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Before I built a wall I’d ask to know
What I was walling in or walling out,
And to whom I was like to give offence.
Something there is that doesn’t love a wall,
That wants it down.

Robert Frost

“Good fences make good neighbors,” posits conventional wisdom, until one questions their purpose. And, so it was that in Chicago late in the morning on July 2nd a thin convention hall wall lent material substance to an enforced border between one act of conscience and another of political expediency.

On one side of the wall, ALA Council III wrapped up a session that sent one longtime council member into a very uncharacteristic torrent of tears, saying she had never been so ashamed to be a member of ALA’s governing body, while on the other side of the wall poet Alice Walker rose to the podium to laud librarians and libraries for their good work, and to share poems and stories from two new books – *The Cushion in the Road: Meditation and Wandering as the Whole World Awakens to Being in Harm’s Way* and *The World Will Follow Joy: Turning Madness Into Flowers, New Poems*. Toward the end of her allotted hour, Walker told the audience she needed guidance in selecting a last reading. With soft, slow-cadenced voice and rooted presence, she said, “I have one short
poem and one long one. The short poem is about Julian Assange. The long one is about Bradley Manning. Which shall I read?"

Having just witnessed ALA Council’s failure to pass a resolution recognizing Bradley Manning as a whistleblower (see page 113), and the parliamentary maneuvers that sent a similar resolution regarding Edward Snowden (see pages 116 and 119) from the status of ALA policy into its dustbin of history in little over a 24-hour period, I shouted Manning’s name as loudly and forcefully as I could from the back of the hall, over the heads of hundreds of conference attendees. Who knows if she heard my shout, there were others, but she read,

As an elder of color born and raised in the United States, I have dreamed of a day when young white men, *en masse*, might rise to take up the cause of freedom and justice in defense of those manipulated, oppressed, and stolen from around the world by our government. That time seems to be beginning. I am thinking of Bradley Manning, Julian Assange, and Tim DeCristopher, in particular...

...Something transformative is happening here. We must rouse ourselves not to miss it...

...It is a sad culture that punishes its children for doing what they have been taught, and believe, to be right. Perhaps Manning was taught long ago to love and protect his neighbor. To love the world and the people who inhabit it; to despise the lies that cause their suffering and destruction around the globe.

If so, he was not alone in learning this.

If he is, himself, our neighbor, what then? What are we called to do?
This is the question whispered always in the ears of those who would be both merciful and just.

Walker had no way of knowing the timeliness of her reading, but she certainly would not have been surprised at the Council debates’ outcomes regarding Manning and Snowden. Alice Walker, after all, knows a thing or two about politics, history, and the great gulf that divides American claims from the reality of democracy in political arenas such as ALA.

Although *Progressive Librarian* does not usually publish ALA Council documents, we are making an exception in this issue in order to salvage from the dustbin a telling moment in ALA’s history. The fate of the Snowden resolution was a first. In just over 24 hours, Council passed then “substituted” the resolution. Given the egregious fate of this resolution, the editorial board of *Progressive Librarian* has decided to provide a “legislative history” as it were of this particular resolution and the substitute motion that replaced it. Here is the chronology:
– Spring 2013 – Tom Twiss (PLG, SRRT, and ALA member) drafts and facilitates the crafting of “Resolution in Support of Whistleblower Edward Snowden.”
– June 29, 2013 – Action Council of the Social Responsibilities Round Table (SRRT) of ALA approves the Snowden resolution at its morning meeting
– June 29, 2013 – Snowden resolution is approved at the ALA Membership meeting that afternoon
– June 30, 2013 – ALA Council I approves the Snowden resolution
– July 1, 2013 – a motion is made in the first few minutes of Council II to reconsider the Snowden resolution and refer it to the Intellectual Freedom Committee (IFC) and the Committee on Legislation (COL)

The significance of these actions cannot be underestimated, and lay in what they reveal of the well-being of the democratic process within ALA, which takes great pride in being the voice of America’s libraries – a “cornerstone of democracy” (See http://www.ala.org/aboutala/governance/officers/past/kranich/demo/quotes).

The Council is ALA’s decision-making body. It alone sets ALA policy, and on June 30, by majority vote, it put ALA on record as recognizing Edward Snowden as a whistleblower, a status the U.S. government refuses to grant him, charging him with espionage and treason.

Members of ALA Council are thoughtful, and take their responsibilities as counselors seriously. The majority vote to recognize Snowden as a whistleblower was an informed and considered act. However, it also proved to be a vote that inflamed at least a few people in positions of power within ALA, and led to what must have been some frantic politicking the evening of June 30th, because the first action the following morning at Council II was a motion to reconsider the resolution and to refer it to the IFC and COL.

This motion to reconsider and refer was, essentially, a slap on the wrists of all those council members whose “yes” vote was determined to be somehow wrong by the powers-that-be in ALA. The motion’s underlying message was clear – “You screwed up, now somebody more expert than you has to fix this mess.” Needless to say, the motion to reconsider and refer was passed, and the following day IFC and COL presented their “substitute” resolution, which does not mention Snowden, or the word whistleblower, or even ALA’s own prior statements regarding whistleblowers. In his report of the 2013 Annual Council meetings, Al Kagan, SRRT Councilor, wrote of the substitute resolution,
In keeping with ALA’s recent tradition, that resolution stripped out names of individual whistleblowers and just made broad policy statements. There is nothing wrong with the generalities in that document, but it will have little or no effect in supporting the people who are taking huge risks to bring out the misdeeds of our government...I could not support this resolution as a substitute for the Snowden resolution, and a small number of Councilors agreed with this position and voted against the substitute resolution.³

The border patrol along the fence between conscience and political expediency within ALA was vigilant, guard dogs strained at the leash, a whistleblower was allowed to stand accused of treason, and spin and accusation prevailed over democratic deliberation. Fortunately, there are within ALA many a someone who doesn’t love a wall, who wants them down – someones like the library activists who brought the fossil fuel, Snowden, and Manning resolutions to Chicago⁴; someones like the activists who took to the streets, and to the conference halls of the Canadian Library Association, in defense of Canadian archives.⁵ Given the dedication of these someones, ALA Council will have other opportunities to do the right thing by whistleblowers who reveal government-condoned and conducted criminality.

NOTES

4. See this issue Progressive Librarian, pp. 110-119.
5. See this issue Progressive Librarian, Samek’s graduation speech (p. 52) and MacDonald’s symposium report (p. 74).
Dozens of kids flocked to the Raynham Public Library on Saturday to celebrate the end of this summer’s children’s reading program. And among the 70 kids who showed up for ice cream and face painting, stood a man in rather large red shoes and face paint of his own. Famed clown and Golden Arches mascot Ronald McDonald joined the celebration after Raynham franchise owner Lou Provenzano donated $250 in funding for the program.

Roadmark Mobile Media, working in close partnership with School District Administrators all over the country, is establishing America’s largest inventory of interior and exterior school bus advertising programs ever to be offered for...communicating “child sensitive” business promotion and educational messages... Obvious to everyone...the advantages to advertisers who comply

John Buschman is Dean of University Libraries at Seton Hall University. He holds a Doctor of Liberal Studies from Georgetown University where he was Associate University Librarian for Scholarly Resources & Services prior to moving to Seton Hall. He is author of, among other books, Dismantling the Public Sphere: Situating and Sustaining Librarianship in the Age of the New Public Philosophy (Libraries Unlimited/Greenwood, 2003) and most recently Libraries, Classrooms, and the Interests of Democracy: Marking the Limits of Neoliberalism (Scarecrow/Rowman &Littlefield, 2012).

KEYWORDS: Smith, Adam; Advertising; Business models; Citizenship; Consumer society; Conversation; Deliberation; Deliberative process; Economic theory; Education; Human nature; Libraries and democracy; Libraries and society; Neoliberalism.
with [the] rules is HUGE. Interior school bus ads (placed over the seats) expose and influence every student who rides the bus to-and-from school every day. Exterior school bus ads reach and expose not only students and parents, but everyone in every neighborhood (community-wide) as buses circulate to pick up or drop off students each day. 

(Author’s note: this paper is a revised book talk based on my Libraries, Classrooms, and the Interests of Democracy: Marking the Limits of Neoliberalism, 2012. Graphics used at the introduction of the talk were included as they are so visually interesting and informative. Page numbers within the book were given for reference back to the original text as appropriate along with additional website locations.)

1. Introduction

Should these kinds of things in libraries and schools – our public educative institutions in a democracy – bother us, and if so why? I have spent the better part of a decade grappling with this question, and while the answer is “yes,” it is not a simple “yes.” I should probably begin with an explanation of that curious phrase, “educative institutions.” Many types of democratic institutions interact with each other, and there are three basic types: educative – which we’ll talk about today; enabling – like voting, political participation; and elicitive – like juries, school boards, etc. Democracies utilize all of them, and they in turn depend on judgment. The practices in classrooms and of libraries are thus situated here as the function of public educative institutions in a democratic society. As a practical matter, we cannot just assume they are a kind of functional utility of a democracy – that of education and libraries simply sitting alongside the US Government Printing Office, the Postal Service, land-grant universities, and the protections of free speech and a free press (p. 12-13). Thus our concern here is the role of libraries and schools and universities – our educative institutions – in democratic society. They are important cultural sites of producing the capacities of sound judgment in a democracy, sorting questions of values, ends, and human flourishing. Also, we can’t address every possible concern about the presence of strongly corporate messages in them. For instance we know that, developmentally, children at a certain stage can’t tell the difference between a television program and the advertisements for toys and food that accompany it. Developmentally kids proceed through these early
stages to the insecurities of adolescents and their need to form identities and fit in – or not. Marketing and advertising – as we know – play on these themes from familiar cartoon characters to consuming products to fit in or conform to an attractive body image (p. 76-84). In turn, Michael Moss has published a book and an exposé on the manipulations of the food industry in the *New York Times Magazine* recently (February 24, 2013, http://www.nytimes.com/2013/02/24/magazine/the-extraordinary-science-of-junk-food.html?ref=michaelmoss). Engineered foods are, in his words, “designed to addict.” Put these together and it is absolutely no surprise that we have problems with eating disorders *and* childhood obesity. These very companies and their products are prime movers in the marketing and advertising in schools (and they are present in libraries too). This is a long-term and serious health concern for our society, but it does not get us quite where my question points: should these practices bother us *as a democracy*, and why?

Far too many of our responses to that question have tended to boil down to a simple and impotent moralism: marketing and advertising encourages consumption; consumption encourages poor behaviors; those poor behaviors are harmful to democratic society; therefore marketing and advertising in our educative institutions is bad. Or, that the market has “invaded” them, markets are organized around private goods, these institutions are public for the common good, therefore these practices are bad for them, public purposes and for democracy. One can easily envision such arguments made before a cash-strapped board worried about finances. It would be lauded as a fine sentiment and then ignored as another policy for more commercialization of the library or school or university is adopted. In answering our question, we must first recognize that there was no “golden age” of American public libraries or education essentially free of business interests and advertising materials. It simply never existed. 122
million copies of the *McGuffey Readers* were sold for use in American schools from 1836 to 1920, and their essential curricular lessons were in adapting to industrial society, its products and disparities in wealth. Free samples of tooth paste, soap and prepared breakfast food were common in schools by the late 19th and early 20th century, and “supplementary” materials were provided early on in areas of interest to businesses. Early media were heavily promoted both as industries and products within the schools and as new and better forms of teaching: Edison predicted in 1922 that movies would replace books, and it was later predicted elsewhere that radio would replace teachers. Libraries followed in the larger wake of developments in education despite the 1902 claim by an administrator that the library “offers no gain to the mercantile adventurer. [T]here are few allurements for money” (http://www.archive.org/stream/whydoweneedpubli00ameriala/whydoweneedpubli00ameriala_djvu.txt). Libraries have been entangled with business practices and corporate largesse – and their influences – from Andrew Carnegie through Bill Gates. The early 20th century also saw business-like marketing practices such as billboards and business partnerships to promote library popularity, and the gradual emergence of information as a commodity and the transition to the “new” economy encouraged these practices (p. 37-54). We now see mail from the American Library Association endorsing the purchase of Geico Insurance as well as Association sponsorships and partnerships with food and electronics companies and a cable television network. And, from my illustrations we see individual libraries have fully embraced corporate sponsorships and offered positive marketing exposure in the affiliation as well. McDonalds now equates with children’s reading programs in Raynham Public Library – at least to the kids.

2. Neoliberalism

So what has changed? What makes these things different now and a challenge to democracy? I contend – along with many others – that we crossed a Rubicon of sorts in the 1980s. Thirty years ago the prestige of private enterprise was sky high. “The 1980s were not a time to say no to business” for educative institutions as Alex Molnar has observed, and administrators “were desperate to prove their willingness to cooperate” – and they still are (p. 43). A significant part of that cooperation was an expansion of the practice of privatization – like selling off public assets, outsourcing, charging for services, and encouraging private sector competition with public functions. The effect was to turn business and corporate support on its head: instead of looking to assist or improve these educative institutions for society (even if only by modeling business-like efficiencies or contributing expertise), they looked to develop markets out of them. We now expect them to behave like businesses. Recruiting and fundraising are cases of
Corporate sponsorship of one or more Library exhibits and programs provides a prominent promotion opportunity to support your marketing objectives. The menu of opportunity includes programs at the Central Library, the Truman Forum at the Plaza Branch as well as at our eight other neighborhood branches.

both developing markets and creating the conditions of competitive success, and services like meeting rooms or videoconferencing are self-supported by being marketed internally: often a client must budget and pay for this out of institutional funds. It is a logical next step to view children, students, or library users themselves – already gathered together – as a ready-made market for services and products to be marketed to them in situ. These practices have grown steadily over the years so that they have become naturalized; we take them for granted, but they are also quite novel (p.42-46).

This history is much more complicated than this overview of course – corporate philanthropy itself is a cottage industry of scholarship examining motives and outcomes. But the basic trajectory has led to a sea change: neoliberalism. There was a liberalism before neoliberalism. A gloss on Adam Smith provides the common ideas:

[I]ndividual self-interest is the primary instrument of social progress. Since men are the best judges...of their own particular needs and capacities, it follows that the most rational use of human and material resources will occur automatically if people are allowed to follow their natural bent under conditions of free competition... If men are forcibly prevented from doing as they wish, their natural inventiveness and enterprise will be stifled; if these forces are liberated, there is bound to be a rapid and progressive improvement in the conditions of human existence (p. 55).

Now, as Henry Giroux put it, the rationality of markets has become “both the referent and the ideal for change” for libraries and schools and universities, and “the basis for new relationships” between these institutions, society, and the economy (p. 43). This is the essence of neoliberalism: a set of interlocking propositions which assert that our well-being is best realized almost exclusively by maximizing self-interest, entrepreneurial (vs. political) freedom and protecting property rights, individual liberty and free markets and trade. From Adam Smith’s assertion that “the propensity to truck, barter
and exchange one thing for another is common to all men” (http://geolib.com/smith.adam/won1-02.html) forward, the assertion is that economic and market relationships are the core to human nature and the definition of rational behavior. Margaret Thatcher’s famous acronym TINA put it succinctly: There Is No Alternative. Superficially, neoliberalism has its attractions: politically, by limiting coercive economic power (taxation) and freeing markets, we protect freedoms. Neoliberalism is, however, highly reductive: a human is only *homo oeconomicus* with “no feeling of affection for his fellow man,” wishing only “to see in front of him...other economic agents” as Ardant put it (http://tinyurl.com/bu7yugw). *Everything* is a market, and/or conducted by the rules of economics: human organs, relationships, religion, and libraries and schools – our educative institutions. For instance, a neoliberal view of children in foster care casts them as naturally interested in making life choices and thus possessing the wherewithal to negotiate the foster care system and living arrangements with host families. Absent are notions of the emotional needs of a still developing child or adolescent, or the concern, care, and motivation of families who reach out and take in these children. By monetizing – and that’s what markets do – *everything*, neoliberalism leaves us with the anomalous situation we noted at the beginning: we market high-calorie/low-nutrition foods to captive audiences
of children in libraries and schools, then we market diets or counseling to them for those who, as a result of consuming these foods, can’t measure up to the body image pushed out in the advertising they’re saturated with. The market is the solution to the problems the market creates within neoliberalism, and these patterns have implications for the health of our democratic political life, as I will discuss (p. 54-59).

3. Thinking About Democracy & Neoliberalism in Our Educative Institutions

So, if neoliberalism is posited as the way we are to conduct our lives and shape our institutions, and there is a consequent strong market presence within our educative institutions, then what does neoliberalism do inside them that is damaging to democracy? Political theory – specifically democratic theory – helps us to think about this question and provides some insights. I will briefly discuss three of them.

First: What Public Educative Institutions Are For

It is easy to demonstrate that the language used to describe our educative institutions and their purposes is different now than seventy-five or even fifty years ago: it is much more closely aligned to neoliberal values now. In 1848 Horace Mann wrote that “Education then, beyond all other devices of human origin, is a great equalizer of the conditions of men” (www.tncrimlaw.com/civil_bible/horace_mann.htm) and core to the health of democracy. 135 years later – and 30 years ago – the authors of A Nation at Risk wrote in quite a different spirit: “We live among determined, well-educated, and strongly motivated competitors... America’s position in the world may once have been reasonably secure with only a few exceptionally well-trained men and women. It is no longer” – ideas that still hold strong sway (p. 7). Early democratic theory reminds us just how reductive and novel this is: even Adam Smith wrote that the “expense of the institutions for education is...beneficial to the whole society, and may, therefore, without injustice, be defrayed by the general contribution of the whole society” (http://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/smith-adam/works/wealth-of-nations/book05/ch01d.htm). What is that benefit? Jefferson’s explanation still resounds: the people “should be rendered by liberal education worthy to receive, and able to guard the sacred deposit of the rights and liberties of their fellow citizens...without regard to wealth, birth or other accidental condition or circumstance”; and, “that nothing would do more extensive good at small expense than the establishment of a small circulating library in every county...” (p. 25-27). In other words, our public educative institutions were not primarily founded to form markets or even promote prosperity – though that was part of the equation. They were started in the interests of the health
and functioning of democracy. Tocqueville was struck by this almost as soon as he touched American *terra firma* in 1831: “no one seems to doubt” that a democratic republic is a natural and good thing he wrote, therefore

enlightenment must be diffused widely among the people, that one cannot enlighten the people too much. You know how many times in France we have been anxious...to know if it is to be desirable or fearful for education to penetrate through all the ranks of society. This question, which is so difficult for France...does not even seem to present itself here... [T]o them even stating the question had something shocking and absurd about it... [T]hey do not seem to suspect that there is some education that can never be shared by the masses (p. 117).

We grant tax-exempt status even to private institutions like Seton Hall or the Redwood Library and Athenæum in Newport, R.I. because of the public good they do in the interests and health of democracy. Early democratic theory gives us a perspective on our libraries and schools under neoliberalism, providing our first insight: subtlety, their purposes have changed; citizenship, human flourishing, democratic rights, the goal of fair and expanded participation in community and political life are no longer at the rhetorical fore in our educative institutions under the influences of neoliberalism.

**Second: Small Things Do Matter**

Tocqueville again provides another novel insight: citizens learn democratic habits “from infancy,” it could “even be traced in the schools, where the children in their games are wont to submit to rules which they have themselves established, and to punish misdemeanors which they have themselves defined. The same spirit pervades every act of social life” (p. 118). In pragmatic terms, Tocqueville tells us that the details of how we conduct daily life in libraries and schools and universities effects society. It is important. Our neoliberal market practices inside them are *not* meaningless or harmless drops in the bucket or a mere vocabulary change: they send a message about what we value, the content of democracy and our expectation of the citizen. We educate also by how we structure and fund and govern our educative institutions (p. 115-121). Modern democratic theory draws some specific lessons. Michael Sandel’s formulation sums up one of the primary points: “we can know a good in common that we cannot know alone” (p. 126). When they function well our educative institutions instantiate and form a kind of *community* – a good in common. Community in turn depends on and functions through trust, cooperation and mutual dependence. We all agree to drive on the right side of the road and that red means stop in the interests of everyone’s safety, including our own. These common virtues are the very building blocks of democracy: we must trust
that our vote counts, the position that prevails in elections is the one with the most votes for governing to be legitimate, and we agree to renew the questions locally, regionally and nationally on the Tuesday after the first Monday every November. And we must be invested in and trust and shape our institutions. It is these very things that neoliberalism inside them erodes: the argument behind the rule to forbid the Chuck-E-Cheese game on a device during class time for the sake of the reading group or the common learning environment of a classroom is undercut by the practice of advertising to a captive audience of kids in the reading program or students on a bus or in the classroom itself. What we are saying in this instance is that advertising which benefits the finances of the institution is fine. As it was put recently by an area superintendent, “When you’re going into Newark Airport, you fly right over our high school, why not see if Ralph Lauren or Donald Trump would like to paint an ad there?” (http://www.nj.com/news/index.ssf/2013/03/schools_look_at_advertising_to.html) But it is somehow not when we don’t want it to be fine. That can’t help but be confusing to kids: the collective and cooperative educational goals of the classroom are set aside during the time the school wants advertising to be seen in the classroom, but oddly (to the child) seems to be the reason not to enjoy the Chuck-E-Cheese game when it would otherwise be allowed. Further, libraries themselves are an instantiated good in common – a shared resource and often a focus of community. But user-driven selection in libraries often mimics consumer choice in the ways it is often structured – like individually selecting goods in a mall. Both of these practices privilege market preference – the neoliberal attribute of self-interest exploiting a common resource – in damaging ways. Habermas notes that advertising and enshrining self-interest
define a “grammar of systematically distorted communication...of dissociated symbols and suppressed motives” (p. 162). That is, our educative institutions are the site of working out the meaning – the “grammar” in his terms – of terms as learning, autonomy, integrity, and education which are important to forming political concepts. It is difficult to see how these building blocks and of trust, interdependence and community are fostered in the very institutions meant to foster them by adopting these kinds of neoliberal practices. A student quoted in a recent New York Times editorial summed it up when she reflected on the rewards of an obsessive focus on individual improvement: “Time not spent investing in yourself carries an opportunity cost, rendering you at a competitive disadvantage as compared to others who maintained the priority of self” (http://www.nytimes.com/2013/03/29/opinion/brooks-the-empirical-kids.html?_r=0).

**Third: The Ability to Deliberate and Quality of Deliberation**

Put most simply, a version of democratic theory tells us that modern democracy began in talk – debate about whether or not this or that policy
was a good idea or good for business in the public sphere as Habermas has it. Debate means exchange and challenging of ideas, reasons for and against and the primacy of the better argument and evidence. It also had a critical cast. Soon under the influence of talk and deliberation, arbitrary monarchical decisions seemed, well, arbitrary, not a legitimate use of power, and they were critiqued. Modern democratic political ideas were born out of this process, and the process was not only verbal, it was quite literate and literary – implicating our future educative institutions. Furthermore, the legitimate democratic exercise of power means that the reasons for a policy are public; they are not secret. That is, they are openly debated on fair grounds – all points of view are expressed – and the result is arrived at through this open process through the force of the better argument, written about and reported and interpreted for the broader public that will be affected by the decision and will reflect on that come election time. That is an ideal rarely achieved, but nonetheless it is what shapes our expectations of democratic practices and institutions – it is why the woman who helped stop the 2011 Tucson shooting which killed six and wounded Congresswoman Giffords yelled “shame” from the Senate galleries when background checks were filibustered (http://www.motherjones.com/politics/2013/04/senate-rejects-gun-background-check-compromise). Even glimmers of its eventual coming-to-pass gives energy and promise to the inevitable ugly processes of logrolling and other features of actual democracy in action. In turn, our educative institutions are meant to shape people who can speak and listen to one another – to deliberate themselves: “embodied in smaller groupings, which cohere because people talk to each other” as Eliasoph puts it (http://depts.washington.edu/ccce/events/eliasoph.htm). Neoliberalism in our educative institutions undercuts deliberation in a number of ways. First, as Neil Postman has noted, the presence of advertising in an educative setting undercuts the building blocks of literacy, reason, and thought that we are trying to teach: a commercial is not a proposition or testable; rather, it is a drama of handsome people selling, buying, and eating things, ecstatic in their good fortune. Advertising is a discourse “immune to truth,” facts and reasoning “are as scarce as unattractive people” as he puts it (p. 74). Habermas calls this systematically distorted communication – that which could not maintain its validity if subjected to rational exchange and inquiry (p. 162). We can see this in our current political discourse, primarily in the form of advertising: it fits Habermas’s description of a stylized show and a ritualized exchange of symbols essentially devoid of deliberative political content. Neoliberalism’s influence in our educative institutions – advertising in the classroom most especially – only exacerbates this situation in the young. It is just these areas where the stakes for money and power are not high that are important foundational arenas for democratic culture – the setting of the “grammar” of everyday life and its terminology and meaning as noted earlier. Second, we should be able to guide libraries and schools – they are local institutions after all – in democratic
ways through open deliberation. It is, as Pamental put it, the “moral quality of the arguing—not of the arguments—which occurs” that is so valuable within deliberative democratic theory (p. 151). A quick look at one’s local newspaper reveals that too frequently fails. School and library and university boards and administrations frequently fall out over contentious issues – recent events at Rutgers are a good local example. This again replicates on a local or regional level our current national deliberative gridlock. Third and related, we know that the dominant neoliberal model of looking at and guiding our educative institutions reifies the market. In other words, where money goes and where it comes from is the primary “voice” in our neoliberal-influenced institutions, and nationally that has had damaging effects. The Supreme Court’s steady forty year process of privileging of commercial speech – essentially advertising – has culminated in the Citizens United decision, but was preceded by decisions like Lorillard that struck down a ban on advertising of cigarettes near schools and playgrounds in the name of the public’s right to “hear” that commercial “voice” and its “argument” and “evidence.” Corporations are persons, now with full First Amendment protections of their speech – conducted through the steering media of money. It is no leap of imagination to see our local institutional practices in libraries and classrooms (like those discussed here) as the ultimate penetration of this neoliberal principle and its baseline undermining democratic culture – essentially a right to “speak” – that is, advertise – in our classrooms and libraries at all levels and of all types (p. 173-188).

4. Conclusion

Are we then in a pessimistic dead end? There is no such thing as total hegemony – the horrific historical examples of Nazi Germany and the totalitarianism of the former Soviet Union tell us that. Neoliberalism is no different: it strongly tends to characterize contemporary institutional culture and expectations of and within our educative institutions, but it does not totally define them or erase their history or define our purposes for them. But democratic theory again offers us some further insights that point ways forward. The first is that democracy is not a thing (a bicameral legislature with a chief executive elected every four years and a supreme court layered over federalism for instance). There are many democracies and democratic practices just as there are many democratic theories that shed light on their similarities and differences. This leads us to a second insight. Formal functioning of democratic institutions can be quite undemocratic – the Electoral College or gerrymandered Congressional districts or closed school or library board sessions are just a few examples. Informed participation and citizen and media vigilance concerning these formal arenas are important, but Mark Warren points us in another direction as well: toward democratizing society; arenas like the on-the-ground institutions under discussion here (p. 187). That, as
Tocqueville noted long ago, is where democracy is nourished and replicated. How do we do that? This brings us to the third point: we enable democratic voice – people’s genuine input in shaping and guiding our/their institutions that affect them directly. This is not merely hortatory either. Nina Eliasoph found a couple of interesting things in her research. Though people didn’t think of their conversations around these institutions and their engagement with them in political terms, she found their talk had real political content. Any time you speak of shaping and helping children or students or library users and worry about the world they inhabit, you are talking politically at a high level about our society, our environment and our politics. Also, Eliasoph found that formal institutional politics and input were not where the action was. It was in enabling this kind of talk – democratic voice. And, very often the people participating in and helping to guide those institutions – bureaucrats and administrators like me and many of us – recognized this content and were quite committed to enabling and enacting it (p. 144). (Ironic given the rhetoric we use about bureaucrats, isn’t it?) Whitney Maxi, a community organizer in the Liberty City section of Miami summed up these points and put a human face on them in an interview on the American Dream. The crash of 2008 was just a “deepening of the devastation” there she said. “The immediate goal” is to “create systems that are more humanizing to be in and having a say in what resources come in and out of the community. If there is an American Dream in Liberty City, it’s having a voice that’s heard and recognized as the authority for their area” (http://www.marketplace.org/topics/wealth-poverty/next-america/american-dream-liberty-city-miami). If I had to sum up the point of my research in broad terms, I would say the takeaway is that democratic theory points out to us that our goal may be modest, but it is crucially important: to see to our institutions’ support and fostering of democratic capacities in the young and in our current generations of citizens. Getting to that point and thinking it through in a legitimate way has been a complex process, and enacting it is not simple, but I believe it is crucially important in our work.

NOTES

B. http://www.busads.com/miscads_schoolbus.htm
By way of Michel Foucault’s genealogical method, in this article we hope to advance discussion within Library and Information Science (LIS) of customer language and “customer-driven librarianship,” or those themes and practices “that both responds to and reinforces an economic vision of librarianship at its base, culminating in the ‘customer’ concept” (Buschman, 2003, p. 110).

Genealogy, as Foucault (1980) expressed his vision, is the “union of erudite knowledge and local memories” which allows us to establish “historical knowledge of struggles and to make use of this knowledge tactically today” (p. 83). Genealogy lends itself to the investigation of customer language in libraries in terms of the library profession’s ongoing struggle to describe individuals who visit libraries to conduct research and pursue knowledge in some way. As a means to expose “the creation of objects through institutional practices” (Dreyfus & Rabinow, 1982, p. 104), genealogy reveals “the dangers of research and delights in disturbing discoveries” (Foucault, 1984, p. 95). In drawing on genealogy, and this becomes apparent later in this article, we are better able to

Identify the accidents, the minute deviations—or conversely, the complete reversals—the errors, the false appraisals, and the faulty calculations that

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gave birth to those things that continue to exist and have value for us; it is to discover that truth or being does not lie at the root of what we know and what we are, but the exteriority of accidents. (Foucault, 1984, p. 81)

Over the decades, various labels have been proposed for individuals, children, and family groups that utilize and support library services and programs. These categories range from visitors, the public, taxpayers, readers, borrowers (Asheim, 1953), clients (Johnson, 1961), “libraree” (Gorman, 1983), citizens (McNeill, 1997; Lomax-Smith, 1999), users and patrons (Trott, 2004), and stakeholders (Walton, 2012). Knowledge seeking individuals are also referred to as customers within LIS (e.g., Crum 1969; Franklin, 1993; Hernon & Matthews, 2011; Keating & Hafner, 2002; King, 2007; Mathews, 1997; Raphael, 2004; Sandy, 1997; Weingand, 1997). This linguistic miasma is summed up in part by Michael Gorman’s (1983) “a borrower is a client is a patron is a user is a reader.” However, the customer model is problematic on a few fronts, especially if we consider librarians (and archivists) as public servants in the employ of government (e.g., federal, state, and municipal libraries):

Emphasis on the citizen as a consumer of services and a focus by agencies on the identification and aggregation of individual preferences may weaken perceptions and understanding of the fundamental obligations of citizens and public servants. The customer satisfaction metaphor ignores and weakens the critical roles of representation and trusteeship intrinsic to both public officials and the public. (Fountain, 2001, p. 71)

Our project began as a straightforward question: how did the use of customer language enter into library discourse? Through a complex research agenda outlined below, we situate customer language within historical periods to better understand how the use of customer crossed into library practice to become the controversial issue it is today. In an interview with Raymond Bellour in 1966 titled “The Discourse of History,” Foucault paints a picture of our research problem:

Of course we are interested in language; yet it’s not that we have finally entered into its possession, but rather that it escapes us more than ever before. Its boundaries have collapsed and its calm universe has entered into fusion; and if we are submerged, it is not so much through its in temporal vigor as through the movement today of its wave. (Foucault, 1996, p. 27)
Extending Foucault, in our research we identified two “waves” that we believe influenced the use of customer language in library settings: the first wave occurred in 1876 within the overlapping historical periods of the Gilded Age and Progressive Era, periods in U.S. history that are significant for the rise of the robber baron (Josephson, 1934), monopolies, bureaucracy, and the middle class, all within a social atmosphere of squalor, struggle for numerous rights, protest, and reform. These periods are also known for the efficiency and scientific management movements, “which promised greater production and less waste for all” (McMahon, 1999, p. 148). Seesawing between efficiency, corporatism, and the democratic urge, Progressive Era librarians applied efficiency principles in management of their libraries. Technology in the form of shelflists, catalogues, classification, tags, even the arrangement of desks and counters were evangelized to “efficiently” serve the public (Poole, 1876; The Library Bureau, 1908). The second wave in use of customer language in libraries, we pose, developed out of the Clinton-Gore Reinventing Government Initiative, which emphasized federal agency “customer service” to U.S. citizens. Reinventing Government policies refashioned citizen-government relations, which we suggest influenced the implementation of the customer model by libraries affiliated with federal, state, and municipal governments. Within LIS, there is a dearth of research linking customer language in libraries to reinventing government policies. In embarking on this investigation, we do not consider our project a search for origins or a truth, nor is it exhaustive in scope, a comprehensive literature review, or historiography. We merely open the door for researchers to build on our work and to explore the threads and associations offered here that led to the normalization of customer language within libraries. As Foucault (1984) notes, “genealogy does not pretend to go back in time to restore an unbroken continuity that operates beyond the dispersion of forgotten things” (p. 81). Genealogy instead

Must record the singularity of events outside of any monotonous finality; it must seek them in the most uncompromising places...it must be sensitive to their recurrence, not in order to trace the gradual curve of their evolution, but to isolate the different scenes where they engaged in different roles. Finally, genealogy must define even those instances when they are absent, the moment when they remained unrealized. (Foucault, 1984, p. 76)

Within this framework, we view our research as an inquiry into the diffusion of customer language into libraries, and the compatibility of such categorization with democratic and progressive visions of the library as a community center, an educational institution, and potential agent for empowerment. Our research is primarily influenced by John M. Budd (2006) who observes that
It is incumbent upon professionals to examine whether “customer” and “community” are congruent or discordant. “Customer” and “community” are theoretical terms, in this loose sense, that are components in a larger cognitive-professional framework that will affect action. Use of a word or term may have cognitive effects on the ways we think about and work in libraries. (p. 256)

Doing Genealogy: The Road to Customer

To better understand the contexts underlying customer language in library practice, our object became “the archive, that is to say the cumulated existence of discourse” (Foucault, 1996, p. 27). Our first research step was a review of the American history and LIS research literature. Particularly within the LIS literature, we located specific discussions on the influence of business practices and application of efficiency and scientific management principles in libraries by legendary leaders such as Melvil Dewey and John Cotton Dana (e.g., Casey, 1981; Garrison, 2003; Johnson & Kazmer, 2011; Mattson, 2000; Nardini, 2001; Stam, 1989; Van Slyck, 1998; Wiegand, 1996). While this literature does not expressly discuss the rise of customer language in libraries, it does point to periods in U.S. history termed as the Gilded Age and the Progressive Era, where industrial management principles and techniques (Chamberlain, 1911; Emerson, 1909, 1911; Taylor, 1911a, 1911b, 1912) influenced the day-to-day “business” operations of libraries. In order to locate the “singularity of events” (Foucault, 1984, p. 76) that underscores the use of customer language in libraries, we turned our attention to scholarly discussions of the Gilded Age and Progressive Era in order to ascertain date ranges and background for our continued search. Perhaps a part of “doing genealogy,” we were challenged by the complexity of the research literature on periodization of these significant moments in U.S. history.

For example, the Gilded Age is depicted “like gilding that covers a baser metal, a thin layer of speculative wealth covered up a deteriorating infrastructure laden with poverty and human suffering,” and is attributed to the years 1865-1900 (Geraci, 2001, p. 158). To make matters more confusing for the genealogist, the mid-to late nineteenth century has been variously described as the Gilded Age, the Era of Excess, and the Great Barbecue (Porter, 1996, p. 2), with some historians compressing both the Gilded Age and the Progressive Era into a wide date range of 1865-1917 (Society for Historians of the Gilded Age and Progressive Era, n.d.). British historian J.A. Thompson (1979) further describes confusion caused by “common use of the two terms ‘Progressive movement’ and ‘Progressive Era.’ To some historians, Progressives are those who participated in a movement that had certain definable objectives – and was not confined to a particular historical period” (p. 7). Michael E. McGerr (2003)
settled our problem with periodization by designating 1870-1920 as years covering the Progressive Era; he also noted the roots of progressivism in the

Day-to-day lives of middle-class men and women in the Gilded Age of the late nineteenth century. Progressivism was the way these Victorian men and women came to answer the basic questions of human life that have confronted all people in all times and places. (p. xiv)

Using McGerr’s designation of 1870-1920 for the Progressive Era allowed us to investigate customer language within a variety of reference sources. With dates in hand, we searched the Google Books Ngram Viewer, which displays a graph of terms that occur “in a corpus of books” over selected years. The Ngram Viewer is a powerful research tool that not only provides visual information on what terms occur within books, pamphlets, journals, magazines, proceedings – what Google defines as “corpora” – for specific years, but allows researchers to then follow up within Google Books with additional terms. We followed our search of the Ngram and Google Books by consulting retrospective (subscription) library databases (e.g., Library Literature & Information Science Retrospective 1905-1983) and the contemporary LIS, American history, political science, and public administration literature to locate specific contexts of customer language specifically used by government bodies, businessmen – and librarians. Our findings are below and take the narrative form.

The First Wave: The Library Customer, 1876-1920

The Gilded Age witnessed a “capitalist revolution” that took place in the mid-19th century that “threatened to eclipse American democracy” (Brands, 2010, pp. 6-7). The “most powerful and influential institution of the twentieth century” appeared during this time – the modern corporation (Porter, 1996, p. 2). The modern corporation’s

Thoroughgoing use of system, of bureaucratic organization, and of what it saw as rational, conscious, and measurable ways of setting and reaching objectives would come in time to influence the way other institutions behaved – those in government, unions, agriculture, voluntary associations, the military, and the schools and universities. The business executive, the engineer, and the wizards of marketing would assume their roles as the most powerful shapers of American civilization. (Porter, 1996, p. 2)

Businessmen-speculators such as Andrew Carnegie, John W. Gates, Edward H. Harriman, Andrew Mellon, J.P. (John Pierpont) Morgan, John
D. Rockefeller, and Cornelius Vanderbilt among other tycoons, controlled banking, finance, steel, railroads, mining, and a plentitude of natural resources that fueled the industrial economy (Josephson, 1934), but “a secret of their success was their ability to harness the strength and skill of armies of men and women to their capitalist purpose” (Brands, 2010, p. 6). From 1870 to 1910, “the old middle class – business entrepreneurs and independent professional men – grew somewhat more than two times...but the new middle class grew more than eight times” (Hofstadter, 1955, p. 215).

It is under these complex conditions the earliest instances of customer language occur. Surprisingly, we located a reference to the public as customer within a 1876 article by F.B. Perkins6 of the Boston Public Library, published in the U.S. Bureau of Education’s *Public Libraries in the United States of America: Their History, Condition, and Management: Special Report*. In his article, Perkins argues for the management of the library as a “business concern” (p. 419), but also likens the library as a form of “machinery” and admonishes the librarian’s “sour face, gruff and disobliging manners, sharp or contemptuous answers, slowness to give information, or to wait on customers will promptly and deeply wound the usefulness of the library” (p. 427).7

The year 1876 is also noteworthy for three other reasons: the founding of the American Library Association (ALA), *The American Library Journal* (Wiegand, 1996, p. 47), later renamed *Library Journal*, and the Library Bureau, all of which hold Melvil Dewey’s mark. Dewey’s influence on ALA’s motto as “the best reading for the largest number at the least cost” (Dewey, 1906, p. 55) illustrates Progressive Era values of efficiency and education. In the case of the Library Bureau, the library profession now had a source to purchase specialized technology, indexing rules, and other tools to organize and standardize collections and services:

Up to 1876 no business had been organized with the definite purpose of supplying libraries with all needed appliances for administration, or in any way to consider their wants, aside from the attention, based on immediate profits, which they might receive from more or less enterprising booksellers and stationers. This was all the field seemed to justify from a business point of view. Few libraries used the same standards, or accomplished a given result by the same method. (The Library Bureau, 1897, p. 4)8

Continuing the journey into customer language, in 1877, comparisons between shopkeepers and librarians are reported in the professional literature (*The Library Journal*, volume 1, 18779); in 1885, Dewey compared the merchant with librarian “as glad to welcome a reader as the earnest merchant his customer” (Dewey, 1885, p. 10).
Dewey or Dui, who out of “efficiency” shortened his name on his twenty-eighth birthday in 1879 (Wiegand, 1996, p. 63), mirrored Perkins’ portrayal of librarians as slow and gruff. However, he went a few steps further in depicting the libraries of his time as “passive, asleep, a reservoir or a cistern” where the librarian was a “sentinel, a jailer” (Dewey, 1887, p. 46). Not only were certain libraries of the period described as unattractive, they were also damp, old, unventilated, dusty, and arranged in “a classification so coarse that a reader seeking matter on a minute topic might require a week to look over the disorganized mass of literature…” (Dewey, 1887, p. 46). As if this were not enough reason to discourage the knowledge seeking public to bypass the public library, Dewey (1887) also noted the “old type of librarian was a crabbed and unsympathetic fossil who did what he was forced to do with an air that said plainly he wished you hadn’t come” (p. 46). Out of this chaos, Dewey (1887) proposed a fresh kind of appealing, “bright,” organized, and efficient library “with simple and complete indexes and catalogues to tell almost instantly if any book or pamphlet wished is in the building” (p. 46). Dewey (1887) repeated the likening of librarians to merchants, and the individual to customer: “a merchant to welcome a new customer, anxious to give as far as possible to each applicant at each visit that book which will then, and to him, be most helpful” (p. 46).

It is interesting to note that customer language was often used in annual reports written by librarians, library directors and trustees. Progressive Era library annual reports as significant primary sources can “uncover interesting social dynamics among government officials, board members, managers, employees, and customers” (Lear, 2006, p. 468). For example, in a March 29, 1888 Annual Report of the Board of Directors of Brooklyn Library, the “modern librarian is glad to welcome a reader as the merchant a customer” (p. 10). However, the library annual report is also a testament, perhaps even a transparency report, to the more bureaucratic aspects of library administration, reporting revenue, expenditures, donors, state library law, and statistics that reflected the “general character of the collection” (Free Public Library of St. Joseph, Missouri, 1891, p. 7).

Spreading the gospel of Library Economy, or the “management of libraries (especially public libraries) viewed as administrative units to be controlled, with personnel and financial issues at stake and with their social environments to be taken into account; as systems of routines and processes; and as buildings with appropriate equipment” (Miksa, 1988, p. 257), the Library Bureau reflected the Era’s pro-business philosophy. According to James R. Beniger (1986) the Bureau acted as a “management consultant, an early application of scientific management to bureaucracy” (p. 394). The Bureau supplied librarians with equipment that streamlined operations, including varieties of card catalogues, rotary book cases, arm rests, and tools such as the Decimal Classification and Relative Index. The Library Bureau was the world’s first library employment
agency (Rider, 1944, p. 63) and had contracts with the New York Fire Insurance Exchange and advertised specialists “to classify and catalog or index libraries, books periodicals, or mss” (The Library Bureau, 1890, p. 4). Dewey’s relationship with the business community, through his various endeavors selling specialized products and labor, appear to have partially shaped his vision of the efficient librarian, perhaps even as entrepreneur. Playing off against the backdrop of the Progressive Era, a period of reform within a climate of social injustice, exploitation, taxation, “merger mania” (Porter, 1996, p. 16) as well as “industrial wastelands – centers of vice and poverty, ugly, full of crowded slums” (Hofstadter, 1963, p. 2), Dana’s Library Primer gave librarians a way to connect “customer service” to the loftier goals of the Era:

And his attention should be again and again called to the fact that of the millions of children who are getting an education in this country today, not over 5 or 6 per cent at the outside, and perhaps even less than that, ever get as far, even, as the high schools. The few, of course, rule and must keep the lamp burning, but the many must have sufficient education to know how to walk by it if democracy is to endure. (1899, p. 125)

Conversely, in our research we uncovered a criticism of business efficiency principles utilized by American libraries, and another piece that is significant in the associations made between customer service and the philosophical aspects of librarianship. For example, in 1903, a British librarian-commentator viewed American library efficiency in an unflattering way,

American libraries are conducted on lines which closely resemble those of ordinary commercial practice, in which everything is subordinated to the furtherance of profits and economy. Their methods are standardised, and everything is more or less interchangeable, with the result that in America we witness practically the same phenomenon as in conservative France. Where methods are run on codified lines, there is always this danger of everything becoming fixed, and all the advantages arising from adjustability and the power of revision being lost in the unprofitable pursuit of the unalterable. (Brown, 1903, p. iv)

In the second example, Herbert E. Law (1905) pondered business practices; for while efficiency principles led to improved library management, they may also seem mechanical:

Now, I do not insinuate that when a reader enters a public library he is not served courteously and intelligently. But do you go to him with that
idea that you simply have to place a book in his hand and to give him the feeling that he has come to the right place and will come again as soon as possible? If you do, you are pursuing good business methods. But if you let your customer wander about the library like a cat in a strange garret, if you do not eagerly as well as courteously and intelligently – then you are not maintaining your library as a business proposition. All this coupling of the words library and business leads me to ask what are the relations of the library to the practical man. (p. 407)

As we move through the research literature to locate additional cases of customer language in Progressive Era libraries, in 1905, individuals are described as satisfied customers in an article published in Public Libraries, where in “a business house the best advertisement is a satisfied customer, so it is in a library” (p. 336).

The Progressive Era’s accent on reform through “scientific principles as a means to guide efficient structuring of organizations to purge government of political patronage and slovenly management” (White, 1999, p. 11) spilled over into citizen-government relations through philosophies of “efficient democracy” and the “ultimate efficient state” (Allen, 1907), as well as the “ideal of ‘Efficient Citizenship’” (Waldo, 1948, p. 18). For example, the New York City’s Bureau of Municipal Research equated efficient citizenship with an “obligation to prepare reports that were useful to a broad range of citizens,” and changes in public administration of the City based on the philosophy that “citizen-owners had the duty to assume an active responsibility for improving government along with a perfect right to inquire into the affairs of their agents” (Schachter, 1995, p. 532). In part based on William H. Allen’s model of the Bureau of Municipal Statistics (Allen, 1907; Stivers, 2000), central to efficient citizenship was the “metaphor of citizens as owner shareholders in city corporations” (Schachter, 1995, p. 531). Dwight Waldo (1948) explains seemingly “incompatible” views of business and democracy that government, libraries, businesses, and other institutions of the Progressive Era sought to reconcile:

The dilemma of democracy versus efficiency was avoided by the formula that true democracy and true efficiency are not necessarily perhaps not possibly incompatible. The assumptions and syllogisms of this line of thought are familiar: Democracy means an intelligent and informed citizenry organized into groups, preferably as few as possible, on the basis of issues. To realize this condition the proper institutions, such as the short ballot, a merit system, a budget system and a reporting system must function. (p. 14)

The Library Bureau continued to operate in this milieu, serving the business
community by printing rate cards and supplying labor that filed and collated the cards at Factory D (The Library Bureau, 1908). With an “army” of workers trained in the use of unique library technologies, efficiency and scientific management manifested in the corporate world, who “used products developed by the Library Bureau for sale to libraries, in order to systematize, control, coordinate, and manage their operations” (Flanzraich, 1993, p. 419). It is an interesting side note – and here again we refer to genealogy’s identification of “insurrection of knowledges” (Foucault, 1980, p. 84) – that Dewey and his son Godfrey were members of the Efficiency Society, established in New York in 1912 and organized around “the root idea of efficiency in the use of power and mechanical effort” (Going, 1912, p. 11). Digging deeper, the Society had a larger mission rooted in “the propagandism of general hygiene and its extension into the wider sphere of eugenics, adapting the theory of conservation and ideals of waste-prevention to the individual human unit and to the race at large” (Going, 1912, pp. 11-12).

As Progressive Era librarians gravitated to principles of efficiency and scientific management to organize, plan, standardize, and increase productivity through “methods and equipment” (Thompson, 1914, p. 515), library reinvention took on a shining purpose. However, librarians of the period continued to question what seemed as a necessary coupling of business efficiency principles and customer language to the mission of the library:

Much, perhaps too much, has been said about conducting our libraries on business principles. Businesslike methods must be adopted, without question, but this should not mean that we must look upon our readers and possible readers, with the same attitude of mind and the same commercial spirit as that shown by the merchant toward his customers. As soon as the commercial element enters into our work, we are in danger of losing that sympathy for our public which our interest in the public has created, but which competition will soon destroy. (Tobitt, Prouty, Van Dyne, & Paine, 1916, p. 277)

As we leave exploration of the first wave of customer language in Progressive Era libraries, Earl W. Browning (1918) of the Niagara Falls Public Library also appears to ponder the efficacy of the business model:

I do not wish to commercialize the library or sacrifice ‘atmosphere’ to efficiency, but I feel sure that methods used by merchants to call the attention of customers to the contents of the store can be adapted to the library...We would not care to have a library run in imitation of any of the stores...but if we could make our public feel as much at ease as do the customers of the general store... (p. 128)
Customer Language Between the Waves, 1921-1992

Customer language periodically occurs in the library literature during the next ninety or so years until the second wave of distinct usage in 1993. For example, at the twenty-second annual Keystone State Library Association, Dr. W.O. Allen (1922) of Lafayette College “spoke of library customers, the regular customers and the prospects” (p. 636). In 1926, Businessman Edward L. Kopf delivered a speech titled “Musings of a Library Customer” at the Special Libraries Association conference in Atlantic City, where he defined customer as a “‘consumer’ of library service” (p. 313). Sporadic uses of customer are found through the 1930s and 1960s library research literature, mostly in conjunction with special libraries and their view of researchers as customers (e.g., Crum, 1969). In 1975, two librarians at Dun and Bradstreet, Roberta J. Gardner and Linda Zelevansky drafted the “Ten Commandments for Library Customers,” that appealed to researcher honesty and “patience” in reference interviews. A search of the Library Literature & Information Science Full Text for the years 1984-1992 reveals scattered articles on customer language and program planning in libraries not only in the United States, but in the United Kingdom and Australia.

In 1993, a significant development in public policy occurred that not only resurrected the Progressive Era’s notion of efficient citizenship, but with it we believe, the contemporary usage of customer language into libraries affiliated with city, state, and federal government.

The Citizen as Customer: Second Wave, 1993-present

In 1901, Woodrow Wilson made an appeal that government “should devise a way of our own to be efficient, consonant with our principles, characteristic of our genius for organization”; in his observations, Wilson also equated “non-professionalism” in government with “non-efficiency” (p. 292). Ninety-two years after Wilson’s appeal, President William J. Clinton created the National Performance Review on March 3, 1993. With Vice President Gore as its “leader” (Kamensky, 1999), on September 7, 1993, the National Performance Review (NPR) released its report Creating A Government That Works Better & Costs Less: The Report of the National Performance Review. A few days after release of the Report on September 11, President Clinton signed Executive Order (EO) 12862 “Setting Customer Service Standards.” The Executive Order (1993) stated that “in order to carry out the principles of the National Performance Review, the Federal Government must be customer-driven. The standard of quality for services provided to the public shall be: Customer service equal to the best in business.” It is interesting to note that EO 12862 defined customer not in terms of citizen, but as “an individual or entity who is directly served by a department or agency.” The National Performance Review, later re-named
the National Partnership for Reinventing Government (NPRG), suggested the
basis for reinventing government was in “recognizing that improved customer
service is essential to restoring trust in government” (National Partnership
for Reinventing Government, 1994). By October 1995, 214 federal agencies
identified over 3,000 standards of service to the public (Kamensky, 1999).

Institutionalization of NPR-NPRG principles opens speculation as to the
driving force behind contemporary adoption of customer language within
the LIS community. To investigate this question, we again turned to the
Google Ngram searching from the date of the 1993 National Performance
Review through 2008 (the Ngram defaulted to this end date). We discovered
an increase in the use of customer language in the library literature, possibly
in relation to diffusion of reinventing government principles. On the other
hand, perhaps the increased flow of customer language can be attributed to
former American Library Association President Hardy R. Franklin (1993-94),
who made “customer service” the hallmark of his presidency. In addition to
Franklin, Hayes and Brown (1994) spell out the customer model in terms of
Progressive Era efficiency principles, as the “concern for the patron, service
orientation, high quality product, and cost benefit analysis are concepts that
have come to the library field directly from business and have been accepted
as central to the administrative model” (p. 413). In 1997, several works discuss
Frederick Winslow Taylor’s principles of scientific management and the library
customer (e.g., Lynch, 1997; Weingand, 1997); Auld (2004) discusses the use
of customer language by way of the Chesterfield County Public Library’s
county government “customer service standards” (p. 81). A search of Library
Literature & Information Science Full Text database from January, 2004 through
September, 2013 reveals over 1,880 articles; a quick search of WorldCat during
this same period retrieves over 200 LIS titles in the form of guides, manuals,
anecdotes, and books on customer service, customer satisfaction, and customer
relationship management (CRM).

In reflecting on the NPR-NPRG alongside Progressive Era history,
reinventing government has the ring of the “efficient citizenship” and “efficient
democracy” movements with a few (post)modern touches. It is also noteworthy
that a similar critique of customer service as reported in the LIS literature
(e.g., Buschman, 2004; Edwards & Krow-Lucal, 2004; Trosow, 2004) appears
in the public administration literature (e.g., Box, 1999; Fountain 2001) with
one significant difference: the critique of citizen as customer of government as
envisioned by the National Partnership for Reinventing Government is lacking
in LIS discussions.

These findings suggest a few things: first, increase in customer-related
language since 1993 suggests a normalization of this language into LIS and
the practice of librarianship. Secondly, our findings point to the need for
sociological investigations into the role of customer language and its influence
on community perceptions of the library. Our findings also suggest that studies
into the politics of customer language and the ways it shapes government services, including that of the public library, are also needed.

**The Customer as Continuing Problematic**

The use of customer language is not only a policy issue, but reflects political questions of the deepest kind, in the sense of sociologist Max Weber’s (1958) politics as the “striving to share power or striving to influence the distribution of power, either among states or among groups within a state” (p. 77). While all categories chosen to characterize the library-using public have implications for understanding power and its relation to policy, it is the use of customer and its association with corporatism that remains problematic for the library profession. The subject is polarizing, and challenges the very possibility of professional neutrality. As Robert Jensen (2006) observes, “In any situation, there exists a distribution of power. To either overtly endorse or reject that distribution is, of course, a political choice; such positions are not neutral” (p. 3). Customer language, whether it has its roots in business efficiency, scientific management, reinventing government, “hospitality” (Johnson & Kazmer, 2011), and/or “best practices” (Harmon & Messina, 2013), challenges how we think of libraries and the individuals who support them. As Jane E. Fountain (2001) observes,

Service models may produce improvements in the operational performance of agencies, but those improvements do not replace—indeed, they obscure—political outcomes that render some customers much less powerful than others. These “market segments,” the poor and the politically weak, will continue to be poorly served absent political change. (p. 56)

Perhaps by way of civic librarianship, which “seeks to strengthen communities through developmental strategies that renew the public library’s mission of education for a democratic society” (McCabe, 2001, p. 77), the profession has an opportunity to recapture one aspect of the Progressive Era. That is, in restoring a “political democracy that was widely believed to have existed earlier in America and to have been destroyed by the great corporation and the corrupt political machine” (Hofstadter, 1955, p. 5). The practice of civic librarianship not only has roots in the Jeffersonian ideal of the educated, informed citizen, but in John Cotton Dana’s (1899) philosophy that the library “helps in social and political education, in training citizens” (p. 9). In suggesting civic librarianship as a means to offset library “customer service.” we need to acknowledge that “librarians must be teachers in spirit” (Chamberlain, 1911, p. 156), who have in every exchange an opportunity to encourage capacity building, new learning, questions, and literacies.
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NOTES

1. Customer driven librarianship consists of accountability/quality measurement, “innovation” through the bookstore-coffee shop model, and an emphasis on marketing and public relations (Buschman, 2003).
2. The LIS literature is short on discussion of Harrington Emerson’s influential work on efficiency.
3. The much used undergraduate reference tool *Encyclopedia Britannica* defines the Gilded Age as a “period of gross materialism and blatant political corruption in U.S. history during the 1870s” (“The Gilded Age,” 2013). Julie Husband and Jim O’Loughlin (2004) find the phrase the Gilded Age a “pejorative term that casts a negative light” on the period from 1870-1900 (p. 243). These scholars instead utilize the “heading ‘the industrial era’” as the label of the Gilded Age, as the latter as “has had the unintentional effect of diminishing elements of this period that do not fit into the narrative of corruption and greed” (p. 243). Charles W. Calhoun (1996) describes the Gilded Age as “the last third of the century...which saw a rapid acceleration in the country’s transformation” (p. xi). Both the Gilded Age and the Progressive Era are sparingly mentioned in Ray Ginger’s *Age of Excess: The United State from 1877-1914*. In the end, perhaps we should take heed that “dates are always arbitrary” (Morgan, 1970, p. vi)).
period from 1890 to 1918 to the conclusion of World War I. Lewis L. Gould (2001) focuses on the dates 1890-1920 for the Era, as do Buenker & Kantowicz (1988). For further study, also see Filler (1976) who offers additional reviews of periodization.

5. Google states that corpora are generated in either July 2009 or July 2012; we utilized a smoothing of 0, which reflects actual values for specific years. We then filtered through Google Books for specific dates as shown on the Ngram. For information on the Ngram, see http://books.google.com/ngrams/info

6. For details on this neglected figure in LIS, see Murray (2009) for details on Frederick Beecher Perkins’ personal and professional work at Boston Public Library and San Francisco Public Library. His “subordinate” role to Dewey is also discussed. Perkins was the father of novelist-feminist Charlotte Perkins Gilman who abandoned his family when Charlotte was a child. Gilman (1991) wrote in her autobiography “my childhood had no father.”

7. We identified customer language as it relates to libraries as occurring in 1876, but this does not imply that earlier uses do not exist; we stopped our search after discovering this date.

8. See Flanzraich (1993) for a detailed history of the Bureau and of course, the Bureau’s own materials, many available full text at Internet Archive and Google Books.

9. Available full text in Google Books; many of the Progressive Era sources we cite in this article are also available.

10. See the Library Bureau’s *Classified Illustrated Catalog of the Library Department*, many available in Google Books. For additional history of the Bureau, see Flanzraich (1993) and Wiegand (1996).

11. We wonder if this workforce 1. Was primarily composed of women, and 2. If so, were they trained as librarians at the Columbia School of Library Economy and then supplied labor through Library Bureau? Dee Garrison (1972-73) notes the “low cost of hiring women was perhaps the most important reason that male library leaders welcomed women assistants” (p. 132), but doesn’t discuss the specifics of employment at the Library Bureau in her article. This in turn raises questions as to fair wages and labor rights – additional progressive Era themes – and Dewey’s role. Additionally, we also wonder if the Library Bureau had a role in solidifying the use of customer language in public libraries. These are questions for future genealogists.

12. Dewey mentions librarian as merchant in quite a few of his writings; due to space considerations, we did not list them all here.

13. Note Taylor (1911) “advocates” for “high wages and low labor cost as the foundation of the best management” (p.22). See Boddewyn (1961) for a discussion of Taylor’s original work and subsequent revisionism of his progressive ideas.

14. See the Library Bureau’s numerous issues of the *Classified Illustrated Catalog of
the Library Department, many available in Google Books. For additional history of the Bureau, see Flanzraich (1993) and Wiegand (1996).

15. Nardini (2001) writes that by “1920, however, business had moved in from the edges, replacing the school as librarians’ first point of reference (p. 121), but we didn’t necessarily find this in our research.

16. We are not certain if reinventing government principles had an influence on Franklin; further research is needed. It is interesting to note however, Progressive Era themes threading through Franklin’s (1993) remarks, such as a “focus on improving services to the library user, expanding services to those underserved, and offering services to those whom we have been unable to serve” (p.677).
And when men live by trade...it is the best product that wins, the best performance, the man of best judgment and highest ability — and the degree of a man’s productiveness is the degree of his reward. This is the code of existence whose tool and symbol is money. – Ayn Rand

The most important single central fact about a free market is that no exchange takes place unless both parties benefit. – Milton Friedman

The Great Depression, like most other periods of severe unemployment, was produced by government mismanagement rather than by any inherent instability of the private economy. – Milton Friedman

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KEYWORDS: Democracy and education; Ireland – Famine, 1845-1822; Liberalism – History; Neoliberalism – United States.
1. Introduction

To begin: we live in an age of neoliberalism – what David Harvey (2007) has called an overarching set of interlocking propositions which contend that “human well-being can best be advanced by the maximization of entrepreneurial freedoms within an institutional framework characterized by private property rights, individual liberty, unencumbered markets, and free trade” (22), and neoliberalism assumes that:

- people are rationally motivated by self-interest
- the market is the best mechanism to harness those pursuits for social good
- the state, with its hierarchical and bureaucratic restraints, thwarts the market and/or privileges certain groups or activities
- state action in the name of the public good thereby often is ineffective or does harm
- the state should therefore be weak in the name market freedom and choice, and ideally itself subject to market competition and discipline – specifically where it counts in budgets (Dunleavy 1992, 3-4; Apple 2005; Halsey, et. al. 1997, 254-262, 356-362; Clarke, et. al. 2007).

This is itself an updating of 18th and 19th century ideas of laissez-faire:

[T]he highest impertinence and presumption...in kings and ministers [is] to pretend to watch over the economy of private people... Let them look after their own expence, and they may safely trust private people with theirs. If their own extravagance does not ruin the state, that of their subjects never will.

[...]

[E]very individual...endeavors as much he can both to employ his capital in the support of domestic industry, and so to direct that industry that its produce may be of the greatest value... He generally, indeed, neither intends to promote the public interest, nor knows how much he is promoting it. By preferring the support of domestic to that of foreign industry, he intends only his own security...and...only his own gain, and he is in this, as in many other cases, led by an invisible hand to promote an end which was no part of his intention. Nor is it always the worse for the society... By pursuing his own interest he frequently promotes that of the society more effectually than when he really intends to promote it. I have never known much good done by those who affected to trade for the public good. It is an affectation, indeed, not very common among merchants, and very few words need be employed in dissuading them from it. (Smith 1937, 329, 423).
This vision came to represent “the promise of a progressive and automatically self-regulating economy was both attractive and exciting[: a] utopian hope for perfection” and social progress (Watkins 1964, 12-13). So as to avoid some of the pitfalls I am about to critique, two points are here acknowledged from the outset. The first is the observation that neoliberalism has become an over-broad god-word of left critique: “Underwritten by simplistic moral denunciations...theories [of neoliberalism] cover over a series of analytic, explanatory, and normative questions [and] in resisting the idealization of the market as the embodiment of public virtue, they end up embracing an equally idealized view of [an] alternative of collective life” (Barnett 2010, 290-291). Fair enough. Second, while there has been a long and vigorous debate over liberal democracy as a political heritage, it is not argued here that this history must be overcome: this is no postmodern denial of democratic possibility or the existence of the demos or a political world in which persons meaningfully assert rights, resist the impositions of power and try and form newer, better forms of it (Walzer 1988, 196). Liberal rights and freedoms “have turned out to be very real...in the light of...totalitarian societies” (Giddens 1982, 222–23) and we turn our backs on this practical achievement at our peril. Very often these rights underwrite the very efforts to critique and/or extend them.

2. Neoliberalism’s Policy Influence, Despite...

While core ideas within neoliberalism have been thoroughly critiqued as contradictory and/or unsustainable, this has made little difference in terms of policy influence (Buschman 2012). Historically, pure market exchange was never that remunerative and capitalism developed not out of a market economy but rather from “competition without competitors” in the form of monopolies opportunistically formed beyond government intervention or with government cooperation, by “transport over long distances [which] was big business,” and trade in fashionable luxury goods – with frequent synergies among these factors (Braudel 1982, 455, 412, 457). The “idealized classical theory of demand and supply, [of] individuals who act independently to exercise rational choice [and] numerous [producers] each controlling only part of the market supply...failed...as the effects of market concentration, monopoly, and price fixing in many industries...became only too obvious” (Pawley 2009, 76). To give another example, neoliberal assumptions about the social and economic functions of the cool, rational chooser rely on a sociology and “moral commitments which could never possibly be expressly stated” by neoliberalism itself (Lippman 1963, 172). While neoliberals valorize the “pure and anonymous mechanism [of] the market...in reality, what keeps the social order from dissolving into chaos...is the continuity of those very institutions and representatives of [social solidarity] that is in the process of being dismantled” (Bourdieu 1998). As it was put, aside from hard-core political
ideologues, “if you actually say that all we need to do is free the market [as a serious policy choice] everyone will laugh” in the circles that actually do this work (Waller 2006, 60).

Yet as noted neoliberalism has had real policy sway: “educational markets operate within an institutional framework and...if [it] is designed with care and concern markets can be allowed to work their wonders with it – for everyone’s benefit” (Chubb and Moe in Grace 1997, 311). We needn’t invest in targeting underperformers or in improving schools (in the democratic interests of social justice, for instance) since a form of market choice among the young will identify the good ones: “The students themselves are perfectly capable of deciding just how inspiring those schools are as compared to other alternatives available to them” (Sowell 1986, 166), and neoliberals would “make [the] schools vulnerable to the...corrective mechanism” of exit, and make sure “that the funding would follow the student” (Labaree 2000, 119). This has been the basic blueprint to reform education in Anglo-American countries for some time now (Hursh 2007; Apple 2000; Chubb and Moe 1997; Brown and Lauder 1997; Grace 1997) and the result is “state control without responsibility” – outcomes are (in neat circular logic) the results of the enabled choices of parents and children and the free play of markets to bring about standards and a meritocracy – or failure (poor choice) (Brown 1997, 402-404). Similarly, if budgets for library services are slashed in a neoliberal winnowing of public expenses, those who democratically demand them restored should, under neoliberal logic, simply volunteer and/or compete (on the market) to lure the best volunteers for their restored library services (Pullman 2011). After all, “it can be assumed that rational people will and must seek good information [in order to] act effectively and properly” (Dervin 1994, 378), therefore they will provide for their own library services if they truly value them. Under the sway of neoliberal fashion and policy the “overall presumption of ‘goodness,’ where the library ‘should’ be supported because of its innate role” is denigrated (Weingand 2002, 9), and “commercialization will change the strategic directions for library customer services... Ultimately [it] may be what makes libraries more expensive, more lucrative, and, ironically, more customer-service oriented because it will be the marketplace that will determine which services are essential” (Hirshon 1996, 19-20).

The neoliberal vision is of the “responsibilized” institution (behaving like a business responsive to the market) and, more fundamentally, the responsibilized person: “moralized, choice-making, self-directing subjects...[who] produce the condition of [their] own independence,” making an enterprise of their lives by maximizing their employability, behaving in conformity with the labor market, and consuming public services like education and libraries rationally (Clarke 2005, 451).
3. Toward Faith

Neoliberalism thus makes a fundamental normative claim about human nature. How else to characterize Friedman’s (2001) blunt statement that “widespread use of the market reduces the strain on the social fabric by rendering conformity unnecessary” and that “the role of the market...permits unanimity without conformity; that it is a system of effectively proportional representation,” – thus solving millennia of intractable political problems (112-113)? This too is merely an updating of Smith’s (1937) “propensity to truck, barter, and exchange one thing for another...common to all men” (13). Elsewhere Levine (in Lauder 1997) declares the market “‘natural’...in the sense that it is the institutional form proper to our nature as free human beings and...whatever constrains economic agents...is conceptually of a piece with the constraints of bare nature” (388). There have been longstanding intellectual gymnastics to give “the market” a “classical” and “natural” pedigree or history when in fact those very (classical) economists “spent a great deal of their effort elucidating the occasions when private interests and social interests do not correspond” (Waller 2006, 61). The conclusion that the core neoliberal idea – “the market” – is largely symbolic, very powerful, but symbolic nonetheless (Waller 2006) is one with which I disagree. Neoliberal ideas about the interplay of human nature and the market are more like Rawls’ (1996) definition of a “comprehensive doctrine”: that which prescribes “what is of value in human life, and ideals of personal character...cover[ing] all recognized values and virtues within one rather precisely articulation system” (13). In other words, the market and its justice and coordinating power (in combination) are “metaphysical...principles” (Keynes in Waller 2006, 61). As Cox (2002) put it, “the market” has acquired “an identifiable value-laden ‘religious’” character – discourse about it bears all of the hallmarks describing a deity (“the market”) that is omnipotent, omniscient, and omnipresent, complete with an origin myth, an explanation of human behavior, a story of fall and redemption, sacramental practices, a “catechetical network” of teachings and teachers to convey the proper market message, a pantheon of market heroes, and “most important, the...culture’s ‘god’ under whose benevolent, if sometimes mysterious guidance, all things eventually work together for the good” (124, 126). This is the key to how and why “the market” draws its power and holds such longstanding sway over policy.

4. The Faith in “Action” (Historically)

We could leave it at that, dismissing the metaphysics of faith, scoring points against neoliberalism’s history and intellectual intelligibility, and making the point that a more public form of education and libraries affects actual people:
the student without parental guidance who, somehow, must find her way on the “educational market”; the lack of library exposure to richer, deeper resources because “market choice” was not well-researched in choosing a house or neighborhood or college in which the library resides; the stress effects of the economy or racism or gender (or a combination thereof) on citizens and their concomitant ability to “choose” these public services on “the market,” and so on. But that would be a mistake because the issue goes deeper than that. Faith in the market has existed for some time. We err if we wholly identify it as liberalism, but this particular feature of neoliberalism-before-the-“neo” has deep roots – roots that mattered in a direct life-and-death way to millions of people in an actual historical situation: the Irish famine of 1845-1849. We will, for sake of brevity, leave out the seven hundred years of British colonial domination of Ireland; Ireland’s resulting utter lack of infrastructure – physical or bureaucratic – to deal with a catastrophe of this magnitude; or Ireland’s consequent ill-prepared, non-industrial, spade-and-potato peasant culture that persisted into the twentieth century. Marx described Ireland at the time as “an agricultural district of England, marked off by a wide channel from the country to which it yields corn, wool, cattle, industrial and military recruits” (in Nally 2011, 50). Instead, the focus here is on the nauseating repetition of the need to protect or promote the market, its operations, and the consequences if the “natural” forces of food production and distribution were “interfered” with during and throughout the famine – in other words, faith in “the market” in the form of the non-action that took place in the face of massive suffering and death during liberalism’s pre-“neo” early heyday.

It will suffice to say here that contemporary information was not lacking, analyses of the consequences of the potato blight were available, witnesses to the suffering were credible, and there was genuine anguish over the suffering of the Irish people and sustained efforts to help – both abroad and in Britain – Woodham-Smith’s (1962) provides ample evidence. Nevertheless, “the market” was a constant presence in the thinking and calculations of important actors at the center of Irish relief during the famine. These instances are not new discoveries, but rather presented here in basic chronological order in brief as an historical reflection on the thrall of faith in “the market”:

- When the potato failed in 1845, new Prime Minister Robert Peel ordered, in direct contravention of England’s strong protective tariff for its own agriculture (the Corn Law), the purchase of American maize thus significantly meliorating the earliest stage of the famine in 1845-1846. Nevertheless, Government policy was still that “there was to be ‘no disturbance of the ordinary course of trade’ and ‘no complaints from private traders’ on account of Government competition” – including that of food supply (in Woodham-Smith 1962, 48-49).
Charles Edward Trevelyan was the central figure controlling policy, bureaucracy, and moral calculations in Irish relief. Trevelyan penned a policy document in August of 1846 opining that “the supply of the [Irish] market may safely be left to the foresight of private merchants” – the position taken up by prime minister Lord John Russell (in Donnelly 2001, 65).

Merchants at that point (August 1846) convinced the then-Chancellor of the Exchequer that they “would not import food at all if it were the intention of government to do so” (in Lengel 2002, 79) and the Government in turn pledged “not to interfere with the regular mode by which...grains were brought into the country [and] to leave that trade as much liberty as possible” (in Woodham-Smith 1962, 101). Prime minister Russell’s position was characterized at the time (by a critic in Parliament): “the supply of the People of Ireland should be left to Private Enterprise and that Private Enterprise and free Trade should not be interfered with” (Bentinck in Lengel 2002, 80).

In September of 1846, Sir Randolph Routh – who, serving under Trevelyan, played an important role in guiding the relief commissions – urged a halt to grain exports from Ireland to stay famine, to which Trevelyan counseled “not to countenance in any way the idea of prohibiting exportation. The discouragement and feeling of insecurity to the [grain] trade from such a proceeding...cannot be [in] doubt that it would inflict permanent injury on the country” (in Donnelly 2001, 69). Nally (2011) cites a report at the time of “export of grain...infinitely exceeding the imports... whilst the inhabitants were suffering from actual want,” and he concludes that “the poor starved from an inability to command food through market transactions” (51).

When Trevelyan was challenged about his laissez faire approach to the famine and reliance on the market and private enterprise to provision the Irish, he responded by citing Adam Smith, and more tellingly, Edmund Burke who famously cautioned “all Governments, not to attempt to feed the people out of the hands of the magistrates” (in Nally 2011, 275N88).

In January of 1847, the English government set aside a sum to purchase seed for food other than the potato for the Irish to cultivate (famine and disease meant that land was going uncultivated). Yet, “seed merchants complained that the Government was interfering,” and Trevelyan once again stepped in “‘to give the required assurance’ that the ‘government would no longer disturb the market’” (in Woodham-Smith 1962, 282).

Sir Charles Wood, new Chancellor of the Exchequer in 1847, disliked the Peel Administration’s expenditures on famine relief, did not want new taxes, believed in laissez faire and wished to allow the famine to be solved by “natural means” (in Woodham-Smith 1962, 82).
• Even Daniel O’Connell – the undisputed leader of Irish politics at the time and a force to be reckoned with in the English Parliament – worried: “the intervention of the government is...absolutely necessary; such intervention...will impose an enormous burden upon the Government [and] in keeping down the markets will...very likely drive the mercantile classes out of the trade, so that the supplying of food will ultimately fall altogether upon the Government” (in Lengel 2002, 71).

• Woodham-Smith (1962) notes in her history that private enterprise finally did function: merchants in early 1847 wrote of “heavy importations of maize [sailing] almost daily” up the Shannon and into Cork harbor, “but they were useless to the people. Destitution and disorganization had gone too far; Ireland was ruined, and high prices and lack of money placed the long-expected food out of reach of the starving” (179-180).

• Trevelyan still wrote in 1848, after the “frightful calamities” of 1846-1847, that “the proper business of a government is to enable private individuals of every rank and profession in life to carry on their several occupations with freedom and safety, and not itself to undertake the business of the landowner, merchant, money-lender, or any other function of social life” (in Donnelly 2001, 21).

• Finally, faith in “the market” was underwritten by a devotion (there is no other word) to private property and this too redoubled suffering during the famine. As it was written at the time, “it was the landlord’s undoubted, indefeasible and most sacred right to deal with his property as he list,” and his “tenants must be taught by the strong arm of the law that they had no power to oppose or resist [since] property would be valueless and capital would no longer be invested” were they to prevail (Lord Brougham in Woodham-Smith 1962, 67). This of course led to the infamous mass evictions and clearances – eliminating peasant rights to bits of land subdivided for subsistence out of the plantations over the centuries – in order to re-consolidate it much like the earlier Enclosure movement in England. Thus “it was possible for Irish landowners who looked back upon the great famine from the vantage point of the mid-1850s to regard that cataclysmic event as advantageous on balance to their interests” (Donnelly 2001, 132, 112-168). Already starving and penniless, families were turned out to live in ditches or holes, their hovels torn down around them, often subsequently driven out of their makeshift shelters (Woodham-Smith 1962, 67).

5. Conclusion

In a remarkably even-handed summation in her standard history of the famine, Woodham-Smith (1962) – who despite her name was Irish – dismisses
the charge that the British response was genocidal, but she divided it into two periods: in the first, until summer 1847, the British government “behaved with... generosity... Not enough was done, considering the size of the catastrophe, but it is doubtful if any Government in Europe...would have done more”; the second period “is difficult to defend” since many districts were chronically bankrupt, tax collection was nonexistent and “yet [they] threw the hordes of wretched destitute on their local [resources], refusing assistance when the second total failure of the potato occurred and even breaking [the] pledge to feed the starving children” (405-406). Nally (2011) strongly argues against the “anachronism” defense – that no government would have interfered with the market at the time – and that contemporary judgments opposing slavery or apartheid could be subject to the same “anachronism” logic, but are not; critical judgment in all eras is a core political need (5). Further, there were strong contemporary arguments against faith in “the market”: the government “know the people have been dying in their thousands and I dare them to enquire what has been the number of those who have died through their mismanagement, by their principles of free trade, yes, free trade in the lives of Irish people” (Bentinick in Nally 2011, 5). “It would require philosophy – and ‘something more’ to convince the sufferers...that this stupendous inequality...is the fiat of the Almighty, and not the effect of some injustice in human laws” (Johnson in Nally 2011, 5-6). These were accompanied broader criticisms of “the self-serving nature of the logic that renders inequality a virtue” – placing the blame squarely on the “speculating capitalists [who] leaves those who have sown and reaped the corn without a meal” (Mitchell in Nally 2011, 52).

So what does this odd little excursion tell us, particularly in terms of neoliberalism, libraries and schools? First of all, it seriously calls into question the neoliberal nostrums of a Robert Nozick (1996) when he writes in 1974 (as it was emerging) that “the state may not use its coercive apparatus for the purpose of getting some citizens to aid others” – a euphemism for taxes, and that the state should be “minimal,” limited to the “enforcement of contracts” – itself a euphemism for underwriting market exchange (698). When we look to our educative institutions and argue for their future and their support, we fly directly into the face of this ethos, this faith. And when we play out its logical end – neoliberal trajectories of de-funding anything that forwards public purposes or the commonweal – we can point to this historical example and argue that extreme logical ends of these ideas have, in fact, played themselves out. Our worries about fundamental hostility towards public educative institutions are justified. Second, when neoliberals argue that they are trying to save these institutions, what they in fact are doing is transforming them: “by turning [them] over to the market [they] will be largely self-regulating” – they will operate as businesses (Apple 2005, 273). In other words, for libraries and schools and universities to survive and thrive, they must be something else, institutions with differing
purposes. Third, contemporary British and Irish critics of famine policy remind us that the political and religious suppression of Ireland, the distribution of its land, and the consequent lag in centuries of its economy were not “natural” conditions to which “the market” could simply respond or deal with. They were man-made policy choices, and faith in “the market” to solve them was deeply irrational in light of this history. George (1999) and Harvey (2007) similarly remind us that neoliberalism itself was not a “natural” outcome of a hard-nosed recognition of human nature, but rather a series of conscious policies, pursued politically through channels of power, with highly unequal results in imbalances of class power and wealth that do not match its populist rhetoric. Finally, faith in “the market” as an all-purpose solution really is just that, faith and neoliberalism does not admit of a plurality of faiths; it is a “comprehensive doctrine.” So when a scholar in our field states that “Yesterday’s library support falters in the cold light of today’s fiscal pragmatism. How can today’s library successfully rethink its position and adapt its operations …in this new environment? The answer lies in effective use of marketing strategies. Marketing can be viewed as a process of exchange” (Weingand 1995, 296), she is stating an imperative (“The answer”), not an option to be considered or adapted. This is what Margaret Thatcher’s acronym TINA (there is no alternative) meant, and as Dewey (1970) noted, “absolute truth exacts absolute obedience” (51-52). The overweening respect and concern for the market in the British response to the Irish famine and contemporary neoliberalism are separated by about 165 years, but they have more in common than we thing – or neoliberals themselves should be comfortable with for that matter.

BIBLIOGRAPHY


NOTES

A. http://www.aynrandquotes.com/
C. http://www.businessinsider.com/milton-friedman-quotes-2012-7#ixzz2T52qTDZY

1. The choice of Braudel and Pawley here is conscious: Braudel’s sweeping three volume series Civilization and Capitalism, 15th–18th Centuries certainly complicates any neoliberal platitudes on the origins and native virtues of the market and capitalism; Pawley’s work intelligently and concisely brings similar insights to bear on the market analysis of readers, writers, and intervening professions and institutions like librarians and schools.

2. Though potato failures did occur before and afterwards and hunger was a cyclical and constant feature of Irish peasant life, “when Irish people refer to ‘the famine,’ ...they mean the years of concentrated disaster in which blight firs appeared; and in rapid succession the partial failure of 1845 was followed by the total failure of 1846 and the second total failure of 1848” (Woodham-Smith 1962, 405). Data on mortality is still controversial, but a recent survey of the scholarship brings forth these rough estimates: “excess mortality” – mortality beyond “‘normal’ death rates” during and after the famine due to starvation and opportunistic disease and lowered natality – stands at roughly 1.5 million people 1846-1851; 2.1 million people emigrated between 1845-1855 – the vast majority to the United States; because the exodus was “characterised by an often panic-driven desperation to escape that swept aside customary restraints,” the mortality on board the ships was extremely high since the passengers were the same population ravaged by starvation and disease who were now overcrowded on the ships; estimates of mortality rates among the emigrants are even more difficult, but the mortality rate on the infamous cheap-fare “coffin ships” to British North America (Canada) has been estimated at close to 50% (out of 100,000 people) if those who perished making their way from Canada on to the United States are included; this does not include the tens of thousands who made their way across the Channel to England and died there – often in Liverpool which was overwhelmed; the ships to the United States were more regulated, better provisioned and thus more expensive – meaning that those passengers were initially were more healthy (they had more resources to afford the direct fare) and did not sicken nearly as much due to poor conditions and starvation-level provisions; by the end of the 19th century – basically the demographic playing-out of the famine on mortality, natality, and continued emigration – Ireland had lost about 45% of its population (Donnelly 2001, 169-186).
Thank you for bestowing me with this unexpected and delightful honour. I am touched to the absolute core. I don’t know how this happened. To those sparky people who made the nomination and those who supported the nomination, please know that I am deeply appreciative. Your generosity of spirit is a positive force.

Also, I must express my sincere thanks to those dear hearted folks who worked with me behind the scenes to organize my trip and the concomitant publicity. I appreciate the time and care taken.

With what you know about me, I assume you understand that I’ll leverage the cultural capital of this award however I can in all of your interests, including by jamming my boot in tight doorways near and far to address issues of mutual concern.

I extend hearty congratulations to you class of 2013. You have paid your dues and the master’s degree is yours to hold proudly. I am sure that today, especially, you are extending your thanks to special family members, friends, colleagues and supporters for helping you see your goal through. I trust you are also acknowledging your SLIS administration, faculty, instructors, staff,

Dr. Toni Samek received her PhD from the University of Wisconsin-Madison in 1998 and has been employed at the School of Library and Information Studies, University of Alberta since 1994. In 2012, Toni was one of 10 professors in Canada to be awarded a 3M National Teaching Fellowship by the Society for Teaching and Learning in Higher Education. Her dossier was framed around the concept of academic freedom and the assertion that the working conditions of teachers are the learning conditions of students.

KEYWORDS: Association of Research Libraries; Canadian Association of Research Libraries; Canadian Association of University Teachers; Canadian Library Association; Freedom of speech; Human rights; IFLA Code of Ethics for Librarians and other Information Workers; Librarians’ unions; Libraries and society; University of Wisconsin – Madison. School of Library and Information Studies.
as well as members of the broader campus community. Many individuals therein, I know, will have contributed to your expanding worldview – not to mention immersion in bureaucracy. These are the people who, I have no doubt, got you through a crisis or jam or two and gave you guidance about personal-professional dilemmas.

I always, too, think it is important to thank those people who stood in your way. I know those blocks must have made your commitment to finishing that much stronger. Never lose sense of your endurance, discipline, determination, self-knowledge and self-respect. They are conditional drivers when times get tough.

The official definition of Badger Alumni is: “Noun, plural. Extraordinary graduates of the University of Wisconsin-Madison. Known around the world for their intellect, spirit and love of their alma mater. Wise beyond their years, this type of graduate is often recognized as being generous, successful and adventurous. Synonyms: Entrepreneur, explorer, innovator, philanthropist, YOU.”

I tailor that definition for SLIS grads. For me we are characterized by an appreciation for the mighty tripartite of courage, compassion and conviction. In that there blend lies opportunity for optimism despite trying times.

Speaking of the times, it is now your moment, to put the MLIS piece of paper to the test. It is time to see what you can do with it. I hope for each of you that it helps you achieve meaningful paid work. The nature of meaningful work is for you each to determine individually. The significance of our profession, meanwhile, is determined by a myriad of players; indeed it is being defined, redefined and even confined in some parts – including where I live and labour stateside. With that said, permit me to give you some modest advice if I may. Take it or leave it of course.

When expertly employed – hopefully now, or soon - and not much later, think hard about how you present yourself when you are giving a session or some such thing at which you are representing your place of employment. Do you need to bear in mind a loyalty oath you signed? Does your org have guidelines about speaking with one voice that instructs you how to negotiate the tension of showing the public face of an organization consistently and professionally while allowing you as professional within that organization to seek autonomy and freedom of speech?

Are you permitted to speak freely to the media (should you be approached for a quote)? Indeed, is there a media relations policy at work that you should be aware of? If you plan to twitter or blog from a professional venue, do you know if you will violate a social media guidelines policy at your institution?

When would you, could you, should you participate in an issue awareness raising event with respect to the local, state, national, international or global stage? If you do, will it make a difference to you if the language used is styled
as advocacy vs. activism? action vs. protest? declaration not dissent? forum vs. mobilization?

Are you a member of a Progressive Librarians Guild chapter (an activist org)? And if so do you proudly list it on your CV alongside your WLA or ALA membership? Sadly my students are not sure they should. And I can understand why.

Would you do what University of Ottawa librarian Jennifer Dekker did and post to her personal blog about alleged issues at CLA Conference 2012? I quote her now:

In the months leading up to the CLA conference, major budget cuts were announced at the Library and Archives Canada as well as at many federal libraries. In response, CAUT launched a campaign called Save LAC. By sharing information on the CAUT Librarians’ and other library list-servs, readers were informed of the drastic reductions in service and / or closure of libraries funded by the federal government. Librarians, in support of the LAC and federal libraries and opposed to the service and budget cuts, informally banded together and created a National Day of Action on May 31st, 2012.

Part of the activities of the Day of Action included a group of a dozen volunteers (many of them retired LAC employees) promoting a white shirt / black ribbon campaign at the CLA national conference and trade show. May 31st was selected as the Day of Action since Daniel Caron, Canada’ s National “Librarian” was to make a keynote speech at the conference, as well as present during a Question and Answer session later that afternoon. Of the group passing out ribbons, only two were registered delegates at the conference; the rest were concerned or retired librarians wanting to raise awareness of the impact of the cuts. They talked to delegates, handed out leaflets and answered questions.

Many conference delegates gladly accepted the leaflet and ribbons for about 20 minutes, when one registered delegate, conference speaker and Action Day volunteer was told by Kelly Moore, Executive Director of CLA that giving out information regarding the cuts to the LAC was “inappropriate.” In addition to handing out ribbons, the librarian and a colleague had placed CAUT “Save LAC” bookmarks on the seats of chairs in the room where the keynote was to be held. They were told to stop, that the conference was “not the right venue” for the activity, and were asked to leave the 3rd floor of the Ottawa Congress Centre – despite being registered delegates of the conference. Downstairs, on the 2nd level, volunteers continued to hand out ribbons and information. But within minutes, Moore had two security guards remove the librarians and banish them to the street level of the Congress Centre and away
from the conference delegates. The official reason given was that the Day of Action volunteers were not registered for the conference. But in fact, even the two librarians who were official delegates were asked to leave. (They were re-admitted later).

What does it mean when librarians are physically removed from a library conference for circulating information regarding library funding? And, what does it mean when the national library association in this country is the body removing them?

Was Jennifer’s blog posting something to support? If so would you support it openly? Would you perhaps decry it as unhelpful to all?

If you are feeling some tension around these issues then you match my interest in speaking here today – my thoughts are prompted by a series of significant events and developments – indeed a growing laundry list.

For example, also last summer, a case of a union blog went to court at The Labour Relations Board Saskatchewan. It went like this:

REGINA PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD, Applicant v. CANADIAN UNION OF PUBLIC EMPLOYEES, LOCAL 1594 ... August 2, 2012

Employer alleges that Union was not bargaining in good faith during recent round of negotiations – Union began public campaign for support which included a “blog” site check-us-out.net – Union published information on website Employer felt was false and misleading and which portrayed a false picture of what the Employer’s position was at the bargaining table – Employer alleges that these postings were intended to interfere with the negotiations for a collective agreement – Board denies application. [UNION won]

Advocating outward for our publics requires some inward work within our own institutional culture. And in this respect, there is a new international level persuasion and consensus building document that is important for us to be aware of: the IFLA “Code of Ethics for Librarians and other Information Workers”, which was endorsed by the IFLA Governing Board, August 2012.

Preamble - This Code is offered as a series of ethical propositions for the guidance of individual librarians as well as other information workers, and for the consideration of Library and Information Associations when creating or revising their own codes.

Section3. Privacy, secrecy and transparency includes the directive: Librarians and other information workers support and participate in transparency so that the workings of government, administration and business are opened to the scrutiny of the general public. They also
recognise that it is in the public interest that misconduct, corruption and crime be exposed by what constitute breaches of confidentiality by so-called ‘whistleblowers’.

Section 5. Neutrality, personal integrity and professional skills includes:
Librarians and other information workers have the right to free speech in the workplace provided it does not infringe the principle of neutrality towards users.
Librarians and other information workers counter corruption directly affecting librarianship, as in the sourcing and supply of library materials, appointments to library posts and administration of library contracts and finances.

As you must know, the ALA Council adopted a 2005 Resolution on Workplace Speech. It states:

Libraries should encourage discussion among library workers, including library administrators, of non-confidential professional and policy matters about the operation of the library and matters of public concern within the framework of applicable laws.

We don’t have that in Canada at the CLA level, much as I wish we did. There was a unique clause found in the 2007-2010 collective agreement of the Saskatoon Public Library that directed the institution to uphold the CLA’s Statement on Intellectual Freedom—for both the library’s outside publics and inside workers.

The Saskatoon Public Library Board and the CUPE local 2669 included in the 2007-2010 collective agreement the following phrasings on intellectual freedom:

The Union and the Library Board agree to be governed by the Intellectual Freedom statement of the Canadian Library Association in the provision of library services to the community. Internally, matters of professional discussion should be governed by the same principles. Employees have the right to express their views whether or not they differ from those of management or fellow employees provided they are not presented as the views of the Saskatoon Public Library.

This was an important clause in that it could be invoked to combat inside censorship or self-censorship, which is common practice in the workplace. But note: as of May 14, 2013, the 250 unionized public library workers represented by CUPE 2669 have been without a contract since the previous contract expired.
March 31, 2010 [more than 3 years ago]. Union workers held a read-in last month where some members made their own book jackets, including “50 Shades of No Pay” and “Life of Why.”

The question for us to carry forward is: Without freedom of speech in the library workplace, can our librarians be effective advocates for everyone else’s intellectual freedom?

IFLA’s Code of Ethics Section 6. Colleague and employer/employee relationship includes:

Librarians and other information workers share their professional experience with colleagues and they help and guide new professionals to enter the professional community and develop their skills. They contribute to the activities of their professional association and participate in research and publication on professional matters.

This important directive evokes thoughts of the new Library and Archives Canada (LAC) Code of Conduct. Let’s hear what CLA had to say about it on March 22, 2013.

(Ottawa, March 22, 2013) – The CLA urges Library and Archives Canada to revisit its Code of Conduct in order to strike a more even balance between the duty of loyalty to the Government of Canada that all public servants have and the freedom of expression that is imperative to the work of librarians in a strong democracy.

The LAC Code of Conduct: Values and Ethics restricts unnecessarily the ability of librarians and information professionals to perform key aspects of their work, namely teaching and speaking at conferences and other public engagements. The conditions placed upon those activities, and the categorization of those activities as ‘high risk,’ effectively eliminate the possibility that librarians may engage in essential elements of their work, elements that benefit both themselves and the greater professional community as well as the public good.

The language of the LAC Code also appears to infringe unnecessarily on the personal activities and opinions of public servants beyond the workplace. While we recognize a duty of loyalty to the Government of Canada and its elected officials, a reasonable balance must be maintained in recognizing that public servants also have a first duty of loyalty to Canadians at large.

The Canadian Library Association Position Statement on Intellectual Freedom states that both employees and employers in libraries have a duty, in addition to their institutional responsibilities, to uphold the principles of freedom of expression, including the responsibility “to
guarantee and facilitate access to all expressions of knowledge and intellectual activity.”

We recognize that, as public servants, LAC employees also have a duty to uphold the principles contained in the Government of Canada’s Values and Ethics Code for the Public Sector, including the duty to “use resources responsibly by acquiring, preserving and sharing knowledge and information.” If employees of Library and Archives Canada are unable to teach and to speak publicly, they are unable to perform their work as information professionals and as public servants.

A strong leadership role is expected of our national institution, including an expectation that LAC librarians participate in and contribute to innovation in the profession, in education, and in the field at large for the benefit of all Canadians. The professional expertise and leadership of LAC archivists and librarians are essential to national progress in making our documentary heritage accessible to all.

The Canadian Library Association urges Library and Archives Canada to revisit its Code of Conduct and to continue to encourage its employees to share their professional experience and professional expertise through teaching, speaking at conferences, and appearing at public engagements. Pilar Martinez, President, Canadian Library Association.

And in Rabble, Priya Sarin—a lawyer—writes in detail² about Library and Archives Canada’s new employee code of conduct. Conclusion: “Given that part of LAC’s mandate is to make its information available to the public and to collaborate and contribute to the sharing of its knowledge, the sections of LAC’s new Code referred to above seem terribly inconsistent with the organization’s purpose and function. The experience of federal scientists³ suggests that this policy will have the effect of stifling the participation of these employees in educational and other settings through both self censoring and possible delay tactics on the part of LAC management. Both employees and the public will suffer.”

Now let’s consider some basic relevant angles (excerpts in the interest of time) as documented in the ALA Questions & Answers on Speech in the Workplace. An explanatory statement of the ALA Code of Ethics:

Since librarians have a special responsibility to protect intellectual freedom and freedom of expression, do librarians have a special responsibility to create a workplace that tolerates employee expression more than other professions?

Yes. Libraries play a special role in ensuring the free flow of information in a democratic society.
Does the First Amendment apply to workplace speech?
Many court decisions support employers on this issue.

As a library administrator should I solicit the opinions of my staff on policy and procedural matters?
Library professionals in leadership positions should encourage discussion on policy and procedural matters, adopt ALA Policy 54.21 on Workplace Speech, and refrain from actions that result in a chilling effect on employee speech.

If I speak out in the workplace on a matter of professional policy, and my employer retaliates against me, will the ALA support me?
The ALA does not at this time provide mediation, financial aid, or legal aid in response to workplace disputes. Your employer has an array of sanctions that may or may not be imposed on you, including but not limited to: reassignment, passing you up for promotion, passing you up for raises, denying you tenure, passing you up for the best assignments, and ultimately dismissal.

If you decide to speak out on a matter involving professional policy, it will be a matter between you and your employer. The ALA does administer the LeRoy C. Merritt Humanitarian Fund, which has provided financial assistance for librarians who have been discriminated against or denied employment rights because of their defense of intellectual freedom including freedom of speech.

In Canada, in 2008, CAUT initiated a landmark case, its first case of academic freedom and academic librarianship in the history of Canadian higher education. Kent Weaver and I were selected as the co-investigators. An important aspect of the investigation and related 75 page report centered on the McGill University academic librarians’ (a cohort of 57 people at the time) right and responsibility to teach (moreover to teach freely). The report included a long set of recommendations, many of which are now being taken up at McGill University. CAUT reported in a 26 November 2012 press release that it “has withdrawn consideration of censure of McGill University at its semi-annual governing Council meeting this past weekend.” The decision was taken following a CAUT review of what steps have been taken by the McGill administration to address the series of concerns raised by McGill’s academic librarians over the last six years. At the 2012 CAUT Librarians Conference, the delegates (who came to Ottawa to represent institutions from coast to coast to coast) discussed the broader context. We heard opening day talks on: deep structural challenges to librarianship; national library associations and a probing of who actually is speaking for librarians; libraries and librarians under attack, as well as resistance to the assault on public institutions with a case look at Toronto Public Library. We probed corporate managerialism, threats to academic status, and the role of library and information schools in the mix.
Here in the USA, Rory Litwin noted on his Library Juice blog on January 14, 2013:

AAUP has just released its new Joint Statement on Faculty Status of College and University Librarians, a new version of a similar statement drafted in 1973 and reaffirmed a couple of times since then. What I’d like to point out is that the new statement backpedals significantly on what it actually says about faculty status. The earlier statement said that AAUP considers academic librarians as faculty across the board, irrespective of how they are considered by their institutions, while the new statement says that faculty status of academic employees should depend upon the librarian’s function in teaching, research, and service at a given institution, with the institution being responsible for setting the specific criteria and procedures for according faculty status. In other words, AAUP has retracted its strong support for faculty status of librarians, stating only that, essentially, “librarians should have faculty status where they should have faculty status, according to their institutions.” It is pretty toothless now.

Why do we care? We care because of real people like Dale Askey, a librarian at McMaster University who has been sued this year by Mellen Press for giving them a bad review. Here is the text of a statement supporting him (and as you probably know, there are many others).

ARL-CARL Joint Statement in Support of Dale Askey and McMaster University

The Association of Research Libraries (ARL) and the Canadian Association of Research Libraries (CARL) share a commitment to freedom of opinion and expression of ideas and are strongly opposed to any effort to intimidate individuals in order to suppress information or censor ideas. We further share the belief that a librarian must be able to offer his or her assessment of a publisher’s products or practices free from such intimidation. Consequently, we are highly supportive of Dale Askey and of McMaster University as they confront the lawsuit brought against them by Edwin Mellen Press. We strongly disapprove of the aggressive use of the Canadian court system to threaten Mr. Askey with millions of dollars in liability over the contents of a blog post. We urge Edwin Mellen Press to withdraw this suit and use more constructive means to address its reputation.

“No academic librarian, research library, or university should face a multi-million dollar lawsuit because of a candid discussion of the
publications or practices of an academic publisher,” said Brent Roe, Executive Director of CARL. “The exaggerated action of Edwin Mellen Press could only impose a chill on academic and research librarians’ expression of frank professional judgments.”

“Unfortunately, this is just the latest publisher that has chosen to pursue costly and wasteful litigation against universities and librarians,” said Elliott Shore, Executive Director of ARL. “These hostile tactics highlight the need for people who share the core values of research libraries to embrace models of publishing that foster—rather than hinder—research, teaching, and learning.”

All told, intellectual freedom, workplace speech and academic freedom for academic librarians are interrelated, complex and going concerns. We are part of the grand narrative. What we do and say—or not—can make a difference for better or for worse—not just for us but for public good. No library cohort, I would guess, is more attune to this than new librarians. They would be wise to pay attention to the discourse. Because as John Berry noted on March 10, 2009:

There is a sad message from many of the “mentors” on NEWLIB-L, a discussion list for new librarians that is one of my favorites. The list has a home page at NEWLIB-L. The message in several posts is to “express yourself with great care not to offend anyone else who reads the list.” Several posts have ranted about postings that were considered “unprofessional” or “off topic.” What they really tell the “new” librarian is that free expression doesn’t apply in professional discourse, only out in the street or in your personal debates. This same syndrome haunts many discussion lists from ALA units and others. It is as if free expression must be limited or at least tempered if it is to be allowed online.

It is the wrong message, especially in a profession where so many have sacrificed so much for free expression.

In my city, Edmonton Public Library applicants are asked to demonstrate “A personal commitment to upholding the Canadian Library Association’s position statements on Intellectual Freedom and Diversity and Inclusion.”

As you apply for, or interview candidates for, such stated positions, be clear about the chosen words. What do they mean? Who are they for? How do we measure the applicant or indeed the employee’s personal commitment to intellectual freedom? What about a professional commitment? Ultimately, is that not more important? If they venture out on a limb for intellectual freedom or academic freedom, who will back them up? Will you? Your org? Your
association? Who has the authority to do so? Who has the resources? Is the law on your side?

Library leader EJ Josey — a man described as “the ultimate insider who retained the outsider’s point of view” and as “the profession’s leading civil rights activist”, the “gentleman from Georgia who wore neat clean gloves over his hard fists” — taught us well about positive troublemaking and positive aggression. I hope you do it; I trust you will wear it well. I met Dr. Josey not long before he died. I asked him, where did you get the courage? He answered simply: “Honey, I grew up in the south”.

Fellow SLIS Distinguished Alumni Award recipient Kathleen de la Peña McCook is another inspiration. Indeed her lore was palpable in these halls when I showed up in 1991. Her critical contributions were actively being transmitted orally from one generation to another. While she and I email regularly, I’ve still not met her face-to-face. It does not matter. She got into my thinking. And I know she is always there watching out for the rights and responsibilities of her fellow alumni.

Taking her cue, sisters and brothers, you can always call on me to have a Badger’s back. But more importantly, look out for one another. Be proud of what you do. Honour those principled colleagues who came before you and those who are out on a limb now. We are forever connected and responsible to one another.

And know this: the oft overlooked genius of our unregulated profession is that the MLIS is never revoked or stripped. On that note, paint the town tonight – hoot and holler – you’ll still have that MLIS in the am no matter what you say or do! Thank you.

NOTES

Adventures in Copyright Violation
The Curious Case of Utopian Constructions

In November of 2012 I was prowling the Web for examples of political posters, one of my primary subject areas. I stumbled across a site that at first glance seemed quite rich with content and technological sophistication. But as I drilled down into it further my response went from surprise to shock. Scores, if not hundreds, of posters I had shot and published in books were loaded on the pages. To compound the problem, they were not thumbnails, but high-resolution images. And none were credited to me – or any other source, for that matter.

The site was “Poster Gallery – Utopian Constructions,” a project of Nanyang Technological University in Singapore, which has close ties to the People’s Republic of China: <http://webposters.adm.ntu.edu.sg/site/page/home>

Their “about” page describes the poster archive project thusly:

“With a database of more than 5400 posters from many countries, a system of classification and search was developed which allows for the establishment of links and crossing references that lend higher complexity to the interpretation of this visual material of such great impact in recent history.”

After some initial clambering around the site for contact information about those responsible, I eventually reached professor Heitor Capuzzo in the School...
of Art, Design and Media, College of Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences. I told him of my concerns, and he assured me that he would take the complaint seriously and look into it. I turned to detailing the extent of the damage, and as far as I could tell the site was using 73 poster images from my book *Revolucion! Cuban Poster Art* (Chronicle Books, 2003) and 90 poster images from *Chinese Posters: Art from the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution* (Chronicle Books, 2007) for which I was the co-author and responsible for all image provision.

Dr. Capuzzo assured me that Singapore was a strict follower of international copyright, but the vendors who had provided the images had assured him that they were from legitimate archives in their respective countries. I then proceeded to exhaustively document each violating image, noting the page in my book in which they appeared. In most cases there were large clusters where the image sequences were identical to those in my books. Further evidence included images that were composites (not a single actual poster) and, in the case of Chinese posters, identical English titles to those I had translated in my book. And finally, for the truly geeky about image technology, some of the images betrayed printed process color halftone dots for posters that have flat colors. The overwhelming evidence was that these were purloined images.

In the spirit of supporting an academic institution that had taken an unintentional wrong turn, I requested three things:
1. Credit as the source of the images, and additionally, credit to U.C. Berkeley’s East Asian Library, where the China poster collection now resides;
2. Removal of the high-resolution images; and
3. An explanation of the source of the images, so that I could try to stop this problem from happening again.

I had two partners in pursuing this complaint, my publisher and the East Asian Library. Both wrote a letter supporting my case. Although Dr. Capuzzo agreed to the first request, he insisted on posting high-resolution images and did not have enough information to answer my third request.

In the digital world, there are almost no safeguards for images posted at high resolution. Aside from a robust, proprietary (and costly) digital watermark service like Digimarc, I had no way of proving that images were mine. And what’s even more distressing, I learned to my dismay that my photodocumentation was not protected1. Despite the years of experience and thousands of dollars I’ve invested in properly shooting large format documents, it’s still considered mere “copy photography” in the eyes of copyright law. The only way to protect my work, and that of the original artists whose work I handle, is to avoid public access to high-resolution images. The thousands of posters I’ve shot that are appearing on the digital archive of the Oakland Museum of California are all
presented in a way that allows a viewer to see details and fine type but not to download a full image\(^2\).

My saving grace was that these were all copied old school style – scanned from a published book. International copyright frowns seriously on such behavior, and academic institutions usually avoid trampling intellectual property rights. The eventual settlement was that they removed all of the violating images, and I am still awaiting any news of their investigation regarding image vendors. I’m not holding my breath. My experience is that people generally don’t like news that puts them in a bad light, and I’m unlikely to ever know what actually happened.

The Web giveth and the Web taketh away. If these copies had appeared in a local database, I never would have known about them. On the other hand, the risk of any actual “harm” to my work would have also been minimal. Putting the full fruit of one’s labor on the Web for all to use may seem liberating, but when it’s someone else’s labor the ethics get much more cloudy. I “protect” my work in order to avoid exploitation, not to limit public access. Archives and special collections are headed into uncharted territory. Examples such as Utopian Constructions reveal that we need to be vigilant, respectful, and creative.

NOTES


Audiovisual Patrimonie for Libraries

Much of our important cultural patrimony does not involve the written word. Audiovisual recordings of interviews, dance, ceremonies and rituals, and even of daily life can be important patrimonial works that will let future generations see what life was like today. They also allow young people today to hear what their grandparents sounded like, what environment they lived in, and what their daily life looked like. These recordings also let young people see what life was like previously in neighboring cultures, and can encourage young people to become more active in both consuming and creating their own cultural works. Libraries need to be responsible for saving these photographic, audio, and video recordings of daily life for purposes of education and for preserving the cultural record. This article discusses why a library should be interested in collecting, preserving, and making this type of material available. And it gives some helpful hints on how a library could go about doing this.

1. Why Audiovisual is important

Our audio and video recordings give important insights into our historic and cultural past. Usually an image is much better at describing a past event than even an entire paragraph of words. Photos or videos of a celebration of national independence help one understand how people celebrated, and accompanying audio helps us understand their exuberance. Personal photographs or home movies help capture what a kitchen looked like in the 1960s, what birthday celebrations or weddings were like, even showing us what mourning at a funeral looked like.

Howard Besser is a Cinema Studies professor at New York University and Director of NYU’s Moving Image Archiving & Preservation Program. He has helped found library standards (from the Dublin Core to PREMIS) and recently helped groups of his students and alumni (Activist Arivists) work on projects to archive the videos and sounds of the Occupy Movement (and place these in repositories that can handle both the access and preservation that the public will need).

KEYWORDS: Audiovisual archiving; Digital media – Conservation and restoration; Motion picture film – Preservation; Technological obsolescence.
Often works made for an entirely different purpose illuminate past cultures and histories (Besser 2011). Even narrative fiction films or documentaries shot locally show background images and sound of city life at an earlier time period, clothing worn by people, what buildings looked like, etc. Even photos or movies taken by colonizers for propaganda purposes show us what the streets looked like in a small village, what agriculture production looked like in certain locales, how certain buildings were constructed, and how peoples’ ways of speaking or accents were different in the past.

In many ways, our media recordings (audio, video, film) are closer to oral traditions. Viewing or listening to them does not require learning to read. And many films and videos still are comprehensible across linguistic groups that may not understand the language spoken in the film, but will understand both the images and the vocal intonations (happiness, sadness, anger).

Some of these audiovisual works serve as bridges between the factors we associate with oral versus written cultures. When a ceremony or ritual such as a wedding is recorded, one slice of immaterial culture is captured on film or video and can be transmitted to future generations without alteration. Essentially the recording is a piece of material culture that captures one aspect of a piece of immaterial culture. It is not as full or rich as the original because it only captures a small part of the ceremony, but an outsider will have a far better conception of the ceremony from watching the recording than from reading a written account.

2. Collection Development of Audiovisual material

Libraries really should be collecting the type of audiovisual material that reflects local culture. There are a variety of methods for collecting works that show the past.

Some libraries have tried to aggressively solicit photos and any other home recordings by directly contacting important individuals such as politicians or cultural figures. Others have contacted anthropologists, linguists, historians, and other scholars who have worked in their region in order to obtain audio and film recordings that were part of their research. Still others have developed arrangements with television stations to obtain copies of older television shows, particularly news. Other options include contacting cultural organizations and entertainment companies in neighboring countries, and asking colonial powers to repatriate audio and film images recording in their country.

Very interesting collections have been built by collecting normal everyday images from normal people. Photographs and home movies recorded by relatives or visitors can show local scenery, clothing, and habits from 50 years in the past. Some libraries have sponsored special days, including participating in Home Movie Day (Center for Home Movies), where they encourage people
to come in, show their material to both librarians and others, and frequently the library asks to make a copy of the work for their collection.

But a library also needs to think about how future generations will be able to see how we live today. The library can purchase cheap recording equipment and begin to record local heritage itself. It is simple to use audio recording equipment to interview elders about how things have changed since they were young, and these recordings become valuable ways of transmitting how culture changes over time.

Libraries can learn from other groups that have handed cameras to young people, and asked them to record interesting parts of their lives. One such project (Bridges to Understanding) gave young people cameras to take still digital photographs, and had them compose and record a narration of what these photos illustrate about their daily lives. Another project (Rev- 2012) used a creative video and the character “Bibliobandido” to encourage young people in rural villages to visit the library, learn to read, and learn to create stories that have more meaning to their lives than the childrens’ books mass-produced in the large cities of other countries.

It may be useful for a library planning to shoot their own digital video to consult the guidelines developed for a course in Ghana teaching good preservation practices to people shooting their own digital videos (van Malssen and Jimenez).

3. Why keeping audiovisual is more difficult than keeping paper

Audio and video recordings are much more fragile than works on paper. Paper works require nothing more than a light source to read them; audio and video works require a complex machine. With only a minimum of care, most works on paper last more than 100 years. But most audio and video works are recorded on tapes that tend to have problems after fewer than 20 years.

A very worrisome problem with audio and video recordings is technological obsolescence. Because a newer format becomes important, manufacturers stop making the equipment required to play back an older format, and they also stop making blank tapes that a library would need to use to copy an older tape that is deteriorating. In the 57-year history of videotape, we have had more than 50 different types of video formats (including U-Matic, Beta, Beta SP, VHS), and no manufacturer currently produces library-grade playback machines for any of these. For audio recordings we have had fewer format changes in the last 50 years (⅛ inch reel-to-reel, 8-track cassette, audiocassette, mini-cassette, micro-cassette, audio CDs), but our formats continue to become obsolete after about 10 years. From a very strict legal definition of “obsolete”, U-Matic, S-VHS, and Betamax videotapes are currently considered obsolete in the United States (Besser et. al. 2012).
Still another problem is the deterioration of the storage medium itself. Tape is very fragile. A single fold in a cassette tape can cause the entire tape to wind out of the cassette when it is played. The chemistry of tape requires a dry climate for storage, and storage in humid air causes a chemical reaction (hydrolysis) that can make a tape unplayable. And tapes contain organic materials that attract mold.

Though optical laser storage (such as CDs or DVDs) are not so subject to hydrolysis or mold, many CDs and DVDs (particularly those not recorded in a factory) have failed to play at all less than 10 years after they were recorded. And the file formats and security used for encoding commercial CDs and DVDs (.cda and css) will not be supported on future devices, so not only the physical support but the contents of our CDs and DVDs will also have to be reformatted.

Because of all of these factors, audio and video formats are very fragile. Most recommendations suggest that reformatting be done at least once every 10 years.

4. Managing a collection of Audiovisual material

How does a library manage a collection of media recordings? Most important is management and a long-term plan. Record-keeping is essential.

Each piece of media needs to be well-labeled, and a record needs to be kept for each work. The record needs more information than a bibliographic record; it needs to indicate the format (not which is currently in VHS, audiocassette, DVD), whether the work is beginning to deteriorate, and needs to maintain a history of any reformatting that was previously done. And the library needs to be able to systematically review these records in order to locate all the works in a format that is close to becoming obsolete. (For example, if the library’s last audiocassette player is nearing the end of its life, the library will need to find all audiocassettes in its collection, and try to reformat them before their audiocassette player finally dies.)

The library should have a plan for re-formatting before a format becomes obsolete. Once a format becomes obsolete it may be too late to save the work. To develop the plan, the library needs to regularly maintain and monitor the conditions of its playback equipment, as well as monitor how quickly formats become obsolete in the world outside the library. Ideally, the library should clean the heads of every tape playback machine at least twice a month (using a Q-Tip swab dipped in isopropyl alcohol). A technician should inspect the machine every two or three years, or when there is a problem. Someone in the library should keep track of how difficult it may be to obtain blank tape or a playback machine for the formats in the library. This is often done by participating in a listserv discussion involving people in the region who have
older audiovisual equipment. The listserv may also include discussion of repair issues and people who do repair work on playback machines. Another very valuable resource is to build cooperation and relationships with other local organizations that have more of a focus on audiovisual materials. Organizations like national film archives and public television stations can offer great advice on dealing with your audiovisual materials, often have technicians who could repair your broken equipment, and are likely to be following issues of technological obsolescence.

The library should store its audiovisual works in a climate that is as cool and dry as possible. But most important is that the temperature of the works should not vacillate too much. So, for example, a set of tapes should not be put close to an air conditioner that regularly cycles on and off; the frequent movement between hot and cold harms the material structure of the tape.

The library should periodically monitor the audiovisual material for signs of deterioration. Perhaps once every few years the library should pull out one item from every bookcase and physically inspect it for signs of deterioration. If it is a tape, they should look for little bits of metal powder that have fallen off the tape into the box. The smell of vinegar is another sign of deterioration. Because most problems come from age or storage conditions, if a problem is found in one item on a bookcase, other items that are the same format from a similar time period and other items stored in the same bookcase should also be inspected. If one finds a widespread deterioration problem (a storage location problem or an older format problem), the library needs to begin a serious project to reformat all the deteriorating material.

A list of good practices for storage of audiovisual materials is in (Jimenez and van Malssen) and a large amount of related information can be found in (MIAP).

5. Reformatting

We need to reformat the works in our collection both because the support that each work is stored on deteriorates, and also because the format becomes obsolete (and we can no longer obtain the necessary playback equipment). To prevent obsolescence it is good practice to reformat each type of material once every decade.

The digital preservation world has defined two concepts that we use in reformatting. Refreshing is designed to respond to the problem of physical deterioration, and Migrating is designed to respond to the problem of obsolete formats. Refreshing means copying to a new support without changing anything; Migrating means changing the actual format when you copy the work. So, in a digital text world, refreshing would mean taking a file on a 5.25 inch floppy disk and first moving it to a 3.5 inch diskette, then later to a CD-ROM, then
later to a DVD. *Migrating* would mean reformatting a file in Microsoft Word for Windows 95 and re-encoding it for Microsoft Office Word 2003, then later re-encoding it for Microsoft Office Word 2011.

Good practice for an audiovisual collection usually means doing a combined refreshing/migration once per decade. This means changing both the type of support and the format at the same time. Reformatting a U-Matic to a VHS, then reformatting a VHS to a digital MPEG-2 file would be examples of video reformatting.

Once we have a work in a digital format, we no longer face the problem of obsolete playback equipment, but we still face the problem of obsolete formats. Videos encoded in Apple’s QuickTime just 15 years ago can no longer be played. But once our works are in digital form and stored on a hard disk, a computer can do a combined refreshing/migration without a human having to sit over the machine constantly changing tapes and punching buttons.

To make our works as preservable as possible, and to minimize the frequency of migrations, audiovisual groups have adopted standards that identify high-quality, long-lasting formats and guidelines. The most important published guidelines for audio recordings was produced by the International Association of Sound and Audiovisual Archives (Bradley 2009). The 2009 edition of these guidelines contains recommendations for preservation metadata, preservation repositories, and an entire preservation infrastructure that likely require more resources than those available in a local library. But these guidelines to ensure long-term preservation are still important to read and think about. Most audio preservation guidelines recommend that audio recordings be stored in the Broadcast Wave Format (BWF) with Pulse Code Modulation (PCM) at 96 kHz sampling frequency and 24 bits per sample. But it is important to note that your long-term storage format will likely not be the same format that you show users; if you use BWF for your preservation format, you may want to have the computer automatically generate MP3 format files for you to deliver to users. As much as possible, you should use non-proprietary formats that are used by many organizations and individuals.

6. Summary

Our audiovisual heritage is important to help convey a rich sense of our cultural past to current and future generations. Audiovisual works can record portions of oral and performative traditions and can make slices of immaterial culture survive in relatively unaltered form. And audiovisual recordings made today can convey a sense of our current culture to people in the future. Libraries need to become more aggressive about collecting and preserving audio, video, and film recordings that convey a sense of local history and culture. Libraries can find creative ways to help produce this type of recording of the present. And some of those ways can encourage creativity and literacy in young people.
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NOTES

1. Some consumer models of combined DVD/VHS players are currently manufactured, but these are of very poor quality, and wear out very quickly. They are designed for consumer habits, like playing only one tape per day.
Organize and Assemble II
Progressive Librarians’ Guild
Edmonton’s Symposium

[Summary of the keynote lecture was written by Toni Samek. The summary of the poster presentation for Special Collections in the Pride Library (UWO): The Closet Collection and the Queer Graphica Collection was written by Sarah Barriage and Peggy McEachreon].

1. Introduction

On October 20th, 2012, The Progressive Librarians’ Guild of Edmonton held its second annual symposium at the City of Edmonton Archives. Like the previous year, presentations focused on a wide variety of topics of interest to progressive information workers. Approximately 40 people from the Edmonton area and beyond attended the symposium.

Below, you will find summaries of each presentation at the symposium.

Stephen MacDonald is the Resource Coordinator with the Edmonton Social Planning Council. He holds a Masters in Library and Information Studies from Dalhousie University.

KEYWORDS: Activism; Archives advocacy & activism; Austerity (Economics); Budget cuts; Canadian Library Association; Cataloging; Consumer society; Critical theory; Deprofessionalization; Domestic violence; GLBTQ literature; Grassroots organizing; Information ethics; Innovation rhetoric; LGBT literature; Library advocacy & activism; Library and information science education; Library outreach programs; Library science – Moral & ethical aspects; Library service to immigrants; Library service to women; National archives – Canada; Social capital (Sociology); Social media; Technological innovations.
In her keynote, Toni Samek (Professor, School of Library and Information Studies, University of Alberta) shared highlights from an *in press* article she wrote for the 20th anniversary issue of the *Journal of Information Ethics* (Fall 2012). The article is titled “I Guess We’ll Just Have to Wait for the Movie to Come Out”: A Protracted First Stand for Teaching Information Ethics.” Her keynote borrowed the same name. This work provides a condensed chronological record of the formation of the Information Ethics Special Interest Group (SIG) in the Association for Library and Information Science Education (ALISE).

Samek’s compressed account was comprised largely of documented SIG business she painstakingly archived during her time as both a founding member and the first Information Ethics SIG convenor. She illuminated the laborious, lengthy and ultimately contentious process (2004-2008) during which the Information Ethics SIG realized the 2008 Position Statement on Information Ethics in LIS Education, which can be read in full here: [http://www.alise.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=51](http://www.alise.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=51)

Samek’s colourful keynote prompted our PLG community to be mindful of the vulnerability of people, ideas, intention and momentum to bureaucratic red tape, the politics of process, and the oft bumpy application of rhetoric to practice. She opened her talk with an 8 June 2012 Wikipedia entry for *Red tape*, defined as “excessive regulation or rigid conformity to formal rules that is considered redundant or bureaucratic and hinders or prevents action or decision-making. It is usually applied to governments, corporations and other large organizations”. She then walked us through the highs and lows in the multi-year collective effort on the Statement, a journey that began in Germany, wavered over an extended play debate over the words “should” vs. “could”, and concluded in the USA. She brought the talk to a close with considered thoughts about the common activist experience of attempting to make a conscious dent in officialdom. And she delivered on her promise to prod our unending education in the politics of process.

The engaging discussion that followed Samek’s keynote gave attention to how to weight issues and address them in strategic fashion, the importance of assessing when to pass the leadership torch, and a cost benefit analysis of the de-linking of politicized individual names from institutional or group efforts.

The second presentation was a panel discussion led by Michael Gourlie, a government records archivist at the Provincial Archives of Alberta, Braden Cannon, an audio-visual archivist at the Provincial Archives of Alberta, and Kathryn Harvey, Head of Archival and Special Collections at the University of Guelph. In their presentation *The Archivists Are Angry: Fighting Austerity*
in Canadian Archives, they focused on the recent federal government cuts to archival programs in Canada, the impact of these cuts, and the On to Ottawa protest that was organized in response to these austerity measures.

Michael Gourlie provided the audience with some context about the relationship between the federal government and archives in Canada. During this segment, he spoke about:

- the National Archives Act in 1911 and how it provided financial support for archives in Canada,
- the creation of the Canadian Council of Archives in 1985 and the subsequent formation of provincial archival councils that directed federal funding to archives across the country so they could run special projects, process backlogs of donations, and provide experience and training opportunities for new archivists.
- cuts to federal spending on archives in the 1990’s,
- the creation of the National Archival Development Program, which provided archives across Canada with funding to hire archival workers, run special projects (including preservation projects that targeted threatened media), digitize items from archive collections, and deliver archive management training to archive workers.
- The merger of Canada’s national archive and library, the ‘modernization’ process at Library and Archives Canada that took place after Daniel Caron became the national archivist and librarian, and major funding cuts to Library and Archives Canada in 2012. These cuts led to the elimination of the National Archival Development Program.

Braden Cannon continued the discussion by looking at how archivists responded to the elimination of the National Archival Development Program. Mr. Cannon felt that this would be a great opportunity to organize archivists around this particular issue. He sent an email to Canadian archives listservs asking archive workers if they were interested in organizing a response to these cuts. Archive workers were overwhelmingly supportive of this idea, but they did not know what actions they could take. After some discussion, a number of Canadian archive workers decided to form a grassroots movement that would organize a national day of action on May 28th to protest the elimination of this program. The event, which was titled the Archivists Trek to Ottawa, was a series of protests organized by archival workers in Ottawa, Edmonton, London, Ontario, and other cities across Canada. The protests in Edmonton and London were run by the local PLG chapters, demonstrating the importance of relying on pre-established activist groups to initiate social action.

The movement also created a position statement, which condemned the NADP cuts and framed it within the larger context of Canadian Prime Minister
Harper’s austerity measures in the 2012 budget. This motivated other members of Canada’s archival community to get involved in the movement.

Mr. Cannon added that in formative stages of this movement, there were some internal disagreements around how it was being organized. In those early stages, a group within the movement thought that it needed a hierarchical structure and should be endorsed by archival associations in order for it to be legitimized in Canada’s archival community. This led to a split in the movement. This group began sending messages to other members of the movement that portrayed Mr. Cannon and others in the movement as radicals that they should avoid working with. As a result, this group created a split in the movement. To resolve this problem, a long-time union activist in the movement served as the intermediary between both sides. The irony of this is that after the intermediary spoke to this group, they agreed with the grassroots principles of the movement and became active members.

The movement proved to be a great success, building momentum for the next fight. As well, members of the movement were asked to join ACA committees, demonstrating the movement’s credibility and potential influence in the archive community. Mr. Cannon said that it also improved the organizing capacity of archive workers across Canada, establishing support networks and relationships that can be drawn upon to take future actions.

Mr. Gourlie added that after these protests, provincial governments in provinces whose archival councils lost all of their funding decided to provide them with the funding they needed to keep operating. This reduced the negative impact that the elimination of the NADP had on Canadian archives.

Kathryn Harvey spoke about the Ottawa protest, which she participated in. During the event, a ‘mock funeral’ was held, which featured a procession of archive workers from British Columbia to the Atlantic Provinces who gathered in Ottawa for the day of action. It was supported by a variety of plural organizations connected to the archival community, including the Canadian Association of University Teachers (CAUT) and the Canadian Council of Archives. The protest also received good coverage in Ottawa. Archive workers from all over Canada contributed to this successful protest.

In addition to the Ottawa protest, she also spoke about the role of archivists in Canada and the changing role of the federal government. She said that archivists play an important role in shaping our country’s history. She added that governments can also have an impact over how history is interpreted. To demonstrate this, she referred to the federal government’s decision to spend $28 million over four years to “celebrate” the War of 1812. An egregious example of the re-writing of history occurred in Stouffville, Ontario where the Conservative MP, with the support of two thirds of the town council, organized a military march to the town hall and requested a CF-18 fly-by. Citizens of the town objected not to commemorating the war, but to the way it was done in that
community which was founded by Mennonites and historically connected to the pacifist movement in Canada.

Dr. Harvey added that the austerity measures that were introduced by the federal government put a great deal of pressure on archives in Canada. She argues that it is important for Canadians to view archives as social institutions that can profoundly influence how Canadians view their history. This is why they deserve to be adequately funded and managed so that they continue to make Canadian history accessible to the public. She noted that the grassroots movement against the austerity measures must continue the discussion and determine what its next actions will be.

Our third presenter was Pilar Martinez, Executive Director of Public Services at Edmonton Public Library and president of the Canadian Library Association (CLA). Her presentation *Creating Change and Achieving Progress in the Restructured CLA* focused on why she decided to run for the presidency of the CLA and what she would like to achieve during her term in office. Ms. Martinez said that she felt that this was the right time for her to take on this role and help re-shape the CLA into an organization that places greater emphasis on dialogue and member participation.

During her presentation, Ms. Martinez talked about the important advocacy work that the CLA does to ensure that the interests and concerns of Canadian libraries are addressed. She mentioned that the CLA has proven itself to be a reputable organization in the library community and has a strong working relationship with the federal government. Over the years, the CLA has been invited to participate in discussions around the development of legislation that affects libraries, such as Bill C-31, which focuses on copyright reform in Canada, and the Federal Access to Information Act.

According to Ms. Martinez, the CLA is in a transitioning period. During this period, Martinez wants to clarify what the CLA’s role is in the library community and how it is supporting Canadian libraries. This will involve discussions with CLA members around what the organization can do to represent the interests of libraries and library workers in Canada. She is also interested in getting CLA members more involved in the organization and increase discussion about its future role in Canada’s library community. She believes that by increasing involvement among members, the CLA can take full advantage of their ideas and strengths and improve the organization as a whole.

Ms. Martinez then talked about ways that the CLA can continue to be an influential voice for Canada’s library community. She spoke about a recent presentation that library consultant Ken Haycock gave in Edmonton surrounding the power of influence. She said that in his presentation, he identified certain characteristics that individuals and organizations must possess in order to be influential including reciprocity (treating others the way that you would like to be treated) and being likeable, which helps you to gain credibility and influence.
These leadership values could be adopted by the CLA to have influence over government policy decisions that affect the library community in Canada.

She ended her talk by reminding those who have given up on the CLA to think back to the successful grassroots library advocacy initiatives that have been facilitated by the organization. She reminded the audience that the CLA can continue to use its reputation and influence to remain a strong advocate for Canadian libraries.

Following her presentation, Ms. Martinez took questions from the audience about the future of the CLA and its role as an advocate for Canadian libraries.

Our fourth presentation was a panel discussion with Michael McNally and Tami Oliphant, who are both professors with the School of Library and Information Studies at the University of Alberta. McNally began with his paper presentation “The Allure and Danger of Innovation Rhetoric for Libraries.”

McNally started by looking at the writings of major figures in the field of innovation. McNally noted the differences between sociological examinations of innovation, which is characterized by Everett Rogers ‘diffusion of innovation’ theory, and economic theories of innovation that have been heavily influenced by the writings of Joseph Schumpeter.

This was followed by a discussion on innovation rhetoric. In this part of his discussion, he spoke about how innovation is considered by many to be an imperative and inevitable, while the negative impact that innovation can have on society is ignored, giving the example of crack cocaine and how it only really benefits the innovator instead of those who consume it. He also looked at the tendency for innovation to be viewed in solely economic terms as a means of creating new goods, processes and services, without looking at the social changes that innovation can create (e.g. women entering the workplace). His discussion also looked at how innovation can benefit consumers and not those who build products that are born from innovation (providing the example of poor labourers who build products for Western markets that they cannot afford to purchase). As well, innovation creates goods that replace workers and leads to unemployment. Also, it is constantly creating new stuff. As a result, we are never fully happy.

After this, he turned his focus to the impact that the innovation rhetoric mentioned above is having in the LIS field. McNally reviewed 40 years of LIS literature using Norman Fairclough’s critical discourse analysis to look at innovation in our field and how the term innovation is being used to explain these changes. Critical discourse analysis analyses detailed examples of text within the social context of the period they were written. This allows us to understand how texts are produced and consumed, while underscoring the dialectical relationship between discourse and social relations. Throughout his review of LIS literature, McNally found that the term innovation was being used
inconsistently. He also found that there were many instances where innovation was misused, describing minor changes in the way that libraries deliver services. McNally found that innovation rhetoric actually does a significant disservice by further naturalizing innovation and information society rhetoric and ultimately strengthening neoliberal discourse that is antithetical to libraries.

Information society discourse is rooted in the works of Daniel Bell and others, who writing in the 1970s argued that a fundamental shift was taking place in advanced societies whereby a post-industrial or information society was coming to replace industrialism. The new information society consisted of information workers and replaced the industrial workers of the previous era. The ideological roots of the information society have been forgotten. The promise of information society and a move away from the problems of industrial society has been used discursively to advance neo-liberal ideals in our environment. The innovation discourse is part of a broader discourse around marketization.

Returning to the issue of libraries, McNally argues that librarians are generally not innovators, but are responding to change and are invoking innovation rhetoric in the face of uncertainty in our environments. He emphasized that we should look back at progress and the Enlightenment and the emphasis they placed on economic, social and moral improvement. He also stresses the need for librarians to use their knowledge to be agents of progressive change.

Tami Oliphant’s talk “Patrons, users, customers, prosumers?: Digital labour and librarianship” focused on the implications of prosumption and digital labour in society and in libraries. Prosumption is the act of creating goods, services, or experiences for personal use and satisfaction, rather than for sale or exchange. At the beginning of her talk, she posed the following question to the audience: “If we view library patrons as consumers of information and libraries as sites of production and consumption, what impact does that have on the traditional role of librarians in society?”

Dr. Oliphant stated that we are now living in what Toffler and Toffler characterize as the Third Wave. Within this Third Wave, society has adopted new ways of living that are shaped by the current forms of technology that we live with. This age is characterized by the demassification of the production of goods and services and the creation of professions responsible for producing specialized goods and services. This is in contrast to the Second Wave or industrial age, which valued mass production of goods by a workforce of workers with an interchangeable set of skills.

In our computerized age, Dr. Oliphant says that the digital technologies being produced are creating new digital spaces for collaboration between individuals. Examples of this include wikis, social media networks and other online programs that allow us to collaborate with one another. At the same time, corporations are benefiting from these collaborations by using them to monitor our online behavior and collect information that they can then use to
create goods and services designed for us. As a result, people often self-monitor their online behavior, even though they may or may not actually be monitored online.

Currently, citizens are using technologies to simultaneously produce and consume goods and services. Individuals who fall into this role are defined as prosumers. Because they are not being paid for the goods and services they produce, they can participate in a non-monetized economy. Dr. Oliphant points out that the monetary economy would not exist without prosumption, citing the unpaid labour associated with parenting as an example of this.

Ritzer and Jurgensen argue that presumption is a new form of capitalism. In their view, prosumers are more difficult to control than paid labour because they exist independently from the capitalist monetary system. As a result, it becomes difficult for capital to exploit these workers and difficult to monetize some prosumption activities. Humphreys and Grayson, on the other hand, argue that prosumption is the same old form of capitalism as capital continues to exploit prosumer labour. Ms. Oliphant gave the example of Innocentive by Proctor and Gamble, which allows anyone to visit the company’s website to design a product in exchange for a monetary prize.

Dr. Oliphant emphasizes that while prosumption allows us to produce and consume something for free, it devalues the expertise and specialized knowledge of professionals, including librarians. She then explored how prosumption has influenced library services and undermined librarian and information workers’ expertise. She used Bibliocommons as an example. Bibliocommons allows individuals who are using a library’s online catalogue to make suggestions as to how the catalogue can be improved, write reviews, provide recommendations for purchases (collection development), among other activities. The ideas shared by the user are then adopted and are used to modify the program. As a result, users’ knowledge is considered on par with the professional knowledge of the librarian, which potentially devalues our professional expertise and consequently, our MLIS education.

She gives another similar example of ‘patron-driven acquisitions’. In some library systems, once a book is explored or requested, a library will order the title. If a book or collection at the library is popular, this increases its value. If it isn’t popular, it will potentially not be purchased and if the library already holds the title. It is at risk of being removed from the collection. This is a problem for books or collections that are rarely used but have cultural and historical significance. One of the significant criticisms of prosumption is that it can provide a way in which companies entice users to labour on their behalf for no pay and sometimes to actually create products on the company’s behalf for no pay. In libraries, this is happening with the automation of circulation services and cataloguing.

Dr. Oliphant ended her discussion by stating that prosumption is neither a
good nor bad / black or white issue. While there are benefits to prosumption, there are certain consequences and impacts this practice has on our role as professionals. While prosumption gives individuals the opportunity to contribute, it simultaneously reduces the value of the knowledge of experts in our field. There has to be a place in society where people can use new forms of technology created in the computerization age to contribute to something that benefits the individual and the collective. As a result, the benefits and problems of prosumption that Dr. Oliphant addresses in her talk are worth discussing further as we try to engage our patrons while also recognizing the value and importance of our profession knowledge.

Our last presenter of the day was Lindsay Whitson, an MLIS student at the University of Alberta. In her presentation “Un(der)mined Potential? Library Partnerships and Immigrant Women”, Whitson discussed her qualitative research project on the attitudes and service priorities of Saskatchewan public libraries toward immigrant women. The first purpose of this study is to learn more about the attitudes that public librarians hold about library services for immigrant women and how they are delivered. The second objective of this study was to review the policies of library systems in six of the ten major destinations for immigrants in Saskatchewan to determine if they allow for the implementation of family law public legal education and information (PLEI) services and programs, especially for immigrant women.

The theoretical framework of Whitson’s study is social capital, or social networks and relationships that build trust among individuals and encourages collaboration to address problems. She is interested in how public library engagement with immigrant women allows them to build a trusting relationship with libraries and view them as credible sources of PLEI.

In carrying out this study, Whitson’s objective is to bring attention to potential gaps in library services for immigrant women. Her hope is that this study contributes to LIS research that encourages integration of family PLEI into library programs attended by immigrant women.

Before discussing her preliminary findings, Whitson discussed the major themes in her literature review, which provided the audience with context that could be used to understand the unique challenges that immigrant women face, their need for PLEI and how public libraries can help to address that need.

In her literature review, Whitson looked at the following topics:

- the lack of literature on the information needs and information-seeking behaviours of immigrant women and potential reasons for this problem (including language barriers, cultural mores, and the challenge of gathering representational information from such a diverse group of women).
- the particular challenges that immigrant women suffering from intimate partner violence may experience as they attempt to flee abusive
relationships (including language, cultural barriers, financial insecurity, and discrimination)
• how legal aid programs tend to provide less support to litigants in family law cases than criminal cases or others that could result in restrictions being placed on the defendant’s personal freedom, and how this can force some immigrant women into defending themselves in family law cases (including divorce and child custody cases), despite the fact that they may have limited knowledge about the legal system, and
• public libraries and how their function and accessibility can help improve immigrant women’s access to PLEI

By October 2012, Whitson interviewed nine employees from six public library systems across Saskatchewan to learn more about their perspectives on PLEI services for immigrant women and their library system’s delivery of these services. Among those interviewed included a regional director, several branch heads, and unit heads from small, medium and large communities across the province. She mentioned that she will also contact two legal aid organizations to understand their views around delivering PLEI to immigrant women.

Below are some of the major preliminary findings that arose from her discussions with employees at the six participating public library systems in Saskatchewan and her review of their library policies:

• When reviewing the library policies for the six participating library systems to determine if they allowed for PLEI programs and services in their branches, she did not find any information that suggested otherwise. As well, the study participants that she spoke to supported her observations.
• When reviewing the occurrence of PLEI in these library systems, participants reported that their libraries have electronic and physical PLEI resources in their collections. However, it was more difficult to find evidence of current PLEI programming in these library systems. One participant mentioned that the public demand for this type of program is cyclical. They said that this service was last popular between 5 and 10 years ago, before the current immigrant boom in the province.
• Participants expressed differing views about the need for family law PLEI services in their library systems. Two participants felt that this is a valuable service, mentioning that they regularly receive questions about divorce, custody and maintenance issues. Other participants questioned whether there was a need for this type of service. One mentioned that immigrants may have more pressing concerns, adding that if a need for this service becomes obvious, programs could be developed and implemented to address those needs. Another person mentioned that immigrant language barriers could make it difficult for them to access these services.
• There was also a concern that offering family law PLEI could lead to the immigrant community labelling the library as a legal information centre, potentially overshadowing the other programs and services that they offer.

• When discussing popular resources for immigrant women in their branches, a participant in Regina referred to the program *Learning Together*, a highly successful family literacy program that teaches English to immigrant women and their pre-school children. The program is a reflection of the library system’s strong focus on family literacy. It was the result of local immigrant women being unable to attend individual English tutoring lessons at the library because they had to take care of their children while these tutoring sessions took place. This program’s popularity is largely because of the fact that the women are able to bring their children to this course. It’s popularity has led to the development of a second section for this program.

• During discussions, some participants mentioned that cultural mores can complicate the delivery of library services for immigrant women. Examples of this include familial limitations that restricted women and children from freely accessing certain library material or having a library card, and conflicts between family responsibilities and library commitments that prevent them from attending library programs that they are interested in.

• Participants also referred to financial restraints and how they place limitations on the types and scope of services and programs that they deliver to immigrant women.

In her concluding remarks, Whitson mentioned that she was heartened by the fact that most of the participants in her study said that they would offer family law PLEI programs in their libraries if they felt that there was a growing need for them. She was also encouraged by the fact that participants were interested in integrating family law PLEI into other library programs to improve access to this information. However, she argues that libraries need more information about the help-seeking preference of immigrant women who experience intimate partner violence. This information would help public libraries assess their role as providers of family law PLEI and determine how they can do more to improve immigrant women’s access to this information.

3. Poster Presentations

In addition to the panel and paper discussions, there were two poster presentations during the symposium. Below are descriptions of those presentations.

*Special Collections in the Pride Library (UWO):*
The Closet Collection and the Queer Graphica Collection

Presenters: Sarah Barriage and Peggy McEachreon

In most libraries, collections of works with homosexual themes are often catalogued under generic subject headings such as “gay fiction”. This can pose significant limitations for scholars or others attempting to access materials which address specific themes within this area. Sarah Barriage and Peggy McEachreon sought to address these limitations through our work on the Closet and Queer Graphica Collections (which are housed at the Pride Library, an academic LGBTQ resource centre at the University of Western Ontario) by developing unique subject terms for the materials contained within them. This poster presentation summarized the work that they did during this project.

For more information about these collections or the Pride Library, please visit http://www.uwo.ca/pridelib/

threeSOURCE: A Research and Resource Hub for Alberta’s Third Sector

Presenter: Stephen MacDonald

threeSOURCE is a freely-accessible online database that is managed by the Edmonton Social Planning Council.

Managed by the Edmonton Social Planning Council (ESPC), threeSOURCE was created to help the province’s social services sector, social researchers, government officials and the general public access current and reliable sources of information created by Alberta’s non-profit, or third, sector. It also contains resources with a wider geographic scope that focus on important social issues of interest to the target audience.

During this poster presentation, the ESPC’s Resource Coordinator Stephen MacDonald gave symposium participants information about the database, while also demonstrating its search engine and why it is a valuable social research tool.

To learn more about threeSOURCE, please visit http://www.threesource.ca.

4. Conclusion

Organize and Assemble II was a lively and highly engaging speaking event that fuelled progressive discussion around a wide range of important issues that affect the information sector. We look forward to our next symposium in October 2013 and hope that our annual symposium continues to serve as an important discussion forum for information sector workers and educators.
The following review of union activity in libraries is taken from entries posted on the Union Library Workers blog (http://unionlibraryworkers.blogspot.ca), a project of the Progressive Librarians Guild. Braden Cannon maintained the blog from January - December 2012. Sarah Barriage began contributing to the blog in October 2012.

In its annual union membership survey, the U.S. Department of Labor (2013) reported that individuals working in education, training, and library occupations had the highest unionization rate among occupational groups in 2012, with 39.2% of individuals in these categories belonging to unions. This was down from 40.5% in 2011. The 2012 overall union membership rate of 11.3% was also down from 11.8% in 2011.

A number of works on libraries and unions were published in 2012. These include, but are certainly not limited to:

- A post on PLG London blog entitled “The Canadian Library Association’s Failure to Advocate for Librarians and Libraries” (Lockhart, 2012)
- Privatizing Libraries, an ALA Special Report (Jerrard, Bolt, & Strege, 2012)
- An article in The Atlantic on library privatization (Erickson, 2012)

Sarah Barriage joined PLG’s coordinating committee in 2012. She recently worked as a public services librarian at the Augustana Campus Library, University of Alberta, and will be entering the doctoral program in the School of Communication & Information at Rutgers University in September 2013.

KEYWORDS: Librarians’ unions; Labor unions – Canada; Labor unions – Egypt; Labor unions – England; Labor unions – South Africa; Labor unions – Spain; Labor unions – USA; Labor unions and similar labor organizations; “Privatizing Libraries” (ALA report); AFSCME: Canadian Union of Public Employees; Bibliographies.
• “Collective Bargaining is a Human Right: Union Review for 2011” in Progressive Librarian (McCook, 2012)

Union and library-related events were held on a number of occasions, including a library workers’ conference hosted by the Canadian Union of Public Employees in March 2012 (see http://ow.ly/na0Y1) and “All of Us or None: Social Justice Posters of the San Francisco Bay Area”, an exhibit of special collections material at the Oakland Museum of California that ran from March - August 2012 (see http://ow.ly/na0ZI).

January 2012

• The Toronto Public Library Workers Union engaged in a number of activities in their fight for a new contract, having been without one since the end of 2011. These activities included polling Toronto residents on the use of surplus municipal funds (Peat, 2012b), enlisting the support of prominent authors to sway the opinions of city administration (Peat, 2012a), filing for conciliation in their negotiations with the city (Peat, 2012c), and working with other Toronto public sector unions to present a united front against city administrations (Alcoba, 2012).

• The United Auto Workers shut down their own research library and its unionized staff (represented by OPEIU) were either re-assigned or laid-off.

• The union representing workers at Chicago Public Library, AFSCME Council 31, filed a grievance against Mayor Rahm Emanuel’s unilateral decision to close public library branches on Mondays (Blake, 2012). The decision to reduce library hours followed the laying-off of 176 library workers. Chicago librarians hosted “People’s Library Hours” at several branches in protest (McClelland, 2012). It was later announced 65 of the laid-off library workers would be hired back in order to keep the library’s branches open on Mondays (Byrne, 2012).

• Service Employees International Union Local 721, which represents library workers in the California city of Simi Valley, filed a lawsuit against the city administration over the latter’s plans to withdraw from the Ventura County library system (McGrath, 2012). The lawsuit claimed that the withdrawal is a legislative act that cannot be made unilaterally. It was reported that the lawsuit was specifically launched to prevent the city from issuing a request for proposals to outsource library services (Goldberg, n.d.).

• Workers at the Attleboro Library in Massachusetts agreed to a contract with the city government.

• Over 200,000 librarians, archivists, and information workers unionized in Egypt (Mourad, 2012). The development was built on the efforts of
information workers from all manner of libraries and archives as well as students in the field.

- Union workers at the Manchester, Connecticut library system ratified a new collective agreement with city administration (Leavenworth, 2012). The workers are members of AFSCME Local 991.
- Fresno County Library in California actively recruited volunteer scabs to run the library in the event of a strike by county workers (Torres, 2012). It was also reported that librarians in the Fresno County Library system were actually scabbing their own strike, with the help of the volunteer scabs (Ritchie, 2012).
- Harvard University Library announced a decision to “involuntarily” downsize its staff, to the shock and concern of the Harvard Union of Clerical and Technical Workers (Weinstock & Worland, 2012). Complaining that their union leadership was not doing enough to fight proposed library cuts, members of the union began mobilizing without the assistance or support of union leadership (Dou, Jain, & Weinstock, 2012).

February 2012

- Unite, the union representing library workers in Greenwich, England, threatened legal action after a conflict of interest was declared by Councillor John Fahy, temporarily halting plans to privatize the library system (Chandler, 2012). Fahy’s company had been given control of libraries in the area.
- Unison protested cuts to the local archives in St. Helens, England, saying that the cuts would threaten the archival holdings currently housed in the public library (“St Helens council denies archives claim”, 2012).
- Students and workers at Harvard University joined together to protest the university administration’s moves to down-size its library staff (Weinstock, 2012). The march included members of Harvard Union of Clerical and Technical Workers, the Student Labor Action Movement, and faculty. Harvard Library management later announced it would form three joint councils with the union to better plan and implement the proposed re-organization of the library system (Schwartz, 2012).
- Library workers and several thousand other public employees represented by the Northern Ireland Public Service Alliance threatened to strike after having their wages frozen for a third consecutive year (“Union threatens strike after pay frozen for third year in a row”, 2012). The pay freeze affects up to 15,000 workers.
- The Toronto Public Library Workers Union called for a “no board” report, a recognition by the Ontario Ministry of Labour that the negotiations have stalled (Church, 2012).
• The State Department of Labor Relations certified the library union at Concord Free Public Library (Hooper, 2012). Workers at Concord Free Public Library are now officially represented by AFSCME Council 93.

• A rally was held in solidarity with workers at the National Library of Spain, members of CNT-AIT Madrid (“February 4 - day of solidarity - conflict with the National Library of Spain”, 2012). Workers there have been campaigning against budget cuts and outsourcing since 2010.

March 2012

• Workers at Toronto Public Library went on strike for 11 days before reaching an agreement with the city’s administration that awarded raises to all employees and gave job security to those who have earned 11 or more years of seniority (Dale & Jackson, 2012). As part of strike action, the union hosted a read-in rally and a knit-in rally to raise public awareness (“Toronto library workers to hold ‘read-in rally’”, 2012; Peat, 2012d).

• AFSCME Local 2760 and Gary Public Library in Indiana came to an agreement on the laying off of 14 library workers and a library budget cut of about $500,000. The president of AFSCME Local 2760 had earlier claimed that proposed cuts to their library system amounted to “union-busting”, with several union members being demoted to part-time positions and thus becoming ineligible to carry a union card (Dolan, 2012).

• The National Federation of Women’s Institutes partnered with Unison, the largest union in the UK, in a campaign entitled “Speak Up for Libraries” to help save public libraries from proposed funding cuts (“Speaking up for libraries”, 2012).

• Librarians in Winsford, England, staged a one-day walkout as part of ongoing industrial action against town council’s moves to alter their collective agreement (“Union action to close Winsford library”, 2012).

• Unionized workers at the Monona Library in Wisconsin launched a lawsuit against the board accusing them of “wrongly using the state’s controversial new collective bargaining law to invalidate a signed contract” (Verburg, 2012).

• Unionized workers at the Rockford Public Library in Illinois delivered a vote of no confidence in their executive director, Frank Novak (Curry & Green, 2012).

April 2012

• Workers at the Regina Public Library in Saskatchewan voted for a strike mandate. The workers are represented by the Canadian Union of Public Employees and passed the vote with an 82% majority.
• It was announced that 41 public school librarians with the Chignecto-Central regional school board in Nova Scotia would be laid-off as of June 30. The move is the result of budget cuts but came as a surprise to the workers and the union, the Nova Scotia Government and General Employees Union.

• Workers at 16 branches of the Okanagan Regional Library in British Columbia voted in favour of a strike with a 96% majority (Rolke, 2012).

• In honor of Library Workers Day on April 10, AFSCME launched an online campaign to draw attention to recent attacks on public libraries across the country by proponents of austerity measures (Sorrell, 2012). Stating that “library workers will not be shushed,” AFSCME Local 1215 (Chicago) president Carl Sorrell drew attention to the importance of an active, organized work force and ties with community members in defending library services.

• Library workers in Greenwich, England went on a four-day strike in opposition to city council’s decision to privatize the library system (Page, 2012). The library workers are members of Unite.

• Library workers in the Canton County, Ohio library system, members of SEIU 1199, ratified a new contract (“Stark District Library employees get raises this year”, 2012).

May 2012

• Workers in the Okanagan Public Library system held an informational picket at the opening of a new library branch in Vernon, BC to inform the public about the situation facing CUPE members who were trying to negotiate a new contract with the library system (“Workers picket at opening of new Vernon library”, 2012). Workers later began a series of escalating job action (Canadian Union of Public Employees, 2012a; “Job action strikes Okanagan Regional Library branches again”, 2012).

• Library workers represented by AFSCME in West Haven, Connecticut have finalized their first contract with the West Haven Public Library (Misur, 2012).

• Regina Public Library workers represented by CUPE staged a one-day walkout, temporarily closing several branches of the library system. The workers had not had a new collective agreement in over two years and had been without wage increases since 2009.

July 2012

• Workers at Ottawa Public Library voted to go on strike after being without a collective agreement since December of 2011 (Reevely, 2012).
Ohio Association of Public School Employees Local 026 announced it was exploring strike options after the Guernsey County District Public Library provided notice of its intent to implement its final offer in the wake of an impasse in negotiations (Stillion, 2012).

Library workers in Port Hope, Ontario organized with the Canadian Union of Public Employees (“Port Hope library workers join CUPE to enhance job security”, 2012).

The labor dispute at Regina Public Library ended, with library workers organized with CUPE accepting a deal with management (“New deal for Regina Public Library staff”, 2012).

Workers at the Saskatoon Public Library in Saskatchewan voted for a strike mandate. The workers are represented by CUPE and had been without a contract for over two years.

August 2012

A contract agreement was reached between workers of the Okanagan Public Library and management (Waters, 2012).

Library workers at the University of Witwatersrand in South Africa acted in solidarity with the Academic Staff Association at that university in their struggle against management. They are part of the Administration, Library and Technical Staff Association and participated in a two one-day strike with the National Education, Health and Allied Workers’ Union and Academic Staff Association The three unions banded together and would not sign an agreement with management unless all three unions accepted.

September 2012

Academic librarians in the University of California system, who are represented by University Council - American Federation of Teachers, were being denied their salary increases in order to coerce their agreement to a contract extension and restructuring of retirement benefits (Wang, 2012). These salary increases are governed by merit reviews and many of the affected librarians had already passed the peer review process.

Workers at the University of Victoria represented by CUPE, including library workers, served strike notice (“UVic workers serve strike notice”, 2012). The timing of the strike notice was set to coincide with the beginning of the fall semester and came after two years without a contract.

The Chicago Teachers Union (CTU), which includes many school librarians, held a massive eight-day strike that shut down the public school system in Chicago (Davey & Yaccino, 2012). The union was out for the first time in 25 years.
Support workers, including library staff, with the Catholic School Board in Edmonton, Alberta went on strike. The workers are represented by the Communication, Energy, and Paperworkers Union of Canada.

Library workers at the Saskatoon Public Library in Saskatchewan held an information picket, accusing library administration of hoarding funds and refusing to negotiate (Biber, 2012).

Support staff at the University of Vermont, including library workers, voted to join a union but did not give a clear majority on which union to join (“UVM staffers vote for union representation”, 2012).

October 2012

Support workers with the Edmonton Catholic School Board, including library workers, overwhelmingly voted in favour of the latest offer from management. The vote brought an end to the three-week strike.

Employees at two of the Okanagan Regional Library branches voted in favour of joining CUPE (Sthankiya, 2012). This decision followed months of job action and contract negotiations between CUPE 1123 and the Okanagan Regional Library board.

November 2012

Library workers in Maidenhead, England expressed concern over plans to extend library hours to Sunday and to use volunteers to staff the library (Batt, 2012). The workers are members of Unison and questioned whether or not those who work on Sundays will be paid over-time, as used to be the case for working on Saturdays.

It was announced that nearly 300 jobs were being eliminated in Southampton, UK - including a number of positions in libraries (“279 jobs to go at council”, n.d.). Two unions, Unison and Unite, attempted to work with Southampton City Council in response to the announced budget cuts.

Library workers at the Wethersfield Library in Connecticut had a new, three-year contract approved (Hoffman, 2012).

A four-year contract was approved for library workers in Cheshire, CT (Ragali, 2012).

December 2012

Library workers at yet another branch of Okanagan Regional Library voted in favour of joining CUPE 1123 (Canadian Union of Public Employees,
The union now represents nearly 200 workers at 21 of the library’s 29 branches.

• Elementary teachers across Ontario prepared to engage in job action in response to Bill 115, which has reduced sick days, introduced wage freezes, and restricted the ability of union members to strike (Gray, 2012). Bill 115 also impacts support staff at Ontario’s schools, including library staff.

• The Dayton Metro Library Board of Trustees reopened negotiations with the Dayton Metro Library Staff Association after rejecting the recommendations of a neutral third-party fact finder (Smith, 2012).

• The union representing workers at the Kellogg-Hubbard Library in Vermont claimed that three employees have been shifted out of the union (Taube, 2012). The library contends that these employees were not shifted out of the union but were moved into new non-union, mid-level management positions. The union filed a complaint with an arbitrator and Vermont’s Labor Relations Board.

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Introduction

The entrance to the library spilled into reference and circulation desks, self checkout machines, a whirl of human activity. As I stood there, attempting (and failing) to get my bearings, disparate, chattering flocks of undergraduate students floated around me in random formations. I clutched the neat list I had compiled of books and call numbers like a talisman and inside felt the first few flutters of panic.

Constant motion was my only defense against the milieu of the library. It can be difficult to know where my limbs are in space or to anticipate how others will move, but walking quickly in whatever direction still mutes the fear of human interaction and the anxiety generated by spatial disorientation. It is also a more socially acceptable – though less effective – coping mechanism than hand flapping or spontaneous vocalization.

After a few haphazard turns and loops around the first floor, I found an elevator to the stacks, where yellow fluorescent lighting buzzed overhead, vibrating through my eyes and into my brain. Dizzy and nauseous, I marched around several floors of the library with a kind of mock purpose, until I had

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KEYWORDS: Autism; Autistic adults; Autistic children; Disability; Disabled professionals; Discrimination in employment; Employment discrimination; Libraries and people with disabilities; Library management; Neurodiversity.
obtained half of the books on my now crumpled list and could leave the library without feeling as if I had failed some sort of strange test.

In truth, I am accustomed to spaces that were clearly designed without someone like me in mind. My sensory integration difficulties, my spatial confusion, my social anxiety: all are constitutive of neurological atypicality that puts me at a systematic disadvantage in a society structured around a rather specific human ideal. Yet while I generally anticipate that most of the places I go will be less than accommodating, this is not the case for libraries. Throughout my life and into the early stages of my library career, I have come to expect more of these institutions. My expectations are tied up with a concept of the library as “safe space,” as well as with the core principals of the field. So when the library fails to live up to such expectations – grounded as they are in our stated commitments as librarians – it is important to ask what has gone wrong and how we might go about fixing it.

In this paper, I will show that neurodiversity, or the idea that neurological variations such as my own ought to be understood as normal human differences, represents a knowledge gap in the library and information science (LIS) field. I contend that librarians have a special obligation to generate theory, policy, and practice that is consistent with neurodiversity, and I will explore some of the ways we might do this. The obligation to meaningfully engage with neurodiversity has important implications for inclusivity in libraries, as well as for the ways in which LIS scholars and practitioners write, think, and work.

I. How might we approach neurological difference?

There are a number of different ways to approach neurological difference. Most, however, fall within the parameters of three primary approaches which I will outline here. The first two – medical and social – can be more broadly characterized as disability models, while the third – neurodiversity – is specific to neurological variations.

a. The Medical Approach

The medical model of disability and, by extension, of neurological variation, works to pathologize a particular subset of human differences along a variety of dimensions (e.g., mobility, sensory perception, etc). It is through this medicalizing process that certain differences become disorders, syndromes, and deficits. Significantly, the medical model is the position that most people default to in the absence of considerations against it.

The medical model centers the problem of disability in individuals (Jaeger, 2012) and focuses predominantly on fixing the “deficient” and the “afflicted.” That is to say, it is deeply interventionist in nature, stressing the importance of preventative measures, treatments, and cures rather than accommodation and
societal change. Disabled people are seen as mere “objects of study...to be acted on, shaped, and turned out as best as can be done to fit into the existing social structure” (Linton, 2005). Those who adopt this model usually emphasize the role of health care professionals and the burdens felt by family and caretakers, but focus less on the actual desires of disabled persons.

The medical approach is pervasive in discussions of autism, which is often referred to as “Autism Spectrum Disorder” and treated as a tragic medical condition or even “epidemic” that primarily affects children (and, consequently, their neurotypical families). Those who take this approach also, more often than not, talk about autism in terms of a linear spectrum from high to low functioning.

b. The Social Approach

The social model is the most common approach to disability among disability rights activists and disability studies scholars. In contrast with the medical model of disability, the social model depicts disability as a socially constructed phenomenon, the product of systematic discrimination. Adherents of this model “[separate] out ‘impairment’ (that is, the functional limitations of our bodies and minds) from ‘disability’ (that is, the disabling barriers of unequal access and negative attitudes” (Morris, 2001). Of course, this distinction is not without its own complications – after all, the question of what qualifies as an “impairment” still looms large. However, rigorously distinguishing between impairment and disability provides activists with a means to talk about disability as the result of social oppression – similar in some (though certainly not all) respects to race or gender – rather than as a phenomenon centered in “defective” individuals.

c. The Neurodiversity-Based Approach

As a concept, neurodiversity “primarily originated in the thinking of... autistic communities founded during the final decades of the twentieth century” (Baker, 2011).

There is a sense in which neurodiversity – or the concept that neurological differences constitute benign human variation – is an outgrowth of the social model of disability. It depends upon the same fundamental claim that many of the harms of disability do not in fact result from the root impairment(s) at all, but rather from hegemonic social and political structures that disadvantage anyone with a particular sort of atypical trait or traits.

Neurodiversity, however, also draws on the concept of biodiversity, wherein naturally-occurring differences lead to species richness. Many atypical neurological variations, then, are a function of human diversity, and “are properly regarded as non-maladaptive cognitive variations in Homo sapiens” (Fenton & Krahn, 2007).
Ultimately, neurodiversity advocates seek “better social support mechanisms, greater understanding from those around them or those who treat them, and a recognition that, though they are neurologically, cognitively and behaviorally different, they do not necessarily suffer from being neurodiverse nor do they need to be cured” (Fenton & Krahn, 2007).

II. How have librarians talked about neurological difference?

Although the neurodiversity movement has gained momentum over the last few decades, there is still a dearth of scholarly work in LIS that touches on its implications for information services. Keyword searches for “neurodiversity” and “neurological AND (difference OR variation)” in Library, Information Science & Technology Abstracts (LISTA) return no articles related to

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Figure 1. Overview of 36 articles from LISTA

and “neurological AND (difference OR variation)” in Library, Information Science & Technology Abstracts (LISTA) return no articles related to
neurodiversity. Inquiries sent to disability studies librarians reaffirmed that, while there is good work that focuses more generally on disability in library contexts, there are not articles dealing specifically with the concept of neurodiversity\(^5\). That said, there are some articles focusing on autism and libraries, though perhaps fewer than one might expect. As of December 2012, a search for “autism OR asperger* AND library” returned 36 research articles from peer-reviewed scholarly journals. These have been broken down by broad subject category in Figure 1. Notably, all of the articles refer to autism as a disorder and/or syndrome.

An investigation of these articles revealed certain tropes that are indicative of a medicalized approach to autism (though the degree to which researchers emphasize pathology varies). Here, I will point to some of the pervasive problems that demonstrate that the bulk of the literature currently makes use of the medicalized approach to neurological difference\(^6\).

\(a.\) \textit{Medical Language}\

There is no shortage of clinical language in the LIS literature. For example, in a 2007 article in Health Information and Libraries, the author notes that “there is emerging evidence that [Asperger’s Syndrome] occurs because the left and right hemispheres of the brain do not communicate correctly” and goes on to assert that “although there is not a cure or specific treatments for AS, many individuals can live productive and ‘normal’ lives” (Lorence, 2007). Akin & MacKinney write that “more than one million people in America suffer from one of the Autistic disorders, and the problem is five times as common as Downs syndrome and three times as common as juvenile diabetes” (Akin & MacKinney, 2004). Other authors also make use of this “suffering from” locution in discussions of autism. Language that centers on suffering, compares autism to diseases like diabetes, focuses on the mechanics of causal theories, or laments the lack of a known cure is pathologizing.

\(b.\) \textit{Person-First Terminology}\

Person-first terminology (i.e., “a person with such-and-such-disability”) is the language that is most often used in North America to discuss disability; it “literally means that the person receives greater emphasis than the impairment” (Jaeger, 2012). As a result, in most cases LIS scholars make use of person-first terminology in scholarly articles that focus on autism. However, many members of the Autistic community have a strong, considered preference for identity-first language (i.e., “Autistic,” “Autist,” or “Autistic person” rather than “person with autism”) because we “understand autism as an inherent part of an individual’s identity – the same way one refers to ‘Muslims,’ ‘African-Americans,’ ‘Lesbian/Gay/Bisexual/Transgender/Queer,’ ‘Chinese,’ ‘gifted,’ ‘athletic,’ or ‘Jewish’” (Brown, 2011).
Autism specialists, healthcare practitioners, and parents, more often than not, still use person-first language because they take autism to be a disorder that is separable from the individual. That is, “[person] with autism’ suggests that there is a normal person trapped behind the autism” (Jaarsma & Welin, 2012); the idea that an autism cure would essentially reveal the afflicted person’s “true self,” releasing the normal child from the prison of their autism, is a fundamental element of the pro-cure narrative. LIS scholars and practitioners are surely - at least in the vast majority of cases – unaware that this language-based controversy exists, and thus mistakenly default to the conventional terminology.

c. Focus on Children, Parents, & Caregivers

Very few LIS articles mention (and fewer still discuss) Autistic adults. This emphasis on children, families, and their doctors is characteristic of much of the writing on autism outside of the LIS field as well. This is in part because diagnosis and methods of early intervention are significant topics of discussion among those who view autism as a disorder. This systematic focus on children renders Autistic adults invisible.

Parents and caregivers are frequently invoked in these articles, sometimes as intermediaries for their children, other times as panicked information seekers. For example, the author of one article asserts that “receiving a diagnosis of autism spectrum disorder can be frightening and overwhelming for a parent or caregiver” and that “finding a reliable source of information is a great relief” (McCollum, 2012); this statement bypasses Autistic individuals entirely, insofar as it fails to reference the emotional response or information needs that the Autistic person might have in response to a fresh diagnosis. Although the article does go on to discuss a website that provides information for Autistics, it is clear that parents and caregivers are seen as the primary seekers of information on autism, to the exclusion of actual Autistics.

d. The Neurotypical Librarian

There is virtually nothing in the LIS literature discussing Autistic librarians or information professionals. There is one case study that centers on Autistic employees who are responsible for shelving books (Strub & Stewart, 2010), but – in the absence of materials on Autistic professionals – it may do more harm than good.

The librarian is most often treated as the non-Autistic facilitator of information access, with the authors of most articles attempting to explain Autistic traits to a presumably neurotypical audience. This is a problematic depiction, both because it is inaccurate and because it perpetuates the exclusion of Autistic people from the workforce generally and librarianship specifically.

Taken together, these tropes (1) promote inhumane normative evaluations of library patrons, (2) reinforce the systematized pathologization of
neuroatypicality with little regard for evidence or the subjective experiences of Autistics, and (3) inhibit librarians’ development of creative and inclusive services that promulgate intellectual virtue and improved quality of life.

Librarians tend to problematically think about Autistics in terms of their symptomology (e.g., “we know that Autistics like repetition because we know that “liking repetition” is characteristic of autism”). Even though authors of LIS articles sometimes note that no two Autistics are precisely alike, they nevertheless tend to slip into a sort of autism determinism. This ultimately results in a library environment wherein the reported desires or wants of Autistics are rarely, if ever, considered, because it is misguided by those who think that everything one needs to know about Autistics can be inferred from their medical classification.

III. How might we do better?

Given librarians’ commitments – namely, our dedication to providing inclusive, equitable information services – we are obliged to meaningfully engage with neurodiversity. What follows is a discussion of some of the ways in which librarians might go about doing this and thus improving on the current state of affairs.

a. Change the Autism Discussion

Librarians must produce scholarship that is sensitive to who Autistics are as people, and not as exemplars of the DSM diagnostic criteria. They must disavow ableism and the medical model of disability, both because these are harmful and because they are intellectually irresponsible. Although a reference librarian may not be able to fully fulfill their professional obligations while systematically denigrating materials that take a harmful approach to autism, librarians are not bound by the same ideal of neutrality in their writing, policy, or actions outside of the library itself, and can thus take a more openly activist stance with respect to neurodiversity. A reference librarian can also make an effort to direct users to neurodiversity-friendly materials, which should be incorporated into the collections.

b. Collaborate with Autistics and Autistic-run Organizations

For any LIS theorist or practitioner, endorsing neurodiversity means taking Autistics seriously as a user group and as a community. To do this well, librarians must provide services and programs to Autistics on the basis of evidence that extends well beyond what medical professionals think they understand about autism. This would involve meaningful collaborations with Autistics and with Autistic-run organizations that promote self-advocacy, such as the Autistic Self Advocacy Network. There is a tendency among neurotypical individuals to want to talk to “autism experts” or to an Autistic’s caregiver rather than to
the Autistic person. One of the greatest frustrations Autistic self-advocates report is the consistent emphasis on the viewpoint of the “autism specialist,” without any regard for the wealth of knowledge Autistics have about their own lives. Working directly with Autistics ensures that librarians are not relying on health care professionals, caregivers, or anyone else to speak for Autistics in the library. Librarians generally agree that they should work directly with users to determine their information needs. Applying this thinking to Autistics is really just a reasonable extension of current practice. It would also allow librarians to import creative ideas, such as interaction badges that “indicate how much interaction [individuals] are up to” (Sibley, 2012), from the Autistic community into the library environment.

c. Educate Neurotypical Users

A recent study showed that young Autistics whose neurotypical peers received inclusion training “spent less time alone on playgrounds and had more classmates naming them as a friend” compared to Autistics who received one-on-one social skills training (Kasari et al, 2012). In other words, educating neurotypical individuals about Autistic people is an effective means to improving well-being for Autistics. Libraries are well positioned to play an active role in delivering this sort of education to children and adults alike, both in a more formalized group training environment and in appropriate one-off reference interactions.

d. Create Autistic-Friendly Environments

The physical library space can be more or less welcoming depending on the level of attention paid to neurologically diverse users. Older fluorescent lights, for instance, can cause Autistic patrons (and others who are light-sensitive and/or prone to migraines) a great deal of discomfort, and should thus be avoided whenever possible. It is also important to bear in mind that certain shifts in academic libraries towards open “learning commons” environments may be helpful to some users, but can prove intimidating or overwhelming to others. There is no “one size fits all” option, and the move towards privileging collaborative, maximally social learning over individualized, solitary intellectual pursuits can have deleterious consequences not only for some Autistics, but also for those users who are introverted or shy.

e. Develop a Neurodiverse Profession

Librarianship is a notoriously homogenous profession. Although nearly 1 in 5 Americans are disabled, the number of disabled information professionals is still unknown (Jaeger et al, 2011). In the case of autism, the problem of underrepresentation in the field is compounded by overly simplistic thinking, such as when the authors of articles suggest that Autistics are uniquely adapted
to performing monotonous, detail-oriented tasks for hours on end. The notion that all Autistics are well suited to certain kinds of repetitious labor but ill suited to complex, demanding professional practice is false.

One way to combat neurologically-based discrimination and better serve Autistic populations is to hire individuals who are neuroatypical. Active recruitment must, however, be coupled with efforts to make the profession safe for Autistics. As an Autistic librarian who is wary of “behaving autistically” around co-workers, I do not doubt that there are many other Autistic information professionals in our midst who do not feel safe coming out at work. This fear is not unwarranted: the stigma attached to autism is alive and well in the library profession. If librarians are to truly embrace neurodiversity, they must cultivate the requisite knowledge and sensitivities to make the profession safe for a wide variety of persons who present in a range of different ways. This is a crucial first step in making the library a safe space for a similarly wide variety of users.

f. Recognize and Cultivate Alternative Communication

Some Autistics make use of assistive technology and augmentative and alternative communication strategies, devices, and applications (particularly those Autistics who are nonspeaking, but also some who experience temporary language loss). Librarians should be familiar with assistive technology and should make an effort to stay current on developments in the area. However, in addition to their knowledge of assistive technology, it is important that librarians develop an understanding of the myriad ways that Autistics communicate. For instance, various forms of stimming (or self-stimulating behavior) such as hand flapping, rocking, and bouncing are common among Autistics. Stimming can be an indication of excitement, anxiety, frustration, or delight, but it is never meaningless movement. Cultivating knowledge of Autistic body language and communication is crucial to the promotion of neurodiversity and the protection of the patron’s right to communicate.

Conclusion

I anticipate that at least some librarians will find such an endorsement of neurodiversity to be inconsistent with the principles of librarianship as they know them, primarily because they interpret it as a breach of neutrality. Librarians’ are, after all, committed to unbiased service – that is, as the ALA Code of Ethics puts it, we must “distinguish between our personal convictions and professional duties and...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.” However, actively engaging with neurodiversity is not a question of favoring particular personal or political beliefs; rather, such engagement is an extension of librarians’ professional duties insofar as
it enables the provision of equitable information services. Furthermore, not engaging with neurodiversity is not a more “neutral” choice simply because it replicates the status quo. Librarians who take it to be so are still inhabiting a substantive political position, one which does actual harms to individuals marginalized for their neurological atypicality. As we make an effort to engage with neurodiversity, libraries and librarianship will become increasingly more inclusive of Autistics and many others. Our profession and our communities will be better for it.

NOTES

1. That is, librarianship is a profession dedicated to making information accessible (where “information access” is a robust concept that entails both physical and intellectual access). Indeed, the American Library Association’s Code of Ethics emphasizes our fundamental role as providers of equitable information services (ALA Code of Ethics, Article I).

2. In talking about neurodiversity, I will focus my attention on the cluster of traits typically classed along the Autism Spectrum. However, my argument should also translate to many other neurological differences (e.g., ADHD, Tourette Syndrome, dyspraxia, etc.).

3. Perhaps the most prominent promoter of the medical approach to autism is Autism Speaks, which is also the most readily recognizable organization devoted to autism. Autism Speaks perpetuates a view of autism as menacing pathology through a variety of means. Notably, its 2009 “I am Autism” fundraising campaign shows a series of video clips of presumably Autistic children – mostly stimming (i.e., engaging in repetitive movements or self-stimulation) or sitting alone – while an ominous voice declares, “I am autism. I’m visible in your children, but if I can help it, I am invisible to you until it’s too late... I work faster than pediatric aids, cancer, and diabetes combined” (ASAN). The language of the “I am Autism” campaign is a somewhat extreme example of the medical approach, but it is broadly characteristic of the way in which many individuals and organizations conceptualize autism: as a dangerous disorder that afflicts children, has catastrophic consequences for neurotypical family members, and demands early medical intervention.

4. While I refer to medical and social models as the most prominent approaches to disability (with medical professionals and the general public most frequently adhering to the former, while disability scholars and activists often adopt the latter), there are other approaches to disability that do not fall cleanly into one camp or the other. For instance, the interactionist approach takes as its main principle the notion that “disabilities arise as a result of the interaction between the social environment and an individual’s range of physical and mental traits” (Barclay, 2011).
5. My interactions with these librarians also served to emphasize that scholars in the education field have written a good deal about neurodiversity. The disparity between these two strongly related fields – LIS and education – is curious and surely apt for further investigation.

6. I should note that references to pathology or flawed language choices are not necessarily an indication that the ideas contained within these articles are irredeemably problematic or misguided. All of the articles I examined were well-intentioned, and many included intriguing ideas for library services directed at Autistics. The problem, then, is largely in how librarians conceptualize autism and, to some extent, disability more generally. This conceptualization has very real implications for how librarians and libraries serve Autistics, but that does not mean that all librarians who consider autism to be a disorder also do bad work, and it certainly does not mean that librarians who adopt the medical model do so maliciously.

7. Prison imagery is common to medicalized autism narratives, which also tend to focus on affected children rather than adults.

8. It is also worth noting that, while many individuals who are diagnosed are in fact children, a growing number of Autistics are diagnosed in adulthood. Some forgo a formal diagnosis entirely for a wide variety of reasons. Among them: the high cost of diagnosis, fear of stigmatization as a result of diagnosis, anti-medicalization beliefs, and so on.

9. This is most certainly not an exhaustive list.

BIBLIOGRAPHY


PLG Resolution on Divestment of Holdings in Fossil Fuel Companies and Libraries’ Role in a Peaceful Transition to a Fossil-Fuel-Free Economy

Whereas the Progressive Librarians Guild recognizes climate change as a serious problem for humanity and the planet;
Whereas in light of alarming evidence of the extent anthropogenic CO2 emissions are having on climate change, the organization 350.org has launched a divestment campaign, supported by individuals such as Bishop Desmond Tutu, economist Naomi Klein, and activist Van Jones, prompting municipalities and institutions of higher learning across the country to divest holdings in fossil fuel industries;
Whereas precedence regarding divestment can be found in the 1980s campaign against South African apartheid when divestment and boycotts were used as tools for non-violent political change;
Whereas global climate change and resource depletion is prompting military authorities to prepare for inevitable social instability, which in the U.S. will likely be exacerbated by a culture of violence and racism unless steps are taken to address and mitigate these tendencies;
Whereas libraries and communities have witnessed the impacts of climate change in the form of increasingly powerful floods, hurricanes, tornados, wildfires, agricultural damage, and rising sea-levels;
Whereas organizations representing many institutional investors have called on governments to “develop workable frameworks that will reduce climate risk and support low carbon investment”; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, that the Progressive Librarians Guild

1. encourages PLG members to work within their workplaces and communities to join the fossil fuel divestment movement and
2. to begin community conversations about what will be necessary to ensure a peaceful transition to fossil-fuel-free economy.

KEYWORDS: 350.org; American Library Association – Council; Climate change; Divestment; Environmental activism; Fossil fuel; Socially responsible investment.
SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION


Resolution in support of whistleblower Bradley Manning

Whereas the American Library Association (ALA) Library Bill of Rights states that “Libraries should cooperate with all persons and groups concerned with resisting abridgment of free expression and free access to ideas;”

Whereas ALA is “the leading advocate for...the public’s right to a free and open information society” (ALA Policy A.1.3);

Whereas ALA “opposes any use of governmental power to suppress the free and open exchange of knowledge and information or to intimidate individuals exercising free inquiry” (ALA Policy B.8.5.1);

Whereas the Freedom to Read Foundation, the First Amendment legal defense organization affiliated with ALA, provided grants in support of the legal defense costs of whistleblowers Daniel Ellsberg and Anthony J. Russo, Jr., who were prosecuted for their role in the publication of the “Pentagon Papers,” which disclosed the official secret history of American involvement in Vietnam;

Whereas in 2004 ALA passed a “Resolution on Securing Government Accountability through Whistleblower Protection” affirming its “support for accountable government and the role of whistleblowers in reporting abuse, fraud, and waste in governmental activities” (CD#20.7, 2004);

Whereas in 2004 ALA passed “A Resolution Against the Use of Torture as a Violation of the American Library Association’s Basic Values” which resolved that ALA “condemns the use or threat of use of torture by the US government as a barbarous violation of human rights, intellectual freedom and the rule of law” (CD#59, 2004);

Whereas in 2005 ALA passed a “Resolution on Disinformation, Media Manipulation and the Destruction of Public Information,” which placed ALA “on record as being opposed to the use by government of disinformation, media manipulation, the destruction and excision of public information, and other such tactics” (CD#64, 2005);

KEYWORDS: American Library Association – Council; Assange, Julian; Freedom of speech – United States; Government accountability; Manning, Bradley; Right to know; War crimes; Whistleblowers
Whereas in 2008 ALA passed a “Resolution Commending the FBI Whistleblower Who Exposed Abuses on the Use of Exigent National Security Letters,” which called on Congress to “protect the rights of whistleblowers against retaliation” (CD#20.5, 2008);

Whereas in 2010 ALA passed a “Resolution on Access to and Classification of Government Information,” which urged “Congress to pass legislation that expands protections for whistleblowers in the Federal government, such as the Whistleblower Protection Enhancement Act of 2010” (CD#19.1, 2011);

Whereas Pfc. Bradley Manning has acknowledged transmitting classified materials to the anti-secrecy website WikiLeaks in 2010;

Whereas Bradley Manning currently faces charges, including aiding the enemy by indirect means, for transmitting that information;

Whereas following his arrest for that action, Bradley Manning was detained for eleven months in conditions characterized by the Center for Constitutional Rights as “torture or cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment,” and by the United Nations special rapporteur on torture as “at a minimum, cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment in violation of article 16 of the Convention against Torture,”

Whereas the materials released by Bradley Manning contained important revelations regarding war crimes committed by U.S. military personnel and other cases of misconduct by U.S. military and governmental officials;

Whereas Bradley Manning explained in a private email message in 2010 that he was releasing the documents in order to provoke “worldwide discussion, debates, and reforms”;

Whereas Bradley Manning again explained in a pre-trial hearing in January 2013 that he had leaked the documents because he believed “that if the general public … had access to the information … this could spark a domestic debate as to the role of the military and foreign policy in general”; and

Whereas a conviction of Bradley Manning, especially under the Espionage Act, would have a chilling effect upon journalism and the climate of free expression in the United States; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, that the American Library Association (ALA) opposes the prosecution of Bradley Manning.

Resolution defeated by ALA Council, 2 July 2013.
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Resolution in support of whistleblower Edward Snowden

Whereas, since 1939 the American Library Association (ALA) has affirmed the right to privacy in its Code of Ethics, which currently states, “We protect each library user’s right to privacy and confidentiality with respect to information sought or received and resources consulted, borrowed, acquired or transmitted”;

Whereas in “Principles for the Networked World” in 2002 ALA included among the “principles of privacy” the fact that “privacy is a right of all people and must be protected in the networked world” and the recognition that “the rights of anonymity and privacy while people retrieve and communicate information must be protected as an essential element of intellectual freedom”;

Whereas in 2002 in “Privacy: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights” ALA recognized that “privacy is essential to the exercise of free speech, free thought, and free association”;

Whereas in 2003 in its “Resolution on the USA Patriot Act and Related Measures that Infringe on the Rights of Library Users” ALA criticized the “USA PATRIOT Act and other recently enacted laws, regulations, and guidelines” on the grounds that they “increase the likelihood that the activities of library users, including their use of computers to browse the Web or access e-mail, may be under government surveillance without their knowledge or consent” (CD#20.1, 2003);

Whereas in 2004 ALA passed a “Resolution on Securing Government Accountability through Whistleblower Protection” affirming its “support for accountable government and the role of whistleblowers in reporting abuse, fraud, and waste in governmental activities” (CD#20.7, 2004);

Whereas in 2005 in its “Resolution on Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) Technology and Privacy Principles” ALA insisted that “user privacy and confidentiality has long been an integral part of the mission of libraries” (CD#19.1, 2005);

KEYWORDS: American Library Association – Council; Freedom of speech – United States; Government accountability; National Security Agency; PATRIOT Act of 2001; Privacy; Right to privacy; USA PATRIOT Act; Whistleblowers.
Resolved, that the American Library Association (ALA):

1. commends Edward Snowden as a whistleblower who has performed a valuable service in support of the principles of privacy, free speech, free thought, and free association; and
2. opposes any attempts by the United States government to extradite or prosecute Edward Snowden.

Passed by ALA Council, 30 June 2013.
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Resolution on the Need for Reforms for the Intelligence Community to Support Privacy, Open Government, Government Transparency, and Accountability

Whereas, Public access to information by and about the government is essential for the healthy functioning of a democratic society and a necessary predicate for an informed and engaged citizenry empowered to hold the government accountable for its actions; and

Whereas, “The guarding of military and diplomatic secrets at the expense of informed representative government provides no real security for our Republic”; and

Whereas, The ALA values access to the documents disclosing the extent of public surveillance and government secrecy as access to these documents now enables the critical public discourse and debate needed to address the balance between our civil liberties and national security; and

Whereas, These disclosures enable libraries to support such discourse and debate by providing information and resources and for deliberative dialogue and community engagement; and

Whereas, The American Library Association remains concerned about due process for the people who have led us to these revelations; and

Whereas, Libraries are essential to the free flow of ideas and to ensuring the public’s right to know; and

Whereas, Since 1939 the American Library Association (ALA) has affirmed the right to privacy in its Code of Ethics, which currently states, “We protect each library user’s right to privacy and confidentiality with respect to information sought or received and resources consulted, borrowed, acquired or transmitted”; and

Whereas, In “Principles for the Networked World” (2002) the ALA included among the “principles of privacy” the fact that “privacy is a right of all people and must be protected in the networked world” and the recognition that “the rights of anonymity and privacy while people retrieve and

KEYWORDS: American Library Association – Council; Freedom of speech – USA; Government accountability; National Security Agency; PATRIOT Act of 2001; Privacy; Right to privacy; Snowden, Edward; USA PATRIOT Act; Whistleblowers.
Whereas, “Privacy: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights” ALA recognized that “privacy is essential to the exercise of free speech, free thought, and free association”; and

Whereas, In 2003 ALA criticized the “USA PATRIOT Act and other recently enacted laws, regulations, and guidelines” on the grounds that they “increase the likelihood that the activities of library users, including their use of computers to browse the Web or access e-mail, may be under government surveillance without their knowledge or consent”; and

Whereas, Since 2010 ALA has sponsored “Choose Privacy Week,” a campaign designed to raise public awareness about personal privacy rights by encouraging local libraries to provide programming, online education, and special events to help individuals to learn, think critically and make more informed choices about their privacy, especially in an era of pervasive surveillance; and ALA has created a website, www.ala.org/liberty, that provides substantive information about privacy, surveillance, open government, and overclassification as well as civic engagement tools to facilitate deliberative dialogues to help support libraries and librarians who create opportunities for public dialogues addressing these topics; and

Whereas, The public recently learned that the National Security Agency (NSA) is collecting the telephone call metadata of millions of U.S. customers of Verizon Business Services, AT&T, and Sprint pursuant to an order issued by the Foreign Intelligent Surveillance Court (FISC) under Section 215 of the USA PATRIOT Act; and

Whereas, Pursuant to a court order issued by the FISC under Section 702 of the FISA Amendments Act (FAA) the NSA is operating a program called PRISM that is collecting and retaining vast quantities of data on internet usage, including internet search histories, email, video and voice chat, videos, photos, voice-over-IP chats, file transfers, and social networking details, from internet service providers in the United States. Though intended to target communications of foreign persons, the NSA admits that it collects and stores Internet data from U.S. persons; now, therefore be it

Resolved, that the American Library Association (ALA):

1. Reaffirms its unwavering support for the fundamental principles that are the foundation of our free and democratic society, including a system of public accountability, government transparency, and oversight that supports people’s right to know about and participate in our government;

2. In light of present revelations related to NSA’s surveillance activities conducted pursuant to orders issued by the Foreign Intelligent Surveillance
Court (FISC) under Sections 215 and 702 of the USA PATRIOT Act the
American Library Association calls upon the U.S. Congress, President
Obama, and the Courts to reform our nation’s climate of secrecy,
overclassification, and secret law regarding national security and
surveillance, to align with these democratic principles;

3. Urges the U.S. Congress and President Obama to provide authentic
protections that prevent government intimidation and criminal prosecution
of government employees and private contractors who make disclosures of
wrong doing in the intelligence community;

4. Calls upon the public to engage in and our members to lead public dialogues
discussing the right to privacy, open government and balancing civil
liberties and national security;

5. Encourage the public to support bills and other proposals that both secure
and protect our rights to privacy, free expression and free association and
promote a more open, transparent government and be further resolved,
that

6. ALA expresses its thanks and appreciation to the members of Congress who
work to protect our privacy and civil liberties.

Passed as a “substitute resolution” by ALA Council, 2 July 2013, thus making
the Snowden Resolution (passed by Council on 30 June 2013) null and void.
The Enlightenment may not seem like an obvious topic for a book about libraries. Our country was founded on Enlightenment principles and it is so imbedded in our culture that we are like the proverbial fish who doesn’t know he is in water. However, those principles have been under attack recently, ranging from the jihad against science declared by one of our political parties to the slashing of library budgets. Reason seems to be in retreat. So it is all the more reason to welcome Wayne Bivens-Tatum new book, *Libraries and the Enlightenment*.

Bivens-Tatum, the Philosophy and Religion Librarian at Princeton University, lays out his book in a fittingly logical fashion. He lays the foundation with a long introduction to Enlightenment thought and then shows how it has influenced public, academic, and universal libraries. Bivens-Tatum makes a strong case that it is impossible to understand libraries without first grasping their intellectual foundations. He is also fluent in the primary and secondary literature and convincingly takes to task several scholars for attacking the Enlightenment from the Post-Modernist Left. The book is a pleasure to read and readers, especially those unfamiliar with Enlightenment thought, will learn a lot.

However, the book has a serious flaw, it is called *Libraries and the Enlightenment* but it should really be called *The Enlightenment and Libraries*. Bivens-Tatum assumes the reader knows nothing about Enlightenment thought and painstakingly goes through the history in too much detail. The introduction
makes up twenty five percent of the book and that understates the time spent on the Enlightenment; he goes back again and again in other chapters to the basics of Enlightenment thought. It would have been much better book if he had cut his work on the Enlightenment and added some muscle to the chapters on libraries.

Even with that flaw, I still recommend this book. Bivens-Tatum writes better than most academics and he makes a thoughtful and impassioned case for the supporting the Enlightenment and libraries. Too often, books on libraries are dry exercises in academic jargon, and Bivens-Tatum deftly avoids that by adopting a conversational tone. His chapter on the history and foundation of public libraries should be used by instructors teaching library history and he does skillfully weave together his two topics into one strong theme. This book should be on the shelves of anyone interested in the intellectual foundation of libraries.
From bibliography to blog, typewriter to Tumblr, the work of remembering and celebrating women in librarianship is continuing. Starting with Women’s History Month in March 2013, the American Library Association Social Responsibilities Round Table (SRRT) Feminist Task Force (FTF) has taken on the task, started by Kathleen Weibel and Kathleen de la Pena McCook almost 40 years ago with their *Role of Women in Librarianship: 1876-1976: The Entry, Advancement and Struggle for Equalization in One Profession* of documenting the significant contributions of women to libraries, librarianship, and the public good.

In February the FTF sent out a call to collaborate and contribute to this project with these words:

> Is there a woman in librarianship who was near and dear to you and your library’s heart? Who has made history at your library? Perhaps a group of women who helped shape you or your community’s interaction with libraries? Maybe even someone whose portrait you pass every day? Highlight the legacy that you still see alive today and share a piece of your library’s history with your patrons and library lovers everywhere in celebration of Women’s History Month. The write-up will be perfect for your library’s own blog. Its inclusion with the submissions of other libraries to this project will illustrate the breadth of contributions women have made to their communities through libraries.

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**KEYWORDS:** American Library Association – Feminist Task Force; American Library Association – Social Responsibilities Round Table; Book review; Blog review; Library science – History; Women in librarianship; Women’s history.
Every day throughout the month a new post informed us of another fascinating woman or women who changed history. Although “historical” submissions were encouraged, the FTF recognized that women are making history every day, and noted

While we fully appreciate that there are women who have recently done and/or are currently doing amazing things for libraries, only submissions regarding historic women of libraries will be included at womenoflibraryhistory.tumblr.com. However, if there is interest we would be more than happy to also collect submissions for a companion (sister!) site to highlight and celebrate women MAKING history in libraries!

On March 1, Peggy Sullivan submitted the names of three school librarians, Mary Gaver, Virginia Matthews, and Francis Henne, who stood out as leaders of the Knapp School Libraries Project, which demonstrated the importance of school media centers in education. By March 31st, the blog had linked to the Oxford University Press Tumblr site which was also highlighting women from the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* for Women’s History Month. On March 22nd it had featured Eileen Hilda Colwell, a children’s librarian who for one thing, fought to get a librarian on the committee to choose the Carnegie medal for outstanding children’s book of the year, and for another, called a meeting in 1937 which led to the Association of Children’s Librarians.

In between those dates, we learned of the WPA-funded Pack Horse Library Project, Nettie Taylor, a WWII Army librarian and later the “guru of Maryland libraries”, and the Everett Women’s Book Club which founded the Everett (WA) public library in 1894. These were submitted by Kristen Hogan, Dr. Joyce Lathem and Lisa Labovitch, respectively.

By March 31st, Katelyn Brown, who, along with Charlotte Gerstein, midwifed and delivered the idea, noted on the FTF Facebook page:

> We had a phenomenal response to our call for submissions, so we’ve still got a lot to share. We will be celebrating Women’s History Wednesday for the next several months so that we can post everything we’ve received. (If you haven’t seen your submission on the blog yet, you will!) I’ll be adding the tag “women’s history Wednesday” to all of our Wednesday posts going forward; feel free to join in the fun each week with your own women’s history posts.

Since then another woman has been highlighted every Wednesday, the most recent at this writing is Carol Seajay and the Feminist Bookstore Network, which was submitted by Kristen Hogan, from the University of Texas-Austin.
It is all archived at the Tumblr blog http://womenoflibraryhistory.tumblr.com and brought to you by this group:

The Feminist Task Force is proud to bring voice and efforts to the intersection of feminist perspectives with issues related to libraries, librarianship, information services, and ALA. To find out more and get involved, please visit us on any of our websites and virtual spaces:

Discussion list: http://libr.org/ftf/ftfclist.html
Wiki: http://ftfinfo.wikispaces.com/
ALA Connect: http://connect.ala.org/node/65369
Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/groups/121097054767/

This is 21st century work born from the commitment of the ALA Committee on the Status of Women in Librarianship (COSWL) to continue collecting and compiling material on the work of women and their status in the profession.


