THE TRANSFORMATION OF SOUTH AFRICAN LIBRARIANSHIP: SURVEY RESULTS AND ANALYSIS OF CURRENT OPINIONS

by Al Kagan

Prologue

This article is being published simultaneously in the Progressive Librarian and in issue #25 of the most important South African library and information science journal, Innovation: Appropriate Librarianship and Information Work in Southern Africa (http://www.library.unp.ac.za/innovation/id1.htm). It is the lead article in an issue devoted to the issues examined here. In the interests of full disclosure, note that this author is on Innovation’s Editorial Committee.

Although most readers of the Progressive Librarian will probably be generally familiar with South Africa’s apartheid history, some further context of the current situation will probably be of help to those who have not followed library developments. Under apartheid, the white society had a highly developed library infrastructure, similar to the environment enjoyed by affluent North Americans. But the parallel with North America did not extend down the racial hierarchy. Poor and minority communities in the United States usually have some type of library access even if relatively or severely underfunded compared to nearby richer and whiter communities. There is a parallel here with middle class so-called coloured or Indian South African communities, but not with those who lived in townships or in poor rural areas. And of course the great majority of African South Africans still live in townships or rural areas.

There was an attempt to develop community resource centers in the mid-to-late 1980s and early 1990s by NGOs and community organizations, but government supported library development for poor communities only started after majority rule in the mid-1990s. Most township and rural dwellers simply never saw a library during the apartheid era. This
situation has changed dramatically, but there is still a long way to go to provide anything near sufficient library resources for the majority of the population. Public libraries are a provincial function under the South African constitution, but large cities have also taken their own initiatives. The degree of library development varies by the relative richness of the various provinces and cities and the degree of commitment to serious transformation. The way public libraries are run also varies according to the relative strength of the political forces in each area. For example, centralized collection development provides inappropriate collections in terms of content and language in many public libraries.

Apartheid’s legacy is also evident in South Africa’s higher education libraries. There were separate technical colleges (technikons) and universities for whites, coloureds, Indians, and Africans. Their library resources were directly tied to the racial hierarchy. Today, the historically disadvantaged higher education libraries are suffering and the historically white libraries continue to be well funded (although the fall of the Rand against the dollar has seriously impacted these historically advantaged libraries). For example, the University of Transkei Library has not been able to buy any new books and serials since 1998 while the University of Cape Town Library is able to mostly keep up with collecting at an international level.

Regarding library education, there is a distinct difference between the US and South Africa. There is no recognized baseline professional degree such as our MLS. Instead there are numerous undergraduate and graduate programs offering various degrees. This is explained more fully in the article. Suffice it to say that most librarians are educated at the undergraduate level, which takes three years, with an optional honors year. A small percentage go on for graduate education. This lack of a broad liberal arts background coupled with a lack of graduate education makes it difficult for librarians to claim truly professional status. Librarians are therefore not yet able to exert their fair share of influence within society.

Most librarians and library educators in positions of power are still white, although many young black librarians are now beginning their careers. Of course, there are many dedicated white librarians who worked against apartheid, but the survey results undoubtedly reflect the opinions of a mostly white survey group. Much has changed in South Africa, but much has also remained the same. This article describes the context of what has been accomplished but also the crying need for more rapid transformation.

Background

It has now been eight years since the first majority-rule election in 1994 and the chance to transform and democratize South African library practice. But the victory of majority rule coincided with the intensification of globalization regimes dominated by the World Bank, International Monetary Fund, and later the World Trade Organization. South Africa’s ambitious Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) aimed at fostering equality and development for the disadvantaged majority was short-lived and soon displaced by the same kind of neo-liberal policies seen elsewhere in Africa and poor countries around the world. South Africa’s neo-liberal plan to integrate itself in the world economy is called the Growth, Employment And Redistribution policy (GEAR). As a result, the ANC with its alliance partners, the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU) and the South African Communist Party (SACP), have redefined and diminished many economic and social commitments first proclaimed in the Freedom Charter of 1956.

This research project investigates the status and role of the South African library profession within the current neo-liberal context, and explores attitudes towards and initiatives towards socially responsible practices that could promote a more democratic and equitable South African future. The following assumptions and hypotheses regarding African studies librarianship, education, status, and professional development inform the project.

South Africa is an African country, however the apartheid legacy continues to mystify perceptions of many South Africans, including librarians. The white-minority government looked to Europe for its cultural focus and tried to create a pseudo-European outpost for the privileged minority. This strategy was so successful that many White, Coloured, or Indian South Africans still claim to be going to “Africa” when they cross one of the borders with a neighboring country. But in order to foster a better quality of life for all its people, the country must prosper within its region and the continent as a whole. A continental orientation can be strengthened through formal and informal educational systems, and libraries can play a key role in such empowerment. Libraries can foster a vibrant understanding of African realities and the information and knowledge necessary to help overcome apartheid myths of European superiority. Continental solidarity might also be a force to oppose neo-liberal policies at home, throughout the continent, in the African diaspora, and throughout the world.
In order for libraries to fulfill this role, librarians will need an appropriate educational background and access to relevant collections. But the bibliography of the African continent is not taught as a discrete course at any library school in the country. This lack must affect many librarians' unexamined assumptions regarding the availability and quality of African studies materials. On a deeper level, this lack of knowledge may feed into continuing apartheid myths, perpetuating racist misunderstandings, and discriminatory interactions with library users. In the academic world, graduate students who fail to get an introduction to the interdisciplinary literature of African studies and appropriate research methodologies must be at a disadvantage with their peers elsewhere. This lack of grounding is likely to affect their future careers, including scholarly production in subtle ways. They will find it harder and more time-consuming to locate needed materials, and they will be more dependent on the expertise and good will of their local librarians.

Librarians' status around the world varies, but in general it is quite obviously too low in most countries to maximize potential societal benefits. Academic librarians will be most effective when they have sufficient status to comfortably interact with other faculty as peers. This implies appropriate graduate education and advanced subject knowledge in addition to library and information science education and expertise. Public librarians can also gain increased status from advanced degrees. Furthermore, such status provides librarians a legitimate voice and the possibility to act forthrightly to advance socially responsible policies for a more just society. But South African library education programs foster a very hierarchical system and include numerous undergraduate and post-graduate degrees and permutations.\(^2\) Rationalization was considered but not implemented in the late 1980s. Under apartheid, most librarians (as other professionals) knew their place and did not challenge the status quo. It is difficult to overcome such a legacy. It appears that only a select few have managed to acquire appropriate status under the current configuration.

Historically, it appears that only the elite South African librarians had access to sufficient and appropriate professional development opportunities. Conferences and symposiums, professional visits, sabbaticals, and formal courses are the stimuli that invigorate individuals and the profession and advance the field. Now that South Africa has reentered the international arena, librarians must have full access to the world of African and international librarianship as well as the chance to create a vibrant profession at home through the Library and Information Association of South Africa (LIASA) and other organizations. Knowledgeable and confident professionals can work together with their colleagues to develop socially responsible policies and oppose the worldwide trends to privatize and commercialize library functions and services. It seems that the profession's inward looking tendency is probably another heritage of apartheid. The counter-tendency to overvalue European and North American practice seems alive and well, and can easily prevent learning from other appropriate African and Third World experiences.

**Methodology**

Two survey instruments were developed and first sent out by printed copy and e-mail (where known) on July 1, 2001.\(^3\) A follow-up e-mail message was sent on July 21 to those who had not yet replied. The first survey was sent to the directors and other faculty members of the thirteen known university schools of library and/or information science in South Africa.\(^4\) For consistency, the second questionnaire was sent to practicing senior academic librarians at these thirteen universities, as well as the senior public librarians in places where these universities are located (and in neighboring towns if large public libraries were lacking).\(^5\) It was also sent to the directors of the Provincial Library Services of the nine provinces.\(^6\) Each survey was accompanied by a list of key social responsibility concerns derived from analyzing the concerns of four progressive library organizations in three countries.\(^7\) The cover letter stated that confidentiality would be assured, and that anonymous responses were welcome.\(^8\) It turned out that three of the library and information science schools had recently dropped their LIS programs,\(^9\) making a total of ten programs left in the country. However, one respondent from one of these schools did reply on the basis of recent experience and that survey was added to the database. Responses from university and public librarians in these places were also retained. Some responses were initiated or supplemented through personal interviews on 7-10 August 2001 in Pietermaritzburg, Kwa-Dlangezwa, Empangeni, and Richard's Bay.

A total of 143 surveys were mailed and 51 useable responses (36%) were received. Respondents in 31 of the 45 geographical places (69%) responded. See the Table on the following page for a detailed explanation of the responses.

In order to further ground the findings, the author arranged eleven personal follow-up interviews with a select group of respondents and three others...
during the period from March 14 to April 3, 2002. Almost all of the people in this group had a chance to read a draft of this article beforehand. Most of these follow-up interviews were conducted with people who had given especially thoughtful survey responses. They took place in Cape Town (4 interviews), Pretoria (5 interviews), and Umtata (2 interviews). Most of the interviews were conducted one-to-one, but there were also two group interviews (one with four educators at the University of Cape Town and one with one provincial and one public librarian in Pretoria). These follow-up interviews included five LIS educators, four academic librarians, three public librarians, one provincial librarian, the executive at LIASA, and the National Librarian. Almost all of these interviews lasted two hours. Nearly all of the respondents were eager to talk and quite engaged in the issues. As a group they were extremely supportive of this research project.

**Summary Results**

Since most of the questions in the survey involved yes or no answers with a chance to explain, it is easy to compile some major trends and to find points of agreement or divergence across the four survey groups: university, public, and provincial librarians and LIS educators. However, note that only five of the questions on the LIS educators survey overlapped with the survey for librarians actually working in libraries. These five questions can be included and analyzed here. Both surveys include four types of questions: on African studies, LIS education, the profession, and socially responsible practices.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>University Librarians</th>
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<th>Provincial Librarians</th>
<th>LIS Educators</th>
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<td>Responses = 16</td>
<td>Responses = 6</td>
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<td>% Received = 46%</td>
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<td>6 of 9 places = 67%</td>
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Summary results are presented below, followed by results for each of the four groups.

**African Studies**

Slightly more than half of responding working librarians think that library and information science programs should teach an in-depth course on the bibliography of the African continent, yet such a course is not available in South Africa. Public and provincial librarians are more in favor than their university colleagues are (about two-thirds vs. half). Two counter themes stand out. Those who affirm the need for such a course refer to the promotion of the ANC’s “African Renaissance” initiative and the need to know one’s heritage. On the other hand, those who do not see the need for such a course state that it is important to teach the bibliographic skills rather than the content. The important outcome is that students will know how to find any kind of materials.

Only one-third of working librarians have access to extensive African studies collections. Many libraries have extensive local, provincial, or national collections, and some libraries have extensive collections on the Southern African region. Of course, this varied with size of library or library system collections. Larger collections were more apt to have a broader scope. A majority of university librarians answered in the affirmative, but only a small number of public and one-third of provincial librarians stated that they had extensive African studies collections. But as in other African countries, emphasis is national. In fact, these inward looking tendencies are evident from responses that seemed to equate African studies materials with explicitly South African materials even though the question clearly asked about the African continent.

**Education**

Only one-quarter of respondents from all four groups are satisfied with the current levels and kinds of LIS degrees offered throughout the country. Nearly half of those surveyed support the retention of undergraduate LIS degrees. Taking these two questions together, the largest group is unsatisfied with the current situation but wants to retain undergraduate LIS degree. However the second largest group is satisfied with the current situation including retaining undergraduate degrees. And the third largest group is unhappy with both the current situation and retaining undergraduate degrees. Here we find a wide difference of opinion. University and provincial
librarians are almost evenly split. More than two-thirds of public librarians are mainly unsatisfied, but want to retain the undergraduate degree. This shows a serious lack of consensus within the profession.

There are a surprising number of respondents who address questions on "education" by discussing "training." In the United States, we often talk about the phrase "education and training" as if it was one concept but we are clearly referring to theory as well as practice. One gets the sense that many South African librarians really are addressing practical skills rather than theoretical grounding when discussing "education." It is likely that this derives from the emphasis on undergraduate LIS education, and the generally low status of the profession, especially for public librarians. This is further discussed in the following sections. Other themes are the problem of differences and perception of university vs. technikon degrees and the need for better basic skills and more practical knowledge or experience, especially with information technology. Some value technikon degrees probably precisely because they provide more "training" than university programs.

The eleven universities award at least 29 different LIS degrees, and five technikons award at least six other LIS degrees. See Appendix 1 for an incomplete list. These 35 degrees are awarded at six or seven levels. This confusing diversity of degrees makes it hard to compare LIS programs across the country. But when asked if LIS programs and degrees (not necessarily courses) should be regularized, only slightly more than half responded in the affirmative. Only the university librarians showed a clear preference for regularization (76%), while not surprisingly two-thirds of the LIS educators showed a clear preference for the status quo. One possible caveat should be noted. Although the question clearly stated that regularization did not necessarily mean standardization of courses within programs, some respondents' answers implied that they might have missed this distinction. For those in favor of rationalization, common responses were the need for standards, and that it would make hiring easier for employers. A number of respondents also advocated not only rationalizing but also reducing the number of LIS programs. In considering hiring decisions, several people asserted that it is not the degree that matters but the reputation of the program.

The Profession

Although there is disagreement on LIS education, nearly all respondents believe that the profession needs to be upgraded. One respondent disagreed with the terminology, saying that the profession needed to be "transformed," implying an even more fundamental shift. Respondents noted the need for more continuing education, and more information technology expertise. On the other hand, one of the follow-up interviewees noted that most library staff have no idea that librarianship is a profession!

As with all other aspects of librarianship, South Africa's LIS professional organizations have been deeply affected by the apartheid legacy. The previous mainstream organization, the South African Institute of Library and Information Science (SAILIS) was seen as deeply compromised by many black librarians who by apartheid necessity had set up their own organization, the African Library Association of South African (ALASA). Furthermore, a new nonracial progressive organization arose during the dying days of apartheid, the Library and Information Workers Organization (LIWO). While SAILIS and ALASA recently disbanded in order to form the new Library and Information Association of South Africa (LIASA), LIWO which took a critical stance towards unification, has now disappeared. SAILIS contributed ten percent of its resources to LIASA while ALASA contributed all of its very small treasury. Considering the history, it is not surprising that LIASA still has a relatively small membership compared to the universe of possible members, and that there are widely divergent views of its current worth and potential for the future.

Two-thirds of respondents are either members or participate in LIASA. As opposed to the former SAILIS, it is interesting that LIS educators show the smallest membership percentage, only half of the respondents. This is counter-intuitive since one would expect that the intellectual framers of the profession would be the most active group in the national association. However, these LIS educators participate in a wide range of other professional associations, (including IFLA and in organizations in other countries) so these results are probably representative. Eleven other organizations were noted. Organizations with two or more participants are: IFLA, LIWO, Association of Southern African Indexers and Bibliographers (ASAIB), and the Library Association (UK). Excluding the LIS educators, only IFLA and LIWO were represented.

Representatives from LIASA confirm these perceptions. The largest membership group is public librarians. In follow-up interviews, the following reasons were given for the lack of LIS educator membership. SAILIS was dominated by LIS educators and academic librarians. Many of these people
do not see LIASA as a sufficiently professional organization because it is open to all. Some of this group may stay out because of their continuing racism. On the other hand, one white respondent noted that whites may feel unwanted in the new organization. On a more mundane, level, it may be a question of the lack of services previously provided by SAlLIS, including lack of a professional journal, lack of accreditation mechanism, and the lack of a need to join for career advancement. Other important reasons are that most librarians cannot attend meetings due to lack of financial resources, lack of administrative support, and lack of sufficient staffing.

A slight majority of respondents think that it is too early to evaluate the work of LIASA. The remaining group is decisively split between positive and negative impressions. LIS educators have fewer strong opinions that the other groups; three-quarters of them think it is still too early to evaluate the Association. About one-third of both public and provincial librarians are negative, which is more than the average. Those who have a positive view or think it is too soon to judge would like to see LIASA get more involved in continuing education, leadership training, lobbying for resources, and collective bargaining. Those voicing negative comments think of LIASA as the old SAlLIS in a new form, and voice very strong opinions such as: “There is no attempt at transformation,” “I refuse to get involved,” “LIASA is silent on major issues,” and “LIASA is useless.” Finally, one of the follow-up respondents noted that the responses might be quite different from junior colleagues.

Socially Responsible Practices

In order to better define the term “social responsibilities” for the purpose of this survey, a list of key topics was appended to the questionnaire (see Appendix 2). The list of thirteen topics was developed by comparing the concerns of four specifically alternative library organizations in the US, UK, and Sweden. The dangers with this approach are that some particularly African concerns might be missed and that the concerns come from rich countries as opposed to the relative poverty of South Africa. However, these organizations have explicitly concerned themselves with Third World solidarity, and these concerns should therefore be mitigated. It is perhaps harder to evaluate responses in this section than in the other sections. It is likely that nearly all respondents would like to claim that they are socially responsible and that they carry out such policies in their work. The importance of the attached list therefore becomes more evident.

Less than half of the respondents think that the profession is meeting its social responsibilities. LIS educators and public librarians are the least satisfied with these efforts. Provincial libraries rate the profession’s efforts slightly higher, while university librarians rate these efforts at the highest rate of the 4 groups. Perhaps they are extrapolating from their own sectors of the field, and perhaps with some justification. Several public and provincial librarians noted the many new libraries in townships and rural areas. Several respondents noted that they needed more funding to be more socially effective, and two people noted that current Government policies are making matters worse rather than better.

Respondents noted the following themes in their socially responsible practice: building of new libraries, provision of community services and library programs, free and open access to collections, and providing access to the alternative press. But several public and provincial librarians again noted decreasing resources. They are personally proud of their own efforts in providing youth services and service equality to all.

Results by Respondent Group

This section addresses each of the four groups of respondents, providing more detail, salient comments, explanations and conjectures.

African studies

African studies bibliography courses

University librarians were almost evenly split on the need to teach an in-depth course on African studies bibliography. However, as explained above, more individuals might have agreed if the question was broken down by level of education, undergraduate vs. post-graduate. One respondent felt it was a big problem that students were not learning their heritage, and one referred back to the African Renaissance initiative. One respondent said that it was a normal practice in any country to learn the resources of that place. Of course, the nebulous concept of African Renaissance may not directly refer back to students learning their own particular cultural heritages, except through focused assignments. The hope is that students would be able to better situate themselves more generally within the African context.

On the other hand, two respondents noted the need to be able to find materials rather than studying the sources for the African continent. As a long-time teacher of such a course in the United States and after recently
teaching several African studies bibliography classes at the University of Cape Town, the importance of such a course is clear to this author. Librarians who have not been exposed to the rich variety of African studies sources often have no idea of what is available and how to find it. My UCT students were particularly interested in learning about these materials, and one professor remarked that there might now be a new demand for such instruction.

As opposed to the university librarians, a majority of public librarians are in favor of teaching African studies bibliography courses. Perhaps this relates to being closer to what one respondent called “vital importance for community needs.” Or to put it more bluntly, perhaps this reflects a more European and elitist orientation in the universities. Other reasons given in favor of teaching it were the need for transformation of society in light of the “African Renaissance,” a general lack of knowledge of Africa and the world, and as a way to encourage the community to write. The one reason against was again the need to teach bibliographic skills rather than content.

Of the three groups of librarians surveyed, provincial librarians are most enthusiastic on teaching the bibliography of Africa. Two-thirds think this is a good idea. Besides citing the “African Renaissance,” other reasons given include the need to address development problems and the ability for graduates to seek employment outside of the country. One respondent noted that South Africa is not a province of America or Europe! The standard counter argument was also put forward, the need to teach bibliographic skills, not content. Of course, one wonders why both goals could not be accomplished at the same time. After all, it is impossible to teach bibliographic skills without using some representative literature.

Instead of asking about the need to teach the bibliography of Africa, the LIS educator questionnaire began with a question on whether or not the respondent’s program actually did teach such a course. All answers were negative. One educator responded that although they did not teach such a course, their entire program was quite Africa-centered. On the negative side, an anonymous angry response asserted that there was no such thing as “African librarianship,” only librarianship. Of course, this response completely missed the content of the question.

African studies collections
A majority of university librarians claimed access to an extensive African studies collection, and three-fifths noted the existence of strong regional collections on Southern Africa. One made the comment that the library was “buying the wrong materials from North America and Europe” instead of buying more materials from Africa. One librarian noted the critical need for indigenous knowledge.

Only two public librarians said that their libraries had extensive African studies collections. This may be slightly misleading in the case of big cities with long established African studies collections such as Johannesburg or Cape Town. Presumably at least some library users in those places could get to these large central collections if they were aware of their existence, and if they made the effort. Two respondents noted that they did not have to collect African studies because these major collections were nearby. Only three out of ten of these respondents noted their extensive national, provincial or local collections (rather than continental collections), and they seemed to think these were appropriate collections for their users needs. However two librarians complained about the lack of appropriate African studies collections, including the lack of needed adult books in the Zulu language.

Two-thirds of the provincial librarians stated that their library systems did not extensively collect African studies materials, and half of them said that they did collect extensively for the country and/or their provinces.

Education
Satisfaction with LIS degrees
Slightly more than half of university librarians are unsatisfied with the current levels and kinds of LIS degrees and almost half are unhappy about retaining the undergraduate degrees. The split indicates profound disagreements among colleagues. The problem of differences and perceptions of university vs. technikon degrees was noted. Several respondents think that the degrees need to be more practically oriented (as at the technikons) while one respondent noted that the degrees are much too practical and ignore important theory and issues of social responsibility. Two individuals note the need for more information technology instruction. Other issues mentioned include: the need for bridging courses for basic communications and language skills, and the need to produce subject specialists with honors degrees. One person made the comment that recent graduates are becoming increasing less employable.

Although public and university librarians have similar dissatisfaction with
the current level and kinds of LIS degrees offered, public librarians had an opposite response from university librarians in supporting the retention of undergraduate LIS degrees (88% as opposed to 47%). Perhaps this relates to the need to hire low-level positions due to traditionally poor budget allocations. It may also relate to the perception of library education as "training" rather than truly professional education and the inadequate self-image of South African public librarians. About one-third noted that librarians have poor general knowledge, and one-fifth stated that there are too many graduates for the number of jobs available. One-fifth volunteered that technikons provide better LIS education than universities. Again, this may reflect an emphasis on practice rather than theory, and an entirely different instrumentalist view of these positions. A few actually state that small libraries cannot even afford to hire LIS graduates. One respondent even went as far as to say that some of the poorer provinces actually hire cleaners as librarians!

Only two of the six provincial librarians answered in the same way, that they are unsatisfied with the current situation, and that they do not support the retention of undergraduate degrees. Again, there is an almost complete lack of agreed upon standards. Comments included: it is the relevancy of the degree that matters not the level, there is a need for more practical experience especially exposure to the Internet and online databases, and there is a need for more specialization by library type and kind of work. One person stressed the need for more "disciplinary skills." On the other hand, one respondent stated that LIS education is too technologically focused, and provides little knowledge mastery and consideration of social responsibilities.

LIS educators are equally split on their satisfaction concerning the current levels and kinds of LIS degrees, and three-fourths of them want to retain the undergraduate degree. Two respondents noted that they are only temporarily satisfied with the LIS programs, and that too many programs lead to mediocrity. They advocate a future amalgamation of programs. On the other hand, two respondents argue that specialization at various institutions develops excellence. One commented that undergraduate degrees should be retained for information studies, but that library studies should only be pursued at the post-graduate level. Another noted the need for basic skills, critical thinking and writing, and computer literacy. A related comment argued that the lack of basic skills came from an inadequate high school experience, and thus the need to upgrade the entire educational system. Two educators commented on LIS technikon degrees. One noted that BTech people often expect better positions than they are able to get. The other noted that technikons should limit themselves to teaching paraprofessionals. Finally, the angry anonymous reply stated that the US model is "worthless," and that the South African model is much superior. Although the LIS educators may be more thoughtful in their replies, they are just as split in their conceptions of the way forward. However, they do agree with the public librarians on the necessity to retain the undergraduate LIS degrees, although perhaps not at the technikons.

Regularization of degrees
A majority of university librarians think that LIS programs should be regularized. Reasons include the need for comparability and quality control, as well as that this would be good for employers. On the other hand, one respondent noted the need for flexibility to meet community needs. For hiring purposes, one respondent noted that the degree itself is not important, but rather the quality of the person. Another responded that the degree is not important, but rather the reputation of the program. These last two responses downplay the value of a well-conceived program that can attract quality students. They miss the point that the degree should at least theoretically certify a level of basic knowledge and the promise of competence. Perhaps people have just gotten used to the chaotic nature of the situation.

Public library respondents are evenly divided on the question of regularization of degrees. One stated that rationalization is needed as well as reduction in the number of library programs. Another stated the need for standards. One respondent surprisingly said that rationalization would be useful but it is not now affordable. Regarding hiring, a few said they relied on the reputation of the school rather than the degree awarded. Lack of funding and the contraction of the job market may be partial reasons for the negativity of some of these responses.

As the public librarians, the provincial librarians are split on regularization of programs, half in favor, one-third opposed, and the rest undecided.

Two-thirds of the LIS educators disagree on the need to regularize degrees, however as noted above two respondents advocate the amalgamation of LIS programs. Two also noted that employers would welcome regularization. One respondent advocated closing the technikon programs.
The Profession

Almost all of university librarians think that the profession needs upgrading. Several people noted the need for more short courses, including electronic courses and the need for more information and communications technology education. One person asserted the need for faculty status, including the need for research and publication. Another individual mentions the importance of closing the information gap between communities. One interesting comment notes that the profession is sinking lower, and that librarians need to earn higher status by upgrading themselves, not through some sort of artificial designation.

Similarly, almost all public librarians think that the profession must be upgraded. Two advocated the need for an entrance examination with attention to general knowledge and communications skills. Other comments include the need for basic standards, more specialization and management skills, and community involvement. Other upgrade avenues advocated were raising awareness to gain public support, raising status through state acknowledgement, and redressing past injustices through empowerment. Problems mentioned included poor self-image, inward focus, lack of career paths, and down-top bureaucracy (“the minority prescribing for the majority”).

Under the authority of the South African Constitution, public libraries are a provincial responsibility. Two of the follow-up interviewees noted the forthcoming legislation to change responsibility to the local level. One strongly advocated autonomy under the metropolitan structure in order to empower local community libraries. One case in point is the very recent centralization of collection development for the Cape Town city libraries under the aegis of the Western Cape Province. It seems clear that the local librarians would have a much better sense of local needs than administrators physically removed from the local environments. This practice is taken for granted throughout almost all of the United States. But the one notable exception on the state level is illustrative. Only Hawaii has a unified public library system with centralized collection development. A scandal ensured some years ago when the state outsourced collection development to a commercial vendor in order to try to save money. In a state with a tropical climate, local public librarians were incensed when they started to receive books on snow skiing and ice-skating. They also complained that more expensive titles were excluded because the contract only designated number of titles, not value of book purchases. The state librarian was eventually fired and the contract was litigated in court.

All provincial librarian respondents agree that the profession needs to be upgraded, although one person noted the need to “transform,” not just upgrade. One person commented on the need for more African content and services for illiterate people. Another noted the need for continuing education. One individual claimed that the profession had been downgraded by allowing anyone to be a LIASA member, and noted the lack of renaissance. The most devastating comment came from one of the poorer provinces where “70% of public libraries are staffed by paraprofessionals or non-professionals” due to lack of resources.

All but one LIS educator thought that the library profession needs to be upgraded. Two advocated much more attention to theoretical and social issues, and an additional two noted the need for a research journal. Other comments included: the need for accreditation, more continuing education, more information technology expertise, the promotion of a service ethic, the need for a national commission, the need for information literacy outreach to the community, and the need to “weed” unqualified staff. On the other hand, one educator argued that too much reliance on information technology is leading to a somewhat uncritical approach. Another commented that the profession must see itself as a significant player in society in order to have the desired effect. Finally, the most thoughtful response discussed the lack of agreement on articulation of LIS programs, and noted that he is currently writing a paper on this subject.

Only half of the LIS educators stated that their institutions have taken steps to upgrade the profession. This seems a bit odd since there is almost complete agreement on the need to do so. Two noted their upgrade of courses, and two more noted their winter schools. Other upgrade efforts include an information literacy program and the awarding of high status to campus librarians.

There is also a need to uplift library assistants and other staff through continuing education, salary raises, and better benefits including child care. Para-professionals should be rewarded for their community involvement and language abilities. It is important that upgrading professionals not create a wider gap between them and their support staff, a recipe for demoralization. Finally, libraries can encourage motivated and capable para-professionals to become professionals by providing time off, flexible work schedules, and full or partial tuition to attend LIS programs.
LIASA and other professional organizations

As with the other groups of working librarians, nearly three-fourths of university librarians are members of LIASA. University librarians also work in IFLA and the American Library Association. One mentioned former participation in LIWO. About half of this group thinks it is still too early to evaluate LIASA, nearly one-third have a positive view and nearly one-fifth have a negative view. One respondent noted the importance of LIASA’s advocacy training, grantwriting workshops, leadership training, lobbying, and the promotion of a South African National Council for Library and Information Services (NCLIS). One person noted the value of LIASA’s learning experiences, networking, and bringing together vendors at its conferences. Others noted the need for more academic content, clear objectives, and training opportunities, as well as collective bargaining status. One respondent asserted that LIASA must be “professional, not political,” but another noted that it represents the establishment, and small grassroots groups could be much more effective. Finally, one person called LIASA a “social club.”

When asked about membership or participation in LIASA or other library organizations, more than two-thirds of public librarians noted that they belong or participate in LIASA, but one specifically noted the need to revive LIWO. The public librarians feel much the same as the university librarians regarding the value of LIASA. Almost half say it is too early to tell, one-quarter have positive responses and almost one-third have negative responses. The one positive comment praised good practical work sessions. One interesting undecided comment was that librarians need to have a “mindshift” from what can LIASA do for me to what can I contribute. Another commented that LIASA needs to take on the Government and act as a union. One-fifth said that either the LIASA provincial branch committees acted as the old SAILIS or that it was an extension of the old SAILIS. The numerous negative comments included that LIASA has no intellectual rigor, is silent on major issues, evidences no obvious outcomes, and has not attempted transformation. Finally, one person stated the need for a Black Caucus.

All but one of the provincial librarian group are LIASA participants or members. One respondent each also participates in IFLA, LIWO, and the Occupational Committee for Library and Information Workers of the Public Service Association (PSA). As the public librarians, this group is more negative than positive regarding LIASA (one-sixth positive, half too early to say, and one-third negative). Comments from those who said it was too early to say advised that LIASA needs to provide more practical opportunities for networking and empowerment, and that LIASA needs to provide more continuing education, fight for salaries and provide leadership. As with the other groups, there were serious negative comments including: LIASA is “useless” and still run by the old SAILIS people, the profession only pays lip-service to transformation, and that LIASA is silent on municipal fees.

Only half of the LIS educators participate or are members of LIASA. This is the lowest percentage of the four groups. However, the educators also participate in ten other organizations. One-quarter noted their work in IFLA, and another quarter noted their previous commitment to LIWO. Two are members of the Library Association in the UK and two are members of the Association of Southern African Indexes and Bibliographers. The other organizations are the Institute of Information Scientists, IATUL, FID (now disbanded), Progressive Librarians Guild, and the International Association of Agricultural Librarians and Information Specialists.

Fully three-fourths of the LIS educators group are still waiting to evaluate LIASA. Two have a positive opinion and one has a negative opinion. Those who said it was too early to evaluate want LIASA to lobby, encourage creativity, provide leadership, sponsor a professional journal, and create professional solidarity. Two people praised its management structure and constitution, but another two said that opening up the membership has lowered standards. One person commented that it is a very bland organization and that it is not doing much. Another called it a “disaster.” Given that three-quarters of this group have not yet formed an opinion, it seems strange that only half are participating. One would think that much of the intellectual direction of a national professional organization would likely come from its educators. Perhaps the distasteful apartheid history of the South African library profession encourages those who can to participate in other organizations, even in the national organizations of other countries.

Socially Responsible Practices

Less than half of the university librarians think the profession is meeting its social responsibilities; equal numbers are unsure and negative. Positive comments included that it was doing good work on freedom of expression, and that it was trying under difficult circumstances. Undecided comments included the need for more funds, need for a clear voice and standing in
Two-thirds of the LIS educators said that they are teaching courses specifically concerned with the social responsibilities of the library profession. The topics include information literacy, legal aspects of information, children’s literature, repackaging information, libraries and society, users groups and information use, information delivery systems, LIS issues, records and archival management, and users studies. Some of these topics seem quite traditional, so we may or may not assume that the content fits the definitions supplied. The angry anonymous respondent gave his opinion that this kind of teaching is unnecessary, and that the list supplied for definitional guidance is "ideological and a waste of time."

Library Initiatives
Community services are provided by four-tenths of the university respondents’ libraries. Several are in consortiums that include sharing services with local NGOs. Other comments included: the library creates space and opportunities, provides mentorship programs and donates books and equipment, provides staff development and employment equity, promotes local and regional self-help projects, acquires alternative press and speaks against censorship. On the negative side, one person bemoaned poverty that necessitated ignoring alternative press materials, and another expressed the lack of a service culture.

In addressing social responsibility needs, four-tenths of the public library respondents said that their libraries were providing empowerment to the community through various activities including literacy training. An equal number mentioned policies providing information to all. One quarter noted regular exhibits. Other answers included access for people without addresses, fostering gender equity and skills development, community development by providing a reading culture, serving the previously unserved (especially women and children), supporting unions, opposing racism, providing a meeting place, and buying alternative press materials. Problems preventing socially responsible practices included decreasing resources, membership fees, and a moratorium on filling vacancies for 20 months!

Individual Initiatives
Individual university librarians promote social responsibilities in their own work by promoting democracy and freedom of expression, book and equipment donations, free access for the community, buying alternative press materials, bringing school groups to liberation movement archives, promoting quality service, reducing gaps between blacks and whites, discussing major issues at regular staffing meetings, and recruiting promising
African librarians. One person was sorry that his socially responsible research must be done on his own personal time.

Four-tenths of public librarians note personal community outreach activities (including to NGOs, businesses, and government). One quarter of the individuals provide literacy classes, one-fifth promote equity, one-fifth provide aftercare centers, and a small number noted their holiday programs for children. Other activities mentioned included giving talks in schools, strong opposition to membership fees, participation in national and world campaigns on social issues, services to seniors and the young, previous work on transformation committees, and establishing a debating society or a book club. One noted that empowerment is undermined by local officials.

One of the follow-up interviewees noted rising xenophobia, and the lack of services for African refugees especially from Angola and the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and the lack of services for the homeless.

The following responses were given for the question on how provincial librarians integrate social responsibilities into their own work: hosting conferences, promoting the value of information, advocating against privatization and commercialization of information, providing equitable services for all, building libraries in disadvantaged areas, hosting exhibits, providing a venue for community activities, producing materials on social issues, providing training, organizing projects on social topics, and providing service to the poor, children, and illiterates.

Two-thirds of the LIS educators stated that they had undertaken research related to social responsibilities. Topics included information literacy, community libraries and resource centres, women and information gaps, the digital divide, information for development, information and the legal needs of sex workers, the role of one of the LIS departments, and the role of information in rural contexts. The anonymous respondent said this was a "waste of time."

**Discussion**

Given the ANC's controlling role in the current Government, it is useful to look back at the Freedom Charter to see how current policies and practices reflect or not the ANC's historical roots. One of the follow-up respondents noted the ANC's obligation to promote libraries by citing the words of the Freedom Charter. However, most of the follow-up respondents thought that the Freedom Charter was now ancient history, and that the African Renaissance concept was a much more powerful tool to promote their concerns within the current context. In opposition to these ideas, another follow-up respondent advocated the need to refer back to the principles in the Freedom Charter now more than ever since the ANC has seemed to abandon them. Furthermore, another follow-up respondent emphasized his frustration with people who get to the top and are then content to revel in their personal glory while forgetting about the disadvantaged people who remain behind.

The Freedom Charter states that:

"The Doors of Learning and Culture Shall be Opened!

The government shall discover, develop and encourage national talent for the enhancement of our cultural life;

All the cultural treasures of mankind shall be open to all, by free exchange of books, ideas and contact with other lands;

The aim of education shall be to teach the youth to love their people and their culture, to honour human brotherhood, liberty and peace;

Education shall be free, compulsory, universal and equal for all children; Higher education and technical training shall be opened to all by means of state allowances and scholarships awarded on the basis of merit;

Adult illiteracy shall be ended by a state education plan;

Teachers shall have all the rights of other citizens;

The colour bar in cultural life, in sport and in education shall be abolished."

As opposed to some of the more explicitly socialist provisions of the Freedom Charter, its education and culture sections could be embraced by governments of various ideological persuasions. Mainstream liberal demo-
cratic practice contains most if not all of these provisions, with the possible exception of a mass state education plan to eradicate illiteracy. However, current neo-liberal economic policies, even in the so-called “advanced democracies,” are eroding basic education and cultural institutions. Budget cutbacks and the privatization of education make these goals much harder to actualize. The free exchange of books is threatened by lack of funds to build and adequately maintain new libraries in townships and rural areas. The commodification of culture and knowledge such as copy-protected CDs or library charges for Internet access challenge the public good concept in the Freedom Charter.

Of course, adequately funded libraries with free and equal access policies can obviously play an important role in fulfilling these provisions of the Freedom Charter: in the enhancement of cultural life, the promotion of brotherhood, peace and liberty, the eradication of illiteracy, and the promotion of equality and human rights. Libraries can promote the free exchange of ideas and provide access to the world’s cultural treasures.

The Freedom Charter advises that the goal of education shall be “to teach the youth to love their people and their culture…” as well as to learn about other lands. The ANC’s and the ANC-led Government’s current promotion of an “African Renaissance” is foreshadowed here. The survey questions on African studies courses and collections relate to this emphasis. The results show a majority of respondents are in favor of teaching an in-depth course on African studies bibliography. It is not clear if the glass is half full or half empty. Perhaps these results show a lot a progress over past practice, at least on a theoretical level. But only one-third of respondents have access to extensive African studies collections. One might speculate that a more thorough transformation of the profession would result in higher percentage rates affirming the need for an emphasis on Africa.

The Charter emphasizes the need for access to higher education and technical training. Here we need to sort out the seeming confusion between “education” and “training” in the LIS world. In theoretical terms, most librarians would probably be in favor of “educating” rather than only “training,” but the surveys and literature show a confused picture. In searching for these two terms in the survey responses, the term “training” appears more frequently than the term “education.” It is interesting that LIS educators used the term “education” more than “training” (15 vs. 10 times), but that the working librarians used the term “training” almost twice as much as “education” (14 vs. 26 times). Koekie Meyer’s recent survey is titled, Training of Librarians / Information Workers by Tertiary Education Institutions [emphasis added]. The recent Carnegie report also uses the same language.

To be a member of a profession implies not only advanced skills, but also an understanding of the theoretical underpinnings of a body of knowledge and allegiance to ethical principles. “Training” can provide skills, but not the rest. On the other hand, “education” provides the theory as well as an exploration of ethical questions. Training equips one to do a job, while education better equips one to participate in shaping the profession and civil society.

This question was thoroughly explored in the follow-up interviews. As in the English language spoken in South Africa and the United States, Afrikaans-speakers do not use these terms to reflect their true meanings. In fact, people tend to use these terms interchangeably. In the U.S., they are often used together as a phrase encompassing both concepts. Perhaps it is best to think of these two concepts as end points on a continuum.

Never-the-less, it is clear that this distinction is important. The follow-up interviews appear to have uncovered the problem. As taught at the universities, LIS schools concentrate on theory but provide very little possibility for practice. As opposed to the U.S. where almost all LIS students work in libraries during the time of their studies, South African LIS students do not have these opportunities. Most U.S. library school students need to work to maintain themselves, and most U.S. university libraries use library school students as highly motivated and cheap labor. As opposed to LIS schools in universities, South African technikons do provide work experiences. It is therefore no wonder that several people have praised the technikon courses as better than the university programs. This accounts for the comments stating that new LIS graduates often know little of what they are really expected to do when starting their first library jobs. It seems that university programs do educate, but do not usually train their students. This is why Koekie Meyer’s publication is indeed focused on training of librarians and information workers.

Furthermore, in contrast to the US where all professional librarians are expected to have a master’s degree, Christine Stilwell found in a recent survey that only 5% of her respondents at provincial library services had master’s degrees. Cathy-Mae Karelse goes a step further in advocating that academic librarians need advanced subject degrees in addition to LIS
degrees (as in the US or Germany). It is worth noting that no respondents addressed this point! Having a narrow self-conception may be an important factor leading to librarians’ low status and often passive orientation towards their communities. Of course, the extreme hierarchical nature of society coupled with repressive structures under apartheid is a hard legacy to overcome.

The question of undergraduate verses graduate degrees also comes into play here. About half the respondents support the retention of the undergraduate LIS degree. Even though it seems that undergraduate students are indeed “educated” rather than “trained,” one can still question whether or not such education is sufficient, especially when compared with those who get a broad-based liberal arts education and then do an LIS master’s degree. Even if half of the LIS undergraduate curriculum is in liberal arts, these students will still miss out on a significant number of courses that would give them a wider perspective on the world. This wider perspective is a prerequisite for enhanced professional status.

Meyer’s report also notes the lack of consistency in tertiary LIS education courses, and advocates that LIASA or other professional bodies identify a core curriculum. She determined that only one LIS program is teaching rural librarianship. It is likely that a more diverse profession would find it more compelling to address the needs of the millions who live in rural areas.

The overwhelming majority of respondents from all groups realized the need to upgrade the profession. Unfortunately, responses on how to upgrade generally focused more on technical expertise than on societal transformation. It was only a few public librarians and one provincial librarian who focused on redressing past injustices, combating a problematical bureaucracy (“the minority prescribing for the majority”), and the need to “transform” the profession. It is precisely this question of transformation, of creating a more just society that can provide a lever to enhance the status of librarians, provide them a better standard of living, and empower them to gain more satisfaction in their careers. This author previously reported the lack of professional development opportunities for academic librarians at six South African universities. Academic librarians are often seen as managers rather than intellectuals, and often do not even have final responsibility for collection development. Indeed, libraries do not generally reward research and service accomplishments. Library administrators should remember the Freedom Charter’s exhortation to open the doors of learning for their own staff members by providing scholarships for graduate degrees along with flexible work schedules and childcare.

South Africa has appropriated terminology directly from the United States regarding redressing the apartheid structure of society. One should indeed question the validity of these terms taken from a majority white society as applied to a majority African society. In the United States, diversity and affirmative action refer to bringing minority groups into the mainstream. In South Africa, the terms apply to the empowerment of the majority of the population. Never-the-less, these terms are used.

It is profoundly disturbing to read Dennis Ocholla’s conclusion that “diversity is not a focus issue” in the South African LIS workplace. Similarly, Ocholla found that “diversity issues never featured” in LIASA’s agenda. In the South African context, diversity should mean not only color and gender, but also ethnic identity, sexual orientation, and disability status. The promotion of diversity is not only the law, but also the vision of a more just society. Professor Ocholla notes that library workplaces remain essentially the same. For example, previously majority Zulu or majority Afrikaner libraries remain so in terms of staffing. However, several respondents have noted that there are exceptions. The follow-up respondents noted excellent progress at UNISA, the Gauteng public libraries, and the senior management at the National Library. For Gauteng, this means that all new appointments must be made in line with the 80-20 plan until the targets are reached (80% includes all previously disadvantaged groups). The National Library has an 14-person senior management team which is 50% black. However some respondents also note that recruiting can be difficult because black library school graduates can often make two to three times more salary in the private sector.

The African Renaissance concept is ambiguously defined and contested. One of the follow-up white interviewees said that it should mean a renaissance for all people in South Africa including whites (who are also Africans). Another follow-up interviewee dismissed the concept as a frivolous public relations campaign oriented to foreign policy and festivals. Another stated that nothing in this regard had been done in the public libraries in his region. He asked the question, Where is Africa in the Library?" Another follow-up participant noted Gauteng Province’s “African Renaissance through Libraries” campaign. The Province has created an expanding “Transformation Collection” made up of a Political Heritage Collection of more than 400 titles, publications in African languages, and publications written by African authors. She referred to library
services such as telling stories in old age homes, collecting local histories, creating library murals, and sponsoring dramas and dancing. Finally, one follow-up respondent noted that there could be no renaissance without literacy, oral and written literature, and performance art. He went on to cite priorities for indigenous knowledge, repatriating materials, and the promotion of writing and publishing in Africa.

Coming back to LIASA, we must acknowledge that it is as yet a new organization. Unfortunately, it seems that the drive to unify under one professional body was seen by some as transformative in itself. The LIS establishment, most clearly represented by SAILIS, certainly had a hand in shifting this debate. Whether consciously engineered or not, the establishment of LIASA seems to have sidetracked the strong emphasis on equity issues. One follow-up interviewee again noted the need for more than one library organization citing the Constitution’s freedom of association clause. Another follow-up respondent compared South African librarianship to that in his home country of Nigeria, and noted the rigidity of LIASA and its penchant for sticking to the status quo.

Although this survey paid no initial attention to South Africa’s apartheid racial classifications, it was possible to pull out respondents with African names to investigate Ocholla’s conclusions. One person was excluded because it is a name taken by marriage. It is quite significant that there are only six “African” librarians in the pool (two university, one public, one provincial, and two LIS educators).28

Going further, it is interesting to analyze the responses of the six librarians with African family names. Regarding working librarians, the responses are remarkably congruent with the majority. There is no disagreement for university or provincial librarians on the seven relevant questions. The one public librarian differed with her colleagues on the value of LIASA (positive vs. only one-sixth positive for the group), and on whether the profession was meeting its social responsibilities (a very positive response compared to only one-third of her colleagues). Perhaps a study of young librarians that would include a more diverse sample would yield more interesting results.29

On the other hand, the two African named LIS educators disagreed with their colleagues on three of seven relevant questions. They think LIS degrees should be regularized as opposed to two-thirds of their group who disagree. They both participate in LIASA as opposed to only half of their colleagues. And they have a positive impression of LIASA as opposed to three-quarters of their colleagues who think it is too early to say and a small number who have a negative opinion.

It is likely that a more diverse professoriate would strongly influence the profession both at their own institutions and through LIASA in ways different from current practice. They would have the potential to invigorate LIASA and make it much more appealing to black librarians and former members of LIWO. This could lead to a much more effective and relevant organization. They would also obviously influence their students who might graduate with a more activist orientation, which could continually prod the transformation of the profession. Of course, this assumes that these new faculty would take leadership roles and continue to be more engaged with social issues.

Women make up the majority of respondents in all three of the working librarian groups, however only five of twelve LIS educator respondents were women. A quick check of the LIS women educator responses showed no significant differences from their male colleagues.

Conclusion

P. C. Coetzee has been called the South African “father of readership.”30 Archie Dick describes him as a serious scholar, who in 1962 as editor of the South African Library Association’s journal, defended the establishment of racially segregated library associations.31 Coetzee thought of the library as a cultural instrument to advance Afrikaner racist ideology. This kind of leadership made the profession and its organizations complicit with apartheid, or as Dick called it, “a morally-warped profession.” In another article, Dick explains how market ideology (“the language of neo-liberalism and GEAR”) has diluted any progressive ideas that might have flourished in the profession.32 And he goes on to note that librarians have completely missed that point because they are technicians rather than educators. They have concentrated on technical skills, and they have lacked political insight and sympathy for change.33 One of the follow-up respondents said that technocism is a retreat from social involvement. Similarly in discussing LIS policy-making, Mary Nassimbeni notes the contested power relations, and that only certain voices have been heard.34 In other words, there has been no radical LIS departure in the “New South Africa.” Amongst other recommendations, Dick concludes with the need for a South African social responsibilities round table, and the development of more black and female
researchers who will be able to frame problems within wider socio-economic contexts.35

These survey findings are consistent with Dick’s analysis. The South African LIS profession is split in many ways. Regarding LIS education, just over half of working librarians surveyed support teaching African studies librarianship, but no programs actually do this. There is a wide divergence on the kinds of degrees that should be offered and the necessity of teaching LIS at the undergraduate level. Almost all think that the profession needs to be upgraded, but only a very few refer to diversity issues in stating how to do it. Two-thirds of the respondents participate in LIASA but only slightly less than half have reached an opinion on its value. Nevertheless, the group that has an opinion is split almost evenly between positive and negative attitudes. The majority of respondents think that the profession is either not fulfilling its social responsibilities or are unsure about this.

As the South African liberation struggle so clearly demonstrated, transformation does not happen by itself. The South African library profession is no exception. Despite much good will, old structures and attitudes die hard. The most reactionary elements of the former SAILIS have not all disappeared or retired. LIASA has an excellent constitution, but it is the responsibility of the democratic forces to actualize these goals. More librarians will need to rise to the challenge to transform the profession, through LIS programs, local work, and vibrant regional and national professional organizations.

A transformed profession would work to decrease the information gaps between the rich and poor, and promote the democratization of society and human rights. A vibrant library profession would actively oppose racism and promote gender equity and gay rights. It would support unions and workers rights as well as environmental justice, oppose censorship and promote freedom of information and expression. A transformed profession would oppose neo-liberal policies, especially the privatization, outsourcing and commercialization of library services and the commodification of information. It would promote access to a wide range of sources, including non-mainstream viewpoints in the alternative press. The Africanization of the profession would certainly promote solidarity and cooperation with Third World librarians and create linkages across the African continent. These results show that new socially responsible organizational structures within or in addition to LIASA are needed.

Footnotes
1 This project was sponsored by the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign (USA) through sabbatical leave from January through August 2001, and a grant from its Library’s Research and Publication Committee. Mailing and some other expenses were generously provided by the University of Cape Town Department of Information and Library Studies.
2 See Appendix 1 for a list of current degrees.
3 Surveys were sent to the following universities and public libraries in these university cities and towns: Potchefstroom University (Noordrug, North-West Province), Rand Afrikaans University (Johannesburg, Gauteng Province), University of Cape Town (Cape Town, Western Cape Province), University of Fort Hare (Alice, Eastern Cape Province), University of Natal, Pietermaritzburg (Pietermaritzburg, KwaZulu/Natal Province), University of Pretoria (Pretoria, Gauteng Province), University of South Africa (Pretoria, Gauteng Province), University of Stellenbosch (Stellenbosch, Western Cape Province), University of the Free State (Bloemfontein, Free State Province), University of the North (Sovenga, Northern Province), University of the Western Cape (Cape Town, Western Cape Province), University of Transkei (Umtata, Eastern Cape Province), and University of Zululand (Kwa-Dienezwa, KwaZulu/ Natal Province). These universities are located in 7 of the 9 provinces. The provinces excluded were Mpumalanga and Northern Cape.
4 Note that the technikonis were not surveyed.
5 It is also quite possible that librarians working in places that have library science schools will be more knowledgeable and informed of current developments and trends in the field.
6 Of course, under the Constitution, public libraries are a provincial function. The conception of the role and function of Provincial Library Services varies by province, especially in relation to the centralization or decentralization of collection development and their relationships with city libraries.
7 ALA Social Responsibilities Round Table, Progressive Librarians Guild (US), Bibliotek I Samhälle (Sweden) and Information for Social Change (UK). See Appendix 2 for the list.
8 Only one anonymous response was received.
9 Rand Afrikaans University (Johannesburg, Gauteng), University of Stellenbosch (Stellenbosch, Western Cape), and University of the Free State (Bloemfontein, Free State).
10 Others sat in at the interview with the National Librarian, but said very little.
11 Note the small size of the sample in the previous table, especially for university and public librarians vis-à-vis the totals for these categories in the country. The size of the sample for Provincial Library Service librarians and LIS educators although small represents a large portion of the universe in these categories for the country as a whole.
12 However, it may be that there is a problem with the way the question was phrased. If post-graduate versus undergraduate education was differentiated, it is possible that the affirmative percentage might have been higher. It is clearly appropriate to include more specialized education at the graduate level. This glitch is probably a failing that stems from this researcher’s unconscious American assumption that LIS education is normally on the graduate level.
13 However, note that technikon LIS educators were not surveyed.
14 SAILIS was itself formed to replace the exclusively white previous organization, the South African Library Association (SALA) which had been a target of an Unesco boycott.
15 A new LIASA journal is forthcoming at the time of writing.
16 Or gave unclear answers.
17 See Appendices 3 and 4 for the survey forms with Yes/No responses.
18 Although there were only six respondents in the provincial librarians group, they represent a two-thirds return rate.
19 The LIS Educators survey was similar but not the same as the working librarians’ survey. Five of the ten questions were either exactly the same or similar. The unique questions investigate specific teaching and research concerns. Note that although only 12 of 41 people
responded to the questionnaire, this represents approximately 27% of all the LIS educators in the country. The group includes respondents from a majority of the library schools in the country.  
26 Of course, this author did a bit of teaching African studies bibliography at the University of Cape Town in 2001, but this was a one-time special effort.  
27 This author is grateful to one of the prepublication readers of this article for insisting on these points.  
28 See Appendix 5 for course titles.  
29 See the previously discussed list, in Appendix 2.  
30 Adopted by Congress of the People, Kliptown, 26 June 1955. See http://www.anc.org.za/ancdocs/history/charter.html  
31 Although as others have pointed out, this phrase is a contradiction in terms and has no fixed meaning. Why use a European concept for an African revitalization? This author criticized the first LIASA conference brochure for having a beautiful photo of what looked like an Italian library building.  
32 Koekie Meyer. Training of Librarians / Information Workers by Tertiary Education Institutions (Pretoria?): Occupational Committee for Library and Information Workers of the Public Servants Association of South Africa, 2001).  
36 However, this argument does not negate the value of teaching information literacy courses to all undergraduate students to enhance their ability to succeed academically and for life-long learning.  
37 Meyer, “Results,” point 8.  
38 Meyer, “Results,” point 15.  
41 Ibid., p. 65.  
42 Personal correspondence from Colin Darch.  
43 Although some typically Coloured names might be fairly obvious to identify, it was not possible to differentiate all the coloured respondents. There are only two Indian names.  
44 LIASA is compiling a directory that should eventually make sure a study possible.  
47 Archie L. Dick, Reading and Outcomes-Based Education: Should Income be the Key Outcome?, Perspectives in Education (Pretoria) 19, 2 (July 2001): 38-42.  
48 More ominously, one follow-up respondent reacted to this by saying that it was not a lack of political insight, but that the white power structure intentionally wanted to maintain the status quo.  
50 Archie L. Dick, Reading and Outcomes-Based Education: Should Income be the Key Outcome?, Perspectives in Education (Pretoria) 19, 2 (July 2001): 46.  

Works Cited  
Dick, Archie L. “Reading and Outcomes-Based Education: Should Income be the Key Outcome?” Perspectives in Education (Pretoria) 19, 2 (July 2001): 37-48.  

APPENDIX 1:  
An incomplete list of degrees currently available at 11 universities and 5 technikons  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>University Degrees</th>
<th>Certificates</th>
<th>Diploma in School Library Science</th>
<th>Diploma in School Library Studies</th>
<th>Diploma in School Librarianship</th>
<th>Diploma in Specialized Education</th>
<th>Post-grad Diploma IS</th>
<th>Post-grad Diploma LIS</th>
<th>BAIS</th>
<th>Bibli; Bibli(B); BILS; BILS(H); BIS; BIS(H); BLIS; BLIS Ed; BLIS(H); BLS; BLS(H)</th>
<th>Mlib; MIS; MLIS; MPhil</th>
<th>DLit of Phil.; Dphil; PhD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>University Degrees</td>
<td>- 29</td>
<td>- Certificate in Children’s and Youth Services in Libraries</td>
<td>- Lower Diploma LIS</td>
<td>- Higher Diploma LIS</td>
<td>- Higher Diploma IS</td>
<td>- Diploma in School Library Science</td>
<td>- Diploma in School Library Studies</td>
<td>- Diploma in School Librarianship</td>
<td>- Diploma in Specialized Education</td>
<td>- Post-grad Diploma IS</td>
<td>- Post-grad Diploma LIS</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Does your library/library system extensively collect materials from and about the African continent? If yes, is there a regional, subject and/or language focus?

Are you satisfied with the current levels and kinds of LIS degrees offered throughout the country? Do you support the retention of undergraduate LIS degrees? Which degrees do you support for the indefinite future? How do candidates' degrees affect your hiring decisions?

Technikon Degrees - 6
National Certificate; National Higher Certificate; National Diploma
BTech
M Tech
D Tech

APPENDIX 2
Social Responsibility Concerns of Progressive Library Organizations

Statements and programs of the following four progressive library organizations were analyzed to distill their common core societal concerns:

ALA Social Responsibilities Round Table (U.S.), http://libr.org/SRRT/
Bibliotek i Samhalle (Libraries in Society) (Sweden), http://www.bok-form.se/bis/eng_1.htm
Information for Social Change (U.K.), http://libr.org/ISC

For more information and organizations, see the Progressive Librarians Around the World website, http://home.germany.net/100-115158/adresse.htm.

Key Social Responsibility Concerns
· Working against information gaps between the rich and poor
· Promotion of democracy, and opposition to repressive regimes
· Promotion of human rights
· Opposition to racism, and support for multiculturalism
· Promotion of gender equity and gay rights
· Support for unions and workers rights
· Opposition to censorship, and promotion of freedom of information and expression
· Access to non-mainstream viewpoints in the alternative press
· Opposition to the commodification of information
· Opposition to the privatization and outsourcing of library services
· Opposition to the commercialization of library services
· Solidarity with third world librarians, and opposition to repressive foreign policies
· Advocacy for environmental concerns

APPENDIX 3
Research Survey for South African Librarians

Universe of University Librarians = 17
Universe of Public Librarians = 16
Universe of Provincial Librarians = 6

1. Do you think all South African library and information science programs should teach an in-depth course on the bibliography of the African continent? Please comment.

University: YES = 8 responses (47%) NO = 9 responses (53%)
Public: YES = 10 responses (63%) NO = 6 responses (37%)
Provincial: YES = 4 responses (67%) NO = 2 responses (33%)

2. Does your library/library system extensively collect materials from and about the African continent? If yes, is there a regional, subject and/or language focus?

University: YES = 9 (53%) NO = 8 (47%)
Public: YES = 2 (14%) NO = 14 (86%)
Provincial: YES = 2 (33%) NO = 4 (67%)

3. Are you satisfied with the current levels and kinds of LIS degrees offered throughout the country? Do you support the retention of undergraduate LIS degrees? Which degrees do you support for the indefinite future? How do candidates' degrees affect your hiring decisions?

University: Y & Y = 5 Y & N = 2 N & Y = 3 N & N = 6 Y & ? = 1
Public: Y & Y = 4 Y & N = 0 N & Y = 10 N & N = 1 N & ? = 1
Provincial: Y & Y = 6 Y & N = 0 N & Y = 1 N & N = 2 N & ? = 1

4. Do you think that all South African LIS programs in universities should be regularized, defined as offering the same degrees (not necessarily courses) at various levels? Please explain.

University: YES = 13 (76%) NO = 3 (17%) ? = 1 (7%)
Public: YES = 8 (50%) NO = 8 (50%)
Provincial: YES = 3 (50%) NO = 2 (33%) ? = 1 (17%)

5. Do you think that the South African library profession needs to be upgraded? If so, how?

University: YES = 15 (88%) NO = 2 (12%)
Public: YES = 14 (88%) NO = 2 (12%)
Provincial: YES = 6 (100%) NO = 0 (0%)

6. Are you a member and/or do you participate in LIASA or any other library professional organization? If so which ones?

The following responses relate only to LIASA:

University: YES = 12 (71%) NO = 5 (29%)
Public: YES = 11 (69%) NO = 5 (31%)
Provincial: YES = 5 (83%) NO = 1 (17%)

6. What is your opinion of the value and effectiveness of LIASA or other library professional organizations? How could the organizations be improved?

Note that "TOO EARLY" means too early to evaluate or unclear answer.

University: POSITIVE = 5 (29%) TOO EARLY = 9 (53%) NEGATIVE = 3 (18%)
Public: POSITIVE = 4 (25%) TOO EARLY = 7 (44%) NEGATIVE = 5 (29%)
Provincial: POSITIVE = 1 (17%) TOO EARLY = 3 (50%) NEGATIVE = 2 (33%)

8. Do you think the South African library profession is meeting its social responsibilities? See the list appended for definitional guidance. Please explain.

University: YES = 7 (41%) NO = 5 (29%) ? = 5 (29%)
9. How does your library/library system fulfill its social responsibilities?

10. How do you personally integrate social responsibilities into your work?

APPENDIX 4
Research Survey for South African University LIS Educators

Universe of 12 responses

1. Does your program teach an in-depth course on the bibliography of the African continent? If no, is this covered in depth as part of another course? Please provide course titles.

   YES = 2 responses (17%)  
   NO = 10 responses (83%)

2. Are you satisfied with the current levels and kinds of LIS degrees offered throughout the country? Do you support the retention of undergraduate LIS degrees? Which degrees do you support for the indefinite future? Please explain.

   SAME AS Q3 ON LIBRARIANS SURVEY

   YES and YES = 5 responses
   NO and YES = 4 responses
   NO and NO = 3 responses

3. Do you think that all South African LIS programs in universities should be regularized, defined as offering the same degrees (not necessarily courses) at various levels? Please explain.

   SAME AS Q4 ON LIBRARIANS SURVEY

   YES = 3 responses (25%)  
   NO = 8 responses (67%)  
   ? = 1 response (8%)

4. Do you think that the South African library profession needs to be upgraded? If so, how?

   SAME AS Q5 ON LIBRARIANS SURVEY

   YES = 11 (92%)  
   NO = 1 (8%)

5. Has your institution taken any initiatives to upgrade the profession? If so, please explain.

   YES = 6 (50%)  
   NO = 5 (42%)  
   ? = 1 (8%)

6. Are you a member and/or do you participate in LIASA or any other library professional organization? If so which ones? SAME AS Q6 ON LIBRARIANS SURVEY

   The following responses relate only to LIASA:

   YES = 6 (50%)  
   NO = 6 (50%)

7. What is your opinion of the value and effectiveness of LIASA or other library professional organizations? How could the organizations be improved?

   SAME AS Q7 ON LIBRARIANS SURVEY

   POSITIVE = 2 (17%)  
   NEGATIVE = 1 (8%)

TOO EARLY TO EVALUATE OR UNCLEAR ANSWER = 9 (75%)

8. Do you offer any courses specifically concerned with the social responsibilities of the library profession? See the list appended for definitional guidance. If yes, is this a separate course, or is it part of other courses? Please provide course titles.

   YES = 8 (67%)  
   NO = 4 (33%)

9. Do you think the South African library profession is meeting its social responsibilities?

   SIMILAR TO Q9 ON LIBRARIANS SURVEY

   YES = 3 (25%)  
   NO = 8 (67%)  
   ? = 1 (8%)

10. Have you undertaken any research related to LIS social responsibilities? If so, please explain.

    YES = 8 (67%)  
    NO = 4 (33%)

APPENDIX 5
LIS Courses Including Social Responsibility Issues

Current Issues in Information and Library Studies; Development Librarianship; Information delivery systems; Information Literacy; Information Society; Information users and use; Issues in Library and Information Science; Legal Aspects of Information; Libraries, Information and society; Philosophy of Information; Political Economy of Information; Professional Ethics; Readership and Children's Literature; Records and Archival Management; Repackaging Information; Research Methods/Research Report; User Groups and Information Use; User studies