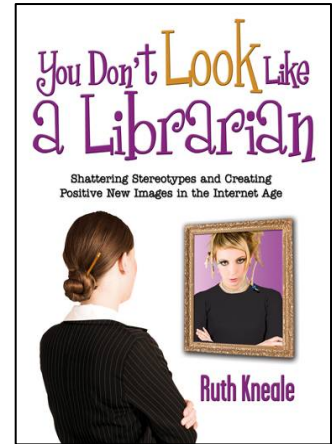# *NEWS RELEASE*

Information Today, Inc.

For Immediate Release
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You Don't Look Like a Librarian

New Book Looks at—and Shatters—Popular Stereotypes and Misconceptions About Librarians … Discusses New Images That Are Emerging in the Digital Information Age

March 31, 2009, Arlington, VA—At the opening of the 24th Annual Computers in Libraries conference and exhibition, Information Today, Inc. (ITI) announced the publication of *You Don't Look Like a Librarian: Shattering Stereotypes and Creating Positive New Images in the Internet Age*, by Ruth Kneale. In this new book, librarian and blogger Kneale debunks outdated preconceptions about librarians and their profession that still exist in the digital era.

"Ask any Joe or Jane Q. Public what comes to mind when they think of a librarian," Kneale said, "and they'll inevitably describe an older woman, her hair in a tight bun, wearing glasses, a cardigan, and sensible (meaning ugly) shoes, who wouldn't know a computer from a cat (of which she owns many)." Kneale adds, "She usually says 'Shh' a lot, too!"

In *You Don't Look Like a Librarian,* Kneale offers a fascinating look at the evolution and current state of the librarian stereotype and, more importantly, provides her fellow librarians with information and inspiration they can use to create positive new images that promote the future of the profession. In addition to presenting the results of a 1,000+-respondent survey and Kneale's interviews with opinionated librarians across the spectrum, the book draws on pop culture, published literature, and lively discussions on the author's website.

Although the book's subject matter may seem lighthearted, it explores a serious issue underlying perceptions of the library profession. "Sure, it's fun to talk about what librarians look or don't look like, but take that a step further," says Elizabeth Burns in the Foreword to the book. "Connect the dots from the assumptions people make about librarians to how the public perceives us, and you'll quickly realize the impact stereotypes have on everything from customer expectations to salaries."

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Karen G. Schneider, community librarian and blogger (FreeRangeLibrarian.com) called *You Don't Look Like a Librarian*, "A readable and entertaining look into the images of librarians in popular culture." Schneider added that the book "also functions admirably as a kind of *What Color is Your Biblio-Parachute?* for people interested in librarianship or those who are in the profession and considering a change of direction."

You Don't Look Like a Librarian includes the following chapters:

1. Stereotypes? What Stereotypes?
2. Pop Culture and Librarians
3. Breaking the Stereotype
4. Thoughts on the Future

In addition to the Foreword by Burns, *You Don't Look Like a Librarian* features an Introduction by the author, two appendices, resources for librarians, a list of relevant websites relating to the profession, and a companion website at www.librarian-image.net/book. Practical yet entertaining, this book is a must have for librarians who want to market themselves and their library, and change their community's perception of librarians.

About the Author
Ruth Kneale is the Systems Librarian for the Advanced Technology Solar Telescope in Tucson, Arizona. Prior to that, she was the Librarian and Webmaster for the Gemini Observatory in Hilo, Hawaii, and the Gemini 8m Telescopes Project. Kneale has written on computer topics for *Information Outlook* and *Computers in Libraries*, and publishes a regular column about librarians in *Marketing Library Service* called "Spectacles: How Pop Culture Views Librarians." She started the website You Don't Look Like a Librarian! (www.librarian-image.net) in 2002, and a companion blog called Random Musings from the Desert (desertlibrarian.blogspot.com) in 2006.

You Don't Look Like a Librarian: Shattering Stereotypes and Creating Positive New Images in the Internet Age (216 pp/softbound/$29.50/ISBN 978-1-57387-366-6) is published by Information Today, Inc. It is available in bookstores and direct from the publisher by calling (800) 300-9868 [outside the U.S., call (609) 654-6266]; faxing (609) 654-4309; emailing custserv@infotoday.com; or visiting the ITI website at www.infotoday.com.

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