A Survey Exploring the Perceptions of Academic Librarians as Researchers

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ABSTRACT
This study examines the perceptions of academic librarian research at six Canadian prairie-province universities. An understanding of how librarian research is viewed and valued at academic institutions can lay the groundwork to improve the state of librarian research in the future. Surveys were sent to librarians and non-librarian faculty in the humanities, sciences, and social sciences at these universities to gather information about how both groups perceive academic librarian research. Thirty librarians and 30 non-librarian faculty responded to the survey. In general, research was viewed as an important and positive aspect of librarianship, though one that was of secondary importance to service. Non-librarian faculty largely lacked awareness about librarian research, and librarians reported being unsupported in their research needs by their institutions. Librarian research collaboration with non-librarian faculty was of high interest to both groups of respondents. The results of this survey highlight the importance of research to academic librarianship while indicating that there is room for further improvement by raising the profile of librarian research outside of the library, fostering collaborative research projects, and providing librarians with the support necessary to engage in research activities.

Keywords: academic librarians · academic libraries · librarian research · librarians · librarians as researchers · library research · perceptions of librarians

RÉSUMÉ
Cette étude examine les perceptions de la recherche des bibliothécaires universitaires dans six universités canadiennes des Prairies. Comprendre comment la recherche bibliothécaire est perçue et valorisée dans les établissements d’enseignement peut jeter les bases pour améliorer l’état de la recherche bibliothécaire à l’avenir. Des sondages ont été envoyés aux bibliothécaires et aux professeurs non-bibliothécaires de ces universités en sciences humaines, en sciences et en sciences sociales afin de recueillir de l’information sur la façon dont les deux groupes perçoivent la recherche des bibliothécaires universitaires. Trente bibliothécaires et trente professeurs non-bibliothécaires ont répondu au sondage. En général, la recherche est considérée comme un aspect important et positif de la bibliothéconomie, bien qu’elle soit d’importance secondaire par rapport au service. Les professeurs non-bibliothécaires étaient peu sensibilisés à la recherche bibliothécaire, et les bibliothécaires ont déclaré que leur établissement ne les aidait pas à répondre à leurs besoins.
academic librarians are frequently required or encouraged to conduct research, either as a component of their job duties or as a requirement for promotion or tenure (University of Manitoba 2018; University of Saskatchewan 2015; Berg, Jacobs, and Cornwall 2013; Whitmell 2017). This study aims to examine the perceptions of librarian research by both librarians and non-librarian faculty. Each group was surveyed regarding their perceptions of library research as part of the author’s master’s thesis (Babb 2017).

The American Library Association (ALA) lists familiarity with research methodology as a core competency of librarianship, and the Canadian Association of University Teachers (CAUT) and the Canadian Association of Research Libraries (CARL) indicate that academic librarians can and should conduct research (ALA 2009; CAUT 2010; CARL 2010). In practice, librarian research is diverse; it may include research in LIS as well as in other fields. Librarian research ranges from practical and applied to theoretical, and it can cover a wide array of topics (Henry and Neville 2004; Hildreth and Aytac 2007; Sorensen and DeLong 2016; Tomaszewski, Poulin, and MacDonald 2013). Librarians regularly publish their research in peer-reviewed journals and present their work at academic conferences (Hildreth and Aytac 2007). Librarian research occurs alongside a myriad of other duties, and research may be sidelined to accommodate these duties even at institutions where librarian research is expected or required (Fox 2007). Certainly it is the case that the degree to which librarians engage in research is variable, and the research productivity of librarians is influenced by a number of factors (Hoffmann, Berg, and Koufogiannakis 2014, 2017). There has been exploration into what could improve the research output of librarians, including a shift in the language from discussing research competencies to discussing research capacities (Berg and Banks 2016). Recent years have seen the rise of evidence-based library and information practice (EBLIP) within academic libraries (Kennedy and Brancolini 2012; Marshall 2014; Eldredge 2000). As a result, there has
been an increased focus on research both created by and used by academic librarians. There have been efforts made to develop a strong research culture in Canadian academic libraries, and initiatives such as the Librarians’ Research Institute have arisen to help in this regard (CARL 2018). Lack of awareness about librarian research and librarian researchers can result in the professional devaluation of librarians and a misunderstanding of librarian roles by non-librarian faculty as well as library and university administration (Stewart 2009).

While there have been a handful of studies that have explored the perceptions of librarian research from the perspective of librarians, there have been very few studies that explore it from a non-librarian faculty perspective, and fewer still that have explored it from a uniquely Canadian perspective. What studies do exist suggest that non-librarian faculty have next to no awareness of librarian research or research capabilities (Cooke et al. 2011; Kotter 1999; Divay, Ducas, and Oystryk 1987). Studies of students have shown a similar lack of awareness regarding librarian research (Fagan 2003). Gilman and Lindquist (2010) studied librarians with additional advanced subject degrees and found that even when librarians possessed these additional credentials they still felt their research skills were neither respected nor supported. Lack of support for librarian research is common; the collective agreements governing librarians often lack acceptable supports for librarian research (Babb 2017; Harrington and Gerolami 2014). In extreme situations, librarian research and academic freedom have come under direct threat at Canadian institutions, as occurred at McGill University in a case that involved censure and investigation by CAUT (MAUT 2012). These threats to librarian research and professional standing are more likely in a climate where non-librarians are unaware of librarian research and roles (Stewart 2009).

When librarian research is misunderstood in the academy, there is a risk that support for this research and its benefits may be removed. There is also potential for a belief that librarians are replaceable by information technologists or technicians (Stewart 2009). Further, lack of awareness about librarian research may downplay the extent of librarians’ capacity to help with research support, possibly resulting in faculty and students missing out on the help librarians could provide them in their own work (Fox 2007). Lack of awareness about librarian research can also foster strained relationships between librarians and non-librarian faculty (Cooke et al. 2011). Raising awareness about librarian research is a desirable goal, with positive outcomes for librarians, non-librarian faculty, and students. Raising awareness first requires an understanding of the perception of librarian research as it currently exists in the academy, from the perspective of both librarians and non-librarian faculty. The current study aims to address this by exploring perceptions of librarians
as researchers at six Canadian prairie-province universities and the implications of those perceptions, as well as identifying areas where the perceptions and supports of librarian research might be improved.

Methods

Two surveys were developed, one for librarians and one for non-librarian faculty. The surveys were similar in structure and content but were adapted where necessary to suit the differences between participant groups. For example, the librarian version of the questionnaire asked, “Do you conduct LIS research as part of your duties at your institution?” and “Which type of library do you work in?” while the non-librarian faculty version asked, “Do librarians at your institution conduct research related to the field of librarianship as part of their duties?” and “What is your discipline?” These surveys were constructed according to the questionnaire-design methodologies outlined by Dillman et al. (2008), with online-survey optimization techniques described by Evans et al. (2009) and Peytchev et al. (Peytchev et al. 2006), and with attention to Morris (2006) on increasing response rates. Topics addressed in the survey included whether librarians do and are perceived to do research, whether research conducted by librarians is perceived to be of academic quality, whether librarians and non-librarian faculty currently do or would participate in collaborative research, whether non-librarian faculty consider librarians capable of helping them in their own research, and whether librarians are perceived as having a justifiable claim to faculty status.

Surveys were piloted with a faculty member working as a professor in a school of library and information studies, and a health sciences librarian. These pilot subjects provided insight on the survey from a practicing librarian and from a professor who were not among the participants of the study proper. Pilot-testers completed a non-interactive version of the survey and provided the researcher with feedback regarding confusing questions, preferred order, and other general impressions of the surveys. Surveys were revised according to the feedback provided from the pilot surveys.

Surveys were administered through the commercial survey tool FluidSurveys. Invitations to participate were sent to all faculty at the six major Canadian prairie universities (Alberta, Calgary, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Regina, and Winnipeg) in the departments of biology, anthropology, and classics, or equivalents (e.g., Greek and Roman studies) as representatives of the sciences, social sciences, and humanities, respectively. I selected these particular disciplines because I have significant experience in all three, and felt that if complex descriptions of collaborative research were provided by non-librarian faculty members in the survey results, I would be
able to understand the descriptions without the need for significant and possibly unattainable follow-up or clarification. A broader group was not surveyed because the nature of the research as a component of a master's thesis limited the scope of the project. Surveys were also sent to all academic librarians at those same universities working in the libraries responsible for providing service to the aforementioned subject areas. Emails for these individuals were obtained from the relevant university websites, and emails were entered into the FluidSurveys invitation tool. Invitations were sent out with the FluidSurveys tool between September 13 and 15, 2013. Surveys were closed on October 29, 2013.

Descriptive statistics were used to analyse the bulk of the survey results. Open-ended questions were analysed qualitatively, and like questions between the two surveys were compared and contrasted.

Ethical clearance for this study was obtained through the University of Alberta Research Ethics Board.

Results

Demographics
Survey invitations were sent to 493 non-librarian faculty members and to 138 librarians. Thirty responses to each survey were returned, indicating a response rate of six percent for non-librarian faculty and 22 percent for librarians. No question was mandatory, and not all participants responded to all questions. With the exception of the University of Alberta, which has an independent librarian agreement, librarians who were contacted belonged to the faculty association at their university and were part of the faculty collective agreement. Research was required, expected, or permitted either in the collective agreements or in the promotion and tenure guidelines at all of these institutions (Babb 2017).

The division of disciplines of the non-librarian faculty respondents indicate that there isn’t equal representation in the sample contacted. Biology in particular is under-represented, while classics is over-represented. These divisions are as follows (percentages are rounded):
TABLE 1  Non-librarian faculty demographics. Four participants did not respond.

Institutional websites did not always indicate which library the librarians who were contacted worked at, and/or their subject affiliation. There was no way to determine the subject affiliation of each librarian invited to participate. The division of librarian respondents is as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Humanities/ Classics</th>
<th>Social Sciences/ Anthropology</th>
<th>Sciences/ Biology</th>
<th>Other</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>% of Non-Librarian Faculty Invited</td>
<td>16% (n=79)</td>
<td>27% (n=133)</td>
<td>57% (n=281)</td>
<td>---</td>
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<tr>
<td>% of Respondents</td>
<td>35% (n=9)</td>
<td>35% (n=9)</td>
<td>27% (n=7)</td>
<td>3% (n=1)</td>
</tr>
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TABLE 2  Librarian demographics. Two participants did not respond.

Fifty-eight percent (n=15) of non-librarian faculty respondents had been employed as faculty at their institution for ten years or more, and results may therefore not represent the views of newer non-librarian faculty members. Librarian respondents were more diverse in this regard, with 46 percent (n=13) having been a librarian at their current institution for one to five years and 39 percent (n=11) having been at their institution for longer than ten years, and they spanned all librarian ranks. Librarian responses may therefore be more reflective of the overall profession.

**Librarians**

Librarians were found to conduct LIS research as part of their duties, either regularly (31 percent, n=9) or on occasion (48 percent, n=14). An additional seven percent (n=2) indicated that they were unable to conduct research but wanted to. Fourteen percent (n=4) indicated that they did not conduct research and did not want to. A majority

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1. This category likely arose from a situation where a faculty member is affiliated with one of the consulted departments in some way, but does not belong to the department proper.
(59 percent, n=17) of respondents also conducted research in non-LIS fields, with an additional ten percent (n=3) indicating that they would like to engage in such research, but 31 percent (n=9) indicated that they did not and did not want to. Most librarian respondents (57 percent, n=16) indicated that conducting research was required at their institution, either as a requirement of being a librarian (25 percent, n=7) or as a requirement of promotion (32 percent, n=9), while the remainder (43 percent, n=12) indicated that that research was encouraged but was not required. No librarians indicated that research was discouraged or disallowed. The bulk of librarian respondents (79 percent, n=23) reported publishing their research regularly; of these, ten percent (n=3) published exclusively in non-peer-reviewed journals or books and 24 percent (n=7) published exclusively in peer-reviewed journals or books. The remainder of those who published (45 percent, n=13) published in both. Ten percent (n=3) indicated that their research is used for internal purposes only. A small majority (56 percent, n=15) of respondents felt that the amount of research already conducted by librarians was adequate, but a comparable number (41 percent, n=11) of respondents felt that librarians should conduct more research than they already do. Only one respondent (four percent) felt librarians should not conduct research. The bulk of librarians (76 percent, n=22) felt that librarians should hold faculty status.

While there was a generally favourable reception to librarian research from respondents, a majority (66 percent, n=19) did indicate that they believed research in LIS to be less rigorous than in other disciplines. The reason for this belief was unclear, though one comment suggested that librarian research may be of lower quality because “most” of it is “pointless—the result of being forced to publish regardless of whether the librarian is actually interested,” while another comment suggested that a lack of rigour was due to the service-based nature of the field.

Eighty-nine percent (n=25) of respondents indicated that they would like to engage with non-librarian faculty on collaborative non-research projects, with 82 percent (n=23) having already done so. One hundred percent of librarians indicated they would like to work with non-librarian faculty on collaborative research, with 39 percent (n=11) having already done so. This included respondents who had otherwise expressed no desire to do research. Eighty-nine percent (n=25) of respondents identified themselves as possessing skills that they believed could aid science, social science, and humanities faculty in their own research.

Participants were asked to identify what they believed to be the three primary duties of an academic librarian. The free-text responses were sorted into 14 categories, which were then tallied to determine which of these categories were identified most frequently. The distribution of the 14 categories is displayed in Figure 1.
The top three responses to this question were:

1. Teaching and Teaching Support
2. Research
3. Collection Management

In tallying these results, a distinction was made between research and research support, the latter of which included supportive research activities related to liaison roles. However, because this question had free-text answers, it cannot be known for certain what participants were including under their definition of research. These results position research as an important part of the librarian role but one that fits amongst the other various roles that librarians play. In the open-ended questions of the survey, librarians were careful to highlight this as well. Several responses indicated that research is important to librarianship but must take a back seat to service. For example, one respondent noted:

“I have one peer-reviewed co-authored article published in a library studies journal, and many non-peer reviewed articles that have been published, as well as a book chapter. I think research is valuable, but […] we are a service profession first and foremost.”

Responses provided to the open questions also indicated librarians felt there was a lack of support, especially financial support, from their institutions for them to conduct research. This manifested both as a desire for direct access to funds and in more oblique ways. This sentiment was captured in the response:

“With all the cuts happening at [my university] right now it is going to be harder and harder to carve out a piece of time to continue to dedicate to research. Unfortunately, research will be the first thing to go when librarians have to pick up more duties when colleagues leave
and are not replaced. It is already difficult to find the time to do research, and I fear it will get worse."

While there were comments criticizing the role of librarian research, and responses from a small number of librarians (n=2) expressing uninterest or hostility toward research, the bulk of librarian participants conducted research or wanted to, and valued research as an important aspect of librarianship.

**Non-Librarian Faculty**

Non-librarian faculty responses to the survey demonstrated a general lack of awareness about librarian research; answers containing “I don’t know” were the most common responses to questions that assessed awareness of librarian research, being 50 percent or more of responses in every instance. This result is consistent with previous studies that have indicated that non-librarian faculty are generally unfamiliar with the duties of librarians, particularly the duties that involve research activities (Divay, Ducas, and Oystryk 1987; Kotter 1999). When asked if librarians at their institution published research, 67 percent (n=20) of non-librarian faculty did not know, while 50 percent (n=9) indicated that librarians did conduct research. Only one non-librarian faculty respondent (three percent) thought librarians did not publish research. Despite the lack of awareness about librarian research, attitudes towards research conducted by librarians were mostly positive. When asked if librarians conducted research related to librarianship (LIS research), 47 percent (n=14) indicated that librarians did either regularly (17 percent, n=5) or on occasion (30 percent, n=9). Fifty percent (n=15) indicated that they didn’t know, but they thought librarians should conduct LIS research. Only one (three percent) believed that librarians didn’t conduct LIS research but should. There was a greater range of responses when asked if librarians should conduct research outside the field of librarianship (non-LIS research). Twenty-eight percent (n=8) indicated that librarians conducted non-LIS research either regularly (ten percent, n=3) or on occasion (17 percent, n=5). One (three percent) indicated that librarians didn’t conduct non-LIS research but should, and an equal three percent (n=1) indicated that librarians didn’t conduct non-LIS research and shouldn’t. Thirty-eight percent (n=11) indicated that they didn’t know if librarians conducted non-LIS research but they should, and 28 percent (n=8) didn’t know if librarians did but felt they shouldn’t. While these responses seem to indicate a generally positive view of librarian research, only 37 percent (n=11) of respondents felt that librarians should be classified as faculty, while 47 percent (n=14) felt they should be academic support staff. The remainder of the respondents marked “other” and elaborated in the comments that they felt librarians belonged to both categories.
Regardless of their lack of awareness about librarian research, the majority of non-librarian faculty (74 percent, n=17) felt that whatever amount of research was already undertaken by librarians was an appropriate amount of research. Seventeen percent (n=4) of respondents felt that librarians should conduct more research, and 9 percent (n=2) felt they should not conduct research at all. Non-librarian faculty respondents indicated that they would be interested in collaborating with librarians on research projects (81 percent, n=21) and on projects that are not research activities (93 percent, n=24). Thirty-one percent (n=18) of respondents had collaborated with librarians on research projects and would do so again, while 50 percent (n=13) had not but would like to. Additionally, non-librarian faculty felt confident that librarians possessed skills that would be able to aid them in their own research activities (85 percent, n=22). The majority of non-librarian faculty felt unable to comment on the rigour of LIS research (58 percent, n=15). The remaining respondents were split between believing librarian research was rigorous (19 percent, n=5) and was not rigorous (23 percent, n=6).

As with the librarian survey, non-librarian faculty were asked to identify what they felt the three primary duties of a librarian were. As with librarians, non-librarian faculty responses fell into 14 categories, which are outlined in Figure 2 below:

![Primary Duties of Librarians According to Non-Librarian Faculty](image)

**Figure 2** Number of respondents mentioning each topic as a primary role.

According to non-librarian faculty, the three primary duties of an academic librarian are:

1. Research support
2. Facilitating access to information
3. Research

Research was seen as an important role for librarians by non-librarian faculty, as was the related area of research support. Like librarians, however, non-librarian faculty were clear that while research is important for librarians it must be secondary to service. In open-ended questions, non-librarian faculty expressed a fear that focus on research could detract from the other valuable work of librarians:

“I think there is a concern amongst faculty and librarians alike that demands that they function more like standard academics and channel more of their energies into research and publishing, there will be less time for them to perform their traditional service and educational functions, especially in a time of cutbacks when there are fewer faculty to do more work.”

Comments on open-ended questions from non-librarian faculty brought up different concerns than those found in the responses from librarians. Several respondents noted that the survey had made them realize how unaware they were of librarian roles, and they indicated a need for librarians to better promote their roles and capabilities to the larger academic community, especially in light of changes to the field during the past decades. One participant noted that continued ignorance of librarian roles could lead to a deprofessionalization of librarians. In comments, some non-librarian faculty members closely linked faculty status (and the pay associated with it) with the conducting of research: “I think some librarians could be considered faculty members, but this shouldn’t be a default. Not everyone is engaged in research activities, but if they are then this should be a possibility.” One participant expressed frustration that the survey “forced” them to “admit” that librarians conduct research when “only a small minority do” and “they are not hired for that.”

Non-librarian faculty had diverse attitudes towards librarian research, but were overall supportive of it, and identified research as an important element of librarianship. This was despite a lack of awareness about librarian research and despite nearly half of the respondents believing that librarians should not possess faculty status.

Comparison

Unsurprisingly, more librarians than non-librarian faculty are aware of the role that research plays in librarianship. Non-librarian faculty were often unable to answer questions that related to the nature of librarian research, and some comments made by non-librarian faculty indicated that they believed that most librarians conducted little or no research or were otherwise unaware of librarian research capabilities. This was in contrast to librarians, who reported conducting research and who indicated that research was often required or expected of them.
professionally. Though there were exceptions, both groups predominantly regarded librarian research positively. Research was identified by both librarians and non-librarian faculty as a primary role of librarians; indeed, it was the only role that both groups included in the primary three roles. Non-librarian faculty also identified research support as one of the three primary roles of librarianship, indicating a perception that librarians are involved in the research processes of others. Librarian respondents identified the research support role as well, though it ranked lower in their perceptions—this may be related to the manner in which non-librarian faculty interact with librarians, as the research-support role that librarians play may be more critical to them than other roles. Collaborative research was of interest to both groups but appeared to be undertaken only rarely. Few librarians and fewer non-librarian faculty had engaged in research of that nature, but nearly all expressed interest in doing so. Many people in both groups identified librarianship as a service-first profession, highlighting the common perception that the role of librarian research must not infringe on the service role of librarians.

An area of significant discrepancy between librarians and non-librarian faculty came in response to the question about librarians having faculty status. Librarians were largely in favour of holding faculty status, while nearly half of non-librarian faculty indicated that they felt librarians should not hold that status. In comments, non-librarian faculty often linked the possibility of faculty status for librarians directly with librarian research activities.

Discussion

Although this study explores the perceptions of only a small fraction of the population in a segment of Canadian academic institutions, the results of this survey raise questions about the status of librarian research in academic libraries. The findings of this study suggest that Canadian academic librarians conduct and publish research on an occasional or regular basis. This is unsurprising, as previous studies have documented regular research by academic librarians (Henry and Neville 2004; Hildreth and Aytac 2007; Sorensen and DeLong 2016; Tomaszewski, Poulin, and MacDonald 2013). Findings suggest that librarian research is required either as part of the librarian job description or to obtain promotion or tenure, and that where it is not required it is nevertheless encouraged. Librarian respondents for the most part were interested in conducting research. Non-librarian faculty respondents were largely unaware of librarian research and librarian research capabilities, and they were sometimes misinformed about formal librarian research requirements.

Overall, librarian research appears to be perceived positively and thought of as one of the primary roles of an academic librarian. Confusingly, this was even
the case for non-librarian faculty who, by their own admission, did not have much knowledge of librarian research. There was some concern from the librarian respondents regarding the rigour of librarian research, and this concern requires further exploration. Librarians were also perceived as playing a role in research more generally, as providers of research support to the university community. In consideration of this and the non-librarian respondents’ perceptions in this study, it may be beneficial for librarians to raise the profile of librarian research in the eyes of their non-librarian peers. Certainly the relationship between librarian support of non-librarian faculty research, and the perception of librarians as researchers (or not) in their own right, merits further attention. Such an exploration may provide valuable insight for providing research-support services or for the involvement of librarians in collaborative research with non-librarian faculty. The collaborative research angle is one of particular interest, as the findings of this study suggest that such research is appealing to both librarians and non-librarian faculty, including librarians who are otherwise uninterested in research. Collaborative research could perhaps be explored as a means of facilitating and inspiring librarian research in the context of increasing research responsibilities for academic librarians. Both librarians and non-librarian faculty in this study were split on their perceptions of librarians conducting non-LIS research. These perceptions should be further explored, as they may have implications for how to facilitate librarian research, particularly research of a collaborative, interdisciplinary nature. Librarians may want to make themselves known to non-librarian faculty as potential research collaborators in order to facilitate increased interdisciplinary study.

Faculty status of librarians was an area where results differed between participant groups. Librarian respondents generally felt that librarians should possess faculty status, but non-librarian faculty were much less amenable to the idea. Given that librarians at five out of the six institutions surveyed possess faculty status already, these findings may indicate an area of particular concern for librarians, especially in the current cost-cutting contexts of many academic institutions. Many non-librarian faculty members in this study closely linked faculty status with the conducting of research; there may be value in librarians’ promoting beyond the library their research expertise and the research expectations of their positions, in order to combat perceptions that they should not be faculty. There is also a need to explore further the links between librarian research, service, status, and the collective agreements or other governing documents of academic librarians in Canada.

Participants made it clear that librarian research must be thought of in the broader context of librarianship, which was noted in comments to be primarily
a service profession. Librarian research, though perceived of as desirable to participants, was explicitly not something that should eclipse the service aspects of the profession. Results of this survey suggest that there may be a perceived tension between research and other librarian duties. Given that research is often required, expected, or encouraged as part of a librarian's role, this tension requires further exploration in future research.

Limitations
This study surveyed participants at six academic institutions in Canada and may not be reflective of Canadian universities more broadly. Additionally, the sample for this study was relatively small, as was the overall response rate, with certain population subsets having a particularly low response rate. The results of this study therefore cannot be considered indicative of views generally held. Because participants were self-selected for inclusion in the study, respondents may reflect those individuals with strong opinions on, or who were most interested in librarian research, and may therefore not be representative of perceptions in general. “Research” was identified as a primary role of librarians by both librarians and non-librarian faculty alike; it is possible, however, that the survey prompted them to think about research more than they otherwise might have, and thus the role of librarian research may have been artificially inflated. Additionally, as participants were not provided with a working definition of “research,” it is not necessarily clear what they considered research for the purposes of their responses to the survey.

Though there were equal numbers of librarians and non-librarian faculty respondents, the response rate of non-librarian faculty was much lower, and most non-librarian faculty respondents were tenured professors with ten or more years of experience; professors with less experience may have responded differently. The sample size was small and results cannot be generalized beyond the populations surveyed, but the results do provide a foundation for new research and highlight new questions regarding academic librarian research in Canada that should be explored further.

Conclusions
This survey provides some initial insights into the perceptions of librarian research at academic institutions in Canada and raises questions for future study. Though the ability to generalize from this study is limited, it appears that librarian research is perceived in a positive light, as is the role of librarian involvement in research support more generally. However, findings indicate that non-librarian faculty are largely unaware of librarian research. This is an area of concern, given that the
results of this survey suggest that non-librarian faculty perceive a direct link between the conducting of research and faculty status. How to raise awareness of librarian research to non-librarian faculty should be considered in the future. Collaborative research was identified as desirable by both librarians and non-librarian faculty, and encouraging collaborative research between these groups may have the potential to increase non-librarian faculty awareness of librarian research and facilitate librarian research in and of itself; certainly, the possibility should be explored further. This study also raises important questions about how to incorporate librarian research into a service-oriented position. Librarian research is an important and valuable component of librarianship, and exploring the answers to the questions that this study raises may help enhance and facilitate that research in the future.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR
Maureen Babb is a health sciences outreach librarian at the University of Manitoba. She obtained her MLIS from the University of Alberta.

REFERENCES


