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Book review editor: Michael E. Matthews
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This issue of *Progressive Librarian* is dedicated to the memory of Zoia Horn (1918-2014) “battler for the people’s right to know”

Illustration by Sara Plaza Moreno.
Al Kagan

Editorial

Racism and “Freedom of Speech”: Framing the Issues

The production and distribution of the ALA Office for Intellectual Freedom’s 1977 film was one of the most controversial and divisive issues in ALA history. *The Speaker: A Film About Freedom* was introduced at the 1977 ALA Annual Conference in Detroit, and was revived on June 30th, 2014, for a program in Las Vegas titled, “Speaking about ‘The Speaker.’” ALA Council’s Intellectual Freedom Committee (IFC) developed the program, which was cosponsored by the Freedom to Read Foundation (FTRF), the Library History Round Table and the ALA Black Caucus (BCALA).

Some background is necessary for context. This professionally made 42-minute color film was sponsored by the ALA Office for Intellectual Freedom in 1977 and made in virtual secret without oversight by the ALA Executive Board or even most of the Intellectual Freedom Committee members. In fact, requests for information about the film, for copies of the script from members of these two bodies were repeatedly rebuffed. Judith Krug (now deceased), Director of the Office for Intellectual Freedom, was in charge with coordination from a two-member IFC subcommittee and ALA Executive Director Robert Wedgeworth. The film was made by a New York production company, and was envisioned by Krug as an exploration of the First Amendment in contemporary society.

The film’s plot is a fictionalized account of real events. A high school invites a famous scientist (based on physicist and Nobel prizewinner William Shockley) to speak on his research claiming that black people are genetically

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Al Kagan is Professor of Library Administration and African Studies Bibliographer Emeritus at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. He has been deeply involved in socially responsible library organizations throughout his career and has just joined the editorial board of *Progressive Librarian*.

**KEYWORDS:** “The Speaker” (film); Intellectual Freedom Committee; Black Caucus of the American Library Association (BCALA); Racism; Freedom of expression.
inferior to white people. The school’s diverse Current Events Committee seems to have been influenced by its advisor to invite the speaker. She is a well-respected white teacher with perfect, high-toned diction who is about to retire. She claims that students needed to hear all points of view, and that the speaker’s theories had neither been validated nor disproved, and that it would be censorship to not invite him. (But of course, in reality Shockley’s racist theories had no scientific credibility in 1977!) Two or three students – black and white – quit the committee when the majority votes to reaffirm the invitation. This enrages the local community and the school board pressures the Current Events Committee to rescind the invitation. The film’s moral is that the racist speaker should have been allowed his First Amendment rights to speak at the high school.

The film was made during the term of ALA’s first black President, Clara Jones, who along with ALA Executive Board members were horrified when they viewed the film. The Black Caucus, SRRT, and supporters of in-coming ALA President Eric Moon were enraged that an ALA Office would choose this most volatile topic to make a case for the First Amendment. They argued that the film was racist, insensitive, full of stereotypes, and that the central thesis was “counterfeit and falsely identified as a First Amendment issue.”

To avoid charges of censorship, the Black Caucus and members of the Social Responsibilities Round Table (SRRT) did not suggest that the film be destroyed, rather they proposed resolutions to the ALA Membership Meeting to simply remove ALA’s name from the film. The Black Caucus resolution was not discussed, but the SRRT resolution was debated. The first vote was 372 to 326 for removing ALA’s name. But ALA Executive Director Wedgeworth declared a counting error. The original decision to remove ALA’s name from the film was reversed after two more votes.

SRRT also wrote a motion censuring Krug and the Office for Intellectual Freedom, but it was withdrawn and never voted. The Council later reaffirmed its support for the film. The debate carried over to the 1978 Midwinter Meeting where TV stations and national newspapers covered the Council meetings. There were 2000-3000 people at the ALA Council Meeting! In front of a national audience, the Council refused to limit the film distribution in any way. Major Owens (later a US Congress member from New York) said that it revealed a “secret agenda of racism,” and E. J. Josey (principle founder of the Black Caucus) asked members “to support the humanity of black people.” Sandy Berman (guru of user-friendly cataloging) circulated a statement that was signed by sixty-five prominent librarians. It read in part,

WE ARE ASHAMED AND DISGUSTED. The American Library Association has produced a film, The Speaker, that purports to deal with intellectual freedom and the First Amendment. It does not. Instead, it
distorts and confounds the First Amendment. But even worse than this intellectual dishonesty is the film’s wanton assault upon Black people. In effect, it says: “Blacks are irrational. Blacks are unprincipled. Blacks must be ‘protected’ by Whites. And Blacks may indeed be less than fully human.”

Bill Eshelman, editor of *Wilson Library Journal*, put it this way:

> The decision to make the “liberals” the villains who wish to prohibit the free speech of the “reactionary” is very strange and flies in the face of the facts of American, if not ALA history…It makes one question whether the IFC knows who the real enemies of the First Amendment are.

With this history, we can now come back to the 2014 program. The panel in Las Vegas included Mark McCallon (Associate Dean for Library Services at Abilene Christian University), Bob Wedgeworth (ALA Executive Director, 1972-1985, and currently on the National Museum and Library Services Board which advises the Institute of Museum and Library Services), and Beverly Lynch (Professor of Information Studies, UCLA). The panel was moderated by Julius Jefferson Jr., President of the Freedom to Read Foundation and Information Research Specialist at the Library of Congress. They also showed a film clip of *CBS Evening News* anchor Dan Rather’s television report on *60 Minutes* about the first showing of the film at the 1977 ALA Annual Conference in Detroit.

In a posting on the blog of the ALA Office for Intellectual Freedom (OIF), Doug Archer, current IFC Chair, had previously noted two historical pieces, one for and one against the film. Tellingly, the program’s sponsors only chose to provide handouts of the favorable article and place them in the back of the room. And it is important to note that three ALA past-Presidents made forceful statements against the framing of the program on the OIF blog and the ALA Council listserv (Mitch Freedman, Pat Schuman, and Betty Turock). Freedman and Schuman called for adding *Library Journal*’s John Berry to the panel since he had critically reported on the debate at the time. However, their request was denied.

Note that all three panelists are supporters of the film believing it meets the originally envisioned purpose. McCallon’s research turned up evaluation surveys from the first showing in the ALA Archives. He provided graphs of the responses and used the data of this flawed survey to support his positive regard for the film. Questions in the survey were rated on a four-point scale, from most positive to most negative – superior, good, fair, poor. The survey is problematic in that the third category was “fair” – a category that could allow either a positive or a negative interpretation. McCallon disregarded the negative
“fair” responses and claimed that the majority of the audience who turned in forms rated the film in a positive light. But he reported that 199 rated the film in the first two positive categories and 261 responders rated the film in the two negative categories.

Wedgeworth was ALA Executive Director when the film was made. At the recent program he claimed that he did not review the script, but was only involved in finances, and he said he had no regrets about his role or the result. He even repeated Judith Krug’s false claim that the film had won a minor film award, a complete fabrication. Lynch continues to use the film in her classes, and continues to frame the debate in the original way. She even made a point that in January 1977 the IFC had tried to rescind the Council’s 1976 resolution against racism and sexism on the grounds that the IFC believed ALA should be neutral in regard to racism and sexism. To her displeasure, the IFC’s attempt failed. In moderating the panel, Jefferson revealed no criticism of the original framing of the debate. It is important to state that both Wedgeworth and Jefferson are African-Americans, and by their presence gave more legitimacy to the film.

The Las Vegas audience totaled perhaps 250 mostly white people, and the great majority were too young to have been at the meetings in 1977 and 1978. Most seemed to take the issues seriously but were probably unaware of the history, and so were unaware of how the panel was manipulating that history. There were jokes from the stage and there was laughing several times during the presentations. The IFC succeeded in presenting a program that justified the production and distribution of The Speaker. In this way, they were able to revise history for those in attendance and to justify Bob Wedgeworth’s collusion with Judith Krug. Perhaps it is not a coincidence that Judith Krug’s husband, Herbert Krug, won the Freedom to Read Foundation Roll of Honor Award in Las Vegas.

Members of the audience were given the chance to speak after the panel presentation. Only a few of the 16 speakers were at the original 1977 film showing. Some of the speakers congratulated the sponsors for presenting a program where the difficult issues around race and intellectual freedom could be discussed. But there were also several critical speakers, so one would hope that many of the audience members who were laughing and self-congratulatory did get an inkling that not all was right with what was going on. Binnie Tate Wilkin reminded the audience that the film was released just after the end of segregation and that it was difficult for blacks to speak out at that time. She asked why ALA had chosen to publicly humiliate blacks. Mary Biblo noted the conflict between ALA’s first black President Clara Jones and Judith Krug. She reminded the audience that civil rights are again under attack today, particularly in restricting the right to vote, and she asked why we should be surprised that the film was resurrected at this time. Ismail Abdullahi directly confronted the Black Caucus, and asked how they could cosponsor such a skewed panel. He
asked whether the founders of BCALA were wrong in their vigorous protests of the time!

As the 1978 BCALA statement noted, the “fundamental error” in equating program planning to a mandate for inviting a racist speaker is never addressed in the film. “Democracy does not require ‘tolerance of ideas we detest.’” In fact, “this nation was founded by people who would not tolerate ‘ideas they detested.’” Further, how could anyone justify making the film in secret, not vetting the script with the BCALA before production, and refusing to share information about the film with members of the Executive Board and the Intellectual Freedom Committee? On June 11, 2014, the BCALA issued “An Open Letter to the Library Community.” In that document, they stated that “times have changed,” and it was time to discuss the issue. That would be a valid argument if the panel included even one speaker who could have discussed what was wrong with the film and why the Association made a huge mistake in producing and distributing it. Someone might have discussed entrenched societal racism, and why Krug either wittingly or unwittingly produced a racist film. Instead, we got a real whitewash. The current leadership has framed the debate just as Judith Krug did in 1977. And those who frame the debate have a powerful tool to revise history for the new generations. Indeed, the African-American leaders of the 1970s would be aghast at what just happened. We need to set the record straight.

NOTES

1 See the statement from 25 prominent African-American librarians endorsed by the BCALA in the Documents section of this issue of Progressive Librarian on page 184.


3 ALA Social Responsibilities Round Table Newsletter, no. 49 (June 1978): 2. Dan Rather told Wilson Library Bulletin, “If I were black, I would think the film was racist and if I were a woman, I would think it was sexist.” And see William R. Eshelman, No Silence! A Library Life (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow, 1997), 257.

4 Kister, 334-350; and ALA Social Responsibilities Round Table Newsletter, no. 46 (September 1977): 4-7.

5 Kister, 343.


See the statement from 25 prominent African-American librarians endorsed by the BCALA in the Documents section of this issue of Progressive Librarian.

This formulation was actually in the final paragraph of the 1973 interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights, titled “Sexism, Racism and other -isms in Library Materials.” The exact quote is, “Toleration is meaningless without toleration for the detestable.” This interpretation was twice revised and finally replaced in 1990 by another interpretation titled, “Diversity in Collection Development.” See Horn, 223.

Decency, security, and liberty alike demand that government officials shall be subjected to the same rules of conduct that are commands to the citizen. In a government of laws, existence of the government will be imperiled if it fails to observe the law scrupulously. Our government is the potent, the omnipresent teacher. For good or for ill, it teaches the whole people by its example. Crime is contagious. If the Government becomes a lawbreaker, it breeds contempt for the law; it invites every man to become a law unto himself; it invites anarchy. Louis Brandeis, 1927\(^1\)

Fear...cannot be allowed to determine the policies and practices of the American Library Association, just as a practicing librarian should certainly never succumb to the censor for fear that his own salary or budget will suffer. If we believe in the importance of intellectual freedom, we must be willing to take risks in order to defend it. ACONDA Report, 1971\(^2\)

Privacy – a state of being for which one closes a door, steps a short distance away, hangs out the “Do not disturb” sign – is required for any communication

Elaine Harger is librarian at Washington Middle School in Seattle and longtime member of the editorial board of *Progressive Librarian*.

KEYWORDS: American Library Association – Committee on Legislation; American Library Association – Council; American Library Association – Conferences, 2013; American Library Association – Intellectual Freedom Committee; American Library Association – Social Responsibilities Round Table; Censorship; Government accountability; Government intimidation; Intellectual freedom; National Security Agency; Privacy; Right to know; Right to privacy; Snowden, Edward; Surveillance; Whistleblowers.
not yet ready for public consumption, whether conveyed via scribbled note, telephone call, text message, or scrawled across a diary “PRIVATE, do NOT read! Mom, that means y-o-u!” One utters the phrase “May I have a private word?” and communicates an implicit expectation of trust to both the invited and the excluded (hopefully without offense to the later). Privacy, whether within the confines of one’s own skull, between two or more individuals, is a requisite condition for grappling with personal troubles, for the tentative working through of new ideas, for arriving at a decision, for implementing a plan. Extended to another or others as the need arises, privacy is a human necessity. Children will choose to be mute, to keep their thoughts private rather than risk ridicule, correction, or rejection. Adolescents refuse to share the day’s events with parents as being “none of their business.” Adults expect private communications to actually be private – for phone and internet lines not to be monitored, for bedrooms and boardrooms not to be bugged. Not that what is said and done in private is wrong, crazy, illegal, immoral, or secret, only that it is simply not yet ready for public consumption.

While an individual’s interest in and desire for privacy is largely a matter of personal predilection and situation, groups and societies have longstanding customs, traditions, and laws that define and protect individual and collective rights to privacy. The American Library Association (ALA), for instance, has a strong commitment regarding privacy rights, “In a library (physical or virtual), the right to privacy is the right to open inquiry without having the subject of one’s interest examined or scrutinized by others.” (ALA Policy B.2.1.16)

The roots of these commitments to privacy reach back into history and became legally codified in the U.S. Constitution, specifically in the Fourth Amendment of the Bill of Rights, which states,

The right of the people to be secure in their persons, houses, papers, and effects, against unreasonable searches and seizures, shall not be violated, and no Warrant shall issue, but upon probable cause, supported by Oath or affirmation, and particularly describing the place to be searched, and person or things to be seized.

According to John Adams, second president of the United States, a speech delivered in the council chambers of Boston’s Old Town Hall in February 1761 by James Otis against “writs of assistance” was the fuse that lit the fire of the American Revolution. Writs of assistance, vague search warrants containing no information as to what was being searched for or toward whom the search was to be conducted, were the bane of colonial life, direct attacks on personal privacy. In the 6th century C.E., the Roman emperor Justinian coined the phrase “a man’s home is his castle” giving expression to a sentiment carried down through the centuries that many consider natural, inviolable. The reality of home
as castle has, of course, been an altogether different matter given predilections of authorities at any given point in history – including today.

Privacy of mind, body, and place turn out to be universal, albeit differently expressed and enforced, to all human cultures. Every human possesses the privacy of her or his own thoughts, and usually enjoys the privacy of communications with at least one other human being. Privacy regarding the body, and bodily functions, varies widely with some bodies completely hidden. Everywhere rules exist as to whom, under what conditions, and to what extent one body may be seen or touched by another. Privacy regarding place also varies widely, and is likely rooted in our evolutionary past, in the lives and customs of mammalian ancestors who marked what they considered their territory and either invited, tolerated, or attacked trespassers. After all, if one can judge by the yaps and growls emitted from behind picket fences and closed apartment doors, a dog’s home is as much his castle as a man’s.

Not surprising then that the lived experience of American colonists in the second half of the 18th century had them fuming mad when King George’s men would pop up at will with their writs of assistance forcing entry into the homes of soon-to-be revolutionaries.

Adams, a newly-minted lawyer in 1761, heard Otis’ speech along with his friend Samuel Quincy, and in 1817 wrote of the experience in a letter to another friend,

The scene is the Council Chamber in the Old Town House in Boston... Otis was a flame of fire!...with a promptitude of classic allusions, a depth of research, a rapid summary of historical events and dates, a profusion of legal authorities, a prophetic glance of his eye into futurity, and a torrent of impetuous elegance. He hurried away everything before him. American independence was then and there born; the seeds of patriots and heroes were then and there sown, to defend vigorous youth. ... Every man of a crowded audience appeared to me to go away, as I did, ready to take arms against Writs of Assistance. Then and there was the first scene of the first act of opposition to the arbitrary claims of Great Britain. In fifteen years, namely in 1776, he grew up to manhood and declared himself free. (Dash 2004, p. 39)

In the aftermath of the American Revolution and ratification of the Constitution, people realized that a statement establishing the rights of citizens was necessary as a counterbalance to any abuse of authority by the new democracy. Few were ready to place complete trust in those empowered by the U.S. Constitution no matter how well-defined the checks-and-balances of that document. Thus the Bill of Rights, the first ten amendments to the Constitution were debated, refined, and instituted.
Although an ardent belief in the sanctity of one’s home and belongings is a political inheritance of every U.S. citizen, the application and interpretation of Fourth Amendment rights have been uneven over the course of the past nearly two-and-a-half centuries. Nonetheless, within librarianship the profession not only recognizes the value to individuals and to society of the right to privacy, but along with other professions – doctors, social workers, lawyers – declares a strong commitment to patron confidentiality. ALA’s policy statement on confidentiality is as follows,

Confidentiality exists when a library is in possession of personally identifiable information about users and keeps that information private on their behalf. Protecting user privacy and confidentiality is necessary for intellectual freedom and fundamental to the ethics and practice of librarianship. (ALA Policy B.2.1.16)

Librarians treat as confidential library users’ reading, viewing, and listening of library resources. What a person uses of a library’s collections is that person’s business only. A teenager’s reading of materials dealing with sexual identity, an entrepreneur’s research into the feasibility of a new business, a pre-2013 Seattleite’s curiosity on the cultivation of marijuana, all three trust the librarian not to share their reading and research queries with parents, competitors, police. Indeed, librarians have made headlines in recent years by insisting on proper search warrants on the occasions when local authorities and the FBI have demanded patron records. Some have gone to court. As a profession, privacy rights and the commitment to confidentiality are taken seriously.

Privacy, of course, is not the same as confidentiality, and neither are the same as secrecy, all three of which figure into the story of Edward Snowden and the ALA.

Confidentiality concerns both informal and formal agreements between individuals and/or institutions. Confidentiality can be a personal promise or legal agreement between parties involved to keep private something (usually information) shared privately. Doctors, journalists, lawyers, therapists, and librarians protect the privacy of patients, sources, clients, and users via practices and values establishing confidential relationships. Sometimes law overrides agreements of confidentiality as when a teacher breaks a promise to a student when keeping the confidentiality might endanger the student or others. Teachers are “mandatory reporters” in such instances, and can be held legally liable if they did not report an endangering situation communicated by a student despite the promise of confidentiality. Librarians treat information regarding patron borrowing and accessing records as confidential just as a doctor treats a patient’s medical information. A person’s reading and internet surfing habits are their business, no one else’s – unless, of course, “probable cause” warrants the breaking of confidentiality.
Privacy is a human need, confidentiality is an agreement, and secrecy relies on both, but is an entirely different matter. The philosopher Sissela Bok describes secrecy as follows,

Secrecy is as indispensable to human beings as fire, and as greatly feared. Both enhance and protect life, yet both can stifle, lay waste, spread out of all control. Both may be used to guard intimacy or to invade it, to nurture or to consume. And each can be turned against itself, barriers of secrecy are set up to guard against secret plots and surreptitious prying, just as fire is used to fight fire. (Bok p. 18)

Bok defines secrecy as intentional concealment, and insists on its ethical neutrality – some secrecy is good, some is evil, while other secrets are neither. Secrecy generates high excitement in the minutes leading up to ALA’s midwinter book award announcements; the secret identity of a donor to the Spectrum Scholarship or the Freedom to Read Foundation elicits deep appreciation but no high emotion; while other secrets, like the NSA’s monitoring of telephone and internet communications, generate fury among some and approval among others. Privacy and confidentiality are essential in the entire process of intentional concealment, from generation, to development, to maintenance, to revelation (or not), but the three are not the same. Not every private moment is confidential or secret, not every confidence is secret it’s just confidential. With these distinctions in mind, let us turn to the purpose of this essay, and the conference at which Edward Snowden, privacy, secrecy, and ALA crossed paths. In presenting the case of the fate of a resolution dealing with Edward Snowden at ALA Council we have a quintessential example of hegemony at work within librarianship – hegemony being the establishment and maintenance of political power structures.

When the Commander-in-Chief Speaks, People Listen

In late-June 2013, ALA members poured across the thresholds of Chicago’s McCormick Place Convention Center, passing playful fountains squirting a Morse Code of watery arcs along the airy lobby. The main rush of members flowed eastward and upward toward the exhibit hall, conference programs, coffee, while a small tributary briefly branched southward entering the cavernous room selected by ALA conference planners for the meetings of ALA Council. Over the course of the next four days, the issue of privacy played center stage in this room for a few hours – in public, and in private. Matters of secrecy lay everywhere, in the shadows, between whispers, on the front-page of the Tribune, tripping tantalizingly around exhibit hall surprises and out the doors of book prize committees.
Council is the governing body of ALA with one-hundred and seventy-three elected members representing either the membership at-large, one of ALA’s divisions or roundtables, or a state or territorial library association. Meetings of Council, three at each midwinter meeting and annual conference, are chaired by the association’s president with assistance from ALA’s executive director, a parliamentarian, the Council Secretariat, and, as need arises, by legal counsel, finance officer, the Washington Office, and other association staff and members. These individuals assist in the multi-faceted work of Council which includes establishing policy, budgetary matters, receipt of committee reports with action on report recommendations, establishing special task forces and committees, electing Council members to the Executive Board and other governance positions, and considering resolutions brought to the body via either ALA membership meetings or by members of Council itself.

On the morning of June 30, Council members, ALA staffers, members of the library press, and others interested in the work of Council filtered into the room. Councilors found seats at the long rows of tables, the curious and interested others took chairs in areas set aside for observers and special guests, while those presiding over the meeting found their places on the dais between two huge projection screens used for meeting identification, powerpoint presentations, the occasional video clip, and, primarily, for closed captioning for the hearing impaired.

Seats found, territories claimed with sweaters or jackets, iPads, Council portfolios, the day’s copy of CogNotes or the Chicago Tribune, maybe a coffee cup (disposable from Starbucks, reusable from home), councilors and visitors alike lined up at tables along the back wall to collect documents for the morning session. To assist in the organization of copious amounts of paperwork, agendas and documents are copied onto different colored paper for each session. Because this Chicago conference led up to the Fourth of July, session I, II, and III documents were printed on pink (in lieu of red), white, and blue paper respectively.

Latecomers to Council that morning arrived to see President Obama addressing the audience via video-clip on the two huge projection screens right and left of the dais where special guest Jackie Garner, acting director of Region 5 for the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), stood.

Garner had just spoken making a personal appeal to the governing body of the association before heading back to the exhibit hall to reach out to thousands of conference attendees as HHS launched, finally, after decades of failed attempts, rancorous national debate, and broad public demand, a national health care insurance program. “Thank you all for everything you do to inform, advise, and assist everyone who walks through your doors,” said Garner, then continued:
As acclaimed author Neil Gaiman has said, “Google can bring you back 100,000 answers, but a librarian can bring you back the right one.”… Public libraries are unique local assets, not only a source for books and information, but a trusted community resource. Libraries are where people go to ask questions and find answers, and informing, educating and aiding patrons to discover and discern something new. That’s what librarians do each and every day. That’s why having you as our partners helping ensure that everyone is better able to understand and enroll in the health insurance marketplace is so invaluable. (ALA Council, 2013a)

Garner invited audience members to visit the booth for the launch of the new website healthcare.gov and call center – the public’s portal to affordable health insurance – and to consider participation in HHS training to provide enrollment assistance. “You as the American Library Association are the first group we are coming to during our launch week, as we know that librarians are essential to the American public as they seek information about the marketplace and the Affordable Care Act.” She then introduced the video of President Obama’s appeal for assistance,

I know that the President is also very grateful for your engagement, and I am now happy to be able to share with you a few words of appreciation from him for the work you, as librarians, are doing and will help us with your communities, as well as his challenge to do whatever it takes to make sure everyone knows what the new healthcare law and the new insurance marketplace means for them. (ibid)

What followed was a canned speech, directed at a generic audience, no mention of libraries or librarians, but nonetheless warm words of thanks from the President to all who would assist citizens to understand and avail themselves of the new health care insurance system. Within a matter of days, the HHS website and call centers collapsed, unprepared for the volume of site and phone traffic, leading to scandal for the Obama administration and website developers, but that is another story altogether.

The Affordable Care Act wasn’t the only thing on President Obama’s mind in June 2013. He was also caught up in the scandal of the National Security Agency’s (NSA) indiscriminate violation of the privacy of U.S. citizens revealed by Edward Snowden the first week of June. On the 21st the Obama administration filed charges against Snowden under the Espionage Act of 1917 (Scott 2013).
Birth of a Resolution

On June 6, 2013, The Guardian began a series of articles revealing massive surveillance of internet and telephone communications by the NSA of the U.S. public. On June 9th the paper revealed the identity of the NSA contract employee who leaked documentation of the programs. Edward Snowden, a 29-year-old U.S. citizen working for NSA contractor Booz-Allen Hamilton had been employed by NSA, the CIA, and Dell, working in increasingly sensitive positions in Maryland, China, Switzerland, Japan, and Hawaii. Over the course of a 9-year period, he became disillusioned by the methods and activities of the CIA and NSA. In interviews with Guardian reporters he said, “Much of what I saw in Geneva really disillusioned me about how my government functions and what its impact is in the world. I realized that I was part of something that was doing far more harm than good.” (Greenwald 2013a)

One Geneva experience involved a CIA agent who, in working to recruit a Swiss banker for some type of covert operation, got him drunk, assuring the intoxicated banker that he could drive home. When the banker was arrested for drunk driving, the CIA agent came to his rescue, thus establishing a relationship of obligation that ultimately led to the successful recruitment of this Swiss citizen. While such an episode might be enjoyed with popcorn in a movie filled with thrilling, action-packed espionage, in real life Snowden apparently found it distasteful, immoral, and believed aspects of the incident to be criminal according to international law.

A young, white, patriotic, and intelligent American, Snowden found himself in a crisis of conscience, discovering that intelligence community operations were not conducted according to moral, ethical, or legal standards that he valued, but instead intelligence operatives and operations often ignored, even flouted, standards and laws. In a state of disillusionment, Snowden took momentary refuge from the predicament in which he found himself in the hope offered by the 2008 election of Barack Obama, fully expecting the new administration to institute reforms to security agencies. When it became clear that reforms were not on President Obama’s agenda, Snowden decided he needed to act on his own and took a job at Booz-Allen Hamilton with the express purpose of gathering evidence – and blowing-the-whistle – on NSA’s criminal and unconstitutional actions. The image below is one of the top secret documents released by Snowden and published in The Washington Post on June 6 (Gellman and Poitras 2013). It is a timeline of agreements made between NSA and internet service providers to funnel customer communications to the NSA.5

Shortly following revelations of both NSA surveillance and Snowden’s identity, Tom Twiss, government documents librarian at the University of Pittsburgh, posted an e-mail calling for interested volunteers to assist in the
crafting of a resolution regarding Edward Snowden in time for the rapidly approaching ALA conference in Chicago. For several years, Twiss had been active in the Social Responsibilities Round Table’s International Responsibilities Task Force (SRRT and IRTF), and was an old hand at the resolution process. In 2004 he was both IRTF chair and SRRT’s liaison to the Government Documents Round Table (GODORT), which at their meetings in Orlando considered and passed a “Resolution on Securing Government Accountability through Whistleblower Protection.”

Initiated by the Government Information Subcommittee of ALA’s Committee on Legislation, and endorsed by the Federal and Armed Forces Libraries Round Table, the Intellectual Freedom Committee, and GODORT, the whistleblower resolution was approved by ALA Council. Somehow, the Policy Monitoring Committee failed to include text from this resolution in the ALA Policy Manual, as sometimes happens. A search of the online manual turns up nothing with keywords “whistleblower” or variations. Given the absence of policy manual language, the full text of this resolution follows. Reading through the “whereas” clauses, one cannot help but recognize the strength of the statement and the recognition that those who demand government accountability need support and recognition for their courage and willingness to defy authority for the greater public good when they “blow the whistle” on government wrongdoing.

One of the documents released by Edward Snowden showing a timeline of data-mining agreements between NSA and the corporations listed
Resolution on Securing Government Accountability through Whistleblower Protection

Whereas, the American Library Association has a long standing policy of supporting free speech by all, including government employees; and

Whereas, open and unfettered access to information by and about government is a basic tenet of a democratic society and crucial to the public’s ability to hold government accountable; and

Whereas, security concerns in today’s environment have resulted in increased restrictions on access to public, unclassified government information, and actions of whistleblowers may be the only means of exposing problems in government; and

Whereas, whistleblowers often have alerted Congress, government officials, and the public to abuse, fraud, and waste in governmental activities; and

Whereas, libraries and librarians have a long tradition of assisting the public in learning about the activities of their government; and

Whereas, government employees who have uncovered abuse, fraud, and waste and become whistleblowers have suffered intimidation, loss of security clearance, reduced benefits, or loss of employment; and

Whereas, legislative efforts to strengthen governmental accountability through enhanced protection for whistleblowers, such as the “Paul Revere Whistleblower Act,” are pending in Congress; therefore be it

Resolved, that the American Library Association affirms its support for accountable government and the role of whistleblowers in reporting abuse, fraud, and waste in governmental activities; and be it further

Resolved, that the American Library Association supports legislative efforts to provide increased support and protection for whistleblowers in the Federal government. (Committee on Legislation 2004)
Concern within ALA regarding whistleblowers is not limited to this one document. Indeed, one of ALA’s major divisions, United for Libraries, whose mission focuses on support and promotion of the work of library trustees, has on its website a “Sample Whistle Blower Policy.” The sample policy puts the library that adopts such a policy on record as prohibiting “fraudulent practices by any of its board, members, officers, employees, or volunteers.” Additionally, the library agrees to refrain from retaliation against any employee who reports conduct that she or he “believes in good faith to be a violation of the law.” To reinforce support of whistleblowers, the sample policy suggests that the library “may take disciplinary action (up to and including termination) against an employee who in management’s assessment has engaged in retaliatory conduct in violation of this policy.” (United, 2011)

ALA policy is made via two basic avenues. A committee established by council for some specific purpose (either a standing committee or a special one) can issue a recommendation, which Council then considers, and approves (or not), usually with little or no amendments. The process seldom takes much time, as committee members are generally trusted with the charge given them. The other route is for a resolution to be brought to Council’s agenda either via passage at an ALA membership meeting, or through sponsorship by at least two members of Council – the mover and a seconder. In either case, the resolution comes into existence because someone, somewhere, has a concern about which they believe ALA should take action. The individual or group either already knows about the resolution process or has been informed about it by someone who does. Often a person new to the process will be shepherded through by an experienced colleague. In the case of the Edward Snowden resolution, the initiators were old hands at the process. (See ALA Policy Manual for guidelines on resolution process.)

Given ALA’s official policy regarding privacy, confidentiality, and whistleblowers, prompt action on the case of Edward Snowden was to be expected. The first two are encoded in ALA’s Code of Professional Ethics for Librarians which 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.” (American Library Association 1995, p. 45)

When the public was made aware of NSA’s sweeping, indiscriminate monitoring of everyone’s communications, it is no surprise that some librarians were ready to “petition the government for a redress of grievance.” The NSA had no probable cause to monitor communications of the entire population (including library users and librarians), and received no warrants to do so for the vast majority of the victims of their datamining. Edward Snowden believed that NSA actions violated the Constitution. Had he been an employee or volunteer at a library that functioned according to a United for Libraries-style
whistleblower policy, a prompt investigation of his concerns would have been required, without retaliation against him.

However, despite federal laws protecting whistleblowers, Snowden had cause to act as though he most certainly would be retaliated against. For him to believe and behave otherwise would have strained credulity. One week following the revelation of Snowden’s identity, USA Today interviewed three former NSA whistleblowers – Thomas Drake, William Binney, and J. Kirk Wiebe. Drake came to the NSA from the CIA in 2001, serving as a senior executive until his resignation in 2008. Binney worked as a cryptologist for 40 years until he retired in 2001. Wiebe spent 30 years at NSA until he too retired in 2001. All three men tried through established channels to bring NSA wrongdoing to light, only to encounter resistance and retribution along the way. In 2002, Binney and Wiebe informed Congress of NSA surveillance and contractor corruption. In 2007, the FBI raided the homes of both men on the same day. Binney, held at gunpoint, was forced to watch with his wife and child as their home was ransacked by FBI agents. Neither men were ever charged with any crime. Drake was indicted for espionage in 2010, but the charges were ultimately dropped in a plea bargain. He pleaded guilty to a misdemeanor of “exceeding authorized use of a computer” and served one year of community service and probation. In the June 16th interview, USA Today asked these three men what treatment Snowden could expect from the federal government:

Binney: Well, first of all, I think he should expect to be treated just like Bradley Manning (an Army private now being court-martialed for leaking documents to WikiLeaks). The U.S. government gets hold of him, that’s exactly the way he will be treated.
Q: He’ll be prosecuted?
Binney: First tortured, then maybe even rendered and tortured and then incarcerated and then tried and incarcerated or even executed. (Eisler 2013)

While the Obama administration demanded Snowden’s extradition to face espionage charges, government watchdog groups and concerned citizens were demanding he be treated (and protected) as a whistleblower. On the same day as the USA Today interview, Mike Marlin member of Council, SRRT and PLG, posted to alacoun (the listserv of ALA’s Council) a link to a statement issued by the Government Accountability Project (GAP) regarding Snowden, which made eight points regarding his actions then elaborated on each:

I. Snowden is a Whistleblower
II. Snowden is the Subject of Classic Whistleblower Retaliation
III. The Issue is the Message and Not the Messenger
IV. Pervasive Surveillance Does Not Meet the Standard for Classified Information
V. The Public has a Constitutional Right to Know
VI. There is a Clear History of Reprisal Against NSA Whistleblowers
VII. We Are Witnessing the Criminalization of Whistleblowing
VIII. In the Surveillance State, the Enemy is the Whistleblower

The GAP statement concluded, “…secrecy, retaliation and intimidation undermine our Constitutional rights and weaken our democratic processes more swiftly, more surely, and more corrosively than the acts of terror from which they purport to protect us.” (GAP 2013)

On June 17th, councilor Ed Garcia, responding to Marlin’s post wrote on the ALA council listserv, “I hope there is a resolution being crafted on this topic.” Shortly after, SRRT councilor Al Kagan, knowing that Twiss was drafting a resolution, replied that one was “coming soon” thereby giving all Councilors a heads-up that the matter would be on Council’s upcoming agenda.

Twiss was joined in the writing of the Snowden resolution by Jim Kuhn, Fred Stoss, and Mike Marlin, and they drew on yet another longstanding ALA policy to support their resolution. In 1971, Council established a policy regarding government intimidation. The policy reads,

The ALA opposes any use of governmental prerogatives that lead to the intimidation of individuals or groups and discourages them from exercising the right of free expression as guaranteed by the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution. ALA encourages resistance to such abuse of governmental power and supports those against whom such governmental power has been employed. (ALA Policy Manual, 53.4)

The policy on government intimidation has a most interesting history. Initiated by Zoia Horn, head of Reference at Bucknell University’s library in Lewisburg, Pennsylvania, with assistance from colleagues Pat Rom and SRRT activist Jackie Eubanks, the resolution was prompted by Horn’s own encounters with the FBI and intimidation by the grand jury process. Writing about the resolution in her memoir Zoia! Memoirs of Zoia Horn, Battler for the People’s Right to Know, Horn describes,

The resolution asserted that the “freedoms to think, communicate, and discuss…are essential elements of intellectual freedom, that these freedoms have been threatened by our federal government’s use of informers, electronic surveillance, grand juries, and indictments….”
And it asked that ALA recognize these dangers to intellectual freedom, go on record against the use of these grand jury procedures “to intimidate anti-Vietnam War activists and people seeking justice for minority communities,” deplore and condemn the misuse of “the Conspiracy Act of 1968 as a weapon against the citizens of this country who are being indicted for such overt acts as meeting, telephoning, and discussing alternative methods of bringing about change and writing letters.” It added two ethical provisos that ALA assert the confidentiality of the professional relationship of librarians to the people they serve and that “no librarian would lend himself to a role as informant, whether of revealing circulation records or identifying patrons and their reading habits.” (Horn 1995, p.166)

Although the resolution met with some resistance during discussion at Council, with some councilors attempting “to shunt it off to a committee,” (ibid) the Resolution on Government Intimidation passed and became ALA policy. Despite the association’s official opposition to government intimidation, the following year the ALA Executive Board issued a statement that caused Horn deep distress.

Policy notwithstanding, in the following year (1972), when I had challenged the government’s attempt to intimidate critics of the war in Vietnam, and was sent to jail as a consequence, the ALA Executive Board refused to support my stand. Moreover, they issued a public statement of their refusal without even asking me if I wanted their support or asking me to present my reasons for declining to testify [at grand jury hearings in the Harrisburg Seven case]. Their statement, which is actually a condemnation of my decision as well as a refusal to support, was published in *American Libraries*, which is sent to all 50,000 members. (ibid)

Although ALA policy “encourages resistance to such abuse of government power” one can see from Horn’s experience, that official policy does nothing to guarantee that actual support might be forthcoming from the Association. However, there are ALA members, such as Horn and Twiss, who dedicate themselves to holdings the Association accountable for abiding by its policies.

Given this paper trail of ALA positions related to government accountability, the right to privacy, the confidentiality of patron records, whistleblower protections, and opposition to the use of government intimidation, it should not have come as a surprise when the Snowden resolution was presented at the ALA Membership Meeting in Chicago, on June 29, and passed by a considerable majority. But just as the Fourth Amendment itself has not been
erased from the Bill of Rights, the commitment of police, lawyers, and judges to act in accordance with the law has varied over the years, and court rulings have weakened protections from unwarranted searches and seizures, due, in part, to the failure of citizens to hold authorities accountable for violations of the law. Similar fickleness is evidenced in ALA by Council and Executive Board prevarication on actions implementing stated values and commitments. Times change, so too the willingness of individuals and groups to question authority, to hold it accountable, and the passage of the Snowden resolution did, indeed, come as a surprise to its writers and movers. Within the context of a general climate of conservatism nationally, colored by budget cuts, and heightened “security” concerns, a decade-long “war on terror,” and continuing economic woes, activists within ALA expected little support for the Snowden resolution, especially in light of recent failures of similar resolutions regarding Army private Bradley Manning, who had released huge quantities of classified material documenting U.S. war crimes to Wikileaks.

Pass it did, and with passage by the membership meeting, the Snowden resolution was automatically placed on the Council I agenda for the following morning. On June 30, in its first session, Council itself passed the resolution. Discussion was brief, and there was no debate.

Jim Kuhn, mover of the resolution, spoke to it,

We, for about the last decade, have been in this situation, where access to the courts on issues related to domestic surveillance and privacy has been extremely limited. Over and over again, individuals and organizations and companies have been told they do not have standing to bring suit against domestic surveillance and broad attacks on privacy [due to lack of documentation]. Meanwhile our access to Congress has been extraordinarily limited. The oversight committees (we have learned) have been limited, lied to. We’ve had senators come out of closed-door hearings saying, “if only the American people knew what was happening in our name you would be outraged.” Meanwhile those among us who are most effected by these laws, in particular Section 215 of the USAPATRIOT Act, are gagged from even speaking for good or ill about these pieces of legislation [impacting] our libraries and our library activities – even to our elected representatives. So we don’t have access to the courts, we don’t have access to Congress that is effective. Meanwhile the executive branch seems to have gotten religion about this issue in the past few weeks, but in fact if you compare the comments of President Obama when he was a candidate for Senate, when he was a candidate for president, and now when he is commander-in-chief, you’ll see that his position on the issues of domestic surveillance and accountability for violations of privacy by government officials have
been moving very much against us. Quite recently, the White House spokesperson said we should be engaging in a broad national debate about these issues, but, in fact, that national debate has not been brought forward by the executive branch. Under such circumstances, when the courts, the Congress, the executive branch, and the press are of no help – in fact, the press has been under an unprecedented level of attack by governmental intimidation – we need whistleblowers. Actions taken by Edward Snowden have given us an extraordinary opportunity to make important strides in public policy that relates fundamentally to [librarianship’s] core values of privacy, open access to government information, over-classification, an informed electorate, and this [the Snowden resolution] is an opportunity to make it clear to folks who are taking great personal risk in revealing important details about what is going on in our name, that we do stand with them on the basis of our core values as a profession dedicated to an informed electorate and the role of an informed electorate in a democracy. Thank you very much. (American Library Association 2013a)

Ann Crewdson, councilor-at-large, spoke next, describing conversations sparked by Snowden’s revelations she had with her family.

Not only has this [incident] sparked dialogue nationally, but it has also allowed me to talk with my own family and my own teenagers about their privacy, their practices on Facebook and social media, and I think that’s very good for a generation that seems to be more and more, being that they grew up in a ubiquitous surveillance society, that they’re more complacent that we’d like them to be, because it leads to many things in the future to such as employment and their health insurance, and I’ve explained it to [my daughter] that every FB like she does, and everything she does online, it’s a built-up datamine, and that’s like a doppelganger, and when I pointed that out to her, I said, what if you knew there was a doppelganger out there and that’s the thing that determines the rest of your life? She was absolutely floored by that. (ibid)

Nann Blain Hilyard, councilor at large, then expressed appreciation and approval at the removal in the original resolution of a 2nd resolved clause that would have put ALA on record as opposing “any attempts by the United States government to extradite or prosecute Edward Snowden.” After evening conversations amongst Council members regarding the resolution, its movers decided to delete the original 2nd resolved, thinking approval might prove possible without it. Hilyard said, “I appreciate the resolved clause that does not pass any judgment on Edward Snowden, it simply identifies him, and the bigger
part is that we are opening up this dialogue, but aren’t passing any judgment on him.” (ibid)

At this point, any Council member who objected to the resolution, or had questions, or needed clarification would have gone to an open microphone, identified him- or herself, and stated their mind. This did not happen. Perhaps those who opposed the resolution simply assumed it would fail. Perhaps, in the face of the resolution’s supporting documentation, opponents could find no ethical way to argue against the resolution. Privacy rights, after all, have been a leading concern of ALA’s since the 1930s. Between the resolution’s passage at the membership meeting and the first session of Council, opponents had an entire afternoon and evening to formulate persuasive arguments, or even to decide to refer the matter to a committee, or to table it for a future meeting, but no opposing arguments or parliamentary maneuvers were forthcoming. Seeing no other members of Council at the microphones, the chair called for a vote and the resolution was approved with 105 in favor, 39 opposed, and 10 abstaining.

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
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);

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 since 2010 ALA has sponsored “Choose Privacy Week,” an initiative “that invites library users into a national conversation about privacy rights in a digital age” and a campaign that “gives libraries the tools they need to educate and engage users, and gives citizens the resources to think critically and make more informed choices about their privacy;

Whereas Edward Snowden, a technical specialist for contractors employed by the National Security Agency, has admitted to providing classified information to reporters for The Guardian and The Washington Post newspapers;

Whereas this information revealed that, under a FISA court order issued in April 2013, the National Security Agency is collecting the telephone records of millions of U.S. customers of Verizon;

Whereas this information further revealed that since 2007 under its PRISM program the NSA has been collecting huge 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;
Whereas Edward Snowden has explained that his “sole motive” in revealing this information was “to inform the public as to that which was done in their name and that which is done against them”; and

Whereas Edward Snowden is now facing extradition and prosecution for releasing this information; now, therefore be it

*Resolved*, that the American Library Association (ALA) recognizes Edward Snowden as a whistleblower who, in releasing information that documents government attacks on privacy, free speech, and freedom of association, has performed a valuable service in launching a national dialogue about transparency, domestic surveillance, and overclassification.

The vote on Council I was met with high-fives, smiles, and congratulations after the meeting by those who’d worked on the resolution. The majority vote to recognize Snowden as a whistleblower was an informed and considered act, all those council members who had attended the previous day’s membership meeting had ample opportunity to think about and discuss with others the position they would take on the resolution. Evidence of this was in the changes made to the resolution as described by Hilyard. Not one objection was voiced. Such vindication of an act of conscience was tremendously gratifying. ALA Council had done what the federal government refused to do – recognize Edward Snowden as a *whistleblower*. Not only that, but had commended him for his *service* to the nation.

Alas, some joys are short-lived, and such was to be the fate of the Snowden resolution.

Before moving on to the ultimate, and unprecedented, demise of the resolution, we should pause for a moment to consider the larger context of this statement in order to see how an ostensibly democratic forum, a platform for free speech, can be swayed in another direction, so that a position challenging authority, is brought into alignment with authority. In other words, how an elite group ensures that the voice “says the right thing.”

The bureaucratic maneuvering that followed on Council overturning the Snowden resolution is a prime example of Noam Chomsky’s observation,

> From a comparative perspective, the United States is unusual if not unique in its lack of restraints on freedom of expression. It is also unusual in the range and effectiveness of the methods employed to restrain freedom of thought. The two phenomena are related. Liberal democratic theorists have long observed that in a society were the voice of the people is heard, elite groups must ensure that that voice
says the right things. The less the state is able to employ violence in defense of the interests of elite groups that effectively dominate it, the more it becomes necessary to devise techniques of “manufacture of consent.” (Chomsky 2002, p. 19)

At the time of this debate, the federal government was calling Snowden a traitor, demanding his extradition for prosecution under the Espionage Act of 1917. The press largely echoed these characterizations. Whenever ALA Council passes a resolution, it gets distributed to the press, and to others concerned with the issue at hand. A copy of the Snowden resolution was destined for the White House. In these days of instant communication, word got out immediately that Council had taken the position that Snowden was a whistleblower and that he deserved appreciation for his actions, and just as instantaneously opposition to the resolution rallied, and found support from at least one council member who voted against it. Why? Was it just sour grapes? Poor losers? As it turned out the challenger of the vote was a member of the ALA Executive Board, the elite of the elite. Not only that, but every member of Council serving on the Executive Board at the time, except Dara Ho, Sara Kelly Johns, and Jim Neal voted against the resolution. So why hadn’t any of them spoken against it? And, what does it matter what ALA says about Edward Snowden?

Death of a Resolution

Council’s passage of the resolution would not have impacted Snowden’s situation, although the resolution’s message of recognition and solidarity might have slightly lightened the emotional burden of his exile and vilification. Nor would ALA’s acknowledgement of Snowden’s actions have tempered the government’s pursuit of him, but the moral weight of this support would have been tremendous. ALA has influence with the public. Everyone loves librarians, and here was ALA, the professional association of favorite librarians across the nation not only recognizing Snowden as a whistleblower, but declaring that he’d performed a valuable service. Recall that not much more than an hour prior to Council’s vote on this resolution, Jackie Garner of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services had referred to libraries as a “trusted community resource” – emphasis being Garner’s own. Libraries honor the trust of their communities by providing reliable information and protecting users’ privacy.

There were, of course, 39 votes in opposition. Following Council I, there must have been at least one private conversation, perhaps even some frantic politicking in Chicago the evening of June 30th, because the first action the following morning at Council II was a motion to reconsider the Snowden resolution and to refer it to the Intellectual Freedom Committee (IFC) and Committee on Legislation (COL). This motion to reconsider was unprecedented,
coming only one day after the resolution’s passage. (Only at one other time was a resolution approved by Council reconsidered. Six months after passage, a resolution regarding censorship in Israel and the Occupied Territories was rescinded.)

As the chair concluded reading Council’s agenda on the morning of June 31st, noting that under the 24-hour rule new resolutions on Bradley Manning, fossil fuel divestment, library services to communities in times of disaster, and prayer at ALA meetings had been placed on the day’s agenda, John A. Moorman, member of ALA Executive Board, stood at microphone number four and was called on to speak.

Moorman stated his wish that another resolution be added to the agenda, that the Snowden resolution be “reconsidered and referred to the Intellectual Freedom Committee and the Committee on Legislation.” Moorman, former director of the Williamsburg (VA) Regional Library and current consultant with Dominion Library Associates, had voted against the resolution the previous day, although he did not reveal his opposition to the audience, merely explaining that,

I am very concerned that our action taken yesterday did not come with due deliberation and with the consideration of recommendations from two committees that are essential to the operation of our organization, and we should hear their input before we take action.

Chair: Is there discussion? Oh [inaudible], so it’s on the agenda? I’ve added it to the agenda. Thank you. Is there other new business? Hearing no further discussion, I declare the agenda adopted. (American Library Association 2013b)

For Council consideration, resolutions are required to be submitted to the Council Resolution’s Committee 24-hours in advance. Had Moorman’s resolution met this requirement, it should have been printed on the agenda for Council II. It was not.

At the time, the addition of Moorman’s new resolution to the agenda was not questioned, probably in the belief that some clause in Sturgis allowed for no advance period for a resolution to reconsider previously approved items. Council II proceeded, and eventually the resolution to reconsider and refer reached the floor.

Members of Council take seriously their responsibilities as elected representatives to the body that establishes policy for the association. Generally speaking, councilors arrive at meetings having done their homework. SRRT Councilor Kagan had posted the original version of the Snowden resolution on June 23rd, a full week before it arrived on Council’s agenda. Had any council
members felt uninformed regarding any element of the Snowden resolution, most would have spoken up. Those opposing the resolution also had ample time to frame their arguments against it. Asking a question, requesting a point of clarification, making an amendment, moving to refer, to table, to close debate—all these parliamentary procedures are second nature to many, but the newest or shyest Council members, and are used with great regularity. As Hilyard’s statement the previous day indicates, the original resolution had been changed following passage at Membership to accommodate objections to the call for the federal government to refrain from persecution of Snowden, a compromise the movers were willing to make in order to gain support from their colleagues on Council.

As a seasoned councilor, indeed a member of the Executive Board, Moorman himself, knowing he opposed the resolution, should have raised his objections during discussion on the 30th. One can only speculate as to why he did not. Perhaps he wasn’t quite awake. Perhaps he assumed most councilors shared his opposition and therefore did not bother to speak, even to refer the resolution for committee review. Perhaps he was too embarrassed (or politically savvy) to openly acknowledge a wavering commitment to the privacy of American citizens—face-savingly easier after the fact to claim the resolution was passed without “due deliberation” than to stand on the floor of Council and explain his opposition to a resolution addressed directly to two ALA policies: privacy rights and support of whistleblowers.

Ordinarily, Moorman would most likely have had the good grace to accept the will of the body and allow the resolution to stand as the official opinion of ALA regarding Edward Snowden. Win some, lose some— all in a day’s work on ALA Council.

Moorman did not accept the will of the body, and when his resolution to reconsider and refer came to the floor, he offered the following explanation,

Sometimes in Council we act in haste. As our procedures, as Bernie Margolis pointed out earlier are in process in order to get us total information in situations and to get recommendations from committees within the organization that are assigned this responsibility. On Monday, neither the Intellectual Freedom Committee nor the Committee on Legislation had had the ability to review and make recommendations. I do know they are meeting this afternoon and that they will bring something back to council tomorrow on this issue. I also feel it is very important that as we look at items that we discuss that we consider the implication of those items upon the ability of our Washington office to work with legislators and the ability of librarians in their community to effectively discuss issues from a neutral stance. This is the reason for this resolution, and I urge its adoption. (ibid)
Moorman’s position then was that (1) the vote the previous day was ill-informed, (2) the adoption of the Snowden resolution would negatively impact the Washington Office’s ability to work on behalf of ALA, and (3) the adoption of the resolution would similarly impact librarians’ ability to “discuss issues from a neutral stance.” We will later return to the first two of Moorman’s concerns, but the third can be dispensed with immediately. In regard to any of the issues raised by the Snowden resolution, none require a neutral stance. Librarianship is not neutral with respect to privacy rights, to the laws protecting whistleblowers, or to government intimidation. Indeed, a neutral position with respect to any of these matters would implicitly condone invasions of privacy, the persecution of whistleblowers, and any amount of intimidation. Indeed, neutrality would be in violation of ALA’s policy, values, and ethics. Librarians in their communities should be able and willing to advocate on behalf of privacy rights, whistleblower protections, and opposition to government intimidation. The fact that Moorman suggests librarians discuss such matters from a neutral standpoint calls into question his own commitment to them.

Jim Kuhn then spoke,

As the mover of CD 39 [the Snowden resolution] and a member of the Intellectual Freedom Committee, I stand here with some responsibility for which otherwise might appear as a procedural snafu or hiccup, but I have to say that responsibility is also shared by the calendar. It is extraordinarily hard, as we have seen this morning, to get full endorsement, to get full consideration. To get all the information we seek for these resolutions that come before this body with the 24-hour rule in place. That said, we did request that this be on the docket for Council II, it was in fact moved to Council I. Perhaps at that time I should have postponed deliberation. I did not, however, because in fact I was prepared to speak to it, and I did speak to it and I stand by what I said. The other thing I would like to say about that is, as an IFC member, I can report on extensive discussions about this resolution at some of our first meetings, discussion which influenced the version that came forward to Council yesterday. There was no vote by the IFC to endorse, and perhaps I should have asked and actually moved as an IFC member that the committee vote on this, to endorse or not endorse. And I take responsibility for that. But I have to say, it is very important for this organization to be able to act on matters of grave concern to us in a manner that does not continually put off action until subsequent conferences, particularly on time-sensitive issues such as this one. We had lots of debate. We had lots of input. It was passed at membership meeting, it was passed by Council yesterday, so I will be voting against referring this to IFC and COL. Thank you. (ibid)
The debate that followed was not a hashing-out of whether or not Snowden was a whistleblower who’d rendered a valuable public service. Rather it boiled down to a debate centered around ALA bureaucracy and whether or not certain committees have a better understanding of the issues than members of Council. Statements that follow, taken from the sound recordings of the session (American Library Association 2013b), are presented verbatim to give the reader the best possible sense of the debate.

Mario Gonzalez, just elected ALA Treasurer, thereby becoming a member of the Executive Board, had voted against the Snowden resolution the previous day. Speaking to the resolution to refer Gonzalez said, “These committees have the intellect, the resources, and the ability to give us more information than, I believe, we had when we voted on the original motion.”

Bobbie Newman, councilor-at-large, said, “I did vote in favor of this resolution yesterday, but in light of the information I’ve heard since then, I’m going to change my mind.” She gave no indication as to what further information she’d received.

Brian Schott, ALCTS division councilor, who had abstained from voting on the resolution said,

Yesterday before we said it was okay, I took a moment of silence and cursed Roberts [sic] for not allowing my abstention on this vote to be counted, and I abstained from it at the time because I was deeply uncomfortable with it and I actually welcome the proposed reconsideration and referral to IFC and COL and strongly support councilor Moorman’s recommendation.

Executive Board member Molly Rafael, who also voted against the resolution, commented,

I speak in favor of this motion. I am actually kicking myself for not, and frankly I’m thinking all of you who have been on Council for so many years should be doing the same thing, for not thinking of this [referral] when we were discussing the motion. We have committees that have taken issues from us, such as IFC and COL, and come back with resolutions that I think many of us have felt were much improved. I believe we will get reports back on this and I think the very fact that there are unintended consequences tells us that we should have been a little bit more deliberative, doesn’t mean we wouldn’t have passed it, but we should have been more deliberative. And I was just going to stand up here and say everything that councilor Gonzales said, because it was exactly what I felt at the same time. Thank you.
Charles Kratz, councilor-at-large who had supported the resolution said,

I certainly have no problem with it being referred, but if it does get referred today, the geniis out of the bottle because *American Libraries*, right now on my iPad here, already has it announced that we’ve supported it. It was tweeted yesterday. We live in a social media world. It was tweeted and on Facebook yesterday.

Dianne Chen Kaley, who also had voted in favor of the resolution the day before, spoke next,

I rise to second the motion because of three phrases important to council – prudent deliberation, thoughtful consideration, and unintended consequences. Yesterday during our deliberations the statement was made that the resolution did not pass judgment, but after more thorough discussion with the Washington Office and with councilors informally during the forum and throughout the conference, I believe this is in fact not true. It jumps to a decision, it paralyzes our lobbyists, and our Washington Office from working effectively with legislators. William Binney, a whistleblower who also disclosed details of NSA’s mass surveillance activities, stated in the press, after Snowden began leaking allegations that the U.S. was hacking into China “he was transitioning from a whistleblower to a traitor.” Imagine, after events continue to evolve and we learn more, as Snowden continues to release these classified documents he has removed from our country, that his status is determined to be both whistleblower and espionage traitor. How would you like to consider supporting a resolution with a resolved clause that the ALA recognized Edward Snowden as a whistleblower and traitor who in releasing information that reveals government attacks on privacy, free speech and freedom of the press has performed a valuable service in launching a national dialogue about transparency, surveillance, and over-classification. Just the addition of those two words makes me uncomfortable enough to urge you, if you have any concern, to please move this for reconsideration.

Kaley’s quote from Binney was accurate, although as Al Kagan stated immediately after she spoke, it was taken out of context. Kaley failed to note Binney’s comment that he himself did not know at the time of the interview whether or not Snowden had access to documentation regarding NSA spying on foreign countries, specifically China. (Readers are referred to the full *USA Today* interview, Eisler 2013.) Subsequent revelations showed that NSA was, indeed, monitoring the communications of even foreign heads of state.
Al Kagan, SRRT councilor,

The Social Responsibilities Round Table brought William Binney to our conference. Many people heard him speak, he is a man of great integrity. I believe that the quote that was just made [by Kaley] must be taken out of context. I ate dinner with the man, had long discussions with him, and don’t believe he would have said that. I really think we need to look at the effect of what the whistleblowers are doing. The whistleblowers in this case have shown that the NSA is monitoring all of our e-mail and all of our phone calls and more. William Binney told us about that. He didn’t have the documents, but he said that in his talk. Now that he has the documentation, this is now national news. Most Americans are offended by what the NSA is doing. ALA membership meeting was offended by what the NSA is doing, that’s why they voted to support what we said about Ed Snowden. We overwhelmingly passed this resolution in the Council, and I think it’s because the councilors are offended by the kind of Orwellian situation we have now in this country. To refer this back to committees that are not likely to even put Ed Snowden’s name in their resolution tomorrow would be a travesty, and I hope we don’t do it.

Diedre Conkling, councilor at large supported the Snowden resolution,

I’m against reconsideration and referral back to these committees, I think that, personally, I voted with full knowledge of the resolutions and what they meant and I think I read it very clearly and I’m very satisfied with my vote. I know that when we get the information back from the Intellectual Freedom Committee and the Committee on Legislation they’re going to send us something about we support open government, we support whistleblowers, we’re going to work on educating our members about these issues, and we will no longer be supporting a whistleblower. I was pleased that we were actually supporting a whistleblower, and I do not want to refer this.

Mary Biblo councilor at large another supporter,

Here we go again, debating an issue that is pretty clear. We are on record that we support whistleblowers, I think. But when we put a name to it, it seems to lose any kind of support for whistleblowers. Now I’ve been here for as long as Molly Rafael, maybe longer, [and know] what referral like this to a committee means. We used to have a treasurer and if they didn’t want this particular item to be brought to the floor,
his main role was to get up to say let’s refer this to BARC because it might have fiscal implications. I’m not saying you might do this with the Intellectual Freedom Committee, it might come out in support, but I’m simply against referral. I learned my lesson sitting here in Council for a number of years, what referral meant. Thank you.

Lauren Comito councilor at large,

I’m against this motion, we voted yesterday to support this, and in my case, I voted in support because of the effect it has on my patrons. I deal everyday with people who have to worry that they need a password on their Smartphone because they get stopped and frisked. I deal with women of middle age who are just dipping into Facebook, who are very concerned with their privacy and so I really thought about this when I voted and I think most of us really did because privacy is a deeply held value that we have as librarians. And that this man, whatever comes out later, whatever flaws he may have or whatever he does later, did provide us with a service. Did provide us with proof of what we knew was happening, but couldn’t confirm, that basically we’re just being listened to. And if for nothing else, that now we don’t have to explain what metadata is.

Jane Glasby, councilor at large and another supporter,

It think we’ve had a lot of discussion about this, we’ve been well-informed. I think we had a lot of documentation, the research that went in to the preparation of the resolution, all those whereas clauses referring back to all the legislation that we’ve passed, if you want to call it legislation, all the policy we’ve passed, so I think to say we don’t have the intellect and we have to send it on to another body for their smaller body of minds, their intellect, I think it’s a little insulting to ask, because I think we have thought about this issue and we are the policy making body, and we did think about it, and its timely and that to refer it back, we know what’s going to happen. People here have the history, and as Mary Biblo said, and Diedre Conkling said, we know it’s going to come back as the same motion that we’ve had so many times. Same resolution, same content, same empty content, and we need to stand by our decision yesterday, and the membership meeting’s strong endorsement also, and support an individual whistleblower as an instance of the whistleblowing we’re all so keen on. And I’m also reminded about this thing, about unintended consequences, of when we were trying to move against segregation and some of the southern states,
the library associations from southern states, were saying “Oh, please don’t pass that because it will make it very difficult in our individual legislatures to negotiate in our individual states. Please don’t make the national ALA force our hands.” Well, I think we have a responsibility to take a stand on some things and if there’s going to be a problem, I’m sorry about that, it might make life more difficult for people going into negotiation in Congress, but I do think we need to take a stand on principle and not worry about those details.

So, what happened here? In a nutshell:
– On June 29, ALA members at the conference membership meeting considered and approved a resolution;
– that evening the resolution was revised to meet objections raised and to garner more supportive votes on Council
– the revised resolution was passed on June 30 by the governing council with no debate, 105 approving, 39 opposed;
– on the morning of July 1, a member of the Executive Board, who had voted against the resolution the previous day, made a motion to reconsider and refer to two committees on the grounds that it hadn’t been given “due deliberation”;
– discussion ensued on this motion, concern was raised about “unintended consequences,” and a vote was taken 96 approving, 42 opposed, 6 abstaining, and unusual in council voting 15 councilors who were present at this meeting cast no vote;
– the resolution was sent to IFC and COL for “more information.”

Moorman never voiced his opposition to the Snowden resolution, much less offered an explanation for his personal position on the matter. The same is true for Gonzalez and Raphael, neither admitting they’d voted against the Snowden resolution. (Although votes in Council are made public with a raising of hands, only the most attentive would know how any one councilor voted, as voting records are not made available until after each conference, and it is highly unlikely that for any given vote more than a handful of people would keep track of how a particular councilor voted.) The motion to reconsider and refer “Resolution in support of whistleblower Edward Snowden” 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. Of the nine Executive Board members who voted on the resolution, six voted against it – an almost exact numeric reversal to the Council vote itself: of the 12 Executive Board members sitting and voting on Council those opposed to Snowden were the majority (67%), while the majority on Council (63%) favored the resolution. The Council vote to approve the resolution was deemed by Executive Board members to be (a) uninformed, and (b) fraught with “unintended consequences.” This might or might not have been a message officially backed by the Executive Board
itself, but none-the-less was put forward by several of its members. Of interest is the fact that every Executive Board member who originally voted in favor of the Snowden resolution remained completely silent during the discussion to reconsider and refer. The unstated message of Moorman’s motion was clear – Council screwed up, the Executive Board was opposed to this resolution, and now somebody more expert than Council had to fix the mess.

This tactical use of appeals to expertise in manufacturing consent, as a means of shaming “less expert” individuals or groups into compliance with the perspectives and agendas of superiors is the modern day method of “whipping” others into alignment. Although members of ALA Council and the Executive Board largely consider one another as equals, as colleagues, and although Council is the constitutionally established policy-making body of ALA, the Executive Board largely steers the ship, and has the ability to redirect its course should a squall head ALA in the “wrong” direction. All of which is to say that, although members of Council are not “subordinates” to those of the Executive Board, the later can act in the capacity of a superior if deemed necessary. This power dynamic at play is a common one, well delineated in the book Authority, by Richard Sennett (1980).

Where power was once exercised through brute force, with the rise of bureaucracies and attendant “cult of expertise,” power utilizes shame as a method of control. Sennett describes how violence gave way to shame over the course of the 20th century in the exercise of discipline in the workplace, in the school, in the home. Indeed, in my own lifetime use of corporal punishment in schools has gone from being not only an acceptable, but an expected, form of discipline to being literally outlawed. Students are no longer whipped or paddled for shortcomings or disciplinary infractions, but are shamed. Who has not written one-hundred times, “I will not talk back to the teacher.” For example, I currently have a colleague who believes he is doing his middle school students a service anytime one ungrammatically asks a question regarding the math lesson. Whenever this happens the teacher silences the student and insists that the question be rephrased. The psychological impact of this instructional method on a child can be profound. The student doesn’t understand a math concept or function, and gets a lesson in grammar. The student is doubly reduced by this authority who is expert both in mathematics and in grammar, and (generally) the student being either an English language learner or an African-American is shamed before his or her peers by their white, Euro-American male teacher. Here is how Sennett describes the phenomena within the context not of student and teacher, but of worker and employer,

Shame has taken the place of violence as a routine form of punishment in Western societies. The reason is simple and perverse. The shame an autonomous person can arouse in subordinates is an implicit control.
Rather than the employer explicitly saying “You are dirt” or “Look how much better I am,” all he needs to do is his job – exercise his skill or deploy his calm and indifference. His powers are fixed in his position, they are static attributes, qualities of what he is. It is not so much abrupt moments of humiliation as month after month of disregarding his employees, of not taking them seriously, which establishes his domination. The feeling he has about them, they about him, need never be stated. The grinding down of his employees’ sense of self-worth is not part of his discourse with them; it is a silent erosion of their sense of self-worth which will wear them down. This, rather than open abuse, is how he bends them to his will. When shame is silent, implicit, it becomes a patent tool of bringing people to heel. (page 95)

In the case of the Snowden resolution discussion, we have a tiny subset (one member of the Executive Board) of an ostensibly democratic body of equals intervening to reverse a decision, not by presenting persuasive arguments or directly addressing the merits of claims that Snowden is a whistleblower, or even sharing his own personal objections to an action taken, but patronizingly through impersonally expressed chastisement via his use of “we” (“Sometimes on council we act in haste”) and bureaucratic maneuver. With only a few exceptions, the chastised respond obligingly, not because any evidence was offered to show that their yes votes on Snowden-as-whistleblower were misinformed, but to agree with the superior that they voted “without due deliberation,” or to prove they are team-players. Three members of the Executive Board had spoken urging Council to reconsider and refer (all three had voted against the resolution). None of the Executive Board members who had voted in favor of the resolution spoke, all remained silent, handing the issue over to their Executive Board colleagues without a whisper of opposition, or even question. In a grand flip-flop, over half of council members who the previous day had voiced their informed opinion that Edward Snowden was a whistleblower, backed off in apparent admission that they should have known better than to express an informed opinion on the matter.

The “Substitute” Resolution

The next morning, after what must have been an acceptable level of due deliberation, the Committee on Legislation and the Intellectual Freedom Committee offered the following as a “substitute” for the Snowden resolution,

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 communicate information must be protected as an essential element of intellectual freedom”; and

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):

• 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;
• 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;
• 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;
• 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;
• 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
• ALA expresses its thanks and appreciation to the members of Congress who work to protect our privacy and civil liberties. (Office of Intellectual Freedom 2013)

In their introduction of this resolution, the chairs of the IFC and COL explained that it was intended to cover the issues raised in the Snowden resolution and in another concerning Bradley Manning, which had come up at a previous conference. During discussion of this “substitute,” accolades to IFC and COL, words of thanks for hard work in such little time, gushed from the microphones as councilor after councilor, most of whom two days prior had voted in favor of the Snowden resolution, now supported a resolution that said nothing about either Snowden or whistleblowers.

Following is the entire transcript of discussion of the IFC/COL motion to substitute the Snowden resolution with the one above. Again, debate is presented verbatim in order to provide the reader the opportunity to experience the spirit of each councilor’s contribution to this deliberation. Also provided in parentheses after each speaker’s name is an indication of how s/he voted on (1) the original resolution, (2) the motion to reconsider and refer, and (3) the substitute motion. The way in which each councilor voted (Y=yes, N=no, A=abstain, E=absent and excused) is listed in order of the votes: first is the person’s June 30 vote on the Snowden resolution; second is their July 1 vote on the motion to reconsider and refer; and third is their July 2 vote on the IFC/COL substitute resolution. Voting records are offered for whatever they might reveal of the speaker’s comments. Finally, each speaker is a councilor-at-large unless otherwise noted.

Al Kagan, SRRT Councilor (Y, N, N): Some of us, probably many of us, saw Alice Walker speak yesterday. She read a long peace titled “the case of Bradley Manning, what are we called to do?” Where she said, something transformative is happening here, when she talked about whistleblowers. And she focused on the inhuman treatment and torture of Bradley Manning. I would be happy to support this resolution as a separate resolution. I think a lot of what’s in there we’ve already taken
Eric Suess (Y,Y, Y): To me this speaks to exactly what I wanted to see. I wanted something that deals with not the symptoms, but the disease, and I think that’s what we’re looking at here. Everybody finds the things that we’re talking about here abhorrent, but what we’ve done here is, I think, not come back with a watered-down version of what we’re concerned about. I think this is strong, it goes straight to the heart of the problem and I feel that it, as a substitute for the three referrals, one from midwinter and two from this conference, I think it serves that purpose well and gives a very clear, direct, and strong statement about what is important to this organization and what we want to project as our image as we go forward. For me this is very strong, very positive, and I will gladly support it.

Larry Romans (Y, Absent, N): I hope that this doesn’t happen again. I’ve been a councilor for twenty-one years, and this is the first time that a resolution that has been passed by this body has ended up being referred to a committee. The Washington Office, the Committee on Legislation, the Committee on Intellectual Freedom work for us as council. We don’t work for them, and the fact that the Washington Office and the committees on Legislation and on Intellectual Freedom didn’t like the resolution that was passed is unfortunate, but they had many opportunities to deal with this before it got passed. Normally the Resolutions Committee would have referred this to them [COL and IFC], but since they didn’t there are members of both of those committees who could have referred, asked that it be referred to the committee. The chairs could have asked to speak, and this is just a very bad way to go about doing this. As I said, I hope this doesn’t happen again. The other thing I’m concerned about, as former chair of Resolutions Committee, is
that these committees and the Washington Office obviously do not read the guidelines on resolution making, and in fact one of these resolutions that came up, came to them in the correct form and they uncorrected it. So I would ask that, starting at the next conference, that they read the guidelines and they follow them.

Susan Roman (Y, Y, Y): I rise in very strong support of this substitute resolution. I’m impressed with how much stronger this document is, because it reaffirms our core values by striking a balance between the public’s right to know, while protecting the individual’s right to privacy, along with a balance between civil liberties and national security. I think this resolution is stronger because it doesn’t tie this action to one individual or even two, but can be used for covering individuals now and in the future. And if I might commend, actually, the members of the Committee on Legislation and Intellectual Freedom Committee for writing, as someone said last night at forum, an elegant document that’s really timely, on such a tight deadline, it tells me how strongly and passionately our members take these professional issues that are at the core of our organization. Thank you.

Andrew Pace (Y, N, Y): I stand in support of this resolution. I also want to commend both the committees, I think there was some pretty strong language yesterday about what it means to refer something back to a committee, and though I tend to agree with Larry that things were a bit messy, sometimes democracy is messy. I want to commend them for acting very quickly, and would even suggest that some of that strong language, people need to eat those words a little bit, and whether or not they agree with what came out of the committees, that they thank the committees for their quick and elegant work.

Karen Schneider (Y, Y, Y): I would like to commend the COL and the IFC for their swift and elegant work on this. It addresses the concerns I had yesterday. I believe very much that ALA should be addressing these issues, but I agreed in my heart that the previous resolution was not the document that did that. This shifts the point of view from the person to the crisis, and I wish I had not gone to the wrong hotel last night, because the only thing I would have added is, which is really unnecessary given our timeline, is the sentence that points out that we as a profession are very well positioned to be speaking to the power of metadata. Thank you.

Jane Glasby (Y, N, N): I’d like to echo some of the things councilor
Romans said about preparing your motions properly, and I imagine if this gets passed that the housekeeper will clear up the semantic problems in the way this was prepared, and I do understand that it was prepared in a great hurry. I would not say this is about democracy being messy. I would say this was inside the beltway shenanigans that went on. And I would have hoped that when some resolutions were referred to committees that they would report back on the resolutions, rather than substituting another resolution that doesn’t really address what was raised [in the original]. I, like councilor Kagan, support what is in this resolution. I think it’s fine, it’s good, and it’s an accompanying resolution to the Snowden resolution. I think the committees were right to throw out what was referred to them at midwinter because it was just a repetition of what we’ve seen before, and it was a gutless resolution. It didn’t say anything. And I think this is a parallel resolution to the Snowden resolution, and I’d like to see the Snowden resolution stand, and to have this passed in addition. But this really doesn’t address the Manning resolution at all. I don’t see anything about the requirements of government employees, whether they be military or federal employees or otherwise, to report war crimes and be protected, and I also think that it’s all very well for us to stand on principle, but there comes a time when we have to support the individuals who carry out those principles. Where I think this generally, despite a few problems in the wording, I can’t support this as a substitute motion. Thank you.

Mary Biblo (Y, N, N): ALA is on record in support of access to information, transparency, and whistleblowers. Yet, when it comes to supporting a whistleblower council hesitates. It appears to me that we are talking out of both sides of our mouth. And I say it’s a real, real sad day, and it’s a hypocritical way of dealing with the issues. I’m ashamed of you.

Elizabeth Ridler (Y, Y, Y): I was at the forum meeting last night and I really do commend the two proposers of this resolution. There was some discussion about the shortness of the time, and not being informed and so on, but I think they gave a very clear explanation of the resolution at the time, and I think the feeling on the part of most of those councilors who were at forum after the explanation was in support of it, and with regard to support for contractors etc. If you looked at resolved three, it is dealing exactly with the issue of government employees who are employed in the area of national security and protection for them as a whistleblower. I would remind the audience that when you’re dealing with an association that has 65,000 members, and talking to Capitol Hill
and Congress, you want to be able to stand on a very clear document that is looking in general at a problem, and looking at concrete solutions that the association as a whole can get behind. And I think this resolution does that, instead of having one, two, five, ten resolutions dealing with individual people. I think it is more important for us to have a clear document that allows us to stand up for each of them as the case arises. Thank you.

Molly Raphael, Executive Board (N, Y, Y): I strongly support the substitute motion, I think it addresses all the issues that are so important to our association, and I too want to commend IFC and the legislation committee because I know this is a challenging area to write a compelling statement that becomes our policy. I think this does that, I think it’s forward looking, as I think Elizabeth just said. It proposes actual actions that we think the government should take, and I think this makes us the best we can be as a deliberative body. You know we make jokes all the time about Congress, and how they can’t get anything done, but part of being a deliberative body is being able to really think through issues, and decide what is the best place for us to be and for us to stand. And I believe that this resolution provides that place for us to stand. I also want to say that I think the whistleblower law is a terrific law, but it is very complicated, and when we start making judgments about whether people are or are not whistleblowers based on what we read in the press, and we all know that the press has some biases and different directions, so when we make those judgments about individuals we’re really stepping into an area where we do not have the facts and we do not have the expertise. Because this is such a good policy statement, I think it stands on its own, and if someone wants to [say] that this does or doesn’t apply to somebody, that’s their right, but what we have said is that this is the foundation for our association based on our core values and the importance of issues around access to information, over-classification of information that all of us are concerned about. Thank you.

Applause

Mario Gonzales, Executive Board member (N, Y, Y): I also want to show my appreciation with the committees that worked so swiftly and the work that they put into it. I strongly support this resolution for two major reasons. One is the relevancy it provides to us and libraries and librarians, and also that it calls for a call to action from the highest level of government to the average citizen, to look at us and how we
are protecting our privacy and civil liberties, which is the concern that I have about all these resolutions. So again, I thank and appreciate, and I strongly support this resolution. Thank you.

Let us pause for a moment here to unravel, if possible, an essential problem regarding decision-making. The problem has to do with views like those expressed above by Molly Raphael on expertise, the press, ordinary (ie non-expert) citizens, and decision-making within a body ostensibly run utilizing the instruments of democracy – information, deliberation, and consent. Raphael’s concern here is with a “very complicated” law, a biased press, an absence of “the facts,” and a lack of expertise. She raises a question regarding confidence. What level of the state of being informed is required in order for an individual, or group, to express an opinion or issue a statement on any given issue? This question gives way to another – who, exactly, sets the bar? Who decides what level of expertise is necessary in any given situation? The “elites” referred to by Chomsky perhaps? Is an “ordinary” person ever capable of making a statement regarding what they think about a matter of public concern? Who decides whether or not members of Council are qualified enough to use knowledge culled from a variety of press sources to express their combined views on a contentious topic of the day?

Consider the poster reproduced here from the U.S. Office of Special Counsel (OSC) describing whistleblowers. Presumably prepared, or at the very least approved, by experts in the complicated laws protecting whistleblowers from government intimidation, the poster was created to inform laypersons of the fundamentals of those laws and protections, be that person one considering becoming a whistleblower or one simply needing to be an informed citizen. Given this public information service, it does not appear that the OSC believes expertise is required to understand the laws protecting whistleblowers, and yet Molly Raphael’s statement suggests that OSC’s confidence in the public’s ability to grasp legal matters is misplaced.

On June 30th, the general public (including members of ALA) who followed the news knew that materials released by Snowden provided evidence documenting that the NSA had violated not just “any law” but the Fourth Amendment to the Constitution, a violation which, in and of itself, could reasonably be described “an abuse of authority.” NSA’s actions were not accidental or uninformed, they were deliberate, taken either in full knowledge of laws involved or in gross dereliction of duties and responsibilities. On that ground alone any statement declaring Snowden to be a whistleblower would have been grounded in an informed understanding of the law.

All of which leads to an even larger question concerning whether or not ordinary people, i.e. non-experts, can be entrusted with decision-making at all in a democracy. Former ALA president Nancy Kranich wrote in 2000 stating
that a free society “must ensure that citizens have the resources to develop the information literacy skills necessary to participate in the democratic process.” Kranich’s claim was that libraries (and librarians) being the institutions that provide the resources informing the public are essential to a free society, a democracy. We also heard a government official state that “librarians are essential to the American public as they seek information....” If Raphael’s
yardstick of expertise sets the standard, then what are we to make of Kranich and Garner and the OSC’s seeming confidence in the ability of informed non-expert people to understand complicated laws and to make decisions regarding them? Moorman, Raphael et al. appear to be simply exercising their authority as an elite to get Council to “say the right thing.”

With that in mind, let us return to the discussion.

John DeSantis (Y, Absent, N): First, I too would like to thank the two committees that worked on the rewording of this, I think the language is very good. That being said, I want to go on record as strongly opposing the practice of reconsidering resolutions that have already been passed for the same reason councilor Romans outlined. I do not approve of approving this resolution as a substitute, I think as others have said, that it would be fine as an additional resolution. I think if it is passed and released to the general public it will be read as euphemistic language because everyone knows we are talking about Manning and Snowden, and the resolution could be stronger if their names were included in the resolved clauses. Thank you.

Mike Marlin (E, N, Y): I’d also like to echo the sentiments of councilor DeSantis, I think we really need to not indulge in this practice of trying to substitute for resolutions that have been passed by the membership as well as by council, and that this would be stronger if the names were in there. And I also feel it could be an additional resolution, but not a substitution. Also, I’m concerned about the idea of taking names out because, what about the resolution commending, what was it, Colleen Rauley. It almost makes that resolution obsolete. She blew the whistle on the 9/11 issue, and I think when these timely things come up, and we commend people for whistleblowing it makes us stronger as an association. And resolved three, it talks about supporting lawful disclosures and we sometimes find out that if the courts determine that they were or not much, much later in the game, usually after the whole things blown over and the public has forgotten about it. Although I don’t know if they’ll forget about this one for a long time. Thank you.

John Sandstrom (Y, N, Y): I do stand in support of this resolution. I thank you very much for your work. As an at-large-councilor I talk to as many members as I can about the issues that are coming before us, and when I brought up the issue of Manning and Snowden I got very universal negative reaction. They are not considered whistleblowers by the majority of the members I was able to talk to. Therefore I could not support either of those resolutions. However, I can support this one.
Thank you very much. [NOTE: the official voting record indicates that Sandstrom voted in favor of the Snowden resolution on June 30]

Valerie Feinman, Small Round Tables Councilor (Y, N, Y): I agree with everything that Molly Raphael said, and I support the motion. However, I think that we may have to reconsider the earlier motion and make some sort of comment or add it to this one come January. I think this is a great beginning to layout the positions that we have, and that sometime when we know a little more about the whistleblowers and how guilty or innocent they are, then we can add that. I too spoke with several people about this and they did not want names in it at all, and they weren’t sure they wanted the word whistleblower even with the wiki definition or somebody else’s definition. Thank you. Support it.

Brian Schottlander ALCTS Division Councilor (A, Y, Y): I also stand in support of the motion and its substitution for the previous motions. I commend our colleagues for having done the quick and good work that they did. I also commend this body in the spirit of Larry’s observation about, you know, what we did on Snowden may not have been the right thing to do, and to roll it back now may further not be the right thing to do, but the beauty of this body, like any democratic body is that it reserves the right to change its mind.

Applause

Maggie Farrell, ACRL Councilor (Y, Y, Y): ACRL did discuss this, and the substitute resolution is much more in line with what we believe is good for the association, and gives us the tools that we need to move forward. Again, like many others, [including] specific names and identifying them as whistleblowers is something that ACRL members, in general, were in opposition to. I’ll also take a personal note as a vet who worked for Army intelligence for NSA, I can fully support this resolution on a personal note. It gives us the tools that we need in order to talk about privacy and security for our citizens, so I support it. Thank you.

Again, let us pause for a closer look at this quite astonishing statement. In the hierarchy of librarianship, academic librarians occupy loftier realms than public or school librarians, even though within the milieu of academia they are often relegated to the lower floors of the ivory towers. Here we have a librarian who is not only the councilor for the Association of College and Research Libraries, not only someone who worked in military intelligence, who
not only worked for the NSA, but who also voted in favor of the Snowden resolution. Surely Maggie Farrell cast her vote on June 30th with a reasonably well-informed level of certainty that Snowden-as-whistleblower was a correct position to take, and that it was important for ALA to issue a statement to that effect. Division councilors most often decide how to vote on any given issue, not simply as private persons, but as representatives of the divisions that elected them. One can only wonder what transpired in the two days between Farrell’s approval of the Snowden resolution and her statement that “ACRL members, in general, were in opposition” to such resolutions. Farrell’s change of opinion was quite a parade ground about-face. Perhaps she voted her own private conscience on June 30, disregarding what she knew of the opinions of “ACRL members, in general.” Perhaps she voted her conscience without asking herself what ACRL members might think. Perhaps most ACRL members whose opinions on the matter she knew of actually agreed with her original opinion regarding Snowden. Perhaps, as a former Army intelligence and NSA worker, Farrell simply abandoned her conscience as soon as she realized that the “higher ups” did not approve. The Army, after all, trains soldiers to jump when superior officers say “Jump!”

Paula Brehm-Hegger (E, did not vote on referral, Y): I rise in support of what’s currently being considered. I do want to briefly speak to the discussion about the Manning resolutions. We have considered those repeatedly over the past couple of years. I think this body has expressed the will that that is not a direction we want to go in. I agree that is not the direction we want to go in. I do want to, as an outgoing councilor, I do, however, want everyone in the room to consider the fact that our friends who have been moving that resolution repeatedly, I think we owe them a debt, because they brought that forward before all of the rotten things going on were quite clear. And they alerted us rather early in the game that something probably was rotten and that we should be aware of it. And I don’t know that everyone paid as much attention as we should, so even though the Manning resolution specifically did not get passed, and I think this is a better way to go, I want to say that I personally appreciate that. I think the group should appreciate that, and that is something that I think has gotten us in this direction. So thank them for doing that, even though that’s not where we’re at. It’s been a significant thing and they were way ahead of that.

Applause

Brehm-Hegger’s mention of the “Manning resolution” is a reference to the fact that the individuals who drafted and moved the Snowden resolution through
ALA were also involved in earlier and very similar resolutions regarding Bradley Manning. Brehm-Hegger’s note of appreciation raises an intriguing circumstance regarding the prescience of “our friends…who alerted us rather early in the game that something probably was rotten and that we should be aware of it.” Recognition is given here to a very small subset of Council members who, in Brehm-Hegger’s estimation, and worthy of her thanks, had (1) paid attention to (2) a situation and (3) had brought it to the attention of the whole. “I don’t know that everyone paid as much attention as we should…” says this councilor, and she also seems to be saying that, while at one point in time the rotten something was not clear, subsequently it had become so. Despite her own objection to an official ALA statement directly addressing whistleblowers, she is none-the-less moved to recognize movers of the Manning and Snowden resolutions for being “way ahead” of Council in being cognizant of situations relevant to the values of librarianship. The applause following her statement might have been for the obvious sincerity with which she spoke, or for the content of her statement, or both, it hardly matters, but having been present at this meeting I can attest that the applause was widespread, not simply partisan.

Discussion neared its conclusion, but not before generating a few sparks between the next speaker and the chair of the meeting.

Tom Wilding (Y, N, N): I will support this resolution because I don’t believe in throwing the water out with the baby, but I think this is the water. The Snowden resolution was the baby in this instance. And I have to express extreme disappointment with the process with which this was done because I’m not a suspicious person by nature, but I suspect strongly that the Executive Board made a decision that they needed to do something, and move parliamentarily to do something. And I think back to all the microphone speakers who put the resolution forward, and all that, and it just adds up to a suspicious line to me. I would have liked this better if there had been transparency, had somebody come to the microphone and said “the Executive Board has reviewed this, and feels uncomfortable, and would like to put this on hold until after consideration by committees.” I am increasingly of a mind that the Executive Board does not practice…

Chair interrupts: Councilor Wilding, permit an interruption. I believe you are speculating and what you are speculating about is not true.

Wilding: But I will continue to speculate that way. And suspect that way.

Chair: And I have the responsibility of assuring this body of the facts, and that is not a factual statement.

Wilding: That’s fine, but I still think that the process by which this was done was unfortunate, and while I will vote for this I really have a very
hard time seeing it as a substitute. It doesn’t seem like a substitute at all to me.

In the end, Wilding voted against the substitute, perhaps from irritation at the chair’s unusual interruption, or perhaps determining that his recognition that the resolution was not an adequate substitute swayed his vote. Regardless, his voting record on this matter remained consistent with his original vote.

Immediately following was a motion to amend the resolution slightly by David Hurley (Y, N, A). There was no discussion after Hurley presented his motion, and the vote to amend passed by 69-67. Discussion returned to the main motion, to substitute the Snowden resolution with that of the IFC and COL.

Michael Porter, Executive Board member (N, E, Y): Speaking to this resolution, I find it impressive and effective in many ways, particularly considering the pressing time constraints that we were dealing with. Speaking to the process, getting to the resolution, adjustments, I recognize that the procedure was followed and that this resolution swap, as it were, can stand. I do find, however, the politicking and maneuvering a bit unsettling, and would ask all involved in the future of this process to contribute and do hard thoughtful work on issues they are expert on and have strong beliefs around, just as I would ask us moving forward to focus on being as inclusive and respectful and cooperative as possible. There are hurt feelings here and suspicions around this process, and I find that very troubling. I have never written down a comment I was to make from the microphone, and I would also like to point out that I wrote that down before councilor Wilding stood and shared his suspicion. I would also like to commend him for sharing that suspicion because I think that people are feeling it, and it’s important that it’s addressed, and that we understand in the spirit of the cooperation and understanding and hard work that we do on things that we care about, that we continue to address those sorts of things both here in the council and in private conversations as councilors. Thank you.

Larry Romans (Y, absent, N): I also have great admiration for both of the committees. I know Vivian Winn personally, I think she’s one of the most effective chairs of legislation there has been. At the same time this is not exactly a quick response. The Bradley resolution was referred to them six months ago. There is the ability to talk with each other, to e-mail each other and so forth, and I think it’s important for committees to do their work between the conferences. And also, this kind of thing doesn’t happen if people present their resolutions before
the conference and people have a chance to discuss things. I think that these committees should have been working on this, and should have brought something forward, and that that would have precluded any of this problem with the Snowden resolution, and I hope they will do that in the future.

Elizabeth Ridler (Y, Y, Y): Call the question.

Ridler’s motion to close debate was approved, and followed immediately by a vote to substitute the Snowden resolution with the resolution proposed by the IFC and COL. The vote to substitute passed with a show of hands: 138-yes, 20-no, 3-abstentions. No one who was present failed to cast a vote.

A handful of members of an elite group, with the assistance of the Committee on Legislation and the Intellectual Freedom Committee, had taken an unprecedented step to silence the voice of Council. Moorman, either self-appointed and alone, or in collaboration with others, refused to accept the will of Council as expressed on June 30, 2013. Some hold that all is fair in love and war – intrigue, duplicity, abuse, violation – perhaps too on Council floor. What was most disturbing in this instance was the ease with which a body of well-informed adults so easily performed this political about-face. Council went from challenging the federal government’s determination of Snowden as traitor to allowing this characterization to stand unchallenged. The original vote on Snowden had been 105 in favor, 39 opposed, 10 abstentions. The vote to substitute the COL/IFC resolution was 138 in favor, 20 opposed, 3 abstentions. The implications of the fact that four-fifths of those who voted for the Snowden resolution abandoned their position two days later are sobering. The voice of ALA fell silent before the federal government – from challenge to compliance within 48-hours. ALA leadership proved itself a trusted partner to the feds.

In his statement during the debate to substitute, Al Kagan said,

The Edward Snowden resolution was approved by a large majority at our membership meeting, it was approved by a large majority by this council meeting, and the will of this body should not be tampered with by ALA committees that are too worried about what might happen to our lobbying efforts in Washington on other issues. The library community has great legitimacy and we need to be a little bit brave once in a while when the country is going in the wrong direction and our core issues are involved.

Why does it matter that, with respect to Edward Snowden himself, ALA went from recognizing “Edward Snowden as a whistleblower who, in releasing information…has performed a valuable service” to urging “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”?

Simply this: ALA abandoned a clear, unequivocal statement identifying Snowden as a whistleblower deserving of “authentic protections,” in favor of one appealing to two bodies, the legislative and executive, who ALA knew were actively, publicly, or otherwise denying Snowden such protection.

The Snowden resolution was a challenge to the federal government, while the IFC/COL substitute let the status quo go unchallenged and simultaneously allowed ALA to declare consistency with longstanding commitments to privacy rights. “Authentic protections” already exist in federal legislation regarding whistleblowers, but in this specific case the federal government refuses to recognize Snowden as a whistleblower, thereby declaring prior to any investigation that those “authentic protections” are irrelevant to his case. Furthermore, with the substitute ALA reiterates positions on privacy rights, while completely abandoning all prior statements and commitments regarding whistleblowers by simply ignoring them.

Council’s turnabout on Snowden is a perfect example of the phenomena Chomsky referred to – freedom of speech is allowed, but an elite must ensure that the voice “says the right thing.” And the “right thing” to say about Snowden was nothing, which is exactly what happened. The predictions of Conkling, Biblo, Kagan, and Glasby played out when the IFC and COL presented a “substitute” resolution, which did not mention Snowden, or the word whistleblower, or even any of ALA’s own prior statements regarding whistleblowers.

The question, in analyzing this debate with an eye to the hegemonic role ALA plays within librarianship, is – What would saying “the right thing” be in this instance? If saying Edward Snowden is a whistleblower who deserves ALA’s thanks is the wrong thing, then were does that leave us? What does it mean that the “right thing” for ALA to say regarding the act and the actor which brought to light NSA’s massive invasion of countless people’s privacy can only be to say nothing, to be silent altogether, or to agree with the federal government that the person responsible for the revelations is a traitor?

When a book is banned from a library, the Office for Intellectual Freedom does not simply mail out a generic, blanket statement opposing the banning of books, rather OIF is specific, naming names – title, author, place of banning, public officials involved – along with a demand that the banning action be fully investigated toward returning the book to the shelves. When the next school of library and information science is threatened with closure, ALA will not simply decry the closing of LIS schools in general, but will identify the specifically threatened school in order to rally support.

In his report of the 2013 Annual Council meetings, Al Kagan 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.

Generic statements demand only generic responses. Calls for government transparency, get met with we’re-looking-into-the-matter responses. Specific statements demand specific responses. Recognition of Snowden as a whistleblower, demands an investigation of his situation as a whistleblower. When the federal government is calling Snowden a traitor, and is spying on you, it requires a bit of courage to challenge that characterization. While researching this article, using the internet, I certainly wondered whether or not the NSA might be tracking people searching for information about Snowden. My name will certainly pop-up from NSA’s datamine if they want to know who’s curious about “Edward Snowden.” The names of curious students with Arabic names at the middle school where I work will pop-up on when the NSA looks for searches on Al-Qaeda. Guilt by association, no matter how tangential, is hardly unknown. In the words of a presidential review group of NSA spying released in December 2013,

Knowing that the government has ready access to one’s phone call records can seriously chill “associational and expressive freedoms,” and knowing that the government is one flick of a switch away from such information can profoundly “alter the relationship between citizen and government in a way that is inimical to society.” (Cole 2014)

Even when six months later, at a time when more people were demanding that Snowden be recognized as a whistleblower, ALA Council failed at its January 2014 midwinter meeting to vote in favor of another resolution similar to the one of June 30th.

In a country where one is assumed to be innocent until proven guilty, government officials who decide off-the-bat that Snowden is a traitor before even investigating the possibility that he actually qualifies as a whistleblower are overstepping their sworn duty to the U.S. Constitution. Is it no wonder then that organizations like the Government Accountability Project have determined that we are today living in a “surveillance state” where “the enemy is the whistleblower”? In not acting to challenge U.S. officials’ and some mass media commentators’ predetermination of Snowden as a traitor, ALA is stepping
away from its stated commitments to the right to privacy, and in stepping away abandonment is not likely to be far off.

Some ALA councilors claimed that the third resolved on the IFC/COL “substitute” resolution clearly covered ALA’s commitment to the rights of whistleblowers,

[ALA] 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,

But, what is inauthentic about current whistleblower protections? Laws already provide authentic protection, what is missing is authentic recognition and enforcement of those laws. The situation we face is that some members of Congress, the President, and other interested parties do not want to treat Snowden as a whistleblower. They do not want to give Snowden the protection of already existing authentic laws, because his actions exposed the “man behind the curtain” as a charlatan with respect to NSA’s claim to being an agency that protects the public and abides by the law in doing so.

This resolved clause also acts as if the need for authentic protection is of merely theoretical rather than of immediate practical interest. Without explicitly stating that there is an existing, real, flesh-and-blood person named Edward Snowden who is not, right now, being protected from government intimidation and criminal prosecution, ALA is abandoning a human being whose case just might embody values and positions supposedly important to the association. And, more chillingly, the practice of carefully crafting language in order to avoid potential conflict with authority stands as an example of the sort of semantic game-playing that presents itself as sincere, authentic communication while actually being something else.

The IFC/COL resolution is nothing more than political gamesmanship, grandstanding, and avoidance. Despite its reaffirmation of “unwavering support for fundamental principles…including…accountability…transparency, and oversight,” in the absence of any specificity regarding the situation that gave rise to the document (namely a discussion about Edward Snowden) it says much about nothing that anyone need act upon, it holds no one accountable, makes opaque with words what should be transparent, and protects no one, instead abandoning the oversight responsible citizens should exercise within a democracy when officials and agencies misuse and abuse positions of authority. It is a defense of writs of assistance cloaked in the language of democracy. John Adams surely lies agitated in his grave.

Moorman claimed that Council was in need of more information that would be provided by the IFA and COL. Neither was forthcoming with additional
information about Edward Snowden’s status as a whistleblower. Indeed, they both ignored this matter altogether. And, what of his claim that the work of the Washington Office would be hindered by a statement from ALA declaring Snowden a whistleblower? The Washington Office is supposed to represent ALA in dealings with legislators and legislation. If questions arose regarding ALA’s position on Snowden, the Washington Office would be obliged to explain in a positive manner the will of Council in taking the position. Was the staff at the Washington Office unable or unwilling to do so? Either way it would be derelict in its duty as lobbying arm of the association.

In the end, as a body ALA Council completely succumbed into compliance with an authority more powerful than the collective conscience expressed on June 30th abandoning a principled decision when an elite appealed to fears of ALA Washington Office lobbyists “paralyzed” by a statement that challenged the federal government. What this incident says about the current state of librarianship as a “cornerstone of democracy” is that this image, this metaphor, is either just a fine façade or that the cornerstone is losing its integrity, cracked by fears of unintended consequences. When citizens are silent, fail to hold those in power accountable, or allow an elite to ensure that everyone speaks with one voice, we abandon the possibility of democracy.

WORKS CITED


NOTES

2. Raber (2007)
3. Many thanks to Susan Maret for bringing to my attention the work of Sissela Bok
4. ALA divisions include: American Association of School Librarians; Association of College and Research Libraries; ALCTS; ALSC; ALTA; ASCLA; LLAMA; LITA; PLA; RUSA; and YALSA. ALA roundtables are: NMRT; LIRT; SRRT; SLLIRT; GODORT; IRRT; LRRT; GLBTRT; IFRT; CLENERT; EMIERT; ERT; FAFLRT; LHRT/ MAGERT/ SORT/ VRT; SRT. In addition to the 50 state library associations that elect one councilor each, both Guam and the Virgin Islands, territories of the U.S. also have one councilor.
5. On 14 June 2014 *The Washington Post* and *The Guardian* (U.S. edition) were jointly awarded the Pulitzer Prize for reporting on the NSA scandal.
Wikipedia: Need for Librarians as Contributors

Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia built collaboratively using wiki software, is the most visited reference site on the web. Only 270 librarians identify as Wikipedians of 21,431,799 Wikipedians with named accounts. This needs to change. Understanding Wikipedia is essential to teaching information literacy and editing Wikipedia is essential to foster successful information-seeking behavior. Librarians who become skilled Wikipedians will maintain the centrality of librarianship to knowledge management in the 21st century—especially through active participation in crowdsourcing. Crowdsourcing is the online participation model that makes use of the collective intelligence of online communities for specific purposes in this case creating and editing articles for Wikipedia.

I began my career as a librarian in pre-digital times when the Guide to Reference Books was called Winchell. As a young librarian I conscientiously reviewed new editions of reference resources and annotated my copy of Winchell until the next edition was released—a rather big event in the librarian calendars of the last century. Since 2000 the Guide has only been published online. Yet the special expertise of librarians honed by our deep understanding

Kathleen de la Peña McCook is distinguished university professor, University of South Florida, School of Information in Tampa where she teaches the “History of Libraries,” “Public Librarianship” and “Human Rights and Librarians.” She is a member of the Progressive Librarians Guild Coordinating Committee.

KEYWORDS: Crowdsourcing; Digital natives; Florida libraries; Gender gap; Human rights; Information-seeking behavior; Information literacy; Knowledge management; Librarian biography; Librarians as Wikipedians; Library education; Library history; University of South Florida, School of Information; Wikipedia.
of the reference books annotated in Winchell (later Sheehy, then Balay, now Kieft) and honored in yearly reviews\(^8\) may give us false confidence that our expertise is widely understood and appreciated. In the 21st century these skills make little difference unless we connect them to the world’s largest and most used reference tool—Wikipedia.

Academic bias against Wikipedia was discussed in 2007 at Inside Higher Education as Middlebury college history professors banned its use, although the columnist points out that an analysis of the accuracy of Wikipedia for The Journal of American History found that in many entries, Wikipedia was as accurate or more accurate than more traditional encyclopedias.\(^9\) Now seven years old, the 161 comments attached to the column illuminate librarian and faculty opinions heavily critical of Wikipedia as a source.

In a 2010 study of Wikipedia use in higher education Head and Eisenberg point out: “Far more students, than not, used Wikipedia….Reasons for using Wikipedia were diverse: Wikipedia provided students with a summary about a topic, the meaning of related terms, and also got students started on their research and offered a usable interface.\(^{10}\)” As our students are increasingly digital natives,\(^{11}\) we can expect them to be more open to crowdsourced technologies like Wikipedia.

The Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education developed by the Association of College and Research Libraries is in the revision process at the time of this writing (May 2014). It defines information literacy:
Information literacy combines a repertoire of abilities, practices, and dispositions focused on expanding one’s understanding of the information ecosystem, with the proficiencies of finding, using and analyzing information, scholarship, and data to answer questions, develop new ones, and create new knowledge, through ethical participation in communities of learning and scholarship.\textsuperscript{12}

This definition of information literacy certainly provides a rationale for using Wikipedia, but \textit{The Framework} indicates no strong recognition of the growing importance of Wikipedia as a source. This is a missed opportunity. Again, Wikipedia is the most used reference resource in the world.

\textit{“Wikipedia and Knowledge Management:” the Courses}

During 2013-2014 I developed a new course, “Wikipedia and Knowledge Management,” and reorganized two other courses, “History of Books and Libraries,” and “Librarians and Human Rights” with large portions of assignments to be done in Wikipedia. I decided that students could apply critical thinking skills to enhance articles in Wikipedia and at the same time work to increase the amount of information about libraries and librarianship at the site. Since my classes are 60 percent women it also seemed to me that teaching more women to edit in Wikipedia would be a way I could help in a small way to address the gender gap among Wikipedia editors.\textsuperscript{13} I live by the question asked by Eleanor Roosevelt, ‘Where do human rights begin? In small places, close to home, so close and so small that they cannot be seen on any maps of the world. Such are the places where every man, woman, and child seeks equal justice, equal opportunity, equal dignity without discrimination.’\textsuperscript{14} A class is a good small place.

In this article I provide a summary of the work done by students enrolled in these classes at the University of South Florida, School of Information, a program accredited by the American Library Association.\textsuperscript{15} Students were extraordinarily creative and without limits as they went through tutorials and became proficient at editing.\textsuperscript{16} The outcome of the classes was that enrolled students are now creative contributors, skilled editors, and managers of content in Wikipedia. They are both librarians AND Wikipedians.

To demonstrate the scope of work I provide examples from the three classes. These examples are intended to demonstrate the range of scholarship and creativity that graduate students accomplished as editors. Clearly, these are examples of solid work on which others can build and expand. Crowdsourcing by librarians is a strategy for extending our contributions to knowledge and especially to topics relating to books and libraries.
LIS Course: “Wikipedia and Knowledge Management.”

A geographical, sociological and chronological overview of knowledge management beginning with the printed encyclopedia.

How Wikipedia came about and how a virtual army of volunteers crowd-sourced a user-built encyclopedia of over 4 million articles.

Class activities will include editing, writing and organizing knowledge to be included in Wikipedia.17

**Biographical contributions**

Out of the gate one student added a new entry on *The Librarian* (Giuseppe Arcimboldo’s painting).

Another student observed: “Wikipedia’s list of librarians was looking male dominated and Eurocentric so I added some notable female and international librarians. While I was glad to see that so many had Wikipedia pages, I thought it was important they be included in an overall view.” By including a few examples of this student’s work taken from the “history” tab of each page we can see how this was accomplished (see endnote 17).18

For the human rights class a new entry was written for Clara Breed a librarian in San Diego, California, remembered chiefly for her support for Japanese American children during World War II. This entry was featured in
the 2/28/14 DYK section\(^1\) and had over 8,137 visits in between time of creation and March, 2014. It was one of the top visited pages in March 2014. The user page of petercannon\(^2\) is a resource to review this process. Additionally, here is a screen shot:

Below is a list of over 40 biographies added during the three classes. Those with a + symbol were new entries. Others were extant entries that were expanded and edited. Because Wikipedia is not in alphabetical order but is an openly searchable database I have listed biographies the way they appear on their Wikipedia pages. Some students included new images with their reports and a few examples are provided. Some wrote biographies of librarians whose careers had a focus on human rights. Some looked to the history of the discipline to add notable librarians and book people.

- Ainsworth Rand Spofford
- Alice S. Tyler
- Alois Senefelder
- Ana Rosa Núñez
- Anne Jarvis
+ Beatrice Winser
- Charles Ammi Cutter
+ Clara Breed
- Clara Whitehill Hunt
- Caroline Hewins
- Eliza Atkins Gleason
- Eliza Farnham
+ Emily Wheelock Reed
+ Francis R. St. John
+ Fred C. Cole
- Garth Williams
- Háfiz Osman
- Hedwig Anuar
+ Helen Marot
- Henrietta M. Smith
- James Logan
+ Jane Walker Burleson
- José Toribio Medina
+ Joseph Henry Reason
+ Josephus Nelson Larned
- Justin Winsor
+ Juliette Hampton Morgan
- Li Dazhao
- Louise Noëlle Malclès
+ Maria Chavez-Hernandez
+ Maria Luisa Monteiro da Cunha
- Marianne Scott
Helen Marot was a Progressive librarian and Labor Movement activist

Melvil Dewey
+Patricia Swift Blalock
+Olinta Ariosa Morales
+Randolph Greenfield Adams
S. R. Ranganathan
Sadie Peterson Delaney

Samuel Gompers
+Shen Zhurong
+Tony Pizzo
Thomas Bray
William Frederick Poole
+Winarti Partaningrat

Winarti Partaningrat. Indonesian leader in the creation of a special library networking system

100 of the Most Important 20th Century Leaders in the United States

And, as a tour de force, one student (already a well-established Wikipedian—the legendary Gamaliel) decided to edit and update entries for librarians listed in American Libraries as “100 of the Most Important Leaders We Had in the 20th Century.” He went through the list and looked for basic things to improve: categories, citations, redirects, dates of birth/death, etc. For most leaders listed below additions and edits were made to improve and enhance their entry.
Mary Eileen Ahern
Alexander Allain
(intellectual freedom advocate)
May Hill Arbuthnot
Lester E. Asheim
Hugh Atkinson
Augusta Baker
William J. Barrow
Mildred Leona Batchelder
John Shaw Billings
William Warner Bishop
Henry Bliss
Sarah Bogle
Richard Rogers Bowker
William Howard Brett
Pierce Butler
Andrew Carnegie (not a librarian)
Leon Carnovsky
Verner Warren Clapp
David Horace Clift
Fred C. Cole
George Watson Cole
Robert B. Craneberger
Arthur Curley
John Cotton Dana
Sadie Peterson Delaney
Melvil Dewey
William S. Dix
Robert B. Downs
Paul Dunkin
Linda Eastman
Margaret A. Edwards
Charles Evans
Luther Evans
Virginia Proctor Powell Florence
Henry Clay Folger (book collector)
Herman H. Fussler
Loleta Fyan
Mary Gaver
Rudolph H. Gjelsness
Fred Glazer
Margaret Hayes Grazier
Emerson Greenaway
James Christian Meinich Hanson
Adelaide R. Hasse
Frances E. Henne
Caroline M. Hewins
Carleton B. Joeckel
Virginia Lacy Jones
Frederick Paul Keppel
(Carnegie Foundation)
Harry Miller Lydenberg
Stephen McCarthy
Archibald MacLeish
Margaret Mann
Charles Martel
Allie Beth Martin
Frederic G. Melcher (bookman)
Keyes D. Metcalf
Carl H. Milam
Sydney B. Mitchell
William Andrew Moffett
Foster E. Mohrhardt
Anne Carroll Moore
Bessie Boehm Moore
(trustee leader)
Everett T. Moore
Isabel Gilbert Mudge
L. 0uincy Mumford
Ralph Munn
Margaret Norton
Paul Peter Evans
Effie Louise Power
Herbert Putnam
Joseph Henry Reason
Ernest C. Richardson
Arthur Fremont Rider
Frank Bradway Rogers
Charlemae Rollins
Francis R. St. John
Frances Clarke Sayers
Marvin Scilken
Margaret C. Scoggin
Minnie Earl Sears
To get an idea of the kinds of changes made to these entries by Gamaliel a few examples are provided in the endnotes.24

Library Associations

Library associations are not well represented in Wikipedia and adding and editing them could be a major focus for librarians who become Wikipedians.25 So much work to support intellectual freedom and outreach takes place in librarian associations that is documented haphazardly on websites of various degrees of currency. There is much support for students by hundreds of librarians in their associations raising funds for scholarships or awards that encourage research: The Progressive Librarian Guild’s Braverman Award, for example.26 Having Wikipedia entries for library associations enhances the visibility of library and information work. Students added new entries and expanded extant ones. The list of library associations on which class members worked to update links is a starting point for additional article creation and editing.27

American Association of Law Libraries
+Association of Caribbean University, Research and Institutional Libraries
Association of Research Libraries
Bibliographical Society of America
+Florida Library Association
+Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, and Transgender Round Table (American Library Association)
Library Association of Ireland
Southeastern Library Association
+Tampa Bay Library Consortium
+Virginia Library Association
Young Adult Library Services Association
Library Updates or New Entries (+) United States

Another group of entries on which students worked were devoted to a variety of U.S. libraries and related topics. Once again those proceeded by a + were new to Wikipedia. Other topics were expanded.

The classes felt that general library information was lacking for many locations and students were especially conscientious adding photographs, location data and history for many libraries. Wikipedia entries on Florida counties were inconsistent in the inclusion of library system information. Student Dgiguere89 did as stunning amount of work adding library information to county entries. A few examples indicate the scope of her work. Though Florida libraries were the majority of the entries, some in other states were included.

African-American Research Library and Cultural Center, Broward County, Florida

Anton Brees Carillon Library (FL)
+Auburn Avenue Research Library on African American Culture and History (GA)
Boca Raton Public Library (FL)
Bradenton Carnegie Library (FL)
Carnegie Library
Broward County. African-American Research Library and Cultural Center (FL)
A great deal of work was done adding information to national library entries. However, one class member, Brooksky, who tried to add information about the National Library of Pakistan was unable to do so. The individual watching the site—“Smsarmad” used the ruse of copyright violation to delete information that was added. Having reviewed the work I know it was not copied and was information that had been documented with notes from secondary sources. When Brooksky met Smsarmad’s demands the changes were still deleted.
Inexplicably the higher authority agreed that the sources should be deleted. I could only surmise that individuals who become conversant in the Wikipedia community on certain topic have created levels of authority that can overturn well intentioned and accurate information on rare occasions. To overturn this would take much more editing focus than was available to this class. We did not have difficulties with any other national library. It is likely best to be aware that this sort of activity can go on, can be discouraging, but is not typical. It would be a leap to suggest that there is a cultural bias against women editing the National Library of Pakistan site, but it could be an aspect of the “Malala effect.” Interested readers may want to review the “Talk” pages for this library to see how issues might be contested.

Listed below are national library entries that were edited by students in the classes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Albania</th>
<th>Costa Rica</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Algeria</td>
<td>Democratic Republic of Congo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Angola</td>
<td>Ethiopia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Azerbaijan</td>
<td>Germany</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belarus</td>
<td>Iran</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Botswana</td>
<td>Norway</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brazil</td>
<td>Portugal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burkina Faso</td>
<td>South Africa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burundi</td>
<td>Turkey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cambodia</td>
<td>Ukraine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cape Verde</td>
<td>Uruguay</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

And a few additional non-U.S. entries demonstrate the range of library and manuscript entries that can be expanded.

List of libraries in the ancient world

- Cotton library
- Dresden Codex
- +Gazi Husrev-beg Library
- Herzog August Library
- Library of Ashurbanipal
- Library of Celsus
- Vernadsky National Library of Ukraine

**Human Rights and Librarianship**

Human rights topics or libraries with a focus on human rights such as the Auburn Avenue Research Library on African American Culture and History were added. Librarians with a notable commitment to human rights are listed
Dresden Codes. A pre-Columbian Maya book of the eleventh or twelfth century of the Yucatecan Maya in Chichén Itzá. This Maya codex is believed to be a copy of an original text of some three or four hundred years earlier. It is the oldest book written in the Americas known to historians

in the biographical section intermingled with all biographical contributions, for who can not say that all library work contributes to human development?

The strongest work done in the class on behalf of human rights was a three person collaboration that extensively revised the Wikipedia entry, “Librarianship and human rights in the United States.” The article now opens with this powerful statement:

Librarians, both individually and collectively, have a long history of engagement with human rights issues as they pertain to libraries and the communities they serve: against censorship and discrimination; and in support of the rights of immigrants, cultural minorities, poor people, the homeless and unemployed, people with disabilities, children and young adults, the LGBT community, older adults, those who are illiterate, and the imprisoned. Librarians also protect human rights by developing
diverse collections, programs and services; promoting literacy; and preserving cultural and historical records.\textsuperscript{32}

Listed below are human rights Wikipedia entries created or edited addressed by students in the class.

Book burning in Chile following the 1973 coup that installed the Pinochet regime in Chile

Abu Ghraib torture and prisoner abuse
+Auburn Avenue Research Library on African American Culture and History (GA)
Bibliotherapy
Book burning
Broward County. African-American Research Library and Cultural Center (FL)
Effect of Hurricane Katrina on Tulane University (added information on damage to library)
Equality Florida
Florida Literacy Coalition, Inc.
Freedom Summer
Human Rights Watch
Individuals and groups assisting Jews during the Holocaust
Intellectual freedom
Lesbian and Gay Equality Project
Librarians Without Borders
Librarianship and human rights in the United States
Other Editing Examples

The classes were expansive and a number of interesting edits on library or book-related topics were also submitted as weekly assignments. Some of these are listed below.

As We May Think
Ask a Librarian
Bibliomania
Blanket order
Bok Tower Gardens
Book curse
Bookmobile
Bookselling
Bookworm
Carilda Oliver Labra
Chapbook
Digital rights management
Education for librarianship
Faceted classification

Oscar Hijuelos, appears at Miami Book Fair International, 1993
A few examples of student comments at the end of the course indicate the kind of reception this class received:

- I plan to continue editing and creating articles for Wikipedia and part of that plan will carry over to whatever place of employment I have after graduation. I’ve put my wiki editing skills on my CV and it’s in my portfolio of things I’ve worked on or created during my time in grad school. I think that integrating special collections holdings into Wikipedia is something that we, as archivists, should consider.

- As I began to learn about Wikipedia, I realized its importance, not only from a conceptual standpoint but also as a source of knowledge. Whether or not academia frowns on it, people use Wikipedia. For most of the population, who cannot afford subscription databases nor have the necessary research skills, it is a primary access point. This resulted in me questioning my role as a librarian. After all, isn’t it my responsibility to ensure that all people have access to the same quality of information? Beginning the editing process was not easy, the syntax was confusing, there was little instructional material and it was difficult to find a community. Without this class, I’m not sure that I would have stayed with it. However, as I kept working on Wikipedia, I began to respect it in a way that I didn’t expect. The internal process of quality control, the sheer amount of time and energy spent by volunteers and the quality of research were actually quite amazing.

- I see Wikipedia as integral part of the web, people trust Wikipedia, they use Wikipedia and no matter what problems it may run into I do not think that it is going to change. I know that I will continue to edit Wikipedia.

- This class was simply amazing. Through intense discussion of the social history of knowledge management, the class learned a great deal about how history, politics, culture and other external factors directly impact the methods of knowledge production and maintenance. The sections we covered on Wikipedia were informative and helpful. Conducting weekly edits helped us as students to get in and really see what Wikipedia does, how it is done, and how it can impact those who frequently use this internet website. The information that I have learned from this class will be of great use to me in the future, and I have every plan to continue on as an editor for Wikipedia in the years to come. The importance of accurate information from an encyclopedia cannot be stressed enough, and with a resource like Wikipedia, librarians should be helping to create better information.
source through our knowledge of research, proper citation and neutrality of topics.

The point of this rather extensive review of work done in the three classes I taught in 2013-2014 is to offer a challenge to teachers of librarians and to librarians as information literacy instructors. The challenge is that they engage in editing in Wikipedia—the world’s most used reference source.

If not us, who?

The Future of Librarianship and Wikipedia

Cultural organizations have begun to hire Wikipedians. The National Library of Scotland hired a full-time Wikipedian in 2013 whose duties involve using the library’s collections to update the online user-led encyclopaedia and teaching staff and the public how to add to the site. The Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library, at the University of Michigan at Ann Arbor, was the first presidential library in the United States to have a “Wikipedian in residence” on its staff. Michael Barera, a master’s student at Michigan’s School of Information, was charged with increasing and enhancing the library’s presence on Wikipedia in 2013. The University of California Berkeley American Cultures program has hired Kevin Gorman as the first Wikipedian-in-Residence at a U.S. university. Houghton Library at Harvard is seeking a Wikipedian to help make its collections as accessible as possible.

Wikipedia is increasingly a topic of academic study. For example Fullerton and Ettema’s analysis of “talk pages” in which discussions of article creation are recorded or Joorabchi and Mahdi’s study of automatic subject indexing of library records with Wikipedia concepts. For me a very true, smart and pragmatic approach to using Wikipedia in teaching information literacy was detailed by Cate Calhoun in College and Research Library News:

Wikipedia can act as a bridge to help them [undergraduates] become familiar with library resources and a new way to research they may have never learned in high school. Wikipedia continues to increase in popularity, and it is likely that students will continue to use it. Scholars, educators, and librarians should not shun it, but rather embrace it and make it work within a structure of information literacy while furthering students’ education.

There are indicators that the convergence of the work of Librarian and Wikipedian is gaining more traction. Brian Kelly, Innovation Advocate at Cetis, the Centre for Educational Technology, Interoperability and Standards based at the University of Bolton, has given a number of talks on Wikipedia...
and summarized developments in use of Wikipedia in higher education at the EduWiki Serbia conference held in Belgrade in March 2014. He has supported Wikipedia training events and edit-a-thons including session at the LILAC 2014 information literacy conference.\textsuperscript{40}

There are initiatives in the Wikipedia community to expand librarian involvement. “Wikipedia Loves Libraries” is a general initiative for improved Wikimedia engagement with libraries (and archives), and more concretely an annual campaign of wiki-workshops and edit-a-thons at libraries around Open Access Week in October/November.\textsuperscript{41} Events for each year can be viewed at the Wikipedia Loves Libraries Portal.\textsuperscript{42}

Wikipedia is a democratic crowdsourced reference tool that needs a more inclusive cadre of editors—more women (only about 12\% of contributors are women) and more people from diverse backgrounds.\textsuperscript{43} Managing knowledge, preserving knowledge, and sharing knowledge is central to the work of a librarian. Wikipedia as a resource is covered by the first point in the Library Bill of Rights: “Books and other library resources should be provided for the interest, information, and enlightenment of all people of the community the library serves. Materials should not be excluded because of the origin, background, or views of those contributing to their creation.”\textsuperscript{44} And use of Wikipedia is also covered by the Code of Ethics of the American Library Association: “We provide the highest level of service to all library users through appropriate and usefully organized resources; equitable service policies; equitable access; and accurate, unbiased, and courteous responses to all requests.”\textsuperscript{45}

Given that mastery of Wikipedia is simply an extension of the librarian’s skill set from scrolls, to codices, to digital collection, isn’t it time that the page “Wikipedian Librarians”\textsuperscript{46} adds thousands?

NOTES


18. The history tab allows readers to view the editors of the article and the changes that have been made. Listed here are a few of the changes made to include women and librarians from a more diverse set of backgrounds to the “list of librarians.” User:Mcgowanlianna https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/User:Mcgowanlianna Accessed May 26, 2014.

18:04, 6 November 2013 (diff | hist) List of librarians (Margaret Scoggin) (current) (diff | hist) . . (+27) . . List of librarians (Frances Clarke Sayers)

17:54, 6 November 2013 (diff | hist) . . (+24) . . List of librarians (Effie Louise Power)
17:53, 6 November 2013 (diff | hist). List of librarians (Mary Wright Plummer)
17:49, 6 November 2013 (diff | hist). List of librarians (Allie Beth Martin)
17:48, 6 November 2013 (diff | hist). List of librarians (Virginia Lacy Jones)
17:40, 6 November 2013 (diff | hist). List of librarians (Helen Haines)
17:39, 6 November 2013 (diff | hist). List of librarians (Virginia Gaver)
17:37, 6 November 2013 (diff | hist). List of librarians (El Sayed Mahmoud El Sheniti)
17:33, 6 November 2013 (diff | hist). List of librarians (Theresa Elmendorf)
17:31, 6 November 2013 (diff | hist). List of librarians (Karl Dziatzko)
17:23, 6 November 2013 (diff | hist). List of librarians (Shen Zhurong)
17:21, 6 November 2013 (diff | hist). List of librarians (Eliza Atkins Gleason)

22. 100 of the most important leaders we had in the 20th century. (1999). American Libraries, 30(11), 38.
23. 100 of the most important leaders we had in the 20th century. (1999). American Libraries, 30(11), 38.

The history tab allows readers to view the editors of the article and the changes that have been made. Listed here are a few of the changes made from the list of 100 library leaders of the 20th century.

(del/undel) 13:49, 26 September 2013 (diff | hist). Frederick Paul Keppel ((corrected dob/d, added to intro with citation)
Carleton Joeckel ((Redirected page to Carleton B. Joeckel) (current)
(del/undel) 14:44, 23 September 2013 (diff | hist). Leon Carnovsky ((Category:University of Missouri alumni; +Category:University of Chicago alumni using HotCat) (current) [rollback: 2 edits]


18:23, 31 October 2013 (diff | hist) . . (+1,170) . . Hamilton County, Florida ↑(added information about the library)
18:12, 31 October 2013 (diff | hist) . . (+425) . . Taylor County, Florida ↑(added information about the library) (current)
18:10, 31 October 2013 (diff | hist) . . (+400) . . Gilchrist County, Florida ↑(added information about the library) (current)
18:08, 31 October 2013 (diff | hist) . . (+428) . . Lafayette County, Florida ↑(added information about the library) (current)
18:05, 31 October 2013 (diff | hist) . . (+243) . . Dixie County, Florida ↑(added information about the regional library system) (current)


Making Space for Silenced Histories
National History, Personal Archives, and the WWII Japanese American Internment

National archives, museums, and libraries function as social memory banks for national identity. What a nation preserves, where a nation preserves it, and how accessible it is, not only reveals what a nation values and how it sees itself, but it also reflects how a nation desires to be seen. The process of constructing a national identity, or what could also be called a national history, remains problematic, because it tends to conceal the privileging of certain records of memory over others in an effort to form a concise and cohesive linear narrative. The idea of a singular national history is by definition hegemonic history; it is a history that privileges, reflects, and justifies the social values of those in power through archival records. Joan M. Schwartz and Terry Cook astutely connect archives, power, and collective social memory, “archives have their origins in the information needs and social values of the rulers, governments, businesses, and individuals who establish and maintain them” (12). As Schwartz and Cook point out, archives were founded by empowered institutions and individuals and consequently come to reflect the social values of the status quo. As archival records are the foundation on which a history is written, revised, and maintained, national history rests on records that not only constitute the national archive, but also are accessible to researchers and the public.

Amy Lau is a current MSLIS graduate student at Pratt Institute. In 2012 she wrote a thesis on the representation of ethical quandaries in David Mitchell’s Cloud Atlas for her M.A. degree in Humanities and Social Thought from New York University. Her intellectual interests include Ethical Studies, Archives, Gender and Racial Politics, and Narrative Theory.

KEYWORDS: WWII Japanese-American Internment; Archives; Hegemonic narrative.
Composition and access are two important dynamic aspects of the archive that change how national history is conceived and taught. Composition especially challenges the idea of a singular history. Questions about who composes and can contribute to the archive, as well as, who has access to those archival records reveals how archives are constructed not only by society, but also by time. Schwartz and Cook emphasize the importance of recognizing that archives are “socially constructed institutions” which “shape our notions of history, identity, and memory” (8). The construction facet of the archives enables that institution to adapt to shifts in power dynamics over time. This adaptability over time enables the archive to help revise, or possibly to expand, national history by collecting and preserving records from marginalized groups. A singular national history, then, is in effect false and porous, because it is always vulnerable to time, the relation of marginalized groups to political power over time, and the social histories of those marginalized groups.

However, a hegemonic national history, validated by national archival records, continues to influence how history is conceived of and taught. When marginalized groups have not been recognized by national history, the construction and maintenance of personal archives enables those groups to challenge the validity of, and possibly change, the taught hegemonic national history. In her article titled “Ethics and the Archive: ‘An Incessant Movement of Recontextualization,’” Verne Harris deconstructs the idea of the archive as a static institution of the empowered. Instead, Harris contends that the archive is an institution that calls for an ethics of social justice that involves:

a fundamental opening—an opening to the voice of ‘the other,’ to a haunting of context, to the knocking of the stranger, to Derrida’s ghosts that flit behind, through, and under the concrete presence of power.

(352)

Here, Harris (a South African archivist) puts her own spin on Derrida’s ghosts; spirits that vocalize the suppressed histories of marginalized peoples. Through metaphor, she depicts the ghosts haunting the content of dominant historical narrative. She names the archive as the place of the haunting and asks the archivist to listen to the echoes of those voices who have not been, and are not, recognized in hegemonic history, and yet are felt in the silence that surrounds that historical narrative. Harris’ ethics of the archive focus on the intersection of archival record, social memory, and social justice. Her ethics of haunting bring to light how the privileged, recognized national archival record influences which personal archival record receives national recognition. Her archive theory can also account for the important role temporality plays in the opening of suppressed, and eventually recognized, marginalized histories. National archives are haunted by the silenced gaps of marginalized people;
gaps that can be filled out and reinterpreted through the ghosts that inhabit the
central archive of marginalized peoples.

While a hegemonic national history is at best an easy way of learning
the dates and well-known political figures in a nation’s history, that history
becomes especially troubled when examining periods of social inequality
and violence against marginalized minority groups. The Japanese-American
internment during World War II is one such point of trouble in United States
history. The personal archives and internees’ testimonies exemplify the major
role that social memory played in bringing about an apology and reparations
from the United States Government for the Japanese-American Internment
nearly forty years after the event. Moreover, after 1988 the personal archives of
Japanese-American internees were included in the national archives and served
as the foundation of scholarship and pedagogy about the internment. The lack
of public awareness about access to archival record, that records the everyday
lives of minority people living through a shameful period of time, skews the
commemoration of that period through past and contemporary politics. The
personal experience of marginalized people becomes represented by a singular
historical figure, leaving other personal histories to haunt the background. How
does national history record and depict a shameful historical period? How does
the national archival record affect how the period is remembered? And how do
personal archives open, change, and empower marginalized people in the face
of the national historical narrative?

Through federal government records, personal archival records, and articles
about a home movie titled *Topaz*, I will construct how personal archives occupied
the silences in the hegemonic national history about the World War II Japanese-
American internment. I contend that Verne Harris’ ethics of social justice in
the archive offers a helpful theory for an examination about the relationship
between personal and national archives. As national history justifies its narrative
through archival record, I will also argue that the relationship between personal
and national archives transforms how researchers’ conceive national history
from a singular history to multiple histories. The story of Japanese-American
redress for WWII speaks to Harris’ ghosts in the archive and breaks open the old
hegemonic history of the internment through the multiple voices of Japanese-
American’s personal archives.

**Government Documents of the 1940’s**

Until the Civil Liberties Act of 1988, the history of the World War II
Japanese-American internment was largely told from the easily accessible
perspective of government officials and newspaper reporters. What was
accessible to researchers was found in the national archives, which contained
commissioned photographs and documents written by the War Relocation
Authority (WRA), the government organization in charge of setting policies and running the internment camps. Documents from the legislative and executive branches, and newspaper articles addressing the internment were also accessible through the national archives. These documents exemplify how hegemonic history privileges the perspective of empowered government officials and journalists and silence the lived personal accounts of marginalized communities through archival record. In her article “Revisiting Manzanar: A history of Japanese American internment camps as presented in selected federal government documents 1941-2002,” Kimberley Roberts Parks focuses on the how the tone of the War Relocation Authority’s documents about the internment changed over time (590). Parks’ article illuminates how the tone of governmental documents fluctuated due to mixed popular opinion about the internment:

The reader can also infer from these documents that both pro- and anti-internment camp advocates in Congress, the press, and the citizenry frequently attacked the agency [WRA] for either coddling or mistreating the evacuees. No direct charges or criticisms are quoted, but reasons for policies are presented in careful detail. (580-581)

It is important to note that the WRA documents were written with the current opinions of the general public, which obviously did not include the Japanese-American community, in mind. The documents Parks references here were the official governmental record of the policies and procedures of the Japanese-American internment during 1942, at the beginning of the internment. The government, and also the press, used euphemistic language to describe the entire internment that helped frame WRA’s policies and procedures in a less morally ambiguous light. The government documents’ understated language also emphasizes the close scrutiny WRA received from elected officials, the press, and the public, because at that time the public did not know much about life inside of the internment camps. That language used by WRA also had dire consequences for the public’s conception and conversation about the internment. Not only did the American press use the same terms as the federal government, but in doing so it also helped lay the framework of the Japanese-American internment in a completely inaccurate way. Using a word such as “evacuee” instead of “internee” framed the WRA program in context of the Japanese-Americans fleeing towards something rather than being involuntarily incarcerated by their own government.

The softened language found in WRA documents tended to defend extremely ethically ambiguous WRA policies such as opening “Evacuee Property Offices in San Francisco, Los Angeles, and Seattle in order to assist with large item storage or serve as real estate agent for the evacuees” (580), as
well as the February 1943 policy that “required ‘registration’ of all Japanese American men over 17 years of age in the camps for either Army enlistment, relocation leave as a worker, or ‘segregation’” (581). While documents from the legislative and executive branches of government at times critique certain WRA policies they continued to support the internment camps. Parks’ article shows the skewed perspective that federal governmental documents bring to the history of the Japanese-American internment. The language used in the government documents, such as referring to the Japanese-American internees as “evacuees,” distances and masks the civil liberties that were violated with the formation and execution of the camps. What official government records give researchers is a history of governmental support for the Japanese-American internment with some instances of contestation over policy in the camps. The government records shadow the emotional, material and physical consequences of WRA policies and decisions experienced by the Japanese-American internees.

While governmental documents gave historians and researchers a history of the internment from the perspective of governmental officials, what haunt the language of those documents are the silenced histories of the Japanese-American internees. Harris’ ethics of the archive comes into play within the detailed reasoning and soften language that defends WRA’s policies. The embodied experiences, letters, photographs, and films of the Japanese-American internees haunt the hegemonic history of the internment as written by the federal government documents. Harris calls for a social justice in the archives based on three imperatives (351). For the purposes of thinking about how the call of social justice haunts the archive and the archivist, Harris’ second imperative is the most relevant when thinking about the composition of the national archive that automatically includes government documents and selects records from citizens’ personal archives:

Secondly, the structural pull in all recordmaking is toward the replication of existing relations of power, with the attendant exclusions, privilegings, and marginalisations. Archivists cannot avoid complicity, for institutionally (and often legally) they are positioned within structures of power. But we can work against its pull and for me it is a moral imperative to do so. (351-352)

Harris astutely points out that the archive and the archivist work within a power structure that tends to work toward maintaining and supporting current power relations. This power structure is apt to take the privileging and inclusion of certain records and exclusion of others as a given. While Harris acknowledges that the archivist cannot avoid some complicity with the status quo of the prevailing power structure, she also recognizes that the archivist
has some agency to work against those power dynamics due to their privileged position within the power structure. Harris calls archivists to use their agency within the archive to listen to the voices of the ghosts who have been left out of official records. In the face of the silence surrounding the Japanese-American internees experience in the internment camps, Harris’ archival ethics calls for the archivist to include personal documents about the Japanese-American internment written and recorded by Japanese-American internees. It asks the archive to create a space for the voices of the Japanese-American internees and to allow those internees to reclaim the terms of the internment from the euphemistic language used by federal government documents.

**Government Documents from the 1980’s and the Redress Movement**

With the rise of the Asian-American movement during the 1970’s, the silent haunting of official government documents by the excluded voices of the Japanese-American internees came into full voice and visibility through the organization and involvement of a younger generation of Japanese-Americans. Beginning in the late 1970’s, the two organizations, the Japanese-American Citizens League (JACL) and National Council for Japanese American Redress (NCJAR), started to campaign for redress (*Chronology of WWII Incarceration*). On July 31, 1980, Congress established the Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians (CWRIC) to review the impact of the internment on Japanese-American internees (*Public Law 96-317*). CWRIC conducted 20 days of hearings all over the United States and heard testimony from 750 internees (Parks 586). In December 1982, the Commission brought the first half of its report titled *Personal Justice Denied–Part I* before Congress (*Personal Justice Denied-Part I*). As Parks explains in her article, the report compared the internment of Japanese-Americans on the West Coast “with the wartime treatment of Hawaiians, Germans and German Americans, and the Japanese in Latin America” (586). This comparison and the testimony of 750 internees helped reframed the dialog about the WWII internment of Japanese-American citizens and Japanese-American resident aliens.

The internment was no longer told through the euphemistic language of governmental officials, but instead through the words of the internees remembering life in the camps. Unsurprisingly the evacuees’ testimonies offer a very different perspective of the camps, differences that the Commission emphasized throughout *Personal Justice Denied—Part I*. For example the report emphasized how the process of “relocation” and “evacuation” dehumanized internees by literally labeling families along with their possessions:

Henry went to the Control Station to register the family. He came home with twenty tags, all numbered 10710, tags to be attached to each piece
of baggage, and one to hang from our coat lapels. From then on, we were known as Family #10710. (11)

The inclusion of this internee’s testimony in the report not only gives voice to the dehumanizing effects of “relocation,” but it also gave that internee the ability to put a human face on a dehumanizing process. The testimonies included in the Commission’s report opened a space for the voices of the Japanese-American internees in the national archives through an official government document. Those long excluded voices appear in the archives through the hundreds of transcribed testimonies collected by CWRIC and included with the report. Nearly forty years after the WWII Japanese-American internment, the documented version of national history was making space for marginalized personal histories.

Through internee testimony and comparing the U.S. decision to incarcerate Japanese-American citizens and Japanese-American naturalized aliens with the decisions of countries in Latin America with similar populations, the Commission’s report cast the justification for the WRA program and the reasoning behind Executive Order 9066 in a dubious light. The second half of the Commission’s report, Personal Justice Denied—Part II: Recommendations, was brought before Congress on July 16, 1983 (Chronology of WWII Incarceration). Along with a formal apology from the President on behalf of the nation to the Japanese-American community, the second half of the report suggested that Congress, not only give each of the surviving Japanese-American internees $20,000 in reparations, but it also suggested that Congress create “a fund for educational and humanitarian purposes” (Personal Justice Denied—Part II: Rec. 9). The report expands upon the purpose of the recommended educational and research fund, which could include a foundation about civil liberties, with an eye on how the report changes the history of the internment:

The recommended foundation might appropriately fund comparative studies of similar civil liberties abuses or of the effect upon particular groups of racial prejudice embodied by government action in times of national stress; for example, the fund’s public educational activity might include preparing and distributing the Commission’s findings about these events to textbook publishers, educators and libraries. (9)

The last part of the Commission’s recommendation acts as a reminder that the Japanese-American internees’ stories had been left out of textbooks, history education and libraries. By including an educational component in their redress recommendation, the Commission was aware that their report contained important historical perspectives on the internment that had been ignored in the national historical narrative. While the existence of the report guaranteed
an official federal record of the Commissions “findings” about the internment, the educational recommendation also sought to give the American public easier access to the “findings” in the report as well. Though the report’s perspective also brought a biased point of view to the history of the Japanese-American internment, it helped open the door to redress and, with redress, the collection of and access to the personal histories of the internees.

The Civil Liberties Act of 1988

The recommendations in the Commission’s report heavily influenced the Act that gave redress to the Japanese-American internees. On August 10, 1988, President Ronald Regan signed the Civil Liberties Act of 1988 that included most of the recommendations in CWRIC’s 1983 report. The Act included individual reparations of $20,000 to each of the surviving internees or their descendants, a formal apology on behalf of the citizens of the United States to the Japanese-American community, and money donated to the Civil Liberties Public Education Fund (Parks 588). With the signing of the Act, the national archival record of the Japanese-American internment expanded beyond the boundaries of the federal government documents of the 1940’s and the physical space of the archive to include the sites of the internment. The money donated to the Civil Liberties Public Education Fund helped turn the internment camp sites into National Historical Landmarks where there were “several comprehensive studies of the internment camps conducted by government and academic historians (Parks 588). The Act also opened a space for the creation of a museum and archive solely dedicated to collecting and making the individual and communal histories of the Japanese-Americans accessible to the public. Founded in 1985 as a private, non-profit museum, the Japanese American National Museum (JANM) is “the first museum in the United States dedicated to sharing the experience of Americans of Japanese ancestry as an integral part of U.S. history” (Hist. of the Japan. Amer. Nat’l. Museum). The museum’s mission statement emphasizes the place of Japanese-Americans as a part of U.S. History; it is a statement that recognizes how national history contains many experiences that need to be told alongside each other. The museum contains collections that focus on individual internees as well as a main collection that reflects on the collective experience of the internment for Japanese-Americans (Hist. of the Japan. Amer. Nat’l. Museum). Not only does the museum maintain and make accessible several collections of personal documents from Japanese-American internees, but it also contains a moving image archive that helped a small film about the internment gain recognition in a prestigious national archive.
The story of Topaz’ rise to national recognition emphasizes the important role personal records can play in opening national history to include silenced histories. Topaz is a home video composed of video clips illegally shot by Dave Tatsuno during and after his incarceration at the Topaz, Utah internment camp (Means “Film Shot by WWII Internee…”). Told through Tatsuno’s voiceover, the Topaz footage depicts life in the Topaz internment camp through the everyday events of Tatsuno’s family and friends (Means “Film Shot by WWII Internee…”). Tatsuno’s video footage is a rare and valuable record of Japanese-American life inside the internment camps. Many Japanese-American internee records contain objects from, and letters written in, the camps. Few of those records include photographs of the camps taken by internees, because as Ishizuka and Zimmerman explain, “cameras, as well as radios, were considered contraband and were to be turned into the authorities” (129). Ishizuka and Zimmermann contextualize the uniqueness and importance of the Topaz footage:

Tatsuno’s footage is especially poignant and historically significant, since the very act of shooting in the camps defied this government-sanctioned embargo and gave voice and image to the silenced and the absent. (129)

The very existence of Tatsuno’s footage is a statement of empowerment not only for Tatsuno, but also for the Japanese-American internees who appear in his footage. Tatsuno’s footage of the internees in the camps offers a perspective in direct contrast to the federal government documents found in the national archives. Until the 1990’s when Karen Ishizuka and Robert Nakamura, the co-founders of the JANM’s Moving Image Archive, contacted Tatsuno, the presence of internee footage of the internment in research accessible archives was non-existent (Ishizuka and Zimmermann 129). Ishizuka and Nakamura’s efforts to preserve and screen all of Tatsuno’s footage of the Topaz internment camp at the JANM’s Moving Image Archive led to wider recognition and use of the footage (Ishizuka and Zimmerman 132). Ishizuka especially promoted the film through film festivals and speaking to the National Film Preservation board about the importance of preserving home videos for film and national history (Ishizuka and Zimmerman 135). While the participation of JANM and the testimonies of Ishizuka helped gain much needed attention for Topaz ’which helped bring about its induction into the National Film Registry, there were important technological and communal factors that also made Topaz’ induction possible.
Without the technological advancements in photography and home videos during the 1920’s, as well as Tatsuno’s decision to share his home videos with members of the Japanese-American community, the story of *Topaz* would not exist. From Katz and Gandel’s technological perspective, *Topaz* was also able to exist, because it occurred during the development of photography when the amount of information being produced was shifting from scarcity to abundance (223). In his newspaper article about the induction of *Topaz* into the 1996 National Film Registry, Sean P. Means perceptively notes that “home-movie equipment was first marketed in 1924” and it was a means for “Japanese-Americans to send their recorded images to their relatives in the old country” (“Film Shot by WWII Internee…”). The development and cheaper production of cameras and film enabled Tatsuno to shoot and develop his film despite being incarcerated. Even though home video equipment and film was even less expensive by the beginning by the 1940’s, it became difficult for Tatsuno to buy and develop footage once he was inside of the internment camp during wartime. After a WRA friend helped sneak Tatsuno’s camera into the internment camp, Tatsuno notes:

“So I had my camera—but how about movie film and color film—when films were so scarce because of wartime shortages? As a buyer for the Topaz Co-op I made three buying trips back East […] once I got the rolls into camp, processing was a problem […] I had the films mailed outside the camp from Salt Lake City and returned to my brother […] he would then give the processed films to someone coming into camp. (Ishizuka and Zimmermann 130)

Tatsuno’s film stock story attests to the communal effort that went into the acquisition and development of Tatsuno’s footage inside the Topaz internment camp. The road to recognition of that footage was also large paved by the communal effort of several Japanese-American organizations. Tatsuno shared some footage, which would become part of *Topaz*, at his local JACL and YMCA meetings during the rise of the Asian-American movement in the late 1970’s to early 1980’s (Ishizuka and Zimmerman 132). The recognition, collection, and preservation of *Topaz* might not have happened without those communal screenings for that was how Ishizuka and Nakamura learned about Tatsuno’s footage (133). The rise of the cheaper camera and the communal promotion of the *Topaz* footage helped the footage get attention and recognition from the JANM’s Moving Image Archive that, in turn, campaigned for the home video’s recognition in the national film cannon.

When *Topaz* was inducted into the National Film Registry on December 11, 1996 not only did it become the second home video to be selected for that honor, but it also became the first film created by a member of an ethic minority and
promoted by a grassroots movement to be accepted into the Registry (126). The selection of *Topaz*, and the press generated by that selection, exemplified not only the lack of films in the Registry by ethnic minorities, but also the disparity in budgets and promotional power between *Topaz* and the commercial studio productions also selected by the Registry. The video’s selection also throws light on the important differences in content between big budget fictional commercial films and personal home videos. As Ishizuka sharply notes, “*Topaz* provides an antidote to the glorification of World War II as the last great, honorable war fought on distant shores, as found in movies like *Pearl Harbor* and *Saving Private Ryan*” (137). Tatsuno’s home video not only helps encourage a shift in historic narrative from a picture U.S.’s heroic international involvement in WWII to the problematic effect of the war on civil liberties during wartime, but it also turns the spotlight on the disproportionate number of historic fictional films created by commercial studios that promote a singular national narrative about WWII and receive national recognition for that hegemonic narrative.

The induction and recognition of *Topaz* in the National Film Registry opens the door for more historically marginalized narratives to enter and fill out the silenced spaces of national history. The home video’s induction is important not only because it speaks from a historically silenced space, but—in doing so—it also sheds light on other gaps of silence in national history. *Topaz*’s road to national recognition speaks to the important and privileged role the archivist plays in bringing out individual narratives that shape national history. *Topaz*’ induction into the National Film Registry asks archivists to continue to listen to Derrida’s archival ghosts. For the voices of the historically silenced often tell some of the most important histories of a nation.

WORKS CITED


NOTES

1 It should be noted that the language used to describe the internment has been a highly contested subject for scholars writing about the internment. Government documents about the Japanese-American internment used the terms “evacuation centers,” “evacuees,” and “relocation” to describe Japanese-American internees and WRA policies and procedures. I chose to follow Japanese-American scholars and internees who have written about the internment and use the terms: “Internment camp” and “internees” (see article by Ishizuka and Zimmerman and Topaz by Dave Tatsuno). Parks uses the government terms and the Japanese-American terms interchangeably in her article.

2 Part of the registration policy required internees to give an oath of loyalty to the United States of America. If internees refused to give a loyalty oath they were segregated from the other evacuees to a camp in Tule Lake that was surrounded by a line of tanks (Parks 581).

3 It should be noted that at the time of the internment immigrants from Japan where banned from citizenship. Thus, first generation Japanese-Americans, called the Issei, were considered resident aliens. Their children, second generation Japanese-Americans called the Nisei, were American citizens.
Executive Order 9066 was the order signed by President Roosevelt that allowed the Secretary of State and military the ability to exclude resident aliens and citizens from “designated areas” to “provide security against sabotage, espionage and fifth column activity” (Personal Justice Denied—Part I: Summary 2). The fear of fifth column activity was used as justification for the internment.

Richard N. Katz and Paul B. Gandel explain how information technology changed the very nature of the archive in their article, “The Tower, the Cloud, and Posterity: Documenting in a Digital World.” Katz and Gandel name the shift from an era of information scarcity to an era of information abundance, “Archivy 3.0” (221). For Katz and Gandel, “Archivy 3.0” is defined by the rise of photography and xerography that “made it possible for an enormous number of people to share identical knowledge in different places at roughly the same time” (223). The possibilities that Katz and Gandel mention also made it possible for ordinary people to create and collect their own photographs and written material. The creation and preservation of the home video footage that would become Topaz can partly be attributed to the changes in information technology that account for cheaper cameras and film in the 1940’s.

Some of the other films inducted into the National Film Registry in 1996 included: M*A*S*H, The Deer Hunter, and The Graduate.
E-lending refers to two types of library services. First, e-lending refers to libraries’ digital collections—the content that libraries create, preserve, maintain, and make accessible to their publics. Digital content may include e-books, audio files, apps, web pages, articles in databases, digitized works, works in institutional repositories, and streamable audio or video files. E-content and the infrastructure supporting it is commonly called a digital library. Besides content, e-lending also refers to the devices libraries lend to enable access to collections or other web resources. These devices may include laptops, dedicated e-readers, multimedia tablets, or other handheld gadgets. E-content and e-devices are distinct yet inseparable when discussing commercialization in library services. This essay discusses both the digital content and the digital technology, and it classifies both e-content and e-device lending under the general term of e-lending.

E-lending is attractive for libraries because it enhances information access in particular ways. For example, device lending is a response to real needs and real demands. Some information resources, like government services, employment applications, and self-published e-books, are only available online, and not everyone owns the technology to access them. Around 40% of U.S. adults do not own a laptop computer, about 40% do not own a desktop computer, and 20% of U.S. adults have neither home Internet access nor a smartphone (Zickuhr & Smith, 2013; Brenner, 2013). While libraries provide access to stationary computer terminals and Wi-Fi access within the library,
these modes of access present barriers to patrons in terms of time and distance (Jensen & Harrington, 2013).

The prevalence of e-lending reflects societal trends. Information producers and consumers increasingly demand mobile, digital devices for information access. As of January 2014, 28% of U.S. adults read an e-book within the last year, and 50% own an e-reader or a tablet. Of those with e-devices, 42% own a tablet computer and 24% own a dedicated e-reader. In addition, 55% of U.S. adults own a smartphone which can be used to access e-books (Zickuhr & Rainie, 2014). E-readers and tablets offer flexibility that analog media does not, like searchability and text-to-speech software. By providing access to e-content and mobile technology to patrons, libraries exist beyond their physical walls, outside of scheduled hours, and offer patrons affordances they may not have with analog materials.

The attractiveness of e-lending notwithstanding, the services often belie commercialized technologies that raise concerns for libraries and patrons. Schiller and Schiller (1988) maintain that understanding how information is commercialized is a fundamental question for library policymakers to consider (p. 154). Such is the case with e-lending. For example, e-lending utilizes mobile devices such as e-readers and tablets, and these devices have certain beneficial features; however, the devices can also be used as trackers that surreptitiously collect patron data and supply it to third-party companies. Closer inspection of e-lending services reveals that their technologies often privilege the interests of capital, not the public good. Librarians must identify how services and technologies commercialize the commons and develop access solutions that avoid ethical and legal problems.

The tensions within e-lending point to a larger conflict between libraries and commercialism. The struggle between libraries and capital has continued unabated for some time, and libraries are the underdogs. Another recent example of the tension between libraries and commercialism is the Google Books case. For the past 10 years, authors, publishers, libraries, and nations worldwide watched as Google, with the complicity of libraries, digitized 20 million books. As of fall 2013, the preservation, access, and distribution of cultural heritage resides in the hands of a corporate entity (Darnton, 2009a, 2009b). Representatives of France and Germany, as well as many other individual observers, protested the unilateralism of the decision-making process, all to no avail.

Schiller and Schiller (1988) observe that, in today’s neoliberal information society, decisions about the public good are routinely left to market forces and decided by for-profit entities:

As computerization and information processing extend throughout the economy, the influence of the for-profit information companies widens. Correspondingly, questions about the production, organization, storage,
and dissemination of information are considered and decided upon at sites in which the public has no presence and the for-profit information sector’s perspective receives preponderant attention and support. (p. 150)

The example of Google Books and the view of Schiller and Schiller suggest that the technologies used in e-lending services exhibit their qualities not to benefit the public, but to benefit corporations. If these technologies had been developed through a process of open, non-coercive discourse oriented to the interests of all involved, then the technologies would have developed differently. In the case of the developers of e-lending technologies, “the information industry was and is interested in collaboration with the public library sector only to the extent that it can use it for furthering its own objectives” (Schiller & Schiller, 1988, p. 156).

The drive for commercialized e-lending services is facilitated by computationalist ideology. According to Golumbia (2009), one aspect of computationalism is the unreflective belief that computers are automatically empowering for individuals (p. 181). This faith contains a number of assumptions, including an overemphasis on individual mastery. Golumbia observes that, rather than establish “rhizomatic, ‘flat,’ nonhierarchical connections between people at every level,” computers often increase striation and control by serving the interests of those already in power (p. 153). Golumbia notes that “the powerful are made even more powerful via computational means than are the relatively powerless, even as everyone’s cultural power expands” (p. 152). Golumbia (2009) poses a question that librarians should consider: “Does the bare fact that computers can do something mean that it is better to have that thing done on computers than in the analog world?” (p. 225). E-lending services seemingly pose many advantages for libraries and patrons, but it does not follow that libraries should adopt these services unreflectively, without considering how they are commercialized and to what extent they serve the interests of libraries and patrons.

As individuals, as collectives, and as a profession, librarians can disrupt the commercial tendencies of e-lending technologies. E-lending is not inherently commercial, and not all e-lending services are commercialized to the same degree. This essay does not take an economically reductionist or technologically determinist stance. Librarians can still make informed policy decisions about e-lending. There is no reason to think that librarians must concede to the false dilemma presented by commercialism: libraries can both offer access services and maintain ethical values.

The remainder of this essay describes the current state of e-lending services in libraries with a focus on e-books and device lending. This essay then explains how e-lending services often privilege commercial interests over the needs
of libraries and patrons, leading to ethical and legal tensions. Specifically, e-lending services raise issues of privacy, exploitative labor, economic domination, collection censorship, universal access, and critical thinking. This essay concludes with preliminary recommendations for minimizing the commercialism in e-lending and proposes areas for future research.

The State of E-Lending in Libraries

U.S. libraries of all types now lend e-books and the devices to access them. According to the American Library Association, 76% of public libraries offer e-books and 39% of public libraries lend e-readers (2013, p. 8). *Library Journal* (2012b) reports that almost 90% of public libraries lend e-books, a somewhat higher percentage than ALA’s estimate. Likewise, school and academic libraries continue to invest in e-textbooks and e-devices. About 95% of academic libraries and 40% of school libraries lend e-books (Library Journal, 2012a, p. 5, 2012c, p. 4; Walters, 2013, p. 189).

Like e-books, e-devices are popular in libraries, and libraries regularly promote their device-lending services in the news. Two notable libraries recently in the headlines are Queens Public Library in New York and Bexar County Bibliotech in Texas. Queens Library lends 5,000 Google Nexus tablets it received in November 2013 as part of Hurricane Sandy relief effort. The tablets contain specially-developed proprietary software (Wave, 2013). Bexar Bibliotech, which claims to be the “first digital public library in America,” lends PocketBook e-readers, iPad tablets, and Nook HD e-readers loaded with software tailored to children (Bexar Bibliotech, 2014; Bexar Bibliotech, personal communication, January 24, 2014). These two libraries are examples among many that lend digital devices. Although some libraries cannot afford to lend devices, most libraries either maintain hybrid collections to support print-based information consumption or they eschew print stacks altogether (Calhoun, 2014; Abel, 2009).

Device lending represents a mix of locally-crafted services and standardized solutions. Consultancy, education, and publication about device-lending services is a burgeoning cottage industry. ALA TechSource, for example, offers training workshops on how to implement tablet-lending services, particularly iPads (Miller, Moorefield-Lang, & Meier, 2013). Several librarians in libraries of all types have published case studies describing e-reader lending services created to fit their local situations (e.g., Behler & Lush, 2011; Clark, 2009; Hayman, Bertrand, & Rose, 2011; Jonker, 2012; Mallett, 2010; Savova & Garsia, 2012). Many libraries lend e-readers or tablets of various sorts, and the proliferation of e-lending is supported by a receptive field. Even if they do not lend devices, libraries routinely provide technical support to patrons. Some libraries offer technology petting zoos to introduce patrons to new technologies, or they
hold information literacy workshops. These services facilitate the adoption of commercial technologies by the public. Librarians have become volunteer salespeople and marketeers for commercial technologies.

While not specifically about device-lending services, a substantial body of literature about Amazon e-readers developed as a result of a 2009-2010 partnership between Amazon and several universities. The participants in the studies included Princeton University, the University of Washington, Arizona State University, Case Western Reserve University, Pace University, Reed College, and Darden School of Business at the University of Virginia (Anson & Connell, 2009; Princeton University, 2010; Arizona State University, 2009; Case Western Reserve University, 2009; Pace University, 2009; Reed College, 2010; University of Virginia Darden School of Business, 2010; University of Washington, n.d.). The stated purpose of the user studies was to determine the viability of Amazon’s new e-reader, the Kindle DX, in a college environment. Student participants used the devices in all of their classes to access their course materials. Importantly, several serious issues with e-reader usability came to the fore in these studies. As a result, Kindle DX never succeeded in the education market. The results from these user studies are further discussed in more detail later in this article.

Discussion about e-lending cannot avoid identifying the corporate interests involved in the development and distribution of e-content and e-devices. Currently, two corporations dominate U.S. e-book sales: Amazon controls 58% of the market share and Barnes & Noble controls 27%. Apple accounts for only 9% of consumer e-book sales. In addition to e-book sales, Amazon and Barnes & Noble also lead in sales of e-readers: Amazon Kindle accounts for 67% of sales and Barnes & Noble Nook accounts for 22% (McCracken, Townsend, & Keehner, 2011). Other e-readers on the market at the time of this writing are Sony Readers, Kobos, and PocketBooks. Amazon controls 70% to 80% of online sales of e-books (Barry C. Lynn as cited in McChesney, 2013, p. 131).

As stated above, Amazon and Barnes & Noble lead the consumer e-book market, but the library market for e-books is also governed by two vendors: EBSCO and ebrary (Primary Research Group, 2010). Another central player in e-book distribution to libraries is OverDrive. OverDrive, partnered with Amazon, claims 90% of the public library market for e-book distribution. Insubstantial competitors to the OverDrive monopoly in public libraries are 3M Cloud Library and Baker & Taylor 360 (Seave, 2013). In school libraries, the e-book field is more competitive. Numerous vendors compete for e-book transactions in school libraries, including Follett, Gale, Scholastic, and Ingram (Enis & Bayliss, 2013).

With the seeming exception of the school library e-book market, e-book industries in libraries suggest monopolistic trends. Robins & Webster (1988) observe that “the media industries, and, more importantly, the whole of the
electronics, telecommunications, and data-processing industries, are undergoing a process of convergence and integration” (Robins & Webster, 1988, p. 63). In a deregulated marketplace, corporations cooperate and merge to reduce risk, avoid competition, and fix prices. This kind of market presents libraries with inflated prices and few commercial options for e-lending solutions.

E-lending marks a significant moment in library history. Libraries, the institutions entrusted to collect, organize, preserve, and make available information recorded on various media, from clay tablets to papyrus scrolls to vellum codices, now maintain digital collections, distribute e-resources via the cloud, link to online data, and enable mobile information access. These features of digital information seem to suggest a revolution in terms of information access: digital information is not tied to any single medium; it can be instantly copied and transmitted at little marginal cost; and it is flexible in ways analog-bound information is not (e.g., searchability; text-to-speech capability; font size changeability; reflowability). For libraries at least, digital information requires relatively little physical storage space compared to physically-tied information. Libraries recognize the affordances of digital information, and through e-lending services, they attempt to make it available to the public.

The paradox of the digital information “revolution” is that information is monetized and restricted now more than ever. Libraries that could conceivably provide information access in unprecedented ways face underfunding, and the digital media that promise new affordances also increasingly require information that is commoditized and monetized. Monopolistic trends in the information economy threaten the mission of libraries to provide free services to the public. Through the Internet and the World Wide Web, information can be distributed and produced rapidly, cheaply, and in great volumes, but industries have also capitalized on opportunities to monetize information in unprecedented ways (McChesney, 2013).

The phrase “mobile technologies” is a particularly striking word in critical theory and political economy literature. While librarians associate mobile technologies with notions of enhanced access, “mobility” can also refer to the novel ways that capital permeates our everyday lives. Borrowing from Jean Paul de Gaudemar, Robins and Webster (1988) explain that the forces of capital “mobilize” populations for the production of surplus value (Gaudemar as cited in Robins & Webster, 1988, p. 48). In other words, “capital seeks to influence, not ideas or profits, but the very rhythms, patterns, pace, texture, and disciplines of everyday life” (Robins & Webster, 1988, p. 46). The mobile technology used in e-lending is potentially a form of control, not freedom. Robins and Webster (1988) warn that,

through information technologies, with their wide-ranging applications, social life opens up to more effective colonization; the rhythm and
social space of everyday life become, potentially, subject to a more certain and effective codification according to the prevailing relations of power. (p. 57)

It is through the mobile technologies in e-lending that capital potentially “invades the very cracks and pores of social life” (Robins & Webster, 1988, p. 54). Librarians must consider how to avoid capitalistic mobilization in e-lending services. What follows is an evaluation of e-lending technologies in terms of their commercialization. After identifying how the services are commercialized, alternatives to these models become thinkable.

**Commercialized E-Lending**

*Privacy, Surveillance, and Patron Data Collection*

A central concern raised by mobile e-lending services is patron privacy. For example, libraries that subscribe to OverDrive, the popular e-book service, require that patrons register with their Amazon accounts in order to check out Kindle-formatted e-books. Through OverDrive, Amazon harvests data about patrons’ reading habits that it can then use for its own purposes, like targeted recommendations. Alternatively, Amazon can share the data with the government for perceived law enforcement purposes. Libraries who offer OverDrive do not control patron data that is stored on AWS servers. OverDrive claims 90% of the public library market, and many academic libraries also subscribe to the service, so the issue of privacy and OverDrive affects many library patrons.

Issues of privacy are not only raised by OverDrive. Any interactive device loaned by libraries can be used as a tracker/recorder (Andrejevic, 2007). Using library-loaned e-devices, commercial entities can gather much more focused data about readers’ habits than just what they read. Barnes & Noble, Amazon, and Google not only track customers’ reading selections, but also how much of an e-book they read, how long they spend reading, and what search terms they use to find a book. Amazon records and publicizes the most-highlighted passages within e-books (Amazon, 2013). Alter (2012) reports that “book apps for tablets like the iPad, Kindle Fire and Nook record how many times readers open the app and how much time they spend reading.” The privacy concerns raised by interactive technologies are especially significant issues for all the libraries who lend iPads or other tablets with apps.

With e-books and e-devices, every device is a Nielsen household or TiVo machine—there is no need for sampling. Individual preferences and behaviors are readily harvested, creating hyper-focused consumer data. If, via library devices, patrons log into the tablets they use, then they also share with third parties their search terms and browsing history. E-lending enables consumer data collection and surveillance:
Decentralized, sequestered, privatized activities and lifestyles are monitored from the diverse centers of power/administration. In the panoptic structure of the electronic grid, we find expressed that pattern of centralization and decentralization—of concentrated power and fragmentary impotency—which, we have argued, is the heart of that emerging configuration of social relations referred to ideologically as the “information society.” (Robins & Webster, 1988, pp. 61-62)

Focused data is increasingly valuable to commercial enterprises, and its collection through e-lending services parallels trends of narrowcasting and media segmentation in the television industry (Curtis, 1988, p. 95). Curtis (1988) observes that “there is a clear and rapid trend toward collection, storage, and use of massive quantities of specific individual information for the purpose of discriminating among segments of the public on the basis of differences in their motivations and likely political and economic behavior” (p. 103). This personalized, individual data is used to produce and distribute targeted product ads and political campaign ads (Duhigg, 2012).

Librarians have traditionally been very concerned with issues of surveillance, privacy, and data collection. The data sharing facilitated by e-lending should raise eyebrows. Card-carrying ALA members should care about e-lending and privacy: the ALA Code of Ethics has emphasized the value of privacy since 1939 (American Library Association, 2014a), and today’s ALA Code exhorts librarians to “protect each library user’s right to privacy and confidentiality with respect to information sought or received and resources consulted, borrowed, acquired or transmitted” (American Library Association, 2014b). Libraries that lend tablets and e-readers most likely violate ALA Code. It will be a challenge for libraries to maintain patron privacy while also providing patrons access to interactive media.

As an example of ALA’s public stance against surveillance, consider the following: on February 11, 2014, members of the American Library Association received an email from Ted Wegner, Grassroots Coordinator in ALA's Office of Government Relations. The email, titled “The Day We Fight Back,” urged members to take action to “fight back against mass surveillance” by contacting legislators in support of the USA FREEDOM Act, a bill that if passed would restrict the National Security Administration’s collection of telephone and Internet metadata (Ted Wegner, personal communication, February 11, 2014). The bill and ALA’s resolution in support of it were responses to revelations about the NSA’s international surveillance programs (Edward Snowden, n.d.; Library of Congress, 2014). ALA reported tens of thousands of calls, emails, signatures, Tweets, and Facebook shares in response to the email (Day We Fought Back, 2014).

While many librarians may have supported ALA in their resolution of the
Act, they should also consider how they aid surveillance and data collection every day. Not only do libraries record circulation data, they also document driver license numbers, addresses, and enlist police to track down recalcitrants. Librarians who also act as passport agents see more personal, official documents—driver’s licenses, birth certificates, immigration papers—than typical NSA employees do. Recoupment officers for libraries regularly testify in court to recuperate stolen, lost, or damaged public assets. Libraries install video cameras for security, and librarians “purposefully watch” profiled patrons in the stacks and in computer labs. Libraries actively support the surveillance state in these ways, and now they also distribute trackers to record consumption. It is difficult for librarians to maintain a stance against surveillance while also staffing the panopticon. Rather than protecting patron privacy, e-lending seems to support the collection of patron data that becomes the private property of data collection firms (Andrejevic, 2013, p. 150).

Reflection on libraries’ data collection practices presents questions like what data libraries should collect, how the data should be stored, and how the data should be used. In order to answer these questions, it might help first to clarify terms like “privacy” and “surveillance.” The problem is that not only are these terms fuzzy to begin with, but they are also contested terrain in a neoliberal, commercialized landscape. In the age of “Big Data,” data is a resource that librarians feel pressured to exploit. The process of identifying new resources to monetize and reworking definitions of traditional values to justify these uses is popularly termed “innovation.”

**Exploitation of Patrons’ Digital Labors**

Closely related to concerns for privacy and tracking are issues of digital labor. Digital labor refers to recording and monetizing patrons’ online behaviors. Corporations track and record patrons’ clicks and views and use them to further commercial interests. Patrons’ online behaviors create surplus value that can be considered a form of labor. Mosco (1989) calls these data “cybernetic commodities.” Andrejevic (2013) calls them forms of “estranged free labor.” The tracking and recording of patrons’ online behaviors is exploited labor both because patrons are not compensated for it and because the data is used against patrons to reproduce capitalism.

The digital labor of patrons’ reading and browsing habits represent a “colonization of leisure” (Robins & Webster, 1988, p. 44). Robins and Webster (1988) propose that

“leisure” will become amenable to arrangement by capital, which can now access the consumer via electronic/information consoles capable of penetrating the deepest recesses of the home, the most private and
inaccessible spheres to date, offering entertainment, purchases, news, education, and much more round the clock—and priced, metered, and monitored by corporate suppliers. In these ways, “free” time becomes increasingly subordinated to the “labor” of consumption. (p. 55)

This invasion of capital into leisure spheres seems particularly enabled by the e-devices loaned by libraries. Through the conduits of e-devices, patrons are tied to commercial channels. McChesney (2013) warns that “If you’re not paying for something, you’re not the customer; you’re the product being sold” (p. 148). This is certainly the case with some library services.

Perpetuation of Harsh Labor Conditions

E-lending not only facilitates new forms of post-industrial labor, but also perpetuates dead labor in its traditional, industrial forms. Libraries that offer e-lending must consider the labor conditions under which the technologies were created. Amazon, for example, maintains non-union, harsh warehouse conditions (Soper, 2011; McChesney, 2013, pp. 136-137). The quick, cheap distribution of the product used for e-lending depends in part on worker exploitation.

Many technologies used in e-lending originate from offshore sites, especially China. Factories owned and operated by Taiwan-based Foxconn are key producers of the technologies used in e-lending, including the technologies used in products sold by Dell, Hewlett-Packard, Apple, Acer, and Sony (Ross, 2013, p. 28). Foxconn factories are removed from human rights overseers. In 2010, 18 migrant youth workers in Foxconn’s Longhua factory campus in Shenzhen, China committed suicide in protest of the harsh factory conditions there. The protests occurred in the wake of a speed-up to produce more iPads (p. 28). Sweatshop conditions and suicide protests are a steep price to pay for offering e-lending services in libraries.

Restrictive Economic Models

Logging into an Amazon account to borrow a Kindle e-book from a library not only shares private user data with a commercial entity outside the library; it also maintains false scarcity of an abundant resource. Copying and distributing e-books requires insignificant marginal costs for vendors, but logging into Amazon activates digital rights management coding on e-books to ensure that copies of each e-book title are only viewed on devices registered by the patron. Kindle e-books can be read on Amazon-sold Kindle e-readers or by Kindle apps downloaded onto other compatible devices. OverDrive’s e-book distribution system privileges commercial interests over the interests of libraries and patrons by limiting access. The 1 copy, 1 patron model sustained by OverDrive is an
anachronism from the analog world that is maintained by industries solely to maximize profits.

Libraries that use OverDrive must not only pay for the service, but they must also pay for each title they make available for borrowing. In this model, libraries do not own the books they make available through OverDrive, and if they discontinue the service, they lose access to the materials they paid for. As libraries invest more and more into a specific vendor’s services, the vendor increasingly binds the library to the service and can force steeper prices.

Binding libraries to specific technologies is a central marketing strategy for e-content and e-vendor manufacturers. Companies hope to tie libraries to a particular device where the library is then limited to purchase proprietary content from the provider. Amazon, for instance, used heavy front-end investment when marketing Kindle Fires. The company lost money on sales of the devices betting that it would reap profits from content sales after binding consumers to the device (Naughton, 2011).

That e-lending services result in such restrictive economic models is paradoxical. After all, it is conceivable that digital information can be easily and cheaply reproduced and transmitted:

Most [economic analyses of information] have led to a number of apparent paradoxes. Most obvious is the theoretical circumstance that, after the first transfer, the marginal cost of information, per se, is zero. Economic optimality conditions would then require that for information to be distributed optimally to more than one consumer, the marginal cost of such information must also be set at zero, making information essentially a free good. However, in the absence of revenues from its transfer, there is no incentive for the private production of nonexclusive information (there would still be incentive for the production of information as long as that information was limited to a single consumer). There would thus seem to be no way in which nonexclusive information, as an economic good, would be produced in the private market in a manner that would be efficient and socially optimal. (Bates, 1988, p. 80)

Bates wrote before the advent of DRM and licensing models. Today, commercial entities transform information from a nonexclusive, public, non-rivalrous good to an exclusive good and restrict its distribution using DRM, copyright law, and contract law. These technologies of control create information scarcity. Indeed, e-books and other technologies utilized in e-lending represent “closed, proprietary systems devised to establish and maintain artificial scarcity, so as to give immense power to private monopolies” (McChesney, 2013, p. 127). Like the Internet, e-lending technologies have been “commercialized,
copyrighted, patented, privatized, data-inspected, and monopolized; scarcity has been created” (McChesney, 2013, p. 218). Due to the commercial nature of many e-lending technologies, libraries have few options in how they provide their services.

**Censorship and Partiality in Collections**

E-lending solutions often depend on content hosted and distributed by third-parties. Libraries often do not control what content is available for licensing. The collection is therefore outside of a library’s control. Commercial entities have incentives to make available the content that most libraries will consume, and therefore third-party content providers are unlikely to invest in product that has only limited potential for return. The vendors therefore focus on pushing the cheapest, most popular, least controversial product to libraries. This type of collection development conflicts with a library’s mission to maintain impartiality and make available information representing a wide variety of perspectives and interests.

Libraries’ control of the collections is limited not only by what content is made available, but also by what content remains available. In legal terms, e-content like e-books is often licensed to libraries, not sold. It is often the case that vendors’ terms of use enable vendors to control libraries’ access to the content they have licensed, leading to third-party censorship. For example, in 2009, Amazon deleted legally-purchased titles from customers’ accounts without notice. Evidently, Amazon did not have the rights to market the books. Ironically, one of the titles was George Orwell’s *1984* (Claburn, 2009). One student sued Amazon in response because his annotations were deleted along with the book. The case was settled without a ruling on whether Amazon can legally delete titles from customers’ accounts. Again, in 2012, Amazon deleted a customer’s account without warning, most likely due to Amazon’s perception that the customer violated her account’s terms of use (King, 2012). These scenarios suggest that e-book vendors control the transaction terms to such a degree that they can censor a library’s collections and make only profitable information available.

**Access Barriers for Patrons with Disabilities**

The e-content and e-devices used in e-lending are designed by corporations to maximize profits. These technologies are marketed to the masses without considering adaptive options for everyone. The technologies are not designed with the interests of perceived marginal populations in mind, including those with disabilities. For example, e-readers like Kindle Keyboards are not especially tactile, the buttons are small, and there is no voice navigation. It is
difficult for patrons with arthritis to use them, and some devices can be useless for blind patrons.

The inaccessibility of e-readers was revealed in the wake of the Kindle DX pilot studies. Besides gathering users’ views on the viability of Kindle e-readers in academic settings, an unforeseen consequence of the Kindle DX pilot project was legal trouble. Several of the participating universities received cease-and-desist letters from blindness organizations, and the National Federation of the Blind and the American Council of the Blind filed a joint discrimination lawsuit against Arizona State University (National Federation of the Blind, 2009). The lawsuit against ASU was settled in 2010 out of court. Failure to offer accessible resources to blind students violates sections 504 and 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. For ASU, e-lending restricted access for some patrons.

Other publicly-funded organizations that loaned inaccessible e-reader devices, including the Free Library of Philadelphia and the U.S. Department of State, faced similar situations (National Federation of the Blind, 2012a, 2012b). According to blindness organizations, the e-lending violated the Americans with Disabilities Act and Rehabilitation Act of 1973 because the Kindle devices do not have voice navigation menus, making them inaccessible to blind patrons. The inaccessibility of some e-lending solutions raises ethical and legal concerns. At this point, commercial entities cannot always be forced to develop universally-accessible technologies.

**Hindrances to Deep Engagement with Texts**

Several characteristics of e-lending suggest that it hinders critical thinking and deep engagement with texts. Considering how and for what purposes the technologies were designed, this is no surprise. E-devices and e-content form a channel designed by commercial entities to push product to consumers, maximize consumption, and generate profits. Through e-lending, then, “commodified entertainment and services will be pumped into the individual household in a steady, metered flow” (Robins & Webster, 1988, p. 54). Within this logic, there is no incentive to create media that promote critical thinking, reflection, and deep engagement with texts.

One way e-lending hinders critical thinking is though poor annotation features. While it is possible for readers to highlight, bookmark, and record notes within an e-book’s digital text, the annotation features of e-readers are limited compared with those offered by print-based media. Critical and deep engagement with a text requires extensive annotation. For readers to think with a text, readers must be able to speak back to it, draw connections and ideas from other texts, physically draw in the margins and between lines, and record notes in quick, idiosyncratic ways. This type of reading results in extensive marginalia, including words, diagrams, pictures, and lines. E-texts have not
sufficiently developed to allow for the annotation required to deeply engage with a text’s content. The insufficiency of annotation features in e-readers was a central finding of the Kindle DX pilot studies of 2009-2010. The Kindle DX has a larger screen compared to regular e-readers, and the device uses a physical keyboard on the bottom of its front face rather than a touchscreen keyboard. Amazon hopes to use the DX to penetrate the education market. In the pilot studies, however, student participants found the annotation features insufficient. It was difficult to type in notes using the small keyboard (Princeton University, 2010). Students would have required computers to sufficiently annotate their e-books and e-textbooks.

A second hindrance of e-lending to critical thinking is the lack of “flipability” using e-books and e-devices. Using e-books, it is difficult to skim and flip through pages in a non-linear way. Readers studying for tests, following citations, and using texts for research must perform non-linear reading. Print materials make non-linear reading simple: readers using print materials can easily flip back and forth between chapters, end notes, references, table of contents, and indices. Readers using print materials can use sticky notes to create different place markers. This type of reading is not sufficiently possible with e-texts. E-books and their delivery devices were designed to augment speedy, superficial reading and maximize consumption.

In addition to poor annotation features and the disablement of non-linear reading, some devices used in e-lending do not sufficiently display pictures, images, charts, and diagrams that are essential for understanding a text. Dedicated e-readers that use e-ink, for example, only display images in black and white. This is a significant disadvantage for students or researchers who wish to engage with, say, a chemistry textbook. In addition to not displaying color, some e-readers only allow for reading PDF in a cumbersome way. Unlike other e-book formats, PDF is not reflowable. The problem is that PDF is the standard format for publishing scholarly work. In effect, some e-reading devices inhibit the transmission of scholarly knowledge.

A final hindrance to critical thinking presented by some e-devices used in e-lending is the presence of advertising. Amazon Kindle, for instance, includes banner ads on the opening screen. Only consumers who can afford to pay extra can purchase devices that do not display ads. While it is not yet the case that ads appear within texts while reading, the advent of ad-viewing while reading is not unimaginable. Needless to say, forced ad viewing while reading would be extremely detrimental to critical engagement with a text.

De-Commercializing E-Lending Services

If libraries retain e-lending services that utilize commercialized technologies, then at the very least libraries should inform patrons how the technologies share
personal information, hinder deep engagement with texts, support exploitative labor practices, and promote one-sided economic models. Many patrons are not aware of these issues. Raising patron and staff awareness can be accomplished through workshops, circulars, signage, and reference interviews. Libraries that offer commercialized e-lending services should provide patrons with informed consent so they can consider the risks and potentially opt out. Libraries could choose only to support publishers, vendors, and manufacturers that offer fair economic terms, ensure patron privacy, and support ethical working conditions for their employees.

Another way for libraries to de-commercialize e-lending services is to avoid providing them. Librarians could identify ways to disable tracking and data collection components on the devices they lend. To aid in accessibility, libraries can lend only devices that offer adaptive features. There are many online guides to assist with these decisions (e.g., Royal National Institute of Blind People, 2014). Libraries can form consortia to increase collective bargaining power. Consortia can effectively boycott commercialized technologies that do not serve the interests of patrons and libraries. Libraries could also lobby to pass legislation that would require modifications to commercialized technologies. For example, the California State University system now requires that any vendors to the system must provide accessible technologies (California State University, n.d.). The central problem with commercialism in libraries is the fundamentally-divergent interests of the two. In order for libraries to best meet patrons’s needs, libraries and commercialism must remain distinct: “commercialism and an honest, democratic public sphere do not mix” (McChesney, 2013, p. 102). As long as libraries do not control the means of information production and distribution, commercialism will continue to corrode library services.

One way for libraries to approach this dilemma is to appropriate knowledge infrastructures. “Infrastructure” derives from Marx’s base/superstructure metaphor that focuses attention on the economic base of society and the maintenance of oppressive social relations by ideology (Althusser, 2001). Infrastructure is also a term propagated by the National Science Foundation in their cyberinfrastructure initiatives (e.g., Atkins et al., 2003). “Knowledge infrastructures” has a broader meaning, encompassing not only hardware but also norms, practices, and individual behaviors (Edwards et al., 2013). Infrastructure could be a useful metaphor for developing alternative e-lending models in libraries.

Public libraries, for instance, could draw from the institutional repository and open access movements to create local means for storing and making accessible digital information. Libraries with local infrastructures of this sort become publishers who can decide the terms of use most conducive to library and patron interests. Many academic libraries have adopted roles as micropublishers (Horava, 2008), but public libraries can also join this movement.
Alternatively, instead of creating localized and distributed system of infrastructure, public libraries could also pool resources to form a jointly-owned, national infrastructure for information publication, storage, and distribution, or contribute to currently existing organizations. The $100 million that libraries annually spend on OverDrive subscriptions, for instance, could be redirected to fund a grassroots e-content provider and e-device design center (Seave, 2013). Libraries on the ground would serve as a distributed R&D lab network system for generating new e-content and e-device solutions. Librarians who work with patrons everyday are the professionals best positioned to design solutions that fit library and patron needs. By unifying to create their own grassroots design center, libraries could eliminate the need for dealing with commercial middlemen.

**Conclusion**

Future research on e-lending can address how the services are commercialized and how commercialization can be minimized. Further research might consider how “mobilization” leads to increased access rather than the facilitation of capital. While the commercialism of library services is not new, and it does not seem likely to abate in the near future, librarians can nevertheless choose less-commercialized options from more-commercialized ones. The potential for collective action to form a shared, jointly-owned and operated e-publishing and e-device design center is one approach that deserves further elaboration. The funding streams and organizational network for such a system have yet to be conceived. Seizing the means of information production seems to be libraries’ best approach to avoid commercialism and better serve the information needs of patrons.

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Deconstructing the “Books for Boys” Discourse

BRAVERMAN ESSAY 2014

Literacy rates are dropping! We’re failing our boys! We must get them reading! This is a battle cry all too often heard in both the popular media and the education and library science literature. It is inspired by numerous research studies that document boys’ apparent disinterest in reading and the resultant gap in boys’ and girls’ literacy rates. What comes out of that research, and the subsequent panic, is what is referred to as the “Books for Boys” discourse, which outlines what boys like to read (content and format), why they are not reading, and ways to encourage them to read more. This paper will provide a critical analysis of the “Books for Boys” discourse and deconstruct some of the gendered assumptions that the discourse relies upon and reinforces.

While I will critique aspects of this discourse, it is not my intention to contradict the widely cited statistics about the gap in literacy rates. Nor do I wish to diminish the importance of literacy, or argue against encouraging boys and young men to read; rather, I seek to provide some alternate perspectives and practices so that we might encourage and support all children in their reading practices, regardless of their biological sex or their gender identity. The paper will begin with an introduction to the “Books for Boys” discourse before moving into a discussion of the ways that the discourse obscures multiple forms of masculinity and reinforces sexist and misogynistic attitudes. From there I will address the need to expand definitions of reading and literacy, and the role that the “Books for Boys” discourse plays in this conversation. Finally, the

Denise Scott recently completed her Master of Information from the University of Toronto and previously completed an MA from York University. She is interested in issues of diversity in library settings and is looking forward to a career in teen librarianship.

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paper will conclude with an analysis of the impact of the “Books for Boys” discourse on girls.

The “Books for Boys” Basics

The “Books for Boys” discourse is not a new phenomenon. In fact, concern about boys’ reading practices and literacy skills, as expressed in LIS literature, dates back almost to the beginning of the public librarianship profession. Stauffer traces this history from the concerns about fiction reading in the early 1900s, to the comic book bans of the 1940s and 50s, through to the proliferation of literacy statistics and research in the 1990s. Her historical overview demonstrates that not only has the general panic about boys and reading not changed significantly in over one hundred years, but neither has the practices suggested for addressing this issue. These often include promoting books about boys’ interests, boys-only or boy-centric programming, and using adult men as mentors or role models. Even a cursory review of contemporary articles on boys’ literacy will demonstrate that these are still very much the recommended best practices for encouraging boys to read (Ford; Henry et al.; Jones and Fiorelli). In addition to literacy statistics, LIS and education literature draws heavily on personal anecdotes of successful experiences of promoting reading to boys by adapting or creating programs that better fit their needs and interests. Unfortunately, many of these sources are very repetitive and formulaic. As a result, few seem to contribute anything new to the conversation. They also frequently discuss boys as a homogenous category and rely on very narrow stereotypes and assumptions about boys and masculinities, as will be discussed throughout this paper.

Constructing and Erasing Masculinities

The cornerstone of the “Books for Boys” discourse is, of course, the books themselves. There are numerous reading lists of books intended to appeal to boys. Much like the articles on boys’ reading practices, there is very little to differentiate one book list from the next; the titles themselves may vary but the subject matter tends to remain the same. Most of these lists include books, fiction and non-fiction, about sports, the military, reptiles, historical figures, comics, horror, and science fiction (Ford 19). The books are often mysteries or adventures, and focus more on plot than character development. They also do not usually include a prominent relationship- or romance-based narrative. While I do not take issue with the creation of reading lists in general, I do disagree with practice of labeling lists specifically “for boys.” Olson, who brings a feminist perspective to classification theory, argues that “naming… is not simply representation of information, but also the construction of that
information” (6). Reading lists for boys therefore not only represent the types of books that interest boys, but they also actively participate in the reification of the types of books that boys are supposed to like. The lists are as prescriptive as they are descriptive.

With a few exceptions, the majority of the sources cited throughout this paper treat boys as a homogenous category. Parkhurst, one of the exceptions, acknowledges that “adolescent boys are, of course, a diverse group, with widely varied interests, so it is a mistake to assume that all would be interested in the same types of reading material” (16). This diversity is rarely represented in the book lists, despite the fact that it would be very easy to do so. For example, a list of sports books could include a book about a male athlete in a predominately female sport, such as dance or figure skating. While it is likely that this book might not appeal to the majority of young men, it sends an important message to a select population that they can still be “one of the guys” if they want to be, and that their particular embodiment of masculinity is no less valuable and valid than that of a football player or skateboarder. This type of minor change could mean a great deal to a minority group of boys and takes nothing away from the majority.

One currently popular source for reading recommendations for boys is noted children’s author Jon Scieszka’s website GuysRead.com. Overall, I found Scieszka’s website to be a good resource. There are reading lists for a variety of ages, interests, and reading levels, all compiled by prominent male authors, illustrators, and other members of the literary world, including Gordon Korman, David Yoo, and Mo Willems. Books are grouped into more traditional categories, such as “Historical fiction” and “Biography/Autobiography,” as well as catchy, humorous categories like “People being transformed into animals” or “Outer space, but without aliens.” However, I couldn’t help but wonder: Are there no gay and transgender guys in Scieszka’s world? Do young gay and transgender men not need to be encouraged to read as much as their straight and cisgender peers? Although I did not do an exhaustive search of every title on the site, I was not able to find any of the most commonly cited examples of juvenile or young adult literature with LGBTQ content. It would be very easy to include authors like David Levithan, Alex Sanchez, and Brett Hartinger, all of whom are male authors who write books with gay male protagonists. This exclusion further reinforces the idea that young gay and transgender men are the “Other,” outside the margins of Scieszka’s “guys.” It also implies that (straight) guys would not or should not want to read about their gay and transgender peers.

There are, however, some voices within the literature that do not feel it is necessary to acknowledge the boys on the margins; rather we should be speaking in generalities and addressing an undifferentiated category of “boys” as a whole. In a strongly worded editorial, St. Jarre, a high school teacher from Maine, explains his position:
A disclaimer to head off the most tired and least effective of arguments: … Yes, there are male students who love the most thoughtful, emotionally impacting sorts of titles. However, we cannot have a discussion like this in the margins; we have to look at greater parts of the student population (15).

In contrast to St. Jarre, I argue that statistically infrequent does not equal insignificant. The boys on the margins are no less deserving of our attention than the boys in the majority. There needs to be a balance between reaching out to the majority of boys without excluding the boys on the margins and without reinforcing narrow, prescriptive definitions of masculinity.

**Sexism and Misogyny**

In addition to the homogenization of masculinity, there is also an underlying current of sexism and misogyny that pervades much of the “Books for Boys” literature. The most obvious example is the assumption that Tschetter describes in a recent blog post on YALSA’s *The Hub* as the “Boys don’t like books with girl protagonists” adage. She counters this stereotype with anecdotes about several young men who are avidly reading books such as Suzanne Collins’ *Hunger Games* trilogy and John Green’s *The Fault in Our Stars*, both of which feature female protagonists, are written from the female perspective, and include prominent romantic and emotionally evocative narratives. Frustrated with the gendering of books, the literary editor of a United Kingdom-based newspaper, *The Independent*, recently announced that the newspaper would no longer be reviewing any book that was specifically targeted at one gender as it is demeaning to all children (Guest). The presumed correlation between reading and femininity is often cited as a barrier to encouraging boys to read (Jones and Fiorelli). Haupt asks, “Are issues of masculinity actively preventing young men from becoming readers?” (19). It is interesting to note, though, that the immediate response is to make reading seem more masculine through male role models and “Books for Boys” reading lists, rather than to question the broader culture that devalues femininity. The misogyny that underlies aspects of the “Books for Boys” discourse is sometimes more overt, as evidenced by the title of St. Jarre’s article *Don’t Blame the Boys: We’re Giving them Girly Books*. Cited above for his lack of concern for diverse masculinities, St. Jarre also asserts that there are too many female teachers who are choosing touchy feely, girl-centric books that will not appeal to male students. Although St. Jarre’s opinion is just one of many, and an extreme one at that, it still represents a certain perspective that can be found throughout the “Books for Boys” discourse.

Sexism and misogyny are sometimes also evident in the recommended books, as well as librarians’ reasons for promoting them to young men. For
example, Parkhurst argues that there is a need for more books with dialogue that actually sounds like boys and young men. There needs to be more slang, more swear words, more contractions and sentence fragments. And I am inclined to agree with him. It is both disappointing and off-putting to read books where the characters sound inauthentic and contrived.

However, I personally find it very hard to accept Parkhurst’s inclusion of an excerpt that contains words such as “pussy” and “bitch” (22) as a positive example of the way young men talk. I do not mean to imply that all books should be wholesome and didactic, nor do I think we should be censoring books because of controversial content. That being said, I also do not believe we should be explicitly endorsing blatantly misogynistic language as a positive attribute of a book. Parkhurst seems to dismiss this oppressive language as just something boys do, which is particularly interesting given that, throughout his article, he discusses the ways that language constructs gender. Regardless of the book’s literary merit, would we as librarians not be reinforcing misogynistic forms of masculinity by promoting this book for having so-called authentic guy speak?

Expanding Definitions of Reading and Literacy

Although aspects of the “Books for Boys” discourse are problematic, it is not entirely without merit. In fact, one of the central arguments potentially has significant, positive implications for all youth; that is, proponents of the “Books for Boys” discourse argue for expanded definitions of literacy and reading. This argument comes out of numerous research studies that have concluded that boys are in fact reading, they are just not necessarily reading the types of materials found on library shelves or in school curricula (Cox; Henry et al.; Jones and Fiorelli; Kenney). So what are boys reading? According to this research, boys are reading magazines, newspapers, video game manuals, websites, comic books, and more.

Expanding definitions of literacy and reading challenges the reader vs. non-reader dichotomy. Drawing on research about teens’ discussions of libraries and reading, Snowball concludes that even youth who did not consider themselves readers could still describe their personal reading preferences and recount experiences of enjoyable reading. Would Snowball’s participants have reconsidered their non-reader identity if they were provided with a broader definition of reading? According to Rennie and Patterson, many students do not consider themselves readers because their “understanding of themselves as readers is based on their experiences of what counts as reading in schools” (54). Definitions of reading have not caught up to the changes in information and communication technologies; as a result, Internet blogs, online newspapers, emails, video game narratives, and text messages are rarely included in analyses
of young people’s literacy practices and skills. In response, prominent children’s author Gordon Korman observes:

My 14-year-old video game-addicted son is constantly surfing the Internet, searching for “cheats” to help him with his games. I love watching him—he’s using the resources at his disposal to find the information he needs to do a better job at the task at hand. There could be no better definition of research (167).

This is an important statement because it not only validates youths’ cultural practices, rather than perpetuating a moral panic about violent and/or mind numbing entertainment, but it also positively contributes to a conversation about what literacy and reading looks like in the 21st century.

What about the Girls?

The “Books for Boys” discourse has implications for girls as well. Not only does it tell boys what they should be reading, it potentially tells girls what they shouldn’t read. Moeller, who researched teens and graphic novels, explains that when asked if they read graphic novels, girls frequently replied, “Those are boy books” (477). The “girls read and boys don’t” assumption that characterizes the “Books for Boys” discourse, and literature on young people’s reading practices more broadly, means that there has been significantly less discussion of what girls are actually reading. Certainly there is less panic about it. The results of studies on boys’ and girls’ reading practices are generally used to demonstrate that we need to encourage boys to read more, and we specifically need to encourage them to read more fiction. However, what we are not seeing, or at least not nearly as often, is concern about encouraging girls to read more non-fiction and informational literature. Doiron’s study of the types of books that boys and girls checked out of libraries revealed that both boys and girls are borrowing fiction but that the vast majority of informational books were borrowed by boys. Similarly, Stauffer observes that the 2006 edition of ALA’s Celebrity READ posters depicted a noticeably more diverse variety of male role models than female role models. She explains that “although the majority of all celebrities were either entertainers or athletes, none of the fourteen females represented any other achievement, while males included a firefighter, a conservationist, a chef, a physicist, and multi-billionaire Bill Gates” (416). Where, then, is the concern about the quality and/or diversity of the material girls are reading?

Additionally, the “Books for Boys” discourse is predicated on the belief that we need to encourage boys to read, presumably because they are not already doing so, which creates the automatic association between boys and the term
“reluctant reader.” While it is certainly true that many boys are reluctant readers, treating the two categories—boys and reluctant readers—as synonymous obscures the fact that many girls are also reluctant readers. Korman observes:

We speak of this archetypal guy reader who radiates an almost passive-aggressive challenge to teachers, librarians, and writers who dare to engage him. But in reality, this kid isn’t necessarily male…That could be the ultimate conundrum in addressing the issue of the male reader: Right when you think you’ve got a handle on the problem, you realize that some of those reluctant boys just might be girls (168).

For this reason, it is important that discussions of reluctant readers in general do not automatically presume a male reader. Gruenthal’s description of YALSA’s Quick Picks lists successfully accomplishes this by using terms like “teens” and “kids” rather than gender categories. The article also includes a definition of reluctant readers that clearly includes girls and boys.

Conclusion

I recently had the opportunity to listen to a prominent member of the library community discuss some of his concerns about library services for teens. Throughout this talk, the presenter frequently spoke in gendered absolutes, as if “boy” and “girl” or “masculine” and “feminine” were concrete, homogenous categories and descriptors. At one point in his lecture, he emphatically asserted that libraries need to do more for boys. One of his examples was that there are too many girl magazines and not enough boy magazines. What he meant was there are too many magazines on fashion and celebrities and not enough magazines about video games and extreme sports. I have included this anecdote by way of conclusion for my paper because I believe it is illustrative of my overall concerns about the “Books for Boys” discourse, particularly the ways that the discourse relies upon and reinforces narrow gender stereotypes. However, I have also included the anecdote because it can be used to demonstrate a simple way to shift the highly gendered conversations and still have the same desired effect. By this I mean that the speaker could have described these magazines based on their content, rather than imposing gendered labels, which would have produced the same outcome—a more diverse magazine selection—without reinforcing divisive gender stereotypes. If we are truly going to allow children and youth to self-select their reading material, as many of the sources cited throughout this paper suggest, then we need to move away from the prescriptive gendering of that material.
WORKS CITED


The following is a review of union activity in the information sector throughout 2013. The items in this review are taken from posts on the Union Library Workers blog (http://unionlibraryworkers.blogspot.ca), which is a project of the Progressive Librarians Guild. Sarah Barriage maintained the blog throughout 2013, with Joanna Kerr serving as an occasional contributor.

**Reports & Publications**

In 2013, the United States and Canada both issued reports on unionization rates in their respective countries. In its annual union membership survey, the U.S. Department of Labor (2014) reported that the overall union membership in 2013 remained the same as that of 2012, with 11.3% of the workforce belonging to unions. While the highest occupational group unionization rate was among individuals working in education, training, and library occupations, the 2013 rate of 35.3% for this occupational group reflects a decrease from both the 2012 rate of 39.2% and the 2011 rate of 40.5%. An analysis of long-term unionization trends across Canada also reflected a decrease in unionization rates in the information, culture, and recreation industry, with rates dropping from 27.6% in 1999 to 25% in 2012 (Galarneau & Sohn, 2013).

Other publications related to union activity in the information sector issued in 2013 include:

Sarah Barriage is a member of PLG’s coordinating committee, serving as the editor of both the Union Library Workers blog and the PLG Bulletin. She is currently a doctoral student at Rutgers University’s School of Communication and Information.

**KEYWORDS:** Bibliographies; Labor unions – Canada; Labor unions – India; Labor unions – South Africa; Labor unions – Trinidad & Tobago; Labor unions – United Kingdom; Labor unions – USA; Labor unions and similar labor organizations.
• “A Manifesto for Culture” issued by Public and Commercial Services Union (n.d.)
• A calendar of labor history events and exhibitions in New York and neighboring states issued by the New York Labor History Association (n.d.)
• “The Public Library Service Under Attack: How Cuts are Putting Individuals and Communities at Risk and Damaging Local Businesses and Economies”, a report issued by UNISON (Davies, 2013)
• The first report by Canada’s National Library Workers Committee, presented to the Canadian Union of Public Employees National Convention (“National Library Workers Committee report”, 2013)
• An online collection of librarians’ collective agreements at universities and colleges across Canada created by the University of Western Ontario Student Chapter of the Canadian Association of Professional Academic Librarians (CAPAL: UWO Student Chapter, n.d.)
• “‘Library workers will not be shushed’: 2012 union review” published in Issue 41 of Progressive Librarian (Barriage, 2013)

Awards

In early 2013, the Toronto Public Library Workers’ Union (CUPE 4948) was awarded the Ontario Library Association’s Media and Communications award for their “Our Public Library” campaign, which was launched in response to proposed budget cuts and suggestions that the library system be privatized (“Toronto Public Library Workers’ Union campaign garners OLA Media and Communication Award”, 2013).

The Labor Archives of Washington was the 2013 recipient of ALA’s Reference and User Services Association’s John Sessions Memorial Award “for its steady stream of exhibits, outreach efforts to the community and the impressive LibGuides site and digital collections portal site” (“John Sessions Memorial Award”, n.d.).

Events

A number of exhibits, both physical and digital, were launched in 2013 related to historical union activity. Such exhibits included:

• “Labor and New Deal Art Print Exhibit” hosted by the Cleveland Public Library in commemoration of the 75th anniversary of The Little Steel Strike (“Labor and new deal art print exhibit opening January 19th”, 2013)
• An exhibit on the 1912 Lawrence Textile Strike titled “Bread and Roses Strike of 1912: Two Months in Lawrence, Massachusetts, that Changed
Labor History”, showcased by The Digital Public Library of America (“Bread and Roses Strike of 1912”, n.d.)
• A collection of political and union activist posters from a number of countries were on display at John Curtis Free Library in Hanover, MA (Burridge, 2013).
• Two online historical collections, the “Dan Long Union Library Poster Collection” and the “Therese O’Connell Poster Collection”, launched by the Victoria University of Wellington Library (“Historical poster collection goes online”, 2013).

Union activity was also a focus of two events at the 2013 ALA Annual Conference. Larry Spivack, President of the Illinois Labor History Society, and Shawn Nicholson, Assistant Director at the Michigan State University Library, spoke on preserving labor history. Jessica Storrs and Paul Almeida presented “Union 101 for Librarians and Library Workers”.

**Union Activity**

**January 2013**

• The union representing library staff and other support workers in schools across Ontario, the Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE), reached a tentative deal with the provincial government (Bradshaw, 2012).
• Members of CUPE 5047, the union representing library support specialists and other support staff at the Halifax (Nova Scotia) Regional School Board, held a strike (“Halifax school board facing possible labour trouble”, 2013).
• British Columbia’s labour relations board ruled that Simon Fraser University had been bargaining in bad faith with CUPE 3338, the union representing library assistants and other support staff at the university (Sandborn, 2013).
• The St. FX Association of University Teachers at St. Francis Xavier University in Nova Scotia went on strike (“St. Francis Xavier University faculty on strike”, 2013). The union represents librarians, archivists, and other faculty.

**February 2013**

• Staff at Harvard Library voiced their concerns arising from the restructuring of library services in a number of ways, including passing out flyers, sending letters to administration, and participating in rallies and pickets (Cersonsky, 2013).
• Simi Valley (CA) City Council voted to privatize Simi Valley Public Library, making it the third library to become privatized after leaving Ventura County Library System (Harris, 2013).

• As the strike by faculty at St. Francis Xavier University ended (“St. FX students back to class after three-week strike”, 2013), the union representing library and other support staff at the university, the Nova Scotia Government and General Employees Union, rejected a contract offer from the university administration (“Support workers at St. Francis Xavier University reject contract offer”, 2013).

• While all female tenure-track and tenured faculty at the University of British Columbia were given a pay increase in order to address gender-based pay inequity at that institution, a review of librarians’ salaries found no such pay inequity and librarians were thus not included in the pay increase (Bigam, 2013).

March 2013

• On March 6, bylines in the Toronto Star newspaper appeared only as “Star Staff” in a display of solidarity with staff who had been targeted for layoffs, including Toronto Star librarians (Cross, 2013). Staff at the newspaper are represented by the Southern Ontario News Media Guild (CEP Local 87-M).

• Staff at Richmond Public Library in British Columbia ratified a new four-year collective agreement (Canadian Union of Public Employees, 2013b). The staff are members of CUPE 3966.

• Members of CUPE 391, the union representing library staff at Vancouver Public Library, Sechelt Public Library, and Gibsons and District Public Library, ratified a new four-year collective agreement (Canadian Union of Public Employees, 2013a).

• Members of New York’s biggest public employee union, District Council 37, rallied outside New York City Hall to demand a solution to ongoing funding uncertainty (Katinas, 2013).

• Staff at New Westminster Public Library in British Columbia voted in favour of joining CUPE (Canadian Union of Public Employees, 2013c).

• Staff at Saugus Public Library in Massachusetts reached an agreement with the town of Saugus regarding the details of their new contract (Gaffney, 2013).

• The South African Municipal Workers Union called on local governments to ensure adequate funding for libraries as a means of providing free access to information and the empowerment of citizens in a statement promoting National Library Week (“Municipal workers welcome library week 2013”, 2013).
250,000 members of the Public and Commercial Services Union in the UK went on strike in protest of changes to wages, pensions, and working conditions (“PCS union stage Budget day strike”, 2013). The strike affected numerous public services, including museums, libraries, galleries, government departments, tax offices, job centres, and border patrols.

**April 2013**

- Staff at Saskatoon Public Library (Saskatchewan), members of CUPE 2669, held a read-in at City Hall in order to bring attention to their on-going contract negotiations (“Saskatoon library workers stage hushed City Hall protest”, 2013).
- Members of Service Employees International Union Local 888 Southbridge Town/Library Employees in Massachusetts voted unanimously earlier this month to decertify (Lee, 2013).
- Over 80 current and former Windsor Public Library employees shared in a $1 million pay equity settlement (Schmidt, 2013). The payments are retroactive to 2005. Windsor Public Library employees are members of CUPE 2067.

**May 2013**

- Protestors at a May Day demonstration at McGill University in Montreal, Quebec, spoke out against austerity measures that could include closure of the university’s education library and other cuts to library services (“Police arrest 447 anti-capitalist demonstrators in Old Montreal”, 2013).
- Leaders of the Communication Workers Association Local 1031 issued a letter of no confidence in the library board at Bloomfield Public Library in New Jersey, citing mismanagement of library funds and safety issues (Frankel, 2013).
- The union representing library workers at Bridgewater Public Library in Massachusetts reached an agreement with the town on a new three-year contract (Hyman, 2013).
- An agreement was reached on a collective agreement for workers at Saskatoon Public Library that covered the period from 2010 to March 2013. Workers received retroactive pay increases.
- Library workers in Fort Madison, Iowa signed a new one-year contract with the city (Parrott, 2013).
- The only professional librarian working at St. Paul University in Waterloo, Ontario was fired in response to a need to reduce its operating budget (Roll, 2013). The librarian was a member of the Executive of the Professors Association of St. Paul University.
• Library workers in Rockford, IL signed a new collective agreement that runs until 2015 (“3% pay raise for Rockford Library workers”, 2013).
• Members of the Public and Services Commercial Union protested outside of the Liverpool Museum and employees at museums across the United Kingdom staged walk-outs as part of a weekend of action in response to cuts to arts and culture (Vaughan, 2013).

**June 2013**

• Library services in Harrow, UK were outsourced to a private company, raising concerns about service provision and contract transfers (Thain, 2013).
• The National Union of Journalists expressed opposition to announced plans by the UK newspaper publisher Trinity Mirror to close all regional newspaper archives, potentially making eleven positions redundant (Linford, 2013).
• Moreno Valley City Council in Moreno Valley, CA approved a five-year contact with Library Systems & Services LLC to run Moreno Valley Public Library, which resulted in all of the library’s employees being laid off and given the opportunity to interview for their positions after the takeover is complete (Hurt, 2013a).

**July 2013**

• Library and other city workers in Oakland, CA participated in a one-day strike, closing the library and other city services, after being unable to reach an agreement with the city on their new contract (Artz, 2013).
• Workers at the public library and art gallery in Sarnia, ON went on strike for several days before an agreement was reached with the county (Dentiger, 2013). Glen Sonier, the representative for Communication, Energy, and Paperworkers Union Local 65, said that while the union did not initially intend on striking, “the union can’t sit idly by and let an employer dictate a collective agreement that’s not negotiated” (Simpson, 2013).
• Library staff, members of AFSCME 2289, and township supervisors in Warminster Township, PA came to an agreement on a new collective agreement.

**August 2013**

• Librarians and professors at the University of Ottawa voted in favour of strike action after negotiations between the union and faculty failed to progress satisfactorily. An agreement on a four-year collective agreement
was reached before strike action was taken (Feibel, 2013).

- After facing drastic budget cuts, the University of Alberta requested that unions representing staff and faculty at the university reopen their collective agreements. Neither union agreed to the request (Mertz, 2013).
- Library and other city workers in Hayward, CA went on a three day strike after failing to come to an agreement with the city on a new contract (“Hayward city employees strike over contract talks”, 2013).
- Unionized custodians at the Queens Borough Public Library were replaced with contract workers (Colangelo, 2013).
- A commissioner from Miami-Dade County, Florida, spoke out against paying full-time union representatives who have been excused from their normal employment responsibilities (Mazzei, 2013).
- An offer was made by Lincolnshire Co-operative to take over six libraries that had been slated for closure in Lincolnshire County, UK, a move that would result in job loss (Fish, 2013).

**September 2013**

- Library workers in Hamden, CT signed a new four-year collective agreement with the city that included wage increases and reduced sick days (Ramunni, 2013).
- Seventeen of the 23 Moreno Valley Public Library workers who were laid off when Library Systems & Services LLC took over were rehired with reduced benefits and wages (Hurt, 2013b).
- Layoffs and reduced hours of operation at Miami Dade Public Libraries were averted after county commissioners voted to dip in to the libraries’ reserve fund (McCorquodale, 2013).
- Members of the Tamil Nadu Public Libraries Employees Association in the Indian state of Tamil Nadu went on a one-day hunger strike, demanding increases in pay and benefits (“Librarians ask for better pay, perks”, 2013).
- Concordia University Union of Support Staff - Technical Sector and Concordia University Library Employees’ Union in Montreal, Quebec have reached an agreement with administration on their new contracts after three and a half years of negotiations (Brennan, 2013).
- A Pennsylvania teachers union filed a grievance against the Wyoming Valley West school board after the middle school librarian position was eliminated. A petition with over 800 signatures was presented to the school board asking for the position to be reinstated (Guydish, 2013).
- Library workers and other classified workers at Oregon state universities reached a tentative agreement with administration, averting strike action (“Union, university system agree on pact”, 2013).
October 2013

• The American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations (AFL-CIO) donated its labor archives, the George Meany Memorial Archives, to the Hornbake Library at the University of Maryland (Hall, 2013).

• A union drive was initiated at the University of Victoria, British Columbia (Kines, 2013). Faculty and librarians were given 90 days to sign union cards indicating their support for unionization.

• The union representing faculty and librarians at Westfield State University in Massachusetts voted no confidence in the university’s president Evan Dobelle in response to a spending controversy (Flynn, 2013).

• Librarians and library assistants at the Public Library of Youngstown in Ohio signed a new two and a half-year contract with the county that included wage increases and the elimination of step increases (Milliken, 2013).

• A new three-year agreement was reached between the University of Manitoba Faculty Association, which represents librarians and other faculty members at that institution, and the university administration, just before the strike deadline that had been set by the faculty association (“University of Manitoba strike averted at last minute”, 2013).

• National Library and Information Systems workers protested unfulfilled pay increases at The National Library in Port-of-Spain, the capital city of Trinidad and Tobago (Surtees, 2013).

• Workers in the UK represented by Unite, Unison, and the University and College Union engaged in a one-day coordinated strike over an offered 1% pay raise (“UK university departments close as three unions join in strike over pay”, 2013).

November 2013

• Library workers in South Gloucestershire, England took part in a one-day strike by members of Unison in in response to proposed pay cuts for weekend shifts (McCormick, 2013).

• The National Labor College in Silver Spring, Maryland announced its plan for closure after a failed campus renovation project and declining support from the AFL-CIO, one of its primary backers (Rivard, 2013).

December 2013

• Workers at universities across the United Kingdom engaged in a second one-day strike on December 3, resulting in at least one university closure (Grove, 2013).
Members of the Association of University of New Brunswick Teachers, the union representing academic staff and librarians at that institution, voted in favor of a strike as part of ongoing negotiations with university administration (Canadian Press, 2013). The administration and the union agreed to abstain from any lockouts or strike action during the university’s exam period.

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Every thing determines everything
Embracing the flux of academic librarianship
to co-author meaningful change

By Stephen Bales

[Introduction]

I would like to thank the CAPAL Programme Committee for inviting me to speak today. I am honored to have this opportunity to share my ideas about academic librarianship with the members of the Canadian Association of Professional Academic Librarians.

Today I want to discuss dialectical materialism as an alternative way of thinking about the academic library. It seems an appropriate topic for this conference, with its theme being the shifting landscapes of academic librarianship. Every one of us knows that the only true constant in the academic library is change. When I started library school in 2002, I think we were still at Web 1.0. Who knows what version we are on now? It’s a different world than it was just moments ago. Dialectical materialism has been around for nearly two

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Stephen Bales is Humanities and Social Sciences Librarian at Texas A&M University where he is subject librarian for communication & journalism, philosophy, religion, and anthropology. His research interests include the history and philosophy of libraries and librarianship and the professional identity of LIS workers.

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centuries, but it is of great value today for analyzing social change in a world that often seems to ignore change until it’s nearly too late.

Thinking dialectically about the library is not something that many of us are used to doing. We typically view life linearly in terms of cause and effect. For example, library anxiety research has found that “barriers with staff” correlates with elevated levels of library anxiety. This is a valuable observation but it does not go very deep. A dialectical approach, however, would study barriers and anxiety from a different perspective, one that considers relationships as well as the change, history, and codetermination that accompany these relationships. I believe that learning to think in this manner would be a valuable addition to the critical thinking toolkit of any practicing academic librarian. I also think that it will result in meaningful change to both academic libraries and the larger society.

The dialectical approach to analyzing the library, therefore, has political implications. Now, seven hundred years ago it was pretty easy to identify the social relationships operating in the society in which one lived. For example, when a serf worked the land for his landlord, he knew exactly who was receiving the value created by his labor: his feudal landlord. Modern capitalism, however, is very effective at obfuscating relationships of all sorts, be they economic, political, cultural, or combinations of these categories. As academic librarians, we are well-placed to work out the important, as well as the sometimes exploitative, relationships found within the academic library itself and between the academic library and the capitalist social totality.

Adopting a mode of thought that uncovers exploitative relationships has a price tag attached. I am a progressive librarian who works at Texas A&M University Libraries in College Station, Texas. Have you seen those tee shirts that say “Keep Austin Weird”? Well, in College Station they have tee shirts that say “Keep College Station Normal.” Of course, the definition of what counts as “normal” in central Texas can have pretty rigidly defined boundaries. Being any flavor of left-wing academic in any place in Texas outside of Austin can make for interesting experiences. Nonetheless, when you uncover something that is unjust, you should work towards changing the situation. If you don’t, you are complicit in the injustice. I am convinced that if you are an academic librarian who adopts a dialectical approach that sensitizes you to the relationships and change within human society, you are left better able to critique and change the academic library as an organic institution within a historically situated and structured society.

The origin of the dialectical approach is often attributed to the writings of the Greek philosopher Heraclitus of Ephesus (died ca. 475 BCE). Before we plunge into Heraclitus’s river, in which the spot “where you set your foot just now is gone,” I will tell you the story of my own personal first encounter with dialectic.
Encountering the dialectic

I have always wanted to be a librarian but have not always known that what I wanted to be was called “librarian.” This may sound strange, but it illustrates how concepts like librarianship are, in fact, flexible phenomena made up of relationships. Academic libraries and librarianship incorporate many different ideas, physical objects, and their interrelationships. Libraries and librarianship are also in relationships that extend outside of the library itself and all the way up to the ultimate relationship, reality itself. When I was a kid in Augusta, Georgia, my first goal was to become a priest. I suppose that this plan was, to some extent, selfish. In hindsight, I think that it had something to do with the fact that priests are in close proximity to power and are mediators of this power. That career plan didn’t last long, but I did go on, with a certain amount of cynicism, to obtain a religious studies BA. When one comes to a realization about the inadequacy of an abstract idea—in my case this idea was the deity idea—the realization can place everything surrounding the compromised idea in doubt, resulting in a sort of gestalt shift. How does one account for the structure of organized religion in light of the perceived limitations of the deity idea? Such a realization can radically change one’s worldview. But, without the proper intellectual toolset, the shift may result in nothing but more cynicism.

Although I had been critical of my received reality for several years, I had not fully developed my critical thinking skills by the time I graduated with my MLS. Upon graduating with my MLS and getting a job, I didn’t realize that I had, in fact, accomplished my original objective of becoming a priest, albeit a secular priest, and a cynical one at that. I had entered a hierarchical and largely patriarchal ideological apparatus with definite traces of religion: higher education in a capitalist society. I was complicit, in spite of and because of my ignorance, in reproducing these ideologies and social formations, of supporting abstract ideas similar to the conception of deity that I had started to question. How did I pierce this professional veil and decide to be a transformative librarian instead of the techno-bureaucrat I was heading towards ending up as?

Now, I don’t know how true the adage is that higher education breeds skepticism, but I do believe that enough education in conjunction with material practice may eventually result in a qualitative change in one’s understanding of the reality transmitted to them by the dominant culture. My own qualitative shift happened when I started my Ph.D. dissertation work and started reading Aristotle (lived 384-322 BCE). This was my first real encounter with this kind of thinking. Aristotle saw that knowledge develops from process and that the academic library is a necessary part of this process. The academic library is about changing the world. Aristotle, you see, thought that to create new knowledge you have to make deductions from basic a priori principles, and that these axioms can only be discovered by dialectically synthesizing
the existing *endoxa*, the “expert opinions” of others. It is only after such a synthesis that a scientist devises logical syllogisms to organize reality. How did Aristotle himself engage in this dialectic? Well, for one thing he owned a print library of *endoxa*. Many of his treatises have extensive reviews of the work of previous philosophers, suggesting that Aristotle used this library for his research. Aristotle also wrote about his dialectical method, his manipulation of *endoxa*, in his book the *Topics*. He did this in a way that looks suspiciously like instructions for organizing a research library:

> We should select also from written handbooks of arguments and should draw up sketch-lists of them upon each several kind of subject, putting them down under separate headings, e.g. ‘On Good’, or ‘On Life’—and that ‘On Good’ should deal with every form of good, beginning with the essence. In the margin, too, one should indicate also the opinions of individual thinkers, e.g. that Empedocles said that the elements of bodies were four; for any one might assent to the saying of some reputable authority. Of propositions and problems there are—to comprehend the matter in outline—three divisions; for some are ethical propositions, some are on natural science, while some are logical [...]”.

When I read this, I see instructions for a classified catalog. I see a printed library catalog with texts keyed to a subject classification. I believe that the ancient scientists and philosophers who came after Aristotle read the *Topics* and saw the same thing. Demetrius of Phalerum (lived ca. 350-280 BCE)—the man that set up the Great Library of Alexandria approximately 20 years after Aristotle’s death—was an Aristotelian philosopher that studied under Aristotle’s famous protégé Theophrastus. Some scholars think that Callimachus (flourished ca. 285-240 BCE), a librarian and scholar at Alexandria, created the *Pinakes*, the first true library catalog, by dividing reality first by subject, then organizing individual authors alphabetically under each major heading and providing short records of all of their individual works. This is a very Aristotelian approach to dividing up knowledge, and I think Callimachus possibly followed Aristotle’s instructions for creating a catalog as put forth in the *Topics*.

When considering these things, I began to see dialectic, even if at the time it was just dialectic in its Aristotelian form, as a key to understanding what was happening with the development of ideas and knowledge creation at the academic library as a social institution. The academic library could be seen as a locus of scientific progress and societal progress where ideas met and transformed each other, and it accomplished these things through connecting physical objects (the library collection) and mental objects (the ideas in the books).
But researching the Great Library did more than just clue me in to the rich interaction and change that act as a foundation for what everyone sees as an obvious purpose of library use: knowledge creation. My research also revealed to me a major contradiction within the academic library as a social phenomenon, one that challenged my understanding of what the library does as an institution. Ptolemy the Great (lived 367/6-282 BCE), the man directly responsible for the Great Library, effectively took Aristotelian philosophy and materially realized it in terms of the political ideology of Ptolemy’s own former boss (and Aristotle’s most famous student) Alexander the Great (lived 356-323 BCE). Like Alexander, Ptolemy understood that one of the best ways to ensure Greco-Macedonian power over the Eastern conquests was to take Greek culture and make it BIG. One result of this strategy was the Great Lighthouse of Pharos, a giant phallic symbol of Greek rule. The pharaoh also went BIG with the Great Library, another ode to Greek power as well as a symbol of that culture’s monopoly of knowledge. One interesting manifestation of this conflation of power and knowledge is that when ships entered the Alexandrian harbor, they were searched by Alexandrian soldiers for books. If any books were discovered, they were confiscated and copied. The copies were returned to the ships and the Great Library kept the originals. The Great Library was also a testament to Greek spiritual authority. It was, being attached to the Temple of the Muses, a symbol of spiritual dominance and cultural hegemony. Aristotelian dialectic had been transformed through this relationship with power and religion. It had become integrated into a material realization of Greek authority. The acts of knowledge creation that occurred in the Great Library and the religio-political and cultural ideological structure enforced by the Great Library were both responsible for reproducing a status quo in which Greek culture and power was ascendant.

This contradiction perplexed me, but it also made me want to learn more. The Great Library, arguably the archetype for all the academic libraries that came later, was at one and the same time a symbol for scientific progress and a political tool used to control a colonized people by enforcing the hegemony of the dominant elite. This realization started the restructuring of my idealistic conception of the academic library. Research that had its beginnings as an historical project with philosophical overtones became an historical project with political overtones. Because of this shift, I also began to question my received understanding of the modern academic library. I had started to move beyond just thinking about dialectic and the library. I had begun to think dialectically about the academic library, and this shift in consciousness required that I move beyond common sense understandings of the library.

To a degree, my library school experience served as a sort of a finishing school in the dominant ideology of the academic library. But, because of my research, I had this paradigm shift in my world view, and I started to think dialectically
as opposed to linearly, even if it took me a while to do so in any sophisticated way. As a result of this break, I also began to shift my research agenda towards trying to understand the not so apparent relationships comprising the modern library. After the Great Library burned, academic libraries could not have just stopped being hegemonic tools, could they? Dialectical materialism presented itself as a holistic approach for understanding relationships and change beyond the common sense surface appearances.

A relational approach to the academic library

Many people think and write about the academic library without considering it in terms of relationships and change, an approach that may have something to do with the LIS profession’s general fixation on quantitative methods. When LIS professionals do consider things like relationships and change, it can lead to consternation. For every article that is optimistic about the future of libraries, there always seems to be one lamenting that the library is becoming something else, something that it is not, and this projected change is sometimes reduced to being the effect of some monolithic cause. For example, major changes in technology periodically lead writers to ring the death knell for libraries and librarianship. This is a simplification that helps us to avoid considering the multiple relations involved in any phenomenon. When such reductionist arguments are made without considering the simultaneous (as well as historical) movement of the other phenomena involved in the thing called the library, people can lose perspective and panic. We sometimes think of the academic library as an idea divorced from reality, as something eternal. In doing this, we lose sight of the relational nature of things and we lose perspective and context. I am pretty confident that the academic library will keep doing what it does, regardless of changes in things like information technology, so long as the basic relationships that comprise it remain unchallenged and thus not made amenable to radical change. The question becomes: do we want the library to keep doing everything it currently does? The great thing about the dialectical approach, identified by contemporary Marxist philosopher Bertell Ollman as the “philosophy of internal relations,” is that it helps us to identify those things that may not be readily apparent. It helps us to see the potential for positive change in even the most apparently sluggish social structures, and it works towards this change.

All of this talk about relationships may seem a bit blurry. To bring it into focus, I want to talk briefly about the philosophical work of two men, one a lens grinder and the other a tanner. I find their ideas particularly valuable for approaching the academic library as a social institution that is organic to society, as something that both determines the social totality and, in turn, as something that is determined by the social totality.
The lens grinder was Benedict Spinoza (lived 1632-1677 CE). Spinoza, in contrast to his near contemporary Rene Descartes (lived 1596-1650 CE), denied the existence of a mind-matter duality. Spinoza held instead that everything was of the same substance, which he labeled “God.”\textsuperscript{\textit{18}} Every thing—mind, matter, ideology, etc.—is equally real according in this conception. Mind and matter are simply different modes of expression for the same cosmic substance.\textsuperscript{\textit{19}} If we look at the academic library through the lens of Spinozism, we can then attach similar levels of material reality to things like the physical places involved, the ideas surrounding what we do and will do as librarians, and what other people, institutions, and ideologies do in relation to the library. If every thing, regardless of its tangibility, is material, the mental and the physical become intertwined in our definitions of what the academic library is and does, and we can begin to decipher how people materially relate to it and are affected by it. We can better understand how things like ideas have a material effect on people. We can also analyze how the physical and mental interact to form stable ideological structures that reproduce society. Adopting this standpoint makes the positivistic approaches traditionally used for understanding these things appear one-dimensional. For example, distributing surveys to a randomly selected sample rips out these relationships and obscures socio-historical context.

The tanner was the nineteenth century philosopher Joseph Dietzgen (lived 1828-1888 CE). Dietzgen was a Marxist and later an anarchist (he is buried beside the Haymarket martyrs in Chicago because of this latter association). Dietzgen coined the term dialectical materialism and developed the philosophy at the same time as Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels. But, while Marx did not say much about dialectical materialism in his writings, and Engels has been accused of being overly schematic in his development of the philosophy, which in turn may have aided in the rise of Soviet dogmatism, Dietzgen was a clear communicator and a flexible thinker. He took Spinoza’s ideas concerning the basic sameness of all things and illuminated their shifting connections by means of Hegelian thought. Dietzgen saw every thing that materially exists as part of everything else and therefore as co-determining everything else.\textsuperscript{\textit{20}} Dietzgen had a profound influence on later dialecticians, including the aforementioned Bertell Ollman.\textsuperscript{\textit{21}}

I would not exist without relationships. We would not be the people that we are right here and now without what is happening to and between us right here and now, as well as without everything that happened prior to our being here and now. Let me illustrate this point with an example. Let’s say that a baby named Jack has just been born in London. According to Dietzgen’s philosophy, Jack would not be who he is without my existence. To posit otherwise would mean drawing definite existential boundaries between Jack and me. Contriving such boundaries ignores the web of relationships between the physical objects and ideas (again, both equally material and equally real) that connect the person...
Bales with the social totality within which Jack exists. We can look at a slice of reality as the phenomenon Bales qua Jack and vice versa. Doing this also lets us consider the individuals in relation to the whole because neither one can exist “as it is” without the other. Now if I did not exist, there would probably be only a miniscule difference in whom Jack is or who he would likely become, but he would be a different Jack nonetheless. So who cares? The relationship is too obscure, too minute to be of much interest. Why should we even consider reality like this? However, if we understand Spinoza’s idea of what substance is and Dietzgen’s explanation of how every thing codetermines every other thing as well as the totality, we are not limited to studying just the relationship between two particular common sense “things” like Bales and Jack. There are, in fact, an infinite number of ways to divide up reality into meaningful congeries of relationships, each of which expresses something that is equally as materially real as every other division of reality. Reality, no matter how we decide to chop it up, has a material existence and effect. Upon adopting this view, the capitalist academic library becomes a set of relationships of people, ideas, and places that are as materially real as Bales the person or as real as everything else in this room. This is a profound realization because it means that everything that I do affects everything else, and vice versa.

As a result of this flexible way to examine existence, it becomes important how we decide to break up reality in order to study it. Analyzing the relationship between Bales and baby Jack probably won’t get us very far. But, unlike the miniscule and obscure relationship between two individuals that have never met and likely will never know one another, the academic library is a massive social institution with great material presence in everyone’s life whether or not they ever actually set foot in the place. Just looking at the 2011-2012 statistics for the 125 member libraries of the Association of Research Libraries provides staggering evidence of academic library’s influence:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TABLE Selected ARL Statistics, 2011-2012 Survey</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Expenditures</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total Professional Staff Employed</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total Support Staff Employed</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total Reference Transactions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Regular (Non-Federated) Searches</td>
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If we conceptualize the phenomena that we want to study as the confluence of relationships that make up the academic library, both past and present and both internal to the institution itself and connected with the greater social totality, we
can start to put together how individual elements of these relationships interact with each other in the larger material context. We can also examine how they affect each other and the academic library as a totality, how they reveal unequal power relationships, and how these inequalities are structurally embedded in social phenomena and the social totality as ideology.

Here is one example situation in which a dialectical approach might be fruitful. Many of the major library subject classifications that we use to organize and retrieve from collections, e.g., the Library of Congress Classification System, are based on culturally biased approaches to knowledge. How do such biased divisions of reality hide alternative and counter-hegemonic collections? How do these systems help to reproduce hegemonic power structures and ideologies through their relationships with the educational apparatus? Or do classificatory structures influence knowledge creation by constructing collections in the way that they do? What can be done? While attitudinal surveys tend to come up short regarding meaning and context, and qualitative approaches like grounded theory do not, in my opinion, adequately take into account either the historical development of a phenomenon or the connection between the whole and the part, a dialectical approach accomplishes all of these things.

This talk is not meant as a blanket condemnation of ideology. Everyone operates using some kind of ideology to structure their reality. It is important, nevertheless, to identify and combat those elements of ideology that result in human exploitation. Studying how relationships exist and change is an excellent way to accomplish this task because it challenges assumptions concerning ideas that we may no longer easily see as affected by relationships and change. You see, viewing the academic library as a system of real relationships that interact both simultaneously and over time allows librarians as critical analysts to identify and critique the simplistic ideas that can become cemented as reality and then help to perpetuate unfair power structures. Ollman wrote that such simplistic ideas about reality can get stuck as ideological structures that seem to be in some way real outside of time and space. Capitalism is rife with simplistic ideas, some of which are reflected and reproduced by libraries. For example, positivist science becomes idealized as the only science and the only way to truth, freedom becomes synonymous with social freedom while ignoring the limitations imposed by economic inequality, and public education transforms the process of internalizing ideas like these into what it takes to be a productive and patriotic citizen in a society that’s economic formation is also taken for granted as an eternal given. I myself wrote a book chapter about the academic library as “sacred space,” and how ideas of the library as a religious place have been historically transcribed in it, and that this sublimation continues to influence how we act in relationship to it. The academic library as a crypto-church reinforces a set of deeply ingrained ideas about reality that are not often questioned.
By examining the academic library as the constant motion of physical things and ideas that both co-define and transform each other through these relationships, we are able to root out the simplistic ideas and understand them for what they are: ideological elements that have become fixed, obscured, and now go largely unquestioned.

For instance, let’s consider a major element of our practice that has been reduced to a simplistic idea: library neutrality. How do academic librarians’ adoption of a simplistic and idealistic idea of neutrality help to reproduce exploitation? How are we, as academic librarians, complicit in this explanation if we choose to ignore these things?

**Transformative academic librarianship and utopian thinking**

Library neutrality has become an idealized concept that is largely divorced from real life and real relationships. Academic librarians should not claim to be neutral because *they cannot be neutral*. If we accept that the academic library is composed of relationships that exists in time and space and that it both maintains and is at the same time buttressed by capitalist ideological structures, then “neutral” librarians are actually functionaries of the dominant culture, reproducing its ideology and hegemony through their supposed neutrality. The claim of neutrality is a façade that hides the real relationships involved, and neutral librarians support a political-economic social structure that reflects and reproduces exploitation. This argument about professional intellectuals is not new; it has been around at least since Antonio Gramsci thought it through while sitting in an Italian jail cell in the 1930s. The progressive library community, particularly through the work of theorists like Douglas Raber and activist collectives like Radical Reference, has made and acted upon such arguments for years. If you haven’t already, I recommend taking a look at the ongoing discussion being carried out in journals like *Progressive Librarian* and *Information for Social Change*. And, even if you don’t agree with left-wing sociopolitical positions, or if you disagree with the dialectical approach to reality, it is still a good thing to think about who butters your bread. It is more ethical to investigate and own where you stand in relation to the ideological state apparatus for which you work, whether it’s to the left, center, or right, than to maintain pretensions of neutrality.

As I said before, I am a progressive academic librarian. If you are as well, and you agree that academic librarians are always, whether implicitly or explicitly, serving some ideological interest, and if you have decided to align yourself with those groups that are exploited, that is, you operate as a counter-hegemonic intellectual, then a theoretically grounded dialectical approach towards academic librarianship will help you to make strategic, positive change.
The sociologist Karl Mannheim wrote that “the only form in which the future presents itself to us is that of possibility, while the imperative, the ‘should,’ tells us which of these possibilities we should choose.” The imperative that Mannheim wrote about comes as the result of utopian thinking. Now the word utopia tends to have a negative connotation in modern society. Utopia is associated with pie-in-the-sky ideas approaches to the future that are not grounded in realistic thought. But, like the fact that everyone has an ideology of some sort, most everyone engages in utopian thinking. Unless you think that “this is it” and that the status quo is utopia (and some people do think this way, usually people with power and money), you should work for the best possible social future.

I believe that librarians are most always utopian thinkers. Now this utopian outlook may have something to do with the fact that librarians rarely have power or money, but I like to think that it’s because we see the potential future social totality as being a place which better realizes freedom, diversity, and creative power in terms of the resolution of societal contradictions as opposed to ideas that have been abstracted from their concrete relationships. I also think that librarians instinctually see the library as a cradle of constant becoming and progress, and we see the kernel of this possible future contained in an academic library that is currently constrained by elements of the capitalist ideological structure. I think that because of our close proximity to the library, we are also tuned into the contradictory elements found in the institution: the relationships that just don’t seem to make a lot of sense. This is why I feel that a dialectical approach to professional praxis provides a way to think about the future of the library that hangs on the reality of the academic library as a materially existing, historically situated, and profoundly interconnected social phenomenon.

**In conclusion**

This talk has been a birds-eye view of the primary ontological aspects related to a dialectical approach to the academic library. The dialectic, however, is a deep rabbit hole to go down, and this has been meant only as a brief taste. But, before ending, I would like to briefly address method and professional praxis. How can transformative academic librarians facilitate meaningful change by using a dialectical approach? Tons of books and articles have been written on the ways that things relate dialectically, and there are many different interpretations of how dialectical change happens. There are, however, a few basic dialectical “laws” that we can apply to understand how social relationships work, where they are headed, and how we might develop workable strategies for creating positive change. These laws include esoteric sounding things like (1) the negation of the negation, (2) the unity and conflict of opposites, and (3) the transition from quantity to quality. I will briefly talk about the final one of
these, the transition from quantity to quality, to suggest how these laws are of value to understanding and making change. If you are interested in digging deeper into these dialectical laws, I suggest reading one of the ABC’s published by Progress Publishers.

The dialectical tendency for things to transition from quantity to quality holds that once a quantitative threshold for something is reached, a qualitative change will rapidly occur. This tendency is derived from empirical observations of the natural world, the classic example being the fast transformation that happens to water when the quantitative threshold of 100 degrees Celsius is reached. The same idea holds in Marxist social theory, in which crisis after crisis eventually results in the qualitative leap of revolution. It happens in personal intellectual development too, and I think that my own shift in perspective came as the result of transition from quantity to quality.

As academic librarians and critical analysts, we can approach the library through this dialectical law and attempt to understand what is going on where we work. In terms of practice, we can harness the transition from quantity to quality. How much or how little does it take to reach a qualitative tipping point? For example, how much exposure does an oppressed group need in order to create or at least influence a substantial qualitative cultural change within the communities we serve? I firmly believe that if the quantity of critical analyses published and presented at conferences like CAPAL continues to increase, that the basic relationships that we have with each other, library paraprofessional staff, library users, and outside groups and institutions will at some point radically change, and do so for the better. These are, of course, simple examples that require much additional research, and effective dialectical work must take into account many shifting relationships and circumstances.

You must, however, resign yourself to the fact that since change is a constant, such analysis never ends. But, despite the difficulty of the task at hand, this simple observation about quantity and quality should be a source of optimism for librarians. It suggests that the steps that we take to create a more equal society, no matter how small, count. We need to keep taking steps until transformation happens, both within the academic library and in the social totality.

Thank you for listening to me today. I hope that this process has been dialectical, and that both parties to the exchange, even if I have been doing most of the talking, come out as different people. That is my goal, both in terms of this talk and as an academic librarian. I want to confront academic libraries as flux, to try to make sense of this flux, and to make the understanding of flux into an important element of the ongoing professional conversation.

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Rosinski of the University of Tennessee Libraries, Knoxville for her invaluable suggestions and advice.

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NOTES

6 For an excellent overview of the religious aspects of libraries, see Nancy Kalikow Maxwell, Sacred Stacks: The Higher Purpose of Libraries and Librarianship (Chicago, IL: American Library Association, 2006).


Ibid.: 175-176.


Harris, *History of Libraries*: 44.

Ibid.: 43.

De Vleeschauwer, “Afterword”: 177.

Evald Ilyenkov refers wrote about simplistic ideas as “abstract thinking.” What we should be aiming for, Ilyenkov wrote, are concrete concepts that offer a “unity of different and opposing definitions, as mental expression of the organic links, of syncretism of the separate abstract definiteness of an object within the given specific object; see *The Dialectics of the Abstract and the Concrete in Marx’s Capital* (Delhi: Aakar Books, 208): 25-26.

Bertell Ollman wrote that such abstractions can become “the basic units of ideology”; see *Dance of the Dialectic: Steps in Marx’s Method* (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 2003): 62.


Ibid.: 27.


Ollman has written many important works on Marx’s ontology and method including *Dance of the Dialectic, Alienation* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1971), and *Dialectical Investigations* (New York: Routledge, 1993).

In *Dance of the Dialectic*, Ollman describes Marx’s ontology as a where the “relation is the irreducible minimum for all units […]”: 17.


Ollman refers to these units of analysis that are composed of multiple relationships as “Relations,” in *Dance of the Dialectic*: 26.
Hope A. Olson and Rose Schlegl thoroughly analyze the literature concerning bias in both classification and subject access systems in “Standardization, Objectivity, and User Focus: A Meta-Analysis of Subject Access Critiques,” *Cataloging & Classification Quarterly* 32, no. 2 (2001): 61-80.


For an excellent collection of essays concerning library neutrality, see Alison Lewis, ed., *Questioning Library Neutrality: Essays from Progressive Librarian* (Duluth, MN: Library Juice Press, 2008). “Ideological State Apparatus” was a term coined by Louis Althusser to describe the capitalist state’s programmatic role in reproducing ideology. See Althusser, “Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses”: 85-126 for a detailed explanation of this function.


From June 23 to July 4, 2013, I was privileged to be a part of a 16 member delegation of librarians and archivists from the United States, Canada, Sweden, Palestine, and Trinidad and Tobago. Calling ourselves “Librarians and Archivists to Palestine”, our goal was to connect with colleagues in Palestine in order to investigate access to information in Palestine so that we could understand how Palestine voices reach us and how they are suppressed and do not reach us.

Our purpose was to develop mutual aid and solidarity with the understanding that this was to be the beginning of a longer-term process of solidarity work. During our two-week tour, we had meetings with representatives of dozens of organizations, and we participated in a walking tours, discussions, and lectures which provided us with a more wide-ranging understanding of the realities of Palestinian life both inside 1948 Palestine (what has come to be known as Israel) and inside 1967 Palestine (the occupied territories of the West Bank (including East Jerusalem) and the Gaza Strip). Unfortunately, due to the delegation’s limited scope, we were not able to visit Jordan, Syria, and Lebanon.

The Legacy of the Nakbah and the “Great Book Robbery”

Any discussion of the fate of libraries and documents in current-day Palestine must begin with a remembrance of the theft of books and archival
materials during the Nakbah, or the “catastrophe” which resulted in the Zionist expulsion of over 800,000 Palestinian refugees in 1948. During the Nakbah, the Hagana militia, the pre-cursor to the modern day Israeli Defense Forces (IDF), was followed by teams of librarians from the National Hebrew Library at Hebrew University who collected books, manuscripts, and newspapers from private family homes whose inhabitants had fled to escape fighting and massacres perpetrated by the Hagana and other Zionist extra-judicial militias. It is estimated that 30,000 books were stolen in Jerusalem, which was populated by many wealthy and educated Palestinians, alone. Today, there are only five or six private libraries left in East Jerusalem. Another 40,000 books were stolen from Haifa, Yaffa, and Nazareth. The looted books included those from well-known Palestinian intellectuals and writers such as Khalil Sakakini, an early Palestinian educator, whose library was confiscated and the whereabouts of which remain unknown today. The library also visited the library of the Nashashibi family whose library has been re-constructed based on new donations. These stolen books were then incorporated into the general collection of Hebrew University. About 6,000 of the 70,000 stolen books were marked AP (Abandoned Property). The Israeli government maintains that these books were not looted, but rather “collected”. However, today, over sixty years after the looting, no books have been returned to their original owners. Thus, the books remain an important part of historical cultural heritage that is not accessible to Palestinians living in the West Bank and Gaza or in the refugee Diaspora. Nor are these materials under the control of the 1.5 million Palestinians who are the descendants of those who remained in 1948 Palestine. A documentary film entitled The Great Book Robbery recounts this theft of books during the Nakbah.

Many archival materials such as personal papers, manuscripts, and newspapers were also stolen during the Nakbah; for instance, a pillaged British-mandate era newspaper collection that is one of the most complete in the world is likewise now located at Hebrew University. During our visit, we met with the Israeli non-governmental organization Zochrot whose name means “remembrance” in Hebrew. Zochrot champions the Palestinian refugee right of return and works to educate the Israeli population about the reality of the Nakbah including conducting tours of destroyed villages with Nakbah survivors. The group also produces maps of destroyed villages in Hebrew and Arabic. Zochrot researchers told us that many significant collections of documents pertaining to the Ottoman era and British mandate are now also located in the Israeli state archives. These materials include administrative records, population censuses, and documents from religious and social organizations. Furthermore, information at the Israeli Military Archives concerning the Israeli Army and the pre-state militia are restricted, censored, and closed. These materials are supposed to be opened fifty years after the time of creation, but if deemed harmful to the state—a familiar excuse—they can be restricted indefinitely. During the Nakbah of
1948, archival items stolen from Palestinian homes were deemed “controlled confiscation” indicating that articles from Palestinian homes could be seized by the Israeli forces for military purposes. In reality, this meant that Israeli soldiers could take whatever they wished from Palestinian homes. It is estimated that in 1948 there were approximately 100,000 manuscripts in Jerusalem; today, only 10,000 remain. There is much looted materials in Israeli archives, most of which is filed under the term “Arab” rather than “Palestinian”; for instance, “Arab files in the land of Israel, pre-1948.” It is also worth mentioning that the Hagana simply destroyed much Palestinian archival material which was lost and never recovered.

During the meeting with Zochrot, we learned that the Military Archives also contains photographs gathered by Jewish military scouts before 1948. The military scouts’ mission was to gather files about and photograph Palestinian villages, structures, roads and drinking wells. The Hagana and other Zionist militias would then search for, for instance, the wells based on the photographs when they invaded the village. The Zionist militias also conducted textual surveys of Palestinian towns and villages seeking demographic information, such as educational facilities, and geographic information such as information on water resources and buildings. While conducting their surveillance missions, these Jewish photographers would often describe themselves as Arab, and this information was sent to the Jewish intelligence forces. A third survey took aerial photographs of the villages which were important for gauging geographical information for the occupation forces. After the war ended, these same Jewish photographers proceeded to take individual photographs of the Palestinians who remained inside 1948 Palestine for purposes of surveillance and control. According to researchers at Zochrot, archival material used to expose Zionist strategy and participation in war crimes is often restricted. For instance, original materials used in research can subsequently only be seen via computer, while access to other historical materials are simply closed after the research is published—sometimes this happens even during the research—when the government archivists understand the parameters of the research project. It must be remembered that this restriction of access is being done by seasoned Israeli government archivists who control the image context and deny freedom of information and access.

Another factor which must be mentioned is the lack of access to Palestinian researchers to their own historical materials. For example, the Israeli State Archives, located in Jerusalem, are not accessible to Palestinians from the West Bank who may not be allowed to cross checkpoints, and certainly not to those in the Gaza Strip to whom the border is closed entirely. Needless to say, Palestinian refugees in Syria, Lebanon, and Jordan are also denied access while even refugees with Western passports can also be denied access to Israel (and will certainly be subjected to lengthy interrogation upon arrival)
based on their Arabic surname. The travesty of Israeli Archives holding stolen Palestinian archival material and then asking Palestinian researchers for money for copyright must also be mentioned.

The second event shadowing the delegation was the targeting, looting, and destruction of libraries, archives and media centers throughout Palestine during the Second Intifada, especially in the spring of 2002 when the Israeli Army damaged Palestinian libraries, archives, files and computer systems. A Palestinian Task Force Initiative indicated that in the majority of cases the libraries, archives and Palestinian ministries were invaded long after the fighting had ceased and it concluded that the destruction was purely deliberate. The library delegation visited the library building of the Orient House which the IDF targeted in 2001. Orient House was the headquarters of the PLO in East Jerusalem in the 1980s and 1990s and it housed a significant library and archive collection. Part of the collection was ironically materials that had been recovered from the looting of the PLO archive in Beirut during the brutal Israeli invasion of Lebanon in 1982. The confiscation of materials and the closure of the building occurred despite Israeli assurances during the Oslo Peace process that Israeli officials would not interfere with the daily operations of the library. Betraying its promise, the library was closed in 2001 using an Ottoman era law which is renewed every six months and posted on the front door of the building. A significant portion of the building’s archival collection was confiscated including materials related to the Jerusalem negotiations and a photo collection representing a unique body of materials relating to Jerusalem’s nineteenth and twentieth century history. A significant newspaper collection was also confiscated.

Orient House in East Jerusalem has been closed by Israeli authorities since 2001
Inside 1948: “As If We Were Still Under Occupation”

Inside 1948, the delegation witnessed a similar Israeli government denigration of its Palestinian population, who are officially designated as “Israeli Arabs”. In turn, in a move clearly motivated by the old colonial tool of “divide and conquer”, the “Israeli Arabs” are further split into Druze (who serve in the Israeli Defense Forces and are chosen to act as policemen over other Arabs), Christians, and Muslims. At a meeting of school librarians at the Mada al-Karmal foundation in Haifa, we learned that there is no official Palestinian archive inside 1948; instead, there are only private papers and files. In Israel, the most important papers related to Palestinian life inside 1948 are held in the National Archives in Jerusalem. In Haifa, such documents are located inside the municipal archives in Haifa. The Mada al-Karmal was the first Arab research center established after 1948.

There are seventy Arab public libraries inside 1948, but strangely, in Haifa, which the Israeli government trumpets as a model of co-existence between Jews and Arabs, there is no Arab public library although there are 21 Jewish libraries. The one Arabic-language public library is funded by a non-governmental organization, not by the Israeli government. The librarians informed us that the Israeli system has also worked to decrease and hide Palestinian archival materials. During our meeting with Arabic-language school librarians, we learned too how kibbutz archives, which contain much material on life in Palestine prior to 1948, use the familiar excuse of “security laws” to dissuade those perceived as “security risks” (especially Arab Muslims) from using them. Every kibbutz has an archive containing very rich information about the surrounding Arab villages.

The school librarians informed us that books on topics the Israeli government deems sensitive in the education of the Arab population, for instance, the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO), are censored and not permitted in classrooms. There is a separate Arab education system, but Palestinian Israelis are not in charge of their own education. Indeed, since 1948, teachers in Arab schools are vetted and monitored by the Israeli government and are dismissed if they discuss issues of Palestinian self-determination inside the classrooms. This system is enforced by a structure of collaboration in which the head teacher spies on fellow teachers. Any subject dealing with Palestinian culture and history is not allowed to be taught in the school system. Thus, even answering a question such as “What is the PLO?” can result in the teacher’s dismissal. In order to avoid discussing Arab nationalism in Arabic literature classrooms, the literature which is taught is that written before the advent of Islam. In essence then, this is a system of anti-education.

Moreover, the Arab education system is underfunded with Jewish schools receiving twelve per cent more money than their Arab counterparts. Indeed,
while the first school libraries for Jewish schools were established in 1927, the first school libraries for Palestinian Israelis were established only in 1992. Arab school libraries are in turn underfunded; for instance, one school librarian told us that her library’s annual budget was $250. Furthermore, Arabic-language children’s books in Israel are not imported from Arab countries; instead, most are translations of Hebrew-language children’s books. Books on sensitive subjects—for example, those dealing with the PLO—are censored or not permitted at all. At the post-secondary level, there are no Arabic-language universities. In practice, this means that even if there is only one Hebrew-speaking student in an Arabic literature class, the class is taught in Hebrew. In essence, the Arabic language school system is still run as if it were under occupation; moreover, there is a real problem of the “Israelization” of Palestinian Arab children who sometimes prefer speaking Hebrew and English rather than Arabic.

**Inside the West Bank**

The situation for libraries and archives in post-secondary institutions in the West Bank (and also Gaza which the delegation did not visit) is also fraught with difficulties as a result of the Israeli occupation. Since 1967, the Israeli occupation forces and officials have harassed, censored and denied access to post-secondary institutions. Indeed, in December 2008 the Israeli Air Force bombed in six separate air strikes the Islamic University of Gaza destroying 74 scientific laboratories.

Birzeit University near Ramallah, which the delegation visited, has, like other post-secondary institutions in the West Bank, been the target of Israeli harassment, closure, and bureaucratic entropy. The Israeli occupation regime has closed the university, which has approximately 8500 students (6,000 of them undergraduate), seventeen times since 1967 for a total period equaling seven years. Like other libraries in the West Bank, libraries and schools are not able to order books and other materials directly from Lebanon, where many high-quality Arabic language titles are published, because Israel considers the country a hostile entity. Moreover, when Arabic books are ordered, they tend to be of lower quality while Israeli censorship dictates that even a poetry or fiction book with a prohibited word in its title can be prohibited. Such practices naturally raise disturbing questions about academic freedom. When Arabic-language books are ordered, they are held in quarantine at the border, a process which can take up to a year. Adding insult to injury, the institution which has ordered the books must pay a storage fee to the Israeli government for the period the books have been quarantined. In practice then, Palestinian libraries end up paying triple the price for books. Even importing equipment can be a process lasting up to six months and then, once again, the university must
pay for the equipment’s sequester. In typical fashion, a simple procedure thus becomes a “security clearance.” Together with the cost of shipping the books, it is therefore more difficult for librarians to develop their collections.

The situation is much the same for al-Quds University in Abu Dis whose boundaries are separated by the illegal wall which Palestinians popularly frame as the Apartheid Wall. Librarians at both Birzeit University and al-Quds remarked on the difficulty of establishing librarianship as a profession in the West Bank. For example, there are no post-undergraduate library schools in the West Bank; therefore, it is difficult to find professional librarians and archivists. Furthermore, there is no unified Palestinian union library catalog because it is too expensive. Thus, each university must pay to maintain its own catalog. A further problem of the lack of a union catalog is that there is no interlibrary loan. Inevitably, the Palestinian Librarian Association is not so active because Israeli checkpoints make it difficult to cross checkpoints and attend meetings. In turn, this situation leads to a lack of training courses.

At an international level, support for alleviating the problems faced by libraries and archives is tepid. For instance, a recent report issued by the International Federation of Libraries and Archives (IFLA) compares Israeli and Palestinian libraries and archives as if they existed on an equal footing without acknowledging Israeli destruction and ongoing harassment of Palestinian libraries and archives. IFLA’s stance is that it must wait until problems are “resolved” and it even states that Israel has legitimate “security fears.”

Many books in the West Bank are charitable donations; a phenomenon the delegation learned can be problematic. At al-Quds University, for example, a donor has contributed money for a brand new library building; however, there is no money in the budget for furniture. The library had recently received a shipment of 30,000 donated titles, but the books were primarily general textbooks which were not currently even used at the university. The donation also included many duplicate titles. After librarians had sorted through the titles and weeded the collection, only 300 or 400 of the titles were chosen for the collection. Obviously, this charity model of collection development is an example of how aid can be unhelpful if it does not allow librarians to direct their own destinies.

A visit to the El-Bireh Public Library also demonstrated the high cost and the arbitrary nature of Israeli occupation. The El Bireh Public Library was in fact built just before the Israeli occupation began in 1967. The library soon discovered that books from the wider Arab world were banned from the West Bank. By 1993, the Israelis had banned 5,000 books including those by Agatha Christie and the poet Samih al-Qasim (who is from inside 1948 Palestine and who holds Israeli citizenship but whose career has been marked by harassment and imprisonment inside Israeli jails). Nonetheless, in 1973 El-Bireh Public Library opened the first children’s library in all of the Middle East. In 1982, however,
when the Israeli government assumed the governance of municipalities, Israeli government officials shut down the library and dismissed library employees. After the signing of the Oslo agreement in 1996, the library moved to a new building and today the library employs six employees. Many leaders in the current Palestinian legislative assembly were graduates of the El Bireh reading program. However, it is clear that Israeli claims of “security” used to harass and intimidate librarians are laughable. For instance, librarians told us of one instance in which Israeli occupation forces became concerned because children from the library would hang their drawings in the public square. As parents and other adults would attend the events, the Israelis would become concerned that it was a popular gathering and would prohibit the gatherings. Another surrealistic episode witnessed the Israeli occupation forces raiding the library because a Palestinian historian was giving a reading program on Zionism to the children.

Prisoners’ Libraries

During a presentation by the Addameer (“Conscience”) Prisoners’ Rights Association, the delegation learned of the truly desperate situation of prisoners detained by the Israeli occupation forces. For example, since 1967, Israel has detained 800,000 Palestinians, a statistic which includes twenty per cent of the population of the West Bank and Gaza Strip and forty per cent of the male population. Palestinian prisoners are subject to torture (both physical and psychological), administrative detention (i.e. detention without charge), and isolation. There are four interrogation centers and three detention centers, all of them inside Israel, a condition contravening international law which states prisoners must be held in close connection. The prisoners also include women and children. It is also important to mention that 320 Palestinian prisoners have died in Israeli prisons since 1967.

It is therefore perhaps unsurprising that special collections in Palestinian libraries are devoted to Palestinian prisoners. The Nablus Public Library, for example, holds a book section of approximately 8000 books and 870 handwritten notebooks from two now-closed prisons which operated from 1967 to 1996 and were closed after the Oslo Accords. When the prisons were closed, the Palestinian Authority collected the books and notebooks and donated them to the Nablus Public Library. A prisoner’s family was allowed to buy two books every month for detained family members; however, these books needed to be approved by the prison authorities first. The books remained in the prison when the detainee was released or transferred to another prison. Sometimes books would be smuggled inside another book, for instance, a cookbook. The library collections were also helped along by Red Cross volunteers who would bring in books about Marxism, Communist theory, and socialist thought as well as
religious books. These books helped to organize the three intellectual trends that emerged and spread among the detainees: a patriotic and nationalist movement; a communist and socialist movement; and a religious and Salafi movement. Detainees also copied books and sent them to other prisons. The books are filled with personal and political annotations in the margins. The books help to reveal gain rich insights into the development of pre-Oslo Palestinian intellectual trends that encompassed the various events occurring from 1967-1996.

Another important prison collection is contained in the Abu Jihad Museum of Prisoner Movement Affairs which was established in 2007 at al-Quds University. The Museum archive holds 55,000 court cases (about 10,000 of which have been digitized), almost all in Hebrew. The museum is now working to digitize the entire collection. Indeed, because the museum is located in what is known as “Area C”, the Israeli Army could enter at any time and confiscate the entire collection. The museum therefore ensures that there is also a computer backup for every document in Jerusalem, Ramallah and abroad. The museum exhibit details the lives of Palestinian prisoners and it also contains both books from a former prison library as well as other archival materials related to Palestinian prisoners.

The library has a network of employees who travel throughout the West Bank to various towns and villages and meet with ex-detainees who have been
recently released from prison. The ex-detainees can donate the original copy of their journal to the library or they can keep the original. The digitized notebooks are not accessible on the Internet but can be viewed at the library.

This passion for digitization in order to increase access to the material was very evident in many of the institutions we visited in the West Bank such as the Palestine Archive Project at Birzeit University and the Institute for Palestine Studies. Digitization is important because it allows Palestinians in the West Bank to circumvent Israeli travel restrictions and it also allows access to the Palestinian Diaspora and the wider community of researchers. Furthermore, digitization also ensures protection against Israeli destruction and theft of original materials.

**Creative Responses to Israeli Occupation and Violence**

The delegation was also very fortunate to visit various examples of responses to the detrimental effects of Israeli occupation and daily violence, often in the face of incredible odds and a paucity of financial resources.

In the Balata Refugee Camp, a camp that sits on 2.5 square kilometers of land near the city of Nablus in the northern part of the West Bank, for example, the delegation visited the Yaffa Cultural Centre which was founded in 1966. Today, almost 22,000 people live in this severely overcrowded piece of land. The Balata Refugee Camp has been a central point of resistance to Israeli occupation and both the first and second Palestinian Intifada began here. Israel targets Balata and Nablus and both places have paid a heavy price for their resistance. Indeed, the Israeli Army continues to arrest Palestinians in the camp on an almost daily basis, most often at night. Actually, on the night the delegation stayed at the centre’s guest house, the Israeli Army entered the camp to arrest Palestinians involved in an altercation with Jewish religious fundamentalist settlers making provocative moves against the nearby historic Jacob’s Well complex. Typically, instead of arresting the settlers for their violence and incitement, the Israeli Army targeted the victims of settler violence.

Established in 1950, the camp was initially intended to be a temporary tent city, offering short-term housing for refugees from 65 towns and villages in the Yaffa area (including Al Lyd and Al Ramleh) and members of Bedouin tribes. However, as time passed and the Palestinian refugee problem remained unresolved, Balata’s residents replaced the tents with concrete buildings. Situated very closely together, the apartments in the buildings are small with thin walls, offering little privacy. The crowded conditions also leave little room for demographic expansion, and almost 5,000 refugees now live outside the camp. The Yaffa Cultural Centre offers a range of programs meant to address the needs and wants of camp residents who face a wide range of challenges including domestic violence, drug abuse, unemployment, poverty,
and inadequate healthcare. The camp’s schools suffer from overcrowding and the illiteracy rate is forty-five per cent. The Centre hosts a children’s library to serve 300 children living under the most oppressive conditions of occupation. The centre also hosts a diversity of programming meant to serve local, social, educational, and psychological needs.

Similar conditions exist at the Aida Refugee Camp located in Bethlehem which was named after a woman who owned a coffee shop near the camp and who was a great supporter of the refugees who eventually settled there. As in Balata, the refugees lived in tents because they believed that the internationally-recognized right of return for refugees would allow them to return to their homes. However, eventually when they realized that they were not being allowed to return, they built concrete apartment blocks. Today, the Apartheid Wall (which is built far beyond the so-called 1948 “green line”) prevents the community from accessing nearby olive groves which had been used for relaxation, studying, animal grazing and agriculture. The delegation learned that in 2004 daily demonstrations stopped the building of the wall for two weeks after which the Israelis arrested teenagers who were resisting and tortured them. Eventually, Aida youth discovered how to light fires against the wall in order to soften it, and then hacked it with tools. Eventually, this action lead to breaking holes in the wall and then the complete torching of a “security” tower. Conditions at the Aida Camp are much the same as those at the Balata Camp. For example, the camp has one United Nations Relief and Work Agency (UNRWA) school but the children are not allowed to use it after class. Moreover, the classes are
so overcrowded that the classes are broken into two shifts. In 2005, the Israeli Army in fact killed teachers inside the school.

As in Balata, Aida now hosts a cultural centre called the “Lajee” (Refugee) Centre which contains a library and very successful media centre. The centre gives the camp children cameras, teaches them photography, video production and how to produce radio programs. The centre is also creating an atlas of the Aida camp (although the Israeli Army has in fact already completed a mapping of each home in the camp so that it can carry out its frequent incursions, arrests, and assassinations of camp residents with greater ease).

Another community initiative that the delegation visited was in the Wadi Silwan district which has become the main center for Judaization in East Jerusalem. Wadi Silwan currently has 55,000 Palestinian residents. During the first Intifada (1987-1991), 296 houses were stolen using the Absentee Property Law. As the Jerusalem Municipality refuses to grant permission to build homes here, the district is the scene of frequent demolitions of houses the Israeli authorities claim have been built illegally. In fact, residents have little choice but to build illegally considering that only twenty building permits have been issued to Palestinian residents since 1967. Meanwhile, Jewish settlers are allowed to build without difficulty, and more than 3,000 apartments have been built for Jewish settlers who build walls around their colonies. Many observers have commented that the home demolitions and the ongoing harassment are in fact designed to make life so miserable for East Jerusalem residents (who cannot afford to hire expensive lawyers) that they will move to the West Bank and forfeit their Jerusalem identity cards. The main impetus for Judaization is the City of David Archaeological Project which tunnels under the Palestinian residents homes causing damage. Israeli planning authorities are in fact in the process of approving plans to raze homes and turn the area into an archaeological park.

Spearheading the movement to Judaize the Wadi Silwan neighborhood of Wadi Hilweh are 400 Jewish settlers who now control 6,000 Palestinians. The settlers have their own militias and have shot Palestinian residents. There are now also 550 security cameras scrutinizing the movements of Palestinian residents of the neighborhood. Meanwhile, social conditions in Wadi Silwan are much like those in the Balata and Aida Refugee camps of the West Bank. In Wadi Silwan, there are nine elementary schools and only one high school. 11,000 students a year have no place to study. Most of the schools do not have libraries, and children must pay money to use the municipal library in Silwan. There are no clubs, community centres or parks, and while there are 3200 playgrounds and parks in West Jerusalem, there are only twelve in East Jerusalem. As in the Balata and Aida refugee camps, the Wadi Hilweh Creative Centre was established in 2007 to be a safe place, and it now serves 450 children between the ages of 6-12. The centre also contains a musical room consisting
of 150 instruments, a crafts room, and a hip hop room with its own studio. The Israelis tried to stop the opening of the centre, forcing it to hire a lawyer to defend its interests.

Another focus of creative resistance the delegation visited was the Tamimi Press in Nabi Saleh, a village near Ramallah, where residents hold a weekly non-violent demonstration against the takeover of a spring which included the whole side of a hill including their olive groves. Their weekly protest has been met with extreme violence by Israeli authorities who in Orwellian fashion claim that the protestors are threatening the settlers’ lives. Out of a village of a total of 600 people, 400 have been injured, and 140 have been arrested, including children. 180 children have also been injured. Children are likewise taken in for interrogation and some are imprisoned and released only after their parents pay a heavy fine. Israeli forces have used five or six kinds of tear-gas against the protestors including phosphorous, skunk spray, and pepper spray (which have correspondingly been used against children). Two residents have been killed including Mustafa Tamimi, a member of the Tamimi family. The community has responded by using video to document the violence they experience, including posting them on YouTube. The videos are also used to counter false accusations in court. The videographers take great personal risk to document the violence, including experiencing violence themselves, and facing arrest and imprisonment. The use of video to document Israeli military violence has also been used in other communities the delegation visited. Indeed, in the Aida Refugee Camp, the Israeli army recently shot a young videographer in the face and then arrested him after his release from hospital. Video has also been used to document Israeli violence by the Wadi Hilweh Information Centre.

Tear-gas canisters the Israeli Army has used against the residents of Nabi Saleh hanging outside the Tamimi home
In each instance, the video is used by these communities to document and communicate their experiences, and it also has the potential role of lessening military violence.

The delegation also visited many other places and met many other people including a walking tour of the city centre of Hebron where Palestinians are not allowed to walk or drive on Shuhada Street, a once thriving centre of market and social life. Meanwhile, Israeli settlers are allowed to go anywhere.

**Concluding note**

The delegation’s closing statement issued the following conclusions: While the delegation has ended, our work will continue. We will seek out and convene events in our home communities where we can share our knowledge about the effects of occupation and colonialism on libraries, archives, and Palestinian society; we will publish reports, articles, and zines that document the challenges faced—and the amazing work being done—by Palestinian information workers; we will develop an international network of information workers to facilitate skill-sharing, solidarity work, and community workers among librarians and archivists in Palestine and abroad; we will lobby national and international library and archival organizations to take tangible steps against the occupation and in support of Palestinian perspectives in information work; we will join Palestinians, Israelis, and international activists in campaigns for boycott, divestment, and sanctions (BDS) against Israeli apartheid and colonialism. We will continue to learn and adapt our strategies to changing realities and will engage in critical examinations of our own positions of privilege. Through these activities we will work to support access to information in and about Palestine and Palestinian self-determination.

We are an independent group of librarians and archivists who traveled to Palestine from June 23 – July 4, 2013. We come from the US, Canada, Sweden, Trinidad & Tobago, and Palestine. We bore witness to the destruction and appropriation of information, and the myriad ways access is denied. We were inspired by the many organizations and individuals we visited who resist settler-colonialism in their daily lives. We connected with colleagues in libraries, archives, and related projects and institutions, in the hopes of gaining mutual benefit through information exchange and skill-sharing. We learned about the common and unique challenges we face—both in different parts of Palestine and in our home contexts. In all our travels and work, we respected the Palestinian civil society call for boycott, divestment, and sanctions (BDS) against Israel and did not partner with any organization that violates this call. As librarians and archivists, as people who believe in access to information, we affirm that institutional academic and cultural boycotts are appropriate responses to curtailed freedoms and are effective tools for change.

Our group was small, our scope limited. We traveled only to Palestine, and only to parts of Palestine. We were not able to visit Palestinian communities in Gaza, Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, or elsewhere, and our trip was only the first step in creating a network of information workers. We were privileged to visit cities, villages, and refugee camps, and to meet with grassroots activists and institutional representatives. In the West Bank, East Jerusalem, and 1948 Palestine (Israel), we engaged with librarians and archivists about their projects and their struggles.

As we travelled we saw barriers to movement everywhere: walls, checkpoints, turnstiles, metal detectors, segregated roads, surveillance watchtowers, military patrols, security cameras, and settler militias. We saw

KEYWORDS: Palestine; Israel; Boycott, Divestments and sanctions; BDS; Occupation; Settler-colonialism; Human rights; Solidarity; Genocide.
communities devastated by criminalization and incarceration. We visited the rubble of villages that were destroyed in 1948, and we witnessed the ongoing Judaization of Palestinian communities through new housing developments, unequal provision of municipal services, and the Hebraization of place names. We saw new Israeli settlements hovering on hilltops above Palestinian villages, evidence of the forcible land grabs and displacement that Palestinians have been facing for decades. We met families that have struggled and suffered through egregious violence and yet work every day to secure education, opportunities, safety and a more just world for their children.

The erasure of Palestinian culture and history is a tactic of war and occupation, a means to further limit the self-determination of the Palestinian people. Yet the richness, beauty, and complexity of Palestinian existence was everywhere evident, in the historical and contemporary cultural material produced by writers, poets, journalists, artists, archivists and librarians, and in the histories passed down through stories and from person to person. We bore witness to a culture of resistance, which in all its myriad forms resoundingly refutes the notion that Palestine does not exist.

Our experiences in the West Bank, East Jerusalem and 1948 Palestine (Israel) were complex, challenging, beautiful and deeply meaningful. We met creative, committed, and courageous activists, visionaries, cultural workers, artists, librarians and archivists. Everywhere we went we witnessed the daily lived realities of occupation and colonialism, as well as ongoing resistance and the persistent quest for justice.*

At Aida Refugee Camp located in Bethlehem, we saw how the Apartheid Wall prevented the community from accessing nearby olive groves which had been used for relaxation, studying, animal grazing and agriculture. We also heard about the Lajee Center’s project to map the people’s histories of the camp.

In Nabi Saleh weekly nonviolent demonstrations against the confiscation of the community’s land and water are met with extreme violence from the Israeli military. The villagers are using video to document the violence they experience, as well as collecting the empty tear gas canisters and shell casings which are used against them. This documentation is used by the community to honor their resistance, to communicate their struggle with the wider world, and to dispute false accusations in the courts.

School librarians described the difficulty in obtaining Arabic language children’s literature, especially in 1948 Palestine (Israel). Many of the available books are low-quality translations from Hebrew, and Palestinian children have little access to their own literary heritage.

We visited the destroyed town of Saffourieh and heard from former resident Abu Arab about his experiences fleeing the town as a child during the Nakba. Abu Arab has a museum of Palestinian material culture, which he developed
out of his work as an antiques collector. The museum challenges the process of ethnic cleansing and the erasure of cultural memory. Abu Arab is the brother of poet Taha Muhammed Ali.

Throughout Palestine we encountered cultural production by youth to preserve traditions, by the Yaffa Youth Movement in Jaffa, the Yafa Cultural Center in Balata Refugee Camp, and the Lajee Center in Aida Refugee Camp.

We witnessed the documentation of prisoners’ lives, a central experience in the Palestinian struggle against occupation. At the Nablus Public Library we saw the marginalia and creative book repairs in a former prison library collection, and at the Abu Jihad Museum for the Prisoners Movement Affairs we learned about a project to collect and digitize prisoners’ notebooks from across the West Bank.

We learned from the Addameer Prisoner Support and Human Rights Association that the Israeli military is currently detaining 4,900 Palestinians, including 236 children and 8 members of Palestinian legislature.

In East Jerusalem we visited the Nashashibi Center for Culture and Literature, a rebuilt family library from which all the books were stolen during the Nakba in 1948. We also visited the Orient House, which was closed by the Israeli government in 2001 and had significant portions of its archival collections confiscated.

Librarians at Birzeit University told us of their success in petitioning the Library of Congress to adopt a call number for the First Intifada, recognizing it as a unique historical period even as it was still happening: DS128.4.*

During a meeting with the organization alQaws for Sexual & Gender Diversity in Palestinian Society, we learned about the process of organizing across the West Bank / 1948 Palestine border, the articulation of Palestinian-specific understandings of sexual identity, and the Singing Sexuality project, which discusses sexuality through music.

In Lyd, not far from Tel Aviv, we saw where the library of the local school was removed and replaced with a police station.

We visited the Wadi Hilweh Information Center in Silwan, where residents of the neighborhood create grassroots media about the settler violence they experience on a daily basis.

At the El Bireh Municipal Library we learned about the Tamer Institute, which produces and publishes Arabic language children’s books that are distributed to libraries and community centers throughout Palestine.

Recognizing the barriers to movement and access that often keep the aforementioned organizations and projects from connecting with each other, and appreciating the importance of accountability to the communities that hosted us in Palestine, our delegation organized a public forum in Ramallah on our last evening together. We shared our initial ideas and asked for feedback about our observations.
While the delegation has ended, our work will continue: we will seek out and convene events in our home communities where we can share our knowledge about the effects of occupation and colonialism on libraries, archives, and Palestinian society; we will publish reports, articles, and zines that document the challenges faced—and the amazing work being done—by Palestinian information workers; we will develop an international network of information workers to facilitate skill-sharing, solidarity work, and community among librarians and archivists in Palestine and abroad; we will lobby national and international library and archival organizations to take tangible steps against the occupation and in support of Palestinian perspectives in information work; we will join Palestinians, Israelis, and international activists in campaigns for boycott, divestment, and sanctions (BDS) against Israeli apartheid and colonialism. We will continue to learn and adapt our strategies to changing realities and will engage in critical examinations of our own positions of privilege. Through these activities we will work to support access to information in and about Palestine and Palestinian self-determination.

Librarians and Archivists to Palestine 2013 Delegation:

Bronwen Densmore – New York City College of Technology
Molly Fair – Interference Archive; Justseeds Artists’ Cooperative; CUNY TV
Che Gossett – Independent Archivist, Philadelphia
Amy Greer – Doctoral Candidate, Simmons College
Blair Kuntz – Near and Middle East Studies Librarian, University of Toronto
Grace Lile – WITNESS
Josh MacPhee – Interference Archive; Justseeds Artists’ Cooperative
Rachel Mattson – University of Illinois at Champaign-Urbana; Jews for Racial and Economic Justice
Hannah Mermelstein – Saint Ann’s School Library; Adalah-NY: The New York Campaign for the Boycott of Israel
Andrea Miller-Nesbitt – Liaison Librarian, McGill University
Bekezela Mguni – Independent Librarian; New Voices Pittsburgh: Women of Color for Reproductive Justice
Melissa Morrone – Public Librarian
Vani Natarajan – Barnard College Library
Elisabet Risberg- Librarian, The International Library in Stockholm
Maggie Schreiner – Tamiment Library and Robert F. Wagner Labor Archive; Rude Mechanical Orchestra

All organizational affiliations are listed for identification purposes only and in no way indicate a position taken by such organizations on the issues raised in this statement.
* For a more complete list of projects and organizations we visited, please see this handout we distributed at our public forum in Ramallah at the end of our delegation.

** An earlier version of this statement listed the call number as DS119.75. Birzeit University librarians have clarified that DS128.4 was the number assigned during the First Intifada, whereas it appears that the Library of Congress assigned a new number (DS119.75) after the Intifada ended. Birzeit University continues to use DS128.4. We apologize for the error.
Librarians and Archivists to Palestine

DS128.4 Zine (excerpts)
Interrogation at Israeli border station,
Aqaba – Eilat, June 22, 2013:

Why are you coming from Jordan?
Who do you know in Jordan?
Why would your friend from Canada go to Jordan to find a job? You mean there are no jobs in Canada?
Have you been to Israel before? Why did you come to Israel?
Why didn’t you land in Israel?
Did you pack your bags yourself?
Why do you have Arabic dictionaries? Do you speak Arabic? Why did you learn Arabic? Why didn’t you choose another language like Chinese or French? Why Arabic? Where did you learn Arabic?
Why aren’t you telling us the truth? What are you trying to hide from us?
Why do you have a shortwave radio? Is it to listen to local broadcasts?
Why do you have an umbrella?
Where did you buy your suitcases?
Why are you carrying fingernail polish?
And—after undergoing a strip search and having everything in my bag (including underwear and socks) combed over with a security wand (this after putting my suitcases initially through an x-ray machine), a process which took forty-five minutes:
Would you like us to help you re-pack your bags?

—Submitted by Blair Kuntz
Throughout our travels in the West Bank we saw how Palestinians' freedom of movement is controlled and restricted by the Israeli government, the military, and through settler violence.

Palestinians are virtually imprisoned where they live.

I spotted kids flying kites from the rooftops of their homes, and watched the red, black, green and white colors soar above the checkpoints, the separation wall, and settlements on hilltops. I was struck that this childhood pastime was a creative act of resistance.

- Molly Fair
One of the most universally popular symbols we’ve seen here (second only to the Palestinian flag) is the cartoon image of Handala. He is a young Palestinian refugee, tattered and back-turned, refusing to grow-up until he can return to his homeland. He is seen as a symbol of popular defiance, and appears in graffiti, on t-shirts, key chains, car decals, and in shop windows. Handala was created by Naji al-Ali, a Palestinian cartoonist who was exiled in 1948 (at age 10), and murdered in 1987 by an unknown assailant at a time when Israel was on an assassination spree of the Palestinian Left.

— Josh MacPhee
Three days into the delegation and I am still without words. Everywhere we go this beautiful land is scarred with the evidence of occupation, suffocation, and violence. The rolling hills are packed with crags and decorated with olive trees. Those hills, the bright blue sky, the proudly waving Palestinian flags seem dwarfed by the Wall, the settlements, the Israeli flags, the checkpoints, the army vehicles, the weaponry, the cameras. For me, this is hard to reconcile, to articulate despite the immense amount of reading and research I have done, personal stories I have heard, and documentaries I have watched. The actual gut feelings these sights elicit are so far inexpressible. The beauty and the horror. The idyllic and the obscene. The pride and the greed. The power and the resistance. Everywhere a contradiction. Even - especially - the fields and the trees are under siege, fighting for their very existence. The images I see while we travel sometimes distract me from the actual meetings because I must work so hard to understand what it is I have just witnessed before even hearing from the people themselves. But when the conversations start, I hear the human version of the stories the land told me as we drove. The stories are complex, nuanced, powerful, inspiring, and distressing. I think I need to wait to unpack the actual conversations we had at Birzeit University and Al Bireh Public Library because I cannot keep my eyes open. I must sleep. I have not slept more than 3 hours at a time since arriving five days ago except for night #2. Writing the emails home each night are my only processing time, and even there I find myself spitting out facts instead of talking about my experience. Hopefully we will get a little more rest soon or my head might explode with information, ideas, images, and gratitude - none of which I've had the words to write about. Perhaps tomorrow the words will flow. Salam.

Photo: Meeting with the Institute for Palestine Studies (IPS) under a fig tree at the Khalil Sakakini Center in Ramallah. With IPS, Birzeit U., and other orgs, we discussed best practices and challenges of grassroots projects to archive social history in the absence of a national archive and with little access to much of Palestine's cultural heritage.
The first school libraries for Jewish schools in Palestine were established in 1927.

The first school libraries for Palestinian schools within '48 were established in 1992.

In Haifa, there are 21 public library branches serving Jews and one serving Palestinians. This branch is run by an NGO.

Local Palestinian councils in '48 are on the receiving end of budgetary discrimination. One school librarian told us her library’s annual budget was $250.

(photograph of the Baha'i Terraces on Mount Carmel, Haifa)
On June 30th we met with ADDAMEER Prisoner Support and Human Rights Association. During their presentation we learned about the overall situation for prisoners in Palestine. There are 4 interrogation centers, 3 detention centers and 17 security prisons. All prisons but one are located in Israel, in violation of the Geneva Convention.

800,000 Palestinians have been detained by Israel since 1967 (approx. 40% of the male population in the occupied territories). This makes visiting prisoners very difficult.
PLACES WE’VE VISITED

The following is a list of some of the organizations we visited during our delegation.

Archives/Special Collections
Kenyon Institute (Jerusalem)
Dar al-Nashashibi Library & Archive (Jerusalem)
Arab Studies Society - Orient House (closed by Israel and confiscated) (Jerusalem)
Prisoners Section, Nablus Public Library (Nablus)
Mada al-Carmel: Arab Center for Applied Social Research (Haifa)
Yasser Arafat Foundation (Ramallah)
Institute for Palestine Studies (Ramallah)
Badil Resource Center for Palestinian Residency and Refugee Rights (Bethlehem)

Municipal Libraries
Nablus Public Library (Nablus)
Palestinian librarians in municipal and school libraries (Haifa)
Ramallah Public Library (Ramallah)
El-Bireh Public Library (El-Bireh)
Tulkarm Public Library (Tulkarm)

Family/Personal Libraries
Khalidi Family Library (Jerusalem)
Ansari Family Library (Jerusalem)
Budeiri Family Library (Jerusalem)

Academic Libraries/Archives
Birzeit University Libraries (Birzeit)
Birzeit Palestine Archive Project (Birzeit)
Al-Quds University Library (Abu Dis)
Al-Quds American Studies Department (Abu Dis)
Khaduri Library (Tulkarm)

Children’s Libraries
Nablus Children Library (Nablus)
El-Bireh Public Library (El-Bireh)
Various grade school libraries (Bethlehem)

Museums
Palestinian Museum (Ramallah)
Return of Qastel Museum/Safouriya Association for Heritage and Return (Nazareth)
Abu l’Haid Prisoners Museum and Archive (Abu Dis)

Cultural Centres
Madaa Center and Library (Silwan, Jerusalem)
Yafa Cultural Center (Balata Refugee Camp, Nablus)
Lajee Center (Aida Refugee Camp, Bethlehem)
Al rowwad Cultural & Theatre Society (Aida Refugee Camp, Bethlehem)
Khalil Sakakini Cultural Centre (Ramallah)

Moving Image Collections/Media Centers/Publishers
Wadi Hilweh Information Center (Jerusalem)
Tamer Institute for Community Education (Bethlehem/Ramallah)
Subversive Films (Ramallah)
Shashtal (Ramallah)

Activist Groups/NGOs
Boycott from Within (Jerusalem)
Anarchists Against the Wall
Grassroots al-Quds (Jerusalem)
B’Tselem/Israeli Information Center for Human Rights in the Occupied Territories (Jerusalem)
Zochrot (Tel-Aviv)
Yaffa Youth (Yaffa)
Tamimi Press (Nabi Saleh)
Addameer/Prisoner and Human Rights Association (Ramallah)
BDS National Committee and PACBI (Ramallah)
Al-Qaws (Ramallah)
EWAH (Ramallah)
Women’s Centre for Legal Aid and Counselling (Ramallah)

Other Activities
Jonathan Cook walking tour, including of Safouriyah (Nazareth)
Walking tour with Tamer Nafar from DAM (Lyd)
Walking tour of Nablus’s old city with Beesan Ramadan (Nablus)
Conversation with human geographer Sa’ed Abu-Hijleh (Nablus)
Walking tour of Yafa with Sami Abu-Shehadeh (Yaffa)
Walking tour of Hebron with Hisham Sharabati (Hebron)
we recommend

Palestine Inside Out: An Everyday Occupation * Saree Makdisi
Sharon and My Mother in Law * Suad Amiry
The Ethnic Cleansing of Palestine * Ilan Pappe
Prisoners Diaries * ed. Norma Hashim
Palestinian Walks * Raja Shehadeh

The Time That Remains * Elia Suleiman
Sling Shot Hip Hop * Jackie Salloum
When I Saw You * Annemarie Jacir
The Great Book Robbery * Benny Brunner
Children of Shatila * Mai Masri

Touch * Adania Shibl
Time of White Horses * Ibrahim Nasrallah
Men in the Sun * Ghassan Kanafani
Wild Thorns * Sahar Khalifeh
Mornings in Jenin * Susan Abulhawa

The Boy and the Wall * Lajee Center youth, Aida Refugee Camp
Chaddar the Ghoul and Other Palestinian Stories * Sonia Nimir
Where the Streets Had a Name * Randa Abdel-Fattah
Awwal Zahra Fi’l Ard * Zakaria Mohammed + Ahmed Al-Khaldy
Al Ta’Al-Marbouta Tateer * Ibtisam Barakat + Hosni Radwan

The Palestinian Kitchen * Madaa Creative Center, Silwan
A Child In Palestine: The Cartoons of Naji al-Ali
Palestinian Art 1850-2005 * Kamal Boullata
Gaza Kitchen * Laila el Haddad
Palestine * Joe Sacco
Authors, artists, and photographers of the preceding excerpts of the Librarians and Archivists to Palestine DS128.4 Zine are:

Blair Kuntz, Interrogation at Israeli Border Station Aqaba-Eilat (p. 166), is a proud red diaper baby who became critical of Zionism after witnessing Israeli brutality first hand, first in Lebanon then in Palestine.

Amy Greer, Day 3, June 24 (p. 167), is a youth services public librarian, doctoral student, and community organizer who now incorporates za’atar, sage tea, and maqluba into her regular diet since her return from Palestine.

Molly Fair, kids flying kites (p. 168-9), is an archivist and artist living in Brooklyn, and new fan of Arab Idol winner Mohammed Assaf.

When he is not reading, writing, designing, studying, or hoarding books, Josh Mac Phee, Handala (p. 170-171) and Places We’ve Visited (p. 175), helps run the Interference Archive in Brooklyn, NY.

Vani Natarajan, Haifa (p. 172) and we recommend (p. 176), is an academic librarian, writer, and activist living in Brooklyn. One of her all-time favorite BDS activities involved singing and dancing to a rewritten Spice Girls song, inside a New York City Best Buy store, in protest of David Beckham’s Motorola endorsement.

Maggie Schreiner, on June 30th (p. 173-4), is an archivist and community organizer living in Brooklyn.

The electronic version of the full text of the zine can be found at http://librarians2palestine.wordpress.com/zine/. Paper copies can be ordered online from JustSeeds Artists’ Cooperative at http://www.justseeds.org/justseeds_collaborations/04lapzine.html

KEYWORDS: Palestine; Israel; Boycott, Divestments and sanctions; BDS; Occupation; Settler-colonialism; Human rights; Solidarity; Genocide; Zines.
We, the undersigned members of the American Library Association, have requested this opportunity to make a statement because we believe that neither the Executive Board, the Council, nor the membership feels or subscribes to what we perceive “The Speaker” to be representing in the name of the Association. In the heat of discussion immediately after viewing the film at the annual conference last summer, there was not enough time to gain proper perspective, especially on a film that is as subtle as this one. It is important to us and to the ongoing welfare of the Association for you to know how we feel about “The Speaker.” It would be easier for us to remain silent, but that would mean acting as if the issue were either resolved or dead, or that it does not matter. It is no insignificant charge that we make: first, that the central thesis of “The Speaker” is counterfeit and falsely identified as a First Amendment issue; and second, that the example chosen to illustrate the principle of free speech is presented in a highly unsuitable and irresponsible fashion, insensitive, and in poor taste and skillfully racist.

“The Speaker” is predicated on the thesis that if the high school Current Events Club does not invite the controversial character, Dr. James Boyd, to address the student body in the last lecture of the year-long series he would ipso facto be deprived of the right of freedom of expression. The students are allowed to labor under the belief that the First Amendment obligates them to select Dr. Boyd because of the controversial nature of his views, which center on the black race as mentally inferior to the white race. This supposed obligation to the First Amendment continues to be the central focus of the film.

Dr. Boyd has come to the attention of the Current Events Club precisely because he has been publicly exercising his First Amendment rights to the fullest. Under the protection of the law he has been free to express himself verbally, to write and publish his controversial views, and to seek as many audiences and sponsors as he wishes. Thus, he has already enjoyed the benefits

KEYWORDS: Black Caucus (ALA); Controversies in librarianship; Intellectual freedom; Intellectual Freedom Committee (ALA); Racism; The Speaker (film).
guaranteed in the law. The First Amendment pledges to protect freedom of expression but not to supply an audience. If the film’s interpretation of the First Amendment were applied, it would follow that wherever Dr. Boyd’s name is suggested there would be no choice but to invite him, for otherwise he would be deprived of his freedom of expression.

The real issue of “The Speaker” is not Dr. Boyd’s First Amendment rights and the supposed obligation to invite him to speak; that contrived controversy is a deception and is the cause of the impossible confusion. The real issue is, first, the denial of the Current Events Club members’ right to invite the speaker they have decided on, and second – the heart of the matter – whether or not the school’s cancellation of the students’ choice could be properly justified. Victoria Dunn’s [teacher advisor to the club] one concern throughout the film is her claim for Dr. Boyd; her attention is riveted on this overriding interest to the extent that no matter what action takes place, her comments and protests never vary. Under her guidance the Club members are fighting for Dr. Boyd’s right to be invited to lecture, instead of fighting to uphold their own right to invite the speaker of their choice. Because everyone had accepted the authority of the history teacher on the matter of Dr. Boyd’s right to the invitation, the school was faced with making the agonizing choice between violating the proposed speaker’s First Amendment rights and violating personal integrity and feelings of human decency by sponsoring his presentation. The pity and irony are that the school’s act of canceling the speaker was never evaluated in the light of actual court rulings that define the school’s obligation in a situation like this. As a consequence, no one ever learned how the First Amendment actually applied to this particular situation. It is incredible that the central issue of the film is overlooked completely, never addressed.

We maintain that “The Speaker” is fraudulent in nature because it rests upon a misrepresentation of the First Amendment; that the interpretation set forth is a manipulation of the First Amendment to deftly force the ordinary program-planning function of choosing a speaker to conform to imaginary First Amendment strictures. This distortion completely discredits and invalidates “The Speaker.” This fundamental error, established at the beginning of the film, is never corrected. The twist of the truth is so subtle that it glides by easily and is woven into a sequence of superficially logical arguments and action to support the deception. Our second charge is that the example chosen to dramatize the First Amendment is unsuitable and presented in a highly irresponsible fashion; that underneath its smooth, superficial plausibility and sophistication, “The Speaker” is insensitive, in poor taste, and subtly, but strongly racist.

The great many librarians viewing “The Speaker” at the 1977 Detroit Conference sense that there was something fundamentally wrong about the film, even if they could not immediately identify all the reasons. It takes a while to sort out the half-truths and untruths, amidst the web of subtle nuances. Dr. Boyd’s
thesis presumes the superiority of the white members of the audience and their in-born right and authority to judge the mental fitness of other races. The black students would become invisible men and women in such an audience, while their erstwhile peers are being instructed in the cardinal principles of white supremacy. The school’s consent to these terms would result in the students being categorized and *addressed* as “superior” or “inferior.”

The purpose of a lecture series such as the one sponsored by the Current Events Club is to broaden the students’ knowledge and understanding of significant issues that confront the nation and the world, in an effort to help make them capable of forming intelligent opinions. None of the lectures can be comprehensive; the expectation is that each will be a highly informative introduction and overview, including an explanation of various schools of thought, especially in controversial areas, in the context of the overall subject or problem.

The protest will immediately arise that we cannot deny or ignore the fact that we live in a world where the belief in white supremacy exists, that black people have no right to declare this unholy subject to be the one area that may not be discussed; and that the subject should be put out on the table to be dealt with like any other idea. We agree completely. Our quarrel is with the irresponsible method of presentation, which is certainly not in the manner that “any other idea” is customarily presented.

The subject of race is not sheltered and forbidden by frightened, supersensitive black librarians. *Every subject under the sun* is fair game for open-minded investigation. The search for truth is everyone’s quest of a lifetime. The problem of race in all its aspects cries out for both scholarly and popular study and discussion, at all levels. The subject of the mental inferiority of black people – more commonly identified as “white supremacy” or “racism” – has plagued this country for three centuries and now convulses the world. It is hollow mockery for Victoria Dunn to represent Dr. Boyd’s point of view as “unpopular” or as “minority opinion.” The fact of the matter is that few ideas in history have burrowed so deeply into the human mentality as this one, or have been used so skillfully for human exploitation. After a one hundred year effort to erase the segregation and discrimination laws left over from chattel slavery, the “Jim Crow” signs have been torn down. This obviously does not mean that the problem of the races is now history; its tenacious hold persists without the support of law, manifesting itself now in more subtle ways, but continuing as a devastating social force.

Periodically, the subject of the inferiority of black people is revived in the popular forum, after the manner of Shockley and Jensen today, each time with supposed new and more scientific proof. This theory was out of keeping with the spirit of democratic idealism that characterized the civil rights protest movement of the 1950s and early 60s. However, as the moral fervor of those
years began to wane in the face of the frustrating task of building new patterns of human relationships after the official end of segregation, the black inferiority rationale, always lurking in the wings, now is reasserting itself and finding new acceptance.

It might be said that some subjects are as painful and offensive to other people as the charge of mental inferiority is to black people, but there is a unique ingredient affecting the black person. The supreme personal insult, added to all other human burdens and possible degradation, is to judge a race of people as inherently inferior in mentality to others, for that denies their status or classification as true, full-fledged human beings; it denies their very humanity. Many men believe women to be physically and mentally inferior to themselves, but there is never any challenge to white women’s humanity or to their inclusion in the presumed superior race. A murderer has degraded himself in the worst way possible, but he is a fallen human being and his birthright remains intact – unless he is black. The arrogance of this attitude is unspeakable and is one of the most hateful of all problems to cope with, even when it is an unconscious assumption.

There is an unwholesome emphasis in the film, and especially in the “Discussion Guide,” on “tolerating ideas we detest.” The spirit of the First Amendment is more like the popular saying, “I disagree with what you say, but I will fight to the death to defend your right to say it.” Democracy does not require “tolerance of ideas we detest.” This nation was founded by people who would not tolerate “ideas they detested.” Slavery in the country would not have been ended if tolerance of the detested idea had prevailed, nor would Hitler have been stopped. There should be closer study of this phrase before it is used in the name of the American Library Association, either by inference as a cardinal principle, or aligned with a twisted perception of the First Amendment.

Why was this theme of the inferiority of black people chosen and developed without consultation with a representative group of members of the Association directly affected?

The American Library Association contracted for the production of a film on the First Amendment to be released for distribution after the Executive Board viewed and approved the finished product. The fact of the matter is that the Executive Board had the right and a definite obligation to be sensitive to the character of the film. Censorship, a loaded, frightening word has been charged, but it has no valid application to this situation.

We have never asked that the film be censored. The Association has had experience with handling a finished study which was considered unsatisfactory and never published by the American Library Association. We feel that there are solutions to the crisis created by “The Speaker” which have not been utilized.

We regret that emphasis has been placed upon our reaction after the film was produced rather than on the manner in which the film was conceived and
developed. We realize that these are past events but we feel the need to state emphatically that our sector of the Association has been deeply hurt, and is profoundly disappointed that there has been no sensitivity to our feelings.

Disturbance over “The Speaker” is deepening, not subsiding. Its lingering, troubled presence has cast a pall over the Association that will not just go away. The American Library Association’s integrity is at stake. It will not be easy to resolve this dilemma, but we have confronted other difficult problems before with wisdom and courage.

This is a statement from the following persons and carries the endorsement of the A.L.A. Black Caucus.

Signed:

Mohammed Aman   Virginia Lacey Jones
Augusta Baker    E. J. Josey
Milton Byam     Doreitha Madden
Geraldine Clark  A. P. Marshall
Jean Ellen Coleman  Barbara S. Miller
William D. Cunningham Jane Hale Morgan
Hardy Franklin   Effie Lee Morris
Dorothy Haith    Annette Phinazee
Vivian Hewitt    Barbara T. Rollock
Monteria Hightower  Spencer G. Shaw
Cynthia Jenkins  Lucille C. Thomas
Casper Jordan    Avery Williams
Clara S. Jones

A PDF of the original BCALA document, a link to the film on YouTube, and other resources related to this issue can be found at the website of ALA’s Office for Intellectual Freedom at http://www.oif.ala.org/oif/?p=5008
A book is a miracle.
So many white wings
on a single bird’s
body. So those who claim
a computer too
is a miracle, have
maybe a little stone
in the imagination, a gallstone
to keep
them from telling different kinds of
miracles apart.

Jorge Riechmann (Spanish poet, literary translator, essayist, activist and full professor of moral philosophy at the Universidad Autónoma de Madrid). Translated by Niall Binns. Included in Riechmann’s book “Poema de uno que pasa” (Fundación Jorge Guillén, 2002). Illustrated by Sara Plaza Moreno.
When librarians write about the future it is usually framed within the context of information technology, the creative destruction it spawns, and our ill-starred attempts to outpace its influence. Instead of thoughtful analyses of how technology can be used to improve daily human existence or at least mitigate the multiple disparities between the poor and the wealthy, we are presented with bleak scenarios portraying our own obsolescence as an inevitable result of market forces. Other professional literatures, including law, medicine, nursing, and education have extensive theoretical foundations that articulate a connection between day-to-day practices and philosophies of service. These professions are thus able to inscribe a boundary where the market’s influence is resisted by an internalized code of professional ethics. Librarianship has yet to establish a robust critical reflexivity, and our futures (as described by our leading visionaries) reflect this tragic paucity. Library 2020 and Reflecting on the Future are the latest iterations in a tradition of literature extending from the mid-1970s.
that valorizes information as a commodity, libraries as private enterprises, and librarians as members of a cognitive elite in the post-industrial society. In the pithy phrasing of John Buschman, these books require a “well-charged BS detector”, (Buschman 2012) one calibrated for detecting the hypocrisy implicit in any vision of the future where the market logic of capitalism banishes all social problems behind a veil of glittering technologies. Of the two books, *Library 2020: Today’s Leading Visionaries Describe Tomorrow’s Library* commits the most atrocities against reason, probably because the editor asked the contributors to “be bold, be inspirational, be hopeful…be fun, be yourself and for heaven’s sake, don’t be boring” [v] when envisioning the future. The result is a book brimming with delusions and occasional madness concerning the emancipative role of technology and the infiltration of our profession’s service philosophy by capitalist discourse.

*Library 2020: Today’s Leading Visionaries Describe Tomorrow’s Library* is the type of book that, like a hopeless drunk on a reality TV show, captures one’s attention because of its hypnotic ability to both arouse and appall. The interesting parts comprise an anarchistic ode to the inevitable and well-deserved demolition of the library as an institution of reading which will be transformed one day into a community space of endless, fascinating capacities: “maker spaces” for using 3-D printers, immersive gaming experiences, kiosks for tourist information or selecting the right restaurant, a place to conduct banking transactions, renew passports, a massage studio, etc., etc. In the blue sky speculation of these ardent advocates, the library of the future is a “one-stop shop” that telescopes the functions of various competing public and private institutions under one conveniently located roof, or website, or phone app. The enthusiasm gushes out of the pages with a flood of superlatives, occasionally brought up short by a recognition of perdurable problems, such as poverty, the homeless, and the “digital divide”, realities of such magnitude that their mere mention disturbs these otherwise cheerfully inane meditations like a homeless flasher with Tourette’s syndrome caustically announcing his presence at a country club garden party.

Despite being written by serious professionals, many of whom are employed in the upper stratosphere of library administrations, *Library 2020* combines Pollyannaish boosterism with unalloyed buncombe. As anyone who has perused the pages of *Library Journal*, skimmed the offerings of *Computers in Libraries*, or attended PowerPoint slideshows with unassuming titles such as “The Kinder, Gentler Libraries are Dead” may tell you, libraries that do not adapt to the future will, like Panamanian tree frogs, be routinely snuffed out by consumer demand for faster technologies wrapped in slicker packaging. Librarians who believe in building collections instead of offering their customers boutique-level shopping experiences will be rendered obsolete. Meanwhile, those armed with the proper resources, training, and budgets will thrive, and their library (with a
multi-million dollar expansion) may even be featured in *Library Journal* as a stellar example of community boot-strapping. Of course, the *LJ* editors may fail to mention that the local community enjoys a standard of living and tax revenue base comparable to that of Luxembourg.

If *Library 2020* serves as any guide, we are rapidly moving beyond the age of the library as an institution which promotes reading and literacy. The increasing transformation of information from a public good to a privately consumed commodity will render the traditional mission of the library quaint and useless. Librarians should abandon the collection of books because in their digital format they are cheap, ubiquitous, and are readily accessible to anyone with the *money to spend*. Kristin Fontichiaro’s opening paragraph in chapter two of *Library 2020* makes this explicit:

> Materials are changing so radically, and it’s easier than ever for people to access stuff without us. When free Kindle books or Nook downloads outprice (sic) the cost of a bus ticket or the car fuel for a library visit, or when it is faster to search online than to ask the librarian, the library-as-collection is a dangerous basket in which to put too many of our eggs. When books are freely or near freely available elsewhere, being “the book place” is a dangerous stance to defend. Libraries can no longer count on describing themselves as the repositories for stuff. [7]

For whom is it easier to download a book to a Kindle or Nook? Someone who owns the device, most likely a middle-class person with disposable income, credit cards for purchasing books online, and a source of electricity for re-charging it. In other words, not a poor person, and certainly not a member of our nation’s burgeoning homeless population. The presumption behind Fontichiaro’s breezy remarks is that those who use our libraries are members of the middle class who, because of their comparative comfort and ease with information technology, may not even need the library in their daily lives. The idea that the library’s mission is to provide information free of charge does not occur to her, or as she says “*The public good is no longer a sufficient rationale for libraries*”, [7] inelegantly negating in one sentence the primary clause of the Library Bill of Rights. A paragraph later she adds “the libraries-for-the-weak narrative is politically tenuous and uncertain” concluding: “*Libraries can no longer portray themselves as supporters of the underserved—their narrative must include everyone.*” [8] Implicit in Fontichiaro’s startling assertion is that the narrative of libraries has somehow miraculously excluded the middle and upper classes, whereas the library as an institution has been (and is) constructed and controlled by elites, who established them for the social uplift of the weary masses in the latter half of the 19th century because of a traumatic increase in poverty, immigration, and urban populations. Fontichiaro believes that libraries...
should not throw in their lot with the meek of the Earth but serve members of a higher social strata for the sake of diversity. Even Orwell would be impressed by Fontichiaro’s mastery of Newspeak. After poo-pooing the library’s social mission as insufficiently inclusive, her solution for making libraries relevant is to install 3-D printers and open maker-spaces because “a maker-space culture diversifies libraries’ long-outdated role as shushing book distributors” and “promotes entrepreneurship to jumpstart much-needed economic growth.” [8]

It would be difficult to substantiate how the creation of an object using a 3-D printer could ever contribute to a local economy, but she fulsomely presses forward. Later, we learn of another motive for promoting maker-spaces as centers of community activity where patrons feel welcome: “Who needs to feel a (sense of) ownership so they can vote yes for the next millage?” [12] Which sums up the major theme shallowly buried in the sub-text of Library 2020: How can we use people to further the end of the library, and by doing so, keep us in high cotton?

There are a few voices of sobriety, including that of Clifford Lynch who seems misplaced aboard this Ship of Fools. The dystopian musing of Peter Morville who believes that libraries will become extinct because of a failure to adapt to technological change is refreshing as a brief jeremiad. Daniel Chudnov’s contribution is the most articulate and realistic, although it too occasionally falls into dystopian dithering. Unlike Morville, Chudnov has powerful convictions to undergird his polemical style. A self-described hacker and librarian, he questions the conventional wisdom of reducing libraries to “charging stations with good Wi-Fi and coffee access.” [146] He also disputes the nationwide trend of “ship(ping) our physical holdings to off-site facilities…weeding out multiple copies along the way, thinning their ranks and making them less available (to the user).” [146]

Save for these few deviations, the humble book is hard pressed for an enthusiastic champion in Library 2020. Most contributors are quite chary of even mentioning the b-word, and when they do it is with an ever-present “e-“, or other qualifier such as “electronic” or “digital” preceding or following the tabooed terminology. Print books will be available, but only to satisfy the needs of toddlers or the elderly, “…print books will go away…The big exception will be children’s books…Spilling soda on a paperback book is much less of a problem than spilling it on an iPad.” [3]

That the market for these technologies is dominated by an oligopoly of tech companies and that our nation’s bandwidth is controlled by a handful of cable providers who threaten to charge access according to one’s shopping agenda is not of even passing concern. But if the contributors of Library 2020 seem to be chucking the traditional notion of literacy down the Memory Hole along with any work considered “tl;dr” (“too long; didn’t read”) in the inimitable phrasing of corporate Internet flack Seth Godin, then they are only responding to an
urgent need among the ALA membership for simplifying complex issues into easily consumable sound-bites. Our conference rosters are packed cheek-by-jowl with high profile members of the information industry and what I can only describe as an apparatchiki of independent journalists and bloggers like Jeff Jarvis of *What Would Google Do: Reverse Engineering the Fastest Growing Company in the World* (2009), and free-market evangelist Steven D. Levitt of *Freakonomics* whose popularization of behavioral economics is a full-throated hosanna for human selfishness. Is it any wonder that our professional literature is bloated with semi-digested bits of Information Society propaganda that all too occasionally erupt in such flatulent declarations as the Annoyed Librarian’s contribution to *Library 2020*? Looking to the future she says “libraries will easily be able to (purchase)…more computers…That way the poor who can’t afford even a low end computer or an Internet connection will still be able to hunt for jobs, find out the exciting events of the day, or surf for porn.” [5]

The Annoyed Librarian’s adolescent brand of irreverent prose reveals that she is, despite any protests to the contrary, a typical middle class American who equates poverty with illicit behavior.

In a cheerfully dystopian vision, Ruth Faklis says “I predict that libraries will collect an additional surcharge for story time programs, author venues, craft creations, after school programs and the like…the user’s library card will no longer be limited to an area of service but rather be totally universal in scope. As long as they pay the surcharge, their quest for information or service will be offered in any location.” [98] This begs the question: Money is also universal, so why not shell out a few clams at the circulation desk without all the fuss of waiting for a library card that is “universal in scope”? Faklis is undeterred by the fact her vision is retrograde to the point of being Dickensian. Such a dedication to extracting fees from patrons for services that should be held in public trust makes a stronger argument for the dissolution of libraries than for their preservation. If public libraries privatize themselves through fee structures, we may as well complete the process and resurrect the Victorian subscription library, complete with leather-clad wingback chairs, snifters of cognac, and liveried footmen for keeping out the riff-raff.

With the blessings of future technology, the library’s collections will be transformed into electrons, and the library into a community center that sports an infinite panoply of shiny IT devices as featured on the latest TED talk. Sarah Houghton of the San Rafael Library states that in the future “Digital will rule supreme…A library solely based on physical space, media, and services will not be able to sustain itself in 2020 or being (sic) able to attract donors and sponsors.” [38] Therefore, libraries should invest heavily in technology so “(f)unding will flow like Pixy Stix from Candy Mountain.” [38] It should be noted that Ms. Houghton, unlike the mass of librarians to whom she is proselytizing her vision of the future, is the director of library in a municipality whose
residents enjoy a per capita income ($43,934) almost 65% over the national average ($28,051).

True to the conventions of its genre, the contributors in Library 2020 invariably refer to users of the library as “customers”, rather than as politically empowered “citizens” or as “patrons” who participate in a public trust. The rational appeal of reifying patrons as customers is to enforce habits such as courtesy and helpfulness among the staff, but identifying someone as a customer is freighted with an entirely different set of ethical, legal, and moral obligations. And, as we are quickly learning in this age of computerized systems, our customers can be used as commodities to further the ends of the library-as-enterprise. In Library 2020, Gale-Cengage CEO Stephen Abram asks: “the library of 2020 will be everywhere (but) can librarians be everywhere too and delight the user and deliver value too?” [47] Let us set aside the issue of our profession’s reputation for omniscience, and ask “why must we delight the user?” Why “delight” and not educate, organize, counsel, reassure or comfort? Because in the year 2020 library patrons are not readers or citizens, they are customers to whom a library service or perceived benefit is offered in exchange for their continued support. To take this approach to its logical conclusion, one must understand that a customer’s attention-span is short and their tastes fickle, so their perceptions must be strategically managed. One method of customer experience management is to constantly inject novelty, thus assuring amusement and receptiveness. Or, as Marcellus Turner, City Librarian of Seattle said, “libraries must give great experiences” because “Jeff Bezos (said) soon you will be able to acquire anything and everything that you ever want or need online, except for an experience.” [91] This is only one of many indications in Library 2020 that the process of finding information is, in the sagacious consideration of these visionaries, more like shopping than any other activity. In the experience economy, libraries (and librarians) must continually sell an impression or an idea of their value to the customer. In other words, a brand of customer service that can compete with “Nordstrom and Starbucks.” And how, in this hurly-burly of impression management, symbolic performativity and commodification will we preserve our role as champions of literacy? By relying on Web 2.0 of course! Or as Turner boldly avers: “Reader’s advisory? What about using social-media-savvy bloggers with great followings to help us push our collections in the virtual world?” [92] Here, and throughout library management literature, the de-professionalization of librarianship is coterminous with the advent of a post-literate society.

Unlike with Library 2020: Today’s Leading Visionaries Describe Tomorrow’s Library, I am not so much disdainful of Reflecting on the Future of Academic and Public Libraries as I am puzzled by it. It is not so much of a book than it is a collection of documents and occasional commentary glued between two pieces of cardboard. I must confess my own inability to fathom why a publisher
would produce a work complete with cover art, pagination, references, author’s biographies, typesetting and the whole costly shebang only to have, in the end, the book equivalent to particle board. Perhaps a short exposition of its contents will suffice to convince the reader that my comparison of it to the amalgamated wood product is indeed merited.

Like Library 2020, Reflecting on the Future has few, if any pretenses toward editorial organization. The former is divided into broad, and mostly meaningless categories such as “Stuff” (e-books! 3-D printers!) and Community (Wi-Fi! Starbucks! User fees!), the latter is superficially separated into chapters that share the distinction of being reports of secondary literature, re-hashes of widely available reports, and—in a flash of scholarly effort—summations of an opinion survey distributed by the authors to “several influential library directors” [xii]. In the introduction the editors state that “the goals of this book are to identify relevant literature and possible scenarios and to get readers to think about the future and what the library infrastructure (staff, collections, technology and facilities) will resemble.” [xii] The authors have met their uninspired and prosaic goal of profiling future library scenarios, which is to say that this book, on the whole, is unnecessary. A few literature reviews and an independently published article containing the results of the survey would have certainly sufficed.

The book consists of nine chapters and two appendices and features four short essays written by four contributors. The views of the editors and the contributors share the same perspective on what makes libraries ready for the future: Money and lots of it. Of course, such a baldly declarative statement is only implied throughout the text. The reader does not have to exercise much effort to excavate this ever-present sub-text. The clues, like poorly laid Easter eggs, are hidden in plain sight. Chapter Five, “Future Views of Academic Libraries”, describes six scenarios that the editors submitted to “twelve library directors at baccalaureate, masters, and doctoral granting institutions” for their august opinion and commentary. Whether the twelve survey participants were evenly split between the three widely varying institutional categories is not addressed; nor is the fact that twelve respondents, no matter how influential they may be, cannot possibly comprise a meaningful study—much less a scientific one.

The six scenarios are listed as “One: The Future is the Present”, “Two: Press a Button Library”, “Three: The Library is a Learning Enterprise”, “Four: Expanding Service Roles”, “Five: The Library as the Campus Scholarly Communication Publisher”, and “Six: The Library as the More Active Research Partner” [89-96]. The scenarios are seemingly listed in no particular order. However, one readily notices that the amount of money required to fulfill each scenario begins with a baseline minimum of continuing the library’s operations “as is” under Scenario One, to breaking the bank under Scenario Six where “The library develops departmental, cross-discipline, and cross-departmental
relationships with faculty and departments engaged in large scale, funded, interdisciplinary research projects to make research findings and data sets widely available.” [135] Of the six scenarios, Scenario Four was believed to be the most preferable, where “The library has greatly downsized its physical collections and traditional services by expanding its digital collection and contracting circulation and e-reserve services from a larger, national cooperative.” [91] The library “outsources services related to collection management and no longer staff a reference desk.” [91] Instead of serving in traditional roles, the staff will “assume expanded service roles and be partners in teaching, learning, and research…” [133] Librarians (the MLS is optional) will no longer provide traditional, library-based information literacy presentations. They will instead be “embedded librarians” who will “spend more time out of the building than in; they may come to the main library only for occasional face-to-face meetings.” [92] Presumably, embedded librarians will use their time for “supporting and advancing teaching and learning pedagogy and knowledge production for the institution.” [92] (italics mine) In the future, information is most decisively a commodity, therefore librarians should be central to the production of the commodity, rather than serving in a traditional value-added role more consistent with a public service philosophy. As the collections disappear, the staff are migrated out, and the library is converted into a multi-use facility, librarians increasingly follow the “information broker” model first propounded by F.W. Lancaster that valorizes information as a private good. But at least librarians of the future will have attractive surroundings, including a “library terrace…located near the dormitories but enabling librarians to interact with students through…mobile devices.” As a powerful symbol of the paperless society, the terrace would “definitely not contain books and/or support the traditional image of a library.” [95] Books, once the West’s greatest symbol of knowledge and prosperity will become, mutatis mutandis, a symbol of information poverty in our near future.

Unsurprisingly, the scenarios set forth by Hernon and Matthews for the public library are equally specious, superficial, and deterministic. They sent their survey to a group of “public library leaders” who, to their credit, mildly objected to the framing of the scenarios. Whereas a more conscientious researcher may have decided to scrap the first survey, write a new one and re-submit, Hernon and Matthews included the commentary as part of “Chapter Eight: Perspectives on Trends and Scenarios in Public Libraries.” Unlike the academic library, the public library has only four possible futures, but each future is predicated on the necessity of community support, which is a euphemism for money. The four scenarios are “Status Quo”, “Living Room”, “Electronic Library”, and the Happening Place”. The scenarios are organized into a lengthy table with twelve characteristics for each. A full treatment of each scenario is not possible here, but the titles alone reveal much. The “Status Quo” library is a typically underfunded
institution with few if any fiscal options, and serves a working class community. It has a print collection, no e-books, a few computers and comparatively low bandwidth. A rather spartan affair, it does not sport any amenities. The “Living Room” provides casual meeting space, a growing e-book collection (balanced by a reduced print collection), higher bandwidth and an area for snacking. Its community previously “enjoyed a robust standard of living” [161] before being struck down by the Great Recession. The “Electronic Library” does not have a physical presence. Containing only e-books through a searchable interface, the EL provides educational programming available “24/7” to “technologically sophisticated” and “transient” [165] patrons who are employed by nearby software companies. Like Scenario Six of the academic libraries, the Happening Place is the ultimate library for the technocratic future: maker-spaces, plush seating, high bandwidth, “Wi-Fi everywhere”, executive-style meeting rooms, publicly accessible computers and freely available software for editing movies and videos, and e-books galore with only “bestsellers in print format”. The Happening Place is, like most info-utopias, cast in the empyrean glow of emancipative technologies. Amenities are noted as “Good coffee and snack food. Wine bar? Comfortable seating and pleasant ambience.” [161]

Public library leaders polled for this survey described “Status Quo” as “Doomed to Failure” [168] and “The Happening Place” as “the only choice for the future.” [169] Unlike the other three public library scenarios, the Happening Place’s supporting community is not mentioned. Instead of the perfunctory details about relative income levels included in the other three scenarios, the editors chose to describe it as “a perfect storm of technology, demographics, and global economics.” [166] Even though “cost savings are secured with elimination of most stand-alone library units and their operational staff”, [166] one wonders what kind of local community could afford to have a wine bar in their library that provided “pleasant ambience” in perpetuity, much less support a library with outrageous monthly Wi-Fi and electricity bills. What tax revenue base could support such an elite, even luxurious institution? Certainly not the working class Status Quo community, those folks can’t even afford a vending machine.

As for the librarians at these public libraries of the future, the implicit message of this book is: Make sure you work in a zip code that is “a perfect storm of technology, demographics and global economics.” In the Status Quo library, librarians offer traditional reference service at the desk, whereas in the Living Room scenario the “staff rove” about the reference area. The Electronic Library has “tech savvy librarians to assist remote users”. Librarians of the Happening Place scenario have left desk duty to subordinates who pass referrals to them as they relentlessly rove elsewhere, perhaps outside of the library. It is striking how the emancipation of the librarian from the reference desk depends on the disappearance of a print collection which is replaced by a wondrous
buffet of information technology gadgetry provided by the largesse of a wealthy community. True to the “information broker” model of professionalism, the librarian engages with the public through an intermediary in a tiered model of reference service. At no point is the traditional mission of the public library as a center for promoting literacy seriously discussed.

Neither of these books present original ideas but rather serve as repositories of our profession’s Gramscian “common sense” on how librarians must respond to the demands of the future. They are records of establishment thinking and how it colonizes our professional discourse and to some extent determines the course of library history. I predict that future LIS scholars will use Library 2020 and Reflecting on the Future as source material for studying how information became synonymous with capitalism, and how librarianship adapted to this wicked turn of events by commoditizing itself under the guise of neutrality. Historians of the library may very well pinpoint when we decided to transform ourselves into self-monetizing subjects and the library into a revenue stream. Perhaps fifty years hence, once this writer’s bones are laid to rest, a librarian may read these books with some discernment and wonder why there was such a heated debate about our profession’s role, why patrons should not be considered customers, and why literacy should remain the library’s primary mission. If she does not, then we—the progressive librarians—did not do our job.

REFERENCE

According to the author, this book is about whether, and to what extent, any library institution can free itself from capitalist power relations, values, and outlook to provide alternative services in the context of the larger capitalist society (p. 17). Shiraz Durrani has been struggling to provide such an alternative for all his adult life in Kenya where he was born, and in London where he was forced into exile because of his political work in 1984. The author must have met or possibly worked with Kenya’s most well-known author, Ngũgĩ wa Thiong’o, because Ngugi wrote one of the three very short forewords for the book. Durrani begins with a long theoretical introduction, continues with an analysis of his work in Kenya and continues with his experiences in London. The last substantive chapter is on national British progressive efforts, and one Pan-African library initiative. The two short afterword essays by other authors are not overly important. Interesting graphics are included throughout the text.

Some historical context in needed for many readers of this journal in order to further discuss the author’s project. Shiraz Durrani grew up in the decolonization period for most African countries, in the late 1950s and 1960s. And of course, that was also during the Cold War. It was a period when the West competed with the Soviet Union and China for influence throughout the Global South, or what used to be called the Third World. But the great powers were after more than resources and influence; they wanted to dominate those...
societies by becoming models for social and economic development, that is capitalist vs. so-called communist states.

Decolonization was difficult, and it took armed rebellion and revolution against the colonial powers in several countries to make a more peaceful transition possible in most of the rest of the continent. The colonial powers finally granted formal independence to most of the African countries by the mid-1960s, but their strategy was to remain in de facto control by maintaining economic dependence. Although using different strategies, Great Britain, France, and Belgium implemented what came to be called neo-colonialism in as many of their former colonies as possible. (Portugal maintained control of its African colonies until the mid-1970s.)

Most African liberation movements became radicalized because they had to fight for independence against the capitalist Western colonial powers, and looked not only for funding and arms from the U.S.S.R. and China, but also looked to them for alternative models to organize their societies. So when the people of Kenya started the Mau Mau Rebellion to win independence from Great Britain, they naturally adopted an ill-defined alternative ideology, which eventually became known as “African Socialism” under the first independent government. Although the Mau Mau Rebellion succeeded in gaining independence from Great Britain, the former rulers found a willing accomplice in Kenya’s first elected President, Jomo Kenyatta. The Western countries did not mind that Kenyatta became an authoritarian ruler, and that he soon presided over a one-party state. Kenya was seen as a model of stability and a counter to radical states in the region. Kenya became a classic neo-colonial country.

But many of the former Mau Mau fighters and some from newer generations could not accept Kenya’s status as a neo-colony, and political protest with an underground movement continued through at least the mid-1980s. As a librarian, Durrani participated in the Library Cell of this December 12th Movement, which became known as Mwakenya. In opposing the neo-colonial Kenyatta government, it is not surprising that the Movement developed a Marxist-Leninist ideology, and saw Mwakenya as a vanguard party.

Rather than focusing solely on librarianship, Durrani’s introduction is a theoretical and ideological explanation of the current global context for the information society, as defined by the crisis of capitalism and the marketization of societies. He juxtaposes progressive versus the pervasive conservative librarianship, and laments that almost all mainstream library literature omits any discussion of social or economic class. He describes how information, disinformation, and the spinning of information are political tools. Mainstream writers and practitioners accept inequality and the suffering of millions of people as inevitable, just as they accept the capitalist system as the normal mode of life. This problem is “fundamental” and “institutional.” Finance capital promotes “private good/public bad ideologies.” This system is responsible for
the massive decline of the British economy, and similarly effects public libraries. The introduction ends with very short discussions of progressive library organizations in the US, Germany, and Sweden, and a reproduction of Mark Rosenzweig’s ten-point Program for International Progressive Librarianship, as presented at the 2000 Vienna meeting that brought together progressive librarians from the U.S., Western Europe, and South Africa. (Rosenzweig represented PLG at the meeting.) Readers can also find this document in *Progressive Librarian*, no. 18 (Summer 2001): 71.

The author’s chapter on his Kenya experience in the Library Cell of the December 12th Movement is especially interesting because we rarely find information about progressive library struggles in the Global South. It is also interesting because it contrasts with the kind of struggle he was engaged with in a rich country, the United Kingdom. He describes the Library Cell’s overground and underground activities, including publishing, poetry, and theatre events, and especially collecting and disseminating struggle information. He presents two liberation poems and many interesting graphics. Durrani’s chapter on the British experience is mostly an explanation of his struggles and campaigns at two London borough institutions, the public library in the Hackney neighborhood and the Merton Library and Heritage Service. These were mainly oriented to addressing social exclusion and promoting community involvement. He opens by setting the context: economic decline, diminishment of democratic rights, large numbers of public library closings, big declines in library staffing, and more dependence on library volunteers. He states that those in power use racism to divide and rule, and argues that equality is perhaps the central issue. He informs us that according to the OECD, the United Kingdom is one of the most unequal and neoliberal societies in that group of rich countries.

The public library in Hackney serves an immigrant community where more than 100 languages are spoken. Durrani was able to organize community support to set up the C.R.L. James Library there which included the Three Continents Liberation Collection. He with the help of many community organizations made the library into a lively cultural center, which sponsored poetry, music, political speakers, and other community events. Of particular note is his work with the Black Workers Group. However, this vibrant endeavor only lasted from 1989 to 1995, when the London administration restructured the library system.

Durrani’s experience at the Merton Library and Heritage Service was characterized by “needs based service.” As opposed to in Hackney, they had senior progressive library leaders who valued community outreach. They mostly used a gradual approach to change, except with one experiment at the Pollards Hill Library where they went for the “whole service approach.” Unfortunately, these efforts only lasted from 1998 to 2004 when new senior managers were put in place. Durrani sees the killing of the Hackney and Merton projects as the result of institutional racism.
The author’s chapter on national and international initiatives gives brief treatment to a number of projects and organizations in the UK, including several under the auspices of the national library association, now called CILIP, Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals. Durrani notes CILIP’s profoundly conservative nature early on in the book, and so these struggles were difficult. He highlights the progressive library education curriculum at London Metropolitan University. Durrani also describes his 2002 initiative to try to create a Pan-African association, PALIAct, the Progressive African Library and Information Activists’ Group. He notes some success in Kenya.

This book is mostly an examination of the author’s personal experience in various struggles. As such it can be seen as a work of case studies that may be useful to progressive librarians in various contexts. The author’s long introduction makes a viable case for the need for progressive librarianship. However, his ideological perspective can sometimes get in the way, or even be off-putting. I imagine that most readers of this journal will find no problem with his emphasis on class analysis, but this reviewer has a hard time with his few quotes from Mao and Stalin. For example, Mao’s admonishment that comrades who don’t know enough about a problem have no right to speak to it (p.73). Let me also quibble that one or two acronyms should have been spelled out and explained for international readers, and that the editing is not perfect. There are one or two graphics where the print is too small to decipher.

Shiraz Durrani has provided a theoretical point-of-departure for debates around the nature of progressive librarianship in the current global context. He has uniquely juxtaposed case studies from poor and rich countries, based on his own experiences. Perhaps current and future progressive librarians will be able to gain some insight from this work.
In the introduction to *Feminist Pedagogy for Library Instruction*, Maria T. Accardi describes her book as both a primer on feminist pedagogy for librarians and as a (much needed) corrective that may begin to redress the scant literature on the relationship between feminist pedagogy and the library classroom. Throughout the book, Accardi, who is Coordinator of Instruction at Indiana University Southeast and co-editor of *Critical Library Instruction: Theories and Methods*, succeeds at striking a balance between elucidating the theoretical underpinnings of feminist library instruction and providing practical guidance for fostering feminist learning spaces in libraries. Three appendices, which include helpful sample teaching contexts, worksheets, and assessment techniques supplement the theory discussed throughout the book, and an extensive bibliography provides direction for further reading. Though it is primarily intended for instruction librarians at colleges and universities, the book may also be of interest to any students and faculty interested in progressive pedagogy in higher education.

The first two chapters introduce feminist theory and situate feminist pedagogy within critical pedagogy, which Accardi describes as “education for social change” (6) that “involves dialogue between teacher and learners, where students contribute to the production of knowledge, and whereby they come to understand the oppressive systems that are innately part of the dominant culture” (32). Here, she references and builds upon the work of theorists such as bell hooks and Paulo Freire (particularly his resistance to the banking method of teaching1), and describes feminist pedagogy’s primary characteristic as “a concern with gender injustice, sexism, and oppression against women, and how
this concern affects what happens in a classroom” (35). Feminist pedagogy matters, she argues, “because the higher education system is still tethered to the dominant patriarchal, sexist, racist, and homophobic culture from which it emerged” (24). Moreover, feminist pedagogy is concerned not just with the content of lesson plans, but also with the methods of instruction. Irrespective of subject matter, feminist instructors employ active learning techniques, favor group discussions over lectures, value student voices and individual perspectives, and collaborate with students in the creation of knowledge (25). She writes, “Feminist teaching strategies are anti-hierarchical and student-centered” (42).

In chapter three, Accardi brings feminist pedagogy into the library instruction classroom. She traces the shift from bibliographic instruction to information literacy as part of the larger evolution in higher education from instruction models to learning models (60), but argues that what distinguishes feminist pedagogy from other learner-centered models is the emphasis on turning critical thinkers into critical actors (58). Employing a learning outcomes approach makes sense for feminist library instructors, she writes, because it places students at the center and focuses on student voices and experiences. Using the Gilchrist and Zald model of instructional design, she outlines how a library instruction session can advance feminist teaching principles at each stage of the design process, from conceptualization to assessment (62-63).

The book’s final chapter addresses feminist assessment, and though the term may seem oxymoronic, Accardi underscores that feminist assessment “eschews standardized testing and privileges student involvement in the assessment process” (77). Feminist assessment may involve common assessment tools such as surveys, interviews, and focus groups, but she stresses that it should also include feminist pedagogical principles of “seeking the student voice, validating student knowledge, and displaying an ethic of care” (87). She notes the scarcity of scholarly literature on the topic of feminist assessment, but that lacuna may provide an opportunity for new avenues of scholarship that reimagine assessment as learner-centered and diverse.

Throughout the book, Accardi is careful to point out that feminism is concerned not just with ending the oppression of women, but with exposing and ending all forms of marginalization. She leaves room, however, for deeper discussion of criticisms frequently leveled at contemporary liberal feminism—namely, that it often perpetuates, rather than destabilizes racist, classist, heteronormative, and neocolonialist systems of oppression. If it’s true, as Accardi quotes bell hooks as writing that “politics of domination are often reproduced in the educational setting” (39), then feminist instructors must remain vigilant about taking an intersectional approach in their teaching, one which takes into account factors such as race, class, and ethnicity in addition to sex and gender. An intersectional approach seems especially crucial given
that the overwhelming majority of librarians in the United States identify as white. While such interrogations may be beyond the book’s scope, they are nevertheless imperative to include in discussions of feminist and critical pedagogy in libraries, and may be fertile ground for future scholarship.

NOTES

1 Freire describes the banking method of education as “an act of depositing, in which the students are depositories and the teacher is the depositor. Instead of communicating, the teacher issues communiqués and makes deposits which the students patiently receive, memorize, and repeat.” See: Paulo Friere, Pedagogy of the Oppressed, trans. Myra Bergman Ramos (New York: Continuum, 2003), 72.


4 See: Michele Tracy Berger and Kathleen Guidroz, ed., The Intersectional Approach: Transforming the Academy Through Race, Class & Gender (The University of North Carolina Press, 2009).

Focus on Educating for Sustainability: Toolkit for Academic Libraries

Reviewed by Patricia Brown

2014 is the final year in the “Decade of Education for Sustainable Development,” declared by the United Nations for 2005-2014. Sustainability is a subject of global as well as local concern, from Australia to Puerto Rico. In San Juan, the 2011 IFLA conference focus was “social sustainability.” It’s also a trendy subject, so much so that a keyword search in my small library yielded 568,093 results plus a Research Starter article. UCLA social sciences librarian Maria Anna Jankowska offers a timely, broad, scholarly, and practical essay collection which encourages “the active participation of libraries in the university sustainability movement”(2). Jankowska herself is an activist scholar; she founded and continues to edit the Electronic Green Journal, has served with the ALA’s Social Responsibility Round Table, and has written on libraries and sustainability for the ACRL and the Journal of Academic Librarianship.

In Focus on Educating for Sustainability, Jankowska divides “sustainability” into four sections: information literacy, collection development, scholarly publishing, and a miscellany of leadership, accountability, conservation, and values. The case studies range from courses and curricula (in English composition, interior design, geography, literature, and sustainability studies, plus professional development workshops) to programs (an energy audit of a library, a finals-week marathon) to “green teams” and seed exchanges. The strength of this collection lies in its emphasis on teaching as the academic library’s central mission. In the opening essay, for example, Kathleen J. Ryan

Patricia Brown is the reference librarian at Louisiana State University Eunice. Before her recent shift into librarianship, she earned a Ph.D. in English literature from LSU, taught at several colleges in the South, and wrote about issues of self and power in Renaissance drama. Her current project, “Beyond Recreational Literacy,” involves a local high school dual-enrollment English course.

KEYWORDS: Sustainability; Environmental education.
and Megan Stark describe information literacy education at the University of Montana as “an opportunity to re-establish local, contextual meaning to the ways librarians teach students to find and engage sources” (13). Ted Bergfeld and Allison B. Brungard explain how sustainability principles are “deeply rooted in the curriculum and guide University practice” at Duquesne (227). Two case studies from Auburn University show the collaboration of librarians, instructors and administrators in bringing sustainability into the curriculum and collection development. Their sustainable expectations were signaled by “changes in the vocabulary used by instructors from ‘scholarly’ and ‘popular’ to ‘credible, reliable, dependable, and/or reputable’” (52). On other topics, Mara M. J. Egherman discusses energy management, and Barbara DeFelice describes Dartmouth College Library’s “role in the scholarly communication ecosystem” (157). These and the other essays expound the variety of ways libraries can advocate and implement sustainable practice.

This breadth of scope reflects a problem in sustainability literature: it is generally more concerned with solutions than with theory or defining the subject. *Focus on Educating for Sustainability* regards its subject as an opportunity for thinking, not for writing definitions (3), yet defining the field is necessary to “fully integrate sustainability literacy into information literacy” (57) as well to build the values and concepts needed for any scholarly discipline. Several contributors (Zanin-Yost, Carter and Schmidt, and Jankowska herself) mention the absence of clear boundaries as a scholarly flaw; others (Zanin-Yost, Brunvand et al., and Leousis and Schmidt) also regard it as an inter- or trans-disciplinary advantage (24-5, 119, 126-8). Though the field is important and interesting, the term “sustainability” needs disambiguation and limitation.

Sustainability is generally concerned with both the health of the planet as a provider of life systems for humanity and the establishment of knowledgeable and empowered societies. It is a future-oriented outlook [and] has a normative aspect (Carr 2013).

This collection also needs a well-reasoned, logical argument about ethics, because environmental issues are intertwined with ethics; library service, environmental sustainability, and respect for life and heritage are not concepts accepted by all, but values. In “Community Archiving and Sustainability: Denison University’s Homestead” (159-72), the inclusion of “pets throughout the years” in the “human and non-human inhabitants” (165) is a poignant example of the values embodied in this article especially, but throughout the collection. These mark an ethical view distinctly different from that of, say, factory-farm owners or Styrofoam manufacturers. An article about the “triple bottom line” of economic, social, and environmental returns (Casey et al., 175-88) invokes “interconnectedness across space and time, involving a study of
what matters for the future” (177). The concluding sentence of the final essay asserts an ethical imprimatur that “librarians and library workers should educate themselves, demonstrate role-model sustainable behaviors, and reach out to their communities to promote sustainable practices” (253). But why should this be so? A chapter about values and the ALA Code of Ethics could have addressed this assumption.

Another neglected aspect here is the sustainability of written language conventions. The text contains a high number of copyediting errors, from punctuation mistakes and simple typos (including misprinting a title in the table of contents and misspelling an author’s last name in the running heads) to a variety of small flaws the editor or publisher should have fixed before going to press. If we as scholarly progressive librarians ignore form, whether in establishing definitions or observing conventions, our ideas will become flabby.

Despite these problems, Focus on Educating for Sustainability does carry out its focus quite well and deserves a place alongside Greening Libraries (reviewed in Progressive Librarian 40[2012]: 130-32) and the less academic How Green Is My Library, by Sam McBane Mulford and Ned A. Himmel (Libraries Unlimited, 2010).

In addition, Tony Wilson (2011) adds three “sentimental” aspects of sustainable librarianship to the issues of physical environment, education, and community cooperation considered by Jankowska and her contributors: the future of libraries, the value of literacy, and knowledge itself. Read Wilson’s article along with this book to learn more about our future.

ADDITIONAL BIBLIOGRAPHY


NOTES

1 In EBSCO Discovery Service at LeDoux Library, LSU Eunice, on May 22, 2014. The topic range was wide, from industrial and agricultural subjects to commercial and conservation issues, both theoretical and applied. Interestingly, a subset of articles from the 1940s and 1950s was about military weapons.
The Green Library Planner: What Every Librarian Needs to Know Before Starting to Build or Renovate

Reviewed by Stephanie Braunstein

A book review is, by definition, a judgment of quality at its most aggressive and a careful examination at its most benign. Either way, it implies that the reviewer is expected to do a close reading of the book and even to suggest changes to the work which s/he sees as needing improvement. Generally, reviewers overlook most of the mechanics of the writing and focus instead on the content of the writing. However, for this reviewer, Carr’s Planner poses an especially tricky challenge: it’s an example of a book needing improvement in one of the most basic of mechanics features—its readability.

To be fair, no one expects a work of this type to be a rhetorical masterpiece. Nevertheless, the awkwardness of the prose, the muddled grammar, and the intermittent typos (hopefully, that’s what they are!) make it difficult to focus on and gather the information imparted (the content) by the book; and, unfortunately, even that information is frequently so buried under truisms and tautologies that it is lost to the reader trying to live up to the wishes expressed in the introduction:

May you read this Green Library Planner and begin your integrated planning process armed with the information needed to remodel,
renovate, or build the best green library building your resources can afford (xiv).

What really frustrates is the suspicion that the stylistic flaws are the result of plumping up what should have been a trim but useful finding tool—such as a well-developed annotated bibliography—posted to a website. Regrettably, that trim finding tool picked up a few pounds along the way and became a rather bloated treatise.

Rhetorical criticism aside, there are some useful sections in this work: one that stands out is chapter 5, “Indoor Environmental Quality.” The chapter begins with an overview of IEQ (Indoor Environmental Quality), citing its definition from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) as “the quality of air in an office or other building environments” and acknowledging that “[i]f not monitored carefully while under construction and during operation, library staff members and patrons alike may be exposed to a variety of contaminants” (69).

While this beginning language is a bit on the truistic side, the segments that follow the overview show more depth. They begin with a discussion of Sick Building Syndrome and Building Related Illness (more citing to the CDC) and continue on with separate discussions of pertinent factors such as temperature/humidity levels; common pollutants found in indoor environments—for example asbestos, lead, radon, volatile organic compounds (VOCs); ventilation systems; ergonomics; visual and acoustical comfort.

It is interesting and heartening to note that Carr spends a reasonable amount of time expressing a belief that visual comfort is not simply an aesthetic concern. For example, she emphasizes how appropriate lighting—both natural and artificial—can contribute to a “sense of place” that is welcoming to and, one assumes, healthy for the people who work in a library along with the people who visit to use its services.

After Carr states that “natural, full-spectrum light is a human biological need. . . . [and] although lighting technology continues to improve, daylighting is preferred” (80), she refers the reader back to chapter 3 on “Energy and Lighting.” This chapter goes deeply into explanations of the various factors that make up lighting, both natural and artificial.

Factors involved in the successful use of natural lighting or “Daylighting,” as it is referred to in this text, include a reiteration of how important daylight is to humans’ health and psyche, a recognition of how light affects vision, a concern about glare on the many computer screens found in the 21st Century library, and even unease about how the use of glass can contribute to bird fatalities (a reference is made to the Audubon Society’s Bird-Safe Building Guidelines, a publication available from the New York City Audubon Society at http://www.nycaudubon.org/our-publications/bird-safe-buildings-guidelines).
When discussing electric lighting, Carr notes that electric lighting makes up the second highest percentage of energy usage (after HVAC systems) in the average commercial building (although we do not normally describe a library as a “commercial” building, we can logically extrapolate that data to include any public building). This observation prompts Carr to note that “once the natural world has contributed as much natural light that is possible to your library given your geographic location and good design, highly efficient electric lighting is needed to supplement natural lighting to meet the required illumination levels” (41). Thus Carr expresses the green philosophy of using natural resources wisely and supplementing them only when necessary and cautiously.

Again, Carr does have some useful information woven into this book—especially the information found at the end of chapters in the form of lists of resources; but if one is looking for a book that engages, inspires, is written with more clarity, and is written from more than one person’s perspective, one might be better off with a copy of the anthology *Greening Libraries*, edited by Monika Antonelli and Mark McCullough and reviewed by Frederick Stoss in the Fall/Winter 2012 issue of *Progressive Librarian*. Stoss’ short review is, in itself, a more engrossing and polished piece of writing than Carr’s entire monograph—a plus for Stoss and, sadly, a minus for Carr.

NOTES

1 On a personal note, my own interest comes from being a denizen of a library workplace that is so “non-green” that it is quite likely a serious health hazard. I speak of a leaking and crumbling basement that is a breeding ground for mold and probably every other known substance that can be identified as contributing to “sick building” syndrome. This basement, part of a structure built in 1958/59 and slated for a way-overdue remodel, sits so closely upon a water table fed by the Mississippi River that it leaks upwards from the floor as well as from the usual directions via foundations, walls, and ceilings. My motivation for reviewing this title was to find answers that I could share with the architectural firm contracted to plan the future remodel.

Reviewed by Michael M. Widdersheim

The Library Juice Press Handbook of Intellectual Freedom is an essential text for anyone studying or teaching about intellectual freedom. As the authors of this anthology make clear, intellectual freedom is a central theme traversing through multiple conversations within the field of library studies, including philosophies of librarianship, law in libraries, and the social, cultural, and political roles of libraries. This volume therefore speaks to students, scholars, practitioners, and administrators within the library field, but due to its interdisciplinary nature, it is also relevant to audiences in related fields such as journalism, critical theory, law, and philosophy.

Each article in the collection explains how intellectual freedom applies to a particular area of inquiry, such as gender and sexuality, religion, and law. Some articles examine intellectual freedom through the lens of a single thinker, like Mill, Gramsci, and Habermas. The articles are authored by domain experts, including but not limited to library studies scholars. The collection examines aspects of intellectual freedom with both breadth and depth.

I approached this text as a graduate student and teaching fellow with instructional experience in masters-level library courses related to law, ethics, and management. I read and evaluated the Handbook from my perspective as a library science instructor and researcher. Some of the questions I asked myself while reading this collection were: Does the collection adequately explain intellectual freedom? Could this book be used successfully in masters- or undergraduate-level library courses? If so, how? What makes this an attractive classroom text compared to other resources, like Office of Intellectual Freedom’s

Michael M. Widdersheim is a PhD student in the School of Information Sciences at the University of Pittsburgh. He is a graduate of the MSLS program at Clarion University of Pennsylvania and has experience in school and public libraries.

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Could I imagine myself using this text in a course on intellectual freedom? Would students enjoy it?

The most attractive quality of the Handbook is its scope. The variety of approaches within the volume widens discussions of intellectual freedom beyond banned books, laws, readers’ rights, and library policies. While these aspects of intellectual freedom are important, they do not sufficiently explain what intellectual freedom is about. I appreciated the humanistic and philosophical quality of many of the articles.

Related to its broad scope, the collection is interdisciplinary in that many of the authors do not write from within the library studies field. The collection departs from any single, parochial understanding of intellectual freedom. Compared to OIF’s Intellectual Freedom Manual, for example, which is limited to American Library Association policies, the relationship of intellectual freedom to the U.S. Bill of Rights, and case law, the Handbook also reveals the philosophical genesis of intellectual freedom and the larger import that the value of intellectual freedom holds for society. Library students with humanities backgrounds would likely identify with the authors’ writings.

Part of what makes me excited about the anthology is that it seems to locate the philosophical currents underlying librarianship. While reading the book, the chapters resonated with me, and I recalled why I wanted to study librarianship in the first place. I think these chapters would also resonate with students. Helping pre-professionals to articulate a personal philosophy of librarianship is something that often gets lost in classes about management or technical skills. Discussions about intellectual freedom may be one way to help students develop a professional identity in a field that often seems marginalized, strained, and reactive.

Many of the articles present complex ideas, abstract concepts, or theory-laden perspectives. While the articles might be challenging in ways, I don’t believe that the difficulty of the readings should dissuade educators from using the Handbook in library courses. On the contrary, difficult readings present opportunities for teachers to scaffold instruction or for students to conduct further research on their own, in groups, or as a class. Many of the articles, while difficult, are clearly organized and present information in an accessible way. For example, the chapter 2 article on Gramsci outlines who Gramsci was, what the central concepts are, defines them, and clearly relates Gramsci’s ideas to intellectual freedom. This chapter and others like it provide down-to-earth introductions to thinkers or ideas.

Another attractive feature of this book is its currency. The articles incorporate live issues, figures, and cases related to intellectual freedom, such as Julian Assange and WikiLeaks, the Copyright Modernization Act, Edward Snowden and global surveillance, Cariou v. Prince, and the Firefly incident at the University of Wisconsin-Stout. These are all extremely important people
and events representative of our current moment. These current challenges illustrate that intellectual freedom is a live, burning issue. While it may be that the *Handbook* dates itself and limits its shelf-life by focusing so strongly on current issues, students in library studies now have likely heard of these people and events, they can relate to them, and they probably want to understand them further. The cases and events are exciting because they are still emerging and are not yet fully understood.

The articles in this reader serve as good models to students of what scholarly work looks like. Each article is well-organized, contains section headings, uses citations, and includes references. Instructors who use this volume can point to the articles and say to students, “This is what scholarly communication looks like.” Some students seem to struggle with creating clear writing or using a consistent citation style, so using this book in class may serve as a helpful guide not only for studying intellectual freedom, but also for eliciting better writing.

The *Handbook* is a good starting point for students to dig deeper. Each article includes copious references and points toward a potential field of study. In this volume, students in the information studies field can easily connect with the key issues of the field as presented by leading scholars. I believe that students will connect with these writings, spark their interest in intellectual freedom, and pursue their inquiries further.

In the end, I see *The Library Juice Press Handbook of Intellectual Freedom* as a valuable resource for teaching and learning about intellectual freedom. The collection makes a suitable primary or supplementary text for library studies courses related to intellectual freedom, philosophies of librarianship, law in libraries, or critical library studies. I look forward to future work in this area from the authors of this collection.

WORKS CONSULTED

Information Literacy and Social Justice: Radical Professional Praxis


Reviewed by Kenny Garcia

Information Literacy and Social Justice: Radical Professional Praxis, edited by Lua Gregory and Shana Higgins, is a collection of essays that nurtures the incorporation of social justice values and practice in information literacy sessions or courses. In the preface of the book, Samek summarizes concisely the outcome I came away with after reading all of the essays in that the readers "who engage with this text won’t get smarter (most of us don’t). But they just might see information literacy more clearly for what it has been, what it has the potential to be, and how and what they, as people, might be while performing it” [ix]. This compilation not only serves as an exercise in reflecting on critical pedagogical practices, it also highlights the importance of seeing information literacy from a social justice-based perspective.

In the Introduction, Gregory and Higgins state that “the work of Berman, Samek, and others before them have led to a generation — not a generation based on age — of librarians that see their profession as not neutral but as politically charged and activist in nature” [2]. Many of the authors acknowledge the importance of contextualizing information within the social constructions of neutrality and objectivity in order to have students think critically about how information is produced and presented, why information is produced and presented in the way that it is, and how to use information for self, communal, and systemic liberation.

The first section of the book is titled Information Literacy in Service of Neoliberalism. Giroux (2013) describes neoliberalism as “a mode of pedagogy
and set of social arrangements that uses education to win consent, produce consumer-based notions of agency, and militarize reason in the service of war, profits, power, and violence while simultaneously instrumentalizing all forms of knowledge” [459]. Neoliberal processes transform information literacy into an individualized act, which must be challenged and critiqued. These interventions, though, should be based on concerns over power, politics, and privilege. If not, the conceptual relationship between information and citizen produces a limited understanding of what an informed citizen really means. Enright’s chapter on neoliberalism and human capital focuses on an Australian case study to contextualize the relationship between the state, capital, and information literacy. It is a valid presentation of the relationship, but the relationship might shift or change if one is looking at it from within the United States. Seale’s chapter on the neoliberal library intervenes in the discussion on critical information literacy and argues that “librarianship must employ the interventions of scholars in other disciplines around power and politics in order to understand and critique its framing of information literacy specifically and education more generally,” which can then also include librarians in the broader discussions occurring in other disciplines surrounding knowledge and information production [40]. Lilburn’s chapter focuses on citizenship and information literacy instruction. The placement of this chapter in a section focused on neoliberalism is an interesting one and Lilburn’s argument that Kazuo Ishiguro’s fictional, representative portrayal of citizenship is applicable to information literacy instruction is logical, but the author ultimately fails to make an impression on the relationship between neoliberalism and information literacy.

The focus of the second section is on challenging authority. The process of searching for, evaluating, analyzing, and synthesizing scholarly communication, whether in digital form (i.e., digital humanities) or in print form, is an iterative one that should be translatable to the searcher’s professional and public life. Related to Lilburn’s focus on the informed citizen, Battista’s chapter focuses on the curation of information on social media platforms and its use in democracy-centered educational processes that develop engaged citizens. It is an informative and critical take on the use of technology and social media in participatory practices and classroom discussions with critical information literacy frameworks. Baer’s chapter focuses on digital humanities and information literacy instruction. It includes an important section on critical pedagogy for academic information literacy, discusses class activities, and challenges a regressive view of digital humanities as inherently positive and progressive. Donovan and O’Donnell’s chapter focuses on librarians’ teaching limitations due to traditional models of information seeking and evaluation that privilege commodified forms of information. The sections on use-centered instruction, empowered authorship, and new information paradigms discuss
how to transform these traditional paradigms into more student-centered forms of scholarship.

The following section focuses on liberatory praxis. The Freirean approach of viewing students and teachers as co-learners and co-teachers allows for students to be seen as both researchers and producers of knowledge. During this process, students can then become more active participants in the educative process and apply what they learn and already know to deal with oppression within and outside of classroom spaces. Leonard and Smale’s chapter discusses a credit-bearing information literacy course at New York City College of Technology where the authors “work with students to explore and interrogate the lifecycle of information in depth” [143]. Leonard and Smale acknowledge the privilege of teaching a credit-bearing course. Even if one only teaches one-shot instructional sessions, there are important points made regarding the process of developing a course and its impact on teaching and student engagement with social justice issues. Ellenwood’s chapter demonstrates how hip-hop can be used in information literacy instruction. Ellenwood’s reflection within the essay on his own racial and gender privilege is as important and valuable as the discussion on activities and lesson plans, which is a reflection that I hope all librarians are doing, especially librarians who are interested in incorporating social justice in their work. Gregory and Higgins’s chapter interrogates how neoliberal discourses impact students’ abilities to critically engage with free speech and censorship. Gregory and Higgins outline the material forces that legitimize “objective” ideology and how to facilitate counter-hegemonic discussions/reflections/assignments. Harker’s chapter on critical legal information proposes that legal research be seen as a social construct and provides strategies for critical legal research education. One crucial aspect missing from this chapter is a discussion of critical race theory within a critical legal information literacy framework.

The fourth section is titled Community Engagement. Swygart-Hobaugh’s chapter is on student engagement with power using a dialogic, problem-posing learning framework. Similar to Leonard and Smale’s chapter on teaching a credit-bearing course, Swygart-Hobaugh highlights the process taken to teach critical information literacy in a credit-bearing course through an examination of a case study of an honors freshman course taught at Georgia State University. An interesting aspect of this chapter is the discussion on qualitatively analyzing students’ assignment texts. Community engagement with information literacy can be interpreted in a multitude of ways. One such way is using service-learning to take what gets taught in the classroom into community projects. Sweet’s chapter focuses on information literacy and service-learning projects. Sweet incorporates Freire’s concept of praxis, to reflect and act in order to transform, which is instrumental in fusing service-learning and information literacy. Ryan and Sloniowski’s chapter focuses on the public nature of academic libraries.
Using two case studies, an Iraq War teach-in at Leddy Library at the University of Windsor and an Occupy Movement event at Scott Library at York University, Ryan and Sloniowski discuss the benefits of student engagement, community engagement, public intellectualism, and socially responsible citizenry that pushes classroom learning into a sphere of public praxis.

In conclusion, I highly recommend *Information Literacy and Social Justice: Radical Professional Praxis*, especially for academic librarians interested in working through and incorporating critical information literacy methodologies into their library pedagogy. One missing element is the inclusion of essays on how K-12 libraries, public libraries, and special libraries develop information literacy sessions within social justice frameworks, a limitation acknowledged by the editors. *Information Literacy and Social Justice*, along with *Critical Library Instruction: Theories and Methods* and *Feminist Pedagogy for Library Instruction*, proposes critical discussion points and models for social change to occur in library instruction sessions and library courses.

REFERENCES


Public and school libraries have become increasingly and effectively active in serving young adults, primarily teens between the ages of 12 and 18, in important ways. Libraries serve as safe havens and self-education centers for teens, helping them acquire the skills and knowledge needed to grow into adults and contributing members of society. Although libraries must find ways to prevent or counter hormone-fueled outbursts of rambunctiousness or even violent tendencies, YA librarians have been extraordinarily successful in designing programs and providing services that meet the needs of teens and help young at-risk patrons reach their full potential.

Right?

Maybe not.

In *Transforming Young Adult Services*, Bernier and a concerned group of knowledgeable contributors question the underlying assumptions we make about young adults. Additionally, they provide thoughtful insights to start a much-needed conversation about who these patrons are, what they need and want, and what they can contribute to their libraries and greater communities. Bernier’s introduction to the book is thorough and informative, clearly presenting the story of how we arrived at our current outlook on young adults and YA services in libraries – based on borrowed, century-old theories from the field of developmental psychology – and why this outlook is problematic at best or, worse, an actual disservice to our patrons.

The core of the book is divided into three sections, each dealing with an important aspect of YA services. The first asks “What’s in an Age?” and questions the age-related assumptions we make about young adults. Young

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Jude Morrissey is the Circulation Supervisor for Jefferson Parish’s East Bank Regional Library. She has a particular interest in the practical ethics of librarianship, intellectual freedom, and information access.

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people create their own meanings, deriving self-identity and defining their own cultures, and are involved in dialogues with teen and adult culture. They produce an amazing array of creative expressions during these processes, which libraries are in an excellent position to support and showcase. With the extension of young adulthood past the teens and into the 30’s, YA librarians need to look for new ways to serve an expanding audience, differentiating the needs of various groups and incorporating diverse materials and collection development tools and methods. Most importantly, librarians and others concerned with YA library service need to seriously consider how to define “young adult,” rather than simply accepting a dated and uncomplimentary definition borrowed from external disciplinary fields.

The second section moves on to discuss the transition “From White and Marginal to Civic Partners.” In this section, we are challenged to reevaluate the presumptions we make about how libraries can best serve teens, particularly by considering a multi-ethnic conceptualization, by abandoning preconceived notions of what type of person uses what types of materials, and by working with teens in meaningful ways that allow full participation in library culture. Increasingly, young people are an ethnically diverse population, with different ideas of how knowledge is acquired and used; libraries should adapt to meet their needs, rather than trying to enforce our own ideas of the proper way to use the resources available. The same holds true for types of materials used. Too often, particular materials, especially graphic novels and comics, are denigrated as less valuable than “real books,” and their readers are labeled in negative ways. It is a destructive and simply false perspective that needs to end. Teens have unique ways of seeing and interacting with the world around them that can be of benefit to the greater community, if they are allowed to share them.

The third section, “Beyond Youth Development and Questions of Intellectual Freedom,” looks at issues of young adult agency and the ethical implications of taking teens’ rights and responsibilities seriously. Adults, librarians included, often feel the need to limit young adults’ access to information – a failure to serve these patrons that can be detrimental to the community as a whole. Libraries can and should act to support teens’ intellectual freedom and provide information access as much as possible within the occasionally draconian limits of the law. Bernier’s conclusion highlights not only the need to continue the conversation begun in this book, but to integrate the theories derived into a formational praxis, leading to practical changes implemented in public and school libraries in order to truly serve our young adult patrons.

*Transforming Young Adult Services* makes no claim to provide definitive answers. The purpose of the book is not to produce program outlines or a unified theory of teen services, but to counter pervasive and counterproductive assumptions at the heart of current library approaches to YA services, beginning a discussion about better ways to structure a framework for serving young adult
patrons. The content and layout of the book are excellent for those who want to read it straight through or for those who are interested in one particular chapter or section, although the sections are not as clearly defined as they could be. The book is academic in tone, written by scholars from LIS and related fields. As such, professors of library science, particularly those focusing on teen/YA services and/or programming, may seriously want to consider including one or more chapters of the book in their curriculum. LIS students intending to work with young adults will definitely want to read this book and join the conversation as they begin to create their own visions for service. Current practicing public and school librarians serving young adults should consider reading the book to reflect on how a more teen-centered structure – focusing on the people teens are now, rather than the adults they might become – could strengthen their programs and services, making them more relevant for their young patrons and for their communities as a whole.