

# SLISsard Line

Indiana University Student Chapter of the American Library Association - March 2008 - 2:2

## The Problem of Gender: Sexism in Library Management

Brooke Bolton



### Inside this issue:

Sexism in Library Management - p.1

SLIS Booklist - p. 3

Examining the CSI Effect- p. 5



Gender, sexism, and discrimination have been a problem in the workplace since women were allowed to enter the workforce. Academic libraries are no exception. In fact, with the large amount of women in the library workforce and the small amount of women in management positions, academic libraries are a particular problem site for gender discrimination and sexism issues.

In 1966, before affirmative action laws applied, 64% of academic librarians were female, and only 11.8% of academic managers were women. In 1972, just as affirmative action laws became applicable, the amount of women managers rose to 14.4%. And in 1982, a decade after the laws were applicable, women made up 63% of the academic library workforce, and 18.1% of academic managers were female. Even though the number of women in management positions rose steadily, women still only made 77% of men's salaries by 1980 (Moran, 1985).

Although the percentages show an increase in managerial positions in the decade after affirmative action laws became applicable, there was only one group

of libraries studied that showed that the number of women managers was proportional to their numbers in the entire library workforce. This group was made up of small, private liberal arts colleges, which have been, historically, the easiest place for women to advance into management positions. The more prestigious the liberal arts institution, however, the harder it is for women to advance (Moran, 1985).

By 1991, the workforce rose to 80% women (Deyrup, 2004), and 57% of all academic library directors were women (ALA, 1999). In the article *Is the Revolution Over? Gender, Economic, and Professional Parity in Academic Library Leadership Positions*, Marta Deyrup suggests that women have arrived at the point where affirmative action lawmakers expected them to be. By 2004, 52.1% of all top administrators in academic libraries were women. (This includes directors, deans, and other upper-level management.) Compared to the 4.6% of all top administrators in 1972, affirmative action laws have brought women a long way, and many to the top (Deyrup, 2004). However, in 2004, women still only received 92% of men's salaries. Deyrup claims this

is an insignificant gap, but it is a gap nonetheless. The gap in salaries proves that although affirmative actions have brought women very far, it is a continuing battle, even today, to promote unconditional equality.

The next battle lies in the organization's culture; gender discussion must become a major part of organizational culture. Doug Valentine (2003), in his article *Gender and Organizational Culture*, states, "It is important that the effective manager recognizes the complementary nature of male and female problem-solving styles and works to make certain the culture of the organization encourages different styles of problem solving" (p. 132).

There are many ways to promote an environment conducive to the success of both genders. Commitment to an organizational culture that fosters success begins at the top, with management. Managers must realize the benefits of both genders and gender characteristics in a workplace. Mandatory diversity training which pertains to cultural gender bias should be in place for all employees of an organization. Social constructs cannot be unlearned as easily and subtly as they were learned but understanding the importance of an organizational culture that avoids gender-role spillover and stereotyping is important. Diversity training can help with this.

In this profession, many people will be retiring over the next decade. These people, particularly the women, have been directly affected by affirmative action laws and have established themselves in roles of leadership (Deyrup, 2004). We must maintain the developments made by affirmative action. Therefore, hiring and promotion decisions should be made by a board of managers to minimize gender bias.

We have seen how legislation affected the growth of women managers over the years. At this point in time, the issue of gender bias must be moved into the organization's sphere where it can continue to grow in the right direction. Most importantly, both genders should be equally represented in the future. Just because men are in this, a "female's profession," does not mean they should be pushed aside in order for women to succeed.

*Bibliography*

ALA. (1999). Library directors: Gender and salary (1999). Retrieved November 30, 2007 from <http://www.ala.org/ala/hrdr/libraryem-presources/librarydirectors.cfm>

Deyrup, M. M. (2004). Is the revolution over? Gender, economics, and professional parity in academic library leadership positions. *College and Research Libraries*, 65(3), 242-250.

Greer, B. & Stephens, D. & Coleman, V. (2001). Cultural diversity and gender role spillover: A working perspective. *Journal of Library Administration*, 33(1/2), 125-140.

Kaufman, P. (1993). Library leadership: Does gender make a difference? In G.M. von Dran & J. Cargill (Eds.), *Catalysts for change: Managing libraries in the 1990s* (pp. 109-128). New York: Haworth Press, Inc.

Moran, B. (1985). The impact of affirmative action on academic libraries. *Library Trends*, 34, 199-217.

Piper, P.S. & Collamer, B.E. (2001) Male librarians: Men in a feminized profession. *Journal of Academic Librarianship*, 27(5), 406-411.

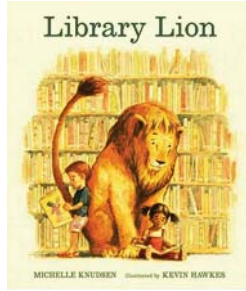
Tannen, D. (1995). The power of talk: Who gets heard and why. *Harvard Business Review*, 73(5), 138-148.

Valentine, D. (2003) Gender and organizational culture. *Library Administration & Management*, 17(3), 130-134.

Voelck, J. (2003). Directive and connective: Gender-based differences in the management styles of academic library managers. *Portal*, 3(3), 393-418.

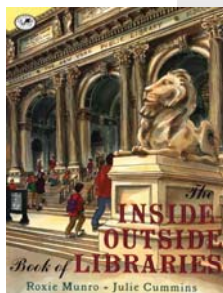


## SLIS Booklist



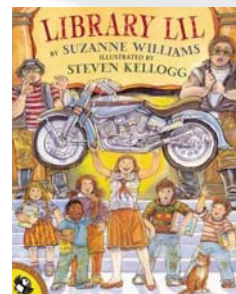
**KNUDSEN**, Michelle. *Library Lion*. illus. by Kevin Hawkes. unpagged. Candlewick Press, 2006. ISBN 076362262-1. \$11.55

**Gr Pre-2**—When a lion starts coming to the public library, patrons are very nervous at first. But they soon become used to this helpful creature, who uses his tails to dust the encyclopedias and lets children lean against him during story hour. The lion throws himself out of the library after he breaks the no-roaring rule, trying to get the attention of a librarian to help someone who has fallen. He is allowed to return, since he broke the rule for a very good reason. Librarians are likely to have mixed feelings about this book: it portrays a comfortable modern library, where patrons feel welcome and part of a community. The soft illustrations show people of all ages and ethnicities using books, resources and computers. The two featured librarians, however, are portrayed in the text as strict, rule-obsessed, and not very social or personable. The illustrations show librarian stereotypes—Mr. McBee in a bow tie, a sweater, and hitched up pants, and Miss Merriweather in a long skirt and matching jacket, flat shoes, and a bun; both have glasses. There is some character development, unusual for a picture book, on the part of the lion and both librarians. The story has a good pace and would be good to read aloud.



**CUMMINGS**, Julie. *The Inside-Outside Book of Libraries*. illus. by Roxie Munro. unpagged. Dutton Children's Books, 1996. ISBN 0-525-45608-2. \$7.99

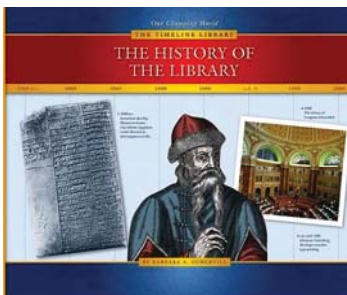
**Gr 3-6**—This non-fiction work discusses 13 different individual libraries or types of libraries. Several pages are devoted to each, and cover everything from the New York Public Library to the library aboard the U.S.S. Abraham Lincoln, from the one-room public library on Oracoke Island, North Carolina to the Berkeley Public Library Tool Lending Library in California. Other reviewers have placed this book's audience at a lower level, probably because about ninety percent of each page is devoted to illustration. However, the advanced sentence structure and vocabulary may make this a bit difficult for readers below 3rd or 4th grade levels. Though detailed and interesting, the illustrations do not add action or emotion to the story; the text is small and packed with information. An illustration for the Andrew Heiskell Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped includes a section in Braille (with translation provided); other descriptions of libraries and their communities give technical information—the U.S.S. Abraham Lincoln makes 185,000 gallons of fresh water every day—or other snippets of information—inmates who work in San Quentin's Folsom State Prison Library get their sentences reduced by one day for each day they work in the library—that readers are not likely to come across in other sources. This book would be good for high-interest low-level readers as old as late middle or early high school. A must-have for every library, and a must-read for all SLIS students!



**WILLIAMS**, Susan. *Library Lil*. illus. by Steven Kellogg. unpagged. Dial Books for Young Readers, 1997. ISBN 0-8037-1699-0. \$6.99

**Gr K-4**—Lil, an avid reader, grows up to become the librarian in a small town. Her hard work and passion help the citizens learn to love reading as well. When a group of tough bikers come to town and can't find a TV to watch because of Lil's successful book campaign, they go to see her, parking their motorcycles in the way of the bookmobile. They bet that Lil can't move the

bikes, but she is amazingly strong because of lifting so many heavy books. The bikers follow through and go into the library to read, where they quickly become just as excited about books as Lil and the rest of the town. Although not a very realistic story, this book does librarians the service of portraying someone outside the stereotype of “mousy little old ladies” (unpaged). Lil is given a true personality and a history. The illustrations, pencil, ink, and watercolors, are amazingly colorful and add real depth to the story - dark for the bikers, vibrant for Lil. Action and motion are clearly portrayed and give the story life. This book is recommended for all libraries.

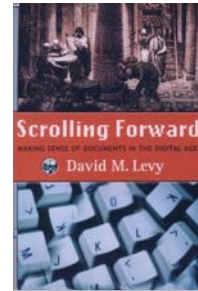


**SOMERVILL, Barbara A. *The History of the Library*.** 32p. The Child's World, 2006. ISBN 1-59296-438-9. \$27.07

**Gr 5-8**—This nonfiction work covers the early development of libraries, including the Library of Alexandria, early public libraries in America, and the Library of Congress, and discusses the future of libraries, mentioning several digital libraries. At the bottom of each page is a timeline of the events discussed on the page; each library event is paired with a non-library milestone, supposedly to generate interest and encourage the reader to go to the library to learn more about these events. This book is most appropriate for older grade school to middle school students: the sentence structure is simple, but the vocabulary is fairly advanced, and the book is very text-heavy, with some pages having no pictures at all. Although it looks like a picture book, it is not. Also, the parallel events mentioned (the illustrations are often for the parallel event, not for the library event discussed) touch on topics more appropriate for older readers: Theodosius' declaration of Christianity as “the only acceptable religion” (pg. 13), the founding of the American Anti-Slavery Society, the sinking of the Titanic, World War I, the Great Depression, the desegregation of schools, and the tearing down of the Berlin Wall all make appear-

ances. There is a glossary of a few terms in the back of the book, along with further reading suggestions and web links. This book is recommended as a primary purchase.

- Sarah Morrison



**LEVY, David M. *Scrolling Forward, Making Sense of Documents in the Digital Age*.** 212p. Arcade Publishing, 2001. ISBN 1-55970-553-1. Herman B Wells Library Call Number: P 214 .L48 2001. \$13.95

The debate over the status of documents in the digital age has been raging now for decades. David M. Levy takes up the both sides of the argument in an intelligent yet accessible exploration and analysis of the status of documents in *Scrolling Forward, Making Sense of Documents in the Digital Age*. Levy approaches the debate with a strong grounding in philosophy and history yet with an Arnold Lobel Frog and Toad sensibility. While Levy's book deserves to be read cover to cover, I'll provide just a few highlights here.

Levy's intimate relationship with documents becomes immediately apparent in his opening chapter, “Meditation on a Receipt.” He comes to the heart of the matter, however, in the second chapter “What is a document?” Levy focuses the argument to a fine point and then expands his definition with the introduction of Bruno Latour and Sylvie Briet. Through this contraction and expansion of argument, Levy ultimately arrives at the conclusion that documents as representational artifacts can only be understood in contextual terms. Despite a somewhat weighty argument, Levy's comfortable writing style and pointedly off-hand remarks (such as “Few documents actually go beserk (29)”), makes for an engaging reading experience.

A probing evaluation of documental authority across formats leads us to the more disturbing chapter “The Dark Side of Documents.” Beginning with an excerpt

from Terry Gilliam's film *Brazil* (1985) and drawing on his own anecdotal experience with the IRS, Levy uses the opportunity to explore the social effects of bureaucratic logic as facilitated through documentation. This disquieting exploration is placed in relief by the following chapter "Reach Out and Touch Someone," where Levy explores the infusion of meaning through the circumstances of creation and reception.

The next chapter, "Reading and Attention," is for those of us nostalgic for the days when books were read cover to cover. He brings the discussion to a debate of religious proportions between technophiles and bibliophiles where there is a tendency to stress the differences between reading for the experience of it and reading for information. Breaking new ground, Levy suggests that it is actually a matter of understanding what we want to preserve – the book as cultural icon, or a mode of reading.

Any librarian will be familiar with the discussion in "Libraries and the Anxiety of Order." Levy immerses the reader in a light-hearted discussion ranging from his experience at Saks 5th Avenue, to Geoffrey Bowker, to ancient library catalogs, history of the library, Melvil Dewey and his neurosis for order, and the messy-desk syndrome. The wide-ranging discussion blends together to underscore our societal urge to lend order to digital materials.

With a firm understanding of the history of the library now in hand, Levy continues the discussion with "A Bit of Digital History." Attempting to discover the essence of digital documents, Levy arrives at the conclusion that "digital materials are made up of both the digital

representation and the perceptible forms produced from it (138);" a seemingly harmless observation, but certainly profound in light of the common emphasis on the ephemeral quality of digital documents.

The final three chapters are closely tied together and should be read as such. He begins with an exploration of the relevance of trust, reliability, and quality in the application of meaning and the status of document to digital materials in "An Immense Effort." "Search for Stable Ground" examines our psychological need for stability with an existentialist slant and the concept of lack. The final chapter shares its title with the book *Without* giving away Levy's final conclusions, it is perhaps best to use his own words to summarize the direction of the chapter and of the book as a whole: "We make a mistake, I believe, when we fixate on particular forms and technologies, taking them, in and of themselves, to be the carriers of what we want either to embrace or resist. Not only do we fail to see the forms and technologies in their full complexity, but we use them, in their symbolic simplicity, as blunt instruments with which to beat one another over the head (198)."

Levy's enlightened take on the status of documents brings the argument to new heights. Most remarkable is the ease with which Levy breaks traditional concepts apart, replacing them with socially introspective questioning. He writes in a manner with a wide range of appeal, making his book of interest to archivists, documentalists, computer scientists, social scientists, and librarians alike.

- Lisa Hooper

## Jurors and Information Literacy: Examining the "CSI Effect"

**Karen McEwen**

Over the past four years a number of articles in popular media and law journals have addressed an issue known as the CSI Effect. The term is based on the television show *CSI* and its spinoffs, which are reportedly watched by sixty three million viewers (Mardis, 2006). The CSI Effect is defined as the conflict between the legal reality and fictionalized interpretation of forensic evidence as demonstrated in television crime dramas (Ramsland, 2006).

*U.S. News and World Report* examined the issue as its

cover story in 2005, noting that the expectations of jurors are heightened by the special effects seen on the show (Roane, 2005). *USA Today* reported on the level of importance juries attach to forensic evidence while demonstrating difficulty correctly applying the information (Willing, 2004). *The Yale Law Journal* debated whether or not interest in the subject helps or hinders prosecutions (Tyler, 2006).

Without knowing it, all three reports identified facets of an information literacy issue. Four of the standards

of information literacy presented by the Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL) relate to evaluating and using information and sources (American Library Association, 2008). Responding to the issue from an information literacy perspective are *The C.S.I Effect, Teaching to Avoid the "CSI Effect"* and *It's Not Just Whodunnit, but How: "The CSI Effect,"* Science Learning and the School Library.

Written for adults, *The C.S.I Effect* cross-references episodes from the CSI television series and real-life forensic science. In clear, easy to understand language, this book includes examples and explanations of interview and profiling techniques, crime reenactments, age – progression computer software, toxicology and psychology.

The article *Teaching to Avoid the "CSI Effect" Library* suggests four methods to refocus students on analysis while using the theme from the show to stimulate an interest in science at the undergraduate and graduate levels. Examples of projects that reinforce information literacy include projects where students have to analyze the quality of evidence in context with the case, projects where students have to prove a party innocent rather than guilty, projects where the evidence is tainted, inconsistent or paradoxical and projects to introduce resource management in terms of database use. This last example in particular relates well to the educational goals of a college or university library.

The last article *It's Not Just Whodunnit, but How: "The CSI Effect,"* Science Learning and the School Library discusses ways to connect school library resources with science curriculum. One of the questions addressed is the age appropriateness of the CSI shows. Educational and scientific toys relating to forensic science are marketed to children ages five to eighteen. A keyword search of CSI under toys on amazon.com led to twenty-eight hits. Toys included a CSI facial reconstruction kit, CSI forensic lab and a Discovery Exclusive DNA Explorer kit, among others (Amazon.com, 2008). This demonstrates potential ways to use or introduce this material in an age-appropriate manner.

The author also recommends several ways to involve the library with science curriculums. Some examples include identifying specimens and finding related research articles about crime, comparing and analyzing crime statistics and accessing digital science libraries to

learn about cutting-edge new scientific developments. Recommended websites for these activities include: [www.teachersdomain.org](http://www.teachersdomain.org), <http://michiganteacher.net> and [www.biosciencednet.org](http://www.biosciencednet.org) (Mardis, 2006).

In closing, nothing was found to address the information issue in a public library. But certainly many of the descriptions above would work for a public library.

*Bibliography*

Amazon.com, Inc. (2008). *Home page*. Retrieved March 1, 2008, from [http://www.amazon.com/s/ref=nb\\_ss\\_t/103-9958716-9951863?url=search-alias%3Dtoys-and-games&field-keywords=csi](http://www.amazon.com/s/ref=nb_ss_t/103-9958716-9951863?url=search-alias%3Dtoys-and-games&field-keywords=csi)

American Library Association Association of College & Research Libraries. (2008). *Information literacy competency standards for higher education*. Retrieved March 1, 2008, from <http://www.ala.org/ala/acrl/acrlstandards/informationliteracycompetency.cfm#ildef>

Bergslien, E. (2006). *Teaching to avoid the "CSI Effect"*. *Journal of Chemical Education* , 83(5), 690-691.

Mardis, M. (2006). "The CSI Effect," It's Not Just hodunnit, but HOW. *Knowledge Quest* , 35(1), 13-35.

Ramsland, K. (2006). *The C.S.I. Effect*. New York: Berkley Boulevard Books.

Roane, K. (2005, April 25). The CSI Effect. *U.S. News & World Report* , 48-54.

Tyler, T. (2006). Viewing CSI and the threshold of guilt: Managing truth and justice in reality and fiction. *The Yale Law Journal* , 115(5), 1050-1086.

Willing, R. (2004, August 5). "CSI Effect" has juries wanting more evidence. *USA Today* , pp. 1A.



**Many thanks to this issue's contributors!**

Virginia Vought, Editor  
 Bill McMillin, Layout and Design  
 Brooke Bolton, Lisa Hooper, Karen McEwen, and  
 Sarah Morrison, Writers

