PERSONALIZING PROFESSIONALISM: THE PROFESSIONAL IDENTITY EXPERIENCES OF LIS GRADUATES IN NON-LIBRARY ROLES

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Abstract

The job market for graduates of Library and Information Science (LIS) programs is changing. "Traditional" roles in libraries and archives are reported to be disappearing while LIS programs point to a new range of opportunities for their graduates in a wide variety of roles and industry sectors. What does this transition to new types of work – including roles in different work settings and different job titles – mean for LIS graduates? What are the implications for their professional identities? What are the implications for the future of the LIS community as LIS graduates transition into roles that could once have be considered alternative, non-traditional, uncommon or unusual but may become the norm?

This research project explores these topics by asking the question of "How do library and information science (LIS) graduates in non-library roles experience professional identity?" Professional identity is the identity that an individual builds around their work or professional life. In essence it is the response to the question "Who am I as a professional?"

The professional identities of LIS graduates working outside of libraries in alternative, non-library roles have not been examined before. There is little work exploring the experiences of this population in general, leaving a large research gap. Filling this gap will benefit the LIS community by providing it with information that could assist LIS graduates attempting to transition to these types of roles, LIS educators and program administrators building courses to prepare their graduates for the employment market, and LIS professional associations attempting to connect with and meet the professional needs of the LIS community.

This project utilizes the Grounded Theory methodology. Grounded Theory is an inductive research methodology that was designed to produce a new theory which is "grounded" in data. Key characteristics of a Grounded Theory study include theoretical sampling and constant comparison. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews with graduates of Master's programs in library and information science working in Canada and the United States.

The objective of this study was to produce a theory which would capture the professional identity experiences of LIS graduates in non-library roles. The theory produced was labelled the theory of Personalizing Professionalism. According to this theory, individuals possess two identities which interact with each other throughout one's career. The first is an internal appraisal of self which represents an individual's assessment of who they "really" are as a professional. The second is an externally expressed identity, which represents who that individual presents him or herself to be. The internal appraisal of self is developed as a result of several processes and concepts including socialization into the profession, interactions with others, perceptions of the profession, and an understanding of one's motivations and interests. The externally expressed identity represents the ways in which individuals present themselves to others in order to achieve professional or personal roles. These expressions include the labels that are used when introducing oneself to others and the strategies that one develops to find one's path within the profession such as identifying success strategies.

Interactions with others impact individuals' internal appraisal of self and externally expressed identity and represent an area of potential conflict when others' views of how a professional identity should be expressed do not match the identity that a professional has developed for themselves or is displaying to others. There are multiple strategies that can be undertaken to respond to a perceived conflict between these two identities which can be grouped into three categories: (1) Assimilation, in which participants change themselves in order to fit into the communities with whom they wish to engage, (2) influencing or attempting to change the perceptions or beliefs of the group, and (3) withdrawal, in which individuals elect only to associate

with communities of likeminded individuals and to avoid those who do not share

their perceptions of the profession.

The findings of this study may prove useful to other professions whose

graduates are considering transitions away from "traditional" job opportunities such

as teachers, nurses, health care professionals, and engineers. Understanding how

people experience professional identity in general is beneficial to educators and

employers who link the socialization of employees into their professional or

organizational cultures with desirable outcomes such as increased commitment and

higher retention rates. In addition, this project may expand research in the areas of

identity and career development.

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List of Abbreviations

ALA – American Library Association

CGT – Classic Grounded Theory

CLA – Canadian Library Association

GT – Grounded Theory

IM – Information Management

KM – Knowledge Management

LIS – Library and Information Science

MLIS – Master of Library and Information Science

SIT – Social Identity Theory

Statement of Original Authorship

The work contained in this thesis has not been previously submitted to meet requirements for an award at this or any other higher education institution. To the best of my knowledge and belief, the thesis contains no material previously published or written by another person except where due reference is made.

Signature: QUT Verified Signature

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Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1   Introduction

This introductory chapter provides an overview of the research problem explored in this project and the context that inspired that question. It begins with a general description of the trends in the LIS job market that have been reported in the LIS practitioner and research literature that inspired the research question. This is followed by a brief description of the context of the research question which describes how this project may be of interest to researchers and practitioners outside of the LIS community. Next, the specific research question is outlined and the research design utilized in this project is summarized.

1.2   Context

The LIS profession is undergoing a time of transition. Positions for LIS graduates in "traditional" library-based settings are becoming increasingly rare (Demers et al., 2014; Clark, 2013; Szkolar, 2012; Fialkoff, 2009; Stronski, 2004) and as one of my participants has stated, these "traditional" positions are changing:

> So even people who work in a more traditional library have to be ready for new things and to be able to take on things that, you know, 10 years ago might have been considered non-traditional. So I think there's a lot more need for creative thinking and for flexibility and for being open to new ideas even if you're in a traditional career. (Interview 16)

Several factors have contributed to this transformation in terms of both the types of work that librarians do and how they do it. The first of these is the emergence of a range of information technologies that allow for dramatic increases in the amount of information available to the average citizen. A report on trends impacting public libraries in Canada between the period of 2000 and 2009 reported that:

> Much of this increase in transactions was driven by digital information. For example, use of electronic databases (library Internet subscriptions or stand-alone or networked CD-ROM databases) more than doubled, and Internet visits to library websites and catalogues grew five-fold in the period. (Lumos Research, 2011, p. 2)

The impact of information technologies on library planning and performance is echoed by the American Library Association (ALA), the accrediting body for North American library schools includes information technology as a major factor in its 2014 trends report:

> Information technology: Fast moving and disruptive. Information technology is a driving force of today's network revolution, impacting the way we access, share and use information, as well as the ways we do business and live our lives. Information technology trends have impacts across many sectors – including libraries, the environment, education, and work. High-profile topics include the mobile internet, cloud computing, the Internet of Things, big data, 3D printing, algorithms, and robotics. Advancements in human computer interaction, new network architectures, and developments in artificial intelligence (AI), as well as security concerns have implications for how people will interact with information in the future. (American Library Association, 2014, p. 2)

There is a perception that traditional LIS jobs are disappearing as a result of changes in today's information environment. These traditional jobs include librarian positions in academic, public, school, and special library settings. This perception is supported by several sources including studies suggesting that there are fewer job

opportunities available (Stronski, 2004) and observations that there is significant

competition for available opportunities, particularly at the entry-level (Clark, 2013).

In 2004, Stronski observed a decline in the number of positions for special librarians

(p. 50). In 2009, Fialkoff reported that there were 12.5% fewer jobs in public

libraries than in 2007 and that overall salary levels had decreased (Fialkoff, 2009, p.

8). A 2011 study reported that the average search time for entry-level LIS jobs was

more than five months (Clark, 2013, p. 472) and in the same year a Forbes online

article described the Master in Library Sciences degree as one of the worst degrees

that a student could take in terms of post-graduation job prospects (Szkolar, 2012).

A recent report from the Royal Society of Canada examining the present state and

forecasting the future of Canada's libraries and archives reported some challenges

that have been faced by several types of libraries. In reporting on the state of

government libraries the report shared results obtained by the Canadian Library

Association (CLA):

> CLA (using data from the Library of Parliament Office of the
> Parliamentary Budget Officer) developed a chart showing the annual
> numbers of Library Science (LS) positions in the GoC [Government of
> Canada] from 1990 to 2012. The chart shows a decline of 29% overall
> for librarians for the period, with a drop at LAC [Libraries and
> Archives Canada] of 60%. Senior positions (LS4s and LS5 are often
> managers) show a larger decline (48% overall, with a precipitous drop
> at LAC of 80%). However, it is not known whether LAC changed the
> classifications so there could be library professionals in new or other
> classifications. (Demers et al., 2014, p. 145)

This quote describes how the Government of Canada library community was

impacted by a series of budgetary decisions, largely undertaken as a part of a

government-wide deficit reduction action plan enacted by the Government of Canada

starting in 2010, but also as a result of individual departmental cost cutting

initiatives. Government libraries, like all types of libraries, are negatively impacted

by budget reductions as they may be viewed as cost centres whose value to the

organization is not fully appreciated by those who allocate funds.

The changes in technology are leading to shifting perceptions in how

librarians should work and the role that libraries should play within society at large

or within the context of other organizations such as governments or universities.

Kennan, Willard and Wilson (2006) described the state of librarianship as follows:

> While librarianship is not the only profession grappling with dramatic
> changes brought about by technology and resultant workplace change,
> it is one of the few professions suffering the appearance of a decline,
> with a great deal of questioning from within as well as externally about
> the ongoing need for, or viability of, the profession (p. 35).

At the same time that reductions in traditional job opportunities are being

reported and staff in traditional work environments such as libraries and archives are

being cut, there is optimism about the future for LIS graduates with authors

highlighting the myriad opportunities available to LIS graduates in the information

economy (Fagerheim, 1999; Hovendick, 2009). In their 2013 report on career trends

for information professionals, which involved a review of over 450 job listings, San

José State University (SJSU) found that 72% of the jobs were categorized as

traditional librarian jobs and 28% of these were defined as emerging. Traditional

jobs included roles in readers' advisory and reference, collections development and

management, library promotion, and information literacy instruction. Emerging jobs

were defined as "new types of positions that have appeared on the employment scene

in recent years…[and were grouped] into six categories – jobs involving virtual

services, outreach, electronic resources, metadata, information systems, and

emerging technologies" (San José State University, 2013, p. 25). In SJSU's 2015 career report, this job type breakdown showed a further shift toward evolving and emerging roles, with 38% of jobs defined as traditional, which the report defined as "Jobs which primarily require skills such as cataloguing, reference desk services, collection management, circulation services, etc." (San José State University, 2015, p. 10), 25% of the jobs defined as evolving traditional – "Jobs which require a combination of more traditional skills and emerging skills" (San José State University, 2015, p. 10), and 37% of jobs defined as emerging – "Jobs which mainly require emerging skills" San José State University, 2015, p. 10).

Library schools are increasingly marketing their programs as providing students with transferable competencies that will allow graduates to obtain employment in a wide variety of industry sectors and job types. LIS graduates are operating in an environment in which continual learning, flexibility, and the ability to identify and leverage transferable competencies are required in order to build and maintain a career. The San José State University MLIS brochure, for example, states:

> Our alumni are putting their Master of Library and Information Science (MLIS) degrees to work at medical facilities, law firms, libraries, high-tech companies, universities, government agencies, K-12 schools, corporate information centers, non-profit organizations, and more. Their business cards carry titles such as Digital Asset Manager, Content Specialist, Metadata Librarian, Digital Archivist, Taxonomy Manager, Teacher, and Web Technologist – just a sampling of the myriad professional positions you can hold with an MLIS degree. (San José State University, 2014, p. 2)

Queensland University of Technology (QUT) also lists a range of job opportunities for graduates on their Master of Information Science website including Data

Communications Specialist, Database Manager, Health Information Manager, Information Officer, Internet Professional, Learning Support Specialist, Librarian, and Web Designer (Queensland University of Technology, 2015). This suggests that library programs beyond North America are also promoting the transferability of the skills and knowledge acquired in their programs.

LIS graduates in non-library roles should be of interest to LIS educators because these types of roles might represent growing employment opportunities for LIS graduates and understanding the professional identities of individuals employed in these types of roles might help educators to prepare students for these types of roles.

1.3   Research Problem

Job opportunities for library and information science graduates are expanding beyond libraries. These opportunities include roles which were created by new technologies and did not exist in the past, as well as jobs that have not been pursued by many other LIS graduates. The lack of research on this population of LIS graduates may create challenges for those seeking to assist LIS students or graduates in exploring non-library job opportunities, LIS students or professionals considering career changes to roles outside libraries that still utilize their skills, and LIS professional associations trying to develop programming that will appeal to current or potential members who are working in different types of roles than their past members. This study attempts to fill this gap for the LIS profession by providing insight into this population of LIS graduates but also to make a contribution to the

body of research available on professional identity by exploring the identity experiences of those experiencing boundaryless careers.

"Professional identity" provides fertile ground for research and has been studied across disciplines. A Web of Science search was conducted on "professional identity" to illustrate the general trends and range of publications available on this subject. This was not the only research database used over the course of this study to identify articles on professional identity, but this database's ability to organize results into clusters based on category (a subject list developed by the database), research area, author, document type, source titles, countries/territories, and other criteria. A search for the term "professional identity" in this database yielded over 5,000 articles. These results were then filtered by research area and the articles in the research areas of psychology, sociology and information science were selected for closer examination. The psychology and sociology articles were examined because these are the disciplines from which identity theories tend to originate. The information science research area was selected this category included librarianship as well as information science. Publications included in this category included the *European Journal of Information* Systems, *Library* Trends, *Canadian Journal of Information and Library Science*, *Journal of Documentation*, *MIS Quarterly*, *Journal of Academic Librarianship*, *Library Information Science Research*, *Information and Organization*, *Information Management*, *Journal of Strategic Information Systems*, and *Information Management*. The 399 articles derived from this filtered search were further explored using the "Analyze" feature of the database to determine which groups or populations were the subjects of this research. The table below (Table 1) provides an overview of the results of this high-level bibliographic

information analysis. In particular it depicts which populations were the focus of
these articles.

TABLE 1: Populations studied in professional identity articles

Group	Number of Articles
Psychiatrists, psychologists, psychoanalysts and counselors	124
Librarians and information professionals	56
General / Undefined Groups (the general population, members of online communities or contributions to theory and research methods)	38
Doctors and other healthcare professionals	33
Teachers	25
Employees and/or work organizations	24
Scientists, academics and university faculty	14
Youth, adolescents and students	12
Social workers and other social welfare professionals	9
Individuals engaged in non-traditional professions for their gender (both men and women)	8
Information technology (IT) professional	6
Members of the LGBTQ community	6
Managers and supervisors	5
Judges, lawyers and the judicial system	5
Knowledge workers	4
Nurses	4

Farmers	4
Elderly individuals	3
Sociologists	3
Writers, playwrights and TV/Film directors	3
Call Centre employees	2
Police	2
People with disabilities	1
Retired people	1
Professional athletes	1
Museum curators	1
Engineers	1
Religious Professionals	1

It must be noted that 105 articles from the results found on Web of Science were categorized as focusing on the library and information science research area, but only 56 of these results applied to the LIS profession while the remaining 49 applied to other populations. These 49 articles focused largely on the impact of information and communications technologies on the professional identities or professional practices of other populations ranging from citizens in general to managers in corporate enterprises to healthcare professionals. Because this category included both librarianship and information science, some of the articles included in the search results focused on the professional identities of information technology professionals with computer science backgrounds and some of information technology professionals with information science backgrounds..

The following table (Table 2) provides an overview of the topics covered in the articles on LIS professional identity found in this Web of Science search. It should be noted that this search included both academic and practitioner focused publications. For the sake of this example, librarians and LIS professionals were separated into two separate categories. "Librarians" refer specifically to individuals working in librarian roles in library settings, especially public and academic libraries. The "LIS Professionals" category includes articles about professional development and identity that are not specifically associated with the library work environment. This includes articles about professional life that are written for "information professionals", information managers, and knowledge managers.

TABLE 2: Topics discussed in LIS professional identity articles

Category	Topics	Number of Articles
Librarian professional identity	- How librarians see themselves in relation to the Librarian 2.0 paradigm - The experiences of Generation X librarians - Representations of librarianship in the media - Librarian participation in non-library associations - Calls to rethink the librarian professional identity	8
LIS professional identities	- Expressions of professional identity and contributions to the profession - Personal marketing for career development - The professional identities of independent	6

	information professionals	
	• Historical perspectives of the LIS profession	
	• Ethics and the LIS profession	
Collaboration and communities of practice	• Use of online forums, listservs or other collaborative tools by LIS professionals • Collaborative initiatives between various types of information organizations such as libraries, archives and museums	4
LIS skills	• The presence of certain skill requirements in position announcements • Boundary spanning competencies	2
Professional activities	• New tasks undertaken by LIS professionals • The impact of technology on LIS professions	11
Librarians as teachers	• The experiences of librarians in incorporating teaching skills and roles into their professional identities	6
LIS education and professional development	• Educational trajectories of LIS students • LIS education in various countries • The continuing professional education role of professional associations • Perceptions of LIS programs in the academic world	8
The identities of libraries and archives	• The future of library spaces • The impact of libraries and archives on culture	6

as institutions	and politics	
	• Library advocacy and marketing	
Foucault's analysis and the LIS profession	• Analysis of an LIS workforce survey	2
	• Exploring information systems as a discipline	
Other	• Improving information access through metadata	3
	• Parallels between metadata and professional relevance	
	• Knowledge life cycles	

This analysis of articles from Web of Science does not represent an exhaustive exploration of all of the literature available on professional identity either particular to the LIS profession or in general, but does provide some insights into some of the trends in the research. It also provides some clues into the aspects of professional identity that are being explored. These include particular individuals' perceptions of their professional identities, portrayals of professionals in the media, skills and competencies, education and professional development, and power or status and professions. No articles were found in this result set that specifically address non-traditional roles. This suggested a gap in literature on professional identity and non-traditional roles within the library and information science discipline.

To understand what is considered a "non-traditional role", a second search was conducted on "Web of Science" for articles containing the keyword "non-traditional". A set of 160 articles on this topic were found. This set of results could

be divided into two major categories: (1) non-traditional activities undertaken by organizations or group actors such as countries and (2) participation in non-traditional roles by individuals.

The first group of articles took non-traditional as meaning a new or emerging approach that represents a break from tradition. The two main groups examined were countries and employment organizations. On the country level, the articles examined topics such as industry reform in various sectors such as agriculture and higher education, new approaches to trade and foreign direct investment including export reforms, non-traditional energy sources, non-traditional security threats, and the impact of information and communication technologies on the spread of ideas in countries in general or in the federal public service in particular.

The topic of the impact of information and communication technologies was also a major theme in articles about non-traditional trends or activities in commercial organizations. The other major themes in this set of articles included non-traditional work arrangements such as telework and flexible work hours, and the management of non-traditional employees with a focus on their job satisfaction and career trajectory. These non-traditional employees were most often identified based on characteristics such as gender or minority group status, but were also sometimes identified based on their work role, for example the involvement of workplace chaplains or labour representatives in activities in which they were not traditionally involved.

There was a substantial group of articles that focused on students and academic success. These articles were largely focused on academic success and

post-graduation career trajectories of non-traditional students. These non-traditional students were variously defined as female students in non-traditional (i.e. male dominated) programs, students from visible minority groups such as African Americans, older students or adult learners, and students from working-class backgrounds including first generation university attendees. These articles examined the impact of early academic failure on students' completion rates, how they transitioned into the university environment and constructed learning identities, the degree to which they were able to participate in university communities, their motivation and academic success, how likely they were to seek help, and their post-graduation career development and employment choices.

The vast majority of the articles found in this search focused on gender, non-traditional gender roles, and participation in activities not traditionally associated with one's gender. As mentioned above, this included participation in programs of study traditionally dominated by the other gender, non-traditional roles in family life (working moms and stay-at-home dads or dual income families), and employment in non-traditional roles based on gender. Twice as many articles were found about women's involvement in non-traditional roles than men's. The articles about men's participation in non-traditional careers focused mainly on the profession of nursing. The articles about women in non-traditional roles included articles on the emergency services, firefighting, security roles such as bouncers, engineering, blue-collar workers, corrections, the building trades, the transportation industry, and white-collar roles (particularly leadership and management positions). Considering the greater number of career opportunities that have been traditionally dominated by men and the number of women who now participate in the workforce, it is not surprising that

this topic has dominated the research on non-traditional careers. There were a few articles about other groups and non-traditional employment roles. For example, there was one article about perceived career barriers for gay, lesbian and bisexual individuals, one about minority group job search behaviour, and one about Indian career and non-career women. These, however, represented a small number of the results in this search. Non-traditional career opportunities based on one's disciplinary background were less commonly discussed but not completely absent from the results. One article about the role of social workers in health care environments was located.

There were some articles from the LIS discipline included in these results and these articles were examined in particular detail. Fourteen of the articles located in the "Web of Science" search were from the library and information science discipline and the majority of these followed the organization-centric articles' pattern of exploring new or emerging ways of working with topics such as partnership building, instructional techniques, the management and promotion of different types of information objects such as grey literature and electronic libraries, and the information seeking behaviour of different audiences. A small number of the articles located in this search, however, did address employment issues and will be discussed in the following paragraphs.

The first of these was "Alternative careers for graduates of LIS schools: The North American perspective – an analysis of the literature" by Terry L. Weech and Alison M. Konieczny (2007). This article presented a literature review of articles examining whether LIS graduates are finding alternative careers. The authors

presented a definition of alternative careers for LIS graduates and described two categories of articles concerning LIS alternative careers: anecdotal accounts of the experiences of LIS graduates in alternative careers and tracer studies in which LIS graduates are surveyed about their field of employment.

The second employment-focused article from this set was "Librarians, Information, and the Non-Traditional Job Market" by J. Duffy, B. Raymond and R. Apostle (1989). This article examined the ways in which the term "information" is used in job advertisements. The authors found low employment rates of MLS graduates in information jobs, but does not explore the causes of these low employment rates.

Taken together, these articles provide a good representation of what has been written on alternative or non-traditional careers for LIS graduates. Several researchers have theorized about what these opportunities for LIS graduates may be either through examinations of job postings or discussions of LIS competencies. Many authors have surveyed LIS graduates about the types of careers they have pursued. There are many descriptions of different aspects of LIS professional identities and stereotypes both from insider (LIS) and outsider perspectives (including examinations of representations of librarians in popular culture). There is, however, a gap in the literature concerning the professional identities of LIS graduates who pursue alternative or non-traditional careers. This brief exploration of Web of Science illustrates a gap in the literature that will be partially filled by this study.

The purpose of this study is to explore how library and information science graduates in non-library roles experience professional identity in order to develop a substantive theory that may be used to conceptualize the experiences of workers in other fields. This population was selected because of the increased focus by LIS educators on career opportunities for graduates outside of libraries and also because of the fact that individuals in this group may provide an interesting case study of how multiple professional identities interact. The outcomes of this study should provide actionable data for practitioners and contribute to several bodies of research literature through addressing the gaps in the literature described above.

Research Question

How do library and information science (LIS) graduates working in non-library roles experience professional identity?

1.5   Research Design

This project utilizes the Classic Grounded Theory methodology. Grounded Theory is an inductive research methodology that was designed to develop a new theory that is grounded in data collected from the real world rather than testing a hypothesis that is derived from the literature or existing theories. It is based on the belief that using induction will lead to the creation of theories that better fit the real world experiences of participants (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). Key characteristics of a Grounded Theory study include theoretical sampling and constant comparison. Theoretical sampling requires the researcher to continue sampling until no new data

are found in any of their coding categories. This is different from most sampling procedures in which the sample size is predetermined. Constant comparison requires that data collection and analysis take place at the same time, with the results of the analysis influencing further data collection (Glaser, 2009, 2012).

Participants in this study included graduates from Masters of Library and Information Science programs working in a variety of non-library roles. These roles included information management positions in the public and private sectors, library vendor positions, policy analyst positions, and marketing roles. They work in cities across Canada and the United States and were identified through snowball sampling. Twenty participants were interviewed in this study in semi-structured interviews that lasted from approximately 30 to 90 minutes.

The Classic Grounded Theory methodology was selected with the objective of developing a theory that to conceptually address how participants resolve their main concerns rather than focusing on an aspect of the experience of professional identity that is preconceived by the researcher – taking an inductive approach to the research problem. This methodology requires that researchers maintain theoretical sensitivity to allow for new theories to emerge directly through data.

1.6   Substantive Theory

The objective of this study was to produce a theory which would capture the professional identity experiences of LIS graduates in non-library roles. The theory

produced was labelled the theory of Personalizing Professionalism. According to this theory, individuals possess two identities which interact with each other throughout one's career. The first is an internal appraisal of self which represents an individual's assessment of who they "really" are as a professional. The second is an externally expressed identity, which represents who that individual presents him or herself to be. The internal appraisal of self is developed as a result of several processes and concepts including socialization into the profession, interactions with others, perceptions of the profession, and an understanding of one's motivations and interests. The externally expressed identity represents the ways in which individuals present themselves to others in order to achieve professional or personal roles. These expressions include the labels that are used when introducing oneself to others and the strategies that one develops to find one's path within the profession such as identifying success strategies. Interactions with others impact individuals' internal appraisal of self and externally expressed identity and represent an area of potential conflict when others' views of how a professional identity should be expressed do not match the identity that one has developed for themselves or is displaying to others. Participants exhibited multiple strategies to respond to a perceived conflict between these two identities which can be grouped into three categories: (1) Assimilation, in which participants change themselves in order to fit into the communities with whom they wish to engage, (2) influencing or attempting to change the perceptions or beliefs of the group, and (3) withdrawal, in which individuals elect only to associate with communities of likeminded individuals and to avoid those who do not share their perceptions of the profession.

1.7   Significance of the Study

Why undertake this study with this population at this time? The earlier sections of this chapter discussed why the timing was right to conduct a study on the experiences of LIS graduates in non-library roles. Understanding the experiences of this population of graduates will have significance to practitioner and research communities both inside and outside of the LIS profession. It provides data that can assist LIS professionals in their personal professional development either independently or through LIS schools or professional associations.   It will benefit the LIS research community by opening up the exploration of a group of professionals who have received little research attention. It will also continue the tradition of multi-disciplinary research in LIS by examining phenomena which are normally examined in the disciplines of sociology, management, and psychology.

This study may also serve as a conversation starter for the community of LIS graduates working in non-library roles. Being an LIS graduate working outside of a library can be an isolating experience. I have personally had this experience and understand that it can be create challenges in interacting with the library community. While many librarians are interested in hearing what their peers are doing outside of libraries it can be a challenge for people in these roles to find the support that they need in order to grow and succeed. In the past there have been few conference and professional development opportunities that are applicable to these types of roles because LIS conferences and associations have tended to focus on the needs of librarians in library work places. LIS graduates working in these types of roles are often either the only LIS graduate in their workplace or the only person in their

workplace engage in a particular type of work. Finding others who can provide advice may be challenging for individuals in this situation. The lack of exposure to the experiences of people in non-library roles in some LIS programs, conference proceedings, and LIS research and practitioner literature may also contribute to a sense of isolation among members of this community. Learning that there are potentially a large number of other LIS graduates who are working in non-library roles may be inspiring or even comforting to members of this community.

In addition to benefiting LIS graduates in non-library roles, this research may benefit the larger LIS community. The lack of research focusing on this population of LIS graduates means that a voice is missing in the LIS literature and that voice may have an important message for the larger LIS community. Working in a variety of settings and having to compete against job applicants with a wide variety of backgrounds encourages LIS graduates in non-library roles to understand and express the value of their skills, competences, and experiences to a variety of communities. The advice and strategies that they can provide can help LIS professionals in all roles to promote themselves and the work that they do, whether they do that work in a library or outside of a library setting.

The results may be transferable to other professional communities such as engineers, nurses, or teachers. This research transects several areas of research: non-traditional or alternative careers, career planning and decision making, the experiences of individuals pursuing second or multiple careers, and professional identity. This study may expand several existing theories through its interdisciplinary approach and qualitative data.

1.8   Key Concepts

The following section provides definitions of several key concepts of relevance to this project. These definitions are provided to clarify how these concepts have been interpreted and understood.

1.8.1   Grounded Theory

Grounded Theory is an inductive research methodology that was designed to produce a new theory which is "grounded" in data. Key characteristics of a Grounded Theory study include theoretical sampling and constant comparison. Theoretical sampling requires the researcher to continue sampling until no new data are found in any of their coding categories. This is different from most sampling procedures in which the sample size is predetermined. Constant comparison requires that data collection and analysis take place at the same time, with the results of the analysis influencing further data collection.

1.8.2   Identity

Identity is an aspect or sub-topic of the broader concept of "self".   An identity can be described as an organizational component of a person's self which is tied to a social structure. Since individuals can be tied to many social structures or parts of a single social structure, each individual may have multiple identities (Stets & Burke, 2003). The broadest definitions of identity describe this construct as the

way in which an individual responds to the question "Who am I" or describes his or her "sense of self" (Billot, 2010).

1.8.3 Interpretivism

An ontology, or method of describing and understanding reality, that argues that there are multiple realities that are determined by individual's perspectives. This is the opposite of the positivist approach which argues that a single, objective reality exists for all. Interpretivism or the interpretivist approach is connected to symbolic interactionism.

1.8.4 LIS Graduate

An LIS graduate is defined as an individual who has successfully completed a program of study in library and information science. Programs of study in library and information science may occur at several post-secondary levels and include library technician diplomas, bachelor's degrees, and master's degrees. Qualifying criteria for using the title of "professional librarian" may differ across countries and in some cases will include completion of post-graduation certification programs or continuing professional development. In this study, graduates of American Library Association (ALA) accredited master's level programs were selected as participants. This decision was made to ensure that the professional education experiences of participants would be similar. Participants included LIS graduates currently employed in Canada and the United States where ALA accreditation is largely applied to master's level library and information science programs.

1.8.5   Non-Library Role

A non-library role refers to any work position that occurs outside of a library setting. This may include both information and non-information related jobs. These roles may or may not require or request a degree in library and information science from applicants.

1.8.6   Non-Traditional Role

This study defines a non-traditional role for an LIS graduate as a role outside of a traditional LIS employer such as a library or archive. A non-traditional role for an LIS graduate may also be one in which LIS graduates represent the minority of incumbents in these roles Additionally, these roles are typically not promoted to LIS graduates or do not require an LIS education in their job postings. Used synonymously with 'alternative', 'uncommon' and 'unusual' in this study. Because some of these criteria may be difficult for individuals to assess (for example, people may not be aware of the educational backgrounds of their co-workers), the selection criteria for participants was employment outside of a library or archive setting.

1.8.7   Professional Identity

Professional identity is the identity that an individual builds around their work or professional life. In essence it is the response to the question "Who am I as

a professional?" Billot (2010) describes professional identity as "the values, beliefs and practices held in common with others of that affiliation" (p. 712). Gibson, Dollarhide, and Moss (2010) argue that "contemporary definitions of professional identity seem to revolve around three themes: self-labeling as a professional, integration of skills and attitudes as a professional, and a perception of context in a professional community" (p. 21).

1.8.8   Profession

A profession is a field of employment that is characterised by having a specialized body of knowledge, a code of conduct or set of professional ethics, one or more organizing associations, entrance restrictions, and authority or autonomy. Types of work roles may be divided into "professional", "para-professional" or "non-professional" roles. Professional roles are generally reserved for those who have met all of the entry criteria for the profession, which in the case of librarianship in the North American context is completion of a master's degree in library and information science. Para-professional roles may be given to those with other related qualifications such as the completion of a technician level diploma or even a master's degree in a different discipline. Workplace experience may also qualify an individual for a para-professional role. Non-professional roles generally involve fewer educational qualifications and may involve entry level positions within a profession.

1.8.9   Socialization

Socialization is the process through which individuals are assimilated into existing communities through the transfer of explicit and tacit knowledge including the learning of the rules, skills, values, norms, customs, and symbols that make up that community's culture (Baker and Lattuca, 2010; Serrat, 2008; Rummens, 2001; Ibarra, 1999).

1.9   Thesis Outline

The next sections will provide an overview of chapters of this thesis. A brief description of the content contained within each chapter is provided below. This section is meant to serve as a guide for the reader to assist them is selecting chapters for quick reviews of key sections of this research project's design and results.

1.9.1   Chapter 2: Grounded Theory

This chapter provides an introduction to the Grounded Theory methodology. It begins with a description of the key features of this methodology. These are induction, theoretical sampling, constant comparison, memo writing, theoretical saturation, and theory development. Next, the chapter describes the various versions of Grounded Theory and reasons for selecting classical Grounded Theory. The chapter addresses the methodological issues associated with participant identification and recruitment in this study. It includes sections on the target population, sample, and recruitment method. The second section provides information about the career paths of the people who participated in this study. The section ends by describing the ways in which the methodology was applied in this study, with sections on data

collection, data analysis, and quality measures. This includes the processes of coding data, identifying a core category, and developing memos to develop a substantive theory.

1.9.2 Chapter 3: Theoretical Sensitivity and the Early Literature Review

This chapter focuses on theoretical sensitivity. It begins with a discussion of the roots of the researcher's interest in the research topic. It is followed by an overview of the debate around literature reviews in Grounded Theory and the approach to the literature that was taken in this study. The literature review completed prior to data collection is included here and is divided into two parts: the first examining identity literature and the second looking at literature on professions and professionalism. The literature on professional identity and identity theories is discussed first and describe the key features of identity theories which are the concept of the flexibility of identity, multiple identities, and the relationship between individuals and society. Each of these sections includes sections on general applications of the theory followed by literature specific to the library and information science (LIS) environment. The next section of the chapter describes the literature on professions and professionalism that was examined prior to the start of data collection. Sub-sections focus on professions and status, defining professions, librarianship and information science as profession(s), LIS professional identity, and defining the boundaries of the LIS profession.

1.9.3 Chapter 4: Study Participants

This chapter provides information about participant employment and educational backgrounds as a means of providing context to this study. The first section provides brief descriptions of the career paths of the twenty participants in this study. This is followed by discussions of several of the career-related response trends from participants. In particular, participants' work roles before and after completing their MLIS degrees and inside and outside of libraries are discussed. Next responses on career paths and future ambitions are discussed. This chapter is intended to provide background information on the context that informed the theory that emerged from this study.

1.9.4   Chapter 5: The Grounded Theory of Personalizing Professionalism

The substantive theory developed through this study is presented in this chapter. This is the theory of Personalizing Professionalism which is based on the participants' main concern of developing a professional identity and learning how to navigate their professional environments and communities. In navigating their careers and developing career goals participants exhibit two identities: an internal appraisal of the self and an externally exhibited self. The components of these two identities, as well as participants' responses to gaps between these identities, are discussed. These components and responses constitute the code categories of the study. The components of the internal appraisal of self are captured by the categories of socialization into the profession, perceptions of the profession, interactions with others, and understanding one's motivations and interests. The externally exhibited self is captured through activities associated with finding one's path and with self-labelling practices. Actions in response to gaps or conflicts between these two

identities are also discussed along with variables that may impact an individual's choice of response.

1.9.5   Chapter 6: Integrating the Literature

This chapter describes the relationships between the substantive theory and code categories that emerged from this study and existing literature across a range of disciplines. The objective is not to prove or disprove theories that have been developed by other researchers, but to explore the implications that data or findings from these studies have for the further understanding and exploration of the theory and categories from this study.

1.9.5   Chapter 7: Conclusions

This concluding chapter summarizes the content covered in the preceding chapters of this thesis and also includes discussions on the contributions, limitations, and opportunities for further research raised by this study.

1.10   Conclusion

This introductory chapter provided a broad overview of the research project undertaken in this dissertation. It began with an overview of the context that prompted this study and the particular research problem that emerged from this context. Next, a brief overview of the research design utilized in this project was

provided along with a statement of the purposes of this project given the research problem and research design. An overview of the theory that was developed was provided along with a brief description of the significance that this study may have to practitioner and research communities. The chapter closed with a set of definitions of some of the key concepts for this study and an outline of the chapters to follow.

Chapter 2: Methodology

2.1   Introduction

This chapter describes the research paradigms, methodology, and methods utilized in this study to examine the research question of how LIS graduates in non-library roles experience professional identity. It begins with an overview of the interpretivist research paradigm employed in this study. Next, the Grounded Theory methodology is discussed, including a description of the various permutations of this theory and the selection of the Classic Grounded Theory model. They key components of Grounded Theory are defined.   Next, data collection is discussed starting with a discussion of the decision to gather qualitative data, followed by a discussion of the semi-structured interview data method and the development of an interview guide. Participants are discussed next, with sections on participant identification and recruitment. The next section of this chapter addresses data analysis and provides an overview of the steps undertaken to collection and analyze the data gathered in this study in order to produce a substantive theory. The chapter ends with a brief description of research quality factors.

2.2   Research Paradigm

This research project takes an interpretivist paradigm. This paradigm holds that there are different versions of reality that are constructed by people based on their life experiences. This is the opposite of the positivist paradigm which argues that there is a single, objective reality which can be discovered. The types of

questions asked and the ways in which those questions are explored differ based on the research paradigm of the researcher.

Researchers using a positivist paradigm tend to explore causality relationships whereas researchers using an interpretivist paradigm "[do] not seek an objective truth so much as to unravel patterns of subjective understanding ... [they assume] that all versions of the truth are shaped by the viewers' perceptions and understanding of their world." (Roth & Mehta, 2002, p. 132). This project explores how a group of individuals experience professional identity. This experience was expressed through career narratives and responses to questions regarding definitions of competencies, group identification, emotions, and attitudes. This study utilized the Grounded Theory methodology, which is an inductive methodology with the goal of developing a new theory. Some categories that emerged from the coding of data obtained in this study relate to causal questions but no causal conclusions can be reached from this project.

In terms of theoretical framework, Grounded Theory recommends that researchers remain theoretically neutral in order to allow a theory to emerge inductively from the study data and avoid preconceptions. The subject of theoretical sensitivity is discussed in greater depth in Chapter 3, which includes an overview of the researcher's motivations for selecting this research topic, potential biases, and literature read prior to data collection. The connections between the theory and coding categories that emerged through the open and selective coding processes are discussed in "Chapter 7: Integrating the Literature".

2.3   Selection of Grounded Theory

This project employed the Grounded Theory methodology. Grounded Theory is a methodology designed to produce a new theory and is built upon the concepts of constant comparison and theoretical sampling (Suddaby, 2006, p. 634). Its purpose is to investigate research problems and systematically develop theories that are grounded in the data (Jones, 2009). It is a broad methodology that welcomes the use of both qualitative and quantitative research methods to gather data and often combines several data collection techniques (Zarif, 2012). The product of a Grounded Theory study is a theory. Grounded Theory was selected as the research method for this study for several reasons.

A method that produces a theory through inductive processes rather than a deductive method that tests a hypothesis is ideal for this project because of the range of possible core concepts that may emerge in exploring the professional identities of LIS graduates in non-library roles, and the lack of a testable theory that seems to fit the population and situation explored in this study. There are a plethora of theories regarding identity and many theories concerning professional identity and I entered into this research project with the idea that an existing theory or set of theories may end up being applicable to the data that I was going to collect. For example, an existing model of socialization or professional identity development may be relevant in exploring this group. I was concerned that jumping directly into validations of a particular theory that was arbitrarily without sufficient evidentiary support for its selection from the research literature may misrepresent the experiences of the population being examined. Given the lack of research that has been conducted on

LIS graduates in non-library roles in particular and individuals' identity experiences with regards to voluntary and hidden identities in the workplaces in general, a theory about the professional identities of LIS graduates in non-library roles that is grounded in data would better reflect the experiences of this population in a more meaningful (and potentially actionable) way than running through a series of tests of existing hypotheses that were not developed with a focus on either this population (LIS graduates in non-library roles) or this scenario (graduates of a professional education program that is associated with a specific professional career path rather than a general skillset). The creation of a new theory grounded in data that aims to capture a deep view of participants' experiences serves as a foundation from which additional studies using a variety of methodologies may flow.

This lack of an existing theory that relates to either of the populations or scenarios outlined above not only supports the use of the Grounded Theory methodology, but discourages the use of other methods that are commonly used to explore questions related to professional identity that have been used in LIS research. Surveys are often employed within the LIS literature to examine identity-related questions, sometimes without a clear explanation of the theoretical framework or methodological considerations undertaken in the selection of this data collection approach. . These survey studies have examined questions such as the extent to which participants accept certain LIS values such as freedom of information or the protection of users' privacy (Moran & Marchionini, 2012; American Library Association, 2004; Dole & Hurych, 2001). A study that simply examines one aspect or another of professional identity may miss significant aspects of the experience of professional identity for a population. For example, there have been studies about

why individuals stay or leave the library profession (Taylor, Perry, Barton & Spencer, 2010; Ard, Clemmons & Morgan, 2006; Burd, 2003). Not all of the participants selected for this study consider themselves to have left librarianship even though they are no longer working in library settings. They also accepted non-library roles for a variety of reasons such as: a lack of opportunities either to enter into or to advance within library workplaces; existing social networks that guided them to opportunities outside of librarianship; a desire to develop skills and competencies; and a whole host of other reasons. The decision to work outside of a library occurred as part of planned and serendipitous career paths. Focusing on one particular question or aspect of one's professional identity or professional experiences can therefore create misleading results. Instead of targeting specific variables to test hypotheses about their significance to participant subjects, Grounded Theory instead allows the key variables and concepts to be exposed by participants, which is particularly important when the target population has not been extensively studied.

Another factor in selecting the Grounded Theory methodology was its use of theoretical sampling. The population examined is highly heterogeneous and it is not clear which demographic factors have a significant impact on the participants' experiences of professional identity. Even if certain commonalities in demographic variables could be observed, a representative sample is not being sought in this qualitative study, so no firm conclusions could be reached to firmly link these variables with actions, perceptions, or experiences in a statistically experienced way. In theoretical sampling, a hallmark of the Grounded Theory methodology, the researcher does not make any presumptions about what demographic characteristics

of participants will be important. A sampling method that does not force the selection of a certain value in selecting participants was appealing given the wide range of possible demographic variables that could have an impact on the experience of professional identity.

2.4 Variations of Grounded Theory

There are several permutations of Grounded Theory. The best known options for Grounded Theory are Classic Grounded Theory (as defined in Glaser and Strauss's 1967 work), Glaserian Grounded Theory (Glaser's expansions and clarifications of Grounded Theory which have been articulated in books and article publications produced from the 1970s through to the present, Straussian Grounded Theory (developed by Juliet Corbin and Anselm Strauss in 2008), Constructivist Grounded Theory (developed by Charmaz in 2006), and a combination approach that borrows components from several of these versions (Cooney, 2010). There are significant differences between these permutations of Grounded Theory, making it important for researchers to identify their selection of a version.

Classic Grounded Theory was introduced by Glaser and Strauss in the 1967 book *The Discovery of Grounded Theory* as "the systematic generation of theory from data acquired by a rigorous research method" (Glaser, 1998, p. 3). It is an inductive methodology that employs the techniques of theoretical sampling and constant comparison to allow researchers to develop new theories that are grounded in data. These grounded theories capture how participants respond to their main concern in a conceptual fashion. The approach combined Glaser's inductive,

quantitative sociological approach with Strauss' symbolic interactionist approach

from the Chicago School (Glaser, 1998, p. 37). The method assists researchers in

performing the type of conceptual, pattern-recognition thinking that people do

naturally with procedural advice to ensure that theories fit and work. In his further

elaborations of the Classic Grounded Theory approach, Glaser and colleagues reject

the assertion that symbolic interactionism is the theoretical framework behind

Grounded Theory, arguing instead that Grounded Theory is theoretically neutral

because the inclusion of a theoretical framework in the methodology would lead to

researcher preconceptions:

> Many authors have linked symbolic interactionism with Glaser's classic
> GT…It has even been stated that symbolic interactionism is the
> foundational philosophy of the original or classic GT. If this were true,
> this would mean that any prospective classic GT research had to start
> with a preconceived or predefined theoretical prospective, namely the
> perspective of symbolic interactionism. If this were true, classic GT
> would be inconsistent and hence meaningless. Dr. Glaser has carefully
> explained that symbolic interactionism is not the foundational
> theoretical perspective of classic GT. Classic GT is a general inductive
> methodology that presumes no discipline or theoretical perspective or
> data type (Glaser, 2005, p. 242-260). (Christiansen, 2007, p. 55)

After the publication of *Discovery*, Strauss worked with Corbin to release further

guidelines on how to conduct Grounded Theory research. This new approach

became known as "Straussian Grounded Theory". The key difference between

Straussian Grounded Theory and Glaserian or Classic Grounded Theory is the

inclusion of highly detailed procedures for data analysis in the Straussian model.

The focus on procedures has been cited as an attractant for new researchers,

particularly students (Cooney, 2010). The detailed and explicit data analysis

instructions in Corbin and Strauss' work have also been criticized both for adding

complexity (Cooney, 2010) and for potentially causing researchers to force data

(Boychuck Duchscher & Morgan, 2004). This model also strongly emphasized the symbolic interactionism approach that Strauss brought to his collaborations with Glaser.

The next generation of researchers to work with either Glaser or Strauss' models of Grounded Theory developed their own variations. Several of these variations were founded in post-modern theoretical frameworks. The best known of these models is Constructivist Grounded Theory, developed by Kathy Charmaz in the 1990s. The key points of Constructivist Grounded Theory are that the research process is "fluid, interactive, and open-ended" and that "the research problem informs methodological choices for data collection" (Charmaz, 2006, p. 178). These points are consistent with earlier versions of the Grounded Theory methodology. The key differences between Charmaz's version of Grounded Theory and earlier versions are clustered around the themes of theoretical framework and procedures.

In terms of theoretical framework, Charmaz uses an interpretivist approach. For Charmaz, the viewpoints of the researcher and research participants are all important, in not only the theory that results from a Grounded Theory study, but also in how the theory emerges. Charmaz describes the role of the researcher's perspective as follows:

> Your grounded theory journey relies on interaction – emanating from your worldview, standpoints, and situations, arising in the research sites, developing between you and your data, emerging with your ideas, then returning back to the field – or another field, and moving on to conversations with your discipline and substantive fields. To interact at all, we make sense of our situations, appraise what occurs in them, and draw on language and culture to create meanings and frame actions. In short, interaction is interpretive (Charmaz, 2006, p. 179)

The role of the researcher is a key difference between the interpretivist and positivist

perspectives that have influenced different versions of Grounded Theory. This is

manifested in the differing descriptions of the role of the researcher. The classic or

Glaserian approach to Grounded Theory calls on researchers to begin their research

with "an empty mind" (Zarif, 2012, p. 972), meaning that they should start Grounded

Theory by either avoiding a literature review entirely or performing a highly limited

literature review to minimize the extent to which their project will be biased by

existing theories. The Straussian version of Grounded Theory gives the researcher a

more active role but still characterizes the researcher as an observer (Zarif, 2012). In

Charmaz's model of Grounded Theory the distance between the researcher and the

participants is reduced as the viewpoints and interpretations of both are vital in the

emergence of a theory (Breckenridge, Jones, Eilliott & Nicol, 2012).

In terms of procedures, Strauss and Corbin's version is the most procedurally

rigorous of the models, providing researchers with detailed procedures for each step

of the process. Charmaz's version of Grounded Theory is not as prescriptive as

Straussian Grounded Theory, but does contain instructions about data collection,

coding, memo-writing, theoretical sampling, and writing which are meant to serve as

"a set of principles and practices, not as prescriptions or packages" (Charmaz, 2006,

p. 9). Glaser's version of Grounded Theory allows for the greatest level of research

autonomy.

The final variation of Grounded Theory that a researcher may choose is a

mixed approach in which certain aspects of Glaserian and Straussian Grounded

Theory are combined to meet the researcher's needs and preferences. This is not an uncommon approach. Eaves (2001) wrote that:

> In line with these perspectives Charmaz (1983) holds that every researcher who uses the GT method will tend to develop his or her own variations of technique. In fact, Charmaz admitted that she has developed her own style of using GT, although within the framework of the original methods put forth by Glaser and Strauss (1967) and Glaser (1978). (p. 662)

Tension exists between the Grounded Theory camps and the version of Grounded Theory that a researcher selects and his or her justification for selecting that variation can have an impact on how the project is received and evaluated. In 2009 Parahoo wrote that:

> It is understandable that the originators of grounded theory would be concerned with what they see, at best, as misinterpretation and, at worse, as distortion of their work. Students and those new to grounded theory cannot avoid being caught up in this debate and controversy over what constitutes and can legitimately be called grounded theory. On the other hand, they have been presented with an array of creative and imaginative versions to choose from. By and large, students choose what they are comfortable with. (p. 5)

Glaser is critical of picking and choosing the methodological components of Grounded Theory to be employed in a study. Glaser has argued that the mixing of methodological components creates a new research method that could not be classified as Grounded Theory, but rather as a form of qualitative descriptive analysis. He wrote:

> Grounded theory is used in part or in whole by researchers. When used in part, it is "adopt and adapt" with other research methods woven in, based on the training and judgment of the researcher involved. The multi version view of GT is based on jargonizing with the GT vocabulary, not the GT procedures. (Glaser, 2010, p. 2)

His criticism is particularly directed toward researchers who claim to adopt one or two elements of Grounded Theory, such as the use of coding protocols from one of the variations of Grounded Theory or using theoretical sampling and ignoring the other components of this methodology while claiming to be conducting a Grounded Theory study. Without full adoption of the Grounded Theory methodology including induction, theoretical sampling, theoretical sensitivity, and constant comparison, a methodology may not fully fit within any of the variations of Grounded Theory.

There is strong pressure for researchers entering into Grounded Theory research to select a model. The model which is selected will have philosophical and methodological impacts. Several of these variations of Grounded Theory are aligned with theoretical frameworks such as constructivism and symbolic interactionism. Selecting a methodology that is based on a theoretical framework will require the researcher to understand that framework and the implications that it will have on their interpretations of the data that is collected. The framework that is selected will also impact the ways in which researchers interact with participants, specifically the extent to which participants are involved in theory articulation. The next section in this chapter will discuss the researcher's decision to adopt the Glaserian Grounded Theory approach.

2.5   Selection of Glaserian Grounded Theory

A first attractant to Grounded Theory in general and classic Grounded Theory in particular was its compatibility with a range of theoretical frameworks and

epistemologies. There is no forced lens in Grounded Theory. Individual differences

in opinion are welcome in Grounded Theory provided that they do not cause

researchers to embrace pet theories rather than exploring what is actually present in

the data. Glaser provides an excellent example of the fact that different researchers

can see different main concerns when examining the same substantive area and both

can lead to the development of theories that meet the Glaserian Grounded Theory

quality criteria of fit and work:

> For example, I was guiding two dissertations studying heart attack
> victims. One student discovered and wrote a dissertation on the main
> concern of "cutting back" to prevent another episode. The other student
> discovered and wrote a dissertation on "super normalizing" behavior to
> show nothing was wrong. Both categories work, fit and are of
> relevance with general implications. Both are powerfully useful,
> neither was right or wrong. They exist as concepts with many
> indicators. Both are going on all around us. Was one more objective
> than the other? No! Just different BSPs [Basic Social Processes] were
> discovered, neither being more accurate, each being powerful
> abstractions: that is concepts. (Glaser, 2009, p. 59-60)

A second reason for the selection of Grounded Theory was the flexibility of

this method. This flexibility allows the researcher to adjust the method to best

address the research question. Allowing a high level of flexibility by presenting

"grounded theory methods as a set of principles and practices, not as prescriptions or

packages" (Charmaz, 2006, p. 9) may also assist the researcher in developing a

deeper understanding of research methodology. By learning to operationalize

principles and apply practices rather than simply following a set prescription, the

researcher learns how to think more critically about all of her methodological

decisions.

I attempted to apply the axial coding method incorporated in the Strausian variation of Grounded Theory as a way of stimulating ideas and attempting to find different ways of viewing my data. This highly structured approach to coding is not a part of Glaserian Grounded Theory which would find that this approach risks forcing data into categories:

> The forcing of theoretical codes on the substantive theory is based on a driving need to theoretically structure and integrate the substantive codes somehow. It's also an identity forcing. Forcing undermines the "have to earn its way" into the theory requirement of grounded theory. It can constrain and stifle the substantive theory generation and is therefore regressive. It does not foster the "fit and work" criteria of grounded theory (Glaser, 1998, p. 167)

I found that the process did not help me to discover any new categories or bring me any closer to discovering participants' main concerns. The processes of trying different coding methods may be an interesting academic activity, but any activity that does not help the researcher to complete a research project is not beneficial. The process of memoing proved more helpful in working my way through ambiguity than any structured coding method. Memoing is a process that is embraced by all variations of Grounded Theory. Glaserian Grounded Theory encourages researchers to develop intellectual autonomy by working through periods of ambiguity and confusion.

2.6 Grounded Theory Description

Grounded Theory is an inductive research methodology that was designed to produce a new theory which is "grounded" in data (Glaser & Strauss 1967; Glaser 1978, 1998). There are several key aspects of this methodology that must be applied.

These are induction, theoretical sampling, constant comparison, memo writing, theoretical saturation, and theory development (Glaser 2001, 2009). Brief descriptions based on the Classic Grounded Theory model as initially developed by Glaser and Strauss and expanded by Glaser of each of these Grounded Theory components follow.

2.6.1   Induction

Grounded Theory is an inductive approach to research. Inductive approaches start with an examination of data and create a theory from that data which reflects the complexities of the phenomena under investigation as they occur in the real world. This is the exact opposite of the deductive approach to research in which researchers develop theories and then gather data to either confirm or disconfirm their hypotheses. The Grounded Theory methodology takes its name for the central idea that theories should be grounded in data. This inductive core has shaped all of the other characteristics of Grounded Theory.

2.6.2   Theoretical Sampling

Theoretical sampling is one of the central components of Grounded Theory. In theoretical sampling, data are collected in parallel with data analysis and continue to be collected until coding categories are saturated (aka "theoretical saturation") (Zarif, 2012; Glaser, 2012; Boychuck Duchscher & Morgan, 2004). The sample that is collected is determined by the code categories (Suddaby, 2006), rather than by a

presumption that it be representative of a given population. This approach is a

departure from traditional sampling procedures, as

> Theoretical sampling violates the ideal of hypothesis testing in that the
> direction of new data collection is determined, not by a priori
> hypotheses, but by ongoing interpretation of data and emerging
> conceptual categories (Suddaby, 2006, p. 634).

Because the theory is driven by the data, the grounded theorist cannot determine

which demographic variables will have an impact on the development of the theory

and therefore will not make assumptions about the relevance of any variable prior to

analysis (Roderick, 2009). Breckenridge and Jones (2009) argued that the systemic

nature of theoretical sampling allows Grounded Theory "to transcend the descriptive

level typical of qualitative research" (p. 121).

2.6.3   Constant Comparison

Constant comparison involves the continual examination of incidents with

other incidents gathered in the course of a study. Every new incident, every bit of

data that emerges is checked in relation to the categories of the emerging theory.

Constant comparison helps guard against "non-grounded ideas occurring from

personal biases, personal experiences of an idiosyncratic nature, logical conjecture or

deductions, received preconceptions and so forth" (Glaser, 1998, p. 182). This

method allows for category generation and expansion and "discovers the latent

pattern in the multiple participants' words" (Glaser, 2012, p. 29).

2.6.4   Memo Writing

Memo-writing is an essential part of the Grounded Theory research process. Memos can serve a variety of purposes throughout the research process. From a procedural perspective they provide value to reviewers and evaluators of the research project in that they record the methodological and analytical decisions of the researcher (Cooney, 2011). Memos should be written throughout the Grounded Theory research process, carefully organized, and frequently referenced. The writing and sorting of memos are essential steps in the development of a theory:

> Sorting is the last stage of the grounded theory process that challenges the researcher's creativity. In fact it is the epitome of the theory generation process. Writing is merely a write up of the sorting piles. Sorting a rich volume of memos into an integrated theory is the culmination of months of conceptual buildup (Glaser, 1998, p. 187)

2.6.5   Theoretical Saturation

When conducting a Grounded Theory study, researchers continue to gather data until theoretical saturation is achieved. "Theoretical saturation of a category occurs when in coding and analyzing both no new properties emerge and the same properties continually emerge as one goes through the full extent of the data" (Glaser, 1978, p. 53). Determining when saturation has occurred is one of the most significant challenges of Grounded Theory research and misidentifying this point and ceasing data collection early is a common pitfall of this methodology (Suddaby, 2006).

2.6.6   Theory Development

A final characteristic of Grounded Theory that applies to all variations of this methodology is that Grounded Theory studies are meant to produce a new theory. There is some debate over what constitutes a theory. Glaser and Strauss describe two types of theories: substantive theories and formal theories. They define a substantive theory as one "developed for a substantive, or empirical, area of sociological inquiry" and a formal theory as one "developed for a formal, or conceptual, area of sociological inquiry" (Glaser & Strauss, 1967, p. 32). They connect the two by stating that "substantive theory is a strategic link in the formulation and generation of grounded formal theory" (p. 79). They argue that a formal theory can be developed directly from the data, but that it is usually necessary to first develop a substantive theory.

2.6.7   Data Collection

The following sections discuss the data collection decisions that were made as part of the methodological design process of this project. This section begins with a discussion of the decision to take a qualitative approach to data analysis. Next, the selection of semi-structured interviews as the data collection method is explained. This is followed by an overview of the interview guide that was developed and the administration of interviews.

2.6.8   Qualitative Approach

This project takes a qualitative rather than a quantitative approach. The qualitative approach is more generally associated with the interpretivist paradigm while quantitative approaches are associated with the positivist paradigm. The qualitative paradigm is focused on "[capturing] authentically the lived experiences of people" (Onwuegbuzie & Burke, 2006, p. 49). The qualitative paradigm is useful when exploring a newer researcher area:

> Qualitative research is exploratory and is useful when the researcher does not know the important variables to examine. This type of approach may be needed because the topic is new, the topic has never been addressed with a certain sample group or people, or existing theories do not apply with the particular sample or group under study (Creswell, 2002, p. 23)

The Grounded Theory methodology allows for both qualitative and quantitative research paradigms, but the question being explored in this project is better suited to the qualitative approach.

2.7   Selection of Semi-Structured Interviews

Data in this study were collected through interviews. Interviews were selected as the data collection method for several reasons. First, the data that this project seeks to gather consists of attitudes, opinions, perceptions and experiences of participants. This eliminates observational methods. The two data collection methods that are most often used to collect this type of data are interviews and surveys. Interviews have several advantages over surveys when exploring complex

topics such as professional identity because of their interactive format which enables

the researcher to collect deeper data through probing and the clarification of

potentially ambiguous questions. Researchers are also less likely to receive non-

responses to questions in interviews than surveys. Barriball and While (1994)

conducted a study of professional identities in nursing and justified their use of

interviews as follows:

> First, they are well suited for the exploration of the perceptions and
> opinions of respondents regarding complex and sometime sensitive
> issues and enable probing for more information and clarification of
> answers. Second, the varied professional, educational and personal
> histories of the sample group precluded the use of a standardized
> interview schedule. (p. 330)

The semi-structured interview format was selected for this study. The objective

of the interviews was to allow participants to discuss their experiences as freely as

possible without interviewer influence. Having a set of prepared questions and

prompts for the interviews "often relaxes the study participant and stimulates his or

her memory so that he or she becomes more talkative and spontaneous" (Corbin &

Strauss, 2008, p. 28). The difference between structured and semi-structured

interviews is that in semi-structured interviews researchers can change question order

and can probe for additional information based on participant responses whereas in

structured interviews participants must be given the same questions in exactly the

same order (Rabionet, 2011).

The semi-structured interview technique includes both scripted questions

which may be delivered in different order depending on the flow of the interview

conversation and probing questions or probes. Probes can be either anticipated,

conditional or spontaneous. They include questions designed to gain details about specific events or to clarify anticipated problems with questions (Beaty & Willis, 2007). Probes are meant to be value neutral (Lysack, Luborsky, & Dillaway, 2006). Probes are an important feature of semi-structured interviews and are designed to elicit additional details relating to the questions in the interview guide. When constructing interview guides, researchers should consider the specification, division and tacit assumptions of any questions: "Specification refers to the focus of each question; division to the appropriate sequence and wording of questions; and tacit assumption to the determining of the true meanings that lie behind respondents' answers" (Barriball & While, 1994, p. 330-331).

2.8   Development of the Interview Guide

Even though the semi-structured interview allows the interviewer some flexibility in prompting participants and allowing the conversation to flow based on the participant's responses, developing a good set of questions to frame the conversation is the essential starting point in conducting a data-rich interview. These questions provide "a structure for participants to communicate their own understandings, perspectives, and attribution of meaning" (Jones & McEwen, 2000, p. 407).

As outlined in the literature review section of this study, conducting a literature review prior to data collection can be controversial as some Grounded Theory researchers believe that approaching a Grounded Theory study with a knowledge of existing theories can contaminate the data and resulting theory (see

Dunne, 2011; Walls, Parahoo, & Fleming, 2010). Others contend that a literature review can assist the researcher in identifying potential coding categories (Kennan, Willard & Wilson, 2006) and orienting him or herself to the phenomenon (Storberg-Walker, 2007). A review of high-level theories of identity was conducted to create an initial set of questions that would address some of the larger themes present in these theories, such as the relationship between individuals (or an individual's self-concept) and society, the flexibility of identity, and the idea of multiple identities and identity salience. By focusing on high-level open ended questions, the researcher attempts to capture major themes in identity research without forcing participants into a particular view of professional identity.

The questions contained in the interview guide changed over the course of the project. This is appropriate in the Grounded Theory methodology as a sign of theoretical sensitivity. Suddaby (2006) described a Grounded Theory researcher's decision to modify interview questions based on emerging data as a sign of "their openness to new or unexpected interpretations of the data" (p. 640). The questions which were asked of participants in this study were varied based on both the elements that emerged over the course of the individual interview and themes that emerged from data analysis that occurred between interviews. Questions related to possible themes or common responses were only raised in cases in which the topics were initially raised by the interviewees. .

There is extensive literature available on the development of interview guides and survey questions. This literature includes advice on question development tactics that promote reliability and validity. Two of the main interview problems that

have been identified in the literature are satisficing and social desirability bias. Satisficing refers to the practice of survey or questionnaire participants either refusing to respond to a question or providing a quick answer to a survey question that does not necessarily reflect their true opinions or experience because they had no existing opinion on the subject (Krosnick, 1999), because they were not provided with an option that reflects their situation, or because the question was presented in a way that taxed their cognitive resources.

Social desirability bias refers to the tendency of some individuals to provide responses based on a desire to be viewed in a positive light or to provide the response they believe the researcher wants to hear (Jäckle, Roberts & Lynn, 2006). This bias is most likely to occur when discussing sensitive topics.

Writing good questions requires researchers to consider "(1) the wording of questions; (2) the structure of the response alternatives; and (3) the context of questions, e.g. other questions asked and the instructions for respondents" (Zmud, 2001, p. 16). Question wording considerations include avoiding the use of words that are ambiguous, imprecise, or subject to different interpretations based on the participant's cultural background (including technical jargon).

Several interview guide quality measures were employed in this study. These quality measures included verifying the readability of the vocabulary used in the interview guide to ensure that jargon or obscure vocabulary was avoided, verification of instruments with colleagues, and the conducting of pilot interviews.

The first quality control measure used in the development of the interview guide for this study was the use of an online tool called Readability-Score.com to verify the readability and the U.S. grade level of the vocabulary used in the questions included in the interview guide. The website provides readability scores based on the Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level, Gunning-Fog Score, Coleman-Liau Index, SMOG Index, and Automated Readability Index, and provides an average grade level based on these formulas. Taken together, these readability tests indicate that the questions included in the guide would require an individual to have a North American elementary school education level. All of the participants recruited in the study have completed university level studies, suggesting that the questions are written in a sufficiently readable level for the participants. The researcher also made an attempt to avoid the use of any terms that would be considered jargon in the interview guide. The fact that the researcher shares the educational background with the participants (i.e. is an LIS program graduate) meant that the researcher and participants had a shared understanding of some of the technical terms that are associated with the LIS field.

The second quality measure was the validation of survey questions with colleagues prior to implementation. The researchers' academic supervisors and colleagues provided suggestions for the improvement of questions including the removal of terms that may be perceived as having value-implications or which might be confusing for respondents.

The third quality test for the interview guide was the two pilot interviews in which participants were given the opportunity to give feedback about the clarity of

the questions and their comfort with the interview process. Details concerning the administration and results of the pilot study are outlined in the appendices of this report. The pilot study confirmed that the interview guide and the methods for administering interviews (both in-person and by distance using an online conferencing tool) were likely to yield sufficient and appropriate data for the completion of the study as designed.

The initial interview procedure involved posing the questions in the interview guide followed by prompts based on participants' responses. After the third interview, the procedure for interviewing was modified after a participant requested to start the interview by providing some background into her career before getting started with the questions. From that point forward all interviews began with the question that asked participants describe their career experiences from the time they decided to pursue a master's degree in library and information science to the present. Participants were able to respond to this question without interruption. Following this response, a series of follow-up questions were asked of participants reflecting their unique career experiences. In some cases the follow-up questions which were prompted by participants' career narratives were already included in the interview guide. In other cases, these follow-up questions were unique to the individual participant's career narrative and were intended to glean clarifications or further details on the participant's experiences or attitudes. Finally, the third section of the interview involved the final questions from the interview guide which had not been previously addressed as direct prompts to the career narratives. In accordance with the Glaserian Grounded Theory methodology, the development of an interview guide could have been limited to a few open-ended questions to start the discussion with

initial participants and then modified based on theoretical sampling. In retrospect, the creation of a ten question interview guide based on themes that had emerged from the initial literature review that was conducted at the start of this project was of limited utility because it resulted in the collection of some data that did not relate to participant's main concern. This data, although interesting, potentially delayed the development of a theory based on the participants' main concern by adding "noise" to the data set.

2.8.1   Interview Guide Questions

In a Grounded Theory study the interview guide frequently changes based on the data that emerge through constant comparison and theoretical sampling. An interview guide was developed for this study based on the key themes that emerged from the literature on identity theories. Each of the questions included in the interview are described in detail in the section below, including their purpose and an outline of the types of responses that they are expected to evoke.

2.8.2   Question 1: Tell me about your career journey from the time you decided to attend library school to the present.

This question represented the heart of the semi-structured interviews in this project. It sought information about the types of jobs participants had held, the tasks performed in each of those jobs, and participants' reasons from moving from one job to another. It was sufficiently open-ended to allow participants to frame their experiences in any way they wished, but explicit enough that it allowed participants

to provide a response that included some career chronology. Starting with a holistic question like this served as an icebreaker as it allowed participants to set the stage for the interview by explaining their career at the start. This meant that they would not have to go back later in response to more specific questions and provide lots of contextual information.

2.8.3   Question 2: How did your LIS education prepare you for your current job?

The purpose of this question is to determine how the participant views the role and value of their LIS education in assisting with their career development. The wording of the question is designed to prompt the participants to think of particular courses, competencies or experiences from their LIS education that were a benefit, or conversely that did not assist them in their career rather than simply answering whether the LIS education was helpful or not. Some researchers have asked LIS graduates whether they would still complete an LIS degree given their current job status. This is an interesting question but it risks creating vague responses ("yes" or "no") or evoking a cognitive dissonance motivated response in which graduates are forced to justify their decision rather than to reflect on what aspects of the experience had preparatory value to their current work.

2.8.4 Question 3: What professional associations, networks or communities do you affiliate with?

The social structures in which one interacts are an important aspect of identity. These structures provide common norms, values, and symbols. On a more practical level, they provide networking opportunities that may lead to future employment opportunities and training opportunities for knowledge and competency development. All of these elements are important to one's professional identity. This question is worded to allow participants to mention their involvement in associations that are not affiliated with the LIS community.

2.8.5 Question 4: How do you describe what you do to non-librarians or people who didn't attend library school?

This question is designed to begin a conversation about the participant's interactions with society in general or those who are not LIS graduates. This was included because of the interaction between society and identity. The way is which one describes one's professional role may provide clues to how they believe others perceive their professional status or competence. The use of a label or decision to affiliate with a group may reveal how positively the individual views that group, as individuals may not choose to identify themselves as members of a group that they do not like or respect. It may also provide clues to how well they believe members of the outside community (either non-LIS graduates or people outside of their company or industry sector) understand the type of work they do.

2.8.6 Question 5: How do you describe what you do to librarians or people who attended library school?

This question is very closely related to question 6 and is also meant to solicit information about the individual's conceptions of group memberships and others' perceived comprehension of their work roles. Participants' descriptions of their interactions with librarians and non-librarians were queried separately to see if the participants interactions with people differed based on that person's completion of an LIS degree. In other words, does the participant feel like they have more in common with the LIS community or with another community?

2.8.7 Question 6: Do you identify yourself as a librarian?

This is one of the most important questions in the interview. How one identifies oneself is a central aspect of identity theories. The probing questions related to this question ask the participant to describe why he or she does or does not use this identification.

2.8.8 Question 7: Do you consider yourself to be in a non-traditional job for an LIS graduate?

This is another important question in the interview because it asks the participant to make an assessment about what is "traditional" versus "non-traditional" work for people who completed an LIS degree. To answer this question,

the participants must compare themselves with others, consider employment trends that he or she has observed in fellow LIS graduates, and assess what type of work would be expected from someone who completed an LIS degree.

2.8.9   Question 8: What advice would you give to LIS students who want to pursue jobs outside of libraries?

This question was designed to pull together some of the content discussed earlier such as the answer about which aspects of a participant's LIS education prepared them for their current job and what led them to their current role. This may also allow them to talk about some struggles that they experienced in their own career path in a way that may be less stressful than being directly asked to describe any challenges or barriers that they faced in their career path.

2.8.10   Question 9: Is there anything else about your professional experiences that you wish I'd asked you about?

This question is designed to allow the participant to highlight any aspects of their professional identity or career experience that had not been covered up to this point. It gives them a chance to tell the researcher what is important to them and to guide the conversation to any topics that they feel need to be addressed. This also gives the participant an opportunity to reflect on the conversation and provide some final thoughts or reflections.

2.9 Interview Administration

Generally, the semi-structured interviews in this study ran from thirty to ninety minutes in length and were audio recorded. The interviews included a brief introduction to the project including the presentation of a consent document. The interviews were conducted both in person and using an internet conference tool which allowed for simultaneous verbal exchanges. These two interview modes were utilized in the study to allow for the recruitment of participants from across North America without incurring the travel and logistical costs needed for the researcher to travel to interview participants in various cities.

Various authors have described advantages and disadvantages of different modes of interviewing (Feveile, Olsen & Hogh, 2007; Jäckle, Roberts & Lynn, 2006; Kogoveek, 2006; Duffy, Smith, Terhanian & Bremer, 2005). Many of these articles on using the internet in research focus on the use of online tools that allow for asynchronous communication, such as electronic surveys or electronic mail systems as the delivery method for questionnaires. Because the project used the internet for an oral, synchronous exchange of information, a better parallel might be made between in-person interviews and telephone interviews than in-person interviews and internet surveys. Using synchronous communication tools meant that the disadvantages in terms of the rapid flow of ideas without the limitations of typing speed and the ability to prompt responses immediately rather than being delayed in asking questions that were mentioned in this literature concerning web-based interview techniques using tools such as instant messaging or email were not experienced in this study. In a few cases, technical difficulties were experienced at

the very beginning of interviews as participants and the researcher connected and set up the audio features of the online conference tool, but these problems did not persist throughout the interview.

Reported advantages of in-person interviewing include better response rates, the ability for interviewers to observe interviewees' non-verbal cues, and better establishment of rapport which is associated with higher levels of honesty as well as lower non-response rates (Barriball & While, 1994). The ability of the interviewer to detect non-verbal reactions to questions in an in-person interview may assist the researcher in delivering probes or clarifying questions. In addition, some researchers have found that in-person interview participants expend more effort in responding to questions. On the other hand, participants of in-person interviews may be less likely to respond to sensitive questions truthfully (Jäckle, Roberts & Lynn, 2006). I did not find that the mode of interviewing (face-to-face versus distance) did not impact the willingness of interview participants to respond to questions or to elaborate about their experiences. Participants in both modes of interview discussed difficult employment experiences, bad bosses, and to offer criticisms or suggestions for the profession. The physical presence of an interviewer was found to be less important than the establishment of rapport between the interviewer and interviewee (Roberts, Jäckle & Lynn, 2006).

Strengths and weaknesses have been found for both modes of interviewing and it must be noted that the existing literature on interview mode has been criticized for not conclusively proving whether observed differences were the result of the mode of interview or other interview factors such as question or respondent characteristics

(Jäckle, Roberts & Lynn, 2006). Good question construction is vital whatever interviewing mode is employed. Another observation made by Taylor (2002) is that much of the literature on telephone interviews deals with polling and structured interviews rather than semi-structured interviews:

> As there are clearly different genres of telephone 'interview', it is posited that a new language is required to distinguish the semi-ethnographic open-ended telephone interview from those commonly associated with areas such as polling and market research (Taylor, 2002, p. 19-20)

The strengths and weakness of telephone interviews used for quantitative interviewing were not deemed relevant in this study. The ability to include participants from a larger geographic region was considered to be a significant potential advantage of using both in-person and distance (web- or telephone-based) interviews. Participants were recruited through snowball sampling rather than open calls for participants through recruitment flyers, and a representative sample was not sought, which eliminated the concerns associated with sampling and telephone surveying. Second, the study used open-ended questions rather than multiple choice questions or Likert scales which can lead to satisficing behaviours in online and telephone surveys.

Rather than simply making assumptions about the possible impact of using different modes of interviewing, these two modes of interviewing were tested during the pilot stage of this study. The pilot involved the completion of two interviews: one conducted face-to-face and the other conducted using the online conferencing tool to determine both if the two modes were technically feasible and whether the

same depth and quality of data could be collected from both modes. It was discovered that both modes would work for this study and so the remainder of the interviews were conducted using both formats. Further details about the pilot study are provided in Appendix B.

2.10   Participant Identification

This following section of this thesis addresses the methodological issues associated with participant identification and recruitment in this study. It includes sections on the target population, sample size, and recruitment method. The second section provides information about the career paths of the people who participated in this study.

2.11   Target Population

LIS graduates are defined as individuals who have completed post-secondary studies in library and information science. These post-secondary studies may include graduates from library technician diploma programs offered at the college level, bachelor's degrees, and master's degrees. "LIS graduates" were selected because of the emphasis on professional socialization during formal education that was found in the professional identity literature (Walter, 2008; Wallace & Kay, 2008; Yagil, Spitzer & Ben-Zur, 2001) and because using the term "LIS professionals" may potentially prevent LIS graduates who have completed an LIS education but never worked in a traditional library environment or do not consider themselves to be "library professionals" from participating.

Initially the study had used the phrase "non-traditional, uncommon or unusual roles" to find participants. There is significant diversity within the LIS professions which makes defining a non-traditional, uncommon or unusual role somewhat challenging. There are several ways in which this type of a role might be defined. The first is by looking at the physical setting of the LIS graduate's role. The traditional workplaces of LIS graduates in the twentieth century have been libraries, museums and archives, creating a strong link between LIS graduates and information institutions (Bates, 2012). Numerous LIS graduate employment studies indicate that public and academic libraries are still the most common employers of LIS graduates (Shongwe & Ocholla, 2011; Fialkoff, 2009; Curran, 2006). This is to be expected because these are the types of employers that advertise employment opportunities to the LIS community through LIS schools and professional association job boards. Non-traditional roles for graduates of these programs are roles in organizations or industries that do not require LIS education as either a mandatory or desired attribute in job postings. Therefore, non-traditional jobs for LIS graduates may include positions outside of libraries and in other industry sectors.

Borrowing from gender studies, a second criterion for a non-traditional role for an individual is one in which others who share their characteristics make up less than 30% of the population employed in that role (Chusmir, 1990, p. 11). This 30% of a population criteria as a cut-off for indicating that an individual is in a minority, non-traditional group for a given industry may not be applicable given the far greater variety of possible employment backgrounds. In addition to the fact that the far greater number of possible educational backgrounds for employees may mean that

many groups may fail to achieve a 30% participation rate in an industry sector, educational background is also far less visible than variables such as gender and race. This means that it may be far more difficult to measure. It was anticipated that participants would have a sense of whether it is rare or common for LIS graduates to be employed in their workplace or industry. Using this definition, a non-traditional role for a LIS graduate could be one in which few other LIS graduates are employed, which for the sake of this study will be self-assessed by potential participants rather than empirically measured.

A complication to this study is that another way of defining non-traditional roles may be to look at the type of tasks that the professional performs. If the tasks performed and skills required involve new technologies, new processes, or new service paradigms, then they may be perceived by practitioners as non-traditional even if they are being carried out in traditional settings. Jobs for LIS graduates in this category may include data or metadata librarians in academic libraries, or knowledge management specialists in special or corporate libraries. To a certain degree, the perceptions of LIS graduates in these types of roles will determine to what extent they consider them traditional or non-traditional and this may not be a binary question but a matter of degree in a spectrum from the traditional to non-traditional. Participants in this study were identified through snowball sampling and did not include any individuals working in these types of roles. This means that the question of whether librarians performing non-traditional tasks in library settings consider their work to be traditional or non-traditional remains an open question.

To avoid these complications, the recruitment material and study title was adjusted to search for LIS graduates working outside of libraries. This phrasing was more easily communicated and understood by potential participants and people who recommended potential participants. As discussed in the paragraphs above, other methods of defining "non-traditional" roles for LIS graduates were deemed to be too subjective as they were open to participants' definitions of whether their work qualifies or requires them to have knowledge of their co-workers' professional or educational backgrounds which might not be easily ascertained. In the course of the interview process, many participants did state that they identified working outside of a library as a "non-traditional" role for LIS graduates.

2.12   Participant Demographic Variables

It was expected that theorists and practitioners reading this research project would wonder about the impact of participant demographic variables in this study. There are many potential demographic variables that could have an impact on how individuals experience professional identity. Theoretical sampling proposes that we cannot know which of these variables will have an impact on the theory that a Grounded Theory study is attempting to discover. It is for this reason that a representative sample was not used.

Because it could not be determined in advance of data collection whether demographic factors would play a role in participants' experiences or which demographic factors would be important, possible factors that could be important were considered. Below is a list of possible demographic factors that were

considered in advance as having the possibility of impacting the results of this study. Demographic variables may be considered only if they are shown to be relevant in the coding categories that emerge. These demographic variables were noted in case they appeared to relate to trends in responses. All of the potential impacts of these demographic variables are speculative and were written prior to data collection and analysis in response to trends in the literature. If trends were observed based on demographics, then demographics would be included in the selection of participants. In analyzing the responses obtained from participants it was found that no particular demographic feature was a central factor in the participants' major concern, so these demographic variables were not included in the theory that emerged from this project.

2.12.1   Gender

The LIS profession has traditionally been female dominated. The number of LIS graduates to pursue non-traditional roles has not been analyzed in terms of gender. Will gender have an impact on an LIS graduate's decision to pursue a non-traditional role? Will men or women be more attracted to non-traditional roles? In 2000, Ben Lupton conducted a study entitled "Maintaining Masculinity: Men who do 'Women's Work'" in which he identified several strategies that men in traditionally female professions employ to maintain their masculinity. These included taking a careerist stance (emphasizing how their feminine jobs will improve their career prospects over time), identifying with more powerful male groups, and representing the work as more masculine (Lupton, 2000, p. 536). In the case of LIS graduates, this may manifest in male graduates being more attracted to jobs that are more

closely related to the 'information science' than the 'library' portion of their education or a greater attraction to non-traditional roles, which would show the careerist value of a LIS degree. The reason for this is that jobs related to the 'information science' side of the LIS profession are more strongly connected to masculine disciplines and tasks such as information technology, whereas librarianship has traditionally been viewed as a feminine profession (Buschman & Carbone, 1991).

2.12.2   I-School vs. L-School Education

There is a divide within the LIS education community that is characterized as the I-school vs. L-school debate. I-schools are those institutions which emphasize an information science curriculum while L-schools are focused on librarianship. Course offerings at I-schools and L-schools may be quite different. I-schools will tend to recruit professors with computer science backgrounds and offer a wide range of information technology courses. L-schools, on the other hand, will focus on hiring professors who have backgrounds in library science and will offer courses that are specifically tailored to library work environments. Both the types of courses that an LIS student completes and the attitude of their professors may have an impact on the types of jobs that they will apply for after graduation. The types of jobs that are advertised on I-school and L-school job boards may even be different depending on which professional communities the school has included in its network. Whether a student joined an I-school or an L-school program may also be a factor in their career decisions.

2.12.3   Time of LIS Studies

LIS curricula have changed over time as the LIS community has debated the importance of including more classes to teach management, leadership, and information technology skills to students. When the LIS graduate completed his or her LIS studies could therefore be as much of a factor as where those studies were completed. LIS graduates who completed their studies in the past decade will have certainly been exposed to different information technologies than those who completed their studies ten, twenty, or thirty years ago. LIS practitioners who completed their studies before the mid-1990s when the Internet rose in prominence to become a tool used by the general public rather than just a small specialist community would have had a very different experience than those who are graduating from library schools in the post-Internet world.

2.12.4   Type of Non-Library Role

Participants for this study possessed a wide range of job titles across industry sectors and employer types. Industry sector, job title, and type of role impact the professional identities of participants. The degree to which the specific job role is similar or dissimilar from a role that the LIS graduate could play in a traditional LIS workplace may be the first factor to consider. Some roles may feel like a natural transition for LIS graduates, utilizing not only the transferrable competencies that they obtained in their LIS studies such as active listening and analysis skills, but also some of the more specialized skills such as controlled vocabulary use and development. Other roles may feel like a further departure from one's educational

background, requiring the LIS graduate to feel that they had to develop all of their role-related skills and knowledge on the job.

At the employer level, each employing organization has its own organizational or corporate culture. There may be some that have a culture that fits with the values and attitudes that the LIS graduate developed during his or her LIS education, whereas others may feel foreign. This may impact whether an LIS graduate predominantly associates with his or her employer or profession.

The same division of loyalties may occur at the industry sector level. For example, an LIS graduate employed in the information and communication technology (ICT) sector may be more likely to identify as an information technology (IT) professional and associate with IT communities of practice.

2.12.5   Experience Working in Library Roles

Whether an individual entered a non-library role immediately after completing his or her LIS studies and remained on that path or started their career in traditional roles and then transitioned into non-traditional roles may also have an impact on their experience of professional identity. Johnson (2002) wrote that "Professional education and training encompasses all coursework, practicum, internships, and work-related experience within the context of a graduate-level, professionally accredited program of instruction leading to a master's or doctorate degree" (p. 623). This suggests that experience working in an LIS environment may bean important part of the socialization process for new entrants into the LIS

profession. If an individual completed an LIS program of study but never worked in a library role, will their socialization into the LIS community be as complete as the socialization of an LIS graduate who had this experience? How will this lack of professional LIS experience impact their sense of connection with the LIS community?

2.13   Impact of Participant Demographic Variables

It turned out that these demographic variables did not impact the types of responses that study participants provided and would not serve as predictors of professional identity. The interviewing processes quickly eliminated fact sheet or demographic variables as potential predictors for given types of responses. Looking at these as predictors of behaviours or attitudes led to the identification of exceptions very quickly. For example, when it came to identifying as a librarian, participants of both genders were found in each of the condition groups (always, sometimes, never, or using a modified title), as were participants who had or did not have library work experience. Because of this, none of these demographic variables were used in participant recruitment. This makes sense given that the goal of a classical Grounded Theory study is to produce a theory that works at the conceptual level, independent of people, place, and time.

2.14   Participant Recruitment

Two types of sampling were utilized in this study: snowball or chain referral sampling and theoretical sampling. Snowball sampling was used to identify potential

participants while theoretical sampling was used to determine when to cease data collection.

Snowball or chain referral sampling was utilized to build a potential list of participants for this study. This method of sampling involves soliciting recommendations for participants from other participants or potential participants. This method is used to build samples of difficult to reach populations, and LIS graduates in non-library careers may qualify as this type of population because they may not be involved in LIS professional associations, which are a common source of participant recruitment in LIS research (see for example Schreiner & Pope, 2011; Stronski, 2004; Sinotte, 2004; Scherdin & Beaubien, 1995) and because they will be scattered across industry sectors and employer types. The fact that this study is not seeking a representative sample also suggests that this method of participant identification would be appropriate (Biernacki & Waldorf, 1981, p. 145). The snowball process was initiated through personal contacts of the researcher and research supervisors. Additionally, interviewees were asked to recommend future participants.

Theoretical sampling involves the recruitment of participants based on the data that emerges through analysis with the objective of achieving theoretical saturation. This is a distinct characteristic of this method as

> Theoretical sampling violates the ideal of hypothesis testing in that the direction of new data collection is determined, not by a priori hypotheses, but by ongoing interpretation of data and emerging conceptual categories. (Suddaby, 2006, p. 634)

Because no assumptions are made at the start of the study regarding which data to collect, an attempt was made to capture as broad a range of experiences as possible in the first rounds of sampling. It was understood that covering every possible permutation would not be possible. Even the act of identifying every possible permutation of types of non-library roles, the paths that participants followed to reach those roles or participants' personal characteristics in terms of demographic or philosophical positions would not be possible. This is not a problem for a Grounded Theory study according to the methodology's procedures:

> The depth of theoretical sampling refers to the amount of data collected on a group and on a category. In studies of verification and description it is typical to collect as much data as possible on the "whole" group. Theoretical sampling, though, does not require the fullest possible coverage on the whole group except at the very beginning of research, when the main categories are emerging – and these tend to emerge very fast. (Glaser & Strauss, 1967, p. 69)

Several steps were undertaken to enhance the variety of participants recruited in the first few rounds of interviewing. First, participants were taken from three referrers' professional networks. Participants recommended by these early participants through snowball sampling were not recruited until later rounds of interviews in case they were recommended because of perceived similarities in experiences or attitudes. Second, participant demographic data was examined to determine if any trends would emerge that would suggest that a typology might be possible in the future. Although creating a typology was not the objective of this study, if certain patterns emerged that suggested that a certain participant characteristic or type of work experience led to similar attitudes or behaviours on the part of participants, then this would be used to guide future sampling. For example, if it was found that participants who completed their studies in the past five years had a different

perspective on the profession than participants who completed their studies fifteen to twenty years ago, or if male participants described their behaviours differently than female participants, then this would have been used to recruit future participants in a targeted way to capture groups based on these observations.

Because of the constant comparison feature of grounded theory, whenever themes or experiences were repeated between interviews, participants were prompted in order to explore the similarities or differences between participant responses. In addition, batches of interviews were compared to see which trends emerged across the group. Throughout the constant comparison process the role of demographic variables was considered. Through this comparison process it became apparent that all of the potential demographic features that were considered as potentially influential did not fully predict response patterns. For example, similar themes emerged in the responses of male and female participants, participants with different levels of professional work experience, and participants working in different types of roles. This led to the conclusion that recruiting for particular participant characteristics would be less important than checking on themes in response patterns through modifications to the interview guide. In other words, theoretical sampling was not conducted to include only participants exhibiting certain demographic characteristics.

Theoretical sampling ended up being manifested through the types of questions that were asked of participants, including references to comments made by other participants in previous interviews, rather than in a decision to filter for

participants with a particular professional background or other demographic feature. This aligns with Glaser's description of the process:

> Much GT interviewing is a very passive listening and then later during theoretical sampling focused questions to other participants during site spreading and based on emergent categories. It is hard for mutual constructed interpretations to characterize this data even though the data may be interpretive: for example, psychotherapists telling the interviewer how to see a psychiatric facility or a supervisor telling how to understand his foremen. (Glaser, 2012, p. 29)

In some cases this sampling was done subtly through probing of questions which related to themes that had emerged in earlier rounds of analysis. In other cases, the theoretical sampling was more obvious. For example, in certain cases where the phrasing used by participants was very similar, the researcher would use a statement such as "A previous participant stated [insert statement here], what do you think of that/or does that resonate with you?"

2.15   Sample Size

In theoretical sampling sample, size cannot be pre-determined, nor should any presumptions about the significance of any demographic characteristic be made (Lysack, Luborsky, & Dillaway, 2006). Data collection continues until saturation occurs. Glaser and Strauss (1967) defined saturation as the point where "no additional data are being found whereby the sociologist can develop properties of the categories" (p. 61). Corbin and Strauss (2008) expanded the definition of saturation to include "the development of categories in terms of their properties and dimensions, including variation, and if theory building, the delineating of relationships between concepts" (p. 143). In the case of this study, theoretical

saturation was reached with 20 participants. A common set of categories was discovered after the completion of 16 interviews, but interviewing continued to make sure that the researcher was in fact observing common themes and not forcing a fit into categories. After an additional four interviews the researcher felt confident that enough data had been captured to develop a theory to capture participants' main concerns.

2.16   Data Analysis

This section describes how data in this study were collected and analysed in accordance with the theoretical sampling and constant comparison practices of the Grounded Theory methodology. As outlined earlier in this chapter, theoretical sampling refers to the practice of collecting data in parallel with data analysis and allowing the saturation of code categories to guide sampling (Zarif, 2012; Glaser, 2012; Suddaby, 2006; Boychuck Duchscher & Morgan, 2004). Constant comparison involves the continual examination of incidents with other incidents gathered in the course of a study (Glaser, 2012, 1998). In this model, data are collected until codes and categories discovered through data analysis are complete (theoretical saturation). This means that the researcher must analyze each portion of data as they are collected before collecting additional data to ensure that theoretical saturation has yet to occur. Each portion of data (interview) that is gathered in the study is compared to other collected data (constant comparison) to identify categories with the aim of discovering a "core category" and ultimately producing a theory that fits the data. Evidence that constant comparison has occurred can be seen in revisions of interview questions based on discoveries found during data analysis. The diagram below

provides a general overview of the data collection and data analysis steps in a Grounded Theory study as adopted by the researcher in planning data collection and analysis. The process included two possible participant recruitment strategies – snowball sampling and participant recruitment through social media advertising – which were developed and included in the study's ethics application. The snowball sampling recruitment method proved to be sufficiently successful as to eliminate the need for social media recruitment. In addition, the "Potential Participant Screening Survey" which was developed and approved as part of the ethics approval process for this study, was not used. This survey was developed as a means of screening potential participants recruited through social media. Because all of the participants recruited through snowball sampling met the criteria of having an LIS education and working in a non-library role, this extra information collection was seen as an unnecessary collection of data which would slow the analysis and constant comparison portions of the study.

Figure 1: High-level Grounded Theory procedures diagram
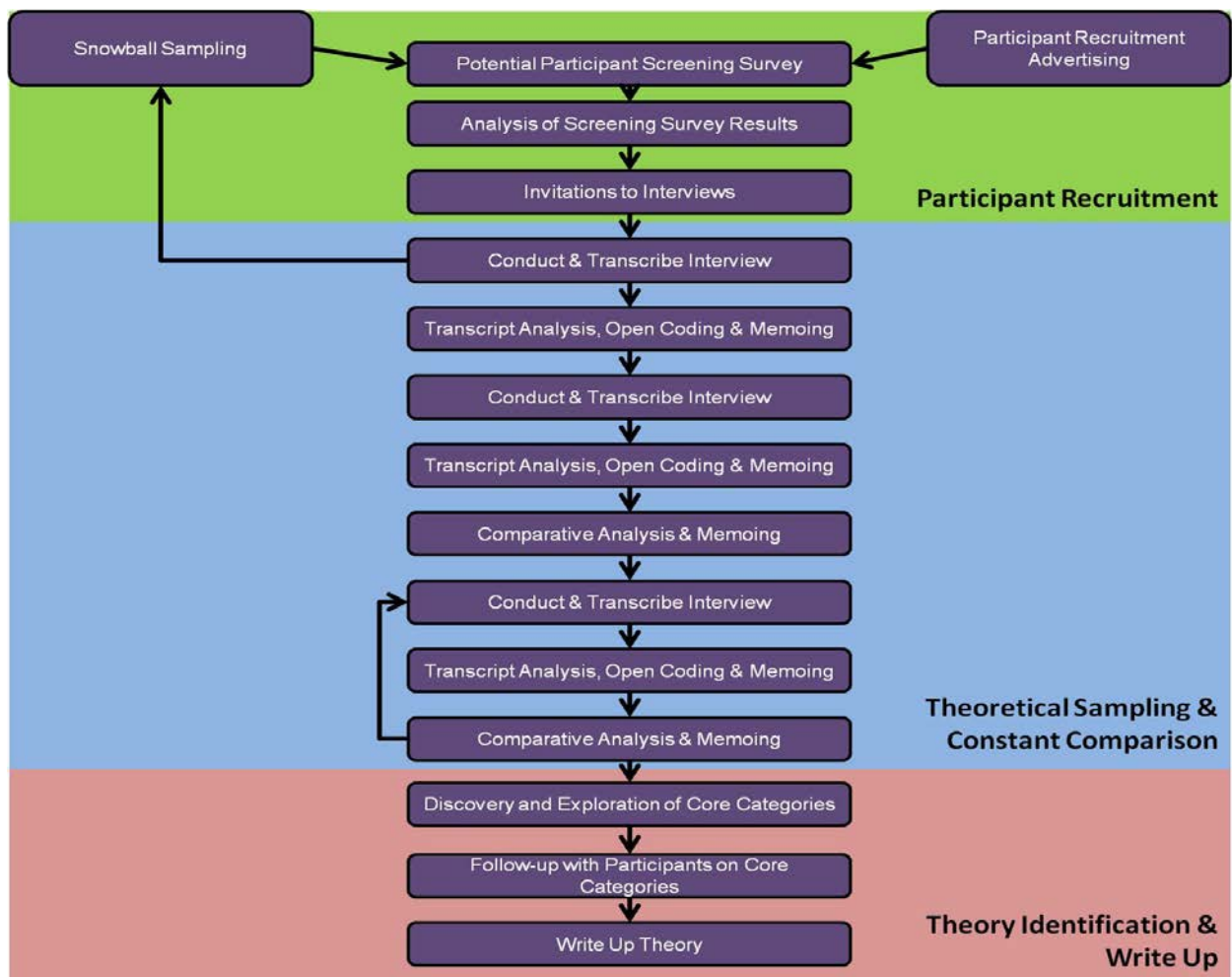
The next sections provide details on the specific steps and processes that were undertaken at each step of analysis in order to develop a substantial theory. The order in which these analysis sub-steps were undertaken is depicted in figure 2 below.

Figure 2: Data analysis procedures diagram
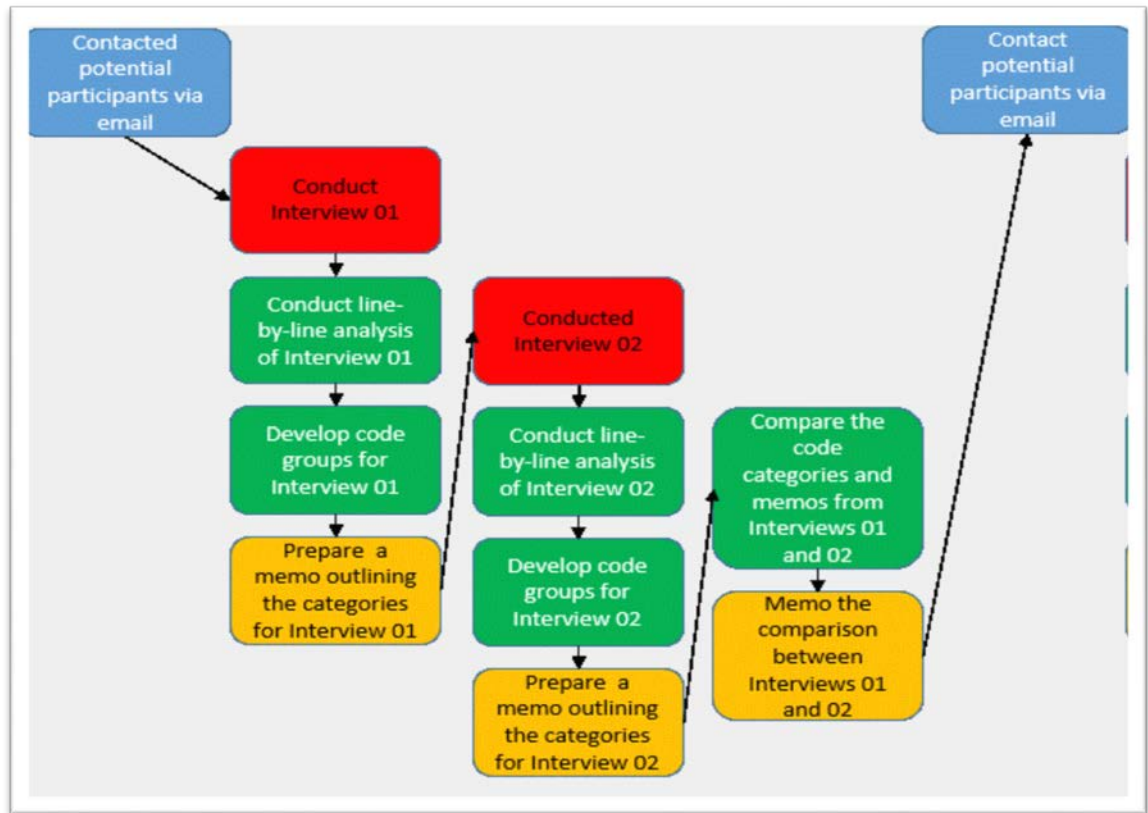
The diagram above shows how analysis was performed on each individual interview, followed by comparisons of groups of interviews. This process of comparing batches of interviews was completed four times over the course of this study: (1) during the pilot study phase using interviews 1 and 2, (2) after the first six interviews were completed, (3) after sixteen interviews were completed, and (4) after twenty interviews were completed. In order to ensure that pre-conceptions or pet theories from an earlier batch did not lead to the forcing of code groups, categories were completely reanalyzed and re-grouped each time. The individual steps undertaken in this process are described in detail below.

2.16.1   Step 1: Line-by-Line Analysis

The first step in the analysis process in this study was line-by-line analysis of the transcript from each interview that was conducted. The transcription of interviews is not a required part of the procedure for Glaserian Grounded Theory which allows researchers to capture the content and key points in interviews at a more abstract level through memos:

> When doing grounded theory there is no need for complete recording of the interview as one would want in descriptive completeness. Theoretical completeness only requires those notes written down after an interview to be later used for constant comparisons. What is not noted will, if relevant, be remembered later through associations occurring during constant comparisons. The researcher can trust this approach. (Glaser, 1998, p. 107)

I elected to create audio recordings and transcripts of the interviews in this study in order to ensure that interview content was accurately recorded and to assist in the analysis process by facilitating recall of information. In order to facilitate later coding, the transcripts were moved into a table format with each question and response included in a separate table cell. The transcribed text was placed in the left column of the table and researcher notes and observations were typed in the right column. Observations and notes included two main elements: contextualising comments and keywords from the response text. The context comments focused on what the participant wanted to communicate in their answer to the question. This included notes on what questions were being asked, what aspect of the question the interviewee addressed, and impressions of the overall intention of the response (the main idea the participant was communicating). The keywords include individual

words and phrases taken from the participant's response. The purpose of capturing keywords was to ensure that any codes that are developed from the interview reflect the participant's own language. Figure 3 shows a screen-capture from one of the analysis tables prepared in this step in the analysis process. The first column contains a direct quote from the transcript of the interview and the second column contains notes prepared by the researcher concerning the interview quote. The first block of text contains a general description of the quote which is followed by keywords taken from the quote.

Figure 3: Line-by-line analysis table

PARTICIPANT: I had been out of active librarianship for…by that time about ten years…umm – I'd actually gone into the corporate environment in a totally different field and then I managed a non-profit for four years – or for six years. So I hadn't been an active librarian for like 11 or 12 years.	This comment followed upon the answer concerning why she decided to start her own business. Links back to librarianship. Describes "active librarianship" which seems to indicate that there are passive ways in which a person can be a librarian Keywords: - "Active librarianship" - Different fields - Management
INTERVIEWER: Ah ok. So what has your career path looked like from the time you finished your library degree to your present job? How many different sectors were you in?	Following up on the comment that the participant had worked in several different fields – seeking clarification on these different roles.

2.16.2 Step 2: Processing of Line-by-Line Analysis

The second step in the analysis process was to look at all of the keywords from each interview together in order to determine if there were any repeated keywords or response themes. The contextual notes helped with this sorting process because they allowed the researcher to see if the same keywords were being used to

describe the same or different phenomena. These grouped keywords were then placed in a PowerPoint document in which each group was assigned a square which could be moved. This approach allowed groups to be moved around and for the size of some categories relative to others to be quickly perceived. Using a different colour for each interview allowed for the linking of keyword groups to particular interviews in later stages of analysis. Figure 3 includes an image of one of the code group sheets prepared for an interview in this project. Each of the coloured squares includes a set of related keywords pulled from the interview transcript notes.

Figure 4: Raw interview code groups
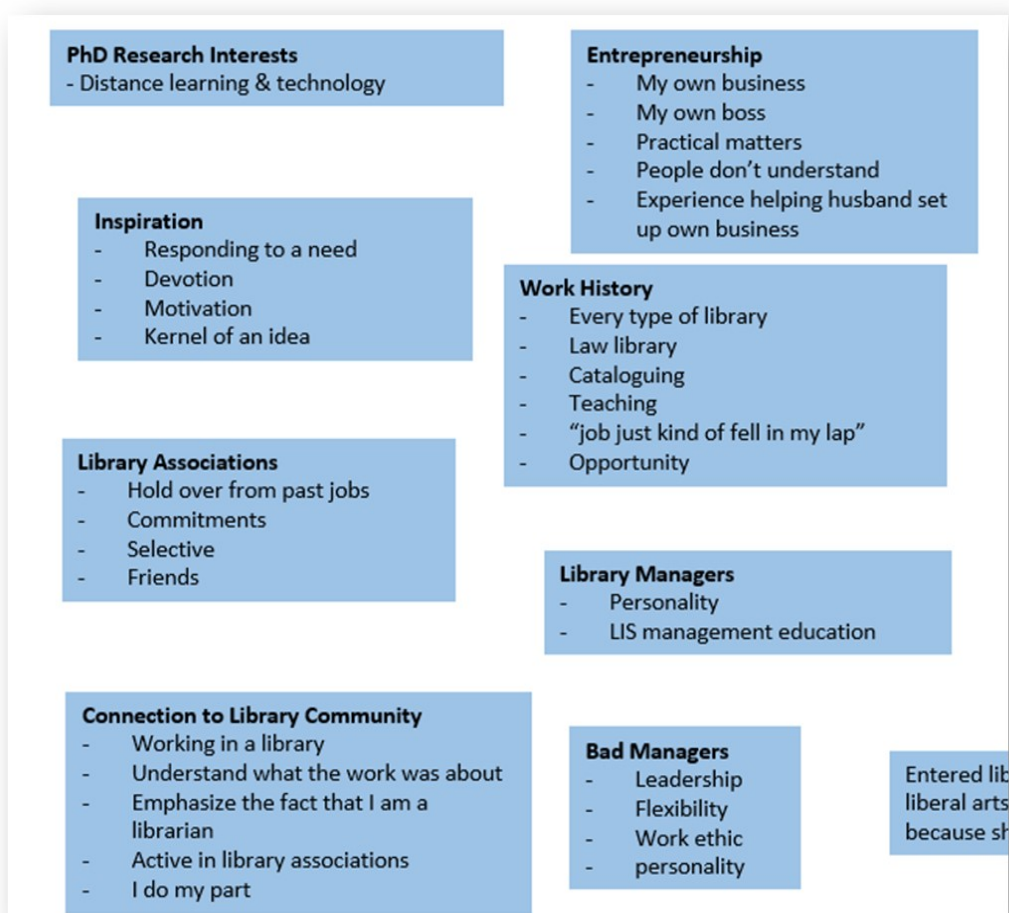
The image presented above as "Figure 4: Raw interview code groups" shows a screen capture of some of the initial code categories developed for the third interview in this study. These raw interview code groups take keywords a brief phrases from the interview transcript and use them to form thematic groups. The groups for each interview were unique and larger code categories were created in the process.

2.16.3   Step 3: Memoing Line-by-Line Analysis

The third stage of the analysis process was to develop a memo describing the phenomena observed and captured in the keyword groups taken from the interview. The first section of each memo was dedicated to describing the participant's career path. The remaining sections in each memo were different for each interview as they were grouped to reflect the key code groups that emerged from the interview. A copy of this memo was sent to the interview participant for their review and feedback. This step actually aligns more closely with Charmaz's Constructivist Grounded Theory than Glaserian Grounded Theory which uses this technique to ensure that participants' experiences have been accurately captured, which is a means of evaluating the theory which emerges from the study in terms of fit and workability. I did not take these memo reviews as far as Charmaz's variation of Grounded Theory suggests because I shared only participants' own interview memos with them rather than memos discussing the emerging theory which incorporated the experiences of multiple experiences:

> Although member-checking generally refers to taking ideas back to research participants for their confirmation, you can use return visits to gather material to elaborate your categories. Cheryl Albas and Dan Albas devised a clever method of checking and refining their categories late in their research. They explain their major categories to certain

participants they have studied and then inquire whether and to what extent these categories fit each participant's experience. (Charmaz, 2006, p. 111)

This review was largely meant to determine if participant experiences had been captured accurately. Several participants responded to these memos with corrections to their career chronology. This memoing process started the process of seeking to identify the participants' main concerns.

2.16.4   Step 4: Developing Initial Code Categories

The fourth stage of the analysis process was to look at all of the grouped keywords from the interview and use them to develop a list of preliminary code categories. These code categories were created using gerunds. This level of coding was designed to find a fairly small set of activities that describe the experiences of the interview participant. The list below provides the set of initial code categories created from the keyword groups shown above.

Interview 006 Initial Code Categories:

- Building a specialization

- Marketing oneself as adding value

- Finding a community

- Finding mentors

- Developing a librarianship and information management mindset

- Transitioning into library roles

- Choosing a career path based on early encouragement

- Connecting people with information

- Making a big impact

- Finding correlations between librarianship and the high tech sector

- Finding one's own way independently

- Finding meaningful job titles

This analysis step was important because it provided potential ideas for theoretical sampling. Glaser describes this process as follows:

> In-vivo codes propel the researcher to theoretically sample and constantly compare as the motion of the core category emerges with its still latent integration. Listening to the subjects becomes easier and more relevant as grist for the constant comparisons that continually correct, verify and generate new categories and their properties (Glaser, 1998, p. 102)

2.16.5   Step 5: Constant Comparison of Line-by-Line Analysis

The fifth stage of the analysis process involved the start of the constant comparison process. In this stage the grouped keywords were explored to see if there were any common themes or topics that were discussed by different interview participants. In order to be able to see connections between ideas, PowerPoint was used in this process. Groups of concepts and keywords were copied and pasted into new keyword groups on new PowerPoint presentation slides, creating a new slide for each concept. Creating concept categories that were directly tied to specific interview questions from the original interview guide was generally avoided. For example, all participants were asked whether they identify as a librarian, so this is not depicted in a concept slide. Instead, slides were created for concepts that came

up in the course of answering questions like the one mentioned above. For example, instead of creating a slide called "Identifying as a librarian", it was found that many of the participants discussed their perceptions of librarians and libraries or the perceptions of libraries and librarians that they have noticed in other people. Figure 5 below shows an example of a themed data sheet from the study. Each colour of text box shows quotes from a different interview.

Figure 5: Themed data / Theoretical coding
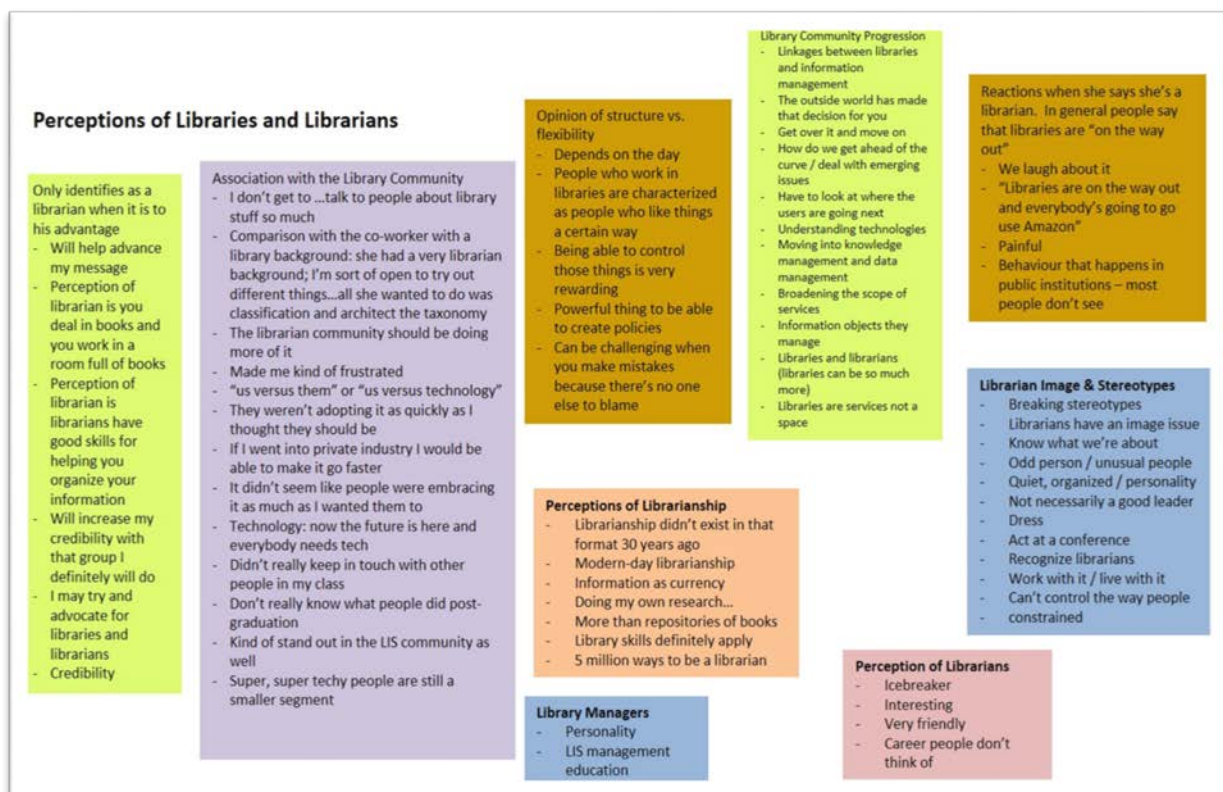
The screen capture above shows an image of a PowerPoint presentation slide prepared to show how content from various interviews were assembled to show how similar themes emerged between interviews. Each of the different coloured boxes was taken from a different interview. The first six interviews yielded the following concepts or experience groups:

- Reasons for going to library school

- Job tasks

- Job titles / self-labels

- Skills needed to succeed

- Career path / reasons for taking jobs

- Perceptions of libraries and librarians

- Relationship with library associations

- The difference between librarians and other professionals

- Connecting with the librarian community

- Mentors

This step is important because it allows for the comparison of incidents across participants.

> In comparing incident to incident and incident to concepts…keep in mind that concept generation is a meaning making activity. Or more precisely a theoretical meaning making activity. The constant comparing carefully generates the meaning of the category or property. It corrects impression generation of concepts as it validates the fit in naming the category, its relevance and its workability (Glaser, 1998, p. 140)

Comparing incidents helped to eliminate pet theories or ideas about simple causal explanations. The researcher found that participants raised many interesting and appealing ideas which could easily have led to the exploration of ideas that did not represent the main concern of all participants. Looking at different cases also allowed for the elimination of many demographic or fact sheet variables as important to the main concern.

2.16.6   Step 6: Memoing of Constant Comparison of Line-by-Line Analysis

The sixth stage of the analysis process was to create memos for each of the concept or experience categories found in the interviews. The process of creating these memos allowed for a deeper examination of concepts that arise in the interviews and for investigations into similarities that arose across interviews. While the individual interview memos focused on the key themes that were found in each interview, these constant comparison memos looked for trends across interviews. In cases where shared concepts were found across several interviews, other interview transcripts would be re-read to determine if the themes were apparent in these interviews as well.

2.16.7   Step 7: Constant Comparison of Code Categories

The seventh stage of the analysis process was to perform constant comparison between the gerund code categories found for each interview and to develop a list of categories that removes duplicates and describes phenomena covered in multiple interviews. The image below shows the unprocessed codes. As mentioned earlier, code categories were developed from scratch four times throughout the analysis process. The reason for this was to ensure that all of the data was explored holistically and that ideas from later interviews were given equal weight to those in early interviews and not forced into existing categories. Figure 6 shows the set of potential code categories pulled from interviews 1 to 6 which were further sorted to develop the first set of potential code categories for the group of interviews. As with the other figures included in this report each colour represents a different interview.

The code categories were taken from the groups of keywords developed in the interview-level analysis.

Figure 6: Comparison of code categories (colour-coded by interview)
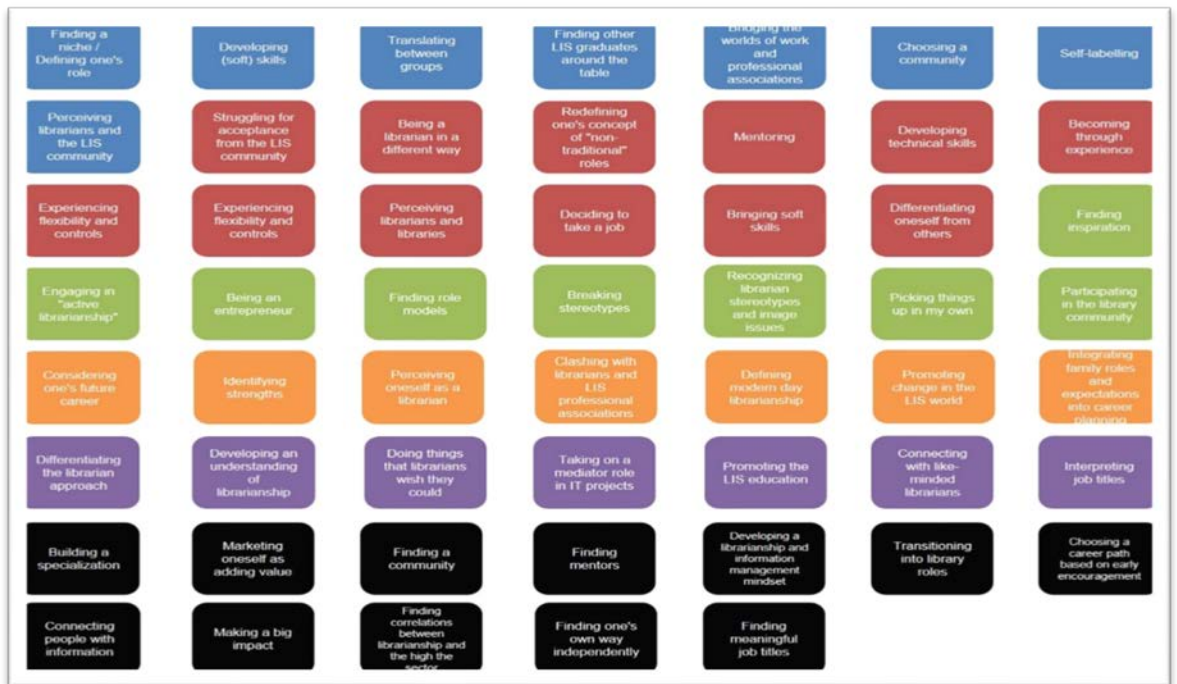
2.16.8   Step 8: Selective Coding

Developing a theory is an iterative process. At several points in the process of developing a theory, initial categories were reanalyzed in relation to categories that were identified as potentially important to the identification of the participants' main concern, followed by the development of a theory that conceptually explained how participants resolved that concern. These categories were potential core categories. Glaser describes the identification of potential core categories as follows:

> [O]ne of the categories seems to be consistently related to many other categories and their properties over and over. This category soon

becomes classified as the core category because most other categories are related to it. This core category provides and becomes the latent structure of the theory as Lazarsfeld termed it. (Glaser, 1998, p. 26)

Memos were written to describe what was found through the selective coding process. These memos were used to understand and elaborate categories:

Theoretical codes implicitly conceptualize how the substantive codes will relate to each other as interrelated, multivariate hypotheses in accounting for resolving the main concern. They are emergent and weave the fractured story turned into concepts back to an organized whole theory. They provide the models for theory generation and emerge during coding, memoing and especially in sorting (Glaser, 1998, p. 163)

2.16.9   Step 9: Memo Sorting

The final stage in the data analysis process was to examine all of the memos created through the coding process. This sorting process allowed me to see patterns and make connections between the various ideas that emerged from the data. This is the phase in which the theory began to emerge:

Sorting is the last stage of the grounded theory process that challenges the researcher's creativity. In fact it is the epitome of the theory generation process. Writing is merely a write up of the sorting piles. Sorting a rich volume of memos into an integrated theory is the culmination of months of conceptual buildup (Glaser, 1998, p. 187)

The result of an examination of all of the memos produced in this study led to the draft of the theory that is outlined in "Chapter 5: Personalizing Professionalism".

2.16.10 Data Analysis Summary

This section provided an overview of the data analysis procedures utilized in this study. The preceding sections included screen captures of some of the tools that were used in the development of code categories in this project. Full depictions of the code categories are included in "Appendix F: Code Categories". Data were analyzed using the constant comparison processes prescribed in the Glaserian Grounded Theory methodology. The data analysis protocols provided by the Classic Grounded Theory methodology were designed to prevent researchers from preconceiving ideas and ensuring that the theory that does emerge is grounded in the data. They also guide the researcher to thinking at a conceptual level by looking beyond descriptions. The codes and theory developed through this data analysis process are described in "Chapter 5: Personalizing Professionalism".

2.17   Research Quality

Reliability and validity are traditionally the concepts use to measure research quality and they can be applied to ways in which research projects are developed, delivered, and analysed. In general, reliability and validity refer to the extent to which the study's methodology is consistent and measures what it was designed to measure. There are multiple forms of reliability and validity. Validity in qualitative research includes descriptive validity, interpretive validity, theoretical validity, evaluative validity, and generalizability (Onwuegbuzie & Burke, 2006). In the qualitative definition, validity is internal, referring to the quality of the interpretation of results rather than to "[a correspondence] to how things really are out there in the

world" (Sale, Lahfeld & Brazil, 2002, p. 45). Some measures undertaken to improve the reliability and validity of this study were described in the procedures section of this chapter. When examining the quality of a Grounded Theory study, however, different research quality criteria may apply. These criteria are fit, transferability/generality, and understanding.

Fit is arguably the most important evaluation criteria for a Grounded Theory study as it emanates from Glaser and Strauss's original 1967 work, "The Discovery of Grounded Theory" and refers to the need for theories to actually fit the situations they were developed to address (Cooney, 2011). Fit refers to "how closely concepts fit with the incidents they are representing, and this is related to how thoroughly the constant comparison of incidents to concepts was done" (Zarif, 2012, p. 976). A theory that 'fits' should describe the phenomena being examined without having to force the data into a category (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Hunter, Murphy, Grealish, Casey & Keady, 2010).

Fit is related to the characteristic of transferability or generality, meaning that the theory should be applicable several similar situations (Cooney, 2011). Transferability may be determined through follow-up research in which a theory developed in one situation is tested in other situations. In the case of this study, a theory concerning how LIS graduates in non-traditional roles experience professional identity may be applied to individuals with other professional backgrounds who are working in non-traditional roles for their given professions, such as teachers, engineers, or nurses.

The evaluation criterion of understanding states that the theory produced by the researcher should be "readily understandable by people concerned with this area" (Cutcliffe, 2005, p. 425). In their original description of Grounded Theory, Glaser and Strauss (1967) wrote that "the theory must also be readily understandable to sociologists of any viewpoint, to students and to significant laymen" (p. 3). A test of the fit and understandability of the theory produced by this study will be the reactions of participants to memos or other written documents that articulate the core category and theory that emerged from the data. If participants read these documents and report that what they have read speaks to their experience, this will be considered a good sign that the data analysis and theory development have been performed appropriately. If the theory that emerges from this project is attended to by the LIS practitioner community, then the study will have met the criterion of Relevance, which Zarif (2012) described as a study that captures the attention of participants or practitioners in addition to the academic community (p. 976), then this study can be considered a success based on these criteria An assessment of the success in this study in meeting these evaluation criteria is presented in the concluding chapter of this thesis.

2.18   Conclusion

This chapter provided information on the procedures utilized in this study as well as the rationale for their selection. The chapter began by addressing the selection of Grounded Theory, the variations of this methodology, the selection of Glaserian Grounded Theory and the key characteristics of the methodology. Next, participant identification and recruitment were discussed. Significant emphasis was

given on describing potential demographic variables and participant recruitment.

The approach to data analysis utilized in this study followed. It included both the

principles from the literature and specific examples of how they were applied by the

researcher. The chapter ended with a discussion of the research quality criteria that

have been identified for Grounded Theory research projects.

Chapter 3: Theoretical Sensitivity and the Early Literature Review

3.1   Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to present the results of a literature review that was conducted prior to data collection and analysis in this study. Literature reviews play a slightly different role in the Grounded Theory methodology than in other methodologies due to the importance of theoretical sensitivity in this methodology. Some Grounded Theory researchers recommend that literature reviews not be conducted prior to data collection and analysis because an early literature review can either result in the collection and review of literature areas that do not prove to be relevant to the theory that emerges from the data or, more seriously, that the literature that was read prior to data collection and analysis could bias the researcher into attempting to prove or disprove an existing theory. This chapter starts with a discussion of theoretical sensitivity and the role of the literature review in Grounded Theory studies. This is followed by the results of the preliminary literature review. This literature review was written in future tense to illustrate the types of questions that were inspired by the literature prior to data collection and analysis. This section has been left in future tense to illustrate the context created by the literature for the researcher prior to engagement with the literature. This was done to make transparent any potential biases that the literature could have caused. "Chapter 6: Integrating the Literature" can be read as a direct response to this chapter of the thesis, as it provides responses to the questions raised in the first literature review. In some cases, the data responded directly to the questions raised by the literature and in

other cases, it showed that participants' main concerns were not captured by the literature explored in this early literature review.

3.2   Theoretical Sensitivity

Theoretical sensitivity is a key feature of a Grounded Theory study. Being theoretically sensitive means allowing the theory to emerge from the data in the study rather than from a preconceived idea that the researcher formed through reading other theoretical literature or through their own professional or research experiences. Glaser and Strauss developed the Grounded Theory methodology with the aim of creating a set of procedures that would increase theoretical sensitivity:

> Potential theoretical sensitivity is lost when the sociologist commits himself exclusively to one specific preconceived theory (e.g., formal organization) for then he becomes doctrinaire and can no longer "see around" either his pet theory or any other. He becomes insensitive, or even defensive, toward the kinds of questions that cast doubt on his theory, he is preoccupied with testing, modifying and seeing everything from this one angle (Glaser & Strauss, 1967, p. 46)

Glaser and Strauss, and other Grounded Theory researchers, have provided explanations as to how theoretical sensitivity may be compromised and what researchers can do to maintain it. The methodology chapter of this thesis described how attempts to maintain theoretical sensitivity were built into the data analysis procedures for this study. This chapter will explore how theoretical sensitivity was addressed in the initial phases of the study and through the literature review.

A key piece of advice that Glaser has offered to researchers is to enter into a project with as open a mind as possible regarding the substantive topic under investigation:

> The first step in gaining theoretical sensitivity is to enter the research setting with as few predetermined ideas as possible – especially logically deducted, a priori hypotheses. In this posture, the analyst is able to remain sensitive to the data by being able to record events and detect happenings without first having them filtered through and squared with pre-existing hypotheses and biases. His mandate is to remain open to what is actually happening (Glaser, 1978, p. 2-3)

This advice has been interpreted as a need for a researcher to be a "blank slate" with regards to the research subject. One's ability to enter a research project without any preconceptions about the topic under investigation is very difficult – some might argue impossible – as researchers likely selected their research question because of their interest in the topic stemming from personal or professional experiences. If one cannot be a "blank slate", then the next best course of action is to develop as conscious an understanding of one's potential biases and assumptions as possible. "By identifying your baseline position before you begin, you can work at consciously developing your theoretical sensitivity during the research process" (Birks & Mills, 2011, p. 59). The researcher's baseline position prior to data collection is expressed through their development of the research interest and the impact of the early literature review on their research process. These two topics are discussed in this chapter.

3.3   Development of Research Interest & Potential Biases

Several personal interests and experiences influenced my decision to research this topic. The first of these was experiences as a LIS graduate working inside and outside of libraries. Interacting with other LIS graduates who worked in public and academic library settings while I was working either outside of libraries or in special library roles reminded me of the research on "Third Culture Kids" that I had been exposed to growing up attending international schools (making me a "Third Culture Kid"). This is a theory that discusses the identities of people who grew up the way I did, living in different countries as a result of their parents' jobs. It suggests that when these children return to their countries of citizenship they may feel like "hidden immigrants" because they did not grow up in the cultural context of their peers, but their difference is invisible to others. I wondered about the experience of people who operated in roles that were different from those experienced by others in their professional communities. Did the invisible difference of professional background lead to different types of relationships with their co-workers (those who did the same work but had different professional or educational backgrounds) or their fellow graduates (those who had the same professional background but did different work)? How do people in this situation conceptualize themselves? How do they conceptualize their profession? The second factor in my decision to pursue this research topic was my motivation to assist people in feeling empowered to seize a range of opportunities. I believed that speaking with people who had taken advantage of a wide range of employment opportunities beyond the types of library roles traditionally associated with the LIS degree would provide me with data that could help other LIS students and graduates to do the same.

This chapter addresses the role of the literature review in a classical Grounded Theory study. According to the Grounded Theory methodology, a literature review should not be performed until after data collection has begun so that the researcher only explores literature which is relevant to the data. This allows the researcher to target his or her literature searches based on concepts that emerge from the data. The methodology does, however, acknowledge that this approach is not always possible because some understanding of the literature or gaps within the literature in a certain area is necessary for PhD students to achieve candidature (Dunne, 2011). The debate over the placement of the literature review in Grounded Theory is discussed below. The concluding section of this chapter discusses approaches taken in this study and the impact that conducting literature reviews at various points in the study had on the research process.

3.4   Literature Reviews in Grounded Theory Research

A literature review is traditionally performed at the start of a research project. The literature review's purpose is "to frame and ground one's discovery, analysis, and synthesis of the relevant secondary literature ... [and] to inaugurate new questions, concerns, and inquiry beyond what we already know from that scholarship" (Bernier, 2011, p. 2). In other words, performing a literature review at the beginning of a research project provides a researcher with hypotheses for testing and/or a starting point for further exploration. The role and timing of the literature review in the Grounded Theory methodology is a subject of debate.

Because the purpose of Grounded Theory is to generate a new theory based on data some scholars have argued that a literature review should be avoided at the start of the project to avoid contaminating the data and resulting theory. Indeed, Glaser, one of the founders of Grounded Theory, was opposed to conducting literature reviews early in the research process for this reason (Dunne, 2011; Birks & Mills, 2011; Walls, Parahoo & Fleming., 2010; Glaser, 1998). According to opponents of an early literature review in a Grounded Theory project, this 'contamination' could occur at two phases: during data collection and during coding. During these phases, "the influence of preconceived ideas or predetermined conceptual frameworks" (Elliott & Jordan, 2010, p. 30) may bias the researcher and impact the types of data he or she collects as well as the types of coding categories that he or she creates to analyze those data. Other opponents of the early literature review suggest that performing a literature review early in the research process may be counterproductive because "given the unpredictable nature of Grounded Theory research, the literature most relevant to the research may not actually be known at the outset" (Dunne, 2011, p. 115). Researchers opposed to an early literature review instead advocate for conducting a literature review late in the research process, after the data collection has occurred.

This opposition to conducting a literature review at the start of the Grounded Theory process is not universally accepted by practitioners. Some researchers, such as Clark and Charmaz (Licqurish & Seibold, 2011), have suggested that conducting a literature review at the start of a Grounded Theory project is an acceptable procedure in the Grounded Theory methodology (Licqurish & Seibold, 2011). Some of the benefits of conducting a literature review during the preliminary stages of a

Grounded Theory study are that it: (1) allows the researcher to position his or her work within the larger body of literature (the traditional purpose of a literature review) (Christiansen, 2011); (2) allows researchers to justify their selection of the research topic and approach (Green, Kao, & Larsen, 2010) and orient him or herself to the phenomenon (Storberg-Walker, 2007); (3) assists the researcher to identify potential coding categories (Kennan, Willard & Wilson, 2006); (4) arms the researcher with information with which to respond to criticism (Dunne, 2011); and (5) guides theoretical sampling by providing potential sample selection ideas. It has been argued that every researcher approaches their research with some background knowledge of the topic which they have obtained either through prior research or experience in the field (Dunne, 2011). As long as a researcher is aware of the lens that he or she brings to the research topic, this prior knowledge may actually serve as an advantage which allows for the detection of nuances within the data (Corbin & Strauss, 2008).

There is a middle ground available in Grounded Theory research that allows researchers to enjoy the benefits of the early literature review while remaining flexible in their collection and interpretation of data. This option is to conduct the literature review throughout the research process, using it initially as a guide to the existing literature and as a source of inspiration for theoretical sampling, next as a guide in developing questions for interviews during the data collection phase, and finally as a sounding board against which findings can be compared during the writing stage (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). This study takes this blended approach to the literature review. An initial literature review was undertaken to assess the literature related to the research problem and identify a research gap. After a gap

was identified, the literature was examined with the aim of acquiring an understanding of different theoretical frameworks that could be used to explore the topic and develop questions to build an interview guide. The literature was explored at a broad level during this initial phase to avoid focusing too narrowly on a single approach to the topic of professional identity. As data are collected, the literature will be re-examined and focused onto the themes that are exposed by the data.

3.5   Literature Reviews in this Project

As mentioned above, literature was examined before, during, and after the data collection process. Even though conducting an early literature review does not comply entirely with the tenets of Glaserian Grounded Theory, it is accepted by Grounded Theory researchers using all variations of this methodology due to its importance of literature reviews in formal academic processes such as doctoral studies or grant applications, especially if certain steps are undertaken to promote theoretical sensitivity. I did incorporate the methodology's guidance into my procedures to try to avoid some of the influences of early literature reviews on theory development.

An attempt was made to examine a broad range of literature at the start of the project that focused on the larger concepts incorporated in the research question, namely the idea of professional identity and concepts of professions or professionalism, and I searched for anything written about the target population to see if there was a research gap. The shortage of professional identity literature written for the LIS community and the almost non-existent body of literature on

professional identities of LIS graduates in non-library roles meant that I did not have too close a comparison study with which I would risk contaminating my research. I did have to be aware of the risk of accepting that ideas addressed in existing in identity research were relevant in my study without properly examining the data to ensure that the concepts were in fact grounded and did reflect the participants' main concerns. The results of this literature review are outlined in "Chapter 3: Theoretical Sensitivity and the Early Literature Review". The content of this chapter was left in the same form in which it was drafted prior to data collection to show the questions that this literature raised. Many of the concepts that were discussed in the literature did arise to a certain extent in the interviews conducted in the study, but none of literature examined completely captured the participants' main concerns. "Chapter 6: Integrating the Literature" reflects the literature review that took place during and after data collection and the development of code categories. Some research themes were carried through from the initial literature review but others emerged only after data analysis.

3.6 Identity Literature

To lay the groundwork for this study, I explored literature on identity in order to determine what theories and research exist on the topic of professional identity in general and on LIS professional identity in particular. The starting point in this project was to examine the concept and definition of identity in general in order to determine what language and activities potential participants may associate with identity.

The concept of identity has been studied extensively across a variety of disciplines. Identity is a central concept in the disciplines of psychology and sociology, but has also been explored in the disciplines of political science, feminist theory, philosophy, anthropology, and economics (Leary & Price, 2003). Not only has identity been studied across multiple disciplines, but identity and related concepts have been studied for thousands of years dating back to the philosophy of ancient Greece (Rummens, 2001). Leary and Price Tangney (2003) reported that "since the 1970s ... tens of thousands of articles, chapters, and books have been devoted to self-related phenomena" (p. 3). The abundance of literature available on identity presents a first challenge in conducting research on the professional identity of LIS professionals in non-traditional roles because it provides so many possible theoretical frameworks from which this topic may be explored. A second challenge for anyone working with concepts such as "self" and "identity" is the lack of a single, universally accepted definition of these concepts. As Leary and Price Tangney (2003) argue "[n]ot only have we lacked a single, universally accepted definition of "self," but also many definitions clearly refer to distinctly different phenomena, and some uses of the term are difficult to group no matter what definition one applies" (p. 6).

Identity is an aspect or sub-topic of the broader concept of "self". An identity can be described as an organizational component of a person's self which is tied to a social structure (Badea, Jetten, Czukor, & Askevis-Leherpeux, 2010; Meyer, Becker, & van Dick, 2006; Gibson, 2003). Since individuals can be tied to many social structures or parts of a single social structure, each individual may have multiple identities (Stets & Burke, 2003). The broadest definitions of identity

describe this construct as the way in which an individual responds to the question "Who am I" or describes his or her "sense of self" (Billot, 2010). This may include emotions, attitudes, competencies, and experiences (Eliot & Turns, 2011). A person's identity encompasses not only a person's "actual" self, but also "possible" selves that they would either like to become or wish to avoid becoming (Eliot & Turns, 2011). In describing one's perception of self, an individual tends to relate to social roles or organized structures of relationships (Davis, 2006), but the notion of "self" is also used by an individual to express his or her uniqueness or distinction from others in similar social roles (Rummens, 2001).

Billot (2010) describes identity as "a subjective interpretation of our individuality in the context of activities – and points out that "in this way identity is learned and re-learnt" (p. 711). Some theorists have focused on the processes in which identity is built through the assimilation and accommodation of information about one's environment (or role within a social system). For example, Breakwell (1993) describes identity-structure as follows: "It absorbs new elements (personal, such as values, attitudes, or style, and social, such as group memberships or interpersonal networks) and adjusts the existing structure to locate them ..." (p. 7). These quotations reflect a trend in identity research to focus on how identity develops. They also provide lists of elements that an individual may mention when describing his or her identity. After seeking high-level definitions, theories of identity were explored to determine if any would be applicable to the population under investigation.

3.7   Professional Identity

This study is interested in the professional identity of LIS graduates in non-traditional, unusual or uncommon roles. A professional identity is a particular type of identity that is focused on an individual's sense of self in relation to their occupation, work or professional life, i.e. it is how one thinks of oneself as a professional (Walter, 2008). This concept has been assigned numerous titles. Literature examined in this study, for example, referred to the concept as vocational identity (e.g. Vernick Perdue, Reardon & Peterson, 2007), work personality (e.g. Strauser, O'Sullivan & Wong, 2010), work or work-based identity (e.g. Roodt & De Braine, 2011), and work or work-based self-concept (e.g. Roodt & De Braine, 2011).

There are a number of definitions of professional identity available in the literature. Billot (2010) describes professional identity as "the values, beliefs and practices held in common with others of that affiliation" (p. 712). Gibson, Dollarhide, and Moss (2010) argue that "contemporary definitions of professional identity seem to revolve around three themes: self-labeling as a professional, integration of skills and attitudes as a professional, and a perception of context in a professional community" (p. 21). Several key commonalities exist between many of the definitions of professional identity examined. The first and most important is that professional identity is shared with a community. That one's professional identity links one with a group of others who are working in similar environments or performing similar tasks. It serves as a cohesive element that ties members of the practitioner community together. Professional identity is also viewed as highly fluid and changing over time based of personal experiences as well as external feedback.

Gibson, Dollarhide and Moss (2010) argued that feedback from others in the profession is used by new professionals in developing their own professional identity (p. 22).

3.7.1 Significance of Professional Identities

Of the myriad identities that an individual may assume, why is professional identity important? The development of a professional identity is important because of the role that work may play in a person's life. The psychological and sociological importance of work to an individual has been described by many authors (Billett, 2006; Price, Friedland & Vinokur, 1998; Hayes, 1969) and work's significance extends beyond the amount of time and attention that a person expends on their job:

> The occupation a person chooses not only affects the way in which he
> will spend his working hours, it affects his whole style of life and is one
> of the major determinants of the ways in which, and to what extent,
> many of his personality needs will be met (Hayes, 1969, p. 18)

Work plays a key role in shaping an individual's identity, impacting the ways in which a person views him or herself, the groups with whom a person affiliates, and how a person is viewed by others (Billett, 2006). Satisfaction with work has been linked with mental health and loss of a job can result in harm to a person's identity (Price, Friedland & Vinokur, 1998).

The development of professional identity is also vital to educators and employers as a part of the socialization of a new practitioner into either the profession at large or a particular workplace. The establishment of a professional

identity by employees or new professionals is important because it involves "the person as a self-oriented active individual which is a prerequisite for professional growth; the person as a skilled professional, prerequisite for a sense of competence; and the person as a member of a professional community, a prerequisite for commitment" (Lamote & Engels, 2010, p. 6). A significant part of the education of a new professional is focused on the socialization of that person into their new professional role (Stenberg, 2010). Research suggests that those with a strong sense of professional identity may be more likely to complete their professional education and remain in the profession in spite of challenges or obstacles (Eliot & Turns, 2011). Employees whose professional identities are compatible with their employer's corporate cultures are more likely to join an organization (Swann, Johnson & Bosson, 2009), experience higher job satisfaction and retention rates (Berger, Cunningham & Drumwright, 2006).

3.8   Identity Theories

There are numerous theories about identity, ranging from global theories that cover multiple aspects of identity (such as its development, psychological or sociological significance, and impact on attitudes and behaviours) to specialized theories that discuss how the identities of particular groups will impact their behaviours in specific circumstances. Deaux and Martin (2003) argue that "the points of divergence [between identity theoretical frameworks] are numerous and often unresolved, although most identity theories focus on similar phenomena" (p. 101).

Although there are philosophical differences between the theories of identity that have developed out of the psychological and sociological traditions, many of them address several common themes. These themes include the link between the individual and society; the idea that identity is fluid and changes throughout an individual's lifetime; and the argument that each individual has multiple identities and that people organize these identities hierarchically based on their salience.

The next sections of this chapter will address the central themes that have run through several major theories of identity such as identity theory and social identity theory. The three central themes are the flexibility of identity, the concepts of multiple identities and identity salience, and the relationship between individuals and societies. Each theme will be presented in the context of identity research from multiple disciplines, and then from the context of research from the LIS discipline describing how the concepts of interest to identity researchers have been explored in research conducted with and by LIS students, researchers and practitioners. Finally, the gaps in the research concerning the population under investigation, namely LIS graduates in alternative, non-traditional, unusual or uncommon roles, will be explored and specific questions for further examination will be identified.

3.9   Flexibility of Identity

A first theme in identity theories is that identity is fluid and changes throughout an individual's lifetime as a result of their experiences and interactions with others (Timma, 2007). In other words, identity is not a static component of an individual's self-concept (Smit, Fritz & Mabalance, 2010).

The literature suggests that there are several time periods in one's career in which their professional identity is more open to changes. First, professional identity is highly adaptable during the early stages of one's career (Ibarra, 1999). At this stage, a person may not be fully socialized into their new profession. Second, a person's professional identity will shift when they change jobs as each new work environment has a unique corporate culture to which a new employee will have to adjust (Ibarra, 1999).

As an individual's identity develops as a result of undertaking a new role or through changes in their environment, that person will undergo a process called "self-verification" in which they "act to verify or confirm their identities" (Burke, 2005, p. 2). This self-verification process helps a person to incorporate new information into their identities while maintaining stability and includes not only self-analyses but also perceptions of how he or she is viewed by others (Burke Robertson, 2011). When a person discovers inconsistencies between their situation and their identity standards, they will take action to bridge that gap. These actions may include changing their situation or shifting their focus to different aspects of their identity (Burke Robertson, 2011).

Identity development, and particularly professional identity development, has been extensively studied, because of the importance that educators and employers place on successfully socializing new entrants into a field. This has been the case with the LIS profession as LIS practitioners, academics and educators have explored how LIS students become LIS professionals.

3.9.1   LIS Identity Formation

There has been significant research conducted on LIS education and socialization with the aim of improving LIS curricula and developing ways to ensure that students quickly and successfully transition into professional roles. Socialization is the process through which individuals are assimilated into existing communities through the transfer of explicit and tacit knowledge including the learning of the rules, skills, values, norms, customs, and symbols that make up that community's culture (Baker & Lattuca, 2010; Serrat, 2008; Rummens, 2001; Ibarra, 1999).

The first type of research that may require further exploration after data collection has begun is that which explores students' motivations for entering LIS programs. For example, Taylor, Perry, Barton and Spencer (2010) conducted a study of students at the University of Alabama in which they found that the majority of LIS graduates only became interested in a career in librarianship after graduating from college (p. 38), emphasizing the point that LIS graduates come from diverse backgrounds and often have work experience in different fields that can contribute to their post-graduation employability. The ability of librarianship to recruit students with diverse backgrounds is cited as essential for the profession. Scherdin and Beaubin (1995) went as far as to state that "the survival of our profession depends on diversity" (p. 35), but the focus of these arguments seems to be on diversity in terms of students' backgrounds rather than their post-graduation career aspirations. Various authors have in fact found that "the majority of students who came into LIS

programs, did so with the intention of going into traditional librarianship" (Hazeri, Martin, & Sarrafzadeh, 2009, p. 10).

It will be interesting to determine how many of the interviewees in this project entered non-traditional roles deliberately as part of a larger career plan, or incidentally either by casting a wide job search net or responding to a particular opportunity that arose after or during their LIS program. Another avenue of questioning worth exploring in this project is how their involvement in non-traditional roles has shaped LIS graduates' future ambitions and perception of their ideal employment opportunity. Do those who enter non-traditional roles dream of entering a traditional library position one day or do they feel that a non-traditional career path is more rewarding than a traditional one and hope to continue to work in non-traditional roles?

A second topic that may be referenced by LIS graduates in non-traditional roles is the impact that mentors or role models had in their professional identity development. The role and importance of a mentor in professional development has been discussed by many authors (see Eaves, 2001; Mills, Chapman, Bonner & Francis, 2007). Even if formal mentorship opportunities are not available for new practitioners, individuals may still look for role models from the field to guide their professional development. Lamote and Engels (2010) argued that people identify teacher role models starting in early childhood and these contribute to cognitive maps of the teaching profession that will guide their occupational choices (p. 5). This method of developing a perception of a profession based on examples set by role models could apply to any profession and not just teaching. These role models

may serve as a guide for our possible selves, which "serve as benchmarks for interpreting and judging one's own behaviour" (Eliot & Turns, 2011, p. 633). Whether or not role models actually impact an individual's decision to enter a non-traditional role is a subject of some debate. In an exploration of women in non-traditional roles, Hulme (2006) suggested that role models may not be a major factor in a woman's decision to pursue a non-traditional career because he found that participants focused on their personal responsibility for career successes or failures rather than on the influence of other women who had entered the field before them (p. 165).

Mentoring has been recommended as a component of LIS socialization (Winston & Dunkley, 2002; Library of Congress, 2011), but the extent to which access to mentors in non-traditional roles has influenced LIS graduate's career trajectory remains to be determined. If the impact of role models or mentors emerges as the theme in data analysis, this topic will be explored further.

Becoming a professional is a process that involves not only acquiring a body of knowledge but also becoming socialized into a profession by accepting that profession's ethics and symbols. LIS academics describe LIS professional education as encompassing more than coursework. Johnson (2002) includes "practicums, internships, and work-related experience within the context of a graduate-level, professionally accredited program" (p. 623) as equally important components of professional education. LIS education has a strong history of apprenticeship, with library education in Britain being historically based on the apprentice method (Grogan, 1982/2007). Lacy and Copeland (2013) and Hall (2009) have lamented the

fact that internships are not mandatory in most LIS programs, which is not the case

for professions such as medicine, law and psychology. Lacy and Copeland (2013)

state that the implications of this are that LIS students enter the profession without

being fully prepared for the workplace and in some cases, students become LIS

graduates "without having ever interacted with a professional librarian" (p. 135).

The process of socializing new librarians into the profession involves more than LIS

schools. Khalid (2011) identified the following agencies and individuals as also

playing a role in librarianship socialization:

> [P]rofessional organizations; link with other professions; political
> involvement of LIS professionals; more commitments with user-
> communities; develop more understanding within LIS; awareness with
> new trends; coordination with other professionals; effective leadership;
> research and dissemination; expertise and competency of LIS
> professionals; higher education; and so on (Khalid, 2011, p. 19).

There have been a few studies that have taken a longer term look at the

experiences of LIS students in developing an LIS professional identity. These

studies have asked the question of how LIS students come to see themselves as LIS

professionals. Sare, Bales, and Neville (2012) conducted a Grounded Theory study

on new academic librarians' perceptions of the profession in order to determine how

these perceptions evolve from the time students enter library school through their

first 6-24 months as a practicing professional. Broadly, they defined the process of

deciding upon librarianship as involving three steps: (1) Experiencing/constructing

the library, (2) Exploring options, and (3) Defining self (p. 184). Although their

study focused on practitioners in academic libraries, several of their findings are

relevant to this investigation.

Like several other studies of LIS students' decisions to enter LIS programs, Sare, Bales and Neville (2012) found that the majority of the participants saw librarianship as a potential opportunity or a second career rather than a "lifelong dream" (p. 186-188). Several authors have argued that the fact that librarianship is often a second or later career for individuals is a detriment for the profession and that LIS degrees should be promoted as a "first choice" career (Clemons, 2011).

This trend might have a positive impact in terms of LIS graduates' ability to transition into non-traditional careers if participants enter LIS programs with the idea that the degree would open up a variety of career opportunities rather than recruiting only students with a strong desire for a particular, traditional career path. This is supported in Sare, Bales and Neville's (2012) study in that "participants appeared uncomfortable speculating about where they would be professionally in five years or what they would be doing in the foreseeable future" (p. 199), suggesting that many LIS practitioners expect their roles to evolve over time.

Sare, Bales, and Neville (2012) also reported that when considering entry to LIS programs, potential students explored librarianship as a potential career by "(1) visiting libraries inside and outside of their communities, (2) informally interviewing professional librarians, and (3) browsing through available literature about library work" (p. 188). Developing an understanding of a profession and finding role models has been discussed in socialization literature from many professions, so the question of how LIS graduates in non-traditional roles discovered these roles and role models is another potential area of exploration in this project.

The Sare, Bales and Neville study served as a good example of both the types of professional identity literature that exist for the LIS profession as well as the shortage of information available about non-traditional roles. This study, like most concerning student and practitioner perceptions of the LIS profession focused on a traditional LIS role. There is a shortage of literature available exploring LIS graduates in non-traditional roles. There are many questions that have not been addressed concerning the identity formation of LIS graduates in non-traditional roles. First, what types of professional identities do LIS graduates form? Do LIS graduates in non-traditional roles develop an identity that is compatible with these non-traditional roles in library school or do they develop these identities at some other point such as prior to beginning their LIS education (as many enter the LIS profession as a second career) or after graduation in their work environment? From an educational standpoint, are LIS programs providing students with sufficient exposure to non-traditional career opportunities or role models in non-traditional careers to either encourage students to pursue these types of careers or to prepare them for the realities of working in these types of roles?

3.10   Multiple Identities and Identity Salience

A second aspect of identity that is significant to this project is the argument that each individual possesses multiple identities and that social contexts will determine which identity or aspects or their identity is demonstrated (Smit, Fritz & Mabalance, 2010). Several theories discuss when different identities are likely to be activated, for example:

(1) in situations of structural isolation, it is unlikely that more than one identity will be invoked, and (2) in situations of structural overlap, the most salient identity, as measured by its place on the salience hierarchy, will be invoked (Mekolichick, 2002, p. 45).

An identity is more likely to influence a person's attitudes and behaviour if it has high salience. Salience is "the likelihood of a particular identity's activation" (Burke Robertson, 2011, p. 607). Salience and the hierarchy of identities reveal an individual's values: "While the prominence hierarchy addresses what is important to the individual, the salience hierarchy focuses on how an individual will likely behave in a situation" (Stets & Biga, 2003, p. 404).

Identity control theory (ICT) explores "the nature of persons' identities (who they are) and the relationship between the persons' identities and their behavior within the context of the social structure within which the identities are embedded" (Burke, 2005, p. 1). This theory distinguishes between role identities, which are used to define what a role means; social identities, which define group categories; and person identities, which define a person as a unique individual being. People, therefore, have many identities as they take on many roles and are members of many groups within society. Each individual organizes these multiple identities into a hierarchical control system in which some identities are perceived as more significant or salient than others.

Henry Bennett (2011) explored the idea that practitioners in the LIS field may juggle multiple professional identities, arguing that liaison librarians negotiate between "two significant professional identities: librarian and subject specialist" (p. 46). How LIS graduates in non-traditional roles manage multiple identities and

whether there are overlapping identities for LIS graduates in different types of non-traditional roles has not been explored.

3.10.1 Multiple Identities and LIS Graduates

How do LIS graduates in non-traditional roles experience multiple identities and select the salient identity? Any employee may experience competition between their identities as an employee of a particular organization, a practitioner in a certain type of role, or the member of a larger profession. Do LIS graduates in non-traditional roles feel that their role-based identity is compatible with a larger LIS identity? If not, how do they deal with these competing identities? One strategy that individuals use to deal with "conflicting social identities is to dis-identify with one or both identities" (Sacharin, Lee, & Gonzalez, 2009, p. 276). If LIS graduates in non-traditional roles employ this coping strategy, with which identity will they dis-identify?

Clues to how LIS professionals address the challenge of juggling multiple identities have been addressed by several researchers looking at traditional LIS roles. For example, Oen and Cooper used the example of a law librarian with a legal degree in describing how order of identity acquisition may affect professional identity:

> The order of the acquisition of competencies may influence one's choice of an identifying label. The "first and foremost" principle often operates, i.e., the professional identity that is first acquired becomes a permanent one. This is especially true when the training is long and extensive. The lawyer who, for example, acquires an MLS degree will most likely continue to identify him/herself as a lawyer even if he/she primarily practices as a law librarian. (Oen & Cooper, 1988, p. 357)

Others, such as Powis and Webb (2007) have explored how the addition of tasks such as teaching is causing a shift in academic librarians' professional identities. Another example comes from authors such as Hazeri, Martin & Sarrafzadeh (2009) who suggest that adding non-traditional skills into the LIS curriculum will help determine whether they wish to pursue traditional or non-traditional roles. Articles like this which suggest that an evolution in the skills required for LIS professionals is taking place may lead to a broadening of LIS professional's definitions of what constitute common or expected roles for LIS graduates.

3.11   Individuals and Society

The third theme that cuts across identity theories is the idea that an identity does not exist in isolation. In defining our identities, we explore commonalities that exist between ourselves and people (Bucholtz & Hall, nd.). Identity has been described by some scholars as the way in which individuals develop connections with particular groups and with society at large (Timma, 2007). Social identity theory (SIT) argues that "identity can be described along a continuum from personal identity to social identity. Personal identity refers to self-conceptions in terms of unique and individualistic characteristics ... Social identity, in contrast, derives from category memberships" (Randsley De Moura et al, 2009, p. 541).

Identity groups are used not only to capture the similarities or commonalities that exist between individuals, but also the distinctions that can be found not only between groups but also within groups. Not only do individuals use identities to align themselves with groups, they also use identities to define those with whom they

do not wish to affiliate or from whom they wish to distinguish themselves (Eliot &

Turns, 2011). These may include individuals who would be identified as belonging

to the same group as the individual. Identity, therefore, is used to define the

difference between "Us" (in-groups) and "Them" (out-groups). How an individual

interacts with in-groups and out-groups − for example whether there will be conflict

or cooperation between groups with distinct identities (Eaton, Eswaran & Oxoby,

2011) − is significant to identity theorists.

Identity Theory is a sociological theory of identity that was developed by

researchers such as Stryker (2007). The central assumption of identity theory,

similar to symbolic interactionism, is that the self and society influence each other:

> The self influences society through the actions of individuals, thereby
> creating groups, organizations, networks, and institutions.
> Reciprocally, society influences the self through its shared language
> and meanings that enable a person to take the role of the other, engage
> in social interaction, and reflect on oneself as an object (Stets & Burke,
> 2003, p. 128).

To understand a person's identity or sense of self, therefore, a researcher must

understand the society in which the individual is situated. Identity theorists also

observed that "although individuals will have different ideas about what it means to

be "middle class" or "a parent," each of these terms still has certain meanings and

expectations that are shared within the larger culture" (Burke Robertson, 2011, p.

605). Because people are constantly re-examining their identities in response to their

social interactions, identity is in a permanent state of flux (Jurasaite-Harbison, 2005).

3.11.1 The LIS Profession and Society

To explore LIS professional identity in the context of identity theory, one would need to examine the LIS profession's place in society. An exploration of library and information science as a profession, which would need to include perspectives from both within and outside of the LIS profession, may be framed in terms of the "status" of a profession and could be linked to literature on professions and professionalism.

The status of the LIS profession in society has been extensively discussed in LIS academic and practitioner literature. Gallen (1984) reported that "the issue of the relative status of librarians and other occupational groups in the workforce has been concerning librarians, on and off, for perhaps one hundred years" (p. 308). Walter (2008) argued that "few professions are as sensitive to issues of professional identity and public perception as that of librarianship" (p. 58). Mirza and Seale (2011) echo this statement, writing that "it might be said that librarians are a little obsessed with their public image; how the profession and its practitioners are portrayed in mass culture have been the subject of numerous articles and books" (p. 135). In general librarianship's status has been described as threatened or in negative terms.

The status of librarians and the LIS profession has an important significance in terms of recruitment into the profession and the success of members of the profession in achieving status gains in the workplace. Taylor, Perry, Barton and Spencer (2010) suggest that "LIS students are more concerned with the prestige,

compensation, or other benefits that might influence a decision to pursue another, more high-profile career" (p. 41). A desire for greater prestige and compensation may be a factor in the career trajectory of LIS graduates who pursue non-traditional careers. Motivations for pursuing non-traditional careers is most commonly discussed in feminist literature, which argues that women pursue non-traditional careers because they offer better pay, higher status and opportunities for advancement (Chusmir, 1990). Some authors have suggested that non-library employers have been hiring LIS graduates away from library employers by providing more competitive salaries (Van Fleet & Wallace, 2002).

Power or status differences between groups are also addressed by authors espousing many different identity theories. Chattopadhyay and George (2001) argue that "those in higher prestige categories are more likely to be invested in maintaining a separation between in-groups and out-groups along that dimension that those who fall into lower prestige categories" (p. 782).

The issue of the social status or hierarchical position of the librarians and other LIS professionals has been an important issue for LIS practitioners and researchers for some time (Gallen, 1984). Although the literature about librarians' power may not have been discussed in terms of identity, it has been discussed in terms of outcomes of power such as librarians' ability to influence budgetary decision makers or other library stakeholders.

3.11.2 LIS Stereotypes

Stereotypes may have an impact on a group's status or ability to obtain rewards such as higher salaries or greater autonomy within a society. Stereotypes and stereotyping has received significant academic attention and has tended to focus on attributes such as race, sex, religion, or ethnicity, but there is a large body of work that has examined stereotypes of occupations or professions (Singletary, Ruggs, Hebl & Davies, 2009; Rooth, 2008; Cole, Chase, Couch & Clark, 2007; Gorman, 2005; Kauppinen, Haavio-Mannila & Kandolin, 1989; Parr Lemkau, 1984). Many authors have written about negative stereotypes of librarianship and the impacts that these stereotypes may have on recruiting new entrants into the profession (Clemons, 2011; Fallahay Loesch, 2010; Potter, 2009; Davis, 2007; Peresie & Alexander, 2005; Isaacson, 2000). The negative stereotype of the librarian is generally described as "the bespectacled, middle-aged matron with her premature graying hair coiffed in an austere bun with her finger pushed to her lips shushing young patrons talking or giggling in a library" (Fallahay Loesch, 2010, p. 31).

Psychological and sociological researchers have studied the impacts of stereotypes on individuals. Singletary, Ruggs, Hebl, and Davies (2009) wrote that "negative stereotypes often cause negative responses, which can manifest themselves in the stereotyped individual's reactions, performance on a task, motivation, and self-esteem" (p. 1). Negative stereotypes of the LIS profession may be an issue for LIS graduates in non-traditional roles. They may have chosen non-traditional work to escape these negative stereotypes. Conversely, they may have sought out non-

traditional roles to help redefine the LIS profession and alter stereotypes about the LIS profession.

Although the possible impacts of librarian stereotypes on employment opportunities have not specifically been examined, there is a significant body of literature examining the role of stereotypes for other groups in hiring processes. Multiple authors have demonstrated that negative stereotypes about a group can lead to discrimination against employees in hiring situations. The numerous studies in this field of research have shown that groups who have experienced less favourable application reviews due to stereotypes include women (Gorman, 2005), people who are obese (Rooth, 2008), people from a religious or ethnic minority (Rooth, 2008), and people who are less attractive relative to other applicants (Bright, Earl & Adams, 1997).

Identity theories have examined the connection between society and individuals in relationship development, particularly "the ways in which individuals distinguish between their own group and some other group, based on processes of categorization and social comparison" (Deaux & Martin, 2003, p. 102). The relationships between actors are of central importance to social identity theory, because their identity roles provide symbolic information that guide the relationships between actors. An individual's adherence to social roles is tied to the maintenance of social order (Deaux & Martin, 2003). This theory argues that identities cannot be examined in isolation from society because "it is only in relation to others and to the material world in which we live, that humans come to realise their separateness from all that surrounds them" (Coates, 1995, p. 832). Another key feature of SIT is the

idea that people have distinct personal and social identities, which "[underpin] the difference between interpersonal situations (in which behavior is mainly under the control of personological variables) and group situations (determined largely by category-based processes)" (Brown, 2000, p. 746). A personal identity consists of a person's unique characteristics – or those aspects of one's self that makes him or her a distinct individual (Randsley De Moura et al, 2009). A social identity is based on his or her membership in a social group combined with his or her perception of or emotional reaction to membership in that group (Sacharin et al.). The theory is used to predict behaviour based on a person's positive or negative perceptions of him or herself as a member of a group (Randsley De Moura et al, 2009). Accordingly, people are motivated to obtain positive social identity through strategies that either separate them from low status social groups or link them to high status groups (Randsley De Moura et al, 2009).

A central theme in the literature on perceptions of librarianship is that few people outside of the profession understand what librarians do and what value they bring to both library and non-library settings. White (1986) wrote that "Nobody else knows exactly what librarianship is, and why it requires graduate-level education ... They simply do not relate a need for high-quality librarians to the value of libraries, or, at least, they don't know what it takes to become a good professional librarian" (p. 94). Potter (2009) has suggested that librarians are defined by the library building and that that librarians may need to consider breaking this association to demonstrate their full range of potential as professionals. Several writers have suggested that LIS professionals have not been particularly successful in promoting themselves and their profession. Cameron and Farnum (2007) looked for librarian profiles and credentials

on university websites to see if academic librarians are using this medium as a location for promoting their professional status and experience and found that although librarians promote their libraries on their institutional websites, they seldom promote themselves.

Another potential barrier for LIS graduates hoping to transcend industry barriers may be a lack of familiarity with an LIS graduate's capabilities on the part of employers who are unfamiliar with the LIS degree. Gorman (2005) writes that role-incumbent schemas are a prescription for what type of employee to hire for a position based on the characteristics of people who have been successful in the role in the past (p. 705). If an organization has never hired LIS graduates, then their role-incumbent schemas may cause the applicant with an LIS background a disadvantage against a "typical" hire when that LIS professional is competing for a non-traditional position. Stereotypes about LIS graduate competencies may impact the degree to which LIS graduates working in non-traditional roles may choose to embrace an LIS identity.

If librarians working in traditional roles perceive themselves as being poorly understood by outsiders, then LIS graduates in non-traditional roles may find themselves even more challenged by a lack of understanding of their role. LIS graduates may feel that society has a particular definition of what types of work they can and cannot do and what types of roles they may or may not apply for. This external perception of the role of librarians or LIS graduates may impact their prospects when applying for jobs. For example, Gorman (2005) described the phenomenon of role-incumbent schemas, in which knowledge of existing job holders

define the types of applicants who would be accepted in the role: "what "is" comes to be seen as normal, appropriate, and desirable, however, such schemas also define what new incumbents "should be" like" (p. 705).

The ideas of both professional status and professional stereotypes relate to the ways in which a profession fits or is perceived to fit within society. The degree to which a profession is well perceived on the one hand, or negatively stereotyped on the other, will impact the ability of members of that profession to obtain desirable outcomes such as promotions, control over their work, or employment opportunities in related or divergent fields. The idea of how a profession fits within society is also explored in the literature on professions and professionalism.

3.12   Identity Literature Conclusion

As mentioned in the introduction to this chapter, this literature review was conducted prior to data collection and analysis and as a result the concepts that were revealed in this literature review played a role in initial interview guide construction. Many of the questions raised by the literature and posed throughout this chapter were addressed by participants both through their own career narratives and as a result of a few scripted questions. The participant responses which address these questions are discussed in "Chapter 4: The Participants".

3.13   Literature on Professions and Professionalism

LIS graduates in non-library roles may focus on their own professional identity and discuss themes explored in identity theories, such as the competition between multiple identities, how their professional identity has changed and developed over the course of their career, and what competencies and attributes their professional identity encompasses. They may also discuss their professional identity in the context of how they conceptualize the LIS profession. The first key question that arises when thinking about professions is determining whether or not an occupation can be considered a profession according to the formal definitions and criteria that exist in the literature. The second is how respected or desired the profession is by society. The degree to which a profession is positively regarded will impact its ability to attract new entrants and the ability for members to command attractive salaries or additional employment options. The third discussion topic that may arise is a definition of the boundaries of the LIS profession. LIS graduates in non-traditional roles will provide an interesting sounding board for these questions because their employment decisions are already influencing the educational options provided in LIS education programs and by professional associations and may lead to a significant redefinition of what it means to be a LIS profession.

3.14   Professions and Status

Questions of the status and power of different professions have been extensively discussed in the literature on professions (Alsbury, 2010; Mellin, Hunt & Nicols, 2010; Shannon, 2009; Hartzell, 2007; Davis, 2007; Krejsler, 2005; Day & Crask,

2000; Gallen, 1984; Axford, 1977). Sociologists have studied professions

extensively and have focused on the roles that professions play in society (Savage,

1994). The two major theoretical perspectives on professions in sociology are the

functionalist perspective and the neo-Weberian perspective. The functionalist

perspective emphasizes social harmony and envisions professions and semi-

professions as playing cooperative functions within society just as the various organs

of the body each play their own vital and complementary function. The approach

focuses on the aspects of the definition of professions that emphasize professional

ethics and a code of conduct that looks toward societal good and service to the

community (Krejsler, 2005).

Conversely, the neo-Weberian approach emphasizes societal conflict in its

analysis of professions. This approach to professions describes professions as a

mechanism for maximizing resource gains for members by controlling access to

knowledge and the ability to perform certain tasks, procedures, or operations. Unlike

the functionalist theory which sees professionals as focusing on social good, the neo-

Weberian approach describes professions as largely self-interested (Krejsler, 2005).

This view of professions has been studied in the field of economics as well as

sociology, with economists studying how professional organizations control

membership to a profession or access to professional knowledge or skills to increase

the earning potential of their members (Savage, 1994).

Membership in a profession may serve as an important identity for an individual,

which means that there is an intersection between the sociological and psychological

perspectives of profession and identity theories. This identity is associated with

social status and power (Alsbury, 2010), which can make professions desirable for individuals to join or occupations that have not historically been labelled as professions to strive for professional status. Because a professional identity includes symbols, attitudes, and behaviours, some researchers have pointed to the need for a fit between the identity of the individual practitioner and the profession (Krejsler, 2005). A person's understanding of a profession and belief as to whether or not the characteristics of that profession are compatible with their other identities may evoke identity processes such as identity negotiation and self-verification.

3.15   Defining Professions

A fundamental concept at the core of professions and professionalism literature is how to define a profession. Some authors define a profession simply as a category of jobs, differentiating between 'skilled', 'semiskilled', and 'professional' occupations (Savage, 1994). Others differentiate between the designations of "professional" and "semi-professional" based on how they define a profession (Krejsler, 2005). Occupations traditionally defined as professions include lawyers, medical doctors, and clergy (Krejsler, 2005, p. 341). Many authors have provided lists of criteria that a field must meet to be considered a profession. These criteria include:

(1) **Specialized Body of Knowledge:** A systematic body of knowledge of substantial intellectual content (e.g. as opposed to simple process or series of steps that could easily be learned and followed by others) that is either unique to or controlled by that profession. This body of knowledge should be clearly

defined. (Alsbury, 2010; Krejsler, 2005; Adams, 2010; Bates, 2012; Gerhold, 1974; McGrath Morris, 2008)

(2) **Professional Ethics and/or Code of Conduct:** Standards of professional conduct or ethics that guide the behaviour of members of the profession. Some authors connect this with a sense of responsibility to society at large or a desire to perform one's job well due to motivations other than financial gain (Alsbury, 2010; Krejsler, 2005; Gerhold, 1974; McGrath Morris, 2008)

(3) **Organizing Association:** A gatekeeper for membership into the profession, which could either be a professional association or educational body, which often controls entry through an accreditation process and which is responsible for providing ongoing professional development. This gatekeeper may also be responsible for the development or maintenance of a professional culture which includes common norms, symbols, and language (Krejsler, 2005; Adams, 2010; Gerhold, 1974)

(4) **Entrance Restrictions:** A prescribed method of entering the field, usually through the completion of an education program, often at an advanced level, and potentially also through the successful completion of a qualifying examination (Adams, 2010; Gerhold, 1974)

(5) **Authority or Autonomy:** Socially acknowledged authority over the specialized knowledge owned by the profession and the ability to control certain behaviours, processes, or activities related to that knowledge. This

acknowledgement or sanction is often expressed in terms of the idea that a professional should have a high degree of autonomy or control over his or her work because of their status as the "expert" of the domain. (Alsbury, 2010; Krejsler, 2005)

3.15.1 Librarianship and Information Science as Profession(s)

There is a body of literature that has addressed the question of whether or not library and information science (either combined or divided into the two fields of librarianship or library science, and information science) is a profession. This questioning of professional status is not unique to the LIS profession but has also been seen in fields such as social work, teaching, and nursing (Ryan, 2003; Krejsler, 2005). Several authors have explored whether or not LIS meets the defining criteria of a profession:

(1) **Specialized Body of Knowledge:** Bates (2012) has argued that the study of information seeking behaviour has provided the profession of library and information science with a specialized body of knowledge that would qualify it as a profession. Others point to knowledge of classification and cataloguing as the core professional skills of the LIS profession (Davis & Kirkpatrick, 1995). There are professional and paraprofessional roles within the LIS profession which have traditionally been differentiated based on the level of education obtained and the types of tasks in which these individuals engage, with paraprofessionals conducting routine tasks and professionals performing intellectual work (although this division of labour may not be as

clearly divided in the workplace, particularly in small library settings and as a result of changing technologies and streamlined workflows) (Cox & Myers, 2010)

(2) Professional Ethics and/or Code of Conduct: There is a multitude of LIS professional associations around the world and many of them have developed codes of conduct or ethics for LIS practitioners. Beyond these codes, librarians tend to view themselves as "helping" professionals and see their work as performing a social good (Lanier et al, 1997).

(3) Organizing Association: There are a number of LIS professional organizations and they do play a role in offering professional development and the communication of norms, symbols and shared language for the profession. Although there are a multitude of LIS professional associations, they generally do not have the ability control an individual's participation in the profession to the same extent as professional associations in the professions of medicine, law, and engineering.

(4) Entrance Restrictions: Entry into the LIS profession is based on completion of academic qualifications. In some countries, professional status is conferred only on individuals who complete additional professional development activities and approval by a certifying body (Brine & Feather, 2002).

(5) Authority or Autonomy: This is a criterion for professional status that many would argue LIS practitioners do not meet. There is abundant literature in practitioner and researcher sources that mentions interference in the activities of LIS practitioners by managers, clients or other stakeholders often in the context of "service improvements" or "service modernizations" (Davis & Kirkpatrick, 1995).

Whether an interview subject believes that librarian and information science is a profession, whether they believe that library and information science should be considered a profession, and what characteristics they believe library and information science possesses, particularly in terms of its specialized body of knowledge, may impact his or her responses and provide a clue to their career choices and aspirations.

3.16   LIS Professional Identity

The body of research on professional identity for librarians and LIS graduates in general is limited. In fact, of the articles that were found on professional identity and librarianship, several focused on the development of niche sub-identities among librarians, such as the identity of librarians as teachers (Walter, 2008). The articles that discussed professional identity among librarians tended to approach the concept from the competencies approach. For example, Heyman (2000), in an article advising librarians on how to build positive working relationships with information technology (IT) professions without losing their professional identities, describes the LIS identity in terms of a set of core competencies that can be used to add value to information technology projects. In his article on the development of the teacher-

librarian identity, Walter (2008) devotes more time to the discussion of the development of a teacher identity than that of a librarian identity. The article, which was presented to a librarian audience, seems to assume that the existence and characteristics of a librarian identity were known and agreed upon by the audience as they are not discussed in any depth in the article.

How to structure LIS programs and which courses to teach are central questions for LIS educators and program administrators. Boll (1972) presented three options for structuring LIS programs: the "one profession in one year" model, the "maximum flexibility in one year" model, and the "growing single profession" model. In the "one profession in one year" model, students focus their studies on the core content with limited exposure to specialized options. In the "maximum flexibility in one year" model students are provided with a generalist education with a high number of options in courses based on their interests and professional goals with a minimal core. In the "growing single profession" model, instructors address the expanding nature of the LIS field by focusing on those aspects of the profession that are common to these different work contexts (Boll, 1972, p. 196).

All of these models require LIS educators and program administrators to decide what content is part of the LIS core and what material is covered in specialties or elective options. Not only is identifying a core curriculum important to the academic community, but it is also vital from a professional perspective because the possession of a unique knowledge and skills base is a requirement for any discipline to be considered a profession. Throughout the nineteenth and at least the first half of the twentieth century there was some unanimity in defining core curricula in

librarianship as consisting of cataloguing, acquisitions (or book selection), reference, and library administration (Grogan, 1982/2007). This is no longer the case. There is a wealth of research on the core competencies of librarianship or of LIS education writ large prepared by academic researchers and professional associations.

LIS educators and program administrators must decide, therefore, what subjects are included in the core as well as the degree to which a curriculum should be generalized or specialized. The explosion of new information technologies in the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries has led to dramatic changes in LIS curricula (and calls for additional changes in some cases) due not only to the need for LIS students to use these new technologies in library employment settings but also because of the proliferation of new jobs and industries that did not exist prior to the development of these technologies (de Bruyn, 2007; Ball, 2008; Minishi-Majanja, 2009; Partridge & Yates, 2012).

This raises the question of whether LIS is a single profession which consists of a variety of sub-professions or a series of allied professions that are all distinct but related. This complicates the search for a core of professional knowledge of the profession, as LIS educators must determine whether there is a shared core for these sub-professions or if these sub-professions each have their own core.

This question has arisen in debates about generalization versus specialization of the LIS curriculum. Khoo, Higgins, Foo and Lim (2004) argued that creating different specializations within LIS has led to a fracturing of the LIS profession into different career paths. Supporters of specialization argue that it is necessary for LIS

graduates to be able to compete in the job market. Several authors have argued that specialization may not be successful because students are not fully aware of the range of employment opportunities available to LIS graduates and may therefore elect not to pursue potentially profitable specializations because of this ignorance (Khoo, Higgins, Foo & Lim, 2004).

3.17   Defining the Boundaries of the LIS Profession

Defining the boundaries of the LIS profession has been a topic of considerable focus for the LIS community. Central to this discussion is the question of relationship between librarianship and information science. Dillon and Norris (2005) wrote that "the lack of formal definition is an indication of the dynamic nature of the profession and that claims of a host-parasite relationship between librarianship and information science are misleading and represent a failure to recognize the shift in the practices and needs of librarianship within a technology-rich cultural environment" (p. 282). This quote highlights the debate in the profession between those who believe that librarianship and information science should be considered two distinct professions and those who believe that they are complementary or even that information science represents a natural evolution of librarianship.

There has also been a shift in the way that library and information science (LIS) education is being delivered. Although library schools were originally designed in order to provide professional training for librarians in preparation for their accepting roles in library settings (the "L-school" model). In the 2000s, a shift

began to occur which became known as the "iSchool" movement, in which "schools, colleges, and departments have been newly created or are evolving from programs formerly focused on specific tasks such as information technology, library science, informatics, information science, and more" (iSchools, 2014). Although these schools still provide students with a professional education which prepares them for employment in library and other information settings, their objective is "to [advance] the information field" (iSchools, 2014). The iSchool movement formally began in 2005 with the formation of the iCaucus (ASIS&T, 2016). Whether schools offer specializes streams in traditional library topics such as school or public library services or newer areas such as knowledge management or information technology, they blend professional practice with research:

> From being vocational education, LIS has gradually established itself as a research-based academic undertaking. There are, however, relatively big differences with respect to how far and how fast different schools and countries have moved on the road towards academia. (Audunson, 2007)

Lasic-Lazic, Slavic and Banek Zarica (2003) suggest that the information society's increased demand for information professionals has led to a convergence of professionals from the library, museum, archival and informatics professions (p. 1). Saracevic argues that library and information science, although often grouped together, are in fact distinct fields (Saracevic, 1999). Given the differences between the various professional activities and approaches to the fields that merge under the umbrella of library and information sciences, it is possible, if not likely, that a single unified professional identity for LIS does not exist. Mellin, Hunt and Nichols (2010) argue that the counseling profession, which like librarianship includes numerous specific specializations spread across a variety of work settings, does not have a

shared identity and is challenged in developing one due to the different professional experiences of professionals in that field.

3.18   Professions and Professionalism Literature Conclusion

As with the content on identity literature, this literature review was prepared prior to data collection. Many participants discussed how they defined the profession and some discussed future directions for the profession. Other concepts were not addressed. The themes that emerged from this literature review ended up sharing a weaker relationship with the categories that emerged from the study data than those which were explored in the identity literature.

3.19   Conclusion

The objective of this chapter was to divulge any potential sources of bias that the researcher may have brought to the study either through her professional and personal experiences which promoted her interest in the research question or through reading that was conducted to prepare her thesis proposal. These potential sources of bias including the specific questions raised by the literature were outlined here so that their impact on the results of the study may be gauged by readers.

Chapter 4: Study Participants

4.1   Introduction

Although the objective of a Grounded Theory study is to create a context-
independent theory, understanding the contextual conditions in this study may help
provide insights into the interviewees, especially given the lack of research that has
been conducted with this population. This section is divided into two parts. The first
provides brief introductions to the work experiences of the participants in this study.
The second section provides descriptions of some of the trends in participant
responses. It is divided into the sub-sections of participants' jobs and work tasks,
pre-MLIS work experiences, library internship experiences, library work
experiences, non-library work experiences, career paths, and future ambitions. This
division of content was determined by analysis of themes in participants' career
narratives. In general these sections describe the work roles that participants have
engaged in up to the time of the interview and where they would like to work in the
future.

4.2   Participants

The following sections provide an introduction to the career paths taken by
the participants in this study. These participant introductions provide an overview of
the types of positions the participants in this study have occupied and their reasons
for moving from one position to another. Why provide this level of detail about all
of the participants involved in this study? The reason why these details are included

in this chapter is because of the potential application of constructivism to the theory that was developed through this study. The connection to constructivism is discussed in "Chapter 6: Integrating the Literature". According to the constructivism epistemology, "knowledge is generated via experiences that challenge current understanding and beliefs" (Slavich & Zimbardo, 2012, p. 582). Given that experiences are seen as having a vital impact on individual's understanding, understanding those experiences is an important precursor to exploring those understandings and beliefs about the world. It is for this reason that participants' career paths have been included in detail, with each individual's career narrative individually presented, in place of summaries of career highlights or commonalities.

4.2.1   Participant #1

The first participant in the pilot phase of this study was an individual working in a federal government information management role. This participant's working interactions with the library and information science world began with an internship in an academic library as an undergraduate student. After completing his undergraduate degree he chose to pursue a Master's in Library and Information Science with the initial ambition of becoming an academic librarian. In the course of his studies he took an internship position with a federal department in their special library. This internship introduced him to the world of special and government libraries, of which he had not been aware prior to this experience. After graduation he was hired on by the department where he had completed his internship position in a contract position. This led to a position in web publishing which evolved into an information management role. His information management role involves web

application development projects and the implementation of an electronic document management system. He describes his career "as fumbling my way into jobs more than actually anything else". He is primarily attracted to roles that offer him the opportunity for learning or "the next adventure".

4.2.2 Participant #2

The second participant in the pilot phase of this study was an individual working for a vendor that develops electronic solutions for libraries. This participant began her professional interactions in the library world with a position in an academic library. She began in a para-professional role [note: this refers to a role within a library which is occupied by an individual who does not possess a master's degree in library and information science] which involved performing a wide range of tasks (basically performing any duties that were necessary) and discovered a particular interest in reference services. After completing her master's degree in library and information science she continued working at this library for a period of five years. After this, she took on a Library Director position at a military base for professional advancement reasons, then she moved into an academic library position in her home state to be closer to her family. She found that this position was not a good fit and had a desire to expand her technical skills. This prompted her to apply for a position with a library vendor. She joined the vendor in a development team project manager role and was soon promoted into an administrative role. Her soft skills were highly appreciated by the company and she feels strongly about offering learning opportunities to staff. She misses library work and sees a return to a library position in her future.

4.2.3   Participant #3

This participant in this interview is an entrepreneur who manages her own consulting firm. She began her professional life in the library world as a cataloguer. She took her first job in an academic library while pursuing a master's degree in liberal arts after pursing a generalised liberal arts degree. Her cataloguing skills allowed her to work in several libraries. She completed her library degree while working in libraries. Her final library job was a law librarian position in a large law firm. While working in this position she completed a PhD in which she examined the role of technology in connecting distance education students with information. She worked at the law library for a period of 11 years. After completing her doctorate, the participant decided to take a one year contract teaching in a computer science department at a university. Following this contract, she took a job as an internet researcher at a private company developing an information portal. She remained at this company for several years, during which time she moved into the marketing department and the company was purchased by an international firm. Her next position was with a non-profit library consortium. After approximately ten years of working in the private and non-profit sectors, she started her own consultancy. Her business involves a variety of projects and she describes her work by saying "I do whatever anybody needs". She loves owning her own business and plans to remain self-employed for the rest of her career.

4.2.4   Participant #4

The participant in Interview #004 is a current MLIS student who is pursuing her library degree with the goal of becoming a children's librarian after having built a

successful career as a marketer in the high tech sector. In this respect this participant is somewhat of an inverse case from others in this study in that rather than being someone who is moving from a library setting into a high tech setting, she is hoping to move from high tech to libraries. When I discovered that this participant was still in the process of completing her MLIS degree, I had to consider whether or not to include data from this interview in the study because the participant did not technically meet the selection criteria of being a graduate of a master's level degree in library and information science. When I reviewed the experiences of this participant in relation to those of other participants, I did notice some similar themes in terms of professional identity experience, which suggested that the criteria of having competed an LIS degree might not be as important as the decision to commit to the LIS profession, which for this participant happened before the completion of the degree.

The participant's decision to pursue a degree in library and information science was based on two factors. The first is the fact that librarianship as a profession appeals to her values and interests and "feels right in her heart". The second is that librarianship will offer her a better work-life balance, specifically the opportunity to spend more time with her child than her previous career and her family life is very important to her.

4.2.5   Participant #5

The participant in this interview works as a "Business Analyst" and is responsible for helping organizations implement enterprise SharePoint installations. His role in the

process involves client services and training. His career has consisted of a number of contract positions in various government, academic, and non-profit organizations doing tasks that fall largely within the areas of records management, information management, and archival services. He has worked in two library settings: at a public library and a government library. His government library position was his favourite job to date and he would consider a return to library work in the future, particularly in a public library setting.

4.2.6   Participant #6

The participant in interview #006 is a taxonomist who has worked for several high tech companies including both large, established firms and start-ups. She began working in the high tech sector while she was in library school, switching to part time studies to work full time, and has continued in the tech sector post-graduation. Her primary task in all three of the tech companies at which she has worked has been taxonomy development or the classification of content into groups based on subject or other criteria. Her other tasks have included building and leading teams, results quality testing, and presentations and demonstrations of search and directory products. Interestingly, she entered library school because she had a love of books and libraries and at the time did not consider herself to be a "techie person". She developed an interest in the "digital side" early on as a result of a combination of factors including early success with a research paper on a technology subject, good instructors and classes in her program, the advice of a mentor, and a research assistantship involving work on a taxonomy.

4.2.7   Participant #7

The participant in interview #007 began working in libraries well before she attended library school. She worked part time in the school library as a high school student and then in an academic library as an undergraduate student. As a library student she took a student internship position in a special library which led to her first post-graduation job. This special library was a small government library in which the librarian was responsible for library, information management, and knowledge management tasks. She followed her contract at a government library with other government contract positions in information management and records management teams where she worked on projects involving both paper and electronic records. She followed these contract jobs with a position at an information architecture and information management consulting firm where she provided information management consulting services to a variety of government and non-governmental organizations. This consulting experience provided her with exposure to a variety of different types of organizations and an understanding of which aspects of information management are universal and which are particular to organizations. She followed this consulting role with a permanent position in the information management department of a large oil and gas company.

4.2.8   Participant #8

The participant in this interview has followed a career path from special librarianship to law librarianship to working for vendors and then to consulting. His positions have ranged from contract work early in his career through to senior

executive positions. His job responsibilities in libraries included records management, reference services, and library automation. His subject matter knowledge gained through working in the special libraries sector combined with his experience with library automation and end-user behaviour allowed him to experience a successful year in the library vendor sector, where he moved from a senior project manager to team leader and ultimately senior executive roles. His interest in librarianship began in elementary school. Libraries represented a safe place for him and also aligned well with his interests in reading and learning.

4.2.9   Participant #9

The participant completed an undergraduate and graduate degree in English literature and found herself asking "What am I going to do when I grow up?" During the many hours she spent working on her graduate degree in the library she got to know the academic librarians and one of them suggested that she consider a career in librarianship. During her library studies she completed two co-op placements. The first of these placements was at a government department and the second was in an organization working on distance education content development. The second co-op placement led to a job after she graduated from library school. She stayed with that organization until the organization shut down due to funding cuts. She then went back to the government department where she had completed her first co-op placement. She worked in a team that was responsible for website content development for a project that was jointly operated by two departments. She then moved to a communications team and transitioned from writing for the web to speechwriting. She was not satisfied with speechwriting so she found a position in a

different government agency conducting research work. This position involved conducting reference interviews and developing database search queries. She then moved to another government department where she did audit work and then finally she moved on to policy analysis work which she did for two government agencies.

4.2.10   Participant #10

The participant in Interview #010 started his professional life by completing an undergraduate degree in English literature and philosophy. During university he held a data processing job at a bank. After graduation he moved west to find a job and ended up working as a corporate archivist. The work inspired him to learn the science behind archival work and he applied to a master's program in library and information science. During his studies he worked part-time in several academic libraries including a rare books library and a business library. Additionally, he took a position at a cryptography company providing information management services. After graduation, the participant found himself moving back into corporate information management and recordkeeping. After a few years working in these roles he moved with his wife to allow her to pursue a co-op position. He looked for work through placement agencies and took a contract position at the national library examining metadata policy. After this position he moved on to a research position in another agency which moved from demographic research to more generalized research. It was during this time that he received advice from the placement agencies he had been working with that he should broaden his search beyond library work to other areas such as database skills and generalized research skills. He followed a series of contract and term positions with a permanent position as a research analyst.

4.2.11   Participant #11

The participant in this interview completed an undergraduate degree in English. During the final semester of her degree she had the opportunity to complete an internship and was able to become the first student in her university program to intern at the university library. Although she enjoyed the work in the library she wasn't sure that librarianship was the path that she wanted to follow and a conversation with a library student convinced her that she should not attend library school immediately after completing her undergraduate degree but that she should instead get some experience in the "real world" and keep the idea of library school as an option in her back pocket. Her first post-graduation job was as a proof reader. She found the job incredibly boring and decided to get into recruiting instead. She chose recruiting because she thought that it would challenge her. She started as a recruiting assistant working one-on-one with an experienced recruiter and found that she fell in love with recruiting. Even though she loved her work, she missed research and learning and applied to library school. She found an online program that would allow her to retain her day job while studying in the evenings. After she graduated, her husband came across a posting for a part-time candidate research specialist and sourcer at an Internet company. The company had never had anyone in the type of role she was filling and she was able to convince them that they needed someone who could do some talent market intelligence and tracking rather than just traditional sourcing work. The role that she created for herself combined competitive intelligence, labour market intelligence, and sourcing of candidates with special

skillsets. She ended up leaving her recruiting job to work full time in talent

acquisition in the internet company.

4.2.12   Participant #12

   The participant in this interview began her professional life by completing an

undergraduate degree in English and women's studies in a program that did not offer

internships or co-op positions. She worked in food service and as a bank teller after

graduation and decided to go back to school, but needed to find a program that would

allow her to stay in her home town. She found an online-based library program

which allowed her to keep her day job and study at night. While attending library

school she completed two virtual internship positions. The first of these positions

involved doing information literacy instruction planning for a university in the

Middle East. The second virtual internship was for a library vendor preparing

content for information literacy. The second internship was extended for the

duration of her library school studies. She was able to give up her day jobs because

of this online position. After she graduated, the library vendor offered her a full time

position. She moved from writing content for information literacy to doing

marketing work within the company. While working for the vendor, she discovered

a part-time sales position at a vegan marketplace that she could do from home on top

of the library vendor job. She eventually left the library vendor and became the full-

time Creative Marketing Director at the specialty retailer. Her role at the specialty

retailer is primarily focused on marketing, but involves a range of activities.

4.2.13   Participant #13

The participant in interview #013 began his career by completing a bachelor's degree in History. After completing his bachelor's degree he ended up working at a hospital doing information statistics. He decided that this role wasn't sufficiently interesting and decided to go back to school to complete a master's degree in history. He ended up leaving the program and travelled for a couple of months. He returned to the university to take on a role as an academic advisor. While working in this capacity he encountered a former classmate who was applying to a master's program in library and information science. The idea of the program fascinated him and he applied to the program himself. During the course of his studies, the interviewee participated in two co-op placements. The first of these was for an energy company and the second was for a telecommunications company. After graduation, he moved west to take a contract position with an energy company. He then moved to a job with a technology start-up company where he took on the role of Document Control Coordinator. He left the position to take on a contract position responsible for image management at a newspaper. In this role he was responsible for loading images, managing images, distributing images, and doing story research. After completing this contract, the participant moved to another western city where he found a position doing information management work in an oil and gas company. He moved on to another oil and gas company position where his work included knowledge management and information management responsibilities. He completed a PhD studying corporate knowledge management practices. After working in knowledge and information management roles in the oil and gas sector, the participant received an offer to conduct knowledge management consulting within an information technology company. The participant worked at the IT company for about a year,

after which time he decided to strike out on his own and start his own consultancy. He has been consulting independently ever since.

4.2.14   Participant #14

The participant in interview #014 began her library career with a paraprofessional job in an academic library while completing her undergraduate degree in lit writing. She continued working in the library's catalogue department after graduating and worked her way up to the position of dean of the paraprofessional level. She completed her master's degree and returned to her library where she was responsible for original cataloguing and managing a team. She moved on to special library setting where she continued to work in technical services but this time she was able to perform those duties with an automated catalog. In her previous academic university role serials check-in had been performed with a card system. In this role she was introduced to more and more automated processes and became the technical services librarian with database management responsibilities. Her knowledge of library systems and technical services allowed her to get a job at a library systems vendor. She worked on product definition with the vendor around MARC records, circulation and cataloguing. When she tired of working on the vendor side she took another horizontal move back into libraries. She returned to a special library setting – this time in an information technology company – and took on a systems librarian role. While she was working in this role staff developing the company intranet approached the head librarian for guidance on how to organize content and the head librarian referred them to the participant because she felt that the participant's cataloguing and library systems

skills could be transferred to another medium. From this first content structuring project she moved into content management consulting and built a specialty providing content management, user interface, and information architecture advice for corporate intranets. She provided consulting services to a number of companies in several industry sectors. After several years of consulting she took on a role in an Internet company. She started as a Community Manager where she worked on collaborative analytics which involved the administration of collaborative workspaces and ended up working as a Product Manager developing intelligent search engines which provide direct answers to semantic questions.

4.2.15   Participant #15

This participants' connection with the library world began when he was in high school. He ended up working in a public library from ages 14-19, shelving books and working at the circulation desk. He entered an undergraduate degree in History with the intention of becoming a history academic after graduation. By his final year of the degree he realized that he no longer wanted to pursue a career in academia. A close friend of his brother's was a librarian and conversations with him opened the interviewee's eyes to librarianship as a possible career. He applied to library school and completed a master's degree in library science. He was unable to find a public library job in Canada, but did find a job with a public library system in the United States. He moved through progressively responsible positions in the public library system, eventually ending up in a policy librarian position in the Executive Directors office. He loved his role in the United States and loved the city, but eventually decided to leave and was offered a position in an urban public library

system in Canada. After four years in the role he found that he was unable to advance and decided to hand in his letter of resignation. The same day that he handed in his resignation he receive a call from his former boss in the U.S. public library who was now working in a library association and wanted him to apply for a position. He applied for the position and ended up getting the job. His boss ended up leaving the association to take on another role, so the participant decided that since he wasn't doing work that he found interesting and his boss was no longer there that he should leave and return to a job in a library. He took a collection development job at a suburban library in the same city. He was only in the role for a few months before he was offered a job by a library vendor. He took the job on a part-time basis – "on spec" – working at the library by day and doing the vendor job at night. This allowed him to explore the role and determine if it was the right fit for him. He decided that he enjoyed the role and left the library to work full time for the vendor.

4.2.16   Participant #16

The participant in this interview was interested in journalism, writing, editing and communication and completed her bachelor's degree in English. Her first post-graduation job was as a Communications Coordinator at a non-profit organization. This position included tasks ranging from giving tours, being the contact for the media, fundraising, research, writing, and preparing newsletters and reports. After working in this organization for several years she felt the need for a change and was presented with the opportunity to complete a master's degree in English in the United Kingdom. She completed her master's degree and returned to the United States to

seek a job in the corporate world. Her intention was to work in publishing, but she was told she was overqualified for entry level positions but not experienced enough to come in at a higher level. Being in a city with a high profile IT sector she shifted her attention away from the publishing sector and toward the high tech industry. She initially found this job search challenging because hiring managers were reluctant to hire people who didn't have high tech experience, but she eventually found a hiring manager who said she was looking for people like the participant who had writing, editing, communicating, research, and analysis skills. She ended up offering communication services in the IT sector. She worked in several different high tech companies doing research and custom publishing. She eventually moved to a high tech company to the position of Communications Director. She ended up starting and managing a corporate library at that company. She felt that going to library school would allow her to develop the skills and knowledge of libraries and took her MLS part-time while continuing to work full-time at the high tech company. She continued at the high tech company for some time after completing her MLS, but this was a point at which things started to go poorly in the high tech industry due to the dot.com bust. She left the high tech company to start her own company with a partner. Through her work as a freelancer, the participant was able to have a much greater variety of clients and work. She liked the flexibility and the variety of her current working arrangement as well as being able to take care of herself and not have to depend on employers who could lay her off at any minute. She finds that having different clients and different kinds of projects to work with makes life interesting.

4.2.17   Participant #17

This participant's career path started with volunteer and exchange student experiences after finishing high school. She was an exchange student in Indonesia during Suharto's regime and had the opportunity to have a first-hand look at dictatorship and information manufacture and control. When she returned to the United States she became an AmeriCorps volunteer and began working with at-risk youth in a tutoring program. She decided to pursue a master's degree in library science because of her interest in libraries as an agency for development and education. While enrolled in the library program she discovered a certificate program in international development which she took at the same time. During the summer she ended up volunteering in a library in a small village in South Africa. It was through this work that she really started to learn to see libraries as a community development institution. She found that public libraries themselves as community institutions could drive development. She graduated from library school with a very clear sense of what she wanted to do, but found that there were very few positions or opportunities that do that type of development work. She ended up taking a job at a State Library, but realized that she had a desire for making an impact at a broader and wider level than the position would allow. She left the state library to get a job at a non-profit in which she helped state libraries understand their role in strengthening the programs and services that they are providing to their public libraries within the state. She still felt a desire to do international work, so she left the non-profit to pursue a job overseas. She took a position for a year in the Middle East managing a small academic library. Ultimately she found that being back in a one-community library felt stifling after she had worked on broad programs and services across wide geographic areas through the non-profit. She ended up

returning to the United States and worked again at the non-profit. This time she found herself working on national scale grants delivering training for library staff on how to respond to the economic crisis. A position opened up at the granting organization as a Program Officer. She applied for and won the position. Through this job she was able to support library workers in the United States and internationally by helping support them and accomplish their visions for development projects in their communities. Unfortunately the granting organization that the participant has been working with is closing its library funding function and she is now considering her future role.

4.2.18   Participant #18

The participant in this interview did not start his career with an intention of entering the library and information science field. He initially studied comparative education and wanted to pursue a career in educational program design. A lecture in his education program opened his eyes to the role that libraries could play in providing access to distance education through Internet access. After completing his degree in library and information science the participant took a role with a library vendor. He was attracted to this role because it would give him the opportunity to become involved in library software development and would have the opportunity to interact with different types of libraries. His first vendor role involved doing implementation training and support. After several years of working at the library vendor an opportunity arose to work for a library consortium in his home state. He was hired for a position working on the implementation of a single unified catalogue

for the state universities. He welcomed the opportunity to work in an academic environment in his home state, but discovered that the pace of implementation was much slower than the pace of software development. The participant returned to the vendor world, but this time he moved into a sales position rather than a training role. He ended up filling an empty territory in sales, which gave him a little more control over when and where he travelled and was more financially rewarding. He next moved to another sales position at a software vendor outside of the library world. This position was with a company that sold multimedia solutions to state, local, and federal government agencies. He accepted the job because he had sales experience and felt comfortable interacting with senior administrators from academic and public library settings. He moved back into the library world to a position with an open source vendor. He enjoyed the opportunity to return to the library field because by this point he'd had close to 10 years working in the library field. It seemed right to him to come back to the field where he'd wanted to be when his career had started. He also enjoyed the opportunity to interact with librarians again on a more technical side. After four years with the open source vendor he returned to a non-open source library ILS vendor. He was attracted to the product line that the commercial software vendor was developing which was much more content driven than the ILSs of the past and involved a move to the cloud.

4.2.19   Participant #19

The participant in this interview began her career with an undergraduate degree in political science. She wasn't sure what she wanted to do when she finished her undergraduate degree, but she knew that she wanted to travel and had a passion

for history and politics and was also fascinated by current events and technology. She had been working in customer service roles since she was 14 years old and knew that she wanted a career that was somewhat people-centred. She ended up pursuing an interdisciplinary master's degree which allowed her to travel but did not lead to a specific professional role or career path. One of her classmates convinced her that pursing a degree in library and information science would allow her to have a career that matched her interests. She decided to pursue a degree in library and information science from a school in which the program was part of the faculty of management. She selected this program because she was primarily interested in the people and soft-skills side of librarianship. Her first post-graduation job was a contract position with a university in which she worked on building a digital library collection for nursing students. She followed this contract with a position in a media organization. She left the media position for a job in a public library. She was in a position called "Community Liaison". She followed this position with a job in an academic library in the United States. She has responsible for budgeting, resource planning, program development, and training. She followed this position with a role in an academic library in Canada in the technical services group. She was only in this role for a short period of time because she received word that she had won a government archives position that she had applied for earlier. This position was the role of reference coordinator for an archival program and involved working with researchers who were coming in to use the archival collection. The participant worked in this role for two years and then moved to her current position in the private sector. The participant's current position is as a supervisor of the records and information management group in an oil and gas company. In this role she is leading the transition of a records team from a physical to an electronic records environment.

4.2.20   Participant #20

The participant in this interview began her career by completing an undergraduate degree in psychology. This degree led to a job in rehabilitation in a hospital. She found this to be a very high stress job because of the potentially high impact that a mistake could have on a patient's life. She ended up leaving the job and took time off to go travelling. At the end of her travels she ended up taking a job in a public library. She found that even though she wasn't attracted to the shop-like customer service experience of working at the public library, she did find that there were some aspects of library work that she did enjoy and she did interact with other library staff whose work she did find interesting. She decided to pursue a degree in library and information science. She ended up getting part-time jobs during her studies. The first of these jobs was at a technical college. She also obtained a job in a government department doing records and archives work. After graduation she continued to pursue government records management positions. She progressed through several different roles of increasing responsibility. Eventually she moved with her husband to Canada. There were no government positions available in the city they moved to so the participant moved from government records management to records management in the corporate sector, taking on records management positions in the oil and gas industry.

4.3 Participant Work Experiences

A first subject discussed by participants in this study concerned their work experiences. This section is divided into the sub-sections of participants' jobs and work tasks, pre-MLIS work experiences, library internship experiences, library work experiences, non-library work experiences, career paths, and future ambitions. This division of content was determined by analysis of themes in participants' career narratives. In general these sections describe the work roles that participants have engaged in up to the time of the interview and where they would like to work in the future.

4.3.1 Participants' Jobs and Work Tasks

The first observation is that all of the participants worked in roles that used some of the skills that could be linked to LIS education and/or library work experience (the one participant who was in the process of completing her MLIS degree at the time of the study engaged in LIS-related activities prior to entering her MLIS degree program and made the connection between those skills and the profession of librarianship). Jobs included information management roles in the public and private sectors, library vendor jobs, information consultant or entrepreneur positions, policy and research analyst roles, and jobs in the information technology sector. The vast majority of the positions occupied by participants were focused on information technology. Some were involved in creating new technological resources such as designing search tools. Others were involved in the implementation of technologies such as collaborative portals or new software into a

variety of organizations including libraries. The rest counted conducting research online or in electronic search engines or repositories as a major task in their work.

4.3.2   Pre-MLIS Work Experiences

The majority of the participants in this study completed their undergraduate degrees in the arts and humanities in subjects such as English, history, literature, and women's studies. Some participants found that their undergraduate degrees did not prepare them for any particular career path. A few pursued graduate degrees at the Masters and Doctoral level. A few who pursued graduate degrees noted that teaching was the main career option after graduation and they rejected this option.

Although the participants in this study graduated at different times, many had the experience of entering a difficult job market. For some this was caused by economic recessions (in the 1990s, during the "dot.com crash", and post-2008). For others, the difficulty was related to the city in which the participant lived. In some cases these cities provided few opportunities in general and in other cases there were some specific barriers such as the need for bilingualism limited employment opportunities.

The vast majority of the participants had work experience prior to applying to library school. In some cases the participants enjoyed the work, but saw a graduate degree as a means of gaining promotions or greater remuneration. In other cases, participants found the work they were doing unsatisfying and wanted a career rather than just a series of jobs.

4.3.3 Library Internship Experiences

Another observation from participants' career narratives was the importance of internships in post-graduation career progress. Internship served three important functions. The first of these was to expose participants to career opportunities that they had not previously considered. One participant, for example, stated that without internships many people would not be aware of the field of special librarianship:

> [U]nless you have a parent who has worked in a corporate environment ... I don't think you get a sense that there are these specialized libraries out there or even government libraries. You grow up going to a school library, you go to a public library and you've just come from an undergrad and your MLIS program where you're using an academic library. The other types of libraries are just not something you're exposed to on a regular basis (Participant 1)

The second was to provide participants with the skills and experience they would need to compete for positions after graduation. One participant described a work placement as providing her with the specific skills she needed for her first job: "So it was like a one-to-one correlation - work I'd done on [my internship] was perfect because then I ended up working at [an Internet search company]". (Participant 6)

The third function of library school internships was to turn directly into participants' first post-graduation job. Several participants reported bring hired by their internship employer:

I came back here to [this city] and called up the person that I had worked for at [my first internship] and that's how I started with the government (Participant 9)

4.3.4 Library Work Experiences

The vast majority of the participants in this study have experience working in library settings including academic, public and special libraries.

Participants' accounts of their experiences working in libraries ranged from the very positive to the very disappointing. No participant had just one type of experience, instead accumulating a mix of good and disappointing work experiences over the course of their careers.

Work experiences were described as positive by participants when they were intellectually challenging. Participants described these roles as providing "an incredible training ground" (Participant 1), "changed my perspective" (Participant 15), gave the "ability to transfer my skillset", or were fascinating or interesting.

In most of the cases in which participants found jobs unsatisfying, a mismatch between the participant's expectations of the role and the reality they experienced in the workplace was the cause. In some cases the mismatch was between the types of tasks or skillset required for the role and what the participant expected. In other cases the attitudes of supervisors or coworkers were not what the participant expected. For example, participants encountered entrenched attitudes or a lack of support for professional development.

Two trends in the way that participants tended to characterize this experience are worth mentioning. The first of these is that participants did not equate pre-MLIS library work experiences to post-MLIS library work. They were sometimes hesitant to count these pre-professional jobs as library work experience.

The second trend was that several participants seemed to rate their library work experiences against a "traditional" model of librarianship which centred on work in a physical library space. For example, when describing reference services, the definition focused on face-to-face reference services are provided to students or members of the public at a library reference desk rather than on virtual reference. Participants who were involved with librarianship in a different capacity, such as through a consulting, association or vendor role, differentiated this work from "active librarianship". Similarly, a participant who had provided online reference services stated that she had little experience with "traditional librarianship".

4.3.5   Non-Library Work Experiences

Discussions of work experiences outside of the library sector took a slightly different tone than those in the library sector. Because working outside of the library industry has historically been uncommon or at least underemphasized among LIS graduates, many participants explained how they got started in a different sector. Several described barriers to joining an industry that were finally overcome by meeting a manager or hiring director who understood the potential value of the LIS skillset in their organization.

In some cases participants were the first people with a LIS background hired into an organization. This is a point of pride for many of these participants. They enjoy blazing a trail for other LIS graduates. In some cases, the participants are in positions in which they are able to hire staff and often preferentially recruit people with an LIS education or experience.

Several of the participants worked or work in consultant roles either as employees of consulting companies or as independent consultants or entrepreneurs. Others have taken a number of contract positions. Those who have had the experience of working in a large number of different workplaces have stated that exposure to different environments helped broaden their perspectives.

All of the participants in the study who work as entrepreneurs or independent consultants are highly satisfied with their work and would not want to return to being an employee in an organization. They do caution LIS students considering this path that running one's own business is a challenging task and that people should gain a variety of work experiences before setting off on their own. The aspects of these roles that they most enjoy are the flexibility and independence involved in being self-employed.

4.4   Career Paths

None of the participants in this study described following a planned career path which took them through a progression of increasingly senior positions in one or

two organizations. Chance was identified as a major factor in the career progress of many of the participants. They explained that they responded to opportunities as they arose without engaging in active career planning:

> So I've had absolutely no career planning whatsoever aside from 'Hey this looks interesting, let's do this'. It's always just the next adventure (Participant 1)

Participants emphasized the importance of flexibility and a willingness to pursue different types of opportunities. Several participants reported knowing classmates or friends who entered library school with the intention of obtaining a specific job, such as an academic librarian position or a public library position, after graduation:

> But I didn't go into library school with a set idea that I wanted to become…like my husband for example wanted to become either a law librarian or a corporate librarian. He figured those were the two things that he wanted to do for sure. I had no such idea. I mean I sort of thought I'll see what's interesting, I'll go where the wind blows me (Participant 9)

Being open to a range of job opportunities opens participants up to applying their skills broadly and experiencing a range of job roles.

Participants described a variety of push and pull factors that led them to leave and accept positions. These included family-related concerns such as wanting a position that allowed for better work-life balance, a desire to be closer to family members, or the need to move to a city where a spouse could find work. Participants left and accepted positions because of specific features of the job such as the desire to work with a favourite supervisor, develop certain skillsets, or because of the

appeal of the job description. In cases where the supervisor moved on to another role or the work didn't match the job description, participants left.

Participants also discussed aspects of the job that kept them motivated. A motivation that was shared by several participants was the desire to learn and develop professionally. In some cases the participant saw jobs as a general opportunity to learn and expand their skills: "I think it was just an opportunity to expand the skills and try something different" (Participant 1). In other cases, jobs were pursued because they would provide the opportunity to develop a specific skillset: "…I wanted to be more technical than I was, I just didn't have the opportunity to dig into the technical side ... " (Participant 2).

The second shared aspect of career decision making for several participants was the influence of family. In some cases, jobs were pursued in certain cities in order to be closer to family: "My parents are getting older, they're having some health challenges and I was just honestly was just looking for jobs here…" (Participant 2). In other cases, jobs were pursued because they would allow a better work-life balance:

> I should mention that number one to me is being a mom and unfortunately it's an either or choice ... when you choose to be a mom, at least from my experience…you're giving up upward mobility. So unless you are undeniably better than the rest at - whether it's something like designing websites or developing training material or just being a really good speaker and being invited to speak, you know, at conferences, you're not going to have that upward mobility. It's all about face time and hours in the office. (Participant 4)

A third factor that was important to many participants in deciding to pursue different jobs was compensation and benefits. Several participants observed that the decision to work in non-library roles was partially motivated by compensation:

> Because I actually did interview with the library district and considered taking a pay cut. If I'd been offered that position when I was looking I might have considered it, but it's the difference between, you know – that job would have been like a 20K pay cut for me. It's really hard to justify at this point. I thought about doing it, you know, later in life when it's not as much about that and because it is a passion (Participant 6)

4.4.1 Future Ambitions

A final area of career paths and career decision making from the interviews was the question of future ambitions. Participants were asked about the types of roles they would like to pursue in the future. Flexibility or the ability and willingness to pursue whatever opportunities arose was a theme in many participants' career stories and they expressed a continued interest in remaining open to a range of future job possibilities. Some actually expressed an unwillingness to name a dream job because they felt that this type of thinking closed people to opportunities in a changing work environment.

When asked if they would consider working in a library setting in the future most were open to this option. Some participants did state that they would be unlikely to take a library position in the future. The reasons they gave for this were a dramatic decrease in compensation compared to the salary levels they receive working outside of the library sector, a perceived lack of alignment between their definition of librarianship and that which they see emanating from at least some

types of libraries, or in the case of those who had become independent consultants or entrepreneurs, an unwillingness to ever again work as someone else's employee.

Several of the participants in the study described their experience of remaining flexible and open to opportunities as they arose, using phrases such as "ride the wave" (Participant 14) when describing their career path. Their focus was on flexibility and being open to whatever opportunities arose rather than targeting a specific role and some spoke about the frustration experienced by their classmates who had specific career goals and were not able to achieve them. Their career goals were low in specificity. Another participant had sought library roles for some time without success and received advice from human resources experts that his likelihood of obtaining a library job in his city was low and advised him to shift his job search to other types of roles. The participant's assessment of the low achievability of his goal to obtaining a library job led him to modify his job seeking strategy.

4.4.2   Career Success and Success Criteria

The participants' career narratives included accounts of their reasons for accepting different positions or making shifts in their career search strategies. These shifts included both the inclusion of certain types of roles and the exclusion of others. These decisions and their rationale suggest that participants developed personalized career goals and criteria for determining their professional success that included a combination of both objective and subjective measures. Even though the personalized goals or success criteria that were espoused were different for each

individual and even for individuals there was some fluidity in the definition of success over the course of their professional life, some common dimensions appeared across the participants' narratives in describing their success criteria which can be explored and elaborated and related to the existing literature on career success (Li, You, Lin & Chan, 2013; Hall, Lee, Kossek & Las Heras, 2012; Stamm & Buddeberg-Fischer, 2011; Dyke & Murphy, 2006; Ng, Eby, Sorensen & Feldman, 2005). This research is discussed in "Chapter 6: Integrating the Literature"

The career success literature generally describes success criteria as being either "objective" or "subjective", with objective success including promotions, raises in salary, and increased benefits, and subjective success including a variety of variables based on quality of life as determined by the individual employee, which could include factors such as work-life balance. Participants in this study described both objective and subjective career goals. The participant narratives suggest that there are additional dimensions of success measures, whether they related to objective of subjective goals, A success criterion's dimensions will impact how individuals respond to challenges, in particular whether they will pursue, modify, or abandon a given success criterion or professional goal. The dimensions of success criteria include attachment, duration, specificity, achievability, control and prevalence.

Attachment: Attachment is the first dimension of success. Attachment refers to the magnitude of the participant's dedication to a success criterion. Attachment levels can range from weak to strong. The degree of an individuals' attachment to a success criterion is indicated by the level of attention and mental energy expended in

its exploration or pursuit. People may use words like "passion" to describe success criteria or personal interests to which they have a high level of attachment.

Duration: Duration refers to the length of time an individual has been aware of or has pursued his or her personal success goals or strategies. Individuals may have maintained success goals, such as identifying a preferred occupation, from early childhood or they may be in the process of exploring a goal. The longer an individual has held a success criterion, the more time they will have had to develop strategies for its achievement.

Specificity: Specificity refers to the precise or generality of a success criterion. People may hold highly specific career ambitions, for example obtaining a particular type of work role, such as being a liaison librarian in an academic library, or more general, such as wanting a role in that involves certain types of tasks such as research or writing. More general success criteria have a greater range of fulfillment possibilities.

Achievability: Achievability refers to an individual's perception of their likelihood or capacity to achieve their success criteria. This assessment will be based on the barriers that they encountered in attempting to realize their success criteria and their success in overcoming them. If a success criterion is considered unachievable it may be abandoned or altered. The perception of a success criterion's achievability is as important as its actual achievability.

Control: Control is linked to achievability in that it explores where the resources to overcome barriers to success achievement lie. Whether or not a success criterion is achievable may be impacted by factors fully under the control of the individual, fully under the control of others, or more often under the shared control of the individual and others. The degree to which an individual feels that they can influence or take ownership over a factor that may serve as a barrier or enabler to achieving a success criterion may be related to their perception of the achievability success.

Prevalence: Prevalence refers to the degree to which an individual's success criteria are shared by others around them such as their friends, family, and coworkers. The ability to find others with shared interests and goals may assist people in achieving their personal goals. A person may value being unique or their ability to differentiate themselves from others and build the pursuit of uniqueness into their success strategy.

The interplay of success goal dimensions will impact whether people decide to pursue a goal and the ways in which that goal is pursued. These dimensions describe the criteria that people include in their career decision making processes. They also contribute to how participants respond to setbacks in their career path. A first example of this comes from the case of a participant who had formed the ambition to become a librarian in childhood. He was not accepted into library school the first time he applied to the program but persisted in his ambition and applied again, this time to be accepted. The high level of attachment and long duration that the participant held the goal led him to persevere in that its pursuit in the face of rejection.

These dimensions provide some insights into why individuals may choose to pursue one type of success or anther at different points in their careers. They may also provide some insights into why individuals select one career opportunity over another. Several participants indicated that they themselves were not the only ones who controlled their ability to pursue a given career goal. Often, participants identified control as being largely situated with others early in their careers. For example, when entering a new career field, participants had to find a gatekeeper who gave them their first opportunity to work in a new industry where industry-specific experience was lacking. As their experience working in a sector grew, their dependence on others to recognize their skills diminished, shifting the control from others to the participant. Prevalence played a role in participants' career paths and professional lives in several ways. The vast majority of participants discussed seeking out communities of likeminded individuals who assisted and supported them in the pursuit of their career goals. Mentors provided specific help in achieving goals through assisting in skill development and connecting people with potential job opportunities and also serving as a model for how participants could function as professionals. This was particularly helpful for participants whose career goals were uncommon or low in prevalence and were not extensively covered in their studies or to which they had limited exposure prior to completing their professional education.

4.5   Conclusion

This section provided information about the career paths and career decisions made by participants in this study. This information serves to provide context into

the types of experiences that were captured in the semi-structured interviews performed in this study. This section provides clarification of the experiences of participants whose experiences of professional identity were explored. It illustrates the diversity within this participant group. Some participants went to library school with the intention of pursuing an information science role outside of libraries. Others intended to work in libraries but ended up switching into non-library roles. Finally, a third group of participants graduated from library school with the intention of being as open to the widest range of career options possible. In general, participants expressed a preference for flexibility and avoiding excessive career planning. No single causal factor could predict a participant's decision to enter a non-library role. Participants entered library school with a variety of interests, took a wide range of specializations, may or may not have had library work experience, and worked in all types of libraries. This chapter sought to capture the individual experiences of participants and to start to discuss some of the career path or decision themes that emerged regarding job choices. The next chapter of this thesis outlines the substantive theory that emerged from these experiences.

Chapter 5: Theory of Personalizing Professionalism

5.1   Introduction

A Grounded Theory study's goal is to produce a theory that works at a conceptual level independent of people, place and time. This chapter will describe the substantive theory that was developed through this study to explore how LIS graduates in non-library roles experience professional identity. It will begin with a general overview of the Grounded Theory followed by a brief description of the contextual conditions impacting the data gathered in this study, and concluding with elaborations of each of the categories that contributed to the theory's development.

5.2   The Theory of Personalizing Professionalism

The objective of this study was to produce a theory which would capture the professional identity experiences of LIS graduates in non-library roles. The theory produced was labelled the theory of Personalizing Professionalism. According to this theory, individuals possess two identities which interact with each other throughout one's career. The first is an internal appraisal of self which represents an individual's assessment of who they "really" are as a professional. The second is an externally expressed identity, which represents who that individual presents him or herself to be. The internal appraisal of self is developed as a result of several processes and concepts including socialization into the profession, interactions with others, perceptions of the profession, and an understanding of one's motivations and interests. The externally expressed identity represents the ways in which individuals

present themselves to others in order to achieve professional or personal goals.
These expressions include the labels that are used when introducing oneself to others
and the strategies that one develops to find one's path within the profession such as
identifying success strategies. Interactions with others impact individuals' internal
appraisal of self and externally expressed identity and represent an area of potential
conflict when others' views of how a professional identity should be expressed do
not match the identity that one has developed for oneself or is displaying to others.
There are multiple strategies that can be undertaken to respond to a perceived
conflict between these two identities which can be grouped into three categories: (1)
Assimilation, in which participants change themselves in order to fit into the
communities with whom they wish to engage, (2) influencing or attempting to
change the perceptions or beliefs of the group, and (3) withdrawal, in which
individuals elect only to associate with communities of likeminded individuals and to
avoid those who do not share their perceptions of the profession. Figure 7 depicts
the various components of the two identities in this theory.

Figure 7: Diagram of the theory of Personalizing Professionalism
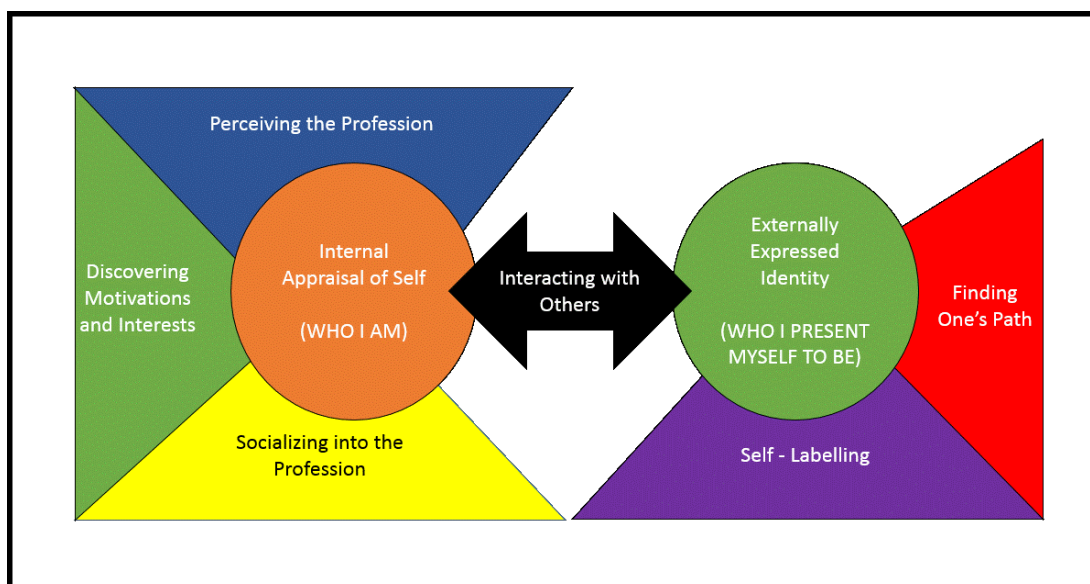
5.3   The Internal Appraisal of Self

The internal appraisal of self is one's perception of who they "really" are. It may include an identity that they feel that they have already achieved or an identity that they are working toward or are becoming. One's internal identity may also be linked to a role that they occupied in the past. The internal appraisal of self will also incorporate an individual's motivations, interests, and values. It also includes one's perceptions of their skills and competencies. The communities with whom one chooses to associate can be an indicator of their internal identity. The components of the internal appraisal of self are shown in figure 8 below.

Figure 8: The internal appraisal of self
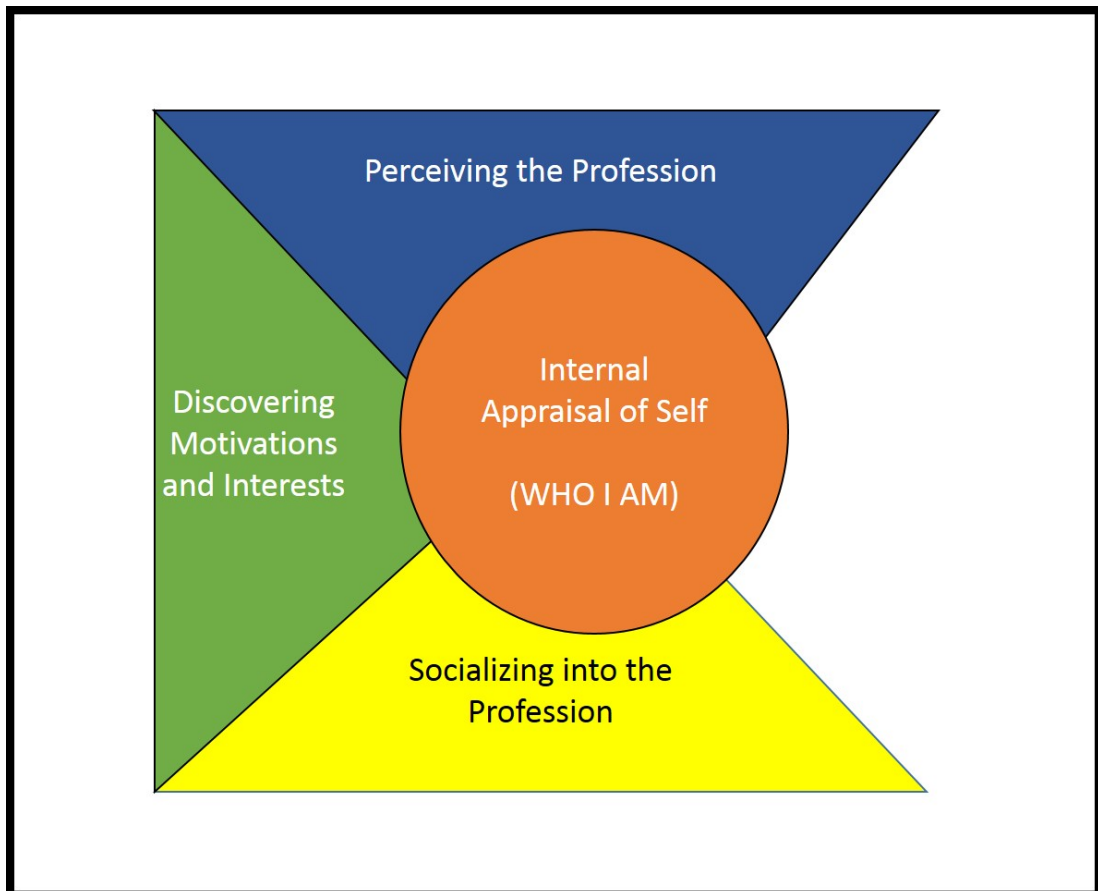
5.4   Category 1: Socializing into the Profession

This section focuses on participants' process of socializing into the profession, and in particular how they learned to perform the tasks that they would need to master to perform their various work roles. Socialization is the process through which individuals are assimilated into existing communities through the transfer of explicit and tacit knowledge including the learning of the rules, skills, values, norms, customs, and symbols that make up that community's culture (Baker and Lattuca, 2010; Serrat, 2008; Rummens, 2001; Ibarra, 1999). This section is divided into the sub-sections of deciding to attend library school, library school experiences, learning and skills development, and mentors.

5.4.1   Deciding to Attend Library School

The first step that every professional must make is to select their profession and enter into the training or apprenticeship program required to enter that profession. In the case of librarianship that first step is deciding to complete a graduate degree in Library and Information Science. Reasons for deciding to attend library school have been fairly thoroughly studied in the library literature and the interviews conducted in this project reflect the findings of the other research that has been conducted on the topic.

One participant in this study had actually developed an ambition to become a librarian as a child as a result of a lifelong love of libraries. This participant was the exception in this study as all of the other participants identified library and

information science as a potential career only during or after completing their undergraduate degrees.

Many of the participants discussed their experiences of visiting libraries throughout their formative and educational years, but only one of the participants attributed these experiences to a decision to become a librarian as a profession: "Decided to become a librarian in elementary school and never wavered" (Participant 8). For the others, the connection between enjoying using or being in libraries and working in a library was not made until much later:

> I had no idea. I mean I spent all my time in the library. You know, I would study in there, I would hang out there, I would wander through the stacks and, you know, pick up random books. It just never occurred to me to actually be a librarian and then after I got the undergrad degree I ended up bouncing around and doing a whole bunch of different things ... (Participant 2)

> I don't really know why it didn't occur to me to be perfectly honest. I think I was more absorbed in the materials than the actual, you know, then the thought that I could actually make a living doing this. It never occurred to me. (Participant 9)

Many of the participants worked or volunteered in libraries either during their teenage or undergraduate years. They reported enjoying the work and in some cases even found that working in libraries was something that they excelled at, but this wasn't enough to entice them to pursue a career in libraries. For many of the participants these jobs contributed to the decision to attend library school:

> So as an undergraduate student I continued to work as a student assistant in the health sciences library at the [University] while I was attending school at that institution. And following up from my undergraduate education I knew that I wanted to continue with graduate

studies of some sort. So I had applied for a couple different types of graduate programs including MLIS programs, simply because I knew that I have exposure to what that degree meant having worked in libraries previously and I knew that it would be a potentially a fruitful path for me. (Participant 7)

I was an English major and I was looking for an internship. I had applied to a few and I had got a few, but they weren't 100% what I wanted to do and my advisor had suggested that I intern at the school's library. And it wasn't really a thought that I had, because I didn't think I wanted to go to library school…My final semester interning there I was able to shadow a lot of different librarians. So I shadowed reference, I shadowed government, the archivist that worked there, interlibrary loans – just really every facet of the library and really learning what it takes to run a library. The different people that were involved and it was so interesting to me because I never – I wasn't one of those kids who went to the library every weekend to rent books. It wasn't something that was in me, but the research and the writing and the love of learning really kind of struck a chord with me. (Participant 11)

And after I graduated I continued working there. That was at [the university where I completed my undergraduate degree] in the central library there in the catalogue department. And I worked my way up to dean of paraprofessional level and then was something like that, which was, you know, a fairly responsible position and I started talking to some of the professional librarians there and my father said if you want to work in libraries get the degree. (Participant 14)

Conversely, several participants reported that they had not been library users as children and teens and that their families expressed surprise that they would be interested in pursuing a degree in library science. This lack of history with libraries did not prevent them from pursuing a library degree.

A common theme through many participants' stories was the impact of a trusted friend or colleague on the decision to attend library school. They described having someone such as a co-worker or friend recommend that they consider librarianship as a career. These individuals were often employed in libraries already

(such as supervisors in academic libraries where the participants worked), or were considering applying to library school themselves.

Several participants described the process of thinking through their interests and determining what career paths would match those interests. Some participants associated librarianship with activities such as reading, research, writing, learning, and customer service, and it was the connection to these activities that led them to the profession.

> So between the time I found out that library school existed and the time I was there was probably about a six month window. So it wasn't something that I had always planned to do. It was just something that sounded interesting and that's where I ended up. And I never had any intention of even working in a library. It was more interesting from an information management perspective. So I thought I was going to go and learn about all these things and become some sort of information broker after that. (Participant 13)

> I actually liked museums when I was in university…[and] I applied for a museum studies program that was joint between *[two universities]*, but I only found it because I was about ready to graduate and wondering what I was going to do with my life – and it turns out I had missed the deadline by like two days. So I was like 'OH NO – now what am I going to do with my life? I really wanted to do that!' And then I found the library school at [a nearby university] was still accepting applications. Like, library – museum – that's going to be really close. And it wasn't until I actually got to library school that – it actually really wasn't until I got out of library school – that I really started to realize what I had learned there and how valuable it was and how interesting it was. (Participant 5)

Some discussed the experience of going to library school as validating some of their prior knowledge and skills:

So, again my experience was funnily enough was that much of what I had already been doing was just reinforced by what I learned… I mean I guess they were all very edifying (Participant 10)

[W]hy wouldn't I get the degree to justify so much of what I've already done? It just – it all seemed to fall into place. It feels right in my heart and I feel like this is what I was meant to do – maybe I just didn't know it was a possibility. (Participant 4)

In some cases participants were particularly attracted to a degree in library and information science because they were interested in working in libraries. Several participants were attracted to librarianship because they had experience working in libraries and knew that they enjoyed the work. In a few cases participants were attracted to libraries because of their potential to achieve functions such as community development or equitable access to information.

Other participants were attracted to a Master's program in LIS not because they were interested in a particular career, but because of the flexibility and transferable competencies that it would provide.

5.4.2   Experiencing Library School

With one exception the participants in this study attended ALA accredited library schools in North America. Participants ranged from those who completed their degrees over 25 years ago to recent graduates. Participants completed both traditional face-to-face and online programs. The range of elective course offerings, the option to select an area of specialization, and the ability to participate in internships or research project placements differed.

Many participants described their library school experiences as being extremely positive, with some saying that they loved the program and that they felt like they were at home.

Several participants discussed the mix of theory and practice included in their MLIS programs. They stated that they expected theoretical content from a graduate-level program and did not want to see the program transformed into a "trade school". Several participants did, however, express concern over how well their programs prepared them for their first post-graduation jobs. In particular several participants cited management skills such as the ability to prepare budgets, advocate for library programs, and interact with stakeholders as missing from their curricula.

When describing their favourite classes and professors, participants identified professors who incorporated their professional experiences as library and information science practitioners into their teaching. The participants reported that these professors better prepared them for post-graduation experiences than those who taught from a purely theoretical perspective.

Several of the participants in this study entered their MLIS programs with the intention of pursuing non-library-based careers. These participants observed that the majority of their colleagues entered the program with the idea of pursuing a career in either public or academic librarianship and that the majority of the classes available were geared toward these workplaces. Some participants observed that they had some difficulty in finding elective courses that matched their interests.

Several participants observed that they did not realize the full value of their degree until they had spent several years working. They pointed in particular to the value of their reference and cataloguing classes, which proved valuable outside of library work settings.

5.4.3   Learning and Skills Development

All of the participants discussed their experiences of learning and developing the skills and knowledge that have helped them in their careers. These experiences extended well beyond the classroom. There were three main methods of professional growth and development discussed by the participants. The first was finding and learning from mentors or advisors. The second was experiential learning or learning by doing on the job. The third method was learning independently by undertaking a range of activities on one's own initiative such as reading, attending conferences, and participating in a range of training courses within and outside of the work environment.

Participants described the development and use of skills throughout their careers. Participants were asked how their LIS education prepared them for their current roles. Several pointed to reference classes as giving them the skills needed to identify user needs, and to cataloguing and taxonomy development classes as giving them ways to organize information. Participants more commonly pointed to library school as providing them with theoretical or foundational skills. In the case of technology classes, participants found that these classes gave them comfort with

navigating different databases, but sometimes couldn't remember the specific programs on which they had been trained.

Continuous learning and skill development were mentioned by many participants. In most cases these skills were developed on the job. They were gained through performing work tasks and also from receiving guidance from coworkers and supervisors. As one participant stated, new employees "have to pay their dues" (Participant 9) and learn how to function in the workplace. Participants also reported learning by attending professional development courses, participating in conferences, and reading professional literature. Many participants described the need to learn independently to develop as a professional. Some described curiosity and a drive to learn and develop as an innate characteristic:

> I was able to learn along by reading blogs, following folks on social media, um ... looking up their publications, and doing my own research a year before I actually started taking any classes. (Participant 4)

> I've been kind of a self-starter. I think that I seek things out like that. I mean I think if I ever needed to ask a question – if I ever had to figure out how to do something really library related it would be harder for me, like I said, because I don't have as many people who are librarians around me. But I mean I constantly learn stuff and talk to people and try to figure out what I need to do and I think that's just throughout. I'm kind of a believer in life-long learning (Participant 6)

> I really enjoy that work and I think it meshes nicely with the curiosity that I think most librarians have. I mean librarians are darn – in my experience – are usually very curious people. Which is what makes us so interesting. I mean it's just – it's a lot of fun to be able to find subjects and follow them through (Participant 9)

> But really, I think the main thing would be to trust in what you've learned and just keep learning, because there's nothing sadder than

someone who leaves school and thinks "There, I've learned everything I need to know" and really it's just the beginning (Participant 9)

In other cases participants found that they were either working in small teams or in emerging work areas where learning and developing skills independently was a necessity:

That was sort of one of those things too where – especially in my second job with that not-for-profit where I ended up for a while – it was a very small organization. There were four of us. So it was basically if you could figure out how to build a database then you were the database girl (Participant 9)

I learned it on the job. I learned it at professional development courses, conferences, paying attention to the growing set of literature and websites and things the community... I was a member of the early information architecture group and I still monitor a taxonomy listserv (Participant 14)

Several participants in this study have recently expanded their teams and they discussed the skills and competencies that they look for in employees. For one participant, library education and background were considered essential as this background would allow employees to adapt more quickly to their roles and responsibilities and work well with librarian clients. For another participant, library background and research skills were considered less important and the ability to function in a fast-paced workplace was more important. The idea arose of skills that could be taught on the job and skills that could not. One participant described a meeting with a hiring manager who listed research, editing, and analytical skills as ones that needed to be built up over a lifetime and that she didn't want to hire anyone who did not already possess these skills.

Finding a supervisor or hiring manager who appreciated their LIS skills was a pivotal moment in the careers of several participants. As in the case described above, finding a hiring manager who recognized transferable competencies rather than relying on industry-specific experience enabled the participant to transition into a new industry. In one case, a participant noted that her supervisor, who did not have a LIS degree, recognized the transferable nature of the knowledge and skills obtained in a library degree before the participant.

A concern expressed by several participants was that the skills possessed by LIS graduates are undervalued and that librarians themselves contribute to this problem. One participant spoke about the experience of sitting in a library school class and hearing people complain about librarians not receiving the same respect as lawyers, accountants, or doctors, but observed that they don't sell their skills in the same way as these other professions. These other professions expect to be compensated based on the value they bring to organizations. LIS graduates have the ability to bring a significant amount of value to an organization, yet they don't seek equivalently high levels of compensation – with some LIS graduates willing to work correspondingly for any level of compensation an employer is willing to offer.

5.4.4 Mentoring

The role of mentors in skills and professional development was discussed by several of the participants in this study. These mentors included faculty advisors, co-workers, employers, colleagues in professional associations, parents, and family friends. They were influential in a range of activities including providing guidance

on which courses to take in LIS programs, how to perform specific work tasks, where to find opportunities for work or professional involvement:

> [T]he top two who were always willing to give advice and ... even the kind of thing I mentioned earlier – they didn't want to hold me back. If they can give me experience and, you know, funnel me to positions where I can succeed and learn something it was great, so it was great ... and if I decided to take those skills and go elsewhere they supported me ... and that's what I try to do for others. (Participant 2)

> When I was a kid, my dad was a sales person for a large chemical company and he did most of his work from home or from the road and he was always working – everyday he was down there at eight o'clock in the morning or earlier and worked the full day. He would come up some days for lunch, but really worked the full day and so I understood what it's like to be – to work from home and to still put your nose to the grindstone and work every day rather than sitting around or taking naps. (Participant 3)

> And there was actually a family friend who was like a database administrator who I, you know, kind of, I wasn't seeking out that person as a mentor specifically – and it wasn't through the program, it was just I noticed, you know, he seems like he has a pretty good career. Like, you know, I would bounce things off him, like, 'Should I take this class?' you know, 'Do you think this is useful?' to learn how to do this or that? Next thing I know I just was choosing information archives and information architecture track. So I was taking more classes in the technical side. (Participant 6)

> I've been very fortunate to have had several great supervisors from the time I – from the time of my first job up until my time right now as a more mid-career professional. And what I've really taken from those experiences and from working with good supervisors is … the generosity of the librarianship profession. So I've noticed that people – that my supervisors have good experiences – displayed real willingness to teach and to share and to – to want to see their protégées excel in the work. (Participant 7)

> Like in those early days in the consulting world I was really young. I was in my twenties and you're dealing with consultants and partners who were in their forties and fifties with MBAs and PhDs and everything else. And they're hypersmart… I think sometimes I was sort of a pet that they saw some potential in me and they would coach

me and I'd learn stuff and they were generous. And so I still have friends from that era who we go out and have coffee and drinks and they…you know, now we're more equals and some of them are retired, but you know…they were good people then, they're still good people now. (Participant 8)

And I know that in some cases students don't get a lot of input from their advisors and I think that's very sad because in both my undergrad and my graduate programs I have really valued the input of my advisors and they've been really fantastic and I feel very lucky and fortunately to have worked with people like that. So I don't know that that's necessarily education-based, but just the impact that an advisor can have who really cares about the direct that you're going and wants to set you up for success. (Participant 11)

Although most of the participants discussed the positive roles that mentors have played in their career development, some participants also discussed the impact that observing poor managers and supervisors has played on their career. Supervisors and managers have provided models of both what participants strive to imitate and what they hope to avoid.

None of the participants found their mentors through a formal mentoring program and one participant stated that she wished that her library school had provided students with the opportunity to connect with mentors

5.4.5   Section Summary: Socializing into the Profession

Socialization into the librarianship profession was a major topic in the LIS body of literature. This literature raised several questions about the socialization process for LIS graduates who entered non-library roles. These questions included participants' motivations for entering library school and the impact of mentors in their professional development. Discussions concerning participants' reasons for

electing to attend library school were similar to those discussed in other studies, including the fact that most participants decided to attend library school was usually made during or after the completion of an undergraduate degree. The topic of mentorship was raised by many participants. These mentors included people inside and outside the library profession and they played a variety of functions including specific skills training, modeling of ways to be a professional, and connections with other professionals or job opportunities. Those who valued mentorship opportunities sought them out independently. Several did note that establishing a network of contacts who can provide professional guidance and support takes time and that while they have managed to build them for their current roles they would be challenged in building new ones if they made a dramatic job change such as moving from a job in the tech sector to a job in a library. Figure 9 below shows the various components of socializing into the profession.

Figure 9: Socializing into the profession

Socializing into the Profession
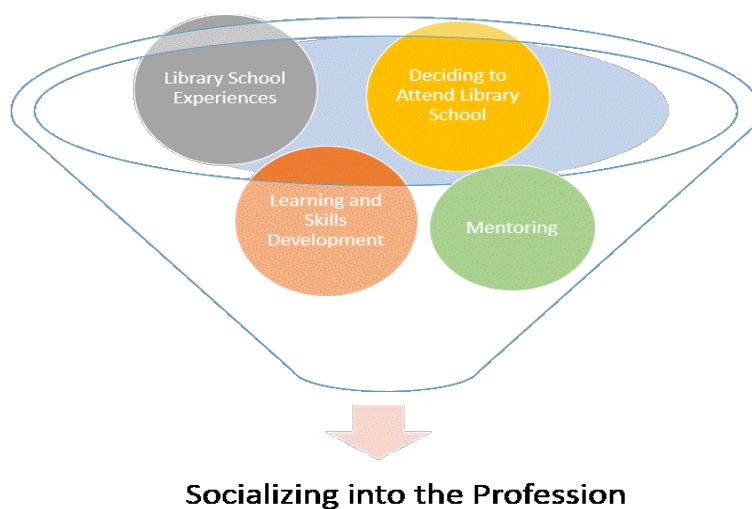
5.4.6   Significance of Socialization on One's Internal Appraisal of Self

The socialization process was included among the components of one's internal appraisal of self because it provides the framework around which one defines their profession and their place within it (Stenberg, 2010). The rationale behind one's decision to enter a MLIS program sets the stage for the professional experience. The reason for choosing to undertake professional education reveals expectations about what the profession entails and what impact joining the profession will have on one's post-graduation career prospects (Taylor, Perry, Barton & Spencer, 2010; Hazeri, Martin & Sarrafzadeh, 2009). One's experiences within professional training environments, both during formal MLIS studies and in continuing professional development activities after graduation, will further refine that perception of the profession (Lacy & Copeland, 2013; Khalid, 2011; Hall, 2009; Johnson, 2002). For some, their expectations and perceptions of the profession will be reinforced and for others they will change. In all cases the result of this socialization is the development of a new way of thinking and acting based on what has been learned. If socialization is successful, then this new way of thinking will become so ingrained as to become the natural or subconscious way of approaching problems or tasks within the workforce (Lamote & Engels, 2010; Swann, Johnson & Bosson, 2009; Berger, Cunningham & Drumwright, 2006). Socialization processes along with interactions with other professionals inside and outside of the profession will lead to the development of perceptions of the profession and those who practice it – in this case librarians and librarianship.

5.5   Category 2: Perceiving the Profession

This section focuses on participants' discussions of perceptions of librarians and librarianship. These include their own perceptions of the profession including views that the developed before and after completing their MLIS education as well as the perceptions of others. The sub-sections included here are perceptions of librarians, librarianship and technology, the heterogeneous library community, and constraints on librarians.

5.5.1   Perceptions of Librarians

Several participants discussed perceptions of librarians. They discussed images and stereotypes of librarians held by people outside of the library community as well as their own perceptions of librarians both before and after completing their library degree.

A common, stereotypical image of librarians in North American society was described. This is the image of the librarian as a little old lady with glasses and her hair in a bun telling people in a library to "shush". One participant described telling a professor in a Master's program that she intended to pursue a degree in library and information science and having the professor say to her "What do you want to do that for? You're going to hole yourself up in a library and 'shush' at people?" (Participant 9).

Another participant discussed how taking an internship in the university library while completing her undergraduate degree helped dispel her stereotypes of librarians. By working in a library she was able to meet the many different types of people and personality types working in libraries, countering the myth that only a particular type of person was attracted to librarianship.

A few participants noted that there are some traits or characteristics that people who go to library school have in common. One participant described library school graduates as "typically very analytical, logical, well-spoken, well-read, able to write clearly" (Participant 11). Another participant observed that she could recognize librarians by the way they dress and act, for example noting that she could pick out library conference participants without any visible conference indicators.

Several participants stated that they like to present themselves to others as librarians because they do not fit with stereotypical images of librarians and they felt that presenting themselves as librarians would help break stereotypes. They feel proud of being able to counter misperceptions about how librarians act and the type of work that they can do. Several of them made particular efforts of presenting different ways of working as an LIS professional to students.

Many participants noted that there are positive aspects of the public perception of librarians. Several participants noted that people generally view librarians as friendly and helpful and find that describing themselves as librarians as an icebreaker to start conversations and build relationships.

5.5.2   Librarianship and Technology

Technology plays an important role in the careers of all of the participants in the study. All of them engage with technology in their roles and several are involved in the development and implementation of information technology systems.

Several participants' interest in technology stemmed from their time in library school. They were interested in technology's potential to connect people with information.

A few participants pointed to the historical connection between librarians and technology. As one participant explained, "…before there were librarians there were archivists who have struggled with what happens when the empire switches from papyrus to parchment" (Participant 10). Another participant stated that "you have to remember that librarians were the first – one of the first large non-engineering professions to adopt computing" (Participant 14). A third participant discussed the connection between LIS graduates and online directory and search applications, pointing out the librarians were among the employees of the first online directory development teams.

5.5.3   The Heterogeneous Library Community

Several participants in this study have worked in positions that exposed them to a range of library settings. Exposure to different settings has led them to observe that librarianship is a heterogeneous community. They observed differences between different types of libraries and library staff in different types of roles.

Participants observed that they encountered different attitudes when visiting public and academic libraries. These observations were both positive and negative:

I think the academic libraries and the public libraries are just spending a lot more time looking ahead. Um ... they are in a more competitive environment – the public libraries in particular. They do have to look at where the users are going next and understanding the technologies and the world ... the environment they are operating in. Same goes for the academic world - understanding technologies that are coming ahead and the challenges that are happening. Federal libraries ... I don't think they're paying as much attention as they should. (Participant 1)

I think the definition is shifting and that might be driven in large part by shifts in the medium – media that we work with. So again, moving towards greater digitization of resources, more electronic resources, different types of multimedia resources. I believe that's part of the shift of role. And then I think it's also – there's – I think that MLIS programs have started adopting more IM [information management] and KM [knowledge management] content into their curriculum, so there's some exposure that happens through that. And then, I think umm that information management is a burgeoning, growing field, so my perception is that there are more jobs available in information management and that – even that just statistically there will be more MLIS graduates who are taking some those roles. So it's kind of just organic exposure. (Participant 7)

Because – it's a paradigm shift. I mean, you know that term is thrown around loosely, but it was a perfect example of a paradigm shift. The older generation was in charge and they could not see past what they had built. And they had built a LOT. You have to remember that librarians were the first - one of the first large non-engineering professions to adopt computing. The punch card system for tracking serials check-in at [the university] as remarkably advanced and was used as an example of business use of cards rather than credit. If you think back to the time, rather than credit and finance, travel, and engineering, librarians were literally like fourth in line to adopt computing, because we recognized its potential. But we harnessed it to this very old way of functioning. We didn't really – we like put a buggy whip in a Model A. Oh we can drive to go and get our horse feed. It was kind of an old thing and I do attribute it – at the time I was a younger generation and – anyway as I said I happened to be at the right place and the right time – but I was also laid off in 2001, so I happened to be in the wrong place in a couple of times, but – what was

I saying? So I do think that some of what happened is that there has been a generation shift and people started coming out of library school more familiar with and more open to things like search engines and websites and stuff. And I think there was a really large influx and territory grab by non-librarians into things like search engines and websites and taxonomies and stuff and so the circle of people who were trying to solve this problem, they came late to this table. Fortunately we're there now, and we're there in a lot of different ways, but we came late to the table. And I think that's absolutely a generation shift. (Participant 14)

Participants also observed differences between reference and technical services staff. The found that reference services staff tended to show a greater willingness to change than technical services staff.

One participant also compared staff with a librarian background to those with a records management background, noting that those with a library background are primarily concerned with access and user needs while those with a records background were primarily concerned with disposition, and that combining these groups constituted a collision of worlds in some respects.

5.5.4   Constraints on Librarians

Some of the participants in the study indicated that working outside of libraries provides them with the opportunity to pursue their interests and opportunities which would not be available to them in library settings.

Two participants, for example, noted that working in the private sector allowed them "…more flexibility and nimbleness" (Participant 8) and involved less bureaucracy than working in libraries. Another participant stated that working

outside of the library allowed him to take a more hands-on role with greater design control on a software implementation process.

Some participants expressed concern over the treatment of libraries. They observed that during budget tightening periods, "libraries always seem to be the first things to be cut" (Participant 9).

5.5.5   Understanding Non-LIS Graduates' Perceptions of Librarians

Understanding the perceptions of librarians held by the people they worked with was significant for the participants in this study as it related to the ways in which they introduced themselves to others and the ways in which they presented their educational and professional background. A significant body of LIS practitioner and research literature has focused on negative stereotypes of librarians and the observation that many people outside of the LIS profession have a poor understanding of the role that librarians play and the types of skills and education that are required to function in a library setting (Clemons, 2011; Fallahay Loesch, 2010; Potter, 2009; Davis, 2007; Peresie and Alexander, 2005; Isaacson, 2000). Several of the participants in this study described librarian stereotypes or image issues as a factor when deciding how to identify themselves to others in the workplace including colleagues and clients.

One participant observed that many people identify librarians with books and physical library spaces and do not necessary translate the idea of organizing a library collection to the idea of organizing digital information. When interacting with these

types of individuals he chooses not identify as a librarian because it will impact their perception of his credibility as an information manager:

> If I'm with somebody for whom libraries and librarians are a passé thing – depending on the environment I may try and advocate for libraries and librarians – more often than not I will not associate myself there until later once it's been more firmly entrenched and in place that I have this person's trust. Then I will massage them – try and make the message with them – but up-front, no (Participant 1)

Several other participants noted that the title or role of "librarian" can be viewed by others as a low status position. By identifying this way to audiences who do not respect librarians, an individual may diminish their credibility and influence in the interaction:

> [S]he is crafting herself at the status with the person she's talking to rather than saying 'I'm a librarian' and digging herself out of the hole with the step and fetch it book-based image of librarianship versus the power image of being the CEO of a large library system with hundreds of employees (Participant 8)

> There are certain factions where that is *not* going to help me gain respect and that would be with certain older subsets…I would not introduce myself as a librarian. I would say I'm Vice President because they're ... most of the folks at the other companies don't have librarians at the top (Participant 2)

Some participants do however see the misperceptions of librarians by outside groups as a challenge and an opportunity to demonstrate that a LIS education and library job experience provides people with skills that can be applicable to a wide range of settings:

> [L]ibrarians have an image issue in a lot of audiences…if your audience is people who don't know a lot of librarians there will be an image issue

and it's still there. And that being one reason why I continue to call myself a librarian – because I'm not the typical image of a librarian and so that will break someone's stereotypes for them (Participant 3)

Many of the participants in the study, however, found that they were met with positive reactions when they identified themselves as librarians or graduates of LIS programs. One of the reasons for that is that many of these participants work in fields that are fairly new or emerging and there is little common understanding of what someone in their role does:

> I'm always saying 'I'm also a librarian', because they – there seems to be understanding that a librarian is somebody who helps to organize and find information and get information that people need to those people in an easy way (Participant 7)

In addition to being easier for people to understand than titles such as "Business Analyst", several participants noted that many people have very positive reactions to librarians, so relating themselves with the profession helps them to build connections:

> I often introduce myself as a Librarian, so I think that it's sort of like a bit of an icebreaker in a way. It helps people, sort of, converse with you and they ask you a little bit about library school and other things and that's interesting. (Participant 5)

> I've worked with a number of people in my organization where their perception of librarian is librarians have good skills for helping you organize your information, retrieve your information, help you get a better handle of information to help you get your job done. (Participant 1)

> I think people find being a librarian really interesting. I think – I always did. I mean, it's an interesting job that people don't always think of. People who aren't librarians don't necessarily know what that job is about. And I think that people have the perception that librarians

are really friendly. So, you know, I think it's sort of helps soften the edges. (Participant 5)

One participant summed up the experience of identifying as a librarian by stating that "librarian is a loaded word" (Participant 8), so by using the title, an individual is exposing him or herself to a range of perceptions and stereotypes, either positive or negative that others have associated with the title.

5.5.6   Section Summary: Perceiving the Profession

The impact of librarian status and stereotypes was a major topic in the LIS literature which raised the question of whether these would be discussed by the interview participants. These topics were not universally discussed by participants. Many who did discuss librarian stereotypes did mention the negative stereotype. It is interesting to note that similar stereotypes were also attributed to the records management profession. Some participants did discuss the positive attributes associated with librarianship, such as the perception of librarians as being friendly and helpful. Participants described a range of responses when encountering librarian stereotypes. One of those responses was to control how they identified themselves to others which is described in the next section. Figure 10 illustrates the codes associated with perceiving the profession that were observed in the data collected in this study.

Figure 10: Perceiving the profession

5.5.7 Significance of Perceiving the Profession on One's Internal Appraisal of Self

Socialization teaches a person how to be a member of a profession. Observations of how other members of the profession behave and are perceived or treated by others forms the other half of one's perception of the profession. In some respects, socialization provides individuals with an idea of how the profession should function while an individual's perceptions of the profession outline how they believe the profession is functioning. In some cases the perception of the profession will match what they have discovered in the socialization process. In others, it will reveal surprises or even frustrations. For example, individuals may believe as a result of their socialization that the profession should take a certain stance on a given subject – such as a certain role with regards to technology – but may find that that role is not being fulfilled in accordance with their expectations in practice. They will develop theories as to why this is occurring which may include ideas about the way other members of their profession behave or ways in which people outside of the

profession respond to members of the profession. This perception of the profession will impact the ways in which individuals choose to interact with those inside and outside of the profession and will be a major component of the extent to which they affiliate with others within the professional group.

5.6   Category 3: Discovering One's Interests and Motivations

The first part of the interview process used in this study involved asking participants to describe their career experiences from the time they decided to pursue a degree in library and information science to the present. This introductory question was deliberately left very open to allow participants the opportunity to frame their experiences any way they wished. Most participants simply gave a chronological account of their careers, starting with circumstances surrounding their decision to enter library school and ending with the present. A few participants, however, reflected on their careers and searched for an underlying theme that summarized and explained the choices they made throughout their careers.

These themes or interests served a vital role in their career decision making processes. The particular motivating issue or theme identified by participants differed. Several of these motivators included community development, connecting people with information, information management, knowledge management, the role of technology in information access and education, privacy and information security, marketing, and customer service.

These motivators impacted a range of participant decisions including which classes or areas of specialization to take during library school, what job opportunities to pursue, what topics to research as doctoral students, and even what types of business models to use as entrepreneurs.

The interviews suggested that the degree to which participants are able to connect the work they are doing to their motivations, the more satisfying they tended to find the role. The ways in which participants viewed the LIS programs' content and their decision to pursue a degree in library and information science related back to the ways in which they connected what they learned in the program with their own skills, knowledge, values and interests.

5.7   The Link between the Internal Appraisal of Self and the Externally Presented Self

As suggested in the sections above the process of developing an internal appraisal of one's self which includes a perception of both who one is at present and who one wants to be as a professional in the future is shaped through interactions with others. These interactions are with a wide range of people including classmates, colleagues, supervisors, mentors, family members, friends, and others who one encounters in social or work settings. The types of reactions that people receive from others can result in changes to either their internal appraisal of self or their externally presented self. The interactions with others that were described by study participants are outlined below. Figure 11 shows the relationship between the internal appraisal of self and the externally expressed identity as being linked through interactions with others.

Figure 11: Interacting with others
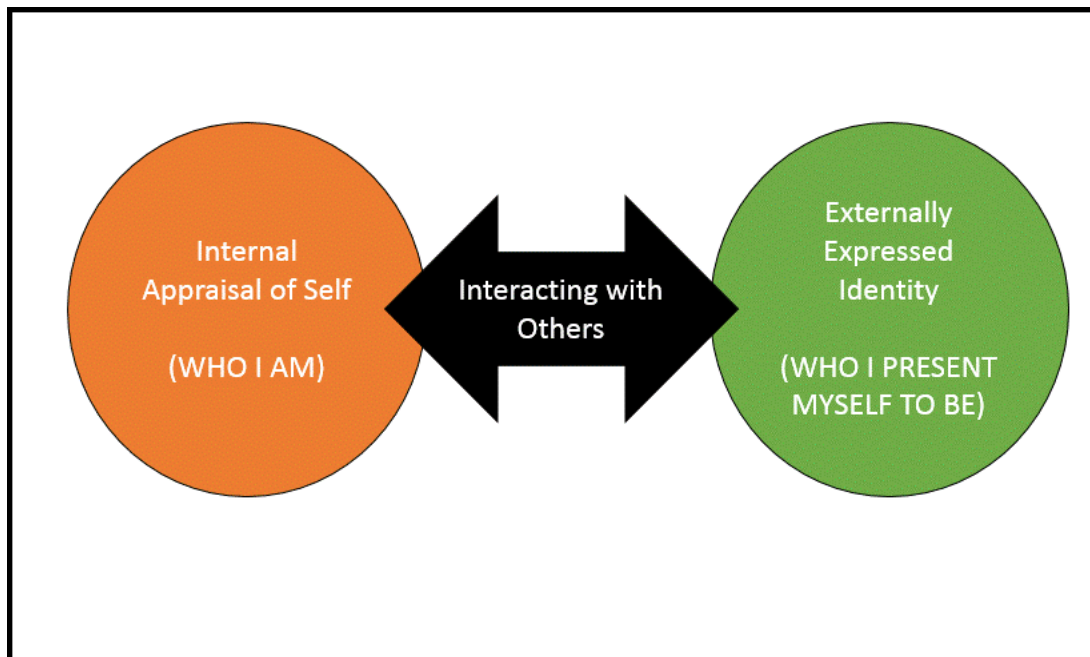
5.8   Category 4: Interactions with Others

Careers are not experienced in isolation. Participants interact with people inside and outside of their professions in the course of their professional lives. The first sub-section is entitled "Librarianship and Other Professions" and includes participant discussions of their understanding of the profession of librarianship and their comparisons between librarianship and other professions. The next sub-section focuses on participants' experiences of how others interact with and perceive librarians. The final two sections discuss the interactions that participants have with other LIS graduates who are working inside and outside of libraries. Participants tended to characterize jobs in libraries as traditional and jobs outside of libraries as non-traditional roles. For this reason, these sections are labelled interactions with the "non-traditional" LIS community and interactions with the "traditional" LIS community.

5.8.1   Librarianship and Other Professions

Once the decision had been made to enter the LIS profession, participants began the process of developing an understanding of the profession. This understanding of the profession was gained through a variety of learning methods and is ongoing. Understanding the profession involves two major components: the first is developing a definitional understanding of the profession and the second is fitting that definition of the profession with their prior experiences, interests and skills to determine if they want to continue in the profession.

Developing a definitional understanding of the profession occurs when the participant is a student in a library and information science program. They learn about the profession's history, activities, skills and knowledge, and its vocabulary.

Several participants provided their own definitions of librarianship. One participant, for example, defined librarianship as "the activity of managing information and assisting others in navigating the information and putting it to their practical use" (Participant 7). Another participant described building relationships as the central activity of librarianship in that librarians create relationships between people and collections. Another definition of librarianship that was offered was based on librarianship's core values. These core values form the basis of librarianship culture and include democracy, intellectual freedom, academic freedom, and education.

A few participants discussed the structure and content of LIS educational curricula. A central aspect of library and information science education is identifying and learning about the core activities and knowledge of the profession. Although LIS programs are typically structured such that the "core" content is included in mandatory courses while less core content is offered in elective courses, several participants discussed their perceptions of what the core of librarianship and information science entails:

> I think if you look at the core curriculum and your values as one base course, organization of information, business analysis, and information services skills, research methodology, statistics, and management. I think those are key skills regardless of what environment you're in. We've traditionally focused those courses to ... libraries – we use reference, it's cataloguing, it's ... perspectives on librarianship – but I think those core values and core skills can be applied in any environment. (Participant 1)

> [C]ataloguing was not a required course and at my job that I was at [the university library], cataloguing was handled by the cataloguing department and no one else was allowed to catalogue except serials issues that came back from bindery but that's all you could – you were allowed to do with your permissions and ... you know I thought hard about whether or not I wanted to take cataloguing and I felt like I *needed* to in order to be well rounded. (Participant 2)

Some participants differentiated between a library degree, the profession of librarianship, and specific information roles. As one participant stated "Librarians need to understand the difference between librarian as profession, library science as a degree, your job title that implies your status, and the competencies that need to play out in certain interpersonal or team-based relationships" (Participant 8). Another participant differentiated between "library as space" and "librarianship as activity". The "library as space" perspective focuses on the library building as the defining feature of librarianship, connecting librarians with the history of libraries as an

institution. The "librarianship as activity" model defines librarianship as a series of

information management activities that could be performed in a variety of settings.

For the participant, "that's where I draw the distinction in a way between traditional

and non-traditional librarianship" (Participant 7).

Several participants compared librarians to other professionals. A few of

these participants work in roles which allow them to interact regularly with

information technology professionals, business analysts, and end users. They noted

that their approach to solving problems for end users was slightly different from that

of IT professionals. Because of this difference, the participants found that they were

able to play an intermediary role between IT and end-users in which they helped to

translate between end users' needs and technological systems. Another participant

discussed the relationship between librarians and lawyers, noting that there are a lot

of adjacencies between the two professions because they are both text-based and

interpersonal learners.

Several participants have commented about the language or jargon of

professions, particularly when discussing working on cross-disciplinary teams in the

professional world:

> And it's so hard to recognize when you're using that sort of a
> vocabulary. But when you're talking about – I don't know – things like
> search and classification – and if you use a word like taxonomy or any
> – and sometimes you forget – and so you throw in the word 'Tag' when
> you mean 'Classify' and people – you think you're being very clear and
> then people are asking you all these questions like 'Well I thought you
> were calling that this one thing and this another thing'…there is some
> jargon in libraries…especially when you're dealing with classification
> and…faceted classification versus the other types…the term 'metadata'
> it turns out that was kind of hard for people to understand so you have

to kind of take your time and explain what you mean by 'metadata' versus, you know – actual content…I think that, yeah, that we definitely use some jargon as librarians ... and I find that I may be using a lot of jargon because I'm finding that the software program, the SharePoint thing, is such a behemoth that it can be really easy to use the words that Microsoft has decided - they've decided that metadata is a site column. So I end up talking about metadata and saying site column. Or they think about pages versus documents and it gets all jumbled up in your head and so it can be very difficult – not difficult, it's just something you need to keep in mind in order to try to keep that straight. (Participant 5)

I speak librarianship when I'm speaking to librarians. My definition of a profession is a group of people who share a language. In the way that the myth that the Inuit have a hundred words for snow, librarians have a hundred words for metadata. And so, by sharing that language we can have a deeper conversation because we understand the difference between a taxonomy and an ontology and a word cloud et cetera. So that language we share makes us stronger as a profession. The weakest members of our profession are like the weakest members of the computer profession where they can only speak in acronyms and jargon and can't speak to others. So when we see IT people trying to talk to librarian people and because I speak both languages – I can speak IT and I can speak librarian – I can sit in groups of people and say, 'You know you're both agreeing totally with each other, you're just using different words' and you see conflicts happening between librarians and systems professionals that are purely driven by their lack – their inability to speak each other's language and speaking in jargon together. (Participant 8)

Yet another participant who works in the information technology sector noted that she felt a greater affinity with computational linguistics professionals than with software engineers because of their shared experiences with taxonomies.

Several participants discussed librarianship as a profession. There was a suggestion that there is a librarian mindset that influences the way that LIS graduates approach the world – or more specifically, how they process information in response to situations they encounter inside and outside the workplace. One participant stated that the way that he searches for information has become so ingrained that he

sometimes takes for granted that people who have not completed a LIS degree do not take the same approach.

There was a perception among many of the participants in the study that the profession of librarianship is undergoing a period of change. In a few cases, participants noted that the larger librarian community had a tendency to stifle innovation in favour of the status quo. As one participant stated about librarians:

> [This is] our identity and this is what we are and we are a part of this industry and let's talk about these common things that are common to this industry…It's kind of funny that people make that professional identity for themselves and then they want to put it on other people. They want to talk about it. They want it to be something that's a solid stable thing (Participant 12)

5.8.2   Interactions with the "Non-Traditional" LIS Community

Participants in this study described two forms of interactions with the LIS community. The first is the experience of discovering others who are working in roles similar to their own and the second type involves interactions with LIS graduates who are employed in libraries.

The first type of interaction is a highly validating one for the participants and has led many of them to redefine traditional and non-traditional work within the field. Their initial definitions of non-traditional roles for LIS graduates meant roles in which few LIS graduates were employed. The more fellow LIS graduates that they encounter in the workplace or in their communities who are not engaged in traditional library-type roles, the less unusual their own work feels:

I'm finding more and more …that there are more of us out here. At [an oil and gas company], there's probably a handful of people working at [the oil and gas company] that have an MLIS. So, now that's company – when you look at its employees there's probably 30,000 people, but still – to know a few people that come from that background is pretty interesting. And certainly around the city too, there's probably, you know, a few dozen, a couple dozen at least, of us (Participant 13)

There are probably a handful of other professional librarians at [the Internet company] and they are almost all of them in what, you know, what organizationally is thought of as user-experience design. And that umbrella term nowadays encompasses information architecture. (Participant 14)

When I go to IM meetings I see a lot more librarians around the table ... not working in libraries. Even back – even when I go back ten years, if I look at the federal government's metadata community – a good number of those people were librarians who were not part of their organization's library – some yeah they were – the metadata function fell under the library – others it was in their communications shop, it was in their IT shop, it was in their enterprise architecture shop (Participant 1)

[A]nd then I met more people here and I was actually very surprised we are - right now – and it of course it fluctuates – as we gain and lose employees as every company does – but we sit right around 50% degreed librarians. We have *a lot* of degreed librarians on staff. (Participant 2)

The discovery of other LIS graduates in non-traditional roles is a reinforcement for these participants that their way of being a professional has value both to other LIS graduates and to people without LIS backgrounds who are hiring LIS graduates because they recognize the skills that they can bring to their organizations.

5.8.3   Interactions with the "Traditional" LIS Community

Interactions between LIS graduates in non-library roles and graduates in "traditional" roles (specifically graduates working in library settings) take on a different flavour for participants. It must be clarified that not all of these interactions are negative and not all are positive. The flavour of the interaction will depend on a variety of factors including the type of non-library role in which the participant is engaged, the participant's history with the librarian community, and even the type of librarianship practiced by the LIS graduate in a library role.

In some cases the participant's decision to pursue a "non-traditional" or non-library role was actually motivated by frustration with the library community's position regarding technology and the role of librarians and libraries in the information society:

> But at the time I also was kind of motivated to do this tech stuff because I felt actually like librarians – the librarian community wasn't really, like, - like I felt they should be doing more of it. And actually at the time made me kind of frustrated. Like I was 'Why aren't librarians…' – there was sort of a lot of papers being written at the time, like, where people were debating, like – it sort of seemed like the librarian community was frustrated, you know, like people were thinking that librarians weren't as useful and the felt like 'us versus them' or 'us versus technology' (Participant 6)

> [A]nd we were nowhere. The profession was NOWHERE. We were still pointing fingers at Google and saying where are we in all this - I get to search everything. God it was like embarrassing at that time. That is where the library profession was and how long it took us to catch up and recognize that what was happening over there was identical to what we were doing over here and if we would just lift our head up from our own little way of doing, and remove the language (Participant 14)

It is interesting to note that the two participants cited above both reported frustrations with the ways in which library education was positioning library work with regards to the types of tasks that librarians should undertake and the ways in which that work should be undertaken, but that they completed their library studies over fifteen years apart. The desire to redefine librarianship's role in society is not a new development linked to the latest technologies that have emerged in the past five to ten years, but is centred on philosophical views about how to best connect people with information and serve user communities, regardless of the technological tools available.

Several participants observed that the type of work they were doing impacted how they were regarded by the librarian community. It was mentioned by several participants that they received particularly negative reactions from librarians when working for library vendors:

> I typically feel that I can see both as an insider and an outsider and even more when I was working as a vendor, because librarians they came to vendors instead of like that trust thing was not necessarily there. They're like 'Oh vendor, I don't know, you're kind of not really on the same page with me'. That was always really interesting. And now, now I feel like rather than having to deal with it people get distracted because they are interested and are like 'Oh, well tell me more about that that you do, that's really interesting', so I don't really have to deal with it as much (Participant 12)

> [W]hat's interesting to me is just how your professional identity is *damaged* a little when you work for a vendor (Participant 2)

Many of the participants in this study reported experiences of being confronted by librarians over why they are participating in librarian events and whether or not they could or should be applying the title of librarian to themselves.

5.8.4 Conflicts with Others

Over the course of their careers people develop an increasingly personalized professional identity. Those who develop a professional identity or definition of the profession that challenges the professional norm may experience conflict with their professional community.   There are multiple strategies that can be undertaken to respond to a perceived or real conflict between individuals and their professional community: (1) Assimilation, in which participants change themselves in order to fit into the communities with whom they wish to engage, (2) influencing or attempting to change the perceptions or beliefs of the group, and (3) withdrawal, in which individuals elect only to associate with communities of likeminded individuals and to avoid those who do not share their perceptions of the profession.

5.8.5   Assimilation

A first strategy that individuals may undertake in response to conflicts with their professional community is to attempt to assimilate with that community. Socialization is an assimilation activity as it is a way in which individuals develop not only the knowledge, skills, language, and values of the community but they also develop professional networks which can facilitate their progress in the profession. Training may be undertaken as a way to affirm one's belonging in the community or to validate their skill sets:

> [W]hy wouldn't I get the degree to justify so much of what I've already
> done? It just – it all seemed to fall into place. It feels right in my heart
> and I feel like this is what I was meant to do – maybe I just didn't know
> it was a possibility. (Participant 4)

Participants viewed training as a way to either fit within a community or to become a competitive candidate for the types of roles the sought to occupy.

5.8.6   Trying to Influence the Community

A second strategy that an individual with an unusual or unconventional professional identity or perception of the profession may undertake is to attempt to change the profession's attitudes in order to better align them with their own. This process may be challenging as it is likely to be resisted by at least certain sections of the profession:

> And I will tell you the frustration that I felt in the early years of my career where I could not get librarians to abstract what they were doing. And I was furious when I was in library school and I went to cataloguing class and I - they were telling you that there was some right way to catalog a book, and I was like "There isn't any right way to catalog a book! You catalog a book based on the boundaries of the catalog, the needs of the users, the set of objects you're working with and all that stuff. There isn't any right way to catalog a book!" And I was just furious with librarians because they seemed so pedantic about WHAT they were doing and HOW they were doing it rather than WHY they were doing it. What framework – what abstract framework they were applying. It was like they'd left it in their history and forgotten, you know. And trying to get people to see that. And it was refreshing when people came from outside the profession and started saying things and I would hear echoes of what I'd expect librarians to have said at the time – and we were nowhere. (Participant 14)

Individuals who undertake this approach may either continue with their efforts to change the profession as a whole or they may focus their efforts on receptive components of the community.

5.8.7 Withdrawal or Seeking Out Other Communities

Withdrawing from those sections of the professional community who disagree with one's perception of the profession is the third strategy for people with unconventional or novel perceptions of the profession. They may reject those sections of the community who challenge their views of the profession or even their status as a member of the professional community and turn either to sub-sections of the professional community who share their views:

> I find that some librarians understand it, particularly if they work in the special library context because they're to assume that special librarians often are exposed to or involved in information management functions. I find that librarians in the public library sector or the academic library sector sometimes don't understand – but sometimes they do because, you know, I find to with sometimes with newer graduates working in public libraries or academic libraries – they will often know somebody who's working in information or knowledge management, so they will sometimes have a friend from their school – from their former class cohort who's taken that path. And then I find when I'm speaking with more experienced professionals – it depends on who that person knows. So sometimes the person will have a very good idea of records management. (Participant 7)

Or they may move away from their "home" professional community, or the community associated with their educational background in favour of other communities which align better with either their professional practices or philosophies:

> A lot of technical groups, particularly in open source, they work on a meritocracy. You know, you show up, do the work, put your work out there, and let other people pick it apart and if you can take good constructive criticism and make that thing better then you're one of them. You know, you just have to show up and do good work. And it's a pretty easy group to get – to get in with. And they're more accepting, I think. (Participant 2)

5.8.8   Section Summary: Interactions with Others

As mentioned in the section on perceptions of librarianship, participants do not experience their careers in isolation. While that section discussed what the participants and others thought of librarianship, this section focused on the participants' interactions with others both inside and outside their own profession. In this case, their non-library role was an influential factor in how they were received by others. Participants more commonly felt rejected or challenged in interactions with LIS graduates working in libraries than in their interactions with any other group.

5.9   The Externally Expressed Identity

The externally expressed identity is the identity that one presents to others. It can be presented in a variety of ways. The first is through the labels that one uses to introduce oneself. Another way is through the skills and competencies that they emphasize and the ways in which they choose to communicate them. Figure 12 below shows the components of the externally expressed identity found in the data in this study.

Figure 12: The externally expressed identity
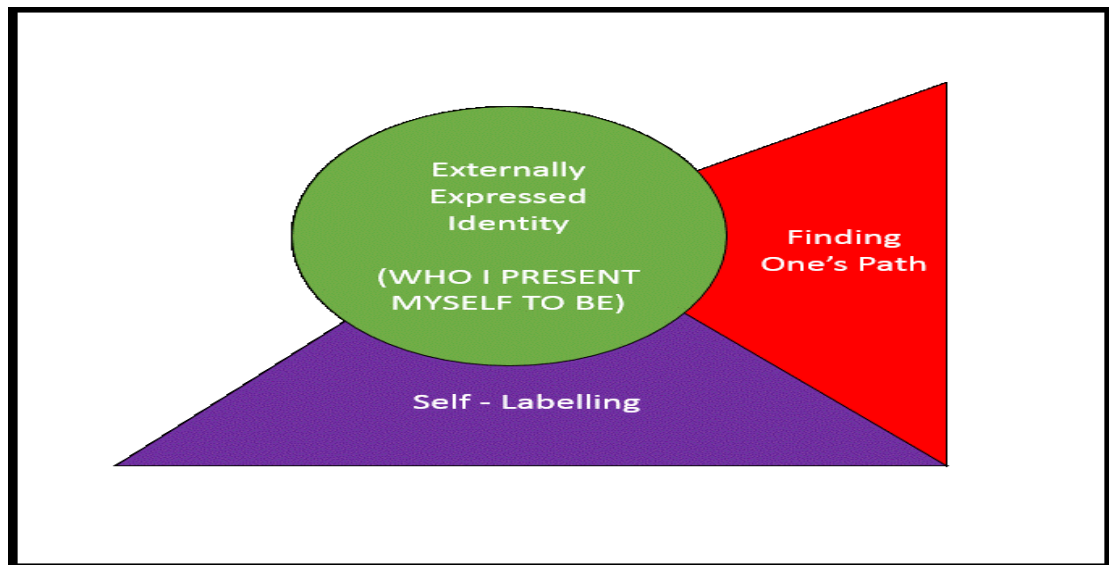
5.10   Category 5: Self-Labelling

This section focuses on how participants identify themselves, in particular if, when and why they use the title "librarian". Four options are described: always identifying as a librarian, sometimes identifying as a librarian, never identifying as a librarian, and identifying as a non-practicing or non-active librarian.

5.10.1   Identifying as a Librarian

Those who choose to identify as a librarian do so because they strongly affiliate with the role of librarian and believe that the work that they are doing outside of library setting is compatible with their definition of what it means to be a librarian:

'What do you do?' 'I'm a librarian.' Because that is what I do. For people it is a very odd way to be a librarian – but that's how I identify myself. (Participant 2)

And I still to this day, I still tell people that I'm a librarian. I still tell them that that's where I came from. (Participant 14)

Well I always try to emphasize the fact that I am a librarian. Particularly – that does give me an in with some of them ... and I know a lot of the vendors that do that too – whether they've ever worked in a library or not they emphasize the fact that they've got the library degree. But I ... I get along with a lot of people, so I don't think that I've ever been seen as that much of an outsider ... and I'm so active in the library associations that I do my part. It's not like I'm coming in from the outside. (Participant 3)

The participants interviewed for this study who will strongly identify as librarians tended to be those who spent a significant amount of their careers working in libraries before moving into non-library roles. These individuals acknowledge the value of their library work experience in allowing them to move into non-library positions.

5.10.2   Sometimes Identifying as a Librarian

Those participants who choose to sometimes identify themselves as librarians and sometimes to identify themselves in some other way, such as by their actual job titles or by explaining the roles that they play in their organizations do so based on their evaluation of which job title will best advance their position with their audience.

Even though they do not always introduce themselves as librarians to others, the people in this group internally identify as librarians as well as other types of

professionals (having a dual or multi-professional identity). The group of

participants involved in this study who indicated that they identify using different

titles depending on context, including the title of librarian, tended be highly active in

LIS professional community through involvement in professional associations and

LIS education programs.

> I think if anybody asks me I still say – well, for example I was
> moderating a session this morning for teachers and when the guy asked
> me what I did and the first thing was 'well I'm a librarian'. And then I
> explained and a consultant and I do other things. It really depends on
> the audience, but primarily I think of myself as a librarian other than
> anything else. (Participant 3)

> I have a degree in taxonomies and ontologies and information
> architecture – I'd rather say that than librarian, because I'm not digging
> myself out of a hole. Why would I put myself in a hole for some
> dogma reason that I want them to understand it and they're not going
> to? (Participant 8)

Participants in this group tended to have developed schemas of the perception

that differentiated between job titles and roles:

> [L]ibrarians need to understand the difference between librarian as
> profession, library science as a degree, your job title that implies your
> status, and the competencies that need to play out in certain
> interpersonal or team-based relationships. And those librarians who use
> 'Librarian' as their only term are going to the cheesy restaurant and
> getting the three crayon – and only using a three crayon box to colour
> the placemat instead of having a 64 crayon box in their toolkit.
> (Participant 8)

5.10.3   Choosing Not to Identify as a Librarian

There were several participants interviewed in this study who indicated that

they never identify as a librarian to others. One was an outlier in the group as she is

a current MLIS student who entered library school from the high tech sector with an ambition of gaining a traditional LIS role. She stated that she would gladly publicly take on the title of "Librarian", but has been told by members of the LIS community either in professional association settings or over social media that she cannot use the title of librarian until she has completed her Masters' degree in library and information science:

> I would proudly right this moment change my LinkedIn description and my description everywhere in social media and anywhere else to 'Librarian' if it wasn't for the librarians themselves. (Participant 4)

The other three participants in this study who choose not to use the title of librarian found that they never internally affiliated with the role or title. They did not enter library school with the intention of gaining a "traditional library job" and either had no or little experience working in library settings, going in some cases directly from library school to a non-library career path. These participants went to library school because they were interested in the transferrable skills that the degree would provide and its ability to open up a range of career possibilities, not because of a particular interest in libraries:

> Like I said I wasn't that interested in the whole library aspect of it, although, you know, I was and continue to be, in that regard, an avid reader. So from that perspective I think that was interesting to me. I really didn't have a – an idea that I was going to graduate and become a librarian or anything like that – certainly not in a traditional setting. I did think perhaps that a university library or something like that as a possibility, but more interested in, sort of, organizational information management. (Participant 13)

One participant observed that others wanted to attribute the title of librarian to him because of this LIS degree, but that he never chose to use the label: "No, everyone

labels me as a librarian which is very funny, but I don't necessarily – I don't label

myself as a librarian" (Participant 12).

Other participants who choose not to use the title of librarian elected not to do

so because of how they thought other LIS graduates would respond to the statement

since they did not have experience working in libraries:

> I guess I feel uncomfortable saying 'I'm a librarian', because I'm a
> little worried that real librarians – REAL – I'm saying in air quotes –
> real librarians are going to be like 'You're not a real librarian because
> you don't work in a library' and even when I was working as a library
> vendor I kind of was worried that if I said 'I'm a librarian' they'd be
> like 'No, you're a vendor' even though I have an MLIS and everything.
> (Participant 12)

5.10.4   Identifying as a Non-Practicing or Non-Active Librarian

Several participants in this study indicated that even though they do strongly

affiliate with the role of librarian and are proud of their LIS education and

background, they hedge their use of the title librarian to "non-practicing librarian" or

"non-active librarian" because they do not feel that they current work roles would

fall within the field of librarianship. Because they do not believe that they are

practicing librarianship, they do not feel comfortable using the title of librarian. In

response to the question of whether or not she identifies as a librarian, one participant

responded: "Oh yeah! Absolutely. Even though I'm, you know, not really a

practicing librarian" (Participant 9). Another provided the following response:

> I frequently use the line in meetings 'I'm not trained as a lawyer, I'm
> actually trained as a librarian', which always gets a giggle depending on
> what we're talking about because it's usually something you'd have a

lawyer speak to. Yeah, so I actually frequently do. I mean, it's sort of like being a non-practicing physician (Participant 10)

5.10.5   Section Summary: Self-Labelling

The literature on identity suggested that people have multiple identities that may be activated in different situations. Participants did not suggest that they took on different identities in different situations. Instead, they made decisions about how to express their identity when communicating with others. For some, the decision of how to identify oneself was based on an evaluation of what form of identification would be most likely to help participants achieve their goals in a given situation. For others, the decision was based on their assessment of whether or not they would be accepted as a member of a particular group by other group members. Participants did describe situations in which there was a mismatch between the way that they identified themselves to others and the identity that they most strongly felt internally. Some tolerated these inconsistencies while others were willing to risk rejection in order to identify themselves according to the title that felt most personally accurate. Figure 13 showed the various ways in which participants responded to the question of how they identified themselves to others and whether or not they use the title "librarian".

Figure 13: Self-labelling

5.11   Category 6: Finding One's Path

The final section in this chapter focused on the participants' efforts to find their professional path. Finding one's path involved participants' reflections and actions aiming at identifying what they want to do and what type of professional they want to be, and the steps they undertook to realize their goals. The sub-sections in this section included identifying and valuing skills and developing success strategies. Figure 14 below shows the activities that participants associated with finding their paths as professionals.

Figure 14: Finding One's Path

Figure 14 depicts the category of "Finding One's Path" as a pyramid, because the activities of "Identifying and Valuing Skills" and "Developing Success Strategies" are prerequisite or foundational steps in the process of "Finding One's Path".

5.11.1   Identifying and Valuing Skills

An important developmental process for participants was identifying the key skills that they needed to be successful in the working world. Success was defined in terms of being able to compete for positions and being able to perform tasks in a given work role. The types of roles held by participants in this study differed dramatically and have included positions in government, education, publishing, information technology, retail, aerospace, and oil and gas sectors. In spite of the variety of job titles and work tasks performed by participants, the majority pointed to

a single key skill from their LIS education that has made the greatest contribution to their professional lives: reference service training.

> Because I work as a business analyst now I talk with people a lot and I find that using that reference interview technique of playing people's questions back to them in your own language and trying to get their agreement that we're talking about the same thing before we actually start working on something, that's really helpful – people appreciate that. And that seems to help a lot (Participant 5)

> One of the things that carried through was the reference interview. Because – and it continues to this day – I literally just last week sat in on an all-day session about customer-driven innovation – which is interviewing customers, finding out what they need so that you can design functions that will actually delight them. One of the things they talked about was don't give your customers exactly what they want. That always reminds me of what I was taught to do a reference interview, which was don't just – you know, he comes in and says 'I'm looking for a book on turtles', for example, and you could just find them the damn book and be done. But really what you find out is that they have a young boy and they are trying to decide which pet they need and really what they need is a book that tells them the pros and cons of turtles versus gerbils versus cats and dogs. And you won't learn that until you actually do an interview with them and talk with them – not just about what they say they want but what their actually information need was. And so you take this forward…and so you really do need information like a reference – like a real good reference librarian. (Participant 14)

> [J]ust being able to find answers and being able to find information that is trustworthy on the Internet is a really key skill that not everybody has which is very surprising. Because I would hope that lots of librarians have that skill and that they can live in the world, but that is something that I'm still learning how to help people find answers and find information has helped me to get getter in doing that. And that has helped me in my everyday as well. (Participant 12)

Another trait that was shared by most of the participants was flexibility. This included a willingness to try out different types of tasks and work roles as well as an ability to think abstractly about their skills.

And the woman I was working side-by-side with on that project was the one I said she has a very librarian background and, you know she's very – she was more – with me I'm sort of open to try out different things – like try out marketing, try out different aspects of business. She was very much, like, all she wanted to do was classification. And so all she wanted to do was architect the taxonomy and do classification. And I feel like I'm a little more, like, pick up different things here and there type of thing (Participant 6)

This quote is a helpful transition into the next aspect of discovering and articulating one's role and value which is differentiating oneself from others.

The ability to appreciate the value of their own skills and to sell those skills to others was a key characteristic of many participants in this study. Realizing that their LIS education gave them skills that could be applied in settings beyond libraries served as an important first step in this process (although some participants entered library school expecting the degree to be transferable). Once a participant has realized that they can apply for a range of information-related jobs, they need the confidence to believe that they can win the competition and do the job. As one participant stated, "…it's really easy to underestimate what you know because we always tend to over-estimate what other people know" (Participant 9). The next step is to find a way to communicate their skills to others.

5.11.2   Developing Success Strategies

Several participants described their strategies for building a successful career. In gaining confidence in their skills and abilities, the participants discovered ways in which they could differentiate themselves from others, including both other LIS graduates and co-workers with different professional backgrounds in the workplace.

Differentiations from other LIS graduates took two forms. The first was differentiating oneself based on individual experiences and specializations developed over time. The second was a willingness to be flexible and try on new roles.

Several participants advocated building a specialization. One described making a deliberate effort of developing her skills and putting herself out as an expert. She started building her specialty in library school through her course selections and work placements and learned how to present the value of those skills in her resume, during job interviews, and on the job.

> I think that it's that I've cultivated a unique skill set and that I know how to market it. Because I feel like there's probably other people who studied library science and know how to do what I do, but I presented it in such a way that makes it marketable or whatever. I'm not saying that I'm the only person who knows how to do – I think probably most library students could put themselves in my career even if they haven't taken as many technical classes, but they just might not know, like, how to do that. Like how to present themselves to a company and how to explain the value of the types of things librarians do to a non-librarian. (Participant 6)

Another participant described the experience of building a specialization in user experience through working as an employee and consultant in a variety of teams working on corporate information management solutions. She echoed the idea that developing a specialization was a way to distinguish herself from others and to occupy a niche within the information world.

Another participant explained how her role as an entrepreneur differentiates her from other LIS graduates because the day to day experiences of this type of role

are dramatically different from the day to day experiences of LIS graduates who are

employed in libraries or any other company setting as employees.

> They don't understand. Anyone who has worked FOR someone else
> their entire life just doesn't understand what it's like to have their own
> business and some of the demands for having your own business.
> Something as simple as having to pay for your own health care every
> month. Saying that to somebody and they just don't get it. You know
> they think it's a hundred dollars or two hundred dollars because that's
> all they have to pay when they're employed by somebody else, but you
> know I pay two thousand dollars a month for my health care and they
> don't understand – not necessarily – not taking a vacation – because I
> don't… They say 'how much vacation time do you get?' well I don't
> have vacation time. I have my own schedule and I decide what I'm
> going to do when, and people don't – librarians particularly - don't
> understand that. (Participant 3)

When differentiating oneself from non-LIS graduates, participants pointed to

the skills that their LIS education gave them which allow them to contribute to a

variety of workplaces. These include reference interview skills as well as the ability

to search for and evaluate information:

> [K]nowing how databases are structured, knowing how information is
> structured online helps you look for it. Those are sort of skills you and
> I as people who have been trained in this stuff take for granted but that
> a lot of people don't. For us it's not even taken for granted. It's almost
> like instinct to us, whereas other people are like 'What do you mean I
> can't use…?' They don't even know what a Boolean operator is. They
> don't know that you can use 'Not' to exclude certain things in a search.
> (Participant 10)

In other cases, the participants decided on a speciality after discovering which

of their skills were most desirable and sought after in the workplace.

> You know, it's sort of like I feel a newer career area and a very
> specialized one, and so there's not a lot of, you know, definition around
> it and when people – when people – it's one of those types of things

where when someone needs someone like me, they actually have a fairly hard time finding someone like me. So when they meet me they're like 'Ok, perfect, you're exactly what we need' and often, you know, and they end up being, like, 'Wow, you know, you contribute even more than we thought you were going to'. (Participant 6)

[T]ook the time to understand where things – I didn't come in and say 'This is how we're going to do it'. I looked at what people were already trying to do and looked for the gap that I could fill. So a lot of the people that I worked with knew what they were doing, and had the place they wanted to go to. The thing with these kind of openings or gaps or places that I could fill in their thinking – and I was quite communion like, both because of language and, you know, you have to use your customers' language. And I tried to learn the business purpose. I tried to take – a lot of business training is actually around applying, you know, effort toward objectives. And, you know, figuring out how you define that objective. I was figuring out what you need to get there – strategies, objectives, tactics. So information management and information approach and understanding of, you know, architecting content or interpreting customer needs. Those were all different aspects of it. And so I tried not to make them get me, but I adapted what I brought to them. (Participant 14)

In other cases, the participants explored niches as a necessity. Those participants who worked as consultants or information entrepreneurs described this as an important task because discovering new opportunities is essential to maintaining a consultancy practice:

I'm always looking for niches or … opportunities to do new things, put new things together. Just as an example, this push the e-books that everyone has had. I do a lot of research in that and look for opportunities, try and assist people in their knowledge of what's going on. Just the changes that we see in things like Collaborate or … platforms like this so I'm always looking for new ways to deliver learning and to do it in a good way. I think there's so much crap out there, we have to careful and make sure that we're going the best we can with the technologies we have, so I'm always open to new opportunities. (Participant 3)

Finally, several participants translated their niche into a particular role within the workplace. Several participants discussed their ability to traverse worlds or act as an intermediary between different specialist groups:

[W]hat's helped me is having a base understanding of both - a little on the web application development side and a little on the electronic record management side (Participant 1)

The problem is there's the disconnect between the people who need something done and the people who do things. There's no way to communicate between those two groups and so if you have people that can take the time to understand what issues one group has and what issues another group has and just do that piecing them together and communicate between them that – that's, yeah, a really good role for us. (Participant 5)

In addition to working to develop a specialization or reputation as an expert among potential employers, several participants described working to make a name for themselves within the library profession. Active participation in library associations, as volunteers on committees or speakers at conferences, was a way that several participants found to network and potentially obtain library job opportunities.

These were seen as particularly valuable opportunities for LIS graduates working in special libraries or non-library settings where they may be the only employee in the organization with a LIS background. As one participant stated, "if you're the only librarian in your company or in your role, no one's going to know you because your candle's going to be under a basket hidden in that organization" (Participant 8).

Some participants were particularly interested in having an impact on the library and information science community. Several participants in the study have taught in LIS programs and many have been active in professional associations, often taking leadership roles. They have expressed an interest in assisting young professionals and students in developing their careers and in showing different ways to be an LIS professional and to think about information in organizations.

Participants also expressed a desire to make an impact in their work. Several participants expressed a preference for special library or non-library roles because these roles allowed them to have a greater level of impact and interaction with their clients. In these contexts, they were able to work with clients on longer term projects – interacting with clients for months or even years on projects – rather than solving a reference desk question for a client in a few minutes. One participant explained that she preferred working on developing web search tools to working in a library setting because she felt that these tools could help connect a larger number of people to information that she would be able to working in a traditional library setting. Being flexible means being open to a variety of job possibilities and being willing to learn new skills and expand existing ones.

One participant described reaching a point in his career when he discovered that there were limited opportunities for the type of library job he had originally been interested in pursuing and shifted his focus onto developing his research and database skills. This opened up a wide range of job opportunities as he discovered that many employers were interested in someone with information gathering, processing, and organizing skills.

Another participant attributed her success as an information consultant to her ability to adjust to her audiences rather than expecting others to adapt to her. She describes taking the time to understand things, looking at what things had already been done, and then looking for a gap that she can fill as part of her process. She develops an approach and solutions that are uniquely tailored to each organization.

As illustrated by the examples outlined above participants in this study developed success strategies over the course of their career to help them to achieve their career goals. The strategies developed and undertaken by participants were carefully constructed based on their observations of others' responses to the skills and knowledge that they brought to their workplaces, opportunities that they perceived as currently available or as potentially emerging in the future, and their assessments of what would help them to maximize their strengths and capitalize on opportunities. These assessments were constructed based on their experiences and observations as well as their personal interests, which led them to be highly personalized.

5.12   Conclusion

This chapter described the theory of Personalizing Professionalism that was developed through this study of the professional identity experiences of LIS graduates in non-library roles. This theory described the interactions between two identities in the professional experience: the internal appraisal of self and the externally expressed identity. The internal appraisal of self captures who an

individual perceives themselves to be as a professional and what they would like to achieve in the future (or who they would like to become). The internal appraisal of self is developed through socialization into the profession, the development of perceptions of the profession and other professionals, and an understanding of one's motivations and interests. The externally expressed identity is how one chooses to present oneself to others in order to achieve their professional goals. It is expressed through one's self-labelling practices and the strategies that they develop to find one's path through the profession. Interactions with others are an essential part of both the internal appraisal of self and the externally expressed identity as they shape both. Individuals will develop personalized success goals in order to reduce conflict that occurs between their two identities.

Chapter 6: Integrating the Literature

6.1   Introduction

This chapter was written to serve as a response to "Chapter 3: Theoretical Sensitivity and the Early Literature Review". The first literature review, which was conducted before the start of data collection, was undertaken to determine if the research question for this project represented a gap in the literature and to gain a broad understanding of the literature on professional identity and professions that was used to develop the initial interview guide. Chapter 3 was written largely in the future tense to illustrate the types of questions that the literature that I explored prior to data collection. The purpose for leaving these questions in place in that chapter was to demonstration what thinking was inspired by this literature so that any reviewers of the theory could trace my thinking prior to data collection to assess the extent to which theoretical sensitivity was retained.

This chapter is divided into two sections. The first section revisits the questions that were raised in "Chapter 3: Theoretical Sensitivity and the Early Literature Review". Some of the concepts that were explored in that literature review proved to be of little significance to the main concern that was identified through the interviews with study participants. The ideas which did end up being raised by participants are identified and elaborated upon. In some cases, additional readings were undertaken based on the data collected in the study. Identity research was the one area that has been explored both before and after data collection because

attitudes and behaviours described by participants in the study fit within this research area.

In addition, this section presents a second literature review for this project, but with several key differences from the review presented earlier in this thesis. This exploration of the literature focuses only on research related to themes that were discovered in this study's data. Every article that was read after data collection and analysis occurred was analysed from the perspective of the data. Did these articles cover themes or ideas that were raised by the participants? If the answer to this question was "No", then an article was deemed out of scope for this project. The articles that were selected for review after the core and theoretical coding began covered the following themes: sense-making and constructivism, and career literature. The purpose of this second literature review was not to validate the participants' comments or my analysis of the interviews, nor was it to validate or invalidate any previous research findings. The purpose of this literature review was to determine if any of the existing literature on themes emerging in the study, which could be viewed as additional data.

The purpose of this chapter is to integrate the theory and data that emerged from this study of the experiences of LIS professions in non-library roles with literature that has explored similar themes from various disciplines. This focus guided the structure of this chapter in which literature themes will first be presented and then followed by the related data from this study. This review should help to place this study and its resulting theory within the existing literature on professional

identity, both inside and outside of the field of library and information science, and to illustrate areas where this project fits within existing work and where it fills gaps.

6.2   Professional Identity

A first topic that was presented in the literature review in "Chapter 3: Theoretical Sensitivity and the Early Literature Review" was the definition of professional identity. In this chapter the commonalities between various definitions of professional identity were identified as being (1) that professional identity is shared with a community; (2) that one's professional identity links one with a group of others who are working in similar environments or performing similar tasks; and that (3) professional identity is highly fluid and changes over time based on personal experiences as well as external feedback (Roodt & De Braine, 2011; Gibson, Dollarhide & Moss, 2010; Billot, 2010; Strauser, O'Sullivan & Wong, 2010; Walter, 2008; Vernick, Perdue, Readon & Peterson, 2007). The definition that was developed of professional identity for this project was that professional identity is the identity that an individual builds around their work or professional life. In essence it is the response to the question "Who am I as a professional?" Billot (2010) describes professional identity as "the values, beliefs and practices held in common with others of that affiliation" (p. 712). Gibson, Dollarhide, and Moss (2010) argue that "contemporary definitions of professional identity seem to revolve around three themes: self-labeling as a professional, integration of skills and attitudes as a professional, and a perception of context in a professional community" (p. 21).

So what did the interviews undertaken in this study reveal about participants understanding of their professional identity? The responses did reveal that participants developed an answer to the question of "Who am I as a professional?" and that answer includes both an "internal appraisal of self" and an "externally expressed identity". The first element of the definition of professional identity found in the literature was the idea that professional identity is share with a community. Participants in this study both identified with and differentiated themselves from not only communities that shared their educational background but also those who performed similar work roles but had different professional training or education. The emphasis on personalizing one's definition of the profession and one's place within the profession (even to attempt to shift views within the profession to accept one's own views) provides insights into the relationship between individuals and communities as being more complicated that simply a matter of "joining" an existing professional group.

The second aspect of the definition of professional identity was that professional identity links one with a group of others who are working in similar environments or performing similar tasks. This proved to the case in this study as participants discussed their relationships with various professional communities based on the tasks that they performed and their attitudes and approaches to information. In some cases, participants identified an affinity to a particular community:

> As I progressed through the two year MLIS program, my interest and my focus from perhaps picking an academic librarianship role did shift towards greater interest in the special librarianship and information management field. (Participant 7)

In other cases, participants have described a desire to distance themselves from certain professional communities or groups. This separation might be a result of a lack of interest in the types of tasks that community performs or philosophical differences:

> I don't think I want to invest that much effort in understanding programming to integrate that well into that group. (Participant 1)

> I had the opportunity to go for an MBA a couple of times, and both times I turned it down...I had, you know, scholarships and, you know, some incentives to really steer me towards this MBA, a lot of people might have said "Why didn't you?" And deep down even though I came up with many excuses of why I didn't it's because that wasn't my passion. I...you know I didn't want to be a quote "business person". (Participant 4)

The third element of the definition of professional identity developed from the existing literature was that professional identity is highly fluid and changes over time. This aspect of professional identity was observed in this project. Participants discussed the evolution of their professional identities over the course of their careers both during and after their formal socialization into the profession through the completion of the library degree had been completed.

6.2.1 Identity Literature

An overview of some of the major themes of identity research was provided in "Chapter 3: Theoretical Sensitivity and the Early Literature Review". That chapter included sections on professional identity, identity theories, the flexibility of identity, the concept of multiple identities, and the relationship between individuals

and society's impact on identity. This section will address phenomena relating to identity research that emerged from the data in this study. In particular the concepts of identity salience, commitment, and identity manifestations will be discussed.

6.2.2   Multiple Identities

The concept of multiple identities is an important one in identity research from both the psychological and sociological perspectives. A body of research has explored the question of how all of an individual's potential manifestations of self or identities are organized and which identity will be active at a given time (Deaux & Burke, 2010; Stryker, 2007; Stets & Biga, 2003; Mekolichick, 2002; Stryker & Burke, 2000; Hogg, Terry & White, 1995). Key concepts that arose from the research on multiple identities were identity salience and commitment. These will be discussed below in relation to the data found in this research project.

6.2.3   Identity Salience

Salience is viewed as providing structure to the hierarchy of identities or possible identities held by an individual with higher salience identities being more likely to be activated within or across situations (Meister, Jehn, & Thatcher, 2014; Stets & Serpe, 2013; Burke Robertson, 2011; Deaux & Burke, 2010; Stryker, 2007; Howard, 2000). Identity salience refers to the probability of an identity being invoked in a given situation (Stets & Serpe, 2013; Stryker, 2007; Stets & Biga, 2003; Stryker & Burke, 2000; Hogg, Terry & White, 1995). Although a given identity may be more or less likely to be evoked by environmental conditions, the decision to

enact that identity is a conscious one which results from an individual's choice on which identity to exhibit through their behaviour (Stets & Serpe, 2013). There has been some debate over the stability of identity salience over time, with some arguing that identity salience is stable and holds across situations (Uemura, 2011) and others suggesting that salience is mutable and dynamic and changes in response to the social environment (Meister, Jehn, & Thatcher, 2014).

6.2.4   Commitment

Commitment refers to the degree to which the maintenance of an individual's network depends on a given identity (Burke Robertson, 2011; Stryker, 2007; Stryker & Burke, 2000; Hogg et al.). Commitment has been further subdivided into:

> 1) interactional commitment, reflecting the number of roles
> associated with a particular identity (the extensivity of
> commitment), and 2) affective commitment, referring to the
> importance of the relationships associated with the identity —in
> other words, the level of affect associated with the potential loss
> of these social relationships (the intensivity of commitment)
> (Hogg et al., p. 258)

Connections have been made between identity salience and commitment, with researchers arguing for a positive correlation between the two (Mekolichick, 2002), with some suggesting that commitment to an identity will directly impact the identity's salience (Stets & Serpe, 2013). Commitment may be related to an identity's importance which self-verification research has also linked to identity salience (Meister, Jehn, & Thatcher, 2014).

6.2.5   Identity Manifestation

Identity researchers have explored the question of which identities individuals will exhibit in response to various environmental or social cues. This topic has been explored from numerous angles, considering multiple variables, only a few of which are described below.

A first variable that researchers have explored is the impact of holding a minority identity. Some researchers have suggested that being a member of a minority group within a given situation will increase an individual's identity salience for that group. Chattopadhyay and George (2001) argued that:

> The salience of group boundaries tends to be heightened for individuals who are in the numerical minority in comparison with the majority, because the numerical minority is seen as a more distinct category than the majority, which is seen as a relatively diffused category. (p. 783)

The minority identities that are typically explored in identity literature are visible ones such as gender, race, or ethnicity. Whether a voluntary or invisible identity would have the same impact as a visible identity has not been explored.

> Other research on identity manifestation has looked at the impact of contextual demands, finding that in some cases these "may be so strong that the choice of behavior will be determined solely by the nature of the situation rather than by identity salience" (Hogg et al., p. 258). Some researchers have actually examined the relationship between identity and the environment from the other direction, suggesting that "identities give behavior a frame through which the environment is perceived, understood, and acted upon" (Sacharin et al., p. 276).

Literature on identity manifestation has been linked to the concept of identity salience which was introduced earlier. A theme in this literature has been the impact

of negative perceptions of their group identities. Research have found that individuals adopt a number of strategies to reduce the negative responses associated with these stereotypes including "[attempting] to restore positive regard by downplaying the salience of the devalued group membership (e.g., avoid stereotypical behavior) or attempting to educate and advocate on behalf of their social identity group in work contexts" (Dutton, Morgan Roberts & Bednar, 2010, p. 271). In addition to studying the impact of stereotypes on identities, some research has focused on whether interactions with others have reinforced or diminished one's perception of his or herself as a member of an identity group. Stryker and Burke (2000) wrote that "if the identity confirmation process is successful, the salience of the identity will be reinforced; if the process is unsuccessful, the salience of the identity is likely to diminish, perhaps considerably" (p. 289).

6.2.6   Relationship to Identity Literature

All of the theories and research discussed above focus on the idea that people have multiple identities that they may choose to exhibit either through behaviours, group identification, or self-labeling. The question of how library and information science (LIS) graduates working outside of libraries identify themselves provided an interesting case through which to explore this question because these individuals may choose from at least two professional identities: the identity of librarian for which their professional education would have socialized them or an identity associated with their substantive position or the role in the workplace which they occupy. Participants exhibited four response patterns when describing how they identified themselves to others in work and social situations: (1) always identifying as a

librarian, (2) never identifying as a librarian, (3) sometimes identifying as a librarian, and (4) identifying as a "non-practicing" or "non-active" librarian. These four scenarios will be described in relation to identity research.

One group of participants in this study always identified as a librarian, regardless of their substantive title or role. Although a question was included in the interview guide asking participants if they identified themselves as librarians, participants in this group tended to bring up their use of the title of "librarian" without prompting, identifying as a librarian and explaining how their work, even though it does not take place in libraries, still contributes to or even expands the boundaries of the profession of librarianship. For this group, "librarian" is a highly salient identity for this group:

> I still think of myself as a librarian. Like I like to think of bringing those skills when I talk with other librarians, very much of the same mind. So I feel like I'm a librarian doing a different type of job. I don't feel so much like I'm – my title right now is 'Business Architect' – that doesn't really ... resonate with me very much, but it's what I'm doing. I think I am a librarian still. (Participant 5)

The second group indicated that they never identified as a librarian. For participants in this group, a title other than that of librarian felt more appropriate. In some cases these labels were selected before the participants completed their LIS education and are not related to librarianship or information science. For example, one participant viewed herself primarily as a "Marketer" and another participant as a "Community Developer". In other cases, the label was adopted after completing the LIS degree and reflected the information science rather than the librarianship side of the profession. Examples of these included labels such as "Taxonomist" or "Information Manager". Participants in this group felt that these labels better

reflected the work that they do than the label of librarian which they associated with traditional library-based work. In this case the participants' chosen label reflected the functions they performed or role they played in an organization if not their actual job titles:

> I love libraries or I went to library school, but I don't actually call myself a librarian (Participant 6)

> And I still to this day, I still tell people that I'm a librarian. I still tell them that that's where I came from. They still find that appealing and interesting. I think it still gives my input a dimension, you know, as a partner on a team where my team members are, you know, data architects, business analysts, you know, managers who come out of engineering schools and MBAs. (Participant 14)

The third group of participants varied the ways they identified themselves based on their audience and the purpose of their communication. They would adopt the title that they believed most likely to help them to build relationships or achieve their goals. They would assess others' perception of the title "librarian" and either use or avoid that title based on that assessment. In some cases, the word "librarian" was avoided because it was deemed to either create the potential for confusion or lowered status. In other cases, the title "librarian" was used as an icebreaker because of the positive associations with this profession. Many of the participants in this group stated that they internally identified as librarians, but unlike the participants in the first group, they felt it more important to identify in ways that allowed them to achieve their occupational goals than to always express their preferred identity label:

> I've worked with a number of people in my organization where their perception of librarian is librarians have good skills for helping you organize your information, retrieve your information, help you get a better handle of information to help you get your job done. In that situation, yes. If I identify as ... identifying myself as a librarian will

increase my credibility with that group I definitely will do that. If I'm with somebody for whom libraries and librarians are a passé thing – depending on the environment I may try and advocate for libraries and librarians – more often than not I will not associate myself there until later once it's been more firmly entrenched and in place that I have this person's trust. Then I will massage them – try and make the message with them – but up-front, no. (Participant 1)

Once again, librarian is a loaded word. It has huge value in the law firm context, in the academic context where it's got respect. If I'm working in the systems space, saying I'm – I have a degree in taxonomies and ontologies and information architecture – I'd rather say that then librarian, because I'm not digging myself out of a hole. (Participant 8)

The final group identified as librarians but because they were not actively employed in libraries preferred to use modified titles such as "non-active librarian" or "non-practicing librarian". Participants who internally identified as librarians but used a modified librarian title or refused to use the title of librarian often did so because they worried that their use of the title would be questioned if not rejected by LIS graduates working in libraries. There was a perception among these participants that librarians working in libraries had the strongest claim to the librarian title:

No, everyone labels me as a librarian which is very funny, but I don't necessarily – I don't label myself as a librarian. Even when I am with librarians or if I'm doing something in a librarian capacity, since I do some marketing work for, like, library vendors currently. I still feel uncomfortable – well, yeah – I guess I feel uncomfortable saying 'I'm a librarian', because I'm a little worried that real librarians – REAL – I'm saying in air quotes – real librarians are going to be like 'You're not a real librarian because you don't work in a library' and even when I was working as a library vendor I kind of was worried that if I said 'I'm a librarian' they'd be like 'No, you're a vendor' even though I have an MLIS and everything. (Participant 12)

These four groups show the impact of several variables when it comes to the decision of how to label or describe oneself to others. The first of these variables is the level of attachment one feels to a label. Participants internally identified

themselves in the way that felt most appropriate to them, sometimes using the label of librarian and sometimes using another label. This suggests that participants did have a top salient identity. When deciding how to identify themselves to others participants considered the reactions of others. These reactions could impact their ability to achieve career objectives, such as the completion of projects or the acquisition of clients. These reactions could also threaten participants' sense of themselves as members of an identity group.

6.3   LIS Identity Formation

A number of specific questions were raised after the completion of the first literature review concerning how LIS education and socialization would impact the professional identities of LIS graduates working in non-library roles. Socialization is the process through which individuals are assimilated into existing communities through the transfer of explicit and tacit knowledge including the learning of the rules, skills, values, norms, customs, and symbols that make up that community's culture (Baker & Lattuca, 2010; Serrat, 2008; Rummens, 2001; Ibarra, 1999).

6.3.1   Motivations for Entering LIS Programs

The first socialization topic discussed in LIS literature is students' motivations for entering LIS programs (Hazeri, Martin & Sarrafzadeah, 2009; Scherdin & Beaubin, 1995). The participants in this study expressed reasons for choosing to attend library school that fit with the findings of other researchers who have asked this question. The vast majority of participants in this study decided to

enter library school after the completion of at least one post-secondary degree (only one participant in the study decided to become a librarian in childhood). Their main reason for wanting to pursue a degree in library and information science was the desire to pursue a more fulfilling career.

6.3.2 Career Planning and Non-Library Roles

After reviewing this literature I wondered at how many of the interviewees in the project had entered non-traditional roles deliberately as part of a larger career plan or incidentally by casting a wide job search net or responding to a particular opportunity that arose after or during their LIS program. Participants in this study followed both paths to non-library careers. For some, the decision to work outside of a library setting was deliberate:

> It was really the idea of what better way to be able to learn all markets and how technologies affecting them than to go work for a vendor. So I really thought for a short term plan is I'd go work on the vendor side of things and then on a personal note just kind of decided which kind of library system fit my personality best, which library type really fit my personality best. (Participant 18)

For other participants, the decision to enter non-library roles was not planned but occurred as a result of opportunities that arose over the course of their career. A quote from the interviewer is provided below:

> I didn't go sort of seeking an opportunity outside of librarianship. I still feel that this job is in librarianship because basically I'm selling a library technology product using my expertise, my experience and my connections in order to further the mission of libraries. (Participant 15)

The second question asked in "Chapter 3: Theoretical Sensitivity and the Early Literature Review" in response to the literature on LIS socialization was how participants' involvement in non-traditional roles has shaped their future ambitions and perceptions of their ideal employment opportunity. Each participant had a different response when asked about their future ambitions and "dream job", but in general participants' responses reflected three patterns: (1) a desire to continue in non-library roles, (2) a desire to work in a library role, and (3) an openness to any type of work role.

Some participants clearly linked their current non-library roles with their future ambitions and expressed a desire to continue in their non-library roles or similar roles. Quotes from three of the interviews in this study are provided below:

> After 10 years of working I've definitely done the technical expert position in a couple of roles, and I think I'm definitely more interested in the soft skills and people side. So, I think when I look at my career I'm definitely focused on maybe moving up the ladder and focusing on professional development. I think what I've loved about my current position is the whole idea of the change management and even the high-grading the skills on my own team. Getting people to become engaged and passionate about what they're doing is a really, really rewarding experience. (Participant 19)

> I love my work and the way my life is set up right now. I could see myself shifting the balance of what I do. Right now I have to do a fair amount of high tech work just for the income because I live in a very expensive part of the world, but I'd like to be in the position where I could pick and choose my projects a little bit more and be able to do more of the things that I think are really fun and exciting, even if they're not very profitable. And a lot of times, yeah I have to do those as a volunteer on top of my work. That's a little more difficult. I don't see myself taking a full time staff job again. I really like the flexibility and the variety the way I'm working right now and being able to take care of myself and not have to depend on employers who could lay me off at any minute and I just really enjoy having different clients to work with and different kinds of projects. Every day is different. Every

week is different. Every client is different. That just makes life really interesting. (Participant 16)

As I continue to develop in my career over the short term I do want to keep exploring the cross-disciplines. I'm very pleased that I've been pulled back into some of the information management / records management portions because it's given me the …opportunity to start balancing and managing against competing priorities within the department, which I think will enhance my leadership skills in the long term. (Participant 7)

Some participants working in non-library roles interviewed in this study do have a desire to work in the library. A quote from the interview is provided below:

I would love to work in an animal rights library of some sort so I could marry my two interests and have them live together perfectly for the rest of eternity. I don't really know what I would do. I guess that would be working in a traditional library, so I guess that's my subconscious telling me that I want to work in a traditional library. (Participant 12)

Interestingly, some participants in this study expressed an interest in remaining open to a range of future job possibilities, with some participants refusing to identify an ideal future role because being flexible and willing to pursue opportunities as they arose had been a central feature of their careers to date.

6.3.3   Mentors and Role Models

The role of mentors and role models was also raised by the literature on socialization from the literature on librarianship and other disciplines such as teaching (Lacy & Copeland, 2013; Eliot & Turns, 2011; Library of Congress, 2011; Hall, 2009; Mills, Chapman, Bonner & Francis, 2007; Winston & Dunkley, 2002;

Johnson, 2003; Eaves, 2001). While the career narrative portion of the interview was structured to encourage all participants to begin with their decision attend library school and the question about future career ambitions or future "dream job" was a part of the interview guide, encouraging participants to reflect specifically on this topic, there were no interview questions designed to explicitly ask about the role of mentors in career development. Without being specifically prompted on this subject, multiple participants described their experiences of finding mentors and role models throughout their careers and the importance that these individuals had on their ability to obtain jobs and build their professional skills. Two participants described their experiences of finding mentors on the job. Quotes from these interviews are provided below:

> Who's just a wonderful mentor and friend to me – and there's of course a dozen others – but they stick out to me as the top two who were always willing to give advice and...even the kind of thing I mentioned earlier – they didn't want to hold me back. If they can give me experience and, you know, funnel me to positions where I can succeed and learn something it was great, so it was great...and if I decided to take those skills and go elsewhere they supported me...and that's what I try to do for others. (Participant 2)

> A lot of it was kind of done through informal mentorship. And then certainly once I had a couple of years of working under my belt I've been fortunate enough to have a couple of pretty amazing mentors in each of my current positions that would help bridge any of the specific knowledge gaps. That's one thing that I think is actually really wonderful about our profession, is that we're willing to share that information with each other and to help each other along and kind of pass down that information and knowledge which is great. (Participant 19)

Another participant described finding a mentor who provided her with advice from the time of her library studies which ended up guiding her into a technical career. A quote from the interview with this participant is provided below:

I wasn't seeking out that person as a mentor specifically – and it wasn't through the program, it was just I noticed, you know, he seems like he has a pretty good career. Like, you know, I would balance things off him, like, "Should I take this class?" you know, "Do you think this is, like, useful?", to learn how to do this or that? Next thing I know I just was choosing information archives and information architecture track. So I was taking more classes in the technical side. (Participant 6)

Yet another participant described the challenges involved in not having access to mentors to help her. A quote from the interview with this participant is provided below:

The only downfall with that is I really like to learn from someone – like in my internship I learned a lot from my supervisor, in my recruiting role I was one-on-one with my boss, basically, so I learned everything from him – and I think I do well in that mentor-mentee relationship. So being the first person to start it is just a very daunting and overwhelming task. (Participant 11)

One participant described actively seeking out mentors through professional associations. A quote from the interview with this participant is provided below:

I went around ALA Connect and I looked up mentors and I was looking for someone who was close to me and fortunately there was one person who is an amazing librarian and she's my friend now…[she] was on there and she was looking for a mentee or a mentor because she also was in libraries. She was already kind of established as a public librarian, but she was young and she wanted to make connections and she's very active in everything. (Participant 12)

6.3.4 Multiple Identities and LIS Graduates

A key question that was raised as a result of the original literature review was how do LIS graduates in non-traditional roles experience multiple identities and select the salient identity? This provided to be a central question in the formation of the theory that was developed through this project. Participants' experiences of professional identity included two key identities: the "internal appraisal of self" and

"externally expressed identity" (which could be modified based on audience). Participants described various situations in which they choose to present themselves in different ways based on their assessments of how their presentation of themselves – including the labels that they use to describe themselves – would be interpreted by the people with whom they were interacting.

> "What do you do?" "I'm a librarian." Because that is what I do. For people it is a very odd way to be a librarian – but that's how I identify myself. There are...there are certain factions where that is *not* going to help me gain respect and that would be with certain older subsets – if I'm talking to one of the other ILS companies…want to come over and talk to me, you know, or I'm standing at our booth and you know we vendors say Hi to one another and wander over and I would not introduce myself as a librarian. I would say I'm Vice President because they're...most of the folks at the other companies don't have librarians at the top. (Participant 2)

> Well you know, librarians have an image issue in a lot of audiences that don't…if your audience is people who don't know a lot of librarians there will be an image issue and it's still there...and that being one reason why I continue to call myself a librarian – because I'm not the typical image of a librarian and so that will break someone's stereotypes for them. But I do hang around with a lot of librarian audiences so they know us better, they know what we're about. (Participant 3)

> And I've found that people are – can be quite receptive to that statement. I'm always saying "I'm also a librarian", because they – there seems to be understanding that a librarian is somebody who helps to organize and find information and get information that people need to those people in an easy way. So that's how I typically position myself in those exchanges. (Participant 7)

> If I'm working in the systems space, saying I'm – I have a degree in taxonomies and ontologies and information architecture – I'd rather say that then librarian, because I'm not digging myself out of a hole. Why would I put myself in a hole for some dogma reason that I want them to understand it and they're not going to? So I try not to engage in a special kind of stupid. So you craft what you're going – how you're going to describe yourself in a way the person you're talking to. (Participant 8)

The four quotes provided above all provide examples of situations in which participants described making deliberate choices about how they wanted to present themselves to their audiences. These participants understood the power that a label or association with a particular community could have in shaping their interactions with others. These participants' statements suggest that using a different label does not necessarily change the way that they conceive of themselves as professionals, the labels are instead tools to help them achieve professional goals.

6.3.5   The LIS Profession and Society

The question of how the status and stereotypes of the profession of librarianship would impact the professional identity experiences of participants in this study was also raised after a review of the existing LIS literature. These issues have been explored by a number of authors (Mirza & Seale, 2011; Clemons, 2011; Taylor, Perry, Barton & Spence, 2010; Fallahay Loesch, 2010; Potter, 2009; Davis, 2007; Peresie & Alexander, 2005; Van Fleet & Wallace, 2002; Chusmir, 1990; Gallen 1984). This topic proved to be a significant topic for the participants in this study as well. The quotes from several of the participants cited above mention how the status and stereotypes of librarianship impact their decisions about how to introduce themselves to others. Perceptions of profession were included in the theory developed in this study because of the impact that these perceptions, including stereotypes, have on how people present themselves to others.

6.4   Professions and Professionalism

Some of the topics raised in the literature on professions and professionalism, such as the power or status of a profession (Krejsler, 2005) and to a certain extent the question of what constitutes the specialized body of knowledge of the profession (Alsbury, 2010; Krejsler, 2005; Adams, 2010; Bates, 2012; Gerhold, 1974; McGrath Morris, 2008) as articulated through participants' ideas concerning the core curriculum of LIS programs, were raised by a few of the participants in this study. Several participants expressed concern about not being accepted as librarians by librarians working in library settings. This reject (of fear of reject) was based on current work role even though the participants (with the exception of Participant 4 who was in the process of completing her MLIS degree) had already met the entry criteria required to join the profession and should therefore be able to use the professional title. A few of the participants did remake on attitudes the library workers with MLIS degrees toward library workers without master's level certifications. Overall, however, this literature did not feature very strongly in the theory developed in this project because it did not reflect the main concerns expressed by participants.

6.5   The Second Literature Review

All of the preceding sections of this chapter provided reflections on questions raised by literature read before data collection and analysis occurred in this study. The following sections of this chapter discuss literature that was read during data collection and analysis after the code categories had been identified. This literature

was selected specifically to explore concepts that were raised by participants. In some cases, this meant that additional literature was sought covering topics explored in the original literature review. This was the case for literature on professional identity and the LIS profession. In other cases, new areas of literature were explored, such as research on constructivism, sense-making, and careers. The tone of this literature review differed from the first, because rather than speculating on how the themes from the literature may be expressed in the interviews, the literature was read in relation to the themes that had emerged from interviews to see where this research fits within the current body of knowledge for a variety of disciplines.

6.6   Recent LIS Literature on Professional Identity

Following the data collection and analysis phases of this study, a second round of research was conducted to explore how the substantial theory developed in this project related to literature that was published in the library and information science (LIS) field and to determine if any new publications on LIS professional identity had been published since the initiation of this research project. Indeed, publication on professional identity and LIS profession-related topics is ongoing, with several articles having been published in the past two years concerning professional identity. A trend in this project's supplementary literature review echoed the findings of the initial literature review that little had been written about the LIS professional identity (Hicks, 2014; Hoffmann & Berg, 2014). A closer examination of several of the most closely related articles to this project is provided below.

6.6.1 Boundaries of the LIS Profession

There is some evidence from recently published works that the question of the boundaries of the LIS profession is still being explored and that the work of those who are pushing the traditional boundaries of the profession either through their professional practices or research endeavours requires greater exploration. Susan E. Thomas and Anne E. Leonard, for example, published a paper in 2014 on "Interdisciplinary Librarians: Self-Reported non-LIS Scholarship and Creative Work" which explored this topic. The article suggested that the profession of librarianship remains strongly tied to the library-as-space and the activities associated with work within that institution:

> Applied library science is work that takes place in the library: for example, cataloging, reference work, library instruction, and collection development and management. Such work is clearly librarian work. A narrow definition of library scholarship limits academic librarians' scholarly activity to explicitly library science topics. Examples include bibliometrics, information literacy pedagogy, and evidence-based management research. Such work is published and indexed in LIS periodicals for a librarian audience. An expanded definition of library scholarship includes scholarship and creative and professional activity outside of library and information science, for the library serves the entire college or university. Here librarians may be publishing in non-LIS journals or other periodicals, producing culture rather than documenting it, collaborating with other departments in grant writing or teaching of non-LIS topics, and performing professional work. Part of expanding the definition of library scholarship and work is about meeting the needs of the institution rather than just the library system. (Thomas & Leonard, 2014, p. 548)

They reported that even locating work by librarians that was published in non-LIS publications or presented in other disciplinary venues was a challenge:

> Because there is no systematic way to determine academic librarians' publications outside of library science, the authors chose to focus on

library literature that specified and interpreted the types of scholarship and creative work produced by academic librarians. Several articles are notable as they at least briefly discuss the issue of librarians publishing in non-LIS publications. It is unclear whether or not there is a trend in regards to such publishing." (Thomas & Leonard, 2014, p. 549)

This suggests that additional work may be needed to present additional ways of thinking about librarianship or presenting ideas from librarianship to other disciplines and vice versa may still be needed. Presenting current LIS students with different models about how and where to work and publish may help to attract a broader range of individuals into the profession who could introduce new ideas to librarianship which could contribute to innovations to both LIS practice and research.

There is some evidence from the articles available on the LIS profession that an expansion of practice and research outside of the traditional arena of library-based librarianship is seen as a threat to librarians' professional identities. Elaine R. Martin wrote an editorial for the *Journal of eScience Librarianship* entitled "Re-thinking our professional identity in light of new responsibilities" in which she discussed postings and debates among practicing librarians about the impact of embedded librarianship on librarian identity:

> Recent discussion in blog posts and webinars suggest concerns that embedded librarians, as they steadily move outside the library and into research teams, may be neither "fish nor fowl." Is the embedded librarian's professional identity allied with the library or with the team? What are the potential effects of such role modifications? Will the embedded librarian somehow achieve more autonomy over their time and work if they are identified more closely with their research team than with their home library? Do you need a library to be a librarian? Where is the professional home for the embedded librarian? (Martin, 2013, p. 1)

The lack of research into the professional identities of LIS graduates working in non-traditional roles may contribute to this concern among practitioners who have never seen their identities expressed in contexts outside of the library. This study, particularly the data shared in "Chapter 4: The Participants", may serve as evidence for some members of the LIS community that one can still be a librarian or retain the values of librarianship while working outside of a library.

This study demonstrated that some LIS graduates choose to pursue careers outside of library settings because they see in these roles as opportunities to help and influence the library community. Two participants, one working at an open-source software company and another who owns her own business, both describe the ability to help libraries as a factor that impacted their decisions to join and start their respective businesses: "I love what I'm doing now. It's nice to be able to help all those libraries, save them money or whichever position I'm doing for them. I really like working with a broad variety of people" (Participant 3). LIS graduates who work in "alternative" careers are therefore not necessarily people who dislike libraries or have rejected librarianship, but who are reimagining ways to be a librarian.

These types of articles also reinforce the observations that participants in this study made about their interactions with LIS graduates working inside library settings. A portion of the LIS community defines librarianship as "bound" to the library context and this perspective of the profession can lead to conflicts over definitions of the profession and ways of being a professional which require those

with views that differ from their peers to engage in conflict resolution strategies (assimilation, influencing change, or withdrawal).

6.6.2   Socialization into the LIS Profession

The process of socialization into the LIS profession continues to be an important research topic in the LIS literature. Several examples of studies exploring this topic were provided in "Chapter 3: Theoretical Sensitivity and the Early Literature Review" and additional examples were found in the final stages of this study.

An example of this type of research is Hoffmann and Berg's 2014 article "'You Can't Learn It in School': Field Experiences and Their Contributions to Education and Professional Identity" published in *The Canadian Journal of Information and Library Science* which explored the role of field experiences (FEs) in relation to classroom experiences as periods of professional identity development. This study took a fairly board definition of professional identity, much like this project, providing the following definition:

Professional identity for librarians, in its broadest sense, answers the question: what does it mean to think of oneself as a librarian? More specifically, professional identity is the set of attributes, beliefs values, motives, and experiences that contribute to people's definition of themselves in professional roles (Schein 1978). It is "a way of being and a lens to evaluate, learn and make sense of practice" (Hoffmann & Berg, 2014, p. 224).

Their data sources included interviews with MLIS students and co-op reports and

included questions on "their experiences and daily activities during their co-op

placement, their perceptions of their own professional identity, and their professional

goals and aspirations" (Hoffmann & Berg, 2014, p. 225). Four themes were found in

this data:

> (1) the relationship between theory and practice, (2) the need for and
> availability of training outside the classroom, (3) the authenticity of the
> professional experience, and (4) the importance of working as an equal
> with librarians. (Hoffmann & Berg, 2014, p. 227)

One finding in particular may describe the relationship between classroom

experiences and field experiences. And that is:

> Students also described the classroom experience as a presentation of
> individual puzzle pieces, that is, discrete components of librarianship.
> On their placements, they became aware of how those puzzle pieces fit
> together and what that meant for the practice of librarianship.
> (Hoffmann & Berg, 2014, p. 227)

Their findings fit within the existing body of literature on the socialization process

for the LIS profession which suggests that socialization begins with formal LIS

education or classroom training and continues in the workplace.

Across this research, the concept of socialization into the profession is a

common theme. For students, the LIS classroom is an opportunity to become

integrated into a community of library professionals, and therefore to become

socialized to certain aspects of the profession (Cherry et al. 2011; Jones, Greene, &

Ruhala 1993; Reid et al. 2008; Sare, Bales, and Neville 2012; Trede, Macklin, &

Bridges 2012). Socialization continues for new librarians, as they learn "on the job" what they did not or could not learn in library school, such as organizational culture, library-specific policies, tenure requirements, or even specific skills such as collection development (Oud 2008; Sare, Bales, & Neville 2012).

The data collected in the present study also fit with the existing body of literature and the Hoffmann and Berg study's findings on socialization. Many of the participants in this study highlighted in importance of internship experiences in the development of their professional identity. The idea that socialization is an ongoing process and that perceptions of the profession continue to develop over the course of one's career both through classroom and experiential learning opportunities are also captured in the theory of professional identity experience developed in this study.

6.6.3   LIS Professional Identity

Some articles are being published that explore the explicit definition the LIS professional identity. An example of this type of publication is an article by Deborah Hicks published in 2014 entitled "The construction of librarians' professional identities: A discourse analysis". The objective of this article was to examine professional identity from a social constructionist framework in order to "provide insight into the professional problems and concerns of librarianship, what it means to be a librarian, and how librarians themselves construct their understanding of librarianship" (Hicks, 2014, p. 252). This study approached professional identity through the lens of interpretive repertoires and defined professional identity as "a

description, or representation, of the self within specific professional practices"
(Hicks, 2015, p. 252). The definition of professional identity used in Hicks' study
and this one, therefore, differed somewhat, which is not surprising given the wide
variety of literature and approaches that have been taken to explore identity across
multiple disciplines. In addition, the participants of the two studies also differed.
Hicks was concerned with the professional identity experiences of librarians working
in library settings (and included literature and interview participants from public,
academic, school and special libraries) while this study was concerned with the
professional identity experiences of LIS graduates working in non-library roles.
These differences, however, do not mean that relationships cannot be found between
the results of these two projects. In fact, the two studies could be seen as
confirmatory of several of each other's findings.

The key finding from Hicks' study was that service (the service repertoire)
was central to librarians' professional identities:

> Service, broadly defined, was often considered to be the essence of
> librarianship. Service included activities such as public services (for
> instance, reference, instruction, and reader's advisory), technology
> services (from helping people with e-readers to providing public-access
> computers), the organization of information (from cataloguing to
> knowing how information on the Web is organized), provision of
> access to information (books, journals, DVDs, specialized databases,
> and the Internet), and professional service (such as publishing in
> journals, association membership and participation, and mentoring of
> other professionals)…Service was described as a core value, the ethos
> and purpose of librarianship (Hicks, 2014, p. 258)

A strong commitment to service and desire to help others was expressed by many of
the participants in the study across professional situations. For example:

In managing others:

> And I like to help them – people achieve skills – that are going to help
> them - that can help them not only for their current job but if their
> interested in something a little outside the scope of their job – that I can
> help them move beyond. (Participant 2)

In mentoring or assisting LIS students and young professionals:

> It's one of my desires in life, to try to help other – to help students
> along the way. (Participant 3)

In comparing their library work experiences with non-library work experiences:

> I liked being able to focus my time on actually answering people's
> questions no matter what they were and sort of helping people do that
> sort of thing ... In places like this, although the job is fine, you don't
> actually – you're not encouraged to **satisfy** people's questions. You're
> encouraged to – well do what your job is and send them on their way,
> whereas with librarians, I felt you could really take ownership of
> somebody's problem and help see them through it. (Participant 5)

In observing librarian mentors:

> And she was really able to apply her skill to – to create value-add in
> other types of work that the organization was doing. And that showed
> that she was quite well respected by her peers due to that – that
> engagement and to that service level she was able to provide.
> (Participant 7)

In considering the role of libraries within society:

> It wasn't just what we think of as typically education, but this broader
> knowledge that we in society need to have to shift to becoming a
> knowledge economy. When I started to realize that libraries were really

> the place that would be able to serve everybody no matter where you kind of where in an economic or social continuum. (Participant 17)

In identifying their strengths and motivations:

> I always found the public energizing a bit. I'm not necessarily an extrovert, but they come and they're looking for help and you're helping them. So I think it was that service aspect as well that was key to my being good at it. (Participant 15)

In deciding to pursue a master's degree in library science:

> She said it was a really good field to go into, it had a lot of flexibility, I would be able to travel with it, it wasn't the kind of stressful work that you take home with you on weekends or at the end of the night, and so for all those things – for that work-life balance – that definitely appealed to me. And again because she said it was a really good combination of this idea of blending technology with that customer services background and working with people. And she said that once you sort of had the theory and philosophy down, there would probably be a lot of ways to apply it outside of like traditional settings (Participant 19)

More importantly was the function that Hicks associated with the service repertoire.

According to Hicks, services was used not only as a description of the types of tasks

that they performed and the values that informed those tasks,

> The professionalism repertoire was employed by librarians when they wanted to foreground their social status as professionals. The provision of high-quality service was often posited as the best way to demonstrate librarianship's professionalism…First, as professionals, librarians will go above and beyond to meet their clients' information needs regardless of the information environment in which they work. Second, it grounds service in the core values of the profession. (Hicks, 2014, p. 262)

But also as a means of differentiating themselves from other groups, such as

paraprofessionals, and of communicating their value to others:

> This willingness to provide service, and not simply perform technical tasks, was what separated the professional from the library technician. The purpose of the repertoires in this instance was to demonstrate the value of librarians to their users. Librarians do not simply perform a technical function; they offer a vital service – they are willing to "dig deep" and put "effort" into ensuring their clients' satisfaction. (Hicks, 2014, p. 262-263)

This fits with the theory of professional identity experience put forward in this study. Identifying and aligning one's professional practices with a core value or ethic (in this case 'service') is part of the librarians' internal appraisal of self and shapes their perception of the profession. Their interactions with other likeminded librarians, either in live interactions or through reading professional journals or participating in listservs reinforces this perception of the profession. Seeing people outside of the profession define or practice service differently also reinforces the belief that librarians have a unique way of exhibiting and perceiving 'service'. Seeing 'service' as a unique contribution that they can make as a member of the librarian profession, practices which incorporate these views of 'service' are used as 'success strategies' to exhibit their value and compete with others in the work place: "The service repertoire functioned as a way for librarians to highlight their professional worth, technological expertise, core values, and uniqueness to clients and stakeholders" (Hicks, 2014, p. 267).

6.7   Constructivism and Sense-Making

By electing to make the first question in this study a request for the participants' career stories (i.e. their journey from their decision to attend library

school to their present position), this study may be read in relation to others that have explored biographies or personal narratives.

There is a strong connection between constructivism and narrative or biographical work. This philosophy and these studies tend to see individuals as active actors who have the ability to construct or reconstruct their own biographies for the purpose of shaping their identities or presenting themselves to others within society.

> Stories and the past can be given an appropriate place, new connections can be established and one's own biography can be seen from various angles and reconstructed in all its contradictions. (Roer, 2009, p. 189-190)

The idea that individuals establish connections when presenting their biographical stories certainly seems to resonate with the narratives that were shared in this study. Participants did not simply provide a curriculum vitae in response to this first interview question, simply listing their work experiences in chronological order from their entry into an MLIS program to their current position. They framed their experiences as an explanation of how they "got where they are today". They provided insights into their thought processes: why they chose to leave positions, what features of positions were most significant in the context of a career that moved them to a non-library position, interactions with others inside and outside of the workplace that contributed to career decisions. The career stories that participants gave was therefore a subjective processing of their life with the objective of communicating why career decisions were made.

6.8   Career Literature

This section discusses several of the key themes which have emerged in career research literature in relation to the data from this study. The career research literature that was explored in this 'integrating the literature' review was primarily situated in the sociology discipline rather than in the management discipline because of the focus on the employees' perspective rather than the perspective of the manager as a representative of the organization(s) as the primarily unit of study.

6.8.1   Defining Careers

A first topic discussed in this literature was the question of how a career was defined. In this literature careers were differentiated from jobs, with a job viewed as a single unit – a single position, task or piece of work – whereas a career is the culmination of all of the jobs that an individual performs over the course of their lifetime. Careers are also seen as having development components as people acquire abilities and interests through work as well as preferences for future job or career directions (Li, You, Lin & Chan, 2013; Biemann & Broakmann, 2013; Grimland, Vigoda-Godot & Baruch, 2012; De Vos, De Cloppeleer & Dewilde, 2009). This matched the perspectives of several participants in this study who differentiated between jobs and careers and expressed a desire for the latter.

Although this literature did not tend to explicitly use the term 'professional identity', researchers such as Jakobsen (2001) have made the connection between

one's occupation, place in society, and identity by arguing that people link their occupations with their values and goals in society and that this provides them with the structures that allow them to define their identities and contributions to society. The idea of how the work one does impacts one's place in society, either in terms of the role played or contribution made or in terms of one's relations with others, was an important theme that emerged from the interviews in this study. This topic will be discussed in the section on identity literature.

A second aspect of the definition of a career that emerged from this literature was the general structure or construction of a career. The modern career experience is frequently described in terms of the boundaryless career (see for example Li, You, Lin & Chan, 2013; Hall, Lee Kossek & Las Heras, 2012; Kuijpers, Schyns & Scheerens, 2006). The career is one which individuals pursue opportunities across organizations, occupations, and even geographic areas. This is a departure from earlier, pre-twentieth century models of careers in which individuals were seen to move less frequently between organizations, generally pursuing promotions within a single employing entity (Sammarra, Profili & Innocenti, 2013). The reason for this change in career patterns has been explored by a number of researchers and has been attributed to factors such as "globalization, work-force diversity, and changed employer-employee relationships" (Rasdi, Ismail & Garavan, 2011, p. 3528).

This description accurately describes the career experiences of the participants in this study. All of the participants in this study had changed employers several times, many changed industry sectors, and some had even changed task types, performing dramatically different work from one position to the next, as they

progressed through their careers. This suggests that the career patterns that have

been observed in a number of occupational sectors hold true for this population as

well. Understanding that employees view their careers as "boundaryless" is

significant for employers because it may impact the efforts that they make to retain

talented employees.

6.8.2   Career Success

The idea of 'career success' is a key topic in career research. Definitions of

career success are generally divided into two categories: objective success and

subjective success, with this distinction dating back to research conducted in the

1930s (Li, You, Lin & Chan, 2013; Biemann & Broakmann, 2013). Objective

success refers to attainment of indicators that are externally observable, usually

ranking, number of promotions, or level of salary and benefits (Hall, Lee, Kossek &

Las Heras, 2012; Ng, Eby, Sorensen & Feldman, 2005). Objective career success is

the type most frequently studied (Dyke & Murphy, 2006). Subjective success refers

to "the individual's own perception of the quality of his or her attainments" (Hall,

Lee, Kossek & Las Heras, 2012, p. 744). Subjective success may be determined

based on internal or external criteria. For example, it may include "the assessment of

one's own success compared with the success of others (other-referent career

success) or compared with one's own individual standards (self-reference career

success or career satisfaction)" (Stamm & Buddeberg-Fischer, 2011, p. 489).

Understanding how people define career success is significant because this definition

"can affect our educational choices, choice of employer, work involvement, career

attainment, financial resources, relationships, family commitment, and life

satisfaction" (Dyke & Murphy, 2006, p. 357).

Several researchers have explored the relationship between objective and

subjective success. Some have found that the two types of success are weakly

related, necessitating the examination of both types of indicators (De Vos, De

Cloppeleer & Dewilde, 2009, p. 766). Hall, Lee, Kossek and Las Heras (2012)

conducted a longitudinal study with employees who had shifted their work hours to

accommodate family-life balances and found that objective success and subjective

success were not always positively correlated. For example, they found that the

group in their study who had achieved high rates of objective success using the

indicators of pay and promotion, felt that they had lower levels of subjective success

because they "felt that they were involuntarily being pulled in the direction of pursuit

of objective success" (Hall, Lee, Kossek & Las Heras, 2012, p. 760). Additionally,

they "did not find any direct relationship between the measures of well-being and

either type of success" (Hall, Lee, Kossek & Las Heras, 2012, p. 759). Others have

developed more complex models of success which have combined both subjective

and objective indicators:

> For example, Parker and Chusmir (1992) examined six specific
> dimensions of life success: status/wealth, contribution to society, family
> relationships, personal fulfillment, professional fulfillment, and
> security. Gattiker and Larwood (1986) measured five facets of
> subjective career success (work role, interpersonal, financial,
> hierarchical, and life success). Factor analysis of their measure by Nabi
> (2001) identified two underlying dimensions: intrinsic job success
> (items such as enjoyable work, respect, and support) and extrinsic job
> success (focused on financial rewards and promotional opportunities).
> (Dyke & Murphy, 2006, p. 359)

This study contributes to the debate about objective and subjective success, agreeing with those authors who suggest that indicators of both kinds must be explored to fully understand individuals' motivations and perceptions of career success. Rather than suggesting that they are causally linked or correlated to one another as some researchers have theorized, however, this study suggests that both objective and subjective indicators of success are considered by individuals to be resolutions of concerns such as their enjoyment of work, relationship with others, and alignment of their career with their motivations and interests. Furthermore, the dominant conflict at a given point in an individual's life at a given period of time will impact the career success indicator that they are most likely to pursue.

6.8.3   Personal Lives and Careers

The concept of work-life balance and the balancing of work and family responsibilities, is important in career literatures, with today's workforce increasingly providing both childcare and elder care (see for example Hall, Lee, Kossek & Las Heras, 2012). This concept did arise in this study as well, with participants expressing concerns for the care of their children and parents as considerations in career decisions. For example, several participants elected to search for or accept positions in cities based on their proximity to family members or to support their spouse's career ambitions. There was also a participant in this study who elected to change careers to a field in which there was less of an emphasis on long work hours in order to spend more time with her family. This was expressed in setting professional goals or making career moves to resolve conflicts related to relationships with others.

6.8.4   Gender and Careers

The issue of gender differences in career experiences, particularly the attainment of career success, has been widely explored in the management and feminist literature (see for example Ramaswami, 2010; Ng, Eby, Sorensen & Feldman, 2005; Dyke & Murphy, 2006; Wiggins & Bowman, 2000). Librarianship is a female-dominated profession and research on non-traditional careers has often focused on the experiences of people pursuing roles in professions that are dominated by people of a different gender. This study involved participants of both sexes. Seven interviewees or 35% of the participants were male and 13 or 65% of the participants were female. According to a 2011 fact sheet from the American Library Association, females represent 81% of MLIS enrollment (American Library Association, 2011). This suggests that there is greater male representation in this study than might have been expected. This could lead to the hypothesis that male LIS graduates are more likely than female LIS graduates to pursue job opportunities outside of libraries. This hypothesis was not tested and could not be substantiated by this study, but could be investigated in a future research project.

The roles that participants pursued included positions in fields that were dominated by people of the opposite gender, for example females working in the information technology sector. Some participants did take note of the fact that they noticed that gender was an issue in the library sector. A male participant, for example, commented on the fact that librarianship is a female-dominated profession and a female participant stated that she was more cognizant of the fact that she was

the only female employee on information technology teams than of the fact that she was the only team member with a library and information science background. On most of the topics discussed in the interview, such as making career decisions based on the need to support one's family or to pursue positions that were interesting or aligned with their interests, there was no obvious gender-based difference. Because gender did not seem to be the main concern expressed by participants in this study, it was not extensively explored at the theoretical coding level. This does not mean that this study discounts gender as a factor in career success, it simply means that this was a variable that proved to be outside of the scope of this study because it did not assist in the identification of a main concern or core variable.

6.8.5   Career Success Predictors

A large body of research has been dedicated to identifying the factors that contribute to career success, and these factors have included employee demographics, human capital, motivation, influence, personal characteristics, and mentorship to name a few (see for example, Wayne, Liden, Kraimer & Graf, 1999; Li, You, Lin & Chen, 2013; Stamm & Buddeberg-Fischer, 2011; Ng, Eby, Sorensen & Feldman, 2005).

Several theoretical frameworks have been developed to predict and explain career success. One of these is human capital theory. This theory asserts that human capital, which includes education (both formal and informal) and work experience, is positively related to career success and that over the course of one's career, people gain social capital related to their job or occupation (Schulz & Maas, 2010; Ng, Eby,

Sorensen & Feldman, 2005). People, therefore, bring a certain amount of social capital to the job and over the course of gaining experience, their human capital increases (Wiggins & Bowman, 2000).

How one achieved one's professional goals was a major topic of the interviews completed in this study. Participants described the strategies that they undertook to find their way and achieve their definition of success. Participants in general did seem to support the idea that increasing one's human capital was a way to achieve greater levels of professional success – whether they defined that success as advancing to levels of greater responsibility within an organization or industry sector or being more competitive in applying for positions in general, whether those positions represented vertical or lateral moves. Most emphasized learning and skill development as part of their success strategies.

Several researchers have suggested that a feature of the modern career is the tendency for individuals to see themselves as the "owners and agents of their own career trajectories" (Sammarra, Profili & Innocenti, 2013, p. 2492) and to actively engage in independent career planning and goal setting rather than relying on their employing organizations to plan for their future advancement (De Vos, De Cloppeleer & Dewilde, 2009).

Participants in this study strongly emphasized the need for individuals to take independent steps in order to achieve their professional goals. These steps included discovering and developing their skillsets, building networks of contacts and mentors, and learning how to communicate their value and skills to others. Their

comments agreed with the idea that the process of finding one's professional path is a process that individuals must undertake themselves because it is not done for them either by their library programs or by employers. Many participants described having to figure out this process on their own. Even those who found mentors tended to find those mentors independently rather than being mentored through a formal program either in school or in the workplace.

6.9   Conclusion

This chapter discussed the data that emerged in this study in relation to several existing bodies of literature. The first section described the link between this study and research on career narratives and constructivism. The second section explored career literature, particularly research on the definition of a career, career success, personal lives and careers, gender and careers, and career success predictors. The third section examined the concepts of multiple identities, identity salience, commitment, and the manifestation of identities from identity research. The fourth section described several recent studies that explored different aspects of LIS professional identity. These topics do not represent the full range of literature available on these topics in the sociology, psychology, library and information science (LIS) and management literature, but an exhaustive review of this literature was not the objective of this chapter. Instead, the above mentioned topics were selected because of their relationship to the data found in this study in the pursuit of identifying a main concern and substantive theory based on the professional identity experiences of LIS graduates in non-library roles.

Chapter 7: Conclusions

7.1   Introduction

This concluding chapter summarizes the methodological choices made in this project which are fully described in previous chapters of this thesis. This is followed by a section which re-articulates the substantive theory which was discovered through the data analysis conducted in this research project. Next, the implications of this study for both the practitioner and research communities are discussed. This is followed by sections on limitations of the present study and future research directions.

7.2   Research Question and Methodology

This research project addressed the research question of how library and information science (LIS) graduates working outside of libraries experienced professional identity utilizing the Glaserian Grounded Theory methodology. The participants in this study were graduates of Master's programs in library and information science working outside of libraries. Their work included roles in information management, policy analysis, taxonomy and search tool development, library software development and sales, and independent consultancy or information entrepreneurship. Participants were recruited from North America and were interviewed either in person or using a video chat tool. The data collection technique employed in this project is semi-structured interviews. The semi-structured interviews included three sections. The first section of the interview asked

participants to describe their career experiences from their decision to attend library school to the present. Participants weren't interrupted during this narrative. The second section of the interview consisted follow-up questions in response to comments that participants made during the first section. The final section of the interview included questions developed in the interview guide to address topics such as educational experiences, communities, and how they identify themselves.

7.3   Substantive Theory

The objective of this study was to produce a theory which would capture the professional identity experiences of LIS graduates in non-library roles. The theory produced was labelled the theory of Personalizing Professionalism. According to this theory, individuals possess two identities which interact with each other throughout one's career. The first is an internal appraisal of self which represents an individual's assessment of who they "really" are as a professional. The second is an externally expressed identity, which represents who that individual presents him or herself to be. The internal appraisal of self is developed as a result of several processes and concepts including socialization into the profession, perceptions of the profession, and an understanding of one's motivations and interests. The externally expressed identity represents the ways in which individuals present themselves to others in order to achieve professional or personal roles. These expressions include the labels that are used when introducing oneself to others and the strategies that one develops to find one's path within the profession. Interactions with others impact individuals' internal appraisal of self and externally expressed identity and represent an area of potential conflict when others' views of how a professional identity should

be expressed do not match the identity that one has developed for themselves or is displaying to others. There are multiple strategies that can be undertaken to respond to a perceived conflict between these two identities which can be grouped into three categories: (1) Assimilation, in which participants change themselves in order to fit into the communities with whom they wish to engage, (2) influencing or attempting to change the perceptions or beliefs of the group, and (3) withdrawal, in which individuals elect only to associate with communities of likeminded individuals and to avoid those who do not share their perceptions of the profession.

7.4   Theory Evaluation Criteria

As introduced in "Chapter 2: Methodology", there are several quality criteria that are particular to the Grounded Theory methodology. The first of these is fit, or the ability of theories to address the situations examined (Cooney, 2011). A second is understandability, or the ability for people concerned with the theoretical area to easily understand the theory (Cutcliffe, 2005; Glaser & Strauss, 1967). Preliminary evidence suggests that these criteria have been met. The 2016 Canadian Library Association (CLA) Forum included a panel on the future of librarianship which included an LIS graduate in a non-library role whose professional experiences and concerns fit with those of participants in this study. This suggests that the criterion of fit has been achieved. In addition, the topic of emerging and non-traditional roles and the value of LIS graduates has been the subject of several calls for papers in LIS journals in 2016. This suggests that the topic is timely and relevant to both the practitioner and academic communities. In some respects, full evaluation of the theory developed in this study will not be completed until several follow-up studies

have been completed which attempt to clarify elements of the theory or to apply the theory to different populations.

7.5   Insights and Further Questions

This research project asked a very broad question: "How do library and information science (LIS) graduates in non-library roles experience professional identity?" The decision to ask this very high level question was taken deliberately in an attempt to discover what aspects of professional identity constituted participants' main concern, rather than narrowing in on certain aspects of professional identity such as professional values or self-labelling which, although they would certainly have yielded interesting data, may not have provided a full idea of participants' experiences. Asking a broad question resulted in the production of a broad answer – a theory that captures many aspects of experience. This theory, which was created through an examination of qualitative data, provides some important insights into the experiences and motivations of participants in the development and expression of their professional identity. These insights, rather than serving as the final word on the experience of this population, open the door to further questions and avenues of inquiry that could be of interest to researchers and practitioners both inside and outside of the library and information science domain.

7.5.1 Impact of a Personalized Professional Identity Based on Personal Motivations and Interests

The first of these insights is that individuals develop a personalized professional identity that is unique to their experiences, values, interests, and motivations. They select the aspects of the profession that appeal the most to them and find ways to apply those aspects of the profession – including ethics, knowledge, and practices – to their work roles. The ways in which they practice as a professional may vary. They may work in a very 'traditional' way for their profession in a non-traditional environment (transferring an existing way of working into a new setting and demonstrating the transferability of their skillset), they may work in a 'non-traditional' way in a 'non-traditional' environment (creating new opportunities or new types of roles for the profession), or they may work in 'non-traditional' ways in 'traditional' environments (pushing the boundaries of the traditional definition of the professional practice). This study focused on the experiences of people in the first two categories, leaving an opportunity to explore the third scenario to determine if the professional identity experiences of innovators, explorers, and non-conformists in traditional work settings reflect the same type of personalization of professionalism experiences as those working in non-traditional settings.

A second key question that was raised by the discovery that individuals develop a personalized, internal appraisal of self is that of how the elements that become integrated into that sense of self blend together and are given prominence. Several participants in this study identified a key, driving motivation that shaped their professional identity. For some, this central motivation was linked to the values of librarianship, leading them to identify as a librarian even if their definition of what

it means to be a librarian is personalized. How can librarianship as a profession be linked to the individual values and motivations of individuals either as a means of recruitment or retention without losing a sense of coherence or shifting to far from the values that have driven its evolution over time? Do all practitioners of librarianship need to embrace all professional values and drivers in order to be considered part of the profession? Certainly, we have seen that even within traditional work settings such as public, academic, and school libraries, practitioners do not need to develop the same sets of professional knowledge and practice in order to be considered library professionals. The skillsets and practices of cataloguers in an academic library are different from those of a children's programming specialist in a public library, but both are vital to the function of their organization's operations. Perhaps there is room within the professional framework for motivational interest or ethics streams (for example, a stream that focuses on community development and democratization, a stream that focuses on education and learning, a stream that focuses on information ecosystems and access to information, etc.) as well as on technical streams or streams that prepare graduates for work in particular types of work roles such as public libraries, records management, or knowledge management.

The participants in this study described their decisions to enroll in library and information science programs. Some participants described watershed moments in which a single lecture or key conversation with a trusted adviser opened their eyes to the potential of librarianship as a viable career options. How can those who seek to recruit new entrants into the library and information science profession create these moments in which individuals realize that librarianship may be a career that allows

them to realize their professional ambitions or act toward the fulfillment of their key motivations? How can the socialization processes that professionals participate in throughout their careers continue to connect to their motivations and interests? This study showed that participants will self-select their learning opportunities and professional activities in order to achieve their own career goals by either specializing or broadening their skillsets. Are there lessons that LIS educators and professional associations can glean from these decisions? Certainly, an analysis of the choices that professionals are making in terms of their professional development based on their perceptions of which courses are going to be most beneficial for certain types of career outcomes can be used by these groups to shape curricula or professional development opportunity offerings.

There are also potential insights for employers in this research as well. When LIS students graduate and enter the workforce, how can they find ways to connect different types of work to their motivations and see the potential for applying their professional ethics, knowledge, and practices in new and innovative ways? What can employers do to better understand what motivates employees and appeals to their professional identities. The body of knowledge on motivation and employee retention was not consulted in this study because the focus on this research was the employee's perspective rather than the employers' perspective. This is a possible area of future work. Understanding that the professional identity that is outwardly exhibited may not be identical to the professional identity that is internally felt may have an impact on employers' strategies for employee recruitment, motivation, and retention.

7.5.2   Impact of a Personalized Professional Identity on Group Interactions

Interactions with others were a major component of the theory that emerged in this project in terms of both the format of one's internal appraisal of self and their externally expressed identity. Interactions with others helped to shape the way that an individual's "internal appraisal of self" developed. Participants described being influenced by role models such as formal and informal mentors. Exposure to ideas and models gave participants ideas about how to engage in their professional practice as well as offering them opportunities for jobs or career advancement which impacted the experiences that they were able to explore over the course of their careers. Without these interactions, participants' internal appraisals of self might have developed differently. The importance of mentorships and career placements have been explored in the LIS literature (Lacy & Copeland, 2013; Library of Congress, 2011; Hall, 2009; Winston & Dunkley, 2002; Johnson, 2002), but the impact of mentorship and practicum or placement opportunities in "non-library" or "non-traditional" work environments have not been studied, nor has the impact of these types of learning opportunities on professional identity development.

The other side of the professional identity experience articulated by participants was the 'externally expressed identity'. This identity was directly shaped by participants' perceptions of how their presentation of themselves as a professional would impact their interactions with others. Participants choices on how to label themselves when speaking to or working with others was impacted on how they believed others would react to them based on the use of a given professional label. In some cases, participants elected to use a label that did not

necessarily reflect the best fit for them in terms of their own perceptions of themselves based on either the befits that they believed using that label would help them obtain or the conflicts the use of that label would help them avoid. These decisions concerning when to use particular labels and when to embrace or avoid conflict with others could be explored further in subsequent projects. In addition to understanding how participants assess which labels to use, some exploration on the impact of the use of different labels could be undertaken. Are participants correct in their assessments of what types of responses different labels will elicit? Are perceptions of the stereotypes and status or power dynamics associated with different labels shared? Are there cultural differences in these dynamics that could be better understood? Finally, what is the impact for the library profession of LIS practitioners choose either to use or not to use the title of librarian? Is the impact different when those conversations are taking place between LIS graduates and other LIS graduates or between LIS graduates and other types of professionals?

Another observation that helped to shape the theory of personalizing professionalism that was developed through this study was that participants are actively choosing their professional communities from both inside and outside of their education-based professional group. This observation could be further expanded in follow-up studies concerning rationale behind individuals' decisions to join certain groups as well as the ways in which they choose to interact with or limit interactions with given professional groups. The research on team and group dynamics was not explored in this study, but is a possible area for future extensions. The literature on identity and groups focused on the identification of "in-groups" and "out-groups", with an emphasis on the ways in which individuals separate

themselves from "out-groups". Key questions that were not emphasized in the research explored during this study were, how, when, and why people differentiate themselves from their "in-groups". Participants in this study reflected a degree of individualism in their professional identity development and definitions of the profession, with some overtly rejecting the assertion that members of a professional community need to adhere to certain ways of being a professional. This theory suggests that just because an individual chooses to identify with and participate in a professional community does not mean that their professional identity or their perception of the profession is identical to that of other community members. What are the impacts of these differences both for individual community members and for the community as a whole? Is there a way to measure the degree of variance in professional perceptions in the community and what is the significance and result of that variance?

7.6   Implications

Even in its present form, both as a new theory of professional identity experiences and taken only as a qualitative account of the experiences of participants this research project has implications for practitioner and academic communities both inside and outside of the Library and Information Science (LIS) discipline. The first part of this section will explore the potential implications for practitioners. The second part will address the implications for researchers.

7.6.1   Implications for Practitioners

This study sought to understand the experiences of LIS graduates working outside of library settings. Any insights on this experience are of potential use to the LIS practitioner community. For LIS educators and program administrators, this study could have implications in terms of program recruitment and content because of the increased emphasis that LIS programs are placing on the transferability of the degree or the ability for graduates to obtain jobs beyond the library world.

LIS educators could focus specifically on certain data clusters or codes that were described in "Chapter 4: Study Participants", for example, drawing on examples found under the areas of types of work obtained by LIS graduates or most valuable skills according to people who had made the transition into a non-library work role. This information could be used to ensure that these skills are covered in programs to prepare students for post-graduation work opportunities. The importance that many participants in this study placed on mentors suggests the importance of developing new school sponsored mentorship programs that introduce students to mentors with a wide variety of work experiences inside and outside of libraries. Students may also be interested in these results as they select their LIS electives to ensure that they are covering the types of skills that have been identified as useful.

Those interested in the recruitment of students into LIS programs could also look at the larger themes that emerged in the theory of Personalizing Professionalism and build these into their program marketing materials. Linking librarianship with some of the underlying motivations and interests of potential students may be a

powerful way of attracting applicants. For example, potential students may care deeply about issues such as social justice and community development, but may not have seen the connection between librarianship and these values because their own experiences with libraries as children and young adults may have focused on the library's collection rather than the library's role or values.

Library educators, researchers and associations may be interested in the identity implications of this study. Many participants described potential or actual conflicts when trying to place themselves within the LIS community. Some took on evangelical roles promoting new ways to be a librarian or new opportunities for LIS graduates, but others chose to avoid potential rejection by "real librarians" working in libraries and limited their engagement with this community. If voices that could be bringing new ideas to librarianship feel that they are being excluded because of the prevailing definition of what it means to be a librarian or a LIS professional, then there could be negative consequences for the profession in terms of loss of innovations and ideas.

Another group that might be interested in the implications of this study are managers and human resources specialists both inside and outside of the library world. The theory of Personalizing Professionalism discusses the reasons behind and actions undertaken to achieve personalized career goals. This theory may inspire these individuals to rethink aspects of work such as compensation packages and learning opportunities in ways that could promote employee retention.

7.6.2   Implications for Researchers

Because the goal of this study was to conceptualize the main concern of the substantive population, the theory that was produced goes beyond the specific experiences of individual participants to a theory which can be applied across people, place, and time. This study involved data that touched on a number of topics which have been explored across a variety of disciplines including psychology, sociology, management, human resource management, and the professional literature of various groups such as librarians, teachers, and nurses. "Chapter 6: Integrating the Literature" provided a description of the connections that could be made between this study and research conducted on the topics of constructivism, careers, and identity.

7.7   Recommendations Arising from this Theory

There are several aspects of this theory that may be of particular significant to those concerned with employment opportunities for the library and information science (LIS) profession including LIS program administrators seeking to recruit students and prepare those students for careers after graduation, LIS professional associations, LIS professionals, and employers, both inside and outside of library settings, hoping to recruit, motivate, and retrain employees. The following sections outline several key observations that were made in the development of this theory along with ways in which the stakeholders listed above could apply some of the observations gleaned from this study's participants' experiences.

7.7.1 Professional Identity is Malleable

Professional identities evolve over time as a result of a variety of factors such as learning or socialization activities, job experiences, and interactions with others. A single event may be sufficient to dramatically alter an individual's perception of their profession and their own professional identity. These events can be cognitive, observational, or experiential in nature. An example of a cognitive event would be the integration of new beliefs or theories about the profession based on a lecture or training session. Several participants pointed to highly influential lectures during their graduate studies that impacted their view of the profession. Observational events may include changing perspectives on the profession based on what is observed in the field. Perceptions of what constituted a "traditional" versus a "non-traditional" role for LIS graduates were changed by meeting other LIS graduates working in roles that they had formerly considered non-traditional or observing the number of graduates employed in these types of roles. The experience of performing professional work is the third way in which participants' views of their profession and professional identity change. They gather new skills and learn ways of performing tasks which may or may not align with the theoretical perspectives they were presented with during their studies. This means that professionals may re-envision their professional identities and work roles at any point in their careers.

7.7.2 Recommendations – Professional Identity is Malleable

The malleability of professional identity means that individuals' sense of themselves as a professional can change over time and be influenced by professional development activities and work experiences. If members of the LIS or any other

professional communities wish to influence the professional identities of their members, then they should make efforts to expose them to new ways of thinking about their profession, their work organization, or their skills. These exposure opportunities could include formal training such as participation in conferences or classes or special assignments such as working on new projects. The malleability of professional identity also suggests that individuals may make a successful switch to a new way of working or an entirely new career at any point during their professional lives. LIS educators, employers and associations may take several actions in response to this finding, in particular:

- Create opportunities for professional development for individuals of all ages or stages of their careers

- Provide opportunities for people to discuss how new trends and developments may impact their professional identities

- Expose LIS students to different theories and models of librarianship

- Include lessons on the changes in the theory and practice of librarianship over time in LIS education to support student perceptions that the profession has evolved in response to changes in information resources and information needs as a way of encouraging further innovation and openness to change

7.7.3   Perceptions of the Profession are Personalized

There is no universal textbook definition of the profession that is accepted by all practitioners. Each individual develops their own definition of the profession which combines those theoretical and philosophical aspects of the profession which appeal most strongly to them. The appeal is based on the relationship between these theoretical aspects of the profession and the individual's practical experiences. These personalized definitions of the profession are used both to explain the complexities of their work experience and to justify their professional decisions. This means that there may be discrepancies between people's definitions of the profession which may impact how they choose to engage in professional practice. This also means that multiple ways of being a "librarian" could be accepted by the community provided that the definitions that are provided to new and established practitioners are not exclusionary or restrictive.

7.7.4   Recommendations – Perceptions of the Profession are Personalized

This finding suggests that the LIS profession should ensure that it creates a definition of librarianship that is inclusive enough to capture the range of ways of people a professional that are currently being practiced by LIS graduates. This inclusiveness would not only benefit LIS graduates in non-traditional roles, but also LIS graduates working in libraries hoping to introduce innovative practices to their workplace or the larger profession. The following recommendations may help to achieve this objective:

- Do not focus exclusively on the library-as-space paradigm of librarianship, instead focus on the underlying values, practices and knowledge of the profession that can be applied across settings.

- Either hire faculty with a variety of professional experiences or seek these professionals as guest speakers in classes

- Conference planning committees should try to include speakers with a variety of professional backgrounds or whose research may be applicable to a range of LIS practitioners.

- Promote definitions of the profession which include LIS graduates working in a range of roles outside of library settings.

7.7.5 Professional Identity is Influenced by Others both Inside and Outside of the Profession

A wide range of actors influence the development of professional identity. These actors include people who are both inside and outside of participant's profession. In fact, actors outside of the profession may serve as more substantial influencers of an LIS graduate's career path and professional identity development than those within the profession. These "others" represent diverse groups of people with whom one interacts in personal and professional capacities.

One such group is one's family, which can sometimes be divided between the family into which one was born (parents, grandparents, siblings, etc.) and the family

that one creates (spouse and children). Families provide expectations, responsibilities, and models in relation to work life. Parents may set expectations for their children's success, suggesting the types of jobs or careers that they should pursue. In some cases children agree with these assessments and in some cases they do not. Responsibilities to one's family (actual, perceived or anticipated) impact many aspects on one's work life. Participants in this study indicated that the decision of where to look for work was influenced by family. Many, including both men and women, reported moving in order to be close to family or to be in a city where their spouses could find work. Family considerations also impacted participants' perceptions of work-life balance. Participants with children sometimes changed jobs or careers in which long work hours were expected in order to spend more time with their families. The need to support a family prompted several participants to seek out jobs with higher salaries or more generous benefits. Family members also provided participants with professional models. Several participants reported learning about how to be a professional by observing their parents' work habits.

Another group of individuals who were significant to participants' professional lives were employment gatekeepers such as hiring managers or consulting clients. Participants need to find ways to convince this group that they are the right person to fill a job vacancy or that their approach to solving a work problem is viable. An individual's ability to interact with this group will have a major impact on their ability to achieve their career objectives.

The third group of influences were participants' professional communities. This group includes people with similar concerns and interests to whom individuals

turn for support and guidance. This community may or may not include people with the same educational background. Connections could come in the form of informal networks, professional associations, or mentorships. The final group of "others" with whom individuals interact is their broader network of friends, acquaintances, and associates. These are the people that one encounters in social situations who may open a conversation with the question "What do you do for a living?"

The impact of non-library professionals was particularly important in participants' initial decisions to attend library school. A number of the participants in this study worked in libraries in either page, paraprofessional or internship positions prior to applying to a master's program in library and information science. These work experiences were sometimes but not always sufficient to convince participants to consider librarianship as a career, just as early exposure to libraries wasn't sufficient to build a desire to work in libraries. For the majority of participants, the decision to apply came as a result of receiving advice to do so from a trusted friend or supervisor. Some of these advisors were connected to librarianship in that they were either practicing librarians or were considering applying to the program themselves. Expanding understanding of the work that LIS graduates can do both inside and outside of library settings may have an impact on future student recruitment.

7.7.6   *Recommendations – Professional Identity is Influenced by Others Both Inside and Outside the Profession*

This finding suggests that professions need to think about the attitudes and actions of a wide range of actors. These actors may influence the likelihood of

individuals to enter the profession and the willingness of members of the profession not only to stay with that profession but also to promote it to others. Recommendations that may support the recruitment and retention of individuals into the LIS profession include:

- Continue efforts to promote the value of librarianship and the LIS degree as broadly as possible

- Encourage LIS students to find mentors from a variety of fields

- Recruit people from a variety of professional backgrounds to LIS program advisory boards

- Consider the role of family life in attempting to recruit and retain employees

7.7.7   Professionals May Feel Closer Connections to Professionals from Other Disciplines than Their Own Discipline

Some members of the LIS profession may feel closer professional alignment with individuals in other professions than they do with members of their own profession because of shared values or shared philosophies of work. This may mean that individual practitioners may gravitate toward outward facing networks or alliances rather than internal ones because they feel that these communities better reflect their self-perceptions and professional goals. This is reinforced by divisions that exist within the profession. The library profession divides itself based on the work setting, with distinct elective courses, associations, and professional literature for the

academic, public, school and special libraries settings. The profession also divides itself based on the type of work that is performed by a profession, again having specialized communities and bodies of knowledge based on areas of specialization such as acquisitions, cataloguing, reference, information literacy instruction, and library management. An individual who is engaged in taxonomy development in a corporate setting may therefore feel closer professional kinship to someone working in computational linguistics than with a children's services librarian in a public library. The heterogeneity of the profession supports personalized perceptions of the profession and the development of cross-professional networks and communities of practice.

7.7.8   Recommendations – Professionals May Feel Closer Connections to Professionals from Other Disciplines than Their Own Discipline

This finding indicates that the LIS profession should consider its relationship with other professions. These relationships could lead to new innovations and partnerships that could benefit librarianship as well as providing opportunities for growth and support for individual practitioners. Recommendations from this finding include:

- Encourage partnerships and collaborations between LIS professionals and professionals from other disciplines

- Invite a variety of organizations from different sectors to post job advertisement on LIS job boards and to participate in LIS program job fairs

- Invite LIS graduates who have engaged in non-traditional roles to speak to LIS students or at LIS conferences and professional development events

- Provide opportunities for LIS students or practitioners to participate on cross-disciplinary projects in either research or professional settings

7.7.9   Career Objectives are Personalized and Change Over the Course of One's Career

Primary career goals will differ over an individual's career lifetime. At some points in one's life, certain goals will dominate. For example, participants reported being willing to accept lower levels of salary early in their careers before they had children and as their families grew they became more concerned with salary and benefits. Individuals were less likely to pursue career goals based on the perceptions of others as they progressed in their careers either because of greater self-confidence, the achievement of a degree of financial security, or a combination of these or other factors. The more confident an individual was in who they were and what they could contribute, the more likely they seemed to base success on their own appraisals of satisfaction and to express a professional identity without concern over the responses they might receive from others. This confidence did seem to increase with age as some participants stated that they were concerned with what others would think of them in the early years of their careers, but that this concern faded over time as they gained work experience.

7.7.10   Recommendations – Career Objectives are Personalized and Change Over the Course of One's Career

This finding suggests that one cannot take for granted what factors another individual will consider an important indicator of professional success. Understanding that people may define success differently is important to those who seek to recruit and retain members of a profession. Recommendations arising from this finding include:

- Provide various examples of professional role models so that LIS students can the range of possibly ways to be successful as an LIS professional

- Consider different types of incentives to employees such as flexible work schedules, the ability to work from home, more or fewer travel assignments, and opportunities for professional development and learning

- Provide mid-career and late-career training and certification opportunities as individuals may decide to change professional directions at any point in their career

7.7.11   Continuous Learning Is Seen as a Key Career Success Strategy

Whether participants were attempting to launch their career, making a transition into a different type of role, or developing strategies to maintain their current employment status, they all viewed the acquisition of new skills and knowledge as essential. Engaging in continuous learning activities was viewed as a

way of making oneself more competitive in the job market. No one type of learning was preferred by all participants, and most engaged in a range of strategies throughout their careers. Learning activities included the pursuit of additional degrees and certificates, participating in conferences, seeking out formal or informal mentors, reading professional literature, and engaging in new projects within the workplace that would expose them to new processes and technologies. Openness to learning and developing new skills was seen as so important by some as to be incorporated into their professional identity as a characteristic of library and information science (LIS) professionals. There was a perception among participants that finding an employer who would support formal learning was a challenge. The provision of learning opportunities for employees was logically tied to the availability of resources, but the more important factor in determining whether training opportunities would be provided for staff was management attitudes toward learning and employee development. Several participants relayed the experience of working in organizations that valued learning and training and provided employees with opportunities to learn new skills even though they did not have large budgets while others reported experiences of organizations that were unwilling to allow employees to dedicate work time to professional development.

7.7.12   Recommendations – Continuous Learning Is Seen as a Key Career Success Strategy

Because learning and professional development were seen as vital in developing career competencies which can allow LIS professionals to gain positions and to

succeed in their work roles ensuring that these services are available. The following recommendations may help them to optimize these programs:

- Provide opportunities for continuous learning in different formats

- Solicit ideas for professional development sessions from LIS professionals in a range of professional roles

- Recognize a range of continuous learning opportunities beyond traditional classroom or group training courses such as webinars or self-directed online courses, reading professional journals, participating in new assignments or special projects, and even volunteering with professional organizations.

- LIS professionals should reflect on their skills and competencies and consider how they may be applied to bring value to a range of tasks and teams, both inside and outside of libraries. This reflection will help to identify either areas of strength which can be further augmented or gaps in knowledge and skills which may be filled by undertaking training or learning activities.

- Professional development opportunities should be made available to professionals at all stages of their career. Collaborations between senior and new professionals may be a particularly helpful way to exchange the wisdom gained through experience and new ideas which are being developed through library schools.

7.8   Limitations

This section describes the limitations of the present study. These limitations include factors that apply generally to qualitative research and to the Grounded Theory methodology in particular. In addition, several potential methodological questions relating to the design of this study are discussed.

As a qualitative Grounded Theory study this project did not attempt to capture a representative sample or achieve statistically significant results. The total number of LIS graduates employed in non-library roles was not calculated, so the number of participants required to obtain a representative sample of this population could not be established. A challenge in identifying this population is its transitory nature. People change roles, so individuals may enter and leave library and non-library roles many times throughout their careers. The sample is not statistically representative of the larger group of all individuals who complete ALA-accredited master's degrees in library and information science and work in non-library roles. This means that claims of generalizability cannot be made of the results of this study. The theory developed in this study attempts to capture participant experiences at a conceptual level so that it may be transferable to other contexts. Whether or not this theory will prove transferable will need to be established through future studies involving other populations.

The way that the research question was articulated may have impacted which participants agreed to participate in this study. The study sought participants working in non-library roles and did not make any suggestions that a certain type of

role was preferred. All of the participants in the study expressed satisfaction with their current work role. A few potential participants were contacted for this study who refused to participate because they were not willing to participate because of their current career status. One refused to participant because of being between work contracts and another refused because she was actively attempting to move from a non-library role to a library work role. This suggests that people who are in a state of professional transition may not feel as comfortable discussing their professional identities as those who are feeling professionally established or on track. This suggests that there is a population that was not reached: those who feel that their MLIS education did not lead to a successful career either in library or non-library roles. This could include those who remain unemployed after graduation and those who have had to take non-preferred work roles for financial reasons.

The use of snowball sampling was an issue of potential concern for the researcher. In snowball sampling, participants are identified through recommendations of existing participants. The possibility that people would recommend others with similar attitudes was anticipated. To counteract this possibility, the researcher started by eliciting recommended participants from multiple informants to ensure that several social networks were tapped for participants. The participants identified through snowball or referral sampling expressed independent views of the profession and had varied career experiences. With a qualitative study using the semi-structured interview technique it is not possible to capture the full range of experiences and a representative sample was not sought. Future studies could be conducted that target participants working in

different types of work roles or have had different career patterns than the ones experienced by the participants in this study.

Another limitation of this study is its scope. This is a Grounded Theory study and its goal is to generate a theory. Sampling stopped when saturation of the categories that emerged from the data occurred. The data that were collected in this study were very rich and offer many potential avenues for future research work and the possibility of many other theories which may be broader or narrower in scope than the one which was described in this thesis. In order to manage the scope of this project, a single main concern of participants was identified and although data was not ignored, data that did not fit within the categories which were related to the main theme were not deeply explored. As a result, this study serves as a starting point for researcher rather than as an end-point. Any aspect of the theory that was described in this thesis could be further explored and expanded in a follow-up research project. These potential future research topics are discussed in the "Future Research Directions" section of this chapter.

7.9   Future Research Directions

As a Grounded Theory study the objective of this project was to produce a theory which would capture at a conceptual level how participants seek to resolve their main concern. Glaser and Strauss identified two types of theories that could be generated through a Grounded Theory project: substantive theories and formal theories, which they defined as follows:

By substantive theory, we mean that developed for a substantive, or empirical, area of sociological inquiry, such as patient care, race relations, professional education, delinquency, or research organizations. By formal theory, we mean that developed for a formal, or conceptual, area of sociological inquiry, such as stigma, deviant behavior, formal organization, socialization, status congruency, authority and power, reward systems, or social mobility (Glaser & Strauss, 1967, p. 32)

Substantive theories may be developed into formal theories through further studies:

Substantive theory in turn helps to generate new grounded formal theories and to reformulate previously established ones. Thus it becomes a strategic link in the formulation and development of formal theory based on data (Glaser & Strauss, 1967, p. 34)

Future research emanating from this study could therefore take two directions. First, future studies may strive to create related substantive theories that elaborate this substantive theory. These studies may further explore any of the components of the theory. For example, tests of the dimensions of career goals may be developed. Also, various demographic or individual difference indicators such as self-efficacy, self-esteem or perceived locus of control could be explored. Gender was a key variable for many studies on career success that was not strongly elaborated here. Whether the fact that participants in this study completed their education in a female-dominated domain could have impacted perceptions of success after graduation could be the subject of a future research project. A range of other methodologies may be utilized to explore components of the substantive theory created through this study.

Second, future studies may be conducted which contribute to the creation of a formal theory based on the "Theory of Personalizing Professionalism" developed

through this project. This initial theory may be expanded through its testing with

other types of occupational groups. For example, a similar research study could be

conducted on professions such as teachers, nurses, or engineers which like

librarianship have often been associated with particular employment settings or types

of work. These types of studies will help to test the transferability of the results of

this project.

Therefore, there are several forms of future research work that may follow

this project. Work can be done to elaborate any of the sub-sections of the model of

identity produced in this theory. Any of the categories found in this study could be

further elaborated or tested using other methodologies. In addition, the methodology

applied in this study could be applied to other populations, for example exploring the

professional identity experiences of other types of professionals or people who are

currently unemployed.

7.10   Researcher Reflections

This project was a learning experience on a number of levels. This project

marked an important step in my socialization process as a researcher, it taught me

about the Grounded Theory methodology, and about theoretical frameworks and

epistemological biases.

A doctoral degree is the first step in the socialization process for academic

researchers. I entered the doctoral program from a practitioner background and I

decided to pursue a PhD because I wanted to conduct research and to build my skills

as a researcher. These objectives motivated me to make a conscious effort to view my data from a researcher perspective by exploring the theoretical implications of the data rather than looking only for the possible impact on or recommendations for practitioners. I noticed throughout the process of analyzing the data that both of these perspectives were possible and that researcher and practitioner views and interpretations of the data and emerging theories could be found at all phases of the study. Like some of my participants I found that I would vary my descriptions of the study and its potential implications of my theory depending on my audience.

The process of selecting and employing the Grounded Theory methodology was also an enlightening experience. On the most basic level, the process of exploring methodologies clarified the difference between a methodology and a data collection technique. Understanding methodologies requires researchers to carefully consider their epistemological preferences and clarify the research question. I had never conducted a Grounded Theory study before so I needed to understand the foundations and procedures associated with this approach to exploring a research question. I learned about this methodology by reading methodology books and articles which had used the methodology, talking to students and graduates in my doctoral program who had used the Grounded Theory methodology, and attending two workshops on Grounded Theory, one of which was offered by a research hospital and the other of which was offered by the Grounded Theory Institute and led by Dr. Barney Glaser. The combination of these resources and the experience of conducting a Grounded Theory study meant that my understanding of the methodology grew over the course of the study. The learning through experience, reading, and conversations with others that occurred throughout this research project

have allowed me to build my data collection and analysis skills in ways that would allow me to conduct Grounded Theory studies – as well as studies using other types of methodologies – more efficiently and effectively in the future.

In selecting the Grounded Theory methodology I had to reflect on my own potential biases stemming from either my professional experiences or research literature to which I had been exposed in order to allow for theoretical sensitivity. Some of the advice included in the Grounded Theory methodology assisted in trying to avoid fixing on an existing or new theory too quickly. I found when I was analysing the data that at different points I was tempted to pursue "pet theories" based around statements by participants that appealed to me personally, but continuing to explore data and re-analysing early interview data alongside later interview data helped me to avoid allowing my own professional experiences to hijack my theory development. I am aware that I viewed all the data that I analysed in this study through the lens of my experiences, both professional and academic, and that my lens impacted how I viewed and interpreted the data, but I have strived to produce a theory that reflects the experiences and concerns of my participants as well as possible using the tools incorporated in the Grounded Theory methodology.

7.11   Conclusion

This research project sought to use Glaserian Grounded Theory to understand how LIS graduates in non-library roles experience professional identity. This methodology allowed for the creation of a theory that moved beyond the specific circumstances of this very specific target population to one that could be applied

more generally, independent of a particular context. That is the theory of Personalizing Professionalism. Both the data gathered and the theory developed through this study have potential implications for practitioner and research communities within and outside of the library and information science world. Because this is a theory, it opens the door to a range of future research projects which can assess either its specific components or its generalizability to other populations.

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Appendix A: Interview Guide

The following questions were used for the initial interviews. As the semi-structured interview technique was employed, question order varied. Note that this is an indicative list only.

QUESTION	PURPOSE
CAREER PATH QUESTIONS	

1. Tell me about your current job?
 	
Probing Questions:
   a) What types of tasks do you perform?
   b) What skills does this job require?
   c) What industry sector is this job in?
	This question is meant to be an icebreaker

2. What led you to this job?
 	
Probing Questions:
   a) Where did you see the job posting?
   b) Why did you apply for the job?
	To find out about how the non-traditional role fit in the participant's career path

3. Have you ever worked in a library?
 	
Probing Questions if Yes ...
   a) What kind of library work did you do?
   b) How long were you there?
   c) Did you enjoy the work?
   d) Why did you leave?
   e) Would you ever want to work in a library again? Why? Why not?
 	
Probing Questions if No ...
   a) Did you apply for library jobs?
   b) Do you ever want to work in a library? Why? Why not?
	To find out about how the non-traditional role fit in the participant's career path

COMPETENCIES QUESTIONS	

4. How did your LIS education prepare you for your current job?
 	
Probing Questions:
    a) Which library skills do you use?
    b) Which classes were the most useful to the job?
    c) What classes do you wish you'd taken given your work experience?
    d) Tell me about how you learnt how to be successful in your current role?
	To find out what competencies and/or knowledge participants identify as being transferrable

IDENTIFICATION / AFFILIATION	

5. What professional associations, networks or communities do you affiliate with?
 	
Probing Questions:
    a) Which do you find most valuable? Why?
    b) How did you get involved with these associations?
	To understand who the participant affiliates with

6. How do you describe what you do to non-librarians or people who didn't attend library school?	To understand how the participant identifies him or her self
7. How do you describe what you do to librarians or people who attended library school?	To understand how the participant identifies him or her self
8. Do you identify yourself as a librarian? Probing Questions: a) Why? Why not?	To understand how the participant identifies him or her self
WRAP-UP QUESTIONS	
9. Do you consider yourself to be in a non-traditional job for an LIS graduate?	To ask about how the participant conceptualizes their work role in relation to their LIS educational

	background
10. What advice would you give to LIS students who want to pursue jobs outside of libraries?	To capture any information that might have been missed by earlier questions
11. Is there anything else about your professional experiences that you wish I'd asked you about?	To capture any information that might have been missed by earlier questions

Appendix B: The Pilot Study

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Pilot Study

A pilot study was conducted as the first step of implementing this research project. The pilot study had three primary objectives: (1) to test the viability of the initial interview guide developed for the project, (2) to test the two different interviewing modes that may be utilized in this project, and (3) to put into practice the methodological approaches to data collection and analysis outlined in "Chapter 2: Methodology". The pilot portion of this study consisted of two semi-structured interviews, one of which was conducted using the face-to-face interview mode and the second was conducted using a distance interview mode.

Participants

Criteria for participant selection are outlined in "Chapter 2: Methodology" and were used as a basis of identifying potential participants in the pilot study. The participant who participated in the face-to-face interview was identified by the researcher and the participant who participated in the distance interview was identified by one of the researcher's supervisors. These participants were selected because they had jobs that fit into a category of "non-traditional" or "alternative" careers for LIS graduates identified in section 3.5 (both had jobs that would be classified under the "Information-Centric Jobs" category). Both of the participants were informed of the study and asked about their willingness to

participate in a face-to-face interaction with either the researcher or the supervisor and then formally invited to an interview via email by the researcher. The email included background information on the project that was approved by the QUT Ethics Committee. The participant in the face-to-face interview was provided a copy of the consent form at the interview whereas the participant in the distance interview was provided with a copy of the consent form via email prior to the interview. Both of the potential participants initially identified for the study agreed to participate.

Interview Modes

The first pilot interview was conducted face-to-face in a neutral location (outside of the researcher and participant's home and workplace). An audio recording of the interview was made using a small, audio recorder. No technical difficulties occurred with the audio recording of the face-to-face interview.

The second pilot interview was intended to take place on camera using the Blackboard Collaborate web conferencing tool. This tool allows for the capture of audio and visual recordings. The interviewer was able to connect to the audio and video functionality of the program so the participant could see the interviewer but the participant was not able to use the audio functionality due to lack of a microphone on her computer. To work around this challenge, the interviewer recorded the participant's auditory responses by using the computer microphone to record the participant's voice over the telephone. To do this, video feed on collaborate was disrupted so only audio feed was recorded.

Because of this modified approach due to technical limitations, this interview was essentially conducted over the telephone. The audio feed was recorded by the Collaborate conferencing tool, but audio quality was not as high as it would have been without the improvised telephone-based solution.

The presence of technical challenges in the second pilot interview provided the research with several "lessons learned" for future distance interviews. The first is that the participant's computer set up must be verified well in advance of the interview to determine the appropriate method of connecting. Potential challenges for using the web conferencing tool include the use of different operating systems or types of computers (Mac computer users may not be able to connect to the conference room or may need special connection instructions), the presence of a functioning microphone for audio exchange, the presence of a functioning video camera for video exchange, and a reliable high-speed internet connection to limit disruptions of audio and video feeds. In cases where one or more of these conditions cannot be met, the researcher may instead propose an interview using the telephone to prevent technical delays.

Apart from technical challenges associated with using a technology-enabled interview mode, the amount and quality of data obtained from the interviews did not seem to be significantly impacted by the interview mode. No visual aids were used to clarify questions in either of the interview conditions. Both participants provided answers that reflected an understanding of the questions that were asked. The interviewer's fluidity in asking probing questions improved from the first to the second interview which is a factor of increased comfort with

the interview guide gained from the experience of having conducted the first interview.

Transcripts

The audio recordings of the two pilot interviews were transcribed by the researcher. The researcher listened to the audio recordings multiple times to ensure their validity.

Data Analysis

After the transcription process for each interview was completed, the transcripts were analyzed by the research and memos were prepared to discuss findings. The analysis process involved a line-by-line analysis of each interview transcript on its own followed by the development of a memo describing any themes or statements that were found to be noteworthy by the researcher. The two interviews were therefore initially analyzed independently. Following this individual analysis the two interview transcripts and their memos were compared and analyzed against each other to develop a research memo outlining their commonalities and to discuss any potential themes that could potentially lead codes in the future. The three memos produced in the pilot study: (1) the analysis of pilot interview 001 (Appendix C), (2) the analysis of pilot interview 002 (Appendix D), and (3) Comparative analysis of pilot interviews 001 and 002 (Appendix E). These memos are included as appendices to this report. The data obtained from these pilot

interviews were included in the development of the theory produced in this study along with the interviews conducted during the main study.

Pilot Study Lessons Learned

The first objective of the pilot study was to test the interview guide. The questions included in the interview guide, the reasons for their inclusion and the types of responses that these questions were expected to evoke are included in the Interview Guide section above.

The interview guide functioned as expected as the pilot participants provided the types of content that were expected to each question. There was one question on the interview guide that evoked a very different response between the two participants. That was the final question which asked if there was anything that the researcher had missed or that the participant wished they had been asked. The first participant could not think of any additional questions to cover but offered to contact the researcher if he thought of any. For the second participant this question was a gateway into a fruitful discussion that had not been captured earlier in the interview. Given how successful it was in allowing the second participant to direct the conversation to a topic that was of great personal interest to her and very relevant to the project, the researcher decided to retain this question for future interviews.

Overall, the interview guide provided an effective tool for this project as its questions appeared to address the same topics for the researcher as they did for the participants, which is evidenced by the fact that the types of subjects discussed after

each question matched what was intended when the questions were designed. In addition, none of the interview questions resulted in vague or one word responses. All of the questions seemed to allow the participants to provide answers with depth. In addition, the questions were not so guiding or restrictive that the two participants responded exactly the same way to all of them. There was enough freedom in the interview format that each participant was able to focus on the aspect of their professional experiences that were most important to them.

The second objective of the pilot study was to test the two interview modes. The face-to-face interview mode did not present any difficulties. The recording device that was selected for the study worked well and produced an MP3 file that was easy to save and transcribe. The online interview mode involved some technical difficulties. These technical difficulties were beneficial as they provided the researcher with some "lessons learned" and ideas for contingency planning in the full study if similar difficulties emerge. The most important risk involved in distance interviewing modes highlighted in the literature was the increased difficulty in establishing rapport when the interviewer and participant can't see each other face to face. The online interview was supposed to allow the participant and interviewer to see each other with a video camera. The participant was briefly able to see the researcher but the researcher was never able to see the participant. Nevertheless, rapport did not seem to be a problem in either of the interview modes. In both cases the participants seemed comfortable responding to the questions and prompts provided by the researcher. The research memos included in the appendix section of this report demonstrate that the research was able to obtain rich data from both

interviews suggesting that there were no serious deficiencies in either the interview questions or mode.

I personally noticed an improvement in my interviewing style from the first interview to the second interview. I was able to transition more naturally from one question to the next and from one prompt to the next in the second interview. I also made sure to keep the audio recorder running longer on the second interview than the first. Because I stopped recording too early on the first interview I missed some potentially useful comments from the participant in the transcript.

The transcription process was much more challenging for the second interview than for the first interview due to the technical challenges with the audio for that interview. Even though the transcription process was tedious and challenging it did allow me to really dive into the interview text and helped with the analysis and memo writing steps because after listening to each sentence in the interviews multiple times I was able to recall specific words and phrases used by the participants and find them quickly in the transcripts when I was conducting comparative analysis. Because of this benefit, I will continue to transcribe my own audio recordings in the main study.

The pilot study was a useful test of the research design for this project. It confirmed that my interview guide and interview modes work and provided me with knowledge on how to "troubleshoot" on future interviews. Both of the pilot study participants expressed a willingness to recommend other potential participants for the main study, so I should be able to begin using the snowball sampling method. The pilot study

also feed my appetite for more data and inspired ideas for further areas of literature review. I expect that my interview skills will grow with experience and that my interview guide may change over the course of the main study as I start to form coding categories.

Appendix C: Research Memo - Initial Analysis of Pilot Interview 001

Five topics emerged from the first interview undertaken in this project: describing one's job, relationships with others, competencies, careers, and identification and affiliation.

Topic 1: Describing One's Job

The first topic of responses pertained to descriptions of one's job. In the case of the first interview these descriptions fell into three topics: descriptions based on one's formal job title, descriptions based on tasks, and descriptions based on other's perceptions of tasks.

In the case of this interview the interviewee described his job in three ways. The first was by using his official job title. In the context of discussing the skills that he performs on the job, the interviewee stated "I think of myself as the paperwork guy". This description is a self-assigned titled based on one of the most important tasks that he performs on the job ("I do the paperwork so the other people can do their jobs"). Thirdly, the interviewee responded to the question about how he describes what he does to LIS professionals and people outside of the LIS community by stating that he provides most people, regardless of their relationship

with the LIS community with what he termed a "flippant response" based on other's perceptions of what he does.

These three different descriptions of one's job suggest that there may be three ways in which an individual conceptualizes their job. The first is the job as it is written in the job description or organizational chart. The second is a self constructed description of the job. This is a telling description because it centres around the aspects of the job that are most significant to the individual (based on either his or her perceived level of their importance or the amount of energy that he or she devotes to them). The third description of one's job is perhaps the most interesting as it is a description based on other's perceptions of the tasks involved in that job. In the case of this individual, this description reflected the challenge that he experienced in launching a new electronic information management system.

Topic 2: Relationships with Others

The next topic that emerged in the interview was relationships with others. The groups and individuals mentioned in this interview were clients, co-workers, and other LIS professionals. It must be mentioned that other LIS professionals included both co-workers from the interviewee's organization as well as those he encounters in the broader community through his involvement in professional associations.

The first type of relationship discussed was relationships with clients. In this case, the interviewee focused on the idea of discovering ways to improve services to

clients. The interviewee was concerned about the technologies and support being offered to clients:

> The technology has improved to a point where yes, you can get pretty decent auto-classification – it's not 100%, I don't need 100% - if it's 60% I'll live with 60% - it's 60% farther than I am now. Stop treating emails are records – do something different. We're trying to manage information objects using – doing the same old ways we've be doing for about 15 years since we started talking about this ...

But he was more concerned about the impact that shifting information management responsibilities to staff has on non-IM employees' workload:

> it's the same old line that managing information is everyone's business blah, blah, blah – well no. Their job is to get to do what they're paid to do. Yes managing information is a part of it. But stop trying to get them to do your job so you can do your job more easily.

This comment about the roles of IM practitioners and IM clients relates to a second type of relationship mentioned in this interview: relationships with other LIS professionals.

Relationships with other LIS professionals can include relationships both within and outside of the workplace. Inside the workplace, the interviewee interacts with information management and information technology professionals both within and outside of his immediate workgroup. The interviewee observed differences in the attitudes and values of individuals from different professional backgrounds, particularly the difference between librarians and records managers:

> I think one of the more interesting ones is that the values of a librarian versus that of – or the focus of someone coming from a librarianship

background versus someone coming from a records management background. The traditions are so totally different. Whereas the person coming from the LIS background the focus is on access and the user. The RM background, the focus is on disposition and getting rid of the information. I find that just fascinating that bring – those two worlds collided really. Makes for facinat ... wonderful discussions really – around the meeting table.

This observation of differences in approaches to work is particularly significant taken in conjunction with the fact that the interviewee describes his role as one of serving as a translator between different groups. This imagery of bringing together multiple groups occurred several times throughout the interview. First, in describing his job, the interviewee described his projects as being divided into "two halves of my team", one half pertaining to information technology and the other to records management. Later, when describing skills, he clarified communication skills as including "translating – crossing that boundary between writing for an academic audience and writing for a professional audience". Thirdly, he discussed his ability to connect his job and work with professional associations stating "The world of work blends into the association naturally".

Topic 3: Competencies

Several of the questions included in the interview focused on the skills needed to perform a non-traditional role, the most valued skills obtained during LIS education, and how competencies were obtained, so it is not surprising that many topics were discovered relating to competencies. The five topics that emerged from this interview relating to competencies were:

(1) Sharing Knowledge / Teaching Others

(2) Types of Competencies

(3) Learning Investments

(4) Process of Learning Competencies

(5) Transferable Competencies

The fist topic, Sharing Knowledge / Teaching Others refers to the theme of teaching others and mentoring that emerged during the interview. The interviewee was particularly committee to both of these activities, having experience teaching in LIS programs and being actively involved in professional associations. The interviewee described the process of identifying skills that are needed by others in the LIS community:

> I can spend my day job thinking about things that I need or my colleagues need to do their jobs better and say well ... through my **[professional association]** network I can say I create my own PD – I create the conditions necessary to get these people to where I think they need to get to. Developing courses based on "Yes, we need this to move ahead, so let's offer something about this". Being able to bridge those two worlds so easily has been incredibly ... fruitful.

The second competency-related topic was types of competencies. The interviewee described various competencies that are required to perform his job. These competencies included skills and knowledge. The competencies included certain skills such as project management skills, but they also included knowledge of different subject areas. The interviewee described one of the key competencies involved in his job as "having a base understanding of both" the information technology and information management domains. The interviewee also expressed different levels of comfort with different skills throughout the interview. In some cases he described his skill level as being low (only having a basic understanding of

concepts, as was the case of programming languages, which he described as "it's Greek to me"), having sufficient skills to function in an area ("I mean I fumble by"), and other skills which he has cultivated over time and practice and now teaches to others.

The topic of learning investments refers to the fact the interviewee refers to the suggestion throughout the interview that the interviewee makes assessments about which training to personally undertake and to develop for others based on an assessment of the degree to which that training will have a positive impact or provide with the participant with some value. He stated "I don't think I want to invest that much effort in understanding programming to integrate that well into that group", suggesting that a time versus returns or value calculation is being made with regard to learning different sets of skills.

The process of learning skills was also discussed in the interview. The interviewee discussed several ways of learning. The first was through taking formal classes and emphasized the importance of classes that provided an "integrated view" of library skills. The second was experiential learning through co-op placements. He credited a co-op position in a special library as the turning point in his career, having entered an LIS program with the intention of pursuing a career as an academic librarian. The second type of learning described was learning through mentors or coaches. The interviewee described a co-worker's willingness to edit his work as central in developing his writing abilities and cited advice on writing techniques given by a former supervisor. Finally, the interviewee described how

tools or techniques could assist in developing competencies. For example, he stated that working with templates helped him to learn how to write succinctly.

The final competency-related topic identified from the interview was the idea of transferable competencies. Most of the skills that the interviewee described as being central to his job could be described as transferable skills. The interviewee described these as "soft technical skills" such as project management and business analysis. The interviewee also spoke about LIS core competencies and their applicability to other work settings:

> I think if you look at the core curriculum as your values as one base course, organization of information, business analysis, and information services skills, research methodology, statistics, and management. I think those are key skills regardless of what environment you're in. We've traditionally focused those courses to ... libraries – we use reference, it's cataloguing, it's ... perspectives on librarianship – but I think those core values and core skills can be applied in any environment. You're organizing information whether you're in a library, a records centre, in a data management environment – yeah, there's specific additional skills sets you need, but that's the same case in libraries.

Topic 4: Career Decisions

Another predictable broad topic to emerge from the first interview of this project was that of career decisions. In this case career decisions were broken down into five sub-topics:

(1) Early exposure to the LIS world

(2) Professional vs. non-professional (pre-LIS graduation) job experiences

(3) Career Planning

(4) Reasons for accepting jobs

(5) Exposure to non-traditional jobs

Early exposure to the LIS world: Several researchers examining socialization and professional identity have emphasized the importance of early experiences. The interviewee in this case also described the role of early exposure to library work in playing a role in his initial intention to pursue a career in academic libraries:

> Oh really, that was all I'd ever seen. Um ... really any ... unless you have a parent whose worked in a corporate environment ... um ... I don't think you get a sense that there are these specialized libraries out there or even government libraries. You grow up going to a school library, you go to a public library and you've just come from an undergrad and your MLIS program where you're using an academic library. The other types of libraries are just not something you're exposed to on a regular basis.

Professional vs. non-professional job experiences: When asked whether he had worked in a library setting before pursuing his non-library role, the interviewee described two short stints of work experience in a government library setting after completing his MLIS degree. Later in the interview, the interviewee revealed that he had several years of experience working in libraries before attending the MLIS program. His decision not to mention these experiences at the same time as the post-graduation experiences suggests that he views pre- and post-graduation experiences differently.

Career Planning: The interviewee clearly stated that he had not engaged in any career planning:

This is one of those things that I fumbled my way in to. It's been sort of ... I think of my career as fumbling my way into jobs more than actually anything else. All this started because I did a co-op at **[a government department]** during my MLIS and that led me into a contract job which led me into web publishing back in the days when we were doing HTML, which led into more of that, which led into a bit of information management work, and it's just sort of evolved that way. So I don't think there was ever a conscious decision to do this. It's just this was what was next - as a project. [PAUSE] So I've had absolutely no career planning whatsoever aside from "Hey this looks interesting, let's do this". It's always just the next adventure.

Reasons for accepting jobs: Rather than selecting jobs based on a pre-conceived career plan, the interviewee moved from one position to the next based on other factors. The factors which influenced whether or not the interviewee would accept a position included the physical location of the job, the mission and mandate of the organization, the type of work involved (with a particular emphasis on jobs that allow opportunities for a variety of tasks), the opportunity to pursue professional development opportunities, and in the case of library jobs, the type of library based on that library's attitude toward the role of librarians and definition of information services:

Topic 5: Identification & Affiliation

The final set of topics found in the first pilot study interview centred on the ideas of identification and affiliation and were sub-divided into the topics of:

(1) Relationship between job and association(s)

(2) Conceptions of the LIS world

(3) Reasons for identifying or affiliating with a group

The first sub-topic in the area of identification and affiliation was the topic of relationships between one's job and professional associations. In the case of the first interviewee, his job and involvement in professional associations were closely connected. The opportunity to participate in professional associations for both learning and networking purposes was cited as one of the most attractive aspects of his job. As a leader in a professional association, the interviewee has the opportunity to develop association programming and he mentioned that he uses his job as an inspiration for developing professional development programming and his association for fulfilling his professional development needs:

> I've had the luxury of essentially ... I can spend my day job thinking about things that I need or my colleagues need to do their jobs better and say well ... through my **[library association]** network I can say I create my own PD – I create the conditions necessary to get these people to where I think they need to get to. Developing courses based on "Yes, we need this to move ahead, so let's offer something about this". Being able to bridge those two worlds so easily has been incredibly fruitful

The second sub-topic in this group is concepts of the LIS world. The interviewee had strong opinions about the LIS world, in particular the concept of Libraries vs. librarians, their relationship between librarianship and other LIS disciplines, opportunities for LIS graduates, and conceptions of "non-traditional" careers for LIS graduates.

The interviewee spoke about the issue of perceptions of the scope the roles and potential of librarians vs. libraries at two points during the interview. First, he expressed concern about how some leaders in the library community are limiting the scope of the services that libraries and librarians could offer:

we're still having that argument or debate of libraries and librarians - that libraries are this – yes librarians can do more – but libraries are still defined as this ... books and providing reference services - where it can be so much more

He noted that this self-limiting tendency was not universal, but more pronounced in some areas of the library world than others. Later, he discussed the experience of interacting with individuals who have limited views of librarian's capabilities:

An audience where the perception of librarian is you deal in books and you work in a room full of books. If I get a sense that that's that person's perception of it ... no I will not identify myself as a librarian.

The interviewee was also concerned with the differentiation between librarians and information management professionals and the differences in attitudes of librarians working in different types of LIS settings. With regards to the first two topics, the interviewee stated:

The linkages between libraries and information management - we're still discussing that. It's like, yeah, the outside world has made that decision for you. Libraries are considered part of IM whether you like it or not. Get over it and move on. Last week I was at federal libraries meeting and then at the same time that week I was at ARMA's IM days. I've heard my library colleagues talking about defining ourselves vis-a-vis IM. I listen to my records colleagues talking about how do we get ahead of the curve, how do we position ourselves to deal with emerging issues – data management, open government, open data. I'm saying I'm ... there's just ... you can easily tell which community's looking ahead and which one isn't.

The idea of the capabilities and functions of librarians and other LIS professionals led to a discussion of opportunities for librarians both inside and outside of library settings. Inside library settings, the interviewee discussed moving into information management areas and the management of different types of information objects. He also provided a list of non-traditional opportunities for

librarians. He discussed these non-traditional opportunities in relation to "L"

schools, which focus on traditional library skills and jobs vs. "I" schools which have

a broader focus:

> I see *[An ALA-accredited library school]* positioning itself there their call
> themselves "ischool" and they broaden their degree and they've reinvented
> themselves and been re-named so many times just to ... help market their
> graduates to those ... other communities. Just looking at their course
> offerings, the heavy emphasis is on non-traditional ... I mean they're in *[a
> large city]* and they do have the advantage of *[the financial district]* and all
> the other firms there. Just the number of prospect researchers, head hunting
> firms that their graduates get themselves into. I think the other one is
> *[another ALA-accredited library school]* ... they're part of the faculty of
> management and ... their advisory committee has a good number of people
> who don't work in libraries. They work in records management shops, and
> their whole masters of IM program is positioned that way. Even targeting
> people with MLISs –focused ... getting them into other careers. *[A third
> ALA-accredited library school]* to a degree with their archives and
> knowledge management streams.

The final sub-topic in the area of identity & affiliation was reasons for

identifying or affiliating with a group. For the interviewee, the decision about

whether or not to identify as a librarian or a member of any professional community

was conscientiously taken and strongly tied to the achievement of professional

objectives. When asked if he identified as a librarian, he replied "If it's to my

advantage yes" and clarified that he assesses his audiences' perceptions of librarians

in making the decision to affiliate with this group:

> I've worked with a number of people in my organization where their
> perception of librarian is librarians have good skills for helping you
> organize your information, retrieve your information, help you get a
> better handle of information to help you get your job done. In that
> situation, yes. If I identify as ... identifying myself as a librarian will
> increase my credibility with that group I definitely will do that ... If I'm
> with somebody for whom libraries and librarians are a passé thing –
> depending on the environment I may try and advocate for libraries and
> librarians – more often than not I will not associate myself there until

later once it's been more firmly entrenched and in place that I have this person's trust. Then I will massage them – try and make the message with them – but up-front, no.

The decision to identify with a group is therefore a strategic one for this interviewee. This utility-based approach to identification and affiliation fits with several of the theories about identity explored in the initial literature review phase of this project and may warrant further literature exploration if it is repeated in future interviews.

Appendix D: Research Memo - Initial Analysis of Pilot Interview 002

Topic 1: Reasons for Accepting and Leaving Positions

Reasons for accepting and leaving positions were a theme that arose in this interview and these reasons can generally be described as factors relating to the specific job and "life considerations". The reasons for accepting and leaving positions that arose in this interview could therefore be summarized as:

(1) The physical location of the employer

(2) The types of tasks involved in the position

(3) The culture, atmosphere and values of the employing organization

(4) A sense of fit between the position and the individual's interests and goals

The participant described her reasons for taking or leaving two of the four employment settings where she has worked since obtaining her master's degree in Library and Information Science.

The first of her career transitions was a move from a special library (i.e. not public, academic or school) to an academic library in a different city. In this case her reasons for moving to this new workplace were motivated first by a desire to move to the second city for personal reasons (in this case to be closer to family) and second on the characteristics of the job based on the unique characteristics of the library based on the job description and the nature of the organization (specifically the types

of collections included in this library and the opportunity to design programming for a user population with a variety of learning styles). The participant's decision to leave this position was based on characteristics of the job – in particularly a mismatch between the culture of the organization and her own values and ideas for library service delivery.

The second career transition that the participant described in the interview was the move from this position to her current position at a library vendor. Chronologically in the interview the participant described her decision to accept this position first before describing her earlier career history. This job was accepted for two reasons, the first being its location in the city where her family lives and the second being the opportunity to build up a technical skill set. The participant's experience with library administration was both her reason for leaving library workplaces and one of the reasons for her success in the vendor organization:

> I wanted to be more technical than I was, I just didn't have the opportunity to dig into the technical side and I saw this job posting for a Project Manager at **[a library vendor]** for the development team and I applied for that. And actually that was the position that I was hired for, but within a few months (laughs) the board of directors came to me and asked me if I would take a promotion ... um ... to do more administrative ... work - which isn't exactly the reason I got into it. I got into it to get away from the administrative stuff and to be more technical

The reason the participant wanted to get away from administrative work in libraries was certain degree of frustration with the fact that in administrative work "you feel like you didn't accomplish anything" whereas technical work involves the completion of concrete tasks and the ability to solve problems in the short or immediate term that is very satisfying, and this applied both to the technical work

that is performed by project managers and developers in the vendor context and front line library staff:

> I can go out there and find somebody that looks confused, that's wondering around lost, that, you know, didn't know how to find the call number they wanted, and I can make an immediate difference for them. And that's kind of why I got into libraries to begin with. I wanted to, you know, to help people to access and find that overwhelming amount of information that we have

Although not related to a specific job application decision, the participant also described her initial reason for selecting librarianship as a profession in this interview in a way that relates to this theme. She stated: "Getting a job was easy. I wanted a career that I could really sink my teeth into and I sat down and thought about it…" This indicates that the decision to enter into librarianship was based on self-reflection concerning a desired career path or the type of work that the participant would want to pursue.

Topic 2: The Appeal of Librarianship

The participant had spent the majority of her career working in libraries and described a desire to return to a library in the future. Aspects of library work that she enjoyed or conversely was less interested in were discussed at several points in the interview. For the participant library work held two main attractions: the ability to investigate problems and the ability to help others.

The desire to investigate problems was the common theme between the participant's library and vendor work experience:

there was nothing better than when I worked at **[a university library]** and somebody would come to me with some kind of really thorny problem, like a kind of half reference that they got from some random journal – and they couldn't track down the original citation. If I could like - find that it's like private investigator work…the mystery of it. It's the same thing actually - I think that's why I like the technical side so much. It's like, you know when there's a bug in the software, it's not doing what you'd expect, it's the same kind of investigative process.

The desire to help people was a strong motivator for the participant. It was a factor in her work as a front-line librarian but it also informs the way in which she works as an administrator in emphasizing staff development:

And I like to help…people achieve skills that are going to help them … not only for their current job, but if their interested in something a little outside the scope of their job – that I can help them move beyond… And maybe that means they can move somewhere else. But I consider that a success.

The desire to help the library community was also cited as a factor in selecting which over vendors she would consider working with in the future, although moving to another vendor was not a career objective for her. She would only work for a vendor if she felt that they were motivated primarily by helping libraries rather than profit considerations. Her career ambition, however, is to return to a library works setting. When asked if she would ever go back to working in a library setting she responded "Absolutely. I say it all the time" and stated that her move into a vendor workplace was an "fluke" in her career path:

It was not part of the career plan. I thought, honestly, I would go back to a big academic library [and] spend out my remaining days there. But it didn't work like that.

The participant identifies herself primarily as a librarian and holds very positive feeling toward library work and libraries as physical places.

Topic 3: Identification as a Librarian

The participant clearly identifies as a librarian and mainly introduces herself as a librarian when talking to others about her position rather than using her formal position title (which does not include the word librarian). Although the participant expressed a preference for identifying as a librarian she did discuss situations in which vendors would and would not use this title. The participant's organization preferentially hires individuals with library education and experience because this helps them come up to speed faster: "I can teach a smart person the technical side but I can't teach them the library side. You have to *live* it". She described a situation in which employees' titles actually had to be changed to reflect their library background:

> I've found that for certain positions ... like trainers, there are certain
> libraries where they go to train, that if that person doesn't have their
> degree, that there's certain loss of respect. Which is interesting. I
> would have never thought that that would be an issue. In fact we used
> to – our position for trainers used to be called 'Education Specialist' –
> that was just what the position was called and that was what was on
> their business cards ... it was such a problem that we actually had to
> change the job title to 'Education Librarian' because 'Specialist' is a
> term that they use often in public libraries and also in school libraries to
> indicate somebody who doesn't have a degree.

It is clearly important in some situations for vendors to highlight their library credentials in certain situations in order to gain respect from their clients. On the other hand, identifying as a librarian or focusing on one's library background would

not gain a person respect with senior members of the vendor community according to the participant. Librarians are rare in these levels with most of the people in senior vendor positions coming from a business rather than a library background.

Topic 4: Acceptance by the Library Community

Although the participant described a situation in which employees at her organization were encouraged to highlight their library background she stressed that having an LIS degree is not necessarily sufficient for an LIS graduate working for a library vendor to be accepted as a member of the LIS community. The participant described the sense of being perceived as an outsider by librarians and having to prove her insider status:

> You have to give them your pedigree. You have to prove to them that you have that experience. And if they're satisfied with your level of experience, then ... then you're one of them ... you know, you're in the fold and suddenly the way they speak to you becomes more *casual*, more friendly – now we're on the same *side*

She described situations in which LIS graduates working for vendors have actually been discouraged from revealing that they have LIS degrees because they didn't have sufficient library experience to be accepted by librarians as one of their own. It seems that for an LIS graduate to be accepted by librarians as "one of them", that individual has to have not only the LIS degree but also a significant amount of experience working in the same kind of library as the librarian audience (i.e. academic library experience for an academic library audience) and that experience has to be current:

> But if your experience is too out of date it may not be accepted. I feel like I can only flaunt my library experience for another five years and then suddenly people will say to me "You know when you were working in libraries we hasn't even implemented RDA yet, you can't possibly understand". It's at that point that I won't have any credibility with them anymore

The participant made several observations about why this occurs that may be examined through the lenses of either negotiation and power relationships or influence theory:

> But you know librarians are awesome ... I think they feel a little beat down. They feel like the budgetary commissions are against us, and ... a lot of the public is against us. You go out and say you're a librarian and people go "Oh ... no one goes to libraries any more" and you can't help but feel a sense of inferiority and you want to be protective of this thing and you don't want somebody to come in and – and they're used to that from vendors – people kind of tearing them down

It seems that simply sharing a degree does not constitute a strong enough connection to allow a vendor to connect with librarians based on the 'liking' dimension of influence theory. Perceived differences in power relationships or a history of trust issues between the library and vendor communities alluded to by the comment that librarians are used to being torn down by some members of the vendor community may be a stronger factor in the minds of the librarians in these exchanges. Having (extensive and recent) library experience may be causing the librarians to accept the LIS graduate vendors because it suggests that not only do they have similarities, but that the vendor is more likely to understand and support the librarian's work goals. A second influence factor that comes into play with the addition of library experience to an LIS-graduate vendor's ability to work collaboratively with librarians is credibility. Have a knowledge of how libraries work increases the amount of respect

that the vendor is shown by librarians and also changes the way in which the

librarians interact with that vendor:

> if they discount your experience then they take on the role of lecturer. I
> mean this happened to employees here, this happened to one employee
> who's wonderful and smart, but she doesn't have a lot of experience
> and there will be a lecture

The issue of having to prove your membership to members of the LIS

community was an important one for the participant not only in that it has an impact

on how she interacts with her clients in the LIS community but more significantly

because it has an emotional impact on her sense of professional identity. She stated

that "your professional identity is damaged a little when you work for a vendor" and

that it "…alienates you in a way. You feel excluded from your own profession."

Appendix E: Research Memo - Comparative Analysis of Pilot Interviews 001 and 002

Introduction

Two interviews do not provide a sufficient sample to create coding categories, but they do allow for the beginning of the constant comparison process. The first two memos provided in this report provided a review of the key topics that arose in each interview. This memo will provide a discussion of the similarities and differences that occurred between the interviews.

Topic 1: When People Identify as Librarians

The first key similarity between the two interviews was the finding that both participants elect either to identify or dis-identify as librarians in different circumstances with the deciding factor in whether or not they choose to identify as a librarian being the impact that declaration will have on their ability to achieve their goals. Both participants described situations in which they did not identify themselves as librarians when interacting with people from outside of the LIS community because the people they were interacting with did not respect librarians and/or did not understand what librarians do or are capable of doing. A key difference between the interviews interactions the participants reported with members of the LIS community. The participant who worked at a library vendor reported that members of the LIS community often treated her as an outsider until and unless she was able to prove her credentials as a librarian. The participant who

worked in an information management role did not report any difficulties in being accepted by LIS graduates working in libraries. This suggests that librarians may have different reactions to LIS graduates depending on their profession.

Topic 2: Supporting Others' Learning and Professional Development

Another interesting similarity between the two interviews was the fact that both participants were highly committed to supporting the learning and professional development of others. The first participant described creating programming through his professional association to teach other LIS practitioners the skills and knowledge that he saw as important given the trends and developments that he saw in his professional role. The second participant described one of the most rewarding aspects of her job as helping employees to develop skills to help them both in their current role and in their future career development. The two participants both describe learning and skills development in several different ways. The participants described learning through formal courses, attending conferences, participating in professional associations, learning on the job, and learning through others with more experience. These "others" included teachers in LIS programs and co-workers and the types of lessons that were learned from these individuals included how to perform specific tasks and how to respond to certain situations that may occur in the work setting.

Topic 3: Career Paths

A difference between the two participant's responses was their career trajectory. This is not surprising because the reasons for moving from one position to the next and the types of positions that individuals occupy will vary from individual to individual. In general, however, the first participant's career path was generally one of moving to positions of greater seniority within a single career track (moving from web design to information management system management), with the participant describing each position as the next step. The second participant's career path was less linear, involving moves to positions based on a variety of factors such as the need to move to be near family and a desire to build up different skill sets. The two participants also differed in their answers as to whether they would consider working in a library in the future. Although neither participant discounted the possibility one expressed an enthusiastic desire to return to library work while the other participant stated that he would consider working in a library but only if that library had an innovative culture and approach to the work that matched his own.

Topic 4: LIS Transferable Skills

The skills that the two participants described contained both similarities and differences which is also not a surprising finding. Both described a number of transferable competencies as being important to their work. The first participant focused on communication and project management skills and the second participant described administrative skills which included employee supervision and project management. The work that the two participants perform is actually quite similar:

both supervise teams of technical specialists who develop tools for the management of information.

The clients for these two participants were different however. The first participant's group is involved in developing information management tools for government employees while the second participant's group creates tools for libraries (i.e. integrated library systems and related software). This difference in clients meant that some differences in skills were required in their workplaces. In the first participant's workplace, the transferrable competencies and technical skills were of utmost importance. In the second participant's workplace a knowledge of librarianship (and in fact, experience working in a library setting) was seen as just as important as transferrable and technical skills in terms of being able to perform the work effectively.

The advice that the two participants provided for current LIS students considering following in their footsteps was also different. The first participant advised participants to explore a wide variety of job opportunities to find ways to apply their skills beyond a library environment while the second participant advised students to gain library experiences as a prerequisite to doing the kind of work she does at a library vendor. This difference makes sense given the different client groups with whom the participants work.

Topic 5: LIS Core Knowledge and Competencies

The two participants also discussed what they considered to be "core content" in an LIS Master's program. The first participant described the core content in MLIS programs as "organization of information, business analysis, and information services skills, research methodology, statistics, and management". The second participant described the core content in MLIS programs as including cataloguing (which was not actually a required class in her program), the history and principles of libraries, and collection development. The second participant also described the value of library instructors sharing their practical experiences in libraries and dealing with different situations that may arise in library work settings – situations that members of the general public who are not familiar with library work would never even consider. This suggests that there may be different perceptions of what constitutes the core of LIS education.

The pilot interviews provided several areas for comparison and discussion, but as mentioned in the introduction of this memo it is too early to determine which of these will turn into coding categories in the full study.

Appendix F: Code Categories

Introduction

This appendix outlines the development of the code categories in this thesis. The analysis process used was outlined in "Chapter 2: Methodology". This appendix shows the codes that were found from individual interviews as well as the codes that were developed by comparing the data from the interviews to created "grouped" categories. The process of individually coding and then comparing interviews was conducted three times in the study: first for interviews 1-6, next for interviews 1-14, and finally for interviews 1-20. The code categories from the first 14 interviews in this study and the combined categories from these interviews are presented below.

Interview 001 Code Categories

- Finding a niche / Defining one's role

- Developing (soft) skills

- Translating between groups

- Finding other LIS graduates around the table

- Bridging the worlds of work and professional associations

- Choosing a community

- Self-labelling

- Perceiving librarians and the LIS community

Interview 002 Code Categories

- Struggling for acceptance from the LIS community

- Being a librarian in a different way

- Redefining one's concept of "non-traditional" roles

- Mentoring

- Developing technical skills

- Becoming through experience

- Experiencing flexibility and control

- Perceiving librarians and libraries

- Deciding to take a job

- Bringing soft skills

- Differentiating oneself from others

Interview 003 Code Categories

- Finding inspiration

- Engaging in "active librarianship"

- Being an entrepreneur

- Finding role models

- Breaking stereotypes

- Recognizing librarian stereotypes and image issues

- Picking things up on my own

- Participating in the library community

Interview 004 Code Categories

- Considering one's future career

- Identifying strengths

- Perceiving oneself as a librarian

- Clashing with librarians and LIS professional associations

- Defining modern day librarianship

- Promoting change in the LIS world

- Integrating family roles and expectations into career planning

Interview 005 Code Categories

- Differentiating the librarian approach

- Developing an understanding of librarianship

- Doing things that librarians wish they could

- Taking on a mediator role in IT projects

- Promoting the LIS education

- Connecting with like-minded librarians

- Interpreting job titles

Interview 006 Code Categories

- Building a specialization

- Marketing oneself as adding value

- Finding a community

- Finding mentors

- Developing a librarianship and information management mindset

- Transitioning into library roles

- Choosing a career path based on early encouragement

- Connecting people with information

- Making a big impact

- Finding correlations between librarianship and the high tech sector

- Finding one's own way independently

- Finding meaningful job titles

Interview 007 Code Categories

- Discovering professional interests

- Making career moves

- Gaining exposure to different work settings

- Developing skills

- Discussing work with librarians

- Developing future work roles

- Deciding to attend library school

- Defining oneself as a professional

- Describing work tasks

- Defining librarianship

- Building relationships with clients

- Making educational decisions

- Learning from professional role models

Interview 008 Code Categories

- Choosing librarianship

- Seeing the impact of work on clients

- Becoming competitive

- Making a name for oneself in the profession

- Finding mentors

- Making career moves

- Developing relationships

- Selecting when to identify as a librarian

- Differentiating between roles and titles

- Defining librarianship

- Developing a toolkit of skills

- Introducing technologies to librarianship

- Comparing librarianship with other professions

- Seeking opportunities for flexibility and nimbleness

- Understanding the value of librarianship

- Changing MLS educational programs

- Characterizing librarians and librarianship

- Observing interactions between library-based and non-library-based librarians

- Interacting with librarians over social media

- Learning how to communicate

Interview 009 Code Categories

- Making career moves

- Maintain a network of LIS colleagues

- Observing the treatment of library-based librarians in various industry secotrs

- Valuing your skills

- Using library skills

- Differentiating between academic and practical masters degrees

- Developing an interest in technology in libraries

- Identifying as a librarian / non-practicing librarian

- Defining what counts as library work

- Dealing with the librarian image

- Satisfying job experiences

- Experiencing library education

- Performing work tasks

- Developing impressions of libraries during childhood

Interview 010 Code Categories

- Deciding to apply to library school

- Experiencing library school

- Experiencing different work roles

- Discovering the generalizability of LIS education

- Integrating personal interests into study and work

- Using reference skills

- Identifying as a librarian

- Defining oneself as a professional

- Developing independently of professional associations

- Linking technology and librarianship

- Making career moves

- Performing work tasks

Interview 011 Code Categories

- Deciding to attend library school

- Experiencing library education and interships

- Finding a career path / Considering future roles

- Selecting jobs

- Working in various roles

- Identifying as a librarian

- Participating in professional associations

- Finding mentors and advisors

- Approaching work from an LIS perspective

- Selling your skills

- Representing an emerging opportunity for LIS graduates

- Taking a broad view of the LIS degree

- Responding to others' reactions to LIS education

Interview 012 Code Categories

- Deciding to attend library school

- Working in various settings

- Experiencing library school

- Developing an insider-outsider perspective

- Finding a career path

- Networking and making connections

- Performing work tasks / Marketing

- Discovering valuable skills

- Identifying as a librarian

- Observing group identities and behaviours

- Responding to reactions to her work

Interview 013 Code Categories

- Gaining experience in various work roles

- Deciding to attend an LIS program

- Experiencing LIS education

- Connecting with others to discover innovative ideas

- Finding other LIS graduates

- Gravitating away from traditional librarianship

- Defining yourself through work

- Performing consulting work

- Describing oneself / Finding a label

- Understanding and articulating LIS value

- Providing records management, information management, and knowledge management services

- Finding work that appeals to interests and motivations

Interview 014 Code Categories

- Riding the wave as a career path

- Working experiences

- Transitioning between diverse roles

- Learning skills

- Developing a specialty

- Valuing skills and experiences

- Placing users at the centre of work processes

- Identifying as a librarian

- Demonstrating a librarian perspective

- Working for librarian values

- Responding to paradigm shifts as a profession

- Contemplating the future of the librarian profession

- Incorporating technology into workplaces

Combined Code Categories for Interviews 001-014

1. Experiencing work roles and defining a career path

   a. Job titles & tasks performed

   b. Perceptions of tasks performed

   c. Intention versus chance in career progress

   d. Future ambitions / future directions

   e. Impact of co-op work

   f. Reasons for taking jobs

   g. Finding & getting jobs

h. Barriers to finding jobs

i. Career paths avoided / not taken

j. Prerequisites for career paths

2. Defining oneself as a professional

   a. Whether or not the title of "Librarian" is used

   b. Identifying as a librarian to others

   c. Identifying as a librarian internally

   d. Choosing not to identify as a librarian

   e. Identifying as a non-practicing / non-active librarian

   f. Responding to others' uses of the librarian title

   g. Differentiating between titles and roles

   h. Variations in the title used

3. Discovering and articulating one's value

   a. Key skills

   b. The ability to traverse different worlds

   c. The value of library work experience and education

   d. Taking proactive steps to gain skills and knowledge

   e. Finding a niche / developing a specialty

   f. Promoting one's skills / marketing oneself

   g. Learning from others and gaining experience

   h. Being comfortable with different types of work roles

i. Taking a broad view of one's skill set

j. Representing a new career model

4. Developing an understanding of the LIS profession

    a. Perceptions of librarians

    b. Perceptions of libraries

    c. Where librarianship is going

    d. Gaining exposure to librarianship

    e. Defining the non-traditional

    f. Changes in LIS programs

    g. Perceived characteristics of librarians

    h. Defining librarianship

    i. Language and librarianship

5. Interacting with the LIS community

    a. Differentiations from other LIS graduates

    b. Becoming a librarian

    c. Trying to influence / change LIS attitudes

    d. Lack of understanding of work / role

    e. Interacting with non-LIS communities

    f. Observations of librarians

    g. Interactions with the LIS community

    h. Reactions from the LIS community

     i. Participating in library associations

     j. Benefits of participating in library associations

     k. Scaling back participation in professional associations

6. Finding one's role within and beyond the LIS community

     a. Choosing community affiliations

     b. Interacting with the library community

     c. Deciding to become a librarian

     d. Self-validation

     e. Limitations of working in a library

     f. Finding a role / developing a specialty

     g. Identifying one's interests & motivations

     h. Being an outsider

7. Learning and developing as a professional

     a. Learning from mentors

     b. Learning from bad models

     c. Learning by doing / the value of work experiences

     d. Exposure to different environments

     e. Developing a librarian mindset

     f. Learning independently

     g. Opinions of the LIS curriculum

     h. Foundational skills

i. Knowledge & experience gaps

j. The need to keep learning

k. Reinforcement of existing skills and knowledge