

5A—Holding up the Mirror

Student Assistants: Our Invisible Community

Zahra Premji, University of Alberta

Justine Wheeler, University of Calgary

This presentation looks at the juxtaposition of students as transitory workers and as library patrons, which comprises a tenuous and ambiguous role for them. Yet despite the ubiquitous presence of student assistants and their increasingly expanding role into library functions such as reference work and peer roaming, we seem to know little of what seems often to be an invisible workforce. We explore the perceptions surrounding student library assistants: how do librarians view them, how do they view themselves, and how do they perceive libraries and librarians?