

LINK: A Network for North-South Library Development

Librarians and information workers all over the world share many common problems and experiences. Many workers, especially in the "South" have developed library techniques to suit local conditions. Their solutions, however, may be applicable elsewhere. To facilitate the sharing of these ideas, some interested librarians in the United Kingdom got together in 1988 to form LINK.

LINK is a network that intends to be an informed, experienced and realistic forum that will raise awareness of "Third World" library issues within the information-related professions of the "North." It aims to link librarians and libraries in the "South" with colleagues worldwide, for their mutual benefit, and to provide support, briefing and continuing information to individuals who intend to do information work in developing countries.

Specific objectives and activities of the group include:

- Raising awareness among professional bodies and related organizations in the information world.
- Raising awareness among individual librarians through personal contact, and other activities, such as talks, articles and meetings.
- Raising awareness among staff and students of UK library schools.
- Providing information and support to individuals before, during and after their work overseas.
- Supporting students, librarians and information workers from developing countries who are in the UK and librarians and information workers in developing countries.
- Producing a newsletter to inform, connect and support participants' activities and provide a forum for discussion of professional issues.
- Producing a directory of network participants and other resources that can facilitate the main aims of the network.

Who are we?

Most of us are librarians who have worked alongside local colleagues in libraries and information centers in developing countries, trying to provide basic services and solve problems on a day-to-day basis. Much of this experience, though not all, has come from "volunteer" projects associated with organizations like VSO, UNAIS, APSO, and CUSO. Returning home

is not the end of our interest and involvement in Third World library development. We want to keep these issues visible, and also contribute in various ways to further development and improvement of libraries and information centers worldwide.

LINK also seeks to raise the political awareness of library and information workers around the world and provide the opportunity to discuss professional and political issues that arise from our work.

If you are interested in these issues, or have useful experience or ideas to share, we would like you to participate with us in some or all of the network's activities. Contact us at: LINK, c/o Gillian Harris, 64 Ennersdale Road, London SE13 ENGLAND, e-mail: 101450.2167@compuserve.com.

NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS

Lynn Andersen is the director of the Durland Alternatives Library on the Cornell University campus, Ithaca, NY. Her work with the library focuses on building coalitions with community social activists and making library resources available for their work on issues of justice, human rights, peace, diversity, and the environment. At present, the library staff and advisory board are working to bring literacy training, books, poetry and cultural programs and continuing education funding to a juvenile detention center in the Ithaca area.

Sanford Berman, PLG member and former Head Cataloger at Hennepin County Library, co-edits *Alternative Library Literature: A Biennial Anthology* (McFarland).

William F. Birdsall is Executive Director of Novanet, a consortium of Nova Scotia academic libraries, and of the Council of Atlantic University Librarians. He has published articles on the politics of librarianship, professionalism, information technology, telecommunications, and public policy. His book *The Myth of the Electronic Library* was published in Japan in 1996. He recently co-edited with Karen Adams, *Understanding Telecommunication and Public Policy: A Guide for Libraries* (Canadian Library Association, 1998).

John Buschman is Acting Chair of Talbott Library at Rider University and Collection Development Librarian. He is co-editor of *Progressive Librarian* and the editor of *Critical Approaches to Information Technology in Librarianship* (McFarland, 1993).

Jennifer Cram, former President of the Australian Library and Information Association and Associate Editor for Australasia for *Counterpoise* (1996-2000), has wide experience of managing public, academic and corporate libraries. Jennifer is a frequent invited speaker at conferences in Australia and abroad, and is widely published on a range of topics including library service design and delivery, performance measurement, social justice implications of library structures and services, and libraries and the Internet. Her current position is Manager, Library Services for Education Queensland.

Michael Donovan, librarian and artist, is a union organizer for UNITE.

Zoia Horn has worked on public, high school, university and special libraries – most recently the DataCenter and the Center for Investigative Journalism. Jailed during the Vietnam War in conjunction with the Harrisburg 7 trials she became an *cont. p. 80*

2000 librarians. They were less than enthusiastic about it, for varied reasons. *Storm Center* received more praise and acceptance abroad. As Robbins sums up, the film "was both the Ruth Brown story and the Hollywood story" for it "captured...the reality of the red scare."

Louise Robbins' first book, *Censorship and the American Library: The American Library Association's Response to Threats to Intellectual Freedom, 1939-1969*, promised much with its careful scholarship, its historical viewpoint and the enthusiasm she brought to her writing. In *The Dismissal of Miss Ruth Brown*, Robbins has hit her long stride. She has brought to the surface how anti-intellectualism, the cold war with its anti-communism and its flagrant manifestations of loyalty oaths, witch-hunts, censorship, and guilt by association, have divided communities, undermined democratic principles, and victimized many people. She also shares with the reader her experience and involvement in writing about Ruth Brown. It is good history, a good story, and an inspiration. It is to be hoped that Robbins will take on the challenge of another book, covering another challenging period for librarians, from 1969 to 1999, with the same verve and enthusiasm.

ardent advocate for intellectual freedom. She served as chair of the Intellectual Freedom Committee of ALA and is the author of the memoir *Zoia* (McFarland, 1995).

Fiona Hunt is currently Information Literacy Librarian at Zayed University in the United Arab Emirates. After receiving her MLIS at the University of British Columbia Fiona became interested in international trade agreements such as the MAI and GATS and their potential impact on libraries. Since then, she has been working to raise awareness on these issues and currently moderates a WTO-related listserv.

Al Kagan, currently on sabbatical as a Visiting Professor at the University of Cape Town, is African Studies Bibliographer and Professor of Library Administration at the University of Illinois Library. He is a Councilor of the American Library Association, representing the ALA Social Responsibilities Round Table, the Convenor of the Social Responsibilities Discussion Group of the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions, is active in the Africana Librarians Council of the [U.S.] African Studies Association, and is on the Executive Board of the [U.S.] Association of Concerned Africa Scholars. He is co-author of *Reference Guide to Africa: A Bibliography of Sources* (Scarecrow Press, 1999).

Robert J. Lackie is an Instruction and Reference Librarian at Rider University and liaison to the departments of Biology, Chemistry and Math/Physics.

Mark Rosenzweig is co-founder of Progressive Librarians Guild, co-editor of *Progressive Librarian*, councilor-at-large of the American Library Association and director of the Reference Center for Marxist Studies in New York City.

Darcy Sharman is a recent graduate of the University of Alberta's School of Library and Information Studies in Edmonton, Alberta, Canada. She recently moved to Broward County, Florida, where she works as a reference librarian with Broward County Library and Broward Community College. This is her first published article.