Towards a Biblical Foundation for a Philosophy of Library Sociality

Terry Dwain Robertson[i]

Andrews University, Berrien Springs, Michigan

Abstract

In this essay, I focus on the sociality of librarianship in the academic setting. How should we as library workers think about the communities we serve? What mindset should guide our interactions with the people who seek our services? How should library workers think about how we collaborate to serve our public? As a profession, librarianship has a solid public service orientation, evidenced by its best community outreach, advocacy, and hospitality practices. Can Biblical teachings emphasized within the Seventh-day Adventist faith community be foundational for this ethos? Does faith integration matter? Correlating insights from Tuomela on group agency, Lankes on the mission of librarians, and the Biblical teachings on Discipleship, Second Coming, and Sabbath, I suggest the integration of work and faith is evidenced by a dispositional orientation that finds expression in a we-mode library sociality.

Keywords: group agency, sociality, we-mode, library outreach, library advocacy, library hospitality, integration of work and faith, discipleship, second coming, Sabbath

Introduction

The function of a "philosophy" of *something* (in this case, librarianship, further delineated as an Adventist philosophy of librarianship) is to capture the essence of that *something* using words and to give a coherent account of that *something*. Cossette (2009) offers the following explanation as applied to librarianship:

> While library science is limited to objective knowledge of the activities within libraries, the philosophy of librarianship wants to account for the total experience of the profession, and includes questions of value. Contrasted to science, it necessarily consists of

judgments of value that translate a vision of the world into the social engagement that follows from it. The philosophy of librarianship, then, is the theoretical integration of library practice as a unity, the encompassing understanding of the meaning of the profession. Through a method that is at once critical and reflective, it attempts to form a synthetic whole out of the disparate facts of librarianship to better direct its application (pp. 8-9).

Following Cossette's proposal, this essay explores questions of value, of a vision of the world, and of the engagement that follows. On the question of objective activities in the library, I appreciate that there may not be much that can be considered distinctively Seventh-day Adventist. Best practices apply in every library setting, regardless of the community served. It has been my experience that everyday functions occupy the library workers' time, and rarely do we stop and think about the unity and meaning of our work. Does our shared Adventist faith speak to our values, our vision, and our engagement? Do the Scriptures inform the purpose and unity of our library work?

Librarianship as a profession has a deeply ingrained mindset of service to, for, and in the community. The Church, represented by our faith, also has a profoundly ingrained service mindset to, for, and in the community. This mindset invites a discussion of the integration of faith and work, a conversation point in many disciplines on faith-based campuses (Burton, 2018; Roberts, 2018). As library workers on faith-based campuses, how do we bring both domains together so they are working in tandem--holistically, rather than schizophrenically? In actual practice, I am confident that most Adventist library workers integrate faith and work with excellence, whether or not they work in Adventist institutions, whether in public, academic, or special libraries. The purpose of this essay is to open some conversation points on which Adventist library workers might articulate what accounts for the distinctiveness faith brings to their work, and then how they integrate faith and work.

Librarianship as a profession consists of three dimensions: documentality, sociality, and spatiality (Bellingradt & Salman, 2017). In other words, there are the artifacts we curate, the services to patrons we provide, and the buildings and other places where we work. In another essay, I (2019) explored documentality. In this essay, the focus is on sociality, a broad-category term that refers to interpersonal relationships and interactions as social groups and in social settings. How should we, as Adventist library workers, think about the communities we serve? What mindset should guide our interactions with the people who seek our services? How should we think about how we collaborate to serve our public? In a future essay, I hope to explore questions regarding the library as a distinct and organized space.

One framework for a conversation like this is the mission of librarianship as expressed by Lankes (2011), "The mission of librarians is to improve society through facilitating knowledge creation in their communities." He argues this mission is not about collections or buildings or institutions, but about the people, the professionals, who practice librarianship. He then parses and exegetes that mission statement throughout the 600+ pages of his *The Atlas of New Librarianship,* illustrating how it applies to all facets of library work, public, academic, and special. His discussion of what improving society entails, the epistemological parameters of the knowledge to be created, and what constitutes a community are all worthy of serious consideration. However, while these discussions provide a good starting point, there is much more on these themes to consider than Lankes could ever hope to include in a conventional textbook.

These three themes—improving society, knowledge creation, community—are foundational to all interpersonal relationships, transcend all cultures, and have spanned all of history. Because of this universality, the Scriptures address these themes. In particular, those Biblical teachings emphasized within the Adventist faith community may prove to be foundational for this ethos. This assumption further suggests that Biblical wisdom on these themes continues to be relevant to all aspects of human flourishing. As such, this wisdom speaks to the dispositions and motivations Adventist library workers bring to their work. As delimited in this essay, these themes provide a framework for discussing the integration of faith and work in the context of an academic library sociality, thus informing the interpersonal engagement of library workers with others in the library environment. Corresponding reflections would be equally fruitful for librarians serving in public and special libraries.

Mission of Librarianship	Biblical Teaching	Librarianship Practices
Improve Society	Second Coming	Advocacy
Create Knowledge	Discipleship	Outreach/Marketing
Communities	Sabbath	Hospitality

Establishing a Frame for Sociality

One concept drawn from the philosophical discussions surrounding group agency is the "we-mode" as differentiated from the "I-mode" orientations to motivations and decision making. For example, Tuomela (2007), in his *Philosophy of Sociality,* analyzes the we-mode phenomena in detail. It pertains to many categories of group actions, group agency, and community behaviors when such actions are undertaken for shared reasons or motivations rather than for private reasons or motivations. According to his analysis, we-mode thinking embraces a broad spectrum of social

activity. Therefore, this we-mode sociality is a valuable frame for how library workers intentionally use their expertise in social engagements.

A second concept drawn from related discussions of group agency is that of social glue. Bratman (2014) defines this as when "several, distributed participants are interconnected—social-psychologically glued together—in ways characteristic of, in particular, shared intentionality" (p. 125). He views this as applying to groups bonding together with shared intentions, plans, and policies. Copp (2015) builds on Bratman's description by arguing that social glue also includes a rational and normative element, a mutual responsiveness. He concludes,

> A virtuous person would be disposed, other things being equal, to be willing to act together with those who are willing to act with her, willing to form interlocking and meshing intentions with those willing to act with her, and willing to support the efforts of those with whom she is acting (p. 3396).

Biblical Illustration

A Biblical model that embraces both the we-mode thinking and the social glue metaphor is the doctrine of the Trinity. Jesus articulates this mode of thinking in John14:10.

> Don't you believe that I am in the Father, and that the Father is in me? The words I say to you I do not speak on my own authority. Rather, it is the Father, living in me, who is doing his work.[ii]

In speaking of the Holy Spirit, Jesus stated in John 16:13-15:

> But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all the truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come. He will glorify me because it is from me that he will receive what he will make known to you. All that belongs to the Father is mine. That is why I said the Spirit will receive from me what he will make known to you.

In this way, Jesus connects the three persons of the Godhead as fully engaged in joint intentions and mutual support. They do not act independently for private reasons; all actions are motivated by joint values and objectives, taking one another into full account.

Some have also interpreted Genesis 1:26 as supporting a belief in the Trinity (Bowers, 2016; Sexton, 2010). By extension, this suggests that the creation of

humanity would be an example of we-mode action. "Then God said, 'Let us make mankind in our image, in our likeness.'" Assuming that the Trinity affirmed in the New Testament is reality, then the use of the first-person plural in this context can be interpreted as a joint intention. It follows that the creation of humanity in the image and likeness of God embodies a we-mode sociality. This orientation can be contrasted with the I-mode motivation associated with the Fall as described in Genesis 3:6. "When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom, she took some and ate it." For private reasons, Eve desired wisdom, thereby substituting the we-mode sociality with an I-mode orientation. This paradigm shift in the human mindset partially explains why Adam and Eve were expelled from the Garden of Eden and ultimately experienced death.

The Biblical narrative closes in Revelation 22 with the we-mode sociality fully restored.

> Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life, as clear as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb down the middle of the great street of the city. On each side of the river stood the tree of life, bearing twelve crops of fruit, yielding its fruit every month. And the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations. No longer will there be any curse. The throne of God and of the Lamb will be in the city, and his servants will serve him. They will see his face, and his name will be on their foreheads (vs. 1-5).

The throne of God and of the Lamb, and the river of the water of life (see Isaiah 44:3) represent the Trinity, fully united and acting in concert so that all people will flourish—experiencing healing and freedom from the curse of death. All inhabitants will fully reciprocate by identifying with the Trinity, sharing Their purpose, living in Their presence, bearing Their name.

In the discussions of the following themes, these metaphors of we-mode thinking and social glue offer a frame for understanding the integration of faith and work.

Theme One: Improving Society

In his discussion of improving society, Lankes (2011) notes, "It requires us not to simply do whatever the community wants but to ensure that our actions are for the betterment of the whole" (p. 117). This action assumes that library workers have a sense of direction defined by core values. But it is not enough to discuss core values. "We must marry our beliefs and knowledge with action. Improving society is not as simple as believing you know how it could be better, but actually working to

make it better" (p. 117). His vision of what betterment entails is spelled out and is founded on common, widely shared social values. As he concludes this section, however, his enthusiasm is focused on encouraging library workers to keep doing. For him, the measure of success is that the battle continues (p. 135).

The ambiguity of what it might mean to improve society is rooted in the human condition. Often, contemporary society measures betterment through economic growth characterized by competition, and when applied to commodified information as a commercial product, thoughtful librarians find much to critique in this orientation (Gregory & Higgins, 2013). Other conversations revolve around diversity, equity, and inclusion in who has a voice (Westbrook, 2021). One theme common to librarianship embraces improved access to information. Without thoughtful and intentional reflection, library workers risk going with the flow of culture rather than helping to shape it in constructive ways.

Biblical Foundation

The Biblical teaching of the Second Coming of Jesus at the end of time helps make sense of this proactive approach to advocacy, particularly as described in 2 Peter 3. The chapter is framed by the exhortations "to stimulate you to wholesome thinking" (2 Peter 3:1) and "grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ" (2 Peter 3:18). These exhortations are mutually inclusive, and the one embraces the other. Thus, two qualitative characteristics of this new life are wholesome thinking and grace. Wholesome thinking speaks to engaging rationally with reality, and grace speaks to learning in an environment of favor, safety, and goodwill free from fear and anxiety. Peter offers two reliable resources for grounding values: "the words spoken in the past by the holy prophets and the command given by our Lord and Savior through your apostles" (2 Peter 3:2).

Peter then applies this disposition of wholesome thinking to the promise of "a new heaven and a new earth, where righteousness dwells" (2 Peter 3:13). He addresses a counterargument that claims nothing will change, that there will never be a new place where righteousness dwells, and that evil desires will continue to dominate. But Peter assures his readers that "the day of the Lord will come like a thief. The heavens will disappear with a roar; the elements will be destroyed by fire, and the earth and everything done in it will be laid bare" (2 Peter 3:10).

Embedded in this application, Peter identifies a critical theological disposition. "He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance" (2 Peter 3:9). God is all about saving people. When the time is right, the earth as an object will need to be cleansed. Those who have accepted His offer of salvation will then receive the promise of a new earth, clean and purified. In the meantime, Peter challenges his readers, "What kind of people ought you to be? You ought to live holy and godly lives" (2 Peter 3:11). Living holy and godly lives

entails embodying the divine dispositions within lived experience. Godly living includes the disposition of patience, "not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance." The hope of the second coming cannot be reduced to an I-mode desire for private reasons, for example, the avoidance of suffering. The hope of the second coming must be elevated to a we-mode action of collective agency to include everyone willing. Advocacy becomes a core characteristic of the sociality of the readers, whom Peter identifies as "dear friends" (2 Peter 3:1, 17).

Two biblical narratives from the Old Testament provide counter-examples for this godly attribute. The first is the story of Abraham. In a carefully argued literary analysis of the seven times God interacted with Abraham in the Genesis story, Drew (2020) noted that the seventh encounter, the sacrifice of Isaac, did not receive the same commendation from God as the other six. While Abraham intuitively advocated with God to save Sodom and Gomorrah from destruction, he failed to advocate with God for the life of his son Isaac (Genesis 18, 22). For Isaac's sake, God intervened, and in Isaac's story, we have a profound example of God's salvation. But Abraham himself appears caught up in the I-mode thinking of submission to power and not in the we-mode mindset of engaging in advocacy for the life of another person.

The second counter-example is the story of Jonah. Reluctantly, Jonah delivered God's message to Nineveh, but at no point did Jonah appear to care for the well-being of the people he was sent to warn. His I-mode orientation was ironically exposed when Jonah complained about the destruction of the sheltering plant while God was rejoicing in the salvation of a city (Jonah 4:10-11).

In conclusion, the Biblical teaching of the Second Coming invites the believer to be transformed from an I-mode mindset into a godly we-mode perspective. The godly we-mode mindset advocates for the world's salvation and shares in God's patience in the hope that all will come to repentance and that all will inhabit a new earth where righteousness dwells, where a sanctified we-mode sociality is the norm. This desire contrasts with an attitude absorbed in one's own readiness/goodness like Abraham or impatiently awaits the destruction of evil people like Jonah.

Application to Librarianship

Based on this value of advocacy, library workers are motivated to connect people to the information they seek and provide a just and equitable environment where they can flourish. These expectations are embedded in the ALA Code of Ethics (American Library Association, 2008). Library workers achieve this mission by advocating on behalf of the less informationally advantaged for whatever is needed to optimize their knowledge creation experiences (Nzomo & Fehrmann, 2020).

Notable examples of this advocacy role in the library world include:

- ACRL's affordable education initiatives (Jenson, 2015);
- SPARC's open access initiatives (Scholarly Publishing and Academic Resources Coalition, n.d.);
- policies that invite the diverse patrons in rather than keep them out (Bombaro, 2020); and
- publishing platforms such as institutional repositories that give student authors a global voice (Sabharwal, 2019).

Many other initiatives also deserve recognition.

Some advocacy opportunities involve a review of internal library policies that speak to ensuring access to sufficient resources. Other opportunities advocate for a place where knowledge creation can happen or engage underserved communities (Skinner et al., 2021; Zettervall & Nienow, 2019).

In introducing their book that profiles many instances of library engagement in social justice initiatives, Bales and Budzise-Weaver (2020, p. 1) assert:

> Modern libraries are routinely associated with social justice as well as adjunct ideas like economic justice, human rights, free access to education, and democracy. Furthermore, one often sees library and information professions as tasked with furthering such ideas, associating library workers with the role of supporting the development of patron autonomy and agency through the professional and responsible custodianship and provision of information.

Based on this vision of a we-mode sociality, library workers are affirmed in their shared motivation to be agents of healing and freedom to improve society while embedded within the community. In other words, library workers fulfill this vision by using their expertise to connect others to the information and resources they need to flourish and progress in attaining wholeness. In academic libraries, the immediate assumption is that this refers primarily to intellectual flourishing. Holder and Lannon (2020) provide a comprehensive description and analysis of the many other categories of wellness initiatives in academic libraries today, including special collections of diversity zines, study spaces for families with children, favorable policies for therapy animals, and reflection rooms. Adventist libraries can also include spiritual wholeness to that mix (Bravo-Rivera & Spears, 2016; Down, 2017; Dürsch, 2016; Hortemiller, 2018; Johnson, 2016; Knight, 2017). The desired flourishing applies to the whole person.

A belief in the second coming of Jesus should enrich and more fully inform the engagement of believers in library work in advocacy practices. It becomes an expression of the divine we-mode sociality to seek ways to improve and enhance the equity and justice of information practices as a pointer towards a greater reality

"where righteousness dwells." Library workers have identified best practices for many standard services to patrons that embrace these values as a profession. Hopefully, faith transforms achieving excellence in these best practices from a duty to a delight, with the added essence of hopeful patience and grace that blesses those served.

This mindset anticipates the value of persistence as aptly illustrated in Jesus' parable of the sower as explained in the Gospel of Luke (8:5-8, 11-15). In Luke, the focus is on the seed, the Word of God. The seed is scattered everywhere, without economy, without reference to efficiency. Some seeds may never get anywhere, some may end up in the shallow ground and be unable to take the heat, and some may be smothered in a weed patch. But the assurance is that there will be a harvest, and the seed that lands on good soil will bear fruit a hundredfold. I suggest it is not the worry of the library worker whether or not the relationships they build improve society in some visible and measurable manner, but to keep sowing the seed persistently. Unlike structured library services with time delimited and quantifiable outcomes, which warrant ongoing assessment, modes of action based on these transcendent guiding values produce results that may not be measurable.

As Adventist library workers, we are challenged to adopt an advocacy mindset. The distinctive element of this advocacy is that it is person-centered, not issue-centered. It embraces the we-mode and not the I-mode orientation. Whether or not those patrons who visit the library recognize it, library workers look out for their best interests and seek to provide equity and opportunity so they may flourish in their learning, not wanting any to be left out. This advocacy orientation emulates God's patience and strives to be invitational rather than authoritative. Belief in the Second Coming also serves as a social glue that bonds library workers with their guests, invoking hope and a dynamic vision of a better society.

Theme Two: Knowledge Creation

Lankes (2011) follows Pask's (1976) Conversation Theory in his development of what knowledge creation entails. His understanding of the theory can be summarized by stating that knowledge is the achievement of an agreement by two or more participants in conversation with each other. These agreements constitute knowledge, and the conversations leading to agreements define knowledge creation. This construction works as a performative definition of knowledge. However, it does not incorporate many epistemological or ontological understandings of knowledge grounded in the classic definition of knowledge as "justified, true belief." Even so, the assumption is that knowledge so created is veridical and does not include the false, the erroneous, or the deceptive.

A first pertinent advantage of a conversation-theoretical approach is that it acknowledges the social engagement inherent in the learning process. When I claim

to know something, I give evidence of that knowledge using words or performing actions. If I cannot explain a notion because I lack the language, nor act because I lack the skills, then I cannot claim knowledge. It is exclusively through social engagement that I can hope to acquire the language to explain a notion. While it may not be solely through social engagement that some performative skills can be acquired, most skills are most efficiently acquired through learning from a teacher.

A second pertinent implication of this approach is that each person can bring only what they already know to the conversation. This sum of personal knowledge has been labeled an entailment mesh. This idea generates two corollaries: (1) we don't know what we don't know, and (2) the more we know, the more we realize that we don't know. However, this entailment mesh readily expands as it confronts new information (Lankes, 2011, p. 49). Making sense of the information and incorporating it into the entailment mesh requires a conversation partner.

It should be noted here that the conversation partner can be another person alive face-to- face. It can also be an author via a document. It might even be with oneself when analyzing observations of the world (Lankes, 2011, p. 39).

A third pertinent advantage of this approach to knowledge is that it assumes that knowledge acquisition is transformative. The measure of the value of the knowledge lies in its empowering of the knower to flourish. One example is knowing how to read, an ability that is a performative skill that can richly contribute to human flourishing. Once achieved, it is virtually impossible to forget that writing is expressive of language. It may be possible to forget how to decode the text, but not the function of the text.

Biblical Foundation

One relational methodology that illustrates this conversational-theoretical approach to knowledge creation attested to in the Biblical writings is discipling. The final words of Jesus to his eleven apostles as recorded by Matthew are, "Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you" (28:19-20).

Since the beginning of Jesus' ministry in Galilee, these eleven disciples had been with him, emersed in his we-mode sociality. Jesus employed numerous teaching moments to share his values and dispositions with these chosen few. Conversation authenticated by a personal relationship powered this knowledge creation that transformed these workers, struggling to feed their families, into world changers. (Matthew 4:19). Even so, the group did not grasp the full significance of this knowledge opportunity until after the resurrection. But when Jesus instructed them to go and make disciples, they were ready.

Sanou (2019) describes this missional discipling:

Believers of the New Testament linked together their belonging to a community and their responsibility to share what that community stood for. Mission in the context of the Great Commission was understood as more than a call to share the gospel with those who do not know Christ. It was understood as both a call to share one's faith and to disciple interested recipients to free them from the grasp of the devil so that they could fully and continually devote themselves to the lordship of Jesus Christ (p. 171).

The remainder of the New Testament attests to the community-building efforts of the apostles and the holistic impact on those who accepted the call. In these records, we find evidence of both the we-mode sociality of the Church and the social glue, the faith, that bonded a highly diverse community together with unprecedented equity and inclusion—discipling at its best.

Application to Librarianship

A broad category of librarianship that correlates well with this understanding of community-centered discipling embraces the many ways library workers in academic libraries do community outreach and marketing. Outreach effectiveness begins with communication, and this is discussed under the heading of marketing. Advice on methods of doing this is readily available from many professional sources; Lucas-Alfieri (2015) is one of the recent, more comprehensive examples. She defines marketing as "the function by which the library keeps in touch with its constituents ... and creating improvement plans for implementation" (p. 67). This description prioritizes and contrasts marketing with promotion. "To promote is to design educational methods to stimulate constituents' interest in using library resources and services. It involves ongoing activities that strategically reveal and advertise library resources and services" (p. 67).

Therefore, this mindset of library workers incorporates the vision of proactively engaging their academic communities to meet those needs where their expertise can positively impact. But even this focus may be too limited. Surveys (Baba & Abrizah, 2018; Hang Tat Leong, 2013; Holder & Lannon, 2020; Schneider, 2003; Sittler & Rogerson, 2020) illustrate many examples of academic libraries engaging the larger community around the university. These outreach endeavors engage the public young and old, extend information literacy training beyond the university community, provide spaces for scholarly events that invite the public, promote wellness, and cooperate and collaborate with community libraries and other organizations. A recent event along these lines within Adventist Libraries is when AdventHealth University shared the National Library of Medicine Traveling

Exhibits in their community (Fisher, 2019). This vision embeds the academic library in the larger community.

The example of Jesus illustrates another facet of discipleship in the training of the twelve apostles where a teacher or leader guides followers on a learning trajectory, addressing immediate needs in real-time. In the library literature, the closest correlation to this discipleship paradigm is the mentoring of library employees (Baranik et al., 2017; Herman, 2016; Jordan, 2019; Malecki & Bonanni, 2020; Martin, 2017; Murphy, 2008; Tan, 2016). The ideal relationship that emerges from this research and discussion fits coherently into the we-mode paradigm. The requisite competence and ethical character of the mentor is a given. Still, beyond that, the best mentors engage their mentees with a sincere desire to see them succeed and genuinely delight in the mentee and their progress. In this way, the continued strength and improvement of the professional community are shaped one person at a time.

The positive psychosocial values that underly effective missional discipling and library mentorship provide a common denominator for all relationship building within the library environment, including the engagements of library workers with their patrons when appropriate. The critical relational dynamic between a library worker and an information seeker is that the library worker adopts a we-mode attitude together with the seeker to accomplish a mutual goal. The mindset is not an "us-them" relationship, in which the library worker is the expert, and the patron is a customer. Instead, the mindset of the library worker is one in which she is delighted to share expertise to empower a friend to flourish in their journey. As Beuoy (2020) concludes her discussion of the role of empathy, she notes:

> By participating in mutual empathy, students who seek help from a librarian, who make themselves vulnerable when asking for help, might find an unexpected space where they receive a bit of affective care. And perhaps that will promote a greater sense of well-being (p. 70).

Another pertinent contrast would be to characterize the interaction not as a "reference transaction," a metaphor drawn from the world of commerce, but as a "reference conversation," drawing on a metaphor of family relationships.

As Adventist library workers, we are challenged to adopt a missional discipling mindset that inspires knowledge creation. The distinctive element of this discipling is that it is person-centered, not service or product-centered. Promoting a service or product proves helpful as an opportunity to encourage the conversations that lead to knowledge creation. This new knowledge defines the satisfactory implementation of a service and not necessarily a masterful performance of a skill by a library worker. The vision of discipling as a community effort highlights the we-

mode orientation, and the invitational nature of discipling becomes a social glue the bonds all who enter the community. This orientation fosters a holistic environment where conversations take place safely, so that knowledge creation flourishes.

Theme Three: Communities

Lankes connects his understanding of community to that of the conversation theory. For him, a community is a group of at least two participatory members. Participation together is vital. With this understanding, he suggests that "the ideal boundaries for a community would be set by conversations, a porous perimeter with conversants coming and going" (p. 85). This ideal intentionally challenges the view that boundaries are arbitrary and defined by external powers, such as location or institution. This conceptual versus physical understanding of boundaries might suggest that the community is the social environment where library workers engage participants. It also hints that we engage them in multiple overlapping communities. For example, in an academic library, these might include the scholarly community, the learning community, and in Adventist institutions, the faith community.

Biblical Foundation

The Biblical teaching of the Sabbath helps to make sense of this participatory approach in defining the boundaries of community and the qualitative relationship of membership in the community.

Exodus 20:8-11	Deuteronomy 5:12-15
Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy.	Observe the Sabbath day by keeping it holy, as the LORD your God has commanded you.
Six days you shall labor and do all your work, but the seventh day is a sabbath to the LORD your God. On it you shall not do any work	Six days you shall labor and do all your work, but the seventh day is a sabbath to the LORD your God. On it you shall not do any work,
neither you, nor your son or daughter, nor your male or female servant, nor your animals, nor any foreigner residing in your towns	neither you, nor your son or daughter, nor your male or female servant, nor your ox, your donkey or any of your animals, nor any foreigner residing in your towns, so that your male and female servants may rest, as you do.
For in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, but he rested on the	Remember that you were slaves in Egypt and that the LORD your God brought you out of there with a mighty

seventh day. Therefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy	hand and an outstretched arm. Therefore the LORD your God has commanded you to observe the Sabbath day.

The first point is that the Sabbath defines the community and provides an inclusive boundary that transcends all social, geographical, and institutional divisions. Membership in the community in Exodus is predicated on God's act of creation and speaks to the oneness of human life with the environment. In Deuteronomy, community membership includes those whom God has freed from slavery in Egypt. This divine act extends to all whom God has released from the slavery of sin through the mighty act of Jesus on the cross. God's action embraces all humanity through all time without imposing on the personal privilege of free choice. Individuals may choose not to participate in the community of the free and remain slaves, but that is their choice, not God's desire. Community membership is gifted as a right actualized by participation. The Sabbath serves as a weekly celebration that I am somebody and that I belong within the community. By participating, I acknowledge my inclusion and the inclusion of all who join with me.

The second point is that the Sabbath speaks to social power in the community (Klingbeil, 2010). Six days per week labor is expected, and work must be done. In the makeup of the human community, some lead, and some follow. The community includes power relationships such as parents over children, employers over employees, insiders over outsiders. The collaboration and cooperation essential for group survival assume the necessity of these power relationships. These relationships risk becoming unbalanced. When this happens, it is to the detriment of the community. These power relationships embedded in the work economy are set aside on the seventh day at the end of the workweek. Everyone in the community celebrates their free and equal status as a human being created and redeemed by God. Relational balance is restored (Brueggemann, 2014).

Jesus illustrated community in His response to the question of who is a neighbor (Luke 10:29). In response, Jesus recounted the story of the Good Samaritan. An outsider was willing to help a wounded insider after the insider leadership refused to assist one of their own. The point Jesus was making is that my community is anyone next to me. Jesus's challenge is to be a good neighbor in a world where having good neighbors seems of more value. For Jesus, it is not enough to claim community membership as in an I-mode frame of reference for private reasons. Community membership entails proactive we-mode group engagement seeking the well-being and flourishing of everyone, whether in person or virtually online.

In conclusion, the Sabbath is a weekly reminder and refresh of the we-mode mindset that embraces all in the community as God's created and redeemed people.

There are no exclusionary boundaries. Everyone belongs. All believers are called to be neighbors to those next to them.

Application to Librarianship

Based on this vision of a we-mode sociality, library workers are motivated to seek opportunities and methods to grow their communities while striving to dismantle any barriers that may be keeping some out. One conversation within the library profession that speaks to this impulse revolves around the term hospitality.

Johnson and Kazmer (2011) defined it this way. "Hospitality may be defined as 'the provision of library resources by a genuinely motivated employee to fulfill the library need of a patron in an environment conducive to the provision of those resources" (p. 387). To be hospitable, a library worker must be "genuinely other-focused, providing welcome and assistance to patrons out of a sense of generosity rather than through a motivation of mere duty or because of pecuniary reward" (p. 389). This definition highlighting the "genuinely motivated … other-focused" character of the employee supports the we-mode essence of hospitality.

In the Atla Plenary presentation focused on issues of diversity and inclusion, Hinchliffe (2020) illustrated hospitality by comparing it with inviting friends home and being mindful of their needs. Invite them in, don't wait for them to come, seek their participation, sacrifice of oneself to gain that engagement. This openness should be analogous to how library workers approach all patrons. Whether ethnicity, gender, language, age, citizenship, or any other categorization, differences that distinguish people are never grounds for differential treatment.

Berryhill (2013) invoked the Biblical image of library patrons as guests. She listed the functions of the host as a) comfort, we provide space; b) protection, we provide academic safety and freedom; c) sustenance, we provide resources; and d) equipping, we teach and equip.

> We are hosts of new formative conversations between diverse ancient, modern, and emerging voices. We embody generous and compassionate service to the stranger. And this is not only in our public services. Our hospitality, our offering to the stranger the best resources we have, permeates the entire culture of the library and requires the interconnected work of each library employee (p. 88).

The concept of hospitality can be enriched by contrasting two different hospitality cultures: the consumerist hospitality industry and the hospitality modeled in Bedouin society (Shryock, 2012), likely reflective of hospitality as practiced in Biblical times. In consumerist hospitality, the guest pays for services, is need-focused, and the host is assessed based on customer satisfaction. In warm culture

hospitality, the host assumes responsibility for ensuring the traveler's well-being as they continue on their journey. Thus, hospitality includes both meeting needs and empowerment. The host is assessed based on the ability of the guest to continue their journey. The implication for library hospitality drawn from this contrast suggests that customer satisfaction by itself is not enough. Those who engage in the library should experience the empowerment that enhances their journey.

The dispositions embedded in celebrating the Sabbath should further elevate the practice of hospitality in the library through relational wholeness. If hospitality remains only in the sphere of the command to work, then the use of expertise assumes a narrow focus on an immediate need. It is a finite transaction that can be counted, assessed, and recorded as completed. In this case, the object, i.e., the information need, takes precedence. However, embracing Sabbath-inspired hospitality grants precedence to the person so that the library worker's expertise facilitates and celebrates their progress toward wholeness. The interaction ceases to be a finished transaction and becomes an ongoing conversation with an open invitation to continue. The relationship never ends; there is no termination and no final assessment. Hospitality becomes synonymous with belonging in the community. Even when life's journey takes them away to new places, their belonging in the community never ceases. The celebration of the Sabbath becomes a social glue uniting a community that transcends time and location.

Summary and Discussion

Beginning with a standard definition/philosophy of librarianship as articulated by Lankes (2011), "The mission of librarians is to improve society through facilitating knowledge creation in their communities," three common categories of library sociality were discussed: advocacy, community outreach, and hospitality. In this essay, I proposed a Biblical foundation for a library sociality by drawing a correlation between these activities as illustrated in the Biblical narrative with documented examples from the library literature.

Mission of Librarianship	Biblical Teaching	Librarianship Practices
Transform Society	Second Coming	Advocacy
Create Knowledge	Discipling/	Outreach/Marketing
Communities	Sabbath	Hospitality

Given this high level of correlation and compatibility between conventional standards of professional excellence within librarianship, and the Biblical teachings on those same ideals, it may be a challenge to articulate any unique distinctiveness that an Adventist faith might bring to the roles of library workers. It may even

appear that the place of faith might be limited to an individualistic application to the character (Sherman, 2018) and not to library sociality collectively.

At the beginning of this essay, I posited three questions. How should we, as Adventist library workers, think about the communities we serve? What mindset should guide our interactions with the people who seek our services? How should we think about how we collaborate to serve our public?

By definition, boundaries define communities. The necessity for identity draws lines and sets up walls between people. These boundaries include geography, ethnic origins, religion, economic status, educational achievements, age, and dis/abilities in contemporary culture, to name only a few. Based on the Biblical teachings of Second Coming, Discipling, and Sabbath, Adventist library workers should embrace a countercultural affective dispositional orientation determined to transcend boundaries. The community becomes all people within their sphere of activity and influence. They advocate for the removal of barriers intended to keep people out. They proactively invite and welcome all within reach and seek to live redemptive hospitality.

The Biblical teachings of Second Coming, Discipling, and Sabbath all speak to belonging. The affective dispositional orientation of Adventist library workers should see the neighbors who come to them for professional assistance as privileged to belong. As such, they are entitled to the best we can provide. This disposition finds expression in (1) a shared identification with the needs of others that compels to action on their behalf, persisting until the needs are fully met; (2) the shared desire to invite all to experience an intellectual, physical, social, and spiritual wholeness; and (3) a shared openness to others that embraces all people, motivated to excel in intercultural competence.

Hopefully, Adventist library workers employed at the same institution can share these values, regardless of their varied expertise and routine responsibilities. The Biblical teachings of Second Coming, Discipling, and Sabbath have the potential to function as a social glue that bonds them together and empowers them to elevate their efforts from I-mode to a we-mode sociality. Collaboratively, they should share an affective dispositional orientation to model and create a library environment that fosters intellectual, physical, social, and spiritual wholeness for all their neighbors.

References

American Library Association. (2008). *Code of Ethics*. American Library Association. Retrieved April 19 from http://www.ala.org/tools/ethics

Baba, Z., & Abrizah, A. (2018). Transformation strategies in community engagement. *IFLA Journal, 44*(2), 90-105. https://doi.org/10.1177/0340035218778435

Bales, S., & Budzise-Weaver, T. (2020). *Transformative library and information work: Profiles in social justice*. Elsevier Science & Technology.

Baranik, L. E., Wright, N. A., & Reburn, K. L. (2017). Mentoring relationships in online classes. *Internet & Higher Education, 34*, 65-71. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.iheduc.2017.05.001

Bellingradt, D., & Salman, J. (2017). Books and book history in motion: Materiality, sociality and spatiality. In D. Bellingradt, P. Nelles, & J. Salman (Eds.), *Books in motion in early modern Europe beyond production, circulation and consumption* (pp. 1-11). Palgrave Macmillan.

Berryhill, C. M. (2013). The guest brings the blessing: Hospitality in theological librarianship. *ATLA Summary of Proceedings, 67*, 84-89.

Beuoy. (2020). A case for the empathetic librarian. In S. Holder & A. Lannon (Eds.), *Student wellness and academic libraries: Case studies and activities for promoting health and success* (pp. 59-73). Association of College & Research Libraries.

Bombaro, C. (Ed.). (2020). *Diversity, equity, and inclusion in action: Planning, leadership, and programming*. American Library Association.

Bowers, J. R. (2016). The creativity behind creation: The Trinity in Genesis 1:1-2:3 and group creativity. *The Journal of Applied Christian Leadership, 10*(2), 24-36. https://digitalcommons-andrews-edu.ezproxy.andrews.edu/jacl/vol10/iss2/4/

Bratman, M. (2014). *Shared agency: A planning theory of acting together*. Oxford University Press.

Bravo-Rivera, D., & Spears, J. (2016). The dogs take over: Therapy dogs add another level of service at McKee Library. *ASDAL Action, 36*(1), 8-9. https://www.asdal.org/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/newsletters/ASDAL-Action-Fall-2016.pdf

Brueggemann, W. (2014). *Sabbath as resistance: Saying no to the culture of now*. Westminster John Knox Press.

Burton, L. D. (2018). Adventist perspectives on faith integration: Subject index for *Christ in the Classroom* volumes 21-40. *Journal of Research on Christian Education, 27*(3), 263-345. https://doi.org/10.1080/10656219.2018.1520664

Copp, D. (2015). Social glue and norms of sociality. *Philosophical Studies, 172*(12), 3387-3397. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11098-015-0562-6

Cossette, A. (2009). *Humanism and libraries: An essay on the philosophy of librarianship*. Library Juice Press.

Down, M. (2017). Human library: Avondale College of Advanced Learning hosts human library. *ASDAL Action, 37*(1), 8-9. https://www.asdal.org/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/newsletters/ASDAL-Action-Fall-2017.pdf

Drew, A. S. (2020). *A hermeneutic for the aqedah test: A way beyond Jon Levenson's and Terence Fretheim's models* [Doctoral dissertation, Andrews University]. Digital Commons @ Andrews University. Berrien Springs, MI. https://digitalcommons.andrews.edu/dissertations/1719/

Dürsch, P. (2016). Summer reading club: Closing party of summer reading club at Schulzentrum Marienhoehe/Germany. *ASDAL Action, 36*(1), 4-5. https://www.asdal.org/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/newsletters/ASDAL-Action-Fall-2016.pdf

Fisher, B. (2019). Making an impact outside the library: With the National Library of Medicine Traveling Exhibits. *ASDAL Action, 38*(3), 4-5.

https://www.asdal.org/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/newsletters/Volume-38-Number-3.pdf

Gregory, L., & Higgins, S. (Eds.). (2013). *Information literacy and social justice: Radical professional praxis*. Library Juice Press.Hang Tat Leong, J. (2013). Community engagement - building bridges between university and community by academic libraries in the 21st century. *Libri: International Journal of Libraries & Information Services, 63*(3), 220-231. https://doi.org/10.1515/libri-2013-0017

Herman, S. W. (2016). Significant value found in mentoring programs for novice tenure-track academic librarians. *Evidence Based Library & Information Practice, 11*(4), 91-93. https://doi.org/10.18438/B8KK8X

Hinchliffe, L. J. (2020, June 17). *Responsive and responsible: Libraries finding the path forward in challenging times* [Plenary]. Atla, https://atlaannual2020.sched.com/event/cO8j/opening-plenary-lisa-janicke-hinchliffe-responsive-and-responsible-libraries-finding-the-path-forward-in-challenging-times

Holder, S., & Lannon, A. (Eds.). (2020). *Student wellness and academic libraries: Case studies and activities for promoting health and success*. Association of College & Research Libraries.

Hortemiller, M. (2018). A walk through Narnia: Union College library fair 2018. *ASDAL Action, 38*(1), 4-6.

Jenson, K. (2015, December). Affordable course content. *Keeping Up With*. http://www.ala.org/acrl/publications/keeping_up_with/coursecontent

Johnson, E. D. M., & Kazmer, M. M. (2011). Library hospitality: Some preliminary considerations. *Library Quarterly, 81*(4), 383-403. https://doi.org/10.1086/661655

Johnson, P. M. (2016). Open house & art exhibit: Eva B. Dykes Library hosts art exhibit for their annual Open House event. *ASDAL Action, 36*(1), 6-7. https://www.asdal.org/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/newsletters/ASDAL-Action-Fall-2016.pdf

Jordan, A. (2019). An examination of formal mentoring relationships in librarianship. *Journal of Academic Librarianship, 45*(6). https://doi.org/10.1016/j.acalib.2019.102068

Klingbeil, G. A. (2010). The sabbath law in the decalogue(s): Creation and liberation as a paradigm for community. *Revue biblique, 117*(4), 491-509.

Knight, N. (2017). Customer appreciation day: Hiram S. Walters Resource Center celbrated patrons during LIAJA Library Week 2016. *ASDAL Action, 36*(2), 8-9. https://www.asdal.org/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/newsletters/ASDAL-Action-Winter-2017.pdf

Lankes, R. D. (2011). *The atlas of new librarianship*. MIT Press.

Lucas-Alfieri, D. (2015). *Marketing the 21st century library: The time is now*. Elsevier Science & Technology.

Malecki, A. L., & Bonanni, M. (2020). Mentorship programs in academic libraries. *Public Services Quarterly, 16*(1), 35-40. https://doi.org/10.1080/15228959.2019.1701613

Martin, J. (2017). Personal relationships and professional results: The positive impact of transformational leaders on academic librarians. *Journal of Academic Librarianship, 43*(2), 108-115. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.acalib.2017.01.012

Murphy, S. A. (2008). Developmental relationships in the dynamic library environment: Re-conceptualizing mentoring for the future. *Journal of Academic Librarianship, 34*(5), 434-437. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.acalib.2008.06.006

Nzomo, P., & Fehrmann, P. (2020). Advocacy engagement: The role of information literacy skills. *Journal of Information Literacy, 14*(1), 41-65. https://doi.org/http://dx.doi.org/10.11645/14.1.2695

Pask, G. (1976). *Conversation theory: Applications in education and epistemology*. Elsevier.

Roberts, M. D. (2018). Faith-work integration: Trendy or essential? *Fuller*, (10), 36-37, 39. https://fullerstudio.fuller.edu/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/FULLER-magazine-Work.pdf

Robertson, T. D. (2019). Towards a Biblical foundation for a philosophy of librarianship. *Journal of Adventist Libraries and Archives, 4*. https://digitalcommons.andrews.edu/jala/vol4/iss1/1

Sabharwal, A. (2019). Optimizing library services--institutional repositories and knowledge curation: Revisiting knowledge conversion in the academic environment. *Against the Grain, 31*(5), 78-80.

Sanou, B. (2019). Discipleship in urban contexts. *Journal of Adventist Mission Studies, 15*(1), 169-189. https://digitalcommons.andrews.edu/jams/vol15/iss1/13/

Schneider, T. (2003). Outreach: Why, how and who? Academic libraries and their involvement in the community. *Reference Librarian*(82), 199-213. https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1300/J120v39n82_13

Scholarly Publishing and Academic Resources Coalition. (n.d.). *Open access*. Retrieved March 10, 2021 from https://sparcopen.org/open-access/

Sexton, J. S. (2010). The imago Dei once again: Stanley Grenz's journey toward a theological interpretation of Genesis 1:26-27. *Journal of Theological Interpretation, 4*(2), 187-205.

Sherman, A. L. (2018, September 17). Integrating faith and work. *Higher thinking blog*. https://christianleadershipalliance.org/blog/2018/09/17/integrating-faith-and-work-by-dr-amy-l-sherman/#/program/e0610f3c5a66d2aceff81924beeccd70

Shryock, A. (2012). Breaking hospitality apart: Bad hosts, bad guests, and the problem of sovereignty. *The Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute, 18*, S20-S33. http://www.jstor.org/stable/41506667

Sittler, R. L., & Rogerson, T. J. (2020). *The library outreach cookbook*. Association of College & Research Libraries.

Skinner, J. C., Gross, M., & Cooke, N. A. (2021). *Underserved patrons in university libraries: Assisting students facing trauma, abuse, and discrimination*. ABC-CLIO.

Tan, F. E. (2016). Mentoring in the library with emphasis in cataloguing. *Journal of Adventist Libraries and Archives, 1*. https://digitalcommons.andrews.edu/jala/vol1/iss1/1/

Tuomela, R. (2007). *The philosophy of sociality: The shared point of view*. Oxford University Press.

Westbrook, E. L. (2021). *Inequity in scholarly communication: Engaging societies and their researchers in a new sustainable future* Library Publishing Forum, Virtual Conference. https://youtu.be/44jwISPyDmE

Zettervall, S. K., & Nienow, M. C. (2019). *Whole person librarianship: A social work approach to patron services*. ABC-CLIO.

---

[i] Terry Dwain Robertson, Seminary Libarian, James White Library, Andrews University. Contact email: trobtsn@andrews.edu. http://orcid.org/0000-0002-1536-3117

[ii] Scriptures taken from the Holy Bible, New International Version®, NIV®. Copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984, 2011 by Biblica, Inc.™ Used by permission of Zondervan. All rights reserved worldwide. www.zondervan.com The "NIV" and "New International Version" are trademarks registered in the United States Patent and Trademark Office by Biblica, Inc.™