

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF ACADEMIC LIBRARIANS:
A PHENOMENOLOGICAL STUDY OF MEANINGFUL AND TRANSFORMATIONAL
EXPERIENCES

A Dissertation

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the
Degree of Doctorate of Philosophy

with a

Major in Education

In the

College of Graduate Studies

University of Idaho

by

Ramirose I. Attebury

Major Professor: Allen Kitchel, Ph.D.

Committee Members: Michael Kroth, Ph.D., Laura Holyoke, Ph.D., Thia Kaag, Ph.D.

Department Administrator: Kathy Canfield-Davis

December 2016

Authorization to Submit Dissertation

This dissertation of Ramirose Attebury, submitted for the degree of Doctorate of Philosophy with a Major in Education and titled “Professional Development of Academic Librarians: A Phenomenological Study of Meaningful and Transformational Experiences,” has been reviewed in final form. Permission, as indicated by the signatures and dates below, is now granted to submit final copies to the College of Graduate Studies for approval.

Major Professor:

_____ Date: _____

Allen Kitchel, Ph.D.

Committee Members:

_____ Date: _____

Laura Holyoke, Ph.D.

_____ Date: _____

Thia Kaag, Ph.D.

_____ Date: _____

Michael Kroth, Ph.D.

Department

Administrator: _____ Date: _____

Kathy Canfield-Davis, Ph.D.

Abstract

Changes in the academic library landscape necessitate continual professional development for academic librarians. Shifting technologies, data formats, and patron needs have led to emerging and varied tracks of librarianship, a trend which requires librarians to seek out methods for keeping current in the profession. The library literature offers a plethora of advice about how to keep skills and knowledge up-to-date in this rapidly changing environment. Yet few large-scale studies have sought to identify the experiences of academic librarians as they seek out and participate in professional development that they consider to be especially meaningful or transformational to their careers as librarians.

This study uses a hermeneutic phenomenological approach to understand the essences of meaningful and transformational professional development experiences as identified by academic librarians themselves. In it, ten participants discuss their experiences with professional development activities that they believe had a meaningful or transformational impact on themselves and their careers. These experiences are analyzed for common themes that may help those interested in professional development understand the essence of meaningful or transformational activities.

Themes that emerge powerfully from the participants' stories include duration and interaction, reflection, discomfort, self-awareness, impact on practice, and sharing. In addition, participants discuss heavily issues of motivation, library administration, gaps in library school preparation, negative professional development, and barriers to participation. Together, these themes help to capture some of the essence of meaningful and transformational professional development experienced by academic librarians.

Acknowledgements

I believe strongly in the benefits of lifelong learning, and I would like to acknowledge that this degree is not only the culmination of nineteen years of formal college, but also a product of countless hours of informal life lessons. I also see it as a springboard to endless hours of additional learning, both formal and informal, in future years. I would like to acknowledge the following individuals for their help and assistance over the years:

-Nancy and Rich Attebury, my parents, both teachers, who helped me learn to read before I ever set foot in a kindergarten classroom and who read countless school assignments, and finally this dissertation, before I submitted them all to my professors (and who also offered to help support me financially as long I stayed in school – I suspect they did not realize how long I would keep going and going and going.)

-Neil Marzolf, my husband and “bestest” friend, who constantly asked me how the “diss” was going, ensuring I would not quit or procrastinate, and who read through all its drafts.

-Max, Roseletta, Mason, and Dorris, my children, whose own current educational endeavors inspire me to keep learning as well.

-My committee members, Dr. Michael Kroth, Dr. Laura Holyoke, and Dr. Thia Kaag, and especially my adviser Dr. Allen Kitchel, for the feedback and support over years of classwork and throughout this final dissertation study.

-Dr. Lynn Baird, Dean of the University Library, for encouraging me to apply for, undertake, and finally finish, this Ph.D. program.

-All of my colleagues at the University of Idaho Library for providing feedback and collaborating with me on various research projects over the years.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Authorization to Submit Dissertation.....	ii
Abstract	iii
Acknowledgements	iv
Table of Contents	v
List of Tables.....	viii
CHAPTER ONE: Introduction.....	1
Background for Study	1
Researcher Background.....	2
Academic Libraries and Change	6
Library School Overview	9
Guiding Questions	11
Significance of Study	14
Theoretical Framework	15
Library Theory	18
Theories Used in This Study	21
Assumptions	22
CHAPTER TWO: Literature Review	25
Methods and Databases	26
Adult Education.....	26
Andragogy	27
Meaningfulness	29
Motivation	31
Transformational Learning.....	32
Reflection	34
Communities of Practice	37
Sustained interaction	39
Relationship of Adult Education Concepts to Each Other	40
Professional Development in Academic Libraries	41
ACRL Guidelines on Professional Development.....	42
Library Literature Related to Professional Development	43

Andragogy in Library Professional Development Literature.....	45
Meaningfulness and Motivation in Library Literature	46
Transformational Learning in Library Professional Development	47
Reflection in Library Professional Development.....	50
Communities of Practice in Library Professional Development.....	53
Summary of Literature Review	54
CHAPTER 3: Methodology	56
Methodology	57
Qualitative Research	58
Phenomenology.....	60
Methodological Rationale for Hermeneutic Phenomenology.....	61
Methods.....	65
Data Collection.....	66
Data Analysis	74
Rigor.....	85
CHAPTER 4: Results of Initial Survey and Participant Profiles	93
Initial Survey Results	94
Participant Profiles	98
Carol W.	101
Susann J.....	102
Pauleen K.	104
Jeffrey M.	107
Robert J.	109
Paige K.	112
Josefina B.	113
Kathleen G.....	115
Nathan T.....	117
Hazel C.....	119
Summary of Participant Profiles	120
CHAPTER 5: Results of Basic and Meaningful Themes.....	122
Participants' Professional Development Activity	122

Support for Meaningful/Transformational Professional Development.....	123
Essence of Meaningful/Transformational Professional Development.....	140
Summary of Results	205
CHAPTER 6: Interpretation and Implications of Themes	208
Supporting Themes	209
Library School.....	209
Attitude toward Professional Development	211
Negative Professional Development	213
Barriers	214
Administrative Aspects	215
Meaningful/Transformational Themes.....	217
Motivation	221
Duration and Interaction.....	223
Reflection	225
Discomfort.....	228
Self-Awareness.....	231
Impact on Practice.....	233
Sharing	235
CHAPTER 7: Conclusion	238
Summary of Study.....	239
Recommendations	242
Future Research.....	244
Personal Impact of Study	245
REFERENCES	249
Appendix A: Institutional Review Certification	282
Appendix B: Interview Questions	288
Appendix C: Definition of Codes.....	291

List of Tables

Table 1: Participant Demographics	99
Table 2: Codes Associated with Professional Development by Participants	206
Table 3: Participant Descriptions of Good Professional Development.....	219
Table 4: Participant Descriptions of Meaningful Professional Development.....	220
Table 5: Participant Descriptions of Transformational Professional Development.....	221

CHAPTER ONE: Introduction

Background for Study

The need for professional development of academic librarians stems from both a rapidly changing library environment and from the impossibility of pre-professional education covering the myriad of concepts and skills librarians need to succeed in the field. The Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL), the major worldwide professional organization for academic librarians, cites technological changes, growth of diverse patron populations, and changing needs of end users as reasons that professional development is a constant requirement for committed librarians (ACRL Professional Development Committee, 2000). Although professional librarians must typically undertake two years of graduate education in order to qualify for their careers, the changes mentioned by ACRL render many of the skills gained during that two-year period outdated shortly after graduation, further solidifying the need for continuous professional development.

Library science literature makes clear that the need for professional development among academic librarians is well understood by those in the profession; however, the methods and best practices of implementing professional development, as well as what constitutes professional development in the first place, are less clear. Although the literature contains numerous examples of and suggestions for professional development activities and a number of anecdotal tales of success, many works contain few to no references to education theories and fewer still look at professional development activities in the light of adult education concepts or with regard to what librarians themselves consider to be meaningful or transformational professional development. A thorough review of the literature found very little related to the experiences of academic librarians as they make choices about which

professional development activities to pursue and what characteristics of those activities librarians perceive to be meaningful or even transformational. This study is an attempt to understand those experiences.

The phrase “professional development” is used in a variety of contexts and to describe a variety of activities within the field of library and information science. For the sake of this dissertation, a broad explanation of what the phrase entails is drawn from librarians Auster and Chan (2004):

Professional development activities can be characterized as formal or informal types of activities. Formal activities include courses and workshops offered in-house, by educational institutions, or by professional associations. Informal activities include attending conferences, discussions with colleagues, participating in e-mail discussion lists, reading the professional literature, and pursuing self-directed projects.

In the context of this study, any of type of formal or informal activity may be considered professional development. This broad conception of professional development is embraced because it allows study participants the ability to define the phrase as they see fit in their own experiences.

Researcher Background

My interest in professional development of academic librarians stems from my own work in the library profession. In addition to the education theories that frame this study, my own experiences have helped in the development of its topic and design. Ironically, I began my graduate education in library science because I had a fear of research. After initially entering a graduate program in linguistics, I withdrew my second semester due to my own, undoubtedly unfounded, concern that I could not possibly write a thesis. I did not know what topics were

of interest to me or needed in the field, and more problematically I did not know how to find out. Limited advising combined with a feeling of being overwhelmed by the size of a final research project led me to seek other career options.

After stints as a cashier, substitute teacher, and legal secretary, none of which promised much opportunity for advancement or continuing education, I realized that I needed to return to graduate school. Fears about research on the scale of a thesis still lingered, however, and contributed in large part to my decision to pursue a master's degree in library and information science, a program for which no thesis or final project was required. Thirty-six credit hours later, I had a degree in hand with course work in children's and young adult literature, a good selection of classes for gaining a school library media specialist position.

But several unexpected things happened. Feelings of not living up to my potential by choosing a degree based on how easy I perceived it to be, a maturing desire to prove that I really could do things that scared me, confidence gained through my library coursework about searching for and using information, a genuine fondness for life on a college campus, and an advertisement at the back of *American Libraries* inspired a new course of action. Instead of applying for jobs as a media specialist, I applied for a post-MLS assistantship at a rural northwestern university library. The unique program allowed participants to work as graduate assistants in the university's library, performing professional entry-level tasks, while at the same time completing a master's program of my choosing. Accepted into the program, I opted to pursue a master's degree in history, choosing and ultimately completing, the thesis option.

Several years later the experience resulted in obtaining a tenure-track position as an academic reference and instruction librarian at a land-grant university. Within five years I gained responsibilities as the coordinator of government documents and the manager of the

College of Education's curriculum library. Tenure-track librarians need to engage in scholarly publishing as well as professional development activities. Unfortunately, little in my library school experience formally prepared me for either activity. Certainly, writing a thesis for a Master of Arts degree helped with the writing requirements of the job, but I still had little experience writing in the field of library and information science and even less with the world of scholarly publishing. From conversations with my new colleagues, I learned that they too felt unsure of how to effectively conduct and publish research. I suspect that they had "research" classes in their library programs similar to mine, a class in which the "research" consisted of creating an Excel spreadsheet for the professor and searching a range of library catalogs to determine which public libraries had a certain number of Spanish-language children's materials. Whatever happened to the data we gathered, I do not know, for the short online summer course did not cover post-data collection activities in the research process.

The requirement of participating in professional development activities seemed easier than the publishing requirement in my new position, but even on this front I noticed challenges. One of the first activities my new colleagues and I undertook was to create a research-based community of practice with the intent of improving research skills and sharing our own research attempts. The group seemed to work well at first with participation from nearly all faculty in the library (Henrich & Attebury, 2010). However, after three years, members felt they had not gotten enough out of the group for the amount of time it required. Several reasons for the decline of the group exist, one of which was that group members did not feel the learning that was taking place during meetings was personally meaningful or useful (Attebury, et al., 2013).

In addition to participating in the community of practice, I found myself trying many professional development activities during my first six years at the institution. While I have always enjoyed learning about new things, I began to realize that my own professional development choices were at times haphazard or even unhelpful. Attendance at conferences, webinars, and training sessions, while often a nice diversion from some of the more routine duties of a librarian, does not guarantee that attendees will find meaning from the information presented. My own choices for selecting professional development activities have, in hindsight, sometimes been weak. Convenient timing, low cost, ease of format, or pure personal interest are not necessarily horrible reasons for choosing professional development activities, but as I think about what my organization and I most need to keep up with changes in the library world, I realize that some of my selections have not been made as thoughtfully as they could have been. This realization on my part, due in no small measure to deliberate acts of reflection on the activities chosen, has contributed to my interest in this area and have led me to pursue this topic for my dissertation.

Although I have chosen this topic for further study, fully immersing myself in literature and experiences related to learning via professional development, I am still searching for what this means in my own career. I believe that the act of studying, reflecting on, and writing about this topic is in and of itself a course of action that demonstrates how undertaking professional development activities can lead to meaningful learning. While I had for several years contentedly been meeting the technical requirements for engaging in professional development as my position description required me to do, a gradual realization took place. Perhaps describable as Mezirow's "disorienting dilemma," I became uncomfortably conscious of the fact that several webinars, online conferences, and even in-person conference sessions I'd

attended, some with cost involved, had resulted in very little change in my own practice or thinking as a librarian.

While I am still continuing to explore how to choose professional development activities that lead to meaningful learning, I have come to the conclusion that, for myself at least and likely for many other librarians, long-term professional development seems to have a greater impact on my thinking and practice. Interacting with others to gain new ideas and perspectives likewise helps those ideas stick in my mind. In addition, specific time set aside for reflection is necessary. Developing a self-awareness of my own limitations and being willing to endure moments of discomfort as I combat those limitations are also important. More understanding is needed about how librarians choose and engage in professional development in order to make informed decisions about how best to implement it. It is my hope that this study, which asks academic librarians about their own meaningful professional development experiences, will help to elucidate some of the characteristics, or even the essence, of what meaningful professional development can look like.

Academic Libraries and Change

Change is a common theme in library literature, and changes in academic libraries stem from a variety of sources. According to the ACRL Research Planning and Review Committee (2012), data curation, digital preservation, information technology, mobile environments, e-book acquisition, scholarly communications, and shifting user expectations are cited as top issues of concern for academic libraries. Dale, Beard, and Holland (2011) cite the convergence of libraries, information technology, and media as a driving force for changes to service models provided by academic libraries. Vendor agreements, pricing models, copyright issues, and consortia partnerships also require librarians to constantly re-evaluate what can and should

be done to fulfill library missions. Thus technology and services found in academic libraries today look radically different from those seen a decade ago.

In addition to technological and fiscal changes, academic libraries also contend with changes to their parent institutions, and higher education has seen no shortage of change itself in recent years. Many libraries have attempted to integrate themselves into the educational fabric of their environment, but the growth of the internet and the rise of distance education have made this challenging for many libraries (Miller, Knapp, & Wood, 2007; Huwiler, 2015). Academic libraries now offer information literacy instruction to on-campus and off-campus classes, hold workshops on research tools, educate faculty about copyright and data management, engage in marketing and promotion of their services, and more. They also are expected to demonstrate their value through assessment measures and continual improvement. Still, the ubiquity of search engines and the mistaken notion that everything can be found online continuously challenge librarians to demonstrate their educational value in higher education.

Many of the changes taking place in higher education have brought about a shift in thinking about the nature of academic libraries. Miller, Knapp, & Wood (2007) and Mossop (2013), in books on managing change in academic libraries, insist that a shift in the worldview of librarianship is needed to survive the fundamental and transformative changes currently underway. Proponents of strategic change in academic libraries emphasize moving away from thinking about libraries as places of stored information toward places of education, learning, and collaboration (Franklin, 2012; Seal, 2015; Shapiro, 2016). Lankes (2011) notes that the traditional worldview of librarians includes a fixation on artifacts and the physical items in the building like books and CDs. He insists librarians must respond to the changing environment

by embracing “a new worldview of librarianship that transcends tools and even former missions like information organization...and maintaining recorded knowledge” and instead focuses on knowledge creation, which can be supported through conversations and interaction among librarians and patrons (p. 16.)

Changes to the work environment therefore mean that academic librarians must also change. Kreszock (1997) noted more than a decade ago that a “mindboggling” array of new skills would be needed by librarians in the years to come (p. 7). Dale, Beard, and Holland (2011) confirm that the changing roles of librarians have altered the skill set needed to effectively perform job duties. McGuigan (2012), who agrees that libraries need to move away from being in the “book and journal” business to being in the “information” business, recommends training and continuous organizational development as a means of doing this (p. 10). Describing a reorganization of his academic library, Michalak (2012) cites the critical need for a program of professional development to help manage change.

Although librarians promote professional development as a mechanism for responding to and preparing for changes in the profession, it is not always easy to identify the best approach. Fourie (2013) points out that even when librarians set aside time to learn new skills or about new technological products, they do not then leave time for reflecting on and then using their new knowledge. Factual knowledge may increase, but practices do not often change. In addition, increasing reliance on technology for professional development, whether in the form of asynchronous, distance education courses or via virtual conferences, workshops, or webinars runs the risk of limiting interaction with fellow learners (Witteveen, 2015), which as this study suggests appears to be an important component of meaningful professional development.

Library School Overview

The educational requirement for most professional librarian positions in the United States is one of the following: a Master's in Library Science (MLS), Master's in Library and Information Science (MLIS), Master's in Information Science (MIS), or less commonly MA in Library and Information Science. Nearly all professional positions also require that these degrees be from programs accredited by the American Library Association (ALA), the major professional body of librarians throughout the country. Yet, librarians have long debated the need for the MLS, MLIS, or MIS, with detractors of the degree citing the fact that on-the-job training can adequately prepare individuals for various professional positions (Wilson, 1984; Hawley, 1995; Milone Hill, 2008; Manley, 2012; Kelley, 2013; Simpson, 2014; Willey, 2014) and proponents arguing that instruction on library concepts like cataloging, database searching, and research methods and resources are valuable components of MLS degrees (Fiedler, 2003; Bittle, 2003).

Changes to the library environments in recent years have led to increased criticism of graduate library science programs (Dale, Beard, & Holland, 2011; Bertot & Sarin, 2015). Many programs have been critiqued for being out of touch with the real problems faced by those working in the field (Matarazo & Pearlstein, 2012). Calls for updates to the curriculum to meet changing needs suggest that not all library science programs have kept pace with those changes (Hall, 2009; Chow, et al., 2012; Cooke, 2012; Schmidt & Stephens, 2013; Bertot, Sarin, & Jaeger, 2015). Ghuman (2011) cites rapid changes in libraries as a reason that library science degrees become outdated after only a few years. Huckle (1999) estimated more than a decade ago that library science degrees have a shelf life of between three and five years. With regard to the technical skills gained in a library science program, such as knowledge of

specific databases or cataloging rules, this shelf-life estimate remains little changed today.

While touting MLS programs as places that can teach students to think about libraries as businesses, Bates (1998) nevertheless acknowledges that very little of her course work from 1982 serves any purpose in the modern library. In reviewing the history of the MLS degree, Swigger (2010) determined that the reasons put forth by the American Library Association for making the degree a requirement in the 1950s had not been sufficiently realized, and in fact, may actually be hampering development of the profession today.

Coursework in library programs often falls short of adequately addressing the skills needed for success in a modern academic library. Among those topics deemed lacking are data curation (Harris-Pierce, 2012), instruction and pedagogical foundations (Gilstrap, 2013; Walter, 2005; Walter, 2008; Lindsay & Baron, 2002), decision theory (Hines, 2012), learning theories (Lankes, 2011), educational technology (Riley-Huff & Rholes, 2011; Singh & Mehra, 2013; Sarin, Lindsay & Jaeger, 2015), access services (Krasulski, 2014), technical services (Mueller, Thompson & Valdes, 2015), and RDA cataloging (Tosaka & Park, 2014). Additionally, although some library science programs offer hands-on experience in the field, Berg, Hoffman, and Dawson (2009) note the challenges library school students have in finding useful field experiences prior to graduation. They further emphasize the lack of consensus in the profession about what constitutes a meaningful field experience, suggesting that even library science graduates who do undertake an internship or practicum may still not be fully qualified for entry-level positions.

Professional development has been recognized as a necessary requirement to get many recent library school graduates and new hires up to speed. The 2004 University Libraries Section of the ACRL biennial conference in Orlando saw four speakers all affirm the

importance of the MLS while also recognizing that education and training beyond it would be vital for librarians of the future (Madden & Thompson, 2004). Interviewing nine directors at libraries affiliated with the Association of Research Libraries, Mullins (2012) reported that all acknowledged the need for mentoring or professional development of new hires. Riley-Huff and Rholes (2011) found in a survey of academic library administrators that a large majority report supplementing technology skills of their librarians and staff members by supporting conferences, classes, webinars, and reading materials. Even librarians who do not fault library schools for failing to provide more than “basic qualifications” for students insist on the need for continual training once graduates have found a job (Luo, 2007, p. 15). As Kern (2015, p. 284) says:

The MLS is also not the end of learning as there are always new things to learn, and in a broad field, it isn't possible to learn everything that would be useful. . . . This is made clear through the innumerable “what I didn't learn in library school” articles and blog posts as well as the range and number of webinars, online short-courses, post-degree certifications, conference workshops, etc., offered by RUSA and other divisions of ALA as well as state library associations, LIS publishers, and others. . . . These trainings are not a substitute for the MLS but are a supplement for learning new areas or staying current.

Guiding Questions

Given the necessity of library professional development, studying professional development activities to gain a better understanding of them, with a goal of possibly improving them, is a worthy goal within the profession. To date many articles about professional development activities exist, yet many do little more than offer a “show-and-tell.” Additionally, many of the articles are written from the perspective of the providers or trainers,

and even those that contain evaluation components rarely delve deeply into the participants' perspectives on the training. In order to understand what types of activities participants themselves feel are meaningful, it is necessary to look at those activities from the viewpoint of the participants who chose and take part in them.

This study thus started with an explicitly stated goal: to try and understand participants' perspectives of the professional development activities they undertake with a specific emphasis on those activities they find meaningful. Once I identified this as my goal, I needed to craft questions designed to address it. Studies focusing on participant perspectives often rely on qualitative research methods, which tends to differ from quantitative research in that narrowly focused pre-determined research questions may not exist as a researcher embarks on his or her quest to understand a phenomenon. As I began the process of considering questions designed to help reach the study's goal, I kept in mind an overarching question suggested by Van Manen (1997): "What is the nature of this lived experience?" (p. 42).

Maxwell (1996) states that in qualitative research design, research questions should be flexible or even emerge after some of the research has taken place. Questions solidified too early in a study can lead to tunnel vision or the discarding of valuable pieces of information. While acknowledging that research questions require some sort of assumption about what data gathered might tell a researcher, Smith, Flowers & Larkin (2009) nevertheless describe such questions as "exploratory not explanatory," reflecting "process rather than outcome" (p. 47). Creswell (2007) similarly describes qualitative research questions as "open-ended, evolving, and non-directional (p. 107). As Gadamer (1975) says, "The essence of the question is the opening up, and keeping open, of possibilities" (p. 266). Because the participants' perspectives

that this study seeks to investigate were unknown to prior to the study taking place, I therefore initially crafted guiding and flexible rather than absolute research questions.

Maxwell (1996) and Smith, Flowers & Larkin (2009) suggests using experience, literature, and a theoretical base to develop guiding questions that frame a study. Such guiding questions can help to explain and clarify the phenomenon under investigation during the proposal and initial research stages. Flexible guiding questions also will influence a study's design, including choices about methodology and participant selection. As a starting point then, the following questions were proposed as initial guidance for this dissertation:

- What motivates academic librarians to choose some professional development activities over others?
- What characteristics of professional development do librarians perceive as contributing to meaningful learning?
- Were adult learning theories incorporated into the planning, implementation, and evaluation of the professional development activities?
- How do professional development experiences influence librarians' long-term and continued involvement with additional professional development?

While closely related to these questions, and undeniably driven by them, the final questions that this study ultimately answered are broader in nature. The above questions led to the creation of interview questions designed to gather data from participants. However, the direction taken by participants' responses required slight adjustments to these guiding questions as I prepared to delve deeper into their professional development experiences. A new, yet related, set of guiding questions emerged mid-way through the study between the first and second round of interviews done with participants. While still being guided by Van

Manen's ultimate focal question of understanding participants' meaningful professional development experiences, I began to seek out and formulate answers to the following questions:

- What common experiences do participants describe while discussing their ideal professional development experiences?
- What common experiences do participants describe while discussing professional development experiences that they perceive to have been especially meaningful or transformational? (This question ultimately serves to capture the essence of this study itself.)
- Are library professional development experiences that incorporate concepts from the field of adult education capable of fostering meaningful or transformational learning from the perspective of participants themselves?

Significance of Study

Given the rapid changes taking place in academic libraries and the doubts raised that library science schools will ever be able to fully prepare their students for the myriad skills needed in the field, professional development of academic librarians is and will continue to be a necessity. Although the library literature contains a considerable number of works offering advice and discussing strategies for professional development, librarians still point out the need for more research in this area. Fourie (2013) acknowledges references to some adult learning concepts in the library science literature but notes "it does not seem to feature very prominently with regard to the mentioned calls for change and development" (p. 173). Shepherd (2010) also points out the dearth of research pertaining to library professional development. Although some professional development studies include comprehensive details

of programs as well as assessment components, there is still a lack of formal studies that delve into the participant perspectives.

In a discussion of the value of qualitative research, and specifically phenomenology, Creswell (2007) states the importance of understanding a human experience in order to develop policies or practices surrounding it. This is not to say the goal of a qualitative study, including this one, is to distill unique any experience down to uniform policies. Rather, the goal is to understand the experiences of librarians making choices about and engaging in professional development activities, not to use this understanding to identify some “correct” solution to academic librarian professional development, but rather to use it as a basis for identifying thoughtful actions that may be taken toward developing policies to further enhance professional learning (Van Mann, 1990). Until the library profession knows more about how librarians make choices about professional development and about what components of professional development librarians feel contribute to a meaningful or even transformational experience, it will be difficult to take thoughtful actions for guiding the professional development activities.

Theoretical Framework

Although I have taken numerous graduate-level classes in the field of adult education, which have introduced me to a variety of educational theories and methods, as a librarian rather than a formal educator, I have sought to identify a theoretical foundation that made sense to the library and information science (LIS) field specifically. (I acknowledge there are those who would say a librarian is an educator first and foremost. However, I argue that few librarians are specifically trained in educational methods during their graduate programs, and there are also many library positions that have little to do with educating others. In addition, I

personally identify as a member of the library profession rather than solely as an educator.)

However, in spite of myriad peer-reviewed library journals, scholars in the field of library and information science have noted a significant lack of strong library-centric theories that describe and guide libraries, their activities, and their research (Benediktsson, 1989; Lynch, 1991; Lankes, 2011; Lor, 2014).

Further, even the close connection between librarianship and the field of education that exists in the form of information literacy instruction suffers from conflicting views about the use of theory. Not only are a multitude of theories suggested (not always mutually exclusively) for thinking about and teaching information literacy, but some librarians question the need for theory at all. Among the recent fusions of information literacy and theory have been genre theory, instructional design theories, and critical information literacy (Burkholder, 2010; Mullins, 2012; Tewell, 2015). Some scholars even see information literacy as a theory in its own right (Smith, 2015). More recently and controversially, an ACRL task force charged with updating the division's Information Literacy Standards for Higher Education infused an abundance of theory related to information literacy instruction, specifically basing their work on threshold concept theory (ACRL, 2015). Feedback from librarians nationwide reveals that some appreciate the use of theory to make sense of actual practice while other librarians see such an inclusion as unnecessary and jargon-heavy (Downey, 2015).

In addition, there are also theories that pertain to specific actions or activities that take place in libraries beyond information literacy instruction, which is only one aspect of librarianship. Examples include the use of interpersonal communication theory, contemporary practice theory, and sensemaking theory during reference encounters (Radford, 2001; Cavanagh, 2013; Kjærgaard & Vendelø, 2015) and the use of bibliometric or mathematical

approaches to the quantification of information, such as have been used in tracking publishing trends or database ranking results (Behnert & Lewandowski, 2015; Olmeda-Gómez, 2016). Information finding practices have been analyzed using approaches such as approximation theory (Chávez, et.al, 2015) while evaluation practices have made use of concepts like probability theory (Koppen, Phillips, & Papageorgiou, 2015). Likewise, the cataloging line of librarianship has given rise to its own theoretical debates regarding information access and arrangement, especially with regard to the recent development of Resource Description and Access (RDA) (Murray and Tillet, 2011; Kincy & Wood, 2012; Taniguchi, 2013; Bedford, 2015; Lee, 2015). An abundance of theory also exists within the archives and special collection branch of librarianship that is specific to that line of practice (Craig, 2005; Prom & Swain, 2008; Ridener, 2009; Berry, 2012).

A number of librarians have suggested using management and organizational theories to study various aspects of librarianship. With regard to library leadership and management approaches, McGuigan (2012) argues that classical organization theory can serve as a guide for library leaders of all types today, and he specifically highlights the schools of thought relating to human resources, open systems thinking, and organizational culture. Focusing on educational and social science aspects of business theories, Miller, Knapp, and Wood (2007) discuss libraries as learning organizations, which they believe could benefit from Peter Senge's work on organizational learning (1994). Additional examples include using organizational theories in researching innovation (Jantz, 2012), developing information commons (Beagle, 2012), library business operations (Lewis, 2014), decision-making (Somerville & Chatzipanagioutou, 2015). What the use of these myriad theories involved in LIS research suggests is that the members of the library profession tend to seek out theories

and frameworks applicable to the specific aspect of librarianship on which they focus their research, rather than using any over-arching library-centric theories that pertain to the profession as a whole.

Library theory. Just because many LIS researchers have made use of theories from outside the profession while investigating specific components of library work does not mean that calls for and attempts to create profession-wide theories have not been attempted within the field. One librarian who has tried to address library theory as an umbrella concept for the entire profession is Lankes. Lankes (2011) believes that in order to understand library work as a whole, the profession should look toward existing theories that help elucidate human nature itself. He specifically selects conversation theory as the foundation on which to base his “atlas,” a work designed to capture “the whole of librarianship” (p. 11). The theory, a concept originally developed by Gordon Pask in the 1970s, expresses the idea that learning takes place from conversations, which helps make knowledge about a subject explicit and salient in the minds of those conversing. Lankes asserts that the relevance of this particular theory is that it brings learning and knowledge to the front of librarianship’s mission and diminishes the traditional importance librarians have placed on discrete pieces of information and the artifacts that contain them. Rather, according to Lankes, in a world of changing information formats and needs, libraries must frame themselves as conversational education centers rather than warehouses of things.

Beyond solely making use of conversation theory, however, to understand librarianship an educational construct rather than physical place, Lankes further builds his atlas on conversational theory’s dialectic relatives. These relatives include a variety of theories that relate to the role of communication and the acquisition of knowledge. Among the theories he

considers appropriate for use in his endeavor are those that relate to sense-making, motivation, and learning. Within each of these are a multitude of narrower and more defined, named sub-theories, such as Speech Act Theory, Attribution Theory, or Self-Determination Theory for example. He does not offer a comprehensive list of all possible theories but rather leaves open the possibility that any number of theories from the realm of communication and learning may be applicable so long as they inform the profession in such a way as to make education and learning the focal point of the profession.

Underlying the use of informative theories from the broad field of education are two assumptions. The first is that learners actively construct meaning from their experiences. Constructivism suggests that learning cannot be imposed on individuals, but rather that individuals can take advantage of opportunities to learn given the right circumstances. It is the goal of librarianship to provide and enable these circumstances. The second assumption relates to postmodernism, a concept that suggests the existence of many truths and many ways of knowing. That truth and knowledge are relative makes way for those in the library profession to “emphasize individual action and interpretation” in their work (Lankes, 2011, p. 27). Constructivism and postmodernism allow librarians to “promote” and “shape conversations” as they strive to fulfill their educational mission (p. 28).

Lankes emphasizes that his goal is to understand the profession by way of dialectic learning theories rather than to make adjustments or refinements to the theories themselves. Theories are used to interpret and provide insight into the broad concept of librarianship. This study mirrors his approach by focusing primarily on the lived experiences of academic librarians as they participate in professional development experiences they deem meaningful. Theories related to communicative learning and education are used to make sense of these

experiences though the theories themselves are not the subject of analysis. However, by virtue of the insights provided from participants' experiences, this study does lend support to Lankes's claim that the profession as a whole should make use of education theories to understand its work.

Lankes offers the most recent and current attempt to understand librarianship as a whole; however, he is not the only librarian to have undertaken such a quest. Nearly three decades ago, Icelandic librarian Benediktsson (1989) lamented the lack of "epistemological or methodological weapons" in the field of LIS "which is still, after decades of soul searching, in a state of no-theory and is at a point of merging into an ocean empirical studies which attest to little or no practical value" (p. 202). To remedy this lack, he suggested phenomenology, and more specifically hermeneutics, as time-tested, well-regarded, social science approaches to research questions "organically applicable to LIS problems" (p. 202). Benediktsson does not identify phenomenology as a theory itself, but rather as "the right attitude in LIS research" to resolve the fact that the use of theory is limited throughout the field (p. 205). Instead, he identifies hermeneutical theory as a general theory of interpretation that should serve as a methodology for not just the social sciences but specifically for the LIS field.

Benediktsson deserves credit for trying to make the philosophical underpinnings of hermeneutical phenomenology accessible to the LIS field by describing its development alongside arguments as to why it should be used in answering LIS problems. Although he typically references the use of hermeneutical theory in the context of interpreters, namely librarians, explicating meaning from written texts that they collect, he nevertheless advocates for its use throughout the field to answer any question that contains a human element. Compatible with the concepts of constructivism and postmodernism as well as Lankes's

assertion that librarianship is a field of knowledge facilitation, hermeneutic phenomenology as a means of combatting a lack of theoretical development in library science provides a means to the end of characterizing and understanding issues in the profession.

Theories Used in This Study. If we view librarianship through a focal point of education and learning as does Lankes, it becomes apparent that library science is a social science. Therefore, theories from the social sciences that relate specifically to learning and knowledge creation are appropriate for use. In addition, given that workers in the library profession are all well-educated adults—the entry level degree requirement being a master’s degree—then ideas from the field of adult education are a natural fit for exploring how librarians approach and find meaning in professional development. However, as anyone who has studied adult education knows, there is a plethora of concepts and theories from which one could draw when attempting to conduct a study related to professional development.

When I first embarked upon this project, I had several assumptions about which types of theories might apply to my research questions. Certainly, broad concepts from the field such as andragogy and social learning seemed fitting. In addition, my coursework and professional library work had provided me with an introduction to other possibilities: transformational learning theory, communities of practice, social learning theory. To begin my work therefore, I began reading broadly about professional development and adult education. As I scoured the library science literature related to professional development, I sought out whether or not these concepts appeared, and if so, in what context. Nevertheless, I wanted to remain open to the possibility that I might be missing something that would be revealed as I began to gather and analyze data. Therefore, I believed then, and incidentally can still assert, that the broad theoretical framework that underlies this study is that of adult education. Along the way,

however, additional insights stemming from my literature review, methodological approach, and data have refined this framework to include additional concepts.

The concepts of andragogy, transformational learning, and communities of practice appear in some of the library literature related to professional development, and the concept of meaningfulness stems primarily from workforce and organizational learning fields. A concrete realization that social learning theories are applicable for understanding librarians' meaningful professional development experiences occurred during the first round of coding when it became apparent that the majority of those experiences as described by participants include some component of social interaction and learning from others. In addition, the long-term nature of participants' self-described meaningful activities led me to add the concept of sustained interaction, from the field of teacher education, into my conceptual framework as I further analyzed and interpreted the data.

Assumptions. Both McClure and Hernon (1991) and Powell and Connaway (2004) state the need for library and information science researchers to state the assumptions under which their study begins. McClure and Hernon remind readers that it is impossible to begin a study without some sort of assumptions forming a foundation. As already introduced, my first assumption comes from David Lankes *Atlas of New Librarianship*, which posits that the mission of libraries is “to improve society through facilitating knowledge creation in their communities” (p. 7). This broad assumption about the foundations of the profession accurately encompasses the myriad sub-goals of libraries and the activities that librarians undertake to achieve those goals. Whether describing shelves upon shelves of books, preservation of rare materials, technology-enabled dissemination of information, or information literacy-based teaching and learning, knowledge creation is at the heart of what libraries strive to achieve.

Following this is the assumption that librarians can and should strive for continual improvement through professional development in order to meet their mission of facilitating knowledge creation.

The notion of continual improvement leads to the assumption that professional development is vital to the work that academic librarians do every day; that this study is being undertaken testifies to the assumption that professional development choices should be made carefully with a goal of acquiring meaningful knowledge that will benefit both patrons and the profession. That's not to say that I disavow that serendipitous learning can take place or that it is not valuable, but rather that librarians should not rely on random chance alone for achieving meaningful learning. This assumption leads to another, namely that some professional development activities are more effective than others at transforming the work that librarians do. A webinar that is watched with disinterest and forgotten the next day is not as valuable as one that sparks a librarian's interest in trying something new in his or her line of work.

In addition to library-specific assumptions, I also acknowledge that I hold several assumptions about the nature of learning and specifically about adult learning. First, I believe that learners construct meaning from their experiences in ways unique to each individual. It is possible to seek an understanding of an individual's learning and how it occurs, but it is not possible to generalize any one learner's experiences to all others. A second assumption that I make is that a lack of generalizability does not mean that the knowledge gained from and one individual's experiences is without value; quite the contrary, the rich descriptions of individual's unique experiences can help learners think critically about their own experiences and can lead to better informed decisions. That understanding and meaning are personal, relative, and context-bound merely means that seeking understanding and meaning requires

delving into a variety of perspectives and lived experiences with the hope of capturing the essence of those experiences.

CHAPTER 2: Literature Review

Work on what eventually became portions of this chapter began long before I started the study itself. As my preliminary examination for the doctoral degree, I wrote a literature review with the goal of submitting it to a library science journal. Ultimately published in *New Library World*, the focus of this literature review at the time was whether concepts from the field of adult education were present in the library literature related to academic librarian professional development, and if so, in what context. To begin the review, I scoured the library science literature for adult education principles as conceived by Malcolm Knowles (1980, 2011) and for concepts that had featured prominently in my program coursework, such as andragogy, transformational learning, reflection, and social learning in the context of communities of practice. This endeavor led me to believe that much of the library science literature related to academic librarians' professional development lacked specific references to adult education concepts. At the same time, it did uncover some library literature with references to these concepts, especially among pieces written within the last 10 to 15 years. It was this body of literature that I used as a starting point for developing my guiding questions.

Throughout the course of this study, I returned repeatedly to the library science literature to seek out new research as well as older works that I might have missed during my first round of searching, evaluating, and writing. In addition, as I became immersed in the data analysis phase of this study, I realized that some concepts present in the participants' responses were absent from my literature review. I sought out more information on these concepts from both the adult education and library science literature. In this way I gathered more information and developed a greater understanding of the role of meaningfulness, sustained interaction, and motivation in the context of professional development. This chapter therefore is a blend of

adult education concepts and library science literature that contains elements of adult education deemed important by the adult education field as well adult education concepts that feature most prominently in the experiences of participants themselves. The first half of the chapter introduces the adult education concepts that were ultimately applicable to this study; the second half describes if and in what context these concepts are found in the current field of library and information science.

Method and Databases

The resources used for this literature review include publicly accessible websites, open access and subscription journals, ERIC documents, and print and electronic monographs. Identification of professional guidelines as put forth by the Association of College and Research Libraries was done using Google to search the ACRL's national website. Journal articles and ERIC documents discussing various aspects of professional development and adult learning principles were discovered primarily via the EBSCO databases Library and Information Science Technology Abstracts (LISTA), ERIC, and the Professional Development Collection. Also used for finding articles were World Cat Local and the Management and Organization subset of journals available in the Sage Full-Text Collection. Monographs were found using OCLC's World Cat Local and Ex-Libris's Primo catalogs. As appropriate, additional literature was identified from footnotes and bibliographies of relevant works.

Adult Education

Containing a rich and diverse body of literature and ideas, adult education has long been defined as learning that takes place among adults rather than children (Taylor & Cranton, 2012). The term andragogy arose to distinguish adult learning from pedagogy (Knowles, 1980). From the 1960s and 1970s when researchers focused on defining the characteristics of

adult learners to today when researchers use any number of lenses for understanding adult learning, the field has changed and continues to change in exciting ways. Researchers in the field now take any number of approaches and perspectives to uncovering how and why adults engage in learning experiences. Best practices and advice articles guide trainers and human resource managers. Cognitive, feminist, critical, emancipatory, postmodern, experiential, spiritual, arts-based, narrative, and non-Western approaches to adult education can be found in the literature. There are currently so many facets of adult education that some researchers lament that the abundance of terms can confuse newcomers to the field (Cyr, 1999). There is also acknowledgement that in spite of the wealth of work on the subject, no standard theory of adult education exists (Edwards, 2005; Brookfield, 2005).

The goal of this dissertation is not to engage in an extensive debate over current issues in or approaches to adult education. The topics, concerns, and questions within the field are entirely too extensive to be addressed here. Rather, the four sections of this literature review that discuss adult education concepts are present primarily because of their prevalence in the library literature that relates to professional development and because they relate to the experiences of participants in the study. Andragogy, meaningfulness, motivation, transformational learning, reflective practice, communities of practice, and sustained interaction were all identified in some manner in either the library literature or in participants' experiences.

Andragogy. Andragogy, often called adult learning theory, is an attempt to explain how adult learning differs from learning done by children. Malcolm Knowles (1973) suggests that adults 1) appreciate the opportunity to be self-directing rather than dependent on a teacher. They 2) hold a reservoir of existing knowledge that they draw on to make sense of new

information. They 3) need to have a real-life, practical need for the information being presented. They 4) prefer problem-centered instruction applicable to real-life situations rather than instruction based on abstract concepts. Two additional assumptions, added later, assert that adults are often driven more by internal rather than external motivation and that they need to know why they are learning something in order to put the effort into learning it (Knowles, Holton & Swanson, 2011).

A similar yet more precise set of six attributes of adult learners is derived by Candy, Crebert, and O'Leary (1994) and Candy (2000) from a review of adult learning literature and from interviews of adult learners:

- an inquiring mind
- 'helicopter vision' (or "awareness of how knowledge is created in at least one field of study, and an understanding of the methodological and substantive limitations of that field" (1994, p. 43)
- information literacy
- a sense of personal agency
- a repertoire of learning skills
- interpersonal skills and group membership

At its heart, the concept of andragogy stems from constructivist perspectives on learning. As such, it suggests that learners construct meaning from their experiences as they interact with the world around them (Lattuca & Creamer, 2005). In addition, and of specific importance to the findings in this study, Neumann (2005) suggests that adult learning is an interactive process, which occurs as a person comes into contact with other people or new

knowledge. This assertion aligns with Lankes's view of librarianship as a discipline that facilitates knowledge via conversation among willing participants in the learning process.

It should be noted that scholars debate whether andragogy is a fully-fleshed out learning theory or rather a set of guiding principles. Merriam, Caffarella, and Baumgartner (2007) call andragogy a theory, but also acknowledge that this debate is unsettled. They also note that Malcolm Knowles himself, the originator of the concept, called it at various times a "model of assumptions," a "system of concepts," and a "conceptual framework" (p. 85, 87). The importance of andragogy's presence in this study is not to engage in this debate, but rather to use its principles as a means for understanding the participants' meaningful experiences as adult learners.

Meaningfulness. Traditionally, educational assessments have focused on the acquisition of content. Cognitive changes meant that transmission from a teacher to a student had occurred successfully. A significant amount of educational research, however, has pointed to the importance of considering meaningfulness in an adult's quest for education, especially in the context of his or her work environment. Ciulla (2000) defines meaningful work as that which, "like a meaningful life, is morally worthy work undertaken in a morally worthy organization" (p. 226). Woods and Sofat (2013) define meaningfulness as "a state that specifically relates to the positive feelings that work is worthwhile or important." Levoy (1997) connects meaningfulness to a sense of passion and value for the work one undertakes, while Chalofsky (2003) notes the joy and satisfaction it creates. Paskett (2007) names "success, passion, money, fulfillment, wellness, and adult learning" all as possible sources of meaningfulness in the workplace (p. 20). The details of what constitutes "morally worthy work" may differ from

person to person, yet all individuals can identify some aspect of their work upon which they place a morally high importance.

Additionally, rather than viewing meaningful work as a “remote abstraction,” Yeoman (2014) views meaningful work as a fundamental human need. She also points out its practical potential of transforming society through the work that individuals carry out. There is evidence of a link between meaningfulness and workplace motivation, productivity, and psychological well-being (Hackman & Oldham, 1976; Arnold et. al., 2007). Individuals who consider their work meaningful also tend have characteristics that are sought after by employers (Steger, Dik & Duffy, 2012). In addition, motivated workers typically report greater levels of job satisfaction (Sparks & Schenk, 2001).

Yeoman (2014) believes that it is possible to create system structures that will promote and enhance meaningfulness in the workplace. Before that is possible, however, it is necessary to identify the characteristics of what constitutes a meaningful experience for those workers. Yeoman notes that empirical studies on meaningful work remain limited, making this area of study ripe for further development, especially with regard to professional development. Those studies that do focus on meaningfulness in the workplace have uncovered a number of themes related to it: an increase of knowledge or thinking about things in a new way, the development of relationships that enhance knowledge and learning, and the opportunity for new training (Wood 2015).

In addition to the concept of meaningful work, the issue of what constitutes meaningful learning has also been studied by researchers. Haverila, Myllyla, and Torp (2009) point out that “there are many views, opinions and definitions on what brings meaningfulness to learning” (p. 2). However, in trying to define what comprises meaningful learning, scholars

have created lists that mesh closely with the andragogical principles originally proposed by Knowles (1980). Jonassen (2003) identifies eight characteristics of meaningful learning: activeness, constructiveness, intentionality, collaboration, complexity, conversation, contextualization, and reflection. In addition to all of these characteristics, Hakkarainen (2011) adds more characteristics to his model of meaningful learning, including self-directed, individual, co-operational, emotionally involving, goal-oriented, abstract, multiple perspectives-oriented, critical, experiential, multi-representational, and creative.

Motivation. Much as is the case with adult education in general, the concept of motivation has received considerable attention in the education literature. In spite of its agreed-upon importance and benefits, understanding motivation remains a complex task. Whiteley (2002) describes motivation as “essential but elusive,” as something that “exists in unlikely places” but which “can be absent in promising locations” (p. 5). The principles of andragogy suggest that adults are motivated by a sense of self-direction, real-life challenges, personal internal factors, and well-defined rationale for learning (Knowles, Holton & Swanson, 2011). Wlodkowski (2008) notes that research especially supports Knowles’s second principle of andragogy—that adults often select learning opportunities that have a practical and vocational application. Additionally, they need the opportunity to apply what they have learned.

In terms of fostering motivation, Whiteley (2002) recommends that those trying to increase motivation remember several important factors related to it: administration must be on board, pay matters, staff members are intelligent beings, honest feedback and praise are essential. Additional recommendations for motivating adult learners are offered by Wlodkowski (2008) who encourages providers of adult education to consider age, culture, and attitude when designing learning experiences. He emphasizes that learners need to have a personal interest

in and engagement with a subject. Additionally, he stresses the importance of sustained duration in maintaining a learner's interest.

Transformational Learning. Beyond meaningful learning, there is an understanding within the adult education field that learning has the potential to completely transform learners' mental understanding of their work and goals. Transformational learning theory describes a process whereby learners' existing frames of reference, or "meaning perspectives," change due to new input or information (Mezirow, 2000, p. 16). Widely used in the education field, the theory suggests that learning takes place through a series of phases, which are initiated by a "disorienting dilemma." This dilemma, something that doesn't fit in the learner's existing worldview, prompts self-examination and an assessment of currently held assumptions. Upon recognizing the disconnect between the previously held assumptions and the new reality, learners begin to explore new options and plan a new course of action that integrates their newfound perspective into their existing roles, relationships, and behaviors (Mezirow, 2009). In essence, a transformation occurs in the learner.

According to Mezirow (2000), learners hold assumptions that act as filters for interpreting experiences; these assumptions, or "habits of mind" could be sociolinguistic, moral, ethical, philosophical, psychological or aesthetic. Learners also have unique "points of view", which include their expectations, feelings, attitudes, and beliefs that shape how they interpret, judge, identify the typical, and determine cause and effect. Achieving a transformational change involves shifts in these "meaning perspectives" so that new interpretations of experiences are possible. A transformation may occur gradually or more rapidly, but will likely involve some period of critical reflection. This reflection may initiate either *objective reframing* in which

learners critically reflect on the assumptions of others or *subjective reframing* which involves self-reflection about one's own assumptions.

Critics of transformational learning theory as originally espoused by Mezirow have arisen over the years, and Mezirow himself has acknowledged that transformational learning may take place in a manner and form different than he had originally envisioned (Segers & de Greef, 2014). First, it may be possible for transformational learning to take place without the learner consciously undertaking the act of critical reflection. Types of assimilation that evoke emotional or psychosocial responses in learners can lead to transformational change. Moreover, learners do not exist in a vacuum but rather in social and political contexts that can influence how learners process new experiences. Likewise, power dynamics may well influence the manner in which a learner experiences an event, processes it, and decides (or does not decide) to act upon it. Finally, background and prior experiences may also be so influential a person's life that they can either prompt or prevent a transformation.

Transformational learning can take place within an individual or as part of a group awakening. A number of scholars have studied it in relation to social learning theories and focus on collaboration and group transformation (Brown & Lambert, 2013; Taylor & Cranton, 2012). Indeed, the focus on Habermas's ideas of "communicative learning" via discourse lends itself to exploring transformational learning as a function of interaction with others (Mezirow, 2009). Boyd (1989) discussed personal transformation as described by Carl Jung in an article designed to help facilitators bring about transformation in small groups, and Berger (2004) suggests that peer-approval or disapproval may help or hinder an individual who seems on the verge of a transformation.

Transformational learning theory rests on constructivist principles of learning, meaning that the theory presumes that learners themselves construct meaning internally from their experiences and reflection on those experiences. As such, Segers and De Gree, (2011) suggest that the focus on meaning makes transformational learning a useful concept in the field of professional development. Mezirow (2000) states the benefits of transformational learning as a way for learners to examine, negotiate, and act on their own “purposes values, feelings, and meanings rather than those [they] have uncritically assimilated from others” (p. 8). This process is believed to lead to greater clarity and control over one’s professional actions, increasing responsibility and decision making.

Reflection. Discussions about reflection as a mechanism of learning have a long history. Dewey (1933) cites reflection as a means of alleviating states of “doubt, hesitation, perplexity, [or] mental difficulty” (p. 12). In other words, reflecting on a problem can provide solutions to that problem. It can also provide insights into common situations that can improve the actions taken in those situations (Ghaye, 2011). McIntosh (2010) points out that events in fields like teaching or health care often occur haphazardly, resulting in new experiences which prompt new feelings and challenge existing beliefs. Librarianship could certainly be added to this statement. Professionals can either “sleepwalk” through these new experiences or use them for new understanding and self-betterment (p. 28).

As pointed out by McIntosh, reflection is often discussed in the context of practice, and the fields of education and health care have strong bodies of literature that examine how reflection enhances and strengthens the work of professionals. Merriam, Caffarella, and Baumgartner (2007) note that researchers focused on improving teacher performance often define reflective practice as a moment of pause that can open the door to higher level thinking and the

examination of existing beliefs and practices. They note five orientations to reflective practice that may be exhibited by practitioners. The first, an immediate orientation, is essentially a non-orientation; that is, those who exhibit it tend not to use reflective practice in any form. A technical orientation may involve using reflection “as an instrument to direct practice” while a deliberative orientation is more focused on discovery and personal meaning, though still within the confines of the organizational structure in which they are working (Wellington & Austin, 1996, p. 308). Dialectic orientations question those structures and often focus on political and social issues via activist practices. Finally, transpersonal orientations help learners to question the status quo, doing so on the basis of personal and inner perspective assessment.

A variety of ways for reflective practice to take place have been discussed in the literature. Schön (1983) conceived of two types of reflective practice that professionals use to improve their performance. “Reflection-in-action” involves a kind of thinking on one’s feet; real-time practice as is common for teachers, nurses, and certainly librarians often involves reflecting on a situation as it is occurring in order to make adjustments for obtaining the best possible outcome. “Reflection-on-action” occurs after the fact as professionals think back on a situation that has already occurred. They can reflect on what went well or what the salient aspects of the situation were. Ghaye (2011) discusses two additional types of reflective practice. “Reflection-for-action” occurs before an event takes place and is described by Van Manen (1991) as anticipatory reflection. “Reflection-with-action” takes place when an individual recognizes a need or deficit in his or her own practice and makes a deliberate effort to gain or develop the skills that will improve that practice.

Reflection does not occur accidentally. Dewey (1933) notes that most people must learn how to think in order to reach the end goal of problem resolution; random insights that produce learning, while not uncommon and certainly helpful, do not involve true reflection. Rather, reflection is initiated and enhanced by a learner's curiosity, willingness to deliberately expose him or herself to new suggestions, and commitment to a systematic, orderly approach to the process. In a practical guide to reflective practice, Ghaye (2011) states a basic assumption about reflection – that it requires an individual to see the need for it and make a commitment to it. Echoing Dewey, Moon (1999) notes that reflection in this sense goes beyond simple thinking or recollection of events; rather, it involves “relatively complicated or unstructured ideas” that must be processed mentally with a desired outcome in mind (p. 4). Merriam, Caffarella, & Baumgartner (2007) state that this involves “an active and conscious processing of thoughts” (p. 173).

Reflection has been discussed as a form of professional development frequently in the teaching, nursing, and social work literature. Moon (1999) suggests this is in part because these three are professions rooted in hermeneutic practices, in which "review, interpretation and reconstruction of ideas" are common (p. 55). Additionally, all three professions require a high degree of action in situations that may not necessarily have existed previously. Such action may often need to be taken rapidly after which professionals will reflect on the action with the goal of identifying better ways of handling the situation should it or a similar situation arise again.

Moon further (2009) suggests that facilitators of professional development activities can deliberately foster reflection in those seeking to learn. By surveying existing literature on the topic, she identifies some of the conditions that are needed to support reflective learning.

Employees wanting to make use of reflection as a deliberate tactic for enhancing learning need to have ample time and an appropriate space. Trained facilitators who have an appreciation for and experience with using reflection are also beneficial. Environmental contexts can help or hinder the process: reflection done as part of a curricular or institutional-wide program augments professional development as does creating an emotionally safe and supportive setting free of distractions and conflicts.

In addition to these characteristics of good reflective practice, facilitators fostering reflection or a manager supporting it must make choices on how to initiate it depending on what type of professional development activity is occurring and what the intended learning outcomes are. Moon (2009) cautions against using a set formula for promoting reflection and suggests that those facilitating it consider whether it will be a private or public, individual or group act. She also insists that facilitators consider the epistemological understanding of each reflector since not all individuals have the same level of cognitive sophistication conducive to reflecting.

Communities of practice. A useful approach in supporting reflection to enhance learning involves long-term communication with others, and one model of this type of sustained interaction with others involved in the learning process is a community of practice. The concept has been described as a group of practitioners who share information related to a specific domain of knowledge (Lave & Wenger, 1991). The practitioners form a community, either formally or informally, to share information with the goal and benefit of increasing knowledge and skills among all members of the group. New group members can gain a footing in organizations by learning from those with more experience, and as time and circumstances

spur changes in practice, all group members can contribute to the evolution of group knowledge and learning (Coakes and Clarke, 2006).

The key characteristics of communities of practice include a community of practitioners and a common goal or interest in learning more about or improving some aspect or domain of their work or practice. The voluntary nature of membership is important as well. The formal term Community of Practice (CoP) may or may not be used by members. Indeed, it is entirely possible that a community of practice may form in an organization without its members being fully aware of its existence as a unique entity. Thus, a CoP is often more aptly defined by its characteristics—a domain of knowledge, a practice, and a community—than by a formal definition or name (Snyder & Wenger, 2004). As a group, the community focuses on sharing, socialization, relationships, and the transfer of knowledge and information among members. This may be done by exploring group projects, embarking on professional development activities together, or forming journal clubs in which members read and discuss literature relevant to their field.

Although reflection is not an automatic activity undertaken by members of a community of practice, research suggests that it is an important aspect of achieving a group's learning goals. Hildreth & Kimble (2004) note that learning and reflection about real life work problems can contribute to a CoP's ultimate success. Smith (2006) notes that "reflection, questioning, conjecture, and refutation" are important parts of the collective learning that occurs in functional CoPs (p. 30). Deliberate, facilitated reflection can enhance the structure and organization of a community of practice (Fitzsimmons, 2007). Among the activities suggested for fostering collaborative reflection are study groups, professional dialog groups, peer support groups, and action research projects (Brody & Davidson, 1998).

Sustained Interaction. A concept related to communities of practice that also aligns with ideas from other adult education principles and theories, including conversation theory and transformational learning theory is that of “sustained interaction.” Described by Huberman (1999), this construct entails repeated back-and-forth exchanges between or among participants. As he says, “unidirectional flow has a short shelf life; it is simply not remembered” (p. 310). Rather, stronger retention of information and ability to act upon that information is associated with long-term interactions among facilitators and/or fellow learners.

Each participant in a professional development activity, indeed each human being, occupies his or her own micro-world. When we interact with each other, our micro-worlds collide, and it is at the point of these collisions that participants learn from each other. The more frequent the collisions, the more complex the understandings that can develop among participants. Groups of individuals can also form their own micro-world. Committees, cohorts, task forces, or individual libraries that interact as single entities with others like them may encounter these collisions, and hence learning opportunities. But actual learning, whether within an individual or a larger group, is predicated upon both time and a willingness to interact with others.

As discussed within transformational learning theory, elements of discomfort or disorientation also play a role in learning during a period of sustained interactivity within a community of practice. When interactions with other micro-worlds lead to conflict or discomfort, participants will often look back to their own micro-world for guidance, clarification, or verification (Huberman, 1999). If community members do not find these, they face a disorienting dilemma, which can lead them to question their own mental constructs.

Increasing time spent interacting with others in a quest to find new ideas and perspectives can lead to both small and profound shifts in thinking and behavior.

Relationship of Adult Education Concepts to Each Other. The adult education concepts discussed here are often interrelated and intertwined. For example, reflection is an important component of transformational learning (Mezirow, 2009; Stevens, Gerber, and Hendra, 2010). It not only fosters new insights to transform meaning perspectives, but it inspires new courses of action that a learner can then use as the basis for additional learning. Likewise, the use of communities of practice in the pursuit of transformational learning has been discussed extensively in the education field (Collay, et al, 2009). Part of the process of transformational learning in CoPs also involves deliberate acts of critical reflection, a fact which has not escaped notice of librarians who have designed cohort programs like ACRL's Harvard Leadership Institute and Immersion programs and the UCLA Senior Fellows Program that allow for sustained interaction among participants.

Also demonstrating the interconnectedness of concepts, constructivism serves as a foundation for principles of andragogy, communities of practice, meaningfulness, reflection, and transformational learning (Merriam and Caffarella, 1999). Constructivism suggests that individuals construct their own meaning as they encounter new information or new environments and integrate this new material into their existing knowledge structures. Social constructivism posits that this construction of knowledge, or meaning making, ripens through collaboration and interaction with others. Dewey (1967) asserts that interactive learning with others, such as occurs in cohort models or through other sustained interaction, is a key component of preventing isolation during the learning process as well as a factor in the creation of new social knowledge.

Although it can be useful to describe and define concepts like andragogy, meaningfulness, motivation, transformation, reflection, communities of practice, and sustained interaction separately for the sake of organization and clarity, in reality they are all very much related. Far from being exclusive ideas, the concepts often work in conjunction during learning situations. For example, principles of andragogy may help explain why meaningfulness and motivation are present in specific professional development situations. Likewise, the combination of reflection and interaction with others over a long duration can also serve to enhance meaningfulness, motivation, and/or transformation. For the sake of this study, then, the importance of these concepts is their use as a lens through which to better see what characteristics of professional development that the participants believe have been meaningful or transformational. Taken as a whole the concepts together can enhance understanding of the essence of the experiences that the participants chose to discuss as meaningful.

Professional Development in Academic Libraries

A review of the literature related to professional development in academic libraries reveals that librarians can and do choose from a wide range of activities. Advice articles, descriptive papers, and case studies, some with assessment components and some without, demonstrate that librarians care about continued learning and professional improvement, and that they are undertaking it in a variety of ways. From small, individual endeavors such as self-directed reading to collaborative efforts like journal clubs to national institutes for emerging leaders, the literature presents a range of activities that contribute to increasing the education and skill-set of professional librarians who work in an academic setting. While some of this literature is written by librarians who have undertaken actual professional development activities, much of it is written by trainers or advice-givers and, as such, contains little information about the

perceptions of the participants themselves. In addition, while the library literature related to professional development is varied in nature, the number of studies that focus on this issue from a qualitative research perspective is still small.

ACRL Guidelines on Professional Development. The Association of College and Research Libraries encourages and fosters professional development of all librarians in the field. In July 2000 the ACRL governing board of directors adopted a statement of professional development as put forth by the organization's professional development committee (ACRL Professional Development Committee, 2000). In addition to arguing for continuing professional development of active librarians, the statement also discusses the responsibility that academic libraries and their parent institutions have for ensuring that professional development occurs. ACRL itself offers conferences, chapter meetings, and publications to encourage learning. They also note the responsibility of graduate schools of library and information science to disseminate research and encourage their students to pursue professional development upon graduation.

In spite of recommending that library administrators support professional development, ACRL acknowledges that the primary responsibility for ensuring it takes place lies with individual librarians (ACRL Professional Development Committee, 2000). The statement says, "Learning, which is the key to acquiring and maintaining individual excellence, is ultimately the responsibility of the individual" (paragraph 9). Taking responsibility for learning involves not just seeking out professional development opportunities but also sharing what is learned. This puts much of the onus of finding professional development activities on individual librarians, a primary reason why this study focuses on individual perspectives.

Library Literature Related to Professional Development. The abundance of library science literature that relates to professional development is impossible to cover in a single literature review. This review, therefore, touches on several broad categories of professional development as well as surveys that which is most applicable to this study's research questions. One of the original questions that prompted the development of this study relates to whether or not academic librarians make use of adult education concepts when choosing or designing their professional development activities. To answer this question, I undertook a review of the library science literature to see whether the concepts I had encountered in my doctoral classes were referenced or used in any way. I determined that there are a substantial number of articles in the library science literature that make no mention of adult education principles or learning theories at all (Attebury, 2015). Some authors simply omit details regarding the activities that they describe. It is not always clear whether this omission is due to lack of awareness or due simply to authors highlighting aspects of the training other than the process itself.

Advice articles are prominent among those in the literature that do not reference adult education concepts. Among these are articles that recommend local, virtual, and discipline-specific conferences, reading, volunteering, conducting training sessions, mentoring, seeking out internet training sites, writing articles and book reviews, listserv lurking, joining Toastmasters, using Twitter, and providing virtual professional service (Vicedo & Davis, 2010; Gruber, 2007; Cetwinski, 2000; Tomaszewski & MacDonalds, 2009; Flatley & Weber, 2004; White, 1984; Harrison, 2010; Hankins, et.al, 2009; Parker, 2012; Todaro, 2005; Zabel, 2008; Englert, 2009; Lanning, Lavallee-Welch, & Smith, 2005; Dalton, 2013; Mathew, Baby, & Pillai (2010/2011). I do not mean to imply in any way that articles of this nature are

unhelpful; indeed the majority of them offer very helpful and practical suggestions for librarians interested in continuing education. However, their presence in the literature does suggest that even librarians who try to read the literature related to professional development may be left unfamiliar with the role that adult education concepts and theories can play in fostering meaningful learning. In addition, articles of this nature do little to help us understand the perspectives of participants themselves as they undertake professional development activities they deem meaningful or transformational.

In addition to advice articles, a number of librarians have attempted to better understand how academic librarians engage in professional development activities. Self-education and reading, conference attendance, vendor trainings, interaction with fellow librarians, and formal coursework are high on the list of activities in which librarians choose to engage (Smith & Oliva, 2010). In a survey of library science literature related to professional development, Auster and Chan (2004) detect that librarians seem to prefer informal, or self-directed, professional development activities over more formal means.

Barriers to professional development of academic librarians have been noted by a number of librarians. Auster and Chan (2004) describe a lack of awareness, resources, time, convenience, motivation, and quality as common. Location and workplace culture and climate act as a barrier as well. The authors also mention that personal barriers such as health and family constraints prevent some librarians from partaking of professional development opportunities. Kendrick, Tritt, and Leaver (2012) also cite these barriers and add to the list those related to technological availability and understanding, especially those present in small and rural academic libraries. Jizba (1997) cites administrative lack of support as yet another barrier facing librarians in need of professional education.

Andragogy in Library Professional Development Literature. Although andragogy is a concept well-known in the field of adult education, its presence remains somewhat limited in the library science literature related to professional development. Fourie (2013) notes that while discussion of andragogy is not necessarily new in the library literature, it is notably absent in most calls for professional development. An exception to this comes from Pugh (2001), who devotes an entire chapter in a book about leadership and learning among librarians to the ways that adult learning theories can be applied. He draws on the concept of libraries as learning organizations by saying that they must be learner-driven, not trainer-driven. Pugh cites Knowles and suggests that trainers draw on learners' existing experiences, encourage participatory learning, allow for social interactions, and relate learning to real life experiences. Likewise, Jurow (2001) also describes Knowles' principles of andragogy in a chapter of a book devoted to library staff training in order to encourage trainers to make use of those principles.

In addition to these books, several articles offering advice surface, which combine adult learning concepts with library professional development. Bennett (2000) encourages the use of adult learning principles in designing professional development programs. Specifically, she notes that adult learners need to feel safe while trying new things, that information presented must be practical and relevant to their positions, and that trainers must respect and draw upon their students' existing knowledge and prior experiences. Westbrook (2005) notes that adults like to 1) take control of their own learning, 2) make sure learning is applicable to their own lives, and 3) prefer concrete, engaging, and hands-on activities. Also offering advice, Albritton (1990) states, "appropriate applications of learning theory and adult education principles should be used to enhance the quality of CE [continuing education]."

Although calls such as these for incorporating adult education principles into library professional development have obviously been around for more than twenty years, it is less common to find explicit references to them being used in practice. One recent exception suggests a growing awareness of Malcolm Knowles's work in the profession, however. Recognizing that the introduction of RDA cataloging requires a shift in thinking for cataloging librarians, Young (2012) looks at RDA training practices and recommends using both Knowles's and Shön's principles to train practicing catalogers. She also advocates that Wenger's community of practice concept be applied in the field for promoting informal social communities that "create and sustain models of professional behavior and practice among those holding a common body of knowledge" (p. 191).

Meaningfulness and Motivation in Library Literature. As is true with the concept of andragogy, the library science literature does contain references to meaningful learning. Yet, as is also the case with much of the literature related to andragogy, discussion of fostering meaningful learning is done primarily in the context of instructional librarians and their work with patrons. That is, there are a number of articles offering suggestions about how instructional librarians can structure their teaching activities to spur meaningful learning among those they teach. However, there does not appear to have been any attempts to extend the concept of meaningfulness in learning to the professional development activities of librarians themselves.

It is not uncommon to find articles in the library science literature related to motivation. As with andragogy and meaningfulness, there are works discussing motivation in the context of library instruction and information literacy (Stiwinter, 2013; Hurst, 2015; Ross, Perkins, & Bodey, 2016). Markgren, et. al. (2007) suggest using professional development *as* a motivator

for academic librarians' work. However, there is also a surprising lack of library literature that focuses exclusively on motivation *for* academic librarians to undertake professional development, and those that do exist tend to be older. This is not to say the topic is not discussed but rather that motivating factors must usually be teased out from a more general treatment of professional development. Among those factors that are mentioned are those often stated as motivators of adult learners in general: promotion, status improvement, subject interest, and self-satisfaction (Ghuman, 2011). Speaking of motivation to conduct research and publish, Fennewald (2008) adds institutional support and expectations, habit, enjoyment, intellectual curiosity, and recognition to this list.

Transformational Learning in Library Professional Development. On the other hand, there does seem to be growing awareness among librarians that a transformation in thinking is a desirable outcome of professional development. Implicit in these references is an understanding that transformation takes time and effort to transpire. Without mentioning transformational learning theory explicitly, Pugh (2001) states that professional development is more than just skill transmission but rather “it is bound up with developing the whole individual and changing attitudes as well as behavior” (p. 80). That a change in attitudes can result in a change of practice is also discussed by Macdonald (2009), who encourages her fellow librarians “to engage in reflective practice in order to break down the self-perceptions and taken-for-granted attitudes that can represent barriers to professional growth and development” (p. 17). In a statement sounding very much like Mezirow’s “disorienting dilemma,” Macdonald states that her own “reflective practice exercise had a curiously and unexpectedly unsettling effect” (p. 23). She claims it acted as a catalyst for transitioning from an accidental teaching librarian to an information literacy educator. Likewise, Clover (2011)

describes a process of goal setting, reflecting, planning for action, taking action, and reflecting again in order to achieve large-scale, life-changing career development.

Transformation is also discussed by Mavrinac (2005) in the context of creating a library learning organization that fosters change. Learning organizations, a concept made famous by Peter Senge (1990) in his book *The Fifth Discipline*, can set the stage for transformational learning by using the tools of shared vision, personal mastery, mental models, group learning, and systems thinking. Mavrinac cites Knowles as a reminder that the human component of organizations sometimes makes change difficult, and she suggests mentoring as a possible way of creating a learning organization that fosters transformational leadership in a library.

Similarly, Jajko (2012) advocates transformational learning as a collaborative solution to today's rapid changes in libraries. Like Mavrinac, she believes it should be done by adopting a learning organization model that contributes to the development of both the individual and the organization. Also along these lines, with examples of organizational and peer-learning in library settings, the Idaho Commission for Libraries (ICfL) held an online conference titled *Libraries as Learning Organizations* in 2009 that was designed to help librarians throughout the state learn to adapt to the rapid pace of change in the library world. Sessions included a discussion of Senge's five disciplines, learning styles assessments, and an overview of an active community of practice. The goal of the conference was to help librarians adapt and transform in the face of constant change.

Another example of transformational learning at work in library professional development can be seen in the Vanderbilt University's Peabody Academy Library Leadership Institute. Designed to help academic library leaders enmesh themselves in the structure of higher education that surrounds them and their library, the program unequivocally promotes

Mezirow's concept of transformational learning as a key method to help library leaders to achieve this goal. Weiner, et al. (2009) states, "From the beginning, the intent was for transformative learning to occur....The institute is designed not only to impart information, but to change perspectives and mental models. The change is from one of a library-centric leader to one that is institution centric" (p. 838). Going even further, Weiner, et al. also cites Mezirow's stages of transformational learning as focal points of the Institute's activities. Requiring participants to select a real project on which to focus during their training allows those participants to experience the stages of "exploring new roles, relationships, and actions," "planning a course of action," and "acquiring the knowledge to implement a plan" (p. 841).

Additional recommendations to apply transformational learning theory to the professional development of academic librarians is also beginning to appear in the recent library science literature. Hess (2015), in trying to address the new ACRL Framework for Information Literacy recommendations for instructional librarians, recommends that conference planners and library leaders design and deliver professional development that will transform the ways that librarians provide information literacy instruction. Pointing out that the new framework has caused a "disorienting dilemma" for academic librarians, she specifically recommends professional development that incorporates principles from transformational learning and social learning theories be offered.

Likewise, while discussing changes in libraries, and specifically the new ACRL Framework, Yukawa (2015) notes that two underlying characteristics of threshold concepts theory, upon which the framework is based, are 1) that new concepts are often "troublesome" and 2) that finally understanding those concepts can be "transformative." That is, in trying to understand the concepts in question, novices often find them difficult to understand because

they are “alien or counter-intuitive” to existing knowledge. They are also transformative in that understanding them requires a shift in perspective on the subject or even identity and worldview. Given the nature of threshold concepts theory, Yukawa advocates that those using it in their library instruction should themselves be aware of transformational learning theory as they prepare to teach. She encourages LIS students and practitioners to become familiar with well-known scholars such as Brookfield (2005), Cranton and Taylor (2012), Merriam, Cafferella, and Baumgartner (2007), and Mezirow (1978, 1998, 2012) who promote transformational learning and critical reflection.

Reflection in Library Professional Development. Closely tied to transformational learning is the act of reflection. The library literature offers growing evidence of deliberate use of reflection as a means to enhance learning. In 2005, Doherty saw limited use of reflection in the profession, stating that librarians “are not very reflective practitioners” (p. 12). He nevertheless insists that models of self-reflection from the education literature are of value to the library science field, not only as a means of reflecting on actions taken in the course of work duties but also as a means of advancing more theoretical research. Also, interested in the concepts of “reflection in-action” and “reflection on-action,” Grant (2007) analyzes thirteen articles from the library literature that discussed reflection as a form of professional development. She distinguishes between non-analytical and analytical reflection, noting that the latter is an attempt to relate past events to recent situations. She describes analytic reflection as a “systematic approach to revisiting experiences or situations, questioning motivations, attempting to pinpoint the reason why [those reflecting] experienced a situation in a particular way, and contemplating how this might impact on future practice” (p. 158).

Although at the time of writing Grant found a limited number of published pieces that focused on analytic reflection in librarianship, she notes that they become more frequent after 2000.

A more recent review of literature related to systematic reflection in library learning activities corroborates Grant's belief that the practice is gaining awareness and acceptance throughout the field. Group activities that include reflection and self-exploration are among the practices used by ACRL's Immersion Institutes, the Harvard Leadership Institute for Academic Librarians, and the UCLA Senior Fellows program. (Lindsay & Baron, 2002; Kalin, 2008; Rumble and MacEwan, 2008). Offering an early testament to the benefits of such practices, Kreszock (1997) summarizes her experiences at an ARL Training Skills Institute and informs readers that the institute provided opportunities for self-evaluation and self-reflection.

Outside of formal institutes, librarians have also begun to call for the use of reflection as a means of enhancing professional development. Reasons for the use of reflection and the possible benefits that might stem from it are as varied as the profession itself. Stoddart (2015) suggests using the reflective method of *currere* can help librarians better understand the essence of their own professional existence and may even rekindle their dedication to the profession. Starkey (2010) believes it may help define competencies for professional portfolios. Suarez (2013) describes its use as a methodology for liaison librarians to understand the information seeking behavior of their patrons. Joint (2006) believes it can contribute to scholarly publication and the sharing of ideas throughout the profession. Hinchliffe (2015) shows this to be an accurate belief as she invited five co-facilitators of ACRL's Assessment in Action program to reflect on their development and delivery of the

long-term professional development program, and their insights include practical advice on both assessment and the delivery of comprehensive professional development programs.

Reflective practice has also been discussed by librarians in the context of information literacy instruction, and calls for its use in the professional development of instruction librarians appear to be growing. A growing number of librarians recommend that instruction librarians engage in acts of self-reflection as a means of improving their teaching (Tompkins, 2009; Booth, 2011; Porter, 2014). Andretta (2008) and Forrest (2008) offer examples of this among medical librarians who teach information literacy skills to students, and Baker (2006) describes use of the practice to assess an entire information literacy unit. Sinkinson (2010) demonstrates its use in a peer coaching model among instruction librarians. Graf and Harris (2016), describing Schön's vision of a reflective practitioner, state that it is hard not to imagine such a practitioner as an information literacy instructor. Also within the realm of library instruction, several professionals involved with LIS graduate education are beginning to incorporate reflective practice into their teaching, ensuring that future librarians will be familiar with the practice (Sen & Ford, 2009; Sen, 2010; Galloway, 2011; Hall-Ellis & Grealy, 2012).

Although these examples of reflection in academic librarianship are heartening and suggest that the profession is growing in its awareness of adult education concepts that will improve professional development, current library researchers point out there is much work to be done (Fourie, 2013; Dymarz & Cameron, 2015). Even with the incorporation of group discussion, limited emphasis can be found on encouraging reflection and helping learners construct meaning from the activities in which they engage. Graf and Harris (2016) offer two suggestions for the lack of reflection among librarians: fear of time constraints and limited

concrete evidence of the benefits. Nevertheless, in spite of these legitimate concerns, it appears that librarians are increasingly becoming aware of reflection's presence in the field of education and are willing to try it as a means of enhancing professional development in the library field.

Communities of Practice in Library Professional Development Literature. A number of librarians have written about communities of practice as a means of professional development. Reasons given for trying to deliberately create communities of practice in libraries include welcoming new members into the library, sharing research ideas and feedback, maintaining general and subject specific knowledge for reference work, developing leaders, connecting with librarians from other institutions, increasing information literacy teaching skills in a low-cost manner, creating professional identity, or creating scenario-based learning to address real workplace problems (Henrich & Attebury 2009; Booth, 2011; Miller, 2011; Stranack, 2012; Dini-Davis & Theiss-White, 2009; Brunch & Wilkinson, 2012; Cunningham & Donovan, 2012; Young, 2012; Shamchuk, 2015; Willey, 2014; Belzowski, Ladwig, & Miller, 2013; Searle, 2015). Descriptions of approaches to professional development that use communities of practice often cite benefits of collaboration, collegiality, sharing, and fostering new ideas and perspectives. Their stated goals mirror those identified by Lave and Wenger (1991) as the reasons that communities of practices are useful for fostering workplace professional development.

There also exists a small body of library literature related reading or journal clubs that hints at the existence of a community of practice. While this literature does not always reference communities of practice by name, the descriptions of these clubs indicate that they draw on and benefit from the concept. In the form of reading and/or journal clubs, the groups

are seen as ways to increase appraisal and research skills, “keep up” with their profession, and increase socialization among members (Young & Vilelle, 2011; Pearce-Smith, 2006; Hickman and Allen, 2005; Barsky, 2009; Stebelman, 1996; Kraemer, 2007; Seago, et. al., 1994; Fitzgibbons, 2015). These groups may be in-person entities formed in libraries or they may extend their membership outside of the library walls virtually (Jackson-Brown, 2013).

In addition to named journal clubs, a number of librarians have written about the importance of creating connections and opportunities to learn from colleagues without specifically using the term club or community of practice. As all librarians know, committees and task forces are a part of professional life. Some libraries may even form these groups with an explicit goal of fostering professional development (Davis & Somerville, 2006; Davis & Lundstrom, 2011; Buck, 2014; Guo, 2014). Professional development association committees and task forces provide an opportunity to join in a shared community of learning (Goldman, 2014). The collegiality and social support that extends from the development of such groups is an important part of nurturing an environment that supports on-the-job and informal learning. The introduction of new ideas brought about by collegial interaction can help libraries manage change and find innovative ways to fulfill their mission. In spite of these benefits, there is still a lack of evidence in the library science literature of deliberate attempts to foster collaborative learning in libraries (Buck, 2014).

Summary of Literature Review

The growth of LIS-related professional development literature that incorporates evidence of adult education concepts is heartening. Librarians are increasingly aware of principles of andragogy, transformational learning, reflective practice, and the benefits of sustained interaction as seen in both named and informal communities of practice. The growth of articles

in the last three to four years that incorporate references to these concepts suggests they will continue to influence professional development in the near future. However, there still exists a lack of research looking at how participants themselves perceive professional development activities, including those that incorporate concepts from the field of adult education. While many professional development programs make an effort at assessment through quantitative surveys that allow for qualitative comments to be added as responders desire, none have been found that specifically and deliberately undertake a phenomenological approach to understand the participants' experiences as they themselves describe them. The library science literature still needs more information about what types of characteristics are present in professional development activities that participants themselves deem meaningful or transformational learning and how these characteristics relate to concepts from the field of adult education.

CHAPTER 3: Methodology

During my first research course at the University of Idaho, undertaken before I had applied to the doctoral program, the class discussed the difference between methodology and methods. The difference was reiterated in more advanced classes as I progressed through the program. Nevertheless, while I understood on some level that methodology referred to my orientation as a researcher, to the philosophical framework of my study, and to the assumptions I made about knowledge, I had a hard time understanding how those abstract theoretical ideas related to the concrete, practical steps, or methods, I would use to begin and complete the study. To rectify this situation, I began a systematic reading program of social science methodology and research methods, especially works done by those focused on phenomenology as well as done by those in the library science field. Ultimately, the methodology and methods I chose for this study were decided upon in fits and starts. I had a general idea of what interested me: professional development of academic librarians, and I knew that I wanted to understand what librarians actually went through as they experienced what they considered to be meaningful professional development. This interest generated my first methodological step – toward a qualitative study design with a phenomenological approach. It also nudged me toward my first decision regarding method – interviewing.

Van Manen (1997) notes that while two social or human science studies make use of the same procedures, they may still look quite different methodologically. Thus, deciding to use interviews as my method of data collection led to more questions related to methodology and methods, some rather concrete, some more abstract and philosophical: Who would I be interviewing and how? What impact would the decision to use a phenomenological approach

actually have on how I wrote and asked my interview questions? What would it mean for data analysis?

This chapter thus describes the decision making processes I used to determine which ideas and actions would best help me answer my research questions. The first half of the chapter describes the methodological approaches I have used – a qualitative methodology with a hermeneutic phenomenological approach. I explain phenomenology as I understand it with the hope that this will make clear why I felt this approach was most likely to help me understand the phenomenon in question: professional development experiences that academic librarians identify as meaningful or transformational. The second half describes the concrete steps taken in the study, or what Van Manen (1997) would term techniques or procedures, to prepare, conduct, and analyze the information gathered from participants. I end the chapter with a discussion of how rigor was built into the study as well as some of the limitations inherent in the study.

Methodology

Researchers in both library science and adult education use a variety of methodologies and methods to better understand professional experiences. In a research methods work geared specifically toward librarians, Powell and Connaway (2004) discuss both quantitative and qualitative approaches, and, unsurprisingly, note that no single method fits every problem in the profession. Likewise, McClure and Hernon (1991), in a work filled with recommendations for those conducting research in the library field describe the “elusive nature of research in LIS” (p. 3). They discuss basic, applied, and action research, and mention methods from highly quantitative experimental designs to more loosely conceived descriptive studies as all methods contributing to the vitality of the profession. In reality, librarianship is such a diverse

profession that one would be hard pressed to define a concept like “library research methodology.” It is small wonder phrases like “it depends...” are common in writings about library research. Rather than seeking to identify a standard library research method then, librarians must typically look outside of the library field for methodological options that relate to the questions they seek to answer. Wilson (2003), a library science researcher partial to phenomenology, offers further advice on methodological choice-making by saying, “The choice of an appropriate research method should be determined by a combination of the philosophical position of the researcher vis-a`-vis the research objectives, the nature of the problem to be explored, its novelty in research terms, and the time and resources available to carry out the work” (p. 447).

Qualitative Research. Creswell (2007) acknowledges a growing difficulty of explaining what constitutes qualitative research due to the preponderance of directions that researchers have taken it over the years; nevertheless, he offers several characteristics commonly considered to be associated with this approach to research. Qualitative data is typically collected in a natural rather than artificial setting via face-to-face interactions between participants and the researcher. The researcher is the key instrument for data collection, which often takes the form of interviews, observations, or documentation. Formal testing instruments and surveys are not typically used. Data analysis involves inductively seeking patterns and themes that emerge from information gathered. An emphasis on identifying meaning as understood by those participants is key in qualitative research although increased acceptance of researcher interpretation of data has also begun to grow in recent years.

In addition to these characteristics, qualitative research is also identifiable by its goals. Such an approach enables researchers to become familiar with social phenomena as those

experiencing the phenomenon understand it themselves (Gorman & Clayton, 1997). Powell and Connaway (2004) identify qualitative research as appropriate when the research questions under study are social in nature and when the researcher wants to know what meaning participants ascribe to the situations they experience. Similarly, Merriam (2009) states that qualitative research helps investigators with “understanding how people interpret their experiences, how they construct their worlds, and what meaning they attribute to their experiences” (p. 5). Furthermore, Darlington and Scott (2002) state that qualitative methods are especially useful when attempting to understand the complexities of human behavior. Likewise, Marshall and Rossman (1999) mention qualitative research as useful for researchers trying to make sense of “the complexity of social interactions as expressed in daily life” (p. 2).

Describing some epistemological considerations of qualitative research, Saldaña (2011) argues that most qualitative research stems from a constructivist point of view. That is, researchers begin with the assumption that knowledge is constructed within each individual rather than existing in a definitive form outside of an individual. Saldaña also notes that most qualitative researchers also identify with a postmodern point of view in which no unquestionable truths exist. Instead, realities for each individual are situated in a particular context, and influenced by immutable characteristics like gender, age, race, or ethnicity.

Identifying the distinctive features of qualitative research in a work specifically geared toward information professionals, Gorman and Clayton (1997) summarize four attributes of qualitative inquiry: assumptions, purpose, approaches, and the researcher’s role. Assumptions of qualitative researchers typically include a belief that reality is socially constructed, that the variables contributing to any individual’s understanding of reality are complex, and that measuring or understanding those variables is a difficult task. The purpose of qualitative

research is therefore not to identify a single, “true” reality, but rather to understand contexts, to make interpretations, and above all to focus on participants’ perspectives. The approaches used to do this are naturalistic and inductive; as when Creswell, Gorman and Clayton indicate that qualitative researchers must focus on generating descriptions and seeking patterns in them. To do this, researchers need to be personally involved and act as impartial data-gathering instruments.

The decision to use a qualitative research design is the first step in a series of methodological decisions that a researcher must make. Qualitative designs can take a number of forms: phenomenological, case study, ethnographic, hermeneutic, narrative analysis, or grounded theory, for example (Creswell, 2007; Patton, 2006). In addition to using research or guiding questions to decide among the possibilities, Maxwell (1996) suggests that researchers consider who their participants will be, what type of relationship will be formed with them, and how the data collected from them will be analyzed. He asserts that researchers should not only consider these aspects before engaging in the study, but they should also rethink them as the study progresses (Maxwell, 1996).

Phenomenology. In an attempt to understand a human experience, or a phenomenon, researchers often turn to the qualitative approach known as phenomenology. Phenomena ripe for study are numerous and varied: emotions, relationships, jobs, programs, culture, or organizations (Patton, 2006). Phenomenology is a type of qualitative research that stems from an interpretive/constructivist epistemological perspective, from which researchers attempt to describe, understand, and, sometimes, interpret a phenomenon with the acknowledgement that multiple, context-bound realities related to that phenomenon can and probably do exist for both the participants and the researcher (Merriam, 2009). By describing in-depth the

experiences of multiple individuals who have first-hand knowledge of the phenomenon in question, a researcher may identify common themes and patterns in order to better comprehend the essence of it. Those themes and patterns help provide an understanding of what the individuals have experienced and how they have experienced it (Creswell, 2007).

Within the phenomenological research tradition, various approaches have developed. Creswell (2007) identifies two types of phenomenology: hermeneutic and empirical/transcendental/psychological. Broadly speaking, hermeneutics means the interpretation of communication, be it textual, verbal, or nonverbal. It involves not just the provision of a rich description of the phenomenon but an interpretation of it. It is the interpretation that provides a fuller and more meaningful understanding of the phenomenon (Van Manen, 1997). Empirical, transcendental, or psychological phenomenology involves less researcher interpretation and focuses more on a pure description of the participants' experiences (Creswell, 2007). The goal is to understand the structure of the experience as defined by those who experienced it (Moustakas, 1994). Beyond these two widely-recognized types of phenomenology, Van Manen (2011) describes several additional orientations, including ethical, existential, experiential or practical, and linguistic. While each frames a phenomenological investigation in a slightly different way, at the heart of all is a goal of understanding participants' lived experience of a phenomenon.

Methodological Rationale for Hermeneutic Phenomenology. The approach to phenomenology used in this study is hermeneutic, or interpretive phenomenology. The focus on interpretation as a key act within a phenomenological study is what separates hermeneutic phenomenology from a purely descriptive approach. In an article arguing for the increased use of hermeneutical phenomenology in LIS, Benediktsson (1989) describes the impact that

several well-known thinkers had on it both as a philosophy and as a method. While acknowledging the contributions of Husserl and his student Heidegger in the development of phenomenology, he specifically, cites Emilio Betti as contributing to the formation of phenomenology as a useful approach for studying social phenomenon. Betti's epistemological belief that interpretive activity can provide insights to meaning opens to the door to interpretation serving as a useful methodological tool in LIS research.

Researchers using a hermeneutic approach to phenomenology often draw upon the work of Max van Manen (1990, 1997) as they think through philosophical considerations and practical techniques. Van Manen indicates that creating a description of participants' experiences is a necessary step of the process; however, rather than description alone being the goal, he focuses on the meaning of their lived experience. Drawing out the meaning that participants ascribe to their experiences requires "presuppositionless" and "discovery oriented" interview questions (Van Manen, 1990, p. 29). Using the participants' responses, a researcher needs to identify common themes that attempt to capture the essence of participant experiences. Writing up a description of that essence requires pointing to and pointing out meaning within the experiences (Gadamer, 1986). Van Manen (1990) cautions to keep in mind, however, that attempts to capture the essence of an experience through interpretive description ultimately does little more than hint at the phenomenon.

If human interpretation then prevents understanding of an objective reality, the question could logically be asked, "why bother?" The persistence in attempts to understand phenomenon rests on an assumption that while it may be impossible to arrive at any definitive, complete, or objective conclusion about meaning, it is nevertheless valuable to understand an experience, especially a shared experience, as fully as is humanly possible. Why? Some

would argue that any attempts to get closer to understanding of shared experiences will help us understand humanity more fully, certainly an overarching goal of the social sciences. More concretely, Creswell (2007) centers in on a practical reason for conducting a phenomenological study: understanding an experience *may* (emphasis on *may*) help develop policies or practices surrounding it. This is not to say the goal is to distill any unique experiences down to uniform policies. As Van Manen (1997) says, “Phenomenology does not problem solve” (p. 23). Rather, the goal is to identify and encourage policies that acknowledge the value of and promote the *act* of reflection on the phenomenon. That is, study and discussion of a phenomenon can make that phenomenon and issues surrounding it salient in the minds of those experiencing it. This salience can then lead to more informed and deliberate reflection and discussion to identify issues, challenges, or solutions. In essence, phenomenology should not then be used to identify some “correct” solution to a problem; rather, it is to be used as a basis for understanding an issue so that thoughtful action may be taken (Van Mann, 1990).

A number of library science researchers interested in the library experience have found hermeneutic, or interpretive, phenomenology to be a useful approach (Benediktsson, 1989; Hayden, 2003; Budd, 2005; VanScoy, 2012; Rondeau, 2012; Burgess, 2013; Suorsa, 2015). Among the reasons given for selecting this approach are: the desire to focus on a social subject or issue rather than physical objects within library science research; a focus on meaning-making by people who have a shared, common experience; a dearth of previous library-science studies that have employed an approach designed to enhance understanding of a specific experience shared by librarians; a desire to understand the function of librarianship

and identity of the profession; and a wish to gain a deeper understanding of meaning in an naturally occurring experience.

This study employs a hermeneutic phenomenological approach as well, for some of the same reasons that other LIS researchers have chosen to use it. Hayden (2003) says that the approach enables a study of participants who are “naturally engaged in their world” (p. 10). As professional development is a naturally occurring component of librarianship that requires engagement with the world of library science, a method for studying the phenomenon as it naturally exists is most likely to yield a deeper understanding of that phenomenon. In addition, the interpretive aspect of hermeneutic phenomenology appeals to me as a member of the very group I am attempting to investigate. As an academic librarian who shares with participants engagement in a wide variety of professional development activities, it would be challenging to limit myself to finding meaning through description without attempting to interpret what the descriptions offered by the participants might mean for the profession.

In addition, Benedktsson (1989) and Lankes (2011), when considered in conjunction, offer further rationale for using this approach. Benedktsson’s argument that hermeneutical phenomenology is appropriate for LIS is based on an understanding of LIS as a field that connects texts, patrons, and understanding, a view of the field fading in the wake of the digital age. Such a focus then might seem to render Benedktsson’s approach unhelpful in focusing on the issue of professional development of librarians themselves, a subject of study which does not involve texts in the traditional sense (books) or patrons. However, if we insert Lankes’ assertion that LIS as a field is not so much about objects (the texts), but rather one that emphasizes the human quest for knowledge creation and understanding, then the use of hermeneutic phenomenology becomes appropriate and relevant. Even Benedktsson might

agree if we remember his overarching belief that hermeneutical phenomenology is applicable to social sciences and all problems that have a human element.

Moreover, Benedktsson himself does actually consider hermeneutical phenomenology from an even broader perspective than texts, patrons, and understanding when he discusses LIS institutions as entities that could benefit from this approach to problem solving. While not mentioning professional development specifically, he states that “interpretative methodologies are very much conceivable when it comes to planning or evaluating practices as they relate to various social groups or strata...” (p. 226). Given that the ultimate goal of professional development is for librarians to improve their knowledge and skillset so as to enhance their ability to connect patrons with the information they need, then using an interpretative methodology to facilitate this goal is sound.

Methods

The primary methods of data gathering in this study are two in-depth phenomenological interviews with each participant, followed by email communication with participants to seek out their feedback on summarization and interpretation of their comments. Interviewees were selected via the method of purposive sampling, which according to Patton (2002) allows researchers to select “information-rich cases whose study will illuminate the questions under study” (p. 230). Throughout the processes of methods design, data collection, and data analysis, the overarching principles of qualitative research and more specifically hermeneutic phenomenology were considered in an attempt to integrate them appropriately. Likewise, concepts identified from my literature review—specifically andragogy, transformational learning, reflection, and communities of practice—were held in a corner of my mind as I selected participants, designed interview questions, and began data analysis. At the same time,

however, as is recommended by qualitative scholars, I also tried to keep an open mind to new ideas and concepts that stemmed from the participants themselves—an action which led to the eventual consideration of meaningfulness and sustained interaction during the analysis process.

Data Collection. In order to collect data from librarians, I looked for guidance from librarians. Therefore, I sought out library-related studies that used phenomenological interviewing as a methodology in order to make decisions about my own approach. Ultimately, as done by fellow-librarians Perryman (2011) and Nelson (2011) in their studies about the sense-making practices of hospital librarians and the perceptions of professional identity among school librarians, respectively, I created an initial survey to distribute to national library listservs in order to purposively select interview participants from a pool of willing participants. My objectives in trying to find participants were that they be as varied demographically as possible, that they all hold positions currently as academic librarians, and that they felt they had undergone at least one meaningful or transformational professional development experience. In order to let participants' define their own experiences as they saw fit, I did not seek to define meaningfulness or transformation to the participants, though I shared my thoughts about the concepts when asked by them in the course of our conversations.

Initials Survey. Hosted by Constant Contact, the initial survey that I created served two purposes. It not only helped to gather basic information about professional development among academic librarians in the United States, but more importantly it identified individuals who could help me answer the guiding questions of interest. As such, it led me to find librarians who believed they had experienced a professional development activity or activities that they found especially meaningful or even transformational and who were interested in

talking about those experiences. In addition to completing the basic survey questions then, interested individual were invited to participate in follow-up interviews and/or write a short reflective essay about those meaningful experience(s).

Design of the initial survey questions followed recommendations given by Powell and Connaway (2004), who insist that researchers consider whether answers to survey questions are accessible to participants and whether participants would be willing to offer answers. The survey began with basic demographic questions asking about participants' positions and whether or not they included any elements of professional development expectations. The remaining questions asked about the types of professional development activities undertaken and whether or not they included any elements of reflection and/or transformation. The answers to questions were deemed to be both accessible and non-controversial to practicing librarians as they asked about a routine practice common to most who work in academic libraries.

The survey, which can be found in Appendix A, was distributed to eight national library listservs over a three week period in July 2014. The eight are listed here along with the number of members subscribing to each at the time of distribution: New Members Round Table (NMRT-L), 1,087; the University Libraries List (ULS-L), 1,791; Information Literacy Instruction (ILI-L), 5,715; ACRL Heads of Public Services Discussion Group (ACRL-DGHP), 58; Reference and User Services Association (RUSA-L), 2,213; AUTOCAT (a listserv devoted to cataloging and authority control), 5,887 United States subscribers; ACRL New Members Discussion Group, 122; and the ACRL Assessment Discussion Group, 289. These listservs were chosen because they encompass a wide variety of library tracts and are subscribed to by librarians nationwide.

Of the 293 responses, 181 librarians completed the entire survey, and of these 21, or 11.3%, indicated that they would be willing to participate in two follow-up Skype interviews of approximately one hour each. During the last week of August 2014, I sent an email to each of the 21 individuals thanking them for participating in the survey and asking if they were still willing to join me for a Skype interview. Of the 21, ten indicated a willingness. The interviews were then scheduled for and completed during the month of September. In addition, 36 individuals indicated a willingness to complete a reflective essay about their experiences with professional development. Each of these was contacted during October to determine whether or not they were still willing to participate. The follow-through with this approach was much less than with the Skype interviews. Only four individuals responded to the email, and of these only two actually completed a short reflective essay.

Interview Questions. The goals of the participant interviews in this study were to gather information that would help uncover participants' unique experiences of and perspectives on professional development, with a specific interest in those experiences that participants themselves found meaningful. Use of an interview guide, or list of questions to be asked in a fairly specific order, is characteristic of semi-structured interviews, and Bernard (2013) recommends this approach when an interviewer needs to be efficient in his or her use of time with the participants. Such an approach ensures that the interviewer obtains specific information relevant to their research questions while at the same time allowing for the exploration of new leads and concepts that might not have been thought of by the interviewer. As such, semi-structured interviews can be a good initial approach to phenomenological studies involving busy professionals.

Nevertheless, since the goal of phenomenology is to uncover the participants' experiences and perceptions of the phenomenon, not their responses to a researcher's pre-determined questions per se, semi-structured interviews may also pose unwelcome constraints on the interview process. Unstructured interviews, unlike semi-structured interviews, allow participants to have more control of the responses and direction the interview takes, and as Bernard (2013) says, "When you want to know about the lived experience of fellow human beings...you just can't beat unstructured interviewing" (p. 183).

As originally conceived, my research design included conducting two interviews with each participant. As such, I originally created two sets of questions. Part of the reason I chose to begin with an interview guide was my newness to interviewing. While I did ultimately want the participants to discuss and describe professional development as they saw fit in order to understand their own perceptions of it, I also did not want the interviews to flounder for a lack of prompting on my part. Therefore, I created the first set of background questions in order to learn about the participants' decisions to become librarians, their experiences in library school, their first job experiences, their current job experiences, and general perceptions about professional development. The second set of questions was shorter, with less specific questions, and focused more on the specific professional development experience(s) that the participants felt had been especially meaningful or transformational to them as professionals. This second set of questions was designed to initiate a more unstructured interview that allowed participants to describe their experiences as they saw fit without undue interference from me. Both sets of questions can be found in Appendix B.

In spite of the fact that the interview questions, even the background questions, were created under the assumption that they may or may not all be used during the actual

interviews, a considerable amount of thought and revision went into creating them. The first step in their creation was to read (and re-read) my research questions while brainstorming potential questions that might elicit responses that would help answer those questions. In addition to the research questions driving the development of questions, the literature related to librarians' professional development also provided suggestions and context. The addition and revision of questions for this first round stemmed primarily from two sources: my committee's suggestions and questions used in other similar dissertations that involved professional development and/or a phenomenological approach (Hayden, 2003; Hussey, 2006; Nelson, 2011; Rondeau, 2012). Development of second round interview questions resulted from reading and re-reading first round transcripts, my notes, and the research questions.

Interviews. The length of time spent interacting with participants in qualitative research varies from study to study. Interviews of one to two hours seem to be common, and among phenomenological studies focusing on professional development there are examples of even shorter interviews providing adequate data for analysis (Al-Behaisi, 2011). At the outset of my correspondence with participants regarding their willingness to participate in interviews, I believed that two rounds of interviews would be appropriate. My goals during the first interview were to gain a familiarity with participants, their library school experiences, current positions, overall attitudes toward professional development, and to explore the experiences they found especially meaningful. Initially unsure about the direction the second round interviews would take, I ultimately used the transcripts of the first interviews to identify gaps in information that would help me answer my research questions. I also crafted questions to clarify and probe further into participants' experiences of meaningful professional development.

Prior to both the first and second round of interviews, in order to better respect the valuable time of the participants, I sent them the questions ahead of time so that they could think about possible professional development scenarios and/or examples that they believed were worthy of discussion. The conversations during the first round ranged between 32 minutes and three seconds to one hour and 27 minutes with the average being 51 minutes and 21 seconds. Most of the second round interviews tended to be shorter because the need for gathering demographic information did not exist. In addition to recording, I also used my interview questions to take notes during each interview. Saldaña (2011) recommends using these preliminary jottings, created during data collection, as a first step in data analysis.

The interviews all took place via Skype, with the recording service Ewear used to capture the conversations as .mp4 files. As directed by Bernard (2013), permission to begin the recording was asked of all participants prior to Ewear being activated; I also informed all participants that I would be taking notes throughout so that if they heard silences on my end, they should not worry or feel pressured to continue talking. At the beginning of each conversation, I exchanged introductions with the participants and briefly explained that the interviews were being conducted as part of my dissertation work on the professional development of academic librarians. As recommended by Moustakas (1994), I tried to make the conversation at the beginning informal and relaxed in order to set a comfortable tone for participants. I assured participants that deviating from the interview questions they had received ahead of time was perfectly acceptable, and I encouraged them to talk as much as they liked about their experiences.

The interviews all began according to the pre-established questions furnished in advance to the participants. After initial discussion, however, about each participant's current position and

how long he or she had held it, the conversations each took their own turns. I let participants finish each train of thought without trying to redirect them to the scripted questions. Follow-up questions were frequently asked to draw out additional thoughts from participants on their experiences. When their speech slowed and the participants seemed to have finished describing an experience or idea, I returned to the established list of questions to begin a new strand of conversation. Once I felt all of the ideas laid out in the questions had been covered by a participant, I then asked if there were any concepts that they wished I had asked them about. On several occasions this led to additional conversation and raised points about professional development that had not even been on my radar.

The first round of interviews occurred during a one month period in September 2014. Analysis of transcripts took place throughout the fall and early into 2015. By early summer 2015, I believed that I had analyzed the transcripts thoroughly enough to have identified preliminary codes as well as additional follow-up questions that would help clarify concepts and more fully solicit data to help understand participants' meaningful or transformational professional development experiences. In June 2015, I emailed all participants again and asked if they would be willing to participate in a second interview. Scheduling interviews over the summer proved somewhat trickier than fall-time interviews, and it was the end of August before I had completed the interviews with the nine participants who agreed to converse with me a second time. Analysis of the results began as soon as the final second-round interview was completed.

Reflective Essays. The decision to invite participants in the initial survey to complete reflective essays regarding their experiences resulted from several considerations. First, I thought that the option would offer those uncomfortable with in-person interviews an option

for participating in a comfortable manner. Second, the option to write rather than schedule a specific meeting time would allow busy participants the opportunity to participate as their schedule allowed. The option of writing an essay rather than participating in an interview was also offered by Holland (2013) in her phenomenological study of teacher professional development. She noted that none of her participants opted for the essay option. In this study, however, two participants chose this approach, both citing time constraints and scheduling challenges with live interviews.

The essays, while valuable in that they did increase the amount of data gathered, were at the same time much less comprehensive in scope than the interviews. Although participants who chose the essay option were given the same type of prompts encouraging the sharing of a meaningful professional development activity, they were left at liberty to decide how much or little they wanted to write. As such, the essays were no more than two pages and were therefore less beneficial than the recorded interviews. Ultimately, I decided that the essays could not compete with the richness of data obtained from face-to-face interviews, so they were therefore not included in the analysis.

Curriculum Vitaes. Once I realized that the essays would not prove a fruitful source of data for this project, I tried to identify another way to obtain extra information from participants. Because they had committed to just two interviews at the beginning of the project, I did not feel comfortable asking participants for additional interview time. I also did not want to burden them by asking for written essays about their experiences. Because hermeneutic phenomenology stems from a tradition of textual analysis, I sought to identify additional texts related to participants' professional development experiences that I could analyze. Several researchers have suggested making use of curriculum vitae as a source of

data for textural analysis scholars' career activities (Dietz, et. al. 2000; Oplatka, 2009).

Drawing on this approach, during the final interview one of the last questions that I asked of participants was if they would be comfortable sharing their curriculum vitae or resumes with me. Eight of the ten participants ultimately shared their CV. All were typical academic CVs, which contained sections on participants' education, work experience, scholarly activity, professional service, and professional development.

Ethical Considerations. Prior to distribution of the initial interest survey, an Institutional Review Board application was submitted at the University of Idaho. A reviewer on the board agreed that the project should be classified as 'exempt' given the near non-existent risk to participants. As such, the entire committee did not need to review the application.

Nevertheless, as recommended by Berg (2012), an informed consent statement was included in the application and subsequently distributed to all participants who agreed to interviews or essay-writing. The statement contained a description of the study's purpose, potential benefits to participants and to the profession, assurances of anonymity and the ability to withdraw from participation at any time. Each of the participants either signed the statement and sent it back as an attachment or emailed a written affirmation agreeing to participate.

Data Analysis. The steps used to analyze data in this study were derived from hermeneutical phenomenology. Both conceptually and practically, I sought out guidance and examples from Benedktsson (1989), Dey (1993), Miles & Huberman (1994), Van Manen (1997), Ryan & Bernard (2003), Smith, Flowers & Larkin (2009), and Saldaña (2009). In addition, I reviewed numerous dissertations for ideas, insights, inspiration, and also for simply taking comfort in the fact that at some point each of their authors had undoubtedly struggled with the same questions and doubt that I found myself facing as I began to immerse myself in

the words and experiences of participants. I specifically looked to those whose authors had used a hermeneutic phenomenological approach, those whose research questions involved professional development of working adults in some way, and/or those that pertained to the field of library and information science.

While I had throughout my doctoral program learned epistemologically about research methods, I sought out practical guidance and scholarly works on qualitative analysis both at the beginning and throughout the analysis process. Smith, Flowers & Larkin (2009), especially, offer a relatively easy-to-understand set of steps of both analysis and writing for beginning phenomenological researchers. Ryan and Bernard (2003) describe a variety of processing and scrutiny techniques for identifying themes. Saldaña (2009) explains initial steps of analysis, the importance of writing analytic memos during the process, and a variety of coding types and strategies. Dey (1993) suggests ways of linking different pieces of data, making connections and creating visual representations of them. And above all, Van Manen (1997) blends a helpful description of the overall spirit, meaning, and goals of phenomenology with a touch of the practical such that a beginning researcher can confidently embark upon first steps.

Initial Survey Analysis. The initial survey resulted in both quantitative and qualitative data. Two tools were used to explore the results of the survey. Constant Contact offers tools for basic analysis of survey results. Simple percentages of respondents are easily seen in the results view of any given survey. In this way it is possible to determine what percentage of respondents to any particular question offered a response. In addition, questions that include an option for participants to add their own responses and questions that prompt participants to respond with their own comments contain those responses in a list format. In this way, a

survey creator can view all text responses to any given question simultaneously for comparative analysis.

Analysis of open-response questions also made use of NVivo software. Responses were transferred from Constant Contact into NVivo documents. From there analysis took several forms. As with other textual data analyzed with a phenomenological approach, reading and re-reading responses began the process. Two forms of coding then took place: NVivo querying and hand-coding. Running NVivo word count queries on the documents created identified words common to participants. By scanning through these words, common concepts began to emerge. At this point with an awareness of common concepts, hand-coding took place in order to merge codes that identified the same concepts.

Interview Analysis. I began data analysis of the first interviews by procuring transcripts, a relatively simple process. Following each interview, I ordered transcripts of the .mp4 recordings from the transcription service Rev. Because I had not turned on recording of the interviews until after introductions with participants were done, the files did not contain information identifying participant names or job locations. In addition, transcribers at the company are held to a nondisclosure agreement further assuring anonymity of participants. Turnaround time for each transcript was typically one to two days, and the quality of transcripts was high. After receiving each transcript, my next step was to check them by watching and listening to the .mp4 simultaneously with the transcription in hand. This served two purposes. First, it allowed me to check the accuracy of the transcripts and make corrections as needed. Second, it provided an opportunity to refresh my memory of each interview. While listening to each interview, I was also able to pause the recordings and take a second set of notes, which I then placed side-by-side with my original notes during analysis

activity. Additionally, if any statements during the interviews stood out noticeably to me with regard to my research questions, I highlighted the passages in the transcript so that I could use them as starting concepts during the initial coding process as well as a foundation for follow-up questions during the second round of interviews.

It was during the transcription phase of the project that I discovered one of my first-round mp.4 recordings was faulty. Although I had practiced using Skype and Evvar together prior to doing any interviews and although I had done several successful recordings already, for some reason only 15 minutes of the mp.4 was captured visually and none of the audio portion was saved. I had hopes that the three pages of notes I had taken during the interview would suffice to allow me to use the data gathered from the interview; however, when comparing these notes with the successfully recorded interviews' transcripts, I realized that they were in no way as complete or comparable. I therefore decided to eliminate this interview from the first round of analysis. Nevertheless, the notes did provide enough information for me to feel comfortable asking the participant, Hazel C., for a second interview just the same as I did for all other participants. I was able to draw on my notes as I put together questions for our second conversation. This second interview was included for analysis.

Notes and Analytic Memos. At the very beginning stages of analysis, each time I performed any activity or had any thought related to the project, I wrote them down on a piece of steno paper titled "General notes." Saldaña (2009) especially recommends writing down any and everything that occurs related to the project in order to look at the data from as many angles as possible, so originally, this steno paper served to capture all kinds of thoughts related to the analysis process, from those concrete analysis activities like sitting down to deliberately look for themes that stemmed from literature review concepts to random questions that popped

into my head as I proceeded through the transcription process. By the time I had filled several steno pages, I realized I needed to separate such notes into categories of their own.

Throughout much of the analysis stage, I added notes to the following categories: conceptual/theoretical notes, follow-up notes, steps of analysis, next steps, theme notes, and “other.” The first category helped me to keep in mind “the big picture.” I included notes about which learning theories I needed to investigate further based on what participants discussed in their interviews. I also included ideas that I felt might make good recommendations for libraries wanting to foster professional development. Follow-up notes were much more concrete and practical. In this category I included questions I wanted to ask all participants during the second round of interviews; I also added questions specific to individual participants based on what we had already discussed. The steps of analysis notes were themselves divided into two parts: those steps that I was actually taking on any given day and those that I felt I needed to take at some point down the road. Related to this were the “next steps” notes. Because I routinely had days during which I could not make time to work on this study, I discovered that it was useful to type out reminders to myself about what I had been working on and what immediate next step I could take when ready to continue my progress. I continually added to these notes, always leaving immediate next step in red and only changing them to black font once I had accomplished the step. Finally, while the “other” notes grouped together any and everything else, I eventually discovered that the majority seem to relate to my personal reflection as I progressed through the process of analysis.

Given that my computer is almost always running multiple programs, browsers, and tabs for work-related purposes, I almost always found it more convenient to grab a piece of paper near me when an idea popped into my head rather than taking the time to open up yet one

more program in my computer designed to capture notes. Ideas occurred at all times of the day or night: while working at the reference desk, while dropping children off at school, while doing dishes, etc. As such, writing notes on little scraps of paper also helped me capture ideas while not at a computer. I filed these notes into a manila folder until such time as I chose to dedicate myself completely to transferring the notes from paper to an electronic format for safe-keeping. Ultimately, I created several Word documents dedicated to the various categories of notes on my computer for permanent keeping. As time when by, I eventually added my notes to the appropriate file.

Contact Summary Forms. Van Manen (1997) suggests three approaches to uncovering themes in a text: holistic, selective or highlighting, and detailed or line-by-line. The first leads a researcher to question “What sententious phrase may capture the fundamental meaning or main significance of the text as a whole?” (p. 93). The second leads to a question of: “What statement(s) or phrase(s) seem particularly essential or revealing about the phenomenon or experience being described?” (p. 93). The third approach asks, “What does this sentence or sentence cluster reveal about the phenomenon or experience being described?” (p. 93). Together these questions can help tease out elements of the conversation that seem to capture the essence of the experience the participant describes.

Building upon this recommendation while also following guidelines from Miles and Huberman (1994), I created a contact summary form for each of the participants. The purpose of the form is to find clarity about the concepts, themes, or questions that emerged during the interview; it can be used as a first step in the data reduction process. The first step in creating such a form is to identify a series of questions or statements designed to identify the most important aspects of each interview. The first two questions on the form began the process of

both holistic and selective theme development. The third question on the form assisted in the refinement of themes by identifying follow-up questions for the second round of interviews:

1. What were the main points that struck me in this interview?
2. What jumps out at me with regard to participants' meaningful professional development experiences?
3. What follow-up questions do I still want to know?

As I considered the main points of each interview that struck me, I took note especially of those that related to communities of practice, andragogy, transformations, or reflection. However, not wanting to color the participants' experiences with my own preconceptions of what those experiences would look like, I was careful not to project these concepts on the transcripts if in fact I did not see them there. In addition, I also tried to be open to new aspects of adult education that I had not anticipated. The concept of sustained interaction, for example, a mixture of social interaction among learners combined with a significant duration of time devoted to the experience, was not originally known to me prior to undertaking analysis. Sensing that the concept was somehow important to participants' meaningful experiences sent me delving back into the education literature to explore it further.

Initial Coding. Having embarked on Smith, Flowers & Larkin's (2009) first step of analysis – reading and rereading – while checking transcripts and taking notes on the contact summary forms, I then set out on the next step – initial coding – with paper and pencil in hand as recommended by Seidman (2006). Without fail, I read through every transcript and essay in one sitting, assigning “codes,” or more accurately preliminary jottings (Saldaña, 2011), in the margins of the transcripts as they popped into my head. As Dey says, first round coding is

more about “forming some general impressions and intuitions, than making a detailed study of the data” (p. 64).

Van Manen (1997) recommends returning to the whole of a project’s goal periodically during the analysis process in order to avoid becoming bogged down in any one aspect of it. During the process, I tried to keep in mind my overall goal of the project, which is to understand the participants’ own unique experiences with professional development, especially with regard to concepts from the field of adult education that relate to meaningfulness or transformation. Although I was not surprised to find in the participants’ transcripts some of the adult education concepts that are described in the literature, I nevertheless made a conscientious effort to avoid projecting those concepts onto the participants’ experiences if they were not present. By the time I had finished all transcripts and essays, I recognized some similarities among the experiences of a number of the participants, especially with regard to those that they found meaningful.

Once I had completed the read-throughs, I sat down with the transcripts, my initial interview notes, and the contact summary forms while at the same time pulling up an electronic version of the transcripts in NVivo. One-by-one for each participant, I turned my margin notes into initial nodes, or codes, in NVivo. At the same time, I read through each transcript or essay electronically and added or refined nodes as they made sense to me at the time. At times when I started to worry if I was selecting the right terminology for a node or if I was missing something obvious in the transcript, I reminded myself that this was still early in the process and that nodes could easily be changed, combined, or eliminated as I continued to immerse myself in the words and experiences of the participants. As Saldaña reminds us, rarely does anyone get the coding right the first time (2011). Additionally, I tried not to

capture any larger themes in my node-assigning during this process. Rather, if I had a suspicion of relationships between nodes or larger themes related to participants' experiences, I made notes about these in my "conceptual/thematic" note file, which I intended to revisit at a later time.

Indeed, once I had finished the second-read through electronically and looked at all of my nodes in a list, it was apparent that I needed to make changes. The most obvious was to combine nodes that differed only in their spelling. Once these typos were corrected, I then combined nodes that seemed to describe the same concept. For example, I realized by looking at the section of transcripts labeled "career change" and "impact on career" that I was using the two interchangeably to describe how professional development experiences changed participants' library career. I therefore changed the nodes labeled "career change" to the latter "impact on career." Another example is that of the node "retreat." With only one reference to it in all ten transcripts, I decided that the themes "interaction" and "duration", both of which appeared in abundance in the transcripts, accurately served to capture the essence of what I had originally tagged as "retreat," an event with colleagues designed to last for an extended period of time.

Comparative Coding. By the time I whittled down original codes, I had left 33 with which to work. It was at this point that I began to attempt deeper thematic coding to reveal which of those 33 most captured the essence of participants' experiences with professional development. Ryan & Bernard (2003) suggest several techniques for identifying themes in qualitative research, including scrutiny and processing techniques. They also offer tips for selecting from among the various types of techniques. Researchers should take into consideration the amount and textual richness of data available as well as their own skill level

with data analysis. They note that identifying repetitions, similarities, and differences in the data is a fairly easy way to identify patterns for beginning researchers. They also propose the processing technique of cutting and sorting similar material into “piles.” Such a process helps researchers to winnow down an unwieldy number of codes into a manageable amount for analysis. They also note that such techniques can easily be shared with outside reviewers.

For this study, I began a deeper level of coding by using the simplest technique identified by Ryan & Bernard (2003): repetition. NVivo software makes it very easy to identify which codes occur most frequently in the available data. The first round of coding and subsequent winnowing down of codes led to several super-prevalent codes, which I scrutinized more heavily as I looked for sub-themes within each. In addition to focusing on these high-frequency codes, I also began looking more in-depth at those that related to the adult education concepts identified in a review of the literature. Once I had identified prevalent and literature-related codes, I re-read each transcript again to see if I’d missed coding any statements for them.

In addition to freely coding statements made throughout the transcripts as a whole, I also zeroed in on specific parts of the conversations. I isolated those comments that related specifically to participants’ discussion of what they considered to be “good” professional developments. Following this, I isolated the discussion of their self-identified meaningful and/or transformational professional development activities. From these portions of the transcripts, I created a spreadsheet containing each code present in the discussions. Finally, I compared across participants the codes from these “good”, meaningful, and transformational portions of the discussions. In addition to noting the frequency of codes in each of these three

portions of transcripts, I also pulled up each segment in NVivo and compared each in context across the participants in order to identify any similarities or patterns.

Curriculum Vitae Analysis. As curriculum vitae are rich sources of textual data, analysis can be done in a number of ways. Dietz et al. (2000) address the methodological complexities of CV analysis. Given the lengthy nature of experienced scholars' CVs, they note the challenge of first deciding what information is most pertinent for analysis. Thankfully, the research questions for this study helped to naturally identify those components of participants' CVs that are most relevant. Therefore, analysis was limited to the portions of the CV that pertained to professional development and service experiences. Additionally, any references to the meaningful or transformational activities about which the participants chose to speak were also included in analysis, even if the references were present in parts of the CV other than those pertaining to professional development or service.

Once CVs had been reduced to the sections that pertained to the research questions, initial coding began. Oplatka (2010) calls for use of qualitative content analysis, or ethnographic content analysis, for analyzing CVs. He notes that this process involves both measuring the frequency of codes assigned as well as category construction of the codes. Consistent with a qualitative approach, he notes that the researcher is a key component of the data analysis in that he or she attempts to understand "the communication of meaning" and the theoretical relationships present in the data. The analysis should take place in an interactive and reflexive relationship among the researcher, the data, and the concepts involved.

Coding of curriculum vitae took place in much the same manner as coding of the interview transcripts. All CVs were imported into the NVivo software for analysis. All CV coding took place after the coding of transcripts. For this reason, many existing codes, already salient in

my mind, were identified in the CVs. Nevertheless, in keeping with a phenomenological approach as well as the methods used by Oplatka (2010), I also strove to be open to any themes that might emerge.

Rigor. Smith, Flowers & Larkin (2009) caution against measuring the quality of qualitative research with the same criteria used for assessing quantitative studies. Rather, they draw on principles espoused by Lucy Yardley (2000) as they make recommendations for enhancing a study's rigor when using an interpretive phenomenological approach to research. They advocate for "sensitivity to context" (p. 180). This sensitivity begins early on in the research process and should be demonstrated to participants through the interview process by displaying empathy and understanding for their experiences. Making sense of the meaning as described by participants themselves is an important component to this process. Visible markers of sensitivity in context include liberal use of the participants' own words in the presentation of results. That is, quotes that speak for themselves and align with the researcher's interpretations should be found throughout the discussion of results. Likewise, alignment of interpretations with concepts from the literature review help to situate the data within a theoretical and scholarly context. The results section of this study incorporates both a plethora of quotes in context from participants as well as a discussion of those quotes in the context of adult education concepts as found in the library and adult education literature.

Additional components of rigor important in hermeneutic phenomenology are commitment to participants and thoroughness of the study (Smith, Flowers & Larkin, 2009). By attending to participants' comments throughout the interview and follow-up processes, a researcher demonstrates his or her commitment to their experiences. Signs of this commitment can be found in a careful reading of the transcripts of participant interviews. Follow-up questions,

entreaties for clarification, and subsequent sharing of interpretations with participants offer further evidence of this commitment. Thoroughness of study takes place throughout the entire research process, beginning with the selection of a relatively homogeneous group of participants, in this case academic librarians with an interest in professional development, and concluding with a substantial effort devoted to the analysis of data gathered from them. The amount of time spent analyzing and re-analyzing results offers evidence of this thoroughness.

Additional elements of rigor in an interpretive phenomenological study include transparency and coherence. The former refers to the researcher's attempt to clearly define the process used to gather and analyze data. Methods and interpretive results are stated succinctly and justifiably. Smith, Flowers & Larkin (2009) emphasize the interpretive act as an important element of rigor. They state that "phenomenological and hermeneutic sensibility should be apparent in the write-up" (p. 182). That is, a mere description of the participants' experiences does not suffice if the intent of the study is to make sense of those experiences. The element of interpretation is what contributes to Yarley's (2000) final principles of rigor: impact and importance. That is, the researcher's interpretation of participants' experiences should say something new, interesting, important, or useful. With regard to this study, it is the interpretive aspect of the analysis that leads to identification of common and beneficial components of professional development as experienced and identified by participants themselves.

Epoche. Phenomenological studies typically include a discussion of epoche. To undertake an act of epoche, researchers bracket, or suspend, their own judgement as they describe and interpret the phenomenon. Epoche as a traditional element of phenomenology stems from Husserl's transcendental conception of the methodology; he is credited with developing the concept throughout the years of his career spanning the first half of the twentieth century

(Borràs, 2010). The goal is to momentarily put aside “prejudgements related to the phenomenon in order to avoid preconceptions and beliefs and instead be open to participants' descriptions of experiences” (Moustakas, 1994, p. 22). Husserl believed it possible to “bracket away one’s biases until all that remained was an ideal expression of the form” (Burgess, 2013, p. 62).

Hermeneutic phenomenology, however, with its emphasis on a researcher’s interpretation of participants’ experiences does not make use of epoche in quite the same way as Husserl’s transcendental approach. Heidegger (1962), Husserl’s student, rejected the idea that bracketing away one’s biases was possible; rather, he argues that interpretation is already present in any act of description. Lavery (2003) states, “Specifically, the biases and assumptions of the researcher are not bracketed or set aside, but rather are embedded and essential to the interpretive process” (p. 28). According to Van Manen (1997) researchers must “resist the temptation to develop positivistic schemata, paradigms, models, or other categorical abstractions of knowledge,” yet at the same time must understand that a phenomenological question “always refers us back to our world, to our lives, to who we are” (p. 46). That is, completely removing ourselves from the interpretive act of understanding our questions is neither possible nor desirable.

Working under the assumption that complete removal of the researcher’s experiences during analysis of data is not possible, nor desirable, it is nevertheless important for a researcher to be aware of his or her own experiences, how they may differ from their participants, and how this difference may color the interpretation of participants’ own experiences. Dey (1993) writes that “the danger lies not in having assumptions but in not being aware of them” (p. 64). For this reason, even researchers using a hermeneutic approach to

phenomenology may make use of the concept of epoche as they begin their descriptive and interpretive work (Hioki, 2009; Pack, 2013). Often this involves acts of conscious reflection and writing about one's experiences in order to gain a greater self-awareness of them.

Prior to beginning data analysis during this study, the act of writing about my research background served as an effort to acknowledge and understand my own experience with professional development as an academic librarian. During the process, I realized that much of my own experience with such professional development was based on webinars and short conference attendance. As such, I had a somewhat negative view of the importance or usefulness of professional development, having not felt these experiences foster any meaningful change to my thinking or practice. As I began to hear stories of participants' positive experiences with professional development, however, I made a conscious effort to listen carefully to what made these experiences poignant to participants. I tried to refrain from discussing any negative experiences of my own as I probed further. That is not to say, I did not make use of my own position as a librarian as I discussed participants' experiences with them. At times, it was useful to use professional jargon with participants in order to solidify my connection with them and encourage them to open up about their experiences. At the same time, the concept of epoche kept me aware of my responsibility as a researcher to listen and focus on the essences of participants' experiences themselves rather than my own.

Confirmability and Credibility. In addition to acknowledging my own experiences with professional development and attempting to refrain from projecting them on the participants' experiences, I also attempted to ensure a rigorous approach to data analysis through further interaction with the participants. The concept of confirmability suggests that the results as presented could be confirmed by others if they were to analyze the data (Trochim, 2005). To

ensure this possibility, I began by recording interviews and then by gaining verbatim transcripts of each one. At the end of each interview, I explained to participants that I hoped to share with them summarizations of our conversations as I progressed through the analysis process. All indicated their willingness to receive further communication from me to this end. In addition Holland (2014) suggests as a first step in enhancing validity of the study the sharing of transcripts themselves with participants. I decided to follow this process as well for two reasons: first, as a courtesy to participants, and second, to ensure accuracy of their thoughts and perceptions about their professional development experiences. Three participants emailed back suggested changes. The first merely clarified a transcription error that I had already caught as I listed to the .mp4 while following along with the transcript. The second recommended that our pre-interview small talk not be used for analysis; I agreed to the request. The third also simply clarified a few transcription errors. The second interviews were also shared with participants, and none offered any suggestions or changes.

The concept of dependability is important in qualitative research, which often requires shifts in methods or techniques as a study progresses. Dependability requires careful attention to the details of a study's structure so that a study could be replicated if desired; that is, if changes to a proposed method are required after embarking upon the study, a detailed trail of those changes must be kept by the researcher (Jensen, 2008). In this study, Saldaña's (2009) recommendation of keeping analytic memos was employed as a means of providing such a trail. Each time I completed any activity related to the analysis of the data, I recorded it in my notes file. These notes not only included stray thoughts and ideas related to concepts and themes, but they also included files devoted solely to "method notes" and the "steps of analysis." These files ensure that should I wish to recreate this study in the future with

additional participants, or if another researcher wanted to use the same methods to answer my guiding questions, it would be possible to identify the steps taken in both the method and analysis.

In addition to the concepts of confirmability and dependability, an attempt to ensure credibility is also present within this study. Trochim and Donnelly (2008) defines credibility as an act of “establishing that the results of qualitative research are credible or believable from the perspective of the participant in the research” (p. 149). To this end, I made use of the techniques of triangulation and member checking. In order to gather more data that could be gained from the participant interviews alone, I asked for, received, and analyzed participants’ curriculum vitae. While these documents did not necessarily provide a great deal of additional information regarding participants’ meaningful or transformational professional development experiences, they did offer a corroboration of participants’ statements regarding what types of professional development they most often undertake. They also showed the relationship between participants’ job responsibilities and the professional development choices they make in order to better meet those responsibilities, an issue touched upon by all participants in their interviews as well.

As a second means of safeguarding the study’s credibility, I also employed the use of member checking as recommended by Saldaña (2009). Upon completion of a draft of the results section, I shared three pieces of the data with participants themselves and asked for feedback. I first shared with each participant the participant profile I had written for each of them. This profile contains both background information about their library school experiences or job history as well as a summary of their meaningful and transformational professional development. I also shared a spreadsheet containing the codes I had identified as present in

each participant's discussion of good, meaningful, and/or transformation professional development. Finally, I emailed each participant a complete draft of the results with sections pertaining to their own experiences highlighted in the text. I asked participants to review the writing, with special attention given to their own experiences. Six of the participants responded with emails indicating their approval and appreciation of the writing. Only one offered three word-level corrections, suggesting that overall they believe their experiences were accurately captured in profile, coding, and the results section.

Delimitations and Limitations. Delimitations and limitations named in a study help identify what a study is able to uncover and what is beyond its scope. Delimitations help define the boundaries that frame the study while limitations are an acknowledgement of potential weaknesses in it (Creswell, 2003). In terms of delimitations, the primary focus of this study is the experiences of the ten participants who have engaged in what they consider to be meaningful or transformational professional development. All participants are academic librarians holding at least a Masters of Library and Information Science from an ALA-accredited school. This study included librarians at public, private, and medical universities and community colleges. All participants are in positions as professional librarians (as opposed to working in library paraprofessional roles), and all have as part of their job requirement a responsibility to engage in professional development of some kind.

Limitations in this study stem from both the researcher involvement and the nature of phenomenological research. Researcher bias is always a possible concern in phenomenological research. While the use of epoche to make clear the researcher's perspectives on a subject is designed to mitigate the effect of bias to some degree, it is not a failsafe approach. Moustakas (1994) describes it as a goal, but notes that while it can be used to help set aside biases, the

self's perspectives still have a way of entering into the research process and should be acknowledged as possible sources of bias.

The concept of transferability “refers to the degree to which the results of qualitative research can be generalized or transferred to other contexts or setting” (Trochim & Donnelly, 2007, p. 149). Generalizability is not typically a goal of phenomenological research; rather, the description and interpretation of participants' experiences is done to identify themes in the context of their own life situations (Creswell, 2007). Still, it is important to explicitly state that the limited number of participants in the study could have resulted in the development of themes that are unique to participants interviewed here. Given the patterns of themes identified among all participants in the study, there is reason to believe their experiences may be similar to other practicing academic librarians; however, the experiences of these ten librarians (eleven if my own experiences are considered) should not be considered representative of all academic librarians.

Geographic bias is present in this study to a greater degree than I would have liked. While I made an attempt to include participants from throughout the United States, the majority of participants came from the eastern part of the country. Two actually worked at the same institution at the time of our interviews. Part of my justification for taking my own experiences into consideration as I progressed through this study was the desire to expand the geographic representation of librarians included. Nevertheless, it should be noted that librarians from the western United States were not well represented among the participants. Thus, the findings of this study are designed to capture the essences of participants' experiences as well as to find any similarities among them, but it should be made clear that findings are not meant to be generalizable to all members of the profession.

CHAPTER 4: Results of Initial Survey and Participant Profiles

The goal of this study is to understand the experiences of academic librarians as they participate in professional development activities that they find to be personally meaningful or transformational. The interviews and curriculum vitae (CVs) that were gathered as data to explore this phenomenon have been analyzed with a hermeneutic phenomenological approach in order to explore and interpret those experiences as described by participants. To this end, several data analysis techniques were used. Initial survey results are scrutinized briefly while the bulk of analysis relies on transcripts, which were reviewed, coded, and analyzed with a specific focus on those experiences that participants pronounced to be meaningful or transformational. As codes were compared across the ten participants, several themes began to emerge from the data. More analysis revealed relationships among unique themes, and it is these relationships that capture something of the essence that lies at the heart of the meaningful professional development experienced by the participants.

Van Manen (1990, 1997) asserts that a description of participant experiences and the codes assigned to them should focus on the meaning of those experiences rather than simply a description or categorization of them. However, while a basic description of experiences does not result as the end goal of hermeneutic phenomenology, such descriptions formed into categories can help provide context for the deeper, more substantive themes that constitute the essence of participants' experiences. Therefore, the results of this study are organized into two main sections. The first section summarizes findings from the initial survey. The purpose of this summarization is to give context to the more interesting and applicable results that emerged from interviews with the participants. Following this summarization, a profile for the participants, describing the type of library in which they work, their library school and work

experiences, and a brief description of the meaningful or transformational professional development activity or activities about which they chose to speak rounds out Chapter 4.

Initial Survey Results

Although this study was not intended to be a mixed methods project, the initial survey offers some insight into librarians' experiences with professional development in the United States. The survey produced 293 responses. Of these, 181 responders finished and answered every question. The majority of respondents describe themselves as reference or instruction librarians (40.9%). The next largest group of respondents selected "other" for a job description with the majority of written responses indicating management, assessment, or a combination of library duties (26.5%). The third group of respondents identify as cataloging librarians (17%). The remaining respondents identified as acquisitions, access services, e-resources/systems, or outreach librarians (16%). Because the majority of academic librarians are expected to undertake professional development activities regardless of what type of role they have within their organization, the make-up of differences in positions in this survey is not likely to have influenced participant responses. While specific job duties are unique to each type of library position, overall librarians within an institution typically are expected to undertake professional development of some kind.

The survey asked participants about whether or not they are encouraged to participate in professional development activities and if their position descriptions include any mention of the subject. Overwhelmingly, participants in the survey are either required (41%) or encouraged (53%) to engage in professional development activities. Surprisingly, however, only 45% of respondents have any mention of professional development written into their position descriptions, indicating that for many there is only an unspoken assumption that they

will undertake it. The specific language related to professional development in respondents' position descriptions varied widely. The variety indicates the diverse ways that librarians think about and describe professional development. Among the range of statements and descriptions offered by participants as to what constitutes professional development in their positions are: professional associations, committee work, conference and workshop attendance, scholarship and publication, and activities designed to "keep current" or "maintain knowledge."

When asked if they are free to select their own professional development activities, only one person indicated that s/he is not. The vast majority are at liberty to choose their own activities, at least within some institutional guidelines. Responding to an open-ended, optional question of what motivates them to choose certain professional development activities over others, respondents overwhelmingly indicated that job relevance spurred their choices. Of the 174 participants who offered a text response, 66 stated that job relevance served as a primary motivator. Additional motivating factors stated by participants include cost (43), personal interest (43), administrative requests/requirements (16), location (13), time (12), potential impact on career (11), sponsoring organization (9), interactive formats (7), and recommendations by others (4). To be clear, this question was not a multiple-choice option required of participants, and results should not be taken as such. Rather, the results of respondents' text answers are provided in order to provide context for the more detailed experiences of interview participants.

With regard to format, respondents were asked what type they attend most frequently. Nearly half said that webinars are the most common type of professional development activity they attend. This was followed by conferences and workshops, which together comprised almost 42% of responses. When asked if they felt any particular format was more beneficial

than others, 54% said yes. Prompted to explain further, respondents overwhelmingly indicated that workshops and face-to-face, interactive activities benefited them the most. An obvious limitation with this question, however, is that participants may very well have differing opinions as to what the term “benefits” means in their situation. Twenty of the 97 written responses indicated that webinars benefited them the most. Even among those survey respondents who went on to participate in the in-depth interviews with me, while none named webinars as providing their most meaningful or transformational professional development, several nevertheless acknowledged that it is hard to beat the low-cost and convenience of the format.

Survey participants were next asked to list other characteristics of professional development that they found beneficial. The question specifically mentioned discussions, collaboration, and lectures as possible examples but allowed participants an open text box to answer freely as they saw fit. One-hundred and fifty-one participants responded. Of those, 77.5% mentioned some form of interaction as a component of beneficial professional development. Of course, it bears a reminder that the initial survey was primarily designed to identify interview participants; as such, it did not attempt to obtain statistically significant results in the manner of a formal quantitative survey. Nevertheless, that survey respondents’ own words mesh with interview participants’ meaningful or transformational experiences suggests that many librarians find interaction a positive component of professional development. In addition, even among the thirty-four responses that did not mention interaction as beneficial, only three specifically stated they preferred lectures with no interaction. The remaining comments focused more on content and/or other adult education concepts, namely hands-on, relevant activities.

Based on the importance of reflection following professional development as described in the adult education literature, several questions on the initial survey asked about reflection. Out of 180 responses, 54% said they had participated in a professional development activity in which the facilitator had asked them to deliberately reflect on the content presented. When asked to describe the experience, many participants wrote about institutes or workshops during which they were asked to reflect on their goal for attending and/or how they might apply the content to their work situations. Slightly more than a dozen also mentioned that they were asked to share their reflective thoughts with others around them. Interestingly, more than twenty respondents offered surveys or evaluations as prompting their reflection about an activity. Unfortunately, I did not think to ask what now seems to have been an obvious question: whether or not participants felt they benefited in any way from the request to reflect. This could be an area for further research.

A similar question asked of participants was whether or not they deliberately made time to reflect on a professional development activity on their own without being asked by someone else. Nearly 74% of respondents reported that they had. When pressed for details, the comments nearly all centered around three inter-connected themes: writing and note-taking, sharing with colleagues, and implementing new activities. Several participants mentioned that writing some kind of follow-up report of their professional development was a requirement at their institution so that they could share information gained with their colleagues. But even among those who did not mention a requirement, the rationale for doing so was similar. Reports and/or notes provided not only an opportunity for sharing with colleagues, but also for reflecting on content and identifying if and how it could be applicable to the participants' individual library situation.

The final question of the survey, save that which asked participants if they would be willing to participate in a follow-up interview or essay, asked if they had ever participated in any professional development activity that led to transformational changes in their practice. Of the 179 respondents, two-thirds said yes. Of these, 93 offered brief descriptions of that experience. The briefness of each response is, of course, a limiting factor in making any interpretations about participants' experiences; however, four codes appeared in the responses in far greater numbers than any others. Those four suggest that survey takers felt that their transformational experiences included an impact on practice (30), an interactive component (24), a high level of duration (21), and an opportunity to develop new ideas (11). It is possible, too, that other participants may have also had experiences that included these components but did not choose to highlight them in their brief text responses.

Several participants also offered general observations about the nature of transformation resulting from professional development experiences. Their responses suggest that a cumulative effect of multiple experiences undertaken over the course of their career led to a gradual transformation in their ways of practicing librarianship. One participant said, "I believe this has happened many times that contribute to the full picture. I cannot specify just 'one' professional development activity that led to 'one or many' transformational change(s)." Another said even more succinctly, "My practice has transformed, but it's been incremental--built in a holistic manner through many, varied PD experiences."

Participant Profiles

The final question of the initial survey sought to identify academic librarians willing to participate in follow-up interviews. Of the survey respondents, twenty-one provided contact information indicating that they were willing to participate further. To these twenty-one, I sent

a follow-up email offering a basic description of the study and guiding questions and asking if they would consent to participate in two recorded Skype interviews. The ten that ultimately agreed and followed through with the interviews were guaranteed anonymity; however, it is also possible to offer some basic information about each in both table and profile format without providing identifying information.

Table 1: Participant Demographics

Name	Experience Level	Institution Size	Institution Type	Position Type	Geographic Location
Carol W.	16 years (10 in current position)	25,000+	Public, Doctoral	Reference, Instruction, Outreach	Mid-Atlantic U.S.
Susann J.	4 years	50,000+	Public, Doctoral	Instructional Design	Southeastern U.S.
Pauleen K.	19 years (5 professional)	30,000+	Public, Doctoral	Director, Operations	Mid-Atlantic U.S.
Jeffrey M.	25 years (4 in current position)	50,000+	Public, Doctoral	First Year Experience	Southeastern U.S.
Robert J.	12 years (3 professional)	10,000	Public, Community College	Director, Technical Services	Southeastern U.S.
Paige K.	20 years (3 mos. current position)	10,000+	Public, Technical	Manager, Reference & Instruction	New England

Josefina B.	1 year (1 mo. current position)	15,000+	Public, Doctoral	Subject Specialist Librarian	Midwest
Kathleen G.	13 years (4 in current position)	Less than 500	Public, Medical	Director, Instruction	New England
Nathan T.	31 years (25 in current position)	10,000 +	Public, Doctoral	Systems Manager	Southeastern U.S.
Hazel C.	23 years	Less than 1,000	Private, Religious	Public Services, Special Collections	Southeastern U.S.

The following profiles not only include basic demographic information about participants but they also briefly describe the meaningful or transformational professional development experience(s) about which they chose to speak. To write these introductory profiles, I reviewed the background questions asked in each interview alongside information about each librarian as provided on their curriculum vitae. I then read and re-read interview transcripts for each participant. For the most part, the profiles that follow include four components: information about the participants' current positions, their library school experiences, their overall attitudes about professional development, and the meaningful or transformational experience(s) about which they chose to speak. In addition, each participant's profile includes a list of the main codes that pertain to their discussion of good professional development. Brief descriptions of these codes can be found in Appendix C.

Carol W. Carol W. is a reference, instruction, and outreach librarian at a large, public university in a large city in the eastern United States. She had been in her current position for less than a year at the time of our first interview, but she had worked at her current library for over a decade. Her new position includes supervisory responsibilities, and her CV includes a plethora of teams, working groups, and committees. Likewise, she has a strong record of participation in a prominent ALA division, serving in a leadership capacity especially within the last two years prior to our first conversation. In addition, fourteen conference presentations and six academic articles attest to her scholarly participation in the profession.

Carol states that she knew by the age of 16 that she wanted to become a librarian, though she mentioned that it wasn't until library school that she considered working in an academic library. The school Carol attended as she earned her MLS is considered one of the most prestigious library schools in the country, and Carol noted that she had to take 48 credits total (as compared with 36 required at many other library schools). With a passion for reference work, she took every reference class possible during her program, five or six as she recalls, also noting that this is a good deal more reference classes than most students take these days. Upon being asked if her courses helped to prepare her as she entered the library workforce, she replied, emphatically, "Absolutely." At the same time, she lamented the fact that she had failed to take a user education course that had just become available to students in her program. Not knowing how important teaching would be to her future career, she says she instead learned how to do it on the job, which proved challenging.

Carol's thoughts on professional development are largely positive but also colored by a major reorganization occurring in her workplace. Moving toward a flatter structure and led by a university librarian without a library background, her library is developing rotating teams to

focus on various library-related activities: virtual presence, scholarly communication, graduate student services, sustainable instruction, and collection development. Additionally, Carol notes that the organization is short-staffed, to the point where day-to-day operations tend to get in the way of team development and learning. Nevertheless, she speaks very positively of forming a group of peers to voluntarily learn about instruction and pedagogical practices. Carol also perceived that the group has helped members stay connected during the reorganization process. The main codes present during Carol's descriptions of good professional development are OTJ, Interaction, Self-initiative/Freedom, Passion, Impact on Practice, Adult Education, and Cost.

Carol offers three examples of what she terms meaningful professional development: a pedagogy reading group with colleagues, peer-observation of classroom instruction, and her work as chair of a major ALA division committee. Carol has plenty to say about these three experiences, all of which involve heavy amounts of interaction with others; however, when asked about truly transformational experiences, she had a more difficult time describing anything. Instead, she simply states that she probably had those experiences early on in her career, but at this mid-stage, she does not feel that she can remember them clearly. Nevertheless, from her CV, it is apparent that Carol has placed a heavy importance on committee work as a component of her professional life. Of all the participants, she has the lengthiest list of involvement with professional association committees, spanning well more than a decade of her career.

Susann J. Susann J. knew she wanted to be a librarian from the start of her college career when she obtained a position as a student library worker. At the time of our interview, she had been working for four years at a very large, top-tier, public research university in the southeast.

Originally starting out as a government documents and reference librarian, she had moved into an instructional design position eight months prior to our first interview as a result of her new supervisor learning about her passion for library instruction. Her position was still in a rather “fluid” state as she identified how she has been finding projects located at the intersection of teaching and learning that involved instructional design principles.

Upon starting library school, Susann knew she wanted to focus on academic librarianship, and she came to realize while working as a graduate assistant that she had a passion for working one-on-one with people as well as for teaching classes. She says that the majority of classes she took related to reference work while a graduate assistantship helped to fill in the gaps with regard to instruction. She also notes that whereas many library programs today are online, it was her ability to be physically present to talk with instructors and become involved in student groups that made for a good library school experience and helped her to find a job afterwards.

Susann’s attitude about professional development is extremely positive overall; she states, “Even a bad professional development experience you still get something out of it. You always learn something. It’s definitely not a waste of time.” But it was when she discussed professional development in conjunction with her love of library instruction that she became most passionate during our conversations. The enthusiasm she has for library instruction is matched by the praise she gives to the major professional development activity that she chose to discuss in our interview: a major ACRL-sponsored, long term institute focused on library instruction. Although she describes moments of discomfort and vulnerability that occurred during her experience, she also speaks very highly of activities that required her to reflect on her teaching and rethink her practices as an instructor. Overall, the codes relevant to her

description of good professional development include: Adult education, Impact on practice, New ideas/perspectives, Self-awareness, Self-initiative/freedom-to-choose, Self-promotion, Specific needs, and Sharing.

Pauleen K. Pauleen began working in libraries while still in high school, saying it had always been “a comfortable fit,” but she waited until starting and raising a family to return to college for an undergraduate degree. Seven years later she graduated with an MLS, fourteen years after she initially began working at an academic library as a paraprofessional. Upon receiving her degree, she accepted a position at a large, leading public research university in a mid-Atlantic state. She began as a director of assessment and access services, but at the time of our interview, she had just accepted what she deemed a lateral move to become a director in charge of strategic planning and assessment for the library and all of its branches. She is still feeling a little overwhelmed in her new position.

Both in her current position as well as her previous position, which she had held for four years, she has had supervisory and management roles. These include budgetary, strategic planning, and operational responsibilities. Her curriculum vitae also shows that she has done five academic presentations and has had two pieces of writing published. Far more extensive is her involvement with library, campus, and professional association committees and working groups. In addition, she lists a variety of professional development activities completed during the two years prior to our first conversation. These include a blend of in-person and online workshops and webinars.

Perhaps because of her long history with libraries prior to attending library school, Pauleen believes she obtained more useful preparation for working in a library than she did from library school itself. She notes a few helpful classes, but claimed that others just “felt like

jumping through hoops.” She describes a lack of classes related to access services, digital repositories, assessment, and strategic planning, namely all of the things she has done since earning her degree and obtaining a job as a professional librarian. Part of this lack in classes on these subjects is likely due to the recent growth of these topics at many academic libraries.

As we talked about professional development in the context of her new position, Pauleen at times seemed unsure if the new assignment was a good thing or not (“who asks to sit around and write strategic plans?”) She envisions difficulty in corralling institution-wide data from individuals who might not want to give it up readily. She notes that in terms of the professional development done by her own colleagues, she isn’t even quite sure how to capture all of their activities for assessment purposes. In the context of her new job, professional development is something of a challenge to be dealt with rather than an unmitigated good. Nevertheless, in spite of these difficulties, she does note that professional development is something she tends to enjoy, especially if she can participate directly with colleagues on actual projects and come away with a tangible accomplishment. The codes appearing most often during her discussion of good professional development include Interaction, Passion, Follow Through, Self-awareness, New Ideas and Perspectives, and Discomfort.

With regard to meaningful and transformational professional development, Pauleen K. offers one example of each. Like Carol W., Pauleen K. describes her involvement with an ALA division committee as a meaningful experience. She specifically notes the interaction and focus on specific goals as components that made the experiences meaningful for her. She also claims that the involvement has had noticeable impact on her self-esteem as well as future decisions to undertake professional development. As an even more transformational experience, Pauleen describes an executive development institute in which she participated

between our first and second interviews. The interaction and duration of it as well as new ideas encountered will have, she believes, an impact both on her career and decision to participate in similar events in the future.

Both in her current position as well as her previous position, which she had held for four years, she has had supervisory and management roles. These include budgetary, strategic planning, and operational responsibilities. Her curriculum vitae also shows that she has done five academic presentations and has had two pieces of writing published. Far more extensive is her involvement with library, campus, and professional association committees and working groups. In addition, she lists a variety of professional development activities completed during the two years prior to our first conversation. These include a blend of in-person and online workshops and webinars.

Perhaps because of her long history with libraries prior to attending library school, Pauleen believes she obtained more useful preparation for working in a library than she did from library school itself. She notes a few helpful classes, but claimed that others just “felt like jumping through hoops.” She describes a lack of classes related to access services, digital repositories, assessment, and strategic planning, namely all of the things she has done since earning her degree and obtaining a job as a professional librarian. Part of this lack in classes on these subjects is likely due to the recent growth of these topics at many academic libraries.

As we talked about professional development in the context of her new position, Pauleen at times seemed unsure if the new assignment was a good thing or not (“who asks to sit around and write strategic plans?”) She envisions difficulty in corralling institution-wide data from individuals who might not want to give it up readily. She notes that in terms of the professional development done by her own colleagues, she isn’t even quite sure how to capture

all of their activities for assessment purposes. In the context of her new job, professional development is something of a challenge to be dealt with rather than an unmitigated good. Nevertheless, in spite of these difficulties, she does note that professional development is something she tends to enjoy, especially if she can participate directly with colleagues on actual projects and come away with a tangible accomplishment. The codes appearing most often during her discussion of good professional development include Interaction, Passion, Follow Through, Self-awareness, New Ideas and Perspectives, and Discomfort.

With regard to meaningful and transformational professional development, Pauleen K. offers one example of each. Like Carol W., Pauleen K. describes her involvement with an ALA division committee as a meaningful experience. She specifically notes the interaction and focus on specific goals as components that made the experiences meaningful for her. She also claims that the involvement has had noticeable impact on her self-esteem as well as future decisions to undertake professional development. As an even more transformational experience, Pauleen describes an executive development institute in which she participated between our first and second interviews. The interaction and duration of it as well as new ideas encountered will have, she believes, an impact both on her career and decision to participate in similar events in the future.

Jeffrey M. Jeffrey M. graduated from library school in 1989 and realized while hunting for jobs that he wanted to live somewhere that had a large, diverse, “international flavor.” He found his ideal location at a very large research university in the southeastern-most part of the United States. After working as the head of access services for a number of years, Jeffrey says he realized that he was simply tired of the job and ready to try something new that allowed him to work more closely with the student population. His supervisor suggested he might like

being a first year experience librarian. Without fully knowing what the job would entail, Jeffrey accepted the position in the fall of 2011. He readily admits that it took him about a year to figure out what he was doing.

Because his library school experience occurred so long ago, we did not spend much time during our conversation focusing on it, but rather jumped right into his experiences getting himself prepared for his new role at the library. Jeffrey discusses this meaningful professional development quest with considerable self-awareness. He highlights his decision to fill gaps in knowledge by meeting with fellow-librarians who were already interacting heavily with patrons. He explains how he shadowed every reference librarian in the building and began working on the reference desk to better understand the student population. He also began teaching instruction sessions again. He attended as many relevant conferences and meeting sessions as possible and publicly announced at them the nature of his new position and that he welcomed help from others in a similar position.

Part of what struck me about the conversation with Jeffrey is his enthusiasm for trying professional development activities with an end goal of really improving his professional practice. He doesn't just want to teach instruction sessions, but he wants to do them well. He wants to not only work more closely with the students but to find new and innovative ways to inform them about the library and its services. Jeffrey emphasizes the connection between his own the professional development, which he undertook to improve his practice, and his professional efforts to help patrons learn themselves. To make the connection between both of these goals, he notes that learning often occurs just by enabling an opportunity for an individual to see something in a new way. As such, the codes associated with his concept of

good professional development include OTJ, Self-Awareness, Interaction, and New Ideas. He also notes Cost as an important factor of professional development.

In addition to his meaningful self-directed professional development attempts, Jeffrey has no trouble identifying an experience he deems transformational: LibQual training. LibQual is a nationally recognized commercial survey used by libraries to assess their strengths and weaknesses. One of two librarians at his institution to spearhead the planning, implementation and analysis of the survey, Jeffrey says it fundamentally changed the way he thinks about library service. Not only did his passion for the survey come through strongly during the interview (he actually volunteered to be a part of the process!), but he truly seems to care about using the results, specifically the qualitative comments, to improve patron services at his library. Unsurprisingly the codes assigned to his discussion of the process – and about good professional development in general – include Duration, Follow-through, Passion, Self-Awareness, Discomfort, Impact on Practice, and New Perspective.

On a related note, and also indicative of his strong customer-service focus, Jeffrey relates another transformational professional development undertaking: two book-based customer services trainings. Each training, spearheaded by the library's administration, involved reading and interaction with colleagues and facilitators. Jeffrey describes radical transformations in thinking as a result of the trainings, which he says provided him with tools to use during tense confrontations with patrons. He still uses these experiences combined with deliberate reflection to further develop his practices, increasing duration, follow-through, and impact on practice that he gained from them.

Robert J. Robert J. has worked in libraries for a total of twelve years, nine of which occurred prior to obtaining his library degree. He currently oversees all technical services at a

mid-sized community college in the south. Similar to many academic librarians at smaller institutions, he takes on a lot of roles. Working with one staff member and a handful of student employees, he has responsibilities for cataloging, acquisitions, collection development, budgets, the library's website, and electronic systems. Although he originally applied at the institution for a paraprofessional position before he had completed his library degree, he was hired on for a different position with the promise that it would evolve into a professional position once he graduated. Unsurprisingly, because of the varied activities and rapid changes in libraries, he notes that his position has indeed changed a good deal during his three-years as a professional librarian.

Like many who go on to become degreed librarians, Robert worked in a library during his undergraduate program. He says he originally gravitated toward public libraries because of the impact he saw that they could make in the lives of patrons, but when his undergraduate library offered him a full-time paraprofessional position, he accepted. After five years, he decided he wanted to work in libraries permanently, so he left his job to attend library school. Although he readily notes that what really prepared him for his job was all of his previous library experience, he also states that library school offered him the framework and context to understand his position. He wonders about his many classmates who had never worked in a library and whether they might have trouble understanding the readings and projects without actual library work experience.

Of all the participants, Robert offers noticeably few statements about how his professional development activities have influenced his actual practice although he was able to offer examples of professional development directly impacting a colleague's work. This lack of impact on practice may have to do with the nature of his work in technical services. Given that

his institution is one of sixteen in a state system of community colleges, his ability to implement changes is somewhat stymied by major administrative decision being made at a system-wide level rather than in his individual library.

In spite of his limited ability to implement major changes as a result of professional development, Robert displays a contagious amount of enthusiasm for professional development activities, especially those of personal interest to him. When asked why he selects some professional development activities over others, he states his tendency to focus more on his interest in various subjects rather than whether or not the activities seemed to have potential for application in his position. Terms associated with good professional development in his mind include Time, Specific Needs, Passion, Self-Awareness, Self-Initiative/Freedom to Choose, Reflection, and Interaction. In addition, he mentions Impact on Practice and Follow-through, especially with regard to serendipitous opportunities to implement new ideas, even if enacting change is not an original goal of undertaking the professional development.

When pressed to discuss meaningful professional development, Robert has two examples available. One is an all-day workshop about scholarly communication within libraries. Scholarly communication, or the dissemination of and access to scholarly work by academic authors, is a very timely and relevant issue in libraries due to the changing nature of technology and the increasing prices to subscription journals. The other event described by Robert is a mini-conference on library space, also a very timely issue in libraries as they seek to evolve to meet the needs of their users. Both events had several similarities in common that Robert believes made them especially poignant to him. Both involved an intense, all-day experience shared with other librarians. Robert also notes that both provided him with new ideas and perspectives about the role that libraries can play for their users.

Paige K. Paige K. has been a librarian for over twenty years and currently works at a prestigious, mid-sized institution, which focuses on science and technology. Although she has been at her library for over seventeen years, she notes that her role at this time is a fairly new position. From working with census information, to coordinating digital reference services, to acting as a liaison, to managing assessment, her position has evolved according to the needs of the library, and Paige notes that she herself in several instances saw a gap in services and pushed for the creation of a new role. She is currently managing a number of library-wide assessment projects. As such, while she has a very positive attitude about professional development as a whole, she also laments a lack of time to follow-through with new ideas or activities as a result of them.

Like Jeffrey, Paige's library school training occurred so long ago that we did not spend much time discussing its effectiveness in preparing her for her current position. Instead we spent more time discussing the professional development activities that she has undertaken over the years that have helped her understand and perform better in her evolving responsibilities. Librarians at Paige's institution are not faculty, but they are expected to undertake some professional activity to achieve promotion. Paige is currently encouraged to try out different activities, and she notes that one of the first she tried, a RUSA training institute about assessment, turned out to be very useful to her own library. Because she was able to apply what she learned in her position, she ended up leading committees on assessment both at her own institution and with RUSA, activities which in turn helped her move into the role of assessment librarian at her institution.

Like all of the other participants, Paige has a very positive outlook on professional development activities, especially those which offer information she can actually apply in her

job. She notes the value of working with an instruction librarian with whom she attended an instruction assessment institute so that they could work together on assessing the quality of their instruction program. At the same time, of all participants, Paige repeatedly brought up the challenge of having enough time to actually take the knowledge gained at a professional development activity and apply it to her work currently.

She discusses three meaningful and one transformational professional development activities that have occurred throughout her tenure as a librarian; all are long-term institutes. The codes assigned to them are quite similar and also match Paige's discussion about good professional development in general. She notes especially the duration and interaction that institutes entail are part of their usefulness. Other common codes related to meaningful and transformational experiences include Impact on Practice, Impact on Career, Impact on Future PD, New Ideas, and Sharing. In addition, during her discussion of good professional development in general, Paige mentions benefits of Communities of Practice, Common Interest, Discomfort, and Self-Awareness.

Josefina B. Josefina B. is the youngest and newest librarian of the participants. She had been working as a librarian for just over a year at the time of our interview, and after a year-long professional stint as a librarian at a small private college in the south, she obtained a position at a large state university in the Midwest as a reference librarian with liaison responsibilities to music and English departments. Unlike many of the other librarians interviewed, she experienced very little trouble obtaining a job after graduating with her library degree. She believes this is due to the abundance of extracurricular activities in which she engaged during library school. She notes that she had "no social life" during library school because of her heavy involvement with student and professional organizations.

With undergraduate degrees in music and English and a limited desire to teach, Josefina accepted her undergraduate advisor's advice to look into library school. She states, "Once I did, it made so much sense. I matched a lot of my interests and skills." Briefly uncertain at the start of her library degree program about what type of library she found most appealing, Josefina decided quickly that she liked the academic library environment and enjoyed doing research herself. Her interview makes clear that she is proud of the library school she chose, and feels that its reputation also helped her in the job search. Nevertheless, although she believes that some of the classes proved helpful, it really was her graduate assistantship, practicum, and interacting with a variety of librarians at the university, in other words, the hands-on experiences, that offered the greatest benefits.

Like other participants, Josefina has a positive attitude about professional development; however, because she is so new to the profession, she has not had as many opportunities to partake in them. Still, those in which she has participated, and of which she speaks quite favorably, are similar to those mentioned positively by other participants: activities that involve a considerable amount of social interaction and duration. Especially as a new librarian, Josefina mentions that professional development activities that allow her to meet other librarians are very important to her growth and development as a professional. Other codes associated with her discussion of good professional development include Self-Initiative/Freedom to Choose, Adult Education, Passion, Sharing, Follow-through, and Discomfort.

During our first interview, Josefina emphasized as her most meaningful professional development activity one that allowed her to immediately become an association officer in spite of her newness to the profession. Unlike many ALA or ACRL committees that take time

to develop a sense of belonging, a local group for emerging librarians allowed her to experience positive, hands-on aspects of leadership development, even as a young librarian. She not only met other officers of the association, but she also helped plan and deliver “meet-and-greet” type activities that allowed other new librarians to develop networks and friendships. Continued participation with the association after she took a new job out of the area enhanced her ability to communicate in a leadership role with virtual technology.

Showing her undeniable interest in professional development, during our second interview, Josefina had two more experiences to relate. One, she describes as meaningful and the other with potential to be transformational. The first involves coordinating a conference round-table discussion, and the later consists of undertaking a large-scale research project and subsequently enrolling in a research class. Both activities had interactive components and a long-term duration, with an expectation that the latter would continue on past the point of our interview. In addition, both fulfilled a specific work-related need in that they helped fulfil a gap in skills or knowledge that Josefina had identified for herself. The decision to undertake the research project and enroll in the research class specifically forced her to acknowledge that she did not have as strong of skills as she would like. As she used the class as a springboard to pursue her master’s degree in adult education, she recognized the activity’s potential to impact future learning and her entire career.

Kathleen G. Kathleen G. provided me with my favorite and most thought-provoking interviews. While I very much enjoyed interacting with each of the participants, the fact that at the time of our interview, Kathleen was enrolled in an adult education doctoral program gave us something in common besides our work as academic librarians. It allowed me to use terms like “community of practice” and “transformational learning theory” in our conversation with

the assumption she would understand what I meant by them (she did). I also understood Kathleen's comments about her sense of unease and confusion as she tried to negotiate two academic identities: that of a faculty librarian and that of a doctoral student.

Regarding her career as a librarian, Kathleen has been working in the profession since 1996 although she left the workforce for five years since then to stay with her young children. A chemistry degree, experience teaching in the sciences, and a previous position at an academic medical library put her in a favorable position when she decided to return to librarianship as a career. She obtained a position in 2010 as an associate director and instruction coordinator at a university medical center, and she notes that the day-to-day operational activities for which she is responsible haven't shifted much since her date of hire.

As an experienced librarian, Kathleen is readily able to discuss a number of experiences with professional development. Codes describing her concepts of good professional development include Interaction, Reflection, Specific Needs, Passion, Impact on Practice, Sharing, Communities of Practice, Self-initiative/freedom, and New Ideas/Perspectives. More specifically, she offers high praise two multi-day institutes she has attended, one for librarians and one for physicians. She is also able to describe positively how much of an impact the institutes have had on her career for the better. Components of the two that stand out in her experience include Interaction, Duration, Impact on Practice, Time, Follow-through, Adult Education, Impact on Future PD, Self-promotion, and Sharing.

Unlike many of the other participants, Kathleen's interview also unveils a growing sense of unease with the direction that her professional development experiences are taking her. She suggests that when learning takes you in a direction you don't originally intend to go, it can result in conflicted feelings and mixed emotions. Specifically, she tells of the increased interest

she had in medical education as a result of the institutes she has attended, which she has since chosen as a focus of study in her doctoral program. The impact of the program has resulted in a shift in identity to a degree not mentioned by the other participants. She talks about her passion for the subject and a growing self-awareness and discomfort with her lack of enthusiasm in library work when compared with medical education. Of all participants, Kathleen's experience fits the description of a transformation more than any other.

Nathan T. With thirty-one years of experience as a librarian behind him, Nathan T. has been in the profession longer than any other participant. He currently serves as a systems department manager with a supervisory role over a staff of five at a large and growing metropolitan university in the upper southeast. He says he grew into the job nearly twenty-five years ago, though, of course, the job has changed considerably over the years. He originally began work at the institution as a cataloger but became head of the newly created systems division seven years ago. In addition to administering his department and overseeing the integrated library system, discovery product, institutional repository, library computers, and website, he also serves as a faculty member with scholarship and service responsibilities. He estimates that two-thirds of his time is spent performing library activities while the other third, sometimes more, relates to scholarship and service.

Nathan graduated with his undergraduate degree in music at the end of a winter semester. This limited his options for applying for teaching positions. In addition, because he had been working in a music library as an undergraduate, he was offered and accepted a staff position at the main library. As his co-workers began mentioning to him how valuable a degree in music would be in a library position and as he realized that he actually liked cataloging (not a favorite of most librarians), he took all of the cataloging classes offered by his library program.

At the time he graduated, entry level catalogers were in high demand, so he had little trouble finding a job. Nevertheless, like other participants, Nathan feels that library school only provided him with half of what he needed to know in his first job. The on-the-job experience he had gained by working in a library added to his education. Even today, Nathan says he notices a big difference when he hires librarians who have real library experience versus those that just attended library school.

In addition to understanding the necessity of on-the-job training for many new librarians who have not yet had much experience, Nathan also values other professional development opportunities that enhance library school knowledge. He feels that socializing and talking to other librarians is one of the best ways to learn. He notes that one of the professional development formats he has started trying lately, and one that he considers could be termed meaningful in his own experiences, is that of a poster session. The informal atmosphere allows people to ask more questions than they could in a formal presentation. Their relative ease of preparation and the ability to learn from other librarians one-on-one is especially appealing to Nathan. However, Nathan is also a realist in that he sees the disadvantages, too, including a limited duration of the interaction that occurs. He notes it is very easy to go home then become bogged down in the day-to-day operations at a library with little or no follow-up on the information learned. As such, the codes most associated with Nathan's idea of good professional development include Interaction, Specific Needs, Cost, New ideas/Perspectives, Follow-through, Support-Comfort, Self-initiative/Freedom to Choose, Adult Education, and OTJ.

The two meaningful activities about which Nathan chose to speak include his MBA program, which he undertook during his tenure as a librarian. The former not only entailed a

considerable amount of interaction with his cohort over a long duration, but it also served as a form of self-promotion. Nathan notes the increased respect that such an endeavor garnered both on campus and with his administrators in the library. While he has no immediate plans to leave librarianship, he also notes that the experience was done partially with an eye to his future career. The decision to pursue the MBA seems logical to Nathan because it could take him in so many directions should he choose to go elsewhere.

Hazel C. Hazel C. is the participant whose first interview recording failed to capture more than 15 minutes of interaction, and even that without any audio. Therefore, most of her profile and analysis of her experiences comes from information provided during her second interview as well as her resume. Hazel is a librarian at a small, private religious university in the South. She works as one of three professional librarians and helps to oversee 24 student employees perform duties related to circulation, shelf maintenance, and clerical work. Her focus specifically is on public services though because she had noticed a need several years ago, she also has taken on responsibility for helping to cultivate her library's small archives and special collections.

A key point of Hazel's interviews (as derived from the first interview's notes and the second's notes and transcripts) is a focus on learning via collaboration with her colleagues. One of the meaningful forms of professional development Hazel mentioned during our conversations is that of reading and sharing articles, books, or ideas with colleagues. This activity sounds common place in her small institution and at times has had a significant impact on the activities that the library undertakes in order to best serve its students. This endeavor requires a certain degree of self-awareness on the part of Hazel and her colleagues as they identify gaps in their services or potentials for improvement. As such there is also a certain

specificity of needs that directs the readings and professional development they undertake. The small size of their library has allowed them to form a de facto community of practice that enmeshes their professional development with on-the-job learning.

Summary of Participant Profiles

In order to provide background information and context for this study about academic librarians' perceptions of meaningful or transformational professional development, this chapter relayed highlights from the initial survey designed to find interview participants. Results of the survey provided basic information about respondents' thoughts on what constitutes professional development, what motivates them to choose certain professional development activities, what formats and characteristics they feel are particularly beneficial, and if and how they make use of reflection in the pursuit of professional development.

From the responses, it is clear that participants of the initial survey believe professional development comes in a variety of different formats, from reading to webinars to formal classes. The main motivators for choosing certain activities over others includes relevance to job, cost, and personal interest. Less clear from the survey—due to lack of question clarity—are what formats are the most beneficial. In terms of what characteristics of professional development respondents find most beneficial, a large majority suggested that activities with a social or interactive element benefit them. Finally, a surprisingly large number of respondents reported that either they had been asked specifically to reflect on ideas learned during a professional development activity or that they made time to do so on their own.

The second half of this chapter introduced readers to the ten academic librarians who agreed to participate in two interviews, communicate through follow-up emails, and share their CVs or resumes. A basic profile description of each participant provided information about

their current position, library school background, and attitudes about good professional development. The codes assigned to participants' experiences are also introduced and defined in the Appendix C. Finally, the profiles also briefly mentioned the professional development activities they chose to describe as especially meaningful or transformation to them personally.

CHAPTER 5: Results of Basic and Meaningful Themes

In addition to identifying professional development experiences that participants identify as meaningful or transformational, this study sought to find the essences of those experiences by way of description and interpretation in a comparative manner. The interpretive act of analysis stemming from hermeneutic phenomenology asks a researcher to put herself in a participant's place and "recognize his intellectual position" (Benediktsson, 1989, p. 212). While keeping in sight each unique participant's experiences and position, interpretive phenomenological analysis then asks researchers to identify common themes among those who have undergone a similar experience (VanScoy, 2012). The goal of this activity is to understand the data in its entirety in such a way that it can be reconstructed so that others can also understand and draw meaning from it. To that end, this chapter offers a reconstruction of participants' experiences by highlighting unique components of participants' experiences and then comparing them across each of the participants. The experiences being highlighted and compared stem from the analysis process of coding and pattern seeking common to hermeneutic phenomenology.

Participants' Professional Development Activity

During the data analysis process, the initial emergence of codes seemed relatively straightforward, almost too straightforward. Some of the codes I assigned to various pieces of the transcripts seemed categorical in nature. Van Manen (1997) notes that themes should not be generalizations or categories, but rather should attempt to capture the fullest description possible of a lived experience. Nevertheless, as refinement of coding occurred and deeper patterns emerged, the initial categorical themes still seemed to remain important in the rich and thick description of participants' experiences – and the use of such description is

recommended by Creswell (1998) as a means of vetting the authenticity of a study. These categorical codes are therefore described as supporting professional development themes, themes that while not necessarily capturing the essence of meaningful or transformational professional development nevertheless give us a foundation for understanding those experiences.

Support for Meaningful/Transformational Professional Development. The supporting professional development themes that emerged from participants' interviews provide the "sensitivity in context" that Smith, Flowers & Larkin (2009) and Yardley (2000) see as a provision of a study's rigor. They provide the history, development, and foundation of experiences that led participants to undertake the professional development they describe during the interviews. These supporting themes include participants' library school experiences, overall attitude toward professional development, ideas about negative professional development, administrative aspects of and barriers to professional development. In myriad ways, these themes have influenced and continue to influence participants' decision to undertake certain professional development activities over others, and they play a role in determining how much meaning participants derived from the experiences.

Library School Experiences. Each of the participants interviewed holds an ALA-accredited graduate library degree. I asked each about their experiences while obtaining the degree and whether or not they felt that it prepared them for their first professional job. Unsurprisingly, the majority of respondents felt that a combination of the degree plus work experience helped to prepare them for the work they are currently doing. Nevertheless, there were some strong responses, especially from participants who had considerable library work experience prior to starting their degrees, that library school alone is not sufficient preparation

to hit the ground running upon obtaining a professional position. Pauleen K. states this most strongly:

I guess I am speaking frankly that I felt overall I got more experience from my working in the library than I did from the school itself. There was a few classes I found very helpful, but others it was just about more like jumping through hoops. That could be just very well from me working so many years. I felt like there was a few gaps, too, in the things that they focus on, that they tend to think about the reference side of things without taking the library as a whole into context.

Robert J. offers very similar sentiments with his statement:

I feel like my library school, what really prepared me for my job was my library experience. That, at that point, 10 years that I had spent working in all different departments. It really helped me get an idea of what being a librarian was all about... Yeah. I was surprised at the number of people when I was in grad school that had never, had zero library experience because I just, I was thinking I understand all of these readings and all of these projects because I have all these experiences to draw from. It must be so much more difficult, if not impossible for you.

Nathan T. likewise emphasizes the importance of hands-on experience over library school preparation only:

I think that library school probably played, I like to say a good half of my training. The practical experience played the other half I think. I've even experienced it here when we do hiring. We can tell a lot of difference between those that have real library experience versus those who have just gone to library school. They seem to have a more realistic vision of what really goes on and what can be done.

Even less extensive hands-on experience, such as working as a graduate assistant during library school or joining professional associations, seems to have helped prepare participants for actual library work. Speaking of her time in library school, Susann J. states, “my graduate assistantship really kind of helped fill in the gaps.”

Likewise, Josefina B. says:

I think the most valuable parts for me were all of the hands on kind of opportunities that I got, so being a graduate assistant, doing a practicum, and then just being in a library environment... The classes were great and some of them were very helpful, but I think those other things are actually more helpful for me.

That library schools vary in their quality and hence ability to prepare students for post-graduation work is suggested by Josefina. Curious in the issue of library education herself, between our first the second interviews she had embarked on a survey of library school graduates asking if they felt their programs had prepared them for their jobs. In addition to hearing from recent graduates frustrated and angry by their inability to find a job, she also states, “I, also, got the sense that the MLS programs are just really different. They vary a lot.”

In addition, a number of responses demonstrate the changes that have taken place in libraries since the participants attended library school. Changing technologies and attitudes about the role of the library can be seen in the responses of participants who indicated that their library school experiences did not quite touch on parts of the job that they now perform. Carol W., who had worked as a librarian for 16 years at the time of our interview, says:

The one course I wish I had taken or I wish had been known that it was important. They had just started offering user education, ie, how to teach. I had to learn pedagogy on the job and that is really hard. I don't think I became a great teacher until I came here.

Susann J. conveys similar sentiments as she describes her library school experience. While she notes that overall “it was a really good experience,” she observes that it lacked a key component of what we consider important today in terms of library instruction: “there was not a lot of instructional design. It was information literacy. I did a lot of information literacy but not instructional design per se.”

Even a fairly recent graduate like Pauleen K., who finished library school four years ago, states:

We had a technical services, we had a catalog, we had a reference class, we had even an information systems-like user experience class, but we didn't have anything like an access services or, now this was four years ago, we really didn't talk about digital repositories too much. We didn't talk about assessment which is a huge thing. There was maybe one or two things that we did, but it wasn't nearly the focus that I thought ... now that I can look back on it, yeah. Strategic planning, the things that I am doing now isn't really things that we really talked about.

Attitude toward Professional Development. While none of the participants go so far as to state that their library school experiences were negative, they nevertheless recognize the impossibility of two years of education preparing students for all of the complexities of the profession. As such, they all have a very positive take on both on-the-job learning and additional professional development endeavors. This discussion of their overall attitude toward professional development stems from their responses to overt questioning about what they consider qualities of good and bad professional development as well as the overall gist of their thinking as espoused throughout the two conversations I had with them. Even while describing

activities which they consider to be mediocre or poor, participants still confirm that learning takes place.

Susann J. offers this thought:

Sometimes it works out, sometimes it doesn't, but regardless, it keeps me engaged and it keeps me developing. I don't feel static, I think that's the difference, is I feel like my experiences have been dynamic because of that and that's not necessarily guaranteed. I think librarianship is very dynamic, but to a certain extent you can get stuck in these static responsibilities like you're always going to teach and you're always going to do these many classes, et cetera, et cetera. But the professional development helps bring that level of dynamism into what you would do routinely... Even a bad professional development experience you still get something out of it. You always learn something. It's definitely not a waste of time.

Jeffrey M states, "I feel like I benefit a lot from doing professional development. I think some librarians don't find it as helpful, but for me, I really like doing it and it makes me feel good."

Participants also indicated that individual librarians have a responsibility as professionals to continue learning. Nathan T. captured the sentiments of many when he emphasized that among the multitude of options available, librarians really ought to be able to find something that interests them:

The librarian needs to take responsibility of their own professional development and find what they're interested in doing. There are so many options now that were not available when I became a librarian. With me, when I became a librarian, it was presentation, article, or whatever, but now you have the webinars. You have all sorts of different ways that you

can participate and learn from professional development. I think if people just find their own niche and what they're interested in, I think that would work.

Likewise, Paige K. asserts that all good librarians need to do some kind of professional development that encourages increased awareness of professional issues:

I just know that I think professional development is a big part of a librarian's [responsibility], I think the only way to become a good librarian is to make sure that you're constantly in touch with what it happening, what people are thinking about, how they're moving forward, so that's why I thought it was important.

And Susann J. acknowledges her need to continue growing and learning as a professional with this statement:

And I think if I'd only worked in my job without professional development, there's no way that I could make myself get to that level without professional development. I can't do that myself, I do need these outside influences and this exposure to outside things in order to improve in areas that I may not even be aware of myself that I have to improve upon. It's deepened my practice of librarianship and it's made me aware of things that I would not even be able to detect in myself if it weren't for being exposed to other things like that. I know for me it's very, very important.

Kathleen expresses a similar sentiment with the statement about her own institution:

Here I don't think we look at it as more required. We just do it because we know we have to keep up with what's going on. I don't think we have to formally require it of anyone because they already know that they need to do it to keep up. We have a good staff here. We don't have anybody that's sitting back and just saying I'm not going to do anything.

I'm just going to sit here till I retire. We don't have anybody like that, so people are keeping up with what's going on.

Paige K.'s attitude toward professional development is also one of expectation; she says, "I think it's an expectation and openness that if you find something appropriate, of course we're going to try to enrich your abilities." Robert J. states even more succinctly than other participants that, "I definitely think it should be encouraged that I think everyone here has gotten lots from professional development." Josefina, who is not sure professional development should be explicitly required for librarians nevertheless asserts, "I think that's part of the beauty of the professional development things that I do, is that all the people who are there are really motivated and really excited to try new things."

At times participants express their positive attitudes about professional development within the context of a specific activity. Their choice of words communicates their upbeat attitude and signifies what emotional feelings good professional development can evoke from participants. Describing the requirement to present a poster at ALA following her participant in a 14-month grant-funded assessment program designed to blend assessment and student success initiatives in academic libraries, Susann J. said enthusiastically, "It is exciting. It is really exciting." Regarding a class she had taken at a nearby university, Kathleen G. claimed, "I just thought so deeply in that class and it was just a wonderful class." Emphasizing especially the intense amount of reading and reflection they were required to complete, she said, "It was really cool...It was so cool." Carol W. uses terms like "desire," "drive," "enjoy," and being "on fire" while discussing positive professional development she has experienced. Jeffrey's positive terms include "very fun," and "entertaining." Josefina uses the words and phrases "enjoy" and "personal sense of fulfillment" in conjunction with professional development. Kathleen says,

“I love learning...I love it.” She also inserts the terms “passion” and “passionate” into her responses; Robert J. does the same. Susann J. offers the terms “well-rounded” and “curious” in conjunction with her thoughts about professional development.

At the same time that they spoke very positively about their own professional development experiences, a number of participants also underscored the need to balance work and learning. As a new librarian, Josefina was extremely enthusiastic about undertaking as much professional development as possible, to the point where she notes she was finally encouraged by her colleagues to spend a little more of her focus on work at the library. She agreed and when asked to offer advice to other librarians regarding professional development states that she would encourage them to “have good time management and not take on too many other things.” Likewise, Paige K. and I engaged in conversation about the challenges of undertaking the intense long-term professional development activities, especially the type that require travel and extended stays away from home. Librarians who have family responsibilities or health challenges are automatically at a disadvantage regarding those activities. Paige notes that at this point in her career, she also avoids the types of activities that require her to perform additional work, or ‘homework,’ outside the context of the event itself.

Negative Professional Development. Just because the participants overall express positive attitudes about professional development, with several saying that learning can always take place regardless of the details, they also have some thoughts about activities that do not work out as well as they might have hoped. While the focus of this study is primarily those experiences that participants found impactful and beneficial, their negative experiences also lend evidence to what constitutes and does not constitute the essence of a positive professional development experience. Many of their negative examples also hint at the importance of the

following good principles of adult education, for when these principles are ignored or not known by presenters, participants believe the overall experience suffers.

As one of Knowles's adult education principles suggests, learning about something unrelated to a person's job is likely to be seen as a waste of time. In spite of the obviousness of this statement, some participants nevertheless describe requirements to undertake professional development activities for the sake of undertaking them rather than due to a noted need. Carol W. complains about her administration's requirement that librarians learn about a host of new software on computer labs, notably SAS and SPSS. In spite of their efforts, the librarians discovered that students asked their professors for help with such software rather than the librarians. Thankfully, she notes that a lack of reference questions related to the software finally convinced her administration to drop the requirement. Similarly, Pauleen, Robert J., and Jeffrey all offer negative comments about activities that are vendor-led or that feel like infomercials more focused on selling a product than on helping librarians improve their practice. Hazel C. describes frustration with smaller regional conferences that try to include tracks for all types of librarians, but which end up being stretched too thin to please anyone fully.

Negative professional development examples also center on a trainer or presenter's lack of preparation and/or respect for the audience. Susann J. offers three characteristics that can kill a presentation: nervousness, lack of preparation, and not reading an audience correctly. She describes feeling alienated as an audience member in more than one situation. She admits, however, to her struggle with all three of these challenges in her own teaching. Ever the optimist though, she notes that in one such situation she benefited from seeing another

presenter's problems because it helped her to be aware of how she comes across when she is the one presenting.

Some of the comments regarding negative professional development will be touched on later as participants describe those activities that really were beneficial. As we will see, two of the most prominent characteristics of meaningful professional development as stated by the participants are the duration of the experience and interaction with others. It is perhaps unsurprising therefore that a negative characteristic of unhelpful professional development is a lack of interaction. Especially with regard to the format of webinars, the lack of discussion or the "talking head syndrome" turns off participants like Jeffrey M. Similarly, Josefina B. references webinars in contrast to her meaningful professional development activity by saying:

I chose it because for one thing it was something that's kind of continuous professional development, unlike a conference or a webinar or something. Being an officer continuously gives me a lot of professional development experiences throughout the whole time I'm an officer, so for a whole year.

In a related vein, the lack of meaningful interaction at large conferences turns-off a number of participants. While becoming involved in committees is discussed very positively, several participants lament the overwhelming array of options at American Library Association annual conferences. Pauleen says:

Well you really end up being everywhere and you end up scheduling things. Like well, I guess I'll go to this, this is closer to my other meeting and I don't have time to get the bus and get over to the other 1. You don't want to feel like you're running around like a chicken with your head cut off. Then you get overwhelmed with everything that's happening because, for me, if I put in a full day, I'm done. I can't do that. I need some

breaks in between, I need to be able to have some collaboration and conversation and sometimes you get it, sometimes you don't. You really want to have those meaningful connections and just because you have your sections doesn't mean that you're going to necessarily find that or have that. The discussion sessions seem to be helpful but then they're overlapping with people that are doing almost exactly the same thing.

Participants also expressed that a lack of follow-through on activities tarnished some professional development activities in their opinions. Speaking about a connection she had made at a conference, Pauleen K. says:

I had this one lady, I don't even remember her name now. If I dug through my email I could. She said, "Oh, yeah", because I told her I was really interested in what she had to say and I would really like to connect if she was looking for partners. I heard from her once and that was it. That was kind of bad.

Nathan T. similarly relates:

Now, one of the things I've also learned as I'm sitting on a conference and I'm thinking, all this, this is a really good presentation, these are good ideas or whatever. When I get back to work, that goes on a file and it's never looked at again unfortunately.

Kathleen G., speaking about a positive professional development experience, nevertheless relays a drawback to it in that she is concerned about the amount of time she realistically has for follow-through. Of the activity's required follow-up project she says:

I have other things going on. Even though the Vice Dean of Educational Affairs I know would love to see me do that. She is totally into this idea. I just don't know if I can make it happen for another 12 months or so.

Barriers. A common supporting theme relates to barriers to participation in professional development activities, many which match those identified by Auster and Chan (2004) in their survey of library science literature. In spite of generally positive attitudes overall toward professional development, lack of time (both to attend activities and implement ideas learned from them) and lack of funds present very real barriers to even the most dedicated professional librarian. An additional barrier for several participants stems from administrative restrictions and lack of institutional support for professional development.

That cost factors can impede professional development activities should come as no surprise to academics. New librarians especially mention struggling to pay for professional development. Although she has now been a librarian for over 16 years, Carol W. mentions having no credit right after graduating from library school, which forced her to save up travelers checks to pay for hotel rooms during conference travel. More recently, Josefina B., who had been a librarian for about one year at the time of our first interview, remarks that conference attendance requires a good deal of logistical planning ahead of time to figure out how to pay for the experience. She also reveals, unsurprisingly, that she simply avoids those activities that she knows that neither she nor her library can fund.

Another challenge with funding mentioned by participants relates to the reimbursement process. Longtime librarian Carol W. mentioned that while her library reimburses her for registrations, hotel rooms, and flights, she still ends up having to time her registrations strategically due to pay dates. She expresses relief that her library is moving toward a P card system for travel funding, which will eliminate the stress of having to pay up front. Likewise, Susann J. feels that while her library does a better job at reimbursing librarians for travel than

many other public institutions in her state, the process is still “a little tricky,” and “You won’t get all of your travel costs reimbursed.”

Even those librarians with well-established careers who earn decent salaries and/or those with administrations that offer travel stipends identify cost as a deciding factor in professional development attendance. Nathan T., who graduated from library school in 1983, notes he only receives \$750 per year for professional development related travel. (Compare this to Pauleen K.’s \$2600 per year.) While he does not mention cost specifically as obstructing his ability to travel, he does mention really thinking about the return on his investment when making decisions about what to attend. Seeing the conference program before making a decision whether to attend is a strategy he employees to stretch his dollars. Additionally, he states that one of the reasons he chose to complete his MBA at his place of employment is because employees can attend classes for free.

Time also presents challenges to the participants’ professional development activities, even for inexpensive activities. Robert J. notes that while his library encourages him and reimburses him to attend at least one conference each year, this year his hopes of going to a conference in Charleston have fallen by the wayside due to a mandatory meeting at the library. Paige K. mentions a similar problem in even greater detail:

In the downturn, in 2007, 8, 9, we lost staff positions, and that of course means that more people are doing more stuff and our ability to have time when we read articles or ever have philosophical discussions as groups or spend just innovative time has really diminished to almost nothing and that’s what people are talking about. I would say personally I do a few things to do the best I can to read anything, so I usually go through my e-mail and any articles because I have feeds, so any articles that I get that I think I really should read, I

open in my browser, so then they sit there in my browser until some day maybe I sit and read them. I've set aside days where I've looked at my calendar and said I have nothing on Tuesday in a month, I'm going to stay home and read that day. Does that happen? It doesn't happen often enough, so I feel like we've lost a lot of that ability, but we talk about it and we know we need to bring it back, so anytime I can, I pull it back in. I have articles printed that I keep saying I should read because I got them through ILL and I want to. This one is really going to help me with this particular thing, but I am inconsistently finding time. It almost feels like reading is a luxury that you can't afford...

Also identifying time as a barrier, Josefina B. says:

I think the culture there [at her previous institution] was more kind of like let's just do what we have to do and not pile on other things that make more work for us. It was so small, everyone did have a lot to do just in their regular duties. They weren't trying to be the best library ever. They just wanted to do a good enough job, so the attitude I feel is a little bit different here [her current institution].

In addition to time constraints at work, Paige K. mentions a work-life balance issue with regard to lack of time for professional development activities. She said to me:

Your picture, when I first entered showed you had a child with you. I think that people who don't have families, children, maybe they have families, but who don't have children, will sometimes carry over some of that professional stuff into the non-working hours, like they don't mind doing professional reading outside of work, which it's not unreasonable. That's fair. I don't. I can't. It's too hard for me to focus. I have so much happening in my home life. That's not what I'm doing, but I do think that sometimes that's how people do it or some people are more excited by it, by that reflection. We have a new colleague and

she's amazing and all she talks about is what research are we doing? What are we each exploring? How are we carrying that research through to help the libraries? She's clearly making it happen. Actually I was trying to get from her how she made it happen, but it does seem like, she's a lot younger than me, maybe the fluidity of life now is so different, there really isn't that line between work and life, so she carries it into her personal life and then back into her professional life, but I think a lot of it is about balance and where you put your priorities.

Similarly, Kathleen mentions briefly that at times she has felt very guilty about working on her doctoral degree because of the amount of time spent away from family. While I am fortunate enough to do my own doctoral work as a part of the research and scholarship portion of my job, Paige and Kathleen's conversation about work-life balance resonate very much with me. Early in my career, I had a goal of reading one professional article each day. This was easy for me as a post-MLIS graduate student earning my second master's degree while working 20 hours each week. Even after work and assignments, I could easily read that article in the evening during or after dinner. At this point in my life, however, with a husband and four children, the thought of reading in my house at night is laughable. The distractions before my children head to bed would make concentration nearly impossible (after all when push comes to shove, one really should prioritize feeding one's children and fixing messy diapers above reading peer-reviewed library articles), and after they are in bed, my first thought is usually about whether I have enough mental power left even for pleasure-reading prior to my own early bedtime.

Administrative Aspects. Participants in the study generally indicate that their administrations try to support their professional development endeavors. Several mention that

their administrators specifically encourage them to apply for and/or participate in specific experiences. These participants agree that good administrators know their staff members' strengths and weaknesses and keep an eye out for appropriate activities to boost their productivity. Susann J. expresses appreciation that in an attempt to become familiar with her staff, the new associate dean of her institution engaged in a conversation with her about an assessment institute. The conversation ultimately led to one of Susann's most meaningful professional development experiences. She adds that continued interest about and support for the activity from her associate dean has been helpful with the follow-through related to it. Similarly, Jeffrey M. notes that it was at his director's request that he initially attended a LibQUAL training that proved to be one of the most transformational activities he'd ever done as a librarian. Also, one of Kathleen G.'s most transformational experiences resulted from a request by her dean to attend an eleven-day institute. Although Kathleen says that many of the concepts transmitted at the institute were not new to her, the establishment of relationships and networking proved invaluable.

Another concept that emerges from some of the participants with regard to administrative involvement in professional development is that of freedom. Several participants express gratitude for their administrators' willingness to let them self-identify activities that will improve their performance. Carol W. describes a long-lasting reading-based community of practice in which she and her colleagues participate. She does not believe her administration even really knew about the group's activities until they started doing pedagogy workshops for their larger consortium. The freedom to engage in the community and share it with others stemmed from the fact that her library was considered a learning organization with members allowed to do what they wished to further their own learning. Likewise, early-career librarian

Josefina says, “I like that freedom...The freedom to be able to choose what I do I think is part of that good feeling, like I’m choosing things that are helpful to me.” Susann J. also notes that she is able to choose her activities but at the same time, she says she appreciates it when her administration puts something on her radar that she may not have noticed yet.

The issue of sharing about professional development activities requirements surfaces during several interviews. Josefina describes how she asked her administration if she could do an idea exchange after attending an ACRL conference. Her administration not only supported the idea but has since made it a goal for librarians to present at and attend brown bag lunch presentations for the purpose of sharing information with a related goal of increasing collaboration among librarians. Paige’s administration also encourages sharing as a form of professional development, especially with regard to failure. Rather than seeing it as something to hide, Paige says the administration encourages sharing ideas that did not proceed as planned in order to learn and move forward. Kathleen G. describes a stipulation of her participation in an upcoming professional development activity like this: “My boss was like, ‘All right. You can do this as long as you promise that when you come back you’re going to teach us all this stuff.’” Even Robert J., who is somewhat hesitant to embrace a sharing requirement says that in certain circumstances he could see the administration bringing everyone together to share what they had learned at a workshop or conference.

Not all participants have administrations that support or require sharing, however, and some participants note that previous requirements to do so have fallen by the wayside. Nathan T. describes previous requirements to share after returning from a conference but notes that such activities were eventually considered unhelpful. In addition to adding more work and stress to those presenting, he asserts that listening to someone report on a topic that is neither

relevant nor interesting does not make sense. Rather, he supports the idea of sharing informally with colleagues as the situation warrants. Even Kathleen G., whose administration asked her to report out after a professional development activity with a major time commitment, states that in general they do not require sharing following an experience.

Unsurprisingly, the time and cost as already discussed are often mentioned in conjunction with administrators' involvement in professional development. Paige K. expresses a wish that her administration would set aside time, perhaps once a quarter, to allow librarians to read and discuss ideas related to librarianship. A retreat-style, administrative-sanctioned time for professional development would help librarians who have a hard time carving out opportunities themselves. Robert J. notes that his new and forward-thinking associate dean does actually set aside staff days to go out to dinner or to a state park with employees just to "explore new things and think outside the box and go with new ideas."

Essence of Meaningful/Transformational Professional Development. While the themes mentioned above prove common enough among participants to warrant discussion, they are general themes related to professional development. That is, they provide foundational support for the professional development activities that participants either do or do not believe were meaningful or transformational. On the other hand, the themes that follow are those connected to deeper, more meaningful experiences as described by the participants. The selection of these themes results from their prevalence in the transcripts as a whole as well as their prevalence specifically in those portions of the interviews that relate to meaningful and transformational professional development as described by the participants.

The first of these themes is motivation. Motivation jumped out as a theme worthy of further investigation during my first round of coding. While I did not specifically ask about

what motivates participants to undertake specific professional development activities, each participant tended to discuss motivating factors in some way, to the point that more than ninety references were found to be a motivating factor across all transcripts. Moreover, every single participant discussed motivation in conjunction with the meaningful or transformational professional development activity they chose to describe. Descriptions of these motivating factors continued into the second round of interviews, leading me to comb through them more carefully to identify unique components of motivation.

Duration of experience and interaction with others are two additional separate yet related themes that emerged from the data, again both in the interviews as a whole as well as in the portions of the conversations specifically related to meaningful or transformational activities. Although they are distinct themes, there appears to be a relationship between the two. The following discussion of the two in conjunction with each other occurs due to their co-occurrence in many portions of the transcripts as well as because of their connection as described by Huberman (1999) in his discussion of sustained interaction.

The additional themes that warrant discussion in the context of meaningful or transformational professional development are reflection, discomfort, self-awareness, impact on practice, and sharing. The inclusion of these themes in this section stems from two primary sources: both the participants' own words as well as the literature related to adult education. Because of their prevalence in the literature related to adult learning, including that which specifically pertains to library science, I chose to ask participants directly about each of these themes. Their responses indicate that they are indeed an important component of the lived experienced of meaningful and transformational professional development.

Motivation. Questions about motivating factors that led participants to select certain professional development activities were framed in several ways. Asking about participants' library school experiences and whether or not they felt prepared by that experience for work as a professional librarian began this line of questioning. I also asked if there were any particular characteristics of professional development activities that participants either sought out or deliberately avoided. Asking about the role of administration in professional development selection also was an attempt to identify possible motivating factors. In addition, many "why did you choose to..." questions were asked in follow-up discussion with participants. In total ninety-six references were made with regard to motivation. Basic sub-categories of motivation were identified through further analysis of this overarching theme: passion for the subject, self-awareness of a knowledge gap, relevance to position, freedom to choose, and self-promotion. In addition, participants also spoke about lack of motivation and constraining factors related to it. More detailed definitions of these codes are provided in Appendix C.

Passion for Subject. The sub-theme related to motivation that was most prominent in the interviews, even more so than relevance to job, was "passion for or interest in a subject." Librarians interviewed report being motivated to undertake professional development of their own volition when it is of personal interest to them. This is unsurprising given that all of them expressed a positive attitude when it came to professional development in general. An extreme example of passion driving professional development came from Kathleen, who is undertaking a doctoral degree to enhance her knowledge of the education field. As opposed to me, for whom my degree program is closely enough related to my work as a librarian that I can work on the program requirements in the context of my position's research requirement, Kathleen's university specifically prohibits using any amount of work time to complete degree

requirements. She cares about her program enough that she uses her own free time to undertake it, even going so far as to use vacation days for data gathering.

Another participant who strongly affirms that passion is a big motivator in his selection of professional development is Robert J. Combined with job relevance, Robert states succinctly when asked about why he chooses certain activities over others, “Primarily, I would just say interest.” Although he does not offer any examples of truly transformational professional development, he does easily talk with passion about his two meaningful activities. He readily admits that he thoroughly enjoyed an extended day’s meeting about library space issues because of his passion for the subject of architecture. Even if he was unable to apply much of the content to his own current work situation, his enthusiasm for the subject while describing it was palpable: “They had some architects come in and speak about things and different things like that. I thought that was interesting because I actually have an associate’s degree in civil engineering, architecture. The library architecture is one of my passions. Bringing my, the two worlds together, I just love the subject.”

Jeffrey M. suggests that passion for a subject (and admittedly a love of travel and new experiences) can motivate a person to attend an event even if the cost or time factor is otherwise exorbitant. As a self-avowed extrovert who loves living in his large, multi-cultural city, Jeffrey describes attending an interlibrary loan conference in Buenos Aires thusly:

I went to the interlibrary loan section with a colleague from Canada and it was all in Spanish, but it was important for them to get together because it was all interlibrary loan, libraries from all over South America who never get the chance to meet... the excitement of being somewhere really exotic and the flavor, you could feel the electricity in the air. People were there from all these different countries and I was able to meet librarians from

Malaysia and France and Africa that I never would have gotten the chance to meet them... Just the fact that it took so much money on their part to get to this conference they were truly motivated to be there and making the most of their time. Sometimes the smaller conferences are obviously so much better, but not because of the size.

I sought to clarify.

Rami: Because of?

Jeffrey: The interest.

Rami: Yeah.

Jeffrey: The struggle people had to get there.

Rami: Right. You're not going to go if you don't care.

Jeffrey: That's it.

Not that cost is completely irrelevant to Jeffrey, but he makes it clear that he considers it less of a factor than the interest and passion he carries for a subject. Speaking about consideration he is currently giving to working on an Ed.D. in higher education, he states something that resonated completely with my own professional development quest:

Because it's tuition assistance here, it won't cost me much because when I leave here I don't know what I want to do. I'm like at the point I'm having to decide that but an EDD and an MLS will give me more options because I love education. I love working in schools and I always wanted to go to school and now I get paid to go to school.

Like Jeffrey, Josefina links a passion for subject with the ability to connect and interact with others who share that passion as a motivating factor in choosing professional development. Even though early in her career, she already feels confident stating, "I also try to choose things where I can connect with a lot of other people who have similar interests and

who are potentially connected to me or near enough to me that I could continue working with them.” She underscores this drive as she talks about trying to start up a professional development/social organization for new librarians within her new home state. And also like Jeffrey, she sees the advantages of professional development that is cost-effective and feasible as long as it aligns to some degree with her interest area. She says:

I’m trying to earn an Adult Development ... What is it? ... Adult learning and development.

Yeah. Adult Learning and Development master’s degree here. I really wanted Instructional Design and Technology, but we don’t have that here. Whatever degrees they have here are free to me, so I’m going to go with that one instead.

Nathan T. likewise sees the advantage of combining an interest in a subject area with practicality and a cost-effective means of pursuing it. Of his decision to earn a Master of Business Administration degree while working as a librarian, he says:

Since we’re employees, we can get our master’s degree for free. I thought why not take advantage of that? It’s not directly related to library work, but it is related to work in general, a master’s in business administration. It’s helped me in my job. I also took it because I thought if ever I get out of library work, and MBA is just a good broad general degree to have to work in any other kind of industry or business. That’s really helped me.

Susann J. offers another take on the issue of passion with regard to professional development. Rather than a personal passion for a subject driving the selection of professional development, she notes that the reverse can occur as well. That is, professional development can help reawaken passion for and interest in the work that academic librarians undertake. She states:

Sometimes [professional development] works out, sometimes it doesn't, but regardless, it keeps me engaged and it keeps me developing. I don't feel static, I think that's the difference, I feel like my experiences have been dynamic because of that and that's not necessarily guaranteed. I think librarianship is very dynamic, but to a certain extent you can get stuck in these static responsibilities like you're always going to teach and you're always going to do these many classes, et cetera, et cetera. But the professional development helps bring that level of dynamism into what you would do routinely.

Awareness of Knowledge Gap. It is not uncommon to find the passion or interest motivation to be present in conjunction with other motivating factors. A self-awareness of a skills or knowledge gap leads participants to seek out professional development as well. Hazel, upon realizing her small library's archives were "a big mess," decided to seek out professional development related to the intellectual arrangement of the archives simply because she had an interest in doing it and realized it had been 25 years since she'd studied archives in library school. Likewise, Carol W. showed an awareness of a challenge she faced with regard to delivering library instruction:

Last semester, so in Spring semester, I asked my colleague to attend a session. We have 4 classroom spaces, the 4th one to me has always been very awkward. I said, can you help me see how I am either not using or using the space well. It seemed to me that the space was a barrier to my teaching. That was really valuable ... So peer observation.

Jeffrey, too, emphasizes heavily that lack of knowledge and experience for undertaking a new position as an outreach librarian motivated him to seek out professional development related to it from a variety of angles:

I was on the phone to people. I e-mailed people. Definitely at conferences I would find as many people [as I could]. For about two years I would stand up at relevant meetings and say who I am and that I was new and please anybody who can help me would you please come forward. I have lots of questions to ask. I was not ashamed to say I need learning help here. The response was again very strong. I was very fortunate. Ours is a great profession where we can share and not worry about stealing somebody's profit making machine...I don't think I'm ever going to stop asking people how did you do it and let me know how you did it so I can do it better.

As a relatively new librarian with one year of experience under her belt, Josefina is in a particularly good position to begin identifying the gaps in knowledge between what she learned in library school with what is expected of her in as an academic librarian. The first class she signed up for in her master's degree program was a research course. She says, "I did know that I needed some help in that area, so I decided to do that one first. I'm really glad that I did. It was very helpful."

Susann J. maintains membership in several listservs that offer announcements of professional development activities. She mentions that she doesn't take into consideration who the instructor is for the activities but rather what she considers is her own knowledge and skills, or lack thereof. She states:

If I feel like I'm having a gap or I need a refresher, that that's really what drives the decision to do certain things. I do know most is based on instruction, I also try to keep one or two to help me just be aware of what's going on. Like I took a webinar with a couple of people here about animated GIFs, I'm sorry, GIFs. Yes. I didn't know a lot about them or how they were created. I'd seen them on the internet but I didn't know what the deal was. I

took it because it was something I didn't know about. It didn't necessarily have a lot of impact on my job but I feel like as an information professional it's just good to be aware of what's going on, and if that's something my students are interested in then it's something I want to know about too. Yes, there's the practical but then there's also the let's try and make sure I'm well-rounded.

Exemplifying her commitment to noticing and fixing gaps in her knowledge and skillset, Susann mentions that her transformational professional development experiences, two week-long institutes, were undertaken because she knew she needed to improve her teaching and assessment practices.

Relevance to Position. Because the participants all strive to be self-aware professional librarians, they endeavor to find professional development not only that interests them but also that is relevant to their positions in their libraries. As a new manager in her library Carol W. discusses a problem that she was having with a temporary librarian; she discovered via her involvement with the Library Leadership & Management Association (LLAMA) the existence of an "Ask a Manager" blog that offers advice for real world situations. She describes reading about problems in the blog that were similar to her particular situation and applying the advice to her own challenges.

In her small library with multiple roles, Hazel describes constantly being on the lookout via readings and discussions for ways to improve her own performance, especially with regard to her work in archives, interlibrary loan, library instruction, and even volunteering at to run her public library's book sale. She states:

If you're going to something that you know, "Oh man, this is going to be great, I can use this, this is something that I can adapt to," then you really engage in it and take the time,

like the things I'm getting on interlibrary loan about doing a better book sale, doing archives better, the things we read about, what has worked and not worked in first year instruction. Because that is what I'm interested in and is actually what I'm going to be doing I put a lot more effort into it that's not necessary.

After a year of choosing professional development in a manner she describes as "willy-nilly," Josefina has begun to think more about the relationship between the activities she chooses and her current position. While still identifying activities in which she has an interest, she relates that she's beginning to seek out activities targeted to just a few areas relevant to her job duties so that she can become the go-to expert on them in her library.

Susann J. also espouses job relevance as an important motivator of professional development selection. She typically tries to find activities based on information literacy instruction or instructional design as they apply closely to her position within the library. At the same time, she sees soft skills improvement as also important and related to her position. She says:

I do try to do things like professional development for those soft skills, like getting along with difficult people or working in an institution. There's a lot of smaller bits of my job that I'm always looking to improve.

Susann also emphasizes the importance of professional development activities aligning with a librarian's job position with regard to achieving promotion and tenure. As an academic librarian with a faculty rank, Susan's emphasis on promotion and tenure considerations in conjunction with professional development is unsurprising. She says:

Those things are looked at very critically for determining whether or not you go up for promotion and our promotion process now is more aligned with the promotion process for

the degree-granting faculty. Service is really, really important. You do need to, if you want to go through the promotion process, the professional development opportunities that you take advantage of that result in like a paper or a presentation, those are the things that really carry the weight of your promotion file.

At the same time, Susann rejects the notion that professional development solely for the sake of producing a good tenure portfolio is the goal at her institution. Rather she describes interacting with her supervisor to identify activities that combine her passion for instruction with the professional elements necessary to succeed in her role as a tenure-track librarian.

Freedom to Choose. While assistance and recommendations from supervisors is praised by participants, the freedom to choose their own professional development activities seems to be an important motivator for several of the participants. Hazel's archives project and the subsequent professional development occurred simply because she had an interest in archives and saw that it needed to be done. She expresses appreciation that her supervisor essentially said, "Yeah, go ahead," and let her run with it. Jeffrey M. also identifies this sort of autonomy as a motivating enabler in the types of professional development he selects. He drives this point home with the following statement:

I don't need to do this. I could sit back and be a slacker, but we had somebody in the library who did that and I'm reminded of it. He was a wonderful man. He retired. Once he got promoted he just did not do anything, and it was such a shame because he was so intelligent... I just think he didn't care anymore and he continued working here for 20 years not caring. He did what he had to do, but he went nowhere beyond that. Newbies would come in for decades and say, "I like him, but I have nothing to learn from him," and

that's really sad. I remind myself at least once a day not to be like that and that's one of my motivating factors. To keep engaged, to keep challenging people, to keep being challenged.

Seeing themselves as responsible, capable professionals, the participants undeniably feel qualified to choose their own professional development, and they feel they benefit from this choice. Carol W. states:

If you take your own initiative you own it. I think if someone says you're going to do this whether you want to or not there's a lot of push back or I'm not going to learn this. So there really has to be the want or the desire or the fire to do it.

Josefina mirrors this sentiment when she says:

I like that freedom. I feel like I benefit a lot from doing professional development. I think some librarians don't find it as helpful, but for me, I really like doing it and it makes me feel good. I think my supervisor and the library in general, they understand that and so they support me in that. The freedom to be able to choose what I do I think is part of that good feeling, like I'm choosing things that are helpful to me.

Robert J. agrees that while administration can encourage certain activities above others, ultimately:

I think if you have the degree. If you are professional, you obviously know what you need. You know where you are lacking. You know what ideas you need to be mindful of, that you need more training in. I feel you can make those decisions by yourself.

Susann J. summarizes the balance between interest area, job relevance, and freedom to choose one's professional development activities. She underscores the importance of choosing wisely and then taking responsibility for those choices. She adds:

I think this is true of most people I know, I really need that kind of freedom to do what I'm interested in. There's also some responsibility for it, so I write my annual plan every year with my supervisor. Those annual plans and the annual reports that come out of it, those are what structure the promotion file. I can't just do what I want to do and not be responsible for the outcomes of that. There's a balancing act, yes, I get to choose what I want but if I'm choosing all of these things that don't make any sense for my position, then it's a waste of everybody's time. Then again I really enjoy having input from administrators who will tell me about things that I haven't thought about. Yes, I don't think any of us here, and me especially, would like to be obligated to do something. We have a lot of freedom to create the jobs the way we want to create and if I didn't have that kind of freedom, it would push down the self-motivation that I have to do better and to continue to push and to try new ideas.

Susann offers an example of the blend of choice and direction from administration as she talks about one of her meaningful professional development experiences, a year-long cohort program. She says humorously that she was "volun-told" to participate.

Self-Promotion. The concept of self-promotion as a motivating factor is one that occurred to me as I was analyzing the first round of transcripts. I saw touches of it here and there in the transcripts but it was not addressed explicitly. Somewhat cautious about projecting the idea onto the participants, I nevertheless deliberately asked about it during the second round of interviews. Jeffrey M. says of self-promotion as a motivating factor in professional development:

It's maybe 10% or 20% of that. I don't know any extroverts who don't like to promote themselves. I think it comes with the territory, but I keep it in check because it's not about

me. It's about the student and I really, really, really, really, really believe in that and I try to practice it on a daily basis.

Not for the first time Josefina matches Jeffrey's answer. When asked about self-promotion, she acknowledges its importance as a motivator, but maintains that a desire to improve her practices drives her even more:

I'm not going to lie, that is a draw for me. It is important. That's not as much as recognition within my library, also, is something that I strive for. Most of all, I have this drive to learn new things about what I do, so that I can do it better. Reading a lot and communicating with other people who are experts in this topic, it gives me a personal sense of fulfillment. I really enjoy learning and becoming an expert in what I want to do. That's probably the biggest draw for me to do those things.

Kathleen G. has no qualms about admitting that self-promotion plays a role in the selection of professional development activities. She notes that not only does she select activities with an eye to self-promotion but that she knows her colleagues do as well. She offers as an example in her own work the decision to attend a prestigious non-library institute related to her outreach and liaison work. Although she admits she went with the expectation that she already would know much of the content being covered, she realized as well that she could not turn down such a prominent honor after being asked by a vice dean of her university.

At the same time, she laments the selection process for participants at institutes such as the one she attended; she believes that all too often those who are picked to attend are those who are already well on their way to learning whatever it is – often leadership skills – that the institute is designed to teach. She cautions against the practice of librarians engaging in resume-building at the expense of other librarians who might actually have a greater need to

learn the content being delivered. She also expresses hesitance, but with a resigned understanding, about library administration encouraging their best and brightest to attend prestigious institutes so that the library looks good to others while in reality less experienced librarians may actually gain more from the activity if they had the ability to attend.

Paige K., too, admits, albeit a little more hesitantly, to selecting meaningful professional development with an eye to self-promotion. With regard to a leadership institute she attended, she had the opportunity to make a recommendation to her director about who from her area of the library she thought should attend. She says:

I waited a little bit and then we have our new supervisor who started. When she started, she wanted to know more about my thoughts for the future and I said that I was interested in this and then I did go back to my boss and tell her that I was interested in this. I don't know if anybody would have said, "No, you're a good person. Let's send you." It's unclear to me.

Paige's sense of self-promotion not only motivated and allowed her to attend the institute, it ultimately led to one of the most meaningful professional development experiences of her career. That said, like the other participants, self-promotion as a motivator does not happen in a vacuum. Paige also states, "I do have a lot of underlying desire just to be a better librarian, too."

Susann indicates that nearly all of her motivation to do well at the institute in which she most recently participated stems from excitement about her project rather than a sense of self-promotion. Moreover, she believes that her fellow participants feel the same way. She says:

As far as self-promotion goes, I have a terrible time thinking in that way. It's not natural to me and I think that it's not natural to a lot of us in librarianship. I don't think that we

promote ourselves very much. I know for the other people in my cohort, thinking specifically about [the institute], everybody's doing it who's excited about their project. They're not thinking about what it means to be part of [the cohort] or the clout that they'll get from having done this professional project or anything like that. I know the people that are in my little group are just excited to do something and they're excited to have, also wrapped up in that, some strategic direction. It's nice to have that professional development direction.

Lack of Motivation. The issue of motivation also has a flip side, a lack thereof. In discussing what motivates them, participants also touched on what does not. A lack of passion for a subject and a lack of job relevance both appear in participants' comments. For example, Hazel's love of archives does not necessarily extend to its digital counterpart. While she obviously values the content, she readily admits her technological shortcomings to the point where she has pushed back against pressure to do professional development related to digital archives. Rather, she advocates for others with a better technological skillset to undertake such training. Robert J. also describes a lack of motivation for a particular activity as relating to the subject matter: "Sometimes it's just that subject doesn't interest me. That subject doesn't apply to what I'm doing. That's more for a public librarian or something so it's not something I'm going to attend."

Beyond lack of an interest, some participants mention constraints on motivation that are to some degree outside of their immediate control. Carol W. offers a realistic perspective about self-promotion and motivation and the effects of gender and parenting on the ability to do professional development. When children are in the picture, "you don't have time to [do] that self-promotion," she says. She describes attending an ALA conference that had an interview

tacked on to the end of it. Even with two years of planning for the trip, she explains how her husband felt it was strange for her to be gone so long while he took care of their two young children. To be fair, she notes, too, that even men with small children who engage in professional development activities of a long duration do it “at the detriment of their family.” Carol does not advance this suggestion in a judgmental manner but rather seems to be stating a simple fact.

Her words resonate with me greatly, for I, too, have struggled with decisions to attend intensive professional development activities while leaving my husband, who also works full-time, at home to take care of our four children without me. The motivation to attend is there; the logistical ability is often not. That Carol and I both perceive a limited number of full-time female colleagues with multiple young children in our respective workplaces also suggests that the issues of motivation for professional development juxtaposed with childcare responsibilities among academic librarians is probably not even on the radar of many members of our profession. We both agreed that this issue’s influence upon professional development would likely warrant its own in-depth study or dissertation for someone interested in focusing on it exclusively.

Another participant who is experiencing some level of constraint on her motivation describes a situation that also resonates with me. Kathleen G., working on a doctorate in adult education, certainly feels a high level of passion for her subject. Simultaneously, however, as she is experiencing this passion, she also questions why she is bothering to embark upon this particular professional development journey. Like Carol, Kathleen mentions the amount of time required to work on her program, and because the program draws her away from her work in the library, she wonders:

I get angry and then part of me is like why am I doing this? Am I doing this out of fear that I need this doctoral degree in order to keep my job or get a better job in the future? Is it like inflation? Is it credential inflation? I know I love learning, so most of it is I just wanted to learn, but some of it is I feel like I see these positions that I always thought I wanted and they're like doctoral degree either required or preferred. You see that increasingly. I thought to myself I'd better do this because what if someday I try to become a director, a dean of libraries or something and I'd lose out to somebody who has a doctoral degree? Then you think about wow, that really sucks that that's the reason why you're doing this. It's very complex.

Certainly, Kathleen's motivation is not lacking as she works through her program, but it is constrained to a degree by self-doubts born of questioning her own motivation. Her statement that "it's very complex" exemplifies the co-occurrence of competing emotions—passion, self-promotion, frustration—present in her transformational experience.

Duration and Interaction. Aside from motivational issues, two concepts that appear over and over again throughout the participants' transcripts, especially in those sections related to transformational and meaningful professional development, are those of duration and interaction. All described activities suggest a level of duration that requires participants to be engaged with the activity over a long period of time, that is, more than through a passing exposure to the ideas presented. In addition, all of these experiences also have a high level of interaction, not necessarily just with facilitators or trainers but also with other participants in the program. Of the characteristics associated with good professional development, duration and interaction appear the most number of times in coding. They are also those codes most

likely to be associated with a majority of participants' descriptions of their meaningful or transformational experiences.

In terms of good professional development including components of duration and interactions, participants offered both general statements about their benefits as well as presented specific examples. Following are the results of participants' discussion of general professional development experiences that they deem as good that include components of interaction and duration. The two subsequent sub-sections then discuss these two co-occurring themes as they relate specifically to participants' transformational or meaningful professional development experiences.

One of the biggest forms of professional development that offers both interaction and duration is that of on-the-job learning. While it stands to reason that most humans learn something every day, especially in professional workplaces, the type of on-the-job learning I refer to in the context of this study is that which participants have deliberately spoken of as a type of professional development. Examples of this include seeking out colleagues to ask for ideas and feedback, deliberate professional reading to identify solutions to problems, or the application of skills learned in workshops, classes, or trainings to real situations in the workplace. Most of the participants offer examples of this type of professional development during their interviews and explain how they have benefitted from it.

Carol W., who admits a lack of preparation for her teaching responsibilities prior to taking her position, describes how a community of practice formed with her colleagues helped to increase and solidify her instruction abilities. She proudly states that she began "flipping" her classroom for years before realizing that there was a term to describe the practice. With regard to six-years of learning from her community in general, she says:

I had to learn pedagogy on the job and that is really hard. I don't think I became a great teacher until I came here. We became great teachers because we worked together. We started looking at research outside of librarianship about pedagogy and how to apply it. What's really great is at least with my crew here, two of them were actually teachers and teaching composition in rhetoric so it's kind of like it opened doors that I never thought of.

Jeffrey M.'s example of on the job learning that incorporated interaction with colleagues over a long duration was touched on already in the section on motivation. While his self-awareness of a gap in his skills provided the motivation for him to learn, the interaction and duration provided the means to do so effectively. He describes the experience as follows:

I shadowed every reference librarian in the building at both campuses... I got as much training as I could in databases on my own, through other people. I sat at reference meetings for the first time in a long time and listened to what was being discussed and said.

At the time of our first conversation, he was about to travel to the annual American Library Association Conference, but he was already planning for more interactive and intensive on-the-job learning when he returned:

After I get back, I've already spoken with the instruction coordinator, they're going to put me in classrooms. I want to see how everybody does it, take notes and go to as many as I can because I really want to deliver the best quality content lecture I can to the students.

Nathan T. also offers an example of the usefulness of on-the-job learning that incorporates time and interaction, but his example is as the person teaching rather than learning. As we were discussing the benefits and drawbacks of library school preparation, he related the

necessity of a new hire needing a good deal of instruction while getting acquainted with his new position.

We had one librarian that started I guess two or three years ago. He had a lot of computer background, but he didn't have a lot of practical specific experience that we had, so I did a lot of hand holding with him, but I was fortunate enough to have the time to be able to do that. I had had the hands on experience myself. I was able to prepare for his coming on board, writing out techniques or procedures and things like that and go over those with him slowly as he came.

Nathan's example resonates with other participants' experiences of needing to learn from their colleagues. His willingness to teach mirrors other participants' statements about how grateful they have been at various points in their careers when colleagues have taken the time to share knowledge as it becomes necessary.

Elucidating the challenge that many librarians face as technology changes, Nathan also speaks to the learning-side of the equation as well. When his library system adopted a new operating system, he became involved in a cohort approach to training that he describes as "a good process." As libraries migrated to the new system, cohorts migrated together at the same time. This allowed for a larger pool of those affected by the changes to learn and share ideas together. He says simply, "We learn from one another." In addition to learning from one another, weekly meetings with an implementation manager combined with available training videos have led to a successful long-term, interactive, and multi-pronged approach to on-the-job learning.

Hazel C. also points out a unique perspective on the role of long-term interaction in on-the-job learning from colleagues. She offers a cautionary tale of a library in which she worked

long ago, at which technical services librarians were not allowed to talk during the day unless it related directly to their cataloging duties.

I thought it was so strange when I would go on break that I would always see people Technical Services taking their breaks together. I thought, “You’re working together all day. Why do they all take their break together every day?” Because they weren’t allowed to talk to each other in their offices. They were policed and monitored: A conversation should only be about cataloging. Everybody hated working there. It was totally repressive, and they would all, at 10:15 on the dot, go upstairs to the break room and take their break together. Of course that’s terrible for productivity. They think you’re wasting time if you’re chitchatting about your kids, but if you develop that kind of relationship of chitchatting about your kids it’s going to be much easier to say, “Hey, I think you cataloged this book wrong. This doesn’t make any sense,” that sort of thing, whereas if you have this stilted formal relationship then everybody is protecting their own territory.

The moral of her example is that not routinely interacting in a positive way with colleagues on non-work issues can take a toll on the work-place learning that is an important and often meaningful form of professional development.

Related in many ways to on-the-job learning but with a more formal professional development component, scholarly activities that have an interactive element also strike some of the participants as a part of good professional development. Scholarly activities are almost always intensive projects. Presentations, posters, and articles take time to produce in academia, and projects in the library science field are no exception. Certainly, one could argue that all research projects are interactive in some sense in that all researchers must review and evaluate the scholarly works that their fellow researchers have contributed to their field. However,

even beyond the written exchanges of ideas present in much scholarly literature, participants in this study cite benefits of working with colleagues while pursuing research endeavors and/or exchanging ideas in-person while presenting them.

Jeffrey M., a self-described extrovert, addresses his growing preference for poster session presentations at conferences, largely because of the interactive component they provide. He explains:

I do the presentations because ... poster sessions can be very fun because you get to talk to people and they get to share their ideas of what they've done or would like to do so it's very much of a learning experience for me. I learn more in a poster session than I think they learn from me, at least I hope so, but I hope they learn from me anyway.

Nathan T. describes a similar sentiment with regard to fostering interaction while presenting:

I also teach a Sunday School class and that's my method of teaching. It's very back and forth conversational, but it's more formal at a conference. I just did one last week and it depends on how much you have to say and how many people are in the room. You get a feel once you get going into your presentation if people are interested or not, and you can elicit questions at the end, and I always try to do that because I'm more interested in hearing what other people say and I think everybody in the room learns from all the different perspectives.

Josefina B. describes her collaborative research project as follows:

I did a survey of recent graduates of LIS programs and I got over five hundred responses. It was really a successful survey and I got lots of data from it and I presented the data at ACRL. A lot of people were interested in it. I wanted to make sure my data was really solid because not everything that the students or graduates said was really positive about

their experience, so I wanted to make sure people knew I was really just reporting it as students were presenting it. A colleague agreed to, also, code all of my data and then, we're going to compare the codes and use SBSS, hopefully, if we can figure it out, to really make a strong argument. We'll be co-publishing that, hopefully, in the fall sometime. We had a journal approach us, actually, and ask if we'd be interested in publishing it.

As a slight aside, the interaction between different professional development activities is also made apparent by Josefina's example. Her decision to enroll in a research class in pursuit of a degree in adult education led to her awareness that outside coders are helpful when doing research. This awareness is what led her to interact with a colleague to assist with coding and ultimately to write an article about her findings.

In addition to on-the-job learning and scholarly endeavors, participants offer some general blanket statements about professional development that exemplify the importance of duration and/or interaction with others. Jeffrey M. says:

Then I also try to choose things where I can connect with a lot of other people who have similar interests and who are potentially connected to me or near enough to me that I could continue working with them.

Josefina says of the issue:

The ones that are more immersive, they last longer, are probably more impactful. Going to a conference for me is a lot more ... I get a lot more out of it than just going to an hour long webinar.

The issue of webinars is broached by several participants in their interviews. Typically, they hold mixed feelings about them. If specific needs are addressed by webinars and if cost of

attending professional development is a barrier in their library, webinars are acknowledged to be a fairly useful tool for learning. However, participants also cite the lack of participation inherent in webinars as a detriment to their usefulness. When asked about their worth, Nathan T. sums up the mixed feelings of participants overall with his statement about webinars:

I'd say about half of them are. Some of them aren't specific to your particular situation.

Some of them also are just too far ahead of where you're ready to go as a library, but it's just good to hear what other people are doing and at least put that in the back of your mind.

Kathleen states, however, that watching webinars with colleagues, as she does in her library, is one way to mitigate the lack of interaction intrinsic in the format.

The importance of making human connections at conferences is likewise represented by other participants. Nathan acknowledges how easy it is to take notes at a conference and then forget all about their content once he returns to work and regular duties take priority again. However, if the need arises, connecting with the people who presented is a tactic to ensure more follow-through:

Once I get back home or once I get back to work, all that just goes out the window because day to day activities take place. You try to maybe keep a folder or something, but a lot of times, I never refer back to that folder unless something comes up later and I think I went to a topic on that at a conference. Let me see if I can find, anyway, it's not really the notes, but it's the contact person. Maybe send them an e-mail or something and say I'm starting this. I remember your presentation and here are some of my questions. I think that's one of the other ways that conferences are important. It gives you contacts to other people.

Another issue raised by participants is that interaction by itself can be a challenge for librarians, especially those who self-identify as introverts. During the second round of

interviews, I deliberately asked participants whether they saw themselves as introverts or extroverts and whether it made a difference in their professional development choices. Paige K., one of only two self-reported extroverts among the participants, does see a connection between her need for interaction with others and her desire to engage in interactive professional development:

I would probably prioritize an interaction with others. For me, that's very strong.

Personally, I have a lot of trouble with professional development that is online. I took a remote class a few years ago and I just couldn't ... I was not devoted to it. I think I have a lot of trouble. I wonder though if you could connect that to the introvert-extrovert thing because if I am an introvert ... An extrovert then I need people...I do get a lot out of the interaction with others. I think it opens my mind.

Conversely, several self-described introverted participants acknowledged that there comes a point during professional development activities, especially prolonged institutes or conferences when they are simply "done" interacting. Kathleen, who overall raves about the benefits of the institutes she has attended also says:

I guess what it means is that, as an instructor, you have to keep those differences in mind and maybe not plan activities from like 8 a.m to 8 p.m., which is kind of what they did at this conference, at this institute. We were going all day, and so, for me, when we were done, I wanted to go back to my hotel room or just be by myself, go see a movie by myself, go to dinner by myself, walk around by myself. I think it's important when you're designing these professional development things that you do keep that in mind.

Josefina draws the same parallel with conference attendance. While she is very clear on the value she places on interaction, networking, and learning from others in the field, she also concedes that at some point, she is done interacting with others:

I would say I'm an introvert, not surprisingly. I try not to let that impact the professional development I do because presenting in front of people is scary for me, but I think it is really valuable, so I do it anyway. I am really ... Just at the ALA conference, at the end of the day I'm exhausted from trying to socialize all day. I do need to sometimes say, "Nope. I'm not going to do that social event because I need to recharge."

Nathan T, another self-avowed introvert, agrees:

Being an introvert, I need time away from that. They have, I know they had a conference I went to recently where it was the all-day conference and then the all-day conference next day and in between there was the reception or whatever and I usually just skip the reception. I just, I want to be away. I want to go off be myself do whatever I need to do or I'm just waiting for a break... when at you're at these conferences and even when you're mingling with other people, this might be bad to say but I'm putting on a face, you know what I mean. I'm putting on a mask or a persona or a certain image or whatever. I'm tired of putting on that. I'm tired of wearing that library and mask all day long. I wanted to go away and take off my librarian mask.

However, in spite of some drawbacks to experiences that are very intensive and interactive, the benefits seem to outweigh the disadvantages, even for introverts. This suggests that being an introvert obviously does not preclude a librarian from stepping outside his or her own comfort zone to seek professional development that involves interaction with others. In fact, all participants cited the concepts of duration and interaction as they described those

experiences that have proved especially meaningful or transformational in their lives. And for Susann, who describes herself as “a big-time introvert,” there are ways to address the interplay between introverted natures with interactive activities:

I seem very extroverted and I've been able to adapt as an introvert in an extrovert world. I think as librarians we have to do that because we're on the desk and we're teaching. All of the things that we do are services with other people, but we adapt. The other thing that I think is not only am I an introvert, but most people who are called to librarianship are introverts. There are very few true extroverts among us. When I was in the program, both programs, I was with people who are also other introverts. [During] my teacher track program, we shared a room, and then the assessment track program, you had your own room, but you shared a bathroom. The first [institute], I was with somebody constantly which a lot of stress because I do need some alone time to recharge so then I can go and spend time with people. We were living together in the room and we talked about how we both kind of need some, “Let's not talk to each other,” time. It was something that we talked about during the program, too. Here we're a whole bunch of introverts, we're getting all this people time, and we're all exhausted. It almost became another way of bonding with each other, that we all knew that there were things that we were uncomfortable with, but we all know that we had that in common as well. For teacher track, we had to do a teaching demonstration where we would demonstrate a portion of what do in our instruction sessions. It was terrifying. It's one thing to do it in front of students, students don't know, but another librarian knows. Throughout that entire process, we talked a lot about being scared of that and how nervous we were and I think that made us a lot more empathetic to each other because we all know that it's not natural to us. Even

myself, I am curious about people and I will walk up to people and say hello, but I definitely need that downtime to recharge and after instruction sessions, I need to take some time where I just don't talk to anybody. These experiences are very intense and very much in person and they can be exhausting, but the thing that makes it bearable is we're mostly introverts and we all know that we're introverts who are navigating an extrovert world.

Transformational Professional Development Experiences. In terms of the professional development experiences that participants themselves describe as truly transformational or especially meaningful, the characteristics of duration and interaction are again quite prevalent. Jeffrey M. enthusiastically describes attending two customer service trainings that completely changed the way he understands and enacts good customer service. He states of the first, "It totally transformed the way I dealt with complaints." More than just transforming his approach to handling complaints, however, Jeffrey describes a fundamental shift in the way he viewed customer services efforts as a result of the training. The trainings, one of which he claims "mesmerized" him, included reading books, watching video tapes, and participating in interactive group sessions. He notes especially the power that one of the facilitators had by virtue of her talent in getting participants to open up and talk. If participants were uncomfortable upon being asked a question, he says "She said I'll come back to you, and she always went back to people whether they wanted her to or not because she really had to get people talking."

Additionally, part of that transformation seems to have resulted though not just from the trainings themselves, but Jeffrey's willingness to implement the ideas and learn from the troubling situations as they occurred. He continued to think about the trainings' messages, and

he describes that he had repeated opportunities to practice the skills learned as the head of the access services department. He suggests that part of the professional development itself is the on-the-job application of skills learned. He also notes that he discussed the ideas learned quite a bit with his public and access services counterparts following the trainings, an action that further cemented his learning. Moreover, as one of the librarians charged with administering and analyzing his library's LIBQUAL survey, he was also able to use what he'd learned in the customer service trainings as a lens through which to view critical customer service responses so that he could identify solutions for improvement.

Another participant who seems to be in the middle of an even more profound transformation is Kathleen G. After initially intending to complete a certificate in adult education at her institution, she has gone on to the doctoral program. She indicates that due to her participation in the program, she has even begun to question her desire to continue in librarianship. As she spoke about her doubts, she noticeably sounded uncomfortable with the direction her lengthy degree program had taken her and the doubts it is inspiring within her: "Frankly, I'm lowering my voice here; it's kind of turned my head a little bit. I don't know. Will I be a librarian forever? See, I don't know now."

While librarianship certainly has a relationship with the field of education, especially for librarians who routinely teach adult students, Kathleen has begun to see librarianship and education as disparate disciplines, and she expressed her confusion about where she belongs:

I think what actually happened is I've gotten so deep into the world of education that it's kind of almost like pulling me away from libraries. Do you understand? I always thought that I wanted to be a director and then maybe a dean of library somewhere, but now I see that if I do that I probably am not going to be able to do research and be really involved in

teaching, so now I'm like hum. I guess what's happened is you almost feel like you don't really have a home anymore because my home was in libraries and now it's kind of almost becoming my home is in education. It's really changed the way that I think about myself. Maybe I'm just kind of in a liminal state right now. I'm not really used to it, but I really; before that program I was like I am a librarian. I am a librarian and then I'm in that program and it's changed my whole way of thinking about myself.

When asked if it changed her identity, Kathleen responds, "Yes. Exactly. Thank you. It changed my identity and now I'm kind of like what is the future going to be like?" And because Kathleen is well-versed in adult education concepts, I mentioned to her that her experience sounded very much like a disorientating dilemma from in transformational learning theory, to which she replies, "Exactly."

The doctoral program in which Kathleen is enrolled is a two-year program, a hefty time commitment, especially considering she has been working on it outside the context of her professional duties. It has also required a large degree of interaction with her fellow students, none of whom, she points out, is a librarian. Rather she has been largely surrounded by professional educators throughout the duration of this long-term professional development activity. Of her interaction with her fellow doctoral cohort she says:

You're there with the people who aren't in your discipline, you see what their concerns are, and really, if you want to collaborate with people from another discipline, you really need to be in their space... because of my program and because of the things that I learn in my program, I really know that dialogue is one of the ways that we learn, and a really important way that we learn

Moreover, when asked if she had this similar level of interaction with her fellow librarians, she indicates that she does not. Solidifying the notion that interaction is an essential part of the type of learning that she has done in her program, she acknowledges that if her library colleagues had more of a learning community and talked more that perhaps she would still be more comfortable in the library world.

Susann J.'s discussion of her transformational professional development activities also highlight the concepts of duration and interaction as playing important roles. Susann chose to talk about three separate but related experiences, one of which she describes as transformational. Two of her experiences are week-long, immersion residency programs focused on teaching and assessment, respectively. The third is a 14-month long program focused solely on assessment. Of the first experience, Susann says, "It was amazing. It was probably the most impactful thing I've ever done." She notes that the way she teaches has completely changed as a result of participation in the program. Moreover, she goes on to say: "It was the best experience of my life. It transformed the way I do everything in librarianship."

The interactive component of Susann's experiences stands out heavily in her comments. She expounds on the benefits of learning from others' experiences as a way to both solidify and expand her perspectives. She states:

I think having that in person experience and especially with living together for that week, really makes a really deep impact in a way that I'm not sure like a single day workshop would do or something online... I think that that was the thing that made it a success. Then that and they forced you to mix with everyone. You weren't with the same people the entire time. I was sitting at different tables the entire time, for every single activity I had

partners that I sat with. There was a lot of cross-pollination that happened and it seemed very organic.

Susann also notes that the benefits from interaction extended beyond the formal components of the program as well to after-hours free time:

I think there's something characteristic about librarians that we can't stop being librarians. You know the kitchen, even when we're supposedly having fun, we're still talking about librarianship all the time. Living with people who are also attending the program had a big impact on me because we were talking about it during our meals.

Moreover, the ability to follow-through with the skills learned at one of the institutes contributed to an even greater duration of learning opportunities. She describes a library initiative to partner with two other groups on campus, a writing center and an English program. Of the process, she says:

I am still a new librarian, I would think. I've only been in the profession for four and a half years and there's a whole bunch of things that I'm picking up on the way. There's a lot of leadership skills that I think are involved in coordinating a large project like that. I don't think that I would be able to do it without the support that the [institute] builds into it.

Like Jeffrey, she also indicates that part of the importance of the experiences she describes is related to the ability to practice and enact them after they formally end. She discusses using the techniques and tools she learned at the institutes by reflecting on them, trying them out in her own teaching, reflecting some more, and making improvements.

Interacting with other participants in a professional development activity on a somewhat relaxed, informal basis also is highlighted by Pauleen K. Pauleen describes her transformational activity as a university-wide executive development institute designed to

foster leadership skills among employees. Meeting two days a month for an entire year, with half-day sessions interspersed as well, the institute inspired Pauleen to think about leadership in a different way. Most notably, Pauleen expresses her amazement at discovering that other participants, of whom she had previously been in awe, were really just “people, too.” The relaxed opportunities for interaction alongside more formal structured activities allowed her to have the open conversations that broadened her perspective on both her university and leadership in general. The long-term extended interactive benefits of the experience are evident as she says:

[The institute] also gives you an opportunity to really connect more with things that are happening on campus because you suddenly start being tied into the other people that are taking these courses. The HR and the things that they’re doing to stretch it out and make it an ongoing conversation.

When I questioned Paige K. about any transformational professional development activities she had undertaken, she, too, selected an activity that was long-lasting and highly interactive in nature. She attended an institute designed to inform participants about reference assessment. A combination of lecture and activities over several half days and full days all focused on different assessment tools. In addition, Paige mentions networking and plenty of time spent talking to other participants. She states that “it’s changed the way that I’ve looked at everything in the library since then” and that “it’s been a big part of my professional career because it made significant impact on how I thought about everything since then.” The ability to carry through the ideas learned throughout her career must be emphasized as an important component of her experience. As we were discussing opening the impact of duration and interaction, she said: “I guess all of the things that you were just talking about were all

embedded in the activity itself, so it wasn't here, you're learning, you're learning, you're learning, now you're going to go away.”

Meaningful Professional Development Experiences. Professional development does not necessarily need to lead to a life-altering, career-changing transformation in order to have a profound impact on a librarian's work. It does, however, need to create enough of an impression that a librarian remembers it and thinks to apply it in future situations. A number of participants who do not necessarily pinpoint a radical transformation in their career as a result of professional development, nevertheless, are able to recall experiences that stand out in their minds as memorable and meaningful. Unsurprisingly, given the importance of duration and interaction in forming memories, their experiences also include these components.

Robert J., who does not necessarily recall any life-changing transformations having taken place as a result of professional development, nevertheless also offers that those that had the biggest impact on him professionally included heavy doses of interaction and duration. (Those that don't impact him as much “start blending together, after a while.”) He specifically mentions two experiences and notes that he sees common themes between them. One was an all-day workshop at a regional university that focused on scholarly communication. He states that it included the same group of people throughout the day. Two outside presenters included many different types of activities, including lectures and informal group sessions. He states that the format and the day as a whole helped him to really “think outside of the box on a lot of things.” Not only did the experience broaden his understanding of issues in professional librarianship, but he believes the format of them—including the duration and interactive components—will have an impact on the future professional development activities that he chooses to undertake.

The second activity he describes also took the form of an all-day event with a lot of discussion—this time related to library renovation. He states that not only did it generate a lot of “outside of the box ideas,” but it also helped him to rethink library signage within his own institution. While his library had recently undergone a renovation and was not in a position to apply all of the ideas generated at the meeting, he was still able to take those ideas and find a way to implement them on a smaller scale to benefit his patrons. This ability likely stems from the fact that the interactive component of the day did not stop either once the meeting ended; rather, Robert describes the car ride back with his colleagues as providing them with time to discuss and reflect on what was learned. The opportunity to share the experience with colleagues allowed him to seek ways to build on the experience even after it had ended.

With regard to the duration of the experiences of both activities, Robert emphasizes that the all-day aspect of the single theme is “why they are the most memorable, those that stuck out to me.” He continues by saying that without notes in front of him, he struggles to remember concepts from other conferences, including conferences or meetings which might have had five or more themes. They merely left him with five ideas bouncing around in his head. He further states that in the future when choosing professional development activities, he would be more likely to attend the longer activities that focused on one specific theme.

Paige K. describes one particular long-term professional development activity as one of her most transformational; however, she also discusses two others with very similar characteristics as also being meaningful and impactful on her career. The first, which she describes as “very valuable” offered her new ways of assessing library instruction. The second, in which she participated between the time of our first and second interviews, she explains allowed for a considerable amount of interaction among participants. She says:

We all really came out of it with such a strong feeling. In fact today, I got three more messages from people in my group. It's something that people ... We really got connected and there was a lot of ... We got a lot of meaning out of it.

At the same time, Paige says she was unable to take full-advantage of the interaction among participants due to the location of the institute. As a local in the area in which it was held, she did not qualify to stay in the institute hotel. Because of this, she did miss out on the group reflection that takes place during dinners and in the residences. Still, the various stories she encountered as individual participants discussed their own situations as case studies, has provided her with a wide range of tools with which to use in her own context. She further describes the experience as such:

It wasn't worded as name a problem you need to fix but more of what's an organizational issue that you would like to address. That was our assignment before we got there and then when we got there, our discussion groups would talk about each other's case studies and then we also had one other separate meeting where we met with two other people not in our group and we talked about our case studies in the context of these principles that we were learning each day.

For her part, Pauleen K. easily acknowledges that the more intense, interactive components of conferences she has attended prove to be more beneficial to her than do attending individual sessions. Specifically, she noted the great impact that involvement with committees has played in her career development. She emphasizes, however, that for committees to be effective as a tool of professional development, there must be good communication and interaction among the participants. Committees that cannot communicate effectively turn into useless entities. While Pauleen does not include the committee work in her discussion of transformational

professional development, it is nevertheless clear that her participation in such group has at times given her a sense of purpose and meaning as a librarian.

Contrarily, Pauleen also reiterates the importance of interaction for her with regard to meaningful professional development when she speaks about conferences that don't have the long-lasting interactive component. Of these, she says:

I have been to some conferences that I feel really good afterwards and overwhelmed, but the next step just doesn't happen because I wasn't active. Just sit and hear someone talk about their project or whatever, that only lasts for so long with me. Don't do that to me for an hour and a half. You can do it for half the time and then we can have a discussion. I think that is the big part. Just the participation part and being able to really connect.

Susann J. also touches on conferences and interaction as she describes the informal, conversational learning that occurs at conferences:

I know that there's a lot of us who travel pretty regularly and whenever we meet up at different conferences, we're always kind of sharing ideas about things that we've seen at other libraries and what about is there anything we could do to bring that here. It is something that kind of impacts that innovation. There's been a lot of great ideas that I've gotten that I never would have gotten by myself if it wasn't for going to conferences and talking to other librarians.

For Pauleen and Susann, it's not just the interaction they experience at the conferences as they meet and share ideas with fellow librarians that is important, but it is the potential for longer-term follow-through. Thus, both the interaction and the duration, or potential longevity, of that interaction can play an important role in whether the experiences become meaningful to them.

Even Josefina B., the newest librarian of the ten, offers an intensive and interactive professional development experience as her most meaningful. In our first conversation, when asked to select the most meaningful activity she'd undertaken, she chose to speak about her decision to pursue an officer position in a networking group for new librarians in her state. Describing why she chose to name the activity as meaningful, she states:

I chose it because for one thing it was something that's kind of continuous professional development, unlike a conference or a webinar or something. Being an officer continuously gives me a lot of professional development experiences throughout the whole time I'm an officer, so for a whole year...It did so much to help me meet other librarians there, and I was only there for a year. Now my network there is so much bigger than when I started just because I was planning these events and I was talking with all of these librarians that were on the panels and things like that.

Josefina acknowledges that the group entailed more work than other professional development activities because of the continuous, year-long commitment, but she counters that it also means the benefits are even larger because there are more ways to be involved and more people to meet.

Carol W., who identifies herself as being at the wrong point in her career to experience any transformational professional development, nevertheless speaks positively about interactive learning opportunities in the context of those that have been meaningful to her in the past. Specifically within her own library, she remarks on the benefit that an informal journal-discussion group has had with regard to solving different library challenges. Monthly readings and discussion groups not only helped provide content information but also helped participants connect. Carol notes this was especially helpful during library reorganization that required

numerous meetings and mediation. Although by the time the reorganization occurred, the sharing of journal articles had fallen by the wayside, the group cohesion continued to exist and proved supportive in times of organizational change.

Likewise, while Hazel C. did not discuss any professional development within the context of transformation, she, too, participates in round-robin readings with her colleagues and describes them as meaningful. At her small library of just four full-time staff, she and her colleagues have taken to sharing their readings with each other in an attempt to improve and increase attendance during library instruction sessions. Such readings also have inspired them to try a personal librarian program in which the staff meets one-on-one with all incoming students. Hazel also notes that her supervisor specifically is always reading and hence always sharing new ideas for them to discuss and ultimately try. The usefulness of this type of casual professional development became even more noticeable to Hazel when she interviewed at another library. The staff there had recently moved into a brand new building, but Hazel pointed out a perhaps unexpected consequence of this move:

The interesting thing about them is that they had moved into this beautiful new library the previous year. The thing that the staff was telling me was how disjointed they felt because for years they had been cramped into a space that was much too small, but they were on top of each other, so they knew what the other person was doing. They were always communicating. They were always sharing. Now that they had this great big beautiful new space, everyone was spread out over these four floors of this building that took up a whole block. Children's Services didn't know what Reference was doing, who didn't know what Programming was doing, who didn't know what ... Everybody felt divided, and disjointed, and not playing on the same team.

Hazel emphasizes numerous times throughout the interview the importance that interaction has in increasing productivity. She does this largely in the context of informal professional development, notably her community of practice that reads and shares material with other members. But she also extends the importance of interaction to casual chit-chat among colleagues about non-work topics. She notes that if you have a good relationship with colleagues, it is easier to make suggestions or offer constructive criticism to help them learn as needed.

Jeffrey M., who does offer a description of transformational professional development, also speaks positively of other interactive and intense learning experiences, especially informal conversations similar to those described by Hazel. Upon taking a new position in his library that involved reference and outreach work, he drew upon the knowledge of his new colleagues to improve his own skills. He speaks about attending reference meetings, standing up at conferences and asking for advice, and not being afraid to say that he needed some help getting up to speed.

During our second interview, Jeffrey notes that he had been asked to start doing library instruction as well. His solution was to shadow his colleagues in the classroom as they did their work. Far from resisting an extra-set of eyes in the classroom, he notes that his colleagues seemed glad to help out, likely indicating what Hazel observed, that a positive interactive relationships tend to help librarians learn from each other, a fact which lends evidence to the importance of long-term, interactive learning not just in formal professional development settings, but also in more informal on-the-job contexts.

Reflection. Based on the importance of the concept of reflection in the adult education literature related to learning, one of the first questions I asked of participants relates to

reflection. While responses naturally varied based on the unique experiences of each individual participant, all seem to agree with the benefits of the practice in general. However, they temper their support of the practice with hesitations rooted in reality: there is often not enough time to deliberately reflect on the information learned during professional development activities. Nevertheless, those that do deliberately engage in personal reflection provide concrete examples of the benefits, and those who do not indicate that they deliberately engage in it still offer less tangible instances of its use, especially in conjunction with informal conversations related to the content of their professional development activities.

The professional development experiences that participants mention as being transformational all include some aspect of deliberate reflection. Susann J. notes the especially strong emphasis on reflection at the week-long teaching immersion she attended. She says, “Immersion, it seemed was like one week-long reflection.” She notes the benefits gained from other participants’ reflections on their varying levels of experience as it prompted her to re-analyze her own experiences and situation. Emphasizing even more strongly the interactive component of learning, she says that reflecting in a group helps bring out many different perspectives which would never have been uncovered otherwise. Likewise, following his customer service trainings Jeffrey M. describes himself as deliberately reflecting during and after challenging situations. He said the improvements in his level of service started right away after the trainings, but the repeated use of and thought about the skills learned resulted in getting even better as time went forward.

In a manner of reflecting that is also deliberate and active, Kathleen G. describes participating in an essay contest following her most meaningful professional development experience. Institute instructors encouraged participants to write an essay describing what

changes they intended to make to their practice as a result of attending the institute. Kathleen believes her essay stood out as one of the winners due to its practical nature as she analyzed how the information learned in the institute would allow her to make very specific changes to the way she conducted her library instruction and how she presented useful resources to her patrons. On a related note, with regard to writing as a form of active and deliberate reflection, Kathleen also describes one of her most memorable college classes as one that required an intense amount of writing. She says the amount of reading and synthesis required to write about those readings meant that she “just had to reflect.” That she still describes the class so memorably and positively seventeen years later lends evidence to the power of deep reflective writing.

Furthering the idea that reflection plus interaction are key components to impactful professional development, Robert compares different experiences. He states that at conferences without someone to talk to, some very limited informal internal reflection may occur but he emphasizes “very, very informally, I didn’t really take any time [for reflection].” This contrasts with his car ride discussion with colleagues following the library renovation meeting, which provided a natural opportunity for group reflection. Likewise, with regard to both impactful experiences that he chose to discuss, he describes the follow-up opportunities he had to speak with librarians from a nearby regional university who also attended the events. He notes reflection occurred by discussing with them the things they had all learned.

Conversely, some participants note a lack of time spent reflecting can negate the impact of professional development. Robert J. states that he wishes he had more time for reflecting on ideas gathered at conferences. Without the reflective pieces in place for professional development, even great ideas can turn into “notebooks full of notes from workshops that I’ve

come back from and haven't even looked at again unfortunately." Implementation of ideas from conferences or workshops takes time, and he states that it can "just fly out the window" when "you get back into the daily grind." Carol W. similarly states, "With reflection I need to do it more consciously. I think sometimes it is easy to glide or slide or keep on keeping on [rather than reflect]." Nathan T. echoes this sentiment by saying, "you tend to want to do more than you actually do." He sometimes engages in reflection while at a conference, an action made possible by a lack of competing sessions that he finds interesting. However, once home again he admits that "all that goes out the window because day to day activities take place."

Even new librarian Josefina says of conference attendance, "I know it's exciting when you're there, but it's easy to forget about stuff." When asked about the use of reflection, she describes writing things down so she can later take action or share with colleagues. Nathan T. also makes this recommendation but concedes that it is still easy to forget about those notes once back at work. Paige K. offers a further suggestion, albeit one she does not actually expect to occur. She states that if her administration picked several of her current responsibilities and said she did not have to do them for three months or so but rather could just use the time to reflect on work activities and professional development that she, and others in her library, would really embrace reflection. Robert J. agrees stating that librarians "should have some time for formal reflection after any professional development." Pauleen K. concurs, stating that "to have the time to reflect and see what I'm doing and where I'm going and having the right conversations is very helpful." But like the other time-strapped participants, she cannot describe any specific reflective behaviors she has undertaken.

Discomfort. In addition to reflection, part of the cycle of transformational or meaningful learning that is described by a number of participants involves uncomfortable realizations.

While discomfort is typically an emotion that humans like to avoid, participants speaking about it in conjunction with their professional development activities tend to describe a love-hate relationship with it, or at least a dislike-appreciation. While uncomfortable at times, participants understand that the discomfort offers them a chance to reflect on why it exists and on their own personalities and activities, which spurs them to make changes to their mindset or practices.

No one more than Kathleen G. exemplifies this feeling. Her progression through the doctoral program in education has resulted in what she describes as “a quandary.” During our second interview she confides that even as she is about to hand in her dossier for tenure, she is not sure if she wants it or even if she wants to stay in librarianship. She expresses her mixed emotions as follows:

It’s almost like this is so bad to even complain about this. It’s like I’m so lucky but at the same time it’s like the golden handcuffs, because if I go over to medical education, I’m not really going to be able to take my tenure with me.

For Kathleen, the professional development that she has undertaken to help improve her practice as a librarian has also resulted in a disorienting dilemma of career changing proportions. She indicates that the discomfort stems not from the learning she has done but rather how that learning has made her feel about her current job. She strongly proclaims about education: “I’m in love with it. I’m passionate about it.” Of her current job duties she states: “This is not exciting.” The dilemma has left her in a state of limbo between two professions to the point that she believes: “I don’t know what I want to do. I don’t know if I’m going to stay in libraries or if I’m going to go over the medical education...I have no idea.” The dilemma is

so strong for Kathleen she cannot currently say whether she is glad to have pursued the degree or not.

Less in the throes of a major transformation like Kathleen, Susann J. equates her discomforting professional development with making her a better librarian. She notes that engaging in group reflection requires a willingness to display a certain level of vulnerability to other participants, but she also notes that the benefits definitely outweigh the discomfort:

By having all those different partners and all those different groups and you've got people with different kind of levels and different ways of dealing with things, it really forced you to be flexible and not to resist, to be open to being uncomfortable and to challenging certain things that you would normally do. I think that that was transformational, it really, really was.

In addition, she described a requirement to teach an instruction session during one of the Immersion programs, a difficult task for many of the introverted participants: It was terrifying. It's one thing to do it in front of students, students don't know, but another librarian knows. Throughout that entire process, we talked a lot about being scared of that and how nervous we were and I think that made us a lot more empathetic to each other because we all know that it's not natural to us.

In addition to the discomfort brought about by the institute's requirements, Susann also experienced moments of social discomfort. She mentions that the intensely interactive nature of the experience strengthened participants' social skills as well as librarianship skills. She notes that when others became aware of awkward pauses in conversations or when others had feelings of nervousness, they strove to overcome the situations in order to build a sense of

community. This blend of discomfort brought about by intense interaction in a community of like-minded participants helped to Susann to grow as both a librarian and as a person.

A similar description of her professional development discomfort is offered by Paige K. During an exercise designed to help participants understand their own approaches to problems, Paige notes that she discovered things about herself that might prevent her from solving the case study under review. In spite of describing herself as “very self-aware,” Paige still admits learning new information about herself. She says:

From that point of view, people learned a lot about themselves and their own approaches to things that they can and can't do. That was a different way of looking at the case study and yourself to say, “Okay, what is it that I learned today about myself that's preventing me from solving this problem or whatever it is?”

In addition, she relates that she saw some participants have even more of an eye-opening moment “because they'd never look at inside themselves and, yes, it was a very vulnerable day.” Citing a concrete example from earlier in her career, she says:

There was some sort of activity where you had to try to build the highest tower with straws and pens and we did it in teams, and what it taught was what kind of team person you are, and I learned that I was really bossy and didn't listen, so actually that affected me a lot because I now listen and people have talked to me about that.

Paige further recalls that one of the benefits of going through the discomforting experience is to not be as afraid of being uncomfortable when interacting with others. She states that after the professional development experience she used the knowledge that discomfort is not always a negative occurrence to solve as personnel situation she was having. She notes that the ability to be open with her colleague helped move the situation forward. Likewise, she shares that her

boss encourages her to try new things, and that the knowledge that tense moments or even failure are not the end of the world, is a way to move forward as a librarian. Indicating the ability to transfer this knowledge to her own library context, she says:

A lot of people felt pretty wiped out by it. In general, yeah, I think that I would actually even expand on that. I have a new boss and I have an employee who I started with last September and in both cases I feel like the ... What we are finding is that the more we make ourselves vulnerable ... This is something that bothers me or this is something that I need to learn or I want to be honest about this issue. The better the result, the more productive that we are in this.

Relating this type of discomfort to Hazel's assertion that building good relationships with colleagues is often an important first step toward learning from uncomfortable moments, Paige says:

I'm usually with a group of people who I have worked with before and we've created relationship so I am more likely in those cases to be able to draw other people out or to make people comfortable so that we can get to anything that's messier or more difficult.

Although to degrees of lesser depth than stated by Kathleen, Susann, and Paige, other participants also mentioned that moments of discomfort enhance their learning. Especially in the context of practicing library instruction to other librarians, this opinion is noted. Josefina B., much like Susann, describes the pressure that ensues from doing presentations in front of peers. Even more so than Susann, Josefina notes an age gap between herself as a young librarian and the peers that were present for her most recent conference presentation. She says the experience "pushed" her a lot but also that it was something from which she learned a great deal. Nathan T., also notes that he delivered presentations and engaged in group work during

his MBA program that forced him out of his comfort zone as an introvert. Jeffrey M., too, acknowledges that the comments of the LibQual survey he administered were “really tough to read,” yet they ultimately contribute to his improved practice of customer service.

Self-Awareness. As Huberman (1999) notes, moments of “disequilibrium” stemming from sustained interaction can be unpleasant to many participants. Nevertheless, some individuals actually seek out such moments in order to grow as persons and practitioners, and participants in this study provide evidence of that. In doing so, they show a certain level of self-awareness as professional librarians and a willingness to admit that there are gaps in their knowledge level or skill set that they need to address in order to be as effective as possible. This theme of self-awareness is therefore also deemed as important in the context of meaningful or transformational professional development experiences.

Jeffrey M. is the librarian who actively sought a new role for himself in the library after experiencing a certain level of burnout in the role he had held for years. In reinventing himself as a reference and outreach librarian, he speaks about seeking out consultations with his colleagues to learn from them when he realized a shortcoming in his own abilities. He states:

Well, I think there’s a fine line between self-confidence and ego. When we quiz ourselves in an honest manner about what our shortcomings are, and a shortcoming is not a mistake. It’s just a fact that you can’t know everything. When I discovered something I need to know I go and find help. I’ll ask for a consultation with one of my colleagues. Whenever they show me something to help deliver a better reference answer then I’ll sit down and say, “How did you find that? Show me, I need to know too.” I don’t understand, frankly, why people are not comfortable with doing this because this is our job, to learn, and then to

pass that learning on. Then again I have a lot of self-confidence and by asking those questions I think it keeps the ego out of the room.

Paige K. also shows herself to be a self-aware individual who welcomes opportunities to grow, even if such opportunities present moments of discomfort. Speaking about her experiences at a major library leadership institution where participants were encouraged to look inward to identify barriers to problem solving, she said:

People learned a lot about themselves and their own approaches to things that they can and can't do. That was a different way of looking at the case study and yourself to say, "Okay, what is it that I learned today about myself that's preventing me from solving this problem or whatever it is?" ...I think, again, I do feel like that particular day was pretty powerful for people. I happen to be ... I'm very self-aware. I have done a lot of therapy and self-interrogation my whole life so it wasn't as powerful a moment for me although it was surprising. I still learned something I hadn't really thought about but for some people it was really powerful because they learned something that they really had never ... Because they'd never look at inside themselves and yes it was a very vulnerable day.

The notion that librarians need to develop a sense of awareness regarding their professional deficiencies is echoed by several other participants as well. Robert J. believes that professional librarians with a degree in library science should be able to ascertain on their own what skills they lack. To him knowing what ideas they need to be mindful of as well as identifying the types of training that are needed are the marks of a professional. While he acknowledges that administration can offer suggestions, ultimately, a key component of professional development is self-awareness:

Like I said, I think if you have the degree. If you are professional, you obviously know what you need. You know where you are lacking. You know what ideas you need to be mindful of, that you need more training in.

Likewise, Susann J. notes that with webinars especially, a major driver of her decisions about what to view rests on her self-awareness of her own abilities as a professional:

I'm on a couple of listservs for like the state library association, et cetera, or a couple of different library consortia, and they'll have different webinars and I don't judge them based on the instructor so much as whether I feel that would fill a need in my knowledge. If I feel like I'm having a gap or I need a refresher, that that's really what drives the decision to do certain things.

On the flip side of this, Hazel C. recounts a decision to decline her supervisor's request to attend a digital library and archives conference. She assessed that her technology skills were not up to par with what would be expected of participants, and she worried that the expense and effort would be lost if she tried to attend. Her point is that sometimes a professional librarian knows enough about his or her knowledge gap, or lack thereof, to appropriately decline a specific professional development opportunity that he or she knows would not benefit him or her:

I think of course self-awareness is always important in pretty much everything you do, but knowing what's needed, knowing what you do, knowing what your shortcomings are. I've been to many a meeting or a training where everybody going in is, "This is so stupid. I don't need this. This does not affect me," and of course builds bad blood all along.

Finally, Josefina B. offers an example of how a professional development experience itself provided the impetus for her to reflect on her own knowledge gap, which subsequently led her to seek out even more professional development to fill this gap:

Over the course of the spring semester I took a course on educational research methods and that really changed my perspective on ... I think I had done pretty well on the first survey I had done, but I didn't really realize all the things I should have been keeping in mind.

After taking the class, my approach for the new survey was different.

The long-term impact that Josefina's professional development experience will have on her practice throughout her career remains to be seen. Yet, it is undeniable that she intends to use the experience as a building block for increasing her ability to engage in the research process and improve her practice as a librarian.

Impact on Practice. As useful as it is to see participants' self-perceptions of meaningful or transformational learning from professional development activities, an issue likely to be of more importance to many administrators and even librarians themselves relates to impact on practice. This study was not designed to offer correlations between characteristics of professional development and impact on practice, nor was it intended to assess the results of different forms of professional development. Nevertheless, asking participants about professional development activities that they feel impacted their actual practice as a librarian is an important phenomenological component of understanding participants' experiences. Trying to understand the essence of meaningful or transformational professional development begs the question of whether these experiences impact actual practice. Participants offer a number of examples of impact on practice that resulted from the professional development experiences they describe.

Among the participants who described professional development experiences with elements of duration and interaction that also impacted their practice are Carol, Hazel, Kathleen, Jeffrey, Paige, and Susann. While some impact on practice among participants consists of small-scale and somewhat broadly-defined changes to practice, others include very specific concrete changes. Carol identifies her long involvement with a very large and prominent division within the American Library Association as having enabled her to organize and facilitate newcomer networking and orientation events at the annual conference each year as well as regular online events to help members dive deeper into the division's work. She also notes that her familiarity with the group empowers her to make recommendations to other librarians. In this sense, her own professional development activities are having an impact on the professional development activities of newer members of the profession. Describing the dual benefits of her involvement, both for herself and for other librarians, she says:

For me it's about making sure other people have professional development opportunities and what I'm getting out of it are these contacts and having people I can ask as mentors, like how would you handle this or being able to say I want to move into middle management, what does that look like...In another way, it's also helping other people with their professional development. Since I've been Coordinator, I've been looking for professional development for other people. In a way, [the division] helped with that because it's massive list service that I'm on, each of the six sections. I've been finding things and sending it to them while I have three direct reports. Sending it to the other twelve and saying, "Hey, I saw this. I thought of you," or "Here's an opportunity. Think about this."

In addition to the direct impact on her practice of improving professional development for other librarians, she also suggests that meaningful professional development that involves long-term interaction with others can have an impact on a librarian's entire career path: Or it leads to a better job, yeah. I think that might be what people don't realize, at least about professional development in the sense of networking. I really do think that it can indeed, now that I'm in the job market, really can affect. Like I know somebody who works there or that person is over there. Maybe they'll have a job and you just send them a note and say if anything comes up let me know, and they do.

Echoing Carol's assertion that this type of professional development can impact a librarian's career trajectory, Josefina describes the impact that her meaningful experience had in her quest to obtain the job she currently holds:

As I came in and I was doing my interview and all that stuff I was telling them a lot of things that I learned through professional development activities and they were very excited about that. I'm almost positive it contributed to me having this job.

Josefina B. also notes that the long-term, sustained interaction she has had while virtually planning events for professional development activities has led to increased distance communication skills in many areas of her practice. She says:

I think working with people virtually like that and trying to plan these big events without being with each other in person has changed how I communicate virtually with others and do teamwork from a distance with others in professional development things and just in general.

Hazel C. describes her small cadre of librarians' informal community of practice and their routine practice of reading articles and sharing ideas from within them as impacting actual

practice in her library. From ideas gained through various article readings, they attempted different approaches to library instruction for students. At the time of our second conversation, they were enacting their third year of a personal librarian program in which each new student at their small university was scheduled for a one-on-one appointment with a librarian. The practice is not only greatly impacting the work Hazel undertakes, but also making an immediate difference in the lives of new students, and according to her, it has the potential to affect the professional development of other academic librarians in the future. The tone of Hazel's description of the practice and culture of sharing ideas that led to it speaks to the power of sustained interacting with one's colleagues.

We found that by having that one-on-one meeting and saying, "I am your librarian. Come sit at my desk in my office, and we're going to go over these things on the computer," they make that connection. They're just not afraid of us anymore, and we also all keep candy on our desks. Maybe they come back the next week, and maybe they don't come back until the next semester but they remember, "That lady was nice to me." We're a real small school so it's easy to do but we've read a lot about personal librarian programs and how they've worked. Actually, [Hazel's supervisor] just got signed on to write a chapter in a book about how we do personal librarian meetings.

More concrete examples of impact on practices can be found in the stories of Kathleen G. One of Kathleen's most meaningful activities described is an institute designed not for librarians but rather for practicing physicians. As a librarian working in the health services field, Kathleen had always emphasized PubMed to her patrons. The training she attended emphasizes evidence based medicine, and she realized as a result of it that her focus on PubMed should be shifted to a focus on more summative clinical care resources. Knowing that

her library subscribes to some of these resources, she pulled them together in one spot and revamped her teaching behaviors. In her words:

It was really practical. It was A, I'm not going to teach people about PubMed so much anymore. I'm going to focus on these other things. B, I'm going to design a website where I pull together all of our clinical care tools in one place so the clinicians can find them easily, which I did. It was about how I was going to teach medical students.

This ability to understand better the needs of her patrons led to increased opportunities to interact with and teach them. This in and of itself led to even more opportunities to integrate with the program:

The medical students who are going through the family medicine clerkship, we have a morning; like a whole three and a half hour instructional session where they go through real cases and they ask questions about what do I need to know, what do I wonder about this case, or what am I unfamiliar with. Then they go search these evidence based medicine schools right then and there. One of them asked me to teach; he then became the director of the physician assistant program, the medical director, which was a brand new program, and asked me to be kind of a co-instructor with him on the evidence based medicine course in that.

In addition, Kathleen, like Josefina, recognizes that the experience of attending the institute, which ultimately spurred her interest in education and led her to seek her doctoral degree has given her a foundation for future research endeavors:

One thing that it's done for me is it has been super beneficial, so even if I quit now I mean it's definitely changed me. One of the most valuable things that happened for me in this program is I felt like it really equipped me to do research, which I really didn't understand

before. Even though I'm a newbie, I'm not saying I'm good at it. I'm saying I feel like I can do it now. I can start and I can learn more and I have a good preparation to my own research projects.

Not all professional development experience that participants describe as transformational have as profound effect on the participant as Kathleen's. Nevertheless, to those affected by an experience, either directly or indirectly, the results of that experience can have profound effects on practice. Offering a poignant, specific, and humorous example of how his professional development experience, which he does describe as transformational, also had an actual impact on his practice, Jeffrey M. relates the following story about his increased customer service focus:

One student came to me and complained when I was working a set of access service, he said one of his original documents he put into the sheet feeder and the photo copier it got stuck. I said what is it. He said it's an original copy of my birth certificate. I said okay. Did you try to get it out? He said I tried, but I was scared I would tear it. I said fine. Let me call the copy center. This is when we were having real customer response troubles with our copier service. They were in house. They felt like they were in charge not the students. Okay. I called the guy and he says I can't come right now. I said we have a contract with you where you come on demand. That's what's happening right now. He said well it's not going to happen I'll be there whenever I can get there. I said okay. Not a problem. Let me tell you what's going to happen. Right now I have hammer in my desk. I'm going to go out and I'm going to take apart the photo copier because this student comes first not you not me. I'm going to do whatever I have to do to get that copier torn apart and hand him the

document. Now the only decision you have to make is whether or not you want to be with me when I do it or not.

Jeffrey relates that the copy repair person came to help immediately.

Whether one agrees with Jeffrey's approach to the situation or not, he definitely took the customer service training described above to heart. Beyond the library, too, and more akin to Kathleen's profound example, he says the training experience has changed the way he interacts with others through his life, from parking lots to grocery stores. Referring to his newfound approach to easing tense situations, he relates the following story:

One day I was going to the grocery store. There was a mother and her teen daughter walking. I was walking to my car leaving, and they were walking from their car entering. The daughter was complaining and complaining because she did not want to go to the grocery store. I turned and I said that's where the food is. What wrong with that?

When asked how they reacted, he says, "The mother laughed. The daughter says okay, okay, okay. Like a 14-year-old would do because we're not right. That's how I viewed the improvements."

Jeffrey and Paige also offer examples of different professional development experiences that inspired specific actions designed to improve the physical space of their libraries for patrons. Related to his experiences with customer service, Jeffrey also describes a LIBQUAL training as transformational in that it helped him re-evaluate how to provide the best possible customer service to patrons. Although unable to enact some requests from students, such as creating a Starbucks in the library, the training helped him to see themes to use for other, more doable improvements. In this case, revamping furniture arrangements based on student feedback from the survey helped to improve patron satisfaction with quiet floor requirements.

Similarly, after a long-term, interactive institute on assessment, Paige used the knowledge she had gained to help a co-worker assessing and re-designing space for patrons.

In an even more long-term example, Susann J. has learned through another year-long assessment training institute myriad ways she can enact what she has learned on her campus. Using her skills, not just in the library but to partner with other entities on campus, she is trying to assess her work teaching faculty information literacy concepts so that they can, in turn, build better assignments for students in an intensive English program. A secondary component involves working with the writing center to inform tutors of similar concepts. Not only is the professional development training in many ways impacting Susann's assessment practices, but also in some ways acting as the driving force between other long-term collaborative practices.

Sharing. The final major theme from this study that emerged from participants' experiences also relates to interaction with others. Ironically, although the majority of interviewees said that they benefit the most from shared or social professional development, few have or would even support requirements for sharing their experiences with colleagues at their own library. Instead, most indicate that sharing via an as-needed basis works best in their own institution. While some have worked at institutions that have sharing or presentation requirements following professional development, overall they suggest that mandated sharing, except in very specific instances, tends to be viewed as time-wasted. Rather, they support seeking out specific colleagues and sharing information learned as it applies to job-specific roles.

Institutional culture seems to account for some of the lack of sharing. Josefina notes this when she compares her current library with her former place of employment. Describing her

one-year stint as a librarian at a small, private college in the south, she says, “In my previous position it was kind of weird situation. It was a very small academic library and so mostly nobody really wanted to hear about what I had to say so I usually kept it to myself.” On the other side of the coin, she describes her current library as one in which sharing is much more valued. In fact, upon returning from the last ACRL conference, Josefina reports that she really wanted to share what she had learned with her colleagues, so she asked to do an idea exchange. Well attended, the exchange inspired a library-wide goal for all librarians to do a brown bag lunch presentation each year. Josefina’s excitement about and approval of the goal is palpable as she relays the situation. She relates how, originally, librarians talking amongst themselves decided the goal was a nice idea, and eventually, the director of the library agreed. At the time of the interview, Josefina also reported that an expectation had grown that librarians would not only share themselves but would also attend at least six presentations of colleagues throughout the year. The types of topics she sees as valuable in a sharing context are types of soft skills that would likely apply to a broad range of her colleagues:

Some of the things that I learned at the conference, I’d really love to share with the other new librarians here. Things like: What’s my leadership style? How to better communicate and get people on board with whatever ideas you have. How to not be intimidated by things, like being younger than others. Things that I think we all could benefit from. I’d really like to share that with them.

More commonly, participants report sharing requirements that occur on a case-by-case basis. Paige K.’s library is devoid of rules regarding sharing after professional development experiences. She does not have to write reports, share, or even apply what she learned. However, she notes that she—and most of her colleagues—enjoy sharing what they’ve learned

and are anxious to do so when the circumstances arise naturally. Therefore, her library's human resources person sends out a quarterly note asking if anyone has an interest in sharing something at a brown-bag roundtable. In addition to presenting at and attending roundtable presentations, Paige makes an effort to take careful notes at professional development activities so that she can return to her library and selectively share with appropriate colleagues. Pressed for an example, she says:

There was another case where we had just changed our departmental structure. We used to call ourselves selectors, so I would be the [subject] selector, which puts an emphasis on the collecting, but we re-organized and rethought a department so instead of having groups of discipline based selectors, what we have now is a department of people who are liaisons and so there was some assessment related to liaison building and I brought back the department head some articles that were raised and again, some of the ways that people were assessing how their outreach programs worked and things like that, so it's those kinds of experiences that I bring back in my small way.

She also describes her role in mentoring newer librarians by sharing ideas about professional development for them to try:

I would say that as a more senior librarian, my role in general is to talk to people about professional development. The way that I think of professional development is anything that's outside of the work that I'm required to do, so I have written articles, so I've talked to people about writing articles. I've presented, so I talk about doing presentations. I'm very active in ALA, so I talk about committee membership or what does it mean to be active in a professional organization, so all of those aspects are part of how I advise.

Similarly, Kathleen G. indicates that while she has worked at places in the past that had a policy of doing a presentation after attending a professional development activity, her current location has no such requirement. Nevertheless, at the time of our first interview, she was planning to attend a major professional development activity in a few months' time. Because of the time commitment involved in the activity, her boss had insisted that she return from the event and teach her colleagues everything she had learned. By the time of our second interview, she had returned and offered three sessions about various topics covered at the activity, but she notes that there is still so much more that she could cover. Unsurprisingly, a lack of time prevents her from sharing more. One idea she shares that combats this lack of time is sharing via a listserv:

We actually do, at Penn State, we have an instruction community of practice, and I'm on the leadership group for that. Basically, it's nothing formal. It's very informal. It's very grassroots. All it is is we have a listserv and whenever we think of something, we put it out there. If we want to ask a question, we put it on the listserv and people respond. Out of 130 people, there are like 60 librarians who are on this listserv. Out of 130 total library faculty. She suggests that the listserv can spur deeper conversations with others who have similar interests in subjects without necessarily subjecting all participants to participation in conversations that do not directly apply to them.

Susann J. portrays a similar situation at her library, which does not have a formal sharing requirement. She notes that there was a time when they tried to do a meeting after conferences so that those who went could share with those who had not attended. She cites not only the sharing with colleagues as beneficial but also that those who attended the conference then have an opportunity to remember and process afresh the ideas they encountered. Unfortunately, as

day-to-day activities occur, sharing activities like this tend to fall away. She states that a conference follow-up sharing session has not occurred in quite a while in her library. She does note that there is a forum for sharing and interaction once a week in her library that is available not just to librarians but to all library staff, and she indicates that she really should take advantage of the event to share details of the institute she attended recently.

Exemplifying the benefits of strategic sharing, she describes interacting with her instruction colleagues specifically. Although a somewhat emergent concept in her library, sharing of instruction strategies seems to be a goal of hers in the future:

So, I've shared activities that I've done with other instruction librarians and they've been able to use it in their class and then tell me about it or they'll ask me, this hasn't happened a lot, but I imagine it will happen more in the future. They'll ask me about, you know, different ways to approach things, like active learning or why, you know, they'll ask me why I'll do certain things and I'll be able to share. Well, I do it because of the multiple learning styles. I'm trying to hit all of these different kinds of ways that people learn and by doing this it gives these people an opportunity to do that, etc, etc. so, there's a little exchange that goes on there. There could definitely be more. There could be a lot more sharing.

While the formal requirements for sharing are sparse among participants' libraries, the participants instead report examples of how and why they take the initiative to share with their colleagues. Nathan T.'s library in the past had a sharing requirement following professional development activities, but it has since "fallen along the wayside." He believes that "things like that just take up too much time." He also asserts that it is both stressful to have to prepare a presentation following professional development as well as an inefficient use of time to force

colleagues to listen to ideas not of interest or not relevant to their positions. Instead, he sees value in talking with colleagues on a more informal basis as the need or opportunity arises. For example, “if the subject comes up in a meeting or something, you could say I went to a webinar on that or I heard about that or something.”

Similarly Robert J. asserts his belief that individual librarians have the responsibility to share information gained with their colleagues as they see fit. He acknowledges that administration could possibly play a role in facilitating opportunities to share, if, for example, a group had all attended the same workshop. In that case, he states, bringing everyone together to talk about what they had learned would be beneficial. He cautions, though, that that type of structured event should only be done in certain circumstances rather than as a general library rule. Rather, like Nathan, he appreciates targeted conversation on an informal basis for sharing. Even at events that a large group from his library attends, he appreciates informal discussions at dinner or on car rides back from the event in order to reflect on the day and share ideas. Describing the relationship between sharing and reflection he says:

For example, the cataloging librarian and I, we work very close, considering, I was a collection development librarian. She was cataloging so we had a little, we had to make many decisions together. Then share many at the same workflow and even the same staff members. If there was something I had seen in the conference that I thought she'd be interested or impacted her position, yeah, I would definitely take some time to talk it over with them. Then a lot of these annual conferences we go as a big group. Sometimes they're just informal discussion at dinner after. It's just reflecting on your day and getting the ideas out there. Then I keep going back to the instruction librarians but they're the ones who seem to be doing this most often, then obviously they're the ones who come in to a

meeting and go, okay here's what we're thinking about doing with instruction this year.

Here's what we learned at this conference. What are your thoughts on the subject, that's much more formal way of doing it.

Pauleen K. shares a different type of challenge with regard to sharing professional development ideas. As the person responsible for overseeing training in her library, she laments that she has a challenge just knowing what types of professional development the staff at her library are doing. She explains:

...one of the things that I'm actually trying to work on slowly with the training portion is to find out more about how people are or are not participating in their travel. Are you going to just attend or are you going to speak because it is very fragmented within our university to know. I don't know that more than a handful of people know that I presented twice this year. I don't know that they know that. I don't know what my colleagues are doing either. I mean, a few of them. [My colleague] said, "I went to Moscow", or wherever, "and did this." Okay, so, unless it is a direct supervisor there is just not a lot of communication like that, but we're working on it or at least it is my plan to work on it.

Pauleen acknowledges the benefits of sharing activities with colleagues, but admits herself to struggling with the action. She questions how many report-outs on various activities is appropriate. If she were to write a report every month, would it be worth the effort? Would colleagues actually take the time to read it? With all the other activities on each librarian's agenda, it is small wonder there is hesitation to add on another task that may or may not result in anything of substance. Furthermore, Pauleen describes that when reports of activities are created, they are "reported up" rather than discussed. She concedes this is "kind of sad" because discussion facilitates connections with things being done already and with the people

doing those things. For Pauleen, at least, the sustained interaction piece of sharing knowledge gained through professional development is missing, and this, she believes, is unfortunate.

Summary of Results. Ultimately, the participants discussed a wide array of subjects during their interviews. These subjects were translated into a wide range of codes that sought to capture the essence of their experiences. The following table contains codes selected to help readers visualize which codes were emphasized strongly by the various participants as they spoke about good, meaningful, and transformational professional development. Not all codes that emerged during analysis are included. Rather, those that feature most prominently in the in the development of themes discussed in the following chapter are selectively highlighted here.

The table is interesting in the fact that while some participants discussed some of the concepts in the context of good professional development, these same concepts were not always those which they discussed in the context of their meaningful or transformational professional development. For example, while only one participant mention long-term duration as a component of good professional development, nine out of ten found it to be a characteristic of their most meaningful professional development experiences. More detailed interpretation about the implications of discomfort and the other themes in participants' experiences follows in chapter six.

Table 2: Codes Associated with Professional Development by Participants

Code/Type of PD	Good	Meaningful	Transformational
Administration	KG, NT, PgK, RJ	CW, NT, PgK, RJ, SJ	JM, KG, PIK, SJ
Community of Practice	KG, PgK	CW, HC, JM	KG, PIK, SJ
Discomfort	JB, PgK, PIK	CW, JB, PgK, SJ	JM, KG, PIK, SJ
Duration	JB	CW, HC, JB, JM, KG, NT, PgK, RJ, SJ	JM, KG, PgK, PIK, SJ
Follow-through	JB, NT, PIK, RJ	JB, KG, NT, PgK, SJ	JM, KG
Impact on practice	CW, HC, KG, PgK, RJ, SJ	CW, HC, JB, JM, KG, PgK, RJ, SJ	JB, JM, KG, SJ
Interaction	CW, JB, JM, KG, NT, PgK, PIK, RJ	CW, HC, JB, JM, KG, NT, PgK, PIK, RJ, SJ	JB, JM, KG, PgK, PIK, SJ

Job relevance	JB, NT, PgK, RJ, SJ	CW, HC, JM, KG, PgK, RJ, SJ	JB, JM, KG, PgK, PIK, SJ
OTJ (On-the-job)	CW, JM, NT	CW, HC, JM, SJ	
Passion	CW, HC, JB, KG, PIK, RJ	CW, JM, RJ	JB, JM, KG
Reflection	KG, PgK, RJ	CW, RJ	JM, KG, SJ
Self-awareness	HC, JM, PgK, PIK, RJ, SJ	CW, JM, PgK, SJ	JB, JM, KG
Self- initiative/freedom	CW, JB, KG, NT, RJ, SJ	CW, JM, PgK	KG
Self-promotion	SJ	CW, KG, NT, PgK, SJ	KG, PIK
Sharing	JB, KG, PgK, SJ	HC, KG, PgK, SJ	JB, KG

CHAPTER 6: Interpretation and Implications of Themes

The goal of hermeneutic phenomenology is to offer both a description and interpretation of participants' experiences of a phenomenon (Van Manen, 1990). While the preceding chapter offered a description of the themes uncovered by analyzing participants' experiences, chapter six provides my interpretations of what these themes may mean for academic librarians' professional development. To some degree the acts of collecting, describing, and interpreting data are intertwined (Seidman, 2006). That is, it is difficult to avoid forming interpretations during the act of interviewing participants. An open mind and epoche can help prevent unconscious researcher interpretations from leading participants in directions they do not intend to go, but inevitably ideas about their experiences will enter a researcher's consciousness as he or she tries to envision the essences of the participants' experiences. The act of analysis also involves interpreting pieces of the data that appear to be most important so that more detailed analysis can take place. Still, it is once all data has been gathered, analyzed, and reanalyzed that a researcher is in the best possible position to offer interpretive comments on participants' experiences as a whole.

In order to offer interpretation of phenomenological data Seidman (2006) suggests researchers ask themselves a series of questions about the data gathered and analysis performed. These questions guide my interpretation of the participants' experiences and are summarized below:

- What “connective threads” can be found among the participants' experiences?
- How can these connections be understood and explained?
- What do I understand now that I did not understand prior to undertaking this study?
- What has surprised me about the participants' experiences?

- What has been confirmed by their descriptions of meaningful and transformational professional development?
- How do participant experiences align or diverge from the existing literature on the subject?

To a large degree, the connective threads among participants' experiences were defined and described in chapter five. The remainder of this chapter, therefore, is devoted to answering the remaining questions. Both the supporting themes and essential themes are reiterated first in the same order as chapter five and then discussed and interpreted in each subsequent section. When appropriate, implications of the themes and recommendations built upon them are offered as well.

Supporting Themes

The five supporting themes that emerged from participants' interviews are 1) library school experiences, 2) attitude toward professional development, 3) negative professional development, 4) barriers to professional development, and 5) administrative aspects. Together these five themes have the potential to impact professional development undertaken by academic librarians. As such, understanding them is important when trying to understand the lived experiences of academic librarians who have engaged in meaningful or transformational professional development. Each of these five themes is discussed briefly here.

Library School. Much of what the participants say related to their library school experiences echoes discussions found in the library literature. None of the participants speak negatively overall about their library school experiences. In fact, all participants believe that some of their work in library school truly helped prepare them for their work as they obtained their first professional positions. Their comments lend support to calls for recognizing the

importance of ALA-accredited degrees in preparing librarians for professional positions (Bates, 1998; McKinney, 2006). Conversely, however, participants in this study also note that their library school degree programs did not, nor could have, prepared them for all of the activities that they now perform as part of their day-to-day professional duties. Their comments match more numerous and more recent calls in the library literature for an update of traditional curriculum in library schools (Berg, Hoffman, & Dawson, 2009; Creel & Pollicino, 2012; Bertot & Sarin, 2015; Saunders, 2015a; Saunders, 2015b).

While calls for updated curriculum in ALA-accredited library programs will undoubtedly continue, it is apparent that the need for post-graduate professional development exists in nearly every type of academic librarianship. Widespread literature offering advice and examples about professional development opportunities and best practices attests to this. In addition, the types of knowledge and skills that library schools are scrambling to incorporate into their curriculum are the same types currently needed in the workplace, and it is likely these types of knowledge and skills are the same as those that professional practicing librarians will need to consider as they choose professional development activities. Saunders (2015a) offers that these activities include not only technological skills but also soft skills and critical thinking skills that will transfer across multiple situations that librarians encounter regularly in the workplace.

The experiences of the participants suggest that they agree, especially with regard to skills and knowledge that can be transferred across various library situations. It should be noted that this assertion does not negate the importance of subject-specific professional development focused on a specific need, but rather it suggests that there is a value to participants in also, as Susann J. says, being “well-rounded.” The choice of reading and discussion groups, committee

work and leadership, comprehensive institutes, and enrollment in additional degree programs that the participants describe indicates that they do not feel they are done learning simply because their library school program is in the past. Rather, they are logically seeking out, what Candy (2004) terms “a repertoire of learning skills,” or professional development activities that offer a broad range of ideas and skills that they can use as needed as they continue on their professional paths.

Attitude toward Professional Development. Overall, participants hold a very positive attitude toward professional development. This is not surprising since it stands to reason that librarians willing to participate in a survey and then two hours of conversation about professional development have a predisposition to like the topic. The roots of their positive attitudes seem to stem from a basic enjoyment of learning as well as a sense of professional obligation to the field of librarianship. The enjoyment of learning mentioned by all participants is an interesting issue, however. While all participants in this study express a joy of learning and growing as librarians, several also contrast their attitude to those of colleagues. Jeffrey M.’s statement about not wanting to end up like a fellow librarian who received tenure and then just skated by doing the minimal amount of work required suggests that the participants in this study unfortunately cannot be considered typical of all academic librarians.

Several statements by different participants offer insight into the differences between librarians who enjoy professional development and those who do not. Josefina notes that at her previous institution, which was very small by comparison to her current library, her colleagues were stretched thin with work responsibilities and not interested in hearing about new or innovative ideas. She does not characterize her previous colleagues as poor librarians but

rather describes that circumstances in their environment had led them to develop an attitude opposed to seeking out new ideas or taking on new projects.

Likewise, while still advocating heartily for participation in professional development, Paige K. and Kathleen both draw attention to the time commitment required for meaningful professional development. Both discuss the draw on their time, including their personal and family time that is required for completing the types of professional development activities – that is, those that include elements of sustained interaction – which they find most meaningful. While not dampening their enthusiasm for professional development overall, all three participants' comments suggest that even a positive attitude can be replaced by a less-positive one if professional development adds stress to normal job and family responsibilities.

A sense of professional obligation for learning among the participants matches calls for continual professional development in both the major professional association for academic librarians (ACRL) and in the library advice literature. It also aligns with responses from participants who took this study's initial survey. By and large academic librarians seem to have a well-developed sense that individuals in professional positions have a personal responsibility to continue learning and to keep up with developments in the field. This sense of obligation compliments Knowles's (2005) principles of adult education, especially the two that relate to self-direction and internal motivation. It also aligns with Candy's (2004) concept of self-agency. Although these principles will be discussed even more in the subsequent section on the "freedom to choose" theme, it is important to realize that the librarians in the study seem to have a strong internal motivation and sense of self-direction that results in a positive attitude and leads them to seek out new professional development opportunities.

Negative Professional Development. Another connection between adult education principles and participants' experiences is found in their discussion of negative professional development. While participants' overall positive attitude about professional development leads many to assert that all learning is good learning, even that which does not work out quite as they had anticipated, they nevertheless offer thoughts about what detracts from good experiences. Relevance to position as an important motivator of professional development is mentioned not just by participants but also a majority of respondents to the initial survey. By contrast, participants describe professional development that does not apply to their jobs as "a waste of time." At work in their statements are Knowles's (2005) principles that adult learners need a practical use for the information presented and that they prefer instruction applicable to real-life situations.

Also related to these adult education principles is the issue of follow-through. While participants do not necessarily believe that all good professional development must have immediate potential for application in their current situation – think of Robert J.'s all day workshop on scholarly communication – they nevertheless recognize the importance of follow-through after professional development activities. Several participants mention the challenge of information overload stemming from conference attendance, and they describe piles of notes on disparate topics that become lost in the shuffle of day-to-day activities once they return to their job. While conferences certainly entail a degree of sustained interaction overall, they do not necessarily provide sustained interaction among the same group of people interested in one specific topic. The jumbled, haphazard nature of conference attendance may very well mitigate the meaningful or transformational learning that narrowly focused long-term institutes, cohort groups, or communities of practice enable.

Barriers. Participants' discussion about negative professional development also speaks to the necessary evil of balancing desires and reality when it comes to selecting activities. As the results of the study demonstrate, sustained interaction – or long-term, social learning – are often present in conjunction with those experiences participants describe as meaningful or transformational. Conversely, participants note that a lack of interaction and a lack of follow-through negatively affect their perceptions of professional development. Nevertheless, the very real barriers of cost and time to long-term and interactive activities is a reality that participants must face in their selection of professional development. For this reason, although none of the participants speak about webinars as meaningful or transformational activities, the negative aspects of them – lack of interaction and duration or built-in follow-through, are to some degree mitigated by their convenience and cost (Coiffe, 2012).

Participants' discussion of barriers to achieving meaningful professional development are not surprising given the prevalence of monetary constraints on institutions of higher education. Both cost and time factor prominently in the participants' interview statements as well as in comments from the initial survey. The comments both support and show the benefit of advice articles from the library science literature that make recommendations for low-cost and convenient professional development options (Auster & Chan, 2004; Nichols, 2006; Pearce-Smith, 2006; Keil, 2011; Campbell, Ellis, & Adebajo, 2012; Goldman, 2014; Shamchuk, 2015). More specifically, the participants who mention both formal and informal communities of practice (Hazel, Carol W., Jeffrey M.) in their libraries provide support for calls in the library literature to develop reading and discussion groups with colleagues in order to facilitate low-cost and convenient professional development (Henrich & Attebury, 2009; Young & Vilella, 2011).

Administrative Aspects. The barriers of cost and time are also discussed by participants in conjunction with comments about administrative oversight of professional development. While all participants have a certain measure of freedom to choose professional development activities as they see fit, they are also bound by administrative rules and opinions if they want their organization to pay for the activities. That library administrators must make difficult budgeting decisions on a regular basis will surprise no one in the profession, and participants' comments provide evidence of this reality. Rather than criticizing their administrations for being unable to provide complete reimbursements for all professional development activities, participants seem understanding of the monetary constraints in their institution. Several participants – Susann and Nathan especially – say that they feel obligated to select professional development that is cost-effective for their institution. Other participants, especially those who describe long-term institutes, while not stating it explicitly, hint at the same commitment to cost-effectiveness as they sincerely describe their efforts to apply what they've learned through professional development to their regular activities in a thoughtful and comprehensive manner.

Another issue that arises from participants' statements with regard to administration is that of the library administration's role in helping participants identify appropriate professional development opportunities. Although participants value their freedom in choosing activities, all also said they welcome suggestions and encouragement from their supervisors. Their statements corroborate calls in library administration articles for administrators to take an active role in helping their professional staff develop new and expanded skills through both professional development and on the job training (Feldmann, Level, & Liu, 2013; Ly, 2015; Meier, 2016).

Several participants also touch on the role that administration can play in ensuring their employees have time available for both professional development, reflection on it, and follow-through. As with cost constraints, participants seem understanding that staffing shortages and essential day-to-day activities often prevent librarians from setting aside time to specifically read, reflect, and implement new ideas gained through professional development. One participant, Paige, mentions that if her supervisor were to remove some of her routine responsibilities for a period of three months and instead encourage her to take time to reflect, both she and her other colleagues would embrace the challenge. She offers this thought though with the realization that such an action is unlikely. On the other hand, Hazel suggests that by building in routine reading and reflective discussion into the normal daily operations—and by sharing the action alongside her supervisor—it is possible to meet day-to-day responsibilities and still find time to grow.

It should be noted that the libraries in which Hazel and Paige work are of vastly different sizes and organizational structures. Therefore, it is reasonable to hesitate in assuming what works in one institution will work in another. That said, however, participants like Carol W. and Jeffrey M. both mention in the context of their meaningful professional development group reading and discussion activities, which provided them with better skills and better connections to colleagues. Like Paige, they both work in larger academic libraries. Carol W.'s experience with a smaller cohort of her colleagues than are present in the entire library suggests that this approach can work even in larger institutions. While Jeffrey's experience was largely driven by an administrative mandate that required employees to participate in a library-wide training program, Carol's was self-directed. That both appear to be effective for the participants suggests administrations could directly facilitate this type of activity or else

could merely step out of the way and let their professional staff guide the direction of a reading and discussion group.

Meaningful/Transformational Themes

While the supporting themes discussed above have the potential impact librarians' professional development needs and selection, the themes in the forthcoming section are more closely related to the experiences themselves that participants deem meaningful or transformational. They relate more closely to the phenomenological goal of understanding the essence of the participants' experiences. Each was described in detail in chapter five, and here the interpretation and implications of each are discussed.

The seven themes are as follows: 1) motivation, which is divided into six sub-themes of passion, self-awareness, relevance to position, freedom to choose, self-promotion, and lack of motivation; 2) duration and interaction; 3) reflection; 4) discomfort; 5) impact on practice; 6) sharing. Each of these themes is discussed separately below for the sake of clarity; however, in reality there are relationships among them. The entire essence of the participants' experiences includes elements of each of these themes in various circumstances. Therefore, where appropriate, they are also discussed in relation to each other.

Prior to reading about the implications of participants' experiences, it may be helpful for readers to have a visual reminder of the codes that participants emphasized during their discussions of good, meaningful, and transformational professional development. The following tables include codes selected base on their importance to various participants as the described their experiences. The first includes those codes drawn from general conversation about good professional development. The second and third includes those codes that emerged from the meaningful and transformational professional development participants chose to

discuss. While all participants described at least one meaningful professional development, only five felt they had had a truly transformational experiences, and this is reflected in the third table.

Table 3: Participant Descriptions of Good Professional Development

Participant/Code	All	CW	HC	JB	JM	KG	NT	PgK	PIK	RJ	SJ
Administration	4					X	X	X		X	
Discomfort	3			X				X	X		
Duration	1			X							
Impact on practice	6	X	X			X		X		X	X
Interaction	9	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Job relevance	5			X			X	X		X	X
OTJ	3	X			X		X				
Passion	6	X	X	X		X			X	X	
Reflection	3					X		X		X	
Self-awareness	6		X		X			X	X	X	X
Freedom	6	X		X		X	X			X	X
Self-promotion	1										X
Sharing	4			X		X		X			X

Table 4: Participant Descriptions of Meaningful Professional Development

Participant/Code	ALL	CW	HC	JB	JM	KG	NT	PgK	PlK	RJ	SJ
Administration	5	X					X	X		X	X
Discomfort	4	X		X				X			X
Duration	10	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Impact on practice	9	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X
Interaction	10	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Job relevance	9	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X
OTJ*	4	X	X		X						X
Passion	3	X			X					X	
Reflection	4	X			X		X			X	
Self-awareness	5	X	X		X			X			X
Freedom	8	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	
Self-promotion	5	X				X	X	X			X
Sharing	6	X	X			X		X		X	X

* This refers to the professional development activity itself taking place on the job. It is possible participants continued to utilize and reinforce the concepts and skills learned while on the job.

Table 5: Participant Descriptions of Transformational Professional Development

Participant/Code	ALL	JB	JM	KG	PgK	PIK	SJ
Administration	4		X	X		X	X
Discomfort	4		X	X		X	X
Duration	6	X	X	X	X	X	X
Impact on practice	2		X	X			X
Interaction	6	X	X	X	X	X	X
Job relevance	6	X	X	X	X	X	X
OTJ*	0						
Passion	4	X	X	X			X
Reflection	4	X	X	X			X
Self-awareness	3	X	X	X			
Freedom	3	X	X	X			
Self-promotion	2			X		X	
Sharing	3	X		X			X

* This refers to the professional development activity itself taking place on the job. It is

possible participants continued to utilize and reinforce the concepts and skills learned while on the job.

Motivation. Factors that motivate the participants in this study to undertake professional development relate closely to Knowles's principles of adult education (Knowles, Holton & Swanson, 2005). The principles state that adults are often motivated by a sense of self-direction, and in this study all participants note their appreciation for the freedom they have to choose their own professional development activities. Adults also learn best when the content applies to real-life challenges with potential for practical and vocational application, and participants here state that relevance to their position is a very important factor in choosing

activities to further their knowledge within the profession. Personal internal factors are also cited by Knowles as contributing to adult motivation for learning, and each of the participants in this study cited a strong sense of passion for the subject as a driving force for professional development selection.

Meaningful or transformational professional development for academic librarians must motivate the librarians themselves to want to engage in it. Chan and Auster (2004) note that across multiple disciplines, “motivation emerges as the single most important determinant of participation in training and professional development activities” (p. 158). Without the motivation to learn, librarians engaged in professional development are likely to see their time as wasted. Speaking of a lack of motivation, participants in this study corroborate Chan and Auster’s assertion of the importance of motivation. Several note that negative professional development experiences they have experienced were those that did not meet the Knowles’s principles. Computer software training or vendor led presentation are seen to lack the practical applicability to their day-to-day routines, and they are even less appreciated if administrations mandate participation. This finding also matches that which was found by Smith and Burgin (1991) in their study of what motivated librarians to participate in professional development as they note that intrinsic rather than extrinsic motivation played a greater role in participation.

The unique skills and interests inherent in each individual academic librarian also play a role in motivation for professional development. Subjects that were not personally of interest to the participants, likewise, led to negative professional development experiences, and participants note that they are likely to avoid these types of activities in the future. Likewise, participants speak most enthusiastically about professional development that encourages them to “think outside the box” and that which exposes them to new ideas or perspectives.

Alsop (2013) notes that “self-evaluation of development needs is an essential feature of a process that underpins professional development” (p. 49). As professionals, participants in this study believe they are capable of determining where their gap in skills lies, and they select their professional development accordingly. That most participants are able to use their self-awareness to seek out appropriate professional development matches a recommendation by librarian Albritton (1990) who states that “a self-assessment and self-development approach is concerned not with the transmission of knowledge, but with seeking to help individuals understand their own personal learning and development processes in a way which increases their capacity and ability to take control and responsibility for learning and developing from personal experience” (p. 247). According to Jarvis (1987), the development of their own learning processes, and subsequent awareness of how to enhance those processes to fill in gaps in knowledge, has the potential to lead to meaningful learning experiences, and participants in this study provide evidence of this.

Duration and Interaction. Of all themes that emerged from my conversation with the participants, the two most common throughout their discussions of good, meaningful, and transformational professional development are related to the long-term nature of an activity and social interaction built into it. Participants emphasize the importance not just of interaction with a facilitator, but also that the interaction they have with their peers and fellow-learners is an important component of this type of professional development. Several types of long-term and interactive examples are mentioned by participants, all of which are spoken of positively by them: on-the-job learning, professional institutes, scholarly collaborations, and informal or formal communities of practice, the latter of which may take the form of reading and discussion groups, in-person or virtual committees, or degree-based cohorts. All of these

activities have the potential for participants' "micro-worlds" to intersect, leading to a continual exchange of knowledge and ideas from which all participants can benefit (Huberman, 1999).

On-the-job learning emerges as one of the most inexpensive and logistically convenient opportunities for professional development of a long-term and interactive nature. Examples of on-the-job learning as a form of professional development include reading and sharing ideas with colleagues, seeking out one-on-one or group mentoring, or identifying colleagues with whom to collaborate on scholarly projects. Such activities help rectify deficiencies inherent in graduate library school programs. They also offer opportunities for self-assessment. More importantly, on-the-job professional development allows for built-in follow through. That is, transferring the skills learned to everyday work practices can occur naturally as learners have an appropriate environment to test out their new knowledge. Considering the plethora of research that suggests motivation to transfer is influenced heavily by environmental factors, including a positive working environment and supportive supervisors, it is heartening to hear about participants' experiences with collaborative, on-the-job learning (Egan, 2008).

At the same time, while participants note that on-the-job learning can be a method of good or meaningful professional development, it should also be noted that none of the participants who described truly transformational experiences indicated that these experiences were routine on-the-job activities. Rather, truly transformational activities for participants required something extra and beyond their normal day-to-day learning.

The other two major types of long-term, interactive professional development that participants discuss are single-theme workshops or institutes and participation in professional committees. Both offer several of the same benefits as on-the-job professional development in

that they can remedy gaps in knowledge resulting from limited or dated library school degree programs. They also include the opportunity to build relationships with like-minded librarians and offer a support system that librarians can draw upon if they identify further gaps in their knowledge at a later time. Many institutes and committee assignments also include follow-through activities, including report-outs, sustained online discussion forums, or action items that ensure participants do not simply “go away and forget.” It is important to recognize, however, that follow-through activities stemming from institutes or professional association work are largely dependent on the support of colleagues and supervisors with whom participants can continue to work and interact after a professional development activity itself has ended (Lindsay and Baron, 2002).

Regardless of what type of long-term, interactive activity participants choose to undertake, they cite benefits to themselves personally as well as to their institutions and the profession as a whole. They cite increased awareness of gaps in their own abilities and use of the activities as a means to rectify those deficiencies. They note the ability to embed concepts learned directly into their work life or day-to-day activities. Participants also state rather simply that more time spent on a professional development activity means more opportunity to learn from and share with others. Finally, they also acknowledge that more time learning can translate to more time for reflection, especially if time is built into the activity itself, which can lead to greater awareness of other professional development needs and the ability to identify solutions for meeting those needs.

Reflection. Discussion of reflection by participants resulted in mixed emotions. Participants largely understand the benefits that come from thinking not just about the professional development activities themselves but also the challenges and confusion that the

activities occasionally bring to their thinking. Reflection helps them probe the doubts that arise and often leads to problem solving for real-life solutions. However, participants also all acknowledged that very real time constraints prevent them from deliberately reflecting on how knowledge gained fits into their existing mental schema and how they might reconcile new ideas with their existing knowledge. All admit to experiencing, at times, what Wellington & Austin (1996) call the immediate reflection orientation, which is basically a lack of reflective activity.

Ironically, in spite of statements indicating they need to reflect more and lamenting the fact that they do not always reflect enough, participants do offer a number of examples of reflective practice. With regard to the technical orientation, or that which is designed to affect direct practice, Kathleen G. offers an example in the post-institute reflective essay she wrote about how a week-long institute helped change her practice. By attending and reflecting on what she learned and how she could apply it, she decided to try a new approach to teaching about the medical resources her patrons need. Nathan T.'s example takes place in the form of a car ride with colleagues following an all-day workshop; he and his colleagues used the car ride to reflect on what they experienced and discuss any potential applications they could see happening in their own institution. Although offering less concrete examples, Robert, Carol, Nathan, and Josefina all indicate an understanding of how this type of reflection can benefit their actual practice, and they claim to do it as they find time, even if very informally as they look over notes or travel home from activities.

The deliberative orientation to reflection fosters discovery and personal growth within the individual doing the reflecting. Participants also demonstrate examples of its use within their professional development activities. Jeffrey M., especially, tends to reflect on what he knows

and what he does not know in the context of his work. This reflection leads him to identify methods for adding to his skillset what is lacking. His effort to become a better librarian by talking to those who have the knowledge he needs provides evidence of this. Likewise, Susann, throughout her interview conversations, repeatedly expresses her desire to grow as a professional by discovering new ideas about both her practice and herself. The dedication she shows to the reflective practices built into her long-term institutes provides examples of this.

Dialectical reflection relates to political and social justice actions that may be taken as a result of reflection, and transpersonal reflection can lead to attempts to alter existing status quos. Of all participants, Kathleen offers the strongest example of this type of reflection affecting her work as a librarian. As a result of her doctoral program, Kathleen has learned to question not only basic tenets of librarianship but also her liaison discipline. As she seeks to earn her degree, she has an interest in focusing her research on the lack of psychosocial awareness many medical students have when questioning the details of a medical case. The implications of her research could potentially disrupt traditional lines of questioning in the medical community that currently focuses mostly on scientific or physical issues rather than psychological or social issues.

In addition to the reflective orientations identified by Wellington & Austin (1996), Shöne (1983) identifies both “reflection-in-action” and “reflection-on-action” as contributing to adult learning. Participants also offer examples of both of these actions. Jeffrey M. offers one of the most humorous examples of this as he quickly thought to solve the copier jam situation by reflecting on his customer service training experiences. He also notes his love of reference work because it forces him to think quickly on his feet. His efforts to learn from his reference

colleagues about their resources and tools help with his success as a practitioner who must routinely reflect on existing knowledge while in the middle of a reference transaction.

With regard to “reflection-on-action,” participants describe thinking about how their actions as a librarian could have been done differently or better after the fact. Carol W. describes soliciting feedback after a series of workshops for graduate students to identify what she should have emphasized more heavily. By reflecting on that feedback, she realized that she had been making assumptions about her students’ level of understanding that had caused her to leave out some basic information. Transitioning into what Ghaye (2011) calls “reflection-with-action,” she now seeks to incorporate this information into her workshops. Susann J. and Paige K. also speak heavily to these two types of reflection. The institutes they attended all included elements of reflection on their past actions with the goal that they would take any revelations they uncover and apply them to their future practice.

Finally, indicative of the fact that participants are a group of pro-active professionals who seek out opportunities to better their practice, all also describe examples of what Ghaye (2011) calls “reflection-for-action” and what Van Manen (1991) calls anticipatory reflection. Each participant acknowledges that at the very least, regardless of what type of professional development activity they choose to undertake, they make an effort to take notes during the event with the anticipation of reviewing those notes later. Whether their intentions come to fruition or not and whether the action impacts their actual practice often depends on the circumstances of their daily routine, but each suggests that the notes taken are done so with an effort to reflect later and potentially share with colleagues as they see fit.

Discomfort. Participants in this study substantiate existing evidence that moments of discomfort are an important part of the learning process. One participant in particular,

Kathleen G., appears to be going through the type of discomfort that Mezirow (2000) defines as a “disorienting dilemma.” She is being forced to reconcile her identity as a doctoral student in education with her identity as an academic librarian, and she has discovered that the two identities are sometimes at odds with each other. The information she has gained as a member of her doctoral community has led her to question her assumptions about the importance of the work she does as a library professional, and at the time of our last interview, she was actively considering “jumping ship” from librarianship into a new career field. Such a consideration came about only after a long and extended process of learning and reflection about her passion in life. At times, the discomfort has been such that she has even questioned whether or not her professional development pursuit has even been worth the cost to her sense of self.

While less intense in both discomfort level and in the resulting dilemma, other participants also describe learning from moments of discomfort. Hart and Montague (2015) state that moments of discomfort in problem-based learning situations are widely considered to be necessary for desired learning to take place. The participants in this study, by either seeking out moments of discomfort or at least acknowledging their usefulness, seem to agree. They admit to feeling some level of distress when engaging in activities that involve social interaction, public speaking, and self-reflection. However, they also routinely describe such activities in conjunction with their meaningful or transformational activities, especially because the activities force participants to critically reflect on their own personalities, shortcomings, and gaps in knowledge. Far from driving participants away from similar activities, the discomfort and reflection seem to encourage them to continue learning in order to rectify any challenges that they have identified as a result of their professional development.

Josefina sums up participants' attitudes on professional development activities that cause discomfort by saying they help her "grow a lot more."

Short of avoiding discomfort altogether, a practice which has virtually no support among participants, the librarians in this study do offer suggestions as to how challenging moments in learning can be done in a positive and safe manner. To some degree, this quest begins long before a learning situation even occurs. Wood (2015) describes the importance of established relationships as a means of mitigating the negative effects of discomfort that stem from learning experiences. Hazel provides an example as she speaks emphatically about the need to develop positive and personal relationships with colleagues so that when learning opportunities do arise, such as the need for one librarian to offer constructive criticism to another, personal antagonisms do not overshadow the potential learning opportunity. Likewise, when mentioning the benefits of peer observation in a classroom, Carol admits that it can be hard but she finds that asking for specific and targeted advice of trusted colleagues can help prevent relationship-poisoning negative criticism.

Jeffrey offers another approach to accepting discomfort and learning from it. He describes his efforts to separate out his emotion from the job at hand. When he reads negative qualitative comments from patrons about his library, he reminds himself that he is merely "learning one way not to do it again" and "learning how to do it better." He acknowledges that some degree of thick skin is a necessary requirement to enable this type of learning. Paige K. and Susann both offer a twist on this mental approach to learning from discomfort. They both describe being comforted in uncomfortable social learning situations by the realization that other participants are also human and likely experiencing similar levels of discomfort.

Self-Awareness. Participants in this study show a considerable effort to become aware of gaps in their skillset that may prevent them from fulfilling their duties to the best degree possible. Many admit that this awareness is what leads them to undertake professional development in the workplace. Moreover, they do not seem hesitant to admit their gaps in knowledge. Rather, they see being aware of their deficiencies as a positive trait, one that will spur learning and professional improvement. Jarvis (1987) notes that when individuals' stock of knowledge is not able to make sense about an experience, they often take note of their insufficiency. It is when they then reflect on that deficiency, and moreover plan how to overcome it, that learning occurs. Consider especially Jeffrey who readily admits – and with pride – that he understood himself to be lacking in reference and instruction skills as he took his new position. Rather than try to cover up these deficiencies, he quickly relayed them to colleagues and asked for help. Likewise, Susann J. easily confesses that without professional development in library instruction techniques, there was no way she could have become the quality instructor that she is today. For her part, Josefina acknowledges that it was a professional development activity in the first place – a research methods class – that led her to the realization she was not nearly as proficient in developing surveys as she had thought. Far from being hesitant to admit this, however, she simply states that the realization and knowledge gained from the class led her to take a different approach when designing a new survey.

In addition to the self-awareness of a knowledge gap that motivates participants to seek out appropriate professional development, participants also note moments of personal self-awareness growing out of the professional development experiences. Often times these moments of self-awareness are related to reflection and discomfort as participants begin to

recognize personality traits or deficiencies in knowledge that stymie their effectiveness as librarians. Paige K. speaks about discovering that in a team exercise that she sometimes comes across as “bossy.” She admits the realization was unpleasant, but also that it affected her a lot to the point that she now makes a conscious effort to listen more. Moreover, she notes that colleagues have actually talked to her about the fact they recognize the change in her behavior.

The role of professional development in fostering this learning by increasing self-awareness via reflection is noted by Boud, Keogh, and Walker (1994), who call this type of reflection conceptual reflection. They assert that trained facilitators deliberately fostering this type of reflection in learners can be an important part of helping participants make choices on their own that will enhance learning. Several participants describe just this, having gained a sense of self-awareness from deliberate acts of reflection that have helped improve their practice as librarians. Susann J. testifies to the fact that several major institutes for academic librarian development are taking note of and applying research that confirms the importance of fostering reflection. Susann describes her experiences as “week-long reflection” and notes the benefits of that reflection in spite of the moments of self-awareness and discomfort that it stimulated.

It is important to recognize as well that self-awareness can also lead academic librarians to decline certain professional development activities. Hazel C. displays an example of this as she relayed that she declined an offer of a digital archives training because she knew her existing gap in knowledge of the subject was too great to bridge. Likewise, Carol relates the futility of spending staff time doing specialized computer training if the librarians are all already aware that students will not begin to see them as experts in the area. The amount of training that would be required to bring library staff up to speed on the software to be considered experts, in

Carol's mind, was not worth the time it would take. By describing these situations, Hazel and Carol remind administrators that relying on librarians' level of knowledge-gap self-awareness may in fact help to save limited and precious staff time and money.

Impact on Practice. The concept of impact on practice, often referred to as “transfer of training” in both education and library literature, has been defined in a number of ways but includes the ability to transfer knowledge or skills gained in one situation to another similar or related situation (Leberman, McDonald, & Doyle, 2007). It can also be seen as a way to use previously learned knowledge or skills to facilitate additional learning. Although this study was not designed to correlate participants' self-perceived meaningful or transformational professional development experiences with a measurable impact on their own practice, participants nevertheless speak proudly about the changes they have made to their practice in conjunction with those experiences. This suggests that there is an important relationship between perceptions of meaningful or transformational professional development and impact on practice. The high importance that participants, as well as initial survey respondents, place on job relevance as they choose professional development activities is also indicative of the fact that academic librarians undertake professional development with the goal of applying knowledge gained to their actual job situations.

Participants provide a plethora of examples of how their meaningful or transformational professional development activities have impacted their actual practice. Some responded to direct interview prompts asking for examples but by and large participants offer examples of their own volition. In addition, they submit both small, one-time examples – like Jeffrey's copy machine situation – as well as large-scale and long-term changes – such as Susann's

campus-wide partnerships with faculty and tutors, which are designed to infuse information literacy skills in students.

Perhaps one of the most important aspects of participants' discussion of impact on practice as it relates to their meaningful or transformational activities is that the impact is just as often indirect as it is direct. That is, much as Leberman, McDonald, and Doyle (2007) suggest, often times the impact is seen in the ability of participants to take ideas, concepts, or even a newfound sense of self-awareness and apply it to situations not directly covered by the professional development activity itself. For example, as Carol thinks back on her meaningful years of committee involvement with her ALA division, she does not mention that any of it was directly about how to mentor new librarians; however, she does suggest that her experiences have led her in that direction so that now she feels an obligation to make sure others have the same opportunities that she has had. She also is using the strength she has gained and relationships she has made to move through a challenging reorganization in her current workplace. This suggests that meaningful professional development has the potential to extend long after the actual activity itself has been completed.

The notion of unexpected impact on practice can also be seen in other participants' stories as well. For example, Hazel notes that her library's decision to implement the personal librarian program stemmed from an article her supervisor read "somewhere." Certainly, her small reading community of practice did not deliberately set out to identify how to create such a program; rather, it is an indirect but tangible outgrowth of the group's desire to continue learning and growing as professionals. Likewise, Jeffrey did not volunteer to participate in LibQual training with the goal of learning how to rearrange library space. Instead, the

outcome of rearrangement stemmed from his willingness to be open-minded about the survey implementation and data gathering process.

This is not to say that deliberate attempts to identify information with a goal of changing practice are not common among participants. Indeed, all of those who relay their practice of taking notes at conferences or meetings with an eye to application or sharing later indicate that they do have a conscious desire to let professional development impact their practice.

However, that just as many of their examples of impact on practice are unexpected or unplanned suggests that an important part of their meaningful or transformational professional development experiences is the ability to be open to unexpected possibilities and to transfer abstract concepts that they learn into tangible activities as opportunities arise.

Sharing. Somewhat ironically, in spite of the importance participants place on interactive learning, sharing among colleagues is not often practiced formally within their institutions. There are certainly exceptions to this, including Josefina's introduction of idea sharing sessions with her colleagues following a conference she attended. However, most participants seem to eschew the idea of formal sharing. Rather, they prefer to share as the need arises, even if this limits the amount of sharing possible. This preference by participants may have both beneficial and detrimental impacts on participants, their colleagues, and their workplaces.

On one hand although a lack of sharing may seem incongruous with this study's findings that interaction is a key component of meaningful or transformational professional development, in reality it does support the themes of personal interest and job relevance. That is, if participants are forced to share with or listen to colleagues who have very different interests and job duties than themselves, it is understandable that they tend to state that their time is being wasted by such activities. This may be especially true in a small library, such as

Josefina's first workplace, in which librarians are already stretched thin by myriad competing duties.

Strategic sharing of professional development information, however, seems to be widely praised by participants, both in experiences that participants have found meaningful or transformational as well as those that they do not describe as such. Kathleen's method of letting people use her notes binder as needed is a good example of this approach, as is Nathan's informal, post-conference conversation with his cataloging librarian. Another tactic to facilitate strategic sharing is offered by Susann who describes optional sharing sessions in which librarians can gather together and exchange ideas or knowledge gained during professional development. In a large library, this approach allows participants to attend sessions as they have time and select those that they feel will most appropriately apply to their own positions.

One-time or specialized formal sharing activities also seem to have a place within the professional development of participants. Kathleen's supervisor's requirement that she share with colleagues what she learned from her pricy activity came about because Kathleen's supervisor thought that the institute would be worth the price if the information delivered could be shared with a greater number of her staff. Several participants describe the proclivity of instruction librarians specifically to share teaching tips and techniques within their library. In addition, Josefina also suggests that formal sharing may be valued by a greater number of library staff if subject matter is general in nature. She offers the example of sharing information that she gained at a conference about leadership styles.

In spite of the fact that many participants explicitly state that they do not formally share information gained through professional development with their colleagues, the fact that they

find non-formal methods for doing so is encouraging. One of the detrimental aspects of not sharing with colleagues is the lack of opportunity for serendipitous learning to take place. As was mentioned earlier, many participants mention unexpected learning as a result of their professional development activities. The ability to share information with colleagues through strategic or specialized formal sharing may be an important component of extending the impact of participants' meaningful or transformation professional development activities. The opportunities for more "life-worlds" to intersect and for learning to occur.

CHAPTER 7: Conclusion

The goal of hermeneutic phenomenology is to offer both a description and interpretation of participants' lived experiences of a phenomenon. It is possible that the understandings gained through a phenomenological approach may eventually lead to concrete new ideas and the implementation of policies or practices. As Creswell (2007) states along these lines, in order to consider developing policies or procedures around a topic, it is important to understand it fully, and phenomenology can help deepen understanding. In this case, the phenomenon under question is the meaningful or transformational professional development experience of academic librarians. As an academic librarian who has experienced both meaningful as well as lackluster professional development over the last decade, I decided to use a phenomenological approach to gain a better understanding of the issue, especially how and why meaningful professional development is experienced by participants. By exploring what participants experience as they undertake professional development they deem meaningful or transformational, I hoped to see what common characteristics were in place during these experiences. By doing so, I believe I have gained enough of an understanding of the essence of meaningful and/or transformational professional development to offer suggestions to my fellow academic librarians seeking out these types of experiences.

This final chapter begins with a brief summary of each chapter previously presented. I describe the guiding questions which framed this study as well as summarize the results of the initial study and, more importantly, participants' interviews. Following this summary, there can be found suggestions for implementation of professional development activities for academic librarians who are interested in experiencing meaningful and/or transformational professional development. These recommendations are based on the experiences of

participants as they described their meaningful and transformational activities. Because the subject of academic librarians' professional development is vast and far from complete, I then suggest possible directions for future research related to this topic. Finally, I offer some concluding thoughts on the study, including its impact on my own professional development as an academic librarian.

Summary of Study

To begin this exploration of academic librarians' professional development experiences, I identified several questions that interested me. Throughout the course of the study, these questions were refined so that ultimately the questions I sought to answer (and felt capable of answering) were as follows:

- What common experiences do participants describe while discussing their ideal professional development experiences?
- What common experiences do participants describe while discussing professional development experiences that they perceive to have been especially meaningful or transformational? (This question ultimately serves to capture the essence of this study itself.)

Before finding participants who could help me to answer these questions, I first turned to both library and adult education literature to determine what knowledge already existed about meaningful or transformational professional development experiences. The prevalence of several concepts led me to investigate them further via the writing of a literature review (Attebury, 2015). These concepts – andragogy, transformational learning, reflection, and communities of practice – then formed the basis of initial interview questions to ask of participants. Subsequent conversations with participants led to additional concepts, including

meaningfulness and sustained interaction, which I explored in the literature review of chapter two.

As described in chapter three, once I had written questions to ask of academic librarians about their professional development experiences, I sought participants via an initial, voluntary survey that was distributed to several national library listservs. The initial survey was designed both to capture basic information about librarians' experiences and, more importantly, to identify a group of librarians willing to participate further in the study. This process resulted in the identification of ten academic librarians willing to discuss their meaningful and/or transformational professional development experiences via Skype interview sessions.

By conducting two interviews with each participant, I was able to gather more than twenty hours worth of conversation for analysis. I also obtained curriculum vitae for analysis and additional clarifying information from participants via email. By drawing on phenomenological analysis method techniques suggested by Dey (1993), Miles and Huberman (1994), Van Manen (1997), Ryan and Bernard (2003), Seidman (2006), Saldaña (2009), and Smith, Flowers, and Larkin (2009) to work with the type of and amount of data I had gathered, I sought out common experiences among the ten participants. The use of NVivo software allowed me to first code transcripts easily and second compare codes among participants to identify those which occurred most frequently in the experiences of participants along with those about which they spoke most passionately.

The emergence of prominent codes led to the identification of several broad themes that are prevalent in the professional development experiences that participants describe as particularly meaningful or transformational. These themes were described in detail in chapters four and five alongside examples of each participant's own words related to those themes. The

supporting themes, or those that impact choices about or abilities to attend professional development activities, include library school experiences, attitudes toward professional development, negative professional development, barriers to attendance, and administration. Those themes that relate more directly to the lived experience of participants as they undertake meaningful or transformational professional development include motivation, duration and interaction, reflection, discomfort, self-awareness, impact on practice, and the act of sharing.

Chapter six offers my thoughts and interpretations of the themes identified. Implications on the choices and abilities for undertaking professional development are included in the chapter. My interpretation of participants' comments and experiences suggests several key points. First, while participants do believe they benefited from their graduate library programs, all understand that continual professional development is essential for academic librarians who wish to remain competent, dedicated, quality professionals. Because all participants appear to be such librarians, they have a very positive attitude about professional development as a whole, even learning from negative professional development experiences. They acknowledge very real barriers to the types of quality professional development activities that they find most meaningful or transformational, but they also believe that their administrations should support their endeavors as a means of improving the services they offer to patrons.

Chapter six also reveals my belief that two of the most important components of participants' meaningful and/or transformational professional development experiences are duration and interaction, or as Huberman (1999) terms it, sustained interaction. While a variety of motivational factors – passion, lack of knowledge, and job relevance, especially – spur participants to undertake professional development, they make it clear that those activities that are long-term and that involve interaction with peers are those that they find the most

meaningful and impactful. Enhancing the impact of sustained interaction are the use of reflection and/or sharing by participants and the development of self-awareness as they overcome any discomfort associated with professional development activities. Further, the most meaningful or transformational professional development activities described by participants are also those that they see as useful in impacting their actual practice.

Recommendations

While the goal of phenomenological research is not to identify some correct solution to a problem, by using a hermeneutical approach to the methodology, interpretations of participants' experiences are not only possible but also desirable. Thoughtful interpretations lend themselves to making general recommendations that may be used to affect or enhance policy and practice (Creswell, 2007). By identifying commonalities among participants' meaningful and/or transformational professional development activities (while acknowledging that these ten participants may or may not be representative of academic librarians in general), it is possible to offer suggestions about what to look for when choosing professional development and what to do to enhance those activities that are chosen. The suggestions that follow are made as a result of careful analysis of the data collected and are based on the common themes found throughout participants' discussion of their meaningful and transformational experiences.

The first recommendation is for those choosing professional development to seek out activities that include the characteristics identified by participants contributing to meaningful or transformational activities. These include sustained and interactive activities with opportunities for reflection. Further, activities that increase participants' self-awareness of personal characteristics and/or gaps in knowledge may cause discomfort, but they also increase

the potential for meaningful learning to take place. As such, these types of activities should be sought out by academic librarians truly interested in growing as persons and professionals. Finally, opportunities to share knowledge gained through professional development should be identified, whether this sharing takes place formally in a library or informally through conversations with appropriate colleagues.

The need to balance participants' desire for sustained interaction with real barriers such as cost and convenience suggests that short-term, lecture-based activities like webinars or single-topic conference sessions will continue to be prominent in the professional development of academic librarians. For this reason, it is suggested that facilitators of short-term professional development activities make an effort to include interactive components, and moreover, encourage participants to connect with each other following the event. There appears to be limited discussion in the library science literature showing if and how sustained interaction is being incorporated into virtual library science professional development. However, Josefina's continued virtual participation as an officer in her new librarians' association and Pauleen's virtual efforts engaging with and promoting her ALA division lend evidence to its potential. Even in one-shot webinars, facilitators should encourage participants to share contact information so that those interested in follow-through can make connections and form virtual communities of practice related to webinar content.

Participants in this study also offer suggestions directly and indirectly about the role that administration should and can take in facilitating meaningful and/or transformational professional development among their library faculty and staff. First, participants balance their comments about freedom to choose activities with comments expressing appreciation for thoughtful recommendations. Participants enjoy learning about appropriate professional

development activities from their supervisors. In addition, such recommendations leave participants feeling that their supervisors understand their interests and passions as professionals. While participants seem very understanding of administrators' budgetary and staffing challenges, their comments suggest that both learning and goodwill stem from administrative recommendations for appropriate professional development.

Also, related to the role of administration in facilitating meaningful and transformational professional development in learning, participants' comments have implications for sharing activities. While there is little support for forced sharing requirements among most participants, the results of this study do suggest that certain types of sharing can and should be encouraged. Rather than mandatory sharing via formal presentations that may not relate to all audience members, participants' comments suggest that time set aside for conversation and reflection – even if just done over dinner or during a car ride – can lead to serendipitous projects and/or collaborations among colleagues. Administrators are therefore encouraged to eschew the practice in place at the library described by Hazel – one that proscribed conversation among colleagues during working hours – and rather promote opportunities for strategic sharing among library staff.

Future Research

As is likely the case among people with curious minds, this study spurred in me countless additional questions. While embarking upon the literature review, formulating my guiding questions, designing my approach, conversing with participants, reading and re-reading their interview transcripts, creating, combining, and weeding codes and themes, and interpreting the results, questions popped into my head constantly. It proved to be quite a chore at times to keep the main focus of the study in sight. Keeping sight of the guiding questions and my

overarching desire to understand the participants' lived experiences helped mitigate these flights of imagination into realms of other tangential but still interesting questions. However, throughout the entire processes, I satisfied my craving to find answers to myriad additional questions by keeping a note file specifically devoted to future research. Into this file went these additional questions. In this section, I share those questions most likely to interest the library science profession as a whole, those that I personally find most interesting, and those most likely to be realistic options for future research.

Obviously, the participants in this study are very passionate and enthusiastic about professional development. While they all mentioned having negative experiences, overall they understand the benefit and necessity of continual learning as professionals. This is undoubtedly not the case for all academic librarians. It would be interesting to conduct a phenomenological study that specifically tried to address the lived experiences of librarians who have had such negative professional development experiences that they no longer see a value in participation or at least try to understand what common characteristics might exist to evoke such negative feelings. Identifying shared characteristics of negative experiences may lead to an awareness of what types of activities to avoid when spending time and money.

Identifying librarians who have had very different experiences from the participants in this study could also lead to further investigation about what personal characteristics are at play during meaningful professional development experiences. Does introversion or extroversion impact the types of activities participants find meaningful? Does type of library school or classes taken have an impact? Do the types of librarianship that librarians choose make a difference (i.e., are public services librarians more likely to appreciate interactive experiences

than catalogers)? Extending the geographic diversity of librarians or comparing librarians at different sized institution may also provide additional insights.

In addition to the major themes that resulted from analysis of participants' transcripts, there were also a number of themes I identified that were unique to one or a small number of participants. Because this study was designed to explore common characteristics of participants' experiences, not all themes identified were, or even could be, included. That does not mean that future research should not take them into consideration. Among these themes that may prove fruitful as focal points of future studies are organized retreats, the use of humor in professional development, the way that institutional culture and/or library mission affect library professional development, and the way that professional development may enhance library restructuring efforts. Investigating any of these issues in the context of sustained interaction, reflection, discomfort, and self-awareness has the potential to benefit the profession as a whole.

Personal Impact of Study

Although I did not consider myself to be a participant in this study, it has not only enhanced my awareness of what contributes to meaningful and transformational professional development among academic librarians, but it has also served as a personal form of professional development for me. The long-term interaction I have had with participants through interviews and follow-up emails has inspired reflection on my own practices. At times, degrees of discomfort arose for me as I become self-aware of my own gaps in knowledge and willingness to admit them. However, realizing that the participants were so willing to admit that they needed professional development to grow as librarians prompted in me an appreciation for honest self-awareness on my part.

Self-reflection led me to several conclusions about my own learning practices. I became aware of limitation in concrete skills such as technical services and cataloging, no small realization as I am poised to take a new position in my own library as the head of our technical services department, but I know that professional development has the opportunity to make me successful in this new area of librarianship. I also became aware of gaps in soft skills, such as the ability and willingness to admit confusion and ask for help or clarification from colleagues, a trait that I should undoubtedly rectify as I move into a new position overseeing staff who have years of experience in their jobs. That the participants in this study seem so willing to admit shortcomings in order to identify and overcome them – and that they typically report that other librarians are willing to help them – has helped me realize that this is a trait necessary in my own quest to become a successful and contributory member of the my own library and the library profession.

Also importantly, this study has given me the chance to grow in my understanding of the research process. Overcoming coding anxiety when faced with pages and pages of transcripts and little concrete idea what I was looking for in them has boosted my confidence as a researcher and writer. It has taught me that moments of ambiguity during a long-term professional development process, while uncomfortable, are not insurmountable – especially with the assistance of helpful software like NVivo. While I acknowledge I still have much reading and experimenting to do when it comes to research methods, I know that I at least have a foundation on which to build my research agenda as a faculty member. I hope to follow-up this study with additional work on the professional development of academic librarians, taking different approaches and identifying new angles. Finally, contrary to previous beliefs I had about professional development, this study has taught me, both through personal involvement

and via the assertions of participants, that professional development can be a positive, worthwhile experience, one that is unmistakably meaningful.

References

- ACRL Board of Directors. (2016). *Framework for information literacy for higher education*. Chicago: Association of College and Research Libraries. Retrieved from <http://www.ala.org/acrl/standards/ilframework>
- ACRL Professional Development Committee. (2000). *ACRL statement on professional development*. Retrieved from <http://www.ala.org/acrl/publications/whitepapers/acrlstatement>
- ACRL Research Planning and Review Committee. (2012). 2012 top ten trends in academic libraries: A review of the trends and issues affecting academic libraries in higher education. *College and Research Libraries News*, 73(6), 311–320. Retrieved from <http://crln.acrl.org/content/73/6/311.full>.
- Al-Behaisi, S. K. (2011). *The Impact of professional development on teacher practices and teaching efficacy* (Doctoral Dissertation). Walden University. Retrieved from ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Full Text. (910322424)
- Albritton, R. L. (1990). Continuing professional education: A management development approach. *The Reference Librarian*, 30, 237–255. DOI:10.1300/J120v13n30_20
- Alsop, A. (2013). *Continuing professional development in health and social care strategies for lifelong learning*. Hoboken: Wiley.
- Andretta, S. (2008). Promoting reflective information literacy practice through Facilitating Information Literacy Education (FILE). *Health Information & Libraries Journal*, 25(2), 150–153. DOI: 10.1111/j.1471-1842.2008.00775.x
- Arnold, K. A., Turner, N., Barling, J., Kelloway, E. K., & McKee, M. C. (2007). Transformational leadership and psychological well-being: The mediating role of

meaningful work. *Journal of Occupational Health Psychology*, 12(3), 193–203.

<http://doi.org/10.1037/1076-8998.12.3.193>

Attebury, R. I. (2015). Adult education concepts in library professional development activities.

New Library World, 116(5/6), 302–315. DOI: 10.1108/NLW-08-2014-0100

Attebury, R. I., Perret, R., Kenyon, J., & Green, D. (2013). Practice makes perfect? A

retrospective look at a community of practice. *Library Philosophy & Practice*, 1–18.

Retrieved from <http://digitalcommons.unl.edu/libphilprac/899/>.

Auster, E., & Chan, D. C. (2004). Reference librarians and keeping up-to-date. *Reference &*

User Services Quarterly, 44(1), 57–66. Retrieved from

<http://www.jstor.org/stable/20864288>.

Baker, L. (2006). Library instruction in the rearview mirror: A reflective look at the evolution

of a first-year library program using evidence-based practice. *College & Undergraduate*

Libraries, 13(2), 1–20. DOI:10.1300/J106v13n02_01

Barsky, E. (2009). A library journal club as a tool for current awareness and open

communication: University of British Columbia case study. *Partnership: The Canadian*

Journal of Library & Information Practice & Research, 4(2), 1–4.

<http://dx.doi.org/10.21083/partnership.v4i2.1000>.

Bates, M. E. (1998). The newly minted MLS: What do we need to know today? *Searcher*,

6(5), 30. Retrieved from ERIC database. (EJ567730).

Beagle, D. (2012). The emergent information commons: Philosophy, models, and 21st century

learning paradigms. *Journal of Library Administration*, 52(6/7), 518–537.

DOI:10.1080/01930820903422347

- Bedford, D. A. D. (2015). Enhancing access to knowledge management literature: A proposal for domain-based classification scheme and thesaurus. *Journal of Information & Knowledge Management*, 14(1), 1-12. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1142/S0219649215500069>
- Behnert, C., & Lewandowski, D. (2015). Ranking search results in library information systems: Considering ranking approaches adapted from web search engines. *Journal of Academic Librarianship*, 41(6), 725–735. DOI:10.1016/j.acalib.2015.07.010
- Belzowski, N. F., Ladwig, J. P., & Miller, T. (2013). Crafting identity, collaboration, and relevance for academic librarians using communities of practice. *Collaborative Librarianship*, 5(1), 3–15. Retrieved from <http://collaborativelibrarianship.org/index.php/jocl/article/viewArticle/212>.
- Benediktsson, D. (1989). Hermeneutics: dimensions toward LIS thinking. *Library and Information Science Research*, 11(3), 201–234. Retrieved from ERIC Database. (EJ405731).
- Bennett, C. J. (2000). Capturing the teachable moment: In-house staff development. *OLA Quarterly*, 5(4), 2. <http://dx.doi.org/10.7710/1093-7374.1532>.
- Berg, S. A., Hoffmann, K., & Dawson, D. (2009). Integrating research into LIS field experiences in academic libraries. *The Journal of Academic Librarianship*, 35(6), 591–598. <http://doi.org/10.1016/j.acalib.2009.08.007>
- Berger, J. G. (2004). Dancing on the threshold of meaning: Recognizing and understanding the growing edge. *Journal of Transformative Education*, 288(4), 336–351. DOI: 10.1177/1541344604267697
- Bernard, H. R. (2013). *Social research methods: qualitative and quantitative approaches*. Los Angeles: SAGE Publications.

- Berry, D. M. (David M. (2012). *Understanding digital humanities*. Basingstoke, New Hampshire: Houndmills.
- Bertot, J. C., & Sarin, L. (2015). The future of the MLS. *American Libraries*, 46(3/4), 40–42.
Retrieved from <https://americanlibrariesmagazine.org/2015/02/26/the-future-of-mls/>.
- Bertot, J., Sarin, L., & Jaeger, P. (2015). Re-envisioning the MLS. *Public Libraries*, 54(6), 23–33.
- Bittle, C. T. (2003). Challenging MLS. *Library Journal*, 128(13), 10.
- Booth, C. (2011). *Reflective teaching, effective learning: Instructional literacy for library educators*. Chicago: American Library Association.
- Borrás, J. (2010). *The ethics of Husserl's phenomenology: Responsibility and ethical life*. London: Continuum International.
- Boud, D., Keogh, R., & Walker, D. (1994). Promoting reflection in learning: A model. In D. Boud, R. Keogh, & D. Walker (Eds.), *Reflection: Turning experience into learning* (pp. 18–40). New York: Routledge.
- Boyd, R. D. (1989). Facilitating personal transformations in small groups: Part I. *Small Group Research*, 20(4), 459–474. <http://doi.org/10.1177/104649648902000406>
- Brody, C. M., & Davidson, N. (1998). *Professional development for cooperative learning: Issues and approaches*. Albany: State University of New York Press.
- Brookfield, S. (2005). The United States and adult education. In L.M. English (Ed.), *International encyclopedia of adult education* (pp. 638–640). New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Brown, V. A., & Lambert, J. A. (2013). *Collective learning for transformational change: A guide to collaborative action*. New York: Routledge/Earthscan.

- Buck, S. (2014). Instruction boot camp: Better instruction through collaborative course design. *Journal of Library Administration*, 54(3), 197–216. DOI:10.1080/01930826.2014.915163.
- Budd, J. M. (2005). Phenomenology and information studies. *Journal of Documentation*, 61(1), 44–59. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1108/00220410510578005>
- Burgess, J. T. F. (2013). *Virtue ethics and the narrative identity of American librarianship: 1876 to present* (Doctoral Dissertation). The University of Alabama. Retrieved from ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global. (1447010731)
- Burkholder, J. M. (2010). Redefining sources as social acts: Genre theory in information literacy instruction. *Library Philosophy & Practice*, 12(2), 1–11. Retrieved from <http://digitalcommons.unl.edu/libphilprac/413/>.
- Caffarella, R. S. & Merriam, S. B. (1999). *Learning in adulthood: A comprehensive guide*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Campbell, K., Ellis, M., & Adebonojo, L. (2012). Developing a writing group for librarians: The benefits of successful collaboration. *Library Management*, 33(1/2), 14–21. <http://doi.org/10.1108/01435121211203284>
- Candy, P. C. (2000). Reaffirming a proud tradition: Universities and lifelong learning. *Active Learning in Higher Education*, 1(2), 101–125. <http://doi.org/10.1177/1469787400001002002>
- Candy, P. C., Crebert, G., & O’Leary, J. (1994). *Developing lifelong learners through undergraduate education*. Stafford, BC, Queensland : Australian Government Publishing Service.
- Cavanagh, M. F. (2013). Interpreting reference work with contemporary practice theory. *Journal of Documentation*, 69(2), 214–242. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1108/00220411311300057>

- Cetwinski, T. (2000). Using training for recruitment and retention. *The Georgia Library Quarterly: The Official Journal of the Georgia Library Association*, 37(1), 5–10.
- Chalofsky, N. (2003). An emerging construct for meaningful work. *Human Resource Development International*, 6(1), 69–83. <http://doi.org/10.1080/1367886022000016785>
- Chávez, E., Graff, M., Navarro, G., & Téllez, E. S. (2015). Near neighbor searching with K nearest references. *Information Systems*, 51, 43–61. DOI: 10.1016/j.is.2015.02.001
- Chow, A. S., Shaw, T. L., Gwynn, D., Martensen, D., & Howard, M. (2012). Changing times and requirements: Implications for LIS education. *LIBRES Library and Information Science Research Electronic Journal*, 21(1). Retrieved from http://libres.curtin.edu.au/libres21n1/Chow_Shaw_Gwynn_Martensen_Howard_REF_LIBRES21n1.pdf
- Ciulla, J. B. (2000). *The working life: The promise and betrayal of modern work*. New York: New York: Times Books.
- Clover, D. (2011). Think big: Investing in your professional and career development. *Impact: Journal of the Career Development Group*, 14(2/3), 26–31.
- Coiffe, D. J. (2012). Webinars: Continuing education and professional development for librarians. *Journal of the Library Administration & Management Section*, 9(1), 37–48.
- Collay, M., Winkleman, P., Garcia, R., & Guilkey-Amado, J. (2009). Using collaborative inquiry to transform teaching, learning, and inquiry about leadership: The transformational learning of our educational leadership faculty team as we developed assessments for an equity-centered pedagogy. *Educational Leadership and Administration: Teaching and Program Development*, 21, 27–38. Retrieved from ERIC database. (EJ965153).

- Cooke, N. A. (2012). Professional development 2.0 for librarians: Developing an online personal learning network (PLN). *Library Hi Tech News*, 29(3), 1–9.
<http://dx.doi.org/10.1108/07419051211241840>
- Craig, B. (2004). *Archival appraisal theory and practice*. Berlin: De Gruyter.
- Creel, S. L., & Pollicino, E. B. (2012). Practitioners' & LIS students' perceptions on preparedness in the New York metropolitan area. *Education for Information*, 29(1), 53–69.
DOI: 10.3233/EFI-2010-0911
- Creswell, J. W. (2003). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed method approaches*. Thousand Oaks, CA.: Sage Publications.
- Creswell, J. W. (2007). *Qualitative inquiry & research design: Choosing among five approaches*. Thousand Oaks, CA.: Sage Publications.
- Cyr, A. V. (1999). Overview of theories and principles relating to characteristics of adult learners: 1970s -1999. ED 435817. Retrieved from
<http://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED435817.pdf>
- Dale, P., Beard, J., & Holland, M. (2011). *University libraries and digital learning environments*. Burlington, VT: Ashgate.
- Dalton, M. (2013). “What would I tweet?”: Exploring new professionals' attitudes towards twitter as a tool for professional development. *Journal of Library Innovation*, 4(2), 101–110. Retrieved from <http://hdl.handle.net/10197/5101>.
- Darlington, Y., & Scott, D. (2002). *Qualitative research in practice: Stories from the field*. Crows Nest, NSW: Allen & Unwin.

- Davis, E., & Lundstrom, K. (2011). Creating effective staff development committees: a case study. *New Library World*, 112(7/8), 334–346.
<http://dx.doi.org/10.1108/03074801111150468>
- Davis, H. L., & Somerville, M. M. (2006). Learning our way to change: improved institutional alignment. *New Library World*, 107(3/4), 127–140.
<http://dx.doi.org/10.1108/03074800610654907>
- Dewey, J. (1933). *How we think: A restatement of the relation of reflective thinking to the educative process*. Boston: D.C. Heath & Company.
- Dewey, J. (1967). *The early works, 1882-1898*. Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press.
- Dey, I. (1993). *Qualitative data analysis: A user-friendly guide for social scientists*. New York, NY : Routledge.
- Dietz, J. S., Chompalov, I., Bozeman, B., Lane, E. O., & Park, J. (2000). Using the curriculum vita to study the career paths of scientists and engineers: An exploratory assessment. *Scientometrics*, 49(3), 419–442. <http://doi.org/10.1023/A:1010537606969>
- Dini-Davis, E., & Theiss-White, D. (2009). Gathering leadership momentum across great distances: Creating an online community of practice. In J. Varlegs & G. Walton (Eds.), *Strategies for Regenerating the Library and Information Professions* (pp. 289–300). Bologna, Italy: K.G. Saur.
- Downey, A. (2015). Breaking through the debate: Understanding, critiquing, and applying the framework for information literacy for higher education. Retrieved from <http://acrloregon.org/2015/12/02/breaking-through-the-debate-understanding-critiquing-and-applying-the-framework-for-information-literacy-for-higher-education/>

- Dymarz, A., & Cameron, A. (2015). Self-assessment in librarianship: An exploratory study of current practices and future possibilities. *Partnership: The Canadian Journal of Library & Information Practice & Research*, *10*(1), 1–22.
<http://dx.doi.org/10.21083/partnership.v10i1.3332>
- Edwards, R. (2005). Theory. In L. English (Ed.), *International encyclopedia of adult education* (pp. 615–618). New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Egan, T. M. (2008). The relevance of organizational subculture for motivation to transfer learning. *Human Resource Development Quarterly*, *19*(4), 299–322. DOI: 10.1002/hrdq.1243
- Englert, T. (2009). Toastmasters: Boost your resume without breaking the bank. *Mississippi Libraries*, *73*(2), 35–37.
- Feldmann, L. M., Level, A. V., & Liu, S. (2013). Leadership training and development: An academic library's findings. *Library Management*, *34*(1/2), 96–104.
<http://doi.org/10.1108/01435121311298306>
- Fennewald, J. (2008). Research productivity among librarians: Factors leading to publications at Penn State. *College & Research Libraries*, *69*(2), 104–116. DOI: 10.5860/crl.69.2.104
- Fiedler, B. (2003). MLS: Minimal prerequisite. *Library Journal*, *128*(13), 10–10.
- Fitzgibbons, M. (2015). Journal clubs: Free and effective professional development for librarians. *Access (10300155)*, *29*(4), 30–33.
- Fitzsimmons, T. J. (2007). Using communities of practice for the professional development of workplace learning and performance professionals (Doctoral Dissertation). Capella University. Retrieved from ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Full Text. (304698443)

- Flatley, R. K., & Weber, M. A. (2004). Professional development opportunities for new academic librarians. *Journal of Academic Librarianship*, 30(6), 488–492.
DOI:10.1016/j.acalib.2004.06.011
- Forrest, M. E. S. (2008). On becoming a critically reflective practitioner. *Health Information & Libraries Journal*, 25(3), 229–232. DOI: 10.1111/j.1471-1842.2008.00787.x
- Fourie, I. (2013). Twenty-first century librarians: Time for Zones of Intervention and Zones of Proximal Development? *Library Hi Tech*, 31(1), 171–181.
<http://dx.doi.org/10.1108/07378831311304001>
- Franklin, B. (2012). Surviving to thriving: Advancing the institutional mission. *Journal of Library Administration*, 52(1), 94–107. DOI:10.1080/01930826.2012.630244
- Gadamer, H.-G. (1975). *Truth and method*. New York: New York : Seabury Press.
- Galloway, P. (2011). Educating for digital archiving through studio pedagogy, sequential case studies, and reflective practice. *Archivaria*, (72), 169–196. Retrieved from
<http://journals.sfu.ca/archivar/index.php/archivaria/article/view/13363>.
- Ghaye, T. (2011). *Teaching and learning through reflective practice: A practical guide for positive action*. London: Routledge. DOI: 10.17821/srels/2011/v48i2/43966
- Ghuman, S. S. (2011). Role of the refresher course in the professional development of librarians. *SRELS Journal of Information Management*, 48(2), 207–213.
DOI:10.17821/srels/2011/v48i2/43966
- Gilstrap, D. L. (2013). Why do we teach? Adult learning theory in professional standards as a basis for curriculum development. *College & Research Libraries*, 74(5), 501–518.
Retrieved from <http://crl.acrl.org/content/early/2012/06/08/crl12-334.short>.

- Goldman, C. (2014). The benefits of local involvement: Professional development through state and regional library associations. *Practical Academic Librarianship: The International Journal of the SLA*, 4(2), i–xi. Retrieved from <https://journals.tdl.org/pal/index.php/pal/article/view/6311/6080>.
- Gorman, G. E., & Clayton, P. (1997). *Qualitative research for the information professional: A practical handbook*. London: Library Association Pub.
- Graf, A. J., & Harris, B. R. (2016). Reflective assessment: opportunities and challenges. *Reference Services Review*, 44(1), 38–47. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1108/RSR-06-2015-0027>
- Grant, M. J. (2007). The role of reflection in the library and information sector: A systematic review. *Health Information & Libraries Journal*, 24(3), 155–166. DOI: 10.1111/j.1471-1842.2007.00731.x
- Gruber, A. M. (2007). Wired professional development: new librarians connect through the web. *College & Undergraduate Libraries*, 14(4), 95–102.
DOI:10.1080/10691310802128377
- Guo, S. (2014). Developing effective professional development programs: A case study. *New Library World*, 115(11/12), 542–557. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1108/NLW-05-2014-0048>
- Hackman, J. R., & Oldham, G. R. (1976). Motivation through the design of work: Test of a theory. *Organizational Behavior and Human Performance*, 16(2), 250–279.
[http://doi.org/10.1016/0030-5073\(76\)90016-7](http://doi.org/10.1016/0030-5073(76)90016-7)
- Hakkarainen, P. (2011). Promoting meaningful learning through video production-supported PBL. *The Interdisciplinary Journal of Problem-Based Learning*, 5(1), 34–53.
<http://dx.doi.org/10.7771/1541-5015.1217>

- Hall, R. A. (2009). Exploring the core: An examination of required courses in ALA-accredited. *Education for Information*, 27(1), 57–67. DOI: 10.3233/EFI-2009-0872
- Hall-Ellis, S. D., & Grealy, D. S. (2012). Service learning in LIS education: The case for holistic assessment. *Catholic Library World*, 82(3), 178–187.
- Hankins, R., Melgoza, P., Seeger, C., & Wan, G. (2009). Meeting our users where they conference: A Texas A&M model to support librarian attendance at subject-specific conferences. *Public Services Quarterly*, 5(2), 98–113. DOI:10.1080/15228950902837541
- Harrison, R. (2010). Unique benefits of conference attendance as a method of professional development for LIS professionals. *Serials Librarian*, 59(3/4), 263–270. DOI:10.1080/0361526X.2010.489353
- Harris-Pierce, R. L. (2012). Is data curation education at library and information science schools in North America adequate? *New Library World*, 113(11/12), 596–613. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1108/03074801211282957>
- Hart, A., & Montague, J. (2015). “The constant state of becoming”: Power, identity, and discomfort on the anti-oppressive learning journey. *Journal of Psychological Issues in Organizational Culture*, 5(4), 39–52. <http://doi.org/10.1002/jpoc.21159>
- Haverila, M., Myllyla, M., & Torp, H. (2009). Towards innovative virtual learning in vocational teacher education: Narratives as a form of meaningful learning. *European Journal of Open, Distance and E-Learning*, (1). Retrieved from <http://www.eurodl.org/index.php?p=archives&sp=full&article=355>
- Hawley, L. M. (1995). Why you do not need an MLS to work in ILL. *Journal of Interlibrary Loan, Document Delivery & Information Supply*, 6(1), 89. DOI:10.1300/J110V06N01_12

- Hayden, K. A. (2003). *Lived experience of students searching for information* (Doctoral Dissertation). University of Calgary. Retrieved from ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global. (305347310)
- Heidegger, M. (1962). *Being and time*. New York : Harper.
- Henrich, K. J., & Attebury, R. (2010). Communities of practice at an academic library: A new approach to mentoring at the University of Idaho. *Journal of Academic Librarianship*, 36(2), 158–165. DOI:10.1016/j.acalib.2010.01.007
- Hess, A. N. (2015). Equipping academic librarians to integrate the framework into instructional practices: A theoretical application. *Journal of Academic Librarianship*, 41(6), 771–776. DOI:10.1016/j.acalib.2015.08.017
- Hickman, T., & Allen, L. (2005). A librarian's journal club: A forum for sharing ideas and experiences. *College and Research Libraries News*, 66(9), 642–644. Retrieved from <http://crln.acrl.org/content/66/9/642.full.pdf>.
- Hildreth, P. M., & Kimble, C. (2004). *Knowledge networks: Innovation through communities of practice*. Hershey PA: Idea Group Pub.
- Hinchliffe, L. J. (2015). Professional development for assessment: Lessons from reflective practice. *Journal of Academic Librarianship*, 41(6), 850–852. DOI:10.1016/j.acalib.2015.10.004
- Hines, S. S. (2012). Incorporating decision-making concepts into LIS education. *The Reference Librarian*, 53(1), 4–11. DOI:10.1080/02763877.2011.591688
- Hioki, W. G. (2009). *Predisposition factors of career and technical education transfer students: A hermeneutic phenomenology study* (Doctoral Dissertation). University of

- Nevada, Las Vegas, NV. Available From ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global. (305088088).
- Holland, F. (2014). Teaching in higher education: An interpretive phenomenological analysis. In *SAGE Research Methods Cases*. London, United Kingdom: Sage Publications. Retrieved from <http://dx.doi.org/10.4135/978144627305014528646>
- Holland, J. (2013). *A phenomenological study identifying factors influencing participation in quality professional development* (Doctoral Dissertation). University of Phoenix. Retrieved from ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Full Text. (1419422843)
- Huberman, M. (1999). The mind is its own place: The influence of sustained interactivity with practitioners on educational researchers. *Harvard Educational Review*, 69(3), 289–319. <http://dx.doi.org/10.17763/haer.69.3.972h3068366m776g>
- Huckle, M. (1999). The library association continuing professional development and chartering workshop. *The Law Librarian*, 30(3), 183–185.
- Hurst, E. J. (2015). Digital badges: Beyond learning incentives. *Journal of Electronic Resources in Medical Libraries*, 12(3), 182–189. DOI:10.1080/15424065.2015.1065661
- Hussey, L. K. (2006). *Why librarianship? An exploration of the motivations of ethnic minorities to choose library and information science as a career* (Ph.D.). University of Missouri – Columbia. Retrieved from ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global. (305313210)
- Huwiler, A. G. (2015). Library services for distance students: Opportunities and challenges. *Journal of Library & Information Services in Distance Learning*, 9(4), 275–288. DOI:10.1080/1533290X.2015.1111283

- Jackson-Brown, G. M. (2013). Content analysis study of librarian blogs: Professional development and other uses. *First Monday*, 18(2). <http://dx.doi.org/10.5210/fm.v18i2.4343>
- Jajko, P. (2008). Librarians and transformational learning. *Medical Reference Services Quarterly*, 15(2), 75–80. DOI:10.1300/J115V15N02_07
- Jantz, R. C. (2012). A framework for studying organizational innovation in research libraries. *College & Research Libraries*, 73(6), 525–541. DOI:10.5860/crl-302
- Jarvis, P. (1987). Meaningful and meaningless experience: Towards an analysis of learning from life. *Adult Education Quarterly*, 37(3), 164–172.
<http://doi.org/10.1177/0001848187037003004>
- Jensen, D. (2008). Dependability. In L. M. Given (Ed.), *The Sage encyclopedia of qualitative research methods* (pp. 209–210). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Jizba, L. (1997). Everyone's job. *Technical Services Quarterly*, 15(1–2), 119–131.
http://doi.org/10.1300/J124v15n01_10
- Joint, N. (2006). Enhancing professional development by writing for publication in library and information science. *Library Review*, 55(1), 5–7.
<http://dx.doi.org/10.1108/00242530610641745>
- Jonassen, D. H. (2003). *Learning to solve problems with technology: A constructivist perspective*. Upper Saddle River, N.J.: Merrill.
- Jurow, S. (2001). How people learn: Applying adult learning theory and learning styles models to training sessions. In E.F. Avery, T. Dahlin, & D.A. Carver (Eds.), *Staff development: A practical guide* (pp. 6–9). Chicago: American Library Association.

- Kalin, S. W. (2008). Reframing Leadership: The ACRL/Harvard Leadership Institute for academic librarians. *Journal of Business & Finance Librarianship*, 13(3), 261–270.
DOI:10.1080/08963560802183047
- Kelley, M. (2013, 4/29/2013). Can we talk about the MLS? *Library Journal*. Retrieved from <http://lj.libraryjournal.com/2013/04/opinion/editorial/can-we-talk-about-the-mls/#>.
- Kendrick, K. D., Tritt, D., & Leaver, E. (2013). Link up the sticks: Access and barriers to professional development for small and rural academic librarians. *Codex: Journal of the Louisiana Chapter of the ACRL*, 2(3), 38–77. Retrieved from <http://journal.acrlla.org/index.php/codex/article/view/78>.
- Kern, M. K. (2014). Continuity and change, or, will I ever be prepared for what comes next? *Reference & User Services Quarterly*, 53(4), 282–285. Retrieved from <https://www.journals.ala.org/rusq/article/view/3848/4252>.
- Kincy, C. P., & Wood, M. A. (2012). Rethinking access with RDA (Resource Description and Access). *Journal of Electronic Resources in Medical Libraries*, 9(1), 13–34.
DOI:10.1080/15424065.2012.651573
- Kjærgaard, A., & Vendelø, M. T. (2015). The role of theory adaptation in the making of a reference discipline. *Information & Organization*, 25(3), 137–149.
DOI:10.1016/j.infoandorg.2015.04.002
- Knowles, M. S. (1980). *The modern practice of adult education: From pedagogy to andragogy*. Chicago: Follett.
- Knowles, M. S. (2005). *The adult learner: The definitive classic in adult education and human resource development*. Boston: Elsevier.

- Knowles, M. S. (Malcolm S. (1973). *The adult learner: A neglected species*. Houston: Gulf Publishing.
- Knowles, M. S., Swanson, R. A., & Holton, E. F. (2011). *The adult learner: The definitive classic in adult education and human resource development*. Amsterdam: Elsevier.
- Koppen, L., Phillips, J., & Papageorgiou, R. (2015). Analysis of reference sources used in drug-related Wikipedia articles. *Journal of the Medical Library Association*, 103(3), 140–144. DOI 10.3163/1536-5050.103.3.007
- Kraemer, E. W. (2007, January). Keeping up with the journals: A library journal club at Oakland University. *Journal of Academic Librarianship*, pp. 136–137.
DOI:10.1016/j.acalib.2006.08.011
- Krantz, D. L. (1995). Sustaining vs. resolving the quantitative-qualitative debate. *Evaluation and Program Planning*, 18(1), 89–96. [http://doi.org/10.1016/0149-7189\(94\)00052-Y](http://doi.org/10.1016/0149-7189(94)00052-Y)
- Krasulski, M. J. (2014). Introduction: On assessment and access services. *Journal of Access Services*, 11(3), 105–108.
- Kreszock, M. (1997). A holistic look at professional development. *North Carolina Libraries*, 55, 7–11. Retrieved from ERIC database. (EJ544776).
- Lankes, R. D. (2011). *The atlas of new librarianship*. Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press.
- Lattuca, L. R., & Creamer, E. G. (2005). Learning as professional practice. In E.G. Creamer & L.R. Lattuca (Eds.), *New directions for teaching and learning* (Vol. 102, pp. 3–11). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Lave, J., & Wenger, E. (1991). *Situated learning: Legitimate peripheral participation*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

- Laverty, S. M. (2003). Hermeneutic phenomenology and phenomenology: A comparison of historical and methodological considerations. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 2(3), 21–35. <http://doi.org/10.1177/160940690300200303>
- Lee, D. (2015). Consumption, criticism and wirkung: Reception-infused analysis of classification schemes. *Knowledge Organization*, 42(7), 508–521.
- Levoy, G. (1997). *Callings: Finding and following an authentic life*. New York : Harmony Books.
- Lewis, J. (2014). ADIIEA: An organizational learning model for business management and innovation. *Electronic Journal of Knowledge Management*, 12(2), 91–100. Retrieved from <http://www.ejkm.com/issue/download.html?idArticle=564>.
- Lindsay, E. B., & Baron, S. (2002). Leading information literacy programs: Immersion and beyond. *Journal of Library Administration*, 36(1–2), 143–165.
DOI:10.1300/J111v36n01_09
- Lor, P. J. (2014). Revitalizing comparative library and information science: Theory and metatheory. *Journal of Documentation*, 70(1), 25–51. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1108/JD-10-2012-0129>
- Luo, L. (2007). *Towards sustaining professional development: Identification of essential competencies and effective training techniques for chat reference services* (Doctoral Dissertation). University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Available From ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global. (304830171).
- Ly, P. (2015). Young and in charge: Early-career community college library leadership. *Journal of Library Administration*, 55(1), 60–68. DOI:10.1080/01930826.2014.985902

- Lynch, B. P. (1991). Research, theory, and the practice of LIS. In C.R. McClure & P. Herson (Eds.), *Library and information science research : perspectives and strategies for improvement* (pp. 358–366). Norwood, N.J.: Ablex.
- Macdonald, K. (2009). Out of the boot camp and into the chrysalis: A reflective practice case study. *The Australian Library Journal*, 58(1), 17–27.
DOI:10.1080/00049670.2009.10735832
- Madden, M. L., & Thompson, J. M. (2004). Beyond the MLS. *College & Research Libraries News*, 65(8), 429–430.
- Manley, W. (2012). Will's world: The matter of the master's. *American Libraries*, 43(5/6), 96.
- Markgren, S., Dickinson, T., Leonard, A., & Vassiliadis, K. (2007). The five-year itch: Are libraries losing their most valuable resources? *Library Administration & Management*, 21(2), 70–76. Retrieved from <https://journals.tdl.org/llm/index.php/llm/article/view/1676>.
- Marshall, C., & Rossman, G. B. (1999). *Designing qualitative research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Matarazo, J. M., & Pearlstein, T. (2012). Schools of library and information science: Some thoughts on vision to purpose. *Portal: Libraries & the Academy*, 12(4), 351–353.
Retrieved from <http://muse.jhu.edu/article/487358>.
- Mathew, K. S., Baby, M. D., & Pillai, S. S. (2010). Professional development of academic library professionals in Kerala. *Education for Information*, 28(2–4), 215–225. DOI: 10.3233/EFI-2010-0903
- Matteson, M. L. (2009). *The impact of group interaction on shared cognition: An analysis of small group communication* (Doctoral Dissertation). University of Maryland, College Park. Retrieved from ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Full Text. (304922182)

- Mavrinac, M. A. (2005). Transformational leadership: Peer mentoring as a values-based learning process. *Portal: Libraries & the Academy*, 5(3), 391–404. Retrieved from ERIC database. (EJ792771).
- Maxwell, J. A. (1996). *Qualitative research design: An interactive approach*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- McClure, C. R., & Herson, P. (1991). *Library and information science research: Perspectives and strategies for improvement*. Norwood, N.J.: Ablex.
- McDonald, L., Doyle, S., & Leberman, S. (2007). *The transfer of learning participants' perspectives of adult education and training*. Farnham: Ashgate Publishing Ltd.
- McGuigan, G. S. (2012). Addressing change in academic libraries: A review of classical organizational theory and implications for academic libraries. *Library Philosophy & Practice*, 138–148. Retrieved from <http://digitalcommons.unl.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1829&context=libphilprac>.
- McIntosh, P. (2010). *Action research and reflective practice creative and visual methods to facilitate reflection and learning*. New York: Routledge.
- McKinney, R. D. (2006). Draft proposed ALA core competencies compared to ALA-accredited, candidate, and precandidate program curricula: A preliminary analysis. *Journal of Education for Library and Information Science*, 47(1), 52–77. <http://doi.org/10.2307/40324337>
- Meier, J. J. (2016). The future of academic libraries: Conversations with today's leaders about tomorrow. *Portal: Libraries & the Academy*, 16(2), 263–288. Retrieved from <https://muse.jhu.edu/article/613842/>.

- Merriam, S. B. (2009). *Qualitative research: A guide to design and implementation*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Merriam, S. B., Caffarella, R. S., & Baumgartner, L. (2007). *Learning in adulthood: A comprehensive guide*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Mezirow, J. (1991). *Transformative dimensions of adult learning*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Mezirow, J. (1997). Transformative learning: Theory to practice. In P. Cranton (Ed.), *Transformative learning in action: insights from practice* (pp. 5–12). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass Publishers.
- Mezirow, J. (2000). *Learning as transformation: Critical perspectives on a theory in progress*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Mezirow, J. (2009). *Transformative learning in practice: Insights from community, workplace, and higher education*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Michalak, S. C. (2012). This changes everything: Transforming the academic library. *Journal of Library Administration*, 52(5), 411–423. DOI:10.1080/01930826.2012.700801
- Miles, M. B., & Huberman, A. M. (1994). *Qualitative data analysis: An expanded sourcebook* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Miller, R. E. (2011). Reference communities: Applying the community of practice concept to development of reference knowledge. *Public Services Quarterly*, 7, 18–26.
DOI:10.1080/15228959.2011.572772
- Miller, R., Knapp, A., & Wood, E. J. (2007). *Beyond survival: Managing academic libraries in transition*. Westport, CN: Libraries Unlimited.
- Milone Hill, N. (2008, April 3). To MLS or not to MLS? *Public Libraries*, pp. 16–23.

- Moon, J. (1999). *Reflection in learning & professional development: Theory & practice*. London: Kogan Page.
- Moustakas, C. (1994). *Phenomenological research methods*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications. Retrieved from <http://dx.doi.org/10.4135/9781412995658>
- Mueller, K. L., Thompson, M., & Valdes, Z. (2015). Ready, set, hire! Perceptions of new technical services librarian preparedness. *Library Leadership & Management*, 29(4), 1–33. Retrieved from <https://journals.tdl.org/llm/index.php/llm/article/view/7103>.
- Mullins, J. L. (2012). Are MLS graduates being prepared for the changing and emerging roles that librarians must now assume within research libraries? *Journal of Library Administration*, 52(1), 124–132. DOI:10.1080/01930826.2011.629966
- Murray, R. J., & Tillett, B. B. (2011). Cataloging theory in search of graph theory and other ivory towers. *Information Technology & Libraries*, 30(4), 170–184.
- Nelson, S. J. (2011). *School librarian perceptions of professional identity* (Doctoral Dissertation). Walden University. Retrieved from ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Full Text. (908349880)
- Neumann, A. (2005). Observations: Taking seriously the topic of learning in studies of faculty work and careers. In E. G. Creamer & L.R. Lattuca (Eds.), *New directions for teaching and learning* (Vol. 102, p. 63-83). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Nichols, J. T. (2006). Monthly check-up: Using a monthly survey to monitor and assess library and information services for distance learners. In J.A. Garrison (Ed.), *The Twelfth Off-Campus Library Services Conference Proceedings* (Vol. 12, pp. 387–395). Savannah, GA: Haworth Information Press.

- Olmeda-Gómez, C., & de Moya-Anegón, F. (2016). Publishing trends in library and information sciences across European countries and institutions. *Journal of Academic Librarianship*, 42(1), 27–37. DOI:10.1016/j.acalib.2015.10.005
- Oplatka, I. (2010). The professoriate in the field of educational administration. *Journal of Educational Administration*, 48(3), 392–412. <http://doi.org/10.1108/09578231011041071>
- Pack, M. L. (2013). *Help needed: A hermeneutic phenomenology study of the experience of Teach for America participants* (Doctoral Dissertation). Capella University, Ann Arbor. Retrieved from ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global. (1461462270)
- Parker, A. (2012). Management and administration: In search of professional development blogs. *Arkansas Libraries*, 69(3), 8–9.
- Paskett, T. J. (2007). *The nature of meaningful work: A heuristic study of adult educators* (Doctoral Dissertation). University of Idaho. Retrieved from ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global. (304855458)
- Patton, M. Q. (2002). *Qualitative research and evaluation methods* (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Pearce-Smith, N. (2006). A journal club is an effective tool for assisting librarians in the practice of evidence-based librarianship: A case study. *Health Information & Libraries Journal*, 23(1), 32–40. DOI: 10.1111/j.1471-1842.2006.00638.x
- Pegrum, M., & Keil, R. (2011). “Changing the way we talk”: Developing librarians’ competence in emerging technologies through a structured program. *College and Research Libraries*, 72(6), 586–598. DOI:10.5860/crl-190

- Perryman, C. L. (2011). *The sense-making practices of hospital librarians* (Doctoral Dissertation). The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Retrieved from ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Full Text. (923626472)
- Porter, T. D. (2014). A focus on reflective learning at the library instruction roundtable retreat. In *Kentucky Libraries* (Vol. 78, pp. 14–19).
- Powell, R. R., & Connaway, L. S. (2004). *Basic research methods for librarians* (4th ed.). Westport, CN: Libraries Unlimited.
- Pugh, L. (2001). *Leadership and learning: Helping libraries and librarians reach their potential*. Lanham, MD: The Scarecrow Press.
- Radford, M. L. (2001). Encountering users, encountering images: Communication theory and the library context. *Journal of Education for Library & Information Science*, 42(1), 27-41. Retrieved from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/40324035>.
- Ridener, J. (2009). *From polders to postmodernism : A concise history of archival theory*. Duluth, MN: Litwin Books.
- Riley-Huff, D. A., & Rholes, J. M. (2011). Librarians and technology skill acquisition: Issues and perspectives. *Information Technology & Libraries*, 30(3), 129–140. <http://dx.doi.org/10.6017/ital.v30i3.1770>
- Rondeau, W. (2012). *The lifeworld in the library's backroom: A hermeneutic phenomenological study of the cataloguer's lived experience of aboutness determination* (Master's Thesis). The University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee. Retrieved from ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Full Text. (1283373846)

- Ross, M., Perkins, H., & Bodey, K. (2016). Academic motivation and information literacy self-efficacy: The importance of a simple desire to know. *Library & Information Science Research (07408188)*, 38(1), 2–9. DOI:10.1016/j.lisr.2016.01.002
- Rumble, J., & MacEwan, B. (2008). The UCLA Senior Fellows Program. *Journal of Business & Finance Librarianship*, 13(3), 271–286. DOI:10.1080/08963560802183237
- Ryan, G. W., & Bernard, H. R. (2003). Techniques to identify themes. *Field Methods*, 15(1), 85–109. <http://doi.org/10.1177/1525822X02239569>
- Saldaña, J. (2009). *The coding manual for qualitative researchers*. Thousand Oaks, CA.: Sage.
- Saldaña, J. (2011). *Fundamentals of qualitative research*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.
- Sandelowski, M. (2008). Research question. In L. M. Given (Ed.), *The SAGE encyclopedia of qualitative research methods* (pp. 787–788). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Saunders, L. (2015a). Academic libraries' strategic plans: Top trends and under-recognized areas. *The Journal of Academic Librarianship*, 41(3), 285–291. <http://doi.org/10.1016/j.acalib.2015.03.011>
- Saunders, L. (2015b). Professional perspectives on library and information science education. *The Library Quarterly*, 85(4), 427–453. <http://doi.org/10.1086/682735>
- Schmidt, A., & Stephens, M. (2013). Creating a library/LIS feedback loop. *Library Journal*, 138(12), 54.
- Schön, D. A. (1983). *The reflective practitioner: How professionals think in action*. New York: Basic Books.

- Seago, B. L., Horne, A. S., & Croom, P. (1994). Journal club with a mission. *Bulletin of the Medical Library Association*, 82(1), 73–76. Retrieved from PubMed Central database. (PMC225865).
- Seal, R. A. (2015). Library spaces in the 21st century. *Library Management*, 36(8/9), 558–569. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1108/LM-11-2014-0136>
- Searle, S. (2015). Using scenarios in introductory research data management workshops for library staff. *D-Lib Magazine*, 21(11/12), 106. DOI: 10.1045/november2015-searle
- Segers, M., & De Greef, M. (2011). Transformational learning: The perspective of J. Mezirow. In F. Docy, D. Gijbels, M. Segers, & P. van den Bossche (Eds.), *Psychological theories of learning in the workplace* (pp. 37–51). London: Routledge.
- Seidman, I. (2006). *Interviewing as qualitative research: A guide for researchers in education and the social sciences*. New York: Teachers College Press.
- Sen, B. A. (2010). Reflective writing: A management skill. *Library Management*, 31(1/2), 79–93. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1108/01435121011013421>
- Sen, B., & Ford, N. (2009). Developing reflective practice in LIS education: The SEA-change model of reflection. *Education for Information*, 27(4), 181–195. DOI: 10.3233/EFI-2009-0884
- Senge, P. M. (1994). *The fifth discipline fieldbook: Strategies and tools for building a learning organization*. New York: Doubleday.
- Shamchuk, L. (2015). Professional development on a budget: Facilitating learning opportunities for information literacy instructors. *Partnership: The Canadian Journal of Library & Information Practice & Research*, 10(1), 1–14. <http://dx.doi.org/10.21083/partnership.v10i1.3437>

- Shapiro, S. D. (2016). Engaging a wider community: The academic library as a center for creativity, discovery, and collaboration. *New Review of Academic Librarianship*, 22(1), 24–42. DOI:10.1080/13614533.2015.1087412
- Shepherd, E. (2010). In-service training for academic librarians: A pilot programme for staff. *The Electronic Library*, 28(4), 507–524.
<http://doi.org/http://dx.doi.org/10.1108/02640471011065346>
- Simpson, B. (2014). Hiring non-MLS librarians: Trends and training implications. *Library Leadership & Management*, 28(1), 1–15. Retrieved from
<https://journals.tdl.org/llm/index.php/llm/article/view/7019>.
- Singh, V., & Mehra, B. (2013). Strengths and weaknesses of the information technology curriculum in library and information science graduate programs. *Journal of Librarianship & Information Science*, 45(3), 219–231. DOI: 10.1177/0961000612448206
- Sinkinson, C. (2011). An assessment of peer coaching to drive professional development and reflective teaching. *Communications in Information Literacy*, 5(1), 9–20. Retrieved from
<http://www.comminfolit.org/index.php?journal=cil>.
- Smith, D. A., & Oliva, V. T. (2010). Becoming a renaissance reference librarian in academe: Attitudes toward generalist and subject specific reference and related profession development. *Reference Services Review*, 38(1), 125–151.
<http://dx.doi.org/10.1108/00907321011020770>
- Smith, D., & Burgin, R. (1991). The motivations of professional and paraprofessional librarians for participating in continuing education programs. *Library & Information Science Research*, 13(4), 405–430. Retrieved from ERIC database. (EJ443257).

- Smith, J. A., Flowers, P., & Larkin, M. (2009). *Interpretative phenomenological analysis: Theory, method and research*. Los Angeles: SAGE.
- Smith, P. A. C. (2006). Collective learning within CoPs. In E. Coakes & S. Clarke (Eds.), *Encyclopedia of communities of practice in information and knowledge management* (pp. 30–31). Hershey, PA: Idea Group Reference.
- Snyder, W. M., & Wenger, E. (2010). Our world as a learning system: A communities-of-practice approach. In C. Blackmore (Ed.), *Social learning systems and communities of practice* (pp. 107-124). New York: Springer.
- Somerville, M. M., & Chatzipanagiotou, N. (2015). Informed systems: Enabling collaborative evidence based organizational learning. *Evidence Based Library & Information Practice*, 10(4), 24–39. <http://dx.doi.org/10.18438/B8VP4X>
- Sparks, J. R., & Schenk, J. A. (2001). Explaining the effects of transformational leadership: An investigation of the effects of higher-order motives in multilevel marketing organizations. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 22(8), 849–869. <http://doi.org/10.1002/job.116>
- Starkey, A. (2010). *Kansas academic librarians perceptions of information literacy* (Doctoral Dissertation). Kansas State University. Available From ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global. (597858846).
- Stebelman, S. (1996). Taking control of continuing education: The formation of a reading group at George Washington. *Journal of Academic Librarianship*, 22(5), 382. DOI:10.1016/S0099-1333(96)90090-7

- Steger, M. F., Dik, B. J., & Duffy, R. D. (2012). Measuring meaningful work: The work and meaning inventory (WAMI). *Journal of Career Assessment*.
<http://doi.org/10.1177/1069072711436160>
- Stevens, K., Gerber, D., & Hendra, R. (2010). Transformational learning through prior learning assessment. *Adult Education Quarterly: A Journal of Research and Theory*, 60(4), 377–404. DOI: 10.1177/0741713609358451
- Stiwinter, K. (2013). Using an interactive online tutorial to expand library instruction. *Internet Reference Services Quarterly*, 18(1), 15–41. DOI:10.1080/10875301.2013.777010
- Stoddart, R. A. (2015). *Currere as a method for critical reflection in the profession of academic librarianship* (Doctoral Dissertation). Boise State University. Retrieved from <http://scholarworks.boisestate.edu/td/1054>. (Paper 1054.)
- Stranack, K. (2012). The connected librarian: Using social media for “do it yourself” professional development. *Partnership: The Canadian Journal of Library & Information Practice & Research*, 7(1), 1–5. <http://dx.doi.org/10.21083/partnership.v7i1.1924>
- Suarez, D. (2013). Making sense of liaison consultations: Using reflection to understand information-seeking behavior. *New Library World*, 114(11/12), 527–541.
<http://dx.doi.org/10.1108/NLW-04-2013-0036>
- Suorsa, A. R. (2015). Knowledge creation and play: A phenomenological approach. *Journal of Documentation*, 71(3), 503–525. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1108/JD-11-2013-0152>
- Swigger, B. K. (2010). *The MLS Project an assessment after sixty years*. Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press.

- Taniguchi, S. (2013). Aggregate and component entities in RDA: Model and description. *Cataloging & Classification Quarterly*, 51(5), 580–599.
DOI:10.1080/01639374.2013.763316
- Taylor, E. W. (2012). *The handbook of transformative learning theory, research, and practice*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Tewell, E. (2015). A decade of critical information literacy: A review of the literature. *Communications in Information Literacy*, 9(1), 24–43. Retrieved from <http://hdl.handle.net/10760/28163>
- Todaro, J. B. (2005). Nothing but net... *Community & Junior College Libraries*, 13(3), 59–65. Retrieved from ERIC database. (EJ677369).
- Tomaszewski, R., & MacDonald, K. I. (2009). Identifying subject-specific conferences as professional development opportunities for the academic librarian. *Journal of Academic Librarianship*, 35(6), 583–590. DOI:10.1016/j.acalib.2009.08.006
- Tompkins, E. K. (2009). A reflective teaching journal: An instructional improvement tool for academic librarians. *College & Undergraduate Libraries*, 16(4), 221–238.
DOI:10.1080/10691310903355937
- Tosaka, Y., & Park, J. (2014). RDA: Training and continuing education needs in academic libraries. *Journal of Education for Library & Information Science*, 55(1), 3–25. Retrieved from ERIC database. (EJ1074293).
- Trochim, W. M. K. (2005). *Research methods: The concise knowledge base*. Cincinnati, OH: Atomic Dog Pub.
- Trochim, W. M. K., & Donnelly, J. P. (2008). *Research methods knowledge base*. Mason, Ohio: Atomic Dog/Cengage Learning.

- Van Manen, M. (1990). *Researching lived experience: Human science for an action sensitive pedagogy*. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.
- Van Manen, M. (1997). *Researching lived experience: Human science for an action sensitive pedagogy*. London, Ontario: Althouse Press.
- VanScoy, A. D. (2012). *Practitioner experiences in academic research libraries: An interpretative phenomenological analysis of reference work* (Doctoral Dissertation). The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, North Carolina. Retrieved from ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Full Text. (1024564087)
- Vicedo, M., & Davis, A. (2010). Professional development on a dime (or less): Learning and connecting in the new economy, *College and Research Libraries News*, 71(1), 30–31. Retrieved from <http://crln.acrl.org/content/71/1/30.short>.
- Walter, S. (2008). Librarians as teachers: A qualitative inquiry into professional identity. *College and Research Libraries*, 69(1), 51–71. DOI:10.5860/crl.69.1.51
- Walter, S. L. (2005). *The librarian in the academy: Exploring the instructional role of librarians in higher education* (Doctoral Dissertation). Washington State University. Retrieved from ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Full Text. (305384870)
- Weiner, S. A., Breivek, P. S., Clark, D., & Caboni, T. (2009). Understanding the higher-education context: The Peabody Academic Library Leadership Institute. *Journal of Library Administration*, 49, 837–846. DOI:10.1080/01930820903396913
- Wellington, B., & Austin, P. (1996). Orientations to reflective practice. *Educational Research*, 38(3), 307–16. DOI:10.1080/0013188960380304
- Wenger, E. (1998). *Communities of practice: Learning, meaning, and identity*. New York, N.Y.: Cambridge University Press.

- Westbrook, L. (2005). Problem-based learning: A staff development model for tight budget times. *Technical Services Quarterly*, 23(1), 27–33. DOI:10.1300/J124v23n01_03
- White, H. S. (1984). Continuing education: Myth or reality? *Indiana Libraries*, 4, 138–145. Retrieved from <http://journals.iupui.edu/index.php/IndianaLibraries/article/view/17307>.
- Whiteley, P. (2002). *Motivation*. Oxford, U.K.: Capstone Pub.
- Willey, M. (2014). Library instructor development and cultivating a community of practice. In A. Woodsworth & W. D. Penniman (Eds.), *Advances in Librarianship*, (Vol. 38, pp. 83–100). Bingley, United Kingdom: Emerald Group Publishing Limited.
- Wilson, P. (1984). ALA, the MLS, and professional employment: An observer's field guide to the issues. *American Libraries*, 15(8), 563. Retrieved from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/25629303>
- Wilson, T. D. (2003). Philosophical foundations and research relevance: Issues for information research. *Journal of Information Science*, 29(6), 445–452. <http://doi.org/10.1177/0165551503296002>
- Witteveen, A. (2015, December). Better together. *Library Journal*, 140(20), 42–44.
- Wlodkowski, R. J. (2008). *Enhancing adult motivation to learn: A comprehensive guide for teaching all adults*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Wood, A. R. (2015). *Assessing the meaningfulness of a leadership development program within an organization: A case study* (Doctoral Dissertation). Capella University, Ann Arbor. Retrieved from ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global. (1712627663)
- Wood, E. J. (2007). *Beyond survival: Managing academic libraries in transition*. Westport, CN.: Libraries Unlimited.

- Woods, S. A., & Sofat, J. A. (2013). Personality and engagement at work: The mediating role of psychological meaningfulness. *Journal of Applied Social Psychology, 43*(11), 2203–2210. DOI: 10.1111/jasp.12171
- Yardley, L. (2000). Dilemmas in qualitative health research. *Psychology & Health, 15*(2), 215–228. <http://doi.org/10.1080/08870440008400302>
- Yeoman, R. (2014). *Meaningful work and workplace democracy: A philosophy of work and a politics of meaningfulness*. Basingstoke, Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Young, N. K. (2012). Effective learning and teaching of RDA: Applying adult learning theory. *Journal of Library Metadata, 12*(2/3), 188–198. DOI:10.1080/19386389.2012.699836
- Young, P., & Vilelle, L. (2011). The prevalence and practices of academic library journal clubs. *Journal of Academic Librarianship, 37*(2), 130–136.
DOI:10.1016/j.acalib.2011.02.004
- Yukawa, J. (2015). Preparing for complexity and wicked problems through transformational learning approaches. *Journal of Education for Library & Information Science, 56*(2), 158–168. Retrieved from ERIC database. (EJ1073554).
- Zabel, D. (2008). The mentoring role of professional associations. *Journal of Business & Finance Librarianship, 13*(3), 349–361. DOI:10.1080/08963560802183187

APPENDIX A: Institutional Review Certification

The University of Idaho Institutional Review Board has certified this project as Exempt.

Statement of Purpose:

Rapid change in academic libraries combined with Masters of Library and Information Science programs that cannot possibly cover all aspects of modern librarianship have resulted in an increasing dependence on professional development activities to ensure librarians have the skillset needed to carry out their job responsibilities. Although professional development activities abound, including comprehensive programs designed to foster changes in thinking and professional practice, little research has been done to understand the lived experiences of academic librarians who participate in these activities and what impact they perceive them to have on their thinking and practice. Further, there is limited discussion in the library literature about the adult learning principles that guide library professional development and whether adherence to such principles affects perceived effectiveness by participants. The purpose of this study is to rectify this gap in research with a goal of using the information gained to identify thoughtful actions that may be taken toward developing policies to further enhance professional learning among this group.

Survey:

This 14-question survey is designed to gather basic information about professional development among academic librarians in the United States. It is also designed to identify individuals who believe they have experienced (a) professional development activity(ies) that led to transformational change in their thinking or practice. Interested individual may be invited to participate in follow-up interviews and/or write a short reflective essay about that (those) experience(s).

For purposes of this survey, the term "professional development" is used broadly: any activity deliberately undertaken to enhance professional knowledge, skills, or abilities, regardless of format or cost.

If you discover that you wish to discontinue participation in the survey, you may close out at any time for any reason. It is not necessary to complete all questions in the survey.

Information gathered will only be available to the Principal Investigator. Data collection for this survey will be confidential and anonymous. Participants who are willing to participate further can submit their name and contact information, but information gathered in this survey will be confidential and de-identified (collected with identifiers, but with identifiers removed after collection), rendered anonymous for reporting, stored in a locked private office on a password protected computer.

If you have questions about this study, you can contact the Principle Investigator at any time:

Ramirose Attebury

University of Idaho

Library

Moscow, ID, 83844-2350

rattebur@uidaho.edu

208-885-2503 or 208-885-7257

1. What is your job title?
2. Which of the following best describes your job?

Reference or Instruction

Cataloging

Acquisitions or Collection Development

Access Services or Circulation

Electronic Resources

Systems

Outreach and Education

Government Documents

Other

3. Which of the following statements best applies to your position?

I am required to participate in professional development activities.

I am encouraged, but not required, to participate in professional development activities.

I am neither required nor encouraged to participate in professional development activities.

4. Does your position description include any mention of professional development activities?

Yes

No

5. If you answered YES to #4, can you briefly summarize what your position description says about professional development?

6. Are you free to select your own professional development activities?

Yes, completely

Yes, within definitive boundaries

No

Other

7. If you answered YES to #6, please briefly describe what influences your selection of professional development activities.

8. If you answered NO to #6, who is responsible for selecting your professional development activities?

9. How often do you engage in professional development activities?

Daily

Weekly

Monthly

Yearly

Other

10. In which of the following type of professional development activities have you participated most often?

Webinars

Conferences

Workshops

For-credit classes

Not-for-credit classes

Institutes (please list names below)

Other

11. Is there a format that you feel is more beneficial than others?

Yes

No

12. If you answered YES to #11, why do you feel that format is most beneficial?

13. What non-format related characteristics of professional development activities do you feel make the experience most beneficial to you? (Examples might include discussions, collaboration on projects, lectures, etc.)

14. Have you ever been asked by a professional development facilitator or trainer to deliberately reflect on the information presented?

Yes

No

15. If you answered YES to #14, can you briefly describe that experience?

16. Have you ever made time to deliberately reflect on what you learn in professional development activities without being asked by a facilitator or trainer?

Yes

No

17. If you answered YES to #16, can you briefly describe that experience?

18. Have you ever participated in any professional development activity that you believe has led to transformational changes in your professional practice?

Yes

No

19. If you answered YES to #18, can you briefly describe that activity?

20. Would you be willing to participate in two follow-up interviews (via Skype), each about 45 minutes to an hour in-length in order to share your experiences with professional development more in depth? (If yes, please leave name and email address below).

Yes

No

Comment:

21. Would you be willing to write a reflective opinion piece regarding your experiences with professional development? There is no required length and suggested prompts will be provided. (If yes, please leave name and email address below.)

Yes

No

Comment:

APPENDIX B: Interview Questions

Background Interview Questions

1. How long have you been a librarian?
2. What is your current job title?
 - a. Can you briefly describe your position?
3. Have you always worked in an academic library?
4. How long have you been in your current position?
5. Has your position changed over the years?
 - a. In what way?
6. Why did you go to library school?
7. Why did you choose academic librarianship?
8. What did you think of your overall library school experience?
9. How did your job search go after graduation?
10. Do you think your library school experience prepared you for your first professional position?
 - a. Why or why not?
11. Do you think your library school experience prepared you for the job you have today?
 - a. Why or why not?
12. Do you ever do or have you done anything in anticipation of or in preparation for professional development activities?
13. What do you look for when you select a professional development activity to undertake?
14. Is there anything you specifically avoid?

15. Do you think that professional development should be required of academic librarians?
 - a. Why or why not?
16. What role do you think individual librarians should have in identifying professional development activities?
17. What role do you think library administration should have in identifying professional development activities?
18. After professional development activities, do you spend time thinking (or reflecting) about what you've experienced?
 - a. Where do you engage in reflection?
 - b. How much time do you devote to the reflection?
19. Does your administration's attitude about professional development have an impact on your reflection?
20. Do you typically discuss your experiences or reflect on them with colleagues?

Professional Development Interview Questions

Initial Question

1. Name and describe a specific professional development activity that you have undertaken since becoming a librarian that you feel was beneficial to you.

Potential Follow-Up Questions

2. Why do you consider this activity transformational?
3. Why did you choose that activity?
4. What was it that caused it to be beneficial?
5. What do you feel you learned from it?
6. What influence do you think it has had on your practice?

7. How did it differ from activities that haven't been as successful?
8. Did you discuss this activity with anyone else?
 - a. Who?
9. Do you think this activity will influence future professional development activities?
10. How did the experience affect anyone else in your life?
11. What dimensions, incidents, and people intimately connected with the experience stand out for you?
12. What changes do you associate with the experience?

APPENDIX C: Definitions of Codes

Administration: This code refers to the role that administrative supervisors have in the direction and support of participants' professional development activities.

Adult education: This code captures the broad characteristics of andragogy as offered by Malcolm Knowles and those who have drawn upon and enhanced his concepts.

Community of practice: As defined by Lave and Wenger (1991), this term suggests the presence of a group of individuals with knowledge in a specific domain who share their knowledge with each other to enhance group learning.

Cost: This code encompasses any monetary implications for participation in professional development.

Discomfort: This code refers to negative emotional or psychological states resulting from participation in professional development.

Duration: Related to the concept of "sustained interaction," this code refers to the longevity or duration of a professional development activity.

Follow-through: This code indicates an action taken following professional development that occurs as a result in having participated in that professional development. The action (such as sharing information or maintenance of newly-made connections) may or may not have an impact on practice.

Impact on practice: This code implies that a professional development activity has changed the way a participant has previously performed his or her job duties.

Interaction: This code indicates that contact with other individuals has taken place either in person or virtually during professional development.

Job relevance: (See also Specific Needs) This code refers to professional development undertaken with the specific goal of improving job-related duties (as opposed to professional development done purely for personal interest.)

New ideas/perspectives: An outcome of professional development, this code is used to indicate that participants have undergone some new mental awareness as a result of the activity.

OTJ (On-the-job training): Outside of formal professional development activities, this code refers to informal learning done in the context of everyday work. Examples might include trial and error, specifically seeking out colleagues to ask questions, or trying to help patrons who have a unique information need.

Passion: This code suggests a high-level of personal interest and drive in the pursuit of professional development.

Reflection: This code refers to the deliberate act of thinking about information or ideas gained from professional development. This action can be taken privately or in group settings.

Self-awareness: This code refers to a participant's recognition that he or she has a gap in a knowledge or skillset that is important to their job position.

Self-initiative/freedom-to-choose: This code suggests that participants, rather than their administrative supervisors, select the professional development that they undertake.

Self-promotion: This code refers to the decision by participants to seek out professional development that will allow them to stand-out or advance in their careers as academic librarians.

Sharing: Beyond incorporating information gained from professional development into their own mental schemas, this code refers to the act of communicating the information to others.

Specific needs: (See also Job Relevance) This code refers to professional development undertaken to fill in an identifiable gap in knowledge.

Support/Comfort: As a motivation for or benefit of professional development, this code refers to participation in professional development that offers encouragement from other librarians facing similar challenging circumstances.

Time: This code suggests that the pursuit of professional development must be balanced with regular job activities, a balance which can be difficult to achieve in a times of staff shortages.