When asked some time ago to talk about library advocacy, I realized that I am most interested in what lies behind the obvious, and when you think about it, power and power relationships have a critical role in advocacy.

No human being is self-sufficient. Each of us needs things that others have to offer, and has things that other people need. All our dealings with other people are based on these needs.

There are only three basic ways in which we deal with other people.

You can take what you need by force, threats, intimidation, or by outsmarting them. Although criminals naturally fall in this category, many respectable people employ these methods too, sometimes not as subtly as they might.

You can become a human relations beggar, and beg other people to give you the things you want. This submissive type of personality makes a deal with other people: “I won’t assert myself in any way or cause you any trouble, and in return you be nice to me.” This is all too common in our profession.

Or you can operate on a basis of fair exchange, which means that libraries and librarians will get what they need as well as, rather than instead of, satisfying the needs of others.

During the Second World War, Laurens van der Post encountered indigenous people who lived in a dripping jungle world where mak-
ing fire by friction in the open air was impossible. They had accordingly developed a unique method of making fire using a longish square block of wood divided into two sections. It had a solid hardwood lid out of which protruded a long, tapering wooden rod with a deep niche carved into its end. The rod fitted tightly into a narrow tapering cylinder bored into the main block of wood. To make a fire required only that the rod be extracted from its cylinder, some very fine dry moss inserted into the niche at the bottom of the rod, and the rod fitted into the opening of the cylinder and slammed hard and fast, as deep as it could go into the cylinder, and immediately pulled out again, and the moss would be on fire. For centuries these people had been applying the principle of ignition on which the Diesel engine is based (Van der Post).

This story holds two messages for me — we often don't recognize and use the power sources we have to the full, and there is no one source of power, use of power, and way of dealing with power that is right for everyone.

Power is about relationships – your relationship with yourself (self-esteem or lack of it) and your relationships with others (status). Control theory teaches that any relationship is really two relationships. My relationship with you is a picture in my head, and your relationship with me is a picture in your head. Your view of the relationship will usually be one-sided, and what you think the relationship is will almost invariably differ in some way from the actuality of the relationship. This will naturally affect your perception of your capacity to advocate, the effectiveness of your advocacy, and indeed, whether you think there is any point in advocating at all. Your perception of your power as an individual, or of the power of the profession, is critical. So in a way, everything I have to say today is encapsulated in the title of my paper “Mana, Manna, Manner: Power and the Practice of Librarianship.”

The subject of power is interesting, because it is often perceived that the profession has problems with power. Whether or not you can address a problem, depends on your perception of its size. Big problems produce feelings of powerlessness. Recasting larger problems into smaller, less overwhelming problems, enables people to identify a series of controlable opportunities of modest size which produce visible results and can be gathered into synoptic solutions (Wieck, 40).

Fully understanding the paralyzing effect of huge problems, William Ruckelshaus laid aside his mandate to clean up all aspects of the environment when he became the first administrator of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. He went instead for a small win, taking advantage of some obscure 80-year-old legislation, which enabled him to take action on water pollution. He effectively narrowed his practical agenda for the first year or two to “getting started on water pollution.” On day one of the agency’s formal existence, Ruckelshaus announced five major lawsuits against large American cities. The impact was electrifying. Noticeable progress was made, quickly forming the beachhead for a long series of successes (Peters).

Ruckelshaus did not tackle everything nor did he even tackle the most visible type of pollution, which is air pollution. He identified quick, opportunistic, tangible first steps only modestly related to a final outcome and his first steps were driven less by logical decision trees or grand strategy than by action that could be built upon, action that signaled intent as well as competence (Wieck, 42).

The accepted approach to improving a service is like an engineering project (as a planned, logical sequence of steps with a designated budget and time frame, and quantifiable outcomes), but following Ruckelshaus’ lead makes a lot of sense, particularly in situations where the capacity to obtain needed resources has been critically affected by perceptions of powerlessness and by powerless behavior. Perceptions of powerlessness and powerless behavior usually result from fear.

When I took up the position of Brisbane City Librarian in January 1987, I already knew that eradicating fear was to be my primary task. Prior experience of local government had taught me that I could not count on needed funding materializing quickly, so I was clear that my focus could not be what to do tomorrow, but had to be what to do today in contemplation of tomorrow.

In researching the position, I had identified a well-entrenched cycle of mistrust in and of the Library Service and could therefore conclude that
fear was likely to be endemic in the Library Service and that the cycle of mistrust was going to be the major barrier to development of the Library Service.

My overt task at Brisbane City Council was to develop the Brisbane City Council Library Service into a modern library service appropriate for the needs of the people of Brisbane. Achievement of such an aim is very much dependent on funding. The actual task was to facilitate organizational change, manage conflict and empower staff and users, to turn an environment of mistrust and fear into one of enthusiasm, creativity and commitment – none of which is dependent on resources, but without which all the resources in the world cannot guarantee a quality service.

Deming admonishes managers to “drive out fear” in order to achieve high levels of quality, but there is no accepted approach to eradicating fear. While open communication and respect is touched on to a greater or lesser degree in a variety of management texts, there is very little in the literature about fear and the workplace dynamics that surround it. But I knew that life is not possible without a heart that knows no fear. As Africans teach their children, with a heart of fear a man cannot protect either his cattle or his women and children and the life of the tribe, or that of the nation. He will not know how to speak the truth; how to protect the weak; how to overcome beasts of prey and men with evil in their hearts.

To empower the library staff in order to enable them to fully contribute to the creation and delivery of a quality library service responsive to the needs of its users, I had to change how the people within the library worked with senior management by changing how they worked with each other. Many people working in the library service had no contact with anyone else. There were no meetings, no measures to reduce geographical isolation. Management was by memo and visits to the libraries. The staff was so disempowered that they were not even allowed to call either the police or the fire brigade without specific permission from a senior administrative officer. Yet these very people were the ones who, for the patron, were the Library Service, were the Council — the boundary spanners, the people who were responsible for creating and maintaining a productive relationship between the organization and the outside world.

I have gone into such detail in order to emphasize the effect on the clients of the organization of inappropriate use of power by senior personnel in service organizations.

Both clients and subordinates are highly dependent on managers, and both are vulnerable to inappropriate intervention by them. Clients may be better able to mitigate their dependency by the potential sanctions they have, but they are still, like subordinates, dependent upon the integrity of the managers in the organizations with whom they deal (Toffler, 1991).

Library users are particularly dependent on the degree to which the staff feels empowered for the quality of the service they receive. Cambon, governor general of Algeria during the 19th century, learned too late a lesson about a government that tries to rule by force: “We did not realize that in suppressing the forces of resistance...we were also suppressing our means of action.”

Organizations can be simultaneously attracted and repelled by the idea of empowerment. Empowering workers without actually giving them power seems to be what is desired. The ideal employees, it would seem, would be energetic, dedicated workers who always seize the initiative (but only when appropriate), who enjoy taking risks (but never risky ones), who volunteer their ideas (but only brilliant ones), who solve problems on their own (but make no mistakes), who aren’t afraid to speak their minds (but never ruffle any feathers), who always give their very best to the organization (but ask no unpleasant questions about what the organization is giving back to them).

Empowerment involves shifting decision-making from a smaller number of middle or top managers to a much larger number of lower-level staff and requires that larger number of staff to have the same information that their managers have, as well as an equally comprehensive vision of the organization’s direction, goals, and objectives (Kantor).

We talk endlessly about the power of a shared vision, failing to understand that the power lies not in the vision but in the sharing. A vision, which is not built up from the common threads of the individual visions of all concerned, a vision which is handed down from on high, com-
mands, at best, only compliance.

The esteem in which we are held, individually or as a profession, our level of self-esteem, the resources we command, and the image we project by the way we behave are inextricably linked with the power we command and the way we use, misuse, or fail to use that power.

Humans are the only creatures able to change their fate by making decisions based on their view of the future and their review of the past. Our libraries are the collected wisdom and foolishness of humanity, and every aspect of human behavior. The most powerful use of a library for any individual is continuous, life-long browsing, building up a background knowledge of the way humanity behaves. This knowledge contributes to personal wisdom.

Two ideas permeate the environment in which we operate – the idea of Reason and the idea of Objectivity. We have been taught, because of the faith in objective evidence, to see things backward. Yet it is only by an act of imagination, before reality provides evidence, that realities begin to happen. What we imagine becomes true because we act as if it is, creating a reality by our very assumption.

The material notion of objectivity, the idea of tradition-independent truths has been replaced by the formal notion of objectivity, in which the idea of tradition-independent ways of finding truths and being rational now means using a variety of methods and accepting their results (Feyerabend).

Like the notion of objectivity, the idea of reason or rationality has a material and a formal variant. To be rational in the material sense means to avoid certain views and to accept others. To be rational in the formal sense again means to follow a certain procedure, and increasingly it now means to take our cues not from independent reflection but from experts.

But you can’t always go by expert opinion. An expert is largely someone who has set himself up as an expert by claiming expertise. You have to temper expert opinion with common sense, a euphemism for wide experience and wisdom in human interactions.

You also have to temper your acceptance of “the facts” with questioning about how the data were collected, and what the facts really mean.

The 1904 Commission of Inquiry into the Care and Control of the Feebleminded attempted to identify the numbers of feebleminded people in England and Wales. They divided up the country and appointed commissioners. The results were surprising. Four times as many feebleminded people lived in the Stoke-on-Trent area than in the rest of the country combined. It seemed the commissioner was a very enthusiastic person. He even advertised in the papers asking for people to write in and nominate feebleminded people, which they did, in droves, naming their neighbors, their relatives and so on.

Is it not possible, asked Kierkegaard that my activity as an objective observer of nature will weaken my strength as a human being? (Kierkegaard)

It is personal purpose that puts the passion into the professional environment. Quite ordinary individuals with a commitment to a moral purpose can generate enormous power. Personal purpose is not as private as it sounds. In moral occupations such as librarianship, the more one takes the risk to express personal purpose, the more kindred spirits one will find. Personal purpose is not just self-centered, it has social dimensions as well, such as working effectively with others and providing the means for empowerment of others.

Personal purpose in librarianship should be pushed until it makes a connection to social betterment in society. This is what it is at the one-to-one librarian-user interaction level. It has greater scope and meaning, and calls for wider action if we realize that societal improvement is really what libraries are about.

If librarians have a problem with power, the problem is not that they do not have power, but that they do not fully use the power they do have, and they do not really believe they deserve to have it, anyway.

To quote Marianne Broadbent, writing about special librarians:
Those who survive tough times in organizations are those who have power, and are perceived by decision-makers to be indispensable. Traditionally librarians have not sought power, nor have been accorded it.... Since power in organizations is vested in those who develop strategy and plan for the future and who decide where the money is to be spent, it is important that special librarians report to a manager who has such power. (Broadbent)

While the organizational reality is that we all report to someone, we also need to believe that we can and should develop strategy, and plan for the future, rather than just comply with the plans of others, and that we can participate in the organizational decision-making processes, including those concerning budgetary allocations, as well as having autonomy to decide where the library money is spent.

We may well believe that we deserve to be treated well, but we don’t do much to ensure that happens, rather we behave as if we want someone else to do the tough stuff for us. We look for Prince Charming to come riding in on his white horse and ensure that we will live happily ever after. I can assure you, that if he does come riding in at all, he will stay briefly and leave swiftly, and you will be left to clean up after the horse.

Abraham Lincoln frequently told a story designed to encourage people to innovate and to take action on their own initiative, without waiting for orders:

A colonel proposed to his men that he should do all the swearing for the regiment. They assented; and for months no instance was known of violation of the promise. The colonel had a teamster named John Todd, who, as roads were not always the best, had some difficulty in commanding his temper and tongue. John happened to be driving a mule team through a series of mud holes a little worse than usual, when he burst forth into a volley of profanity. The colonel took notice of the offence and brought John to account. “John,” said he, “didn’t you promise to let me do all the swearing for the regiment?” “Yes, I did, Colonel,” he replied, “but the fact was the swearing had to be done then or not at all, and you weren’t there to do it.” (Hertz, 531-2)

While others can be a powerful support you are the critical advocate for yourself and for your library. This is a responsibility that cannot be delegated because delegating it will cut you out of the essential triangle.

When we consider power in relation to advocacy, both in the sense of our capacity to advocate successfully and whether we believe that we have both the permission and the skills to do so, we have to consider it as part of an eternal triangle made up of power, politics and competition.

Power is simply the capacity to accomplish things through others. Politics are the techniques used to gain power. Competition is what happens when many people want the same few resources. Power determines who gets or distributes resources, and politics influences who has the power. (Leatz, 52)

One of the difficulties of libraries is that they are both part of larger organizations whose primary purpose is not library provision, and part of a number of networks of libraries. In the organizational environment competition sometimes comes from directions you would least expect. Secretaries, staff members, or colleagues may want to see a boss or best friend succeed, either because they like that person or because they believe their stature will be raised by association. This kind of competition can be extremely frustrating because it usually doesn’t look like direct competition. You may not be able, at first glance, to determine what the person gains by competing with you (51).

Such competition also exists within the matrix of library networks, and is more damaging and disempowering than anything that happens within the parent organizations precisely because the profession and practice of librarianship is, in many respects, judged in our society the same way women are – the negative exemplar is judged the norm, the positive exemplar an eccentric exception. To be a thinking and sensitive librarian is to notice the frequency with, and degree to which, much that is supposedly positive acceptance is in fact, aversive librarianism.
Aversive librarianism is a concept I have adapted from aversive racism, a subtle form of bias characteristic of many who possess strong egalitarian values and believe that they are not prejudiced (Dovidio). But many also possess negative racial feelings and beliefs that they don’t recognize, or try to dissociate from their image of themselves as non-prejudiced people.

The difficulty is that these negative feelings and beliefs are rooted in three types of normal, often adaptive, psychological processes.

The first is the cognitive process of social categorization. We all categorize others into groups, typically in terms that delineate our group from others, which automatically initiates bias.

The second is the motivational process of satisfying basic needs for power and control for ourselves and our group. In a world of limited resources, one way to maintain control or power is to keep competing groups down.

The third relates to socio-cultural influences. For example, many of the values of contemporary society still reflect racist and sexist traditions and subtle messages about power persist. That white men still have most of the political, economic and social power sends a strong message to people of all races and both sexes about what is valued, a message equally strong both within and outside our pink-collar profession.

Most people have convictions of fairness, justice, and racial equality, along with almost unavoidable biases, so the ambivalence involving the positive and negative feelings that aversive racists experience creates psychological tension that leads to behavioral instability. Thus aversive racists sometimes discriminate (manifesting their negative feelings) and sometimes do not (reflecting their positive feelings).

When interracial interaction is unavoidable, aversive racists experience anxiety and discomfort, rather than hostility or hatred. Negative feelings are expressed in subtle ways that can be rationalized but which ultimately create a disadvantage for minorities and an advantage for the majority.

The difficulty with aversive librarianism, as with aversive racism, is that because the behavior is apparently unpredictable, it appears random and therefore not understandable, and it is critical that we understand exactly what is going on at all times, if we are to be effective advocates for libraries and librarians.

In the United States one response to racism was a phenomenon called “passing.” People of color who looked white moved into white society, denied their Negro heritage and took on white culture in every aspect of their lives. I believe that the move on the part of librarians to drop any reference to libraries or librarianship in their titles, is equivalent to passing, and signals a massive inferiority, which does nothing for our ability as a profession to advocate both for ourselves and for our libraries.

Not all -isms are negative. The Macquarie Dictionary defines feminism as “the advocacy of equal rights and opportunities for women, especially in the extension of their activities in social and political life.” Anne Summers says she would translate it into an even simpler statement: “Feminism is our response to the barriers or other obstacles that stand in the way of our ambitions and our desires.” (Buttrose) Feminists do not suggest that women will improve their status by calling themselves population managers.

The time has come for the profession to develop a positive librarianism.

In the best of all possible worlds, our ability to achieve our goals would depend solely on how well we fulfill the requirements outlined in our job definitions. But changes in the environment make it too risky to count just on doing a good job to see you through. You have to demonstrate the value to the organization of what you do, particularly we need to attach a dollar value where we can. We also need to ensure that we show personal benefit to the individuals whom we are trying to influence. We imagine that all our processes are designed to assess our services and performance objectively. But in practice, even apparently objective performance appraisals more commonly represent bosses’ subjective assessment of an employee’s ability to help them meet the goals and objectives that have been established for them.
However sophisticated we may believe we have become, our view of power does not appear to have changed since it was laid down in the cinemas of our childhood. It was at the movies that we learned that power springs from the barrel of a six-shooter. Every Saturday afternoon a lone cowboy rode into town, dispatched the villain, and rode off into the sunset, much like a modern-day consultant.

Power, we learned as children, came from violence (Toffler 1990). Violence is the least versatile power. You can point a gun at someone and say, “Do this” and he probably will, but it’s different when you try saying, “Be this.” In particular things like “Be public-spirited” or “Be efficient” (Dickenson).

If the cowboy hero represented the power of violence, the financier who bankrolled the railway or the land-grabbing cattlemen symbolized a much more flexible tool of power, one which can be used to reward or punish, and can be converted to many other resources.

In many westerns there was also a third important character: a crusading newspaper editor, a teacher, or an educated woman from the “East” who represented not merely moral Good in combat with Evil, but also the power of culture and sophisticated knowledge about the outside world. While this person often won a victory in the end it was usually because of an alliance with the gun-toting hero or because of a sudden lucky strike.

We frequently fall into the trap of equating success with luck rather than with skill. By definition luck is the absence of assignable cause. A belief in luck is deeply ingrained in our concept of how events are shaped. Yet it is both a naive view of the way things work and a convenient crutch for our disappointments. There are accidents in life, but it’s simplistic to believe that chance occurrences account for wholly unanticipated wins. More often a lucky break is really an accident an individual has converted to his purpose. “Chance,” Louis Pasteur once remarked, “favors the prepared mind.” “The opportunity that God sends does not wake up him who is asleep,” says the Senegalese proverb.

Knowledge is the most versatile and basic tool of power. It can help one avert challenges that might otherwise require the use of violence or wealth, and it can often be used to persuade others to perform in desired ways out of perceived self-interest. Knowledge yields the highest-quality power. The cinematic lesson of our childhood, however, was that for knowledge to win it usually had to ally itself with force or money.

As you are no doubt aware, in Australia, as in New Zealand, there is a running debate about user fees in public libraries. ALIA [Australian Library & Information Association] has a statement of principle which is clear on the matter. Certain elements are trying hard to get us to discard it in favor of a statement of practice, to include the notion of core and value-added services. The pressure from that minority is enormous, but it is the terms in which it is couched that I find most revealing. Within the struggles around our professional identity, if the strongest single pattern is acceding to our perceptions of what individual politicians require, rather than demonstrating the benefit to those politicians of what our library users require, we will be no better as people than if the strongest pattern were the technicality of everything. We must deal with all issues in an integrated fashion, as whole human beings.

Librarians persist in behaving as if only in alliance with money or violence is our knowledge of any use. When we perceive we have a problem, if we believe it can be solved we believe it can be solved by the rules we learned in the movies. We look for a leader to rescue us instead of behaving like adults and getting on with it.

Our traditional view of leaders – as special people who set the direction, make the key decisions, and energize the troops – are deeply rooted in an individualistic and non-systemic worldview.

I find this curious, because if systems theory has total applicability anywhere, it is in libraries. Everything is connected to libraries, and everything is relevant. Librarians must adopt a new way of thinking about libraries. Systems theory is a broad view, which far transcends technological problems. It is not a theory in the usual scientific sense of a discrete system of assumptions, constructs, and functional relationships, which explains and predicts the behavior of some particular phenomena. Systems theory is a set of principles, an orientation in thinking, a general
body of knowledge applicable in a wide variety of circumstances. It applies in circumstances where “wholeness” is important, and this is usually the case when dealing with the problems of libraries.

Our prevailing leadership myths are still captured by the image of the captain of the cavalry leading the charge to rescue the settlers from the attacking Indians. This mythic view of leaders as heroes who appear in times of crisis, reinforces a focus on short-term events and charismatic heroes rather than on systemic forces and collective learning. It is based on assumptions of people’s powerlessness, their lack of personal vision and inability to master the forces of change (Senge).

I have discussed elsewhere my concerns about our profession’s tendency towards appeasement (Cram). It does not work, indeed, not only does it signal powerlessness, it has enormous potential to result in disaster.

Early in his first term, Abraham Lincoln was constantly pressured by key advisers to capitulate to the South’s demands. On one occasion, he was advised by a Virginian to surrender all forts and property in the Southern states. Lincoln responded by quoting Aesop:

A lion was very much in love with a woodsman’s daughter. The fair maid referred him to her father and the lion applied for the girl. The father replied: “Your teeth are too long.” So the lion went to a dentist and had them extracted. Returning, he asked for his bride. “No,” said the woodsman, “your claws are too long.” Going back to the dentist he had them drawn. Then he returned to claim his bride, and the woodsman, seeing that he was unarmed, beat out his brains.

“May it not be so with me,” Lincoln concluded, “if I give up all that is asked?” (Hertz, 262)

Sitting-Bull had a more selfless purpose in using both personal and moral power – the very survival of his people. For many generations, the Sioux had lived on the plains in close harmony with nature, following the buffalo, which provided them with food and clothing. But by the mid 1870s, gold prospectors and settlers were taking their land almost at will, and buffalo hunters were indulging in profligate slaughter of the huge herds on which the Sioux were so dependent. Their way of life was rapidly disappearing.

Sitting-Bull deliberately took time to build trust and commitment among the Sioux tribes. There was no jockeying, no self-serving criticism to the enemy of one tribe by another, no appeasement. Because he had realized that the Sioux would lose if they fought as individual tribes, as they had in the past, he worked to bring the northern Sioux tribes and their allies, the Cheyenne, together, so they would be a highly concentrated force when Custer arrived.

Custer, on the other hand, divided his force into smaller units on the assumption that the Little Bighorn, like the battles before it, could be won by a surprise attack.

I don’t suppose I have to tell you who won, and I don’t believe I need to draw in the fine detail of the applicability of this lesson to contemporary librarians. If we don’t stop giving up the high moral ground and the rich treasure of our sphere of influence and operation, if we don’t stop disempowering each other by our personal self-seeking, and particularly if we don’t find the commitment to strengthen and use our alliances within the profession, others will assume they can plunder our resources, divide our strength and attack at will.

It may be a bit much to ask that professional library associations build coalitions with other groups, when we can’t seem to build coalitions between various professional associations representing sectional interests, but I believe it is critical for school and public librarians to build coalitions with teachers’ associations, for public librarians to build coalitions with education interests and with gray power organizations, for academic librarians to build coalitions with associations representing academics, and so on. We must use our social intelligence wisely.
The English psychologist Nicholas Keynes Humphrey emphasizes that social intelligence is all-important to survival of a species. An up-and-coming chimp, for example, is always trying to predict what a dominant animal will do in response to an initiative, is often recruiting help by building coalitions, and otherwise solving social problems (which influence access to mates) rather than environmental ones (which affect personal survival). So, in terms of evolution, social foresight bootstraps cleverness. We librarians tend to focus on environmental problems, such as the budget, and to support others’ priorities, and then we hope that that support will be appreciated enough that somehow we will benefit. As my son would say, “dream on.” We have to negotiate social position, coalitions, and support as our first priority.

There seems to be an entrenched belief that negotiation is difficult, that you have to do courses to understand the rules, that you have to negotiate from a recognized position of power and that, therefore, librarians have very limited capacity to negotiate for anything important. Nonsense.

If you want a good course in negotiation start watching children. They are superb negotiators even though adults logically have power over and control everything they need and want and children ostensibly have nothing that we want or need. Yet try to get a child to eat dinner, or clean his teeth, or go to bed, and you will find yourself negotiating. Who wins? The child, because he instinctively knows there are no rules in negotiations, only options.

When you state your ultimatum, he knows that he has something of value you want. If you demand that he eat his vegetables, he knows that this is something you want that only he can give you. You will find yourself trading off pudding, which is what he wanted in the first place; the vegetables were only a side issue.

Terry Lambrose recounts an excellent example of negotiating among a group of boys playing cricket on a vacant lot (Lambrose). First, they negotiated the “rules” – over the fence was a six, etc. Then they started to play. One of the boys, David, was older and much taller than the others, but was bowled out first ball.

He refused to leave the crease and stood holding the bat. “You have to get me out three times before I’m out because I have brain damage,” he said. After some discussion among themselves, the other boys agreed to his demands. They were the many and he was the few. What had caused them to change the rules? He believed his case was special and therefore exempt from the rules. He waited until he was in control of the bat before he made his demands. In negotiation, timing is everything. He made his initial demands high. There is a saying in negotiation that, “If you are not prepared to ask for more, then you must be prepared to settle for less.” The settlement will always be something less than your original demand. He justified his demand and used an emotional appeal (brain damage) at the same time. The rationale strengthens, protects and justifies the demand. He remained at the crease with the bat in hand while they debated the issue among themselves. The tactic of forbearance paid off. He held the bat at the crease, so from the other players’ perspective he controlled half of the resources. In negotiation, power is a matter of perception.

These principles apply equally to negotiating with those we perceive to be more powerful than we are. The thing to remember about power is: If I have power and you don’t think that I have, then you will act as if my power doesn’t exist. If, on the other hand, I don’t have any real power but you think I do, then you will act as if I do. In negotiations we almost always attribute more power to the other party and discount our own power.

You cannot imagine a wider discrepancy in actual power than that between the Western Australian State Government and the three children who found the giant fossilized egg of the Elephant Bird. Yet, when the Government told the children that they were not allowed to accept the $150,000 they had been offered by a private collector, that they had illegally mined the egg, and that it was the property of the Government, the children negotiated the full $150,000 by one of them simply reburying the egg and telling the Government to go and find it. They also made liberal use of the emotional power of the “I’m only a little kid” tactic, and built effective coalitions with the media.

Human desires are woven into our basic natures. No matter who we are dealing with, what the power-base might be, and whatever our own
perceived position in the hierarchy might be, we are always dealing with individuals. Bill Bernbach put it this way:

...you are not appealing to society. You are appealing to individuals, each with his own ego, each with the dignity of his own being, each like no one else in the world, each a separate miracle. The societal appeals are merely fashionable, current cultural appeals which make nice garments for the real motivations that stem from the unchanging instincts, and emotions of people — from nature's indomitable programming in their genes. It is unchanging man that is the proper study of the communicator (Martin).

The early Greeks had a magnificent philosophy, which is embodied in three sequentially arranged words: ethos, pathos, and logos, which contain the essence of making effective representations.

*Ethos* is your personal credibility. *Pathos* is the empathic side - it's the feeling. It means that you are in alignment with the emotional thrust of another person's communication. *Logos* is the logic of your argument.

Notice the sequence: *ethos, pathos, logos* — your character, and your relationships, and then the logic. If you cut straight to the *logos*, the left-brain logic, of your ideas and try to convince other people of the validity of that logic without first taking *ethos and pathos* into consideration, your representation will lack power.

Councils, governing committees or other groups who control or influence the level of resourcing for libraries should be approached like any other target group. The first step is to analyze them, both as a group and as individuals. Newspapers can provide current information about the politicians and their concerns and campaign literature can reveal what promises they may have made. If they were elected on a platform of cutting government services, this will greatly affect how they treat the library and what approach the librarian should take with them.

Minutes of past meetings can provide insights into how incumbent officials have treated the library in the past and can provide clues to existing alliances among the members.

One should also gather personal information about these people. In voluntary committees or local government the occupational background of members may affect their method of governing. If being on the council or committee is their only managerial position, their reaction to situations may be different to that of those with more managerial experience. Educational level can also affect how they perceive the library and its role, as will whether decision makers or their families are library users (Griffith).

Power is not just a matter of how much but of how good. Quality of power may be as important as its quantity. Your own power must be related to your own goals, and your library's power must be related to your library's goals, not merely to the power of others. What might be adequate for one purpose, reflecting one set of values, may be inadequate for another.

A Maori carver and art historian remarked, less than a decade ago: “Our Maori artistic heritage will remain meaningless in this country as long as the barrier of racism remains. People will not see beauty in what they despise or devalue.” (Spoonley)

What is particularly sad, and particularly disempowering is when the people who devalue or despise something are the very people for whom it has most significance. Our inner sense of ourselves is crucially important. We all have a complex, subtle, feeling sense of what we are like inside. This is hard to put into words, yet it dramatically affects how we project our image to other people.

New Zealand has an advantage in the concept of *mana*, in the recognition that spiritual power, authority, prestige and status is not necessarily positional nor is it constant in all spheres of the complicated lives we live. *Mana*, as I understand it, is something, which you earn by service to others, not something you can demand, nor indeed, deliberately set out to acquire, and it is inextricably linked with self-esteem in a way the Western concept of power is not. The concept of *mana* is a healthier view of power than the one on which the profession is currently operating.
Everybody has had the experience of walking into a room feeling great. When you smile, people respond. When you look or act gloomy or have a chip on your shoulder the chances are that your feelings will convey a negative message. Negative messages are usually misunderstood. People generally interpret negative feelings as being directed toward them, and may perceive you as angry, sullen, arrogant, snobbish, cold or sad. People will walk through the door of your expectations if these are real enough to you. Positive powerful behavior is a manifestation of purpose, self-esteem, and presentation. Katherine Hepburn described her arrival in Hollywood: “I was bringing myself as though I were a basket of flowers.”

Julian Jaynes suggests that early man had no consciousness but rather a bicameral mind, “an executive part called a god, and a follower part called man.” Early man functioned, survived, purely through listening to the god-voice within. This voice gave him advice, criticized and sometimes mocked him. Jaynes suggests that, because of their authority and control, it was virtually impossible to disobey these gods. (Jaynes)

The residual of the omnipotent god-voice authority functions in all of us still – our internal censors, that little voice that tells us that we should, ought, can’t, aren’t in control, aren’t good enough, don’t have enough brains, talents, money, and never will have, in short, that we are not good enough to do whatever it is that we really want to do/accomplish. It is even there when we tell ourselves that the reason we don’t do/accomplish is because it’s not really our fault.

You can’t be the star in your own life while you allow this omnipotent god-voice to be the director and manager. He will look for evidence to support your poor opinion of yourself, and then he will harp on it. He will ignore the positive steps you have taken and the small triumphs you have had, or worse, will tell you that they’re not achievements, not important, that instant success is the only thing that counts. He expects you to be perfect.

If you wait until you feel you can be perfect, you will do nothing. Those wonderful hand-knitted Aran sweaters that come from Ireland all have a deliberate mistake in them. The knitters say that, “only God is perfect.”

Human culture is both the reflection of and an extension of our minds. The various professions, for instance, put special boundaries around the realms of experience or expertise they treat and thus treat the “same” “problems” differently as well as focus on or take in different problems to begin with. The boundaries between professions are the differences between the categories they use to structure the problems they treat. The medical profession’s diagnosis of the drug problem is very different from the legal profession’s. One wants to treat drug abuse as an illness, the other as a crime, the difficulty is that drug abuse is both and much more besides. (Mitroff & Bennis, 68) We librarians persist in using our jargon and our boundaries as if they are uncontestable.

When dealing with others we should take cognizance of three particular features of the human mind:

We are extremely sensitive to recent information. An air crash, for example, forces attention on aircraft for a while, all sorts of reforms are initiated and then the spotlight goes away.

We are interested only in “the news.” Unexpected or extraordinary events have fast access to consciousness, while an unchanging background noise, or a chronic problem soon gets shunted into the background. It is easy to raise money for emergencies, like the few victims of a well-publicized disaster; it’s much more difficult to raise money for the many victims of continuous malnutrition. We respond quickly to scarcity and danger. Gradual changes in the world go unnoted while sharp changes are immediately seized on by the mind.

The mental system determines the meaning of any event, its relevance to the person. In the process, it throws out almost all the information that reaches us. A siren is frightening because it means that the police want you to stop. (126)

Our minds are set up to simplify, to bring order to a world that often is as chaotic as it appears. To do this we not only throw out a great deal of information that is presented to us but we lock in, long after they lose their usefulness or validity, older patterns and pieces of information. (127)
For librarians to acquire power involves, in essence, beating the system. To beat any system involves overcoming self-imposed constraints. Trying to beat a system requires exercise of all the mental functions: thinking, sensing, feeling, and intuition. It contrasts with passive acceptance of what is. It occupies our mind with what might be, imagining a future that would be better than the present. (128)

Significant personal and cultural development is not possible without beating systems. In some cases, systems are beaten, even destroyed, by use of force. However, it is much better to beat them by the use of ideas. Force is directed at getting rid of what we don’t want; ideas are directed at getting what we do want. They are not equivalent: getting rid of what we don’t want does not assure us of getting what we want.

Beating a system not only removes constraints imposed on us by the system, but also removes constraints imposed on the system by itself. This extends its range of choices and enables it to develop. (Ackoff)

On the wall of my office I keep a poster of Ganesha, the Hindu elephant-headed god who is both patron god of literature and the remover of obstacles. When I sense an imperceptible raising of eyebrows of first time visitors, I comment “What better library god could one have.” However, I confess an uneasiness that as a profession we seem to be neither defending nor supporting literature, preferring to concentrate on the more commodified information, and we do not join forces to strive to remove obstacles, but rather we concentrate on accommodating them.

User fees are one way we are bending over backwards to accommodate the obstacle of economic restraints. I was very excited when I read these words written by Donna Awatere:

In the Paakeha world, information is like gold. When you go to a doctor, he is the one who has the information and you’ve got to pay for it. If you go to a lawyer, he has the information and again you’ve got to pay for it. The Maori way is that if people have got the information then you will just be given it. (Awatere)

In the novel, The Power of One, Peekay, first as a child and then as a teenager, expresses what we all require:

He had given me the power of one, one idea, one heart, one mind, one plan, one determination. Hoppie had sensed my need to grow, my need to be assured that the world around me had not been specially arranged to bring about my undoing. He gave me a defense system and with it he gave me hope. (Courtney, 124) ...The power of one is above all things the power to believe in yourself, often well beyond any latent ability you may have previously demonstrated.... Hoppie’s dictum to me: “First with the head and then with the heart” was more than simply mixing brains with guts. It meant thinking well beyond the powers of normal concentration and then daring your courage to follow your thoughts. (520)

The recognition and use of our power is essential to the future of libraries and librarians, but we must link that power with intelligence, passion, and a genuine empathy for others, if it is to be of any use to us, to our profession and to our libraries.
WORKS CITED


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