

LIS Interrupted

Intersections of Mental Illness and Library Work

*Edited by
Miranda Dube
Carrie Wade*

Library Juice Press
Sacramento, CA

Copyright 2021

Published in 2021 by Litwin Books.

Litwin Books
PO Box 188784
Sacramento, CA 95818

<http://litwinbooks.com/>

This book is printed on acid-free paper.

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Names: Dube, Miranda, editor. | Wade, Carrie, editor.

Title: LIS interrupted : intersections of mental illness and library work /
edited by Miranda Dube, Carrie Wade.

Description: Sacramento, CA : Library Juice Press, 2021. | Includes
bibliographical references and index. | Summary: "Provides a collection
of both personal narratives and critical analyses of mental illness in
the LIS field, exploring intersections with labor, culture, stigma,
race, ability, identity, and gender"-- Provided by publisher.

Identifiers: LCCN 2021007453 | ISBN 9781634001083 (trade paperback ;
acid-free paper)

Subjects: LCSH: Librarians--United States--Psychology. | Librarians--Mental
health--United States. | Library science--United States--Psychological
aspects. | Information science--United States--Psychological aspects.

Classification: LCC Z682.35.P82 L57 2021 | DDC 025.501/9--dc23

LC record available at <https://lccn.loc.gov/2021007453>

Contents

- 1 A Letter to the Reader

The Process of Becoming

- 7 The Space Between Neurodiversity and a Degree: Misinterpretations of ADHD in Higher Education
Kaelyn Leonard
- 15 There's no Dublin Core Element for "Body Issues"
Zoë Nissen
- 29 Surviving to Thriving: Creating a Culture of Radical Vulnerability in Libraries
Karina Hagelin
- 39 Diversity Scholar with the Trifecta of Mental Disorders
Marisol Moreno Ortiz
- 51 Finding Mental Balance at the Fortunoff Archive
Christy Bailey-Tomecek
- 65 The Downward Spiral
Nina Clements
- 71 If You're Happy & You Know It, Tell Me How
Chelsea Tarwater
- 79 On Surviving
Allison Rand

Critical Perspectives and Narratives

- 87 Full Disclosure? Issues Around Disclosing Mental Illness in an Academic Library Workplace
Alice Bennett
- 105 Words Matter: Examining the Language Used to Describe Mental Health Conditions in the Library of Congress Subject Headings (LCSH)
Carolyn Hansen
- 117 Neoliberalism, Mental Health, and Labor in the Library Workplace
Michelle Ashley Gohr and Andrew Barber
- 135 Defusing Stereotypes Through Humor: A Social Media Analysis
Pamela Andrews and Melissa Freiley
- 153 The Perils of Public Service: Emotional Labor and Mental Illness in Library Employees
Sara Harrington

- 167 The Language of Libraries: What Does It All Mean?
Brady Lund
- 181 Stuck in the Filter: Health, Anxiety, and Feeding the Fear
Stacey Astill
- 195 Mental Illness and the In-Person Interview
Ian Ross Hughes
- 203 Caring Work: Reflections on Care and Librarianship
Stephanie S. Rosen
- 219 Lean on Me: Support and Shared Experience in the Anxious Workplace
Marie Campbell, Clayton Hume, Max Powers, and Ann Sen

The Situated Experience

- 237 ILL, NOT I.L.L.
Chaundria Campos
- 245 Arbitrary and Capricious: Mental Health, Library Work, and Deciding Just How Much to Talk About It All
Jasmine Rizer
- 255 One Among Many: Fit, Precarity, and Neurodiversity in Academic Libraries
Evelyn E. Nalepinski
- 271 Bipolar Disorder and the Drive to Lead
John Cohen
- 281 Fog
Avery Adams
- 293 Depression and Obsessive-Compulsive Personality Disorder (OCPD)
Jodene R. Peck Pappas
- 305 Librarian vs. The Machine That Goes Beep: Professional Adventures on the Autism Spectrum
Jess Alexander
- 315 A Critical Conversation about LIS Interrupted
with Miranda Dube and Carrie Wade
- 335 Editor Bios
- 337 Author Biographies
- 343 Index

A Letter to the Reader

Dear Reader,

Thank you for picking up this book. Regardless of how or why you have arrived here in this moment—if it's to see yourself in the pages, learn more about mental illness, improve your library praxis, none or any combination of the above—we want to express our gratitude towards you.

Brave and vulnerable people opened up their minds to write this book. They have invited us to witness their challenges and triumphs as they navigate both mental illness and the Library and Information Science (LIS) field. Authors featured here have dedicated their time and energy to help the field, both as individuals and as a community. Being brave and vulnerable is not just limited to the authors of these chapters though. You, dear reader, are brave and vulnerable. Willing to talk about mental illness, and reflecting as both humans and professionals to examine how we can improve the world for ourselves and our colleagues, is a brave and vulnerable act.

This book has been organized into three sections: “The Process of Becoming,” “Critical Perspectives and Narratives,” and “The Situated Experience.”

The first section, “The Process of Becoming,” focuses on folks entering the world of library work—from their experiences as graduate students to establishing themselves as new professionals. Kaelyn Leonard tells of their experience working towards a master's degree in library and information science (MLIS) as a person with ADHD. Zoë Nissen opens up about their experience developing and recovering from an eating disorder (ED) as they attended graduate school and entered library workplaces. Karina Hagelin shares their radically vulnerable experience with assault and mental illness, and provides ways we can begin practicing the same within libraries. Marisol Moreno-Ortiz outlines

the ways they navigated their mental health as a new career Diversity Scholar. From the Fortunoff Video Archive of Holocaust Testimonials comes Christy Bailey-Tomacek whose own experiences with difficult mental illness has helped create an emotionally safer workplace amongst coworkers handling and transcribing materials related to human trauma. Nina Clements helps us understand that there is never a clear ending when it comes to disclosures and mental illness. Chelsea Tarwater invites us to witness the darkest moments of their depression and sing story time songs as we go. The section closes with Allison Rand, present for the Boston Marathon bombings, who discusses how the resulting Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) has impacted their life.

For “Critical Perspectives and Narratives” the book takes an analytic turn. This section contains chapters that challenge norms and practices in libraries by examining our foundations. It opens with Alice Bennett who examines mental health disclosures in the context of western academic libraries in Higher Education. Carolyn Hansen reviews outdated and problematic catalog headings, specifically focusing on Library of Congress subject headings. Michelle Ashley Gohr and Andrew Barber use critical theories to address concerning trends in librarianship that focus on class and alienation of paraprofessionals and other library workers in the neoliberal landscape. Pamela Andrews and Melissa Freiley analyze librarians’ use of humor on Twitter in relation to librarian stereotypes and mental illness. Sara Harrington explores how emotional labor, gender, and mental illness intersect in the LIS field. Brady Lund discusses communication disorders and provides suggestions for improvements the LIS field can make to reduce barriers. Stacey Astill considers the impact of health news on library staff who experience anxiety. Ian Ross Hughes questions aspects of the in-person interview and provides ways to reduce barriers in order to hire the most qualified candidates. Stephanie S. Rosen, through highlighting their personal experience, provides us with a path to understanding healthy care work in LIS. Marie Campbell, Clayton Hume, Max Powers, and Ann Sen conclude this section with an analysis of their shared experience and formation of a solidarity network as co-workers co-experiencing workplace anxiety under toxic leadership.

To close out the book is the third section and a return to personal narratives with “The Situated Experience,” which focuses on established professionals who have coexisted with their conditions and careers. It begins with Chaundria Campos, a black woman and veteran

with PTSD, who discusses workplace resources as the classic line that seldom helps. Jasmine Rizer explores how ongoing mental health issues has affected their decisions of how and why they have chosen to be open or not in the workplace. Evelyn E. Nalepinski outlines ways we can turn the misfit nature of librarianship into a more inclusive space for neurodivergent individuals. John Cohen illuminates how their experience with bipolar disorder has positively improved their ability to lead. Jodene R. Peck Pappas examines their experience as a cataloguer who also has Obsessive-Compulsive Personality Disorder (OCPD) and depression. Jess Alexander concludes this section with their recount of their battle with *The Machine That Goes Beep*—a villain to the author’s neurodivergent brain.

There are many ways to read this book: you may choose to read one chapter, all chapters, or somewhere in between. You may choose to mark up the pages with your thoughts. You may choose to read this cuddled up under covers alone or in a group of trusted friends. There is no right or wrong way to engage with this book, just like there is no right or wrong way to experience, learn about, or reduce stigma around mental illness. We hope if anything resonates too deeply, or creates feelings of unease, that you will have a trusted confidant to process with, or a tried and true way to provide yourself care that you can utilize.

We encourage you to practice mindfulness, to breathe and ground yourself as you explore the lives and experiences of others. Understand that one life is not a universal experience either—each glimmers as its own unique set of circumstances and conditions to create the lives presented here. Similarly, the thoughts and ideas presented here will hopefully open you up to new possibilities as well.

We are honored that you have picked this book up, and hope you find something befitting your needs in its pages.

*With care and gratitude,
Miranda Dube and Carrie Wade*