Librarianship & Parenthood: A Balancing Act

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Format

4 themes that will each include

- Panelist presentations
- Large group discussion & questions
In 2017, women accounted for 79% of all librarians, which was above the average of 73% for women employed in all education and library professions” (DPE Fact Sheet, 2018).
“Despite the predominance of women in the profession, the gender wage gap persists: the overall average salary level for male graduates is 18.3% higher than for female graduates; for 2015, the average salary level for males was 8.1% higher than for females.” (Allard, 2012)
“On average, mothers earn lower wages than childless women. This well-established finding is referred to as the ‘motherhood penalty’ ” (Gough, 2013).

“The gross motherhood wage penalty is typically estimated to be between 5 and 10 percent per child” (Gough, 2013).
Gender Dynamics

Wage Penalty

“The theory of compensating wage differentials proposes that mothers and childless women choose different working conditions and mothers may be willing to accept lower pay in return for better working conditions” (Glauber, 2012).

Do compensating wage differentials actually offset wage penalties?
Gender Dynamics

Wage Penalty

“Women who work in female-dominated jobs not only earn less than other workers to begin with but also pay an additional, larger wage penalty if and when they become mothers. This larger penalty is not offset by measurable compensating differentials” (Glauber, 2012).
41% of working mothers and 20% of working fathers say that being a parent has made career advancement difficult (Pew, 2015).

When re-entering the workforce, women who have “paused” their careers are more likely to choose lower paying jobs with less responsibility for increased flexibility (Stromberg, 2017).
“The most educated women are still among the most likely never to have had a child.” The opposite is true for men (Pew, 2010).

"Childcare leave and other related policies disproportionately affect women" (Connell, 2013).

“Having a child during one’s primary career-building years (25-35) is likely to permanently exacerbate the pay gap between husband and wife” (Krause and Reeves, 2018).
Career Trajectory and Progression

Interviewing & Job-Searching

Protected class & Pregnancy Discrimination Act

“Should we refer to you as Mr., Miss, or Mrs.?”

Confidence vs. Aggression

“It is imperative that search-committee members ... recognize the effect their perceptions can have on gender equality in leadership” (Mamlet, 2017).

Implicit bias (Project Implicit)
In a survey of more than 200 female academic library administrators, the majority of whom were in their peak earning years, “salary equity became more important as age increased; gender equity and civil rights were ranked less important as age increased” (Dreyup, 2012).
Topic 3: Logistics/Scheduling

Childcare
Appointments
Inflexibility

It’s a marathon. Not a sprint.

Except when you’re sprinting.
Managing schedules = Transferable skills

“The skills adopted in parenting also include more nebulous concepts such as communication, reasoning, teaching, emotional intelligence, and the like.” (Hines, 2015)
Scheduling

The Good, the Bad, the Ugly

- Know the policies
- Be flexible and supportive of colleagues use of the policies
- Be aware of flexibility stigma, bias avoidance, and other cultural hurdles.
- Understand that being a librarian and being a parent is a “marathon, not a sprint.” (Gallin-Parisi, 2017)
“We’ve created a world in which ubiquity is valued above all” (Brooks, 2014).

In households with 2 full-time working parents, “a large share of day-to-day parenting responsibilities falls to mothers” (Pew, 2015).
Identity

“Always On Culture”

“Librarianship tends to be a very public-facing occupation, both on the job and off the job. People recognize librarians throughout their community, and engage them in conversation. This creates a sticking point for librarians: at what point in their day can they take off their mask of professionalism that they are wearing?” (Keer and Carlos, 2015).
Identity

“Always On Culture”

Parenting at home and at work.

1. Our own families
2. Patrons

Expectations for reference librarians = emotional support, reassurance, answers, etc. "reference librarians are explicitly taught to foreground emotional labor in patron interactions" (Emmelhainz, Pappas, & Seale, 2017)
Identity

“Always On Culture”

Reference skills and access to information (e.g., subscriptions) is sometimes helpful for parenting purposes.

"This bi-directional work–family enrichment sentiment was echoed to an extent in most of the participants' interviews" (Gallin-Parisi, 2015, p. 842)
Questions & Discussion

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Bibliography


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