge on private time, thoughts and beliefs. They write: "The widespread use of culture management practices in particular has been shown to encroach insidiously into the hitherto untapped areas of workers' private lives."[103] Citing Bendix's work, Kunda analyzes the "growing managerial interest in the psychological absorption of workers by organizations. This represent[s]…. a sort of creeping annexation of the workers' selves, an attempt to capture the norms of the workplace and embed control 'inside' members."[104] That annexation can take several forms. The first, and most obvious example, is time, such as a situation in which the employee is always on call or expected to work long hours. The second form is psychology, where the employee is expected to demonstrate psychologically based allegiance, as defined by the employer. DEI trainings, as part of a DEI-centric culture management program, may introduce time demands but certainly introduce psychological expectations. Both demands on the employee's private time and psychology blur the boundary between the public and private spheres. In the Industrial Revolution "[t]he development of the work/non-work boundary was …a reflection of the power relations that attempted to render labour more amenable to the production process."[105] Over the past two centuries in Western countries the public/private boundary was gradually negotiated in favor of employees through organized labor, pro-labor laws and regulation. Taking an employee's private time or prying into her mind are predatory practices on the part of an employer.[106]

When employers violate workers' privacy of thought it can be counterproductive to the interests of the employer as well as the employee. Unsurprisingly, eroding privacy boundaries can lead to burnout, withdrawal, and anxiety. Employees in organizations that have strong organizational control "report feeling intense pressure, an invasion of their private life by corporate requirements, and, in many cases, considerable personal suffering, manifested in burnout and associated forms of despair."[107] They can become cynical, or resort to self-protective dishonesty, as "a way of blocking the colonization of a pre-given self."[108] Cynicism disengages a worker from his job and colleagues from one other. But cynicism is also a sign that a worker is defending his cognitive liberty: "Cynicism is a way of escaping the encroaching logic of managerialism and provides an inner 'free space' for workers."[109] When DEI trainers encounter cynicism or disengagement, the cause may be weak content or delivery, but it may also be participants defending their own privacy of thought.

Even absent abusive practices, organizational control invites over-surveillance of workers because of the effort needed to enforce policy and compliance, and to assess performance. Tracking attendance at trainings is one new data point, especially where participation is required or assessed in performance reviews.[110] DEI action plans, rubrics, "temperature checks," climate surveys, equity audits, assessments of impacts, and so on, in aggregate contribute to shifting the library's culture away from the academic and toward the bureaucratic.[111] The message they send to the library workers is that their own independent thoughts and autonomy in their jobs is secondary to data-collection tasks.

One example of decentralized, bottom-up control is known in the organizational management literature as "concertive control." Under concertive control, organizations employ cross-functional and self-organizing teams.[112] Library DEI trainings, while potentially administratively sponsored, are often delegated to a team that is responsible for their content and that may also conduct the trainings. Library administrators will naturally delegate DEI training to those who are motivated and well-versed in the ideas. These trainings, and the teams that lead them, are a mechanism for non-hierarchical, concertive control over employees. Teams that do not have authority over library policy may be given wide latitude to develop trainings, especially when they can be based on profession-wide guidelines such as *Cultural Proficiencies*.

Concertive control can exert more power over workers than hierarchical control.[113] The power of peer pressure grows under concertive control and can quickly lead to codification of what began as informal norms. In the training context, this could manifest as expectations for attendance, ground rules (e.g., "brave space" agreements[114]), explicit learning goals, and active participation. Barker describes the tendency to codify and then enforce team expectations: "Team members rewarded themselves for compliance and punished themselves for noncompliance. They had invested their human dignity in the system of their own control… The team members directed and monitored each other's actions."[115] The comment of a librarian interviewed in a study of cultural competence reflects how concertive control feels: "'I've never been told that I have to go to X, Y or Z workshop, but when you're strongly encouraged, it's kind of like you're 'voluntold'."[116]

The dynamic of concertive control is thus a lever of managerial power over employees even if it is not enacted by means of a hierarchical structure. When peer pressure leads to violations of workers' privacy of thought, it is a management and ethical challenge for library administrators. And, just as with culture management programs, excessive concertive control also makes the organization less effective. No library staff can effectively realize their shared goals when there is an internal dynamic pitting some against others, or where there exists a culture of fear and intimidation, even if low-level.[117] The repeatedly demonstrated result of mixing concertive control with DEI ideology is internal dysfunction and distraction from the organization's mission.[118]

Librarians' enthusiastic professions of commitment to DEI precepts have become a "presentational ritual." Such rituals are "mechanisms through which certain organizational members influence how other members are to think and feel—what they want, what they fear, what they should regard as proper and possible, and, ultimately, perhaps, who they are."[119] The presentation ritual serves the third type of organizational control, which is normative control. Normative control is "the attempt to elicit and direct the required efforts of members by controlling the underlying experiences, thoughts, and feelings that guide their actions."[120] Management advocacy of DEI training endorses the presumption that personal beliefs—even those a person

is not conscious of—influence behavior, which justifies library leadership embracing a moral concern for employees. Moral concern encompasses interest in other people's beliefs and behaviors and "an eagerness to improve both."[121] Moral concern also "begins with the conviction that the men and women about whom we are concerned are in a bad state …religiously, politically, ideologically incorrect."[122] Just as librarians understand that what someone reads does not dictate their actions, so we should understand that a worker's thoughts and beliefs do not dictate their behavior at work.[123] As Finn et al. point out, "We can (and do) distinguish between thought, feelings and behavior. Thought does not automatically translate into behavior."[124] Yet moral concern that leads to violation of privacy of thought goes beyond presuming a link between beliefs and behavior. Moral concern, such as it is reflected in *Cultural Proficiencies*, is justified by the presumption that thoughts, ideas, and their expressions are morally equivalent to behavior (i.e., words are harmful, or a form of violence). The moral concern mindset on the part of "therapeutic administrators"[125] takes an instrumentalist but also boundary-violating view of employees. It matters to workers that their employer respects their privacy of thought because it is a moral dimension on which everyone is equal outside the workplace.

The moral concern mindset may also incentivize a university or library administration to adopt a particular political stance. When a political narrative is endorsed by library administration, politics has entered the organization in a qualitatively different way than when colleagues have a conversation over lunch about the events of the day. When an employee perceives there is a "correct" political narrative that differs from their own, there is pressure either to endorse that narrative or keep quiet.[126] The officially endorsed worldview makes its way into the library through trainings, but also public statements on current events, exhibits and programming, and collection decisions (e.g., content warnings, diversity audits, "decolonizing"), among other ways. Once there is a "correct" narrative—especially when it is framed as morally correct—it then becomes harder for an individual to object and more acceptable, or even expected, for the administration to prioritize the narrative in the library.

Honoring separation of the public and private spheres fosters inclusion and enables cooperation across differences. It focuses energy on the common purpose. A library leader should assume that there is diversity of worldviews among employees and communicate that it is everyone's job to defend workers' privacy. Just as the ultimate check on government power is its inability to know everything about its citizens, the ultimate check on managerial overreach is the employer's inability to know the private thoughts of employees. And just as seeking to know, and control, citizens' private thoughts and beliefs is a clear mark of an authoritarian government, a clear mark of an unethical employer is seeking to know or control workers' private thoughts and beliefs.

Library Values

The core values and principles of librarianship guiding how we interact with our user communities should be the same values and principles that guide how we interact with our workplace colleagues. Respecting library workers' privacy of thought is a direct parallel to respecting privacy of reading. Privacy is a value system. Those values, as expressed for American libraries through the ALA's *Library Bill of Rights*, *Code of Ethics*, and *Freedom to Read Statement*, show not only library users but also library workers that the library will safeguard their freedom of thought, belief, and conscience. After all, "Privacy is about respect for persons, not just protection of data."[127] As institutions, libraries are a bulwark against the encroachment of

surveillance in society and are advocates for strengthening privacy culture. In "Privacy: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights," ALA "affirms that rights of privacy are necessary for intellectual freedom and are fundamental to the ethical practice of librarianship," stating that "[p]rivacy is the foundation upon which our libraries were built and the reason libraries are such a trusted part of every community."[128] The *Code of Ethics* explicitly addresses library workers. Principle 5 says: "We treat co-workers and other colleagues with respect, fairness, and good faith, and advocate conditions of employment that safeguard the rights and welfare of all employees of our institutions."[129] One of the rights we safeguard is our employees' privacy.

We defend the privacy of thought of everyone in the library, reader and worker, as if they are human rights, which suggests that we believe that they are. In the end, our commitment to the foundational values of librarianship can only be met if we are equally guided by those same values in how we treat the people who work in our libraries. Librarianship's ethic of privacy, just like the inherent moral autonomy of the individual, is a leveling idea; it stands independent of the power of any one individual and is equally deserved by all. Among those who work in the library, the ethical imperative to respect workers' privacy is greater for library managers because an employee has less ability than a library user to defend their own privacy of thought without regard for the personal consequences. Our collective responsibility is to support our libraries in providing ethical library service, which cannot be done without treating library workers ethically.

Conclusion

The core goals of universities—creating and sharing knowledge—are simple but lofty goals and doing them well is essential for building a better society. The university cannot allow itself to become a politically partisan institution; if it does, it betrays its core mission. Academia has lately rediscovered the wisdom articulated in the 1967 University of Chicago Kalven Report: "To perform its mission in the society, a university must sustain an extraordinary environment of freedom of inquiry and maintain an independence from political fashions, passions, and pressures."[130] Like the university, the library is a community with "limited and distinctive purposes," which "cannot insist that all of its members favor a given view of social policy."[131] Both universities and their libraries are long-lasting institutions that have evolved substantially in how they advance their missions. Yet no institution can be long-lasting if the mission itself is co-optable by the people who work there at any given time. Social justice-based DEI trainings adopt a framework that argues that there is "one true way to understand race and racism in America."[132] In the library there is never one true way to understand any complex social and historical topic.

The library is an emergent space. Librarians do not tell library users—or workers—what to think. On the contrary, they are invited to use the library to figure out what they think and then to share it publicly, or not. The library opens its doors to all and does not seek to undertake their moral education.[133] Library workers walk through those same doors every day and should be accorded the same respect. Many people choose to work in libraries to participate in the mission of learning, exploration, thinking, and creating. Library workers are not only participants in the ethos of the library but are charged with persisting over time. In exchange for that important work, they have earned respect for their privacy of thought to the same degree we defend it for all users of our libraries.

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Making the Connection: An Examination of Institutional Repositories and Scholarly Communication Crosslinking Practices

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Institutional repositories (IRs) remain a powerful tool for opening, sharing, and preserving scholarship. Scholarly communication (SC) services and resources are essential to promoting and supporting IRs. Linking SC services within an IR offers support to users at their point of need. This study investigates the prevalence of web linking between IR and SC services in 145 Association of Research Libraries and Carnegie R1 libraries. This quantitative analysis identifies gaps and offers practical recommendations for developing connections between SC and IR websites at academic libraries.

Introduction

It has been well established that at the turn of the twenty-first century, amid new publishing house mergers,[1] exorbitant serial costs,[2] restrictive licensing, and static or decreasing budgets, academic libraries struggled to provide access to the critical scholarship that users required. In response, and with the maturation of the web and the introduction of new software applications, libraries and research scholars promoted a shift in principles for sharing scholarly output: open access (OA) or freely available, open, online scholarship.[3] Subsequently, DSpace, an open source repository platform developed by MIT and HP Labs in 2002,[4] and other institutional repository (IR) resources were born, and new IRs[5] were launched, aiming to provide a solution to challenges the larger research community faced. Libraries, as key sources for the discovery of, access to, and preservation of research and other scholarly materials, took on the role of establishing and managing IRs. Libraries also facilitated scholarly communication (SC) services and related resources to educate their users on considerations related to emerging open practices.

Crow[6] and Lynch,[7] prominent voices for the value of IRs, set the stage for a period of institutional investment in repository infrastructure. Despite their slightly divergent arguments for such services,[8] both were clear that repositories would require libraries to invest in and offer new services in support of these efforts. Their work set the stage for several decades of IR and SC service development. Subsequently, the Association of College and Research Libraries

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(ACRL) issued a white paper detailing principles and techniques to reform SC efforts, which identified areas where libraries could take action to advocate for the "reform" of scholarly communication, that is, the "system through which research and other scholarly writings are created, evaluated for quality, disseminated to the scholarly community, and preserved for future use."[9] The Association of Research Libraries (ARL) also collected data about its member organizations and their IR services,[10] which were most often cited as being established to "increase global visibility of, preserve, and provide free access to the institution's scholarship."

As IRs became more widely adopted, expanded, and matured in the first decades of the 21st century, academic library literature asked numerous questions about engaging and encouraging their communities of users to openly share research via IRs. Researchers have explored the value of IRs;[11] strategies for building content in IRs;[12] the role of librarians in relation to IR support;[13] faculty perceptions of and participation in IRs, or lack thereof;[14] education and outreach efforts;[15] and the cost of maintaining IRs.

Following a period of examination that questioned their relevance,[16] IRs recently experienced renewed attention due to their vital role in providing open access to critical research during the 2020 COVID pandemic. For example, the 2020 Confederation of Open Access Repositories (COAR) Community Framework for Best Practices in Repositories released guidance "to assist repositories to evaluate and improve their current operations based on a set of applicable and achievable good practices."[17] In 2021, the Scholarly Publishing and Academic Resources Coalition (SPARC) and COAR launched an effort to "support and better organize the repository network in the US."[18] Following the May 2022 release of the National Science and Technology Council's Desirable Characteristics of Data Repositories for Federally Funded Research,[19] the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy's updated its policy guidance, which brings repositories to the forefront in helping to meet the federal government's Open Science goals in August 2022.[20] IRs remain a vital element of the research enterprise.

Research Questions

IRs continue to be "an essential component of our national research infrastructure, offering rapid and open access to research,"[21] while also nurturing a more bibliodiverse[22] scholarly ecosystem that supports gray literature,[23] student work,[24] and other collections that may not otherwise be readily and openly available for use and/or preserved for the long term. As efforts to further invest in IRs continue to evolve, it is an opportune time to take stock of the ways in which online SC services and IRs are situated in academic libraries and interconnect to meet user needs.

In this study, the authors aimed to investigate the alignment of IRs and SC services related to discoverability,[25] user engagement,[26] and web design.[27] This research grew from the authors' evaluation of their institution's emerging IR-related and SC services, including developing a SC web presence. As detailed in the ACRL's Scholarly Communication Toolkit,[28] SC encompasses many topics (e.g., IRs, copyright, open access).[29] For IR-related SC services, it is essential that a dedicated SC page links to relevant resources and vice versa.[30] Doing so provides a mechanism for discoverability, where users can "encounter new content or functionality that they were not aware of previously."[31] SC efforts also require outreach and education to thrive.[32] Making users aware of available SC resources can help them navigate copyright and article version (e.g., pre-print, post-print, version of record) questions, and providing at-hand support can disentangle complexity in the self-deposit process.[33] Because

many library users prefer online access due to accessibility and ease of use, an easy-to-navigate and action-oriented site is invaluable to encourage researcher engagement.[34]

To explore these issues, the authors asked:

- Are academic libraries building informational connections between IRs and SC services for users?
- Does IR software influence the informational connection between IRs and SC services and resources?
- Do academic libraries need to consider practices that better connect IRs and SC web pages to provide an easier path to engagement with open practices for users?

Each institution's IR has its own collection scope and other locally specific information. And IRs have a diversity of users (e.g., faculty, students, and external users) with varying needs. These stakeholders may need or seek assistance engaging with the institution's IR, and building a connection between the IR and SC services helps the institution establish trust between the library and user. The goal, in turn, is that with increased trust, users will be more likely to return to the IR to read and share openly available scholarly work. This study's results offer baseline, practical recommendations that may help library colleagues who are launching and formalizing their SC programs and IRs, or institutions that are expanding SC programs or updating a web presence for SC and IR services, to establish trust with users by building easy-to-navigate connections.

Literature Review

Engagement and participation are key elements of successful SC work. As researchers are invited (or compelled) to shift very personal research practices related to openly sharing their scholarship, the academic library's role in encouraging and mediating open practices requires both a compelling call to action and clear information supporting that request. Such clarity can help reduce friction for researchers interested in engaging with library-supported SC and IR efforts as they reconsider tried-and-true practices and engrained disciplinary norms. Navigating versioning, publishing agreements, and terms of use required for IR submission may feel overwhelming for time-strapped researchers. Institutional and funder open access policies may feel like additional administrative burdens. Until incentives clearly align with and reward open practices, and the resources associated with them (e.g., IRs and SC services) are less complex, researchers may not take advantage of the benefits of openly sharing their work in IRs. The request of authors must be clear, and help must be readily available. Salo's continued relevance[35] in the literature supports this assertion.

Optimizing User Engagement

Library-based web pages are the standard method for delivering information to researchers about SC services and related resources, frequently answered questions, and points of contact. However, providing clear, reliable, up-to-date information that serves the diverse range of audiences, both in- and outside an institution, can be a challenge,[36] as Manness et al. explored in their repository's personas work.[37]

To understand how academic libraries might better bridge the gap to successfully engage researchers in IR participation, an exploration of interaction design by Silver[38] offered a compelling consideration. Silver indicates that user interaction with systems and their design is a "conversation," and he asserts that service providers should "focus on the quality of the

conversation that is the root of behavior." To that end, academic libraries need to be clear in the online conversation they are conducting with researchers through their services—informative, truthful, purpose driven, and relevant.[39]

Identifying and Addressing Speedbumps

In their work, González-Pérez et al.[40] applied the Technological Acceptance Model as a method to explore two key variables affecting user interaction: ease of use and perceived usefulness. They identified barriers to IR depositor participation, which can include time, copyright issues, and versioning. These known speedbumps, as well as others, can cause researcher confusion about what may be required for IR self-deposits or about the potential benefits of IR participation, and can further deter well-established faculty and researcher behavior. Advocacy and training are part of the answer, González-Pérez et al. suggest, coupled with good interface design as a tool for "effective action." They note, "[i]t is vital to know users' feelings when interacting with the system and address subject qualities such as motivation,"[41] rather than simply focusing on task execution. IR deposits can feel like a complex task. To encourage user participation, in partnership with education and support, IR usefulness needs to be clear to depositing authors and the submission process needs to be easy to navigate. By connecting IRs with the educational resources in SC web pages, the self-deposit process can become less burdensome. In turn, this small, technical shift may help promote broader adoption of open scholarly sharing via IRs.

As academic libraries do the slow and sustained work required to change disciplinary cultures that reward and sustain open practices, they also need to make IR deposit protocols less complicated. However, academic institutions are limited in the degree to which they can control the design of IR systems, with greater or less flexibility depending on the IR software they are using[42] and the resources at their disposal. In their user experience study of the self-archiving process, Betz and Hall[43] explored the ways in which microinteractions of the IR deposit process can create concern or confusion for depositors. They noted that, "[s]tandard installations of popular IR software … do little to help facilitate easy and efficient IR deposits for faculty."[44] Even though it has not been established that positive user experience can increase IR participation, removing barriers to participation by "providing comprehensive instructions at points of need" or "goal-based triggers" can help, assuming the help is clear and concise.

In a similar spirit, Narayan and Luca[45] deployed user experience design methods to update their IR interface. Much like Betz and Hall,[46] they found that researchers' reluctance with using IRs included a lack of branding, opaque jargon, and lack of direction. They spoke to the challenge of bridging the gap between "emotional and psychological needs" of IR users and "design decisions." This and other institutionally specific examinations provide a good reference point for the recommendations herein concerning well-articulated linking practices. From the above-mentioned studies, an author's confusion and resulting hesitance to navigate a submission process appears generalizable; there are low-impact solutions providing a user-friendly system that can address these challenges and increase IR user engagement and participation.

End Users

While not the focus of this exploration, several studies have examined the IR end user experience. From St. Jean et al.,[47] readers learn that IRs are generally viewed favorably by end users, yet there is still room for providing clarification on collection scope and criteria for deposit

to increase an IR's trustworthiness. Subiyakto et al.[48] identified a suboptimal interface at the root of poor end user experience, which perhaps speaks to the low percentage of returning users. COAR's[49] efforts toward establishing a global framework for shared practices for IRs addresses the importance of clear documentation to the integrity of IRs, as well. All told, providing context, clarity, and transparency encourages user trust, which serves to improve the conversation with users and increase their engagement with efforts to open access to their scholarship. While the authors' examination and recommendations focus on depositing users, end users would benefit from the authors' findings as well.

Methods

Sample Institutions

This study selected and evaluated 145 North American ARL[50] and Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education (2018)[51] academic research library websites to identify whether the institution offered SC services and resources and IRs, and whether there were linked connections between the two. Coupling the ARL institutions, which by definition "[advance] research, learning, and scholarly communication," [52] with Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education (2018)[53] R1 universities not represented in the ARL list allowed the authors to explore those institutions with very high research activity from well-established university categorization systems. This group of institutions demonstrate a high level of research activity, making it more likely that they would incorporate SC services on their library websites. Additionally, the authors removed the French language libraries since they did not want to rely on machine translation services and misevaluate content.

Data Collection

This study used summative content analysis principles,[54] that is, identifying and counting keywords and interpreting context, to review these library SC and IR websites. In doing so, the authors examined whether and how (e.g., via reciprocal linking) SC topics were included on library websites. As Clyde[55] noted in 1996, "the best preparation for creating a home page" is looking at other library sites; in the authors' opinion, this practice is still true. Indeed, as the authors were looking to formalize their library's SC web presence, they aimed to identify what topics other library SC web pages addressed and how they did so. In doing so, the authors sought to determine trends among similar institutions.

For this evaluation, the coding scheme focused on thirty-five scholarly communication elements influenced by the ACRL Scholarly Communication Tool Kit (e.g., copyright, author rights, repositories, Open Educational Resources, and digital humanities).[56] The authors were intentional about creating guidelines at the project's start to establish common data collection practices and reliability. To create interrater reliability, a sample set of websites was reviewed from the list at random. Using Randomizer.org, a free service offered by the Social Psychology Network, institutions were randomly assigned to each coauthor. They then compared and discussed initial results. From this sample data, the authors created definitions for each topic and added search strategies and examples to the definition list to further support consistent data gathering. Decisions from the subset review process were formalized in a codebook and followed through the rest of the data collection process.

In spring 2021, the researchers collected the first data for all SC terms. For each website the researchers looked for a link to the SC web page from the main library site and then explored

top-level links to determine if one was available. If this was not identifiable from dropdown information, the library's LibGuide system, embedded Google search, or Google search with "scholarly communication" link:library URL were used. This study focuses on a review of IR-specific SC data for targeted analysis, rather than the comprehensive spring 2021 dataset.

In November 2021 (hereafter fall 2021) a second close review of each institution's web content was conducted to explore the IR-specific data. This data collection focused on the connection between SC websites and IRs. These data identified crosslinks between IRs and SC web pages. While documenting these crosslinks, additional free-text information that each site provided about the other was gathered. Text data were analyzed using Excel, aiming to answer the following:

- Which institutions support IRs (if so, what platform was used)?
- Which institutions offer a SC web page?
- Is there a connection (i.e., a crosslink) between the institution's IR and SC service page, and vice versa?

Replication data are publicly available.[57]

The authors completed a final IR subset data review in March 2022 (spring 2022) to see if there was any change in the data over time and to identify repository platform to address a final question: Are there any trends in crosslinking practice related to IR software? With this final pass, rather than start the review from the existing spreadsheet, the researchers returned to library home pages to identify SC information. If they still were not able to identify any SC services page, they returned to the original spreadsheet to identify if there was a URL from a previous search, and, if so, whether it was still active.

In this review, the authors documented differences between the earlier and current data. The authors also explored secondary pages on the IR to determine if these sites linked back to library SC services. If found, the authors made note of where the links were situated, as well as SC information that was available within the IR. In addition to the quantitative data, elements of the IR and SC page that provided additional information about the institution's approach to both IR and SC services were noted. These free-text notes are not coded and are not included in the replication data.

This study investigates the availability of SC content and IRs, examines the relationship between academic libraries' SC content and their IR library support page, and explores whether IR software influences whether there are crosslinks between SC service pages and the IR. Based on this work, the authors assert that to optimize coordination between IRs and SC educational content and increase user engagement, libraries must clearly connect IR and SC services to improve user interactions, build trust, and further the utility and reliability of the IR.

Results

IR and SC Webpages: Current Landscape

In the spring 2021 round of data collection, the authors identified whether an institution had a SC page and hosted an IR. In the spring 2021 data, 142 of 145 (97.9%) of the libraries hosted an institutional repository. Of those, 101 of 145 (69.7%) maintained a dedicated SC web page. Additionally, the authors documented the number of link levels necessary to navigate to the page, to determine whether the SC page was readily discoverable from the library's home page. For 20 (19.8%) of the institutions, SC information was located one link in; for 18 (17.8%) institutions, it took two links; for 12 (11.9%) institutions, three links. Thirteen (12.9%) institu-

FIGURE 1
SC Navigation Paths
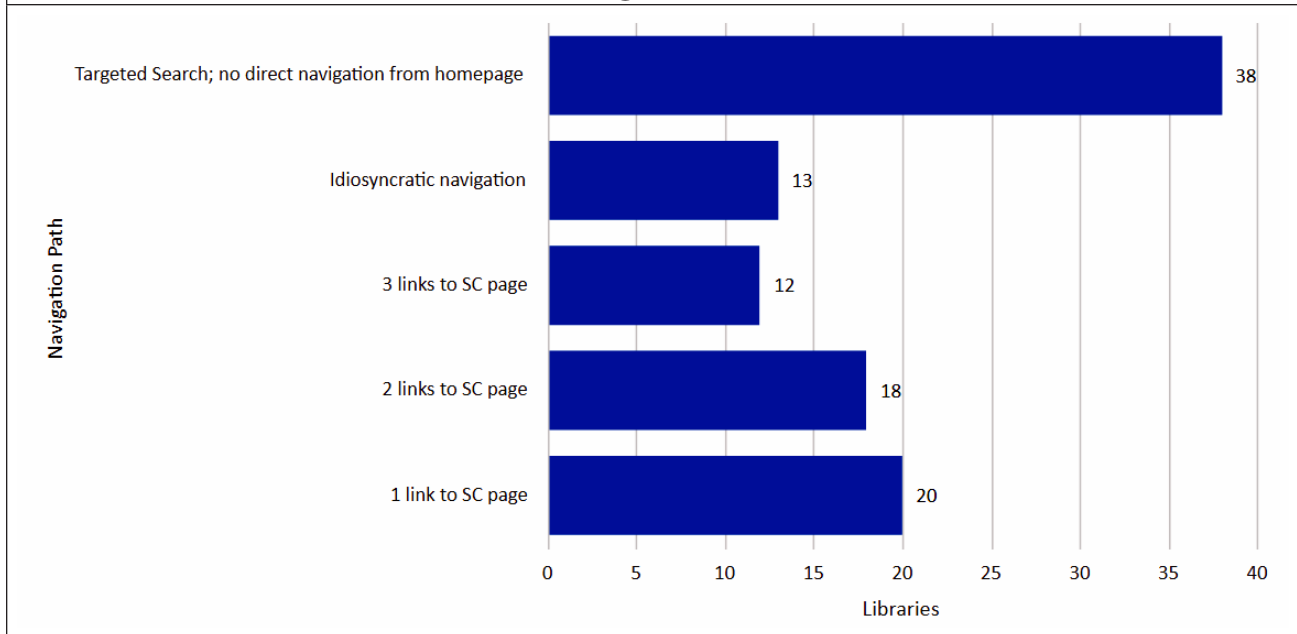
tions had what the researchers characterized as "idiosyncratic" navigation, where finding the page took some digging; and 38 (37.6%) institutions required a targeted search to find SC information (see Figure 1).

The researchers then identified whether SC was defined on the SC page. The authors found that of the 101 institutions that supported an SC web page, 52 (51.5%) of those institutions provided a definition of scholarly communication; and, of those 52 institutions, 7 (13.5%) directly referenced ACRL and 36 (69.2%) referred to what ACRL identifies as the lifecycle or system of scholarly research, whereby scholarship is "created, disseminated, evaluated, and preserved" (see Figure 2).

FIGURE 2
SC Definitions Used on Library SC Websites from Spring 2021 Data

- Tangential SC Definition
- ACRL's SC Definition (verbatim)
- ACRL's SC Definition (paraphrased): Incorporates ACRL's lifecycle or system of scholarly research
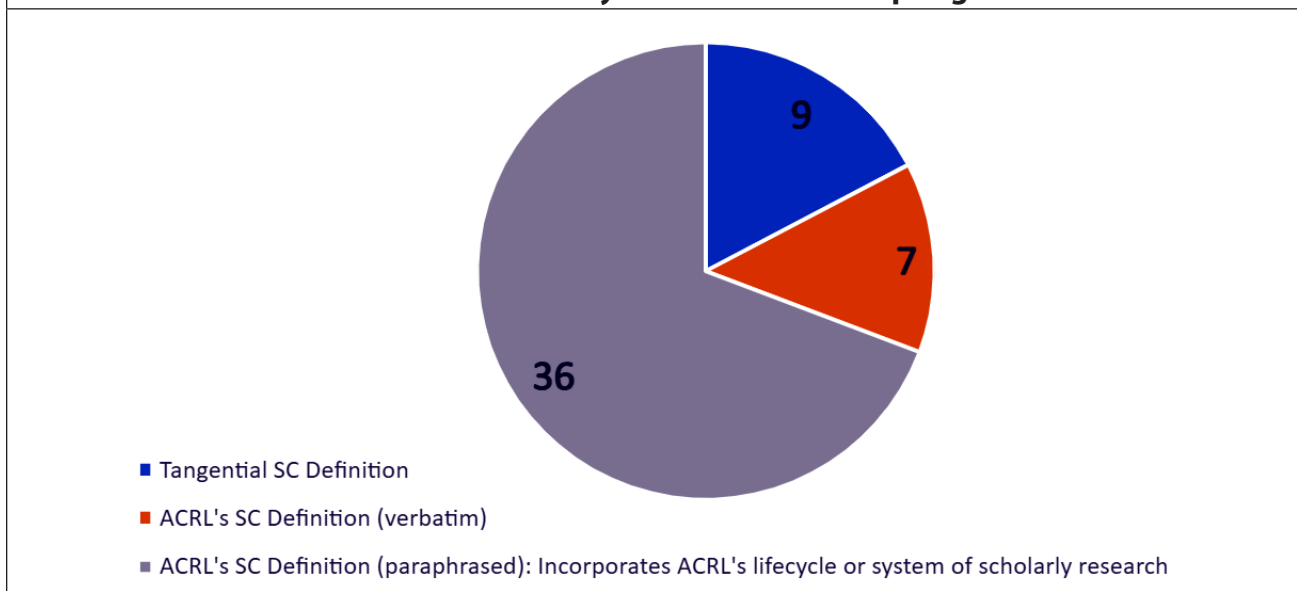
To identify discoverability opportunities for users between SC pages and IRs, the authors noted whether the two services were linked. Of the study's 145 libraries, 99 (67.6%) featured both an IR and a SC web page. Of those 99, 84 (84.8%) of the SCs linked to the IRs, and only 9 (9.1%) of the IRs contained a link to the SC page (see Figure 3).

FIGURE 3
Frequency of Crosslinks Observed in Spring 2021, Fall 2021, and Spring 2022

	Number of institutions with IR	Number of institutions with SC information	Number of institutions with both IR and SC information	SC to IR link	IR to SC link
Spring 2021	142	101	99	84	6
Fall 2021	142	101	99	84	9
Spring 2022	142	98	97	78	19

■ Spring 2021   ■ Fall 2021   ■ Spring 2022
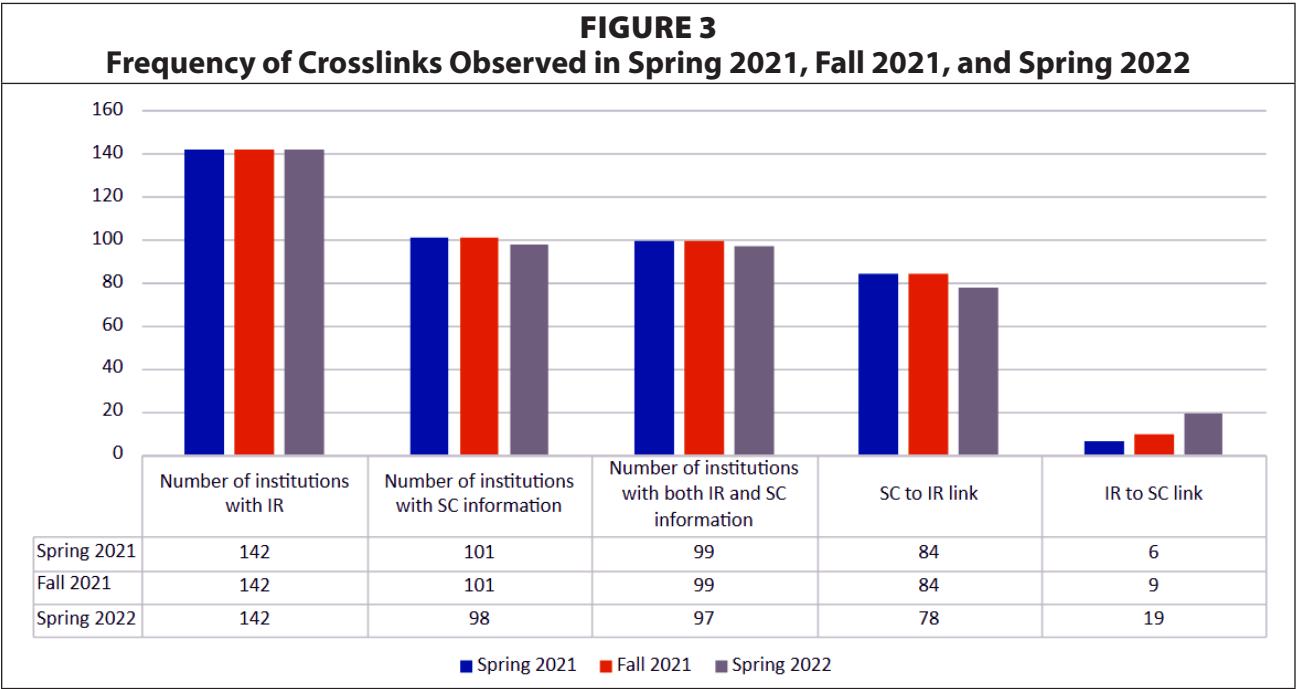
Common SC Elements

The researchers further explored the link location and guiding calls to action for the nine institutions where the IRs did crosslink to the library's SC page. There were several common SC elements between these nine IRs, which included links to author rights information or author rights services and points of contact for SC topics. Two of the libraries linked to the SC web page directly on the IR homepage, and another two had links to the SC page on the IR's "About" page. Five linked to the SC page on a sidebar under headings such as "Author Corner," "Useful Links," "About," and "Other Resources."

Changes Over Time

Recognizing that webpages are dynamic, the authors revisited the SC and IR websites collected in fall 2021 to track any changes. As in spring 2021, 142 (97.9%) institutions maintained an IR and 101 (69.7%) provided an SC page to their uses. Similarly, 99 (68.2%) institutions offer users both an IR and SC information. When exploring the crosslinking practices at these institutions, 84 (84.8%) SC pages linked to the institution's IR, while 9 (9%) IRs linked back to the institution's SC page.

The spring 2022 website review identified 98 (67.6%) SC web pages. Interestingly, 11 (7.6%) SC pages from the original 145 were no longer available, and an additional eight (5.5%) library sites that did not have SC pages in spring 2021 had a newly available site. The number of IRs remained consistent and were supported at the same institutions in both the original spring 2021 and fall 2021 data collection. Additionally, the number of sites that had both an SC page and an IR dropped to 87 (60.0%); a decrease of 7.6 percent. Of those, 20 (23.0%) of

the IRs linked to the SC page and 77 (88.5 percent) of the links were reciprocal (see Figure 1). What stands out in Figure 3 is a 13.9 percent increase in crosslinks from IRs to SC pages over the course of a year.

FIGURE 4
IR Software Crosslink Trends

	DSpace	bepress	Esploro	Fedora	Custom
Total instances	55	39	5	5	16
SC to IR	29	22	3	2	14
IR to SC	8	9	0	0	2

Total instances   SC to IR   IR to SC
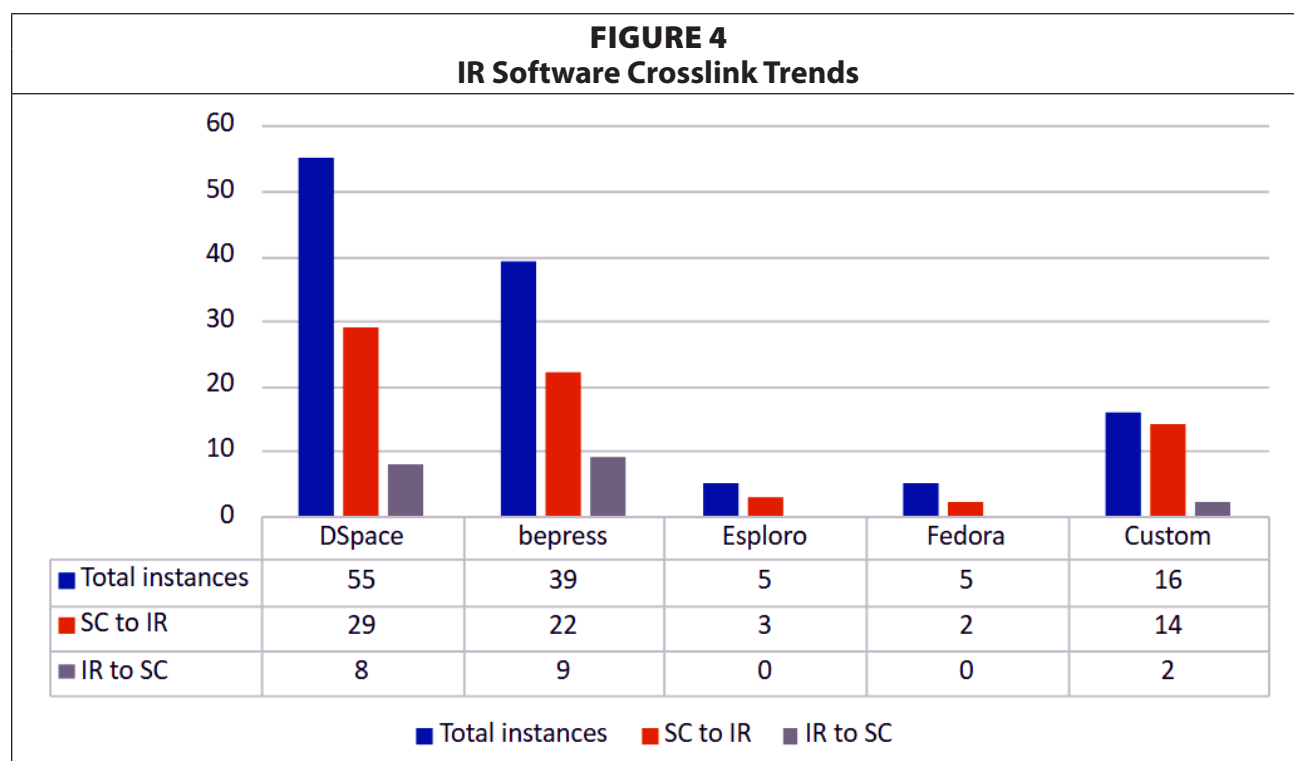
IR Software Trends

Last, in the spring 2022 data, 142 of the 145 (97.9%) libraries maintain an IR. Of those 142 institutions, the following software platforms were used: 55 (38.7%) used DSpace; 39 (27.5%) bepress; 5 (3.5%) Esploro; 5 (3.5%) Fedora; and 16 (11.3%) presumed and confirmed custom builds (seven of which were in the University of California system, which use a shared repository across their campuses). The remaining institutions used other IR software, including ePrints, Samvera, Hyrax, Pure, Invenio, FigShare, Hydra, Sobek, and Jupiter.

Looking more closely at IR software to explore the crosslink trends (see Figure 4):

- Of 55 DSpace institutions 8 IRs linked to SC page, 29 SC pages linked to IR.
- Of 39 bepress institutions 9 IRs linked to SC page, 22 SC pages linked to IR.
- Of 5 Esploro institutions 0 IRs linked to SC page, 3 SC pages linked to IR.
- Of 5 Fedora institutions 0 IRs linked to SC page, 2 SC pages linked to IR.
- Of 16 custom build institutions 2 IRs linked to SC page, 14 SC pages linked to IR.

The trend in SC pages more commonly linking to IR, rather than the other way around, follows across all IR software platform. IR software does not appear to be a significant determinant of crosslinking practice.

Discussion

With this study, the authors aimed to first address the question of whether academic libraries are facilitating connections between IRs and SC services. The findings show that 97.9 percent of the academic libraries reviewed host an IR. This indicates that the work involved

with libraries supporting IRs has evolved and advanced over the past twenty years since the Budapest Open Access Initiative promoted the benefits of self-archiving, and by extension, repositories.[58] Repositories have become integral tools for providing access to and preservation of an institution's scholarly output, with open distribution in IRs showing an increase in the visibility and use of vital institutional research.[59] Hosting an IR is a significant undertaking, however, and offering a platform is a fraction of the work. The education, outreach, and mediation underlying IR services[60] are where institutional intention becomes action. One of the fundamental methods for providing information about IRs and IR-related services is via SC resources (see Figure 3).

With this understanding, the authors expected a comparable number of SC pages at institutions that had IRs. However, over 30 percent of the study's library websites did not feature a dedicated SC web page. Furthermore, it is noteworthy that between spring 2021 and spring 2022 there was a 10 percent decrease in the number of institutions that offer SC services information to their user community. This merits further exploration. While webpages evolve, possible explanations for these datapoints may include SC services being rebranded, distributed under different services, or suspended entirely. Shifts in what SC services are called and where they are situated may offer a bellwether of changes in how institutions frame SC-related services. At the very least, exploring these shifts further may provide insight into where SC services fit within an organization's structure and priorities.

It is reassuring that the number of IRs remained consistent. Another bright spot is the nearly 14 percent increase in links made from the IR to SC services between spring 2021 and spring 2022.
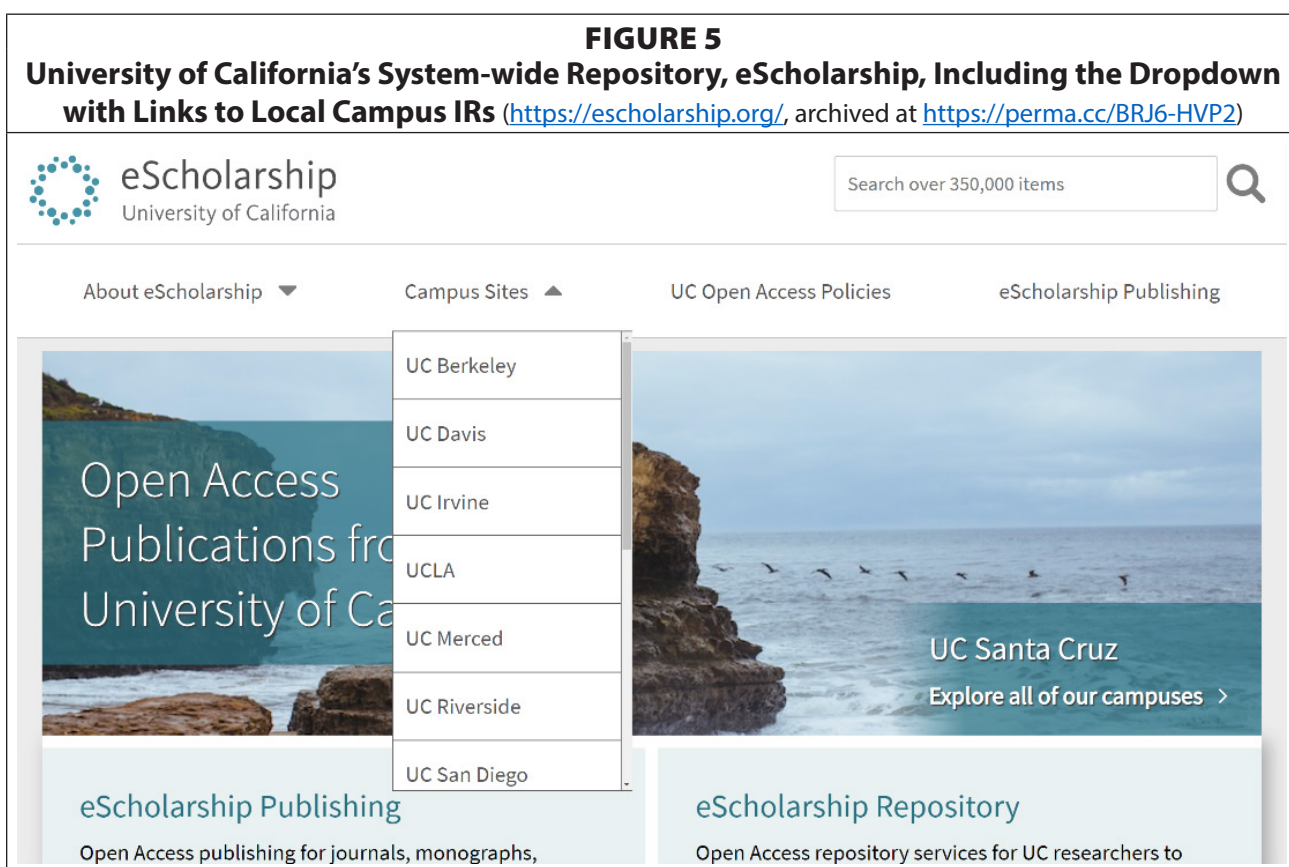
Crosslinks for Discoverability

IR services are readily available at a significant number of the institutions yet, at most, 67 percent have web-based information to direct users to SC and IR services in tandem. Most institutions that have both an SC webpage and IR service linked from the SC webpage to the IR. However, only 23 percent linked from the IR back to SC services. Most libraries did not include a clear, direct path for users to their SC webpage from their homepage. Of the institutions examined, thirty libraries nested their SC content under a larger content category such as "Services" or "Research Support." The University of Oklahoma Libraries, for example, nests their SC webpage (titled "Scholarly Communications") under three sub-categories: "Faculty Services,"[61] "Research Support," and "Publication Services." This breakdown can help provide different paths for users to find relevant SC support, depending on how they identify their own information need.

Returning to the assertion that IR and SC pages are critical tools in academic libraries' efforts to open and preserve an institutions' scholarly record, how then might academic libraries do better at building connections for and trust with users? Most directly, and most immediately, one practical recommendation is linking from the SC page to the IR and back again. Whether the SC and IR are different units in an institution, libraries should crosslink the two services to bolster user interactions and invite participation. For those institutions without an SC page, the authors recommend creating one with basic elements contextualizing the IR and considerations related to sharing scholarship openly. The few IRs in the study that did crosslink back to SC pages (9.1% in spring 2021; 23.0% in spring 2022) often included the SC link directly on the repository's homepage. If the repository platform permits direct

linking, this provides an unambiguous option for placement. Including the SC link under the repository's "About" or "Frequently Asked Questions" page or section could also serve the dual purpose of providing information to end users who seek to learn more about the purpose and aims of the repository.

This study found that sixteen institutions used consortial or shared repositories. In cases where an institution is part of a consortium or a shared repository, the IR will see users from various home institutions. Including a link to each institution's SC page is warranted for users of a shared service. By localizing a shared service, participating institutions can build credibility and trust among users. At the same time, local users can quickly locate relevant information for their needs. In building space for the local user, the shared instance can feel more personalized. One method for doing so is by creating a shortlist or an accessible dropdown menu with institution-specific links to SC pages. The University of California's eScholarship "Campus sites" exemplifies this sort of subtle localization.[62] By selecting a specific campus from the dropdown, users are directed to home points of contact and websites (e.g., University of California Berkeley, see Figure 5).

FIGURE 5
University of California's System-wide Repository, eScholarship, Including the Dropdown with Links to Local Campus IRs (https://escholarship.org/, archived at https://perma.cc/BRJ6-HVP2)

IR Software Influence

The authors also aimed to determine whether IR software influenced the informational connection between IRs and SC services and resources. The data collected indicate over half of the institutions studied (66%) use DSpace (55 institutions) or bepress (39 institutions) for their IR software. Looking more closely at the institutions that do crosslink from the IR to SC services and back again, 9 of them use Dspace (16%), 8 use bepress (20%), and 2 use custom software (12%). There is not a clear outlier that indicates, or hints at, one IR software offering a clear

advantage, or disadvantage, for crosslinking between IR and SC services. The gap between crosslinking practice, then, seems to indicate either institutional oversight or intention.

Recommendations to Encourage Engagement

Might academic libraries need to consider practices that better connect IRs and SC web pages to provide an easier path to engagement with open practices for users? The findings herein seem to offer a cautionary tale. While crosslinking may seem self-evident, the data collected demonstrate a significant opportunity to improve the connection between IRs and their users and SC support, which can aid IR user goals and advance the benefits of OA.

New visitors, whether depositing to or accessing content from the IR, may not be familiar with IR and SC topics. There are several ways to increase the usability of IR systems and SC services that provide familiar functionality that can improve the likelihood of users having a "satisfactory experience."[63] Brief introductory information can help reduce a user's frustration and confusion and focus user action.[64] Link labels should be clear and descriptive, explaining what the user will find if they follow the link. A link to "The Office of Scholarly Communication," for example, may not mean much to a new visitor. A more effective link label would be "Scholarly Communication Services" or "All Scholarly Communication Services," which directly sends the user to the web page that covers relevant services and support. Clearer still would be targeted calls to action for known areas of ambiguity or concern, such as, "How to Deposit," as found in Duke's IR, DukeSpace page (see Figure 6), which links users to the institution's SC page that features additional calls to action (e.g., "Learn more about copyright").[65] As Lucaites, Fletcher, and Pyle[66] note, "[u]sers rely on clickability cues to know where on the page they can click and how they can interact with the site." Call-to-action buttons are an unambiguous way of doing so.

One of the primary responsibilities of libraries is to connect users with information. IRs provide an excellent venue to freely share and access information. The data herein indicate that, while the number is slowly growing, only 23 percent of IRs maintain a link with SC services. Libraries can and should institute practices that better connect their IRs to SC resources.

FIGURE 6
Duke's IR DukeSpace, Linking to Duke's SC Page ScholarWorks with a "How to Deposit"
Call to Action (https://dukespace.lib.duke.edu/home, archived at https://perma.cc/WW66-RJDD)

Inserting services, support, and points of contact to help clarify and focus a user's information seeking helps nurture a positive experience for users. While academic libraries may clearly invite contributions to IRs, do they similarly invite information seeking that clarifies the details and supports the practices attendant with IR deposits? With adequate support at the point of need, with the goal of making regular and confident visitors to IRs, the academic libraries' collective call for behavior change in support of a more open, sustainable scholarly landscape may become an easier reach for potential users. An unambiguous method for doing so is to employ "triggers," such as call-to-action buttons or menu items, that invite active engagement.[67] Academic libraries need to be clear and direct in their communication, using plain language and prominent links to support the deposit process.[68] Doing so will help empower users and may affect whether they choose to deposit content in an IR or not.

Limitations

The authors were deliberate and aimed to be thorough in their study of IR and SC service crosslinking; however, several limitations to this work bear acknowledging.

First, the decision to use ACRL's SC definition is a limitation of this study by design. ACRL's term is well recognized, as evidenced by the Association's roadshow and toolkit of the same name, but academic libraries do not consistently use "scholarly communication" to characterize their SC-related services. As a result, ARL and Carnegie R1 institutions with digital initiatives, digital scholarship, and similarly titled services and support were not considered in this review. Additionally, these data were only collected during the spring 2021 data period. Potential shifts in local SC definitions over time were not captured, since crosslinking trends were the focus of this study.

Another intentional decision was to limit this study to ARL and R1 institutions. Again, the authors anticipated that these institutions would have SC services and IRs because of their high research activity. The findings herein do not consider, and may not be applicable to, non-research-intensive colleges and universities that are mainly teaching-focused.

This study explores the publicly available interfaces of SC resources and IRs. As such, the authors did not have access to submission-side resources that may be embedded within IR software; for example, definitions and links to SC services or external resources for submission support may be in place at these institutions. Access restrictions rendered such guidance invisible to this study.

A related limitation is that institutions employ different methods for collecting content for their repository. These strategies may include mediated deposit, harvesting, publisher autodeposit, and other tools, such as research information management systems (e.g., the U.K.-based Publications Router and U.S.-based Public Access Submission System). Self-deposit is neither the only nor the fastest way to increase content to a repository. However, since these alternatives require additional resources and institutional commitment, these findings offer fundamental recommendations for all institutions, which may help smooth the path and make clearer connections to better support researcher participation in IRs.

Conclusions

Creating clear, comprehensive SC webpages, action-oriented instructions in the IR, and building direct links between IRs and SCs, these services can together help grow and evolve the attitudes and practices required to broaden a researcher's reach and expand access to valuable scholarship.

This study examined whether 145 ARL and Carnegie R1 institutions maintain and connect IRs and SC websites. An analysis of the data indicates that SC pages are more likely to link to the IR rather than the reverse. As much as IRs are common at the study's institutions, these findings indicate it may be time to reconsider what SC information is provided via IR pages and how this information is framed. Doing so would better support an author's efforts to take advantage of OA distribution in IRs with the support of institutional SC services.

As academic libraries continue to invite participation from their community of users, the authors consider whether grounding the request of researchers—to shift practices and invest time in making their work OA—can be better supported with some common crosslinks that provide clear information and targeted actionable steps. By connecting services and systems more seamlessly with some small, tangible steps, academic libraries extend the range of their invitation to researchers to shift their practices.

Following from this work, the authors encourage further research in the linking practices and language libraries use to help direct user self-deposit. More specifically, the qualitative reason for the decrease in SC websites at the study's institutions merits exploration. A survey to a random sample of institutions that deactivated their sites, those that remained active, and the newly added institutional sites may help determine trends in the SC field.

Acknowledgments

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Building Distinctive Collections: A Survey of Association of Research Libraries' Member Institutions Acquisitions Infrastructure

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This study explores how acquisitions practices and infrastructure influence building diverse distinctive collections within Association of Research Libraries (ARL) member institutions. Through a survey of the existing acquisitions practices within ARL institutions, this study interrogates the collections-based methodologies that are utilized to purchase distinctive collections resources. The researchers analyze the aggregate data; the results highlight current efforts and practices to decenter dominant narratives and Western ways of collecting in acquisitions programs to build distinctive collections.

Introduction

The current and historical scholarly communication ecosystems have entrenched notions of dominant Western narratives as the default. These systemic deficiencies impact the ways in which libraries develop their collections. Decisions and actions taken by those responsible for prioritization, selection, acquisition, description, access, and use of collection materials are neither neutral nor objective, and these reflections are ever-present in collection building practices. Existing scholarship focuses primarily on collection development and resources metadata and discovery, and the critical intersection between these two areas has garnered significant attention in the profession. However, there has been little focus on acquisitions. Acquisitions departments play an essential role in building library collections, but relatively little attention has been paid to the acquisitions process and its impact on equity, diversity, and inclusion (hereafter mentioned as EDI) either in library collections development in general or in distinctive collections specifically.

This study aims to address this gap by shifting the focus of building diverse collections from selection activities to acquisitions practices.[1] Library acquisitions exercises agency in interpreting, dismantling, and reconstructing current systems of knowledge creation, supply,

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distribution, and consumption. By extension, library acquisitions may influence building distinctive collections, particularly around notions of EDI. This study explores the role of acquisitions by taking a closer look at the acquisitions infrastructure, namely the business, financial, and legal aspects of collections stewardship.

Background

This study focuses on impacts of collection development strategies and decisions on acquisitions at ARL institutions for distinctive collections. The Online Dictionary for Library and Information Science defines acquisitions as:

> the process of selecting, ordering, and receiving materials for library or archival collections by purchase, exchange, or gift, which may include budgeting and negotiating with outside agencies, such as publishers, dealers, and vendors, to obtain resources to meet the needs of the institution's clientele in the most economical and expeditious manner. Also refers to the department within a library responsible for selecting, ordering, and receiving new materials and for maintaining accurate records of such transactions, usually managed by an acquisitions librarian.[2]

The Society of American Archivists' dictionary characterizes acquisition as "materials physically and officially transferred to a repository as a unit at a single time" or "the process of seeking and receiving materials from any source by transfer, donation, or purchase."[3] Both dictionaries broadly define and denote the processes within the larger acquisitions context.

The term "distinctive collections" encompasses special collections of rare books, manuscripts, archives, and other formats. It also encompasses international studies collections[4] that include specialized materials selected around ethnic identities, geographic regions, cultures, and languages, and other specialized collections of distinction. This study's focus is distinctive collections, combining special and international collections, which is also referred to as area studies. Working definitions of the terms "acquisitions," "area/global/international studies," "distinctive collections," and "selection" are provided in Appendix A. The main distinction to note is that collection development comprises the selection process while acquisitions the ordering and payment processes.[5]

Acquisitions infrastructure in this article is discussed largely within the scope of the business, legal, and financial aspects of library acquisitions. In other words, how libraries conduct business given the legal and financial protocols governing how institutions operate in the global marketplace, and the agents involved in the process.[6] The business, legal, and financial infrastructure of libraries' collection programs have significant influence over how collections decisions are implemented as they are tied to institutional, city, county, state, provincial, federal, and international regulations, and they function beyond the scope of the library acquisitions unit.

Literature Review
Evolution of Distinctive Collections

In this study, the authors recognize that "distinctive collections" is a description that has evolved over time, with some institutions creating and maintaining distinctive collections units and others dismantling them. Carter and Whittaker attribute the beginnings of the idea

of distinctive collections to Nicolas Barker.[7] Building upon this idea, the ARL Working Group on Special Collections, charged with addressing the changing nature of collections steward-ship and ways of leveraging special collections, began nuancing this notion in February 2007. Within this Working Group, special collections was conceived broadly to include distinctive material in different formats and at various levels of endangerment due to extinction or era-sure.[8] The Working Group published its report in March 2009 and, by December of 2009, a special issue of *Research Library Issues* focusing on distinctive collections was also published.[9] The special issue began to redefine special collections as inclusive of distinctive collections. The special issue further elaborates that, "special collections are not distinctive just because they are unique but also because of what their stewards do with them to promote use."[10] These early conceptions were important in establishing the thinking around distinctive collections, and in extending the purview to collections of distinction beyond special collections.

At the 2012 Charleston Conference, the members of Yale's collection development group characterized distinctive collections as being somewhere between general and special collec-tions within the larger collections continuum. They were the first to focus on distinctive col-lections from the financial collections stewardship framework, and suggested the mechanics of the procurement process to determine the difference between general and special collec-tions. General collections acquisitions processes can be highly streamlined, centralized, and automated to handle bulk processing, while special collections may require a more tailored approach at the title-by-title level. The authors argue that distinctive collections may involve more consideration than general collections in negotiating and purchasing workflows, but the content may not fit the scope for special collections level in terms of collections management.[11] Alongside this view, Rick Anderson's 2013 *Ithaka S&R brief* approached the question of collec-tions from the economic standpoint, categorizing collections based on the notions of commod-ity (i.e., resources available through the conventional marketplace) and non-commodity (i.e., rare and unique documents), and the increasing importance of non-commodity resources in the academic library environment.[12] Collections stewardship in its totality comprises various measures of cost and expenditure, and it is important to recognize the acquisitions infrastruc-ture and its capacity to support these varying financial activities.

In 2015, Carter and Whittaker used the shared development, challenges and steward-ing of special and area studies collections as the rationale for integrating these two types of collections under distinctive collections at each of their institutions. They list the following commonalities as levers for aligning area studies and special collections to the institution's overall needs and resources:
- a high level of expertise in a distinguishing area
- highly focused collection development
- special handling and processing concerns (e.g., fragility, languages, format)
- a targeted but international user community
- existing element of the desired intensive liaison model
- shared history of positioning as outsiders, as siloed, or as different from larger library system

They also describe the local conditions under which the formation of distinctive collections was actualized at the Ohio State University Libraries and University of Kansas Libraries. The results were of improved engagement through increased collaboration, centralized and shared support for similar activities, and scalability and sustainability for services provided

by these paired programs. Although Carter and Whittaker attribute the initial formulation of the idea for distinctive collections to Barker[13] they, along with other research institutions, administratively operationalized the concept into implementation and codified it into organizational structures.[14]

Diversity and Collection Development in Libraries

This study is grounded in the acknowledgement that research libraries and librarianship are predominantly white and predominantly female.[15] Further, most academic libraries developed alongside the academic institutions they represent and therefore have a deep-seated history of discrimination and white supremacy. The profession has attempted to grapple with EDI as it relates to collection development across research library collections, as well as discovery and access, instruction, reference, outreach, and the workforce through the years.[16] In 2019, Cruz utilized a literature review to assess the treatment of diversity in academic libraries, specifically in the areas of staffing, culture and climate, collections, services, and programming, and determined that libraries were at a point of re-evaluation of their practices and services.[17] Diversity is not easily achieved with a statement, strategic hire, or single presentation. Instead, strategic assessment and planning should be consistent and evolve as an institution's EDI needs also evolve.

In 2016, the Massachusetts Institute of Technology Libraries set forth an ambitious plan, called the "Collections Directorate Diversity, Inclusion, and Social Justice," to "identify opportunities for archives, technical services, preservation, scholarly communication, and collections strategy staff to manifest the values of diversity, inclusion, and social justice in their daily work." A task force convened throughout much of 2016 to conduct research, engage in professional development, gather information from colleagues, and facilitate discussions across library units to develop a broad range of workable strategies and ideas that would support their goals. The suggested strategies were organized into four major sections: scholarly publishing and academic library marketplace, based on the challenges academic libraries face due to neoliberalism and the corporatization of academic libraries; representation of marginalized perspectives, in an effort to disrupt the historic and ongoing unequal distribution of power; community inclusion and outreach, in reaction to libraries' historic practices of neglecting and actively silencing alternative narratives and nondominant voices; and building organizational infrastructure for diversity, inclusion, and social justice, acknowledging that a cultural shift in day-to-day approaches to work takes commitment to regular staff training and education. The analysis and reflective work of the task force and their subsequent report in 2017 indicates an administrative willingness to support interrogation of institutional practices related to EDI values at ARL libraries, as well as library staff's willingness to hold these important discussions.[18]

In 2017, Conner-Gaten, Drake, and Caragher presented three major strategies for anti-racist collection development: active and continuous acknowledgement by all librarians of personal perspectives and biases; consistent engagement of works by marginalized groups with library users and the public throughout the year; and an institutional commitment to diversity outlined within collection development policies.[19] Taking on these strategies wherever possible can promote future advocacy and combat existing oppressive structures. The authors argued that racism is everywhere—it is built into the institutions where we carry out our work—so library workers must be equipped with the necessary tools to build anti-racist

collections. Organizations cannot depend on statements and collection development policies alone to achieve EDI values. A willingness to enact change to established processes, standards, and avenues of acquisition is also necessary.

In their 2022 article, Jahnke, Tanaka, and Palazzolo argue that diversity in collections requires investment of time, labor, and fiscal resources during a period where libraries are becoming increasingly cost efficient.[20] In 2023, Jones, Lapworth, and Kim's article on assessing collections diversity in their institution's special collections and archives stresses the value in learning from their collections assessment with intentionality to implement changes for future assessments. Most importantly, however, the limitations of the tools used to conduct the analysis must be considered as "the discovery and assessment of diverse collections depend on description," and description and metadata are ultimately products of humans prone to interjecting institutional and/or personal bias into their work output.[21]

Impact of Library Acquisitions

Although library acquisitions and its infrastructure are important and critical components in building collections, there is little scholarship focusing on EDI collections through a holistic acquisitions lens, especially in comparison to the wide body of literature available within technical services regarding collection development or even metadata and discovery. Blume and Roylance's piece on building an authentic authorship model is one of the few in library literature to highlight the underlying infrastructure, workflows, and relationship maintenance within the realm of acquisitions, addressing relationship building with internal financial audit and structures, as well as externally with vendors to convey the protocols necessary for workflows in collections building.[22] Lamdan's inquiry on the legal research companies selling surveillance services to government entities, such as immigration and law enforcement, through data acquired via their legal research tools and products raises ethical concerns. Lamdan calls for divestment from the unethical and dangerous enterprise built under the guise of legal research and centers the impact of acquisitions more indirectly.[23] More specifically within academic libraries, DiVittorio and Gianelli examine vendors' business practices via reviewing corporate sustainability ratings as well as accessibility reports to enact a more ethical fiscal stewardship model. Their findings underscore the importance of how libraries do business, with whom they negotiate, where library budgets are being committed as financial investments, which vendors libraries purchase from, who makes the decisions, what checkpoints exist within institutions, and various other infrastructure factors contributing to complexities in the procurement process.[24]

There have been some efforts to incorporate acquisitions as part of the larger process. In a 2020 follow-up to "Creating a Social Justice Mindset," the MIT Libraries' diversity, inclusion, and social justice task force report, Kauffman and Anderson present the challenges and opportunities in taking on the report's proposed strategies and ideas specifically within technical services.[25] Because the work of technical services is seen as the most practical and systems-oriented body of work across the library landscape, department staff often struggle with making connections between the work they do and the big picture impact of the diversity, inclusion and social justice framework set forth by the task force. Dividing technical services into three main roles—cataloging and metadata specialists, acquisitions assistants, and technical services managers—allowed the authors to examine the various and most effective approaches for addressing the proposed strategies. Acquisition assistants are uniquely aware

of all collections materials that are being purchased across the library. Though the acquisitions assistants at MIT Libraries do not make selections for collections, they are able to make critical observations regarding trends in working with specific publishers, directions or discrepancies in price lists, who is being represented in the materials purchased, and how materials are being presented in physical spaces. These critical observations can, in turn, help inform the decisions of selectors and other decision-making stakeholders. An important component for technical services to ensure success in connecting with the larger library's proposed strategies is to foster, promote, and welcome inter-departmental collaboration and communication across the library.

Research Methodology
Research Design
The overarching goal for this project was to gather information about acquisitions infrastructure that has been in place since 2009 across ARL institutions, to investigate how those practices impact the building of diverse collections, and thus to advance critical conversations about building diverse collections and counter-narratives in libraries and archives. As the notion of distinctive collections began formalizing in 2009, that was chosen as the starting point.[26] Including only ARL institutions simplified comparisons, as the acquisitions infrastructure of peer institutions reported on their collections activities in a similar way (e.g., scale, budget, capacity).

The researchers selected a mixed-method approach to collect data through a questionnaire survey. After developing the questionnaire, the researchers recruited subject matter experts and held several cognitive interviews with information professionals who work in the targeted areas of the study. This approach gave the researchers an opportunity to "study the manner in which targeted audiences understand, mentally process, and respond to the materials […] present[ed]."[27] Cognitive interview participants were asked to read the questions out loud and think out loud while the researchers took notes on how participants reacted to the questions and listened for areas to improve the questionnaire flow. The researchers deployed the thirty-two-question survey (see Appendix B) included via Qualtrics, which allowed the researchers to cast a wide net to potential participants without the need for hands-on coordination. The questionnaire asked a mixture of demographic, multiple choice, Likert scale, drag-and-drop, and open-ended questions. No questions required a response. The questionnaire, consent, and recruitment forms all received IRB approval. Despite the focus on ARL institutions and distinctive collections, this research is applicable for all libraries looking to diversify their collections by interrogating their acquisitions procedures and practices.

Recruitment and Sample
The researchers were unable to create a roster of possible participants because the complexity, and often non-descriptive nature, of job titles made it impossible to identify all qualified participants. Instead, the researchers opted to recruit survey participants by sharing an open link to the questionnaire shared via a variety of listservs of the various library professional organizations, targeting specific areas in libraries (e.g., acquisitions, special collections, subject specialists). This option meant losing the ability to communicate directly with potential research participants, as well as acknowledging that not every potential participant would be reached via listservs, effectively excluding them from participation. The survey responses

were collected from July 7, 2021, to August 6, 2021. The survey initially received 164 individual responses and the data analysis included seventy-seven survey responses.

Coding and Analysis

The 164 individual survey responses received underwent data normalization and cleaning, which included removing insufficient responses, outliers, duplicate submissions, and responses from outside the target sample. Post-data normalization, seventy-seven survey responses were deemed valid and were included in the data analysis. None of the survey questions were required, therefore no one survey was considered 100 percent complete. There were different total numbers of responses for different questions, for instance, the demographics section below shows that there were seventy-seven responses for one question, and seventy-six responses for another.

The researchers transferred the survey responses from Qualtrics to Google Sheets to perform a descriptive analysis of the results. Researchers analyzed quantitative questions using automated methods tabulating the responses, while qualitative and open-ended questions underwent manual inductive coding and thematic analysis. The survey consisted of thirty-two questions total, with the authors concentrating specifically on questions that would offer a broad overview of the survey responses.

Demographics

To gain an understanding of the individuals and institutions represented in the survey participation, respondents were asked for general demographic information. Of the seventy-seven valid submissions, forty-five different ARL institutions were represented. Of the seventy-six respondents who answered the geographical location question, sixty-nine were from the United States and seven were from Canada.

Of the seventy-seven participants who responded to the question regarding their primary area of responsibility, twenty were selectors for special collections, rare books, or archives; eighteen were selectors for international studies; thirteen were in collection development or collection strategies roles; and thirteen were from acquisitions departments. The seven respondents who fell under the "Other" category were made up of administrators, such as associate deans and directors of departments. The six respondents who made up the "Non-Acquisitions/Technical Services" category included archivists working within collection management units, electronic resources librarian, and technical services librarians.

Findings
Acquisitions Infrastructure

Acquisitions infrastructure is the business operations side of the libraries situated within the larger campus systems of business, purchasing, payment, auditing, and accountability. When conducting business, institutions implement their own business, legal, and financial operations, workflows, and philosophies on their business relations. Funding is a critical resource allocation tool to building collections and impacts collections efforts at both individual and collective levels. Funding decisions are often administrative functions taking place at the macro level and separated from the individuals making micro level selection decisions. This multilevel decision chain allows for reviews, transparency, and reduction of errors throughout the process.

The study sought to document the personnel responsible for the collections budget within institutions (see Table 1). The respondents confirmed a noticeable separation of responsibility at many institutions wherein the individual making the overall collections budget decisions was removed from the actual work of selection. This disconnect may result in the budget allocation being less attuned to user needs and the efforts to diversify the collection.

TABLE 1 Collections Budget Responsibility (n = 69)	
Responsible Personnel/Group	**Number of Responses**
Library Administration	57
Library's Collections Development/Strategy	42
Library's Business/Finance Office	21
Library's Acquisitions	10
Other	1

A signed contract activates the terms of agreement within the contract and demonstrates that the parties accept those terms. Signing authority therefore delineates which entity within an organization has the final authority to accept the terms of a contract on behalf of the institution. The survey asked who had signing authority for contracts, licenses, MOUs, and deeds of gifts. Of the sixty-nine responses, forty-three indicated that the library has the authority; twenty-one indicated "Campus Legal;" eighteen marked "Do not Know;" fourteen indicated "Campus Finance;" and nine responded with "Other." The "Other" category listed entities such as the Senior Information Resources Officer, University Librarian, Head of Curators, and Board of Trustees. Overall, responses to this question indicated that the vast number of libraries have more direct control over the business partnerships they maintained, even though the parent organization might still take part in reviewing the contracts to adhere to the organizational standards for contract agreements.

TABLE 2 Institutional Openness to Different Financial and Legal Practices (n = 69)		
	Financial Practice (No. of Responses)	**Legal Practice (No. of Responses)**
Did not know	30	41
Not open	21	15
Open	17	13
Very open	1	0

The study also sought to understand the institutional openness in ARLs to different financial and legal practices (see Table 2). When asked about how open the institutional financial and legal divisions were to new practices, the respondents' answers largely skewed to the perception that most individuals were unsure of their institutional openness, and that most institutions were not open to changing established practices. It is also worth noting that respondents seemed to believe that there was slightly more risk aversion with legal practices than financial.

In addition to assessing the general knowledge of the acquisition infrastructure and where authority rests for decision-making, the study sought to understand the ease of the process for adding new vendors, as well as the ability to assess existing vendors. When asked about the ease of adding new vendors, thirty out of sixty-nine said it was easy; twenty-three said it was difficult; and sixteen did not know. When asked about the ease of assessing existing vendors, thirty-one out of sixty-nine said it was easy; twenty-three did not know; and fifteen said it was difficult. The process to add and assess new vendors has an impact on which businesses institutions choose to conduct business with, directly correlating with the ability to diversify

collections. There is a wide variety of vendors supply-
ing content to libraries and they may vary significantly
in terms of size and operational scale. Institutions need
to strive towards inclusion by finding ways to cultivate
and establish relationships with vendors needing to
operate outside the norms of institutional business
expectations and existing infrastructure.

TABLE 3
Acquisitions Method Used to
Purchase Distinctive Collections
Materials (n = 61)

Methods	No. of Responses
Firm Orders	28
Donations and Gifts	16
Approval Plans	13
Continuations	4

In terms of the acquisition methods used to build
distinctive collections, participants were asked to rank
the methods from the most to least used (see Table 3).

Furthermore, participants were asked to rank the
following firm order methods from the most to the least utilized: creators, book fairs, auctions,
rare materials and archives dealers, purchase trips, and publishers and catalogs. Creators (i.e.,
buying directly from creator) were the most utilized with seventeen out sixty, while fifteen
indicated rare materials dealers.[28] Of the remainder, thirteen selected from catalogs; nine
from publishers; and six utilized purchase trips. Although other acquisition methods, such
as auctions and book fairs, are also actively used in the profession for collections building,
no respondent ranked either of those options as their most-used method. Allowing for use
of a variety of purchase methods in an institution similarly opens the possibility of acquiring
content from a variety of markets.

Additionally, participants were asked to reflect on specific acquisitions activities ranging
from funds tracking to reimbursement culture. Responses indicated that institutions gener-
ally do not assign purchasing cards to selectors (forty-four out of sixty-eight); selectors are
not allowed to make purchases up front and then seek reimbursement afterwards (thirty-one
out of sixty-seven); individuals at ARLs either do not know (twenty-nine out of sixty-eight)
or ARLs currently do not track purchases that support EDI values (twenty-eight out of sixty-
eight); and some ARLs have either discontinued or never started business partnerships with
vendors because they are not able to accept certain methods of ordering (thirty-two out of
sixty-eight). Similarly, some ARLs have either discontinued or never started business partner-
ships with vendors because they are not able to accept certain forms of payment (thirty out
of sixty-eight). However, many institutions make purchases from vendors who do not use
English as their primary language (fifty-one out of sixty-eight).

Challenges When Acquiring Materials for Distinctive Collections

The study further sought to identify
challenges that are encountered when
acquiring distinctive collections. Since this
was a free text question, responses were
analyzed and grouped into four themes.
There were thirty-five respondents whose
responses upon qualitative analysis fit into
either single or multiple themes. As such
the total number of thematic responses was more than thirty-five (see Table 4).

TABLE 4
Challenges Faced in Acquiring Materials for
Distinctive Collections (n = 35)

Challenges	Number of Responses
Infrastructure	13
Lack of Unified Library Strategic Direction	12
Budget	10
Other	6

"Infrastructure" consisted of responses that expressed challenges with payment and auditing methods within their organizations; onerous campus procurement policies; changing discovery platforms; lack of technical and legal infrastructure to handle electronic products outside of major English-language vendors; and changing in-house requirements and policies for imports due to changing import laws within countries.

"Lack of Unified Library Strategic Direction" consisted of responses that reported challenges from a lack of support and buy-in from administration; library-wide policy, strategy or initiatives that provide direction for selection, acquisitions and materials processing related work; consortial efforts around selecting and cataloging international studies collections; and workflow for interdepartmental collaboration in acquisitions.

"Budget" consisted of responses that pointed to a lack of funding which, in turn, affected several aspects of distinctive collections operations including selection, acquisitions, processing and storage capacities, and staffing.

"Other" included responses that pointed to format limitation, namely, a lack of e-formats for mostly non-English titles, and subject and language expertise limitations.

Institutional Approaches to Diversifying Collections

Building and developing diverse collections is a complex undertaking that should be prioritized, mainstreamed, and incorporated into a library's strategic direction. It is recognized that a sound collection development strategy articulated in a policy should be the guiding principle for collecting practices. To ascertain the presence of such policies, respondents were asked whether their institution had a collection development policy for distinctive collections. Forty-three of the seventy-seven responded in the affirmative. Further, when asked if the policy had an element that specifically addressed EDI collections, twenty-seven of the forty-three responded in the negative.

Distinctive collections processes span various library units collaborating for successful operations and service delivery. The study sought to establish the level of collaboration across units, specifically between special collections and international studies. Some level of collaboration was reported by forty-seven of the seventy-seven respondents. In a follow-up open-text question, respondents were asked to explain the nature of collaborations. Responses included shared funds and collaborative purchase decisions in some areas; occasional collaboration and consultation on the acquisition of materials in the areas for which there are designated subject experts in international studies with the subject expert often undertaking cataloging of material in that area acquired for distinctive collections; and transfer of materials from one type of collection to another (e.g., general to distinctive collections).

The study sought to establish the presence of designated entities (e.g., committees, task forces or persons) within libraries that can advise on collections decisions related to EDI. Of the seventy-seven respondents, twenty-two indicated presence; forty-five indicated no presence; and ten did not know. To further understand the nature of these entities, respondents were asked to explain the local context. Most respondents indicated that committees or task forces were newly formed, others indicated that it was an aspect of one or more positions' responsibilities, while a few reported that it was a specific role. Specific responsibilities of the designated entities reported in the questionnaire included the creation of a consultative document regarding the selection processes for subject librarians; review of collections to assess gaps and imbalances; development of rubrics for evaluating library policies in relation

to diversity, equity and inclusion; reviewing of collections development policy and providing feedback; and managing funds for EDI collections.

The study further sought to document existing initiatives within distinctive collections that correlated with EDI values. Respondents were asked to state and explain these initiatives. The responses were analyzed and placed into four categories (see Table 5). A respondent's descriptions did not necessarily fit under a single category, therefore the number of responses totaled more than fifty-nine.

TABLE 5 Current Institutional Initiatives (n = 74)	
Current Institutional Initiatives	Number of Responses
Prescribed Collecting	24
Planning	22
Examining/Re-imagining Practices	15
Library/Collection-wide Collecting	13

"Prescribed Collecting" consisted of responses in which organizations, through their strategic and priority planning, had designed positions, collecting, and processing priority areas, as well as directed action to accomplish desired outcomes in these areas. Twenty-four responses informed this area and included such initiatives as establishment of community-driven archives, African American Life and Culture, Latin American Cultural History and US Latinx Experience, LGBTQIA+ History and Experience, Women's History and Experience, digitization of culturally important materials, oral histories, and tribal law collections. To increase focus on underrepresented and marginalized groups in library holdings, respondents reported that their libraries had created positions with specific focus on EDI coverage, such as Community and Student Life Archivist and Archivist for the Black experience.

"Planning" consisted of elements of plan formulation at all levels from individual units to the institutional level. These included an institution's strategic directions dossier that speaks to EDI values as well as anti-racist initiatives; development of a library system statement; creation of framework for collection development; award of university-wide grants to fund library EDI initiatives; evaluation of past diversity, equity and inclusion acquisitions; discussions within committees related to collections to find a way forward; and planned collections audits to investigate efforts related to purchasing items which represent diverse perspectives. Additional responses included formulation of acquisition guidelines that promote representation and diversity; new and re-imagined collections diversity statements and plans; and language in policies that address collecting material reflecting diverse creators and histories long unaddressed in special collections. For example, redesigned donor and development policies at a university have allowed for the special collections unit to collect rare and unique books that foreground, in subject or association, the university's regional context, as well as communities which have been historically silenced through erasure from the historical record. Furthermore, another institution created a new three-year strategic plan with an emphasis on EDI as major components for collections assessment and building. A significant observation from responses to this question was the accelerated focus on formulation, redesign, and updating of collection development policies and frameworks by institutions to help center historically marginalized voices and groups.

"Examining and Re-imagining Practices" included responses that were concerned with new or different individual, unit, and institutional level efforts to address EDI in the collections development and management processes. Reported efforts included the establishment of acquisition funds in honor of Juneteenth; displays of new books for heritage months cel-

ebrated on campuses; blog posts highlighting diverse collections across subjects; creation of digital collections; and utilization of EDI perspectives on approval plans. At the individual level, some selectors, in the absence of an institutional acquisitions policy, developed their own strategies for building more inclusive and diverse collections. In addition, institutions were considering expanding acquisition methods beyond approval plans (e.g., GOBI, especially for English titles). For one library's current priorities, a primary collecting area was "works by and about creators from historically underrepresented/marginalized populations including Indigenous, Latinx, Black, women, and LGBTQ+ creators." To be able to support this priority, a library embarked on purchase initiatives through various channels, such as conventions, festivals, and Kickstarters.

"Library/Collection-wide Collecting" consisted of responses that reported on new initiatives that focused on the library as a whole. Responses in this category included having a working committee on EDI in collections that produced featured blog posts highlighting diverse collections across subjects; implementing EDI perspectives on approval plans; increasing digital collecting capacity; and infusing EDI into priority areas for acquisition.

Discussion

A university's mission, vision, and strategic direction are major determinants of what libraries within it can do, since they operate within the larger university framework. As libraries envision their strategic direction, EDI values should be at its core. In this study, attempts were made to determine the relationship between acquisitions practices and building diverse collections, as well as to surface the tension between individual interpretations and collective considerations taking place in EDI collections building endeavors within ARLs.

Respondents largely acknowledged the heightened need for individual awareness and intentionality to collect in ways that prioritize peripheral knowledge, and support development of diverse collections. Libraries and librarians used a variety of approaches to increase their capacity to support diverse collecting and were keen to infuse EDI ideals into all areas of the collection building process. However, data pointed to the lack of collective institutional strategies and approaches towards doing this work. As such, there is a fundamental need for top-level management buy-in into EDI initiatives to enable adequate support for the entire workflow from selection, acquisition, and description, to discovery and delivery. This is also an opportunity for library administration and those with collection development responsibilities to align institutional collecting strategies and priorities.

Libraries must embrace and advocate for new ways of acquiring materials, including purchasing from less established sources, directly from creators, and the use of alternative modes of payment. Acquisition processes often reflect the dominant culture's values through the imposition of business procedures that privilege longer established organizations to work with libraries while inadvertently creating barriers for new, often underrepresented creators and publishers. To reduce these barriers, institutional collection development, acquisition, and procurement policies should be revised to make room for doing business with underrepresented, unconventional, and new entrant businesses.

Library personnel are the agents through which any idea, innovation, or change would be implemented or adopted within an organization. There is marked development of initiatives to train and equip existing personnel to enhance service delivery, while also creating positions and designing responsibilities that specifically require developing collections representative

of global diversity. Similarly, library leadership have a role to play in engaging and advocating for structural changes to institutional procurement practices that have historically been restrictive. The community of users can also enact change through demonstrating their needs and informing the demand driven collections building practices.

Conclusion

This is the first study to begin analyzing the collections framework by looking at the acquisitions infrastructure through the EDI lens, and by examining the impact of acquisitions infrastructure in building distinctive collections. Survey results revealed that library acquisitions processes in ARL institutions were varied, and that collection building initiatives have included individual, unit, and institutional collaborations. There was willingness to incorporate EDI ideals in the collection building lifecycle, yet the supporting systems and infrastructure including policies and funding appear to be under development. Furthermore, there is a need to create and iterate a better infrastructure for collection development activities that are reflective and responsive to all people, especially underrepresented populations. An infrastructure such as this would generate a more sustainable paradigm for collections programs and services, and would actualize a clearer feedback loop within the broader institutional acquisitions operation.

The collected data pointed to three main strategies that organizations should implement to support and enhance diversity of distinctive collections: 1. find ways to make it easier to acquire materials in terms of collection development and acquisitions; 2. to whatever extent possible, purchase as much, if not more, from newly and less established sources or directly from creators and creator-communities; and 3. secure top-level management buy-in into EDI collecting initiatives, and provide adequate support to library personnel and users.

Larger budgets do not necessarily equal diverse collections, and diversity is not a given simply because collections materials may be sourced abroad—especially if the perspective reflects only the colonial, mainstream, or dominant culture. In addition, there is a need to demystify the often invisible but established acquisition processes within libraries, and to reconcile the tension between existing workflows and procurement processes with EDI values to build more holistic acquisitions programs in support of intentional EDI collections building. To increase diversity in library collections, genuine interrogation of past and present acquisitions practices—to identify and correct structural and systemic barriers that have made collecting marginalized voices challenging—should persist and increase. This will result in difficult but necessary conversations, as well as in changes to, and the adoption of, new systems, policies, processes, and practices.

Appendix A: Glossary of Terms

A localized glossary of terms has been developed for the purposes of this survey.

- **Acquisitions**: purchase of resources where there is a financial transaction (for example, this would include collection building methods such as donations or loans where the institution pays for the shipping costs); OR library unit that facilitates the negotiations, licensing, ordering, receipt, and/or payment for purchased resources
- **Area/global/international studies**: research and scholarship pertaining to different regions, countries, cultures, and or languages of the world
- **Distinctive collections**: rare and unique holdings of archival, special, and/or area/global/international studies collections
- **IDEAS**: acronym for Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, Accessibility, and Social justice. There are a number of related acronyms, including DEIA, DEI, EDI, etc.[29]
- **Selection**: choosing content that will be added to the library's collection; collection development

Appendix B: Survey

Acquisitions Practices in Distinctive Collections

Q00 **Introduction** This survey is intended for information professionals in Acquisitions, Archives, Area/Global/International Studies, Collection Development, and Special Collections whose responsibilities include purchasing materials for distinctive collections at their institutions. The survey's aim is to gather acquisitions practices that have been in place since 2009 across Association of Research Libraries (ARL) member institutions and investigate how these practices influence building diverse collections. The survey aims to cover acquisitions practices from collection policy development to acquisition and thus asks questions regarding processes you may not be familiar with. Please do your best to respond using the information you are aware of.

Note regarding COVID-19: The COVID-19 global pandemic has disrupted budgets and operations in a variety of ways, there will be a question near the end of the survey focused on COVID-19's impact on the acquisitions practices at your institution that has not been addressed elsewhere in the survey.

Glossary of Terms This glossary has been developed for the purposes of this survey.

Q1 Demographics
- o Name of your institution (1) _____
- o Position/business title (2) _____

Q2 What is your primary area of responsibility at your institution?
- o Acquisitions (1)
- o Non-Acquisitions/Technical Services (2)
- o Selector (area/global/international studies) (3)
- o Selector (collection development/strategy) (4)
- o Selector (special collections, rare books, archives, manuscripts) (5)
- o Selector (scholarly communications) (6)
- o Other (7) _____

Q3 How long have you been responsible for this area at your current institution?
- o 0-5 years (1)
- o 6-10 years (2)
- o 11-15 years (3)
- o >16 years (4)

Q4 Does your institution have a collection development policy for Distinctive Collections?
- o Yes (1)
- o No (2)
- o Don't know (3)

Q5 Does the Distinctive Collections development policy include any elements that support

Inclusive, Diverse, Equitable, Accessible and Socially Just collections?
- Yes (4)
- No (5)
- Don't know (6)

Q6 What are your institution's current Distinctive Collections-related initiatives that relate to Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, Accessibility, and Social Justice? Please explain.

_____

_____

Q7 Does your institution have a designated committee or person within the library that can advise on collections decisions related to Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, Accessibility and Social Justice?
- Yes (1)
- No (2)
- Don't know (3)

Q8 Please explain how the designated committee or person within the library has advised on Distinctive Collections' decisions related to Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, Accessibility and Social Justice?

_____

_____

Q9 Do area/global/international studies and special collections collaborate to build Distinctive Collections?
- Always (1)
- Sometimes (2)
- Never (3)
- Don't Know (5)

Q10 Please explain the nature of collaboration between area/global/international studies and special collections.

_____

_____

Q11 Are you primarily responsible for determining the scope of purchases in your areas?
- Yes (1)
- No (2)
- Not applicable (3)

Q12 Do you engage dealers/vendors to seek out diverse collections?
- Always (1)
- Sometimes (2)
- Never (3)

Q13 Does your institution accept donations of materials for the purpose of

	Sometimes (1)	Never (2)	Not Sure (3)
Building donor relationships? (1)	o	o	o
Cultivating future monetary donations? (2)	o	o	o

Q14 What is your level of agreement with the following statements at your institution?

	Agree (1)	Neutral (2)	Disagree (3)
Area/global/international studies builds diverse collections. (1)	o	o	o
Special collections builds diverse collections. (2)	o	o	o
Institutional archives builds diverse collections. (3)	o	o	o
There are resources to support Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, Accessibility, and Social justice efforts in developing Distinctive Collections. (4)	o	o	o
Obtaining collections ethically is important. (5)	o	o	o

Q15 The following attributes factor into increasing diversity of Distinctive Collections.

	Agree (4)	Neutral (5)	Disagree (6)	Don't know (9)
Country of origin (5)	o	o	o	o
Language (6)	o	o	o	o
Creator's/author's identity (7)	o	o	o	o
Creation/publication date (8)	o	o	o	o
Genre/topic/subject area (9)	o	o	o	o
Vendor/dealer's business location (10)	o	o	o	o
Vendor/dealer's expertise (11)	o	o	o	o
Vendor/dealer's identity (13)	o	o	o	o

Q16 Does your institution

	Yes (1)	No (2)	Don't know (3)
Enforce conflict of interest verifications? (1)	o	o	o
Enforce ethics laws? (2)	o	o	o
Require purchase approval above a certain price point? (4)	o	o	o
Have a requirement to verify the provenance of potential acquisitions? (3)	o	o	o

Q17 With regard to the acquisitions and legal infrastructure at your institution, how strict is it to purchase new resources?
- o Very strict (1)
- o Strict (2)
- o Not strict (3)
- o Don't know (4)

Q18 Who makes decisions on collections budget allocations at your institution? Check all that apply.

- □ Library's Collections Development/Strategy (1)
- □ Library's Acquisitions (2)
- □ Library's Business/Finance Office (3)
- □ Library's Administration (5)
- □ Other (4) _____

Q19 Who negotiates collections contracts at your institution? Check all that apply.

- □ Campus Finance (1)
- □ Campus Legal (2)
- □ Library's Technical Services (e.g., Acquisitions, Electronic Resources) (3)
- □ Library's Collection Development/Strategy/Selectors (4)
- □ Library's Scholarly Communication/Intellectual Property/Copyright Office (5)
- □ Don't know (6)
- □ Other (7) _____

Q20 Who has signing authority for contracts, licenses, MOUs, deeds of gifts, etc. at your institution? Check all that apply.

- □ Library (1)
- □ Campus Finance (2)
- □ Campus Legal (3)
- □ Don't know (4)
- □ Other (5) _____

Q21 How aware are you of the following at your institution?

	Very aware (1)	Moderately aware (2)	Not aware (3)
Financial auditing check points (e.g., the individual making selection decision cannot place the order, the individual placing the order cannot receive the item) (1)	o	o	o
Legal auditing check points (2)	o	o	o

Q22 How easy is it for you at your institution to

	Easy (4)	Difficult (6)	Don't know (7)
Add new vendors? (1)	o	o	o
Assess profiles of current vendors (e.g., access to current vendor file in the ILS or campus financial system)? (2)	o	o	o

Q23 Drag and drop the firm order methods you utilize to build Distinctive Collections from most used to least used. Only move the methods you utilize.

Drop methods in order of importance

_____ Creators (1)

_____ Book fairs (2)

_____ Auctions (e.g., eBay) (3)

_____ Rare materials/archives dealers (4)

_____ Purchase trips (5)

_____ Publishers (6)

_____ Catalogs (12)

Q24 Drag and drop the acquisition methods you utilize to build Distinctive Collections from most used to least used. Only move the methods you utilize.

Drop methods in order of importance

_____ Donations/Gifts (1)

_____ Loans/Leases/Deposits (2)

_____ Firm orders (3)

_____ Approval/blanket plans (4)

_____ Continuations (e.g., subscriptions, standing orders) (5)

Q25 As a selector, are you able to gather the following information after a collection or resource is acquired?

	Yes (1)	No (2)	Don't know (3)
Country of origin (1)	o	o	o
Language (2)	o	o	o
Creator/author (3)	o	o	o
Creation/publication date (4)	o	o	o
Genre/topic/subject (5)	o	o	o
Vendor/dealer/supplier (6)	o	o	o

Q26 Please reflect on how your institution does the following

	Agree (1)	Disagree (2)	Don't know (3)
Tracks funding that supports Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, Accessibility, and Social justice values (1)	o	o	o
Makes purchases from vendors who do not use English as their primary language of operation (2)	o	o	o
Has a formal process for submitting order requests for Distinctive Collections (3)	o	o	o

Has discontinued/never started business partnerships with vendors because they are not able to accept certain methods of ordering (4)	o	o	o
Has discontinued business partnerships with vendors because they are not able to accept certain forms of payment (5)	o	o	o
Has assigned selectors their own purchasing cards for collections purchases (6)	o	o	o
Has allowed selectors to purchase up-front and seek reimbursements for collections purchases (7)	o	o	o

Q27 There are institutional entities that support me in managing the following when building Distinctive Collections that reflect Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, Accessibility, and Social Justice

	Agree (4)	Neutral (5)	Disagree (6)	Don't know (7)
Fund allocations (1)	o	o	o	o
Campus auditing check points (2)	o	o	o	o
Negotiations (3)	o	o	o	o
Contracts (4)	o	o	o	o
Campus vendor files (5)	o	o	o	o
Acquisitions methods (6)	o	o	o	o
Payment methods (7)	o	o	o	o

Q28 How open is your institution's

	Very open (8)	Open (10)	Not open (11)	Don't know (12)
Finance division to new purchasing practices? (e.g., Kickstarter) (1)	o	o	o	o
Legal division to new purchasing practices? (e.g., Kickstarter) (2)	o	o	o	o

Q29 How has the COVID-19 Pandemic impacted your work?

_____

_____

Q30 What other challenges (not Covid-19 related) have you faced in acquiring materials for your Distinctive Collections that have not already been addressed in the survey?

_____

_____

Q31 In your opinion, what initiatives could be adopted to transform Distinctive Collections acquisitions to build Inclusive, Diverse, Equitable, Accessible and Just collections?

_____

_____

Q32 If you would like to participate in our focus group discussions, please provide your name and email.

o Name (1) _____

o Email (2) _____

Acknowledgements

Notes

1. The preliminary results of this paper were previously presented at Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL) on April 15, 2021, and the updated survey results of this paper were presented at Rare Books and Manuscripts Section (RBMS) on June 22, 2022.

2. Joan M. Reitz, "Acquisitions," in *Online Dictionary for Library and Information Science* (ABC-CLIO, 2013), https://products.abc-clio.com/ODLIS/odlis_a.aspx#acquisitions.

3. "Acquisition," in *Dictionary of Archives Terminology* (Society of American Archivists), accessed September 13, 2021, https://dictionary.archivists.org/entry/acquisition.html.

4. The authors understand the criticism surrounding the term "Area Studies" and its connection to the Cold War. Because of it, the authors chose to utilize the term "international collections" throughout the article. For more information see Szanton, *The Politics of Knowledge.*

5. The intellectual exercise of collection development in selecting resources added to library collections heavily drives what gets purchased and, because this step immediately precedes acquisitions, the authors determined it would be worthwhile to also incorporate how the different roles and positions perceive acquisitions policies and practices.

6. For examples, see Education Committee of the Acquisitions Section, "Core Competencies for Acquisitions Professionals," Report (Association for Library Collections & Technical Services, May 2018), https://alair.ala.org/handle/11213/9058.

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15. Roger C. Schonfeld and Liam Sweeney, "Inclusion, Diversity, and Equity: Members of the Association of Research Libraries," August 30, 2017, https://doi.org/10.18665/sr.304524.

16. See aggregated literature: Karla J. Strand, "Disrupting Whiteness in Libraries and Librarianship: A Reading List," *Bibliographies in Gender and Women's Studies* (blog), accessed May 22, 2023, https://www.library.wisc.edu/gwslibrarian/bibliographies/disrupting-whiteness-in-libraries/; Jessica Philippe, "LibGuides: Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, Justice, and Accessibility (DEIJA): Best Practices," accessed May 22, 2023, https://scrlc.libguides.com/c.php?g=858806&p=6153184; Michelle Caswell, "Teaching to Dismantle White Supremacy in Archives," *The Library Quarterly* 87, no. 3 (June 8, 2017): 222–35, https://doi.org/10.1086/692299; Jennifer Bowers, Katherine Crowe, and Peggy Keeran, "'If You Want the History of a White Man, You Go to the Library': Critiquing Our Legacy, Addressing Our Library Collections Gaps," *Collection Management* 42, no. 3–4 (October 2, 2017): 159–79, https://doi.org/10.1080/01462679.2017.1329104.

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23. Sarah Lamdan, "When Westlaw Fuels Ice Surveillance: Legal Ethics in the Era of Big Data Policing," August 14, 2018), https://papers.ssrn.com/abstract=3231431.

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25. Rhonda Y. Kauffman and Martina S. Anderson, "Diversity, Inclusion, and Social Justice in Library Technical Services," in *Library Technical Services: Adapting to a Changing Environment*, Charleston Insights in Library, Archival, and Information Sciences (Purdue University Press, 2020), 213–36, https://dspace.mit.edu/handle/1721.1/121480.

26. "Special Issue on Distinctive Collections."

27. Gordon B. Willis, "Introduction to Cognitive Interviewing," in *Cognitive Interviewing* (SAGE Publications, Inc., 2005), https://doi.org/10.4135/9781412983655.

28. Creator refers to "individual, group or organization that is responsible for something's production, accumulation, or formation" https://dictionary.archivists.org/entry/creator.html.

29. The IDEAS framework was introduced for the purposes of the survey, but after analysis of the responses, the authors determined that accessibility and social justice components were not addressed, so instead utilized EDI for the article; these missing terms may be a focus for future study.

Library Correlational Assessment and Campus Partnership for Student Success

Holly Yu and Adele Dobry

Data-driven assessments in academic libraries, which demonstrate their relevance to student success, have become increasingly crucial. This correlational study aimed to assess whether using online resources and borrowing print materials from the university library contributed to higher grade point averages (GPA) and better retention rates among undergraduate students at California State University, Los Angeles (Cal State LA), a campus where students of color comprise 85% of the overall student population with 75% coming from underserved communities. The analysis explored library resource usage patterns based on gender, ethnic background, first-generation status, and Pell Grant eligibility. The findings have strengthened the library's efforts to partner with the campus student success team to integrate library resource access and services into the learning workflows, which enabled more effective use of library resources and services within the applications or systems commonly employed by students and faculty. Additionally, this study has highlighted some challenges associated with collecting library data and integrating it with campus data systems for sustained assessments.

Introduction

This study aimed to utilize evidence-based assessment, specifically correlation analysis, to highlight the library's role and value in fostering student academic attainment at Cal State LA. The identified evidence was used to persuade campus partners about the significance of integrating library use data with student demographic and academic performance data for continued assessments. It was also used to initiate a partnership between the library and the campus student success team to integrate library resource access and services into campus student learning analytics and learning management system. Both outcomes helped establish the library as a true contributing partner in student success.

The importance of data-driven assessments in academic libraries, which demonstrate contributions and relevance to student success, has been increasingly recognized. Recent scholarship has highlighted the growing trend of identifying correlations or associations between the utilization of library services and resources and improved student academic performance. In

this correlational analysis, the aim was to assess whether the use of library online resources and material borrowing contributed to higher GPAs and better retention rates among undergraduate students at Cal State LA over a period of five semesters, from fall 2017 to fall 2019. The analysis involved mapping electronic resource remote access through EZProxy logins and library print circulation counts with campus student demographic and academic performance data.

To examine potential statistically significant differences in cumulative GPA between undergraduate students who utilized at least one of the mentioned library services and those who did not use any of these services, the chi-square test and Pearson's correlation coefficient test were employed. The findings revealed a positive correlation between library resource utilization and better GPAs among undergraduate students. The analysis also explored library resource usage patterns across various categories, including gender, ethnic background, first-generation status, and Pell Grant eligibility.

The study results have further propelled the library's efforts to: integrate library resource access and services into campus learning workflows; facilitate the timely and effective use of library resources and services within the applications or systems commonly utilized by students and faculty; and enhance sustained collaboration among campus partners to foster student success. Examples include embedding the library discovery function in the learning management system and integrating the library research consultation service into student learning analytics. The initial success has set the library on a path to further develop campus partnerships for student success, to address the challenges associated with library data collection, and to integrate library usage data with campus data systems for ongoing and systematic assessments.

Literature Review

Academic library assessment has evolved. It started by heavily relying on qualitative measures to assess the quality of library services and resource use. At the beginning of the 2000s, return-on-investment (ROI) evaluation gained popularity. In the last decade, library impact and value assessment utilizing correlational analysis started emerging, which represented a transformational shift in library value assessment. Assessment results have propelled libraries to seek integration with campus systems both to demonstrate value and to shift the library to being a true partner in student success.

Academic library assessment using qualitative measures became the dominant methodology when the American Library Association published the Library Survey Questionnaire in 1924 (Craver et al.). Qualitative studies, such as focus group interviews, user feedback, or comments, were also frequently used. The library assessment interview conducted by the Digital Library Federation (DLF), which had 24 member institutions in 2001 (Covey, 2002), as well as a similar survey the Association of Research Libraries (ARL) conducted of its 24 large academic libraries in the United States (Hiller et al., 2008) found that the following assessment methods were being employed: surveys/questionnaires, focus group interviews, library web usability studies, usage/transaction log analysis or return-on-investment evaluation, and space and facility use. These assessments are effective in gauging and understanding user needs, satisfaction, and expectations, but they are qualitative and anecdotal (Wong & Webb, 2011).

Assessment preferences began to shift from user satisfaction surveys on the outcomes of library services and resource use, to return on investment (ROI). Library ROI research was

particularly common during the 2008 and 2009 economic downturn when academic librar-
ies needed to demonstrate their value to their parent institutions and to secure funding for
library resources (Aabø 2009; Matthews, 2011; Mezick, 2007). More recently, a shift to focus-
ing on student success in higher education required academic libraries to reconsider how to
demonstrate their contribution and impact on student success. This also led to an increasing
realization of how insufficient previous assessment methods were in understanding the rela-
tionship between library uses and student success. The Association of College and Research
Libraries (ACRL) created the Value of Academic Libraries (VAL) initiative and published *The
Value of Academic Libraries: A Comprehensive Research Review and Report* in 2010, seeking answers
to the following two critical questions:

- What differences do academic libraries and librarians make in the lives of students, faculty,
  their overarching institutions, and other stakeholders about things that matter to them?
- How can librarians capture the difference made—the impact of the library—and how
  can they assess it, share it, and increase it?

The report summarized existing academic library value research, set the course for future work
in the field, and articulated an initial academic library value research agenda. Since the publi-
cation of the ACRL 2010 report, library assessment transformed from fragmentally measuring
service qualities and user satisfaction to systematically measuring library impact on student
success; it also became a goal in ACRL's Plan for Excellence in 2011 (Becker & Goek, 2020).

ACRL published *Academic Library Contributions to Student Success: Documented Practices
from the Field* in 2015, which documents the *Assessment in Action: Academic Libraries and Student
Success* (AiA) Project and supports a multi-approach assessment. ACRL's *Academic Library
Impact: Improving Practice and Essential Areas to Research*, published in 2017, recommended
six priority research areas to highlight the library's impact on student learning and success:
communicating the library's contributions; matching library assessment to the institution's
mission; including library data in institutional data collection; quantifying the library's im-
pact on student success; enhancing teaching and learning, and collaborating with educational
stakeholders. In *Action-Oriented Research Agenda on Library Contributions to Student Learning
and Success*, published in 2017, ACRL narrowed its scope to focusing on the library's impact
on institutional priorities for improved student learning and success.

The literature on academic library correlation assessment has documented research and
practices using the quantitative method to collect data on resource and service use, to analyze
how student library use impacts their learning, and to explore the relationship between stu-
dents' library use and learning outcomes or academic achievement. These studies have found
a relationship between library use and better or improved academic performance (Allison,
2015; Beile et al., 2020; Cox & Jantti, 2012; Goss, 2022; Haddow, 2013; Heady et al., 2018; Hsieh
et al., 2021, LeMaistre et al., 2018; Marcum & Schonfeld, 2014; Nackerud et al., 2013; OCLC
2018; Scoulas et al., 2019; Soria et al., 2013; Stone & Ramsden, 2013; Thorpe et al., 2016; Wong
& Webb, 2011). In their correlation study, LeMaistre et al. (2018) noted a significant difference
in semester GPA between library users and nonusers. Cox and Jantti (2012) discussed how
the Library Cube database, developed at the University of Wollongong Library in Australia,
joined the library usage data with the Performance Indicators Unit (PIU), to become a campus
one-stop data source for student demographic and academic performance data. Using the
unique identifier, the student number in both library borrowing records, and electronic resource
EZProxy log data as the match point in PIU, their data analysis revealed a strong correlation

between the use of electronic resources and student grades. The Joint Information Systems Committee (JISC), a non-profit organization in the United Kingdom, developed the Learner Analytics environment in partnership with several pilot institutions. In 2017, partnering with OCLC, JISC started access to both circulation data and EZproxy logs to the institutions using OCLC WorldShare Management Services (WMS) (OCLC, 2018). Involving data from OCLC systems has helped JISC develop a standard process and create data structures that can be used to process WMS data.

The literature documents how libraries have used a range of service points, combined with student demographics and academic performance data, in correlation assessments. Quantitative use reports, such as borrowing, access to electronic resources via EZProxy, attendance at information literacy sessions, and research consultations can be integrated with student performance data to indicate possible associations between library use and student success, as well as to demonstrate libraries' value and contribution to student success and the mission of the institution (Haddow, 2013). Soria et al., in a study done at the University of Minnesota Library, connected library information—including interlibrary loan transactions, library computer workstation uses, library instructional classes and workshop attendance, and research consultations, as well as in-person reference transactions—with non-library data—including student demographics, GPA, academic background, and ACT and SAT scores. The study found s statistically significant differences in "cumulative GPA between first-year students who used at least one library service (GPA 3.18) compared to the student who did not use any library services (GPA 2.98)" (2013, p. 151). Library data alone are not sufficient in providing an overall picture of who uses library services and whether using library services improves GPAs. To outline the scope and level of library assessments illustrating how library services impact student academic performance, and to provide a frame of reference for libraries planning to embark on similar assessments, this study conducted an examination of the literature of library correlation studies on both the library service data points used and student demographic and academic performance data.

An analysis of Allison, 2015; Beile, et al. 2020, Cox & Jantti 2012, Haddow 2013, LeMaistre et al. 2018, Nackerud et al. 2013, Soria et al. 2013, Stone & Ramsden 2013, Thorpe et al. 2016 found that, among other data points, loan transactions and proxy logins are two data points consistently used in library correlational assessment, as shown in Table 1. Both data points contain student unique identifiers as reliable match points in institutional student performance

TABLE 1 **Library Data Points**								
Data Point	**Allison**	**Beile et al.**	**Cox & Jantti**	**Haddow**	**LeMaistre**	**Nackerud et al.**	**Soria et al.**	**Stone et al.**	**Thorpe et al.**
Ask Librarian						x	x		x
Computer Workstation						x	x		
Course-Integrated Instruction		x				x			
Interlibrary Loan Request						x	x		x

Data Point	Allison	Beile et al.	Cox & Jantti	Haddow	LeMaistre	Nackerud et al.	Soria et al.	Stone et al.	Thorpe et al.
Intro to Library Research		x				x	x		x
Loan Transaction	x		x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Library Visits								x	
Research Consultation		x				x	x		
Proxy Login	x		x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Reference Service Desk		x							x
Phone/Chat Reference									x
Website						x	x		
Workshop						x	x		

TABLE 1
Library Data Points

and demographic systems.

Similarly, an analysis of Allison, 2015; Cox & Jantti 2012, Haddow 2013, LeMaistre et al. 2018, Nackerud et al. 2013, Soria et al. 2013, Stone & Ramsden 2013, Thorpe et al. 2016 indicates that GPA is one of the data points researchers measure the most. As shown in Table 2, some libraries use more data points to try to obtain a multidimensional picture of overall library services by both undergraduate and graduate students; they also divide it into colleges or departments so that targeted intervention and outreach can be executed. All these studies have demonstrated that connecting student library use to student demographic and academic performance data is a critical aspect of library assessment. It is important that libraries measure the relationship between student library use and their academic performance and retention

TABLE 2
Data Points Outside Library

Data Point	Allison	Cox & Jantti	Haddow	LeMaistre et al	Nackerud et al	Soria et al	Stone & Ramsden	Thorpe et al
Academic Level					x		x	x
Academic Performance		x						
Academic Program								x
Academic Registry								
Academic Standing	x			x				x
Age			x		x			x
AP Credit						x		
Course							x	
Demographics		x						
DFWI*				x				

TABLE 2
Data Points Outside Library

Data Point	Allison	Cox & Jantti	Haddow	LeMaistre et al	Nackerud et al	Soria et al	Stone & Ramsden	Thorpe et al
Enrollment Status			x					
Ethnicity				x	x	x		
First-Generation				x		x		
Gender				x	x	x		
GPA	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	
International Status						x		
Major					x			
Part-Time Status					x			
Pell Grant				x		x		
Pre-College ACT Score						x		
Retention				x				
School/Dept					x		x	
Socioeconomic Status			x					
Student of Color					x			
Veteran Status						x		
*DFWI stands for D grade, fail, withdrawal, or incomplete								

using quantitative data from reliable library and institution systems.

Together, Table 1 and Table 2 show that the scope of measurable data points, both in library service data and in student demographic and academic performance data, varies in the literature of library correlation studies.

Recent literature has also documented research about libraries' attempts to advance the six priorities initiated in the 2017 ACRL *Academic Library Impact* report. As detailed by Croxton and Moore (2020) the University of North Carolina at Charlotte has been working on three of the six priorities, including library data integration with campus data collection, quantifying the library's impact on student success, and forming campus partnerships. However, intentional plans to advance all six priorities remains, as yet, unreported. The literature has indicated that correlation research aided by available data and technology is accelerating. The readily available data on student GPA, retention, and graduation rate provided by campus institutional research allows for tracking student performances in real-time for timely intervention. Without exception, all the research has documented both a statistically significant relationship between student library resource and service use and better GPAs, and that these two factors are positively correlated (Cox & Jantti, 2012; Haddow, 2013; LeMaistre, 2018; Soria et al. 2013; Nackerud et al., 2013; Stone & Ramsden, 2013; Wong & Webb, 2011). Despite the positive evidence, Cox and Jantti (2012), and Thorpe et al. (2016) caution that correlation may not prove cause and point out that many other factors may contribute to student academic success, such as teaching skills, students' motivation levels, and financial situation.

In examining the library correlation study literature, the authors found that integrating library data with institutional analytics is often a one-time collaboration. Consistent integration

with campus analytic systems is rare and should be a goal of future studies. The University of Minnesota Libraries provides an early example of an ongoing integration of library and institutional data. In 2011, the libraries started gathering usage data in an attempt to connect library resources and service use to student success measures, such as higher GPA, retention, and four-year graduation rates. Every semester the library collects usage data for approximately 15 different library engagement points, including digital/electronic material usage, online reference transactions, instruction sessions, circulation data, and library workstation usage. In partnership with the campus Institutional Research, and with Institutional Review Board approval, multiple studies have been conducted and published using these data (Oakleaf, 2018). A second example is DePaul University Library: in 2016, the Library Research Service was added as a referral option to learner support services available to DePaul faculty and academic advisors. The system was designed to improve communication among student support offices and to provide integrated information about academic resources both to students and to their advisors. This is a very successful example of integrating library data with a campus learning analytics system. Croxton and Moore (2020) illustrate how the library, Academic Affairs, and Student Affairs, along with other student success units, established a repository with contributed student data in which the campus can identify engagement factors that significantly contribute to student success. Beile et al. (2020) discuss both the dissemination of their correlation study results and their ongoing work to build an interactive learning analytics library dashboard that complements existing institutional dashboards.

One of the primary objectives of this correlational study at Cal State LA was to advance partnership and data integration by leveraging early study results to enhance library services for student success. The aim was to provide timely assistance to support student academic performance intervention and improvement. The initial success was achieved through a collaborative effort with the campus student success team, which integrated library research consultation with student learning analytics through Navigate LA. Moving forward, using the positive results of correlational studies to foster sustained collaboration among campus partners for student success remains a key goal.

Correlation Assessment at Cal State LA
Research Justification
Cal State LA, founded in 1947, serves a diverse and predominantly underserved student population, preparing them for the state's workforce. With approximately 23,000 FTEs, it stands as the premier comprehensive public university in the heart of Los Angeles. At Cal State LA, students who face equity gaps are identified as "Historically Underserved Students" (HUS). This includes first-generation students, economically disadvantaged students eligible for Pell Grants, and students from underserved communities. As of 2019, nearly 57% of our students are first-generation, 63.7% are Pell-eligible, and 70.5% come from underserved communities. Their four-year graduation rate and two-year retention rate consistently lag behind those of non-HUS students (Institutional Effectiveness, 2022). To address these disparities and promote student success, data-driven interventions have become a crucial strategic decision within the California State University system and Cal State LA, aimed at closing equity gaps.

Since the 2017 launch of Cal State's Graduation Initiative 2025, the campus has embraced the use of data as a powerful tool for analyzing student learning and for identifying interventions to improve graduation rates. Student success dashboards have fostered a data-informed

decision-making culture across the campus, empowering faculty, administrators, and staff to identify, diagnose, and predict challenges in student learning and success. Cal State LA's Student Success Collaborative, provided by the Education Advisory Board (EAB), offers a learning analytics tool that provides predictive analytics associated with student learning and enables targeted interventions. The EAB especially benefits students who may be less familiar with navigating higher education, providing them with insights into their learning and guiding them toward effective interventions.

The University Library at Cal State LA offers a rich array of scholarly and informational resources to support learning, instruction, research, creative activities, community engagement, and career development. It provides access to over 350 subscription databases, 65,000 electronic journals, approximately 1.4 million volumes of print and ebooks, as well as streaming video and music. OneSearch (PrimoVE), the library's discovery tool, facilitates searches across all material types and 23 California State University campuses, offering access to over one billion items, including 29 million books. The library offers one-on-one research consultations, conducts approximately 800 library instruction sessions annually for lower-division courses, and course-integrated instruction sessions for upper-division and graduate-level courses. Additionally, a credit-bearing information literacy course is available as an elective. While the library has conducted surveys to gauge student opinions about library services and resources, the output has primarily been qualitative, lacking longitudinal and quantitative research. Moreover, previous findings have been limited to library-specific information, without a holistic view of the student learning experience connected to their academic performance. This study aims to address these gaps by initiating quantitative assessments and correlational investigations to uncover the association between library use and student academic attainment.

Currently, the impact of the library on student success at Cal State LA is largely overlooked in the campus-wide assessment process. Furthermore, the role of the library is not mentioned in the five targeted intervention areas outlined in the Graduation Initiative 2025 Plan aimed at improving graduation rates. None of the library service elements, including information literacy instruction and resource use, are part of the existing intervention programs (CSU, 2021). Therefore, one of the primary goals of conducting this quantitative assessment and correlational investigation is to use the positive correlational study results to convince the campus partners the importance of integrating library services into the overall student success initiative of the parent institution. By articulating the value of the library through both qualitative and quantitative assessments, we have taken the first step toward integration.

An anecdote shared by a history faculty member underscores the significant role the library can play in preventing or reducing student withdrawals. The faculty member observed that students were more likely to withdraw from classes when assigned reports without a library information literacy session. Many students struggled to come up with their own research topics, so library instructional sessions and individual research consultations were designed to assist them in developing critical thinking skills, defining research topics, and finding necessary research resources. Referring students to librarians at this stage could potentially aid in withdrawal prevention. By harnessing the positive correlation between library use and improved student academic performance, we can effectively advocate for the integration of library services, particularly information literacy instruction, individual research consultation, and abundant research resources, into the institution's student inter-

vention program.

This study is particularly timely as the campus is focusing on interventions aimed at closing equity gaps. The study is also particularly valuable for Cal State LA, where most students are historically underserved and often face challenges in navigating the collegiate environment. The study, and this article, align with the three priorities outlined by ACRL: quantifying the library's impact; communicating its contributions; and fostering collaborations and partnerships with entities such as the Academic Success Center and Institutional Effectiveness (IE).

Existing literature has not specifically documented how the library contributes to large urban public universities, particularly where students of color comprise over 85% of the student population. To address these gaps, this article includes data and analysis of gender, ethnicity, and first-generation differences in library use. It also examines whether students receiving Pell Grants utilize the library differently. The findings of this study not only demonstrate the value of the library in promoting student success but also establish a positive correlation that informs the library's collaboration with campus entities directly involved in student performance and retention, enabling timely intervention in student learning. Furthermore, these study results can influence library decision-making in resource development, instruction and research consultation, targeted marketing, and outreach. They also highlight the need for the library to re-evaluate services that do not contribute to student success.

Research Objectives

Mapping out the library use data with student demographics and academic performance data reveals the association between our students and the role of the library in student academic performance. This approach enables the library to compare the demographic profile of library users to non-library users among all students and HUS, and to identify the strength of the association between student library use and academic attainment. In collaboration with the Office of Institutional Effectiveness, Center for Academic Success, and other campus partners, this study aimed to achieve the following objectives:

- Map the library use data with campus student demographic and academic performance data to determine whether undergraduate students and HUS utilize library resources, and to identify correlations or associations between library resource use and better GPA and retention.
- Communicate the library's contributions, match library assessment to the institution's mission, including library data in institutional data collection for sustained assessment, and quantify the library's impact on student success.
- Foster ongoing collaborations and partnerships with the campus student success team, faculty, academic advisors, Institutional Effectiveness, and Information Technology Services to leverage student data in support of student learning and success.

Methodology and Design

The student population investigated in this study comprised undergraduate students who entered as first-year or community college transfers from the fall of 2017 to the fall of 2019. The study used two measurable library data points to map with campus student demographic and academic performance data:

- Circulation counts: This included check-outs, renewals, and course reserve material borrowing. The library's unified library management system, Alma Analytics, provided

comprehensive transaction records with student ID numbers and the number of transactions. These circulation reports were exported as an Excel file and matched with student demographic and academic performance data from PeopleSoft.

- EZProxy log: Students accessed library electronic resources remotely through the campus network, primarily using EZProxy. The EZProxy log file contained student campus network user names, which were matched with student demographic data and academic performance in PeopleSoft to identify users and non-users of library electronic resources.

During the period under this research, the total number of reserve borrowings was 23,047 (2.7% of total transactions), and the total number of circulation transactions was 31,524 (3.7% of overall transactions). Due to the small sample size for physical circulation and reserves, it was combined with EZProxy login data (843,347) for meaningful statistical analysis, as recommended by the campus IE.

Data collection for both EZProxy and circulation data was completed by the end of the fall semester of 2019. To address privacy concerns and obtain an Institutional Review Board (IRB) exemption, aggregated analysis results were provided by the Institutional Effectiveness office without student IDs and network login IDs.

To analyze the data, the IE analyst performed a matching process aligning library data points with institutional data on students, including variables such as gender, ethnicity, first-generation status, Pell eligibility status, semester GPA, and one-semester retention. To answer the following questions, chi-square tests were conducted to determine statistically significant disparities in library use across categories such as gender, ethnicity, first-generation status, and Pell eligibility. Pearson's correlation coefficient (r) test was used to assess the strength of the relationship between GPA and library use.

1. Among all undergraduate students during the period under study, are there any significant differences in remote access to library resources and general resource use by ethnicity, gender, first-generation status, and Pell Grant status?
2. Among all undergraduate students during the period under study, are there any significant differences in remote access to library resources and general resource use by ethnicity, gender, first-generation status, and Pell Grant status?
3. Is there a positive relationship between library resource use and better semester GPA and retention among undergraduate students during this period?
4. How might the analysis results highlight the impact of library services and resources on student learning?

Although library information literacy instruction data were collected for the research, they were not included in the analysis due to the absence of a unique identifier required to match the library instruction records with campus courses and course sections. A graduate student assistant was hired to clean up the data and fill in missing information fields. The library instructional class data cleanup was funded by the Diversity Research Grant awarded by the American Library Association (ALA, 2020). Analysis plans for the library instruction data are yet to be determined, including whether to separate sessions by general education courses for lower-division students and course-integrated instruction for upper-division students with research assignments.

Data Analysis

The results from the data analysis include library resource use by gender, ethnicity, first-generation status, and Pell Grant eligibility status among undergraduate students, and whether

TABLE 3
Library Resource Use by Gender, Ethnicity, First-Generation,
and Pell Grant Eligibility Status

		Non-User (3-Year)			User (3-Year)		Subtotal	χ^2	P
		Num	%		Num	%			
	Gender							1,436	<.001
	Female	14166	40		21248	60	35414		
Gender	Male	14143	56		11324	44	25737		
	Grand Total	28309	46		32572	54	61151		
	Ethnicity							126	>.005
	American Indian	19	34		37	66	56		
	Asian	4526	49		4711	51	9238		
	Black/African American	1208	51		1161	49	2369		
	Hispanic/Latino/a/x	21670	49		26486	55	48156		
	International	2466	50		2467	50	4933		
	Pacific Islander	34	49		35	51	69		
	Two Races	562	51		540	49	1102		
	Unknown	769	47		867	53	1636		
Ethnicity	White	1757	48		1903	52	3660		
	First Generation							17	>.005
	First Generation	5630	46		6609	54	12239		
First Generation	Non First Generation	3768	49		3921	51	7689		
	Pell Grant							4,173	<.001
	Received	6305	44		8025	56	14330		
Pell Grant	Never Received	2753	49		2865	51	5618		

the use of library resources has any statistical significance on student GPAs and retention.

Table 3 provides an overview of library resource use and non-use among undergraduate students based on their demographics to answer the first question: "Among all undergraduate students during the period under study, are there any significant differences in remote access to library resources and general resource use by ethnicity, gender, first-generation, and Pell Grant status?"

There was a total of 61,141 undergraduate FTEs enrolled in the five semesters of fall 2017, spring 2018, fall 2018, spring 2019, and fall 2019. Among them, 32,572 students used library resources at least once, representing 54% of the overall student population. Among the overall undergraduate student population at Cal State LA during this period, there were an average of 57.5% female students, 42.4% male students, and 0.1% unidentified (Institutional Effectiveness, 2022). As observed, the use of library resources by gender is significantly different. Among female students, 21,248, or 60% used library resources at least once. During the same period, among the male students, 11,342, or 44% used library resources at least once. The difference between male and female students' library use is over 16%. To further clarify whether there were statistically substantial differences between male and female student library resource use, a chi-square test was performed with the chi-square value χ^2 = 1,436, degree of freedom (df) = 1, and p-value < .001. The smaller the p-value, the stronger the evidence is to indicate the significant difference in library resource use between female and male students, with more female students using library resources. Research has been planned to investigate the reasons why fewer male students used library resources. Uncovering the underlining explanations can assist the library with our effort to reach out to male students.

Our research hypothesis inquires whether there are any statistical differences in library use between the HUS and non-HUS undergraduate students during this period. First-generation and Pell Grant status were used as controlling factors for this analysis. During the five

semesters of this study, among the overall undergraduate student population, 61.3% were first-generation and 63.7% of the student population was Pell Grant eligible. Table 3 clearly indicates that Pell Grant recipients were using more library resources. On average for the five semesters evaluated, 56% of Pell Grant recipients used library resources, while 51% of non-Pell Grant students used library resources. The chi-square test was also performed with a result of $X^2 = 4,173$, $df = 1$, and $p\text{-value} < .001$, which indicates a difference in library resource use between Pell and non-Pell students.

The chi-square tests do not conclude significant differences between our first-generation and non-first-generation students in using library resources. On average for the five semesters evaluated, 54% of first-generation students were using library resources, while 51% of non-first-generation students were using library resources. The critical value of the chi-square test of $X^2 = 36$, $df = 1$, and $p\text{-value} > .005$ ($p\text{-value} = 1.84$) indicates no significant difference exists, which mirrors the analysis by the percentage of use.

Resource use by ethnicity also yields a result of no significant differences among the students with different ethnicities. Aside from American Indians (0.1/22 student population), the library resource use by ethnic group is within a 6% points difference with Black and biracial students at the low end, with 49%, and Hispanic students at the high end, with 55%. The chi-square value $X^2 = 126$, $df = 8$, and $p\text{-value} > .005$ ($p\text{-value} = 2.11$) reveals no significant differences in library resource remote access and print material borrowing among different ethnic groups of students. Even though the differences are not significant, further research should be done to uncover the reasons why the percentage of library resource use is low among Black and biracial students, and how we can increase the use among them through effective research consultation and outreach efforts.

Table 4 illustrates the relationships between library resource use and student GPA and it answers the second research question: "Is there a positive relationship between library resource use and better semester GPA and retention among undergraduate students during this period?"

Table 4 shows the accumulative GPA distributions among the students for the five semesters by the number of students under review. There are 30,574 students who used the library at least once, while 30,407 students did not use the library at all. Among the GPA distribution,

TABLE 4				
Library Resource Use and Student GPA				
GPA	**% of Student Use**	**Num of Student Use**	**% of Student Not Use**	**Num of Student Not Use**
3.75	0.180267548	5,512	0.08827931	2,684
3.5	0.158206319	4,837	0.088854902	2,702
3.25	0.154935566	4,737	0.098212377	2,986
3	0.148197815	4,531	0.115430789	3,510
2.75	0.102374567	3,130	0.091354614	2,778
2.5	0.087885131	2,687	0.091716414	2,789
2.25	0.057058285	1,745	0.069087441	2,101
2	0.043599137	1,333	0.06007532	1,827
1.99	0.067475633	2,063	0.296988834	9,030
		30,574		30,407

18% of the students who used the library had an accumulative GPA of 3.75 and above, and only 6.7% of students who used the library had a GPA of 1.99 and below. Of the students who did not use the library resources at least once, 30% have GPAs of 1.99 and below, and only 8% have GPAs 3.75 and above. To accurately claim that more library resource use correlates with higher GPAs, a Pearson's Correlation and Coefficient test was performed.

A Pearson's correlation coefficient (r) test in Table 5 examines the relationship between GPAs and the percentage of library use. To avoid significant deviations from the overall pattern of library use and the GPA correlation, the percentage of library use by students for GPAs 2.0 and below was excluded. These outliers can have a strong influence on the calculation of correlation coefficients by creating misleading conclusions, suggesting a stronger or weaker relationship than what exists. Removing outliers can help provide a more accurate representation of the relationship between the two variables, and to allow for more valid interpretations of the results with the analysis focusing on the majority of the data points, providing a clearer picture of the relationship between the two variables. In this case, the analysis included GPAs ranging from 3.75 to 2.25. The test statistics showed a T statistic of 8.441846, a degree of freedom (df) of 5, and a *p-value* of 0.00034. The test revealed a strong positive correlation ($r = 0.97$) between the percentage of library use and GPA, indicating that students who used the library more tended to have higher GPAs. These values indicate a significant relationship

TABLE 5 Pearson's Correlation & Coefficient Test			
GPA	**% Library Use**	**PEARSON's R Test**	
3.75	0.202803635	Coefficient (r):	0.968208761
3.5	0.177968284	N:	7
3.25	0.174288973	T statistic:	8.441846
3	0.166709592	DF:	5
2.75	0.115162442	p-value:	0.00034
2.5	0.098863093		
2.25	0.064203981		

between library use and GPA, with a high level of confidence.

Table 6 presents the relationship between retention status and the use of library resources among undergraduate students. The data includes separate figures for freshmen and transfer students. On average, among the students who were retained in the fall semesters of 2017 and 2018, 57.2% used library resources, while only 39% of the students who were not retained used library resources. This suggests a positive association between library resource use and

TABLE 6 Retention and Library Resource Use				
Retention Status	**Use of Library Resources**		**Not Use of Library Resources**	
	Num of Use	**% Use**	**Num of Not Use**	**% No Use**
Fall 17 Freshmen Retained	1461	51.20%	1393	48.80%
Fall 17 Transfer Retained	1701	57.60%	1252	42.00%
Fall 18 Freshmen Retained	1769	57.00%	1318	43.00%

TABLE 6				
Retention and Library Resource Use				
Retention Status	**Use of Library Resources**		**Not Use of Library Resources**	
	Num of Use	**% Use**	**Num of Not Use**	**% No Use**
Fall 18 Transfers Retained	1728	63.00%	996	37.00%
Average		57.20%		42.70%
Fall 17 Freshmen Not Retained	212	30.00%	490	70.00%
Fall 17 Transfer Not Retained	145	40.00%	222	60.00%
Fall 18 Freshmen Not Retained	270	35.00%	505	65.00%
Fall 18 Transfers Not Retained	135	51.00%	132	49.00%
Average		39.00%		61.00%
Retained/Not Retained Students				
Fall 17 Freshmen	1673	40.60%	1883	59.40%
Fall 17 Transfer	1846	48.80%	1474	51.20%
Fall 18 Freshmen	2039	46.00%	1823	54.00%
Fall 18 Transfers	1863	57.00%	1128	43.00%
Freshmen	3712	43.30%	3706	56.70%
Transfer	3709	52.90%	2602	47.10%

student retention.

Comparing the retention status between freshmen and transfer students reveals that transfer students generally used library resources at a higher rate. Among transfer students, 52.9% used library resources, while only 43.3% of entering freshmen used library resources. This difference may be attributed to transfer students taking more upper-division courses that have research assignments requiring more in-depth library resource use, in comparison with first-year students who take more general education courses with fewer research assignments.

Discussion

This study revealed several noteworthy findings and limitations. Some of the key findings include that students who utilized the library tend to have higher GPAs, that student retention rate is also associated with library use, and that Pell Grant recipients are more likely to use library resources compared to non-Pell Grant recipients. Among Pell Grant recipients, 56% used library resources, while 51% of non-Pell Grant recipients used them. There is also a gender difference in library resource use, with female students being 16% more likely to use library resources compared to male students.

The study had some limitations. Correlation does not imply causation, and other factors, both internal and external to the students, could influence GPA and retention rates, such as instruction, student attitudes and aptitude, attendance, financial situation, and family dynamics. Thus, the study alone cannot determine causation. The study only examined undergraduate students' remote access to library electronic resources via EZProxy and print material borrowing. It did not include on-campus users or users accessing resources through

a virtual private network (VPN). This limited scope may have impacted the sample size of this analysis. The data used in the study were not specifically collected for this research but rather were previously collected by the library.

Despite these limitations, the study has several benefits and implications. The study demonstrates the role of library use in student academic attainment. The positive correlation results led the library to propose the establishment of partnerships between the library and various campus entities, such as Institutional Effectiveness, the Center for Academic Success, and information technology management. These partnerships aim to foster student success through initiatives like comprehensive academic support services, tutoring, workshops, and peer-to-peer services. The positive association between library use and better academic performance allowed the library to collaborate with faculty, academic advisors, and students. This study emphasizes the importance of collaboration with the campus community in data integration and sharing. It highlights the need for standardized data collection methods, data interoperability standards, and collaboration in data processing. This collaboration can lead to improved library impact evaluation, sustained value demonstration, and evidence-based decision-making.

The library's active participation in campus efforts to foster student success is evident through its involvement in the planning and development of the Center for Academic Success (CAS). The CAS, located within the library, offers a range of academic success services to students. The partnership between the CAS and the library has resulted in the implementation of the library's peer-to-peer service within the Navigate LA platform, a cloud-based student success management system. This service allows students to access research and citation assistance from student research consultants (SRCs) and in-depth research consultations from librarians. Students can also schedule research consultation appointments with subject librarians directly through Navigate LA. Additionally, the library joined the CAS "Plan to Soar" webinar series. In the fall of 2021, the library also launched its own "Library Live" series to introduce the role of the library, its services, and basic information literacy skills to students.

The positive association between library use and academic performance has positioned the library to engage with faculty, academic advisors, and students. For instance, the library collaborates with the College of Health and Human Services to require first-year students in the Introduction to Higher Education courses to complete the Library Research Tutorial Canvas Course and attend Library Information Literacy webinars. The library has been encouraging faculty to integrate library resources into research and writing requirements and to refer students to librarians for research consultations. Academic advisors are also made aware of library services to enable timely referrals and interventions for at-risk students. The library can use evidence to demonstrate to students how library resources and use of the library services can improve their academic standing, thereby driving further library resource utilization and forming a positive cycle of student performance and library return on investment.

Furthermore, the analysis results highlight the importance of collaboration with the campus community in data integration and sharing for successful assessment in the future. However, challenges related to data collection methods, data ambiguity, interoperability standards for integration, and collaboration in data sharing and processing with the campus community need to be addressed. Purposeful, proactive, and systematic data collection aligning with the parent institution's standards is critical in allowing the library to demonstrate its value and contributions to student success. To conduct sustainable data collection, libraries must stan-

dardize data collection by defining data points and eliminating data-name ambiguity, which is vital for comprehensive library impact evaluation and specific area assessments. Libraries must also establish an infrastructure for data gathering and investigate interoperability standards that facilitate integration with institutional learning analytics, student demographic data, and academic performance systems. Most importantly, ensuring data privacy and defining data-sharing protocols must be considered throughout the process. Additionally, leadership support from both the library and campus units is critical in establishing an infrastructure for library-related performance measurement. Clear communication, documented goal alignment, and collaboration with campus units contribute to the process.

Conclusion

The findings of the study highlight several important next steps in standardized data collection, assessment, and collaboration with campus entities involved in student success. The study underscores the importance of continued analysis of the relationships between student resource use and GPA, as well as retention, particularly within the historically underserved student (HUS) population. By examining whether library resource use contributes to improved academic performance among HUS students, further insights can be gained to support their success. The study highlights the urgent need for a purposeful and systematic library data collection process. This includes developing procedures to collect library data that can be interoperable with campus institutional and learning analytics systems. By adding relevant metrics, a multidimensional picture of the overall impact of library services on student academic attainment can be obtained.

The study emphasizes the need to go beyond demonstrating the value of the library in student success. It calls for utilizing the assessment results to further establish partnerships with the campus student success team and integrate library services and resource access within the campus systems. This integration is crucial to create a comprehensive campus intervention program for student success. Furthermore, the study recognizes that existing library systems, such as Alma and Primo VE, are primarily focused on library operations, collection management, and resource discovery. To truly integrate library services, resources, and access into the daily workflows of students and faculty, it is necessary to embed them within systems commonly used on campuses for teaching, learning, and research. This finding aligns with the argument made by Evans and Schonfeld (2020) that the library system should be viewed as an integral part of the higher education system. The services and resources offered by academic libraries should be tightly integrated with course management systems, student learning analytics, and textbook assignment/provision systems. This integrated approach allows for a comprehensive analysis of student use of library resources and their impact on academic performance, ultimately enhancing student learning outcomes.

In summary, the study calls for continued analysis of library resource use and student academic attainment, systematic data collection, and the integration of library systems and services with commonly used platforms in higher education. These steps will contribute to the overall goal of improving student success, a task for all of us to undertake.

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Inclusive Leadership: Perspectives From Academic Library Leaders

John J. Meier

This paper presents the results of thirty-seven interviews, conducted with deans and university librarians at large, research institutions in the US, regarding how they practice inclusive leadership and develop future leaders from diverse backgrounds. A demographic survey shows this cohort has become increasingly representative of the profession in gender and racial identities. Content analysis of interviews indicates that academic library leaders are moving beyond DEI training programs to actions that advance equity in their organizations and within the profession. Best practices for recruitment, hiring, onboarding, and retention are presented along with strategies to increase inclusion and belonging within academic libraries.

Introduction

Libraries have been called to antiracist work by a joint task force of the American Library Association and the Association of Research Libraries.[1] It is especially important for academic library leaders who have positional power and influence networks across higher education to advance social justice. This paper focuses on describing current inclusive leadership practices by academic library leaders and how they support the development of future leaders with diverse identities. Best practices and trends are drawn from interviews with thirty-seven senior library administrators at American Association of Universities (AAU) libraries. As part of a sabbatical project, the author replicated methods used in a prior study on decision making in libraries that additionally revealed strong support for developing diverse future leaders within libraries.[2] A new question was introduced to assess the adoption of inclusive leadership practices within the population. The results pertaining to decision making were analyzed in a separate paper.[3]

This paper focuses on the current adoption of inclusive leadership practices by senior library leaders at large research universities and describes best practices. While leadership can be practiced throughout an organization, senior library leaders have authority and influence based on their position, meaning that they hold "positional power" within their organizations. The author hypothesized that strong support for leadership development of individuals with diverse identities in the prior study would show outcomes in a more representative population of library leaders in terms of gender and ethnicity. The author hypothesized that this population would focus on inclusive leadership practices that support Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI). The author also anticipated that these new practices would change approaches

to developing future library leaders increasingly focusing on Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC). Comparing responses to a similar question on leadership development in the prior study, this paper reveals changes in practices of developing future library leaders. Themes derived from content analysis reveal innovative approaches to dismantling racist systems within these large, research libraries. Library leaders are doing more than just supporting equity through words, they are taking action to make their organizations more equitable.

Literature Review

Diversity, equity, and inclusion are not only core professional values for libraries, they are core institutional values for the universities where academic libraries operate. Racial inequities are embedded in systems of oppression throughout society, universities, and the profession of librarianship.[4] Inclusive leadership has arisen as a term describing a holistic, encompassing approach to leadership and management that integrates multiple attitudes and practices to advance equity within organizations.[5] Within the Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL) the Inclusive Leadership Subcommittee of the New Roles for a Changing Landscape (NRCL) proposed defining of Inclusive Library Leadership as: "individuals who are aware of their own biases, actively seek out and consider different perspectives to inform their decision-making, collaborate more effectively with others through cultural competency, and center empathy and compassion in their approach to leadership."

This approach begins with self-reflection and self-assessment, so that individuals can act with awareness of their leadership style, biases, and knowledge gaps. It is also important for inclusive leaders to be committed to continuous self-improvement through learning about other cultures, experiences, and ways of being. Openness and curiosity are key attitudes that also encourage listening and actively seeking out diverse perspectives for decision-making. The inclusive leader takes a human-centered approach, acting with compassion and empathy. These practices can promote an environment of trust that affirms marginalized voices and supplants inequitable systems. In a discussion about this definition, library leaders from across the profession talked about the importance to inclusive leadership of equitable practice and encouraging BIPOC individuals toward leadership roles.[6] This aligns with a growing library literature showcasing the importance of DEI to effective library leadership and practice.

Since the 2020 murder of George Floyd by a police officer in the US, support for social justice and DEI in universities and libraries has become a focus for leaders and employees. Job descriptions for top library administrators doubled the frequency of DEI-related responsibilities in just over a year.[7] The focus of DEI work for these leaders was developing their library workforce and supporting professional development. DEI initiatives have also risen in library programming, collections work, and organizational development. Among BIPOC in libraries, awareness of these efforts is higher than among White employees.[8] While employees of color had a clear idea of inequitable systems within libraries, White employees often point to causes in the surrounding environment. DEI work also falls disproportionally on BIPOC, who are uncompensated for additional duties. The emotional labor and stress for BIPOC—stemming from racial unrest compounded by the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic—is not accommodated by library or university policies and systems.[9]

Leaders set the tone for the climate of their organizations through action and inaction. Library administrators and supervisors can have a large impact on morale and retention of library employees.[10] Inequitable treatment, discrimination, and unfair compensation drive li-

brarians not only from their current institutions but also from the profession. BIPOC in libraries are disproportionately affected through individual experiences and institutional systems of oppression.[11] Senior library leaders can also create dysfunctional or toxic workplaces through inequitable practices, micromanagement, or bullying that result in increased turnover and burnout for BIPOC.[12] The status quo of Predominately White Institutions (PWIs) can also be inequitable environments as they are based on norms and standards of White Supremacy, which are not explicitly identified, discussed, or questioned.[13]

BIPOC in management roles in libraries can bring an inclusive leadership approach informed by their experiences and identities.[14] However, many barriers exist along the career path to academic library leadership. The inequitable representation of BIPOC in librarianship and library leadership has been examined by researchers for decades.[15] Recruitment and retention of librarians of color has focused primarily on early career librarians, graduates with the Masters of Library Science (MLS) degree. Recruitment and leadership programs for BIPOC in the library profession began in the late 1990s with the ALA Spectrum Scholarship, Association of Research Libraries (ARL) Kaleidoscope and Leadership and Career Development Program (LCDP), and the Minnesota Institute for Early Careers Librarians. The benefits of these dedicated programs come from networking and cohort building in addition to skill development and training.[16]

BIPOC who are new professionals leave the field or their current jobs due to negative experiences such as microaggressions, inequitable compensation, and isolation.[17] Graduate schools and libraries have been encouraged to address racism in their organizations and the profession with frank conversations and education on Critical Race Theory (CRT). Mentoring has long been seen as an important approach to retention and career advancement for BIPOC in libraries.[18] The longer that healthy mentoring relationships are maintained, the greater job satisfaction and likelihood of pursuing opportunities for promotion. Review of hiring procedures through an equity lens can also increase success of recruitment.[19] Consideration should also be given to non-traditional pathways to senior library leadership roles, which could result in deans and directors from different backgrounds.

BIPOC and women in organizations are more often placed in precarious leadership positions than White men in a phenomenon known as the "glass cliff."[20] These roles, often interim, can have deleterious rather than helpful effects on career pathways. For interim leadership opportunities to be successful for the individual and the organization, sufficient preparation should be made.[21] Succession planning, equitable access to professional development, and multiple mentorship opportunities increase the effectiveness of interim leaders and trust from their organizations. Well-constructed interim leadership opportunities can benefit career progress and increase confidence, though they also have an impact on wellness with added stress.[22] The most successful interims have a prior interest in leadership although focusing on self-promoters can limit the opportunities of diverse leaders.[23] Effective succession planning should ensure BIPOC have equitable access to mentoring and professional development.

Academic library employee perspectives show an increasing preference for leaders with leadership characteristics that are traditionally viewed as feminine, such as empathy, communication, and person-focused decision-making.[24] These are traits associated with the inclusive leadership definition. Cultural and institutional barriers to advancement of women in library leadership exist as unquestioned assumptions grounded in male privilege.[25] Libraries still need to remove gendered behavioral expectations, provide mentoring and coaching, and enable

networks between women in management roles. Some gender-neutral equity measures, such as tenure stays, have benefitted men more than women.[26] The lived experiences of women in library leadership showcase the barriers, discrimination, and inequitable expectations still faced despite the growth in representation.[27]

Methods

This paper presents a portion of the results of a sabbatical project approved by Penn State University for 2023 related to inclusive leadership and decision making in academic libraries. This paper focuses on inclusive leadership and development of future library leaders, while the companion paper presents results related to decision making in libraries. The overall project consisted of a series of interviews (see Appendix A) with academic library leaders and an accompanying demographic survey (see Appendix B). The Penn State University's Institutional Review Board (IRB) reviewed this study at the exempt level. The demographic survey was based on the prior study but expanded to include non-binary gender identity. An additional age category was added for those seventy plus years old, and the question of racial/ethnic identity was modified to match the US Census Bureau standard.

The author conducted interviews starting in February 2023 and completed by May 2023. The author sent emails to the most senior administrator at each of the libraries at the sixty-five Association of American Universities (AAU).[28] Participants were asked for their informed consent and to complete a demographic survey prior to the interviews. In total thirty-seven members of the population agreed to participate for a response rate of 57 percent, which was lower than the prior study (71% response rate). Those who declined to participate but who gave a reason for their lack of participation most often mentioned insufficient experience in their current position or impending job changes, including retirement. The author did not perform cross-tabulation of demographic data with interview responses due to the small size of the population to preserve anonymity since several demographic categories had few members.

The interviews were conducted over the teleconferencing software Zoom, which provided machine transcription. Participants also agreed to be recorded, which allowed the author to use recordings to correct errors in the automatic transcription. After the author corrected and anonymized all transcripts, the recordings were deleted to protect confidentiality. The author replicated the content analysis methodology from the prior study, which consisted of individual coding. Only having one coder for the interviews did limit the reliability of coding and diversity of perspective. For the two interview questions analyzed in this paper, the first required a new codebook since it was not included in the prior study. The second question was modified from the prior study (#2), changing it from: "How are you preparing future deans and university librarians?" to: "How are you preparing individuals with diverse identities for leadership roles in the profession?" To make comparisons, the author used the codes from the prior study for this question. The author created new codes in the same method as the prior study, when concepts appeared frequently in the "Other" category. For the new question on inclusive leadership, the author created a new set of codes for inclusive leadership practices and expanded using same methodology. Several participants spoke of values they hold or attitudes they adopt as an inclusive leader, such as treating each employee as a whole person or practicing self-reflection. These were not coded individually as practices of inclusive leadership, so additional research could be done on leadership attitudes and mindsets.

Results

This paper analyzes responses to the first two questions of the interview, which focused on inclusive leadership and developing diverse leaders, along with several aspects of the demographic survey. The remaining five interview questions and other demographic results were analyzed in a companion paper.

Demographic Survey

TABLE 1 Answers to the Question "Gender: How do you identify?"		
	Woman	**Man**
1986 ARL	25%	75%
1994 ARL	37%	63%
2005 ARL	56%	44%
2014 ARL	58%	42%
2015 ARL	57%	43%
2015 Meier	55%	45%
2021 ARL	59%	41%
2023 Meier	68%	32%

When compared to data from the Association of Research Libraries (ARL) and to the prior study for library deans and directors, a higher percentage of participants indicated that they identified as a woman (see Table 1).[29] No participants indicated that they identified as non-binary or transgender. While this is a far greater representation of women than in the US population (50.4%), it reflects the gender distribution among ARL library professional staff (64.6%).[30] While the population of this study was small, it follows the trend of increasing representation of women in leadership roles in academic libraries over the past four decades. Despite increasing representation of women in senior leadership positions, ARL salary data still indicates a measurable salary gap compared to men in similar roles.

Past data from the previous study and ARL can also be used to analyze the increased representation of BIPOC individuals in library leadership roles. This study aligns with recent ARL data showing an increase in Black or African American identifying deans and directors (see Table 2). These percentages slightly exceed representation among the current US population (13.6%) yet are almost double the proportion of Black or African American identifying ARL professional staff (7.4%). Although representation of Black senior administrators has risen over the previous decade, the number of Black professional librarians in ARL institutions remains unchanged. The demographic composition of paraprofessional staff in academic libraries, however, is closely aligned with the US population.[31] The credential barrier of the MLS degree disproportionately affects BIPOC due to undergraduate debt disparities, climate of graduate programs, and cultural assumptions on librarian identity. Programs are needed to create equity in the credentialing of librarians or the requirement for the MLS in all librarian positions should be reexamined based on job duties.

TABLE 2 Answers to the Question "What is your racial or ethnic identity?"			
	White	**Black**	**Asian American**
2014 ARL	86%	8%	6%
2015 Meier	95%	5%	0%
2021 ARL	74%	15%	7%
2023 Meier	81%	14%	5%

There was also an increase in the representation of Asian American identifying individuals in the most senior leadership roles. Both this study and ARL data for library leaders align with Asian American professional staff representation (6.9%) and the US population at large (6.3%). Asian American employees in libraries and higher education still experience stereotyping, xenophobia, unfair evaluations, and questioned expertise.[32] In order to reach current representation levels in senior library leadership roles, they had to challenge these systems of

oppression through networking, coalition building, professional development, and connecting with identity-based mentors. Interviews with Asian Americans library leaders show they had to leverage cultural-identity based leadership skills in addition to mastering mainstream expectations of senior managers.[33]

This study cannot report results for American Indian or Alaska Native; Hispanic or Latino; Multiracial; or Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander identities, as it would identify individuals that participated in this study. Based on 2021 ARL data, 4.2 percent of ARL employees identify as Hispanic or Latino while only 1.2 percent of deans and directors indicated this identity. With US population statistics approaching 20 percent Hispanic or Latino identity, both representation of library employees and especially library leaders are dramatically lower. ARL 2021 data found a higher representation of library leaders identifying as American Indian or Alaska Native (2.4%) over the percentage of professional staff (0.7%) and the US population (1.3%).

While the proportion of Hispanic and Latino paraprofessionals and credentialed librarians varies geographically across the US, there are persistent barriers across the profession. ARL data shows the largest remaining wage gap based on ethnicity is for Hispanic and Latino library employees, and it is widening.[34] The MLS degree is almost universally required for librarian and library administrative positions. Paraprofessionals conduct library work for lower salary with limited career advancement opportunities. For students even in institutions with a majority Hispanic or Latino undergraduate population, MLS programs primarily enroll White students.[35] Establishing pathways to graduate education and effective recruitment through mentoring could enable positive transformation of the library workforce. ARL data shows.

Interview Responses

Although they were not asked about the proposed ACRL definition for inclusive leadership, 22 percent of respondents said that they supported the definition as written and one participant disagreed with the definition.

Many interviews highlighted DEI professional development within their organizations in order to practice inclusive leadership in agreement with literature on the topic (see Table 3). Over half of these responses began with the participant first focusing on their own DEI training and professional journey. Several interviews mentioned they also went through programs with their senior leadership team or required those individuals to complete the same program they had. The goals ranged from increasing awareness of bias, developing cultural competency, building appreciation of differing viewpoints, and fostering understanding of diverse lived experiences. The most frequently cited organization was DeEtta Jones and Associates (DJA) (22%), which provided a gamut of services from stand-alone programs like the Inclusive Manager's Toolkit to multiple training sessions and in-depth consultation services. The second most mentioned program was the Racial Equity Institute (REI), where often the cohort experience built shared lan-

TABLE 3 Answers to the Question "How do you practice inclusive leadership?"		
DEI Training	20	54%
Salary equity project	12	32%
Build trust	11	30%
Transparency or more communication	9	24%
DeEtta Jones and Associates	8	22%
Created a staff governance body	8	22%
Town Hall meetings	8	22%
Intentionally hiring BIPOC employees	8	22%
Created a DEI administrative position	6	16%
Created diversity committee	5	14%
Listen to anyone	5	14%

guage and ongoing conversations locally. In some cases, participation in DJA or REI was in multi-institutional cohorts, either through a consortium or regularly offered programs. The Crucial Conversations program was also mentioned by a few (8 percent) participants as either a library or university-wide program in support of inclusive practices.

After training, the most frequently mentioned practice of inclusive leadership was some type of salary equity project (32%). Each example varied greatly due to Human Resources (HR) practices, institutional policies, or employee population of focus. For rationale, a few participants said it was evident to them when newly arriving at their position that salaries were inadequate. In most cases a formal HR process, sometimes called a compensation review, was conducted across all employees. After analyzing salaries holistically, most found compensation falling behind over the years due to frequent budget cuts and high inflation. In one case the salary equity project was prompted by employee feedback during a climate survey. In another institution analysis of salaries revealed BIPOC employees were paid less than their White colleagues. In many cases staff salaries were found to be trailing behind market values, and adjustments were implemented through percentage or hourly rate increases. Other studies have found that the racial pay gap is wider for paraprofessional staff than among librarians.[36] In a few cases professional or faculty salaries were increased, often with financial support from the provost's office. The most frequent goal stated was equity, but a few mentioned retention as a positive result. One participant noted, "I think that's one of the reasons we haven't seen the great resignation in this library, and if you look at the staff survey, I think you'll see evidence to back that up. People generally feel well compensated, although they still feel overworked. And the motivation to stay levels are really high."

The importance of trust, particularly among their leadership team, was mentioned frequently (30%) by senior library leaders as part of inclusive leadership. Many participants highly valued honest and very direct feedback from their administrative team, including being told that they are wrong and encouraging disagreement. One participant observed:

> I think that one of the things you have to do is encourage people to push back against things that you say. And then actually, actively, both listen to it and then have your mind changed. And if you don't engage in a way that allows for that to happen, then it doesn't matter what your structure is, you're never going to have any sort of inclusive leadership style in place.

Interviewees wanted differing perspectives, alternative solutions, and the varied expertise from the diverse individuals on the team. A few respondents noted the importance of everyone having an equal voice, although one acknowledged the positional power they hold within the group. In a few cases the participant spoke about their organization more broadly, encouraging all employees to ask questions and disagree with leadership decisions. Inclusive leadership practices highlighted here were actively listening and being open to changing your mind.

Another key practice of inclusive leadership is transparency and increased communication (22%). Several participants talked about how they share more information with all library employees than in previous years or past leadership. This could be more details about the library budget, open positions, or information they are privy to due to their position, though at least one respondent noted some personnel matters can't be shared. Others talked about making portions of their executive meetings open or sharing broadly the notes from senior

leadership meetings. As a method to help employees understand their role, a few participants talked about ways they communicate their weekly activities via a blog or newsletter. Others used their position to amplify or highlight different individuals or departments within their organizations on a regular basis. Another goal mentioned during a few interviews, beyond sharing information, was to invite feedback and more communication from their employees.

The town hall was one communication method mentioned often enough (22%) to merit a separate discussion. These open forums had many titles, but in all cases invited every employee of the organization to participate and ask questions, sometimes via an anonymous form. In many ways the COVID-19 pandemic and remote work made this type of gathering feasible for large library organizations with hundreds of employes often working from many different locations. Though a few examples originated before the pandemic, most were recently established and have continued as online town halls even as library employees returned to working on-site. Beyond sharing information, it was important to many of these responses that everyone has an opportunity to be heard. In addition to presentations of information, these town halls often included question and answer (Q&A) portions, and a few individuals mentioned using anonymous question submission methods.

Several responses (22%) mentioned intentionally hiring BIPOC, LGBTQ, and women to bring different perspectives to the library, especially the senior leadership team. Most of these participants described their initial administrative team's demographics as overwhelmingly White and male. One participant noted, "The first way that I seek out and consider different perspectives is that when I came to the library the leadership, the people who reported to me, were typically white males. And so now I have a more diverse leadership team. I actively sought out leaders who didn't look like I did and hopefully they don't act and think like I do." Many leaders deliberately hired or promoted people who had different life experiences, which resulted in a more diverse leadership group. It was noted as very important that this group take the time to build teamwork and collaborative culture with many different backgrounds working together. Almost all these respondents expressed a goal of having different perspectives and experiences to inform decision making. A few also said their goal was to have the library's leadership reflect their employees' identities. There were also examples of new approaches to hiring librarians, such as opportunity hiring when excellent candidates are identified in the field. Student interns and employees were another group mentioned with leaders looking beyond basic qualifications and instead for exceptional lived experiences. A few challenges were difficulty recruiting due to an unwelcoming environment in the geographic area and fears that state legislation or US Supreme Court decisions would restrict recruitment programs and support.

Another way participants used to bring diverse perspectives to their leadership team, steer organizational development, or improve workplace culture was to hire a DEI administrative position (16%). These positions had as many different titles and responsibilities as responses, and had portfolios including accessibility, diversity, equity, inclusion, or organizational development. Many of the responses highlighted that the individual hired into this new role had a diverse identity. One goal noted was that BIPOC library employees would feel comfortable speaking directly with this person and that their voice would be represented in library leadership. In some cases the candidate was hired from outside of the institution, but in others the individual had been with the university for years and was recently hired into the library organization. One participant noted, "We centered the reorganization on the new AUL position, not only to meet the functional need to do all that work around organizational

development, but also to help start supplementing and changing the dynamics on the leadership team. I've really tried to practice valuing difference of opinion. I had to really go out and cultivate it, bring it into that leadership team, and then do it throughout the organization."

Interviews also talked about establishing a DEI committee (14) to bring more voices into decision making and strategic planning. These groups had many different official titles including accessibility, belonging, diversity, equity, inclusion, or social justice. Respondents placed emphasis on the fact that membership in these group was from across their libraries and most members did not have positional power within the organization. The responsibilities of these groups varied greatly, including review of the mission, vision, and values statement biannually to advising the leadership team including, in some cases, chairs of the group sitting on that team. Interviewees valued the insights into employee perspectives that these committees bring, especially from BIPOC employees. Equally as often (14%) participants set up structures and expectations to encourage input directly to them from any member of their organization. This included meeting as many members of their organization as possible and learning their names, holding all employee meetings as mentioned above, and populating leadership groups from across organizational hierarchies.

Developing Leaders with Diverse Identities

When analyzing responses to the second question, the author compared the prior study and current interviews, although the question was shifted to focus on individuals with diverse identities. While many of the same themes occurred, several new areas were identified (see Table 4).

TABLE 4 Answers to the Question "How are you preparing individuals with diverse identities for leadership roles in the profession?" ("—" indicates response was not coded in 2015 study)		
	2023	**2015**
Mentoring	43%	41%
ARL Leadership Programs	41%	52%
Improve recruitment or search process	38%	—
Budget support and professional development funding	24%	25%
Local (library) programs of development and assessment	19%	18%
Developing leadership in entry level or middle managers	16%	32%
New evaluation process or criteria	16%	—
Local (university) programs on leadership	14%	20%
Diversity resident program	14%	—
Improve retention	11%	—
Sponsor or recommend for jobs	11%	—
Harvard Leadership program	8%	39%
Opportunities to lead projects	8%	11%
Succession Planning	8%	27%
Hiring a coach	8%	—
Delegate duties or committee membership	5%	23%
Leading Change program	3%	25%
UCLA Senior Fellows	3%	14%

Mentoring

Mentoring rose to the most frequently noted approach for preparing individuals for leadership roles, which is especially important for retention of BIPOC.[37] While most responses in this theme mentioned formal mentoring programs, such as those operated by ARL, a few participants primarily or only do informal mentoring. Almost all these responses spoke of mentoring outside of their own organizations, but two mentioned internal mentoring and said that it required a different approach. Internal mentoring programs were also often associated with tenure-track systems, providing support for academic writing and making connections to facilitate research projects. Those mentored were other senior leaders, mid-level managers, new professionals, and even graduate students entering the profession. Mentoring activities included giving career advice, recommending them for job openings, nominating for committees and boards, and helping them to publish scholarship. A few participants said that it was just as important to help their mentee assess their readiness for a leadership role, saying some emerging leaders feel pressured to move quickly into jobs of increasing responsibility. Mentors also feel that they learn from mentees and many of these relationships continue long after any formal time period has elapsed.

Overall, participants talked about mentoring as an active role that uses their professional network to benefit future leaders. One participant noted

> You have to be action oriented and intentional about connecting people. Because it's really about my network, and I leveraged those networks. And I think it's really important for me in the position I am in to leverage my network to benefit others. Because if we don't have help, it's really difficult for underrepresented people to succeed, and I've certainly benefited from a lot of help in my years.

Several participants (11%) made a distinction between mentoring and sponsoring, that is, between being a mentor versus being a sponsor. Sponsorship was most frequently associated with recommending candidates by name to search firms or other library leaders. A sponsor needs to be able to "talk up" the aspiring leader in multiple venues, advocating for them if leadership positions become available in the profession.

ARL Programs

While ARL Leadership programs were mentioned less frequently (41%) than in the prior study (52%), they are still one of the top approaches to developing future leaders. Interview subjects most frequently referenced the Leadership and Career Development Program (LCDP) that focuses on "mid-career librarians from historically underrepresented racial and ethnic groups to take on leadership roles in their careers."[38] This program has operated for over twenty-five years and multiple alumni are in this study's population of senior library leaders. Several respondents described participating as coaches, hosting meetings at their institutions, and noted significant investments of time and funding put towards the program. Mentioned by fewer participants was the Kaleidoscope program (formerly Initiative to Recruit a Diverse Workforce) that prepares "BIPOC graduate leaders, building professional networks for these emerging leaders, and creating community both locally and in the profession.

The final program from ARL mentioned by the least number of participants was the Leadership Fellows program, which "provides the next generation of senior and executive leaders with exceptional opportunities for growth in research libraries." While not included

under the umbrella of DEI program for ARL, the Leadership Fellows goals include "expand the diversity and overall pool of talented leaders." Interviewees mentioned hosting this program, acting as mentors, and sending their employees, particularly librarians of color. Participants want to prepare future leaders for success both within their own institutions but also broadly in the profession. Multiple respondents mentioned their past participation in this program, valuing the cohort experience and ongoing networking connections they built.

Recruitment

Recruitment was the most frequently mentioned new theme (38%) identified as an approach to preparing leaders with diverse identities. Most of these examples focused on improving the search process with more equitable and inclusive practices. Several participants conducted assessments of their search procedures either with an external consultant, an internal review, or programs like the Search Advocate Workshops from Oregon State University. A few changed the language of their search postings to reduce minimum requirements, use inclusive language, and express clear expectations particularly around promotion and tenure. They also made sure to promote open positions online, especially via lists and websites focused on BIPOC librarians, and even increased the budget spent on advertising significantly. To improve the process, some respondents changed their search rubric or matrix to be robust and freer of bias, including asset-based assessment approaches. When forming search committees, improved practices included balancing representation of different roles and identities, as well as making sure all members of the committee are trained on DEI principles.

In order to increase the likelihood of a candidate reaching the final stage and of accepting an offer, a more candidate-centered approach was described, consistent with research-based recommendations.[39] Participants found ways to decrease the timeline of the search process and reduce barriers, such as having more meetings and stages of the interview online, because the senior leader's availability is often the most restrictive element to schedule. Some interviews mentioned both making entry level and management positions more open to external candidates, while also providing opportunities for internal candidates to move up into leadership roles. A few participants mentioned changing institutional culture to allow for external candidates, while a few others had to shift practices to enable internal candidates to have a chance. A few were able to collaborate with the university or create their own cluster hiring program, which could include both a DEI and thematic focus.

Local Support

Participants also mentioned that putting funding toward supporting their values by increasing budgets for professional development at a similar frequency (24%) to the prior study (25%). Most of these responses described expanding professional development funding to all employee types, not just librarians. A few also mentioned that BIPOC individuals, particularly new hires, were well supported for training and conference travel. Participants mentioned seeking additional funding from the provost's office or donors to increase these budgets. Other responses talked about expanding successful programs, such as internships for students or financially supporting affinity groups for BIPOC employees. One participant

> created a framework and internal-library policies for the creation of Employee Resource Groups (ERGs) that are self-run with specific charters, sponsored by

someone in administration. It's not just an interest group, it's to give a space for people of color, and other groups, a space where they can come together and determine what their needs are. And then be able to convey those and get us to pay attention and commit resources.

Another key strategy (8%) intended to bolster the onboarding of new administrators was to hire an executive coach for the individual or the entire team. This can require a significant financial commitment but can occasionally be included as part of the offer negotiation process. Indeed, one participant insisted on a coach for themselves as the senior administrator of the library as part of their hiring package.

Several participants (19%) described local library programs to support leadership growth and DEI, like the prior study (18%) in response to the second question. While responses to the first question, discussed earlier, were focused on DEI topics, most of these responses were focused on leadership training. A few of these programs included cultural competency and inclusive practices, although the primary goal was to develop leaders internally. Programs were open to all employee identities, often explicitly expanded to include library staff. Two participants mentioned internship programs for students from underrepresented backgrounds, hoping to engage new professionals in the field of librarianship as a career. University programs were mentioned slightly less frequently (14%) than in the prior study (20%). These examples were also split between leadership programs and DEI programs, though fewer integrated the two concepts into inclusive leadership. Participants identified library employees to participate in various ways, depending on the program, with most encouraging all eligible to participate. In the few cases with smaller opportunities, responses mentioned prioritizing BIPOC individuals or those appearing to the administration as having the greatest need.

Retention

While the need for more support of entry level professionals and middle managers was identified as key in the prior study (32%), fewer participants in this study mentioned this theme (16%). The two main goals mentioned in these responses were to create a career path within the organization and to increase employee competencies so they can lead in their current roles. One participant tries to

create promotional opportunities to create a career path for them right here within the organization. Sometimes we look outwardly, and we forget to look and leverage the skills we have inside and really grow and nurture those people for leadership positions. We continue to do that, as we also continue to diversify our workforce.

The benefits to the organization come in the form of retention, diversity among managers, and communities of practice. A few participants talked about creating a community of managers who can support each other and who are trained on common vocabulary in management and inclusive leadership. One response discussed creating a rotation in leadership roles, so that more employees can gain the necessary experience for career progression without leaving the institution. Retention, primarily focusing on either investing in employee professional development or counteroffers, was mentioned frequently enough (11%) to merit analysis. In one case, counteroffers were newly implemented at an institution where it was not a past

practice, while in another the participant concurred with the institutional policy against them. Two challenges mentioned were that the employee might stay and still not be satisfied with their job or that inequities would result in compensation within the library.

Another way participants talked about developing leaders with diverse identities was to improve annual evaluation processes (16%). For some, this involved integrating equity and inclusion activities into goals and performance evaluations, such as using SMARTIE goals (Strategic, Measurable, Ambitious, Realistic, Time-bound, Inclusive, and Equitable). Other responses focused on including staff in processes previously only open to librarians, such as career path planning and recognizing service work in annual evaluations. A few completely redesigned their promotion ranking system or job descriptions to both equitably promote and compensate employees regardless of status within the organization. While only one of these responses specifically highlighted the benefits for retaining BIPOC employees, most spoke to opening opportunities for all and centering DEI activities in every employee.

Interviews mentioned other ways to give opportunities to "everyone" through leadership roles within the library slightly less frequently (8%) than in the prior study (11%). All these examples used internal committees and committee leadership positions as an example of developing leaders within their organization. One participant described this approach as similar to "affirmative action" though noting that they could appoint anyone to a committee. Other ways senior leaders created opportunities was to delegate duties, which was mentioned (5%) significantly less (5%) than the prior study (23%). This could be due to the focus of the interview question from preparing individuals to be deans and directors toward preparing leaders with diverse identities. In these few examples, the senior leader stepped aside from a campus committee or professional organization appointment to give the opportunity to a person from an underrepresented group.

DEI Programs

Diversity resident programs were mentioned by several (14%) participants as a way to take action to increase the representation of diverse identities in the profession. These two- to three-year-long temporary positions focus on providing an initial professional job opportunity to individuals from underrepresented groups. Most responses discussed their program with the caveat that a permanent position within their organization was not a likely outcome for the residents, although a few mentioned job offers extended after the residency ended. Many participants talked about making improvements to their established programs, such as adding additional positions to create a cohort, securing sustainable funding, or focusing on outcomes for the individual rather than the library work accomplished. At least one new residency program is being established, so it seems that these programs may be more prevalent in the future.

One of the most noticeable declines among responses was for library leadership development programs not organized by ARL. Harvard's Leadership Institute for Academic Librarians (LIAL) was frequently mentioned (8%), but not nearly as often as in the prior study (39%). Even though the program lists "Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging" as one of the five topics addressed in the weeklong experience, no mention is made of underrepresented groups or diverse individuals under "Who should attend."[40] The Leading Change Institute (LCI), formerly known as the Frye Institute, a joint initiative of EDUCAUSE and the Council on Library and Information Resources (CLIR) was mentioned by 25 percent of participants in the prior study, but only by one participant in this study. While LCI states that "each class

cohort reflects the diverse and dynamic spectrum of experience found in the current higher education workplace," there is no indication in the curriculum or application process encouraging underrepresented individuals.[41] The interview subject only discussed how university Information Technology (IT) professionals and library professionals brought different points of view to the LCI experience. Finally, UCLA Senior Fellows was also mentioned by only one individual, while in the prior study 14 percent of responses referenced the program.

Succession Planning and Retirement

When discussing goals for preparing individuals with diverse identities for leadership roles, succession planning was only mentioned by three (8%) of participants which was lower than the prior study (27%). One respondent talked about the need for a succession plan for various roles within their organization, planning for inevitable vacancies in leadership roles and preparing internal candidates. Another focused on planning for their own future retirement, which was still years away, not only preparing their administrative team members to potentially step into their role but also making sure the team works well together. The last participant in this theme talked more broadly about their career accomplishments having already peaked, and thus they were now making it a goal to get others involved, particularly those from diverse backgrounds. It is notable that in the prior study 11 percent of participants mentioned an impending retirement, but only 5 percent did in this study.

Additional Themes

While the demographic survey did not ask participants about their sexual orientation, a few interviews discussed LGBTQ status as it relates to DEI and leadership. Participants mentioned difficulties in working with donors who are politically conservative while fundraising for the library. Others talked about the leadership benefits of having empathy and compassion because of their life experiences as a LGBTQ person. Several participants talked about mentoring LGBTQ individuals and the importance of representation for this population in academic libraries and higher education. Neurodiversity was another topic addressed by a few interview participants. One respondent discussed the ways they mentor and advocate for neurodiverse individuals. Another participant outlined in detail the structures and communication they have tried to implement within their organization to respect neurodiversity, which included speaking less in generalities and creating clear processes.

Several participants (16%) talked about uncertainty in promoting DEI within their library or university due to state legislation or federal judicial decisions. Much attention was focused on US states with Republican legislatures and governors, such as Florida and Texas, and even adjacent states were closely monitoring pending legislation. One participant noted, "I think that will be a challenge in the future. I will say that the library's in a unique situation in that DEI is really built in our profession, much more so than some of the other entities and units and departments and colleges on campus. And so we are trying very hard with building leaders." A few participants were waiting to make changes to the strategic planning documents or hiring initiatives. Others mentioned the politics of their state were a barrier to recruitment of individuals with diverse identities. University programs supporting recruitment of diverse individuals were also seen as potentially threatened by US Supreme Court decisions. Overall, it seems important for senior academic library leaders to pay close attention to the political environment of their states and consult with their colleagues in similar situations.

Discussion

It may seem surprising that only half of library leaders mentioned DEI training as an inclusive leadership practice; however, this does not necessarily mean that the other half does not have professional development in DEI in their organizations. It is possible that these leaders do not think of it as an inclusive leadership practice. Library leaders frequently indicated that they wanted to take real action towards inclusion and equity, going beyond training and education. As one participant summarized, "There's been this major shift from diversity programs to really becoming inclusive organizations." These results could also be due to DEI professional development becoming core to academic libraries rather than extra activity. Participants were not asked for examples of DEI and leadership programs; however, several were mentioned often enough to be notable in this study, such as DeEtta Jones & Associates and the Racial Equity Institute.

While salary adjustments can be part of regular human resources practice in libraries, the salary equity projects noted in this paper go further than adjusting individual salaries based on market trends. The intention and scale of these efforts to address equity across racial, job classification, or employment status is new and notable given the racial and gender pay gaps in the field noted in the literature and ARL statistics. Participants frequently talked about the value of open feedback, often introducing or maintaining mechanisms within their organizations to give more employees a voice. Accountability and transparency can give evidence to these intentions, so library employees can see that their contributions matter. These senior library leaders also said their administrative teams are most helpful when they are the most honest, even disagreeing when necessary. While these intentions and practices align with inclusive leadership, positional power still exists within hierarchical organizations like academic libraries. Some library deans and directors even acknowledged that this level of openness is a goal rather than reality, something that takes time and concerted effort to approach. Teambuilding, coaching, and actions that confirm trust are the methods they use to build this type of workplace climate.

In many cases participants felt that their efforts toward inclusive leadership were most effective when they heard perspectives different than their own. Several initiatives, such as one salary equity project, came from bringing representatives from staff governing bodies into leadership groups. Other leaders pointed to inclusive practices that only began or gained success when new BIPOC leaders within their organization were hired or empowered to act. These benefits of bringing diverse voices into leadership are supported by the literature and reinforce the importance of representation of BIPOC and development of future leaders. Senior leaders in academic libraries dedicate their professional and personal efforts to many approaches toward this goal, primarily mentoring and professional development programs. ARL and other programs seem to have had some impact on slowly increasing representation among academic library leaders, but not for everyone. Both individual institutions and these consortia need to grow and evolve these efforts to address inequities, especially for individuals identifying as Hispanic or Latino.

With library organizations hoping to increase the diversity of their leaders and employees, they are looking outward rather than inward in most cases. Though some can remove barriers for current BIPOC and marginalized employees within their organization, many look to recruitment and retention strategies. More equitable hiring practices are known in the profession and literature; however, local human resources policies and past library practices make adopting new approaches difficult. Nonetheless, this is important, hard work and

many participants in this study mention positive results in recruitment or retention through best practices, such as creating balanced search committees with representation of diverse identities, members trained on DEI principles, and clear and equitable criteria lead to hiring practices that center on the candidate. It is also vital to build a welcoming organizational climate for the success of new hires for improved morale and retention. There appears to be a need for collective action across consortia like ASERL, or across library organizations like ARL, to create systematic change, such as establishing postbaccalaureate fellowships to support increased BIPOC pursuit of the MLS degree.[42] The question remains: is there sufficient will to put collective action and funding toward efforts at this scale?

Limitations

The author acknowledges their bias and privilege as a White, cisgender male researcher at a large research institution. The main limitation of this study is that the results are based on a small, self-selected sample, so the results are not generalizable to all libraries. While a few respondents discussed the impact of ARL leadership development programs on their careers, particularly in building a cohort experience and professional network, more research is needed to quantify the impact of these programs on outcomes for leaders with diverse identities. Researchers could follow the career trajectories of these programs' many years of participants and could compare outcomes for participants with diverse identities. The author also did not compare representation of BIPOC among library employees at AAU library organizations to assess the impact of inclusive leadership practices. Researchers could examine both current representation and change over time within one institution or multiple institutions in a population that practices inclusive leadership as outlined in this paper. The author attempted to draw comparisons in responses to the second question with the prior study even though the framing and text of the question differed. This could have influenced participants to address individuals with diverse identities rather than all future library leaders as analyzed in the prior study. Though the most frequent responses were consistent between studies, long term trends cannot be validated if the question was changed.

Conclusions

Inclusive leadership in libraries means self-awareness of bias, seeking out different perspectives in decision-making, collaborating through cultural competency, and centering compassion and empathy. From the perspective of senior leadership in AAU libraries, this begins with training and self-assessment, starting with their own journey and continuing through opportunities for their library organizations to participate. These leaders show commitment to equity through resources committed to hiring, professional development programs, consultants, and salary equity adjustments. These leaders also try to model inclusion through open communication, transparency in decision-making, increasing governance structures, and town hall gatherings. Intentionally seeking and hiring BIPOC and women for administrative roles and creating positions dedicated to DEI work are concrete actions taken to advance diversity in libraries. Increased representation in senior leadership teams and governance bodies resulted in increased morale and perception of equity within these library organizations.

Library deans and directors are also taking action to enable pathways for future leaders from historically minoritized backgrounds. Their positional power as the final decision maker

within their library organizations enables them to take real action for change. While mentorship is still important, the current focus on sponsorship is a more active advocacy by current leaders through leveraging their professional networks to support the career advancement of BIPOC and women. When supporting the development of future leaders with diverse identities, participants overwhelmingly focused on ARL DEI programs rather than other leadership programs (e.g., Harvard, LCI, UCLA). These programs often include inclusive practices recommended by the research literature such as mentoring/coaching, cohort building, and are targeted to individuals from diverse backgrounds. Library leaders brought in consultants or initiated strategic reviews to improve hiring practices by removing inequitable language, focusing on asset-based measurements, and keeping processes candidate focused. Recruitment has become interwoven with retention as library leaders focus on improving workplace climate, creating opportunities for promotion within their organizations, and expanding access to professional development.

The author hypothesized that academic library leaders would focus on DEI when describing inclusive leadership practices. Most academic library leaders spoke to leveraging established programs and practices, but there were a few examples of traditional systems of rank being eliminated towards equitable access. Examples from this study are evidence that best practices exist across academic libraries; however, no organizations have adopted all these practices, which are complimentary and which build on each other toward the goals of DEI. The author also anticipated that these new practices would focus on BIPOC as future leaders. While participants mentioned individuals with diverse backgrounds as important to DEI outcomes, they stressed that inclusive leadership development benefits all their employees. Finally, the author hoped that leadership development in academic libraries has improved representation within senior leadership. While representation of those identifying as women, Black, or Asian American in ARL libraries and this study have improved, for other racial identities there are significant gaps, especially for Hispanic or Latino individuals. There is still important work needed to advance DEI outcomes in academic libraries through the best practices presented in this paper.

Appendix A. Interview Questions

1. ACRL is developing a definition for inclusive leadership, "Inclusive library leaders are individuals who are aware of their own biases, actively seek out and consider different perspectives to inform their decision-making, collaborate more effectively with others through cultural competency, and center empathy and compassion in their approach to leadership." How do you see this approach reflected in your work and planning?
2. How are you preparing individuals with diverse identities for leadership roles in the profession?
3. * How do you make decisions about your organization's future?
4. * What are your main strategic goals over the next 3-5 years?
5. * What major organizational changes have you made in the past 3 years? What factors drove these changes in your library organization?
6. * What major organizational changes do you see ahead in the next 3-5 years?
7. * Who do you rely on for advice or direction in your leadership and decision-making?

* Responses to these questions were not analyzed in this paper

Appendix B. Demographic Survey

Gender: How do you identity? (based on UCLA Williams Institute)
- □ Woman
- □ Non-Binary
- □ Man
- □ Prefer to self-describe _____

Do you consider yourself to be transgender?
- □ Yes
- □ No

Which range below contains your age?
- □ 20-29
- □ 30-39
- □ 40-49
- □ 50-59
- □ 60-69
- □ 70+

What is your racial or ethnic identity? (Based on US Census data collection)
- □ American Indian or Alaska Native
- □ Asian American
- □ Black or African American
- □ Hispanic or Latino
- □ Multiracial
- □ Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander
- □ White
- □ Prefer to self-describe _____

What year did you receive your most relevant terminal degree? _____

What year did you begin working at your current institution? _____

Is your current appointment permanent or temporary? _____

What is your job title? _____

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The Kind Librarian: Cultivating a Culture of Kindness and Wellbeing in Libraries, Helen Rimmer, Facet Publishing (UK), 2024. 400p. Softcover, $66.99. 9781783307128
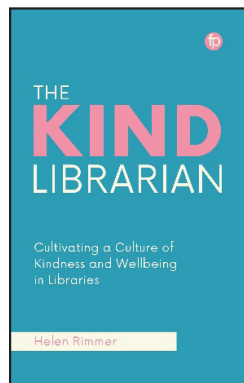
The Kind Librarian: Cultivating a Culture of Kindness and Wellbeing in Libraries, by Helen Rimmer, is an informative and appealing text for librarians at all institutions and all leadership levels. As a former library administrator and the founder and current owner of The Kind Brave Leader, Rimmer brings unique expertise and recommendations to the library world. *The Kind Librarian* is well-researched and approachable, incorporating reflective questions and exercises, both for groups and individuals, at the end of each chapter designed to spark conversation and collaboration. With its blend of theory and practice, Rimmer's book provides plenty of opportunity for librarians and staff to learn and grow. Case studies provide examples from a variety of library sectors and enhance the applicability of concepts the author covers. This book primarily appeals to library leadership and patron-facing librarians because of their roles in management and customer service. Rimmer suggests that librarians in these roles often face burnout and that applying principles of kindness could help relieve the effects of stress and difficult work environments. Developing a culture of kindness also has the potential of helping libraries better serve their patrons and communities.

This book is split into four parts: "Theoretical Foundations of Kindness in Libraries as Workplaces," "Cultivating Kindness in the Library: A Holistic Approach to Wellbeing and Team Empowerment," "Leadership Approaches to Enhancing Kindness and Wellbeing in Libraries," and "Embracing Kindness and Wellbeing in Library Cultures: Navigating Change and Toxicity." Readers could skip to sections they think would be most beneficial; however, it would be better to start with part one and progress through the sections as presented as several frameworks introduced at the beginning provide the support for further arguments in subsequent segments. The majority of chapters are in parts two and three where theory is applied and kindness is put into practice.

Part One consists of four chapters which introduce the book and provide the theoretical and practical framework for employing kindness and empathy in a professional setting, such as the library. In these chapters, readers learn the differences between being kind and being nice, how kindness and positive psychology connect with wellbeing, and four different models of thinking about staff wellbeing. These four models are interwoven threads that ground the rest of the book and are the lenses through which recommended changes are viewed.

Part Two, with seven chapters, is the longest section. These chapters emphasize the integration of wellness practice into the library workplace. Each chapter addresses various aspects of library operations, such as writing and enforcing policies, or using flexible work schedules/options (e.g., hybrid modalities) to support library workers. Part Two is most relevant for people working outside of management and administration because these chapters have practical applications valuable in any team or location. The suggestions are also potentially easier for anyone, from librarians to upper management to recommend or practice. The last chapter in this part is written by Kirsten Elliott and Darren Flynn about their Fair Library Jobs grassroots

organization and how the authors view embedding kindness, empathy, and equity in library hiring and recruitment practices.

Part Three contains five chapters about various aspects of leadership and management, making it the most relevant section for library leadership and least applicable to library workers without management or supervisory responsibilities. Highlights of Part Three include chapters on effective conflict resolution strategies, diverse leadership styles, and the use of data for supporting wellbeing and leadership practices.

Part Four synthesizes the previous three sections and covers topics such as toxic work environments, managing change, and the future of kindness in libraries. This is the shortest but most hopeful section of the book, once again helpful to anyone in librarianship seeking to incorporate more kindness and empathy into their own organization.

Ultimately, *The Kind Librarian* is a valuable guide full of applicable reflection questions and activities for incorporating kindness, empathy, and holistic wellness into a library work environment. All these concepts can be applied by anyone on any level at any kind of library, which is the book's most appealing point. Occasionally, chapters feel redundant as the frameworks and steps often overlap even when dealing with different topics, such as conflict resolution or a toxic work environment. The repetitiveness is useful, though, for readers who skip to the specific sections most applicable to them or their workplace. The book is best for managers, or for informal leaders, who are trying to make healthy cultural changes in their workplaces.— *Clarissa Ihssen, American University*