

# Honest Conversations

Over servicing at your Library at the  
Expense of a Healthy Life Balance

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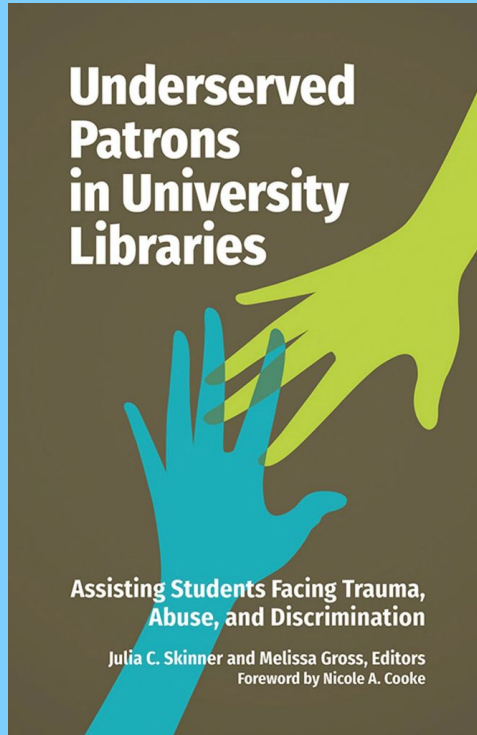




## Vocational awe...

*...the set of ideas, values, and assumptions librarians have about themselves and the profession that result in notions that libraries as institutions are inherently good, sacred notions, and therefore beyond critique.<sup>1</sup>*

**-Fobazi Ettarh**



- First-generation, low-income (FGLI) Students
- English as a Second Language (ESL)
- Adult and Senior Students
- Veterans and Military Families
- Mental Illness, anxiety, depression
- Homelessness
- Communication Disorders
- Immigrant communities



## Post-Katrina NOPL

- FEMA offices
- Housed Military Personnel
- Air conditioning/ Safe Places
- Internet/Phone Access
- Locating loved ones
- Social Work Assistance
- Food, Water and Basic Necessities
- Entire Patron Population in Crisis

# The New Social Safety Net?

- ▷ Ad hoc Social Service Service Agency
- ▷ Administering Narcan
- ▷ Patron Safety
- ▷ Gun Violence
- ▷ Homelessness
- ▷ Mental Illness<sup>4</sup>



*It's a lot easier to make the emotional argument: Someone's In front of me; how can I do nothing?"*

*It's a lot harder to take a step back and ask, "If we set this precedent, what will happen in the future?"<sup>5</sup>*

**-Fobazi Ettarh**

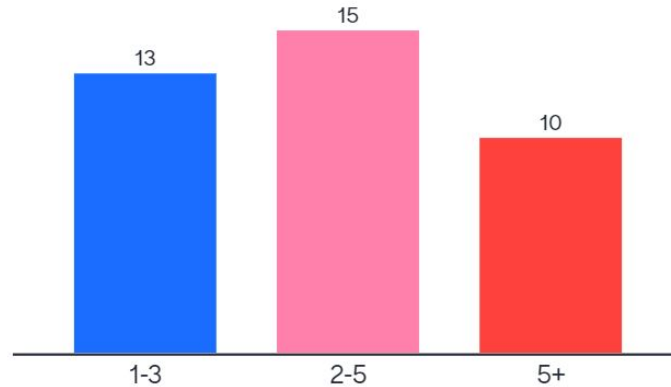
# Honest Conversations

- ▷ How many additional tasks, outside of primary job description, have you assumed?
- ▷ How does the increased workload affect your current job and personal life?

# Honest Conversations

Approximately how many additional tasks, outside of your primary job description, have you assumed?

Mentimeter





# Honest Conversations

How does the increased workload inform your primary work and life balance?



# Honest Conversations

- ▷ How often do you feel you can say no? Do you? Why or why not?
- ▷ Is there a space/opportunity to safely share and discuss with fellow colleagues?



*"Nobody's free until everybody's free."*

***-Fannie Lou Hamer***

# #closeCPL

*“The mayor is forcing libraries to be the social safety net of the city. ... She is relying on us to do what the city is supposed to be doing by providing homeless shelters, mental health institutions, being a day care...”<sup>6</sup>*

**-Anonymous Chicago Public Library Staff**



# Collective Action

- Committing to uncomfortable conversations
- Actively listening
- Willingness to learn
- Learning to say “no” to job creep
- Supporting fellow colleagues
- Raising awareness
- Galvanizing allies
- Using PTO
- Investing in self-care





*“The function, the very serious function of racism is distraction. It keeps you from doing your work.*

**- Toni Morrison**

*“Keep Your Eye on the Prize”* -Alice Win



## ALA's Referendum Roundup: The State of the Union<sup>9</sup>

- Challenges to local support networks
- Censorship
- Defunding services and resources
- LGBTQ attacks



*“The only rewarding thing for me is to bring to light information that no one knows.”*

**-Dorothy Porter**

**HAPPY BLACK HISTORY MONTH**



Thank you!  
*what should we talk about?*

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# NOTES

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2. Gross, Melissa, Nicole A. Cooke, and Julia Skinner. Underserved Patrons in University Libraries: Assisting Students Facing Trauma, Abuse, and Discrimination. Santa Barbara, CA: Libraries Unlimited, 2021.
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Source: [flickr.com](#)
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6. Cohen, Jodi S., and Logan Jaffe. "Chicago Shuts down, but Its Public Libraries Are Open. Librarians Want Them Closed." ProPublica, March 17, 2020. <https://www.propublica.org/article/chicago-public-libraries-still-open-coronavirus-pandemic>.
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