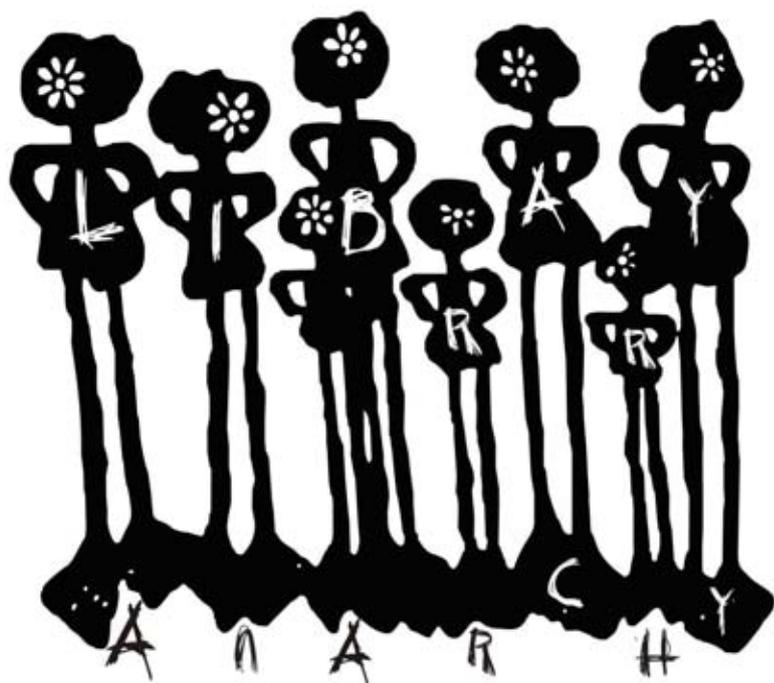


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# PROGRESSIVE LIBRARIAN

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A Journal for Critical Studies & Progressive Politics in Librarianship



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**Issue #40**  
Fall/Winter 2012

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Anarchist Libraries and Archives  
Counterhegemonic Academic Librarians  
Underground Newspaper Collection  
National Library of Bosnia  
Native Hawaiians in Children's Picture Books

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PROGRESSIVE LIBRARIAN, Issue #40, Fall/Winter 2012  
Published, produced and distributed by Progressive Librarian Guild  
2 issues per year; ISSN 1052-5726  
Indexed in Alternative Press Index; Library Literature & Information Science Full Text; and Library, Information Science & Technology Abstracts  
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Editors: David Lesniaski, Kathleen de la Peña McCook, Susan Maret,  
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Progressive Librarian formatted by Edgardo Civallero (BiblioDesign)

COVER IMAGE: Sara Plaza Moreno & Edgardo Civallero

Subscription/membership rates:  
\$20 individuals; \$10 low income; \$35 institutions; \$40 overseas first class  
Checks and money orders in US\$ to Progressive Librarians Guild

Subscription requests & membership dues to:  
Progressive Librarian Guild  
c/o MLIS Program, St. Catherine University,  
2004 Randolph Avenue, #4125  
St. Paul MN 55105

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# Libraries and Archives of the Anarchist Movement in Italy

## 1. Introduction

The anarchist movement in Italy has a long and deep-rooted tradition. Indeed, the Italian section of the International came into being beginning in the summer of 1872, with a strong anti-authoritarian and federalist stamp in sharp contrast to the directives of Marx and Engels and the General Council in London. Throughout the twentieth century, anarchists were among the leaders of the political and social struggles of the proletariat. They passed the dark years of the fascist dictatorship working clandestinely or from exile, participating in the Liberation movement and have continued to be active even in post-war period, albeit suffering the dichotomous logic of the Cold War<sup>1</sup>.

Occupied by the struggle for a radical social transformation in the libertarian sense, anarchists have often given little thought to preserving their own memory, especially that accumulated in written documents (though not lacking in examples to the contrary, the names of such great bibliographers and bibliophiles as Max Nettlau and the Italians Pier Carlo Masini and Ugo Fedeli should be mentioned). Besides seriously underestimating the role played by historical memory in building a strong political identity, other factors have contributed to the loss of a significant part of this documentary heritage. The troubled history of many activists (subjected to searches, repeatedly imprisoned,

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exiled, etc.) has certainly not lent itself to the easy growth of archives and personal collections. Prudent caution and the fear of falling into a web of repression were responsible for the willful destruction of what could have been inconvenient evidence of political activity, sometimes carried out on extra-legal soil. Last but not least, a general distrust must be recorded towards anything with a hint of “museumification” as if these papers signify a burden rather than a blessing.

The tools produced for propaganda and the dissemination of ideas (flyers, brochures, newspapers, books) were set alongside the channels of oral communication through which much of the political-cultural formation of the activists passed – and were generally intended for immediate use. Not only did the anarchists often ignore the print repositories at public libraries, but even the last copy of these publications was often distributed, thus making them difficult to find even a short time afterward on the shelves of the libraries organized by libertarian groups and clubs, whereas these same publications, paradoxically, were carefully conserved in police archives.

It has only been since the 1960s and 1970s, in the wake of the struggles that marked a decided revival of political action, that in Italy these cultural institutions inside the movement have come about, combining a desire to save from a future and probable loss much of what had been produced within the sphere of the daily struggle and the need to preserve their own historical memory. These institutions soon found themselves facing difficulties – rising above them in some cases and being overwhelmed in others – related to a chronic lack of money, an inevitable reliance on volunteers, and, last but not least, the changing fortunes of the organizing groups.

The anarchist movement’s archives and libraries manage a select bibliographic patrimony that includes books, pamphlets, magazines, gray literature, posters, flyers, and other materials. In some cases, these items are rare, their rarity due to having been excluded from the usual commercial channels; there are exemplars of historical value, almost none of them earlier than the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century. The archival collections have come from groups, organizations, and individual activists or consist of documents of various origins and provenances collected at the institution that stores them. They also contain oral history recordings and material testaments of the history of the anarchist movement and the revolutionary left like flags, banners, and an assortment of other kinds of memorabilia.

The number of these institutions is now on the rise, with a good geographical distribution. Recently – but, in some cases, for several years now – they have worked to increase their visibility. By extending opening hours to the public, signing agreements with local authorities, and participating in cooperative systems at least at a local level, they provide a public service with professional expertise that is freely accessible to all. At present, the archival collections

are in the process of being inventoried. The bibliographic holdings are being catalogued according to national and international standards and are available through the OPAC of the National Library Service (SBN) or other union catalogs.

Here below we have focused on the histories, collections, and plans of the main archives and libraries of the Italian anarchist movement<sup>2</sup>.

## **2. *Archivio Famiglia Berneri-Aurelio Chessa***<sup>3</sup>

In 1962, upon the death of Giovanna Caleffi, the wife of the anarchist Camillo Berneri, their daughter Giliana decided to donate to Aurelio Chessa the documents kept by her mother. The donation included the valuable collection of letters that Berneri had exchanged with various exponents of anarchism and anti-fascism, including Gaetano Salvemini and Carlo Rosselli as well as his other private files, consisting of personal papers, notes, documents on various themes, and his writings, some unpublished, of a political, sociological, literary and philosophical nature.

Despite an acquisition proposal from the prestigious International Institute of Social History in Amsterdam, Chessa decided to personally open a study center named for the Berneri family. To the documents he had received, Chessa added materials on Italian and international anarchism that he personally had collected since immediately after the end of the Second World War. Although located in Genoa-Sampierdarena under less than optimal conditions, the archives began to receive their first requests for consultation. From that moment on, the story of the institute ran parallel to the life of its owner, curator, and guardian, who devoted all his energy to the archives at the cost of personal sacrifice and exhausting confrontations, sometimes clashes, with various municipalities. However, especially in the beginning, there was also considerable indifference on the part of the anarchist movement that did not see as one of its priorities at that time the preservation of its memory.

In 1966, Chessa and the Berneri Archives moved to Pistoia, the first step in a long peregrination that, over the course of thirty years, involved various Italian regions. In this Tuscan city, the institute handled an increasing number of users: mainly researchers, scholars, and students, including many in their final year at the University of Florence. Chessa meanwhile set up shelving and furniture, saw to its opening daily, and began the work required to organize it. He proceeded to enlarge the collections by exchanging duplicates with study centers and collectors, making new acquisitions, and accepting donations that came through his extensive network of contacts in the international anarchist movement, with particular reference to a group assembled around the New York newspaper, «*L'Adunata dei Refrattari*».

As mentioned earlier, the archive had to contend with moving several times over the years: Iglesias, Genoa, again to Pistoia from 1980 to 1992, Canosa di Puglia, and finally Cecina, the last stop for Aurelio. Upon his death in 1996, the center's management was entrusted to his daughter Fiamma. Since 1999, the institute has been open to the public in Reggio Emilia under the name of the *Archivio Famiglia Berneri-Aurelio Chessa*. Acquired by the Panizzi Public Library, it is managed in independent premises by Fiamma Chessa.

The online catalogue of its holdings contains approximately 12,000 monographs and a rich newspaper library of 2,000 titles, particularly noteworthy for its collections – microfilmed in part – of anarchist periodicals in Italian published abroad. The library is constantly increasing, especially as regards those subjects that have become the institution's strengths, e.g., the 1936-39 Spanish Civil War and Revolution; women in the anarchist movement; and libertarian customs, pedagogy, and art. The archive section includes some 200 boxes of documents. In addition to the papers relating to Berneri-Caleffi family and Aurelio Chessa, its main collections include those dedicated to Leda Rafanelli, Pier Carlo Masini, Pietro Bianconi, Michele Damiani, Ugo Fedeli, Nella Giacomelli, Virgilio Gozzoli, Serge Senninger, Pio Turrone, Aldo Capitini, Cesare Zaccaria, Bartolomeo Vanzetti (photocopies), and several others. Lastly, of particular interest along with the posters (about 3,000), theses, dissertations, and gray literature is the collection of photographs that totals 15,000 prints, negatives, slides, and digital images, with about one third of them from the files of the photographer and anarchist activist Vernon Richards.

In recent years, the archives have organized several cultural events of national interest, including study days dedicated to Giovanna Caleffi, Camillo Berneri, Leda Rafanelli and Maria Luisa Berneri, followed by the timely publication of the event's proceedings.

### **3. *Biblioteca libertaria Armando Borghi*<sup>4</sup>**

“Between socialist Imola and Republican Faenza lay the anarchist village of Castel Bolognese”<sup>5</sup>, Armando Borghi wrote in his memoirs, recalling the adolescence spent in this village in Romagna where he was born in 1882 and where, exactly one century later, activists and scholars launched an initiative to create the archive, later merged with the library, that bears his name.

The first traces of a libertarian library actually date back to 1916. It was founded by the anarchist group established by Nello Garavini and active during the “*biennio rosso*” until the advent of fascism. More than half a century later, in 1973, such elderly activists of Castel Bolognese as Garavini, Aurelio Lolli, and Giuseppe Santandrea, participants in the earlier project, came together with the new generations to introduce a similar initiative: the new *Biblioteca*

*libertaria*, located in Armando Borghi's house and open to the public. Later, in January 1982, libertarian scholars and activists organized an archive dedicated to Armando Borghi that gathered both his published and unpublished writings as well as all salvageable materials pertaining to the figure of this Romagnol anarchist. Finally, a few years later, the *Biblioteca libertaria* moved to new quarters. It was formally re-established as a cooperative, incorporating what had also been collected by the Borghi Archives. Meanwhile work began on computerizing the cataloging of the library's materials.

With an entrance under the arcades of Via Emilia in the historical center of Castel Bolognese, the *Biblioteca libertaria* has now settled permanently in its new quarters, received as a gift from Aurelio Lolli upon his death. The new structure was inaugurated on November 25, 2006. Gianpiero Landi runs the institute, together with other members of the cooperative of which Giordana Garavini is president. Its relationships with local institutions are governed by an agreement signed with the municipal administration that expires in 2020.

The library's holdings include the collections of various people and organizations, some of which have a certain import and substance. Of primary importance are the Armando Borghi Archives that include books, photographs, correspondence, manuscripts, copies of materials obtained through an exchange policy with the IISH in Amsterdam, and various kinds of documents received in large part from activists, scholars, co-workers, and Borghi's friends and comrades. Other collections are dedicated to Luce and Luigi Fabbri, Nello Garavini, Domenico Girelli, Giuseppe Mascii, Emma Neri Garavini, the *Organizzazione anarchica forlivese* (documents from the 1960s and 1970s), Maria Rossi Molaschi, and Aldo Venturini (as well Francesco Saverio Merlino's manuscripts). Also of note is the large quantity of material on a 20-years loan from the *Centro studi dell'abitare Oikos* in Bologna, including books, magazines, and archival records belonging to the anarchist-urban planner Carlo Doglio.

Over the years, the library has organized various cultural activities as workshops and conferences. Among the latter, for example, were those dedicated to Andrea Caffi, in 1993 and to Francesco Saverio Merlino in 2000. Currently open twelve hours a week, the library has about 7,000 monographs, 800 periodical publications, gray literature, various audio and audiovisual materials as well as ten archival collections. It is part of the OPAC-SBN national catalog and the ACNP Italian periodicals catalog.

#### **4. Centro studi libertari / Archivio Giuseppe Pinelli<sup>6</sup>**

In 1976, a proposal was made to establish a study center named after Giuseppe Pinelli, the Milanese anarchist who fell to his death from a fourth-floor

window of police headquarters immediately after the 1969 “*strage di Stato*” in Piazza Fontana. Based in Milan, the new institute has a twofold purpose: on one hand, to build an archive that will preserve the memory of anarchism and, on the other, to develop a libertarian culture able to face the problems of contemporary society by means of the most advanced ideas and practices within an anti-authoritarian framework. In other words, the supporters would like for the project to be a means of re-examining anarchism in light of the current social context, freeing it from its past by making it a credible alternative to the dominant culture of today. The aim is not so much to question its essence and core values but rather to revitalize it by opening it up, also critically, toward those genuinely libertarian expressions that have been arisen in the challenging contemporary world of the last few decades, starting from the social conflicts, the best intellectual thinking, and a new perception of everyday life.

The first endowment incorporated materials made available by the initiative’s self-same supporters (ascribable to the *GAF-Gruppi anarchici federati*), the *Circolo Ponte della Ghisolfa*, other activists, and some of the publishing houses affiliated or sympathetic to the anarchist movement in addition to the thousand volumes donated by Michele Damiani’s heirs. Of particular note is the Pio Turrone Collection, which constitutes the true foundation on which the center’s library holdings have been built as well as his private files that have now been reorganized and inventoried. An anarchist, the elderly Turrone supported and followed the study center’s activities with interest from the beginning.

After ten years, the institution was formally divided into two sections: the study center and the archives, which continue to work together and share quarters in a new location. At the same time, *Editions Elèuthera* was begun, following in the footsteps of the old *Antistato* catalog that the Milanese group had carried forward since 1975, but with a less “activist” slant and one more open to a broad cultural area sensitive to libertarian issues.

In 1992, the first issue of its semi-annual newsletters was published. Still published today, it contains information about the institute’s research activities, presents rare and unpublished material from the archives, publishes news reports and events of interest to the libertarian reader, and offers space for biographies, reviews, bibliographies, and short research papers<sup>7</sup>. The newsletter can be consulted online and downloaded from the study center’s website.

Over the years, its research and cultural activities have maintained a steady pace and superior programs, with particular attention to the international flavor of its debates. Following an interdisciplinary approach, several important, in-depth conferences and seminars have been organized that have permitted frank discussions between activists and scholars with different methodological and political approaches. Over the course of three decades, the topics covered have encompassed an analysis of the “new masters” (techno-bureaucracy); self-management; utopia; the subversive imagination; social ecology; libertarian

approaches to anthropology, architecture, and urban planning; the foundations of anarchist thought and its historical origins; anarchism's relationship to the law and to Judaism; and many others. A greater organizational effort however was required for the international anarchist gathering held in Venice in September 1984. It was conducted outside the movement's political structures and carried out in collaboration with the *Centre international de recherches sur l'anarchisme* of Lausanne and the Anarchos Institute of Montreal.

Among the documentary materials donated have been those of Luciano Farinelli, Raffaele Schiavina, and Michele Corsentino in addition to Luce Fabbri's magazines, about 600 microfilms left by Leonardo Bettini, and the Bartolomeo Vanzetti collection (photocopies). There are a total of 17 archival collections, a photo-iconographic archive of 2,000 documents, 150 recordings of interviews, conferences, and public debates, and about 1,500 periodicals for which a simplified paper catalog exists. Eight thousand monographs have been cataloged using PMB software.

The Center is a member of the IALHI – International Association of Labor History Institutions. It receives no institutional funding but is active thanks to the help of the many individuals who cooperate in carrying out its daily activities.

## 5. *Centro di documentazione anarchica*<sup>8</sup>

The *Centro di documentazione anarchica* was set up in Turin in January 1976 by some members of the *Circolo studi sociali E. Reclus*. Its approach has been characterized by a commitment to increasing awareness of and disseminating what different groups and collectives had developed within the anarchist movement, maintaining a firmly independent position towards those groups organized by the movement itself.

In 1981, the center's management passed from Turin to Rome, to the headquarters of the *Collettivo anarchico di Via dei Campani* (today dissolved). Materials from the *Collettivo anarchico*'s library and archive in Rome were added to that from Turin with the later addition of the holdings of the *Centro di documentazione Valerio Verbano*, including documents produced by the *Autonomia operaia romana* and over 3,000 texts on Marxism, the history of the communist movement and of the movements of the 1970s, armed struggle, feminism, and the means of mass communication.

With its subsequent growth thanks to donations and loans yet without receiving institutional funding, the center is now open to the public for over thirty hours a week. It shares space and an overall cultural program with the *Libreria Anomalia*. Its holdings consist of approximately 7,000 monographs; an extensive collection of magazines, newspapers, and single issues; political

posters; flyers; and 500 archival binders. The computerized catalog is nearing completion and is available on the center's website.

## 6. *Biblioteca Franco Serantini*<sup>9</sup>

The founding of the library dates back to 1979. At Franco Bertolucci's suggestion, Pisan anarchists decided to dedicate the collection taking shape on the premises of its political headquarters to Franco Serantini, a young man killed in a street battle by the police a few years before. The library initially maintained an "activist" approach that was directed at its use internally by the anarchist group itself. Soon, however, its supporters opened the doors to scholars and to a dialogue with the public, thereby laying the foundations for a lasting cultural plan marked by both social commitment and historiographic rigor.

Due to the non-renewal of its lease, the *Federazione anarchica pisana* was forced to leave its original premises in 1986. Forced to acknowledge the total lack of public spaces for associations, Serantini's curators occupied the nineteenth-century Palazzo Cevoli, which belonged to the city, and shared it with other citizens' associations. The response by the administration was an eviction order that was soon carried out. Only in 1992 did a way to resolve the problem finally appear with the Province of Pisa committing to the safeguarding and development of the library's holdings by finding it independent premises in the Concetto Marchesi school complex.

The collection was initially made up of books donated by the elderly anarchist worker Gino Giannotti. Covering politics, history, philosophy, economics, and literature, his collection of 1,500 items, published beginning in 1840, offer a glimpse of the readings and thus the cultural and political growth of a self-taught activist in the first half of the twentieth century. In addition to these holdings, the library began to collect more recent bibliographical material but also editions dating back to the dawn of the labor movement, with some noteworthy items because of their rarity. Its acquisition policy has been supplemented by numerous donations and specific key works remain independent collections that bear the donor's name. Of greatest interest among these personal collections are those of Joseph Cono, an Italian anarchist who emigrated to the United States, and of the historian Pier Carlo Masini, testament to the solid rapport of cooperation and friendship that was instrumental also in founding the «*Rivista storica dell'anarchismo*» (published between 1994 and 2004 and today continued in the series, «*Quaderni della Rivista storica dell'anarchismo*»).

Offering solid guarantees of rigorous practices, a critical approach as well as knowledge in library and archival management, the Serantini library has

managed to attract several documentary collections from friends, scholars, and activists in those organizations prominent in the anarchist and extra-parliamentary settings of the 1960s and 1970s. It should be noted that the library is also affiliated with the *Istituti storici della Resistenza* network.

The overall holdings of the library have reached more than 40,000 monographs (books and pamphlets) as well as 4,500 periodicals and single issues, with a considerable number of materials in foreign languages; about 6,000 photographs and picture postcards; 5,000 posters and dazibao (big-character posters); 30,000 pamphlets; 100 archival collections, with most considered to be of “significant historical interest” by the *Soprintendenza archivistica*; numerous sound and video recordings as well as paintings, plaster sculptures, lithographs; and protest materials like memorabilia, flags, pennants and banners. The library’s online catalog uses the open-source Koha software, and is an integral part of the national MetaOPAC Azalai.

Considering the collecting, sorting, and conservation activities closely related to historical research and the promotion of a libertarian culture in the contemporary debate, the Serantini library has been involved in both publishing (with *Edizioni BFS*) and the organization of conferences, exhibitions, seminars, and study days. From September 4-6, 2009, it hosted the XIV International Conference of FICEDL (*Fédération internationale des centres d’étude et de documentation libertaire*).

To highlight the contributions of the institute’s staff, an *Associazione Amici della Biblioteca* was formalized in 1995, providing volunteers and financial assistance in addition to publishing a monthly magazine<sup>10</sup>. The members come from various political and cultural backgrounds and are distributed throughout Italy as well as abroad. Unfortunately, the library recently has had to leave the premises where it was previously housed and, for the moment, all its materials are stored in the general archives of the University of Pisa. The curators, however, are working on an ambitious project to provide a suitable, new permanent location with sufficient space.

## **7. Archivio storico della FAI<sup>11</sup>**

Forty years after its foundation, which dates back to the September 1945 Congress in Carrara, the *Federazione Anarchica Italiana* (FAI) considered the need for its own historical archives. For the XVII Congress (Livorno, 1985), the fourth item on the agenda was a discussion regarding the “importance of memory”. The debate focused on two projects that could no longer be postponed. First was the publication of a book on the historical-political course of the federation and second, the establishment of a center to collect relevant documentary sources. The conference’s labors resulted in the appointment of

a Historical Archives Committee that established the archives in temporary quarters on premises shared with the anarchists of Pisa and the *Biblioteca Franco Serantini*.

The first documents to be deposited in Pisa for the newly created archives were a collection of twenty boxes, which contained internal FAI bulletins, the Committee's correspondence and various reports, flyers, tape recordings of the organization's meetings and conferences, over a hundred books, some magazines and a complete run of the periodical «*Umanità Nova*» from 1951 to 1973, with almost everything provided by the anarchists of Carrara.

Because of serious logistical problems on the part of the Pisa group, the historical archives were moved in April 1988 to Imola where they were located in premises leased from the town administration. Thanks to the efforts of the local anarchists and with the assistance of the *Istituto Beni Culturali dell'Emilia-Romagna*, the first steps to catalog and inventory the holdings were launched in 1993. The dual nature of the establishment was taking shape: on the one hand, it was to offer a documentation center on the history of anarchism as a public service and, on the other, to collect and preserve the internal records produced by the FAI as part of its own work. With regard to its finances, the *Gruppi anarchici imolesi* took charge of the expenses related to the center's rent and routine management, preventing these costs from being a financial burden on the federation.

Among the documents stored are the personal papers of leading members of the organized anarchist movement, like Umberto Marzocchi and Alfonso Failla (in the early 1990's, a proposal, later dropped, was circulated to dedicate the archives to the latter) as well as collections related to various activists like Guido Barroero (*Federazione comunista libertaria ligure*), Mario Mantovani, Giuseppe Mariani, Augusto Masetti, Mammolo Zamboni, and others. Recently, the *Soprintendenza archivistica* has attested to the "significant historical interest" of these collections, a recognition that will safeguard the integrity, preservation, and inalienability of the materials.

A specific group of papers focuses on the local situation as regards the history and biographies of the anarchists from Imola and Emilia-Romagna, which was collected through the painstaking work needed to uncover the documents in the State Archives and, more generally, to look for and select the documents. The library contains about 7,000 volumes. In addition, the growth of a well-nigh unique collection of historical anarchist flags should also be noted.

The promotion of historical research in recent years has led to the organization of two important study days. The first was in 1999 and focused on the Italian Anarchist Union (UAI) entitled "*L'esperienza dell'UAI dal biennio rosso alle leggi eccezionali, 1919-1926*". The other, in 2008, focused on the role of organized anarchism vis-à-vis the 1968 protest movement and was entitled "*Alla prova del '68. L'anarchismo internazionale al Congresso di Carrara*".

In November 2005, the historical archives opened its new, more hospitable and functional headquarters situated, as before, in a beautiful building in Imola's historical center. In the meantime, it has begun the online cataloging of books using PMB software.

## 8. *Arkiviu-Biblioteka Tamasu Serra* <sup>12</sup>

The idea of organizing an archive-library as a place to collect documentary material and as a reference point for the anarchist and revolutionary movement in Sardinia arose within the context of the social struggles of the 1970s, which were the starting point for the facility currently open in Guasila, in the province of Cagliari. At that time, Costantino Cavalleri, still one of the curators today, had chosen and collected some 500 specialized books and began to look for archival records. By the mid-1980s, the core of the first collection had significantly increased and was combined with materials collected by the elderly activist Tommaso Serra. After serving in the Resistance, Serra had settled in Barrali and had given birth to the original *Collettività anarchica di solidarietà*, basically a self-sufficient “commune” based on the principles of autogestion, solidarity, and a respect for the cycles of nature. There, he also established a library consisting of all the material he had collected upon his return to Sardinia (acquisitions and donations) together with the international anarchist publications that arrived regularly at the *Collettività*.

Upon Serra's death, the institute was named for him, opening officially to the public in October 1986. Initially located in the town of Guasila, whereas, it transferred permanently to premises owned by the organization in 1988. For nearly a decade, it was housed on the ground floor of the curators' accommodation, in rooms that had been suitably renovated yet were independent from the rest of the apartment. Later, in the late 1990s, the top floor was also occupied, its rooms given over entirely to offices and shelving. Previously, in 1989, in consultation with the *Soprintendenza archivistica per la Sardegna*, an early partial reorganization effort of Serra's private collection had taken place, which provided a starting point for later work as well as a significant increase in the number of documents as the result of, among other things, the acquisition of photocopies of all the papers found in the *Archivio Centrale dello Stato*.

In 1994, the institute's operations were formally reorganized with the establishment of the *Associazione culturale “Andalas de Libbertadi”* (whose name means “paths of freedom” in the Sardinian dialect). That same year printing and bookbinding machinery were also purchased in order to set up a printing center. The publishing and the library activities go hand in hand with the *Editziones* reprinting several rare documents kept in the archives-library, in addition to tackling an analysis of Sardinia's social problems, the historical

aspects of the local revolutionary movement, and the most current discussions of contemporary anarchism. The archive-library currently holds more than 10,000 books, 3,000 pamphlets, 2,000 periodicals and single issues as well as posters, pamphlets and gray literature. Sebina software has been used to enter cataloging data in the national catalog (*Polo SBN della Regione Sardegna*). The library collection has grown over the years as well through the acquisition of the personal libraries of such anarchist activists as Luigi Assandri and Alfredo Bonanno. The main archival collections are the two original ones of Serra and Cavalleri to which have been added materials from Giovanni Tolu, the long-time editor of the periodical «*L'Internazionale*», acquired and transferred from Genoa in 1991 along with his extensive private library and other documents of Sardinian anarchist activists like the one related to Pietrino Arixi.

### **9. Archivio storico degli anarchici siciliani<sup>13</sup>**

The *Archivio storico degli anarchici siciliani* was organized in 1994 as a section of the *Associazione culturale Sicilia Punto L* in Ragusa, bringing to fruition an idea that had been supported for many years by some activists receptive to the issue of preserving historical memory. The initial core of documents was formed by materials from the *Gruppo anarchico* of Ragusa, active since 1971. Its main center has been established in the same city while, in order to maintain a connection between the documents and their provenance, branches of the institute are hosted in other locations around Sicily.

The archives contain both historical as well as private collections of anarchist activities, of which odd volumes of documents may be consulted. Among the collections in Catania curated by Natale Musarra, the most interesting is the one related to Paolo Schicchi and his family (especially his brother Nicolò). It contains correspondence, personal papers, newspaper articles, pamphlets, and some periodical files, while Schicchi's library, including the notebooks he compiled in jail at the end of the nineteenth century, was seized by the police in the 1930s. The Ragusa location contains the archives of the periodical «*Sicilia Libertaria*». In 1996, it acquired a considerable quantity of documents from the anarchist Franco Leggio (who died in 2006), including the archives of *Edizioni Anteo*, *La Rivolta*, *La Fiaccola*, and *Altamurgia*. We should also mention the *Biblioteca di studi sociali Pietro Gori* in the city of Messina Sicily.

### **10. Archivio-Biblioteca Enrico Travaglini<sup>14</sup>**

The *Archivio-Biblioteca Enrico Travaglini* in Fano is named after a supporter of the local anarchist groups in the late nineteenth and early twentieth

centuries. It specializes in both the anti-clerical sphere and, more broadly, religious criticism as well as the fortunes of the anarchist movement in the Marches and the province of Pesaro.

Established formally as a cultural association in December 2003, the archives-library began its work with material inherited from the *Circolo culturale Napoleone Papini*, with which it shared quarters in the heart of the city's historical center. Since September 2006, a general reorganization has been underway as a requirement for entrance to the national OPAC of the National Library Service (SBN). Recently, it has joined a network of special libraries in the province.

The library collection consists of approximately 6,000 monographs selected on the basis of areas of specialization, printed in Italy or abroad since the middle of the nineteenth century. To enhance the semantic content as well as the cataloging and its physical organization, the collection has been divided into two sections – the *Biblioteca del Libero Pensiero* and the *Biblioteca di Studi Sociali* – and with each individually following a multi-level organizational model specifically designed for those documents. In particular, the texts collected in the *Biblioteca del Libero Pensiero* are representative of the different shades of anticlericalism, from the subversive, anarchist or socialist to the bourgeois-liberal. Ranging over diverse issues of secularist analysis, they include philosophical, historical, and sociological works regarding the nature and social effects of religion (with a good number of works devoted to religious persecution). In addition, there are works of fiction, drama, satire, even sacred books and clerical propaganda relevant to a discussion of some issues.

In addition to the library's book holdings, there are thousands of politico-social magazines and other minor materials as well as some old posters and fliers produced by Fano's early anarchist groups plus about 700 local administrative and political posters from the first two decades of the twentieth century.

The archive section contains five collections, described in the Unified Information System for Archival Superintendencies (SIUSA). With reference to the themes of Free Thought, the *Archivio anticlericale* contains all the documents collected during the twenty-five years that the *Circolo Papini* was active. It consists of 45 files that contain posters, correspondence, preparatory materials, photographs, and other documents relating to the anticlerical meetings held in Fano from 1984 to 1998 and to the *Associazione per lo sbattezzo*. Other collections are those of the anarchist activists and the extra-parliamentary left that have been active beginning in the post-war period up to today and of the *Organizzazione Anarchica Marchigiana* (a federation active during the 1970s in several Marchigian towns). Finally, note must be taken of the collection of research materials, composed of dozens of envelopes and more than 70,000 digital photos, the fruits of a labor of research, selection, and reproduction carried out in many Italian and foreign libraries and archives.

## 11. Conclusions

There are small archives and libraries managed in relatively professional manner by anarchist and libertarian groups in many other cities. Unfortunately, these institutions, even the principal ones, are not yet interconnected through a strong cooperative network. Many are part of FICEDL (*Fédération internationale des centres d'étude et de documentation libertaire*), which provides international coordination, though it is fundamentally Eurocentric. Formed in Marseilles in 1979, the Federation's last meeting was held in Lisbon in 2011 with the next one scheduled for Lyon in 2013.

It is to be hoped that an effort be made to redefine the identity of these individual organizations without causing them to abandon their distinctive roots and characteristics. Rather, their value should be increased with each institution becoming an access point to the resources available throughout the entire network. Meeting this challenge of cooperation could lead to a significant impact at a cultural development level and perhaps open up new frontiers for historical and political research in the spheres of anarchism and libertarian movements. Projects could include the creation of bibliographic databases that would examine the contents of periodicals, coordinate acquisitions through a reliable document delivery and interlibrary loan network, set up a cooperative reference service currently available only at an informal level, and develop coordinated digitization policies – to offer only a few suggestions.

## NOTES

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# The Counterhegemonic Academic Librarian: A Call to Action

## 1. Introduction

This essay argues that academic librarians should work consciously for the improvement of conditions for marginalized and underrepresented segments of the population, and do so in spite of the fact that the political terrain of the academic library typically reflects the ideologies of the dominant culture. Although long a subject of intense debate among library practitioners,<sup>1</sup> we hold firmly that the academic librarian may not maintain claims of neutrality; human reality would simply not exist without formative, and ultimately political, relationships. But, as Sandy Iverson noted, “all too often librarians have rejected the political nature of the work they do.”<sup>2</sup> The counterhegemonic academic librarian *qua* transformative intellectual both questions hegemonic realities and changes them.<sup>3</sup>

Although this essay uses the theoretical work of critical theorists in sociology, education, and library and information studies, its object is not theoretical, but practical and political. Philosophizing by itself, as influential Marxist philosopher Louis Althusser warned, runs the risk of becoming an empty discourse.<sup>4</sup> The ultimate goal of this essay is to encourage informed practice among academic librarians through (1) critiquing existing ideological structures using extant theory and (2) offering theoretically conscious strategies

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for action based upon this critique. We would like to stress that the reader of this essay need not be a member of the left. She should, however, be willing to engage with the essay, comparing her own ideas critically with the arguments within. We hope she will emerge with a modified understanding of the academic librarian as a political being, and conclude that such an understanding necessitates political action.

Marginalized groups are those who have been categorically denied access to privilege including educational access, political office, high-paying jobs, and access to health care. While college enrollment reports show that women, an historically marginalized group, have outnumbered their male counterparts for over thirty years,<sup>5</sup> it is not a time to consider our work done. These statistics are based on a binary understanding of sex and gender which excludes students with gender identities outside of these two categories. Additionally, students of color, low income students, students with disabilities, and first-generation college student enrollment is still lacking nationwide with Caucasian students comprising over 60% of the enrollment in degree-granting institutions,<sup>6</sup> and retention rate for these students are significantly lower than students from dominant socioeconomic and ethnic groups. While Caucasian and Asian-American/Pacific Islander students have a graduation rate of 59% and 60% respectively, only 50% of Hispanic students and 39% of African-American students reach graduation.<sup>7</sup> The ideologies driving the academy cannot change if underrepresented groups cannot make it past bachelor-level studies.

The stories of members of marginalized groups are chronically erased from accounts of history and when present are often told from the perspective of the dominant group. To work toward an understanding of a whole issue it is imperative to include multiple perspectives. Sandra Harding explained that, “in societies stratified by race, ethnicity, class, gender, sexuality, or some other such politics shaping the very structure of a society, the *activities* of those at the top both organize and set limits on what persons who perform such activities can understand about themselves and the world around them.”<sup>8</sup> Meaning that those ideas belonging to those people at the top of the hierarchy create a cultural and social context into which members of marginalized groups must situate themselves. Perspectives and social realities of members of marginalized groups are not considered when dominant groups form these limits. Harding continued, “ones’ social situation enables and sets limits on what one can know; some social situations – critically unexamined dominant ones – are more limiting than others in this respect, and what makes these situations more limiting is their inability to generate the most critical questions about received belief.”<sup>9</sup> Although the world of academe seems the ideal location to “generate the most critical questions,”<sup>10</sup> those in places of power within the academy may simply be aligning themselves with the dominant ideologies of the institution and not analyzing their behaviors and assumptions and how they reflect those of their

employer. Herein, we call librarians to participate in a critical examination of their institutions and their practice within them.

## 2. The Political Terrain of the Academic Library

Karl Marx acknowledged the pervasiveness of the notion that capitalism is the “natural” mode of production in western civilization, writing in the *German Ideology* that these “eternal laws” are, in fact, the “ideas of the ruling class,” which “increasingly take on the form of universality.”<sup>11</sup> These dominant ideas (i.e., the concepts that make up the dominant ideologies of a culture or society) tend to support the dominant culture and the society’s privileged groups.<sup>12</sup>

Althusser argued that dominant ideologies are implanted in individuals through the primarily non-violent operation of “Ideological State Apparatuses” (ISAs) such as the church, trade unions, and, preeminently, education.<sup>13</sup> He held that the educational apparatus was the dominant ISA under the capitalist mode of production wherein “the relations of exploited to exploiters and exploiters to exploited are largely reproduced. The mechanisms which produce this vital result for the capitalist regime are naturally covered up and concealed by a universally reigning ideology of the School, universally reigning because it is one of the essential forms of the ruling bourgeois ideology: an ideology which represents the School as a neutral environment purged of ideology...”<sup>14</sup>

The dominant western ideologies (e.g., the narratives of capitalism, liberal democracy, positivism, and “neutral education”) appear to members of society as natural because of the members’ submergence in the ideological work of the educational ISA; institutions of higher education are well-positioned to perform this indoctrination, especially considering their place of high authority in western society. Althusser held, however, that dominant narratives cloak the materially based realities of social life.<sup>15</sup> These realities include the exploitation of marginalized groups by the dominant class.

Michael H. Harris argued in his seminal essay on the modern library and research perspectives that the library is an apparatus for cultural production, one that privileges high culture.<sup>16</sup> Reflecting upon the work of Harris and Wayne Weigand,<sup>17</sup> Douglas Raber concluded that the public library is an ISA, a “state-maintained, superstructural institution designed not to coerce but to persuade the public of the historical bloc’s [the prevailing social formation of the age] legitimacy by reinforcing the dominant culture.”<sup>18</sup> The current historical bloc may be characterized as a late capitalist social construct that validates existing hegemonic structures. The public library, as an organ of this bloc, disseminates information that Wiegand described as being valued primarily by business and government.<sup>19</sup> The academic library may also be regarded as an ISA in that it supports higher education, promoting the status quo through aiding in the

educational apparatuses' production of, according to Althusser, "small and middle technicians, white-collar workers, small and middle executives, petty bourgeois of all kinds."<sup>20</sup> In this capacity, the academic library is a necessary and inseparable component of the educational ISA, reproducing the political milieu through its collections and library staff or faculties. As a result, students in higher education are not only positioned to become functionaries of the prevailing mode of production, they are steeped in the norms of the dominant culture that ultimately controls the means of this production.

Academic librarians are in a problematic position. Even though academic libraries support freedom,<sup>21</sup> they do so from hegemonic perspectives, from vantage points molded by curricula and cultural/literary canons that reproduce dominant structures and the workers necessary for these structures' maintenance.<sup>22</sup> The American Library Association (ALA) "Code of Ethics" illustrates this contradiction. The Code describes intellectual freedom and objectivity as a core professional value; librarians, according to the Code, "distinguish between our personal convictions and professional duties and do not allow our personal beliefs to interfere with fair representation of the aims of our institutions or the provision of access to their information resources."<sup>23</sup> One interpretation of the Code mandates that librarians set aside their prejudices and collect and connect users with resources they may not personally find suitable or believable. Librarians should be able to treat materials on evolution, creationism, and intelligent design on the same level, not collecting materials in line with their personal beliefs disproportionately with those that contradict their own interpretations and understandings. However, a second interpretation of the Code is that it encourages librarians to maintain a neutral standpoint on social justice issues and give equal access to materials that promote the advancement of marginalized groups and those that encourage continuation of the status quo or opposition to equality.<sup>24</sup>

Librarians with faculty status and in tenure-track environments, furthermore, face additional challenges and responsibilities that underscore the need for the immanent critique of dominant hegemonic concepts. Tenure-track librarians are uniquely placed as creators of knowledge, researchers, and part of the institutional body that curates and purchases the knowledge resources that support their constituencies. However, until conceptions of academic librarianship are reshaped from within to facilitate meaningful change, academic librarians are left in a position that does not offer them the ability to use their expertise to act transformatively. For example, although support for open-access materials is growing amongst librarians and across campuses, many promotion and tenure decisions are ultimately made by a university-wide committee that may not have specialized knowledge in the field. If librarians or other academics ethically choose to submit their work to open-access journals that are not on the list of the alleged top-three journals of the field, reviewers

may see that as a lack of the candidates' strength instead of an intentional and politically conscious move.<sup>25</sup> Additionally, new media, like blogs, are highly contested in discussions of promotion and tenure. In a 2009 survey, Arthur Hendricks found that most survey participants' institutions did not give blogs the same weight as a peer-reviewed article.<sup>26</sup> However, the conception that all written work should be evaluated by the same criteria misses the mark and suggests the capitalist quantification of the profession and the commodification of its intellectual products. While blogs may not go through the same rigorous review that traditionally-published articles do, they can make a meaningful contribution to the field of librarianship.<sup>27</sup> Librarians, as gatekeepers for a campus' information resources, need to raise questions of new media in their tenure and promotion discussions.

At what point should librarians act, taking it upon themselves to transform the library and their profession? When does a social justice issue become mainstream enough for the library to promote it? Librarians wield an incredible power. Through collection development, and, in their capacity as gatekeepers to those collections, they have a hand in guiding undergraduate, graduate, faculty, staff, and community research and education. As most undergraduates, and arguably most users of the academic library in general, use sources that are immediately available, the progressive, conscientious librarian should facilitate instant access to materials representing and supporting works by and about underrepresented and marginalized groups.

Ours is not a position of neutrality as imagined by the ALA "Code of Ethics," but one of social and moral responsibility to challenge the academic library as an ISA, to contribute to the creation of authentic knowledge and history, not simply the reiteration of canonical indoctrination.

### **3. The Politically Conscious Academic**

Because of higher education's role in sociocultural and economic production, the idea that the legitimate academic, and therefore the legitimate academic librarian, must remain neutral – that is, that they should refrain from viewing scholarship and pedagogy through the lens of politics – keeps its grip on academic consciousness. Gary Radford argued that the neutral librarian is a result of an ingrained culture of positivism;<sup>28</sup> positivism being a major bulwark of capitalist ideology.<sup>29</sup> This positivism, (i.e., knowledge derived from experience and empiricism not theoretical inquiry<sup>30</sup>) as well as middle-class hegemonic accounts, such as the need to maintain links with the corporate world and assert the scientific status of library and information studies, serves as a basis for LIS graduate school curricula.<sup>31</sup> As a result, reproduction of the academic library as a hegemonic institution is essentially a circular process.

The neutral academic, and hence the neutral academic librarian, works passively in the service of the controlling interests of society; she acts politically.<sup>32</sup> Stanley Aronowitz and Henry A. Giroux termed such academics “accommodating intellectuals,” that is, intellectuals who stand

firm within an ideological posture and set of material practices that support the dominant society and its ruling groups. Such intellectuals are generally not aware of this process that they do not define themselves as self-conscious agents of the status quo, even though their politics further the interests of the dominant classes.<sup>33</sup>

This accommodating but professedly neutral intellectual was first identified by Antonio Gramsci in his *Prison Notebooks* as the “traditional intellectual,” that is, one who thinks herself as acting independently while in fact perpetuating dominant ideological norms.<sup>34</sup> The professional academic, in her capacity as an academic, accepts the hegemony of the privileged classes over groups typically defined as “subordinate” classes, races, genders, and sexualities.

Gramsci’s “organic intellectual,” in contrast to the traditional intellectual, is a politically conscious functionary of the prevalent material conditions of the age and aligns herself fundamentally with a social group:

Every social group, coming into existence on the original terrain of an essential function in the world of economic production creates together with itself, organically, one or more strata of intellectuals which give it homogeneity and an awareness of its own function not only in the economic but also in the social and political fields. The capitalist entrepreneur creates alongside himself the industrial technician, the specialist in political economy, the organisers of a new culture, of a new social system, etc.<sup>35</sup>

Aronowitz and Giroux also described the “hegemonic intellectual,”<sup>36</sup> which conforms to Gramsci’s organic intellectual in the service of the bourgeoisie.

Aronowitz and Giroux warned, however, that such categories should not be held as rigidly separable.<sup>37</sup> Gramsci himself wrote in a later passage of his *Prison Notebooks* that the distinction between traditional and organic intellectuals is illusory, that, in fact, intellectuals are always bound organically to particular classes.<sup>38</sup> We suggest, therefore, that Gramsci’s traditional intellectual further decomposes into two groups: (1) a passive auxiliary of the body of organic intellectuals that aligns with the dominant class at varying levels of self-consciousness; and (2) a potentially mobile contingent of critical thinkers possessing developed political convictions but who have not yet made a political commitment in their capacity as public intellectuals. The first

type of traditional intellectual, while operating under the guise of neutrality, is complicit in what Gramsci called the bourgeois organic intellectual's "articulation of the relationship between the entrepreneur and the instrumental mass."<sup>39</sup> The passive professional academic, through their tacit or grudging support of dominant ideologies – e.g., modernism, positivism, a-politicization of academia – braces capitalism in their capacity as a researcher/educator. The second type of traditional intellectual listed above, the critical thinker as professional academic, while still complicit, has the most potential to become a "true," that is, markedly affiliated, organic intellectual.

#### 4. The Academic Librarian as Counterhegemonic Intellectual

The American Library Association lists democracy among its "Core Values of Librarianship."<sup>40</sup> In neoliberal societies, however, the academic library arguably has become a tool of the democracy's ruling interests, and academic librarians have become these interests' subalterns. The academic librarian, in fact, is a rather obvious techno-bureaucratic, organic intellectual, a specialist academic who works for the academic library *qua* ISA, and, despite this function, one who often maintains pretensions of neutrality. Raber outlined this role of librarian as organic intellectual, arguing that Gramsci's work suggests that

librarians can be viewed as 'organic intellectuals' and that they play an ideological and organizational role in maintaining a historic bloc's hegemony over the relations of economic production and civil society. From this perspective, the apparently neutral discourse of LIS regarding access to information can be examined as a discourse that privileges particular rather than universal interests.<sup>41</sup>

Raber concluded that, because of the hegemony's grip on the academy, and its legitimization of the status quo, it is unlikely that librarians (i.e., traditional or hegemonic intellectuals) will question the relationships between information and power.<sup>42</sup> Librarians, he concluded from Gramsci's theories, inhabit a "contradictory theoretical consciousness;" they have the potential to make progressive reforms to society but are held back from doing so because of hegemonic norms that suggest that they should take no action.<sup>43</sup>

Considering the broad themes and values associated with librarianship (e.g., intellectual freedom, freedom of information, equity of access to information resources, and democracy) we hold that, upon accepting the concept of the neutral academic as fallacious, academic librarians should align themselves with other academic workers, the laboring classes, marginalized, and underserved

groups. Aronowitz and Giroux referred to this class of organic educator as “transformative intellectuals,” those who

earn a living within institutions that play a fundamental role in producing the dominant culture... [but] define their political terrain by offering to students forms of alternative discourse and critical social practices whose interests are often at odds with the overall hegemonic role of the school and the society it supports.<sup>44</sup>

Raber argued that librarians maintain some level of autonomy and may choose to align themselves as organic intellectuals with counterhegemonic groups.<sup>45</sup> What is required for this to happen? There must be a shift in political perspective concerning the function of the academic library in its determination of power relationships and a commitment to political and economic equity. But until the change has been made, even the second type of neutral academic listed in the previous section of this essay, the potentially mobile contingent of critical thinkers, remains a cog in the academic library in its capacity as ISA.

## 5. Call to Action

Although the typical academic working in a college or university avoids political alignment in the performance of her job, she acts politically, either maintaining hegemonic structures or challenging them. As outlined above, professional practice always realizes ideology regardless of whether it consciously incorporates theory. John Doherty argued that, for the librarian to engage in effective praxis – the realization of theory as practice – she must actively pursue “reflection-in-action,” she must commit to a constant critique of actions.<sup>46</sup>

Responsible academic librarians must be cognizant and critical of ideological influences, understand that they saturate thought and action, and, following necessarily upon this, own and/or disown specific ideological positions. Adopting Althusser’s language, the politically conscious academic librarian is at once able to be “in the truth” and to “speak the truth.”<sup>47</sup>

Therefore, we call on academic librarians to act politically, but to do so in consciously transformative ways that address inequities in society and the institutions that reproduce society. They should become what Les Tickle described as organic intellectuals “constantly interacting with society, struggling to change minds, engaged in the evolution of knowledge, raising issues in the public domain and defending decent standards of social well-being, freedoms and justice.”<sup>48</sup> Academic librarians, as intellectual laborers and gatekeepers of knowledge resources, should advance the interests of marginalized and

disempowered groups. Doing this will make the library a more democratic institution: a position in line with the purpose of library work.

## 6. Strategies for Action

As professionals engaging in public service, librarians are well-positioned to engage in transformative praxis at the level of their library community. The counterhegemonic academic librarian is both an educator and a facilitator of the research process for her constituency, which includes students, staff, professional scholars, and community users. Raber suggested that means of resistance are open to librarians, including demands for intellectual freedom and resistance against censorship. He also asked for transformative strategies from librarians.<sup>49</sup> We offer the following strategies for action along with readings that support their informed application:<sup>50</sup>

(1) Advocate the teaching of critical theory as part of library school education. Introduce library school students to critical theory during internships and practicums. Explore alternative educational opportunities with library school students, such as serving in informal mentoring capacities or inviting graduate students to functions relating to progressive librarianship.

### *Recommended Reading:*

- Andersen, Jack. "Information Criticism: Where is It?" in *Questioning Library Neutrality: Essays from Progressive Librarian*, edited by Allison Lewis, 97-108. Duluth, MN: Library Juice, 2008.  
Argues that librarians should be trained as "information critics" of systems of knowledge organization and concludes that library schools do not adequately prepare graduates for this role. Andersen advocates that library schools verse their graduates in the methods and theories of critical/cultural analysis.
- Aronowitz, Stanley, and Henry A. Giroux. *Education Still under Siege*. Westport, CT: Bergin & Garvey, 1993.  
The second edition of Aronowitz and Giroux's *Education under Siege*, the classic challenge to education that supports hegemonic social structures, acts as an antidote to the entrenched neo-liberal ideologies often found in LIS school curricula.
- Brookfield, Stephen D. *The Power of Critical Theory: Liberating Adult Learning and Teaching*. Hoboken, NJ: Jossey-Bass, 2005.  
A detailed survey of critical theory that advocates theory's application to adult education. Many of the ideas (e.g., developing critical consciousness) are applicable to the education of LIS students.

(2) Fight to protect intellectual and academic freedom, and use developed, defensible theoretical positions to do this.

*Recommended Reading:*

- American Library Association. *Intellectual Freedom Manual*. 8<sup>th</sup> ed. Chicago: American Library Association, 2010.  
Designed to “answer practical questions that confront librarians in applying the principles of intellectual freedom to library service,”<sup>51</sup> this manual lays out the ALA’s position on intellectual freedom matters, gives advice to information professional dealing with intellectual freedom issues, and reproduces related documents.
- Arko-Cobbah, Albert. “Intellectual Freedom and Academic Freedom: Some Challenges and Opportunities for Academic Libraries in Africa.” *Mousaion* 28, no. 2 (2011): 76-95.  
The author incorporates academic librarians into the debate over academic freedom, an arena in which they are absent due to their lack of faculty status. Arko-Cobbah stresses the importance of academic freedom not only to ensure research without potential job loss, but also to shape curriculum to pass values to the next generation.
- Buschman, John. “Who Defends Intellectual Freedom for Librarians?” *Academe* September-October (2009).  
Discusses the American Library Association’s policies on ethics and intellectual freedom, but urges them to actively defend these freedoms. Buschman also discusses what individual librarians can do to help promote intellectual freedom.
- Larue, James, L. *New Inquisition: Understanding and Managing Intellectual Freedom Challenges*. Westport, CT: Libraries Unlimited, 2007.  
Although written for application to the public library, this book provides practical techniques and resources for responding to intellectual freedom challenges that are also of value to academic librarians.

(3) Fight for equal status and job security for academic librarians, Support initiatives that maximize librarian autonomy and self-governance within the academic library,<sup>52</sup> while opposing measures that reduce academic librarians to being bureaucratic functionaries.

*Recommended Reading:*

- Coker, Catherine, Wyoma vanDuinkerken, and Stephen Bales. “Seeking Full Citizenship: A Defense of Tenure Faculty Status for Librarians.” *College & Research Libraries* 71, no. 5 (2010): 406-420.  
Analyzes the history and development of tenure status in academic libraries,

provides arguments both for and against tenure, and offers strategies to librarians seeking to attain or protect tenure status in their institutions.

- Fanton, Jonathan. "The Academy and the Future: Constancy within Change." *College and Research Libraries News* 50, no. 7 (1989): 564-566.

From a paper presented by the then president of the New School for Social Research at a 1988 meeting of the ACRL Greater New York Metropolitan Area Chapter. This article reasserts traditional concepts of the academic library as a neutral forum, while calling for a vigilant defense against the increasing corporatization and bureaucratization of the institution.

- Hill, Janet Swan. "Wearing Our Own Clothes: Librarians as Faculty." *The Journal of Academic Librarianship* 20, no. 2 (1994): 71-76.  
Defines the characteristics of the academic librarian as faculty members while contrasting them with those of traditional teaching faculty.

(4) Engage in and support library practitioner research that challenges positivist and scientific assumptions. The academic library is an excellent working laboratory,<sup>53</sup> providing a vantage point from which the scholar librarian may observe and critique power structures active in society and determine how these ideological constructs manifest themselves in the library as an institution. Practice informs sound theory. The counterhegemonic academic librarian as researcher occupies a vanguard position; she both generates new professional knowledge and dialectically tests and refines existing theory through her work.

*Recommended Reading:*

- Budd, John. "An Epistemological Foundation for Library and Information Science." *Library Quarterly* 65, no. 3 (1995): 295-318.  
This well-researched, theoretical article argues against a solely positivist approach to libraries and library science, shifting the focus from the library as thing or place to the library as the site of human actors. For a rebuttal to Budd, see, Zwadlo, Jim. "We Don't Need a Philosophy of Library and Information Science—We're Confused Enough Already." *Library Quarterly* 67, no. 2 (1997): 103-121.
- Dick, Archie L. "Epistemological Positions and Library and Information Science." *Library Quarterly* 69, no. 3 (1999): 305-323.  
Argues that epistemological research and discussions are lacking in LIS programs. The author researched definitions of epistemology and discusses methods for incorporating epistemological research into librarianship and LIS programs as a way to distinguish the presuppositions and theories from the practice and policies.
- Leckie, Gloria J., Lisa M. Given, and John E. Buschman. *Critical Theory for Library and Information Science: Exploring the Social from Across the*

*Disciplines*. Santa Barbara, CA: Libraries Unlimited, 2003.

A collection of the latest critical theory research in library and information studies. Essays are written from multiple critical perspectives and apply the thinking of major theorists to LIS.

(5) Analyze academic library constituencies as political beings or interests. Develop academic libraries in light of these entities and their relationships.

a. Include library users in the process of defining the library.

*Recommended Reading:*

- Edwards, Julie Biando. "Neutrality in Context: Principles and Rights." *Information for Social Change* 31 (2011): 17-27.  
Considers library neutrality from both the perspective of individual rights and group rights, advocating a middle course of action. Edwards affirms the consideration of context when making decisions that might curtail the rights of individuals or groups.
- Maret, Susan. "True Community: Connecting the Millennium Development Goals to Public Library Services in the United States." *Information, Society and Justice* 4, no. 2 (2011): 29-35.  
The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) is a United Nations initiative that aims at effecting positive societal change internationally through eight goals by 2015.<sup>54</sup> Maret advocates applying the MDGs to benefit users and potential users of public library services in the United States. She offers two valuable models for implementing the goals, particularly the second of the eight, which aspires to "Achieve universal primary education."<sup>55</sup>
- McCook, Kathleen de la Peña. *A Place at the Table: Participating in Community Building*. Chicago: American Library Association, 2000.  
Provides strategies for libraries engaging in community building, including both in the physical and virtual senses. This book emphasizes the importance of building diverse communities and discusses how librarians fit into the effort. Narrative accounts of library community building efforts effectively illustrate the discussion.
- Mehra, Bharat, Ann Peterson Bishop, Imani Bazzell, and Cynthia Smith. "Scenarios in the Afya Project as a Participatory Action Research (PAR) Tool for Studying Information Seeking and Use Across the 'Digital Divide'." *Journal of the American Society for Information Science and Technology* 53, no. 14 (2002): 1259-1266.  
The Afya Project aims to increase health information access to Black women. The authors employed scenarios to determine social contexts and involved their intended users in all stages of the research process

giving them a voice that is missing in the research methods often employed by library and information studies researchers.

b. Provide appropriate information tools for all user groups. Critique existing tools to determine whether they reflect a diversity of viewpoints.

*Recommended Reading:*

- Cyzyk, Mark. "Canon Formation, Library Collections, and the Dilemma of Collection Development." *College & Research Libraries* 54, no. 1 (1993): 58-65.

Examines the concept of canon development in collection development. Cyzyk calls for the careful analysis of how library collections form, how they tend to center around "protean entities," and what duties collection officers have towards their audience.

- Dilevko, Juris, and Lisa Gottlieb. "The Politics of Standard Selection guides: The Case of the *Public Library Catalog*." *Library Quarterly* 73, no. 3 (2003): 289-337.

Dilevko and Gottlieb analyzes the *Public Library Catalog (PLC)*, a bibliography of recommended books for public library collections, in terms of the ideological frames that it represents. The study determines that certain necessary perspectives are excluded. Similar studies may be performed on academic collections and collection development tools to determine where they are insufficient.

c. Make connections with underrepresented and marginalized campus groups – offer to lead a library tour and make targeted library handouts for the GLBT or women's center, multicultural centers, and Black student association. Encourage librarians to participate in professional organizations like the women's faculty group.

d. Actively address hegemonic canons of knowledge. Identify the "non-dominant" and counterhegemonic resources in hegemonic collections and make them easily findable.

*Recommended Reading:*

- Adkins, Denice, and Lisa Hussey. "The Library in the Lives of Latino College Students." *Library Quarterly* 76, no. 4 (2006): 456-480.

Discusses the historical context that led to librarians losing power over their collections through approval plans, patron-driven acquisitions, and other "advancements." Danky's work encourages librarians to seek out alternative presses to ensure substantive neutrality.

- Doherty, John J. "The Academic Librarian and the Hegemony of the

Canon.” *Journal of Academic Librarianship* 24, no. 5 (1998): 403-406.

A call for academic librarians to engage in “information dialectic between academic libraries and the faculty and departments that they serve.”<sup>56</sup> Contends that the reflective librarian can actively help canons evolve by considering the inclusion of non-canonical materials.

- Rothbauer, Paulette. “‘People Aren’t Afraid Anymore, But It’s Hard to Find Books’: Reading Practices That Inform The Personal and Social Identities of Self-Identified Lesbian and Queer Young Women”. *Canadian Journal of Information & Library Sciences* 28, no. 3 (September 2004): 53-74.

Discusses the power of reading, especially how it pertains to the GLBTQ community and brings to light challenges users seeking GLBTQ materials face while trying to access library materials.

- e. Consider counterhegemonic ideas in programming and offer alternatives.<sup>57</sup>

*Recommended Reading:*

- Accardi, Maria T., Emily Drabinski, and Alana Kumbier, eds. *Critical Library Instruction: Theories and Methods*. Duluth, MN: Library Juice Press, 2010.

A guide to incorporating critical pedagogy in library instruction. This resource is illustrated with stories of successful praxis.

- Baldwin, Michael. “Librarians as Knowledge Provocateurs.” *Public Libraries* 45, no. 2 (2006): 11-14.

Written from a public libraries perspective but with implications for libraries of all types, Baldwin encourages librarians to not just connect users with materials but promote information itself and the library as a center of democracy.

- f. Factor in ideology when considering adopting technologies for library constituencies; for example, select free/libre open-source access methods as opposed to “proprietary software that stands in the way of the need for autonomous solutions.”<sup>58</sup>

*Recommended Reading:*

- Stevenson, Siobhan. “Digital Divide: A Discursive Move Away from the Real Inequities.” *Information Society* 25 (2009): 1-22.

Stevenson critiques the concept of digital divide as an invention of neoliberal ideology supporting existing class structures.

- Stienstra, Deborah. “The Critical Space Between: Access, Inclusion and

Standards in Information Technologies.” *Information, Communication & Society* 9, no. 3 (2006): 335-354.

Discusses the Canadian Standards Association and if this type of organization can ensure equal access to information technologies. However, the author argues that corporate interests have too loud of a voice in the issue, and she suggests ways to put the users back into the center of the debate.

(6) Develop a culture of critical social theory within the academic library.<sup>59</sup> Create progressive information worker working groups within libraries to bring together librarians, staff members, and student workers within academic libraries. These groups would engage in a communal research and publication program centering on the ongoing critique of LIS.

*Recommended Reading:*

- Eubanks, Virginia. *Digital Dead End: Fighting for Social Justice in the Information Age*. London: MIT Press, 2011.

Critical analysis of the effects of information technology on society and how such technology leads to inequitable social structures and the exploitation of marginalized groups. Eubanks introduces the concept of technological citizenship as means of providing equity and increasing freedom among these groups.

- Graham-Gibson, J.K. “An Economic Ethics for the Anthropocene.” *Antipode* 41, no. S1 (2009): 320-346.

In the human-centric world we are both transformers of and transformed by the world around us – understanding the consequences our actions have but not necessarily how to create positive change. The authors discuss the ethics, power, and abilities of so-called hybrid research collectives and challenge the reader to create change in their communities and encouraging academics to understand that research is activism.

- Roelvink, Gerda. “Collective Action and the Politics of Affect.” *Emotion, Space & Society* 3 (2010): 111-118.

The author uses the anti-globalization movement as a lens through which she studies possibilities for collective action. This moves away from a problem with a singular solution model to the power of an affected hybrid collective creating new previously unimagined possibilities.

(7) Collaborate with campus organizations outside the library. Create a system of mutual support wherein campus activists and counterhegemonic librarians can find strength in their shared mission and further progressive community reformation.

*Recommended Reading:*

- Fonseca, Anthony J., and Van P. Viator. "Escaping the Island of Lost Faculty: Collaboration as a Means of Visibility." *Collaborative Librarianship* 1, no. 3 (2009): 81-90.  
The authors suggest librarians reinvent themselves and spend time promoting library services outside of the library to ensure equal standing with other faculty on campus.
- Morrone, Melissa, and Lisa Friedman. "Radical Reference: Socially Responsible Librarianship Collaborating with Community." *The Reference Librarian* 50, no. 4 (2009): 371-396.  
Discusses a model of librarianship and reference work that challenges librarians to work with populations outside of the expected scope of academic libraries, providing professional-level reference assistance to activists and journalists not affiliated with colleges and universities, and therefore unable to access subscription information sources.
- Ritzo, Christopher, Chaebong Nam, and Bertram Bruce. "Building a Strong Web: Connecting Information Spaces in Schools and Communities." *Library Trends* 58, no. 1 (2009): 82-94.  
Focuses on a youth-service program from the University of Illinois that focuses on integrated education and instruction through a collaborative effort amongst community organizations and libraries of different types (i.e., school, public, university).

(8) Promote small presses and databases. Often we focus on the most-used resources and classify these sources as niche materials. As long as budget decisions are based on usage statistics over content, the large databases will always win.

*Recommended Reading:*

- Atton, Chris. "Beyond the Mainstream: Examining Alternative Sources for Stock Selection." *Library Review* 43, no. 4 (1994): 57-64.  
Although the article is a bit dated, Atton provides an excellent analysis of the value in collecting publications that fall outside of the dominant paradigm, as well as strategies for selection.
- Browning, M.K. "The Small Press and the Library. A View from Confluence." *Serials Librarian* 9, no. 1 (1984): 37-42.  
Discusses the cultural function in society and their value to library collections using Confluence Press as a case study. Argues that small presses "set the parameters of genuine regional literature,"<sup>60</sup> and encourages academic librarians to explore them.

## 7. Conclusion

Alison Lewis wrote that “at the beginning of the twenty-first century, ‘neutrality’ no longer always means ‘impartiality’ or ‘objectivity,’ but too often is taken to mean ‘indifference.’”<sup>61</sup>

To turn a blind eye to political and economic forces and determinants – the market and groups that maintain an inordinate amount of control over this market – while working as a gatekeeper of information is not objective. It is, instead, an irresponsible form of “moral relativism,”<sup>62</sup> but a moral relativism determined, in the last instance, by ruling ideologies. The counterhegemonic librarian advocates directly for those she serves, and she advocates directly for the integrity of librarianship as a politically conscious institution. If she does not have this power, she should fight for it.

Audre Lorde, a radical black lesbian feminist and practicing librarian, asserted that real change would never come by fighting the system using its own rules: “For the master’s tools will never dismantle the master’s house. They may allow us to temporarily beat him at his own game, but they will never enable us to bring about genuine change.”<sup>63</sup> Similarly, librarians who work within dominant ideologies will never be able to reform the academy. Lorde and the authors of this essay challenge the reader to a call to action. While this initially may be daunting, requiring academic librarians to question existing narratives of power, it is “only threatening to those women [and indeed, any marginalized group] who still define the master’s house as their only source of support.”<sup>64</sup> Counterhegemonic academic librarians need not rely on the master’s house for support but need to make themselves visible through action and scholarship to create networks of best practices and support.

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# Prisoners of Microfilm

## Freeing Voices of Dissent in the Underground Newspaper Collection

*“We are a people, and a people must have their own voice, and that voice is the underground press.”<sup>1</sup> - Thomas King Forcade*

### 1. Bad juju

I put the finishing touch on the display case in the lobby of our library, a sign in bold newsprint: “Come Explore the UPS Underground Newspaper Collection (1963-1975)!” Stepping back to admire my creation, I almost had to brace myself against the dizzying psychedelic collage of graphics. This display screamed not only “Look at me!” but “Damn! I’m cool!” And oh how cool it was covered with photos, comics, and covers from a wide range of colorful Vietnam-era ‘underground’ newspapers. The bright art of Black Panther’s Emory Douglas shouted “Power to the People!” Psychedelic covers of the *San Francisco Oracle* flashed Vedic Motifs, bearded gurus, and hookah-smoking shamans. Gilbert Sheldon’s *Fabulous Furry Freak Brothers* and Trina Robbins’ feminist superheroes playfully danced throughout the display. There were photos of protesters marching for civil rights, gay rights, women’s rights, and in opposition to the war in Vietnam. There were raised fists of solidarity, peace signs, concert posters, a real lava lamp (which I hoped wouldn’t burn the library down), and covers of the *Berkeley Barb*, *Avatar*, the *Los Angeles Free Press*, and many others. Books about the Vietnam-era underground press were featured prominently throughout the display, such as Ken Wachsberger’s extensive *Voices from the Underground* series and John McMillian’s *Smoking Typewriters: The Sixties Underground Press and the Rise of Alternative Media*

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*in America*. Inspired by its cover, I propped McMillian's book next to an old typewriter I'd decorated with flames soaring out of it and a scorched scroll rising from its platen inviting all to a presentation I planned to give at the end of the month on the underground press. As I continued to admire my work, I noticed two young college students approaching the display. I held my breath waiting for the accolades to roll in. After a few speechless moments of staring, one of the students shook his head, furrowed his brows, and exclaimed to his friend, "Man! There's some bad juju goin' on up in there." Oops! Not the response I was going for.

Nevertheless, the display eventually seemed to grow on folks and turned out to be quite a success. Faculty and students stopped to look at the spectacle, some even taking photographs. Handouts on the underground press were snatched up, and interest in the papers began to surface. A travelling exhibit of *The Great Speckled Bird*, Atlanta's underground paper from 1968-1976, was also on exhibit in the lobby. The exhibit, on loan from Georgia State University, was created to celebrate digitization of all issues of *The Bird*.<sup>2</sup> I'd planned and heavily promoted a month-long celebration of the Vietnam-era underground newspapers. Specifically, I wanted to educate students, faculty, and community members about our Underground Press Syndicate (UPS) Underground Newspaper Collection on microfilm.

Jacksonville State University is a medium-sized institution nestled in the foothills of the Appalachians. In a fairly conservative college town, far removed from radicalism, I was pleasantly surprised to discover this collection of over 500 alternative newspapers dating from 1963-1985 in our library. As a librarian working at one of the 109 libraries<sup>3</sup> worldwide which provide access to this resource, I knew I had hit upon a rare gem, one that needed to be explored, promoted, and used.<sup>4</sup> Now titled the Underground Press Collection and available from ProQuest, in 35mm microfilm,<sup>5</sup> this Collection began as a joint venture created by the Underground Press Syndicate and the Bell & Howell Company in the early 1970s. While united in opposition to the Vietnam War, the newspapers cover a diverse range of movements such as civil rights, women's rights, gay rights, American Indian issues, Black power, Eastern spirituality, alternative lifestyles, communal living, growing ecological awareness, the New Left, youth culture and, "oh yeah," a whole lot of sex, drugs, and rock 'n' roll. In this paper, I discuss the unique story of how this Collection came into existence, the role librarians can play in making the Collection more visible, and why, in our current political and cultural climate, this alternative media Collection is more relevant than ever. Also explored is the dilemma of making a microfilm collection accessible in a digital age. While students expressed great interest and curiosity in The Underground Newspaper Collection, its cumbersome format turned them away. Convince students to use *microfilm* in 2012? Dream on. Ultimately, unless librarians come up with ways to make this resource easier

to access, this Collection will remain unused and underappreciated – in effect, a prisoner of microfilm.

## 2. Fifth Estate Rising

Until six years ago, I'd never heard of the Underground Newspaper Collection nor did I know anything about the Vietnam-era underground press. My introduction to the Collection was pure happenstance. While shelving a box of microfilm, I noticed a set of microfilm titled the Underground Press Syndicate (UPS) Underground Newspaper Collection. What in the heck was the 'Underground Press Syndicate?' I began to peruse the index which went with the collection. The papers sported some pretty outrageous titles: *The Buddhist Third Class Junk Mail Oracle*, *Free Spaghetti Dinner*, *Peace Balloon*, *The Shinjoko Sutra*, *The Great Speckled Bird*, etc. My curiosity was instantly piqued. I randomly picked up one of the yellowing microfilm boxes and blew off the dust (these things obviously hadn't been used in years) and headed towards the microfilm readers. I turned out the lights, spun the microfilm through the machine, and like Alice falling down the rabbit hole, entered a psychedelic, funky alternative universe I never knew existed. I began tripping on the gospel of Timothy Leary: "Drop out! Modern Civilization is a dangerous insane process..."<sup>6</sup> I soaked up reviews of Beatles albums and photos of Jimi Hendrix. I marveled at the originality and artistry of the newspaper covers. I covered my mouth and gasped in shock at images of naked hippies intertwined in Kama Sutra positions and newspaper headlines which shouted "Fuck Hate!" I giggled at the antics of a couple of stoned comic book characters named the *Fabulous Furry Freak Brothers*. I screamed "hell, yeah!" to "Free John Sinclair!" I became teary-eyed reading the stories of servicemen who'd lost comrades in Vietnam. Hours later, my colleagues found me slumped over the microfilm reader, punch-drunk and in love. I've always been fascinated by sixties counterculture and, I confess, a little envious that having been born in 1970, I missed the entire scene. However, I had not been aware of the hundreds of Vietnam-era papers that "spread like weed"<sup>7</sup> from the late sixties and into the early seventies. This Collection of those newspapers provides a vivid snapshot of one of the most important cultural, anti-establishment youth movements in our Nation's history.

So, just what are the 'underground newspapers' in the Collection? Scholars of the underground press tend to agree that the *Los Angeles Free Press* was the first 'underground' newspaper, having been founded in 1964 by Art Kunkin on a mere budget of fifteen dollars.<sup>8</sup> In 1973, Thomas King Forcade, Director of the Underground Press Syndicate (UPS), chronicled the early history of the underground newspapers writing:

Some people say the underground press began with the socialist papers of the early 1900s, while others trace it either to the beatnik little magazines of the fifties or the *Village Voice*. While it is certainly true that there are some similarities between these early efforts and the current underground press, the latter is a separate and unique phenomenon with a history of its own. That history began with the founding of the *Los Angeles Free Press* in 1964.<sup>9</sup>

Certainly, many of the underground press writers may have been influenced by popular and well-established publications such as *Evergreen Review*, *Ramparts*, *The Realist* and the *Village Voice*, which were founded much earlier. These publications were critical of the establishment and, like the underground press, covered stories considered inappropriate by mainstream magazines and newspapers. Steven Brower describes *Evergreen Review*, published from 1955-1973, as a “groundbreaking journal which inspired readers with its call to ‘Join the Underground’.”<sup>10</sup> *Ramparts*, which was published in 1962, was described by *Time* as a rambunctious magazine packed with “a bomb in every issue.”<sup>11</sup> Dwight Garner argues that “*Ramparts* stood apart from the brawling underground press of the 1960s not only because of the quality of its writing, but for its élan, its aura of brewing drama.”<sup>12</sup> However, it’s doubtful that most ‘underground’ writers would agree with Garner’s assessment. There was no shortage of drama from the underground press. Unlike the underground newspapers, however, *Evergreen Review* and *Ramparts* were polished, well-financed magazines with widespread audiences.

Perhaps more connected with the sixties underground newspapers were *The Realist* and the *Village Voice*. *The Realist*, founded by Paul Krassner, described itself as “social- political – religious criticism and satire.”<sup>13</sup> The first issue of *The Realist*, which was published in 1958, was titled “An Angry Young Magazine.”<sup>14</sup> The *Village Voice* was founded in 1955 by Ed Fancher, Dan Wolf, John Wilcock, and Norman Mailer in Greenwich Village.<sup>15</sup> John Wilcock, recently dubbed by Steven Heller, as the “puppet master of the underground press,”<sup>16</sup> was not only responsible for co-founding one of the first underground newspapers, the *East Village Other* (the ‘other’ alternative to the *Village Voice*) but was also responsible for founding the Underground Press Syndicate (UPS), which was instrumental in the fast and far reaching expansion of the underground press. What set the ‘underground newspapers’ apart from *Evergreen Review*, *Ramparts* and the *Village Voice* was that they operated on shoe-string budgets, typically didn’t have a host of renowned literary contributors, weren’t glossy and commercial, were more grass-roots and local in their coverage, had short life spans, and perhaps, most importantly, set out to do more than just report the news. The underground press set out to *make* the news. The writers of the underground press often did not distinguish between their roles as activists

and journalists. Herein lies the uniqueness of the style of writing pioneered by the underground press. Reflecting on the mission of the underground papers, John Wilcock wrote “All of us underground publishers thought we were making history!”<sup>17</sup> In 1966, Walter Bowart warned readers about the growing acquisition of local dailies by larger firms with their “own axes to grind.”<sup>18</sup> In reaction to this ‘monopoly on the news,’ Bowart suggested that a “fifth estate” had emerged (the fourth estate traditionally refers to the press). He pointed out that “shoe string publications” were popping up everywhere throughout the United States, and he described them as follows:

These papers of the fifth estate or underground concern themselves with civil libertarian issues, the war in Vietnam, freedom of pleasure, freedom of privacy, and freedom to dissent in a time where cynicism – the traditional frame of mind for the journalist – is lacking in the moneyed press. The fifth estate is fighting for cynicisms reinstatement.<sup>19</sup>

Appropriately, one of the first underground newspapers, one which is still in publication, is titled *The Fifth Estate*.<sup>20</sup>

During the late sixties and into the early seventies, hundreds of underground newspapers were founded. In 1968, *Newsweek* attributed the underground press’s success to lack of coverage in the “dailies” of the youth counterculture movement, particularly opposition to the war in Vietnam.<sup>21</sup> Other factors included “the comparatively low overhead cost of offset printing methods and the whole new permissiveness made possible by the 1966 Supreme Court [ruling] defining hard-core pornography.”<sup>22</sup> Indeed, young people often seemed to taunt the establishment as they continued to push the boundaries of sexual expression in the underground press. Wilcock, noting the low costs of printing wrote, “any kid with dedication plus \$200 and a typewriter can go into the publishing business.”<sup>23</sup> According to Wilcock, most underground papers operated on a budget of “five hundred to one thousand dollars per issue.” Further aiding the young aspiring newspaper founders was “the development of a street sales force.”<sup>24</sup>

Underground newspapers weren’t strictly confined to the most liberal and radical centers of the United States. By the late 1960s, counterculture papers had emerged all over the country. The *Distant Drummer* was popular in Philadelphia, hipsters read the *Helix* in Seattle, and Madison, Wisconsin’s *Kaleidoscope* was considered “one of the most impressive” papers in the Midwest “with editions printed in Milwaukee and Chicago.”<sup>25</sup> James Danky, Librarian at the State Historical Society of Wisconsin, reported that by 1974, there were twenty underground newspapers in Madison, Wisconsin alone.<sup>26</sup> Well-known publications out West included three from Texas: *The Rag* (Austin), *Space City News* (Houston), and *Dallas Notes* (Dallas). In the Southeast,

young street vendors could be found hawking copies of *The Great Speckled Bird* (Atlanta), *NOLA Express* (New Orleans), *The Crocodile*, (Gainesville, Florida), and *The Kudzu* (Jackson, Mississippi). America's youth had caught newspaper fever! Even students in high schools began publishing their own 'undergrounds,' aided by the *New York High School Free Press*, where they battled "fascist" principals over the right to wear their hair long. A special issue of John Wilcock's *Other Scenes* featured a "do-it-yourself newspaper contest." The winner's newspaper would be published as a regular issue of *Other Scenes*, of which they would receive one hundred free copies, along with a cash prize of two hundred and fifty dollars. Contestants were urged to cover a variety of content from suggested categories: "politics, art, rock, sociology, revolution, astrology, dope, religion, ecology, fantasy, sex and photography."<sup>27</sup> As Thomas King Forcade wrote, "in cities and towns throughout the world the founding of an underground newspaper in that community has then made possible an entire culture which was impossible without a voice."<sup>28</sup> Abbie Hoffman echoed this notion, suggesting that the main role of the underground press was to provide a *space* for a movement that felt alienated by the straight news, remarking:

Let's start from the position that the most valuable thing about the underground press is that it is here. I don't know if that is what McLuhan means by the medium is the message, but the fact is that ... it looks different from the other press and that people see it. It is a viable manifestation of an alternative culture.<sup>29</sup>

The alternative press looked askance at corporate news sources. In the *Berkeley Barb's* "statement of purpose," Max Scherr wrote "if we do our job well, we hope to nettle that amorphous but thickhided establishment that so often nettles us..."<sup>30</sup> Indeed, it would seem that the *Barb* did its job exceedingly well. Between constant FBI harassment and lawsuits brought on by the Establishment, the *Barb* was constantly embroiled in controversy. The headlines of one *Barb* flashed "CIA Buys Barb."<sup>31</sup>

### 3. The Myth of Objectivity

The greatest difference between the underground press and mainstream news is that authors of underground papers dropped all pretense to objectivity. Maxine Ruvinsky, in a study on the characteristics of sixties underground press journalism, defines 'objectivity' as follows:

Objectivity referred to the mainstream belief in an objective reality which, mirror-like yields facts, which were presumed to exist in the

“real world” and add up to the truth; while subjectivity referred to the undergrounders’ belief in personal involvement as the only way to discover the facts left out (of the mainstream accounts), and hence the truth.<sup>32</sup>

Journalists of the underground press were also activists. Michael Kindman, editor of Michigan State University’s (MSU) *State News*, quit his job to start an alternative to the relatively tame campus paper. Kindman founded *The Paper* so he could freely express his views and write according to his conscience. In his memoir, Kindman writes that “the increasing pressure to be either an “objective” journalist or an activist, but not both was more than I could take.”<sup>33</sup> Kindman, a bright journalism student, was so bored and dissatisfied with his studies that he eventually dropped out altogether. “The journalism courses,” Kindman writes, “were unexciting, taught by traditionalist faculty with a heavy commitment to what we have since come to know as the myth of objectivity.”<sup>34</sup> He later joined Mel Lyman’s commune in Boston, Massachusetts to write for the *Avatar*.<sup>35</sup> “Thorne Dreyer and Victoria Smith of Austin’s *The Rag* argued that ‘objectivity’ fails to put “isolated events and data into context.”<sup>36</sup> “Radical journalism” strived for something beyond presenting mere facts. The underground press sought to provide reflection and open up a dialogue with its readers on the *implication* of these facts. Dreyer and Smith explain the shortcomings of journalistic objectivity:

Not only does the commercial media fail to tie together the facts it presents, but it actually destroys a sense of continuity and history in the minds of the American people. In the name of journalistic objectivity, it reports events; the readers are supposedly free to make their own judgments. But the people read their daily papers and make no judgment at all, except that most of what they read doesn’t relate much to their daily lives.<sup>37</sup>

Abbie Hoffman stressed the activist role of the underground press, remarking that “Underground editors ... have to eventually evolve into the organizers.”<sup>38</sup> Also related to the subjective nature of the underground press is the writers’ relationship with their readers. Min, in a case study on the *Texas Observer*, discovered that the writers of the *Observer* characterized “their audience accurately in terms of demographics, political ideology, and political activism.” According to Min, scholars of mass communication “have argued that professional journalists do not know their actual audiences.”<sup>39</sup> The underground press’s close relationship to their audience (weren’t they also their own audience?) is in direct contrast to “objectivism journalism” which retained a professional distance from its readership.

Underground papers spurred readers to action by announcing when and where protests, rock concerts, be-ins, and other gatherings would occur. The youth movement had a pervasive fervor and energy in which communication between the underground press and its readers was essential. Many of the papers published reader feedback, along with exposes of the cultural and political events that were unfolding around them at lightening pace. In a pre-Facebook age, young people needed a place to voice their opinions about issues such as the Columbia University Protests of 1968, the assassinations of Martin Luther King Jr. and Bobby Kennedy, the Civil Rights Movement, and other transforming events that were rapidly taking place. An exploration of the late 1960s underground newspapers reveals a genuine sense amongst counterculture youth that America was on the verge of a cultural, social, and political revolution. The underground press was the voice of the revolution. Dreyer and Smith wrote "...there is a serious revolutionary movement struggling to be born; there's something to write about."<sup>40</sup> Indeed, there was plenty to write about. The underground press provided readers with a channel for communicating with each other in an age when social media didn't exist. The Underground Newspaper Collection is a record of how thousands of young people reacted to the tumultuous times in which they lived.

The publications in the Underground Newspaper Collection are valuable in their coverage of political and social issues from a perspective different from that of mainstream media. For historians and sociologists, the historical record is not complete without the underground press. It was often the underground press who first broached topics not deemed worthy or appropriate for the regular news. As Forcade wrote, "...spin through the microfilm copies of the *New York Times* for the period 1964-1973 and then spin thru the UPS microfilms for this same period. The difference is staggering, beautiful, and clear-cut."<sup>41</sup> Rodger Streitmatter, in his historical study of the dissident press in the United States, points out that the underground press was the first to "legitimize rock 'n' roll."<sup>42</sup> There's no denying that rock 'n' roll was one of the greatest legacies of the sixties and early seventies and some of the most thoughtful critiques of the music and musicians of the era can be found in the Underground Newspaper Collection. *Rolling Stone*, founded in 1967, had more than its share of competition from the underground press who often lambasted the commercial upstart for its capitalist belief "in the cosmic dollar."<sup>43</sup>

The underground press was ahead of its time in its coverage of many issues. For example, *Gay Sunshine* first reported on the inhumane treatment of gay inmates in Vacaville Prison in California. As a "cure for homosexuality," doctors forced shock therapy on gay men by attaching electrical wires to their genitals and delivering shocks. Gay men were also forced to take drugs and carry I.D. cards identifying themselves as homosexuals.<sup>44</sup> This news was later confirmed by the *San Francisco Chronicle*, but those who followed the

underground news were already aware of and protesting against this treatment of gay men in prison.<sup>45</sup> The underground press reported on the atrocities coming out of Vietnam years before the media giants dared question the United States' involvement in the war. Streitmatter writes that "after the Tet Offensive, it was as if the country's leading journalists had simply combed through the back files of the anti-war press and then repeated the statements that had been published there five, six, and seven years earlier."<sup>46</sup> Forcade, Director of the UPS, told a reporter from the *Philadelphia Inquirer* that the underground press wrote articles on ecology, sexism and protests against the war in Vietnam long before they appeared in the "daily papers."<sup>47</sup> Forcade even boasted "Hell, we published what was in the Pentagon Papers long before it appeared in the *New York Times*, but we didn't have proof."<sup>48</sup> In "How we Covered Wounded Knee," Rex Weiner, a writer for the UPS, reflected on how the underground press covered the American Indian Movement (AIM) occupation of Wounded Knee, South Dakota, on the Pine Ridge Reservation in 1973. Weiner noted that anyone looking for information on the occupation should check out a special issue of *Akwesasne Notes* (Roosevelt, New York) which gave a "day-by-day chronicle of the Wounded Knee occupation over a month's period." According to Weiner, the coverage was so thorough that the issue deserved to be published as a book.<sup>49</sup> One wonders how many gems like this are hidden in the Underground Newspaper Collection and how many go unread by sociologists and historians who might otherwise gain a different perspective.

#### 4. Rainbow Newspaper Consciousness

Allen Cohen, founder of the *San Francisco Oracle*, wrote that the *Oracle* began as a "rainbow newspaper dream" where "people were exploding with rainbow newspaper consciousness."<sup>50</sup> In hindsight, it seems that Cohen's dream may have come true. While most of the newspapers in the Underground Newspaper Collection, particularly through the years 1964-1973, were united in their opposition to the war in Vietnam, their content and characteristics were as diverse as the colors in a rainbow. Only a few papers had significantly high circulation numbers; the biggest sellers tended to be located in areas with large concentrations of radicalism. By 1968, there were an estimated 150 underground newspapers with a total circulation of twenty million readers.<sup>51</sup> The *Los Angeles Free Press* had the greatest circulation with an estimated readership of 68,000. The *Barb* had a circulation of 50,000, *Avatar's* circulation was 35,000 and the *East Village Other's* was 40,000. Liberation News Service, an organization that supplied packets of political and international news for the underground press to add to their newspapers, served about 300 underground newspapers, including 100 college newspapers.<sup>52</sup> The *Black Panther Intercommunal News*

*Service* was one of the most successful underground papers, in spite of constant harassment by the FBI, with a readership of 100,000 at its peak.<sup>53</sup>

Some of the papers focused on youth culture while others were highly political in nature. Schisms occasionally erupted over cultural versus political content. Papers that focused on revolution and civil rights often charged cultural lifestyle papers, such as the psychedelic *San Francisco Oracle*, with apathy. While the readers of the *Oracle* sought enlightenment and freedom from society by ‘tuning in’ and ‘dropping out,’ readers of *The Movement* (San Francisco) or the *Black Panther Intercommunal News Service* (San Francisco) sought revolution through militant resistance and protest. In an “Open Letter to Weather Underground from Panther 21” which was published in the *East Village Other*, the following warning was given:

We can also see the possibilities that exist for you to develop the movement so that as revolutionaries you change and shape the cultural revolution ... We can also see that you feel – and rightly so – the need for more support from the mother country youth. But we feel that most of the mother country youth culture communes smack heavily with escapism...<sup>54</sup>

How could a revolution possibly be won by a bunch of hippies tripping on acid or listening to Beatles albums while stoned? Because the Weather Underground Organization (WPA) really *was* underground, the Black Panthers were using the widely read *East Village Other* to communicate with them. However, this opened a dialogue among general readers as well on the ethics of peace and militant resistance. The battle of flower power versus revolution was a constant theme in the underground newspapers, particularly during 1968-1970.

According to Dreyer and Smith, by 1968, underground papers had become more political and revolutionary. Dreyer and Smith suggested that it was at the underground press conference in Madison, Wisconsin on Thanksgiving of 1968 that the true “media of the revolution came together for the first time” to “discuss their new identity.”<sup>55</sup> During this conference, attendees discussed the “need to work together and ... to begin the development of a political strategy for the underground press.”<sup>56</sup> Dreyer and Smith concluded that the conference in Madison defined a “transitional period” in the underground press in response to “escalating repression” from the Establishment and the growing realization that underground papers needed to be “politically relevant to an America beset by potentially fatal traumas and to a movement just realizing the fantastic complexity of the enemy and the task at hand.”<sup>57</sup> The counterculture movement was maturing. As Dreyer and Smith noted, the underground press conference in Madison was “a far cry from the *San Francisco Oracle’s* original pow-wow.”<sup>58</sup>

The first underground press conference had been held near San Francisco on Easter 1967.<sup>59</sup> The conference in Madison in '68 was the fourth meeting of the underground press and, according to Dreyer and Smith, the most productive and meaningful.<sup>60</sup> That this 'transition' took place in the span of just one year points to the tumultuous, fast-paced tempo at which socio-political events were unfolding during the late 1960s.

Papers which focused on hippie 'drop out' culture tended to flourish in the late sixties. One of the most well known was the *San Francisco Oracle* published from 1966 to 1968. The *Oracle* captured the pinnacle of the "summer of love" in Haight-Ashbury, covering subjects such as expanding consciousness, experimentation with Eastern spirituality, and human be-ins. Contributors to the *Oracle* included writers, poets, thinkers, and artists such as Timothy Leary, Gary Snyder, Ken Kesey, Alan Watts, Allen Ginsberg, Michael Bowen, and Allen Cohen. The *Oracle* was well known for its colorful, psychedelic graphics.

Hundreds of underground newspapers began sprouting up on college campuses, especially those with chapters of Students for a Democratic Society (SDS). *New Left Notes* was the official paper of SDS and focused heavily on New Left ideology. Papers that sprung up on or near college campuses throughout the United States included *The Paper* (near Michigan State University in East Lansing), *The Rag* (near the University of Texas at Austin), *Old Mole* (near Harvard University in Cambridge, Massachusetts), *The Great Speckled Bird* (associated with Emory University students in Atlanta) and *High Gauge* (near the University of Alabama in Tuscaloosa). *The Paper* was one of the first five publications invited to become a member of the Underground Press Syndicate. One of *The Paper's* most widely read stories delved into involvement of faculty from Michigan State University's political-science department who had "served as advisors" to the United States' supported "anti-Communist regime" in Saigon during the 1950s.<sup>61</sup> A few papers attempted to appeal to worker's rights and focused on Unions; these included the *New Age* in Buffalo, New York and *Rising Up Angry* in Chicago. However, the working class sector never really identified itself with the counterculture movement, particularly its 'hippie' lifestyle aspects. *Left Face* (Ft. McClellan, Anniston, Alabama) was one of hundreds of GI newspapers which were published on or near the bases of military servicemen. Many of the writers documented racism within the military, spoke out against the draft, and shocked readers with gruesome tales and images of atrocities emerging from the War in Vietnam. There were papers that addressed the concerns of ethnic groups in the United States such as *Free Palestine* (Washington, DC). The Young Lords Movement (YLM) explored the plight of Puerto Ricans in *Palante* (Bronx, New York). *Dine' Baa Hani* (Fort Defiance, Arizona) focused on social issues of the Navajo during 1970 to 1973. *Akwesasne Notes* was one of several that covered American Indian topics. Other papers championed civil rights, women's rights, and gay rights.

Women's rights were the central focus of *Rat* (New York City), *It Ain't Me Babe* (Berkeley), *Ain't I a Woman* (Iowa), *Off Our Backs* (Washington, DC) and *EveryWoman* (Los Angeles). In 1970, the women workers at RAT staged a coup and took over the entire paper, opening up *LiberRATion* in response to their allegedly sexist male co-workers who had relegated them to secretarial or other menial staff positions. In her widely circulated essay, "Goodbye to All That," printed in *Rat's* 'take over' edition, Robin Morgan wrote:

Goodbye, goodbye forever, counterfeit Left, counterleft, male-dominated cracked-glass mirror reflection of the Amerikan Nightmare. Women are the real Left. We are rising, powerful in our unclean bodies; bright glowing mad in our inferior brains; wild hair flying, wild eyes staring, wild voices keening ... We are rising with a fury older and potentially greater than any force in history, and this time we will be free or no one will survive. Power to the people or to none. All the way down this time.<sup>62</sup>

*Gay Sunshine* (San Francisco) and *Fag Rag* (Boston) were two of the first papers to openly address Gay and Lesbian rights following the Stonewall Riots in 1969. According to Charles Shirley, "*Gay Sunshine's* twelve year history of intellectual dignity on the cutting edge of the gay experience remains unmatched by any gay publication."<sup>63</sup> Published by Winston Leyland, *Gay Sunshine* featured interviews with renowned literary figures such as "William Burroughs, Jean Genet, Allen Ginsberg, Christopher Isherwood, Gore Vidal and Tennessee Williams."<sup>64</sup>

Counterculture papers even flourished (or attempted to) in the Deep South, particularly around universities with Southern Student Organizing Committees (SSOC) which was the South's closest affiliation with the Students for a Democratic Society (SDS). In a letter to the *Inquisition* in Charlotte, North Carolina, a reader pleased with the paper's existence wrote, "Charlotte needs you. Otherwise it would probably still be a bummer. Someday I might tell you about the poppies in my backyard."<sup>65</sup> Many Southern underground newspapers did an excellent job covering the Civil Rights Movement. Atlanta's *Great Speckled Bird* announced "a new spirit is rising in the South, the closed society of the crackers is cracking."<sup>66</sup>

Some papers, such as *Modern Utopia* (Berkeley), explored communal living. *Northwest Passage* (Bellmingsham, Washington) was known for its coverage of environmental issues. Never quite having the feel of an 'undergrounder,' *Mother Earth News* (Madison, Ohio) emerged in 1970, describing itself as a "monthly how to" targeted for the "doers. The ones who make it all happen."<sup>67</sup> In the first issue, the editors noted that the publication would place "heavy emphasis on alternate lifestyles, ecology, working with nature and doing more with

less.”<sup>68</sup> *Edcentric*, published by the Center for Educational Reform, explored radical reforms in education and addressed educational needs in third world countries. An issue published in 1971 focused on education in North Vietnam. *International Times (iT)*, *Black Dwarf*, and *Gandolph’s Garden* were published in London. *iT* reemerged into the digital age in November, 2011. All issues of *iT* have been digitized and are now freely available online.<sup>69</sup> *Black Dwarf* published articles on socialism. *Gandolph’s Garden* was a mystical, ‘hippie’ publication.

*Georgia Straight* became a highly successful Canadian underground paper founded in Vancouver by Dan McLeod in 1967.<sup>70</sup> Still owned by the McLeod family and in publication today, *Georgia Straight* boasts a circulation of 804,000 readers.<sup>71</sup> In exploring the UPS Collection, I came across one politically conservative publication, seemingly out of place, entitled *The New Advocate* which claimed to be “Staten Island’s Only Conservative Voice in Print.” In an article on the threat of “Guerilla Warfare” in the United States, readers were reminded of their “duty to urge ‘tricky Dick,’ and Attorney General John N. Mitchell to prosecute” radical left-wing protestors for “treason.”<sup>72</sup> Hmm.

According to an estimate in the 1973-1974 Directory of the Underground Press Syndicate, the underground press had “20 million readers, 83% of whom were 25 years of age or younger.”<sup>73</sup> What really makes the underground newspapers particularly unique is their colorful, bold, and often shocking graphics. Many of the covers are beautifully illustrated, dazzling, and psychedelic. Another characteristic of the underground press is its mixture of serious issues with adolescent humor and zany urban myth. As Harvey Wasserman (Liberation News Service) noted “we were not only political activists but comedians.”<sup>74</sup> Abe Peck (*Chicago Seed*) writes about the “sheer balls-to-the-wall, nose to the grindstone, laughing-all-the-way daily life” he experienced working in the underground press.<sup>75</sup> Peck remembers that the largest folder in the office of the *Chicago Seed* was labeled “No More Goddamned Hippie Poetry!”<sup>76</sup>

Readers of the underground press regularly followed their favorite comix strips (X for alternative). While the written voices of the counterculture tell the stories of the underground press, Paul Buhl writes that the underground comix “epitomize” and “visualize” the “fabled 1960s.”<sup>77</sup> Robert Crumb’s *Mr. Natural*, R. Cobb’s biting satire, Gilbert Shelton’s *Fabulous Furry Freak Brothers*, Spain Rodriguez’s *Trashman*, and Trina Robbin’s feminist characters (to name a few) were widely published and adored by underground readers. According to Patrick Rosenkranz, underground comix had an influence all their own:

[They] became an ascendant force on the cultural zeitgeist, and a popular lifestyle accoutrement through the sheer audacity of the stories, the explicitness of the sex, and the wild-and-crazy graphic experimentation, along with a big “Fuck you if you don’t like it!” to authority.<sup>78</sup>

Indeed, no history on the underground press would be complete without covering the massive popularity and importance of underground comix. The Underground Newspaper Collection is a goldmine for scholars and students interested in cartoon and comics art.

Like the underground comix, popular columns were featured regularly in the underground press such as the *Barb's* "Dr. Hippocrates" by Eugene Schoenfeld, who answered questions about "sex, dope, and personal hang-ups." Others included the *Los Angeles Free Press's* "Ask Dr. Strawberry," *The East Village Other's* "Poor Paranoid's Almanac," Larry Lipton's "Radio Free America," Ralph Nader's weekly column "In the Public Interest," Charles Bukowski's "Notes of a Dirty Old Man," Julian Schuman's "China Report" from Peking, Saul-Paul Sirag's "The New Alchemy," and Phineas Israeli's "Maggie's Farm."<sup>79</sup> Readers also expected the underground press to cover the rock 'n' roll scene. Music fans enthusiastically snatched up underground papers, some solely for the papers' record reviews and in-depth critiques of rock songs. In a recent article for the *New Yorker*, Maria Bustillos wrote about the influence rock critic and underground writer Lester Bangs of *Creem Magazine* had on her coming-of-age reading choices.<sup>80</sup> Bustillos writes:

As much as I relied on his irresistible humor and wisdom for advice on how best to blow my birthday money at the Licorice Pizza Record Store, I sought him out still more to learn about books, in particular the forbidden and arcane books no conventional teacher would mention.<sup>81</sup>

Books, poetry, and films censored or ignored by the Establishment were often covered only by the underground press.

## 5. From Underground to Alternative

Far from being 'underground,' the counterculture press was always a source of interest to the mainstream press. In "How they Cover Us," Forcade wrote "hardly a week goes by without a reporter calling the UPS for a story on the underground press."<sup>82</sup> In fact, barely had the Underground Press Syndicate (UPS) been founded in 1966 when *Time*<sup>83</sup> 'broke' the story about this wild coalition of hippie newspapers.

At an Underground Press Syndicate conference in Boulder, Colorado, the consensus among attendees was to change the syndicate's name to the Alternative Press Syndicate (APS).<sup>84</sup> In a 1973 UPS Directory, Forcade explained this decision, "though we are the only press uniquely equipped to go underground at a moment's notice, what we are really about is viable social alternatives."<sup>85</sup>

Forcade expressed his distaste for the term 'underground' as early as 1968, complaining;

Underground is a sloppy word and a lot of us are sorry we got stuck with it. "Underground" is meaningless, ambiguous, irrelevant, wildly imprecise, undefinitive, derivative, uncopyrighted, uncontrollable and used up.<sup>86</sup>

Papers that might have actually been 'underground' would include the hundreds of GI newspapers published by servicemen. Even more 'underground' were those of prisoners, who had their own underground press organization, the Prisoners' Digest International (PDI). In the preface to Joseph W. Grant's recently published book on the PDI, Black Panther journalist Mumia Abu-Jamal writes, "imagine, if you will, that you are in a maximum security prison ... and you want to put out a newspaper. No you don't get it. Not an administratively approved, guard-censored newspaper. An *underground newspaper*."<sup>87</sup> There were truly underground organizations who used underground newspapers to publish 'open letters' and 'communiqués.' Such groups included the Weather Underground Organization (WUO), Black Liberation Army (BLA), The Symbionese Liberation Army (SLA) and the New World Liberation Front (NWLF).<sup>88</sup>

In an article for the underground press, Gabrielle Schang, staff member of the UPS, discussed the complexities involved in publishing communiqués from underground organizations, particularly if an underground newspaper was already under the watchful eye of the FBI. She asked fellow underground press members to ponder the question "What if you received a communiqué from a group purporting to be underground? Would you print it? How would you authenticate it?"<sup>89</sup> Most of the papers in the Underground Newspaper Collection, however, screamed like the protesters to be accounted for and heard. As Forcade wrote:

The underground ideas and lifestyle have merged into the mainstream of thought everywhere in books, plays, films, and advertising. Even the established press has adopted our new journalistic styles and our role as questioners of authority.<sup>90</sup>

The established press had, indeed, taken notice of the underground press, some with curiosity and others with pure disdain.

An article in *Time* described "most underground newspapers" as "a garish amalgam of barnyard prose, bare bosoms, revolutionary tracts, and sex-oriented want ads."<sup>91</sup> In this same issue, the underground press was even accused of censorship:

Despite their strong editorial stance against all forms of censorship, the underground papers have just got together and imposed a censorship of their own. Advertisers no longer may plug their products with any forms of the words 'liberation' or 'revolution.'<sup>92</sup>

Because it smacked of Capitalism, advertising was always a tricky issue for the cash-strapped, fledgling underground papers. Record companies, head shops, trendy clothing shops, and book stores were often their biggest source of advertising revenue. On the one hand, advertising allowed newspapers to reduce the costs of papers to readers or, even better, give them away for free. On the other hand, not having advertisers meant raising the price of papers in order to cover overhead costs.

## 6. Birth of the Underground Press Syndicate (UPS)

The Underground Press Syndicate (UPS) was instrumental in propelling the tremendous growth and expansion of underground newspapers worldwide, particularly between the years 1964-1973. In 1973, Forcade reported that there were over 300 members of the UPS with an estimated readership of twenty million.<sup>93</sup> Conceived in 1966 by staff members of the *East Village Other (EVO)* in New York City, the general idea of the UPS was to serve as a loose coalition between the *EVO*, the *Los Angeles Free Press*, the *Berkeley Barb*, *The Paper* (East Lansing, Michigan), and *The Fifth Estate* (Detroit) to swap papers and allow each paper the ability to freely reprint (with credits) each other's news stories, comics, and columns.<sup>94</sup> According to Wilcock, no one quite remembers exactly why they chose to call it the "Underground Press Syndicate" He remembers throwing in the suggestion "underground," having been impressed (while living in wartime Europe) by the French *Marquis* (underground).<sup>95</sup> On being invited to join the UPS, Michael Kindman (*The Paper*), had this to say:

We did look underground enough ... to earn an invitation to help in the haphazard formation of the Underground Press Syndicate, a mutual-self-help-or other which from the first has captured everyone's imagination ... Almost needless to say the UPS is not well organized. Mainly it is a mixed bag of publications none of whose respective bags is easy to figure out.<sup>96</sup>

The syndicate's vagueness was also echoed by Forcade who suggested that the UPS was more of an "appearance" which "does not attempt to speak for any underground paper's politics or cultural views or act as their conscience."<sup>97</sup> Emphasizing the practical, everyday work performed by the syndicate Forcade

wrote, “UPS is part of the plumbing which does things which someone has to do but nobody wants to.”<sup>98</sup> *Time* described the UPS as a “vague alliance” in which papers “hope to exchange articles, columns and cartoons, hire one agency to solicit advertising for all of them and divide up the income.” The story was accompanied by photos of the first five underground newspaper founders who banded together to form the UPS; Alan Katzman (*East Village Other*), Art Kunkin (*Los Angeles Free Press*), Max Scherr (*Berkeley Barb*), Harvey Ovshinsky (*The Fifth Estate*), and Michael Kindman (*The Paper*).<sup>99</sup>

According to Steven Heller, the significance of the UPS is that it provided underground newspapers with “almost unlimited access to inexpensive content-text and image.”<sup>100</sup> By 1968, UPS had expanded from five papers to over 150 papers across the United States and even into Europe, Australia, and Canada. Because papers swapped stories with each other, counterculture news not covered in mainstream papers made its way from the more radical centers of California and New York, into places such as Jackson, Mississippi fairly quickly. In a pre-Internet age, the UPS allowed alternative news to flow very effectively. At a UPS conference in Ann Arbor, Michigan, one coordinator described the underground press as “three hundred fingers.” UPS’s role was to “make these fingers into a fist.”<sup>101</sup> In addition to the UPS, there were at least four other alternative news gathering organizations that helped supply the underground press with national and international news. These groups included Liberation News Service, New York News Service, Alternative Features Service and Pacific News Service.<sup>102</sup> The UPS also had several overseas offices that attempted to disseminate and organize underground newspapers in different countries. The UPS Europe office was maintained by Ian King, a homeless writer who hated to travel but whose mailing address in England seemed to change with every issue of *Magic Ink*, their official newsletter.<sup>103</sup> A perusal of all of the *Magic Inks* published in the Collection humorously details the trials and tribulations of managing the UPS Europe office. In the August 1973 issue of *Magic Ink*, King blames delay of publication on a series of unfortunate events:

We were searched by the Drugs Squad while leaving a party, had head lice the size of mosquitoes, bronchial asthma, one of the staff members destroyed a doctor’s fence whilst driving Bath Arts Workshop’s van, and Igor, our dog, has an abscess on his arse.<sup>104</sup>

And the situation for *Magic Ink* continued to deteriorate with King’s dismal report in another issue that “UPS Europe has no money, no home and, from feedback from the last *Magic Ink*, no readers.”<sup>105</sup> In one issue, King ordered readers to staple and number the pages, themselves, confessing “This issue is late-it is badly produced.”<sup>106</sup> In *Smoking Typewriters*, McMillian writes that by 1968 the UPS in New York was “in total chaos” and “broke.”<sup>107</sup> Luckily, a long-

haired ruffian with a passion for hippie ‘mags’ and a business degree to boot came blazing into Greenwich Village in a 1946 Chevrolet school bus. Straight out of Phoenix, Arizona, the “Reverend Forcade,”<sup>108</sup> singlehandedly whipped the UPS into shape and ensured the preservation of hundreds of underground newspapers by creating the UPS Underground Newspaper Collection.

## 7. Bell bottoms & Bell & Howell: wacky work in Wooster

The year was 1970. A clunky old school bus filled with a bunch of ‘hippies’ and stacks of underground newspapers rolled into Wooster, Ohio. Their destination: the Microfilm Division of the Bell & Howell Company. The company put their groovy new business partners up in a hotel for the night. The next day, staff from the Underground Press Syndicate and the Bell & Howell Company began filming the first batch of what would ultimately become the UPS Underground Newspaper Collection. Bell & Howell began offering Underground Newspaper Collection sets to libraries as early as 1970. After the Collection’s initial start-up in 1970, staff at the UPS office would ship batches of newspapers to the Bell & Howell Company to microfilm into the mid-1980s. The last set of papers was microfilmed in 1986. When completed, the UPS Underground Newspaper Collection provided access to underground newspapers published from 1963-1985.<sup>109</sup>

The story behind the Underground Newspaper Collection is both amusing and remarkable. It also demonstrates how one person with a great love and passion for the underground press created an amazing resource in which hundreds of counterculture newspapers have been preserved in libraries for scholars, students, and interested folks to enjoy for decades to come. While Thomas King Forcade, the man behind this remarkable feat is no longer with us (he committed suicide in 1978),<sup>110</sup> the UPS Collection allows the papers Forcade dedicated so much of his life’s energy in supporting and defending to live on. As Forcade waxed not-so-eloquently before President Richard Nixon’s Commission on Obscenity and Pornography in 1970 in defense of the underground press, “these goddamned papers are our lives and nobody shall take our lives away with your goddamned laws ... So fuck off, and fuck censorship.”<sup>111</sup> I’d like to think that Forcade would be happy to know that, because of his tireless efforts these “goddamned papers” are still here, still waiting to be read by a new generation of rabble-rousers.

“Born as Kenneth Gary Goodson in Berkeley, California in 1945,”<sup>112</sup> Thomas King Forcade was an enigmatic figure. Today, Forcade seems to be most well known as the founder of *High Times*, that glossy, popular ‘Playboy’ of pot. Forcade made national headlines in the 1970s for the aforementioned testimony he provided at the Commission on Obscenity. His speech might

have gone unrecorded had he not topped it off by throwing a whipped cream pie in the face of the chairman upon his conclusion.<sup>113</sup> He also debuted in the regular news for founding the Zippies (Yippies with a Zip!). The Zippies, who, unlike the Yippies, wouldn't be "McGoverned," caused a bit of a stir with their shenanigans at both the 1972 Democratic National and Republican Conventions in Miami Beach, Florida.<sup>114</sup> While in Miami, Forcade was charged with and eventually acquitted of, firebombing charges. He also made the national news over a bizarre legal dispute with Abbie Hoffman over, of all things, a book titled *Steal this Book*.<sup>115</sup>

Despite these headline, there is very little written about the life of Forcade. Bill Weinberg, writer for *Cannabis Culture*, dubbed Forcade as the "unsung hero of the counterculture" writing that he "changed American culture as much as his confederates Abbie Hoffman and Larry Flynt."<sup>116</sup> According to Weinberg, much of the world knows little about Forcade because he wanted it that way; "he labored behind the scenes" and "shunned the spotlight."<sup>117</sup> Michael Chance, writing for *Take Over*, described Forcade as "an underground publisher, international smuggler, radical activist, and self-made millionaire."<sup>118</sup> According to Chance, Forcade grew up in Phoenix, Arizona, obtained a business degree from the University of Utah, served in Air Force briefly, and around 1967, turned into a bit of a hippie.<sup>119</sup> He bought a 1946 Chevy School bus, dubbed himself the "Reverend Forcade," and started an underground newspaper titled the *Orpheus*.<sup>120</sup> Forcade also began collecting underground newspapers and, it seems, until his death, never stopped collecting them. In his bus, Forcade began building a library of underground newspapers. In fact, Forcade had amassed so many underground newspapers that he decided to call up John Wilcock at the *East Village Other* in New York City to offer his assistance with the Underground Press Syndicate.<sup>121</sup>

John Wilcock, one of the UPS founders, remembers returning from his travels abroad to find the UPS in complete disarray. At that point in his life, Wilcock couldn't devote the time needed to 'fix' the syndicate so he was quite relieved when he got a call from a "Tom Forcade" in Phoenix who said he had a collection of papers and asked if Wilcock could use some help. Wilcock recalls welcoming Forcade as a partner (though he'd never even heard of him). He explained to Forcade that UPS was "financed – in a minuscule way – by group subscriptions whereby Time-Life [publishing company] would pay \$25 and be guaranteed copies of all member papers."<sup>122</sup> According to Wilcock, Forcade wasted no time in moving to New York City. He became Director of UPS and came up with a more lucrative idea for funding the fledgling UPS.<sup>123</sup> In what Michael Chance called Forcade's "greatest coup," Tom formed a partnership with the Bell & Howell Company "to create a microfilm collection of every underground newspaper published in America and abroad."<sup>124</sup> An article in the *Philadelphia Inquirer* on the UPS reported on Forcade's savvy wheeling

and dealing, stating “UPS is not financed as you would expect ... The money comes from no less a capitalist venture than Bell & Howell, which pays UPS about \$10,000 a year to supply it with underground papers.”<sup>125</sup> This ‘venture’ became the UPS Underground Newspaper Collection which consists of nearly five hundred boxes of microfilm reels of well over eight hundred underground newspapers.

According to Chance, Forcade was “a tireless shit worker spending hours on the phone and typing letters to pin down and enumerate the shadowy ranks of the underground press.” Within a year of arrival, he had “...transformed UPS into an efficient organization.”<sup>126</sup> In addition to obtaining the microfilm contract with Bell & Howell, which funded the UPS and provided royalties to member newspapers, Forcade also advanced the underground press by sponsoring UPS Conferences, seeking advertising sources for papers, publishing marketing research on the underground press, aiding members with legal defense, promoting the papers, publishing extensive membership directories, and providing information about distributors.<sup>127</sup> Forcade also published and sold a booklet titled *How to Publish an Underground Paper* (not in the UPS collection), and “received accreditation to the Senate and House Press Galleries.”<sup>128</sup> He was turned down by the White House, however, for reasons even the *New York Times* could not ascertain.<sup>129</sup> In the September 1971 issue of *Free Ranger Intertribal News Service*, Forcade declared that he was suing Richard Nixon and the government to provide cause as to why he was considered a “security risk and to demand admittance to the White House Press Corps.”<sup>130</sup>

If the state of UPS was in chaos prior to Forcade taking over the helm, the various official newsletters which seem to begin with his arrival reveal that he ran a pretty tight ship, at least as tight as one could run with a “vague alliance” of hundreds of often fledgling counterculture papers. The official UPS newsletters published from 1970-1985 provide excellent information on how the UPS operated, the state of the underground press during different time periods, its interaction with members, and the ‘business side’ to managing the syndicate. The official UPS newspapers also mirror the characteristics of the underground papers they represented throughout the years. All of the newsletters are available in the Underground Newspaper Collection and go by various titles such as *Free Ranger Intertribal News Service*, *Underground Press Service*, *Underground Press Revue*, *Alternative Press Revue*, *Alternative Journalism Review* and *Alternative Media*. The later publications, *Alternative Journalism Review* and *Alternative Media*, are quite different in characteristics from their more counterculture predecessors with more professional and in-depth reports, such as Chip Berlet’s “Carving up the Constitution,” an in-depth investigative piece on the government’s attack on the press.<sup>131</sup>

The official newsletters published throughout the UPS’s lifespan provide a wealth of data including member feedback. Letters from member newspapers

regarding their satisfaction or dissatisfaction with the syndicate, as well as their trials and tribulations running an underground newspaper are published in the newsletters. The UPS newsletters also provide information on advertising, distribution, copyright, and other issues of importance to their members. In addition, the newsletters often reprinted 'trending' stories, comics, or articles that were currently making a buzz amongst the undergrounds. While there are hundreds of newspapers in the UPS collection, the official UPS newsletters serve as a sort of anthology. They're great sources for providing samples of some of the most popular stories and best articles published by the underground press during different time periods.

The UPS's success can be attributed in part to Forcade's excellent business skills. In the 1973 UPS Directory, Forcade, hoping to attract advertising sources, argued that the underground press was a ripe market for advertisers pointing out that "the legendary Woodstock, which had some 500,000 in attendance was advertised almost exclusively in the underground press."<sup>132</sup> He also pointed out that regular media sources are largely ignored by the "subculture served by the underground press" writing that:

Most of the readers do not read newspapers, watch television or listen to conventional radio. If they do, they have little respect for such media or the advertisements found there. Thus the underground press, to some extent, holds a monopoly position with this huge subculture.<sup>133</sup>

Forcade also recognized that because of the sheer diversity of UPS newspapers, the UPS, itself, had to be "somewhat anarchistic" in order to meet "the basic needs of the underground press."<sup>134</sup> Forcade reported that the UPS had expanded to such a degree that there were official UPS offices in Argentina, London, and Hong Kong.<sup>135</sup> In *Smoking Typewriters: The Sixties Underground Press and the Rise of Alternative Media in America*, John McMillian devotes an entire chapter to the UPS with lots of tidbits from folks who had worked at the UPS office in New York City with Forcade.<sup>136</sup> One such person was Rex Weiner, who recalled that in the middle of the UPS office was "a huge tie-dyed tent" and "a rock'n'roll band living there, and a bunch of really hot babes walking around."<sup>137</sup> There seemed to be a method to the madness, however, since the UPS lasted until 1985.

Libraries had several options of purchasing papers from the UPS. For \$50 a library could receive all newspapers in the UPS collection for six months, or pay \$100 for a year's worth. However, once the microfilm sets were available (sometime in 1970) libraries could begin purchasing entire runs of underground newspapers for \$500.<sup>138</sup> In an issue of *Free Ranger Intertribal News Service*, 141 "UPS Microfilm Repositories" were listed, revealing that there were microfilm sets in libraries as early as 1971 in 40 different states, as

well as collections in British Columbia, Nova Scotia, Manitoba, and Ontario.<sup>139</sup> Of the 141 libraries listed, fourteen are public libraries. Not surprisingly, the Wisconsin State Historical Library in Madison is among those listed. Thirteen libraries that had subscribed in print for either six months or one year are listed as well. Out of thirteen libraries, the American Library Association is listed. Out of the eleven academic libraries listed, three are from Canada and one is from New Zealand. The libraries who subscribed in print are listed with complete addresses and expiration dates because member newspapers were required to send copies of their newspapers to every library listed until their subscriptions ended.<sup>140</sup> Forcade also came up with options for individual subscriptions. One could purchase a sample packet of fifty papers for \$12 or a sample of ten papers for \$5.<sup>141</sup> In fact, there were so many different options available for purchasing newspapers from the UPS that it's hard to keep track of them all. By 1985 and long after Forcade's passing, complete sets dating from 1973-1985 were sold. Although the origin of the Collection in my Library is shrouded in mystery (no one remembers how, when, or why we obtained it), I was surprised to discover that my institution is listed as a microfilm repository in a 1973 UPS newsletter.<sup>142</sup>

What's most amazing about the UPS is that it worked as well as it did given that it operated in part on a system of trust. The syndicate published a directory each year with "complete information on all members, ad rates, publishing schedules, bulk distributor rates, editors, addresses, subscription rates and founding dates of all papers." To be a member of UPS, a paper owner had to agree to "free exchange" of their material, pay a \$25 initiation fee, and send six copies to UPS for "microfilming," "publicity," and for "UPS's own archiving purposes."<sup>143</sup> Members were also required to visibly indicate that they were members of UPS somewhere on their publications, "give credit to any papers reprinted," and "allow Bell & Howell full rights to microfilm their papers." The most crucial (and often neglected) rule was that they were required to send copies of their papers to all other members whose addresses were included in the yearly directories. In other words, if there were over 200 newspapers in the UPS directory, a member would have to send a copy of their newspaper to all 200 members. Given that many of these newspapers were struggling and operating on shoestring budgets, and given that member papers were operating on a system of trust, one can imagine the number of problems that occurred. International papers, for example, were constantly complaining that they were not receiving papers from the United States. Obviously, many of the papers did not want to bother with or could not afford airmail postage. There were frequent complaints published in the UPS newsletters from members angry that they were sending out their papers to other members, but not receiving papers in return. One such letter was published by Don Romundson of *Whipping Post* in Nelsonville, Wisconsin:

Dear Brothers and Sisters:

Here is our \$25. We have finally got it together. We have paid our \$25 for membership. In everything we read that you send us there is a statement about the paper exchange. We could dig it, and thought it was an excellent idea. But dig this: Last month we sent out a paper to EVERY UPS MEMBER, and so far we have received absolutely NO PAPERS! We are rather pissed off to say the least. ... Christ, what is UPS good for ANYWAY if it isn't conducting exchange. ... Out of the two hundred papers, we didn't get any ... They regard the exchange as a complete waste of money instead of the idea-sharing it was meant to be. Are they all capitalists?

Yours Gratefully,

Don Romundson<sup>144</sup>

Amazingly, despite the fact that the system did not operate perfectly, it operated well enough for the UPS to last from 1966 until 1985. Thomas King Forcade's passion for the underground press was truly impressive. Even after founding *High Times* in 1974, Forcade continued to support the UPS. He established a *High Times* office in Washington D.C., where Chip Berlet could continue his work on alternative media. According to Berlet, Forcade funded the UPS until his death in 1978. Forcade devoted nearly a decade of his life's energy into supporting the alternative press in our country, both through his leadership and financially. He was a visionary who strongly believed in freedom of the press. When Gabrielle Schang-Forcade once asked him what he felt about the "straight media," Forcade responded as follows:

In the past 20 years the entire media has been bought up and become a subsidiary of big business. There is no media self-criticism in this country. The result is inevitable ... The people who own the media are blatantly controlled by the government and big business.<sup>145</sup>

Forcade obtained a contract with Bell & Howell as a way to finance UPS and provide member newspapers with a little extra funding as well. However, another consequence of this deal has been that hundreds of the small underground newspapers he so passionately supported have also been preserved. Reflecting on the legacy of his friend, Ron Lichty, wrote:

The alternative press worldwide owes a great debt to the late Thomas King Forcade. He was undoubtedly responsible for more underground and alternative papers' and magazines' beginning publication than any other five persons put together.<sup>146</sup>

By 1980, an *Alternative Review* was still being published<sup>147</sup>. Some of the crew who kept the UPS going at that time included Craig Silver, Ron Lichty, Chip Berlet, and Harvey Wasserman. Chip Berlet's name appears on the masthead of one of the last official UPS publications in 1985. Although, I've mainly focused on Forcade, it's hard to know how many folks devoted their time and energy to the UPS and who they even were. They weren't a self-congratulatory bunch and must have been motivated by love and a belief that what they were doing had real meaning. They obviously didn't do it for the money. In 1973, a reporter asked Don Weimer, who was in charge of microfilming the underground papers for Bell & Howell, whether he thought it had been "worth all the trouble." Weimer replied:

They have some pretty good reasoning behind their shouting. What isn't worthwhile won't stay. Ten and 20 years from now, scholars will look at these microfilm copies and see how things have evolved.<sup>148</sup>

Nearly forty years have now passed and it seems as though this Collection is more relevant than ever. Reflecting on the importance of the UPS Underground Newspaper Collection, John Wilcock, founder of the Underground Press Syndicate, wrote "I do think it's very important that there is an actual record of underground papers in the form that Bell & Howell made it. I certainly wish the papers were all available, digitized or whatever."<sup>149</sup> Because Thomas King Forcade was always on the cutting edge, it seems like he would *want* this Collection digitized for a younger generation to enjoy. I asked Rex Weiner, former staff member at UPS and friend of Forcade, what he thought Tom would do with the Collection if he were alive today. Weiner chuckled and half-jokingly replied, "if Tom didn't already have his own copy of the Collection, he would've broken into a library at night, stolen the entire set, digitized it himself, and had it up on the Web the very next morning."<sup>150</sup>

## 8. Legacy of the UPS

In 1973, the *Washington Post* published an article entitled "Zap! No more Underground Press!" which suggested that the readership of underground newspapers had dwindled to the point that the papers were no longer relevant.<sup>151</sup> According to the *Post*, the underground press was dying out because "their readership became depoliticized" and there was nothing "left to shout about."<sup>152</sup> The article concluded, "They cannot shed tears for Hard Times or Leviathan. Those days are over."<sup>153</sup> If the underground press is generally agreed to have been born in 1964 with the founding of the *Los Angeles Free Press*, its end is not so clear. Ed Sanders (*East Village Other*) was once asked to comment on

why the counterculture movement seemed to have lost steam and had become cynical in the early 1970s. Sanders remarked “We’re tired; I’ve been here since ’58 and I haven’t had a day off. Ginsberg’s been doing it since about thirty years.”<sup>154</sup> Many scholars have suggested the underground press fizzled out with the end of the draft and the war in Vietnam.

Furthermore, the peaceful revolution that once was envisioned had degenerated into eruptions of violence throughout the United States during the late 1960s and into the early seventies, most notably; the assassinations of Martin Luther King Jr. and Bobby Kennedy, violence at the 1968 Democratic Convention, “Bloody Thursday” at Berkeley’s People’s Park protests, mayhem at the Altamont Free Concert in California, the Kent State Massacre and the Jackson State killings. The long arm of the Establishment seemed to be winning the cultural battle as the FBI’s counterintelligence programs (COINTELPRO) constantly targeted the underground press.

Indeed, a growing sense of disappointment and cynicism seemed to spread within the counterculture movement. For a brief moment in late 1960s, a door appeared to open for real change. Many in the youth movement envisioned a society based on love, care, peace and social justice. Racism and inequality would decline as our society became more educated. The Military-Industrial complex would be dismantled, and our Country would cease its Imperialistic aspirations. Americans could seek more holistic lifestyles that embraced cooperation, doing more with less, enjoying life, and leaving the smallest possible footprint on our environment.

One can feel a profound sense of sadness in the words of John Sinclair when this door for meaningful change seemed to be closing:

We had been so wiped out by our visions of love and universal truth that we were blinded to the real nature of the death culture and we just couldn’t believe it when Babylon refused to melt away in the face of the colossal wave of good feelings we had let loose on Amerika. ... This wasn’t quite what we expected, and it knocked most of us right off our feet, and we still haven’t recovered from the shock of finding out that the world wasn’t going to change just because that was the best thing for it.<sup>155</sup>

James Danky, however, writing in 1974 on the “supposed death of the underground press” suggested that the “subject tone of many papers” had changed but that the “alternative” press was still flourishing.<sup>156</sup> He suggested that papers tended to focus more on “questions of survival and control of one’s lifestyle.”<sup>157</sup> The *Whole Earth Catalogs*, for example, became popular during this time period.<sup>158</sup> Reflecting this notion of survival in the 1970s was an underground newspaper aptly titled *Post Amerikan* which lasted until 2004 and

attempted to resurface later as a blog.<sup>159</sup> The UPS itself includes alternatives published until 1985.

An exploration of the publications in this Collection reveals a shift in the characteristics of the underground press as papers became more specialized around causes such as women's liberation, gay rights, the emergence of New Age lifestyles, and Ecology. It might be more appropriate to say that the underground press evolved into alternative publications that focused less on an alienated Vietnam-era youth movement and more on a maturing baby boomer group whose activism led them in more diverse directions. John Foster "Chip" Berlet, one of several who held the Alternative Press Syndicate together until the end, continues to be a tireless activist for freedom of the press and a sentinel for crimes against civil liberties.<sup>160</sup> Some have suggested that those in the sixties counterculture became cynical in the seventies, gave up on the multitude of concerns plaguing our nation, 'sold out,' and got rich in the eighties. It's comforting and inspiring, then, to discover how many of the original underground press writers, like Berlet, are out there in the blog-o-sphere still fighting against senseless wars, racism, injustice, and ecological destruction. Harvey Wasserman (Liberation News Service) went on to found No Nukes and hosts "Green Power and Wellness" on Progressive Radio.<sup>161</sup> Thorne Dreyer (*The Rag*) maintains the "Rag Blog Spot" and Rag Radio where several members of the underground press write about current issues and provide excellent book reviews.<sup>162</sup> John Sinclair (*Ann Arbor Sun*) maintains Radio Free Amsterdam and continues to fight for legalization of marijuana.<sup>163</sup> John Wilcock blogs about cultural and political issues in his "Column of Lasting Insignificance."<sup>164</sup> Former crew of the *East Village Other* recently held a reunion at New York University to educate students about their experiences in the underground press.<sup>165</sup> Trina Robbins continues to publish comix for "grrrlz."<sup>166</sup> Billy X. Jennings maintains "It's About Time," the Black Panther's Web Site with freely accessible issues of the *Black Panther Intertribal Communal News Service*.<sup>167</sup> Ken Wachsbarger (*Joint Issue*) has been on a lifelong quest to keep the spirit of the underground press alive through his extensive *Voices of the Underground* series<sup>168</sup>. A.J. Webberman (*East Village Other*) continues to contribute general weirdness to the field of "Dylanology."<sup>169</sup>

It's been over forty years since the underground press flourished, but in the last few years there has been a notable resurgence of interest in the Vietnam-era underground newspapers. It kind of makes sense, though. After a senseless, decade-long war in Afghanistan; women's reproductive rights in the spotlight *again*; with racist policies concerning immigration being enacted; with censorship and surveillance by the government ratcheting up; with corporate greed, media consolidation, the failed drug war, and ceaseless destruction of our environment; it make one wonder if we'd be in this shape *now* if the underground press had been taken seriously enough.

## 9. Showdown in the Richmond City Council meeting

Most underground newspapers were sold by street vendors and were also available from local head shops, bookstores, and on college campuses. Many librarians, as part of their mission to provide all their readers with a diverse selection, began to encounter the challenges that went along with providing access to local underground papers which might not be popular with conservative patrons. In 1968, mayhem broke out at the El-Cerrito branch of the Richmond Public Library in California over the presence of the *Berkeley Barb* on library shelves.<sup>170</sup> At the El-Cerrito City Council Meeting, community members expressed their outrage that the library would provide such “subversive” and “pornographic” garbage. Due to community pressure, the *Barb* was temporarily pulled for evaluation by the library’s book selection committee. John Forsman, Richmond Librarian, defended the *Barb*:

It provides news not covered elsewhere in the press. It expresses a contemporary point of view which is not reflected in other media, It is unique as a record of social phenomena and their impact on the local scene.<sup>171</sup>

A particularly irate community member identified as “Mrs. L. Klock,” took such offense that she began a crusade to exorcise the *Barb* from the public library, of all places!<sup>172</sup> On August 26, 1968, Pacifica Radio recorded, and released as an album, the entire Richmond City Council Meeting in which Mrs. Klock challenged John Forsman, calling for a ban on the *Barb*. A description on the album’s cover notes that “the meeting itself was much more disorderly” than it sounded on the record and that “There were cheers, boos, shouted insults and general rudeness.”<sup>173</sup> Priests, an attorney from the American Civil Liberties Union, a local Birch Society Member, and community members both for and against the library providing access to the *Barb* were in attendance. At one point Mrs. Klock stated that the *Berkeley Barb* was more dangerous to the minds of young people than “childhood diseases.” A priest attempted to take up for the *Barb* by claiming there was nothing in it that wasn’t already in the Bible. In the end, censorship claimed victory and the *Barb* was officially banned from the Richmond Public Library.<sup>174</sup> The liner notes on the Pacifica Recording described the meeting as “a unique and often frightening experience for those who believe that materials selection for libraries is merely a rational, intellectual exercise confined to librarians.”<sup>175</sup>

While the underground papers fought censorship and harassment by J. Edgar Hoover and the FBI’s COINTELPRO on one front, librarians fought for the freedom of patrons to access these papers on another. Librarians were encouraged to serve all of their patrons by offering access to a diverse collection

including publications both mainstream, and marginal. In the tumultuous cultural climate of the 1960s, some librarians realized their role in helping citizens make informed decisions by including literature representing a whole spectrum of viewpoints, even when some of these included views that the mainstream found offensive. Some of the underground press's greatest allies in the fight against censorship were librarians. In *American Libraries*, James Ridgeway describes the value of the underground press:

Most important, the underground press opened up the press to ordinary people ... Journalism, the very best journalism, is not a business for professional technicians, but ought rather to be the natural evocation of every citizen in a democracy. And in that sense the underground radicals have created the basis for real revolutionary change.<sup>176</sup>

Perhaps no librarian was a better advocate for the inclusion of alternative materials than James Danky, who compiled *Undergrounds: A Union List of Alternative Periodicals in Libraries of the US & Canada* in 1974.<sup>177</sup> To “fellow librarians” who were “not so easily convinced” of the importance of collecting underground newspapers, Danky wrote:

The size, popularity, and diversity of content and approach provide sufficient reasons for institutional collecting and serious scholarship. The growing number of dissertations and master's theses based on these materials is proof of the value placed upon research in the alternative press.<sup>178</sup>

Today, another type of restriction impacts the free flow of information in libraries; media consolidation and the lack of alternative materials in the database bundles offered by large vendors. In *Fostering Media Diversity in Libraries: Strategies and Actions*, a publication by The Intellectual Freedom Committee of the American Library Association, librarians are advised to give “special attention” to the “acquisition of and access to small, independent, and alternative sources – including locally produced and international ones.”<sup>179</sup> The importance of providing access to alternative voices in libraries is explained:

When media consolidation restricts the creation and dissemination of multiple perspectives, the public no longer has a healthy, open exchange of information and ideas. In an era when democratic discourse is more essential than ever, the information system is out of balance. Libraries must provide forums – both physical and virtual – that create opportunities for individuals to engage in the open and balanced exchange of viewpoints and ideas.<sup>180</sup>

Unfortunately, libraries facing economic challenges find themselves making hard decisions about what to purchase. All too often, big database vendors that provide the 'sweetest' deal are favored over smaller, independent sources that librarians feel may not be heavily used by their patrons, are more costly, and probably will entail cataloging nightmares. In a study by LaFond, Ulling, and Irving (2000) on the inclusion of alternative serials in the databases that are most purchased by libraries, the authors found that alternative materials were "not well represented" in the "the commercial products available today."<sup>181</sup> In a study on the inclusion of alternative materials in libraries, Donna Davey argues that. "since the dissident press has a long history of being overlooked, libraries should make an extra effort to ensure that non-mainstream titles are included in serials initiatives."<sup>182</sup>

Most of the underground newspapers in the UPS Underground Newspaper Collection are not included in available commercial databases. However, for American Studies, History, Sociology, Political Science, Art and Communications scholars the papers in this collection constitute primary resources of immense value. Davey notes:

Researchers wishing to expose every angle of a topic should seek coverage in the alternative press. In fact, one of the most detrimental and perhaps unrecognized consequences of hidden collections of alternative serials is the hole in scholarship left when research draws only on mainstream media.<sup>183</sup>

Although the UPS Underground Newspaper Collection is currently preserved in microfilm in at least 109 libraries worldwide, the format deters a significant number of scholars and students who are used to and have come to expect the convenience of full text access to materials through databases. Because of the collection's tedious and outdated format, the probability that students will ever come across the papers in the Underground Newspaper Collection during their research is slim. Some librarians may counter by saying that if students really want to have access to this Collection, they can simply come into the library. However, as Davey notes, "in an era of digital immediacy, access means not just ensured availability through longevity, but immediate fulfillment of demand."<sup>184</sup> She suggests that librarians seek digitization initiatives of microfilm resources. Of particular importance are alternative serials that have been overlooked by big database vendors (even those providing retrospective access). Again, according to *Fostering Media Diversity*, librarians are encouraged to "request database aggregators to include small/ independent/ alternative resources in their packages, and their collections overall."<sup>185</sup> As the primary markets for these vendors, librarians must let providers know that we want more retrospective access to alternative publications.

Another option is for librarians to create their own digitization initiatives for underground press publications that were local to their region. Currently, New York University is in the process of digitizing the *East Village Other*.<sup>186</sup> The Ann Arbor District Library has digitized the *Ann Arbor Sun*.<sup>187</sup> Georgia State University has digitized all copies of *The Great Speckled Bird*<sup>188</sup>, and Cleveland State University Libraries have digitized *The Buddhist Third Class Junk Mail Oracle*<sup>189</sup>.

Suzanne Parenti Sink, who obtained a Ph.D in English from Old Dominion University and studies the 1960s underground press in the South, has created The Southern Underground Press Web Site. She hopes to create a network where underground newspapers from the Deep South will be digitized and made available to the public. Paving the way, she has digitized all issues of *The Inquisition* (Charlotte, North Carolina). Sink provides details on her Web site regarding her experience digitizing *The Inquisition*, including how she tracked down former staff of *The Inquisition* and obtained permission to carry out the project. Passionate about making sure folks know that the counterculture movement was very much alive in the South, she encourages others to join her.<sup>190</sup> Additionally, Jeff Moyer and Ken Wachsberger plan to unveil “Independent Voices: a Collection of an Alternative Press.” This database will, ultimately, include sets of over 800 digitized titles of underground feminist, antiwar, LGBT, Black Power, Hispanic, Native American, anarchist, alternative literary magazines, dissident GI newspapers and ultra-conservative right-wing publications. Librarians and scholars interested in purchasing these sets, offered through a unique acquisition model unlike that of most corporate vendors today, should contact Jeff Moyer of Reveal Digital LLC.<sup>191</sup>

## 10. Extra! Extra! Squint your eyes and read all about it

Although the UPS Underground Newspaper Collection is still only available in microfilm, there are ways that librarians can increase knowledge about the collection and promote it. Creating displays and exhibits like the one I described in the opening is one method for raising awareness and interest in the Collection. One of the most amazing aspects of this collection is its bold, shocking, in-your-face graphics. Simply displaying a collage of underground newspaper covers with bold interesting headlines and books about the underground press creates an instant visual representation of the Collection. Inviting students, faculty, and community members to presentations about the Collection is another way to generate interest. In March of 2012, I presented “Occupy the Occupast: Echoes of Dissidence in the Underground Newspaper Collection.” The purpose of the presentation was to discuss the similarities and differences between the Occupy Wall Street Movement (OWS) and the

Vietnam-era counterculture movement as illustrated through news stories and graphics from the underground newspaper collection.

Reaching out to faculty in history, political science, sociology, art, and communications departments and offering to collaborate with them on assignments or projects that would encourage their students to use the Underground Newspaper Collection as primary sources is a great way to promote the Collection. I offer to give presentations about the Collection to student clubs and campus groups, an offer which, thus far, has been taken up by our campus ethics club.

There have been many excellent digitization efforts of individual underground newspapers that could be promoted to students. In addition to the ones already mentioned, other papers which have been, or are in the process of being digitized, and are available freely on the Web include packets of Liberation News Service,<sup>192</sup> Antiwar GI Newspapers from the Radical History Project at the Harry Bridges Center for Labor History at the University of Washington,<sup>193</sup> the *Black Panther Intercommunal News Service*,<sup>194</sup> *The Rag*,<sup>195</sup> *The Paper*,<sup>196</sup> and *The International Times (iT)*.<sup>197</sup>

Additionally, several excellent books about the underground press have recently been published and should be purchased by libraries, including Ken Wachsberger's four volume *Voices of the Underground* series. In this extensive series, the history behind a wide variety of underground newspapers is told through first-hand accounts of those who created and wrote for them. Wachsberger's series is a monumental contribution to the underground press. John McMillian's well-received *Smoking Typewriters* is a must-read for all scholars of the underground press. McMillian's extensive bibliography reveals much primary research from the UPS Underground Newspaper Collection. Sean Stewart's *On the Ground* is a perfect teaser to get folks interested in the underground press as it provides page-by-page graphics from the actual underground papers with little tidbits from those who wrote for the newspapers covered. One of the best ways to promote this collection is just to let people see it. The graphics alone are enough to provoke interest. Although published much earlier, Abe Peck's classic on the underground press, *Uncovering the Sixties, The Life and Times of the Underground Press* is an excellent resource for students unfamiliar with the major cultural and political events of the 1960s. These are just a few of several great books published on the underground press but are essential reading for faculty and students interested in putting the papers in the Underground Newspaper Collection in their proper context.

Since the Collection is on microfilm, providing as many access points as possible to the Collection is crucial. Access points include cataloging, library handouts, and subject guides. In order to promote the Collection I created an extensive online guide and regularly send the link to faculty members and ask them to share it with their students. This guide provides information about the

UPS Underground Newspaper Collection, a tutorial, a bibliography of books about the underground press, links to individual papers which have been digitized, and a listing of all the newspapers in the Collection.<sup>198</sup> This guide continues to be a work in progress and anyone wishing to collaborate and add additional information to the guide is encouraged to contact me.<sup>199</sup>

Although the Collection is in microfilm, when conducting presentations or creating displays on underground newspapers it's beneficial to obtain a few original print copies of the papers so students and community members can experience firsthand how unique these papers are. In *Occupy Nation*, Todd Gitlin described the energy and fervor of the early months of Occupy Wall Street writing that people “started newspapers and theoretical journals. They lived pell-mell in the grip of what Barrie Thorne, writing about the sixties, once called *event time*, hurtling from action to action with high fervor and much jubilation.”<sup>200</sup> Flipping through an original underground newspaper from the 1960s, one can almost feel that energy of ‘event time’ and sense the ‘fervor’ and excitement with which it was written. Possibly no other media in our nation’s history captures such youthful exuberance as the 1960s underground press. David Carr, upon being handed a copy of the *Occupied Wall Street Journal* in Zuccotti Park pondered what makes a print, tangible newspaper unique:

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Forgive an old newspaper hack a moment of sentimentality, but tis somehow reassuring that a newspaper has traction in an environment preoccupied by social media. It makes sense when you think about it: newspapers convey a sense of place, of actually being there, that digital media can't. When is the last time somebody handed you a Web site?<sup>201</sup>

The papers in the Underground Newspaper Collection were lovingly and painstakingly designed and illustrated. Luckily, thousands of underground newspapers have been preserved in the UPS Underground Newspaper Collection for at least five hundred years, the known-preservation life of microfilm. Thanks to Thomas King Forcade and all of the individuals who devoted time and energy to the Underground Press Syndicate, we have this Collection of immense value. The challenge is in making it more visible, a fact that is somewhat ironic since this is a Collection of some of the most graphic, colorful, eye-catching newspapers ever published.

## 11. A fair hearing

It has been said that “history is written by the winners” but the fact is that we have in our possession a vast chronicle of our nation’s history written by

a laughable, lovable, bunch of losers! It can also be said that history is more kind to the underdog because that's where we get our heroes from. Whistle blowers like Daniel Elsberg and Julian Assange are lauded for their efforts to shine light into dark places, but the UPS Underground Newspaper Collection contains hundreds, if not thousands, of firsthand accounts of people enduring a struggle for their mere existence. Their stories can inspire and inform us in unimaginable ways, but the reason why this archive is so important is because it literally details the extraordinary lives of ordinary people normally silent, but forced by the prison of their own consciences to speak out or cease to exist. Instead of continually reinventing ourselves, we could just acknowledge who we are: half of us are hell-raising rabble-rousers discontent with our 'imperfect union'.

If our strength lies in our diversity, then we need to hear from as many voices as possible to reinforce defiance, a defining characteristic of our humanity. The important thing is to express yourself, a risk the underground press was not afraid to take, often even reveling in their brave attempts to 'stick it to the man.'

Free Speech is no joke; just ask the thousands of people who have been jailed, pepper sprayed, gassed, or clubbed for expressing it since the Occupy Wall Street Movement started in September of 2011. Librarians are tasked with the responsibility of protecting the free flow of ideas, both mainstream and marginal. We do an excellent job acquiring knowledge; the challenge is in disseminating it. While students and scholars are able to access many retrospective articles and newspapers online through databases and on the Web, the hundreds of alternative, shoe-string budget papers which aren't available digitally still exist only because of Thomas King Forcade and the Underground Press Syndicate's efforts to have them microfilmed. Vendors and giant publishing conglomerates dictate what users are able to instantly access. Because little perceived demand exists for the Underground Newspaper Collection, the probability of its being digitized is slim. However, librarians must not only ensure that this valuable resource is available, but must make it *easily* accessible. Whether this entails delving into issues of copyright, exploring digitization initiatives, making vendors aware of the immense value in the underground press, or creating more access points such as handouts and indexes to the Collection, we can't allow these papers to disappear from the historical record. The scholarly importance of the collection is confirmed by historians such as Paul Buhl, Faculty Emeritus at Brown University, who recently referred to the underground press as "one of the great wonders of modern cultural politics."<sup>202</sup> John McMillian, a historian too young to have witnessed the sixties firsthand, spent countless hours using the Collection while doing research for what culminated in his well-received book on the underground press. In *Smoking Typewriters*, McMillian concluded that

...never again will we see anything like the underground press of the sixties ... the underground press had a specific raison d'être: it was created to bring tidings of the youth rebellion to cities and campuses across America and to help build a mass movement.<sup>203</sup>

Joseph W. Grant, founder of the Prisoners' Digest International, reminds us that the writers of the underground press "fought the Vietnam-era war machine with an assault of words and actions..."<sup>204</sup> We have a serious restriction on information here, made critical by its content: subversive opposition to suppression. These are the words of people beaten down in the streets for standing up for what they believed. Some died or went crazy fighting for civil liberties and for speaking out against an unjust war. From their moldy, yellowed, microfilm cells, it's time to free those voices of dissent. Don't we owe them at least a fair hearing?

## 12. Acknowledgments

The author would like to acknowledge Evan Lay for his support and Ken Wachsberger, 'my good friend,' for keeping the spirit of the underground press alive. Long live Thomas King Forcade!

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APPENDIX A - PHOTOGRAPHS

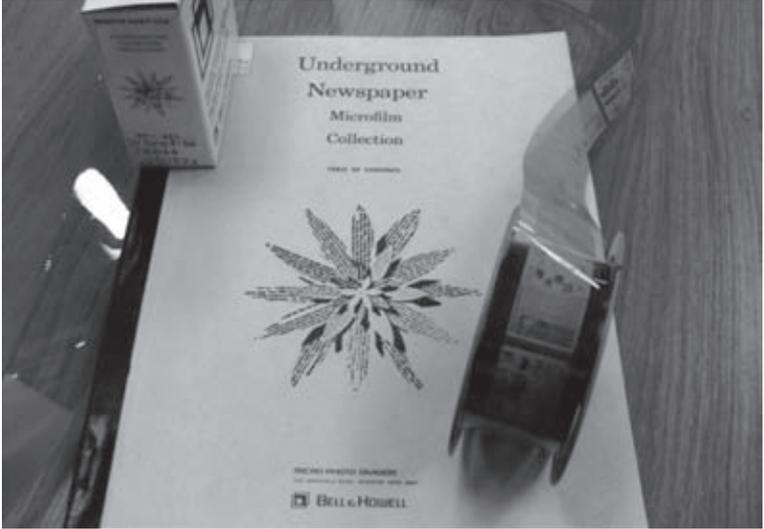


Figure 1: UPS Index to the Underground Newspaper Collection. (c) 2012 L. Charnigo



Figure 2: Display in the Houston Cole Library promoting the Underground Newspaper Collection in March 2012. (c) 2012 L. Charnigo



Figure 3: Student using the Underground Newspaper Collection in the Houston Cole Library. (c) 2012 L. Charnigo

Figure 4: Student viewing the from Georgia State University's Great Speckled Bird Traveling Exhibit, in the Houston Cole Library in March, 2012. (c) 2012 L. Charnigo





Figure 5: Student exploring the Underground Newspaper Collection in the Houston Cole Library. (c) 2012 L. Charnigo

Figure 6: Student reading *The Great Speckled Bird* in the Houston Cole Library in March 2012. (c) 2012 L. Charnigo





Figure 7: Student looking at Georgia State University's Great Speckled Bird Traveling Exhibit in the Houston Cole Library in March, 2012. (c) 2012 L. Charnigo

Figure 8: Student struggling with microfilm in the Houston Cole Library in March, 2012. (c) 2012 L. Charnigo





Figure 9: Student viewing an 'underground' paper on the microfilm machine in March, 2012. (c) 2012 L. Charnigo

Figure 10: The Underground Newspaper Collection on a microfilm reader. (c) 2012 L. Charnigo





Figure 11: Thomas King Forcade, Director of the Underground Press Syndicate. (c) 2012 Chip Berlet

Figure 12: The last UPS Directory published in 1986. (c) 2012 Chip Berlet





Figure 13: Chip Berlet using the College Press Service ATF Chief 15 offset printing press in Denver, Colorado. (c) 2012 Chip Berlet

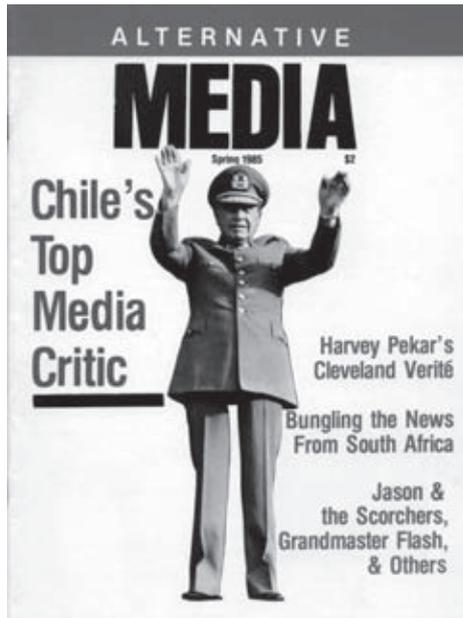
Figure 14: “Phil Ochs on the steps of the National Student Association in Washington, DC after being interviewed in 1974 by Chip Berlet for an article on Nixon’s resignation that August. Ochs saw himself as part of the underground press culture.” (c) 2012 Chip Berlet





Figure 15: “A. J. Weberman engages in dumpster diving on Capitol Hill in Washington, DC as part of his garbology research series in the underground press in the 1970s.” (c) 2012 Chip Berlet

Figure 16: One of the last publications produced by the UPS/ APS in 1985. (c) 2012 Chip Berlet



# The Politics of Cultural Genocide

## Uses and Abuses of the Destruction of the National Library of Bosnia-Herzegovina as a Western Propaganda Tool

The shelling of the National Library of Bosnia-Herzegovina in Sarajevo on August 25, 1992 marked one of the largest wartime ruins of a cultural landmark since the end of the Second World War in 1945. The ensuing fire, which was made worse because the city's water supply had been cut off prior to the shelling, lasted three days until eventually over ninety per cent of the library's collection burned.

Founded in 1945 as the central library of Bosnia-Herzegovina (before this, the library had been city of Sarajevo's city hall), the library housed materials written in various scripts. These items included irreplaceable rare books, original manuscripts, and archival materials. The bombing occurred towards the beginning of the three-year civil war (1992-1995) in Bosnia-Herzegovina fought between Serbs, Croats and Bosnian Muslims in which Western powers such as the United States and members of the European Union supported the Bosnian Muslims. Bosnian Serbian forces led by Radovan Karadzic and Ratko Mladic supervised the shelling of the building. Serbian forces would later claim that the building was being used as a military shelter, although these claims are unsubstantiated.

On the surface, the bombing of any cultural institution, especially one containing priceless cultural artifacts is by any measure a reprehensible act, and this sentiment is certainly portrayed on the plaque later placed on the outside of the ruined shell of the building. It states (in rather stilted English translation):

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On this place Serbian criminals on the night of 25<sup>th</sup>-26<sup>th</sup> of August 1992 set on fire National and University Library of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Over two millions of books, periodicals, and documents vanished in the flame. Do not forget. Remember and warn [most likely this should read “beware”]!

Some years later, on March 31, 2001 former Serbian president Slobodan Milosevic was abducted and arrested by the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY), a United Nations (UN) Security-Council committee promoted by the United States and heavily dependent on Western, especially American, money for its establishment and operation, on charges of genocide, crimes against humanity, and violations of the customs of war. The bombing of the library and other alleged destruction of Bosnian cultural heritage was used in a campaign to prove Milosevic’s further complicity in “cultural genocide” or “the deliberate destruction of the cultural heritage of a people for any number of ideological reasons (Edwards 2008; 79).”

The charge in this area was helped along by a Harvard librarian, Andras Riedlmayer, who appeared before the ICTY on July 8, 2003 testifying against Milosevic for the crime of cultural genocide. In his testimony, Riedlmayer used the shelling of the National Library, and also that of the Sarajevo Institute on May 17, 1992, as prime evidence of this genocide (Riedlmayer 2007: pp. 107-132). In both his testimony and his research regarding Serbian destruction of cultural heritage in both Bosnia, and later Kosovo, his narrative almost totally and crudely adheres to the narrative established by Western governments and Western corporate and publicly-owned media, namely: Although other nationalities committed violence, it was the Serbs who carried the greatest responsibility for instigating it and who attempted through their demented and despotic leader, Slobodan Milosevic, to create a Greater Serbia by carrying out the ethnic cleansing of other nationalities. In Bosnia, the official story continues, Bosnian Serbs attempted to cleanse the area of Bosnian Muslims who were seeking to create an exemplary model multi-ethnic society. In the end, only American bombing forced the end of hostilities in Bosnia because it compelled Milosevic to come to the negotiating table.

Later on, in Kosovo, the narrative resumes, once again brutal Serbian actions against defenseless Albanian Kosovans forced the “international” community, i.e. the United States and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), to come to the aid of the beleaguered Kosovans who were being viciously massacred by the stubbornly intransigent Serbs.

In Riedlmayer’s hands, the narrative extends to the cultural sphere where it was only Serbs who carried on a violent campaign of cultural genocide to cleanse areas based on ethnicity. While the other nationalities —the Bosnian Muslims, the Croats, the Albanian Kosovans— may have carried out acts of

cultural violence against Serbs, in his narrative there was no coordinated plan to destroy their cultural heritage in order to decimate their identification as a people.

As the author and journalist Diana Johnstone notes, “almost everything about this tale is false. Unfortunately, disproving falsehoods, especially established falsehoods, is a hard task. What has been repeated over and over becomes obviously true (Johnstone 2002: 5).” In the interim, she and other writers have forcefully challenged these falsehoods and asked pointed questions such as: Instead of Western involvement in the region being motivated by “humanitarian” concerns was the Western interest in fact more concerned with economics and the wish to eliminate the former Yugoslavia as a last socialist bulwark standing in the way of economic globalization? If Milosevic was indeed an evil tyrant, why was he lauded for the role he played in negotiating the Dayton accords which ended the conflict in 1995? If the Kosovans were indeed the objects of ethnic cleansing why did the refugee flow not begin until *after* NATO’s relentless bombing of Serbia began (Parenti 2000: 125)? Furthermore, why have no Americans or participants from NATO countries such as Bill Clinton, Madeleine Albright, Tony Blair, American General Wesley Clark, or NATO spokesperson Jamie Shea been charged for the gross violations of international law that resulted from their illegal invasion of Serbia in 1999? If the United States and NATO were allowed to rescue Kosovo through a self-described “humanitarian intervention” in 1999, why did the same actors condemn Russia for conducting its own humanitarian intervention in 2008 on behalf of South Ossetian and Abkhazian minorities fighting against persecution in Georgia (BBC News 2009)?

In the spirit of such inquiry, this paper questions Western allegations of “cultural genocide” perpetrated by Serbs by asking the following questions: If the West was really so concerned about cultural genocide, why at approximately the same time did it raise no protests when Western allies Turkey, Israel, and the Afghan Taliban carried out gross acts of cultural destruction? Why has no American or British instigator ever been charged for the cultural destruction that has occurred in Iraq since the illegal invasion of Iraq in 2003? If the United States is so concerned about genocide and the application of international law, why has it refused to join the International Criminal Court established in 2002?

Moreover, can a state such as the United States which has been implicated in other acts of cultural genocide in Guatemala, East Timor, Vietnam, or Cambodia be trusted when it raises concerns about the decimation of cultures? After all, Riedlmayer’s testimony before the ICTY attempted to prove that the shelling of the Library of Bosnia-Herzegovina, as well as the destruction of other Bosnian Muslim cultural sites, was a deliberate policy of cultural genocide of the Bosnian Muslim community.

## 1. The Politics of Cultural Genocide

The bombing of the National Library of Bosnia and Herzegovina was obviously traumatic for all three ethnic groups who lived there. Nonetheless, two Bosnian librarians from Sarajevo, Savo Peic and Aisa Telalovic, refuse to assign blame for the destruction of Bosnian cultural heritage solely to the Serbian forces, and acknowledge that all three sides in the Bosnian War (Serbs, Croats, and Muslims) contributed to the devastation. As they note:

The war in former Yugoslavia has been responsible for destroying and demolishing towns, villages, churches (Catholic, Orthodox, and Muslim mosques), schools, and other institutions of higher learning, cultural and historic monuments, libraries and archives ... It was as if there was a death wish in all three parties to obliterate their national existence and heritage from the face of the earth. (Peic 1999: 151)

Their interpretation, in fact, is consistent with the traditional multi-cultural outlook of Bosnia-Herzegovina where no nationality held a majority and where many citizens were the offspring of mixed marriages. Many citizens, in fact, identified themselves as Yugoslavs rather than Bosnian Muslim, Serbian or Croat (Parenti 2000: 30).

Furthermore, while the two Bosnian librarians' interpretation fails to take into account the outside Western interference (notably Germany, Austria, the Vatican, and the United States) that led to the break-up of the former Yugoslavia, their analysis is far more nuanced than that promoted by Andras Riedlmayer, the Harvard University librarian who testified against former Serbian leader Slobodan Milosevic at the International Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia for the crime of cultural genocide. Riedlmayer almost completely adheres to the official line promulgated by the American government relating to the Balkan Wars which occurred from 1991-2001. In his view, the wars are primarily the fault of the Serbs, led by a brutal leader, Milosevic, who along with his acolytes bears almost the entire responsibility for the conflict. As he notes in his paper on the destruction of libraries during the Balkan Wars, "while Western leaders' attention was focused on the collapse of the Soviet Union and on the challenges of establishing a common European currency, war broke out in Europe's backyard (Riedlmayer 2007: 108)." Here, Riedlmayer's biases are laid bare: the benign West, which really wanted to concentrate on other more important matters, was caught off guard by the unexpected ethnic hatred erupting in its own backyard, forcing it to engage in a "humanitarian intervention" which was purely altruistic and had nothing to do with its own geo-political interests.

The many alternative explanations that have been posited for Western intervention in the Balkans such as the desire to eliminate Yugoslavia as a last

socialist bastion standing in the way of economic globalization; the wish to establish a secure pipeline of Caspian oil to the Mediterranean; the yearning to establish NATO “credibility”; the desire to overthrow the authority of the UN in favor of Western interests; the German desire to rid itself of its Nazi past and win back the respectability to fight in “legitimate” wars; and the American aspiration to gain standing among Islamic nations, are absent from Reidlmayer’s account. Therefore, there is no mention of the active participation of Germany to foment discord in Slovenia and Croatia (Johnstone 2002: 27; Parenti 2000: 25), for example, and his account of war in Bosnia-Herzegovina, like the Western press reports at the time, describe the conflict as a holocaust perpetrated against Bosnian Muslims, when in fact, according to British negotiator David Owen, a major obstacle to achieving a peace agreement in 1992 was that both the Bush and Clinton administrations encouraged Bosnian Muslims to avoid compromises and promised them NATO support in return (Johnstone 2002: 159).

Consistent with his narrative supporting the American government, Reidlmayer forwards his account to 1999 with descriptions of what he terms Serbian “burning” and repression in Kosovo where he details Serbian destruction of Kosovan Albanian libraries, schools, and archives. Typically, however, he conceals, or probably just isn’t interested in detailing, other crucial facts which contradict his argument. For instance, he says that “after peace talks in early 1999 failed to bring concessions, NATO *intervened* [my emphasis] at the end of March 1999 with air strikes on Kosovo and Serbia proper (Reidlmayer 2007: 124).” In reality, however, the so-called American-led NATO “intervention” was an illegal invasion that bypassed the UN Charter, the UN Security Council and NATO’s own Charter. Reidlmayer’s account of the failed Rambouillet peace talks preceding the NATO attack on Serbia in 1999 also fails to mention that the talks were aborted only because the Americans, after Serbia agreed to most of its stringent provisions, demanded the addition of the onerous condition stipulating NATO forces would have the right to enter and monitor the entire Republic of Yugoslavia, an ultimatum which many saw as ensuring failure as it was a condition that no sovereign country —certainly not the United States— could reasonably accept.

Reidlmayer also simply parrots the figure of eight hundred thousand Kosovans (a figure which has never been verified and which many believe to be grossly exaggerated) being forced to leave Kosovo, but does not mention that this happened *after* the NATO bombing of Serbia and Kosovo caused a counter response from the Serbian Army (Parenti 2000: 125). He makes no mention of the tens of thousands of Albanians who fled Kosovo because of the NATO bombings themselves, or because they wanted to escape ground force fighting between Yugoslavia and the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA). Between 70,000 to 100,000 Serbian residents of Kosovo also took flight and thousands of Roma

(14,000 of whose homes were burnt as they left) and other non-Albanian groups were forced to leave or were driven out by the KLA (Parenti 2000: 131), but these refugees are totally absent from his account. Nor does he mention that NATO attacked these refugee convoys and actually killed Albanians fleeing the conflict in Kosovo (Mandel: 139). He states that “once again cultural landmarks of the non-Serb population suffered massive destruction (Riedlmayer 2007: 124)” but he —once again— studiously ignores the NATO cultural destruction wreaked upon Serbian cultural landmarks both within Kosovo and within Serbia proper. Albanian militants, for example, *systematically* worked to erase Serbian historical and religious culture in Kosovo and they destroyed around eighty parish churches, monasteries and cathedrals, some of which dated to medieval times and some of which were listed as UNESCO world heritage sites (Parenti 2000: 163).

If he were really interested in detailing such damage, which he clearly wasn't, Riedlmayer could have consulted the Serbian government's meticulously documented NATO war crimes in Serbia which it released in a two-volume set replete with colored photographs entitled *NATO crimes in Yugoslavia: documentary evidence*, more commonly known as the *White book on NATO aggression against the FR of Yugoslavia*. In two detailed chapters, the report lists NATO bombing of NATO cultural monuments which included damage to Byzantine religious art, mosaics, and frescoes, the flattening of the 13<sup>th</sup> century city of Pec, the 16<sup>th</sup> century Hadum mosque in Djakobica, the Byzantine Basilica in Nis and the ninth-century church in Prokulpje, the fifteenth-century rampart in Belgrade and the Banovina palace in Novi Sad (*NATO Crimes in Yugoslavia* 1999: 215-231 v. 1; 295-317 v.2). Although Reidlmayer is quick to condemn the deliberate bombing of the National Library of Bosnia-Herzegovina in 1992, he maintains total silence over the deliberate NATO bombing of the Serbian Radio and Television Station on April 23, 1999 which killed sixteen employees, and for all the outrage reserved for the “libricide” of the Bosnian National Library, he ignores the Kosovan Albanian destruction of two million books in the Serbian language, as well as archival material (Parenti 2000: 158). NATO's Kosovo Force did nothing to protect the books in Serbian libraries and other cultural institutions.

Riedlmayer is so unaware of the political machinations of his own government that in one of his articles he quotes Dr. Biljana Plavsic, a Bosnian Serb professor of biology and former dean of the Faculty of Natural Sciences at the University of Sarejevo (and also a right-wing monarchist), as advocating the ethnic cleansing of Bosnian Muslims because of their “genetic deformity” which caused them to embrace Islam (Riedlmayer 2005: 41). While such viewpoints are indeed alarming and certainly racist, what Riedlmayer does not detail is the story of Plasvic's rise to power in the Republic Srpska (RS). When the first president of the Republic Srpska (RS), Radovan Karadzic, who

supervised the shelling of the Bosnian National Library, proposed that the Serb majority of the RS be allowed to remain within Yugoslavia, he took the further step (even though he was not a Communist) of appointing Communist or other leftist officers who shared his viewpoints. In return, Western forces worked to remove him from office, and in turn he was replaced by then vice-president Biljana Plavic (the same person whose hate speech Riedlmayer quotes to justify western actions against Bosnian Serbs) as president (Parenti 2000: 58-59). Soon after, Plavic worked closely with Western authorities to purge the RS army of leftist officers who were unsympathetic to western free-market economic reforms. This action was quickly followed by a purge of the civilian government. Evidently, racist hate-mongers are quite acceptable to Western interests as long as they further the Western agenda of economic liberalization.

Relying only on Riedlmayer's writings, one would think that the other sides in the conflict disseminated no such hate speech against Serbs, although in fact such statements are ubiquitous. Croatian leader Franco Tudjman and Bosnian Muslim leaders Alija Izetbegovic also perpetrated acts of ethnic cleansing based on hate speech (in the Bosnian Muslim case, extremist *mujahedeen* fighters beheaded civilian victims (Herman 2004: 49)), yet none of them found themselves dragged unceremoniously before the ICTY. Moderate Bosnian Muslim leaders, however, such as Fikret Abdic, who urged negotiation and compromise but who didn't please Western authorities, did (Johnstone 2002: 160). Croatian leader Franco Tudjman, for example, declared in his book *Wastelands of Historical Truth*, published in 1989, that "genocide is a natural phenomenon in harmony with the sociological and divine nature. Genocide is not only permitted, it is recommended... whenever it is useful for the survival or the restoration of the kingdom of the chosen nation (Parenti 2000: 42). Taking this notion to its logical conclusion, between 1991 and 1995 Tudjman began his own program of ethnic cleansing targeting Serbian residents of Croatia (Blum 2005: 211). Instead of earning Western censure, however, the West in fact assisted the Croatian campaign. In August 1995, during what was termed the "Operation Storm" campaign, NATO helped the Croats drive out over 200,000 Serbs from the Krajina region (Mandel 2004: 237). Furthermore, Tudjman conducted his own campaign of "libricide" —one which Riedlmayer typically does not detail— which saw Croatian libraries purged of books the regime deemed unworthy (such as, for instance, copies of the Yugoslav encyclopedia which were burned) while high-school textbooks were re-written so they contained no criticism of the Nazi-allied Croatian-regime which existed during the Second World War (Parenti 2000: 44).

Under cross-examination by Slobodan Milosevic on July 8, 2003 (during which Reidlmayer reveals that he had written to U.S. President Bill Clinton in the summer of 1995 asking him to lift the embargo on the delivery of weapons to Bosnian Muslims), Reidlmayer is consistently questioned concerning

his obvious bias towards the Bosnian Muslims and his failure to investigate thoroughly Bosnian Muslim and Croat destruction of Serbian cultural heritage. Although in his writings Reidlmayer is silent on such destruction, remarkably under questioning he states that “the fact that I have engaged in political discourse does not, to my mind, affect my professional activity in reporting here (*Milosevic Trial Transcript*, 8 July 2003: 94)”. At the same time, however, he also admits that he was hired by the Office of the Prosecutor to investigate only the destruction of the cultural and religious heritage of non-Serb communities. Moreover, this investigation covered only 19 of the 33 municipalities in Bosnia, and these were municipalities which before the war had a majority Bosnian Muslim or Roman Catholic Croat population. In essence, the destruction of the cultural and religious heritage of those municipalities with a Serbian majority was in effect simply glossed over. Despite the fact that Riedlmayer admits that he did not investigate the destruction of Serbian cultural heritage in Bosnia and Herzegovina, his report was entitled “Destruction of Cultural Heritage in Bosnia and Herzegovina” as if it indeed include descriptions of the destruction of Serbian cultural heritage.

Milosevic quite rightly asks Reidlmayer if any Muslim sites had been destroyed in Serbia during the period 1992-1995, a question which deserves scrutiny since if there really had been a campaign to commit cultural genocide against Muslims, why would it have stopped at the Bosnian border with Serbia proper? Despite pursuing what seems a logical train of thought, presiding Judge Richard May prevented Milosevic from following this line of questioning. Furthermore, despite the fact that he never describes the destruction of Serbian cultural heritage, Riedlmayer declares that “I don’t have any animus against describing and condemning such destruction (*Milosevic Trial Transcript*, 8 July 2003: 59).”

Milosevic reminds Riedlmayer that a report entitled “Destruction of Orthodox Religious Structures” lists 68 examples of the destruction of Serbian religious institutions for the year 1992-1993, and reminds him that this is just a partial list as the war continued until 1995. Astonishingly, in response to Milosevic’s query asking why Riedlmayer’s terms of reference in his report concerning Bosnian cultural destruction specifically excluded that of Bosnian Serbs, Judge Richard May responds that obviously examples of destruction of Serbian cultural heritage have been excluded “because they cannot be relevant to the charges [we are] dealing with in this trial (*Milosevic Trial Transcript*, 8 July 2003: 65).” In other words, he may well have said, such examples are of no account since the ICTY was put in place to prosecute and convict those who had dared to defy the American and Western aims; therefore, there no evidence implicating Western powers in cultural destruction could be permitted. Indeed, carefully hidden from Reidlmayer’s entire account is the crucial American role in establishing, financing, staffing, vetting the judges and prosecutors,

supplying the police force, and providing information to the ICTY (Herman 2004: 39-40).

Milosevic reminds Riedlmayer that the Bosnian war was in fact a three-sided war (echoing the two Bosnian librarians' remarks concerning the Bosnian civil war) in which Catholic Croats also fought against the Bosnian Muslims. Had Riedlmayer described, for example, Catholic churches that had been destroyed by Bosnian Muslim forces? Remarkably, Riedlmayer responds that "none of the 19 municipalities that I studied fell into the area where this fighting happened (*Milosevic Trial Transcript*, 8 July 2003: 67)." Milosevic's point here was to prove that any destruction of cultural heritage was reciprocal and that the destruction had occurred on all three sides. In fact, challenging Riedlmayer, he notes that Serbian Orthodox churches in Mostar had been destroyed before the mosques and Catholic churches.

In spite of the massive evidence indicating cultural destruction by NATO of Serbian cultural landmarks, two other American librarians, Stephen P. Edwards and Julie Biando Edwards, looked positively at Riedlmayer's "painstaking research" at the ICTY noting with enthusiasm that now at last destruction of "libraries, archives, and other cultural property were prosecutable crimes against humanity", which can be classed as 'cultural genocide' (Edwards 2008: 79)." Of course, the fact that the ICTY was established primarily by NATO countries and provided most of the finance to set up the tribunal, that NATO aggression against Serbia was never discussed at the ICTY, or that the United States itself has refused to sign on to the provisions of the International Criminal Court in the Hague, passes without comment. Also not mentioned are criticisms of the trial of Slobodan Milosevic himself, a trial which respected Canadian trial lawyer Edward Greenspan—who is no admirer of Malosevic, describing him as a "thug"—viewed as a "lynching" and a "kangaroo court" (Greenspan 2002) which overlooked the basic tenets of Western jurisprudence such as the right to a trial by jury, the right to be tried by an impartial judge, and the right to be presumed innocent until proven guilty. Indeed, as we see in Riedlmayer's testimony, Judge Richard May consistently set arbitrary time limits that interfered with Milosevic's cross examination and he clearly seemed to revile Milosevic. Then again, the Edwards are also remarkably nonchalant about the circumstances of Milosevic's arrest, stating that Serbia "handed over" Milosevic.

In fact, Milosevic's arrest and extradition is more plausibly described as an abduction. After threats of economic blackmail from Western powers, the pro-western Serbian Prime Minister, Zoran Djindjic, arrested Milosevic not for war crimes but rather on charges of corruption, allegations of which even if true would not have merited extradition to an international court. Even so, the Yugoslav constitution forbade the extradition of nationals. However, when Serbia's Constitutional Court declared Milosevic's extradition unconstitutional,

Djindjic simply went ahead and extradited him anyway (Mandel 2004: 148-150).

## 2. Western Double Standards

While American government apologists wax enthusiastically over the future application of international law concerning cultural genocide, prosecution of such a law is clearly one reserved for non-Western players. In the current Middle East, for example, the locus of much Western attention due to its vast oil resources which fuel Western economies and described by the U.S. State Department as “a stupendous source of strategic power and one of the greatest material prizes in history (Chomsky 2003),” censure for cultural genocide when practiced by the West or its allies, in contrast to the opprobrium meted out to the former government of Yugoslavia, is blithely ignored.

One of the most obvious examples, and one which is cited by many critics of NATO actions in the Balkans, is the treatment of Kurds in NATO member Turkey where the Kurds who inhabit the south-eastern part of the country have been subjected for over eighty years to a policy of assimilation into the Turkish majority. Referred to as “mountain Turks”, the Kurds’ linguistic rights have been so brutally repressed that until 1992 the mere possession of a Kurdish-language book or music cassette was illegal and subject to imprisonment, torture, even death. In contrast to Albanian Kosovans, who had their own university where it was possible to study in their own language and whose linguistic rights were respected, in Turkey the words “Kurd” and “Kurdish” were erased from maps and books, and Kurdish children who spoke Kurdish in schools were beaten. The Turkish government has had no need to bomb or destroy a Kurdish National Library for the simple reason that, due to the ban on the Kurdish language, Turkish libraries have not stocked Kurdish books, and those that did saw the books meticulously removed (Malmisanij 2006: 39).

Beginning in 1980, and continuing through to 1998, coinciding in part with the same period the West was excoriating Slobodan Milosevic for his brutality, the Turkish government waged a vicious campaign of repression against its Kurdish population known by Kurds as the “dirty war” in which more than 3,000 rural villages were set on fire and partially or completely evacuated (Human Rights Watch 2005: 3), displacing two million inhabitants who were forced to move to urban shantytowns (Kuras 2007). Meanwhile, countless archaeological and cultural treasures, including world-class sites, living historic cities and standing monuments, were submerged underwater due to colonialist hydroelectric projects such as the multi-million dollar GAP Project which by itself has forced an estimated 350,000 Kurds from their land as of 2004 (Chahim 2006: 4). Although it is estimated that some 37,000 Kurds were killed (Kuras

2007), and tens of thousands more wounded, no western power, in contrast to that which occurred in Kosovo, came to their aid. Indeed, the opposite was true. The Turks were armed with modern American weapons, while Israeli military officers and intelligence officers also supplied weaponry and high-tech security supplies. Furthermore, Germany and other NATO countries supplied tanks, firearms and munitions which were used to bombard Kurdish areas. Yet despite the obvious double standard, Turkey was one of the countries that assisted in the bombing of Yugoslavia (Fernandes 1999).

The same concern for “cultural genocide” has been perhaps even more pronounced in Palestine, the place in which in 1948, as the great Palestinian refugee Edward Said notes, ethnic cleansing began and which has continued, with liberal western support, until today (Said 2000: 44).

While a detail of Israeli destruction of Palestinian cultural heritage in the sixty years following Israel’s establishment would be impossible in a paper of this length, especially if it included destruction in the Occupied Territories since 1967 and the numerous Israeli invasions of Lebanon, a review of such destruction since the second Palestinian Intifada of 2000 is useful especially since these events occurred after the Yugoslav war when presumably the concept of “cultural genocide” had become a reason for prosecution for war crimes.

The greatest damage to Palestinian, libraries, and archives occurred during the Israeli incursion into the West Bank in the spring of 2002 during which the Israeli Army damaged Palestinian libraries, archives, records, and files, and also government computers and computer systems. The damage also included vandalism to cultural sites and institutions such as radio and television stations and cultural centers. Damage to libraries and archives included the al-Haqq Human Rights Organization, the Health Professions Library of al-Quds University, the university library of Bethlehem University, the French Cultural Center, the library of the Maan Development Center, and several libraries, archives, and files of Palestinian government departments located in Ramallah (Twiss 2002). A Palestinian NGO Emergency Initiative revealed a consistent pattern of invasion, destruction, and invasion and stated that in the majority of cases the ministries were invaded long after fighting had ceased and that the destruction was purely deliberate. Meanwhile, from April 2002 to March 2003, Israeli destruction of the old city of Nablus was tremendous and many buildings were completely destroyed (Dabbeek 2003: 1). Undoubtedly, if the same destruction had been practiced by the Serbian government during the Balkan wars, it would have been seized upon as evidence of Serbian perpetration of genocide, yet no Israeli has ever been held responsible for these actions.

The recent 22 day Israeli invasion of Gaza in December 2008-January 2009 damaged the Gazan Antiquities Museum as well as archaeological sites, not to mention targeting schools, mosques, the Red Cross, United Nations relief facilities, hospitals, and civilians holding white flags, yet Israeli leaders learned

they could carry out such actions with impunity. While Slobodan Milosevic was forcibly extradited from Belgrade to face prosecution in the Hague, response to the siege of Gaza was very different than the concern Westerners demonstrated for the siege of Sarajevo from 1992-1993. Indeed, after the Israeli massacre in Gaza, the Spanish foreign minister informed Israeli foreign minister Tzipi Livni that Spain planned to amend legislation that granted a Spanish judge the authority to launch an investigation into Israeli war crimes against Israeli officials (Ravid 2009), while surrealistically the United States Congress voted 390-5 to condemn the democratically-elected government of Hamas for launching ineffective missiles in the face of overwhelming Israeli destructive power (Horowitz 2009). While Western leaders trumpeted the right of Israel to “defend itself,” no such right was granted to Serbia to defend itself against terrorist actions by the KLA.

The American-backed support for the Taliban in Afghanistan also marks another instance of American and Western-backed support for cultural destruction which was not denounced until the former ally was no longer deemed useful. Support for Islamic fundamentalists in Afghanistan can be traced to the Cold War which pre-dated the Soviet occupation of that country in 1979. The invasion of the country in 2001 marked the United States’ and the West’s second illegal invasion of a country following Kosovo in 1999. Since the invasion, it has become fashionable for former enablers to feign outrage over the Taliban’s brutality. In fact, however, the Taliban’s relation with the United States and the West has long roots. For instance, in the 1970s, the United States under President Jimmy Carter and his national security adviser Zbigniew Brezinski viewed Islamic fundamentalists in both Iran and Afghanistan as a bulwark against Soviet expansionism, and funneled money and arms to them through Pakistan and Saudi Arabia. Moreover, there were other geopolitical and economic considerations concerning western support for the Afghani *mujahadeen* which predated the Taliban: the military occupation of the Persian Gulf and its oil fields (Dreyfuss 2005: 246). The Afghan *mujahadeen* in the 1980s began acquiring weapons from the Americans, Chinese, Israelis and others to fight the Soviet Red Army and this support continued into the 1990s with the rise of the Taliban. Essentially, the United States along with Saudi Arabia, which financed the movement, and Pakistan, which supplied it with military intelligence, supported the Taliban because they viewed it as anti-Iranian and anti-Shiah but pro-Western (Dreyfus 2005: 326).

Although formal support for the Taliban by the United States ended in 1998 with the bombing of two American embassies in Africa, American support of the Taliban could be confirmed as late as 2000 because American multinational energy companies such as Enron and Unocal saw the Taliban as enabling the stability needed to build oil pipelines from Turkmenistan through to Afghanistan and on to Pakistan. From 2000 to late summer 2001, US officials held meetings

with the Taliban in an effort to persuade them to form an alliance with their local rivals, the Northern Alliance, in order to build such a pipeline in exchange for financial aid and international legitimacy (Ahmed 2009). If they failed to comply with this federalization plan, US officials threatened the Taliban with military action. Thus, all through the Taliban reign when its officials were busy destroying and ransacking the country's libraries and museums of precious cultural artifacts, the Americans were giving the movement their tacit support.

The cultural destruction wreaked by the Taliban included the destruction of books and rare manuscripts, especially in the Persian language, and the smashing of artifacts in the country's National Museum, especially statues with a human form such as Greco-Buddhist Buddhas and bodhisattvas. Photographs, films, and paintings of humans and animals were also targeted for destruction (Bopearachchi 2002: 13-14, 148). The campaign culminated in the March 2001 destruction of the two incomparably beautiful ancient statues of the Buddhas of Bamiyan which Buddhist monks had carved out of sandstone statues between the second and fifth centuries A.D. Apparently, the loss of precious cultural artifacts was less important than building an oil pipeline. As a US diplomat commented in 1997: "The Taliban will develop like the Saudis ... there will be Aramco [consortium of oil companies controlling Saudi oil], pipelines, an emir, no parliament and lots of sharia law. We can live with that (Ahmad 2009)." In Afghanistan, the West would see how their support for Islamic fundamentalists would come back to haunt them. Afghan mujahedeen who fought against the Soviets made their way to Bosnia which also attracted several thousand "holy warriors" from throughout the Islamic world. In Bosnia, allies of al-Qaeda leader, Osama bin Laden, who later allied himself with the Taliban, were given boxes of blank passports (Johnstone 2002: 62). Only after the events of September 11, 2001 in New York was U.S. attention drawn to the al-Qaeda link in Bosnia.

Overlooking American involvement in the ransacking and looting of the Iraqi National Museum in 2003 was a much more difficult challenge for American apologists since it was the Americans, and only the Americans (and British), who were responsible. In their third illegal invasion after the invasion of Kosovo in 1999, which was also undertaken without the authority of the United Nations Security Council, the Americans lied about non-existent weapons of mass destruction, implied al-Qaeda connections, and professed their desire to bring democracy to a country under the yoke of extreme tyranny in the guise of Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein (whom they had previously supported). Shortly after the invasion, on April 3, 2003 the Iraqi National Museum, which was considered one of the best in the entire Middle East, was looted. In a move that makes clear the true purposes of the American invasion, the Americans made certain that the Ministry of Oil was secured and protected but they failed to protect important cultural institutions that were inevitable targets for looting

and pillage. Although a precedent had been set when nine Iraqi museums had been targeted after the 1991 Gulf War, the American military's obvious priority was not the protection of cultural institutions. It must be said that even Saddam Hussein had posted guards in front of the Kuwait National Museum to prevent looting on the first day of the Iraqi occupation of Kuwait in 1990 (Rothfield 2009: 2).

On April 3, 2003, during the American's initial invasion of the country, the Iraqi National Museum in Baghdad was subjected to three successive waves of looting, the latter two of which were targeted lootings by professionals who stole around 15,000 artifacts which included at one point the Mask of Warka, a 5,100-year-old Sumerian artifact believed to be one of the earliest surviving representations of the human face (this mask was found buried on an Iraqi farm five months later) (Glenn 2009: B17). After the fall of Baghdad on April 9, for five days mobs attacked the country's public institutions. In contrast to the expressions of outrage concerning the destruction of Bosnian and Croatian cultural heritage, American officials in charge of the invasion were remarkably nonchalant about their own negligence in the protection of Iraqi national cultural heritage. The day after the looting, for example, Secretary of Defence Donald Rumsfeld commented that "stuff happens", while during a pre-war conference General Tommy Banks of the U.S. Army Central Command responded to a question on securing cultural sites upon invasion by exclaiming: "I don't have time for this fucking bullshit! (Werner 2009: IN6)." Apparently, the Iraqi people would be so eager to meet their American liberators that they would take care of their own domestic security.

### 3. Concluding note

The rules of engagement for the West are clear. As the self-proclaimed inheritors of democracy and civilization, they are free to set the rules for the rest. If the rest of the world adheres to the precepts, they will be rewarded; if not, they will be punished. If, for example, Bosnian Serbs destroy cultural heritage, their leaders must be dragged before an international tribunal and charged with genocide, while the many fewer Bosnian Muslims and Bosnian Croats who appear before it are charged only with war crimes (Herman 2004: 49). In the service of promoting the war, professors from elite academic institutions such as Harvard University such as Joel Goldhagen and the self-described "human rights expert," Michael Ignatieff (a cheerleader for all three illegal wars waged against Serbia, Afghanistan, and Iraq) will make the case for war. The defiant leader of a losing side, Slobodan Milosevic (who in fact played a leading role in ending the first Bosnian war and was praised for doing so) will be illegally kidnapped from his home and tried before a specially-devised international

tribunal, while war criminals on the other side, such as Croatian leader Franco Tudjman and Bosnian Muslim leader Alija Izetbegovic, will go free. In the process of convicting Milosevic, another Harvard “expert” will appear before the tribunal, give selective evidence concerning the cultural destruction wrought by one side, and one side only, in the conflict, and he will be praised for his courage in confronting war crimes even though his own country refuses to sign onto the terms of the International Criminal Court. In turn, other American commentators will, in the words of American dissident authors Noam Chomsky and Edward Herman, continue the process of “manufacturing consent”, retrace his findings, and refuse to ask the difficult questions concerning their own country’s contribution to the conflict.

An ally such as Turkey can bomb and burn Kurdish villages, drown them under hydroelectric projects, ban and restrict the Kurdish language, and no consequences will accrue. However, a country such as Serbia, which has earned the West’s wrath, will be scrutinized for every infringement, real or imagined, against its Albanian minority, even though this minority enjoys the right to publish, broadcast and be educated in its own language.

Meanwhile, when friends such as the Taliban rampage libraries and museums and destroy priceless manuscripts, museum artifacts, and rare books, there will be no repercussions until they no longer serve a useful purpose or refuse to cooperate with Western economic plans. At this point, they will be vilified for their horrific human rights abuses, their barbaric practices, their religious fundamentalism, and they will be targeted as a candidate for another western “humanitarian intervention.”

Likewise, when an ally such as Israel, which is an occupying power in the West Bank and Gaza Strip —and thus under international law has no rights but only responsibilities towards those it occupies— rampages and wreaks destruction against the occupied population’s cultural monuments, artifacts, and institutions, the rampage is overlooked and is accepted as the right of a sovereign nation to “defend itself (AlJazeera 2009).” When the same country invades and attacks a defenseless civilian population in the Gaza Strip in 2008-2009 and bombs and destroys a university, kills civilians waving white flags, employs horrific weapons such as white phosphorous, and targets UN schools, the West will rush to defend this country’s “right to defend itself.” When a jurist such as Richard Goldstone serves as a judge before the ICTY to judge Slobodan Milosevic, his service is regarded as distinguished and fair-minded but when he takes on the task of United Nations investigator into the events in Gaza in 2008-2009, and his report implicates Israel in possible war crimes which could be tried at the International Criminal Court, his findings are decried as biased and not beneficial (for a non-existent peace process in the region, in any case), especially since his conclusions might mean that Western war criminals could be held accountable for their crimes (Chomsky 2009). Likewise, when Israel

declares its “right to exist” as a nation, it is seen by the West as sacrosanct, although for countries such as the former Yugoslavia no such right exists. When Kosovan citizens of the former Yugoslavia declare their right to secede from that country, their right to do so is guaranteed by Western powers who work to scuffle a negotiated agreement between the Serbs and the Kosovans; however, when Palestinians recently threatened to ask the United National Security Council to recognize Palestine as an independent state in response to Israeli recalcitrance, the US State Department issued a statement opposing the Palestinian proposal stating: “It is our strong belief and conviction that the best means to achieve the common goal of a contiguous and viable Palestine is through negotiations between the parties (Mozgovaya 2009).”

Finally, while the United States and the United Kingdom illegally invade Iraq using evidence based on gross fabrications, leading to the deaths of an estimated one million Iraqis (Stanton 2010) and the flight of four million refugees (statistics which could surely be used to describe the perpetration of a genocide), none of its leaders will be tried before the world for perpetrating the crimes. Meanwhile, the inability of the occupying powers to prepare for the safeguarding or protection of that country’s cultural institutions, while assuring the protection of the Oil Ministry, lay bare the real reason for the country’s invasion.

In the interim, the western charade continues as NATO was once again called upon to bomb civilians in another country perceived as a Western enemy—Libya under Muammar Gaddafi in 2011—while at the same time another Western ally, Bahrain, with an equally appalling human rights record against its own citizens, was invaded by its authoritarian Gulf country neighbors such as Saudi Arabia, to prevent the will of the Bahraini people from running its course. As the West demonized Libya’s Gaddafi, Bahrain’s minority Sunni Muslim rulers destroyed Shiite mosques, including the 400 year old Amir Mohammed Braighi mosque, saying they are “illegal buildings” and American and Western European governments remained silent (Gutman 2011). Gaddafi’s over-throw led in turn to further cultural destruction in other places. The Libyan intervention, for example, which empowered Islamic fundamentalists supported by undemocratic Gulf countries such as Saudi Arabia and Qatar, spread across the border to neighboring Mali, resulting in an attack on July 2, 2012 on the door to the World Heritage Site Sidi Yahya Mosque in Timbuktu by axe-wielding militants belonging to an al-Qaeda-linked group who had already defaced mausoleums and tombs of local Sufi saints (Mark 2012).

In its silence over cultural destruction in Bahrain, the West did not mention Bahrain’s strategic position as home to the American Naval Fifth Fleet which protects America’s interests in a resource-rich region, nor did it cite Libya’s fields of petroleum; Western greed for natural resources not being a subject worthy of mention as the West launches its wars of humanitarian intervention.

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# Through a Distant Lens Visions of Native Hawaiians in Children's Picture Books

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BRAVERMAN ESSAY 2012

*“Sovereignty is on the lips of Hawaiian and non-Hawaiian alike. Some utter it with a vengeance, some with hope, some with fear. Sovereignty is no longer just the dream of a few young Hawaiians.”  
- Martha H. Noyes (101)*

*“We have so much anger and resentment that I don't know that we will ever be satisfied even if they gave it all back.” - Jennifer Gomes, Native Hawaiian (Whitelaw 28)*

As I have swum up from the muck of student life and into enlightened librarianship, I have witnessed the many intersections of our profession with social justice issues. Working at inner city libraries, I have seen homelessness, undereducation, crime, and discrimination. Regardless of our backgrounds and socioeconomic stations, though, in the Upper Midwest we share the challenge of the black hole that is January, which sucks you in and threatens never to spit you out again. It is very easy, in such circumstances, to dream of Hawaii<sup>1</sup> in its oversimplified role as a tropical paradise.

But this year, Hawaii stayed on my mind past January, as it dawned on me that I may know some things about the experiences of Native Americans

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whose lives are embedded beside mine in the Upper Midwest, but I knew much less about the lives of Native Hawaiians.<sup>2</sup> It did not take much work to discover that the history of Native Hawaiians, which was never mentioned in my mainland public schools, is both troublingly similar to and yet quite distinct from that of other Native Americans. While many Native Americans suffer from poverty and poor health, “we elect our leaders and have our own police force and court system,” Debbie Reese says of her continental Native American peoples. Native Hawaiians, on the other hand, “were given the status of perpetual guardianship” by the federal government, says Mililani Trask. “We are not allowed to form governments; we are not allowed to control our land” (32). I was honestly shocked to learn this and began to wonder when and how my own vision of Hawaii began to form. This led me to interrogate how public libraries present the experiences of Native Hawaiians to our youngest citizens. Are the stereotypes I remember from my childhood still being perpetuated? If so, how deep does the discrimination go? And, finally, what can we as librarians do to ameliorate our complicity?

## 1. Selection and Analysis

At first, I cast a wide net and pulled in everything I could request in children’s literature about Hawaii through my local library system,<sup>3</sup> along with a few interlibrary loan items from other library systems within the state. It was important to me to work from materials that are readily available to parents of young children (as opposed to academics) so that my analysis would encompass what local families would be likely to learn. After collecting about fifty books for ages preschool through eight, I began to see a pattern: picture books are the most likely to portray Native Hawaiians and their stories directly. Based on that initial finding, I developed the final criteria that each book must:

- 1) be a picture book that is appropriate for ages four through seven,
- 2) have been published in the last thirty years, and
- 3) purport to depict Native Hawaiians or tell a Native Hawaiian story or folktale.

This selection process left me with eleven books, five of which profess to be Native Hawaiian folktales. Of the remaining books, one is an alphabet book (with fairly complex definitions for each letter), three are stories of contemporary children, and two are historical tales that feature native characters who were invented by the authors. The following analysis of those eleven books interweaves elements of rubrics for analyzing children’s literature from Louise Derman-Sparks, Betsy Hearne, and Mitali Perkins. I will address their questions and suggestions in two main areas: author expertise and sources, and illustrations and story content.

## 2. Author Expertise and Sources

My concern with authenticity and the right of authors to speak for their subjects begins with determining the authority of the creators of these stories. Derman-Sparks, a professor of human development who has devoted her career to issues of multiculturalism in children's education, suggests that assessing a book's racism includes investigating the author's and illustrator's background and perspective (Derman-Sparks and the A.B.C. Task Force). Because a typical library user would likely only access the book itself to find out about the author and illustrator, I limited this ranking to the information available in the book and on the book jacket. Table 1 lists the backgrounds of the authors, illustrators, and author-illustrators as described by the books themselves. I graded the entries into four levels, based on the extent of each book's noted connection to Hawaii.

There are some trends worth noting in how this shakes out. For example, the older titles tend to be the ones that lack author/illustrator biographies. However—and perhaps this is a reason why they have lasted so long in the library's circulating collection—they tend to come from Hawaiian publishing houses (University of Hawaii Press; Pacifica Press of Kailua). The two examples from the University of Hawaii Press (*How Maui Slowed the Sun* and *Maui and the Secret of Fire*), both by Suelyn Ching Tune, also each include an author's dedication to those who helped review these traditional tales for accuracy. This hints at a greater attention to and respect for Native storytelling, which, along with the authority of a university press, may explain their persistence in the collection. Unfortunately, the connections to and context of the stories are not made more explicit, which we will see is important in further examining these books.

Another item of note in this survey of basic information is that the only books that do not indicate any connection to Hawaii are the three by author-illustrators. Interestingly, according to "James Rumford's Biography" online, he has lived in Honolulu for thirty years, but for unknown reasons, the publisher chose not to include that information. I was also interested to discover that the three books in Level 3 make no connection between the author and Hawaii but do note that the illustrator has spent time there before creating the book. This could imply that, to publishers at least, the authenticity of visual representation of Hawaii matters more than the voices of its people. And, indeed, the voice of a Native Hawaiian might be heard directly in only one of these books: U'ilani Goldsberry has a Native first name, but neither her book jacket biography nor her online information indicates her heritage. Unfortunately for those of us struggling to learn at a distance, it is not unusual for Native Hawaiians to be absent as authors in print: they come from an oral tradition. As explained by Veronica Ogata, Education Coordinator at Kapi'olani Community College

| Level  | Book   | Author/Illustrator                    | Location, as indicated on the book (author or illustrator)                            | Other Hawaii connections, as noted on or in the book   |
|--|--|---------------------------------------|---|--|
| Level 1:<br>Hawaiian<br>author and<br>illustrator                                      | <i>A Is for Aloha</i> (2005)                       | U'iana Goddessberry (author)          | Born on Maui, lives on Oahu   |  |
|  |  | Tammy Yee (illustrator)               | Born in Honolulu, lives on Oahu   |  |
| Level 2:<br>Score<br>information<br>provided on<br>a direct<br>connection<br>to Hawaii | Torch Fishing with the Sun<br>(1999)               | Laura E. Williams (author)            | Grew up in Hawaii, lives in Cleveland   |  |
|  |  | Fabrizio Vandani Boreck (illustrator) | Lives in Mexico   |  |
|  | <i>How Maui Slowed the Sun</i><br>(1988)           | Suelyn Ching Tane (author)            | No information provided   | Author acknowledgment lists author/illustrators in Hawaii who have reviewed the book for accuracy; University of Hawaii Press            |
|  |  | Robin Waho Burningsham (illustrator)  | No information provided   |  |
|  | <i>Meat and the Secret of Fire</i><br>(1991)       | Suelyn Ching Tane (author)            | No information provided   | Author dedication lists author/illustrators in Hawaii who have taught her and reviewed the book for accuracy; University of Hawaii Press |
|  |  | Robin Waho Burningsham (illustrator)  | No information provided   |  |
| Level 3:<br>Marginal but<br>noted<br>connections<br>to Hawaii                          | <i>The Menomonee and the Kene</i><br>(1984)        | Socot Yamashita (author)              | No information provided   | Book published in Hawaii by local Pacific Press  |
|  |  | Barbara O'Connell (illustrator)       | No information provided   |  |
|  | <i>Dear Kono, The Volcano Is a Girl</i> (1998)     | Jean Crisphead George (author)        | Lives in New York state   |  |
|  |  | Daniel Powers (illustrator)           | Lives in New Mexico but received a grant to travel to Hawaii for illustrations        |  |
|  | <i>The Woman in the Moon</i><br>(1994)             | Jenna Kim Ranzgan (author)            | Lives in Virginia   |  |
|  |  | Carla Golenbe (illustrator)           | Lives in Massachusetts but spent several months in Hawaii for this book               |  |
| Level 4: Book<br>does not<br>note any<br>connection<br>to Hawaii                       | <i>Grandma Calls Me Beautiful</i><br>(2008)        | Barbara Joosse (author)               | Lives in Wisconsin  |  |
|  |  | Barbara Lavallee (illustrator)        | Lives in Alaska; notes Hawaii "is a favorite destination" (back)                      |  |
|  | <i>Maui Lullaby</i> (2005)                         | Erin Erter Kono (author-illustrator)  | Lives in mainland USA; listed as flight attendant, implying might have visited Hawaii | [Lives in Hawaii, but this is not on or in the book]   |
|  | <i>The Island-below-the-Sea</i><br>(1998)          | James Burnford (author-illustrator)   | No information provided   |  |
|  | <i>Fig-fig- A Treacher Tale From Hawaii</i> (2009) | Gerard McDermott (author-illustrator) | Lives in California   |  |

Table 1: Author-illustrator geography, based on information available on the book itself

in Honolulu, and her colleagues at the University of Hawaii, this “means that much of Hawaiian history and culture is transmitted verbally by respected elders ... through storytelling rather than written records” (Ogata, Sheehey, and Noonan 7). The authenticity of written records that do exist is further called into question by the complex definition of “Native.” Since 1920, in order to be recognized as Native, Hawaiians must demonstrate a 50% blood quantum, as explained by Margaret Jolly, a scholar of Pacific studies (108). However, as reported in the *New York Times*, the 2010 U.S. Census revealed that, Native Hawaiians (alongside Native Americans) are among the mostly likely citizens to report a mixed-race background. In addition, Native Hawaiians have suffered a series of oppressions by the various cultures in Hawaii’s highly diverse population, so their own histories often braid the oppressed with the oppressor. Native activist and Professor of Hawaiian Studies Haunani-Kay Trask explains, “The history of our colonization becomes a twice-told tale, first of discovery and settlement by European and American businessmen and missionaries, then of the plantation Japanese, Chinese, and eventually Filipino rise to dominance in the islands” (“Settlers” 2-3). Given these multiple buffers that distort the voice of the Native, how can we who are non-Native determine the accuracy of stories like the ones presented here?

There is no simple answer to that question, and to move forward with trying to answer it, non-Native librarians need to make a truce with our own uncertainty. Native Hawaiians will always be the experts on their own experience, no matter how much we learn as outsiders, and we need to trust their voices. Information studies professor, scholar of multicultural librarianship, and Anishinaabe tribal member Lorlene Roy has stated firmly that “indigenous people know who they are” (46). Attempts to further explicate “indigenous people” in print have led to a multiplicity of definitions, but what they have in common is that they are all extensions of Roy’s succinct assertion of Native self-definition. What this means is that as non-Native librarians practice collection management, we must explicitly and with self-awareness place the interests of Native Hawaiians, as expressed by Native Hawaiians, ahead of our own perceptions and standards. We do this in order to support Native Hawaiians’ intellectual sovereignty and their right to control the representation of their own culture. Roy and her colleague, Kristen Hogan, rightfully point out that handing over our decision-making power “may spark a feeling of fear of loss of autonomy on the part of librarians” (131). While acknowledging and accepting that caveat, we should be able to refer to and follow the directives of Native Hawaiians when selecting stories about them for our children.

Unfortunately, as exemplified by the books discussed in this paper, the reality of existing materials we have to work with can be much messier than the ideal. One method of working around the lack of direct Native voices, as suggested by children’s literature scholar Betsy Hearne, is assessing the source note provided

by the author or publisher. Suggesting that the ideal note should, at a minimum, “note the name of the teller; the time, place, and circumstances of the telling; and the tone of the occasion” (“Cite the Source” 24), she has created a rubric that categorizes source note information in five levels. Hearne’s rubric is based to some extent on the assertion that “understanding depends less on biology and more on knowledge and experience” (“Respect the Source” 34), which can seem tricky to reconcile with the directive to enable Native Hawaiians to tell their own stories. On closer examination, though, these positions are not mutually exclusive. Trask herself notes that the aforementioned blood quantum is an imposition of the colonial government: “In this way, our nation was divided by race, a concept and reality foreign to our way of thinking” (“Feminism” 907). When people who self-identify as Native Hawaiian may have diverse biological ancestors, we should take into consideration that a well-prepared source note can serve a crucial role in helping those of us outside the culture to understand the story’s place.

Although Hearne’s rubric was created to evaluate sources of traditional tales or folktales, I adapted it in Table 2 to encompass all of these books since they come from outside the realm of experience of most of their authors and therefore should provide context and provenance for the stories. Given that cultural competency and documentation have tended to increase over time, I expected the newer books to score better on this scale, and for the most part, that holds true. The exceptions are *Hula Lullaby*, which has some problems that will be discussed in the upcoming section on illustrations and content; and *The Woman in the Moon*, which in spite of being fifteen years old has the most extensive source note and bibliography and also includes a glossary. When this information is cross-referenced with the information in Table 1, it reveals that

| Ranking (Hearne “Cite the Source” 24-25)   | Books in this paper  |
|--|--|
| 1. <i>The model source note.</i> “The truly exemplary source note cites the specific source(s), adds a description for cultural context, and describes what the author has done to change the tale, with some explanation of why.” | <i>Pig-Boy</i> (2009)<br><i>The Woman in the Moon</i> (1996)   |
| 2. <i>The well-made source note.</i> Specific sources, cleverly integrated and culturally situated.  | <i>Grandma Calls Me Beautiful</i> (2008)<br><i>A is for Aloha</i> (2005)   |
| 3. <i>The fine print source note.</i> Source information is included but hidden.   | N/A  |
| 4. <i>The background-as-source-note.</i> Some cultural information but no citation.  | <i>Hula Lullaby</i> (2005)<br><i>Torch Fishing with the Sun</i> (1999)<br><i>The Island-below-the-Star</i> (1998)  |
| 5. <i>The nonexistent source note.</i> Self-explanatory.   | <i>Dear Katie, The Volcano Is a Girl</i> (1998)<br><i>How Maui Slowed the Sun</i> (1988)<br><i>Maui and the Secret of Fire</i> (1991)<br><i>The Menehune and the Nene</i> (1984) |

Table 2: Alignment of books with Hearne’s ranking of source notes

the books with better source notes also tend to show some connection, however tenuous, between the author or illustrator and Hawaii. Unfortunately, though, most of these books still fall into the two lowest categories for source notes and author/illustrator connections, so a family who picked them up from the library would not find a verifiable connection to Native Hawaiian life. We will see that this continues to be a problem in the illustrations and content.

### 3. Illustrations and Story Content

In her recommendations for analyzing children's books for racism and sexism, Derman-Sparks's first suggestion is to look for stereotypes in the illustrations (1). What do people who know little about Native Hawaiians associate with their culture? They may envision flower leis, hula dancing, women in grass skirts with coconut bras — in general, “exotic” women. In his exploration of “the Other” in children's literature, renowned children's literature scholar Perry Nodelman recounts that this feminization is inherent in Orientalism: “Representations of those who can't see or speak for themselves are and must always be engendered by outsiders — those who can see and speak” (29). Although she is primarily referring to white people being portrayed as the highest form of beauty, young adult author Mitali Perkins touches on this as well in her questions for challenging stereotypes in children's books when she asks how beauty is defined in the books (32). The exoticized Native Hawaiian woman represents an appealing but dangerous form of stereotypical beauty.

A glance at the books analyzed in this paper turns up plentiful examples of the exoticized Native. Buxom, flower-swathed women are featured in six of the eleven books (Figures 1-8). These are books for young children, so the desirability of the women is typically shrouded in motherhood and/or deification (Figures 1-6), but it is visible nonetheless. Because of the importance of mothers and the power of goddesses, there are aspects of these images that are positive. However, because these are the only images of Native women we see, they necessarily limit the definition of who a Native Hawaiian woman can be.

The most egregious example is *Hula Lullaby*, which focuses almost entirely on stereotypical, hula-dancing women (Figure 8). Additional problems are raised in *Hula Lullaby* because the author has taken what is a deeply meaningful cultural tradition and flattened it into a children's song. In her introduction, Kono—who is, we recall, white and not from Hawaii—writes, “In Hawai'i the warm breeze often carries the ... rhythmic chants of the hula. It is not difficult to imagine rocking one's child, or *keiki* [keh kee], to sleep to the accompaniment of this gentle cadence” (3). Compare that to the words of Native Hawaiian hula dancer, Momiala Kamahale: “In modern Hawai'i, hula ... has been distorted and commodified for the benefit of the tourist industry ... For those of us who are

practitioners steeped in the ancient form of this Native dance, saying the word 'hula' brings forth an enormous cultural matrix from which this sacred dance emerged, connecting us back to our ancestors" (40). On Hearne's source note scale, Kono scored a four, providing a perfect example of why Hearne scores this type of information so low: "It's important to know about traditions, but that's a background note ... In some ways, it's worse than no note at all because it's deceptive" ("Cite the Source" 24). Just as troubling, though, is that the soothing tone of the story and images will likely continue to appeal to parents and librarians who do not know and may never know why it is inaccurate.

In the five books that feature male heroes, the situation is not much better. Derman-Sparks points out that "for many years, books showed only 'safe' minority heroes — those who avoided serious conflict with the white establishment of their time," and suggests asking, "when minority heroes do appear, are they admired for the same qualities that have made white heroes famous?" (4). In *The Island-below-the-Star*, the answer is yes, such that the heroes are rendered "safe" while simultaneously justifying white colonialism. The story celebrates the discovery of the Hawaiian islands by Polynesians "about 1,500 years ago" (Rumford Afterward). However, this is not a story Native Hawaiians tell about themselves; it is a story white historians have constructed for them, and it is being told by a white man. Rumford depicts happy, dark-skinned men cavorting their way to their new home in Hawaii (Figure 9); this depiction reduces their long journey to a game. What's more, this white man's story creates a role for Natives as a previous generation of colonizers, a mirror and tacit approval of what will happen when white men "discover" the islands.

In addition, because all of the stories featuring male heroes take place in the past or outside of actual history, in most of these books the accomplishments of Native Hawaiians are kept "safe" by the distance of time or imagination. In Figure 10, you can see that the "little people" (the "menehune" of the title) of the story are depicted to look like Natives but with any of their potentially threatening, masculine qualities removed. The only warrior to appear in any of these books, the king in *Pig-Boy*, is not only defeated but is easily conquered by a mere animal (Figure 11). These images take the stories into the realm of "one version of the well-worn 'civilized' Hawaiian: a happy, incompetent child, regardless of chronological age, whose former savagery resulted from superstition and evil chiefs" (Howes 71).

Across all of these stories, regardless of the character's gender, is the aforementioned problem of portraying Native Hawaiians as a people of the past. *A for Aloha*, which has some positive qualities I explore below, undercuts its own accomplishment by defining Native Hawaiians as people of a stone age past (Figure 15) and not as a thriving, contemporary culture. Once again, I turn to Derman-Sparks, who asks us to look at the lifestyles of characters in the



Figure 1: Detail of *Pig-Boy*



Figure 2: Detail of *Grandma Calls me Beautiful*



Figure 3: Detail of *Dear Katie*

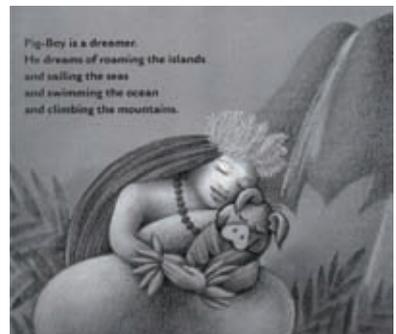


Figure 4: Detail of *Pig-Boy*



Figure 5: Detail of *The Woman in the Moon*



Figure 6: Detail of *Hula Lullaby*



Figure 7: Detail of *A is for Aloha*



Figure 8: Detail of *Hula Lullaby*



Figure 9: Detail of *Island-below-the-Star*



Figure 10: Detail of *The Menehune*

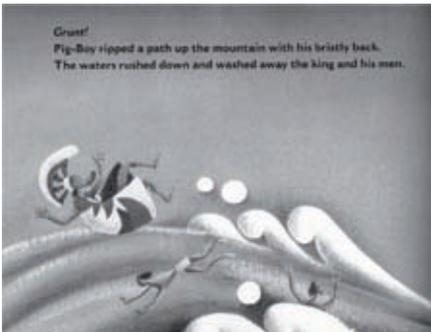


Figure 11: Detail of *Pig-Boy*

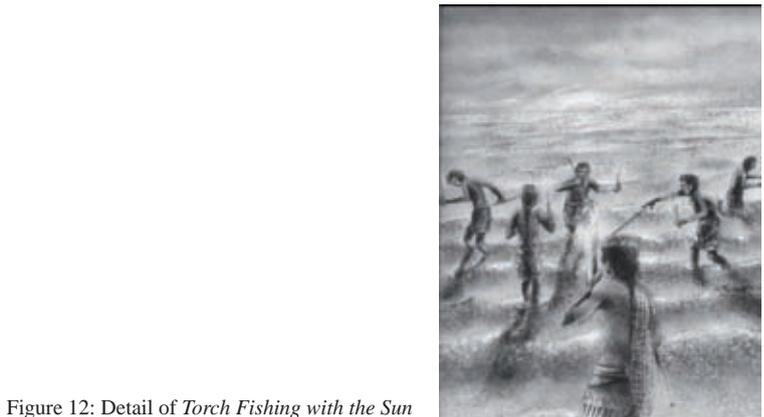


Figure 12: Detail of *Torch Fishing with the Sun*



books: “Are third world persons and their setting depicted in such a way that they contrast unfavorably with the unstated norm of white, middle-class suburbia? ... Watch for instances of the ‘quaint-natives-in-costume’ syndrome” (3). Taken collectively, these books consistently show Native Hawaiians as “quaint natives-in-costume” (Figures 9-15); even a contemporary story like *Grandma Calls Me Beautiful* depicts the family in muumuus and shows flashbacks to a past way of life. This representation of Native culture as historical encourages non-Native children to dismiss it as a relic.

Of all of these books, the only one to show a contemporary, adult male is *A is for Aloha* (Figure 16). The man in this image is of indeterminate or possibly mixed biological heritage, reflecting the reality of Native Hawaiians in the present day. He is clearly graduating from some level of higher education and celebrating Hawaiian-style, with leis and local food. Significantly, the celebration is shared transracially, with affection and joy between this man and children with different shades of hair and skin. This image opens the possibility for discussion —perhaps during library storytime— of what children imagine is happening in the scene, then making the connection between Native and non-Native lives explicit. The picture still is not perfect, in that it could be construed as supporting the problematic “melting pot” trope, but it does offer a the hope of a richer vision of Native Hawaiian life.

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#### 4. Recommendations and Conclusion

If so much is wrong with these books, what should be corrected or added to the collection? One important addition would be the inclusion of more books about contemporary Native Hawaiian children and their families. The challenge is not just in finding those books, though, but in empowering writers to produce them. As I mentioned early in this paper, Native Hawaiians are steeped in an oral culture. Stephen Canham, professor of literature at the University of Hawaii, notes, “the art of the story, the impulse to transform life into a story, is central to the inner life of Hawaii. But not necessarily in its written form” (174). If written culture is an imposition —especially if, as Canham also says, English is “viewed, rightly or wrongly, as the colonial language of the upper middle class Caucasian” (174)— what should we do, those of us who are in danger of appearing as colonizers yet again? Throughout this paper, I have tried to be attuned to and encourage awareness of the voices of Native Hawaiians. But, if we are not hearing those voices in the stories we have on hand, we need to seek out Native Hawaiians who are speaking in other forms. Libraries could accomplish this through digital storytelling, internet portals, and/or long-distance collaboration, to name just a few options. In a virtually connected world, we no longer have the luxury of relying on distance as an excuse.

Nevertheless, we who are non-Native should also choose to learn and act locally. While we should be mindful and take care not to group all Native American experiences together, the basic tenets of respect for indigenous autonomy apply across groups and can be practiced with local communities as well. As Roy and Hogan point out, “indigenous peoples can also work with libraries as liaison officers to Native communities” (139), thus providing opportunities for direct contact and collaborative work. Finally, non-Native librarians need to extend the welcome of Native peoples into the library beyond advisory and liaison capacities and into librarianship as a profession. Native Hawaiian librarian Kawika Makanani puts it best when he says of non-Native allies, “It is the responsibility of such selfless individuals to consider that their best work will be to train and prepare native peoples to conduct such work for themselves” (39). Through involvement of local Native peoples in our libraries and advocacy for inclusive outreach to Native Hawaiians and other Native Americans by ALA and other national organizations, we have the power to shape our profession into one where a non-Native librarian will be able to find a Native authority without conducting extensive research. If we respect and amplify the true voices of Native Hawaiians, we might eventually be able to meet and learn from each other as something closer to equals.

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## NOTES

1. The literature is inconsistent in the spelling of Hawaii (versus Hawai'i). In this paper, I have chosen to use "Hawaii," but when an author has chosen to use "Hawai'i," I have respected and maintained that spelling.
2. I acknowledge that in some communities and schools of thought, "indigenous" is a preferable term to "Native," particularly when used by someone like me who is non-Native. In the particular realm of discussion of Hawaiian issues, though, "Native Hawaiian" seems to be the term most commonly used by both Native and non-Native scholars, so it has been my choice throughout this paper.
3. A major urban/suburban system in the upper Midwest whose name I have redacted from the study.

## Insider Histories of the Vietnam Era Underground Press, Part 2

By Ken Wachsberger (ed). (East Lansing, MI:  
Michigan State University Press, 2012).

Reviewed by Matthew Ducmanas

When the protests of the Occupy Wall Street movement began just over a year ago in New York's Zuccotti Park, the widespread use of digital media and information and communication technologies was a familiar sight. The protesters and their sympathetic supporters were building websites, posting Facebook updates, and maintaining robust Twitter feeds. In no time they were setting up makeshift Wi-Fi networks, sharing live video feeds online, and utilizing their mobile phones to communicate, organize, and record events.

Amidst all these modern technologies, just weeks after the protests began, a significantly older communication tool was also employed when the first issue of the *Occupied Wall Street Journal* hit the streets. The four page, color broadsheet was written and printed by journalists sympathetic to the cause. The first edition numbered 50,000 copies. Within days, an additional 20,000 had to be printed.<sup>1</sup> The demand for the paper by protesters and spectators alike demonstrated that there is still room amongst the blogs and text messages for a physical, tangible form of communication.

Ken Wachsberger's edited volume, *Insider Histories of the Vietnam Era Underground Press, Part 2*, shines light on the allure of the alternative newspaper format. This third volume in the *Voices from the Underground* series aims to document the history the American underground press and present "the gay, lesbian, feminist, Black, Puerto Rican, Native American, socialist, Southern consciousness, psychedelic, prisoners' rights, military, New Age, rank-and-file,

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and other independent voices of what was known in the sixties and seventies as the counterculture.”<sup>22</sup>

A teacher, political organizer, and writer, Wachsberger himself was active in Michigan’s underground press and has compiled an important companion to the first volume of the series *Insider Histories of the Vietnam Era Underground Press, Part 1. Insider Histories... Part 2* is also composed of detailed, first-hand accounts from those intimately involved in the alternative and independent publications that grew out of the anti-war and counterculture movement. These varied and largely entertaining narratives provide fascinating glimpses into the challenges, aspirations, and continued importance of these publications in our country’s history as well as to the future of progressive and radical movements.

Steve Abbott’s chapter on his time with Ohio’s *Columbus Free Press* mentions the opportunities he has to deliver talks on the Vietnam-era underground press to students and young people. He values the chance to “move their awareness beyond visual images and simple stereotypes into the complexities of the personal and political conflicts then that have molded our politics today.”<sup>23</sup> As a younger reader with no direct experience of the cultural and political struggles of the sixties and seventies, my general knowledge of this significant time is mostly bolstered by impressions derived from various media depictions and half-remembered episodes of *The Wonder Years*. One of the values of collections like *Insider Histories... Part 2* is that they provide an alternative to the distortions of mass media and the official histories that often ignore or underplay the role of dissident speech. *Insider Histories of the Vietnam Era Underground Press, Part 2* preserves a part of this important history while effectively contextualizing these efforts.

*Insider Histories... Part 2* delves deeply into the challenges the underground press faced from the state and those defending the status quo. The accounts given in this volume are startling evidence of the degree to which violence and legal intimidation were used against these individuals who had the audacity to try to communicate their own content through their own outlets. Though the zeal and the vivacity of the anti-war and counterculture movement are often acknowledged, the courage and perseverance of those individuals on display in this volume deserve recognition.

While unwarranted arrests and harassment by police were commonplace for many of the participants in the underground press, David Doggett’s account of Jackson, Mississippi’s underground newspaper *The Kudzu* presents an especially egregious case. Formed in 1968, *The Kudzu*’s staff and supporters sustained forty-two arrests within its first three years of operation. The paper had to endure its street vendors being arrested and police raids on its office. A staff member was evicted from her apartment after police visited her landlady, and Doggett himself was aggressively arrested, beaten, and held for over a day

and a half without being allowed to make a phone call- all for just photographing a separate police arrest. These are just cases attributable to the police and do not include the anonymous threatening phone calls, bomb threats, and shots fired through the paper's office windows.

*The Kudzu* and the other underground papers were not just under pressure from state law enforcement and local opponents, but had a surprising amount of federal attention lavished upon them as well. Another strength of *Insider Histories... Part 2* is the way that it documents an especially troubling period in the federal government's activities. These papers, often staffed by a handful of people and producing a limited number of issues, had captured the attention of COINTELPRO, the FBI's covert counterintelligence program aimed at investigating, repressing, and discrediting domestic political organizations. The authors in *Insider Histories... Part 2* recount numerous examples of undercover informants planted to report on everything from the papers' finances to the staff members' sexual relationships. While these efforts rarely resulted in directly terminating publication, they contributed substantially to the financial stress, staffing issues, and burnout that weakened the underground press over time.

A more humorous account of the extent of the COINTELPRO efforts is given in Elihu Edelson's chapter on *Both Sides Now*. Based in Jacksonville, Florida, *Both Sides Now* existed on a smaller scale and within a much smaller progressive community than many of the other papers described in the book. Nevertheless, the FBI deemed it dangerous enough to go through the trouble of setting up a rival underground paper for the purpose of poaching staff away from *Both Sides Now* with the promise of paid positions. The FBI funded paper produced two full issues of radical news and commentary before publication stopped, perhaps realizing that by that point Edelson was the sole remaining staff member and was producing the paper himself.

That the staff of these papers chose to exercise their right to free speech in the first place is commendable, and that they continued to do so in the face of threats, arrests, and beatings is impressive. Their efforts are even more remarkable considering the internal struggles they faced as well. *Insider Histories... Part 2* makes apparent that many of these papers didn't just try to communicate the activities and aspirations of the movement, but that they also aspired to operate in a way that supported and perpetuated those causes. In line with their revolutionary aims, many of the underground papers operated, or at least aspired to operate, collectively and democratically. Competing visions struggled over what to print and how to go about printing it. This effort was often less than tranquil. The book is filled with accounts of tense staff meetings, heated arguments, inter-paper coups, and organizational splits.

Often the major disagreements were over content and the difficulty of covering all aspects of the countercultural movement in one publication and through a non-hierarchical organizational structure. Bob Hippler's chapter on

Detroit's *Fifth Estate* provides an especially riveting account of the internal struggles between the feminist, socialist, anarchist and gay factions of the paper's staff. The heated arguments and staff upheavals resulting from the number of articles devoted to each cause is recounted by Hippler with the good humor of hindsight, but also with the very real understanding of the challenge it is to communally produce a publication, let alone a movement.

The diversity of cultural and political concerns that brought such disparate groups together to produce these underground papers also provided the fundamental differences that in many cases caused these publications to self-destruct. In addition to documenting the successful cooperative efforts, *Insider Histories... Part 2* does not shy away from showing the sometimes-unrecognized biases of the movement and the individuals as well. Ginny Berson's account of *The Furies* and Bonnie Eisenberg's chapter on *It Aint Me Babe* both call warranted attention to the backseat role that the women's liberation movement took within the larger leftist movement of the sixties and seventies. They describe how feminism and, even more so, lesbian consciousness were largely considered issues to be dealt with after the war was halted and the larger revolution had commenced. These voices had to work even harder within the underground press to be heard and resulted in having to take a separatist stance and publish their own papers to be heard.

This separatist mentality also became increasingly prevalent within the gay community. Though the counterculture movement represented an unprecedented shifting of attitudes and cultural openness, it was slow to fully embrace gay culture. Many of the authors included in *Insider Histories... Part 2* recognize belatedly the way non-heterosexual staff members were given less attention and their issues sidelined. In the book's chapter on Boston's *Fag Rag*, Charley Shively explains: "Separation came both from hostility found in self-styled comrades, and from frustration in developing a self-consciousness. Profound contradictions around race, gender and class could not just be glossed over with well-meaning but otherwise meaningless professions of a common struggle."<sup>4</sup> Despite the internal contradictions of the Left, it wouldn't have been difficult for the narrators of *Insider Histories... Part 2* to present an idealized image of the past, play up the dramatic aspects of oppositional journalism, and look back with self-righteousness. Without exceptions, all of the accounts read as clear-eyed assessments of these sometimes amateurish, sometimes revolutionary publications. Recounted alongside the standoffs with police are the monotonous evenings of tedious layout work, and though the authors recall the revolutionary spirit of their efforts, they also appreciate how counterproductive their "own youthfully superficial political polemics"<sup>5</sup> proved to be. The narratives are told with humor, often with self-deprecation, but also with an eye to the future. The authors recognize there is still work to be done, and though the underground press may be an imperfect vehicle, its role remains vital.

The true worth of this collection goes beyond just preserving these stories and contributing to the history of free speech and independent journalism in our country. Reading it, I felt not just the demand to remember, but also an unspoken appeal to act. *Insider Histories of the Vietnam Era Underground Press, Part 2* reminds the reader that our right to dissident speech, whether through the printed page or a tweet, is too necessary to be left unexercised.

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2. Azenphony Press, "Voices From the Underground – Home," 2010. <http://www.voicesfromtheunderground.com/index.htm>
3. Steve Abbott, "Karl and Groucho's Marxist Dance: The *Columbus Free Press* and Its Predecessors in the Columbus Underground," in *Insider Histories of the Underground Press, Part 2*, ed. Ken Wachsberger (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 2012), 331.
4. Charley Shively, "*Fag Rag*: The Most Loathsome Publication in the English Language," in *Insider Histories of the Underground Press, Part 2*, ed. Ken Wachsberger (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 2012), 101.
5. David Doggett, "*The Kudzu*: Birth and Death in Underground Mississippi," in *Insider Histories of the Underground Press, Part 2*, ed. Ken Wachsberger (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 2012), 151.

## Greening Libraries

By Monica Antonelli and Mark McCullough (eds).

(Los Angeles, CA: Library Juice Press, 2012).

Reviewed by Frederick W. Stoss

Libraries have an institutional integrity that surpasses nearly every work setting, except perhaps those in which we find physicians and health care providers. Our libraries represent the first tried-and-true networked information infrastructure serving the public good for many decades and in many areas, from the strengths of their collections to the services they provide. Since the 1960s and the 1970s, libraries in particular championed public understanding and participation in the new areas of environmental awareness and activism, especially through the efforts of their professional associations, such as the American Library Association and the Special Libraries Association. Libraries became, evolved and remain the source of credible and timely data and information related to a myriad of environmental topics and concerns to the communities and stakeholders they serve. The issues handled by librarians range from use of pesticides and household chemicals to waste management strategies for small and large quantity generators of hazardous wastes, acid rain to global climate change, atmospheric ozone depletion to changing salinity gradients on the oceans, from endangered species to destructive extraction of the last petroleum and coal reserves, and much, much more. In recent years there has been an upwelling of interest in the roles libraries play in assisting individuals, neighborhoods, and communities with improving the ecological and environmental conditions to better meet the demands of allocating natural resources, selecting food, selecting alternative transportation strategies, implementing energy conservation and alternative sources, and embracing other

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quality of life indicators to reduce their impacts. The 21st Century measure of these actions is the ecological, carbon, or CO<sub>2</sub> footprint.

The response of libraries and librarians in meeting these new demands on their collections, services, facilities and expertise evolved in the 1990s to the present, as the Green Library Movement. These new environmental and energy actions are often umbrella-ed under the term or concept of environmental or energy sustainability or sustainable communities. Librarians rose to the challenge in providing new ways of thinking and acting with the great intentions of providing library users with tools and strategies outlining principles and practices for Green Living and promoting the broadened concepts of Sustainable Communities (the American Library Association's 1999-2001 Libraries Build Sustainable communities Program was a tremendous show of foresight). These professional interests led many libraries and librarians to develop print, digital and virtual collections fostering Green Collections and Green Programming. Above and well beyond these fundamental and perhaps more traditional library and librarians functions are the rigorous and inventive means by which librarians educate the greater public (stakeholders) including elected officials, community leaders, teachers and educators, environmental activists, business managers and planners, and academics in public and private institutions with the means to understand the necessity with which green living practices reduce their impacts of the environment and at the same time save not only diminishing resources, but also provide savings to budgets from individuals to homes to communities and farther.

Monica Antonelli and Mark McCullough edited an outstanding resource demonstrating how libraries and librarians effectively handled these challenges. Their 2012 book, *Greening Libraries* (Litwin Books at Library Juice Press, P.O. Box 25322, Los Angeles, CA 90025; inquiries@libraryjuicepress.com; litwinbooks.com, 270 p. ISBN 978-1-936117-08-6, \$32.00) is the first book providing a chronicle of the Green Library Experience and a detailed accounting of the history and the future of Green Libraries (and the "Green Librarians"). Twenty chapters in three sections comprise this important work. "Green Buildings" is devoted to an overview of the decade-long efforts in replacing older and smaller libraries, built as part of the Carnegie Libraries of the late 19th to the mid-20th Centuries and those post-Carnegie Libraries built in the building boom decades of the 1960s and 1970s. These are constructions made to capitalize on smart energy use and environmental design, largely through the efforts of the Green Building Council's promotion of LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) Certification. "Green Committees, Services and Programs" represents the stories of individual libraries' and librarians' efforts to establish a "green ethic," as a major component of the operations, and as effective educational and informational tools to promote energy-smart and environmentally-friendly actions and activities in library programming.

The last section of *Greening Libraries* is a reflection on librarian and library actions that stimulate and hopefully sustain an ethic towards practices that challenge and resolve personal to collective (from households to communities, to associations, and beyond) commitments towards living that Greener Life Style.” It is of particular note that the last two chapters are as inspirational as they are informative.

Promotional information for this book includes a comment, “*Greening Libraries* offers an overview of important aspects of the growing green library movement, including, but not limited to, green buildings, alternative energy resources, conservation, green library services and practices, operations, programming, and outreach.” It is without exception that this book does much more. Not only does it stimulate librarians into thinking about the roles their libraries and fellow librarians play in promoting attainable goals for a living in a greener society. *Greening Libraries* should, over time, become the cornerstone of a foundation of library literature transcending other academic disciplines in environmental studies, urban and municipal planning, government policy and decision making, and other areas of cross disciplinary exchanges of ideas that sustain the concepts for living those greener ideals at all levels and in all places where people work, go to school, live, and play.

## A Social History of Books and Libraries from Cuneiform to Bytes

By Patrick M. Vaelentine. (Lanham: The Scarecrow Press, Inc, 2012).

Reviewed by Kathleen de la Peña McCook

I recommend *A Social History of Books and Libraries from Cuneiform to Bytes*. It is always a fine experience to add a new book to the ambitious roster of sweeping histories that have shaped thinking about library development.<sup>1</sup> This book takes an interesting approach with an emphasis on the context of social and cultural factors.

However, Dr. Valentine's book continues as do other over-arching histories — he provides a male majority focus. In *A Social History of Books and Libraries*, once again, It's a Man's Man's Man's World.<sup>2</sup> Each chapter begins with a series of quotes that lead you on. Valentine cites Francis Bacon, Thomas Carlyle, Umberto Eco, R. David Lankes, José Saramago, Martin Schrettinger, Don Heinrich Tolzmann, Timothy Wu and 26 other men whose observations expand and extend the ideas presented in the *History*. I looked in vain for evidence or impact of Dr. Suzanne Hildenbrand's important volume, *Reclaiming the American Library Past: Writing the Women in*. It isn't even included in the bibliography.

Like Dr. Valentine I teach library history. Because the comprehensive histories like his or those cited in endnote number one (below) fail to include the role of women and the development of libraries serving groups outside the mainstream, I must supplement extensively. Men seem to be the gender to take on the entire sweep of the history of libraries. Until a woman does so there will continue to be a single-sex version of the development of libraries. I recommend this book with many supplements.<sup>3</sup>

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## Libraries, Classrooms, and the Interests of Democracy

By John Buschman. (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 2012).

Reviewed by Peter McDonald

The day a review copy of John Buschman's new book arrived, so too arrived the new *American Libraries* (v.43, #9, p.30), wherein was penned an article by Bertot, Jaeger and Sarin. It was titled "Forbes Folly" where the authors rightfully lament, "Forbes.com published an article in June declaring that a master's degree in ... information science is the worst type of post-graduate degree based on career earning potential."

That may be so, but had Forbes actually bothered to interview any librarians (they didn't) one might wager 99% would reply: "Duh, we didn't become librarians for *earning potential*." But I quibble. Yet today, sadly, when I finally took up the task of writing this review, over the transom arrived an ACRL e-bulletin with the blazing headline, "Beyond Literacy" a new ACRL and Ontario Library Association joint report that touts "the demise of literacy and the rise of other capabilities ... that will effectively and advantageously (sic) displace reading and writing." Really? The author, Michael Ridley, former Chief Librarian and CIO of the University of Guelph, might have spared us this polemic by heeding his own advice by dispensing with writing it altogether.

Even so, these three things share a dubious propensity, a nod to the ubiquity of the marketplace where value is defined in dollars. For one, libraries and the profession of librarianship have long since been commoditized, as the Forbes piece drives home amply. Secondly, prognostications that literacy along with the book are in the final stages of rigor mortis nevertheless fail, blessedly, to materialize, though the siege continues that our future lies surely in the hands of technocrats and their gadgets. And finally, how often today terms like CIO creep into the job portfolios of former library directors as they ascend into the upper echelons of corporate-driven academic management. Libraries in, this

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milieu. do little more apparently than aggregate bits and bytes which, in turn, need information officers to return investment on.

One must, of course, take all of this with a pinch of salt and fortify oneself against the relentless, and largely successful, onslaught within our profession by this trifecta of commercialization, neoliberal capitalism run amok (think Elsevier) and the hegemony of corporate culture creep. The best antidote? Reading John Buschman's new book *Libraries, Classrooms, and the Interests of Democracy* out now by Scarecrow Press.

It is a fine read, and timely. Mr. Buschman, the newly appointed dean of university libraries at Seton Hall, is also the author of *Dismantling the Public Sphere: Situating and Sustaining Librarianship in the Age of the New Public Philosophy* (2003). In it, Buschman argued that libraries and educational institutions, notably those that are state supported, increasingly gauge their value, not by the inherent benefits they may imbue by nurturing citizens to be well educated or to think for themselves. Rather, to prove their benefits because they are supported by taxation, libraries and schools today are designed largely to prepare the callow mind for the conveyor belts of capitalism and the work force.

In his new book, Buschman builds on his prior work, and posits an important question of addendum. What is it that serves the highest interests of democracy, and can this method of inquiry into participatory citizenship truly serve our 'public sphere' when libraries and classrooms simply reflect a wider neoliberal hegemony? Put another way, if libraries and classrooms increasingly adopt the mantle and language of consumerist capital, do they by extension lose their natural place as guardians of liberty, free inquiry, public discourse, the very quidity we place upon the enrichment of the publica mens as a good for its own sake?

He argues that the link between democracy and the public sphere of our educational institutions (libraries among them) may not at first be obvious, but as a democracy moves from the ideal of a jointly held sense of the public good, to a form of consumerist voting purveyed by an unregulated free-market economy, one might well ask, wither our so-called rights and freedoms as we all are democratized in the market place? Not that democracy is all good, nor voting with our pocketbooks all wrong, but that without a foundational critique of the inherent issues, citizenry becomes synonymous with consumerism. Buschman's is therefore a cautionary tale.

From the outset, Buschman hammers on a familiar theme, that marketing and advertising, and the commercialized language of these domains, already permeate our system of education thoroughly from kindergarten on up. Libraries are no exception as we 'market' our 'services' to our 'clientele' through 'focus groups' and so on. But why should we care? Why not get on the bandwagon and let the marketplace decide what our role is as educators in this society?

Buschman is nothing if not methodical. Through eight dense, often exhaustive, sometimes repetitive, but always insightful chapters he tells us how we got to this impasse, teasing out a set of empirical answers to this inquiry, not least by analyzing the historical connections between our burgeoning democracy with our emerging capitalist principles and the theoretical underpinnings of our institutions of education.

In this, Buschman's chapters have a Socratic quality to them, insofar as they follow a well established didacticism of question and response that in the whole provides a cognitive argument without ever particularly providing a definitive 'answer' to the conundrum of education's proper place in a democracy. It can be slow going in parts, especially his exegesis on the fundamentals of western democracy from Aristotelian views on citizenship, to Jefferson's on democracy, from Tocqueville's young America up through the emergence of modern educational practice. But the long route ultimately is necessary since each theorist examined has obviously built his work on the shoulders of his predecessor till we come to the modern ideals of individualism, community and democratic social order promulgated by the father of American educational experience, John Dewey.

It was perhaps Dewey's failure, as it was also for so many turn of the 19<sup>th</sup> century American thinkers, like William James and Charles Peirce, in that these foundational educational theorists, while clearly empiricists, failed, or chose not to, recognize, as Buschman puts it, the "growth and dominance of big science, and thus the tension between democracy and ... technology welded to capitalism." Men of this age and class felt it self-evident, and believed without critique, that a well-rounded education would somehow, anyhow iron out the rough spots of the inherent democratic inequalities of industrial expansion which marked the beginnings of corporate dominance in America.

This failure of critique, if you will, paved the way for our current educational system so thoroughly grounded in its complacent corporate-friendly ethos. For example, big science today, as in our major research universities, is too often paid for by corporate interests, which by rights (long before Citizens United) felt they had critical, if not a national role to play in purveying and owning information (e.g. our library resources) and certainly in making good consumers out of us as a workforce (e.g. inoculating our children against a reaction to endless capitalism by spoon-feeding them non-stop advertising from pre-school on).

The author is at his best in the chapters where he tackles the pitfalls, pratfalls and perils of advertising that so permeate our culture, and sadly, our schools (K-16). The rugged pragmatism of a burgeoning America in the mid-nineteenth century through to the market crash of 1929 saw no shortages of the incursion of business into the schoolyard even back then. From *McGuffey Readers* to the sponsorship of scholarships and awards by corporate interests,

the business of educating American kids was itself always largely a business, from chalk boards, to pencils to textbooks on to Channel One TV ubiquity. What Buschman makes clear is that the rise of commercialism and a marketing mentality are everywhere evident in libraries as well.

One cannot do this book justice without emphasizing that Buschman is a scholar who clearly understands the theoretical strands that underpin the evolution of our concepts of democracy, and from there is able to tie these back to a deeper understanding how those democratic concepts infuse our beliefs about education in general, and libraries specifically. The author puts it starkly. When talking of the 'public sphere' it is implicit that this includes our schools and libraries: "The public sphere has been "re-feudalized" under neoliberal capitalism's long reach, and the emotional/experiential spectacles of marketing, advertising and consumption are core to this process." The apotheosis of this new corporate feudalism, of course, is the happy marketeer's conflation of the schoolyard and our libraries with that chimerical 'public sphere' of the shopping mall. To the neoliberal, the same capitalistic rules apply a priori to each.

While this book stands as a deep critique and indictment of neoliberalism's insidious inroads into how we think about education and the meaning of libraries, it is also a call to arms for librarians to reevaluate some of the implicit assumptions we have grafted from the corporate world into our profession. Buschman's work, however, could have benefitted from a stronger editorial hand. The paragraphs are often too long and their density sometimes hammers home so many key points in succession it's hard to know what the take-away is. Other paragraphs have such a myriad of quotes, often many within a single sentence from multiple sources, it can be truly confusing to get to the end without having to reread the paragraph to grasp the author's true point of view. Indeed the notes on citation at the ends of each of the eight chapters comprise almost a quarter of the book.

This is not an easy read nor for the faint of heart, but it is nevertheless timely and an important scholarly advancement, perhaps even a bulwark against the inherent complacency of our citizenry toward the inordinate control commercialism, consumerism, capitalism and corporate hegemony have over our lives. One would hope the schoolyard and the civic space of our libraries might be the last haven against this onslaught. As Buschman makes clear, we are sadly, and often blindly, at its alarming epicenter.