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This study examines a sample of websites created by librarians on the World Wide Web. The websites were analyzed to see how librarians are discussing and presenting themselves on the World Wide Web in the attempt to escape the traditional stereotype. An analysis of these websites revealed that librarians are not trying to completely escape the stereotype but rather to prove that all librarians are individuals outside of their profession.

Headings:

Librarianship as a Profession

Men Librarians

Librarians in Literature

Librarians in Motion Pictures

WE ARE INDIVIDUALS: LIBRARIANS' DEMONSTRATION OF INDIVIDUALITY  
ON THE WORLD WIDE WEB

by

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*What is repugnant to every human being is to be reckoned always as a member of a class and not as an individual person.*

-- Dorothy L. Sayers

### **Introduction**

Stereotypes have a way of taking individuals and making them appear as a group. Once stereotyped, the individuals are no longer seen as such, they lose the characteristics that are not part of the stereotype. In some cases the group that is stereotyped is an entire profession. Professional image, positive or negative, affects each individual that is a member of the profession. In some cases professional image has a way of taking all the individual members of the profession and forcing them into a group, and each member of the group is seen as being the same as any other.

Such is the case with librarianship; members of this profession have been placed under a stereotype which is often negative, and which we cannot seem to escape as it has been with us for centuries (Jordan, 1991). Today, many librarians are still trying to escape the stereotype of being a quiet, unattractive female who is constantly “shushing” people. While there have been numerous attempts to rid the profession of this negative image, the World Wide Web has provided a new forum in which to do so. Many librarians have set up their own websites in order to contradict the stereotype that has plagued the profession for so long.

## **Literature Review**

Librarians have been concerned with their professional image for centuries. The negative stereotype associated with librarianship was first documented when Petsis, a sublibrarian at Alexandria, complained that the hieroglyphic for librarian suggested a certain amount of inferiority (Jordan, 1991). Today, many centuries later, librarians are still concerned with their professional image. Even Dewey had expected that by the twentieth century the negative stereotype would no longer be associated with librarianship, yet librarians more than one hundred years later are still attempting to escape it (MacDonald, 1995).

Several theories have been proposed in an attempt to explain the persistence of the negative stereotype. Feminist theorists argue that the negative stereotype persists because women dominate the field of librarianship, and as such their contribution is of little value (Radford & Radford, 1997). These theories suggest that the negative stereotype is not of the librarian's making, but rather that of a system of "power and rationality" (Radford & Radford, 250). On the other hand, some authors argue that librarians are ultimately responsible for their image (Hall, 1992). Male librarians argue that their negative image stems from working in a field that is associated with and dominated by women (Carmichael, 1994).

While some librarians might claim that image is not very important to our profession, the amount of literature discussing the image of librarians begs to differ. If

we as librarians do not or should not care about our professional image, why is there so much literature discussing it? Numerous types of studies have been conducted to examine the image and personality of librarians.

Many of those interested in examining the image of librarians have done so by exploring what the cultural image of the librarian is by looking at their portrayal in film and literature. Elaine Yontz (2002) completed a study of librarians in children's literature. Thirty-five children's books published between 1909 and 2000 in the United States were used. These books were analyzed to discover "indications of attitudes and beliefs about librarians and to discern evidence of changing roles within the profession of librarianship" (Yontz, 2002, 85). Overall, librarians in children's literature were depicted as female and Caucasian, even in more recent publications. The work tasks performed by the librarians in these books were consistent throughout the century, but the tools used to perform the tasks changed, as they did in reality. The librarians in these publications were portrayed as being caring professionals to have positive relationships with patrons (Yontz, 2002).

Some researchers have examined films in order to explore the types of personalities librarians are portraying as having. In 2002 Jeanine Williamson conducted a study in which she used the Myers-Briggs personality typology to determine the probable personality types of librarians in twenty-eight films. The results were then compared with the Scherdin (1994) study in which 1600 librarians were involved in a study to determine their personality types. During the course of the Williamson study thirty-one librarian characters were examined; some personality types were overrepresented, while others were underrepresented. In this study, the most frequently

occurring personality type was ISFJ (Introverted/Sensing/Feeling/Judging), which differed from the results of the Scherdin study (Williamson, 2002).

The Scherdin study began in 1992, and used 1600 librarians taken in a random sample from the membership lists of the American Library Association and the Special Library Association. The purpose of the study was to see whether or not the personality types of actually librarians refuted their usually negative portrayal in the popular media. A revised version of the MBTI, the Expanded Analysis Report, was administered to the participants. The two most frequent personality types among these library and information professionals were ISTJ (Introverted/Sensing/Thinking/Judging), 17 percent, and INTJ (Introverted/Intuitive/Thinking/Judging), 12 percent. These results refuted the traditional ISFJ (Introverted/Sensing/Feeling/Judging currently assigned to librarians (Scherdin & Beaubien, 1994).

However, despite the fact that librarian's personalities are somewhat different than they are portrayed in the media does not necessarily mean that the public will view librarians differently. In looking at how different parts of the population view librarians it seems that there are a couple of audiences that are of particular interest to researchers within library and information science. Children's perception of librarians seems to be of particular interest because they will be the library users and supporters of the future (Jordan, 1991). In Jordan's (1991) study, forty-nine suburban fourth graders were surveyed to see whether or not the negative stereotype was prevalent and whether or not it was more prevalent among boys than among girls. A questionnaire was given to two fourth grade classes, the negative stereotype was defined to include the negative traits commonly seen in the media including "old, grumpy, unattractive, dowdy dressers, [and]

always ‘shushing’ people” (Jordan, 12). For this study “prevalent” was defined as more than 50 percent of the respondents. The results of the study did not support the hypotheses that the negative image is prevalent among children and that the negative image is more prevalent among boys. Overall, the children in this study had a positive view of librarians and thought they were knowledgeable, and friendly. From this survey, it seems that school librarians have done relatively well in removing their negative image (Jordan).

Although young children are an important population to examine, many researchers are concerned with how college students view librarians, and whether they hold any misconceptions about the “librarians’ professional status, teaching roles, knowledge and expertise, and attitude toward students” (Fagan, 2002). Fagan’s study centered around the education and knowledge of librarians, whether students know who in the library is a librarian and what they do, whether students see librarians as valuable to their own work, and what the librarian’s attitude is toward their job and toward helping students.

A total of forty-eight undergraduate students at Southern Illinois University were surveyed. In regard to the level of education required to be a librarian, 57 percent checked “bachelors degree,” 28 percent checked wither “high school degree or “some college classes,” 15 percent checked “master’s degree” and none checked doctoral degrees (Fagan, 2002). Students put much more on the librarians’ helpfulness in finding materials that how to use materials, and many shows a lack of understanding of the professional nature of librarians’ work (Fagan). While these students have a generally

positive view of the librarians they interact with, they have little idea of what they know and what they do.

While many of the studies do not focus on the sex of the librarians, from the traditional stereotype it is clear that the stereotype usually focuses on women. However, it is not only women who are forced to combat the stereotype of librarianship. Male librarians also have their own stereotypes to overcome. Although the field of librarianship used to be an exclusively male domain, it has come to be dominated by women. As such the stereotype of the male librarian had changed greatly over the past few centuries (Dickinson, 2002). Newmyer describes the prevailing stereotype associated with early academic librarians as “grim, grouchy, [and] eccentric” (Newmyer as quoted in Dickinson, 2002, 98). This stereotype remained largely unchanged until the mid-nineteenth when women began to enter the field. By the turn of the century, a field that had once been dominated by men was associated entirely with women. At this point, Newmyer’s stereotype of “grim, grouchy eccentric and *male*” was replaced with the “kindly and sometimes effeminate misfit” (Morrissey as quoted in Dickinson, 2002, 104).

For the most part, this remains the stereotype of the male librarian, and it is a stereotype that many men in the field are frustrated with. James Carmichael (1994) conducted a survey of male librarians to gauge how they feel their gender has affected their careers. Some of the librarians surveyed felt that they had an easier time getting into the positions they wanted, particularly administration, while others felt that they were discouraged from even applying for jobs because they were white and male. Many were frustrated that people assumed they were gay simply because they were a librarian, and those who were gay felt as though the profession was very welcoming, and were

grateful for that. Carmichael argues that the gender issues associated with librarianship need to be worked out before the image of the profession as a whole can be improved and that the issues can only be resolved when “all librarians learn to listen to each other and be open to changing their attitude” (Carmichael 1994, 230).

Clearly librarians have an image problem, whether it is because of how we are portrayed in the media or how we are perceived by library users, the question now becomes is there anything we can do about it, and if so what? Pauline Wilson argues that while some improvement in the image and status of the profession is possible, the negative aspects cannot be completely overcome because they are inherent in the services provided by the profession. The product handled by librarians is, in a broad sense, information. Because of the nature of information it is impossible for librarians to lay claim to it, anyone can access information. This makes it difficult for the public to understand what information related professions do and the “result is limited or ambiguous status for the occupation” (Wilson, 1982, 182). Because of the ambiguous nature of the profession, the tasks performed will continue to be simplified by the media and the stereotype will, to a certain extent, continue.

Others however argue that the stereotype can be overcome. Stuart Hall, an expert in stereotypes argues that stereotypes can be overcome in three ways (Radford & Radford, 2003). The first approach is to reverse the stereotype. For librarians this would mean the media presenting the image of librarians that contradicts that which is currently presented. The second approach is to substitute a range of positive images for the negative imagery that dominates popular representation. This strategy can be seen in illustrations featured in LIS journals and which portray librarians smiling, dressed

professionally, and usually seated or standing behind a computer. The third strategy “located itself *within* the complexities and ambivalence of representation itself, and tries to *contest it from within* (Hall as quoted in Radford & Radford, 2003, 67). This third strategy can be seen in the various websites created by librarians such as the Lipstick Librarian, the Modified Librarian, and Warrior Librarian Weekly (Radford & Radford, 2003).

Websites such as these appear to be attempting to change the stereotype of the librarian, but it remains to be seen whether or not they are or can succeed.

## **Methodology**

This study examined the ways in which librarians are discussing and presenting themselves on the World Wide Web in an attempt to escape their stereotypical image. Content analysis was performed on eight websites created either by librarians or those associated with the profession. The content analysis involved looking for a discussion or presentation of a characteristic that is opposite of the traditional librarian stereotype.

The sample used in this study was drawn from an annotated bibliography compiled by Salinero and Grogg (2005), and from hyperlinks provided on some of the websites from the bibliography. Because of the enormity of the World Wide Web, this annotated bibliography was invaluable in the assistance of finding the sources for this study, and it does not seem possible that the same sample would have been gathered if the only option had been to search using various search engines.

The websites chosen for this study were

- The Bellydancing Librarian
- The Lipstick Librarian
- The Modified Librarian
- Butt Kicking Librarians
- The Laughing Librarian
- Librarian Avengers
- Librarian.net

- Warrior Librarian Weekly

These websites were selected because they appeared to exhibit characteristics not traditionally associated with the librarian stereotype and because they contain content that could be analyzed relatively easily. Although more websites could have been included in this study, these eight were chosen for several reasons: 1) they were/are run by librarians or those associated with the profession; 2) they contain evidence that librarians are trying to break through or change the stereotype; and 3) the websites have enough content to analyze in response to the stereotype. Each of the sources was included because it was felt that they would contribute an important dimension to the outcome of the study. Those that were not included in the study were excluded because the content was not conducive to the nature of this study.

Each of the websites is a personal webpage or blog, and is not associated with a specific institution. They were identified as personal websites either by the author or because the content of the website indicated that it was personal. The reason for choosing personal websites was to see how librarians are discussing and presenting themselves rather than to see how they are presented by those outside the profession. The content of these websites varies greatly; some are mostly written content, while others are more visually based. Some concern themselves with more serious topics, while others are designed specifically to make its audience laugh.

Although many within the profession generally know the characteristics usually associated with the stereotype, few sources actually mention the characteristics and are instead left to the imagination of the reader. The primary librarian stereotype used in this study comes from a Ph.D Thesis completed in 1957 by Robert Raymond Douglass and

which identified the components of the stereotypes based on documents written by librarians.

1. Orderliness, meticulousness, acquisitiveness  
Preoccupation with rules, routines, records; possessive and proprietary.
2. Conformity, conservatism  
Conscientiousness, traditional and conventional attitudes and behavior; aversion to change; neutral, without strong convictions; cautiousness; dependability; lack of imagination.
3. Passivity, submissiveness  
Non-argumentative nature; sacrificing and uncomplaining; mildness; lacking in vigor and qualities of leadership; not adventurous.
4. Introspection; nonsocial attitudes and behavior  
Introvertive nature; detached, aloof; impersonal; “bookish.”
5. Anxiousness; lack of self-confidence  
Timidity, shyness, inclination toward worry; lack of decisiveness; defensive attitudes; inhibited irritable (as quoted in Wilson, 1982)

This documentation of the librarian stereotype was chosen primarily because it includes many of the characteristics typically associated with the librarian stereotype; however, because it lacks the physical characteristics, it was combined with characteristics from other sources in the library literature. The other characteristics chosen for this study include “sexual repression, matronly appearance, dowdy dress, fussiness, dour facial expressions, and monosyllabic speech” (Radford & Radford, 2003, 60). These physical characteristics, combined with the previously mentioned components provide a more complete view of the usually negative librarian stereotype.

It should be noted however that this documentation of the stereotype is not entirely without problems. Although the librarian stereotype is usually thought of as being negative, clearly not all the characteristics mentioned are negative. Many of the characteristics mentioned are admirable qualities. However, the overall picture that is usually painted using these five components of the librarian stereotype is negative,

and fits well with the negative image that surrounds the profession nearly fifty years after Douglass' thesis was completed.

With this documentation of the negative stereotypes the characteristics that were sought to represent the opposite of the stereotype are a sense of humor, self-confidence, imagination, outgoing/adventurous, non-conformist/uninhibited/exotic, liberal, outspoken/argumentative, social, leadership qualities, and male.

All the websites were analyzed with regard to the previously mentioned components, looking for evidence of characteristics opposing the stereotype. Both text and images were examined. Anything deemed relevant to the study was analyzed to see how librarians are presenting themselves to the public and whether or not they are trying to escape the stereotype.

Each website was analyzed individually and were then examined as a whole to see how they try to escape the stereotype. The websites will be analyzed separately.

## Findings

Each of the websites was analyzed to see which characteristics were present. This section will show what characteristics were present on each website and the prevalence of the characteristic within the group.

### The Bellydancing Librarian

- Non-conformist/uninhibited/exotic
- Outgoing/adventurous
- Liberal
- Self-confidence

### The Lipstick Librarian

- Imagination
- Sense of humor
- Self-confidence

### The Modified Librarian

- Non-conformist/uninhibited/exotic
- Liberal
- Outspoken/argumentative
- Self-confidence
- Outgoing/adventurous

### Butt Kicking Librarians

- Male
- Social
- Self-confidence
- Outgoing
- Leadership qualities

#### The Laughing Librarian

- Sense of humor
- Social
- Outspoken/argumentative
- Male

#### Librarian Avengers

- Sense of humor
- Social
- Outspoken/argumentative

#### Librarian.net

- Social
- Leadership qualities
- Outspoken/argumentative

#### Warrior Librarian Weekly

- Liberal
- Sense of humor
- Imagination
- Outspoken/argumentative
- Leadership qualities

Each website contained evidence of at least three of the characteristics, but none had evidence of more than five. Table 1 shows how many of the websites contained evidence of each characteristics and the percentage of websites containing each characteristic.

**Table 1**

<b>Characteristics</b>	<b>Number of Websites</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Sense of Humor	4	50
Self-confidence	3	37.5
Imagination	2	25
Outgoing/Adventurous	3	37.5
Non-conformist/Uninhibited/Exotic	3	37.5
Liberal	3	37.5
Outspoken/Argumentative	5	62.5
Social	4	50
Leadership Qualities	3	37.5
Male	2	25

The characteristic that appeared most often was outspoken/argumentative, which appeared of five websites (The Modified Librarian, The Laughing Librarian, Librarian Avengers, Librarian.net, and The Warrior Librarian Weekly). Social behavior (Butt Kicking Librarians, The Laughing Librarian, Librarian Avengers, and Librarian.net) and sense of humor (The Lipstick Librarian, The Laughing Librarian, Librarian Avengers, and Warrior Librarian Weekly) were the next two characteristics to appear frequently, and appeared on half of the websites. Self-confidence (The Bellydancing Librarian, The Lipstick Librarian and the Modified Librarian) outgoing/adventurous (The Bellydancing Librarian, The Modified Librarian, and Butt Kicking Librarians) , non-conformist/uninhibited/exotic (The Bellydancing Librarian, The Modified Librarian and Butt Kicking Librarians), liberal (The Modified Librarian, Librarian Avengers and Warrior Librarian Weekly, and leadership qualities (Butt kicking Librarians, Librarian.net and Warrior Librarian Weekly) each appeared on three websites. Two

websites exhibited evidence of imagination (The Lipstick Librarian, and Warrior Librarian Weekly), and two looked at or were created by male librarians (Butt Kicking Librarians and The Laughing Librarian).

## Discussion

Librarians are, to a certain extent, presenting an image of themselves that differs from the traditional stereotype, however they are not completely contradicting the stereotype. Each website presented slightly different characteristics, though there was a certain amount of overlap.

### The Bellydancing Librarian

Firefox File Edit View Go Bookmarks Tools Window Help  
The Bellydancing Librarian  
http://www.sonic.net/~erisw/bdlib.html  
Mon 7:13 PM

By day, she toils as a dedicated information professional...  
by night, she shimmys to the music of the ney, dumbek, and oud...

# the Bellydancing Librarian

Our dedicated Info Pro spends her days in sensible footwear, assisting her clients with a multiplicity of information needs. Cataloging books, searching online databases, fixing printer jams, teaching people how to use indices, and explaining why everything knowable is not yet on the Internet are among her many tasks.

But man -- and woman -- do not live by information alone. At night, our gal trades her Birkenstocks for beads and serves her adoring public's entertainment needs with the music and dance of the Middle East.

Stereotypes abound regarding both of the Bellydancing Librarian's professions. Our heroine does not, you will notice, wear her hair in a bun; indeed, she has never met a librarian who does so! And why, she wonders, do people think it a compliment to remark, upon learning her profession, "But you don't LOOK like a librarian!" In actuality, librarians run the fashion gamut, from power suits with Italian shoes to hippie skirts with Birkenstocks to bright blue dreadlocks with multiple facial piercings.

Most librarians are fierce defenders of Free Speech and the First Amendment. We do not spend our days shushing people and dusting books! Public librarians toil to provide free information access to all citizens in the most democratic of institutions. Medical librarians provide physicians with information that may save lives, while corporate librarians help their companies' bottom line by providing competitive intelligence to marketing executives and R&D.

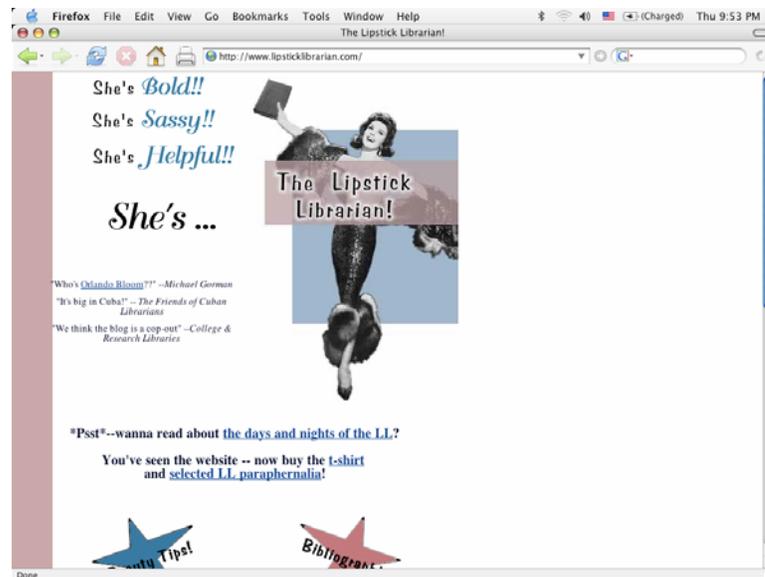
http://servedby.advertising.com/click/site=0000713038/mnum=0000315276/genr=1/rkdt=80P0K1T0/cstr=48095426w=4403959f/4876355269.713038\*315276.1/\_mnum=4809...

The Bellydancing Librarian exhibits numerous characteristics that oppose those in the stereotype. This website shows that librarians can be exotic, outgoing and adventurous. Clearly the librarians featured here have vigor, and are not shy and timid. In addition, the website shows that these librarians are not very conservative at least when they are dressed for bellydancing.

Although the website does try to place emphasis on the idea that librarians do not

all fit the stereotype, the creator does mention many aspects of the stereotype while discussing her mode of dress and activities while at work. The website essentially makes the case that librarians do fit the stereotype at work, but that outside of work they contradict it.

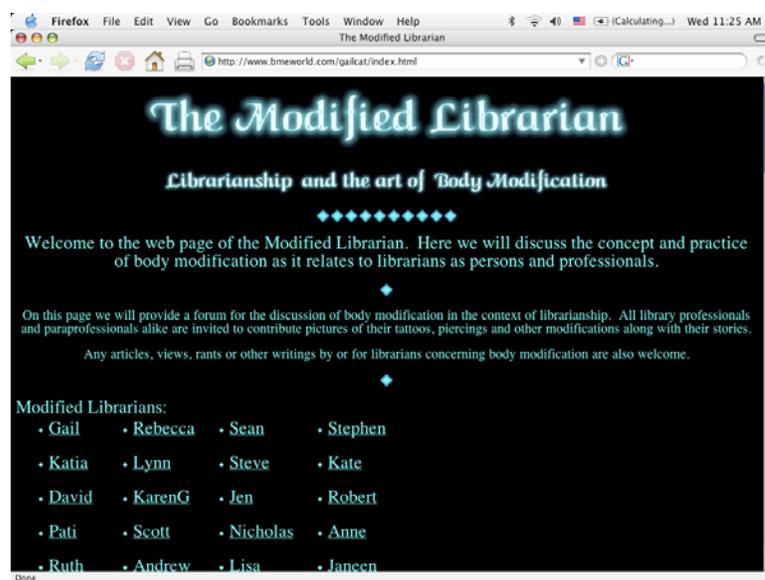
### The Lipstick Librarian



The website featuring the Lipstick Librarian combats the stereotype in a different manner by taking the stereotype to an extreme that is clearly meant to be a joke. This website shows that librarians are not necessarily preoccupied with rules, at least when it comes to fashion and that they can have fun while laughing at their own image. The humorous nature of the website exhibits a certain amount of vigor in that these librarians want to prove that they are not the stereotypical librarian featured in the media or the past. Clearly the librarians who compiled this website have a sizeable imagination, one that completely contradicts the lack of imagination mentioned in Douglass' stereotype.

Overall, the theme of the website is fashion advice for librarians, though none of the advice should be taken as seriously as the website states. The main goal appears to be to take the stereotype to such an extreme that people will realize that few librarians fit the stereotype perfectly, if at all.

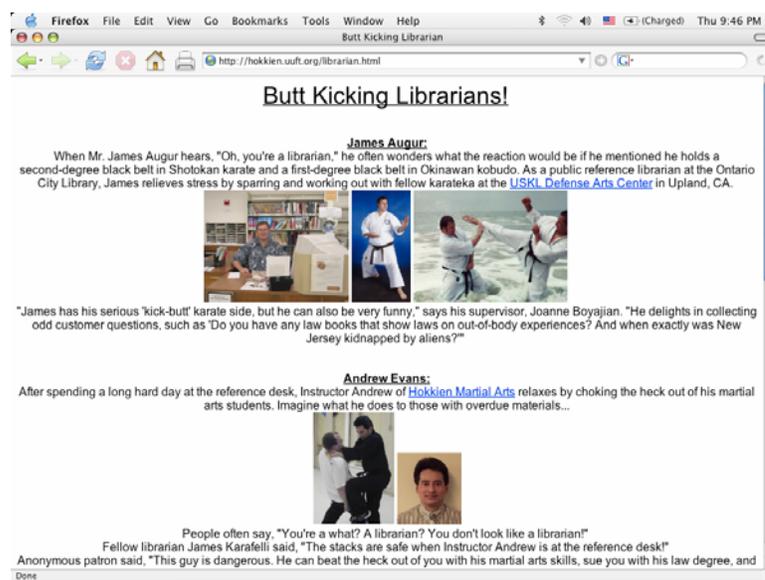
### The Modified Librarian



As a website that features librarians with various forms of body modifications, primarily tattoos and piercings, these librarians clearly do not conform to the stereotype. Each name seen on the website leads to pictures of that librarian's body modifications, along with the pictures, a description or explanation of the body modifications is also included. The librarians featured are clearly not inhibited, and do not conform to society, they are happy to be themselves and to behave in a manner that society does not expect. Modifying one's body also shows that these librarians have self-confidence, a characteristic that according to the stereotype they should lack.

The website also features several “rants” from modified librarians which show that librarians can indeed be argumentative, at least outside the work environment if given a reason to be. In this case the librarians argue that there is nothing wrong with their body modifications and that they have absolutely no affect on their ability to be a good librarian however much their supervisors wish they did.

## Butt Kicking Librarians



Although the stereotype components do not specifically mention the sex of the librarian, it is well known that the stereotypical librarian is usually female, and as such the librarians featured on this website contradict the stereotype simply because they are men. The librarians featured here are called “butt kicking librarians” because they practice karate, and in most cases are advanced practitioners. Practicing karate shows that these librarians have a certain amount of vigor which is unexpected according to the stereotype.

The practice of karate demonstrates that they have leadership qualities in that they have shown responsibility for their craft. In addition, at least one of these librarians is a karate instructor, and as such is a leader. Karate also seems to require an amount of social behavior, particularly because these librarians either take or teach classes due to their advanced level. These librarians clearly do not demonstrate “non-social attitudes and behavior” (Douglass, 1957 as quoted in Wilson 1982, 9). From the text and photographs on the website, these male librarians perform many of the same tasks as the librarians featured on other websites, and also are not trying to completely escape the stereotype.

## The Laughing Librarian



The website for the Laughing Librarian was originally created to show that librarians have a sense of humor and that they can laugh at themselves. Much of the humor featured on this website is library humor that those unassociated or unfamiliar with the workings of a library are not as likely to find amusing. However, for those familiar with libraries the postings of this website are quite humorous. The humor is

often based on daily occurrences. One of the more recent postings involves unfortunate acronyms at the library, a public library had a children's knitting group called "Kiddies Knitting for Kitties" or the "KKK," and the acronym upset a number of people.

The format of this website is a blog, which is updated on a fairly regular basis. As a blog, it is meant for interaction. The owner of the blog makes the original post, but readers can comment and can respond to one another. Although the social behavior may not be in its traditional face-to-face form, this site clearly tries to bring together librarians to discuss issues. Many of the humorous postings on this website bring up real library issues.

## Librarian Avengers

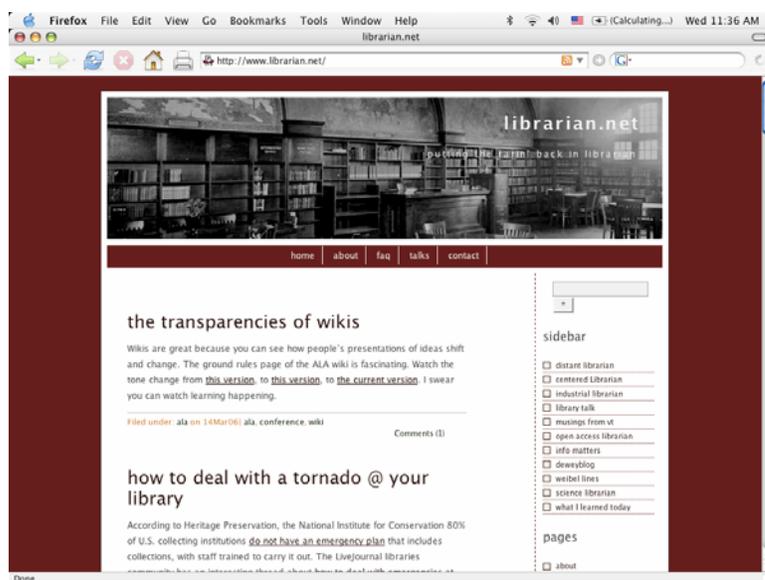


The website for Librarian Avengers is also a personal blog, created by a librarian, which discusses mostly issues associated with the field of librarianship. As a blog, it is a medium that seeks to encourage interaction and demonstrated social behavior. One of the posts on the website mentions trying to put together a meeting of librarians on an

upcoming trip. Librarians do socialize, although in this case it is with others in the profession.

Some of the postings also show that librarians are not strictly “bookish” creatures, and that we enjoy other activities. While one post on this website mentions an enjoyment of video games, many posts are book/reading related. In addition, several posts on the website show that at least this librarian is not politically conservative. This blog also includes complaints of a personal and professional nature; clearly not all librarians are uncomplaining.

## Librarian.net



Another personal blog, this is the least humorous of the three blogs, and is more issue based. As a blog that appears to encourage communication between the author and the readers, social behavior is demonstrated. Although this communication does take place over the internet the interaction between human beings still occurs. The author shows qualities of leadership in that she posts information that will be helpful to other

libraries and librarians. By doing so, she is placed in somewhat of a leadership role because other libraries and librarians may follow these suggestions or adapt them for used in their library.

Although this website does demonstrate some characteristics that seems to contradict the stereotype, there does not seem to be a conscious effort toward escaping the stereotype. The fact that most of the postings relate to serious library issues demonstrates that libraries are important to her, and that the author is dedicated to encouraging libraries and librarians to do their best to assist the people they serve.

## Warrior Librarian Weekly



The website for the Warrior Librarian demonstrated numerous characteristics that contradict the librarian stereotype, and does so through fictitious new stories. By examining numerous issues of the Warrior Librarian it is clear that these fictitious stories do bring to light real library problems, such as budgets and administration. By bringing real issues to light, the Warrior Librarian Weekly shows that librarians do care a great

deal about the issues that will affect them and the work they do. The site is designed to make the reader laugh and does so quite well.

On this website, librarians are warriors and not the timid, shy creatures of the stereotype. These librarians are argumentative and unafraid of speaking their mind. Free speech is encouraged and demonstrated. By encouraging free speech the website and its author show qualities of leadership. The website encourages librarians to voice their opinions and to not only have strong convictions but to act on them as well. The opinions expressed on this website are clearly not conservative, and could be offensive to some, however they do contradict the idea that librarians always demonstrate “traditional attitudes and behavior” (Douglass as quoted in Wilson).

## Conclusion

All of the websites analyzed contain characteristics that suggest librarians are trying to escape their stereotypical image using the World Wide Web, however the fact that the websites also connect librarians to the stereotype suggest that they do not wish to escape it entirely. The librarians that created these websites may practice belly dancing, have tattoos and piercings, practice karate, have a sense of humor, and encourage librarians to be outspoken, but they still strongly identify themselves as librarians. In putting themselves on the World Wide Web, these librarians are not trying to say that librarians do not fit the traditional stereotype, they are saying that each librarian is *more* than the stereotype.

Being a librarian is a profession, and many professions have stereotypes. In putting themselves on the World Wide Web, these librarians have not said that the stereotype is entirely wrong. They have simply put out the message that they are individuals who have been placed in a group based on their profession. The goal of these websites appears to be to remind the public that librarians are more than a profession and that it is made up of different individuals who may or may not fit the traditional stereotype in different ways.

The World Wide Web has provided a platform that facilitates open discussion of various ideas and allows for individual expression unlike any medium before.

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## Appendix A. Websites Used

The Bellydancing Librarian:	<a href="http://www.sonic.net/~erisw/bdlib.html">http://www.sonic.net/~erisw/bdlib.html</a>
The Lipstick Librarian:	<a href="http://www.lipsticklibrarian.com/">http://www.lipsticklibrarian.com/</a>
The Modified Librarian:	<a href="http://www.bmeworld.com/gailcat/index.html">http://www.bmeworld.com/gailcat/index.html</a>
Butt Kicking Librarians:	<a href="http://hokkien.uuft.org/librarian.html">http://hokkien.uuft.org/librarian.html</a>
The Laughing Librarian:	<a href="http://www.laughinglibrarian.com/">http://www.laughinglibrarian.com/</a>
Librarian Avengers:	<a href="http://www.librarianavengers.org/">http://www.librarianavengers.org/</a>
Librarian.net:	<a href="http://www.librarian.net/">http://www.librarian.net/</a>
Warrior Librarian Weekly:	<a href="http://www.warriorlibrarian.com/">http://www.warriorlibrarian.com/</a>

## Appendix B. Website Images

## The Bellydancing Librarian

Firefox File Edit View Go Bookmarks Tools Window Help ⌘ 📶 🔊 🇺🇸 🔋 (Charged) Mon 7:13 PM

The Bellydancing Librarian

http://www.sonic.net/~erisw/bdlib.html

By day, she toils as a dedicated information professional...

by night, she shimmies to the music of the ney, dumbek, and oud...

# the Bellydancing Librarian



Our dedicated Info Pro spends her days in sensible footwear, assisting her clients with a multiplicity of information needs. Cataloging books, searching online databases, fixing printer jams, teaching people how to use indices, and explaining why everything knowable is not yet on the Internet are among her many tasks.

But man -- and woman -- do not live by information alone. At night, our gal trades her Birkenstocks for beads and serves her adoring public's entertainment needs with the music and dance of the Middle East.



Stereotypes abound regarding both of the Bellydancing Librarian's professions. Our heroine does not, you will notice, wear her hair in a bun; indeed, she has never met a librarian who does so! And why, she wonders, do people think it a compliment to remark, upon learning her profession, "But you don't LOOK like a librarian!" In actuality, librarians run the fashion gamut, from power suits with Italian shoes to hippie skirts with Birkenstocks to bright blue dreadlocks with multiple facial piercings.

Most librarians are fierce defenders of Free Speech and the First Amendment. We do not spend our days shushing people and dusting books! Public librarians toil to provide free information access to all citizens in the most democratic of institutions. Medical librarians provide physicians with information that may save lives, while corporate librarians help their companies' bottom line by providing competitive intelligence to marketing executives and R&D.

[http://servedby.advertising.com/click/site=0000713038/mnum=0000315276/genr=1/tkdt=B0P0R1T0/cstr=48093426=\\_4403956f,4876355269,713038^315276,1\\_/bnum=4809...](http://servedby.advertising.com/click/site=0000713038/mnum=0000315276/genr=1/tkdt=B0P0R1T0/cstr=48093426=_4403956f,4876355269,713038^315276,1_/bnum=4809...)

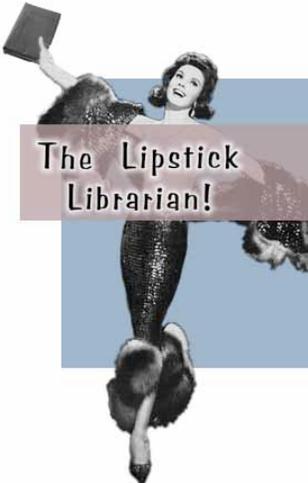
## The Lipstick Librarian

Firefox File Edit View Go Bookmarks Tools Window Help Thu 9:53 PM  
The Lipstick Librarian!

http://www.lipsticklibrarian.com/

She's *Bold!!*  
She's *Sassy!!*  
She's *Helpful!!*  
  
*She's ...*

"Who's [Orlando Bloom??](#)" --Michael Gorman  
"It's big in Cuba!" -- *The Friends of Cuban Librarians*  
"We think the blog is a cop-out" --College & Research Libraries



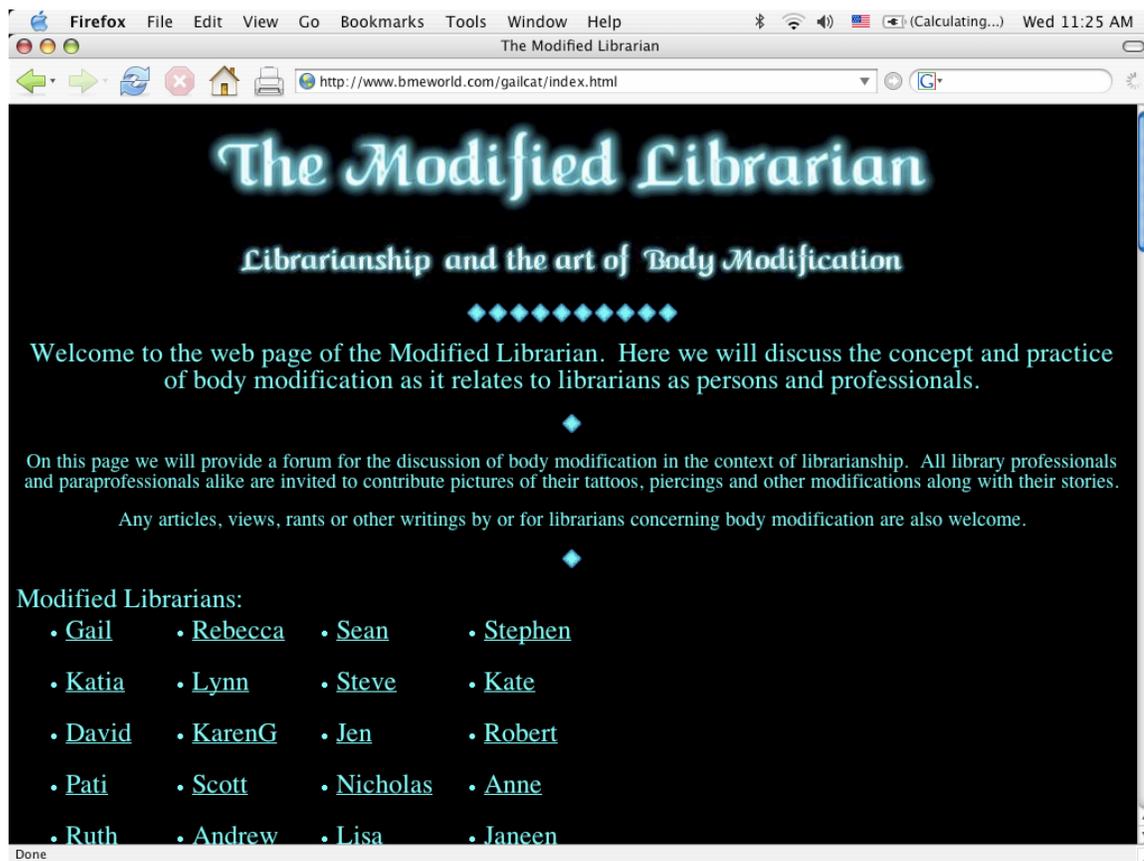
**The Lipstick Librarian!**

**\*Psst\*--wanna read about [the days and nights of the LL?](#)**  
**You've seen the website -- now buy the [t-shirt](#) and [selected LL paraphernalia!](#)**

 Beauty Tips!  
 Bibliography

Done

## The Modified Librarian



The screenshot shows a Firefox browser window with the address bar displaying <http://www.bmeworld.com/gailcat/index.html>. The page content is as follows:

# The Modified Librarian

## Librarianship and the art of Body Modification

◆◆◆◆◆◆◆◆◆◆

Welcome to the web page of the Modified Librarian. Here we will discuss the concept and practice of body modification as it relates to librarians as persons and professionals.

◆

On this page we will provide a forum for the discussion of body modification in the context of librarianship. All library professionals and paraprofessionals alike are invited to contribute pictures of their tattoos, piercings and other modifications along with their stories.

Any articles, views, rants or other writings by or for librarians concerning body modification are also welcome.

◆

Modified Librarians:

- [Gail](#)
- [Rebecca](#)
- [Sean](#)
- [Stephen](#)
- [Katia](#)
- [Lynn](#)
- [Steve](#)
- [Kate](#)
- [David](#)
- [KarenG](#)
- [Jen](#)
- [Robert](#)
- [Pati](#)
- [Scott](#)
- [Nicholas](#)
- [Anne](#)
- [Ruth](#)
- [Andrew](#)
- [Lisa](#)
- [Janeen](#)

Done

# Butt Kicking Librarians

Firefox File Edit View Go Bookmarks Tools Window Help  
 Butt Kicking Librarian  
 http://hokkien.uuft.org/librarian.html Thu 9:46 PM

## Butt Kicking Librarians!

**James Augur:**

When Mr. James Augur hears, "Oh, you're a librarian," he often wonders what the reaction would be if he mentioned he holds a second-degree black belt in Shotokan karate and a first-degree black belt in Okinawan kobudo. As a public reference librarian at the Ontario City Library, James relieves stress by sparring and working out with fellow karateka at the [USKL Defense Arts Center](#) in Upland, CA.





"James has his serious 'kick-butt' karate side, but he can also be very funny," says his supervisor, Joanne Boyajian. "He delights in collecting odd customer questions, such as 'Do you have any law books that show laws on out-of-body experiences? And when exactly was New Jersey kidnapped by aliens?'"

**Andrew Evans:**

After spending a long hard day at the reference desk, Instructor Andrew of [Hokkien Martial Arts](#) relaxes by choking the heck out of his martial arts students. Imagine what he does to those with overdue materials...




People often say, "You're a what? A librarian? You don't look like a librarian!"  
 Fellow librarian James Karafelli said, "The stacks are safe when Instructor Andrew is at the reference desk!"  
 Anonymous patron said, "This guy is dangerous. He can beat the heck out of you with his martial arts skills, sue you with his law degree, and

Done

# The Laughing Librarian

The screenshot shows a Firefox browser window with the address bar containing 'http://www.laughinglibrarian.com/'. The website has a green and blue color scheme. At the top, the title 'the laughing librarian' is written in a cursive font, with 'Library Humor & Stuff' underneath and a cartoon character of a laughing man's face to the right. A navigation bar below the title contains links for 'BibDitties', 'Stories4Boys', 'ZenLibrarian', 'LibSigs', 'Links', and 'JunkBox'. The main content area is dated '23 February 2006' and features a post titled 'BOOTYBRARIAN: GET IT RIGHT, GET IT TIGHT.' with a small image of a woman and text about a video for the 'new Bubba Sparxxx song'. To the right, there is a 'Feeds' section with 'Atom' and 'RSS 2.0' options, a 'Contact:' section with an 'Email' link, and a 'Search:' section with a 'Google' search box and a 'Search Us!' button. A warning box at the top right states: 'WARNING: This site includes words, images, and links that might ruin your life forever.' A small advertisement for 'the librarium.com shop' is also visible.

Waiting for www.laughinglibrarian.com...

# Librarian Avengers

Librarianship and Life and Links and SxSw 14 Mar 2006 06:09 pm

**SXSW antics, continued**

My ex-professor and information architecture guru Peter Morville is in town promoting his new O'Reilly book, *Ambient Findability*, which I'm going to buy and review, whether you like it or not. For all you digital librarians out there, he had a slide showing some attractive ladies that was meant to illustrate how metadata is sexy these days. Not exactly librarian strippers, but better than nothing.

I also caught the end of the web comics panel, which was so popular I ended up enjoying it from the floor in the back. Bill Barnes from *Unshelved* was talking about the future of his comic, and how webcomics can become financially self-sustaining. I recommend everyone buy his books **RIGHT NOW**. Bill also showed up at one of the parties in his library FBI jacket, wowing the geeks.

I met one of my favorite writers, Heather Armstrong from *Dooce.com* at a local coffeehouse along with fifty of my fellow slathering idiots. Heather was, of course, funny, kind and gracious. I was, of course, a big dork. Meeting your favorite blogger is an inherently awkward social situation. But not as awkward as last year when Chris' mom asked us why we haven't gotten married yet. In front of three of my coworkers. Several times. Really loud.

**ABOUT THE SITE:**  
Thwart not the Librarian.

**PAGES:**  
Home  
About  
Contact  
FAQ  
Schlock  
Worship

**CATEGORIES:**  
Books (8)  
Librarianship (20)  
Life (27)  
Wrath (3)  
Library school (4)  
Interface design (5)  
Film (4)  
Avenging (22)  
Comics (3)

Done

## Librarian.net

Firefox File Edit View Go Bookmarks Tools Window Help (Calculating...) Wed 11:36 AM  
librarian.net  
http://www.librarian.net/

librarian.net  
putting the fun back in librarian

home | about | faq | talks | contact

## the transparencies of wikis

Wikis are great because you can see how people's presentations of ideas shift and change. The ground rules page of the ALA wiki is fascinating. Watch the tone change from [this version](#), to [this version](#), to [the current version](#). I swear you can watch learning happening.

Filed under: ala on 14Mar06 | ala, conference, wiki

Comments (1)

## how to deal with a tornado @ your library

According to Heritage Preservation, the National Institute for Conservation 80% of U.S. collecting institutions do not have an emergency plan that includes collections, with staff trained to carry it out. The LiveJournal libraries community has an interesting thread about how to deal with emergencies at

sidebar

- distant librarian
- centered Librarian
- industrial librarian
- library talk
- musings from vt
- open access librarian
- info matters
- deweyblog
- weibel lines
- science librarian
- what I learned today

pages

- about

Done

## Warrior Librarian Weekly

Firefox File Edit View Go Bookmarks Tools Window Help (Calculating...) Wed 11:40 AM  
Warrior Librarian Weekly: Issue #228 - March 2006 Late Edition  
http://www.warriorlibrarian.com/



# Warrior Librarian

ISSN1445-9124 ————— Price: Within Budget

Over 200 pages of original library humor!

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## Issue #228: March 2006 Late Edition

**Warrior Librarian Weekly**

Do not attempt to read this journal whilst operating heavy machinery or prior to undergoing major surgery. It is not intended for younger readers, or those suffering from Humor Deficit Disorder. If you require any assistance in decoding the sub-text, you may need to consult a mental health-care professional.

**WARNING!**  
READ DISCLAIMER

**NEW BOOKS**



**WLW PRODUCTS**

### A WARRIOR LIBRARIAN EXCLUSIVE

## Swimming legend drowns under library politics



The rapid decline in health of Australian sporting icon Ian Thorpe has shocked the athletics world. Although his withdrawal from the Commonwealth Games has been officially blamed on a bout of bronchitis, his recent involvement in library politics is a more likely cause for his condition - fatigue, depression and lethargy.

Only a few days had elapsed since Thorpe launched the new Australian Reading Challenge, leaving Thorpe looking and feeling like heck. Or worse.

The Challenge aims at promoting reading whilst raising book-purchasing funds to address literacy deficiencies.

Apart from his significant medal tally from various competitions, the production of his own range of signature clothing, and a few other minor notable achievements, Thorpe nearly achieved true immortality.

### EDITORIAL SOAPBOX

**Give me a break!**



If one more person lapses into raptures over ['the I word'](#), bases a keynote on the topic, or uses it as an excuse for anything from blowing their nose to going to lunch, the time will be ripe to introduce Justifiable Homicide into the Australian Legal System.

Whilst it seems OK for the suits to embrace the *concept*, it would appear to actually move beyond the rhetoric requires more than a mere hint of risk-taking. Real guts, in fact.

And this has nothing at all to do with the brilliant proposal that was made three weeks ago, where "the implications are still being considered". OK, it does. Whatever.

Done