

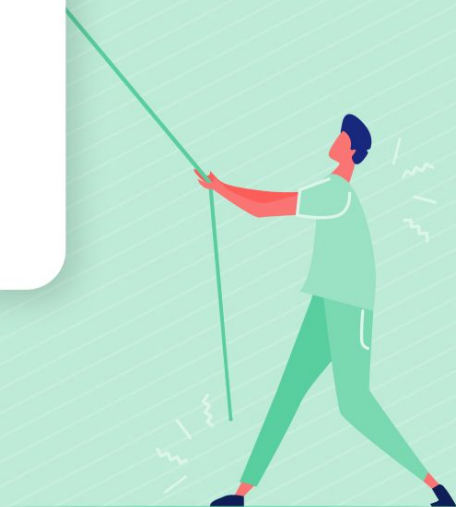
# Beyond Self-Care

A call for sustainable practices in library instruction  
Candice Benjes-Small, [cbsmall@wm.edu](mailto:cbsmall@wm.edu)



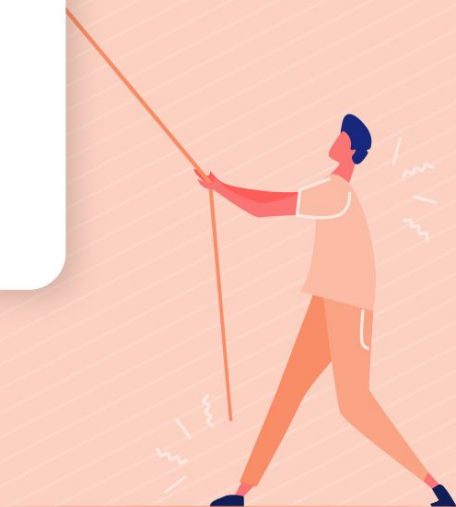
“We live in the kind of society where, in almost all cases, hard work is rewarded.”

- Neil deGrasse Tyson

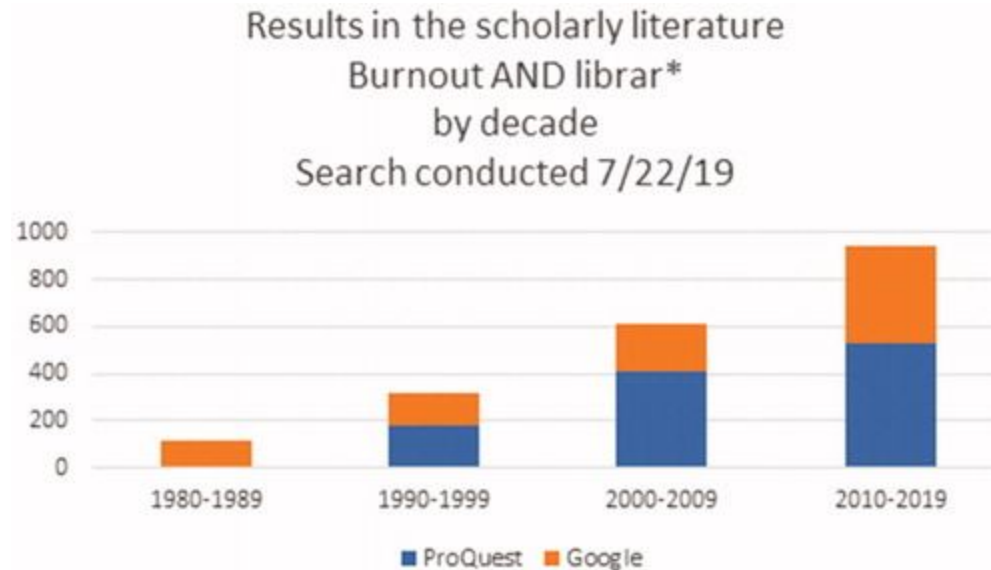


“A sign of a hard worker is one who works without complaint.”

- Sarah Price



# Figure 1 from “Academic Librarian Burnout: A Survey Using the Copenhagen Burnout Inventory” (2020)



1990: “Library user education: attitudes of those who teach” (Patterson & Howell)

2001: “Burnout and the academic teaching librarian” (Sheesley)

2015: Maria Accardi launches “Librarian Burnout” blog

2019: “Caring for your community of practice: Collective responses to burnout” (Brown and Settoducato)

2021: “Prioritizing and promoting self care to avoid burnout” (Bryan)

# Burnout

Emotional exhaustion

Depersonalization or negative feelings about clients

Reduced sense of personal accomplishment



[Home](#) / [News](#) / Burn-out an "occupational phenomenon": International Classification of Diseases

# Burn-out an "occupational phenomenon": International Classification of Diseases

28 May 2019 | Departmental news | Reading time: Less than a minute (180 words)

Burn-out is included in the 11th Revision of the International Classification of Diseases (ICD-11) as an occupational phenomenon. It is **not** classified as a medical condition.

It is described in the chapter: 'Factors influencing health status or contact with health services' – which includes reasons for which people contact health services but that are not classed as illnesses or health conditions.

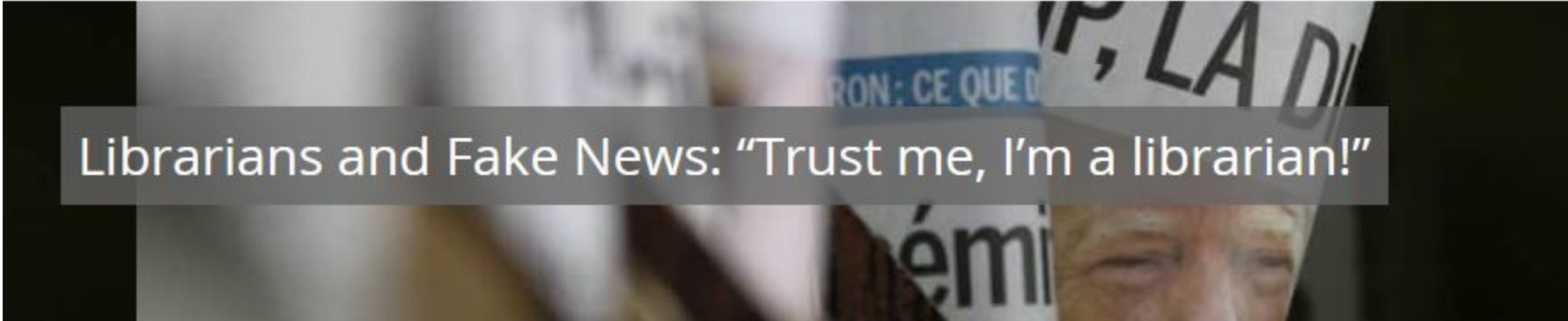
# **Fobazi Ettahr's *Vocational Awe and Librarianship***

Vocational awe “refers to the set of ideas, values, and assumptions librarians have about themselves and the profession that result in beliefs that libraries as institutions are inherently good and sacred, and therefore beyond critique.”



# **Ross Todd's *Information Literacy: Agendas for a Sustainable Future***

Information literacy is “a concept resting on the platform of ‘goodness’ of libraries to deliver or rescue people.”

The background image is a horizontal strip showing a blurred scene. On the right, a person's face is partially visible, looking down. To the left of the face is a newspaper with French text. Legible words include "RON: CE QUE D", "P, LA DI", and "émi".

Librarians and Fake News: "Trust me, I'm a librarian!"

# Lizard People in the Library

*As “research it yourself” becomes a rallying cry for promoters of outlandish conspiracy theories with real-world consequences, educators need to think hard about what’s missing from their information literacy efforts.*

EPISTEMOLOGY

BY BARBARA FISTER

FEBRUARY 3, 2021

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# Role of One-Shots in Burnout



# ***Monroe-Gulick and Petr's *Incoming Graduate Students in the Social Sciences: How Much Do They Really Know About Library Research?****

“[O]nce was very informative. The second time cleared up some questions that I had. Three and four made me want to toss myself out the nearest window.”

# **Role of Imposter Syndrome**

In their 2019 study, Martinez and Forrey found that “at some point in their work as a librarian, 84.9% of respondents felt insecure, underqualified, or in danger of being discovered a fraud.”



## **Nicola Andrews, *It's Not Imposter Syndrome: Resisting Self-Doubt As Normal for Library Workers***

“When are we going to stop signalling that fear and anxiety is normal within our profession, and instead examine how these narratives are the result of institutions deflecting the need for change?”



**Burnout**

"This book made me cry with gratitude and relief. It is that revolutionary."

—PEGGY ORENSTEIN

**Burnout**

*THE SECRET*

**Burnout**

*to UNLOCKING*

**Burnout**

*the STRESS CYCLE*

**Burnout**

Emily Nagoski, PhD

New York Times bestselling author of *COME AS YOU ARE*

Amelia Nagoski, DMA

**Burnout**

# **Veronica Arellano Douglas, *Innovating Against A Brick Wall***

One instruction coordinator, when introduced as a new member on a university-wide assessment committee was referred to as “one of the library girls.” That offhand remark is demeaning and disrespectful in such a complex, concise way. It highlights the coordinator’s femininity, equates it with the library, and dismisses her work, the work of teaching librarianship, as unimportant and not ‘real work.’”

Library Trends

Volume 68, Number 2, Fall 2019

Johns Hopkins University Press

Article

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Additional Information

# Low Morale in Ethnic and Racial Minority Academic Librarians: An Experiential Study

*Kaetrena Davis Kendrick* — (bio) *and* *Ione T. Damasco* — (bio)

**So what can we do?**

THE WORLD  
INSTITUTE of  
SLOWNESS

# The fastest way to a good life **is to slow down**

Geir Berthelsen, Founder, The World Institute of Slowness

WHY SLOW?



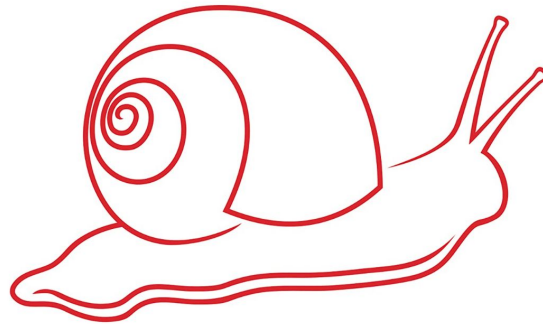
WATCH VIDEO

*The*  
**Slow**  
Professor

*Challenging the Culture of Speed  
in the Academy*

Maggie Berg and Barbara K. Seeber

With a New Foreword by Stefan Collini



## **Berg & Seeber**

“It seems obvious that when one teaches well, one enjoys it, but perhaps the reverse is more accurate: that when one enjoys teaching, one does it well” (p. 34).

# Suggestions

Intentional transitions to teaching

Using humor (in a positive way)

Increase engagement through story telling

Be alert to verbal and non-verbal feedback



# **Glassman, *The Innovation Fetish and Slow Librarianship***

“We must let our patrons’ genuine, demonstrated needs and interests guide our work. What services and resources are they searching for? Are we providing them? If not, how can we change our practices so that we are...On a deeper level, though, we must push back against the corporate cultures in which we work. How? Here I don’t have any easy answers.”

## **Farkas, *What Is Slow Librarianship?***

“Slow librarianship is a process, not a destination; it is an orientation towards our work, ourselves, and others that creates positive change. It is an organizational philosophy that supports workers and builds stronger relationships with our communities.”



# **The Lure of Innovation**

Delay discounting

Paying attention to the novel

Status hierarchy

Obsession with “growth”

# **Danger of “Innovation”**

“Progress” declined in early 1970s

“Innovation” on the rise

Innovation=“better”

## **Vinsel, *How to give up the I-word***

“Innovation is as close to progress as one could come without the word ‘progress.’ On the other hand, in its more technical definitions, ‘innovation’ lacked progress’s sense of social justice or betterment of all. Innovation need not serve the interests of all, in fact, typically it doesn’t.”

# Suggestions

Push back against “cult of productivity”

Reward teamwork and relationship building

Reflect on the power and privilege of saying no

# Suggestions

Promote maintenance over innovation

Maintain that which provides value to us and to our users

Understand, expose, and interrogate the power structures which created the organizational systems



# ***Gibson, Civility and structural precarity for faculty of color in LIS***

Continually seek ways to educate yourself about racism, sexism, and ableism in academia

Speak up about inequities and injustices that you see

Interrogate phrases like “civility” and “troublemaker”

## **Concrete steps**

Discuss culture intentionally, up and down

Set benchmarks other than 'growth'

Develop strong onboarding programs

Evaluate for outcomes, not inputs

Distribute organizational scales to assess your library



“I don’t need a friend who changes when I change  
and who nods when I nod; my shadow does that  
much better” – Plutarch