PROGRESSIVE LIBRARIAN
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Struggles for Political and Social Inclusion
The Internet — Sustainable?
The Internet — Aid for Social Activism?
Durland Alternatives Library
Historical Document, Added Entries & Book Reviews
CALL FOR PAPERS

Articles, book reviews, bibliographies, reports, and documents that explore progressive perspectives on librarianship and information issues are wanted for future issues of Progressive Librarian.

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We reserve the right to edit all submissions.

Submit manuscripts to: Progressive Librarians Guild, PL Editors
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10th Anniversary Issue

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PLG Statement of Purpose
The Progressive Librarians Guild was established in 1990 to:

- Provide a forum for an open exchange of radical views on library issues.
- Conduct campaigns to support progressive and democratic library activities locally, nationally and internationally.
- Defend activist librarians as they work to effect change in their own libraries and communities.
- Bridge artificial and destructive gaps within our profession between school, public, academic and special libraries.
- Encourage debate about prevailing management strategies adopted directly from the business world, and propose democratic forms of library administration.
- Consider the impact of technological change in the library workplace and on the provision of library service.
- Monitor the professional ethics of librarianship from a social responsibility perspective.
- Facilitate contacts between progressive librarians and other professional and scholarly groups dealing with communications world-wide.

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EDITORIAL: Core Wars

EDITOR'S NOTE: In 1999, ALA’s Congress on Professional Education recommended a series of task forces on various issues it studied. One of those task forces was the Task Force on Core Values, which also had roots in the previous year’s discussions within ALA on outsourcing. That committee released a series of drafts, culminating in the 4-28-00 version to be considered at the ALA Annual Meeting in Chicago this July (see www.ala.org/congress/corevalues/draft5.html). This draft document, despite suggested revisions, remains very distant from the progressive social commitments that lie at the heart of the profession’s core values.

I’m not sure how to attack the statement on Core Values. On its face, it is a bland homogenization of euphemisms vaguely pointing at ALA policies already on the books. Those policies exist already, so this is just a bureaucratic layer of wording which allows some policies to be more equal than others, by proxy and interpretation. For instance, the “Interpretation” section of Draft 5 (see reference above) captures this perfectly:

These values encompass many principles and beliefs that may have special meanings or require a different emphasis in each of the varied professional associations representing librarians and information professionals. The following is one interpretation, which may be adopted or revised by these organizations, based on their individual goals and priorities.

Now, for instance, how does one put a “different emphasis” or “revise” the “assurance of free and open access to recorded knowledge” or a “commitment to literacy and learning” as the Core Values draft suggests? For me, the Library Bill of Rights and Freedom to Read are pretty much the core values of the profession, and one would have to do some pretty fancy reasoning to get around those two landmark statements as our core values.

So, why have the statement at all? If we have one, why doesn’t it specifically refer to those two landmark positions? Why are there no specific references to intellectual freedom or equal access to information?
The Library Bill of Rights and Freedom to Read are pretty much what gives the profession (and has given the profession) any real stature and moral/political force in the public arena. Vague, vanilla-euphemizing blandness as a statement of "core values" weakens our basic credibility as a profession.

Having said that, it isn't really a mystery why this is being pushed forward within ALA. PLG and SRRT have taken ALA and its divisions to task for betraying core values (as embedded in ALA policies and the two statements to which I've referred). ALA and ACRL leadership specifically have either been embarrassed or have been forced into actual, real-live discussions about the profession's values and how we might or might not put them into action. ALA leadership continues to see this as a threat and/or a distraction to the profession's "real" work, and so wants to define it out of existence. ACRL did the same thing with its "Strategic Plan" restrictions. This is political backlash, pure and simple.

Hey folks, it's not like we (progressives) actually win most of these battles/issues. Now along comes a bland "core values" statement which will provide verbal cover when an issue is raised, or define it out of existence. (I can see it: "Well, intellectual freedom might be really, really core for academic librarians, but as for school or public librarians, we have to adapt and bring a different emphasis to that 'core' value.") The startling thing is that ALA leadership is willing to distance itself from the landmark positions which have been its only base of public power and credibility in order to avoid taking positions or having internal debate. Stunning. Don't amend, defeat it.

John Buschman

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Returning a Stare: People's Struggles for Political and Social Inclusion

by Shiraz Durrani

“The native, the exotic, the victim, the noble savage, is looking back, returning a stare.” Derek Walcott (1999) What the Twilight Says

Public Library Policy and Social Exclusion: Project Statement

In the autumn of 1998 the British Library Research and Innovation Centre and the Library and Information Commission (now called Re:source) jointly agreed to fund research exploring the role of the UK public library in combating social exclusion. The research is based at Leeds Metropolitan University School of Information Management and is being conducted in partnership with two UK library authorities - the London Borough of Merton and Sheffield MDC - and with support from an independent consultant. It is planned that the research will be completed by summer 2000, when a final project report and policy briefings and guidelines will be produced.

The overall aim of the project is to investigate the potential value and impact of the public library in overcoming social exclusion. Empirical research will comprise a survey of local authority policy and provision together with six detailed case studies designed to highlight both good practice and the problems of policy formulation and provision. In addition, in order to explore both the broader issues underpinning the study and the record so far of public library policy in this field, we have undertaken a series of exploratory working papers. These papers aim to both clarify the core concerns of the research and to stimulate discussion and debate.

What follows is one of these papers. We should make it clear that papers are internal working documents intended as interim position papers, which report on work in progress. They are in no way meant to represent a final or agreed position for our study, or in any way represent the position of our sponsors, the Library and Information Commission. They are, in the main, the work of individual members of the project team and individual authors are wholly responsible for their content. However, because the papers explore a wide range of themes relevant to our research, we are keen that they are widely read and commented on and we are therefore pleased to make them available to those who request them. Most advance a particular perspective or argument and, in this sense, the papers are deliberately intended to further or generate discussion and debate. We hope that they will be read in this spirit and we would welcome feedback in the form of written comments or contributions. If readers would like to help with the project in this, or any other, way, we would be more than pleased to hear from you.
Capitalism and Social Exclusion

People’s struggle is primarily waged around satisfying basic material needs for survival: food, clothing, and shelter. The seriousness of exclusion facing a large part of world’s population is shown in the fact that “half the world’s people lack basic sanitation services, while more than a billion lack drinking water – and in much of the developing world these numbers are rising.” (Ghazi 1999).

Two broad characteristics in every capitalist country are a sharp social division along class lines and a class struggle with varying degree of intensity. At the economic level, these struggles can be seen as struggles for inclusion in the share of national wealth, to own land and resources, to have a decent job with a living wage. At the political level, the struggle is for inclusion in the decision making process. At the social and cultural level, the struggle is to have the right to belong to a particular nationality, to use people’s own language, and to practice one’s own culture. The rights to organize, to get relevant education and information and to benefit from technological achievements are rights for which many excluded people have often given their lives.

Public libraries have an important role to play in these world-wide struggles of the people of all nationalities and all countries. Yet as international finance consolidates its stranglehold over lives of people and countries following the end of the so-called cold war, national governments and local authorities are being forced to follow the social and economic policies laid down by international finance and its agencies, the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank. The resources available to governments to support education, information and knowledge through public libraries are consistently shrinking. The relentless drive towards "privatization" results in an ever-reducing role of local authorities by decreasing the funds available to them to run social and educational services such as public libraries. While the international finance capital can tolerate Mobutus, Mois and Marcoses who drain away huge proportions of national wealth, it cannot tolerate a relevant information and education system that can liberate people from their bondage to international finance.

This does not imply that people have given up their struggle for a relevant information system. While their main struggle is at the economic level, the provision of relevant information and education is considered essential for success in people’s struggles everywhere. There is a general recognition that no liberation can be won without getting control of the means of mass communications.

A note of warning needs to be made here: when looking for relevant information systems among those struggling for liberation, we should not expect to find magnificent buildings with huge bound volumes, nor clean lines of the latest computers and networks. The resources for these have long gone to sustain fabulous lifestyles elsewhere. What we will find instead is a highly sophisticated network of information flows using whatever technologies are readily, cheaply and locally available. The lesson to be learnt is that it is not the high gloss ICT (information and communications technologies) products that are needed for people to be included in the social, political and economic lives of their countries. After all, with all the wealth that USA and Britain have, they have not even begun to address the problem of social exclusion. Struggling people everywhere are taking steps to end their exclusion in a long struggle.

The process of exclusion is evident in all capitalist countries. This is not accidental, as the division of society into classes implies that some people are “over-included” while others are excluded from social, political and economic life. The process of exclusion has been accelerated in the last part of this century with the collapse of the USSR. Capitalism is now free to extend and intensify its ideology of “profits before all else.” The process of globalization of this period has created its own record of social exclusion.

Globalization and exclusion have had a profound impact on the information field. We need to see what these terms mean and exactly what effects they have had on the information field.

Social Exclusion

Social exclusion is a concept proposed by the social policy think-tanks of the European Union’s Commission, and adopted by the United Nation’s International Labour Office. Castells (1998, p.73) describes social exclu-
It is worth remembering that it is not only individuals and individual communities that are excluded from enjoying economic benefits that a society is capable of generating. Entire countries and regions are often excluded, for example Sub-Saharan Africa with its 500 million people. The reason for this exclusion can be explained in the context of the development and expansion of capitalism world-wide. Castells (1998, p.74) says that these regions are excluded because they are

non-valuable from the perspective of informational capitalism and they do not have significant political interest for the powers that be and so are bypassed by flows of wealth and information, deprived of the basic flows of wealth and information, and ultimately deprived of the basic technological infrastructure that allows us to communicate, innovate, produce, consume, and even live, in today’s world. This process induces an extremely uneven geography of social/territorial exclusion and inclusion, which disables large segments of people while linking up trans territorially, through information technology, whatever and whoever may offer value in the global networks accumulating wealth, information, and power.

It is thus clear that exclusion is not an isolated phenomenon, an unexplainable side effect of global development. It is in fact an essential outcome of capitalist development and is allowed to continue as a basis for the development of capitalism. A sobering fact that forms the background to our discussion is worth mentioning here: the world population is 5.9 billion. Out of this, 800 million people are hungry today – excluded from the very basic means of staying alive (Pretty, 1999). The world already produces enough food to provide everyone with a nutritious and adequate diet – on average, about 350kg of cereal per person. A clue to understanding causes of world hunger is in these facts: The poorest, 6% of the world’s population share just 4.5% of the world’s income, and 20% of the richest share 83% per cent (Brittain, 1999).

Capitalism does not distinguish between the North and South in inflicting exclusion on people. It is not only in the poorer, industrially undeveloped world that exclusion exists. In USA, for instance, “the human rights situation is such that the social vice whereby the rich get ever richer and the poor get ever poorer has reached its extreme; tens of millions of vagabonds, beggars, destitute, and unemployed wander on the edge of their basic right to live” (Democratic People’s Republic of Korea, 1999). Yet
USA boasts the most advanced industrial and electronic base in the world, creating unbelievable wealth for a small proportion of its population. It is not beyond the realm of possibility to eliminate exclusion if economic and political will existed. It is the financial/industrial capital, which, in USA as well as internationally, opposes such elimination.

**Globalization**

By its very definition, capitalism divides people along class lines. Working class people as a whole are historically excluded from enjoying the social wealth created by their labour. Hence the system creates a class that is automatically excluded from wealth, power, education and information. But this process of exclusion has been intensified in recent years. There has been a qualitative change in the process of social exclusion in the last quarter of this century on a global level. Castells (1998, 1) explains these changes as a technological revolution, centred around information (which) has transformed the way we think, we produce, we consume, we trade, we manage, we communicate, we live, we die, we make war, and we make love: a dynamic global economy has been constituted around the planet, linking up valuable people and activities from all over the world, while switching off from the networks of the power and wealth, people and territories dubbed as irrelevant from the perspectives of dominant interests.

Capitalism began a new phase with the end of the international communist movement in the 1970s and 1980s and used the networking logic of the Information Age. Capital, no longer having to contend with opposition from socialism was now free to roam the world wherever excessive profits were to be made. While this aggressive phase of capitalism resulted in increasing economic growth in some countries and regions, its own logic ensures that millions of people and large parts of the world remain excluded from growth. Many areas have thus experienced a decline in national product as capital moves out of less profitable countries and regions. The social and economic consequences of this global search for profit inevitably leads to marginalizing and excluding millions of people around the world.

An important qualitative change brought about by globalization is the change in the balance of power between labour and capital. Sivanandan (1999) explores the causes for the change and the shift in balance of power:

The technological revolution of the past three decades has resulted in a qualitative leap in the productive forces to the point where capital is no longer dependent on labour in the same way as before, to the same extent as before, in the same quantities as before and in the same place as before. Its assembly lines are global, its plant is movable, its workforce is flexible. It can produce ad hoc, just-in-time, and custom-build mass production, without stockpiling or wastage, laying off labour as and when it pleases. And, instead of importing cheap labour, it can move to the labour pools of the Third World, where labour is captive and plentiful and move from one labour pool to another, extracting maximum surplus value from each, abandoning each when done.

All of which means that the relations of production between capital and labour have changed so fundamentally that labour (in the developed capitalist world) has lost a great deal of its economic clout, and, with it, its political clout. And that in turn gives a further fillip to technological innovation, and imbibes capital with an arrogance of power that it has seldom enjoyed since the era of primitive accumulation.

Thus globalization serves the interests of a minority rich elite which controls the wealth and resources of the “global world.” As Lazarus (1999, 97) says “globalisation directly serves the interests of some people and that there is an intricate structural connection between the obscenely burgeoning prosperity of this minority and the steady immiseration of the vast majority of the world’s population.”

The social, political and economic control over the majority world by forces of global capital has resulted in massive poverty – total “social exclusion” – for a majority of people. Sivanandan (1998, 14) describes the reality of the new globalized world:
Today, there is not even the seedling vestige of an independent economic life. Agriculture has ceded to agribusiness, food production to the production of cash crops, staple foods like rice to cheap foreign imports like wheat. Education, the staple diet of Third World countries' economic and social mobility, has been priced out of the reach of the poor to produce an elite, which owes allegiance not to its own people but to "opportunities in the West." The farmers have no land, the workers have no work, the young have no future, the people have no food. The state belongs to the rich, the rich belong to international capital, the intelligentsia aspires to both. Only rebellion offers release. Hence the insurrection when it comes is not class but mass, sometimes religious, sometimes secular, often both, but always against the state and its imperial masters.

In the meantime, globalization destroys workers' rights, suppresses civil liberties and negates democracy. It dismantles the public sector, privatizes the infrastructure and determines social need. It free-floats the currency and turns money itself into a commodity subject to speculation, so influencing fiscal policy. It controls inflation at the cost of employment. It creates immense prosperity at the cost of untold poverty. It violates the earth, contaminates the air and turns even water to profit (Sivanandan, 14).

In effect globalization has created deeply divided societies (both in the Capitalist developed countries as well as in the majority world) – what Sivanandan (15) calls "that third of society that Information Capitalism and the market have consigned to the underclass as surplus to need" and which Hutton (1995) calls "the absolutely disadvantaged" 30 % of the "thirty, thirty, forty society."

These developments have resulted in an increased social exclusion for an increasing number of people. Kundnani (1999) explores the dynamics of social exclusion:

\[\text{The relationship between the wealthy and the poor is changing from one of exploitation to indifference. The role of the nation is changing from that of mediator between the nation's labour and capital to establishing the right infrastructure for foreign investment. The axis of power is shifting from exploitation of poor nations by rich to the indifference of a global elite in every nation towards the increasing poverty of their own people.}\]

Gray (1998) records the social effects of globalization – "over a hundred million peasants becoming migrant labourers in China; the exclusion from work and participation in society of tens of millions in the advanced societies; a condition of near-anarchy and rule by organised crime in parts of the post-communist world; further devastation of the environment."

Castells dates the forces of globalization and informationalization from the end of Soviet communism and the "hurried adaptation" of Chinese communism to global capitalism. Previously, the 1917 Russian Revolution and the international communist movement had been the dominant political and ideological phenomena of the twentieth century. Castells sees the end of the Soviet Union as resulting from its inability to "manage the transition to the Information Age."

Kundnani (1999, 49-50) sees "the economic paradigms of the industrial age in the process of being replaced by new paradigms of the globalized, information age." He says:

\[\text{Developments in information technology since 1970s have made possible new forms of economic organisation in both manufacturing and also in media industries, which have undergone substantial changes in the last twenty years. The huge growth in the spread of digital telecommunications over the last ten years has accelerated this process, leading us to the brink of a new era of capitalist development. One aspect of these new forms of economic organisation is the process of globalisation.}\]

Elliott (1999) looks at the contradictions created by globalization and technological developments at the end of the second millennium:

\[\text{This is the age of the Internet, yet 80 per cent of the world's population have never made a phone call. This is the age of democracy, yet the world's richest three men have assets that}\]
exceed the combined GDP of the 48 poorest nations.

Muddiman (1999) sums up the relation between capitalism and social exclusion:

The key thing is that the “Information Revolution" has actually made things worse. The “Information Society" is not just neutral or “up for grabs,” but actually bound up with the forces that perpetuate exclusion and intensify it.

This intensification of exploitation of the majority world has created a corresponding intensification of contradiction within countries and globally. People throughout the world are struggling against increasing exploitation and against capitalism as a whole. Thus as globalization creates the global capitalist, so it also creates conditions on a global scale for resistance to it. It is this resistance to capitalist super-exploitation, to the total social exclusion, that we now turn to.

Resistance to the New Global Disorder

Globalization is unleashing contradictory forces that provide the dynamics of life at the end of the second millennium. The tremendous possibilities for improvements for a better life for all are reduced to the reality of marginalization and exclusion for the majority.

On the one side, the levels and capacity of production are increasing at a tremendous pace with immense capacity to satisfy material needs of all people. There is greater scope to communicate on a global level in an increasingly efficient way. New creative and cultural activities are possible at a scale not even thought of 20 years ago. Increased productivity has the potential to transform the lifestyles of people by increasing leisure time.

On the other side, is the fact that such possibilities are available to only a minority of countries, societies and individuals. As the world is dramatically divided in ever sharper class divisions, the majority of working people are excluded from all the wealth and possibilities made possible by the increased capacity to produce wealth. Castells concludes, “globalization and informationalization are disenfranchising societies.”

With the exception of a small elite, “people all over the world are losing control over their lives, over their environment, over their jobs, over their economies, over their governments, over their countries, and over the fate of the earth” (Castells 1997, 69).

The resistance by those who have lost control over their lives is resolving this basic contradiction. Thus “resistance confronts domination, empowerment reacts against powerlessness, and alternative projects challenge the logic embedded in the new global order, increasingly sensed as disorder by people around the planet.” (Castells 1997, 69).

It is however an aspect of globalization that information about resistance itself has also been marginalized and banished from the mass media controlled by the same global controllers. Thus begins people’s resistance at the level of information and communication. The struggle then is not only to end poverty and exclusion but also to end the embargo on progressive information about the struggle of people around the world to end their exclusion.

It is obvious from the previous section that social exclusion is not an accidental outcome of some misguided policy. It is a natural outcome of capitalist development in the period of globalization, which has entered a new phase in the last quarter of this century. It affects the “developed" capitalist countries as well as the non-developing majority world. The struggle of the people around the world to be included in the distribution of products, which sustain life, is also global. It is global in two senses: One, in every country the marginalized and excluded people are struggling to be included in the economic, political and social life of their country. Secondly, the struggle is global in the sense that there is an increasing co-operation by people in different countries to work together on joint campaigns as their struggles and causes of their exclusion are also linked.

Before the collapse of the Soviet Union, people’s struggle everywhere were primarily defined by the presence of the two super powers. People’s struggles were clearly a struggle for liberation from capitalist marginalization with a hope of creating a new society based on social justice and for socialism. With the material, ideological and symbolic support of Soviet Union and Eastern Europe gone, and with China increasingly adopting
capitalism, the struggles of people have undergone a qualitative change.

These struggles take place in the “developed” as well as the majority world. Sivanandan (1999, 15-17) examines both these struggles:

In the developed countries, political power is diffused and mediated, and dissidence centres around specific issues. Resistance, therefore, takes on the form of protests and demonstrations and direct action politics – over the opening of a motorway through the green belt, say, or the closing of a local hospital or the destruction of civic amenities by property speculators or the growing of genetically-modified crops by food speculators. Although, at the outset, such resistances tend to be ad hoc, sporadic and disconnected, they form the basis of the alliances and larger resistances that follow – as, for instance, over the poll tax when thousands of people from diverse campaigns found common cause against an unjust tax. And as transnational corporations continue to integrate vertically and horizontally into a privatised network of power, direct action campaigns are themselves integrating issues and becoming international – as, for instance, in the battle against Shell by ecological groups over the North Sea and the Ogoni people in Nigeria.

In the Third World, political power is concentrated in the hands of a few and is naked, and dissidence solidifies around basic needs. Hence, resistances take the form of spontaneous uprisings and/or mass rebellions spurred on by indigenous movements sometimes, and sometimes by peasant and worker struggles.

Resistance on a global level to forces that create social, political and economic exclusion is intensifying as we come to the end of the second millennium. The combatants are peasants, workers, intellectuals, academics, and many others. The important qualitative difference in their resistance is that they are united, articulate, organised and are able to use the latest technologies in support of their resistance. Their target is no longer just the local tyrants, dictators and financiers. They have targeted the worldwide network of transnational companies, official bodies, unfair treaties and speculators who use the neutral image of UN to hide their real motive of mega-profits.

In the following section, we look at some examples of resistance to social, political and economic exclusion by people around the world.

The Battle of Chile

The control over mass media by a few transnationals has resulted in people’s history either hidden from view altogether, or distorted to such an extent that events become non-events, heroes become villains, and atrocities against people never see the light of day. But once again the courage of individuals and organizations fighting oppression and exclusion has used appropriate technologies to give people’s history its rightful place – center stage.

Patricio Guzman’s documentary film, The Battle of Chile: The Fight of an Unarmed People is an “epic of reportage on the events that extinguished democracy in Chile in 1973” (Pilger 1999). It was shown at the Human Rights International Film Festival in London in February 1999. The film is in two parts: Part One is entitled The Insurrection of the Bourgeoisie (1975) and Part two, The Coup d’Etat. Guzman and five colleagues who made the film were detained and tortured in Chile during filming (Hattenstone 1999). Guzman made a sequel, Chile, Obstinate Memory which reveals that after the film was smuggled abroad, the cameraman, Jorge Muller was arrested, and taken to a torture camp, where he “disappeared” until his grave was found years later.

The film records the events in Chile from 1972 onwards – on the streets, with the student unions, and in the factories, “to document the melodramatic reality of revolution. Guzman and his crew were there to record every significant event, every tiny speech, every road block, in the last year of Allende’s rule.”

The reason for the banning of the film in Chile even today and the reasons behind the horrific events in Chile are revealed in the films. Pilger (1999) says that the film reveals the hidden force behind the events in Chile:
Muller’s camera traces the contours of faces, revealing the freemasonry of deception, lies and false hope. Pinochet is brought into the government; in his shadow are 250 terrorist groups backed by Washington. Almost everything now is backed by Washington. The CIA finances the truck operators’ strike; William Colby, the CIA director who ran the terrorism of Operation Phoenix in Vietnam, pointedly refuses to deny that the invisible hand is his. A popular television channel broadcasts anti-government bile; it is run by the Ford Foundation. At sea, American warships make contact with the Chilean navy.”

The films play an important role in restoring history to the people of Chile. When Guzman returned to Chile, he was shocked by the collective amnesia of his people. “If you go to a bookshop to buy history books, there are more-or-less 12 books about the history of Chile and you look through the chapter on Allende and there are 12 lines or 14 or 20. It is a sign of the terror Pinochet created.” (Hattenstone, 1999). The historical significance of Guzman’s films is obvious. The brutal regime that murdered Allende was backed by the US military-financial establishment. Both want to drown people’s memory of Allende and his achievements, including popular democracy, health and education. Guzman shatters the walls of silence and distorted reality created by Allende’s enemies and “celebrates the truth that the universal phenomenon of resistance continues.”

The people of Chile suffered years of torture, “disappearance” and death to assert their right to shape their own destiny, to be included on the stage of history. Their sacrifice is recorded for all by Guzman and his colleagues. The next generation learns from the lessons of history, ready for new sacrifices. The struggle for social inclusion is indeed a bloody one.

It is obvious that no public library will be able to document openly state oppression against its own people. Yet it is important that library workers do not use this as an excuse for not recording, preserving and making available, at a later stage, records of events taking place around them. The film crew managed to do this and there are obvious risks they faced. But if library workers are part of the people they seek to serve, they face similar risks anyway. If they cannot become activist-librarians, the least they could do is to join hands with activists to ensure that the library’s functions are kept in the forefront of the struggle. Perhaps library and information workers need to study the examples of journalists who often risk their lives in the course of their professional work. The concept of risk and danger in professional work needs to be incorporated in the core values of the LIS profession if it is to be socially relevant.

The Video Activist

The use of cameras and videos in support of struggles has a long history. Photo-documentation of events as they happen gives an instant authenticity to events. They are also more accessible to communities which may have been kept away from literacy skills. For the first time, activists themselves take control of the medium and present news from their own point of view. As Undercurrents (1998) says:

The video magazine is an alternative news distribution outlet that sets out to challenge mainstream definition of news. Undercurrents relies on volunteer video activists using domestic camcorders. Ignored but important local issues now can have an international audience.

One example of how Undercurrents allows free flow of alternative news was in No. 8 where the Kurdish Workers Association shows a short documentary on Leyla Zana, an MP in the Turkish Parliament. The commentary sets the scene:

Leyla Zana is the first Kurdish woman to become a member of Parliament in Turkey. In 1994, she was sentenced to 15 years in prison for supporting the rights of the Kurdish people. This film includes extracts from letters she wrote while in prison, showing her courage and determination to continue the struggle against injustice.

The visual images, the commentary and the voice of Leyla bring to life a situation that Western business interests and the mass media which supports it would rather suppress. As Tony Benn says (Undercurrents 8), “I think Undercurrents is doing a marvellous job because you’re providing [news that you do not see] in the media and with that little box of tricks you
can beat Rupert Murdoch and John Birt and CNN and NBC and you’ve got to do it.” It is an alternative voice and image that needs to be heard and seen.

Libraries need to pay more attention to forms other than printed books: sound recordings, photographs, video filming, recording and preserving oral histories should become important forms that they actively collect and promote.

The Alternative Davos

The Alternative Davos was set up by Ahmed Ben Bella, the former President of Algeria and is supported by some of the best organised mass movements in the majority world – such as the landless of Brazil (MST), led by Mario Luis Lill; the organizations of Indian farmers; the National Federation of Peasant Organizations (Fenop) in Burkina Faso, as well as the substantial social movements in Europe, especially in France.

The Alternative Davos got together to challenge the meeting of the global financial elite as they met in Davos. “It was the first time that the world’s economic and political powers had had to confront the intellectual challenge to their fundamental premises on their own doorstep.” (Brittain 1999).

Prof. Riccardo Petrella explains the agenda of the Alternative Davos:

What is at stake is the right to life – the right to water, housing, food, that is what the battle over international financial institutions is all about. We need a new social contract, which rejects the poverty created by the existing system.

The privation of education, the concentration of information systems, the control of intellectual property rights – all of these threaten a world in which the dominant powers control even how we conceive our world. (Brittain 1999).

The Alternative Davos attacked the power of the transnational companies, the Bretton Woods institutions, and the speculators. It called for the imposition of a tax on capital movements; the cancellation of all majority world debts; the replacement of the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank with a democratic UN body. No longer are the financial controllers of the world able to sit in isolated splendour planning world plunder. Resistance has reached their doorstep.

Protest and Campaign Movements

Various protest and campaign groups have now started using both, the over-ground and underground, alternative press to mobilize their supporters and disseminate their information. The availability of relatively cheap and easy means of communication that the Web and e-communications allows has revolutionized the way protest and social justice movements can be active. This has given new power to united and organized forces of those struggling against transnational companies and their Western financial supporters. Vidal (1999b) gives some examples of how the protest and campaign movements use the electronic media:

Twelve environmental justice protesters and a video activist walked into Shell UK’s London HQ and occupied three offices on January 11, 1999. Almost the first thing that the Undercurrents reporter did was to set up his small digital camera and link it to a palm-top computer and a mobile phone. Despite Shell turning off the electricity and cutting the phone lines, within minutes he was broadcasting the protest live on the Internet, and e-mailing to the mainstream press.

The campaign to stop the Multilateral Agreement on Investment (MAI) depended on the Web and spread like wildfire. The MAI was being debated in secret by OECD countries and would have been nodded by Western parliaments, giving massive legal and economic advantage to transnational corporations around the world. Once a French NGO exposed what was going on, more than 600 citizens’ groups, including unions, workers parties, consumer organisations, development and environmental groups in dozens of countries were exchanging information, co-ordinating opposition and alerting politicians, the media and civil servants. In the end MAI had to be abandoned.
Thus the Web technology which is being used by speculators to acquire massive profits by “whizzing trillions of dollars around the world every day” has now become the most potent weapon in the toolbox of resistance to globalization and the rampant free market. It has given instant information to activists around the world. “Small” events in one part of the world get immediate world-wide exposure, which leads to massive global campaigns within days or even minutes. The days when information was controlled by a few who disseminated only those aspects considered “safe” are over.

Public libraries need to pay attention to underground and alternative material, which are becoming the main communication media for people struggling for change. The possibilities of cheap and easy means of communication that the Web and e-communications allow need to be harnessed by libraries to acquire, store and disseminate information that the struggling people consider relevant. Those who are active in the struggle have already adopted these technologies as tools for their struggles. If libraries are to be considered partners in the people’s struggles, they will need to accept the new media, not to satisfy the business and other needs of the “already rich,” but for the needs of the socially excluded.

_The Adivasis and Social Exclusion_

It is instructive to see social exclusion from the point of view of the Adivasi of the Nilgiri Mountains in Tamil Nadu. They struggle against transnational companies such as Unilever which evicts them from land they have lived and worked on for generations. Marcel-Thekaekara (1999) compares the Adivasi experience with the struggle against social exclusion in a number of other countries:

The experience of those struggling against social exclusion among the housing estates in the inner cities of England and Scotland: In Easterhouse housing estate in Glasgow considered “Europe’s worst slum,” the reality of poverty included the fact that “most of the men in Easterhouse hadn’t had a job in 20 years; they were dispirited, depressed, often alcoholic. Emotionally and mentally they were far worse off than where we worked in India; [we saw] underdeveloped Scottish children – a whole generation were growing up a head shorter, smaller than their parents and grandparents. Malnutrition in Britain!”

The struggle of the Aboriginal Australians: “Our people in Tamil Nadu were shocked beyond words by the Australians’ stories of children wrenched from their families, of the treatment meted out to them by the white Australians.” For months afterwards the Adivasis talked about the Aboriginal Australians’ visit: “Poor people, how they’ve suffered” they said. “Our problems are nothing compared to what they’ve been through.”

The Adivasis visited the “super-developed Germany” but they were not impressed. They did not hanker after German consumer goods, and were speechless when they saw an old people’s home, saying, “we must ensure that such things never happen in our society.” They were shocked at the spectre of unemployment that haunted the society. Yet they admired the fact that everyone treated them with respect and dignity, as equals.

For those struggling against social exclusion, satisfying basic material needs is obviously an important concern. But for many, the notions of wealth do not equal possession of money. Wealth to the Adivasis is “our community, our children, our unity, our culture, the forest.” Marcel-Thekaekara (1999) comments, “We realised that the Adivasis didn’t see themselves as poor. They saw themselves as people without money.”

Their contacts with other struggles around the world provided a new source of strength, which is a result – an unplanned one, no doubt – of globalization: solidarity of people struggling against exclusion, exploitation and oppression in different parts of the world. Marcel-Thekaekara (1999) quotes Bomman’s speech in the village square after his overseas visit:

Unilever is very powerful. But the days when Adivasis were totally powerless are over. We now have friends in Germany and UK. If we tell them what Unilever is doing here they will start a campaign to inform all the people of Europe to stop
buying Unilever tea. They will fight on our side. We are not alone.

As Marcel-Thekaekara (1999) says, “The global links between people usually considered poor, and therefore powerless, had made a difference.” Thus globalization which brought poverty and powerless to every doorstep in the world, also brought the means of overcoming the very poverty and powerlessness on which capitalism thrives. New battles lines are drawn. Combatants of a new generation take on the new struggles.

Public libraries in Britain and other “developed” countries need to examine their work practices, outlook, mission statements with a view to making them less Euro/USA-centric. There is an assumption in the profession that the “Western” model of public libraries is the best. This model has failed to stop the exclusion of perhaps a third or more of our populations from the informational world. It is time we asked for some technical expertise from those Majority World countries which have had more success than ourselves in providing a relevant educational and information service.

We need to question and challenge the static role that public libraries have acquired in Britain. The class bias in public libraries is analysed by Pateman (1999) who says,

There is plenty of evidence to suggest that, while public libraries are used by all social classes, they are a predominantly middle class institutions...the service is managed and operated by middle class people who share their middle class values with middle class library users.

Library and information science is a sanitised profession that wants to keep away from getting involved in people’s struggles, that wants to remain “neutral” while those with power and wealth gobble up an ever-increasing proportion of library budgets. Again a comparison with another profession may help to understand our real situation: NHS [National Health Service] doctors insist on the best medicine for their patients irrespective of their financial or social standing. What matters are the needs of the patients. The library profession needs to come up with a similar “needs-led” approach to satisfying information needs of people.

Glimpses from Kenyan Struggle for Political Communication

The Kenyan people’s struggle for political freedom and independence had been fought at various levels: political, economic, military, educational and communications. Before the majority of peasants and workers could be included as the mainstream of the society, they had to struggle with all means at their disposal. The battles at communications level were central to their winning the war for political independence. The lessons from this struggle add to the wealth of experiences in how to eliminate social exclusion.

Some examples of how political communication was used in Kenya as part of the people’s struggle against exclusion are given below:

The Kimaathi Tradition

Kimaathi led the Kenyan forces in the political as well as military fronts. He was elected to lead the Kenya Parliament founded as an alternative state in the liberated areas; he also led the Kenya Land and Freedom Army on the battlefield. Because of these roles he had of necessity to be involved in the communication strategy of Mau Mau. He helped to plan an elaborate underground library network in the liberated forest areas; he ensured that Mau Mau reports and documents were well looked after and preserved (it was the British forces which destroyed or hid, even to this day, much of this valuable resource); he supported the work of underground and over-ground press controlled by Mau Mau; he actively distributed Mau Mau newspapers, carrying them in baskets and travelled around the country in buses and Matatus. Kimaathi is a good role model of a library/information worker in tune with his people’s needs and struggles.

The Handbill Tradition

In the 1930s, one of the first acts of the East African Trade Union was to purchase a typewriter and a rotary cyclostyle machine. Thus began a new phase in Kenyan publishing. Previously, publishing was beyond the reach of most nationals, particularly the working class, because of the exorbitant charges for printing. The costs were high not only because machinery had
to be imported from Britain, but also the charges were kept high to discourage Kenyan publishing. Colonial settlers owned most presses and the few controlled by Kenyans could not meet the needs of all.

Thus the decision of the Union to use cheap cyclostyling was significant as it brought relevant technology within their reach. The Union developed the use of handbills, which could be produced cheaply and distributed easily without colonial censorship, formal or informal. These handbills contained information of relevance to workers about their rights, and also about union matters and activities. In addition, they carried news items of interest to workers, since not many newspapers catered for the needs of workers. The Union produced its handbills in the major worker languages such as Kiswahili, Gikuyu, Gujarati, Hindi, and Punjabi, as well as English. The easy availability of relevant news in a form and language that made it easily accessible played an important part in raising class consciousness of Kenyan workers and helped to strengthen their organisations.

A whole new set of worker activities developed around the production and distribution of these handbills. These experiences proved crucial in producing a trained cadre for carrying on trade union and political work, at the same time winning mass support for the liberation movement.

Use of Orature

The use of oral communication systems was well established before the colonial government declared a State of Emergency in 1952 to fight the armed Mau Mau. Kubai (1983, p. 98) explains how this developed:

In November 1951 the colonialists and white settlers’ newspapers stopped covering KAU [Kenya African Union] public meetings. The militants started mouth-to-mouth bush-radio information service. Songs were composed carrying revolutionary and “subversive” messages and were sung by both young and old. Kinuthia Mugi of Olenguruone became champion in the composition of new Kikuyu songs. J. J. Gakara, among others, printed the songs into “hymn books.” Kikuyu and Kiswahili newspapers and pamphlets were started.

The need at the early stages of struggle against colonialism was to organize secretly. This was reflected in the early means of communication developed by people. The colonialist regime had kept Kenyan nationalities in isolation from each other by banning Kenya-wide nationalist movements. Thus one of the first tasks of the now developing revolutionary movement was to develop new communication links with all Kenyan people, and to do it secretly.

The Mau Mau High Command, using its organizational network at Mathare Valley in Nairobi resolved this problem. Since the largest concentration of workers was in Nairobi, a new communication network was organized from here. Workers of various nationalities were recruited in Nairobi. One aspect of their work was to act as links with their nationality areas. Thus the worker-organized Mau Mau movement established deep roots among peasantry, without which the whole movement could have been crushed by imperialism within a short time.

Public libraries need to see themselves as part of the society as a whole. People’s struggles for social justice and economic liberation are waged at various levels: political, economic, social, cultural and educational. Communications can be at the heart of these struggles, linking all the different struggles and providing a basic support mechanism. Any search for relevance will need to explore this dynamic role of libraries.

Library workers will need to become activists in the various struggles of the people, in the Kimaathi tradition. Only thus will they become relevant to the people they serve and avoid the one-dimensional approach that is the rule today. There needs to be a new debate about what being a “professional” means.

No public library collects underground and alternative material from the people’s struggles. Many important documents may already have been lost already as no organization in Kenya dare openly collect it. It is not certain if any outside institution, with the possible exception of CIA, has collected such material. (Durrani, 1997). In order to avoid losing the experiences of people’s struggle, public libraries need to have an active collection policy, possibly in conjunction with international bodies such as UNESCO.
Kurdish Resistance

“No friends but mountains” goes a Kurdish song. That indeed seems to be borne out by the plight of the Kurds people this century. Together with the Palestinians, the Kurds, as a nationality, are among the most excluded people in the world today. Both suffered at the hands of the post-First World War carve-up of their territories by Britain and France.

The Kurdish people number between 25-40 millions according to different sources. They are divided over 5 main countries: Turkey (13 million); Iran (4.8 million); Iraq (4.3 million); Syria (1 million); Germany (0.5 million); Russian Federation (0.3 million); Armenia (0.1 million). They are also spread in Lebanon and Syria as well as in most European countries in varying numbers. Yet they have no state they can call their own. Kemal Attaturk “tore up the 1820 Treaty of Sevres which had envisaged an independent area for the Kurds in Eastern Turkey and cancelled their right to be seen as a people separate from the rest of the Turkish nation” (Butt 1999). He also “swept aside their freedom of language and culture that had been written into the Treaty of Lausanne” (Black 1999). As Butt says, “The Kurds were doubly cheated after the First World War. Not only did they fail to get a state of their own, but they found their mountainous territory chopped up by the new borders of Iraq, Iran, Syria and Turkey.”

Until recently Turkey had maintained that the Kurdish nationality is “Mountain Turks,” denying them their identity as Kurdish people. Until 1991 Kurds in Turkey were forbidden to speak their own language which is made of the Sorani, the Kurmanji and other related dialects. “If people heard you talking Kurdish in the village,” Griffiths (1999) quotes Sevan Sen a London factory worker, “you would be reported and the next day in school the teachers would make you stand on one leg for half an hour or beat you.” But the use of Kurdish in education, broadcasting and publishing is still prohibited. Pinter (1999) says, “Anyone publishing, or attempting to publish an objective historical analysis of the Kurdish situation is subject to prosecution and imprisonment. Torture is commonplace, particularly in police stations.”

In Turkey, the Kurds were forced to change their names and had to call their villages and towns by Turkish names. They are “politically and economically marginalized in each of the five main countries they live” (Black 1999). According to the Turkish Parliament’s own investigation, in 15 years 4,000 Kurdish villages have been destroyed by Turkish security forces, leaving 30,000 dead, and 3 million driven from their homes (Steel, 1999). Thus their social, political, economic and cultural exclusion seems total.

Veysi Aydin sums up the plight of the Kurdish people: “The Kurdish people feel trapped. We are surrounded by fire and nobody is listening to us.” (quoted in Gillan, 1999). Even when over 30,000 people have lost their lives – most at the hands of the Turkish military – there is no urgency in the power capitals of the world to find a solution to the struggle of a people without nation.

The need to communicate among the Kurdish communities spread all over Europe becomes an important matter for the survival of their culture and social life – indeed their very identity. A strong sense of organization is one way in which the Kurdish people have overcome their lack of territorial control. Wherever they live, they tend to be highly politicized and organized. Just as the Zapatistas (see next section), they make extensive use of orature, so that news spreads fast between isolated community members within each country as well as between different countries.

However, the Kurdish community also uses modern means of communications to carry news about their struggles, their culture and their language. Publishing is an important aspect of their struggle for survival. Publications in Kurdish language are important, as it has been suppressed over the years. New publishing houses in Kurdish language material have sprung up in France as well as other European countries. These serve the needs of the Kurdish people throughout Europe.

In addition, the community runs the Med TV, a satellite television station based in London. Med TV has become the “Kurdish voice, not only in Turkey, but throughout Europe” according to Estella Schmid, the coordinator of the Kurdistan Solidarity Committee (Black 1999). Med TV played a crucial role in keeping the Kurdish communities throughout Europe informed about developments surrounding the arrest earlier this year of Abdullah Ocalan, the leader of the Kurdish Workers Party. Its
communications work was perhaps responsible for ensuring that there was widespread protest in more than 20 cities in Europe when Ocalan was arrested.

Pinter (1999) highlights a sad fact about the flow of information about the Kurdish struggle in Britain, with all the freedom of press it boasts. The Today programme on Radio 4 interviews Professor Norman Stone who describes Ocalan as a “thug.” Pinter continues,

The appalling repression of the Kurdish people in Turkey is generally unreported in the British media and virtually ignored at Government level... the issue is not simply of what is happening to the Kurds but also what is happening to freedom of expression and independent thought. Something has been occurring beneath our very noses in Turkey for years: many thousands of people confront substantial and persistent persecution and yet we read little about it in the press and our government is silent while trade with Turkey flourishes - Turkey provides rich business opportunities for all Western “democracies.”

Meanwhile the struggle of the Kurdish communities continues.

Public libraries need to become friends to all those who have “No friends but mountains.” This can happen only when they establish active relationships and communications links with people’s struggles. The real solution would be to recruit people from these struggles as librarians and information workers. Perhaps then we can start making links at national and international level with struggles of different people. Perhaps then we can start breaking down the “what’s it got to do with me” mentality among a large number of middle class library professionals.

The Zapatistas and the Electronic Struggle

The Zapatistas came to the attention of the world on January 1, 1994 when about 3000 armed men and women took control of several municipalities in Chiapas in Southern Mexico. They were the Ejercito Zapatista de Liberacion Nacional. They are Mexican patriots “up in arms against new forms of foreign domination by American imperialism.” (Castells 1997, 78). The Zapatistas staged an armed uprising on behalf of Indian rights and fought the Mexican army for 10 days before a cease-fire was declared and negotiations began.

They thus launched what has come to be known as the first “cyber” or “Net” war. “Even as the government mobilised its army to occupy the state of Chiapas and tried to deny the revolutionaries access to the mass media,” says Vidal (1999a) “they and their supporters were mobilising words and images to disseminate ideas electronically.”

The Zapatistas’ struggle is at two levels: “they fight against the exclusionary consequences of economic modernisation; they also challenge the inevitability of a new geopolitical order under which capitalism becomes universally accepted” (Castells 1997, 77). Although the struggle of the Zapatistas is restricted to a relatively small region of Mexico, the geographic and political reach of their struggle covers not only the whole of Mexico, but also the whole world. This has been achieved through a clever and sophisticated use of various aspects of electronic technology. Not only have they used computer communications, they have also proved adept “at the speedy production and circulation of videos, the genesis and compilation of pro-Zapatista interviews and music on audio tapes and CD ROM and the use of radio (both legal and pirate) and community access TV to outflank scanty and biased coverage by the mainstream media” (Cleaver 1997, 22).

The struggles of the Zapatistas could not have been waged successfully if they had not broken out of the information embargo imposed by the state. They have used electronic networks in conjunction with solidarity networks throughout the world to ensure that their voice is heard. An important reason for their success is the development of their own forms of self-organization which enables not only the use of computer systems but provides social cohesion and unity.

According to Castells (1997, 79), “the success of the Zapatistas was largely due to their communication strategy, to the point that they can be called the first informational guerrilla movement” [his emphasis]. Castells quotes Subcomandante Marcos, the Zapatista spokesperson: “We must say our
word and be heard. If we do not do it now, others will take our voice and lies will come out from our mouth without us wanting it. Look for a way to speak our word to those who would like to listen.” It was this appropriate communications policy which enabled Zapatistas to reach the people of Mexico and gave strength to their struggle.

Vidal (1999a) quotes Henry Cleaver in how the Zapatistas used the net and combined its use with “conventional” means of communications:

Information was downloaded on to the Net, gathered from other sources and transformed into flyers, pamphlets, newsletters, articles and books detailing the torture, rape, executions and other violence being perpetrated by the police, military and the hired goons of the big ranchers. The material fuelled marches and vigils around the world.” The Zapatistas have extended the usage of the Net with their analysis of poverty, human and land rights, justice, exploitation which have now become part of the “vocabulary of new democracy movements in many countries.”

But the Zapatistas have shown that they are equally effective even when they are denied the use of mass means of communication, such as the radio and television. The struggle in Mexico has taken a new perspective with a series of “unofficial plebiscite” conducted by the Zapatistas. The first one was conducted in 1995, and the second one in 1999. Up to three million Mexicans, aged 12 and above “gave an overwhelming support to the Zapatista rebel group” on indigenous rights (McCaughan, 1999). This massive turnout was achieved without the use of radio or television coverage; nor were there posters and other advertising materials. The main method that the Zapatistas used was word of mouth and “vigorous campaigning conducted by the visiting rebel delegates.” McCaughan explains how the campaigning took place, “Five thousand Zapatistas left their homes in Chiapas a fortnight ago, visiting factories, schools, and universities, playing football, chatting to tourists, and holding a meeting on the United States border.”

It seems that it is the creativity and commitment of the oppressed people that creates conditions for their liberation from exclusion.

The Zapatista’s ability to grasp with enthusiasm new communications tech-

ologies and use them actively for their struggles holds a lesson for libraries.

Social exclusion is an essential part of capitalism and so long as capitalism survives, social exclusion, social oppression and economic exploitation will also remain. Nor can such exclusion be totally eradicated as long as the prevailing free market system ensures that economic activity satisfies the profit greed of a few rather than the satisfaction of material, educational and cultural needs of the majority of people.

Social exclusion can be eliminated on the basis of people’s determination to be included in the processes that control their own lives. Experiences from around the world indicate that excluded people everywhere struggle to include themselves in deciding their future as individuals, nationalities, communities and countries. The level of exploitation and exclusion they face decides the strength of their determination to struggle against their exclusion. They thus create the conditions for their own inclusion. They do not need to depend on outside agents to “include” them in the share of power, which belongs to them by right. Their success in the process of self-inclusion is determined by a number of factors: their class consciousness; their understanding of the causes of their exclusion and knowledge about the struggle waged by other people (hence the importance of relevant education, information and knowledge); the organizations they create as part of their struggle; their control over appropriate technologies; the availability of a correct ideology which can guide them and, perhaps the most important factor, what actions they take in ending their exclusion.

In this paper we have seen the forces that have changed the playing field on which libraries are set; we also examined some struggles waged by people from different societies to participate fully in moulding their own lives and to take control over their destinies. The lesson from this is that the struggle for social inclusion is in essence the struggle for economic, political and social inclusion. And that is where the difficulty arises, as they come into direct conflict with the forces of international finance capital. The economic interests of finance capital are in direct conflict with the interests of the people struggling for inclusion.

History records that finance capital will go to any length in order to ensure
that it continues to maintain its hold over labor and resources. It even uses the state power of powerful nations such as the USA to ensure its control over lives and resources of entire countries. Examples of Chile, Congo and Cuba immediately come to mind. The extent to which the USA has gone to suppress people’s actions to eliminate exclusion is revealed in recently published documents and in President Clinton’s apology to the people of Guatemala (Kettle and Lennard 1999):

The findings of the independent Historical Clarification Commission concluded that the US was responsible for most of the human rights abuses committed during the 36-year war in which 200,000 people died.

Thus people’s struggles for inclusion are not waged in a vacuum. They are waged against powerful economic and political interests, which seek to appropriate the wealth of the whole world – no less. In this struggle, public libraries need to decide whether they support the interests of finance capital or those of the people struggling against exclusion. One reason why libraries have failed in the past to play an active part in people’s struggles against exclusion is perhaps because they have avoided this decision and have thus quietly provided support to those opposed to people’s struggles. Muddiman (1999) gives what is probably the real reason for their failure when he says that “libraries have usually existed as part of the apparatus of a capitalist state and hence, by and large, embodied the values of that state – i.e. acquisitive individualism.”

Given this, what role can there be for public libraries? Some lessons for public libraries are suggested in the above section. In general, the examples of struggles examined in this paper show that if libraries are to be relevant to the needs of the people, they need to make a conscious decision to side with the people in the on-going struggle. The challenge to information workers is to raise their heads and be counted among people’s forces seeking to end exclusion. A new breed of activist librarians can possibly save the profession from becoming totally irrelevant to those who have been “socially excluded.”

Liberation movements everywhere have had to create new information services to serve their own needs. People’s struggles against exclusion will continue – with or without public library services. Official public libraries can fulfill a new role as information providers to people’s forces in their search for inclusion, provided there is a conscious decision on the part of information workers and decision-makers in local and central governments to support people’s liberation struggles. A cultural revolution is needed for this to happen. How to become involved on the side of the people’s struggle is the real challenge to information workers and local and central governments throughout the world.

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The Unsustainable Library: Does the Internet Really Help Us in Africa?

by Colin Darch

First, this presentation puts forward the proposition that in Africa, as in other parts of the non-industrialized world, traditional libraries of printed material may well be unsustainable. Second, and working from the assumption that the first statement is true, it argues that the advent of systems of information delivery based on ICTs (information and communications technologies), commonly known as the Internet and the World Wide Web, may not make much short term or immediate difference, for various reasons. This is a viewpoint that has been dubbed “techno-pessimist,” and is characterized by a belief that political and economic issues cannot be ignored in the search for technological solutions, and that technology inevitably reinforces existing cultural and class divides in Africa. The opposite view, held by techno-optimists, argues that massive and cheap bandwidth and connectivity will leapfrog Africa into the Information Age and huge amounts of essentially free information will rapidly become available.

Can traditional print-based libraries be sustained in Africa? So far the overall record of their performance is not hopeful. The discussion about the sustainability of the “Alexandrian model” the indefinitely growing print storehouse is not new, even in the developed world. In the proceedings of an important, but now largely forgotten conference held in 1975, the North American Daniel Gore wrote that what he termed “the unexamined faith that to be good a library must be vast and always growing” rested on “nothing more solid than mistaken intuition” (Gore 1976, 3). His insights have not had as much impact on library practice, even in the United States, as one might have hoped. As Odlyzko (1999) has pointed out, there is a massive and “understandable inertia” in developed library systems, based on the existence of huge accumulated print collections that will have to be preserved until digitization is complete. Indeed, he goes on to argue that libraries may eventually be “disintermediated” or cut out of the loop, with scholarly publishers selling information services directly to
end-users. Thus, publishers may be able to retain or even increase their revenues and profits, while at the same time providing a superior service. To do this, they will have to take over many of the functions of libraries, and they can do that only in the digital domain.

In Africa and the developing world, the debate on sustainability has gone in a different direction. It was picked up in the 1990s by such writers as Agha and Akhtar (1992), Rosenberg (1994), Sturges (1997) and most recently by Sturges and Neill (1998). None of them are especially sanguine about the future of libraries in the continent. There is a generalized and perhaps understandable absence of political will to make them so, given that a clear causal link between information and socio-economic development has not yet been modeled in mainstream economic theory. Sturges and Neill, who characterise the Alexandrian model as an “alien implant,” write that “the reality is that after more than three decades of independence libraries are, at best, grudgingly tolerated by governments, and are placed low on any national list of priorities” (1998, 92). In these circumstances in most African countries, even a “steady state” or no-growth library model oriented towards performance measures, such as Gore and his colleagues advocated in 1975, has been extraordinarily difficult to implement. In much of Africa academic libraries have no periodicals subscriptions, and purchase few book acquisitions; many of them survive on gifts and exchanges, and soft money from overseas donors. There is insignificant local knowledge production, and local languages are ignored in favor of English, French or Portuguese. Agha and Akhtar cautiously point out that [s]tudies indicate that information systems in developing countries usually thrive when assisted with external aid through the development of products and services, along with related infrastructural development. Unfortunately, however, once aid ceases, the information systems tend to function at a lower level of productivity, or on occasion, become inactive. (1992, 284)

But even aid to libraries, as Zeleza more forcefully argues, is often a “dubious benefit”: aid itself is a short-term solution, and sometimes “donations [to libraries] are irrelevant and inappropriate. In the process, the culture of silence and submission to imperialism, which is partly responsible for the African crisis in the first place, deepens.” (1996, 295-296)

It is sometimes argued that the grand challenge facing modern librarians is the effective integration of past practice in the management of print sources, requiring the mediation of the professional information worker, with a developing practice in the organization of digital information, which can be accessed directly from the end-user’s desktop. But if the inheritance of past practice is increasingly “emptiness, indeed squalor, behind the facades of library buildings,” or “utterly empty shelves” (Sturges and Neill 1998, 93, 95), then the problem may lie at a deeper socio-economic level altogether.

Africa and the Internet

Is it likely that the Internet will come to our rescue? Most of Africa is marginalized in general ICT development, both quantitatively and qualitatively. In many countries, telecommunications remain a monopoly closely regulated by the state. Telephone access is itself problematic outside major urban centers. The Internet and the Web are inaccessible to the majority of citizens, and even if they have the technical means and the skills and ability to gain access, many useful digital information resources are too costly for most people. Distribution of resources within Africa, in all senses, is hopelessly skewed in favor of South Africa. According to the January 1999 top-level domain survey by the Internet Software Consortium, there were some 43 million Internet hosts in the world, of which 144,445 were in South Africa. The next most connected African countries were Egypt, with 1,908 hosts, and Zimbabwe with 1031. At the other end of the scale, fifteen African countries or territories are listed as having no domestic Internet hosts at all. These are Angola, Burundi, Central African Republic, Chad, Djibouti, DRC, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Gabon, Gambia, Guinea, Mayotte, Rwanda, Somalia, and Sudan (ISC 1999). The UNDP estimates that only one person in a thousand, or 0.1 percent of the inhabitants of sub-Saharan Africa, are Internet users, compared to one in four, or 26.3 percent of the citizens of the United States. Sub-Saharan Africa has nearly ten percent of the world’s population, while the USA has less than five percent (UNDP 1999, 63). If South Africa were to be discounted, these numbers would drop off the bottom of the chart.
These points are often, ironically, made most tellingly by using the technologies of the Web itself. Several researchers such as Stephen G. Eick of Bell Laboratories have worked at various times on global “visualizations” of Internet information flows. What is most fascinating about Eick’s images, for example, even though they are now admittedly several years out-of-date, is the way that the Internet globe or the arc map simply pass the African continent by, usually without comment from the author. Another source for a variety of such images is Martin Dodge’s Web-based Atlas of Cyberspaces (1999). Harpold (1999) has addressed these issues in a paper entitled “Dark Continents: A Critique of Internet Metageographies,” where he makes the important point that inequities within such categories as a country probably matter as much as inequities between countries themselves. Thus, South Africa’s 27th position in the NSC domain survey, above Austria, New Zealand and Mexico, tells us nothing about the differentiated class and race basis of access to digital information that makes up a more complex reality.

The most comprehensive survey of Internet connectivity in Africa at the time of writing is probably Mike Jensen’s (1998b), and used in conjunction with such other sources as the same author’s list of ICT development projects (1998a), gives a wide-ranging snapshot of a rapidly changing environment. Although change within Africa in terms of connectivity and access is dramatic, the gap between the developed world and Africa is widening, and is likely to continue to do so.

The question of the ideological underpinning of the worldview that the Internet presents to African end-users has also preoccupied African librarians and information workers. Da Costa (1996) has pointed out that knowledge generated in Africa is most likely to be found on the Internet at Web sites based in North American universities, which “reflect it back” to its original producers. Nawe (1998) has argued along similar lines that “equal access does not necessarily imply equal benefit,” and concludes her paper with a telling quotation from Aboriginal women in Australia: “If you have come to help me, you are wasting your time. But if you have come because your liberation is bound up with mine, then let us work together.”

Intellectual Property Rights and “Free” Trade

However, the problem with digital information in Africa is not only an infrastructural one of bandwidth, telephony and workstations. The content itself – information – is increasingly seen by the developed world as a commodity, and its availability and distribution is increasingly driven by the desire to maximize profit. To facilitate this, the legal system for the protection of intellectual property rights has been significantly widened in recent years, particularly since 1993. For many librarians and information professionals, the broad issue of intellectual property rights is normally seen through the narrow prism of the impact of copyright law on their daily activities. However, the imposition of the present world trade regime at the conclusion of the Uruguay Round of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), in December 1993 “marks a clear historical demarcation in the global control of information” (Frow 1996, 89).

A key objective of the 1993 negotiations was to extend intellectual property rights through patent, copyright and trademark law to such new areas as pharmaceuticals and agri-chemicals, whose products (medicine and food) are fundamental to human well-being. The view of the industrialized countries (the United States and its allies) was, and remains, that the knowledge-and-information components of these commodities are themselves private capital goods. An alternative view is the traditional one that the basis of scientific method is full disclosure. This in turn makes information and knowledge broadly a public good, both in the sense that they are non-depletable, and in the legal sense that they cannot be bought and sold.

In such an environment, librarians should actively begin to question whether the extension of current intellectual property rights practice to digital information is in the best interests of modern society. Patent and copyright provided exclusive rights in an age when the means of replication were technologically limited and it was feasible to receive an income stream for several years from publication, for example. However, with the exception of publishing for entertainment purposes, this is no longer the case and has never really
been the case as far as the “learned societies” were concerned. (Underwood 1999)

It is not only on the political left that concerns are being raised about the extension of intellectual property rights at the expense of the shrinking public domain. A recent North American book on legal aspects of the information society argues that the trend set at the 1993 GATT negotiations “…leads us to have too many intellectual property rights, to confer them on the wrong people, and dramatically to undervalue the interests of both the sources of and the audiences for the information we commodify” (Boyle 1996). This “commodification” of information in the global economy presents a gloomy prospect for librarians in Africa, who have been trained in the liberal tradition of the free flow of information. It seems that we will not be able to enter the electronic library of the future without a credit card.

Hand-in-hand with the process of expanding intellectual property rights into new areas, we are also seeing the increasing commercialization of the Internet and the privatization of the public domain. This represents a sharp contradiction, in the sense that the technology allows us limitless and barrier-free access to information sources, but law and economics may prevent us from utilizing it without paying. There is little doubt that, for example, US business regards this prospect with something approaching glee. A recent management text put it this way:

Information and knowledge are the thermonuclear competitive weapons of our time. Knowledge is more valuable and more powerful than natural resources, big factories, or fat bankrolls. In industry after industry, success comes to the companies that have the best information or wield it most effectively — not necessarily the companies with the most muscle. (Stewart 1997: ix).

The Internet, and more specifically e-commerce, are the means by which this success is to be achieved — and as this happens, the role of the Internet as a means for ensuring the free flow of information for non-commercial purposes is already diminishing. The “dot-com” or commercial domain alone already constitutes just under 30 percent of the total number of hosts on the Internet, compared to just over ten percent for the “dot-edu” or educational domain. Admittedly, these figures are applicable only to the United States, since everywhere else the geographical domain is first level. More significant is the exponential growth of electronic commerce in dollar terms. Analysts at eMarketer, an Internet research company, predict that the value of e-commerce will rise from US$98.4 billion in 1999 to an estimated US$1,244 billion in 2003, while the US share of the market will drop sharply (eMarketer 1999, 31).

The corollary of commercialization is the privatization even of information that has been produced in the public domain, by the assertion of intellectual property rights and other legalistic means. In most countries of the world it is accepted that public funds are used to support knowledge production in public institutions, whether state-funded universities and research institutes or government commissions and the like. Typically the product of such processes are freely available: in the United States, for instance, government publications are broadly speaking exempt from copyright controls. But the process that Noam Chomsky has dubbed the “socialization of risk, the privatization of profit” is nonetheless insidiously at work. We have seen a concrete example of this process recently in South Africa, where a text produced at the taxpayers expense has effectively been handed over for profit to a publisher.

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) was appointed by the South African government to collect evidence and report on gross human rights violations of the apartheid years. The TRC made the text of its final report, as well as transcripts of all the testimony heard on the TRC Website available on a cheap CD-ROM. However, the publishers of the printed version of the report — selling for over R700 for the 5 volumes — allegedly forced the withdrawal of the CD-ROM from sale, and the removal of the report text from the TRC website. The TRC’s webmaster, Steve Crawford, organized a campaign to have this vitally important document for South African democracy placed back in the public domain for free downloading.

**Conclusion: Pessimism of the Intelligence**

It seems to me that it is unlikely that cheap ICT will “rescue” librarians in Africa or in other less developed regions of the world from their already
existing difficulties in an unproblematic way. As Paul Tiyambe Zeleza has written, "in themselves the advanced technologies offer no magic solution to the challenges of information dissemination and scholarly communication facing Africa... electronic information service in Africa benefits only a small, already privileged elite" (Zeleza 1996, 296).

The question of access to appropriate digital information in an understood language remains inextricably tied up with broader development issues. Information access is both a precondition for development, and an outcome of development. To be effective and to have any kind of transformational impact, library and information workers must be politically aware and politically active. The question of technology transfer remains as problematic as ever, and the need to develop our own models and to validate our own experience as imperative as ever. Our techno-pessimism of the great Italian Marxist thinker, Antonio Gramsci. Gramsci advocated "ottimismo della volontà," or "pessimism of the intelligence, optimism of the will." (1978,175). It is necessary, wrote Gramsci in 1932, "to direct one's attention violently towards the present as it is, if one wishes to transform it."

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The Internet and Social Activism: "Savage Inequalities" Revisited

by Dorothy A. Warner & John Buschman

The Internet will make us -- maybe even has already made us -- more free, more happy, and a more prosperous and democratic country. Simply put, these are the claims made on behalf of digitized networked information -- claims that have been continuously asserted and advanced for close to thirty years now. It isn't hard to find prominent, curious, and even unintentionally humorous examples of this. For example, John Perry Barlow, co-founder of an electronic civil-rights group stated without irony that "we are in the middle of the most transforming technological event since the capture of fire. I used to think that it was just the biggest thing since Gutenberg, but now I think you have to go back ..." (Young 1996). It's pretty clear that such breathless rhetoric -- much of it coming from compliant media and sources like the magazine Wired -- is simple hype, wishful thinking, and maybe more than a little self-promotion (Bradley 1997). For instance, Vice President Gore harkens all the way back to when the "transcontinental telegraph...transmitted Abraham Lincoln's election victory to California in real time." He notes that this "ability to communicate electronically has informed and shaped America [and] our new ways of communicating [and] will educate, promote democracy, and save lives." (Gore 1994).

Our concern in this paper is the claim made on behalf of the Internet in making democracy, that is to say citizen participation in democratic action and activism, more vigorous and responsive to the people. Activists writing from the political left have argued that "information technology has already been used to promote social change: that it can be a democratizing influence, and that it also carries intrinsic political implications." Examples are cited like the Chinese democracy movement's use of faxes, the use of e-mail during the attempted coup in the former Soviet Union, and the wider dissemination of database information and skills with the advent of public-use CD-ROMs in libraries" (Kagan 1992). One political analyst states bluntly that "cyberspace defeats [regulation] handily [and this] is just the beginning of an inexorable trend that will likely become the greatest tool that democratic peoples have at their disposal in their aim to eliminate authoritarian governments" (Nielsen 1999). Finally, in the case of education (a topic of particular note to this paper), networked hyperlinked information is argued to empower students through their access to a wide range of research and contextual materials. At the same time, these networks carry with them the possibility of breaking down the educational hierarchy and democratizing education (Barnes 1996). We would like to step back from such high-flown language and predictions, and bring the issue to some direct and (thanks to the ever-lengthened Presidential election cycle) now timely issue of education funding and equity. The question this paper addresses is a simple one, a prosaic test of such claims as noted above. Does the Internet provide, free of charge, the ability to research a very local form of citizen action: legitimate comparative data on school or school district funding and finance? Further, is that data accessible and provided in a clear, sensible path? Our test of this is to follow up Jonathan Kozol's noted 1991 exposé Savage Inequalities.

Savage Inequalities and School Funding

In Savage Inequalities, Jonathan Kozol assesses the "progress" made since the 1954 Supreme Court decision in Brown v. Board of Education. In that decision the court found segregated education unconstitutional claiming that it was "inherently unequal." Kozol's investigation of public schools in the late 1980s found that even the 1896 Plessy v. Ferguson standard, which Brown overturned, was not being met. Segregated institutions for black people were then accepted with the stipulation that the schools be "equal" to those available to whites. Kozol did not find truly integrated racial groups in schools and, within those segregated institutions, he discovered severe inequities. In the schools populated predominantly or exclusively by racial minorities he discovered appalling conditions. For instance, one history teacher in East St. Louis had 110 students in four classes and 26 textbooks -- some of which were missing the first 100 pages. New Jersey had a statewide mandate for school librarians to have at least 6,000 volumes. One elementary school in a poor district had 300 volumes. One New York City school was built for 1,000 students but enrolled 1,550. Another New York City elementary school occupied an old roller rink.
Chicago suburban schools on average paid its teachers 50% more than those in the city. Dropout rates reached 58% in Camden, New Jersey, and among the 7,000 who graduated from the Detroit schools (out of 20,000 who began four years previously), it was estimated only 500 were ready for college level work. The single item Kozol found most striking was the disparity in expenditures, with no relationship to educational needs. Again in Illinois, the range of expenditure per pupil went from a low of $2,100 per year in poor districts up to over $10,000 per year in wealthy ones. Needless to say, Kozol found an embarrassment of riches simultaneous to this deprivation in the schools of Winnetka, Illinois, Rye, New York, and Princeton, New Jersey (Kozol 1991, 37, 167, 88, 69, 149, 198, 57). Schools were not only separate but clearly unequal.

A notable court case in New Jersey has supported the demand for equal education opportunity. The 1988 ruling by Judge Stephen L. Lefelt addressed the disparate results of locally-controlled school districts, recognizing "that students with similar abilities and needs should be treated substantially equally." He found that the evidence provided by the plaintiffs proved a violation of the New Jersey constitution's requirement that all students be provided with "an opportunity to compete fairly for a place in our society." Lefelt concluded that the educational rights outweighed the "defendant's local control, associational rights and efficiency justifications." He suggested that "if money is inadequate to improve education, the residents of poor districts should at least have an equal opportunity to be disappointed by its failure." His decision was affirmed two years later by the Supreme Court of New Jersey, yet attempts by Governor Jim Florio to transform school funding methods met with public opposition (167-169). States like New Jersey which had attempted to at least improve their schools' conditions had achieved little progress. The protections for local control of schools predominate, perpetuating an ever-widening gap between the haves and the have-nots. Arguments defending this position rely on the accusation that funds are not used wisely in poorer districts and that increased funding is not the answer to their problems. Yet the resistance to diminishing funds for wealthier schools is simultaneously adamant. The most acute example of this "logic" is Proposition 13 in California in the late 1970's (220).

Perhaps most devastating, a 1973 U.S. Supreme Court decision denied constitutional support for some equal education suits. The high court reversed a 1971 Texas federal district court decision which found Texas to be violating the equal protection clause of the U.S. Constitution through unequal educational opportunity. Justice Lewis Powell challenged the allegation that the constitution had been violated, writing that education "is not among the rights afforded explicit protection under our Federal Constitution." Powell went on to note that "the Equal Protection Clause does not require absolute equality..." (215, 219). The continuing evidence of inequality prompts presidents and presidential candidates to address the situation, not surprisingly with recommendations which can only continue the disparities. For example, John W. Donohue suggested that Kozol's "book be taken as seriously by President Bush, the U.S. Education Department and the governors of the 50 states as Michael Harrington's The Other America was said to have been taken by John F. Kennedy" (Donohue 1992). Bush's response was the Federal government's Goals 2000 initiative and a statement that money "isn't the best answer" and warned parents of poor children not to look to more spending as a "cure" (Kozol 205). In a recent Washington Post article, candidate George W. Bush, President Bush's son, "vowed...that his administration would strip federal funding from failing public schools 'that cheat poor children' and give the money to parents to pay for tutors or to help transfer their children to other schools, including private ones" (Booth 1999). The reality of such a promise is that the $1500 which would actually be available to those parents would not go far in today's education market, but most regrettable would be the substantial financial drain on an already struggling school district. More separate. Even more unequal.

Before beginning our inquiry into free Internet-based school funding data sources, it is worth reviewing where Kozol's data came from in 1989-1990. Essentially, there were three primary sources. First and foremost, regional newspapers and newspaper series provided a backbone of information. For New Jersey and New York City schools, the New York Times was a prime source along with newspapers like the Philadelphia Inquirer and the Bergen Record. In the case of the two Illinois schools, the St. Louis Post-Dispatch and the Chicago Tribune provided much of the data along with regional papers. Occasionally national papers like the Washington Post or the Boston Globe investigated or reported on problems or notable successes outside of their immediate communities. The second prominent
source of information was interviews with students, teachers, and administrators at the location of the schools. The last prime source of data was governmental agency reports, memoranda, court decisions, and educational policy/advocacy group reports. This is the kind of routine information generated by agencies and policy groups which becomes part of the official record of bureaucratic enterprises like education. It is worth noting that certain schools or communities Kozol examined made national feature publications. Perhaps the most conspicuous examples were from Illinois. Life magazine featured East St. Louis in a story on race, and an article called “Let’s Hear it for New Trier [High School]” featured wealthy Winnetka in Town and Country (Kozol 19, 65). In sum, Kozol’s data research was very much akin to investigative reporting and journalism. He researched and compiled reported data, interviewed on-site, and gathered more factual information from governmental and policy agencies.

Internet Research and School Equity

We have picked six of the schools (two each in the same state) which Kozol profiled, visited, gathered data on, and wrote about in his book. They are: in Illinois, East St. Louis High School and New Trier High School in Winnetka; in New Jersey, Camden High School and Cherry Hill East High School; in New York City, P.S. 79 (in the North Bronx) and P.S. 24 (in Riverdale), both in District 10. For each of these schools, we chose to look for nine different kinds of statistic which Kozol consistently reported throughout all of his visits to dozens of schools. They are in two groups. The first group can be thought of as common statistical measurements of any school: class size, expenditure per pupil, dropout or graduation rate (if applicable), standard test scores like the SAT or statewide exams, attendance rates, and teacher salaries. The second group of measurements we think of as more qualitative in nature: size of the school’s library or number of books per pupil, the number of computers or number of computers per pupil, and the ratio of guidance counselors to students (if applicable). It is important to note here that we were not looking for the exact same type of measurement across all three states. For instance, if schools could be compared by their average SAT score in one state vs. their average score on a statewide test (like those in New York for instance), that was perfectly acceptable — so long as the two schools could be compared. Also, statistical data gathering on education is a state matter.

So, the most reliable data are those compiled and published by the states and it is the only normed set of data by which to compare different schools. The universe of information available through Internet search engines was not our bailiwick since the data, unlike that generated for and published by the states, would be inconsistent. There may well be one or two or numerous wonderful individual or district or private websites available per school, or many articles on the schools published on the web, but statistically that leaves one comparing apples with oranges, so we had to rely on the only source of free, published data on the Internet from the state departments of education.

We should start out with perhaps the only good news. Such data, in varying forms of completeness, are available free on the Internet through state departments of education for all 50 states. The bad news is that the data is, frequently, radically incomplete. In the worst instance, in Illinois, only one of the nine pieces of data was available: comparative scores for math and verbal on the tenth grade Illinois Goal Assessment Program test. Not one other relevant piece of data was available. Not class size, not graduation rate, nothing. Comparing two elementary public schools in New York City was nearly as bad. Of the seven relevant pieces of data (graduation rate and guidance counselors didn’t apply), only two meaningful ones were available. Spending per pupil was given citywide for both schools, so that was essentially useless. We could compare the two schools based on percentage of 3rd grade (our choice) math and verbal test scores which ranked at or above the state minimum score on New York State exams. Also, the percentage of total school days attended was reported for both schools. New Jersey, among the three states examined, easily had the most complete data. We could compare the two high schools in terms of class size, expenditure per pupil, dropout rate, standard test scores (the SATs — also including the percentage of students who took the test), attendance rate (available for multiple years), and median teacher salaries in the district. Not one state we looked at reported on library size or books per pupil, nor on computers, and for the high schools, available guidance counselors (Illinois 1998; New York 1999; Philadelphia 1999). This lack of data is perhaps even more startling when one realizes that this information is collected by all fifty states and reported, in composite form, to the Federal government. Every single item of the data we sought is reported, again in composite form, in Digest of Education Statistics and State...
Indicators in Education. All of this information must be collected at the school district level at least. It simply is not made available.

The results of reviewing the accessibility of this data is not much better. Though both of the authors are librarians familiar with government agency web pages and the pitfalls of web resources and search engines, it would not have been a fair test to simply go directly to state department of education sites to review the data — much of which is not available. Rather, the search engine most recently reported to cover the highest percentage of web pages, Northern Light (Lawrence 1999), was used. Further, straightforward search terms were used: “New Jersey Education,” “New York Education Statistics,” and “Illinois Education Statistics” were the three searches. All were done on the same day (September 13, 1999). The results, again, were not encouraging. The first search for “New Jersey Education” was the most successful. On the first page of the search results, the sixth item noted a possible series of links, which led to a State of New Jersey link, then to the list of State Departments, then to the Department of Education, from which one had to chose a menu, then from the NJ DOE web site, the “Standards and Assessment” section. From the “Standards and Assessment” menu, one picked the “Schools” button, then “School Report Cards,” then the reports for Camden County (where Cherry Hill East and Camden High School are profiled — two of Kozol’s examples). In all, it takes twelve steps to get to the high schools’ report cards, if one guesses correctly and takes the most direct path from a successful search on a decent quality Internet search engine.

We will not take you through this excruciating level of detail for the other two searches because the results were dismal. The “New York Education Statistics” search had to be accessed via a Columbia University profile, which included, on a links banner, a link to a New York State Education Department site, which itself required another hyperlink. In all, it took eleven steps to get to the “School Districts Information” which was buried in tiny print — along with another five or six items in the corner of the web page. Unfortunately, every single one of the access points — alphabetical listings of all New York schools, schools sorted by county, and a hyperlinked state map — were not working that day. Nor were the listings available when checked one week later. The State of Illinois Department of Education web site simply could not be found with a web search. Six different approaches (some through universities, some through other government agencies) were attempted with several pages of the results from inputting “Illinois Education Statistics.” None provided even a link to the State’s web page, let alone statistics. Instead, the authors relied on a handy web link to State Departments of Education discovered in the process of reference work. Even this direct approach proved utterly frustrating. Links under the headings of “School Finance,” “Quality Assurance,” “Assessment,” and “Standards” led nowhere. An internal search of the web site was attempted, and the third one (using simply “districts”) resulted in a link to a page not where the information is available, but where one can order the report by phone or e-mail! (Reports 1999) An earlier search had resulted in the small amount of statistical information gathered, downloaded from a zipped file, which requires either a sophisticated computer or knowledge of unzipping a file. Interestingly, over the course of working to find this and other school-specific data over the last year, one of the authors has had reason to call a couple of state departments of education to request data, or request access to data. The response has been frequently to question why it was needed and what it was to be used for on the part of the state agencies. Given how little substantive information is reported in these cases, and how inaccessible it is, this classic bureaucratic response seems to be replicated in digital form.

Conclusion

The authors came to this paper with very different expectations of what the results would be, but in the end we are both clear about the conclusions of our inquiry: data on local schools is very, very sketchy and its accessibility is terrible. Interestingly, revisiting Kozol’s schools in just this small way reinforced the need for just this kind of data to be available for citizen action. Ten years after Kozol, schools are still separate and still highly unequal. East St. Louis High School’s scores on the Illinois Goal Assessment Program tests for 10th graders in reading and math are less than half the scores of New Trier High School students. Only 56.5% of the third graders at P.S. 79 in the North Bronx performed at or above the New York State minimum on a reading test, while 92.2% did at P.S 24 in Riverdale — in the same District 10 in New York City. The dropout rate at Camden High School is 11.5% (a particular kind of statistic Kozol finds frequently fudged and underreported), while Cherry Hill East’s dropout rate is 0.3%
It is not that the web is incapable of providing and making accessible such information. The State of Connecticut is a model. Its individual statistics for school districts provide six or seven of the pieces of data we looked for (depending on how one counted them), plus data on ethnicity of students, per capita income, percentage of non-native English speakers, and post-graduation activities of students. There is no need to read the runes with Connecticut’s district reports to know the difference between the Greenwich and the Bridgeport schools (Strategia 1999). Clearly, the Internet can contribute to local citizen action. Right now, it doesn’t. In sum, the vast and longstanding claims made on behalf of the Internet’s contribution to democracy do not stand this simple test. School funding is an essential, local, and political matter in communities and states across the nation. The data is available and collected by the states, but it is unreported and buried on their web sites. Democratic citizen action in America will just have to struggle on without the web – as it has for 250 years.

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FROM THE ALTERNATIVES LIBRARY

Patent Alternatives

by Lynn Andersen

This issue marks the first of my contributions to the Progressive Librarian though it is the second issue to be published as a collaboration between the Progressive Librarian editorial staff and the Durland Alternatives Library. The partnership between the two organizations is an effort to expand the activities of PLG by sharing the publishing costs thereby freeing up some PLG money to use for program and speaker sponsorship. In this initial submission, I introduce the workings and mission of the Alternatives Library and its fitting role as collaborator with the Progressive Librarian.

Stated simply, the mission of the Durland Alternatives Library (DAL) is to provide free and open access to materials expressing viewpoints and information not readily available through mainstream print publications and mass-media. The focus is on current issues and events as represented by alternative print and broadcast sources.

In 1974, the Anne Carry Durland Memorial Alternatives Library was founded and provided with funding by Lewis and Margaret Durland in memory of their daughter who was concerned with many of the social and environmental issues addressed by the library collection. Since its founding, the library has been housed in Anabel Taylor Hall on the Cornell University campus. There it has served continuously as an organizing and information center for social action as well as a resource center for its parent organization the Center for Religion, Ethics, and Social Policy (CRESPI), a consortium for various projects working to address the social, environmental and educational problems of our times. Though the library is on the Cornell campus, it is an independent affiliate of the university and is open to the public as well as students.

As a rule, our collection supplements rather than duplicates materials found in the academic and public libraries in our area and seeks to provide progressive viewpoints on a variety of issues. Though the collection is mainly non-fiction, we also maintain a small section of poetry and fiction including anthologies representing a diverse community of authors from around the world. Publications from alternative and independent sources make up the bulk of our holdings comprising books, AV materials and over 300 periodical titles currently available. All materials are arranged by categories similar to those found in bookstores. Because the collection is small, we have the flexibility of using our own call number and organization systems. This has been very popular with patrons who find the informal setup convenient and easy to understand. As a part of our work to make the library collection more widely available, we have established an affiliation agreement with the Finger Lakes Library System Interlibrary Loan Services so materials can be accessed readily throughout five counties in New York State.

In addition to offering a collection of materials reflecting alternative and progressive viewpoints, the DAL works with campus and community groups to provide AV and print materials for information programs on social issues such as the death penalty, inequities in the penal system, effects of mass media on culture, human rights, U.S. foreign policy and its consequences, and similar issues that either do not receive adequate coverage or that receive skewed or inaccurate coverage in mainstream media. Our work is motivated by a wish to give voice to under-represented peoples and viewpoints, and, to that end, we co-sponsor a number of speakers throughout the year.

As education budgets and particularly library budgets remain stagnant while prison funding escalates, we at the DAL feel increasing pressures to do whatever we can to make sure people have access to information regarding activities that directly effect their lives. At the DAL we take every opportunity to pool resources with a number of organizations that are feeling the money crunch. Together we are able to bring programs and speakers to our community that are not usually included in the university lecture circuit. Over the last year, the library helped to bring such people as G. Simon Harak, who traveled to Iraq with Voices in the Wilderness, in defiance of US/UN sanctions, to bring medical supplies and toys to Iraqi hospitals; Constancio Pinto, East Timorese resistance leader in the inde-
pendence movement and author of *East Timor’s Unfinished Struggle*, published by South End Press; and, most recently, Amy Goodman of Pacifica’s Democracy Now who addressed concerns about the corporatization of news and the pressures on journalists to conform with an agenda promoting consumerism instead of information.

Besides cosponsoring speakers with local groups, library outreach to the community also includes rotating book collections that are sent from school to school within the district. School librarians and teachers are grateful to have these supplementary materials for use in curriculum design as well as collection development. Recent collections have included videotapes on particular topics. One that has been very well received – in fact, it hasn’t been back to the Alternatives Library for almost 2 years – is *It’s Elementary: Talking about Gay Issues in School*. This is the fourth year that we have sent out collections on Native America, ecology and diversity. By special request from the schools, we are developing a collection on the family and its many forms in today’s world. Along with outreach to the schools, we are committed to reaching the many underserved populations in our area. In the works, is a new outreach project to target two of the local prisons that incarcerate juvenile offenders. Our main foes are ones that we all have in common — lack of time and staff.

All librarians have quite a task to fill in the void left by thinly veiled forms of censorship while struggling against the constant pressures to become inured to the consumer culture. Progressive and forward thinking librarians around the globe are feeling the frustration of their struggle against such overwhelming odds. This makes it increasingly necessary to keep professional communication channels open. The staff and advisory board of the Alternatives Library sees the *Progressive Librarian* as just such a means for us to discuss these issues, to offer each other ideas for solving problems that arise in our work, and to support each other in taking action against reductionistic positions regarding education and the dissemination of information. It is with warm regards that I salute all of you progressive librarians out there and with great pleasure that I join you in your work, struggles and sharing of ideas.

Lynn Andersen has been librarian and director of the Durland Alternatives Library, Cornell University campus, in Ithaca, NY, for over 8 years.

**EDITOR’S NOTE:** The following piece is from the archives of progressive librarianship.

In fact, it’s author, Henry Black (librarian of Commonwealth College), was one of a pioneer generation of progressive librarians who, most notably as organized in the distant predecessor organization of PLG, the Progressive Librarians Council, were active in the 1930s and 40s, and played a role in first sharply articulating debates in our profession about the social responsibilities of librarianship which still resonate today but which are seldom traced back further than the tumult of the 1960’s.

The piece here reprinted, published in 1937, is an annotated bibliography with an introduction. It was distributed as a mimeographed, stapled booklet with a hand-stenciled cover, self-published by Black who took responsibility for the opinions expressed therein. It was meant to help promote librarians’ familiarity with the “radical press,” the then-current journals of the radical left. It helps illuminate the historic roots of today’s arguments about the importance of the alternative press in libraries. For that reason alone it is valuable.

Some of the arguments and issues already delineated in Black’s brief introduction, which we must remember was published, significantly enough, two years before ALA’s adoption of the landmark “Library Bill of Rights,” will seem eerily familiar and contemporary to most of our readers.

Surely the quirky partisanship of the annotations must be read as products of the highly charged political atmosphere of the 1930s with its various warring tendencies, a period, however, in which there was a mass “counter-public-sphere” of the left which, variegated and innovative, was a living popular, intellectual and institutional counter-culture, encompassing everything from fiction and poetry to film-making and photography, from dance, music and theater, to education and journalism, from co-ops and summer camps, to nightclubs and book clubs.

The memory of the progressive librarianship of the 30s and 40s was not openly available as a resource to the new radicals of librarianship who emerged in the 1960’s to eventually form ALA’s Social Responsibilities Round Table: it had been effaced by the 50s of McCarthyism and the witch-hunts, which rooted out every trace of radical librarians wherever they were found. Even in 1990 when PLG was founded we were unaware that we were, in effect, taking up a name which was so-closely connected to an organization from this earlier period which had a rich history of struggle within ALA.

We are reprinting Black’s bibliography in this the 10th anniversary year of PLG’s journal *Progressive Librarian*, as a reminder that the historical memory and continuity of radicalism in the profession is something which cannot be erased and which will reassert itself and rediscover itself anew as long as the same contradictions exist which prevent librarianship from fulfilling its social mission.

The copy of “Radical Periodicals and their Place in the Library” from which this is re-printed was discovered at the Reference Center for Marxist Studies, NYC.  
Mark Rosenzweig
During the past two or three years, there has been an increasing amount of discussion concerning the place of radical periodicals in libraries. At the Denver conference of the A.L.A. [1935], one session of the Periodicals Section was devoted to this topic; the matter was also discussed less formally at the Richmond conference [1936], though in the latter case the discussion was not reported in the “Proceedings.” On the other hand, there is a steady flow of complaints concerning the absence of important radical periodicals from libraries.

At Denver a session of the Periodicals Section was given to the topics “How shall the Library treat so-called propaganda periodical literature?” Points emphasized in the papers read were: radical periodicals should be in the library but should not be paid for; their use should, perhaps, be restricted by keeping them on closed shelves and allowing only students and mature persons to have access to them. The discussion was abstract and quite “up-in-the-air.” In five columns of Proceedings, not a single radical periodical is mentioned by name and there appears to have been no recognition of the fact that radical periodicals vary considerably in current interest, reference value and physical permanence.

When the question of radical periodicals comes up in library circles, attention tends to center on their “propaganda” aspects. Now propaganda may be defined, roughly, as the attempt to influence a reader toward a certain point of view or course of action. With reference to periodicals, it is quite impossible to find any journals dealing with social questions that are unbiased, free from propaganda. (A general list of propaganda periodicals is out of the question; it would be little more than an annotated directory.) BUSINESS WEEK, THE NATION’S BUSINESS, and FORBES MAGAZINE, for example, are all frankly committed to the upholding of certain policies concerning business, government, and labor, and their contents are selected to maintain that point of view. One of the most efficient conservative agencies of propaganda in this country is our old friend, the SATURDAY EVENING POST. It is only a couple of years ago that the ATLANTIC MONTHLY frankly and openly advertised its services to American industrialists for creating a more favorable attitude toward large corporations.

Now there is nothing wrong about this. No one would even think of removing these periodicals (the above, of course, are merely examples) from library shelves. But two propositions follow from a recognition of the fact that “propaganda” is universal in the periodical field: radical periodicals cannot be barred from the library merely because they contain propaganda; also, since “conservative” and “reactionary” journals abound in all libraries, if the library itself is to escape being an agency of propaganda, it must provide a more balanced diet. For example, anti-Russian material is found by the bushel in every public and college library in the country. Are not the librarians, therefore, under obligation to provide at least some pro-Russian material? Similarly with labor unions, civil liberties, negroes, literary and artistic criticism. There is no “impartial” material on these topics. Since bias and propaganda are inescapable, the librarian can only attempt to balance one side against the other.

Another fundamental point concerns the size and importance of the radical movement. The Communist philosophy is now the controlling force in one-sixth of the world; it is exceedingly important also in parts of China that have a population as great as that of the United States. An understanding of the political and diplomatic events in no country in Europe is possible without a thorough knowledge of the radical parties. In the United States, the radical movement is steadily growing both in numbers and influence. In any particular large city, it is a safe wager that there are as many people interested in THE COMMUNIST as there are who want, say, the HARVARD BUSINESS REVIEW; probably more would like to see the INTERNATIONAL PRESS CORRESPONDENCE than would demand an expensive investment service. Incidentally, the circulation of the NEW MASSES in now approximately equal to that of the NATION. It is just as much the duty of a public library to help supply the demand for
radical literature as to meet the need for conservative journals.

A third point concerns the value of radical periodicals for reference purposes. In the strictest sense of the word, the second quarter of the twentieth century is a revolutionary epoch, in which two or three irreconcilable philosophies are battling for supremacy. This fact must inevitably affect all departments of a library’s work. (Even in the “pure” sciences; note, for example, the conflict between Fascist, Liberal, and Marxist ideas of race and the importance of heredity, not to mention the battle over the philosophical aspects of modern physics.) In the social fields, the radical periodicals have a distinct point of view, a criticism of the existing situation which is quite different from opinions to be found elsewhere. The criticism of the New Deal, for example, made by the NEW MASSES is sharply different from that made by the NATION. Whatever our individual opinion of the ideas in them, magazines like ART FRONT, INTERNATIONAL LITERATURE, MODERN MONTHLY, FARM HOLIDAY NEWS contain an immense amount of important reference material on labor unions, politics, civil liberties, negroes, farm problems, literary and artistic criticism, international relations, and other topics without which the library’s collection will be extremely deficient. For the library to shut out this material will simply make the library itself a propaganda agency — for the conservative point of view.

The fact that most radical periodicals are not indexed is sometimes urged as a reason for not keeping them. In view of the fact that libraries are the chief supporters of the composite indexes and have a good deal of influence with regard to their scope, this it a rather lame excuse. It is also urged that Boards of Trustees and prominent citizens would object. This only raises the more fundamental question as to whether the librarian is a professional worker and leader in education, or merely a clerk and errand boy.

But does this all mean that libraries should subscribe to all radical periodicals? Obviously not. Radical periodicals, though they do have a group unity, vary widely in current interest, reference value and physical permanence. One or two, like the NEW MASSES, should be in every library that can afford the NATION or the CHRISTIAN CENTURY. Others, like the MODERN MONTHLY or the AMERICAN SOCIALIST MONTHLY, are somewhat poorer and of more limited interest and would fit appropriately only in larger collections. Still others, like NATIONAL EPIC NEWS or the NORTHWEST ORGANIZER, have only a sectional or regional interest. Some, like the RURAL WORKER or FARM HOLIDAY NEWS or the publications of the Labor Research Association, will be of use only to special libraries. A few, such as HEALTH AND HYGIENE or WOMAN TODAY, because of the similarity of their contents to those of corresponding “bourgeois” publications will be of little use anywhere. Half a dozen, CLASS STRUGGLE or FIGHTING WORKER for example, are so lacking in usefulness, so poor in physical make-up, as to be worse than useless anywhere. Each library must consider the group with reference to its own particular needs. The point is that the group of periodicals that have been roughly classified as “radical” contains much that is of great current interest and of considerable reference value. No library can afford to ignore them merely because of their political complexion.

The following list of radical periodicals includes, with certain limitations, practically all the radical periodicals that we have been able to find currently published in the United States, as well as a few European titles. It does not include a few which are of purely sectional importance, such as the SHARECROPPER’S VOICE, nor does it include new titles of which less than four numbers have been published. Shop papers and other local sheets are excluded. Conservative trade union papers are also excluded. Paging is usually from one issue and is intended merely to give some idea of the size. Other data have been checked with the most recent issue (March 1937). The notes on affiliation or political position are based largely on the writer’s personal knowledge of the labor movement.

AMERICAN GUARDIAN, 17 West 3rd St., Oklahoma City, Okla. Weekly. $1.50 yr. 4 p. 22.5 x 17. Oscar Ameringer, editor. Largely a personal organ. Mildly socialist in political complexion. News items and editorials on current economic, labor, and political events. Most of this appears in very similar form elsewhere. The paper is popular in many parts of the central and south West, and probably should be in the public libraries of smaller cities and towns in that region.

AMERICAN SOCIALIST MONTHLY. 21 East 17th St., New York City. Monthly (quarterly until 1936). $1.50 yr. 32 p. 10 x 6.75 in. Official theoretical organ of the Socialist Party, U.S.A. Articles on American politics and the labor movement. Mildly leftist in political line. (It is dominated by the “militant” caucus.) Usefulness in reference work not as great as the COMMUNIST and
libraries that can take only a limited number of radical papers would find the latter more used. Partly indexed in the P.A.I.S.

ART FRONT. 430 6th Ave., New York City.
Monthly. $1.00 yr. 16 p. 11.75 x 8.76 in. Official organ of the Artists Union. Concerned chiefly with the economic position of artists and the activities of the more militant organizations. There is some material on the social significance of art, different "schools," and related topics.

CHALLENGE OF YOUTH. 549 Randolph St., Chicago, Illinois.
Monthly. 25¢ yr. 8-12 p. 17 x 11 in. Official organ of the Young Peoples' Socialist League, youth auxiliary of the Socialist party. News stories on political and economic conditions of young people. Some material on larger political and international questions, but this is of quite ordinary character. Should be in public libraries where the socialist movement is strong, but elsewhere its value would be small.

CHAMPION OF YOUTH. 2 East 23rd St., New York City.
Monthly. (52 issues for $1.25). 16 p. 15 x 11 in. Apparently independent, but probably more or less guided by the Communists. Articles on economic and political status of young people. Militant and inclined to the left. Short stories; also regular departments on sports and movies.

CHINA TODAY. 168 West 23rd St., New York City.
Monthly. $1.50 yr. 18-20 p. 9 x 12 in. Published by the American Friends of the Chinese People, which is dominated by Communists. Articles chiefly on political, economic, and military events in China and Japan. The point of view is radical, but is not over-emphasized. Numerous photographs and occasional maps. Very useful in these days when information on the Far East is so difficult to get. This journal is one of the few sources where current information about the Chinese Soviets can be obtained. An excellent companion to the more conservative ASIA

CLASS STRUGGLE. P.O. Box 947, Chicago, Ill.
Monthly. $1.50 yr. 50 p. 11 x 8.5 in. Mimeographed. Not too regular. Albert Weisbord, editor. Organ of the Communist League for Struggle, the smallest of the splinter groups. Its political line is difficult to define, but is characterized chiefly by a fanatical contempt and hatred for all other working-class organizations. Weisbord, under one name or another, writes about half the contents. Entertaining to the informed radical, and university libraries will want a few copies around for the classes in abnormal psychology, but otherwise it is quite useless.

COMMON SENSE. 315 4th Ave., New York City.
Monthly. $2.50 yr. 32 p. 8.5 x 11.5 in. Alfred Bingham, editor. Militant and half-radical middle-class political line. Independently owned. Is now the organ and chief exponent of the Commonwealth Political Federation, a recently formed third party organization. Definitely anti-Marxist and anti-Communist. The signed articles on American political and economic problems, militarism, etc., though they represent no consistent point of view, are always interesting.

COMMUNIST, THE. 50 East 13th St., New York City.
Monthly. $2.00 yr. 92-96 p. 6 x 9 in. Official organ of the Communist Party, U.S.A. Articles on Communist strategy and tactics, labor unions, political and economic conditions in the U.S. Much of the writing is rather stiff and less readable than in the COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL. But the Communist Party now constitutes one of the important political movements in this country and one or the other of these journals should be in all self-respecting college or university and larger public libraries, whatever we may think of the ideas expressed in them. The files have considerable reference value. Indexed in P.A.I.S. Bulletin.

COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL MAGAZINE. Editorial office Moscow, U.S.S.R.
Separate editions published in English, Russian, German, French, Chinese, and Spanish. American edition handled by Workers Library Publishers. P.O. Box 148, Station "D" New York City, (50 East 13th St.)
Monthly. $1.75 yr. 120 p. 6 x 9 in. Official organ of the Executive Committee of the Communist International. Articles on the labor movement, politics, and government, and social conditions of the various countries of the world, as well as international problems. Much discussion of the activities of the various Communist Parties. Broader in scope and more readable than the COMMUNIST. Indexed in P.A.I.S. Bulletin.

COUNCIL CORRESPONDENCE, 1604 California Ave., Chicago, Ill.
Monthly. $1.00 yr. 30 p. 6.5 x 10 in. Mimeographed. Sometimes: INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL CORRESPONDENCE. Published by the "group of council Communists in America"; one of the smallest of the splinter groups. Articles, rather academic in tone, on American politics, Marxism, revolutionary strategy; some are of temporary interest to active radicals, particularly teachers, but have little reference value. Probably not worth keeping anywhere.

DAILY WORKER. 35 East 12th St., New York City.
Daily. $6.00 yr. 22 x 17 in. 6-10 p. Included here because likely to be missed. Organ of Communist Party, U.S.A. General news though emphasis is on labor movement. In the past three years, the Daily Worker has become a first-class paper, both technically and editorially. It carries the more important theses, reports, programs, etc. of Communist organizations. An excellent counter-irritant for the Hearst papers, Chicago Tribune, et al. Also a Sunday edition at $2.00 yr., but that would be less useful in most libraries.

ECONOMIC NOTES. Labor Research Association. 80 East 11th St., New York City.
Monthly. 65¢ yr. 10 p. 8.5 x 11 in. Mimeographed. Short news items, statistics and occasional charts on business and industrial conditions in the U.S. Working class point of view. The L.I.R.A. is organizationally independent, but is sympathetic to the Communist Party.
FACTS FOR FARMERS. Room 1009, Peoples' Life Insurance Bldg., Washington, D. C. Monthly. $0.50 yr. 8 p. 9 x 12 in. Short news items and interpretive notes on economic aspects of agriculture and relations between farming and other industries. Militant in tone and probably more or less sponsored by Communists but contains very little that is directly political. Agricultural libraries.

FIGHT AGAINST WAR AND FASCISM. 268 Fourth Ave., New York City. Monthly. $1.00 yr. 32 p. 10.75 x 13.50 in. Illustrated. Official organ of the American League Against War and Fascism, a non-factional organization of liberals and radicals for combating the menace of Fascism and war. Popularly written. Articles on war and its results, armaments, civil liberties, and the activities of Fascist organizations in the U.S. and Europe. These topics are all very much to the fore and the paper would have considerable value, both for current reading and for reference work. Also, it would provide some counterbalance to the large amounts of militaristic propaganda that exist in all libraries.

FOURTH INTERNATIONAL, THE. 2159 West Division St., Chicago, Ill. Monthly. $1.00 yr. 8.5 x 11 in. 24 p. Mimeographed. Theoretical organ of the Revolutionary Worker's League, one of the smallest of the Trotskyite splinter groups. Devoted chiefly to editorials and "exposes" of the socialists and communists. Not even funny and utterly useless.

INDEX TO LABOR ARTICLES. Rand School of Social Sciences. 7 East 15th St. NYC. Usually monthly. $1.00 yr. 6-8 p. 8.5 x 11. Mimeographed. This is not really an index but, rather, a list of articles on topics of interest to the labor movement classified under about twenty-five broad headings with a few sub-heads. References include title, author, periodical, and date, but not volume or paging. There is some little duplication of the indexing in the Readers Guide, but items from 25 to 30 Socialist, Communist and Trade Union papers are also listed. The index is not cumulative and has several other limitations, but is useful as a rough guide to the current literature on labor problems.


LABOR NOTES. Labor Research Association. 80 E. 11th St., New York City. Monthly. $0.50 yr. 10 p. 8.5 x 11 in. Mimeographed. (Formerly called LRA Notes.)
Brief items on wages, strikes, child labor, unemployment, and other labor problems in the U.S. See note under ECONOMIC NOTES.

MINING NOTES. Labor Research Association, 80 East 11th St., New York City. Monthly, 50¢ yr. 5-6 p. 8.5 x 11 in. Mimeographed. Notes and statistics on business and labor conditions in the mining industry. See note under ECONOMIC NOTES.

MODERN MONTHLY. 47 East 21st St., New York City. Monthly. $1.50 yr. 9 x 12 in. 64 p. Slightly irregular in publication. "An independent radical magazine affiliated with no party" (title page), but at present it leans strongly toward the Socialists. Articles on the labor movement and the radical parties, stories and poems, some literary discussions. The intellectual and literary standards of the magazine vary considerably. Indexed in P.A.I.S. Bulletin.

MOSCOW NEWS. Petrovski Peroulok 8, Moscow. Weekly. $2 yr. 12 p. 17.75 x 12.25 in. Short articles on industry, agriculture, labor, science, sports, and other aspects of contemporary Russian life. Profusely illustrated. A useful antidote for the anti-Russian propaganda that abounds in most libraries, though probably less useful for library work than SOVIET RUSSIA TODAY.

NATIONAL EPIC NEWS. 120 North Union Ave., Los Angeles, Calif. Weekly. $1.50 yr. 12 p. 16.5 x 11.25 in. Organ of the End Poverty League, Inc. Upton Sinclair's organization. News of the Epic movement and some material — the quality of which is not high — on economic and political conditions. Dubious in value outside of California.

NATIONAL FARM HOLIDAY NEWS. 400 South Third St. Minneapolis, Minn. Weekly. $1.50 yr. 8 p. 17 x 11.5 in. Organ of the Farm Holiday movement. News of the activities of the more militant farmers' organizations and of political and economic events of interest to farmers. Useful for labor, agricultural, and economic collections.

NEW LEADER. 7 East 15th St., New York City. Weekly. $2.00 yr. 8 p. 22.5 x 16 in. James Oneal, editor. Organ of the extreme right-wing Socialists who were until lately known as the "Old Guard" of the Socialist Party, U.S.A, but who have now split off and call themselves the Social Democratic Federation. Some material of no unusual value, on the Trade Unions, longer articles on the doings of the more conservative socialist organizations and a great deal of material on the factional fight within the Socialist Party. The Old Guard Socialists constitute a group of declining strength and significance and the paper has but little reference value.

NEW MASSES. 31 East 27th St., New York City. Weekly. $4.50 yr. 32 p. 9 x 12.25 in. Very similar in scope to the NATION or NEW REPUBLIC. Notes, editorials, and articles on current political, economic, social, and international problems. Some discussion of literature and occasional poems and short stories. Some excellent cartoons. Frankly Communist in political sympathy but not blatant. Generally high intellectual caliber. The NEW MASSES should certainly be in every library able to afford the NATION, NEW REPUBLIC or CHRISTIAN CENTURY and its absence can only be interpreted as a case of political censorship in one form or another.

NEW THEATRE MAGAZINE. 156 West 44th St., New York City. Monthly. $1.50 yr. 32 p. Published by the New Theatre League, a non-political organization, more or less dominated by Communists. Devoted to the theater from the working class point of view. Articles on social implications of the theater, criticisms of current dramas, play technique, and the dance. Well illustrated.

NORTHWEST ORGANIZER. 226 East 6th St., St. Paul, Minn. Weekly. $2.00 yr. 8 p. 12 x 18 in. Organ of the Farmers Holiday Association of Montana. Some news of farmers holiday organizations and political events of interest to farmers in the northwest; considerable amount of purely local news. The political connections of this paper have been varied and its present line is not clear, but is probably Trotskyite in sympathy. Of doubtful value anywhere.

PRODUCERS NEWS. Plentywood, Montana. Weekly. $2.00 yr. 8 p. 12 x 18 in. Organ of the Farmers Holiday Association of Montana. Some news of farmers holiday organizations and political events of interest to farmers in the northwest; considerable amount of purely local news. The political connections of this paper have been varied and its present line is not clear, but is probably Trotskyite in sympathy. Of doubtful value anywhere.

PROLETARIAN NEWS. 1545 Larrabee St., Chicago. Monthly. 50¢ yr. 8 p. 17.5 x 11 in. Organ of the Proletarian Party, oldest of the Communist parties. Articles on economic and political sympathy but not blatant. Generally high intellectual caliber. The NEW MASSES should certainly be in every library able to afford the NATION, NEW REPUBLIC or CHRISTIAN CENTURY and its absence can only be interpreted as a case of political censorship in one form or another.

RESEARCH REVIEW. Regina, Saskatchewan, Canada. Monthly. $1.00 yr. 24 p. 6 x 9 in. (Formerly the C.C.F. Research Review.) Published by the Canadian Commonwealth Federation, a new and militant Socialist-leaning Canadian party. Articles on economic and political conditions in Canada from a mild left-wing point of view. Probably of limited interest outside the largest public and university libraries.

RURAL WORKER. 1 Union Square, New York City. (P.O. Box 176, Station "D") Monthly. 25¢ yr. 6-8 p. 16.5 x 11.5 in. Published by the National Committee of Agricultural and Rural Workers, which is close to the Communist Party. Short news stories on the condition of agricultural workers and activities of their
organizations. Current information in this field is hard to get and the paper would be useful in agricultural libraries and in large libraries that have special departments for economics and business.

SOCIALIST APPEAL. 1654 West 67th St. Chicago.
Monthly (somewhat irregular). 50¢ yr. 16 p. 9 x 12 in. A factional organ within the Socialist Party. Point of view largely Trotskyite. Devoted chiefly to controversial issues within the Socialist Party, theory, and programs. A considerable amount of anti-Communist material. Should be in public libraries where Socialist movement is active, but of limited value elsewhere.

SOCIALIST CALL. 21 East 17th St., New York City.
Weekly. $1.50 yr. 12 p. 15.5 x 11.5 in. Official organ of the "Militant" faction of the Socialist Party (mildly leftist). News articles on activities within the Socialist movement, labor unions, civil liberties, American politics. Some longer articles on theoretical and programmatic problems of the Socialist movement. The paper is made up in tabloid style — many pictures. Reference value is small; usefulness limited to public libraries where the Socialist movement is active.

SOCIST RUSSIA TODAY. 824 Broadway, New York City.
Monthly. $1 yr. 30 p. 11.5 x 8.75 in. Published by the Friends of the Soviet Union, a Communist dominated organization. Articles, well-illustrated, on industry, agriculture, government, sports, science and the arts in the Soviet Union. Some of the articles are rather "pollyannaish." The paper carries a good deal of material on industry, social insurance, labor and related matters and has considerable reference value. Probably better for library work than the MOSCOW NEWS. One or the other should be in all but the smallest public libraries.

SOUTHERN WORKER. Box 572, Birmingham, Ala.
Monthly. 50¢ yr. 8 p. 17.5 x 11. 5 in. Southern organ of the Communist Party, U.S.A. News items and a few longer signed articles on political and labor events in the South. Chiefly of regional interest.

STEEL AND METAL NOTES. Labor Research Assoc. 80 East 11th St., New York City.
Monthly. 50¢ yr. 5-6 p. 8.5 x 11 in. Mimeographed. News notes and statistics on business conditions, wages, and labor conditions; chiefly in the steel industry but with some reference to automobiles and machinery. Working class point of view.

STEEL LABOR. 2600 Grant Bldg., Pittsburgh, Pa.
Bi-weekly. 50¢ yr. (7). 8 p. 17.5 x 11 in. Organ of the steel workers' organization committee, subsidiary of the Committee for Industrial Organization. Not a radical paper in any sense, but the campaign to unionize steel is undoubtedly the most important thing in the labor movement today. As the chief source of news concerning the steel drive, the paper is clearly of major importance.

TEXTILE NOTES. Published by Labor Research Assoc., 80 East 11th St., New York City.
Monthly. 50¢ yr. 5-6 p. 8.5 x 11 in. Mimeographed. News, notes and statistics on business conditions, wages, strikes, profits, etc. in the textile industry. Working class point of view.

WESTERN WORKER. 121 Haight St. San Francisco, Calif.
Semi-weekly. $3.00 yr. 8 p. 22 x 17.5 in. Western organ, Communist Party, U.S.A. Newspaper devoted largely to labor news of the Pacific coast area.

WEEKLY PEOPLE. 45 Rose St., New York City.
Weekly. $2 yr. 6-8 p. 22.5 x 18 in. Organ of the Socialist Labor Party, the oldest of the radical organizations. Notes and editorials on current events. Some longer articles on program and theory. Also propaganda articles and party news. Dry reading and reference value slight.

WOMAN TODAY. 112 East 19th St., New York City.
Monthly. $1 yr. 32 p. 9 x 12 in. Articles and comment on various aspects of women's work and interest, stressing working-class angles. Apparently independent politically with very little material on politics. Same trade union news.

WORKERS AGE. 51 W. 14th St. New York City.
Weekly. $2 yr. 8 p. 16 x 11.5 in. Organ of the Communist Party Opposition, one of the split-offs from the Communist Party. Very useful articles and news notes on the trade unions, the radical parties and the international situations. Some occasional longer theoretical articles of fairly high quality. Critical of the Communist Party.

The copy of "Radical Periodicals and Their Place in the Library" from which this is reprinted was discovered at the Reference Center for Marxist Studies, NYC.
ADDED ENTRIES

Open the Doors: Ridgedale Library
Grand Opening Poem, 10.10.99

by Chris Dodge & Solveig Nilsen

We the people of this place,
Having set ourselves to the task,
Having planted an idea and nurtured it into action,
Having committed our resources to the re-creation of this shape-shifting library,

We the people of this community now open its doors to all.

We the numerous ordinary folks of this place near the shores of Lake Minnetonka,
Immigrants and native people of the upper Mississippi Valley,
In the county of Hennepin,
The state of Minnesota,
We citizens, inhabitants of Mother Earth,
Open the doors of this library to extraordinary worlds within and outside its walls.

We had a vision, and we made it live
Brick upon brick,
Glass set in frame:
A building reborn.

We humans did this.
We architects and planners and taxpayers and construction workers,
We had a vision, and we did the work.

We humans did this.
We the excavators, backhoe operators and pile drivers,
We the pipe fitters and cement masons and tin knockers,
We the drywall tapers and layers of tile,
We the interior designers and project planners say: "Open these doors!"

We the shelvers of books, we networkers,
We the catalogers, the computer technicians,
We circulation workers say: "Open ‘em wide!"

We had a vision and we did the work,
Glass set in frame: a building reborn.

We the painters, we plumbers,
We the rough and finish carpenters,
We glaziers, we electricians,
We had a vision, and we made it live.

We dreamers and doers,
We had a vision, and we made it live.
We the proofreaders, we the poets,
We the people say "Open these doors!"
We the writers, we the children,
We the builders, we the elders say: "Open 'em up!"

We citizen readers, we watchers of films,
We students, we teachers,
We askers of questions,
We publishers, we printers, we musicians,
We diggers, we skiers and skaters and wheelers and dancers,
We the mothers, the daughters, the sons and the fathers say: "Open the doors!"

Open these doors for the better,
To the laws of physics and the lives of the saints.

Open these doors to the languages of the world:
Laotian, Norwegian, Swahili, and Russian,
and to the Spanish tongue, and the Ojibwe.
Open these doors to high and low, history and myth,
Sacred and secular, fact and theory.

To all these worlds of possibility:
Open the doors most joyfully!
To a world of true diversity:
black and green, red and white, rural and urban, serious and silly,
To seekers and reachers, to curvy and straight,
to those who suffer and all those outside the lines, we say:

Open these doors with utmost pride and pleasure!

Finally! It's ready! Come on in!
Shout praise and cheer!
To liberty!
Shout praise and cheer!
To the library!
We say:
Let this place spark our imagination into flame!
Let it fuel our dreams!

We say: Sound the drums!
Open the doors!
Let's celebrate today!
Celebrate!

The Mystery and the Act: Towards a YA Human Sexuality Collection
by Teri Weesner

This essay is based on the premise that there is a connection between young people accessing porn via the internet and their innate curiosity about human sexuality and their own bodies. Young people viewing internet porn have an information need that can be addressed by youth services librarians and library collections. To ignore this information need is just as inaccurate and inappropriate as young people gleaning their information from internet pornography and cybersex chat. Young people’s information needs are legitimate and the response of shaming from librarians is an ineffective tool for teaching, learning or discipline.

Cultural reluctance to educate young people about human sexuality and cultural reaction of shame and punishment for young people’s experimentation and access to information through the prolific pornography industry is an intrinsically related combination which fosters unhealthy cultural human sexuality. Unhealthy in the sense that shame and ignorance become barriers to people’s healthy and safe concepts and practice of sexuality. A culture which will not educate itself about sex in order to “protect” itself is left (on many levels) ironically unprotected.

We relegate a large percent of sexual culture to the pornography industry and keep it separated as forbidden knowledge. When pornography overextends these boundaries of separateness, as in the case of young people accessing internet porn, a body of accurate, accessible and respectfully presented knowledge is needed to turn to.

Go Ask Alice (http://www.goaskalice.columbia.edu or the 1998 paperback) is one of the best resources I’ve seen in terms of medical accuracy and honest and respectful responses. Go Ask Alice is not only an indispensable resource of accurate health information for people of any age with questions but an excellent primer for librarians on honest and respect-
ful dissemination of “sensitive” information. As my signed copy says, “Be healthy and happy – Alice.”

As librarians, our charge is to create an environment of information in relation to the needs of all people who would access that information as well as an ideology of honesty and respect towards all people and their information needs. Shooshing young people off the internet is like obnoxious shooshing of their curiosity and hunger for knowledge. Young people speak with their behavior. When we are confused by their behavior, ask them what it is they really want to communicate and help them find it in your collection (which includes the library’s computer). We are the gatekeepers and porn and cybersex chat are barriers in youth services. Our job as librarians is to open the gate when asked and assist young people to navigate those barriers.

As adults looking back at our own youth, think about how such dispassionate information may have benefited us to make informed, individual choices.

Take a look at your youth services human sexuality collection under the subject heading, “sex instruction.” What proportion of the titles are current, accurate, respectful, dispassionate information in a form young people will read? Are the juvenile titles in the juvenile or the adult collection? Weed and reseed your collection for Teen Read Week, held annually in October.

The following are a few human sexuality titles I highly recommend.


Blank, Joani (1983). A kid’s first book about sex. Yes Press: San Francisco, CA. “A first for this age child... the focus is on self image, the pleasures of sexuality and personal relationships, not on reproduction...” – School Library Journal. I picked this one up at the Women’s

Presses Library Project booth at ALA. Visit their site at http://www.litwomen.org

http://www.goaskalice.columbia.edu. Originally for Columbia University, the internet allowed Columbia to share the wealth of health information in a Q & A format. This site is still linked to ALA’s “Teen Hoopla” site. Although Dr. Laura’s nationally syndicated condemnation of ALA and Go Ask Alice was negative attention, it was attention none the less. Many people are now glad to know of this site with an archive of over 1,500 Q&A’s.

Columbia University’s Health Education Program. (1998) The "Go Ask Alice" Book of Answers. Henry Holt: New York. The book from the site of the same name. I picked up this gem for $5 at ALA; my only regret is not buying an even dozen to share with all the libraries and resource centers I have contact with.


Finally, here are two human sexuality books by favorite authors who have contributed greatly to children’s literature.

Brown, Laura Krasny and Marc (1997) What's the Big Secret?: Talking about Sex with Girls and Boys, Little, Brown and Company: Boston MA. From the creators of Dino Life Guides for Families and the Arthur books comes a book about human sexuality for young children with neither dinosaurs nor aardvarks, but just as wonderfully illustrated. After discussing gender socialization and how that is not always an accurate indicator of gender, page 10 says, “Actually, the only sure way to tell boys and girls apart is their bodies.” Homosexuality is not discussed.

grow up is to respect yourself and others.” She covers a wide-range of topics including homosexuality. At the end she encourages the reader to consult other resources (people and books) and emphasizes lifelong learning.

If you have other titles to add to this bibliography, please send them to me at teri@libr.org.

From Library Juice 2:28, July 21, 1999

BOOK REVIEWS


Reviewed by Sanford Berman

Truth in Reviewing Declaration: An extremely flattering (and gratifying) reference to my own work appears on page 327.

This painstaking and sometimes fascinating work seeks to demonstrate that classification systems spring from cultural, social, and political contexts -- and may have definite cultural, social, and political consequences. Given their pervasiveness and growing influence, it is wise to understand how and why these categorizing and naming codes develop, what their effects can be, and how to make them at once more visible and accountable. “Our job,” say the authors, “is to find tools for seeing the invisible,” to explore “systems of classification as part of the built information environment,” and to examine how “classifications and standards give advantage or...give suffering” for specific individuals, groups or situations. They approach these tasks by sandwiching detailed studies of discrete systems that have been devised to categorize diseases (ICD), viruses, tuberculosis, race (in Apartheid South Africa), and nursing work (Nursing Intervention Classification) between opening and closing chapters dealing with theory and implications. References to related literature abound, their closely-packed bibliography extending to 32 pages.

Librarians may glean lessons, or cautionary tales, from much of the material, especially the experience of nurses -- a similarly feminized and undervalued group -- in crafting a veritable inventory of what they actually do in order to establish their worth and professionalism (the product, however, being subject to possible adverse uses by management). And there is explicit recognition of the power of naming, which easily applies to subject cataloging practice. Here’s one relevant quote: “Many patients feel that one of the greatest burdens of having chronic fatigue syndrome is the name of the illness.” A comparable situation has long obtained with respect to “leprosy,” still a Library of Congress subject heading. Both
patients and doctors have argued for replacing the unarguably stigmatizing, Biblical term with "Hansen's Disease," a post-Biblical, medically-approved substitute without negative connotations. Interestingly, Christian missionizing bodies resist the patient-desired change, believing that "leprosy" is far more likely to leverage donations than "Hansen's Disease."

And this maxim (p.32) nicely relates to much library and information technology activity: "Abstract schema that do not take use into account...will simply fail. (That is, common sense will be seen as the precious resource that it is.)" This principle could well ratify or underpin local departures from such standard codes as AACR2 and the Dewey Decimal Classification in order to make resources more easily accessed through catalogs or shelf-browsing. Which raises a problem not fully addressed by Bowker and Star: mistakes in classifying (no matter how splendid or rational the overall scheme) that may render the system ineffectual and even reduce its credibility. An example: classifying a volume titled El Dorado, dealing strictly with the history of South America, emphasizing the importance of mining and working gold, in the DDC number for "El Dorado County, California." Or placing Life Lessons From Xena, Warrior Princess: A Guide to Happiness, Success, and Body Armor - unmistakeably marked "A Parody" on the cover - in the Dewey and LC notations for "Self-help psychology," with an harmonious, single subject tracing: SUCCESS - PSYCHOLOGICAL ASPECTS! Liberating such items from unfindability requires a critical, conscious deviation from standard practice, best undertaken locally as a "work-around."

Although important attention is given to not only the direct impact of classifications on people, but also to how those categories may be valorizingly expressed, framed, or termed (e.g., "Chronic Fatigue Syndrome," "Gay-related Immune Disorder" [precursor to AIDS], "Homosexuality" as a psychiatric condition, and "Bantu race" [chosen, albeit anthropologically wrong, “in preference to African or Black African partly to underscore South African "Nationalist desires to be recognized as ‘really African’"], classificatory bias and its results — right now — merit extended discussion. For instance, F. Allan Hanson notes how disability and sexual orientation have lately been somewhat de-stigmatized due to an increasing appreciation that "people are less responsible for traits or behavioral propensities stemming from heredity or other biological causes than from their upbringing, cultural milieu, or other environmental factors" ("Where have all the abnormal people gone?" Humanist, March/April 2000, p. 29-32). However, he observes that while such "opposition between normal and abnormal weakens," with attendant benefits (i.e. less discrimination and exclusion) to disabled and lesbigay people, the "decline of the normal/abnormal opposition...might not have an entirely happy ending" inasmuch as stigma may then be relocated on the basis of "personal responsibility" to criminals and poor people in particular, producing tougher sentencing guidelines, explosive jail building, and punitive welfare reform. Comments Mary Ann Gleason in that last regard:

If nothing else, welfare reform has taught us that as long as we insist on naming those who are poor as unworthy, lazy, self-inflicting of their own plight, people to be shunned or punished, we only drive them into psychological spaces that could neither improve their lives, nor bring hope to their children. ("From this corner of the reflecting pool," Safety Network [National Coalition for the Homeless], Jan./Feb. 2000, p. 3)

Who benefits? Who loses? Those seem key questions to pose with respect to both new and old classifications.

There's doubtless much more of value in Sorthing Things Out for librarians and their professional kin, but it's frankly hard to know, because the work is crippled by its own density and almost occult, inaccessible language. It is dizzyingly awash in definitions and theoretical formulations, too often stated in impenetrable infosci jargon. And there are far too many annoying "foreignisms" and run-to-the-dictionary terms - like "de novo," "perfervid," "imbrigated," and "eclat" - that violate George Orwell's sensible guidelines (in "Politics and the English language") for writing clarity. These are merely a few instances of nearly unreadable prose:

This categorical saturation furthermore forms a complex web. Although it is possible to pull out a single classification scheme or standard for reference purposes, in reality none of them stand alone. So a subproperty of ubiquity is interdependence (p. 38).
We advocate here a pragmatic methodological development—pay more attention to the classification and standardization work that allows for hybrids to be manufactured and so more deeply explore the terrain of the politics of science in action. (p. 48).

Each type of memory that has been distributed in space will also be sequenced in time. The plenum is contained by the overarching organization constituted by the scientific community precisely through a controlled program of first clearance and then continuing erasure (p. 278).

An important theme in recent feminist theory is resistance to such imperializing rhetoric and the development of alternative visions of coherence without unconscious assumption of privilege....The narratives she analyzes are in one sense meant to reconcile the heterogeneity of multiply naturalized object relations in the person, where the objects in question are stories—depictions of life events (p. 303).

Transparency is in theory the endpoint of the trajectory of naturalization, as complete legitimacy or centrality is the endpoint of the trajectory of membership in a community of practice. Due to the multiplicity of membership of all people, however, and the persistence of newcomers and strangers as well as the multiplicity of naturalization of objects, this is inherently nonexistent in the real world (p. 311).

What-in-hell are they talking about? Is there a perhaps unwitting wish to limit readership exclusively to members of the infosci mystery cult?

Lastly, while the heavily detailed and concept-laden tome concludes with name and subject indexes, the latter is lamentably Spartan and incomplete. As random examples, no entries appear for:

- Aristotelian classification, 61-66, 201, 322
- “Bantu” classification, 197, 200, 203
- Capital crimes, 48
- Chartres Cathedral, 14
- Chronic fatigue syndrome, 66-67
- “Coloured” people (South Africa), 206-212, 221-222
- English Revolution (1640), 41
- Griquas, 218
- International Classification Society, 59
- Interracial persons, 43, 203-306, 223-224, 300. See also “Coloured”
- Library classification systems, 11
- Mixed race persons. See Interracial persons.
- Multiracial persons. See Interracial persons.
- NSS interventions, 249, 269
- “No Shit, Sherlock” interventions. See NSS interventions.
- “One drop” rule, 43
- Prototype classification, 61-66, 201, 322
- Psychoanalysis, 46-7
- Schizophrenia, 49

Absent from the name index is:

- Pasteur, Louis, 48

And these entries—in both indexes—lack relevant page-citations:

- Foucault, Michel, 42
- International Classification of Diseases, 55-57, 68-69, 192-193, 201, 239
- Laing, Sandra, 222
- World Health Organization, 53

These are serious and surprising shortcomings in an “information science” study bearing the prestigious MIT imprint.

Reviewed by Lorna Peterson

As a collection of fifteen articles representing research, personal narrative and bibliography, Untold Stories is a significant contribution to the literature of the Black American experience and librarianship. The fifteen articles are divided into three sections: "Legacies of Black Librarianship," "Chronicles from the Civil Rights Movement," and "Resources for Library Personnel, Services and Collections." Each has excellent essays, containing high-quality research and writing. This review concentrates on the most impressionable of these essays—not meaning to rank the unselected as lesser, but rather to amplify the range of discoveries Untold Stories offers, in the hope authors' voices will be heard, and the book will receive the wide readership it deserves.

Marilyn Pettit's lead piece "Liberty & Literacy: Sunday Schools & Reading for African-American Females in New York City, 1799-1826" bridges race, gender and class politics in an exploration of Sunday schools as the common school for the most marginalized of early nineteenth-century New York City residents, Black girls. In analytic and unsentimental language, Pettit reconstructs the development and decline of this ignored "matrix for the acquisition of literacy and for the use of libraries and books, particularly for African-American females" (p. 11). Based on dissertation work, the research is thorough, meticulous, and a model of scholarship. Pettit consulted church records, city council minutes, and letters, and framed this evidence with a solid consultation of the secondary literature on free Blacks, Sunday schools, and literacy, particularly for African-American females" (p. 11). Based on dissertation work, the research is thorough, meticulous, and a model of scholarship. Pettit consulted church records, city council minutes, and letters, and framed this evidence with a solid consultation of the secondary literature on free Blacks, Sunday schools, and literacy, thereby turning information into knowledge. Pettit's conclusion is particularly meaningful to librarians and one which those in library education must take to heart. That is, as librarians we must take into custody the records of neglected groups so their histories can be written, and library educators must educate professionals who "are alive to the research potential of such records" (p. 20).

The gift of an historical narrative is that its story piques certain curiosities, thereby leading to new discoveries. Rosie Albritton reveals in "The Founding & Prevalence of African-American Social Libraries & Historical Societies, 1828-1918" that the accepted, or designated, expert chroniclers of North American social libraries gave scant recognition to the existence of African-American social libraries, or to the early work of Black historians who documented their existence. Albritton presents the story told, but not heard, and through her extensive bibliography reveals a lost history of the nineteenth-century African-American literary societies and social libraries. She integrates literature on Black and White social libraries with that of literary society history, to place the African-American experience in the context of American library history. Her appendix continues the work of Dorothy Porter and other Black library scholars giving a useful foundation for further research.

The history of a single library helps us gain greater understanding of the public library in a social context. Andrea L. Williams illustrates the effect of segregation and its dismantling, in presenting the history of the Holland Public Library, Wichita Falls, Texas, 1934-1968. Under Jim Crow, the library was a testament to Black self-determination. Founded, funded, managed, and cared for by Black leadership for Blacks, the library held little interest by Whites. During integration, the library became of interest to Whites because of its status as a city employer, thereby offering a good salary (p. 71). Here we see at least two outcomes of community interest in a library: as a place for education and inspiration, and as an institution, which provides secure employment. This reader was struck by this because whether intentionally or unintentionally, the question of the library as a marginal institution appears in Williams's work. For example, the closing of Holland Public Library in 1968 stirred no controversy, although the closing of Booker T. Washington High School resulted in much protest. Williams concludes with this poignant quote regarding the public library's demise:

We saw it as inevitable and necessary for it to close; it was a remnant of a separate but unequal age, that no one ever pretended was o.k. Keeping it open with all its inadequacies would be extending another remnant of a part of our history we were trying to dismantle (p. 75).
Yet this would be true of the school, and still its closing generated community protest. The library’s role in society is paradoxical in that citizens see its importance and dedicate resources, no matter how scare, to its establishment. But at other times the library seems to have an inconsequential role. Marginal or essential? — which is the library in society and from what viewpoint should it be studied?

The second section, “Chronicles from the Civil Rights Movement,” explores the structural barriers of law and social custom specifically related to librarianship. Dan Lee in “From Segregation to Integration: Library Services for Blacks in South Carolina, 1923-1962” skilfully uses correspondence from the Carnegie Corporation, annual reports and minutes of the South Carolina State Library Board, newspaper articles, census statistics, charters, and other primary sources to demonstrate resistance to library service to Blacks in South Carolina. For example, the Charleston Library Society turned down Carnegie assistance in 1905 “out of fear that acceptance of such funding would commit the staff to serving the general public, and therefore blacks” (p. 94). Lee also chronicles the attempt in 1921 to secure a Carnegie library for Blacks in Charleston which was ultimately unsuccessful. From 1928 to 1931, to meet the library needs of Blacks in Charleston, African-American Susan Dart Butler, the daughter of a minister, developed and ran a library at her own expense until it was made a branch of the county system (p. 95). Thorough, meticulous research by Lee shows how libraries were made separate and certainly were not equal, and how Blacks challenged, sacrificed, and by determination made sure the public library was a part of their community.

In “Reading for Liberation,” Don Davis and Cheryl Knott Malone reconstruct the role of libraries in the Mississippi Freedom Summer Project of 1964. The story of library planning, book donation, maintenance and legacy is a fresh look at the role of libraries in civil rights. This article focuses on the writings of James Farmer, founder of the Congress of Racial Equality, whose papers were acquired by the University of Texas. In fact, it was the acquisition of this collection and the discovery that establishing libraries was part of the Freedom Summer, which inspired the 1994 American Library Association, Library History Round Table program and resulted in this book. This is a moving piece which presents the optimism of our profession, the faith in books as instruments of liberation, and the desire of people to have or withhold libraries in communities. In some cases, the Freedom Libraries were all that a community had. In the end, some fell prey to arson, others merged with newly integrated libraries (p. 119). How many libraries were there? This is difficult to determine and is one minor flaw of imprecision in this work, where the authors refer to “15 or 20 [libraries] of the more than 40 centers” (p. 111).

The final section, “Resources for Library Personnel, Services, & Collections,” pulls together issues involving biography, bibliography and collection building. Its concluding bibliographic essay by Edward Goedeken is ambitious in its attempt to bring together a forty-year literature of civil rights, libraries and Black librarianship. This reader was curious as to the rationale of organization and the selection process of including works, and therefore wished for an introductory paragraph, specifying how the multidisciplinary approach was applied. Also, the pathfinder approach of starting with general sources outside of library science somehow does not seem appropriate for the readership of this volume. And oddly, the title demarcates at 1994 but a 1996 article by Glendora Johnson-Cooper from a collection that also has a piece on Dorothy Porter is included [1]. Without knowing the selection criteria, for example, why was the fine biography of Nella Larsen [2], published in 1994, omitted? This bibliographic essay though is a good start for the beginning researcher and the suggestions for further research is a thoughtful contribution.

In reading a collection, too often one finds that the diversity of voices contributes to an unevenness of tone and tenuous relationship of content. The skillful and careful editing of Untold Stories makes this the rare collection that does not suffer from unevenness and is thus enjoyable to read. But for me, there was a subtle and troubling aspect of the book that is marked by the epithet selected by the editor. It reads:

The civil rights movement did not grow out of the dream of any one man, or woman…The people who made up the Movement were almost as diverse as America itself. [It] was carried out by a tiny percentage of all those who could have taken part. And yet this small group was able to generate a wave that washed over the entire nation, that spawned similar movements in a dozen fields. (Powledge, 1991, pp. xi, xii [p. 1])
The Black American demand for humane treatment, for the full rights of citizenship, for liberty and justice is first, a Black story. Whites who fought Whites in the struggle for Black civil rights should be acknowledged. But there must be a way to do it that does not make the sympathetic white person the hero, or diminishes the courage of the oppressed by immediately acknowledging diversity. The use of white journalist Fred Powledge’s quote stripped the strength, determination and power of Blacks who resisted and successfully fought White law and social custom of segregation, thereby muting these powerful stories. To talk about race and the legacy of racism is an unpleasant, hurtful task – so to sugarcoat it is tempting. To resist this temptation requires a will and responsibility necessary to the scholarly integrity in studying race and racism.

Unquestionably, *Untold Stories* is a remarkable collection and one that should enjoy a large and diverse readership.

WORKS CITED


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