

Graying of the Profession

The retirement of librarians is a major factor contributing to the shortage of public librarians. It is estimated that 30% to 50% of librarians currently working in the profession will retire by the year 2010, and according to a survey conducted in 2000 by the CLA, 30% of its members will retire by 2010.^{xii}

- In its national outlook from 1999 to 2004, HRDC forecast that finding work as a librarian is expected to improve, as a very high retirement rate is projected to increase the number of job openings more rapidly than the number of qualified job seekers. However, they further predict that, "Government spending restraint in the cultural sector will decrease employment opportunities in public libraries ..."^{xiii}
- Surprisingly, the Canadian national average of librarians in the 40 to 54 age range is 56% as compared to 35% for those in all other occupations.^{xiv} The Association of Research Libraries (ARL) Annual Salary Survey indicates that the percentage of librarians who are 45 and older is about 75% higher than the percentage of the same aged employees in comparable professions.^{xv} The ARL survey of American and Canadian academic libraries found that, "librarians are, as a group, substantially older than those in comparable profession, and they are ageing at a much faster rate."^{xvi} According to the July 2000 issue of Monthly Labor Review, in 1998, 57% of professional librarians were age 45 or older.
- The increasing trend towards early retirement compounds the problem of the older age of the library workforce. The typical retirement age in the public sector is 58.5 years of age.^{xvii}
- Research conducted by Library Journal indicates an estimated 40% of America's 190,000 librarians say they will retire in the next 9 years or sooner. Similarly, the May 2000 issue of Library Journal reported that 40% of America's library directors plan to retire in 9 years or less. "Many librarians who were either hired to service in the 1960s during the baby boom growth or are baby boomers themselves are nearing retirement age".^{xviii}
- The ARL Annual Salary Survey indicated that, "... 16% of the current ARL library population would retire by the end of 2000, and the rate of retirement will increase to 27% between the years 2010 and 2020."^{xix}