

Academic Rejection and Libraries

Emily Rogers

“You are not the queen of the library!” I found myself yelling at one of my reference colleagues. At the desk. In front of other faculty and students. “Don’t you dare ever talk to me that way again!”

A few minutes earlier, I had been working at one of my least favorite tasks: scheduling room reservation requests for library meeting rooms. I heard pounding on my office door and a loud voice saying, “Give me that schedule book! Give me that schedule book *now!* I need it!” The coworker had an urgent scheduling question and hadn’t been able to find the book. The pounding continued, then stopped when she left after finding my office door locked.

Tensions building over the several years I had been library instruction coordinator finally came to a head that day in 2009. Much of the rest of that day was a blur, until later a library administrator brought me a letter with the following words:

This letter is a written reprimand for the incident that took place... near the Reference Desk, when you lost your temper publicly. Angry, verbal, and emotional altercations with colleagues will not be tolerated in the future. You will need to manage your interpersonal relationships in a professional manner. This behavior will be noted in your annual evaluation for this year.

Receiving this letter began for me a downward spiral that ended several years later with my own tenure denial.

As happens with many people, I had fallen “out of love” with my

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job. By the end of my first few years, the library instruction coordinator position had left me anxious and drained. Here, the library instruction coordinator, as at many libraries, is the librarian who takes last-minute instruction requests and the classes that no one else agrees to teach. It can be hard to feel a sense of completion or accomplishment as a library instruction coordinator; there's always another faculty member to reach out to or another opportunity to connect with students in the classroom setting. For me, library instruction was never done, unlike most of the other jobs within our reference department, and the team organization we were under when I started my job ultimately exacerbated the sense that labor was unequally distributed in our department. Because our assessment program was in its early stages, it was difficult to document improvement in library instruction other than that we more than doubled the number of sessions we taught, and credit for that gain went to our marketing librarian. In addition, I was the one who ultimately bore responsibility for the quality of instruction sessions, though I had no power to address problems with others' teaching. Finally, I spent many hours scheduling rooms within the library, diverting time from more professional activities.

After three years in the position, I was experiencing burnout. Because library administration refused to recognize the very real stressors of the LI coordinator position—indeed, a library administrator declared that as long as I was employed at that library I would be responsible for room scheduling—I felt I had no power over my career or even day-to-day work duties. In fact, I was labeled “insubordinate” for questioning how appropriate it was for me as a professional librarian to spend hours each day scheduling meeting rooms for student organizations. My sense of powerlessness was amplified by my lack of authority over instruction.

That is how I found myself embarrassing my colleague and myself at the reference desk. The public nature of my outburst certainly increased the level of punishment. About my coworker, the administrator said that “she can say whatever she likes to you, as long as it's not in public.” Six months later, my evaluation described the incident and designated my annual review unsatisfactory, even though at the same

time it assessed the other parts of my job performance as satisfactory, even praiseworthy. At no time were the systemic problems that contributed to my—and probably my colleague’s—behavior addressed.

In August 2015, the previously unthinkable happened at this same campus, where I’ve now been for more than ten years: because of declining enrollment, more than twenty-five faculty received termination notices, including several tenure-track faculty otherwise well-positioned to earn tenure here. Seniority within rank seemed to be the basis for deciding which faculty members received notice, but any unexpected termination brings about feelings of sorrow, anger, and bewilderment. Even when a departure is voluntary, it often is accompanied by a sense of unfulfilled potential, of disillusionment and desire to escape. Perhaps this loss seems even more poignant because most faculty members enter academia for the love of the discipline rather than for financial gain. Even though we don’t expect ample paychecks, we do perhaps assume that at least we’ll experience high job satisfaction and the chance to achieve tenure.

Along with disillusionment over job duties, a faculty member who loses a job or is denied tenure usually feels both loss and rejection. Every so often the *Chronicle of Higher Education* publishes stories of tenure denial. As Daniel Drezner writes of the personal effects of the loss of tenure, “The emotional pain of rejection is married to the material anxiety of trying to find gainful employment elsewhere, the anxiety of reassuring friends and family, and the existential anxiety of questioning if academe is the right career.”¹

Trying to understand the complicated reasons for tenure denial can occupy most daytime energy and many sleepless nights. I, too, have experienced such soul-searching over my own tenure denial.

In a recent Inside Higher Ed column, John Warner writes of graduate student and junior faculty positions as subordination more than learning opportunities:

Faculty on the tenure track must pursue research that will meet the approval of those superior. They must teach appropriately—often well, but not *too* well. They must be “collegial.” All of these things are very eye-of-the behold-

er, but they are the price of entry to what they wish for, the chance to be not subordinate, but “self-regulating.”²

While Warner uses “self-regulating” as the condition that subordinate workers long for, the scare quotes he uses for this term and the word “collegial” suggest darker possibilities that I will explore later. Such subjective expectations for tenure vary from campus to campus, department to department. As Karin Griffin writes in her autoethnography of her tenure journey, “Academe is a unique geography requiring a strategy for gaining full expertise of its cultural landscape.”³ Despite her compound marginality as a black female library faculty member, Griffin achieved the success of self-regulation within her university through self-awareness, an ambitious research agenda, careful attention to service and institutional policies, and a successful mentoring relationship.

For both personal and professional reasons, however, many of us map the terrain of the academic landscape less smoothly, in part due to unspoken institutional expectations. Often, as *A Guide to Surviving a Career in Academia* describes, “The criteria used to determine how well you are progressing over your probationary years in meeting your department’s expectations are vague and there are few, if any, clear guidelines as to how to manage your efforts to satisfy their institutional and department expectations.”⁴

Even when quantifiable criteria are met, intangible qualities can lead to denial. It is difficult not to internalize such rejection. But is such internalization necessarily the only outcome? It is possible that we can use such disappointment both to initiate self-growth and, at the same time, to resist assuming that the entities making such decisions are correct—ultimately, to reject our subordinate status.

Anxiety over tenure is a fairly recent development at my comprehensive university. At many schools, especially research universities, the path to tenure entails greater peril than it did here for many years, but the establishment of a university-wide tenure and promotion committee some five years ago brought tenure guidelines across campus under scrutiny. Many departments and colleges rewrote tenure policies, and expectations became more fluid and less immediately predictable. As in other departments, our library’s tenure policy had

to be revised, raising concerns about our very status as tenured librarians.⁵ The delicate balance of research, teaching, and service tilted toward more publications while heavy service expectations remained. As one department head quipped, “Service won’t get you tenure, but you can’t get tenure without service.” Talk of “grandfathering” faculty for whom the guidelines changed in midstream was rejected. Some departments urged candidates to go up as soon as possible before new guidelines became definite; others became extremely careful about submitting candidates in the first place.

As a librarian who had received an excellent pre-tenure review, I did not adapt well to the insecurity of changing tenure requirements. I had shown the required professional activity by publishing a book chapter, a conference proceeding, and short articles; by serving on and chairing committees in national library organizations; and by actively serving the university on numerous committees, including the provost search committee and regional accreditation task force. The tenure guidelines changed in my fourth year, however, so that a peer-reviewed publication was required, and none of mine met that criterion. Despite my pre-tenure committee’s positive feedback, by the time I applied, I was approaching tenure review with trepidation.

When judgments of professionalism were added to the equation, I felt that the workplace began to resemble the grade-school playground, where I could be rejected for no visible reason other than failing to “fit in.” Add to that the amorphous notion of collegiality as a requirement, usually undefined but nevertheless expected. Earning tenure depends partly on the assistant professor’s socialization to departmental and campus culture. William G. Tierney and Estela Mara Bensimon examine the process of and difficulties with faculty socialization in *Promotion and Tenure: Community and Socialization in Academe*.⁶ Rebecca K. Miller reviews some of the socialization and adaptation issues facing new tenure-stream library faculty in particular, including lack of clear guidelines, insufficient time in the academic environment pre-employment, and limited support and feedback from colleagues.⁷

I had spent much of my adult life in either graduate school or other university settings, but even with that experience I found that I did not fully comprehend the intricate expectations for socialization

of tenure-track faculty. Here I use *socialization* not as a synonym for *collegiality*, though fitting in to department and institutional expectations is an aspect of both. In my mind, socialization is externally motivated, whereas collegiality is an internal choice to behave in ways that a group or organization finds civil and congenial. In either case, fuzzy institutional expectations can make it impossible for new faculty to acclimate within a department and can result in employee turnover and tenure denial.

For whatever reason, failure to continue in an academic job can feel like abandonment by the home department. A faculty member rejected for tenure has failed to research and publish what one likes and say what one wants—or “self-regulation,” in Warner’s terms. Those denied tenure, especially for a reason as difficult to quantify as lack of socialization, can never feel quite secure within an organization again. Even in times of an impersonal workforce reduction, it’s difficult not to think, “If they really wanted me, they’d find a way to keep me.” Being denied tenure feels even more shameful. As Peter Ellenbogen writes in the *Chronicle of Higher Education*, “Routine social interactions become as scripted and impersonal as Kabuki,” for “tenure denial is an effective scarlet letter.”⁸

I know firsthand the experience of insecurity and ultimately rejection over tenure, for I received a terminal contract for my tenure-track position. For me, however, this rejection was based only partly on changes in the university’s and library’s tenure and promotion policies. Rather, the unmasking of previously hidden expectations for socialization and collegiality within our organization brought to light my failure to win acceptance and approval from my colleagues.

By the time I went up for tenure in fall 2011, I’d been able to shift primary responsibility from library instruction to my other long-term interest, government documents. I was more than a year beyond my blowup at my colleague, though I had continued for another year as library instruction coordinator. I had put in more and more hours on the job in an attempt to make up for my outburst at my colleague and my bad evaluation, but I spent just as many hours puzzling over what seemed to me somewhat arbitrary administrative decisions. My

bewilderment made me work harder but also built my resentment. My lapse was, in my mind at least, no worse than other behavior I'd seen exhibited from time to time by several faculty in our workplace. Yet my punishment was more severe, a decision a library administrator blamed on our university administration's current concern over problems with professional and collegial behavior in our college environment. At times I felt despair over unsettling behavior that I couldn't seem to conquer, and at other times I felt that my behavior hadn't been so bad, that I'd been caught up in a political atmosphere that tried to enforce collegiality.

To some extent both interpretations were true.

Soon after my revised job duties began, two of our library administrators retired, and some overdue changes were implemented. The reference department hired a staff assistant who would take care of room scheduling, among other duties. The new library administrator recognized that room scheduling was a time-consuming, repetitive duty that did not require the skills of a professional librarian. In addition, my successor as instruction coordinator successfully argued that it was inappropriate for him as a professional librarian to spend his time and energy on this task, while under the previous administration I'd made the same claim for four years, to no resolution. It took a change in leadership for this shift to occur, and a new instruction coordinator whose complaint was not labelled "insubordinate."

When I applied for tenure, I realized that I was still having difficulty functioning in my position, yet I believed that what I had to offer would outweigh my negatives. The efforts I was making to rewrite my own story came to a standstill in November 2011, when the library promotion and tenure committee voted not to support my request for tenure, quoting these lines from the university tenure and promotion committee standards: "Faculty members should... foster a respectful relationship with students, colleagues and others who participate in or benefit from their work. Faculty members should uphold recognized standards for... professional conduct." Citing repeated improper behavior, the letter continued:

Ms. Rogers' conduct undermines her colleagues, her

department head, and the library administration.... We do feel that Ms. Rogers' service and work have been valuable to the library, the University, and to the profession as a whole. Thus it is our hope that Ms. Rogers can resolve these issues and develop into a welcomed colleague whose performance lives up to her promise.

The interim library dean's letter demanded that I build "a consistently respectful working relationship with colleagues, improve collegiality, develop a healthier working environment, and become a more productive faculty member." In the eyes of the administration and the tenured faculty, I had failed at socialization. As our library's tenure and promotion committee is made up of all tenured library faculty—the majority of the librarians currently working there—I felt rejected and alone, suspended between an insecure faculty position and looming unemployment.

Like many faculty denied tenure, I certainly experienced deep feelings of personal inadequacy, even though I also had letters from faculty colleagues outside of the library that praised my "work ethic, collegiality, and flexibility." Another noted that I understood "the governance of a university, and, thereby, what needs to be done for the library to maintain its place as an important part of the campus community." I was conscious of representing the library at larger university functions and often attended lectures, exhibits, concerts, and other campus events in part to give a positive face to library faculty. Through my position as library instruction coordinator, I had regularly interacted with teaching faculty across campus. I was well-regarded there, yet I had failed to convince those with immediate power over my future of my permanent worth to the organization.

Something about this library work environment was bringing out my worst qualities, particularly in my years as instruction coordinator, to the extent that colleagues outside the library could not recognize me at all in descriptions of my problem behavior. Within the library I could work myself into a fury when complaints about library instruction came to me. When our library instruction sessions increased, instead of the praise I craved, I heard complaints over increased workload. At times teaching faculty had negative reports

about the library instruction their classes received, but I lacked the ability, due in part to structure and in part to my own unpredictable temper, to bring about improvement.

When I could be objective, I recognized that a range of factors contributed to my downfall. Some were circumstantial—the changing tenure policies, inconsistencies in the policy about professional behavior at the library, university, and state system levels—but many of them were personal as well—problems handling stress, a desire for recognition, keen radar for perceived injustice. Ultimately, my public blowup served as a symbol of how I had not been socialized within this library culture. I had failed to become fully part of an institution that had turned out to be nontransparent in its expectations and structure.

As the reprimand and tenure denial letters noted, I did display anger at work—less often than I felt it, but still it appeared at times of particular frustration over instruction responsibilities or disparity in departmental workloads. I would blow up at coworkers or hold monologues about my frustrations with library leadership. I was wrong to think that I made up for these disturbances with my generally friendly disposition. I had actively and regularly supported social functions at the library: offering my home up for a baby shower, making special time-intensive treats for library functions, donating to gifts for colleagues' retirement and illness. I knew everyone's name and in most cases personal interests and family situations, and I genuinely liked almost all of my colleagues. I failed to realize, however, that the occasional blowup, in someone generally regarded as sweet and congenial, was more unsettling and disruptive to colleagues than a steady dose of crankiness would have been.

In a particularly bitter irony, I am one of those people (usually women) whom other people call sweet. My behavior usually does follow the gendered societal norms of having a pleasant disposition and behaving politely to others. In times of high stress and resentment, however, I violated that expectation. Being named insubordinate for questioning work assignments contributed to the frustration. I felt that I was expected to perform my work without a voice, and my suppressed voice came out in inappropriate ways that did make

me unpredictable and difficult. The changing tenure requirements increased my anxiety; could I really be denied tenure when the requirements shifted in midstream? One library administrator merely shrugged his shoulders when I asked about considerations for faculty who had been hired under a different policy. No matter that I had published what were previously considered good—and sufficient—works; no matter my general popularity with other campus faculty or my successful extension of the library instruction program.

Furthermore, a lifetime struggle with depression left me ill-equipped to know how to handle feelings of anxiety and anger effectively, or, indeed, to understand if such feelings were justified. Looking back, I see overreaction in my behavior, and I realize that my depression played a role in the extent of my workplace anxiety and frustration. But I also recognize workplace factors that made the work environment uncongenial, in addition to problems with the position.

As on many campuses, our library had its own building, increasing the sense that it was separate from the rest of campus and within its own workplace culture. Similar workplace issues come up in the types of library environments Kelly Blessinger and Paul Hrycaj present in their collection *Workplace Culture in Academic Libraries: The Early 21st Century*.⁹ For instance, Loanne Snavely and Alexia Hudson identify problems with incivility and describe a successful launch of a civility initiative at Pennsylvania State University.¹⁰ In another chapter, Jason Martin focuses upon a transition period at “Metropolitan Academic Library,” a library that had to adjust to new leadership after many years of little change.¹¹ The positive “family reunion” Christmas party cited by one of Martin’s interview subjects brings to mind our library’s own holiday tradition, unique from the rest of campus, of a friendly competition over the best treats at morning break during our “goodie week.” At our library, a family dynamic was in place long before I came in 2006.

Relationships in workplaces can easily resemble families, but families work in various ways—some wonderful, but others toxic. Our library at the time had a number of employees who had been there for a dozen years or more. While most of the library personnel were friendly and welcoming, uncongenial behavior by some employees

was dismissed as, “Well, that’s just how s/he is.” We had (and still have) quarterly staff parties to recognize birthdays and significant achievements, and I often joined a half dozen or so who used to eat lunch together in the staff room. Furthermore, several faculty referred to our longtime upper-level library administrators as “parents,” and once I received my reprimand and unsatisfactory evaluation, I personally felt as though I’d been disowned by the “library family.” When both administrators announced retirement within a month of each other, one faculty member said it felt as though “Mom and Dad were leaving us.” Such identification of colleagues with family members was extremely uncomfortable for me. I vacillated between relief at getting new leadership and anxiety over a lengthy search for a new dean and other changes, made even more dramatic once I was denied tenure.

Power structures exist in every organization, and, in my experience, the more isolated the organization, the more likely it is to develop in unhealthy ways. Libraries, too, are such cloistered environments that the resemblance to the family setting can be either a warm incubator or a corral of anxiety. Maggie Farrell notes that although libraries “are valued within our communities as safe spaces to explore different topics... and discourse is encouraged,” collegial relationships at work are not a given, and “employees may develop alternative work processes in order to avoid difficult individuals impeding smooth operations.”¹² Such divergences certainly had developed at our library, where some people had not spoken to each other in years. Yet my reprimanded episode stood out as the example of just how far, and no farther, unacceptable conduct would be tolerated.

Academic rejection should theoretically be no worse than rejection from other employment and job situations; after all, many people spend years building job experience only to meet obstacles that set back (or redirect) their careers altogether. I know that in my case the years of investment in education combined with the deeply personal self-expression that informs teaching and writing made my failure feel more devastating. After her final rejection from an overcrowded academic job market, Rebecca Schuman asked in the *Chronicle of Higher Education*, “What makes academe so ‘special’ as to traumatize its rejects into believing they are worthless to humanity?”¹³ The

personal nature of my tenure denial cut especially deep: I was rejected not for the quality of my work, but for my inability to measure up to behavioral expectations—I had failed to socialize within the library “family.”

Perhaps there is something unique in the closeness of the library workplace that increases the need for cordiality and the impulse to socialize employees. Unlike many teaching professors, librarians on our campus often spend all or most of every day within the library. Teaching faculty often travel to buildings, or at least floors, away from their offices to do their teaching, and they might go to the library for research or to work in a private carrel. Library faculty, on the other hand, usually work in the same place their teaching and research work takes place. For instance, except when I am at the reference desk or teaching, I spend most of every day with the same seven other people in an office suite. Its entrance is adjacent to the reference desk, so there is no way to avoid crossing paths with colleagues on duty at the desk. In such an environment, in which all of us must interact regularly throughout the day, good office dynamics make for a much happier and more productive workplace. As Dixie A. Jones noted in 1997, members of a reference department must “pull together to provide the best possible service... be willing to learn from one another, trust one another, treat one another with respect and courtesy.”¹⁴ While Jones calls on management to oversee such behavior, L. J. Pellack counters that a collegial department “is the responsibility of each individual librarian in the unit” and that even experienced librarians need to attend to their personal skills.¹⁵ No matter how anyone else had acted: I had violated common standards of behavior that damaged the department and library; I had failed, ultimately, to be collegial or to be socialized into the library family.

Is this need for collegial or professional behavior then necessarily a requirement for tenure? Is a faculty member’s failure to socialize within the home department and institution reason enough to deny tenure? If acceptable performance includes behavioral standards, should those standards be clarified? Four years later, having earned tenure and promotion at the same institution that originally denied it, I am still here to write about it, to empathize with others going through what can feel like both a betrayal by the system and a deep personal failure.

The letter refusing me tenure, with its demand for me to develop collegial relationships, had, in fact, laid out a path for me to pursue. I was to prepare a course of remedial action through which I could document improvement: counseling or anger management training, personal caretaking, regular meetings with selected tenure committee members to discuss my personal progress. When I first received the tenure denial letter, I despaired that I might ever convince my tenured colleagues that I belonged at our library, but the message offered me a course of action usually unavailable to faculty denied tenure. By the time I reapplied for tenure a year later, I had not only developed an acceptable level of collegiality in the minds of my tenured colleagues, but our library committee had also recognized that our state-wide university system did not include collegiality or professional behavior as a tenure requirement. The grounds on which I had been denied tenure were indefensible at the system level, but I have not regretted my decision not to appeal the initial denial.

It might be surprising that never once did I consider leaving the profession of librarianship, and very seldom did I consider applying for a new job. I spent some time wondering how I could carry on in my position after the tenure denial. Could I ever feel as though I belonged at this library again? Oh, I did idly wonder how a job at a local call center or the chain pet store might fill my desire for less stress, but I've spent enough time in low-paying jobs to know that there is nothing easy or romantic in underemployment. In addition, my spouse is a full-time lecturer at our relatively isolated university, and a new library job would mean completely relocating and finding him a position as well. Finally, I had previously worked in teaching and scholarly publishing, and I was much happier and more fulfilled in my work as a librarian. Despite my disappointment, spending one more year trying to succeed in my current environment was preferable to starting all over again elsewhere. However unfair some of the decisions that led to the rejection might seem, all I could do was address my own role in the story and try for a better outcome.

What got me through this period? My spouse, my friends, my commitment to make a success of this position. A friend advised me to pretend that in my work environment I was behind a waterfall: I

could see what was going on around me, but there was a barrier that protected me personally. The waterfall image itself was soothing, and I traveled through the library building shielded by its cascade. While I received encouragement from library leadership, I knew that this time I was on my own within the building to recover what was left of my career. Whatever the personal and structural problems that led to my downfall, that behavior could define me for life only if I let it.

Many things I could not control: memories coworkers had of my loss of control, the daily job obligations that caused me dissatisfaction, my sense of uncertainty about the future. I did seize hold of tools that could help me reverse my negative behavior, if not the tenure decision. For instance, I could take relentless care of my health. I attended an anger management workshop at the college counseling center, met regularly with an objective counselor, and sought medical guidance to adjust long-term prescription treatment for depression. Another effort to cope showed these notes I made to myself: a list of the five things that most annoyed me in the workplace (number one was, and remains, being interrupted and talked over—my sense of having my voice squelched was many years in the making).

Then my personal notes show the added revelation that “No one is ‘out to get me.’ People can be inconsiderate, or impatient, or self-absorbed, or insensitive, but are seldom intentionally malevolent.” This realization helped, as did more personal objectivity about my work environment. As I learned to consider my colleagues as coworkers rather than displaced family members, I regulated my anger and frustration, adopted a more consistently congenial disposition—and genuinely felt better even as I began to conform to the expectations within this setting. I published a peer-reviewed article, reapplied the next year, and was unanimously approved for tenure. A member of the committee commented that the remedial plan had worked just as intended; there was a perception that I had been socialized into this library family. Eventually, I felt that I again had a voice on the library faculty, though I needed to be careful not to express it in ways that might be perceived as unprofessional or insubordinate. I learned to become self-regulating, though not just in the ways Warner identified: overcoming subordination and gaining greater freedom of

expression. Rather than socialization, I feel that I have achieved true collegiality: the choice to regulate my behavior to address often unspoken and at times inconsistent standards for congeniality.

Looking back, I see that I am now much happier, not just because of the security of tenure, but also because I have found my niche within our current library environment, which has changed in personnel over the past five years. Without the expectation for collegiality, I might have been approved for tenure the first time. In that case, I might have bypassed the growth, the ability to self-regulate, that helped me find a more peaceful life today. I am able to contribute to the library without letting anger interfere with my work. I have tenure and, with it, more freedom to pursue research and writing projects—such as this one—that don't fit quite within the usual requirements.

Then again, had there been an opportunity to address job dissatisfaction or systemic problems within the library, the reprimanded episode that came to encapsulate my early career years might never have happened. Vague explanations of insubordination and lack of collegiality are no way to help faculty express and develop independent voices or to address their anxiety. It is essential within the academic workplace to have in place—and consistently follow—proper procedures for addressing employee issues before they reach a crisis point, long before these issues become fodder for tenure denial. Likewise, faculty must resist internalizing the expectation that new employees must simply figure out for themselves how to fit in to the new workplace.

Anyone responsible for mentoring new librarians or reviewing applications for tenure must have an accurate understanding of the policies and be willing to lift veils from institutional culture. Evaluation and tenure decisions should not be surprises. Multiple factors go into decisions about whether to grant tenure or not. While most academic workplace cultures probably always will contain subjective expectations for socialization of new faculty, it is not merely administratively sound to identify and clarify the standards of acceptable and unacceptable behavior. The tenure process—indeed, library workplaces as a whole—can become at one time both more humane and less actionable. Our work communities, including the individuals within them, need to be transparent and supportive.

In an ironic twist in the cycle of academic life, I assumed leadership of the library's tenure and promotion committee in fall 2016. This assignment brings me discomfort at contributing to decisions that so dramatically affect others' careers, but it is an opportunity for me to bring microscopic attention, empathy, and a unique perspective to the review procedures. Library leadership bears the responsibility to make an environment that allows all faculty voices to be heard and to model the behavior expected in the academic workplace without insisting on the conformity of socialization, to indeed allow all our colleagues to become self-regulating and fulfilled. Libraries as workplaces can, and should, be places where individuals can develop professionally without sacrificing personal identity.

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Notes

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