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## This Is Not a Library! This Is Not a Kwik-E-Mart! The Satire of Libraries, Librarians and Reference Desk Air-Hockey Tables

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**This Is Not a Library!**  
**This Is Not a Kwik-E-Mart!**  
*The Satire of Libraries, Librarians and  
Reference Desk Air-Hockey Tables*

Casey D. Hoeve

**Introduction**

Librarians are obsessed with stereotypes. Sometimes even so much so that, according to Gretchen Keer and Andrew Carlos, the fixation has become a stereotype within itself (63). The complexity of the library places the profession in a constant state of transition. Maintaining traditional organization systems while addressing new information trends distorts our image to the outside observer and leaves us vulnerable to mislabeling and stereotypes. Perhaps our greatest fear in recognizing stereotypes is not that we appear invariable but that the public does not fully understand what services we can provide. When we lose our ability to maintain relevancy, we risk the loss of operational funding and weaken the viability of the profession.

Whether the need to investigate library stereotypes is a personal choice or professional obligation for survival, examples offered throughout books, movies, and television are limited and inconsistent in nature. Libraries and librarians often play one-time support characters for specific scenes or purposes, only to disappear as quickly

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as they surface; such manifestations are exemplified by Mary Bailey's brief fate in *It's a Wonderful Life*. The librarian stereotype is explicitly prevalent, but minimal screen time prevents the opportunity to defend against niche roles perpetuated by the media.

The presence of libraries in *The Simpsons* undoubtedly increases the risk of satirizing the profession. In light of these circumstances, *The Simpsons* has defied the status quo of reducing libraries and librarians to an ephemeral prop. After almost thirty seasons, the library has played a regular role on the series, with many reoccurring scenes showcasing scads of libraries and librarians in Springfield and beyond. Although these places and characters remain secondary to the significance of the normal cast, the continued references suggest a more than temporary role, and perhaps even an established institution within *The Simpsons'* universe.

Within *The Simpsons*, the concepts of the library as place, attitudes toward the library, and librarian demographics are satirized as general categories. While some instances are grossly fabricated for the purpose of comedic value, a disturbing number of correlations exist between our reality as professionals and our satirical portrayal. Beyond good-natured ribs, *The Simpsons* suggests areas where librarianship should and must change for the better to serve a growing population of diverse library users, interests, and information needs.

### **The Library as Place**

“We’re just as much a part of Springfield as the church, the library, or the crazy house”

—“Bart After Dark” 8.5

Mapping the full spectrum of libraries throughout *The Simpsons* yields a surprising assortment of libraries, surpassing the average representation by the media. The Springfield Public Library is likely the most symbolic example of libraries to the average viewer, but additional libraries are presented that typically fall below the cultural radar. In illustrating the breadth of the profession, *The Simpsons* provides an in-depth portrayal of content and services offered to specialized populations.

Libraries in the series range from their earliest origins to the present day. The library of fictitious ruler Goliath II was hailed as an indicative example of a thriving civilization (“Simpsons Bible Stories” 10.18), representing the first Mesopotamian and Assyrian libraries. In modern Springfield, we find a curious hodgepodge of buildings complementing the citywide library scene. Old Springfield Library, the Springfield Public Library, the Springfield Library, and Springfield Elementary School library constitute significant reoccurring backdrops within the show. Additional libraries presented are not always immediately recognizable to the public. A penitentiary library was featured in The Montgomery Burns State Prison (“The Seven-Beer Snitch” 16.14), and a medical library was used by Dr. Nick Riviera to research techniques for Homer Simpson’s triple bypass surgery (“Homer’s Triple Bypass” 4.11). For those unfamiliar with college campuses, the Springfield University Library provides an example of academic libraries (“Homer Goes to College” 5.3); other examples are rounded out with the presence of the Bookmobile and the Christian Science Reading Room.

Libraries as a whole are often stereotyped as underfunded organizations, and *The Simpsons* alludes to this problem several times throughout the duration of the series. In one scene, Grandpa Simpson stands outside a crumbling and boarded up (and likely condemned) public library (“Old Money” 2.17). The infestation of bats in the card catalog (“Sideshow Bob Roberts” 6.5) and silverfish in the Old Springfield Library (“HOMЯ” 12.9) highlight shortcomings easily surmountable if adequate funding were available. It is suggested that the Old Springfield Library is so desperate to get rid of book sale items that they are willing to convert any unsold materials into pig feed (“Sweets and Sour Marge” 13.8).

In other instances, the libraries in Springfield appear to be moderately maintained and less hyperbolized as charity cases. The Old Springfield Library is rather impressive, comprised of a red brick exterior and a long reverential stairway with a columned entrance. The Springfield Public library appears much the same as any mid-sized to smaller town library, resonant of a subdued middle-class dignity sustained by humble means.

Despite these contradictory characterizations, most libraries are struggling to provide resources and services under their current

budgets. While many libraries produce a steady return on investment (ROI), with Meredith Schwartz et al. demonstrating that the Toledo Public Library produces \$2.86 for every dollar invested (12), and Bruce Kingma and Kathleen McClure calculating the Syracuse University Libraries' ROI of \$4.49 for every dollar invested (63), inflation frequently outpaces budgets. In 2005, Adrienne Chute and Elaine Kroe determined that the percentage of public library expenditures devoted to collections was thirteen percent (3). This percentage has decreased to 11.77 percent under Deanne Swan et al.'s further investigation in 2010 (9).

Stephen Bosch and Kittie Henderson also found that the Association for Research Libraries had experienced a drop in funding between 2011–2012, with most of the cutbacks coming from public university academic libraries. The increased cost of healthcare benefits for employees, as well as continued inflation of databases and periodicals, rising at a steady rate of six percent in both 2012 and 2013, has far outpaced the consumer price index of 1.7 percent (Bosch and Henderson). In reality, *The Simpsons* may be correct in subtly stating what we need to admit: that libraries are financially vulnerable and in need of better sources of sustainable financial support.

### **Attitude Toward the Library**

“Books are for squares. We’re a Multimedia Learning Center for children of all ages ... but mostly bums”

—“Margical History Tour” 15.11

The public opinion toward libraries and library use is both increasing and in decline. In separate reports, Adrienne Chute and Kathryn Matthew concluded that public libraries witnessed a tremendous increase in circulation from 1.4 billion (Chute 6) to 2.4 billion checkouts (Matthew 7) per year between 1990 and 2013, with loans to other libraries escalating from 4.6 million in 1990 (Chute 6) to 49.9 million reported by Everett Henderson et al. in 2007 (6). Similarly, Margaret Cahalan et al. noted that academic libraries saw a peak of physical circulation in 1994 at 230.7 million items per year (Cahalan et al, “Academic Libraries 1994” iii), which has since steadied out according to Phan et al. at approximately 138.1 million in 2008 (Phan et al.,

“Academic Libraries 2008” 2). Academic library loans and borrowing have experienced a steady increase, rising from 8.8 million (Cahalan et al., “Academic Libraries 1994” iii) to 11.2 million loans (Phan et al., “Academic Libraries 2010” 2) between 1994–2010, and 6.3 million (Cahalan et al., “Academic Libraries 1994” iii) to 10.2 million lends to other libraries between the same period (Phan et al., “Academic Libraries 2010” 2). It can be speculated that the decline in circulations may have resulted from more electronic holdings of journals and e-books (the statistics are still lagging behind); however, it is clearly evident that patrons use library services regularly, especially borrowing materials from outside their hometown library collection.

To accommodate our users, librarians not only develop services around our patrons, but we also search for gaps, as suggested by Jeanne Nikolaison, among non-library users, marginalized groups, and those with library anxiety: the fear of belittlement by librarians for the possession of rudimentary research skills, or for being ignorant of library services and building navigation (1). While user groups can demonstrate a startling diversity of needs and identities, *The Simpsons* presents several themes regarding library user stereotypes, namely that library users derive from populations of the less educated and lower socio-economic strata, as well as the elderly and adolescent, and individuals with less desirable personality traits.

*The Simpsons* regularly plays upon these attitudes by depicting library users and chronic store browsers as cheap. In the film *Ernest Goes Somewhere Cheap*, Ernest and Vern visit the public library, resulting in Ernest getting his head stuck in the toilet (“Cape Feare” 5.2). In other instances, the browsing of materials at retail business is also referred to as library-like behavior, insinuating stinginess by the customer. Apu threatens to shoot Bart and Lisa for browsing magazines in the Kwik-E-Mart like a lending library (“Krusty Gets Busted” 1.12), and in a similar occurrence, physically expels Homer for flipping through an issue of *Jet* magazine (“Marge on the Lam” 5.6).

The library is additionally portrayed as a place used by people on a limited income. Reverend Lovejoy needs to check out the *Bible* from the Old Springfield Library for the last nine years, as he cannot afford to buy his own personal copy (“Bart the Mother” 10.3). Lisa Simpson also imagines her future in an impoverished lifestyle, which includes living in a trailer and routinely traveling to the library

to “rent” movies (“Lisa the Simpson” 9.17). The library is even presented as a cheaper alternative for fiscally conscious families. Marge believes the family was living above their means and could find free information in the library, rather than spending money on expensive books (“Mobile Homer” 16.13).

In many scenarios, library users are also categorized as hopeless muttonheads. Cletus, the epitome of stereotypical white trash, visits the library to crack a turtle with a Leon Uris novel (“HOMЯ” 12.9). Patrons also mistakenly request Shirley Jackson’s “The Lottery,” with the fatuous belief it can help improve their chances of winning the state lottery (“Dog of Death” 3.19). And in another thick-witted example, Dr. Nick Riviera, whose educational credentials are highly suspect, is astounded by a library book containing a pregnant woman who had “swallowed a baby” (“Sweets and Sour Marge” 13.8).

Contrary to *The Simpsons’* stereotype, library users appear to be more prevalent among the college educated and those in higher socioeconomic brackets. In 2015, John Horrigan completed research on behalf of The Pew Research Center for non-partisan, non-advocacy public opinion, gathering library and information use by Americans. This survey shows greater use of libraries among higher income and educated populations. Individuals with some college or a college education were between ten and sixteen percent more likely to have visited a library in the last twelve months than those with a high school diploma or less than a high school education. Those making less than \$30,000 a year were approximately ten percent less likely to have visited a library in the last year when compared to those who earned above \$30,000 per year (Horrigan).

Regarding other user stereotypes, *The Simpsons* also suggests that libraries are a place where the less desirables of society congregate, most notably a meeting place for the nerdy, elderly and adolescent, and the creepy and/or lonely. As Edward Fink notes, *The Simpsons* uses Incongruity Theory, a comedic means to surprise the character (and the audience) with unexpected situations or logical extremes (46–48). Even though the public often ignores or avoids these unwelcome groups, or engages with them on a limited basis, these marginalized groups do, in fact, utilize libraries. The conglomeration of these “social outcasts” in the libraries serve as a stereotype to employ logical extremes, and amplify amusement, as ordinary citizens are forced

into uncomfortable and unexpected situations as they interact with the socially, physically, and mentally vulnerable.

Illustrating the more common stereotype, *The Simpsons* often associates the library and users of library services with the nerdy. Homer Simpson believes that libraries and people associated with libraries are strange and lame, poking fun at Marge for suggesting they attend Friends of the Library events (“Realty Bites” 9.9). When Lisa Simpson attempts to create a new and cool persona, she recognizes that the library was part of her old, nerdy self. Instead, she made friends with the kids who spent their time outside the library, using the facade as a skateboard park rather than going inside to “do stuff” (“Summer of 4 Ft. 2” 7.25).

*The Simpsons* also has a penchant for depicting most library patrons as either elderly or very young. The usual gang of regulars at the Springfield Public Library is a group of advanced age individuals with gray or balding hairstyles (“Dead Putting Society” 2.6). Marge also mentions that the periodical room is always filled with old people (“Lady Bouvier’s Lover” 5.21), and the Springfield Public Library and Springfield Elementary School library consistently show many of their users as being children or young adults (although it is expected that children would use the elementary school library).

However, more than just children, the elderly, and the nerdy use the library. In 2013 alone, Matthew reported there were 1.5 billion visits to the library, averaging out to four million visits each day (Matthew 7). Comparing public library card ownership, Kathryn Zickuhr found no correlation among age and ownership, with sixty-one percent of Americans under age thirty owning a library card, identical to the percentage of card owners over thirty years of age (Zickuhr). Horrigan also determined the percentage of those who visited the library in the past twelve months was fifty-two percent for ages sixteen to twenty-nine and fifty percent for ages thirty to forty-nine (Horrigan). When it comes to the assumption surrounding these particular user groups, *The Simpsons’* stereotype does not appear to hold much water regarding the age of users, or the education and economic status of library patrons.

In quite a few examples, *The Simpsons* highlights the gravitation of creeps toward the library. Homer Simpson mentions that he is “no longer allowed in the big people library downtown, due to some

unpleasantness,” resulting in his use of the Springfield Elementary School Library instead (“The Wizard of Evergreen Terrace” 10.2). Moe is also banned from the library (while disguised as Dr. Hibbert) in an unspecified incident, implying he had committed inappropriate actions or behavior (“Bart-Mangled Banner” 15.21). In another episode, Moe also comments that much creepier people are seated next to him in the computer lab of the Springfield Public Library, who happen to be the Crazy Cat Lady, Gil Gunderson, and an unnamed, mentally ill man with a twitchy eye (“Eeny Teeny Maya, Moe” 20.16).

In addition to creepiness, the issue of homeless and lonely individuals is also addressed. Lisa Simpson visits The Springfield Public Library, where the librarian comments, “we’re now a multimedia center for children of all ages ... but mostly bums” (“Margical History Tour” 15.11). The seating area is filled with unhygienic and possibly mentally ill, homeless types, which disgusts and frightens the visitors.

*The Simpsons* also casts several library visitors as lonely. Hans Moleman, usually presented as a rather solitary character, thinks he and Marge are hitting it off as friends, when in actuality Marge is talking to herself while conducting research (“It’s a Mad, Mad, Mad, Mad Marge” 11.21). Moe Szyslak uses the library computers to meet women through online dating sites (“Eeny Teeny Maya, Moe” 20.16), and Lisa Simpson, as an isolated hobbyist, manages to find encouragement through a gardening enthusiast website accessed in the library computer lab (“Stealing First Base” 21.15).

While *The Simpsons* exaggerates to a certain extent, libraries do face concerns regarding homeless and problem patrons. Angie Kelleher reports that many libraries have partnerships with social services to assist the homeless and less fortunate (19). Due to mental illness (and behaviors resulting from) and poor-hygiene, some of these individuals may be labeled as creepy or troublesome. Even though most librarians have weird patron anecdotes (sometimes these shared encounters serve as a bonding experience among librarians), Calmer Chattoo concludes the literature is inconsistent in defining what a problem patron is or what constitutes creepy behavior (20). Other than most complaints stemming from the homeless or delinquent activities, which vary by library, the concept of loneliness and libraries is not well understood. The average library probably has its share of creeps, delinquents, and lonesome individuals, but it is an inconclusive

stereotype. In all likelihood, the library may not be different than any other publically accessible facility that offers free or low cost activities and services.

*The Simpsons*, notably, often presents an alternative view to satirized conceptualization of libraries and librarians. The many instances of satire are often counterbalanced by reverence for the impact and services offered by the library, and the positive recognition of the library as the official destination for life-long learning and information gathering. The library's impact on the life of Lisa Simpson has been immeasurable. She uses the library in a multitude of ways, ranging from learning about football ("Lisa the Greek" 3.14) to ending the estrangement between Krusty the Clown and his father Rabbi Krustofsky ("Like Father, Like Clown" 3.6). The Springfield Mensa group also laments the reduction of library standards, criticizing The Springfield Public Library for removing the reference desk to "make room for an air hockey table ("They Saved Lisa's Brain" 10.22).

Even the most unlikely characters have been shown using the library with positive results. When Bart Simpson kills a mother bird with a BB gun, he visits the Old Springfield Library to learn how to properly care for the hatchlings ("Bart the Mother" 10.3). He also makes significant inroads to learning during an independent study with Superintendent Chalmers, where they meet in the library to discuss Theodore Roosevelt and manliness ("Bart Stops to Smell the Roosevelts" 23.2). It is one of the few instances in the series where Bart became interested in education and is able to select materials to fuel his enthusiasm. Although seemingly lukewarm at times, *The Simpsons* undoubtedly recognizes the importance of libraries and their contribution to research and learning.

### **Librarian Demographics**

"There are no books on Eliza Simpson, but I did find this ..."

—"The Color Yellow" 21.13

There is a fairly standard image of librarians in the media. From a perspective of age, Katherine Adams states that librarians are typically viewed as old spinsters, "the formidable mistresses of a complex

storage retrieval system” (291). The dedication to, and edification of the profession is usually implied as a negative or boring life choice, when compared to other ancillary pursuits such as raising a family (Lutz). Further, Jennifer Bartlet argues librarians are often depicted as white and female and rather conservative in dress (2). *The Simpsons* is consistent with other media productions in their conception of physical attributes. The overwhelming majority of librarians in the show are female, with over nineteen appearances by female librarians or library staff, compared to only five male librarians or library staff. Nearly all of the librarians appear to be in their mid-forties and older, many of whom have gray hair or wear glasses.

*The Simpsons* also exhibits the stereotypical characterization of the non-existent (or minimally existent) epicene male librarian. James Carmichael explains that the library literature describes male librarian stereotypes as lacking social skills and power, or having a lack of ambition for more traditionally masculine occupations (428). Male librarians in *The Simpsons* are mostly overlooked and adumbrative of most of the negative stereotypes attributed to male librarians. Among the low rate of representation, the characters are merely present in the background, completely lacking personality or demonstrably masculine characteristics. Hans Moleman, often depicted as weak-willed and stupid, serves as a librarian in the Springfield Police Station (“Dumbbell Indemnity” 9.16). In another example, a trusting, yet naive male librarian provides Homer with the phone book to Hokkaidō, Japan, and then allows Homer to use the telephone to make a “local call” (“In Marge We Trust” 8.22). The series also exemplifies the man-child male librarian stereotype by staffing the Young Adult section with a red-haired teenaged boy (a position typically reserved for an adult librarian), who Lisa was enamored with due to his snarky and disagreeable attitude (“Bart’s Girlfriend” 6.7).

The American Library Association (ALA), the largest organization uniting most librarians, provides demographics for our professional members. In 2017, ALA documented in a self-reported study that gender distribution among librarians is predominantly female, with a ratio of 81% female librarians to 19% male librarians. *The Simpsons* is shockingly consistent with ALA data, depicting a strong correlation of approximately nineteen female librarians and library staff (79.17%) to five male librarians and library staff (20.83%). This data leads us

to believe that the stereotype of the female librarian is, by in large, actually correct, and that *The Simpsons* factually represents the statistics in a nearly identical manner.

From a stereotypical perspective, *The Simpsons* overwhelmingly portrays librarians as yellow (white); there is only one librarian of darker skin color in the entire series, seen working at the Springfield University Library (“Homer Goes to College” 5.3). Racial and ethnic diversity has been a longstanding issue in librarianship. In 2009–2010, Julia Gonzalez-Smith et al. noted that only 13.9 percent of librarians were non-white, a decrease of 0.5% from the previous year (151). In 2017, the ALA showed that ethnicity distributions favored whites as making up 86.7% of the library profession, whereas 13.3% of librarians came from other ethnicities, with the second highest being Black or African American at 4.3%. Looking at the racial distribution in *The Simpsons*, the one non-yellow (non-white) librarian accounts for roughly 4.2% of the librarians in the show, which is much lower than the proportion of non-white librarians in the ALA. Regardless, both of these examples clearly display a shortcoming in diversity among librarians and a need for change and increased inclusion in the profession.

*The Simpsons* is also similar in their portrayal of age demographics on the show. It is very difficult to specifically document age, as no librarian provided this information; however, given the general appearance of the librarians, they look to be overwhelmingly middle-aged and above. A few younger librarians are presented, such as Martha, who assisted Lisa with her genealogy project for a class assignment (“The Color Yellow” 21.13). Correlating with this view, 81.8% of all librarians in the ALA were age thirty-five years and older and 54.5% were age forty-five years and older (ALA). Presented with the statistics, librarians are conspicuously white, female, and graying.

Personality-wise, a few tidbits in *The Simpsons* illustrate how librarian behavior is perceived. Pauline Wilson comments that a librarian’s stereotypical personality consists of orderliness, conformity, passivity, introspection, and anxiousness (9). Bartlet states that librarians are also viewed as distant, unfriendly, and introverted (2). *The Simpsons* depicts librarians in much the same nature. While the personality of younger, hipster librarians have been left out, the traits of the rational, introverted librarian are offered to the audience. Librarians

on the show are rarely confrontational, with only a few extreme examples in the case when Homer is physically removed from the library for eating (“Marge on the Lam” 5.6), or when Lisa is shushed for talking too loudly (“The Color Yellow” 21.13). Otherwise, librarians are frequently depicted as quiet and solemn characters, and in one instance, a robot incapable of understanding love (“Lisa’s Wedding” 6.19).

If we examine the true extent of librarian personalities, we find that librarians come from a diverse range of experiences and backgrounds. The varieties of available positions provide opportunities for all types of personalities and skills and offer individuals roles that best match their professional capacities. Juxtaposed with their presentation in *The Simpsons*, consistency is observed in the rationality, respectfulness, and the trusting nature of librarians examined by Jeanine Williamson and John Lounsbury (124). Librarians in the show respond to user questions in a professionally terse and respectful manner, displaying a helpful efficiency to empower library patrons. However, *The Simpsons* fails to address other personality traits that are less understood about librarians. Compared to other professions, librarians are more openminded, self-reliant, and imaginative (124), which may come as a shock to some users. While employed in underfunded organizations, librarians are constantly finding creative ways to provide patrons with excellent services despite reductions in budgets and staff. We also have an open mind regarding patron needs, as the sheer diversity of people we encounter regularly exposes us to new perspectives and subject matter. The ALA also advocates for equitable access and unbiased service (“Professional Ethics”), leading us to address and interact with content beyond our personal beliefs.

## Conclusions

“You made me bleed my own blood”

—“Bart the General” 1.5

The satirizing of libraries and librarians has the potential to negatively impact the profession. While there can be a shred of truth contained within stereotypes, much is exaggerated to promote an agenda, whether to positively or negatively influence an audience. But to what

extent has *The Simpsons* perpetuated false stereotypes? And just as importantly, how culpable are librarians in the process of contributing to those faults that are pointed out in jest?

We need to be careful attributing blame, as broad trends are not particularly indicative of individuals, but point out general truths that exist among large groupings of data and observation. Sometimes that truth can hurt, and in other cases, may debunk plenty of cultural hogwash and factoids. As the teacher at Rommelwood Military School discusses, “But the truth can be harsh and disturbing! How can that be considered beautiful?” (“The Secret War of Lisa Simpson” 8.25); the academic analysis of these stereotypes allows us to understand the reality behind these depictions, and the beauty manifests from the opportunity to learn and change our conceptions and improve the profession of librarianship.

Libraries are underfunded. *The Simpsons* and library data point to the veracity of this stereotype. Our return on investment continues to go unrecognized in the public and academic spheres, and libraries are forced to develop exceptional services on a shoestring budget. Despite the misconception presented in *The Simpsons* that libraries are used among the uneducated and low economic populations, libraries are, in fact, used by all groups of people, especially those of more ample fiscal means and higher levels of education. This type of stereotype can be damaging to the public image of librarianship; it reduces the library to something akin of a social service for the indigent and stupid, rather than an affordable place where people of all education and economic levels are welcome to better their knowledge and circumstances.

In addition, the library is not just a meeting ground for people labeled as nerdy, the elderly or adolescent, or the creepy, homeless, and lonely. With more than 1.5 billion visits per year, and an approximately equal percentage of users possessing library cards below thirty years of age, and above age thirty, library users definitively consist of a wide range of personality types and ages. But the library does experience its share of problem patrons. Librarians encounter the homeless and problem patrons (who may be viewed as creepy) at times. However, the poor definition of problem patrons in the professional literature leaves our comparison with *The Simpsons* as inconclusive. One may assume these people do visit the library, but it cannot be concluded if

there is any greater concentration of these groups in the library than any other publicly accessible space.

Although *The Simpsons'* satirical exaggeration of user groups is slightly askew, there are certain truths evident in the presentation of librarians that actively demonstrate a need for improvement in the diversity of the profession. Overall, the librarian profession is overwhelmingly female, white, and aging. This stereotype is not only prevalent in the series, but it is consistent with the demographics of the ALA. While there is nothing wrong with being white, female, and aging, *The Simpsons* and demographic data demand the examination of the profession and how we can eliminate barriers to make librarianship more inclusive. As our user base continues to expand in diversity, the profession should strive to match our patrons to appropriately meet content and service needs.

While the library literature and *The Simpsons* agree on the fact that librarians are rational, respectful, and trusting, we are surprisingly imaginative, self-reliant, and open-minded. These skills allow us to be flexible and adaptive to the changes in information services. *The Simpsons* does not get every detail correct (which is a realistic expectation of comedy), but it does recognize the importance of libraries and librarians to the citizens of Springfield (and hopefully the viewers). Their reoccurring role on the show is an aberration among traditional media, and allows us to critically analyze our profession to make it better and more representative for all library users without overly stigmatizing or damaging the library profession.

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