

## **Beyond Accommodation: Creating an Inclusive Workplace for Disabled Library Workers, by Jessica Schomberg and Wendy Highby**

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Volume 9, 2023

URI : <https://id.erudit.org/iderudit/1098751ar>

DOI : <https://doi.org/10.33137/cjal-rcbu.v9.39099>

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### Éditeur(s)

Canadian Association of Professional Academic Librarians / Association  
Canadienne des Bibliothécaires en Enseignement Supérieur

### ISSN

2369-937X (numérique)

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### Citer ce compte rendu

Bond, S. (2023). Compte rendu de [Beyond Accommodation: Creating an Inclusive Workplace for Disabled Library Workers, by Jessica Schomberg and Wendy Highby]. *Canadian Journal of Academic Librarianship / Revue canadienne de bibliothéconomie universitaire*, 9, 1–3.  
<https://doi.org/10.33137/cjal-rcbu.v9.39099>

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Schomberg and Highby are both themselves disabled library workers, with different disabilities that emerged at different times in their careers. Schomberg has had diabetes since childhood, so came to work as a disabled employee. By contrast, Highby has only recently developed Parkinson's, so she had to adjust to work as a disabled employee as a change. Having these two perspectives helps illustrate a small degree of the diversity among disabled workers (they do point out that their differences are not representative the full breadth of experiences, but even this gesture towards difference is useful). This is an embodied study, and while it does contain both engagement with existing research and first-person interviews with other disabled library workers, it is in Schomberg and Highby's personal anecdotes that it comes most alive. The last two chapters are dedicated to a first-hand account of what working with each of their disabilities is like. For readers who are new to thinking about how disability affects workers, it might be worth starting with these chapters to set the stage, though for the intended audience of the book this was the right placement for them.

This piece is explicitly written for disabled library workers and would probably be most helpful for workers who are newly disabled (or new to thinking of themselves as disabled). While Schomberg and Highby do consider literature and experiences from other countries, the chapters about requesting accommodation under the ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) will have varying relevance in other jurisdictions. As one example, the AODA (Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act) has a less adversarial and litigious framework. Nonetheless, their cautions about the promise and perils of disclosing disability in the workplace will be universal.

While the target audience for this book is disabled workers themselves, it can also be of significant value to employers and colleagues of disabled workers (the chapters on the decision to disclose also offer a helpful reminder that just because you don't know you have a colleague or employee with a disability doesn't mean you don't have one, just that nobody has disclosed a disability to you). It would even be useful to disabled workers and those who work with them in other types of workplaces. Aside from a chapter on the library as an organization, the library is not foregrounded: it just happens to be the setting where these particular disabled people work.

Schomberg gets at the core message of the book in the final paragraph of her section on how her disability affects her daily working life: "My disabilities impact my work life because they are part of the package that is me .... For me, working well requires acknowledging and respecting the fact that I am an embodied creature with bodily needs" (169). While that is particularly evident for disabled workers dealing with a workplace, it is no less true for anybody else. Non-disabled workers are just more likely to have their bodily needs met by their employers without having to ask.

*Beyond Accommodation* provides a model for how disabled workers can be included in a library that will be useful both for disabled workers themselves and for libraries trying to include them.