

# **Gender divide in librarianship: past, present, and future**

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## **Abstract**

Librarianship in the 20th century was a profession defined by a gender divide in which females performed lower service functions while a minority of males dominated higher status management positions. This paper reviews the history and effects of this gender divide and the role of professional discourse in helping to bridge it. Further analysis of current professional trends in library and information science (LIS) reveals a new pattern of dual career tracking based on gender, with implications for the formation of a new 21st-century gender divide unique to the field in which men are associated with technology and women with management. The paper concludes with recommendations for more research into the role of gender in the profession as it continues to evolve.

## **Introduction**

Over the last century, women have consistently made up a large majority of librarians, and librarianship is widely considered to be a female-dominated profession. Interestingly, the field has also seen the emergence of a minority-dominated male management force, despite the overwhelming majority of female librarians. This gender divide between female librarians as the majority occupying lower positions and the minority of male librarians assuming higher-level and higher-paying management positions has greatly impacted the status of librarianship as a profession throughout the last century.

This paper will explore the foundations of librarianship as a profession defined by a gender divide, attempts of librarians to bridge that divide and the progress that has been made, and current professional trends and the possibility of the emergence of a new gender divide as the traditional one begins to disappear. The hope is that we can avoid another century-long struggle to bridge this potential new gender divide by studying the factors that led to the first gender divide and, its impact on the profession, as well as by opening a dialog about the possible emergence of a 21st-century gender divide.

## **History of Gender in Librarianship and the Formation of a Gender Divide**

For more than a century, women have numerically dominated the library work force, defining librarianship in important ways. Following is a discussion of the history of gender in librarianship,

beginning with the influx of women into the profession and the establishment of female-dominance. Then, recruitment of males into the field and the rapid rise of males to management positions that created a gender divide will be explored. Finally, the impact of this gender divide on the status of librarianship will be discussed.

## **Influx of Women into Librarianship and the Establishment of a Female-Dominated Work Force**

The beginning of professional library training with the first School of Library Economy at Columbia College, opened by Melvil Dewey in 1887 ([Passet, 1990](#)), an advocate for training women in librarianship ([Hildenbrand, 1983](#)), marked the beginning of an influx of female entry into the profession. Around this time, a new middle class emerged, characterized by a professionalism that was deeply rooted in service ([Hildenbrand, 1983](#)). Progressive reform of the time emphasized the role of education in promoting individual opportunity, and thus the number of libraries tripled between 1876 and 1900 as they took on an expanded role in the educational development of society ([Hildenbrand, 1992](#)). Women made up the largest pool of qualified candidates for these expanded openings in librarianship ([Hildenbrand, 1992](#)) and were recruited because they were "cheap and available" ([Phenix, 1987](#), p. 36). In 1887, Justin Windsor, Harvard librarian and American Library Association (ALA) founder, proclaimed that "[women] are equal to our work, and for the money they cost – they are infinitely better than equivalent salaries will produce in the other sex" ([Phenix, 1987](#), p. 36).

From 1880 to 1920, the number of professional women practicing librarianship increased 236 percent, most of whom were recruited from the middle class ([Hildenbrand, 1983](#)). Women went from a minority (20 percent) of the profession in 1870 to a majority (75 percent) of the profession in 1900 ([Phenix, 1987](#)), and peaked at 90 percent in 1920 (Ladenson as cited in [Record & Green, 2008](#)). However, professionally trained female librarians encountered many obstacles. Women accepted low-paying positions, which they often took for reasons other than monetary rewards ([Passet, 1990](#)), but in doing so, set a precedent of low salaries that would define the status of the profession over the next century. Many were forced to take on temporary work acting as "itinerant library organizers" (p. 209), cataloging collections, advising, and training local women to carry on the work ([Passet, 1996](#)). This temporary work performed by professionally trained female librarians perpetuated the employment of amateur librarians and reinforced the precedent of low salaries ([Passet, 1996](#)), and established an inferior professional image of librarianship, despite the introduction of formalized education that should have served to bolster the profession's status.

As society evolved from a service culture to a consumer culture, standards of living continued to rise and women increasingly sought independence and self-sufficiency ([Passet, 1996](#)). With this shift away from the value of service, female librarians became increasingly aware of their depressed status that was reflected in low salaries ([Passet, 1996](#)). By 1920, librarianship had become "a less attractive profession for ambitious modern women" ([Passet, 1996](#), p. 210). As society turned towards consumerism, the emphasis on service eroded and women began to value status and titles. As a result, female librarians became discontent with the low salaries that had by now been established as precedent ([Passet, 1996](#)). Female librarians began declining positions due to low salaries and recognized that the best way to increase their salaries was to change positions ([Passet, 1996](#)). However, the precedent was set and the image defined, and attempts to redefine the status of librarianship turned away from the women that had shepherded the emergence of libraries and secured their place in society.

## **Emergence of a Male-Dominated Management Force and the Formation of a Gender Divide**

Although professional changes in the early 20th century, a period characterized by an influx in women, caused male librarians to become the minority in librarianship as an emerging profession, they still dominated in terms of position and salary. A 1904 report, "Women in American Libraries," found that male librarians were more likely to be in better-paying and managerial positions than female librarians, and that men received higher pay for the same work (Fairchild as cited in [Hildenbrand, 1992](#)). Women were considered unsuitable for administrative work due to their emotional temperaments and lack of business experience ([Hildenbrand, 1992](#)).

In 1919, Charles C. Williamson, an economist and head of the Municipal Reference Library in New York ([Rubin, 2004](#)), was appointed to conduct a study of existing programs of library education sponsored by the Carnegie Corporation ([Brand, 1983](#)). The Carnegie Corporation had become worried about poor service in libraries that occupied Carnegie buildings ([Brand, 1983](#)). Williamson submitted a report of his findings in 1921, in which he stated that "largely because it is looked upon as clerical, library work has come to be known as 'women's work.' Men generally, and women to a large extent, do not think of it as offering a desirable professional career" ([Williamson, 1923](#), p. 107). Williamson recommended that the feminization of librarianship needed to be checked (as cited in [Brand, 1983](#)) and that "library schools should confine themselves to training of the professional type" ([Williamson, 1923](#), p. 136), meaning the training of male professionals. The Carnegie Corporation adopted Williamson's recommendations, and so the first adequately supported library education programs were formed with the intent of attracting men to improve the status of the profession ([Brand, 1983](#)). While the Carnegie Corporation used Williamson's report to revolutionize library education, this was designed in part to check female-dominance of the profession, and had lasting effects on the status and role of women in librarianship.

The Great Depression saw an exaggeration of the already depressed status of women in librarianship (Garrison as cited in [Hildenbrand, 1983](#)). By 1938, men were openly preferred to women, and laws were passed that prohibited the employment of married women (Garrison as cited in [Hildenbrand, 1983](#)). The techniques and incentives with which men were actively recruited into the library profession had profound effects on the number of male library administrators ([O'Brien, 1983](#)).

With the 1940's came a major recruitment effort in librarianship in response to the shortage of trained librarians caused by World War II ([O'Brien, 1983](#)). The ALA predicted a shortage of 18,000 librarians in the six years following World War II, but hoped to remedy this by actively and effectively recruiting men into the profession ([O'Brien, 1983](#)). Libraries sought to recruit men by emphasizing the ease with which they could move into administrative positions and the better pay that came with those positions ([O'Brien, 1983](#)). Returning veterans were especially targeted for recruitment, and the greater prestige, benefits and salaries bestowed upon male librarians were used to try to attract men to the field ([O'Brien, 1983](#)). However, in the late 1940's, the image of librarianship began to be recognized as an obstacle to the recruitment of new librarians ([O'Brien, 1983](#)).

By 1952, it was found that men made up greater proportions of administrative positions than women in public libraries, and top male administrators were five years younger than top female administrators (Bryan as cited in [O'Brien, 1983](#)). According to the U.S. Department of Labor in 1959, men began entering the field in increasing numbers as a result of higher salaries and opportunities for advancement to administrative positions (as cited in [O'Brien, 1983](#)). By this time, the low status of librarianship was considered a result of the continued image of librarianship as a female profession, and the influx of men into management positions established a gender divide in which librarianship was characterized by a majority of female library workers that were managed

by a male minority. The formation of this gender divide impacted the status of librarianship and the suppression of women for decades to come.

## **The Gender Divide: Impact on Librarianship**

The emergence of a gender divide and the continued low status assigned to the majority of librarians greatly impacted the status of librarianship as a profession. While the Bureau of the Census classifies elementary school teaching, librarianship, nursing, and social work as professional and technical fields, which are of highest prestige within white-collar occupations, sociologists nonetheless classify these fields as "semiprofessions" ([Grimm, 1978](#)). According to sociologist James Grimm ([1978](#)), female-dominated professions are referred to as such because their membership is mostly female, not because women hold the most desirable and powerful positions. Rather, the gender-specific nature of work in these professions "makes women second-class citizens in their own professions" ([Grimm, 1978](#), p. 293). In 1973, women made up 82.1 percent of librarians, the largest female majority of those four female-dominated "semiprofessions" ([Grimm, 1978](#)).

The gender divide continued to widen and men increased their majority in management positions. From 1950 to 1970, the proportion of men holding top administrative positions increased in public, academic, and state libraries ([Grimm, 1978](#)). Studies of income by economists concluded that the lower salaries of female-dominated professions were primarily the result of the effects of a noncompetitive market ([Grimm, 1978](#)). The gender divide created salary discrepancies between men and women because the large numbers of women provided greater opportunities for advancement, prestige and higher salaries for men because they had less competition ([Grimm, 1978](#)). Also, the lower rates employers paid to the female majority of workers allowed for higher salaries to be paid to the male minority ([Grimm, 1978](#)).

The gender divide and the association of librarianship with a lower status due to its female-dominated work force played a major role in its continued lack of professional status. This lack of status caused many problems for the profession, including the continuing challenges of recruitment, persistent low salaries, and the poor image of librarianship.

Although professional literature had discussed the problems women faced in the field, rarely had the gender divide been linked to the image and status of librarianship, "despite the obvious cause-effect relationship" ([Sukiennik, 1983](#), pp. 105-106). Contradictory trends emerged during this period, in that there was a gradual accumulation of data that revealed the low status of women in the profession, while, at the same time, a growing literature of library history remained unconscious of the impact of this gender divide on the profession ([Hildenbrand, 1992](#)). However, the problems of professional image and status could not be accurately investigated without addressing the social role of women ([Sukiennik, 1983](#)). Acknowledgement of the impact of the gender divide on the status of the profession was the first step towards overcoming it.

## **Professional Discourse on the Gender Divide Heralds Progress**

The gender divide contributed to the low status of women by keeping salaries low and keeping the image of the professional woman disconnected from traditional male roles that held status and power. A discourse about this gender divide and its role in the status of librarianship began with the rise of feminism in the 1960's. Efforts have been made to call attention to the gender gap in librarianship and its role in the status of the profession, and the number of studies focused on the gender gap and measurements of progress made have increased as a result. The evolution of studies focused on the role of gender in librarianship and progress in overcoming it will be explored as

emerging from the call to attention that resulted from the feminist movement and slowly changing views of women in society.

The feminist movement is of great importance to female-dominated professions because the social role of women defines the status of these professions ([Sukiennik, 1983](#)). The fight for equal pay that raged in the 1960's, the 1970's, and continues to this day, served to call attention to the lack of acknowledgement of the gender divide and its role in the depressed status of librarianship. Without this acknowledgement, progress in the profession could not be made.

In the first comprehensive career study of librarians for ALA's Committee on the Status of Women in Librarianship, Heim and Estabrook ([1983](#)) found that 78.3 percent of ALA's members were female and 21.7 percent were male. Almost half of men (49.6 percent) could be categorized as administrators, while 30.4 percent of women occupied similar positions ([Heim & Estabrook, 1983](#)). Further, the study found that twice as many men were elected or were appointed to office or chair of a committee at the national association level ([Heim & Estabrook, 1983](#)). Most importantly, the study found that "being male is significantly associated with receiving a higher salary even when personal, professional, and organizational variables are comparable to those of females in the sample" ([Heim & Estabrook, 1983](#), p. 37).

Irvine's 1985 study of the demographic and career patterns of academic library administrators supported the stereotype of the male career pattern as a fast-track to management; however, it was also found that there was a dramatic increase in the representation of female administrators from 1970 to 1980. Irvine further concluded that the dramatic progress made by women into the male-dominated sphere of management in the 1970's would not have occurred without the impact of federal laws, regulations, and affirmative action resulting from the feminist movement ([Irvine, 1985](#)).

A study on salary determination and occupational segregation in librarianship was conducted by Van House in 1986, which found that the earnings associated with library type were related to the proportion of men in that area. Male academic librarians earned the most and were most rewarded for job achievement and personal investment, while female school librarians benefited the least from those factors. Further, Van House also found a lack of expected differences in personal characteristics such as education and experience as explanation for differences in salaries ([Van House, 1986](#)).

During the 1990's, women began to make progress bridging the gender divide and entered management positions in greater numbers. Fisher (as cited in [Record & Green, 2008](#)) conducted a study on gender and management trends in librarianship in 1997 that indicated that there were three times the number of women in management positions than men and that only 19 percent of men occupied top managerial positions. However, Fisher also found that men occupied the majority of director positions in large and medium-large academic libraries and in large public libraries, that men occupied the majority of all management positions in medium-large academic libraries, and that men were still disproportionately represented in many other categories, despite being the minority (Fisher as cited in [Record & Green, 2008](#)).

Libraries began to see a major surge in the proportion of top leadership positions held by women around the turn of the twenty-first century ([Greer, Stephens & Coleman, 2001](#)). From 1990 to 2001, the percentage of female directors of Association of Research Libraries (ARL) members increased from 37 percent to 47 percent.

In a study on the status of women in librarianship and the motivation to manage, Murgai (2004) discusses the significant advances women have made in the last three decades. Since the 1980's, more women than men earned their masters and doctorate degrees (Murgai, 2004), and women came to occupy 51 out of 111 ARL director positions (Deiss as cited in Murgai, 2004). However, less than 8 percent of women held positions in higher administration (Murgai, 2004), and women still earned 76.5 cents to the dollar compared to men (Deiss as cited in Murgai, 2004).

In the fifty years since the rise of feminism in the 1960's, there has been a gradual shift in attitudes towards women and their professional roles as reflected in these studies. Research indicates that women have made significant, though not complete, progress in bridging this gender divide in librarianship in recent years.

## **Current Professional Trends and the Potential of a New Gender Divide**

Despite this progress, the role of gender in librarianship continues to impact the nature of the profession. As women continue to enter management roles in librarianship in greater numbers, slowly bridging the traditional gender divide that has plagued the profession over the last century, there is some evidence to indicate the potential emergence of a new gender divide. This new gender divide that threatens to emerge is unique to the 21st century and is a product of the increasing role of technology in the profession and the struggle to redefine the profession to remain relevant in the growing information industry. To reflect this transformation, the profession of librarianship will be referred to here as the library and information science (LIS) profession.

A discussion of the current trends in LIS and the signs of an emerging gender divide that associates males with technology and females with service and management will ensue. First, patterns suggesting a move from emphasis on traditional service functions of professional librarians to technological and administrative functions will be explored. From this exploration, a view of women as increasingly associated with management in the modern organization will emerge. Next, trends associating men with science and technology and evidence of men dominating technological positions within LIS will be discussed. Finally, the threat of a new gender divide emerging between autonomous, technological roles filled by men identified as information scientists and bureaucratic, administrative roles filled by women identified as librarians will be discussed.

### **LIS: Emphasis on Technology and Administration**

Predictions that LIS is moving away from its service roots are present in the literature from the last two decades. The belief that emphasizing a profession's science as the answer to the status problems of traditionally female-dominated service professions tends to lead to an abandonment of the service aspects (Harris, 1992b). The attempt to incorporate information science within librarianship to form the modern LIS profession is an attempt to bring the masculine status of science to the profession.

Traditional librarian functions, especially those that have the highest concentrations of women, are becoming "deskilled" (Harris, 1992b, p. 13) and are moving to the domain of nonprofessional staff. There is some evidence that core areas of professional practice that are heavily staffed by women, such as reference, collection development, and cataloging, are now being shifted to the domain of lower-paid, nonprofessional staff (Dilevko & Harris, 1997). Many of the service roles traditionally in the scope of the professional librarian will become the role of nonprofessional staff (Harris, 1992a).

The emerging pattern of this deskilling of traditional functions of librarians suggests that LIS as a profession is moving away from an emphasis on service and towards an emphasis on administrative and technical functions ([Harris, 1992b](#)). However, the contention held by professionals that the only appropriate professional functions are administrative and technical is also undermining the service function ([Harris, 1993](#)). Administrative and technical functions are increasingly seen as the predominant areas of professional information practice ([Dilevko & Harris, 1997](#)). With this focus on administration and technology, the term "librarianship" is more and more replaced with "information science" ([Dilevko & Harris, 1997](#)).

The inclusion of information science into professional education programs and the adoption of the term "information science" into professional rhetoric indicate the growing emphasis on the role of technology, because technological change has transformed perceptions of and access to information ([Cronin & Davenport, 1988](#)). It is argued that the increasing focus on information and technology is an attempt to shift the image of the profession away from the realm of service that has been viewed as feminine to associate the profession with functions considered to be more masculine ([Harris, 1993](#); [Hildenbrand, 1992](#)).

This attempt to once again improve the status of librarianship by reinventing it as a masculine profession mirrors the approach taken just under a century ago that caused a gender divide in the library profession. This attempt to associate librarianship with masculinity at the very least failed to improve the low status of the profession, and more probably contributed to its continued low status.

## **Women Emerge as Suitable Managers in Today's Flatter Organizations**

Women continue to make headway into management positions in the LIS profession in increasing numbers. Deyrup (as cited in [Bergman, 2005](#)) found in 2004 that women finally occupied over 50 percent of directorships at large research universities, and further, that they were also often earning higher salaries than their male counterparts.

The traditional male management style is characterized as directive and values individualism, power, and competition, while the female management style is characterized as connective and emphasizes cooperation, teamwork, and consensus building (Voelck as cited in [Record & Green, 2008](#)). In recent years, increasing challenges have been made to the perception that the traditional male leadership style is more effective ([Record & Green, 2008](#)).

Today's libraries are transforming from traditional bureaucratic hierarchies into flatter, more participatory and team-based organizations in response to the need for more flexibility to keep up with rapidly changing environments ([Stueart & Moran, 2007](#)). A new type of manager is emerging as the most suited to this new organizational structure. This modern style of management, with a focus on enabling, must establish an organization as a democratic and participatory environment ([McDermott, 1994](#)). Research by the Institute of Manpower Studies indicates that women are viewed as more flexible and adaptable, and are better at team work, managing change, networking and providing group support (as cited in [McDermott, 1994](#)).

As women continue to make up the management force in increasing numbers, there will be more evidence of this transformation of the image of modern management. More research will be needed to examine the role of women in this transformation. However, as women enter the sphere in greater numbers and the changes occurring in modern organizations are conducive to their management styles, it seems that women will further break down the traditional gender divide in librarianship and become increasingly associated with management in the future of libraries, especially as their traditional professional roles move to the domain of nonprofessional staff.

## Men and Technology: Indications of a New Gender Divide

With the structural and technological change of the information age has come the need for LIS to reassess its role in the information marketplace ([Cronin & Davenport, 1988](#)). As the information sector has become increasingly specialized, it has opened career opportunities for technical specialists from many fields, threatening the continued relevance of the LIS profession ([Cronin & Davenport, 1988](#)). A 1980 survey conducted by the University of Pittsburgh and King Research found that only 10 percent of 1.64 million professionals belonging to the information workforce were classified as librarians and another 9 percent were classified as working in information services (as cited in [Cronin & Davenport, 1988](#)).

A recurring concern in information technology (IT) literature is the declining number of women taking IT courses over the last 20 years, as more men continue to enter the IT profession than women ([Hutchinson & Weaver, 2004](#)). An explanation of the existence of a gender disparity in enrollment in computer-related courses is the social conditioning and the stereotyping that relates technology with men and associates the creation and programming of technology as a masculine domain ([Hutchinson & Weaver, 2004](#)). The proportion of women in IT continues to drop, from a high of 40 percent in 1986, to 29 percent in 1999 ([Ramsey & McCorduck, 2005](#)). While women make up half the workforce, they make up only 20 to 29 percent of the IT profession ([Ramsey & McCorduck, 2005](#)).

The terms "information scientist" and "information science" were formulated in 1953 and 1955, respectively, by Farradane (as cited in [Summers & Oppenheim, 1999](#)) to "distinguish the activities of information professionals from those of librarians" (p. 1154) in order to disassociate information professionals from the negative image of the term "librarian." The adoption of the term "information science" into the domain of librarianship raises the issue of the role of gender in these efforts. According to Gorman's famous line quoting a colleague, "information science is librarianship practiced by men" ([Gorman, 1990](#), p. 463). The association of men with technology, and therefore with information science, calls into question the motivations for emphasizing information science as a primary component of modern librarianship, now deemed LIS. According to a study by Morrissey and Case (as cited in [Rubin, 2004](#)), men are more likely to identify themselves as information scientists instead of librarians. The association of men with technology is beginning to gain attention in the literature, and predictions are rampant as to the growing value placed on technical functions in LIS.

Because current social attitudes identify men with technology, it seems that this trend offers a way to improve the status of the profession by once again favoring men, just as the traditional gender divide emerged from the profession's identification with masculine leadership abilities as a way to improve librarianship ([Hildenbrand, 1999](#)). A recent study indicates that computer specialist and higher level computer administration positions are disproportionately held by men, and that they make more money (Corbin as cited in [Hildenbrand, 1999](#)). Systems librarian positions are being held by a larger proportion of men than other areas of the profession, and these positions are more highly paid and are perceived to be more prestigious ([Bergman, 2005](#)).

The proportion of men hired for high-tech positions continues to show a wider gender gap than the total average in the LIS profession ([Bergman, 2005](#)). Men obtained 56 percent of high-tech positions but only made up 21.4 percent of new graduates in the field. Furthermore, men in these positions had a starting wage that was 28 percent higher than that of women (Maatta as cited in [Bergman, 2005](#)).



The disparity in salaries between positions identified with "librarian" and positions identified with "information scientist" is great and is seemingly growing. In 1996, professionals who used technology 20.68 hours per week had starting salaries of under \$20,000, while professionals who used technology more than 25 hours per week had starting salaries over \$40,000 ([Carson, 1997](#)). New LIS graduates entering nontraditional fields tend to make higher salaries than those entering traditional areas, and men accounted for 31.9 percent of those entering nontraditional jobs in 1996, although they made up only 21.8 percent of the total pool of new graduates ([Carson, 1997](#)). In 2002, the median salary for librarians was \$43,090, while the median salary for information scientists was \$77,760, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (as cited in [Gilley, 2006](#)). In 2007, graduates that described their jobs as falling in the information science category earned starting salaries on average 20 percent more than other graduates ([Maatta, 2008](#)).

A two-tiered workforce seems to be reflected in the gender breakdown of LIS program enrollment represented by the Association for Library and Information Science Education's (ALISE) 2002 statistics that found that information science courses were only 30 percent female, while library science courses were 70 percent female ([Vogt, 2003](#)). Enrollment information also seems to indicate that men make up greater proportions of non-ALA-accredited information science programs ([Gilley, 2006](#)). Men make up 62 percent of these information science programs, while women make up 62 percent of ALA-accredited information science programs. This seems to indicate that men are disassociating with the librarian label as represented by ALA accreditation.

While social stereotypes associate men with technology, it seems that they are either accurately mirroring the trends or they are impacting these trends. Either way, men continue to dominate the technical positions in LIS that are more and more emphasized as the future of the profession, and are valued higher than other areas of practice, as reflected in significantly higher salaries.

### **Implications for a 21st Century Gender Divide: Technology vs. Management**

In the IT profession, there are dual career tracks for technology and management, and women find themselves in management, often by default ([Ramsey & McCorduck, 2005](#)). It seems that a similar dual career track may be emerging in LIS, as administrative and technical functions define the modern LIS profession, and as women continue to become more associated with modern management while men continue their dominance of technical positions.

There is a potential divide between prestigious jobs characterized by higher pay, autonomy, and opportunity to be highly occupied by men and a new class of lesser valued bureaucratic positions in which female professionals will be concentrated ([Harris, 1992a](#)). As LIS continues to become oriented towards technology, the next generation of men entering the profession will likely experience "a renewed advantage in hiring, advancement, and compensation" ([Record & Green, 2008](#), p. 194). Further, as traditional service roles that were dominated by women continue to move to the domain of nonprofessional staff, professional women will likely continue to take on the role of managing the operation of these functions within the traditional library industry, and thus women may emerge as dominating the management function. There is potential that this management function, in light of the increasing value placed on technology, will be relegated to a lower status, just as women start to make true progress bridging the traditional gender divide that kept them out of these positions. As men continue to occupy technical positions in greater numbers, both within the traditional library industry and information science positions in other industries, they will likely continue to earn higher salaries and greater prestige than female professionals, once again creating a gender divide in the LIS profession.

In conclusion, while women continue to break down the gender barrier that has defined the profession over the last century, it seems that a new gender divide, unique to the changing nature of the profession, may be emerging in its place. More research is needed on the role of gender in the profession as it continues to undergo major changes. In particular, a study of the value and status of management positions as compared to that of technical positions in LIS should be undertaken to see if there is an emerging disparity between these functions as women become increasingly associated with management and men continue to be associated with technology, and if this disparity falls along a new gender divide. It seems that, in an effort to redefine the profession and its status in the information industry, women are once again threatened with relegation to lower status and lower salaries.

If the effects of the past gender divide provide any indication, this new 21st century gender divide will likely have a negative and divisive impact on the status of the LIS profession. There is much to be learned from studying the factors that created the first gender divide in librarianship and the long process to overcome it. Perhaps we can avoid another century-long struggle to bridge this potential gender divide through a dialog about its emergence and the impact of dividing the profession according to "librarian" and "information scientist" roles.