Against Technopolistic Librarianship
Beyond Diversity to Social Justice
Academic Libraries and Veterans
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ALA, IFLA, and Israel/Palestine
Youth Empowerment
Intellectual Freedom is not Social Justice
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We have witnessed the phenomenon over the past few decades of library schools dropping the word “library” from their names and becoming “i-schools.” But a recent article in the *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette* business section cheerfully informs readers that the former “Carnegie Library of Homestead” has been “officially rebranded” as simply the “Carnegie of Homestead.” This may be the first example of a public library actually dropping the word “library” from its official name. Even the Rangeview Library District in Colorado, which rebranded its libraries as “Anythink” a few years ago and stopped using traditional library job titles, still includes “library” (perversely perhaps) in its official name and branding materials.

The institution described in the article has always been multi-use, as are many public libraries. But it appears in this case that the “library” component is being relegated to the margins of what will henceforth be primarily a technology learning center, along with a concert hall and fee-based athletic club. Although the trend toward turning libraries into “technology spaces” is widespread, most institutions calling themselves “libraries” have continued to hold onto the word. This story may be an indicator of more far-reaching changes to come.

What the Post-Gazette article does not mention is that the governing board of what was then the Carnegie Library of Homestead summarily fired its MLS-degreed library administrators several years ago. It was only then that, as the article informs us, “board members and volunteers stepped up to help manage..."
the facility.” The article also tells us that the current director “joined the board in 2010 and became full-time director of administration in 2012” and that her previous experience “included managing an art department and a call center for a manufacturing business.” The question of why a presumably self-respecting public library would be administered by an individual with no professional library degree or even experience working in a library is not addressed. Perhaps, since the “Carnegie of Homestead” is no longer a library, this is no longer an issue.

Of course, the Carnegie Not-Library of Homestead still maintains collections of books and other materials, which its board president refers to dismissively as “old-fashioned check-out book services.” But its real mission and goal is now “knowledge services,” defined by the board president as “technology-oriented learning” and lavishly funded with grants from Google, the Office of Naval Research, the Association for Unmanned Vehicle Systems, the Heinz Endowment and other charitable arms of the corporate-military-information-industrial complex.

The usual justification for converting libraries into technology learning centers offering robotics labs, creative software, and maker spaces with 3D printers is that such technologies support the STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) curriculum currently ascendant in the public schools. These are of course important and necessary subjects, and so few would argue that the justification is entirely without merit. But what is striking about the “library as technology learning center” philosophy is that it presents itself, not as an additional set of services and programs that libraries may or may not want to offer depending on the availability of space, funding and staffing, but as a new core mission that will save public libraries from themselves by replacing the apparently antiquated purpose of promoting literacy, free intellectual development through reading, and an enlightened citizenry.

We see this in the American Library Association’s relentless hyping of 3D printing as an almost magical technology that “democratizes creation,” “advances education and entrepreneurship” and helps build “cutting-edge skills for the innovation economy.” ALA urges libraries to “harness the power of 3D printing to achieve individual opportunity and progress in every part of our country.” The ridiculous hyperbole of such statements aside, the explicit linking of education with entrepreneurship and the emphasis on “cutting-edge skills” reveals the neoliberal ideology and hidden curriculum behind the techno-hype. In ALA’s rosy vision of the future, education is equated with passive assimilation into the global capitalist economy and thoroughly delinked from any notions about literacy, intellectual development and an enlightened citizenry. Andrew Carnegie himself, who pioneered the use of philanthropy as a tool of class domination and endowed the Carnegie Library of Homestead only after the steelworkers union there was safely crushed, would surely be proud.
ALA and the library establishment are also ignoring air quality and workplace safety concerns related to the proliferation of 3D printing in libraries. Research findings on 3D printers and hazardous particle emissions, which suggest possible adverse effects on staff and patron health of operating 3D printers in tightly-enclosed, climate-controlled library buildings, have been publicly available since 2013. We should be invoking the precautionary principle and insisting that, until it can be demonstrated conclusively that 3D printers will not adversely affect the health of library workers and patrons, we should not be operating them in libraries.³

Over two decades have passed since the late social critic Neil Postman coined the word “technopoly” to describe “the tendency in American culture to turn over to technology sovereignty, command, control over all of our social institutions.”⁴ What we increasingly have now is a technopolistic librarianship, a kind of “gizmology” that places more value on technology and gadgets than it does on books and the potentially liberating knowledge they contain. Which is to say: not a librarianship at all.

NOTES


The academic library is the common thread among all campus constituents. Open to students, faculty, staff, and community members, the academic library offers services and resources that are accessible to all. With such extensive scope, the academic library can be a major influence on knowledge construction in the higher education environment. Diversity and social justice are championed in foundational documents of the profession prompting libraries to promote uncensored access of information to all. Specifically, academic libraries have carried out this mission by promoting information literacy, providing free access to scholarly materials for faculty and student research, hosting engagement opportunities for the campus and community, and serving as a gathering place for independent and collaborative learning. Indeed, these efforts can pay off as correlations have been found between academic library offerings and perceptions of increased positive campus climate (Ciszek, 2011).

Often, however, libraries choose to express the commitment to diversity and social justice through diversity initiatives that are too simplistic to achieve true social justice ideals. By more intentionally incorporating social justice frameworks into common library functions such as information literacy education, research services, access to scholarly material, and physical spaces for scholarly activity and engagement, the academic library can do important work in achieving true social justice goals. However, the academic library often
fails to realize its own potential for the advancement of social justice on college campuses. Further, the academic library is often overlooked as a key player in social justice initiatives on campus. By communicating and working toward true social justice goals, the library can show meaningful value to campus constituents. Through intentional partnerships with areas such as institutional effectiveness, residence life, student affairs, and other organizations, the impact of social justice acts can be magnified (Oakleaf, 2010).

This article examines the common challenges faced among academic libraries and higher education institutions. The article will explore the nuanced difference between diversity and social justice and how academic libraries can draw upon the profession’s social justice foundations to move beyond simple diversity initiatives to a more authentic social justice agenda, recognizing the library’s role in knowledge construction. As such, this paper focuses on the social justice agenda within academic libraries. It is beyond the scope of this article to address library neutrality and the role of the academic library as advocate. For further examinations of library neutrality and the role of the library as social advocate, the author recommends the works of Lewis (2008) and Samek (2007).

**Challenges in Higher Education**

As a constituent of a larger organization, academic libraries share many of the challenges faced by their host institutions including constrained funding, an increasingly diverse student body, and campus climate issues. These challenges make it important for libraries to not only prove their value, but also to collaborate with campus partners to capitalize on shared resources and talents. It is also essential to consider the social justice implications of these challenges.

**Changing Funding Models**

Higher education institutions face increasing pressure from external bodies such as state governments and accrediting agencies. These pressures are also felt in academic libraries. Changing funding models are a common challenge faced by colleges and universities. In Ohio, for example, the basis of state government funding has moved from enrollments to performance-based measures like course completion and graduation rates. This move has subtle social justice implications that have shifted the focus of the university mission from one of access to one that incentivizes student success (Miao, 2012).

Many institutions, particularly open-access institutions, find this funding shift challenging. Open-access institutions often enroll a high number of students who are not college ready. Supporting students who are not college ready often
requires extensive resources, including academically vibrant library services and extensive library resources. Often when institutions move from enrollment-based funding to performance-based funding, budget challenges arise, resulting in steep budget cuts. These budget cuts impact the academic library through reduced staffing and reduced resources, which negatively impact support to students. Thus, open-access institutions strive to maintain their access mission with increasingly limited resources to support the very student success upon which their funding is based (Tinto, 2008).

Shawnee State University, an open-access institution in Appalachian Ohio, was particularly affected by Ohio’s switch to performance-based funding in recent years. Shawnee State University has implemented budget cuts that have impacted the level of service offered to students. With a majority of first-generation, nontraditional, and academically at-risk students, the financial challenges have been particularly difficult. Shawnee State University has faced several years of budget cuts stemming primarily from decreased enrollments and the move to performance-based funding (Allen, 2013). The cuts have led to decreased library services and staffing, including the planned vacancy of up to 50% of professional librarian positions, despite the library being recognized as a mission-critical partner (Budget, 2015).

Given the budget challenges and unique mission of Shawnee State University, government directives have formalized a series of commitments to improve student completion rates (Chancellor, 2011; Completion, 2014). These commitments focus on increasing student success as measured by course completions and graduation rates, but do not provide the necessary funding to achieve such goals. Setting challenging goals with limited resources necessitates cross-campus collaboration to maintain quality service to students in an institution driven by an access mission. The academic library can be a valuable partner in the effort to increase student success in a limited budget environment.

**Changing Student Demographics**

Student populations at higher education institutions are becoming more diverse. According to data from the National Center for Education Statistics, student populations on college campuses are welcoming a higher number of female students and students of all racial/ethnic backgrounds. In 1976, female students made up 47.2% of enrollments in U.S. institutions. This figure grew to 57% in 2014. The percentage of White enrollments has declined from 84.3% in 1976 to 59.3% in 2013. This trend was accompanied by an increase in diverse racial groups. In the same time period Black enrollments increased from 9.6% to 14.7%; Hispanic enrollments increased from 3.6% to 15.8%; Asian/Pacific Islander enrollments increased from 2.4% to 6.4%; and American Indian/
Alaska Native enrollments increased from 0.7 to 0.8%. This is in addition to students identifying two or more races making up 2.9% of enrollments. The increase in racial diversity parallels the increase of foreign students who are enrolled in institutions in the United States who numbered 311,880 in 1980-81 and increased to 885,052 in 2013-14 (NCES, 2013).

These measures of increasing diversity do not take into consideration the multiple other factors of diversity that are more difficult to recognize and measure. These factors include students’ sexual orientation, unseen physical challenges, and mental health issues, among others. This growing diversity on college campuses amplifies the need to incorporate social justice frameworks into practice to better support a diverse student population. Academic libraries can help fill the need to provide social justice frameworks as a provider of diverse resources, inclusive services, and a safe space for study, research, and programming.

**Increased Campus Climate Issues**

Institutions of higher education have faced many campus climate challenges in recent years. Mishandled sexual assault cases have made headlines from Columbia University (Smith, 2014) to the legacy of sexual assault at the University of Virginia (Kelderman & Koenig, 2014; Securo, 2011). Systematic sexualization and racism have also made headlines as the Ohio State University Marching Band addressed allegations of a sexualized culture and a racist fraternity chant was exposed at the University of Oklahoma (Schmidt, 2015; Thomason, 2015). These examples highlight that institutions of higher education are not doing enough to address campus climate issues.

Some institutions and student groups have responded to charged campus climate issues on their campuses, demonstrating a willingness to address social justice issues. An institutional campaign at the University of Michigan encourages the campus community to use inclusive language (Jenkins, 2014) and a student campaign on racially appropriate conversation and representation of diversity at Harvard (Bean, 2014; Harvard, 2014) demonstrate that administrators and students alike are beginning to confront social justice issues. In fact, in a study of the classroom climate in higher education, Boysen (2012) found that students expect faculty to confront social justice issues in the classroom. Academic libraries can carry this important work of addressing campus climate issues forward to help provide students with a safe and inclusive campus environment. Academic libraries can provide resources to faculty and staff to raise awareness of social justice issues and how to effectively address the structures of higher education to ensure inclusiveness. The academic library can also critically analyze the library structure to ensure social justice concerns are addressed.
Social Justice Frameworks

Library staff can address the challenges of increasing diversity and intensified campus climate issues by incorporating social justice frameworks into everyday practice. Though social justice frameworks targeted specifically at libraries are scarce in the literature, many scholars have written with the higher education audience in mind. This article will explore several major social justice frameworks with the intent to provide a frame of reference for practitioners to weave theory into practice.

Diversity vs. Social Justice

Diversity is a common theme in academic libraries. However, it is important to distinguish between diversity and social justice. When we seek to address diversity, we are really addressing the varied characteristics that are represented in groups (Morales, Knowles, & Bourg, 2014). An example of this is ensuring that a library display of poetry includes authors from various racial and cultural backgrounds.

While ensuring diversity is a valuable action, social justice takes this line of thinking beyond simple representation to a more complex view of systems. Social justice seeks to ensure that all people participate in and benefit equally from a system. Following this line of thinking, social justice is inclusive of diversity. Social justice can ensure that power and privilege are addressed at the micro and macro level (Morales et al., 2014). Thus, while diversity initiatives in libraries are commendable and important, it is now necessary to incorporate social justice frameworks into library structures. An evolution of social justice thinking is presented below.

Foundational Social Justice Frameworks

John Rawls (1999) approaches social justice from a distributive fairness perspective. Rawls focuses on ownership of goods, which can be both tangible and intangible. Rawls stresses the importance of fairness over the privileging of any specific characteristic and supports value-free decision making. Rawls proposes operating under the mindset of the “original position (Rawls, p 11),” an approach in which one is placed behind a “veil of ignorance (Rawls, p12),” in which knowledge of any privileging characteristics is unseen. Specifically, Rawls contended that distribution of primary goods should be equally distributed, regardless of social standing. Rawls accepted inequalities when they benefit those least well off (Wilson-Strydom, 2015).

Critiquing Rawls, Young (1990) contends that using a distributive approach is too simplistic in that it ignores the very structures that bring about inequality.
of distribution. To focus on distribution implies that there is a simple solution to social justice concerns. Young (1990) contends that we should focus on the process of distribution, not the end result. Young draws attention to the complex and contextual aspects of social justice challenges, focusing particularly on oppression and domination of groups. Young contends that structures often privilege certain groups and we should strive to reconstruct these systems by allowing various groups to be involved in decision-making processes (Wilson-Strydom, 2015).

The idea of focusing on structure is also championed by Fraser (1996, 1997, 2009), who calls for parity of participation. Acknowledging the distributive approach, Fraser notes that resources must be distributed such that all people can interact as equal contributors, each with an equal voice. Fraser acknowledges the importance of distributive fairness as an equalizing mechanism of participation, but echoes Young by asserting that the system must be the object of critique. Fraser also calls for systematic mechanisms for respect and equal opportunity (Wilson-Strydom, 2015).

The New Social Justice Approach in Higher Education

Nussbaum (2000, 2011) and Sen (1985, 1999) take the work of Young and Fraser a step further by focusing on the ability and opportunity individuals have to achieve their desired state. This capabilities approach begins to view success not just in equal outcomes, but equal opportunity. In education, this could mean ensuring that blind students have access to Braille textbooks or visual equipment to ensure they are equally capable of reading course materials as sighted students. This approach requires understanding diverse student needs and the necessary factors to support students to achieve success (Wilson-Strydom, 2015).

Davis and Harrison (2013) offer a balanced approach to social justice. Davis and Harrison advocate social justice as a “means as well as an end” (p. xix). Davis and Harrison also acknowledge the complexity of diverse interactions involving emotion. Davis and Harrison target structures that perpetuate social injustice. Citing examples of how the educational system failed to produce a student who was able to instill critical thought and racial sensitivity, Davis and Harrison look past superficial solutions to pinpoint the problematic foundation of an issue.

Essential to the idea of parity of participation, Davis and Harrison offer the idea that we must be willing to accept that our truth is not a universal truth. When we acknowledge the lens through which we view the world, we can participate in honest conversations that lead to meaningful change and holistic solutions to social justice challenges. Similar to Sen (1985, 1999) and Nussbaum (2000, 2011), Davis and Harrison cite postpositivist thinking as a means to unpack
how our knowledge is constructed in an effort to dissect the often unseen social justice implications of our practice. This balanced approach aligns well with the foundational ideals of the library profession.

**Academic Libraries as Social Justice Partners**

For the past seventy years, American higher education has become increasingly diverse. The increased diversity was enhanced by several legislative actions including the G.I. Bill, the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964, and the 1965 Higher Education Act. The diversification of the student population was accompanied by a demand for more diverse courses of study, with practical studies accompanying the liberal arts (Geiger, 2015).

Academic libraries have supported the growing diversity in student population and curriculum by amassing collections, providing services, and creating programming that supported all subject areas. The student affairs field also grew to support the new face of higher education. Student affairs activities that revolved around enrollment management, residence life, student programming and academic advising proliferated. Amidst the growth of student affairs services, the value of academic libraries to support diversity and social justice was virtually unnoticed as higher education adapted to support the growing diversity in higher education (Wellburn, 2010). Even today, the understanding of how libraries can contribute to social justice on campus and the important collaborations that could stem from such an understanding are largely unrecognized beyond, and even within, the library walls. In an effort for the library profession to recognize its value as a social justice partner and communicate this value to campus partners, it is important to recognize the foundational commitments and characteristics that enable libraries to be important campus partners in social justice. Summaries of the major foundational statements of the American Library Association are presented below.

**ALA Library Bill of Rights**

The *Library Bill of Rights* was established by the American Library Association (ALA) in 1939. Since then, it has been amended and reaffirmed six times, most recently in 1996. This document sets social justice missions at the core of librarianship. The document outlines six policies that should guide library practice. It is evident that these themes align with social justice frameworks.

The first policy establishes that library resources should be accessible to all people. Additionally, library resources should not be “excluded because of the origin, background, or views of those contributing to their creation” (Bill, 1996, para. 1). This policy is extended to discourage the selection or exclusion
of materials based on “partisan or doctrinal disapproval” (Bill, 1996, para. 2). Instead, libraries should include all views in their collections, ensuring representation of current and historical points of view. To this aim, libraries will not tolerate censorship. In fact, libraries will protect the right to intellectual freedom and freedom of expression for all people regardless of “origin, age, background, or views” (Bill, 1996, para. 1). Likewise, the library extends its physical space in an equitable manner (American Library Association, 1996).

With such a solid foundation in free access, equitable representation of resources, and inclusivity of all, it is readily apparent that libraries are obvious social justice partners. The inclusiveness described in this document speaks to the commitment to ensure all views are represented to work toward a balanced construction of knowledge. The *Library Bill of Rights* establishes these policies before all else, intending this document to inform the development of library services and collections. This document can be considered one of the first and essential social justice documents in librarianship.

**ALA Code of Ethics**

The American Library Association furthered the commitment to social justice with the publication in 1939 of the *Code of Ethics* of the American Library Association. This document has been amended three times since the original publication, most recently in 2008. In this document, ALA recognized that “ethical dilemmas occur when values are in conflict” (Code, 2008, para. 2). The eight principles outlined in the document seek to inform the management of ethical dilemmas. The fact that ALA published this document in addition to the *Library Bill of Rights* demonstrates the early and enduring commitment to social justice (Code, 2008).

The *Code of Ethics* reiterates the commitment to equitable service and access to a collection that is uncensored and inclusive of all viewpoints, again echoing a commitment to balanced knowledge construction. The *Code of Ethics* also calls for “courteous responses to all requests” (Code, 2008, para. 5). The *Code of Ethics* further explains that the library will protect the confidentiality and privacy of a library user. The library should not release information about the information sought, checkout history, or any other use information about the patron to any third party. This allows the patron a sense of security and safety to access any information deemed useful to them without shame, embarrassment, or any other challenge. Libraries further should not let personal convictions interfere with fair and equal treatment of library functions (Code, 2008).

The *Code of Ethics* further states that library staff will treat coworkers with “respect, fairness, and good faith, and advocate conditions of employment that safeguard the rights and welfare of all employees of our institutions” (Code, 2008, para. 5). This principle is essential for fostering a social justice climate
in which diverse ideas can be discussed and inclusive decisions made. A work environment that fosters this type of respect, in turn, benefits service to patrons. Additionally, professional development is encouraged to sustain an environment that is able to meet changing needs in an equitable way (Code, 2008).

It is evident from this document that the library profession is one that fiercely protects an individual’s right to access any information he or she deems necessary. This right is further protected by an intolerance for censorship of materials. These commitments safeguard the inclusive construction of knowledge in the academy. These foundational documents demonstrate the profession’s commitment to incorporate social justice frameworks into practice.

**ACRL Diversity Standards**

To further strengthen the commitment to diversity and social justice, the Association of College and Research Libraries division of ALA published their *Diversity Standards* in 2012.

The goal of this document is to develop cultural competencies, outlining eleven standards for diversity in academic libraries. This document offers interpretations of the standards to aid application. This document begins to move closer to a true social justice framework in that it considers acknowledging our truths, knowledge of and respect for diversity, and a look at the structure of academic services (Standards, 2012).

The *Diversity Standards* advocate a “cultural awareness of self and others” and “cross-cultural knowledge and skills” (Standards, 2012, st. 1). As Davis and Harrison (2013) advocate, this calls for library workers to examine their personal truths to increase awareness of how our views of the world may be biased and may affect decision making. This involves examining any predisposed beliefs one may have, even if it is uncomfortable, to insure that those beliefs do not prevent the library worker from achieving the inclusive goals of librarianship. It is also essential to understand when membership in a privileged group may influence a situation and unknowingly affect others. It is then essential to acknowledge and respect the truths of others. The standards encourage library staff to become educated in the cultural beliefs and communication norms for diverse populations to better connect with patrons and provide needed services (Standards, 2012).

The *Diversity Standards* go on to outline cultural competencies for services and collections of the library. These standards speak to the establishment of professional values that guide culturally competent professional behavior both individually and as an organization. Following the *Diversity Standards*, librarians must be diligent in examining collections and services to be sure no group is excluded and that services respect cultural needs and differences. Libraries should build programs and services to meet unique cultural needs.
Monitoring demographic trends helps librarians to anticipate community needs. In developing services such as instruction, librarians are encouraged to address the audience in culturally competent ways, such as developing an awareness of language barriers inherent in library services (Standards, 2012).

The Diversity Standards (2012) also encourage developing cultural competence among library staff. This can be achieved through ensuring that diversity is reflected in library staff. When diverse perspectives are included in library planning, patron needs are better able to be met. The organization should foster an environment that encourages the learning and development of cultural competence that is sustainable. This can be bolstered by developing leadership and mission documents that encourage diversity and promote cultural competence.

As demonstrated through the Library Bill of Rights, the Code of Ethics, and the Diversity Standards, libraries are at their core social justice advocates. The driving mission of libraries is to provide uncensored access to an inclusive set of resources and services to all people. It is thus essential for libraries to apply these social justice commitments to practice. We will identify how libraries have incorporated these values so far and how libraries can successfully incorporate these ideals into future initiatives.

**Traditional Approaches to Diversity in Academic Libraries**

It is not contested that libraries have harnessed the profession’s proclivity for inclusiveness to extend to renewed goals for diversity in libraries. Indeed, diversity is a common buzzword in the library profession. Many necessary initiatives have proliferated to achieve the goal of diversity in libraries. These activities do important work to expand the connection and engagement of marginalized groups on campus.

As the profession continues to move diversity to social justice, these activities are to be honored for paving the way for deeper social justice work. Early in diversity initiatives, libraries often focus traditional approaches to specific groups, ensuring diverse representation and training in the workforce, and targeted library displays and events.

**Service to Specific Groups**

An initial response to incorporating diversity initiatives into practice is to design specialized services for targeted groups. This often manifests in the creation of a display of library materials that highlight a cultural topic of the targeted group or highlight authors who are members of the targeted group. Cultural events and celebrations attached to recognized days or months are often common.
The African American community as often represented in diversity work. At the Ernest J. Gaines Center, the University of Louisiana has created a safe environment to promote awareness and prompt discussion surrounding diversity. The Gaines Center hosts speakers and film screenings on topics such as slavery in tourism in Ghana. The Center feels that these types of conversations expand the vocabulary of our world and expose people to new perspectives from which they can examine their world. Taking this approach a step further, the Center has also screened well-known films such as *The Color Purple*. This type of event draws people in due to the popularity of the film, then provides a vehicle to discuss the issues that these films bring to light.

The LGBT community is also often a population that receives targeted services. As far back as 1990, Gough and Greenblatt edited a collection of writing presenting a robust synthesis of how libraries can reach out to, support, and build collections for the LGBT community. This has prompted libraries to assess the inclusiveness of collections, ensuring that LGBT research as well as non-academic material is included. Ciszek (2011) extended this commitment to studies of campus climate and academic library offerings of LGBT resources. Looking at the presence of online research guides, presence of a designated diversity staff member, and subscription to a popular LGBT database, Ciszek found that there is a correlation between the presence of these items and a more positive campus climate (Ciszek, 2011). International students are also a community often targeted for intentional support. This, too, is often in the form of events and exhibits. The George A. Smathers Libraries at the University of Florida had a successful experience designing events and exhibits in support of International Education Week, a nationally-recognized celebration established by President Bill Clinton in 2000. The Libraries hosted events including the University of Florida’s own faculty, who presented on their own international research. The Libraries also hosted a reading event in which participants read their favorite international works aloud and a film viewing exploring Latin American issues. All events allowed for interaction and the sharing of ideas. The Libraries rounded out their week with an impressive line-up of exhibits including Chinese printing, Spanish and Chilean authors, and a global art exhibit. Each of these events attracted community members, including K-12 students (Aissing, 2011).

While these types of diversity initiatives are important, this approach ignores the structural implications of library services and how they may lead to inequality and oppression. Often the approach to provide targeted services to a specific group is too simplistic to achieve true social justice goals. While it is valuable to include the perspectives of targeted groups, this approach does not provide extensive inclusivity as knowledge is constructed. There is also a danger that this approach sustains the marginalization of the targeted groups, displaying them as an exception to the mainstream, not worthy of full
integration. Diversity initiatives, however, are essential to sustain and pave the way for more robust social justice work.

**Staffing**

In a study of diverse undergraduate and graduate students at a large university in the Midwestern United States, Bonnet and McAlexander (2012) studied the perception of librarian approachability by diverse students. The study found that students tended to identify with librarians who were from the same race, age, and gender category. This indicates that students engage more when they see themselves reflected in library staff (Bonnet & McAlexander, 2012).

Observations like this often spur libraries to focus on staff training and development. Academic librarians have participated in campus diversity learning communities and communities of practice (Rader, 2006; Global Education, 2015). Diversity committees of professional associations also champion diversity at workshops and conference presentations. However, academic libraries begin to move closer to social justice work when the focus turns to recruitment of diverse library staff and the hiring of diversity librarians.

Much of the literature focuses on recruiting diverse library staff. Such work is filled with many noble, yet intangible directives for recruiting a diverse workforce. The language is often general, advising libraries to commit to diversity; actively locate and recruit from marginalized groups; foster communication with marginalized groups; and to include diversity as part of the hiring conversation (Perry, 2006). While important goals, this advice does not speak to the structure of hiring practices, nor does it extend to recognize the parameters set by the host institution within which academic libraries must operate. Suggestions to include discussions of diversity in library school curriculum are useful, but often are of the same topical theme.

Hiring a librarian specifically to concentrate on diversity work is another way libraries have acted on commitments to diversity. Diversity librarians, however, often face job descriptions that span a wide range of responsibilities. From instruction to programming to acting as a liaison to campus partners, a diversity librarian’s time is often spread thin. With such an extensive job description, it is often difficult to find librarians who have experience in all required areas. This challenge can be increasingly difficult when diversity is not emphasized in library education programs on par with the traditional subfields of librarianship like reference, instruction, and technical services. Often, these positions are filled by less experienced candidates. Hiring a diversity librarian is a commendable venture, but only if the commitment to diversity is pervasive in the library structure. Otherwise, this action may simply serve as a topical initiative that gives a false sense of accomplishment toward diversity goals (Mestre, 2010).
Displays and Programming

Several libraries promote diversity via library displays and programming. Southeastern Louisiana State University developed a diversity committee to help reach out to diverse groups on campus. The committee has done this through a series of displays, which they have coordinated with various known themes nationally and on-campus. Displays have been set up for Black History Month, Pride Month, and International Week. These displays have included posters, banners, library books, arts, crafts, artifacts, and other materials. Patrons were invited to check out items in the displays. The committee collaborated with the Center for Faculty Excellence on campus to create posters for the displays. The library also coordinated events including film viewings and panel discussions. The film viewings prompted valuable discourse among students, though attendance was sometimes low (Johnson, Hecker, & Lovitt, 2010).

The University of the Pacific’s Library also used displays to leverage partnerships to build working relationships with key areas of diversity on campus. The library created displays to support various Multicultural Affairs programming to create an integrated presence on campus for these events. The collaboration evoked positive feedback from participants, but most importantly, the displays served as an ice breaker for the climate within the library. Students who engaged in the displays and events became familiar with the librarian in charge, often seeking the librarian out for help in the future (Maloney, 2012). This type of outcome gets the profession closer to addressing the true, structural goals of social justice work. Instead of the librarian perched behind a reference desk, students were able to engage with the librarian in a less structured setting, making them feel comfortable enough to build a connection that may benefit them in the future. Again, however, it is important to consider the underlying messages of library diversity displays. While it is valuable to shine light on diverse perspectives, are libraries also doing a disservice to marginalized groups by presenting them as an outlier of the mainstream? Thus, it is essential to move beyond diversity to consider true social justice concerns in academic libraries. Several libraries are pushing the boundaries of traditional diversity work. These libraries are building culturally sensitive relationships with patrons, building culturally competent services, considering accessibility through language, and highlighting the economics of resource acquisition in order to challenge traditional structures.

Social Justice Initiatives in Academic Libraries

Academic libraries should seek to move beyond simple diversity initiatives to enact true social justice measures. Williams (2006) suggests conducting a
diversity assessment to gauge the cultural climate of a library. Cultural climate assessments, especially when conducted on a regular basis to track change over time, are invaluable in gauging the library climate and whether library staff and patrons feel social justice issues are considered. Assessments can be the purview of a social justice task force or committee to turn assessment results into tangible action. Following any existing institutional social justice plans, the social justice task force can develop a library-specific social justice plan to formalize social justice efforts (Edwards, 2015). Once the commitment to social justice is formalized, the library can begin to move beyond diversity to social justice by ensuring frameworks are in place to achieve structural equality. The examples below highlight examples of social justice actions academic libraries have admirably taken so far.

Services

Hudson (2010) moves beyond the traditional reference approach of targeting specific groups to begin exploring the structural differences of reference services. In the exploratory study, Hudson (2010) analyzes the impact of cultural differences on the inclination to engage in mobile reference service. The study found that students of different cultural groups may be more or less likely to engage in certain types of mobile reference. This study is important because it moves beyond the assumption that marginalized students do not use services like mobile reference due to a perceived digital divide. In fact, citing the Pew Internet and American Life Project, Hudson confirmed with her own data that marginalized students do use mobile devices, often more so than majority students. Hudson also found that male students of all ethnicities prefer faster text-based reference service to more conversational digital reference via social media, which was most preferred by African American female students. White females tended to use digital services to access materials and did not engage in mobile reference services as frequently. Hudson speculates that marginalized students view digital forms of service and their mobile devices as tools of empowerment (Hudson, 2010).

Friedman (2014) extends social justice thinking beyond the library walls to deliver reference work where activity is happening. Friedman is known for the creation of the Radical Reference movement that initially provided reference service to the protestors of the Republican National Convention in New York City in 2004. Friedman cites that Radical Reference strove to “liberate access to information in unique ways” (p. 264). Even in the age of social media, librarians can serve to provide information literacy coaching, raise awareness of reliable resources, and help people make sense of the barrage of information available to them. Friedman (2014) cites an example of a communication on social media that police were confiscating bikes in certain areas of the protest.
Radical Reference workers were able to provide activists with information about their legal rights concerning this action. Further, this service sees beyond the assumption that all people have smartphones and data plans to access such information on their own. In all ways, the Radical Reference phenomenon transcends the limitations of library structures to provide all information to all people. Similar reference was also seen at the World Trade Organization Protests in Seattle and the Occupy Wall Street movement in New York City (Friedman, 2014). Universities can harness this spirit by providing such services at campus protests, festivals, and events.

**Collections**

New publishing and database models are challenging resource-strapped libraries to maintain access to resources from diverse perspectives. As vendors become more like monopolists, libraries face limited selection and higher prices. Vendors often concentrate on mainstream titles, offering reduced-price packages. To maintain diversity, libraries must pay for the mainstream packages, then subscribe individually to titles that represent marginalized perspectives. This can be quite prohibitive in an environment of declining budgets. Increasing subscription prices have further exacerbated this phenomenon. When libraries are faced with budget cuts, it is often the single, non-mainstream titles that are cut first.

LaFond and Van Ullen (2000) studied the challenge of access of non-mainstream literature in the face of new vendor models concerning digital resources. The researchers examined the number of alternative titles included in well-known vendor packages. Using the *Alternative Press Index*, a list of alternative titles, LaFond and Van Ullen found that the major vendors carried less than 20% of the alternative titles. The economics of digital resources has very real social justice implications. The structure essentially either denies access to diverse titles or prices them out of the market. Libraries must use studies like this to advocate for increased access to alternative titles.

Further, once libraries gain access to diverse titles, it can be a challenge to make those items accessible to patrons. Catalogers and those who attach subject headings to describe items as finding aids in library catalogues and vendor databases are often not experts in the content of the items they are cataloging. This can compromise the ability to discover these items when a patron does a search. Freedman and Kauffman (2014) offer practical insight for catalogers of zines that can apply to any cataloging effort. As an alternative publishing model, zines can often be particularly challenging to catalog. Authors often vary names, titles, and numbering schemes, magnifying the challenge to catalog (Freedman & Kauffman, 2014). Being aware of the characteristics of zines and being able to catalog appropriately so that the contents are able to be
successfully accessed is an example of how social justice can be addressed at the very ground level of librarianship.

The economics of collection development demonstrates clear social justice concerns. Academic libraries play a role in knowledge construction through collection development. The content that is selected to be part of collections is directly related to which views are permitted to be represented in the broader academic pursuit. As students perform research projects and faculty conduct scholarly work, it is essential to offer an inclusive pool of resources from which to pull. The voices that library patrons have access to directly impacts future knowledge construction. The projects mentioned here are exemplary of where academic libraries need to go with social justice issues regarding collections.

**Strengthening Campus Partnerships**

Collaborating with other areas on campus helps strengthen funding that has often not been provided to libraries to promote diversity and social justice initiatives. More importantly, collaboration among campus partners strengthens our understanding of each area’s important contributions and outlooks. This deeper understanding can help higher education reach a more robust understanding of frameworks that are inclusive and equitable, not just in representation, but in outcome.

**Supporting Student Success**

Enrollment Management and University College are two important areas on campus. Supporting student access, retention, and success, these units can benefit tremendously from the support the library can offer while the library benefits from building connections with staff and students, gaining an understanding of the unique needs these units serve. Libraries can help build strong academic habits from orientation through the first-year experience and provide support to underprepared students.

At Shawnee State University’s Clark Memorial Library, the outreach librarian established a connection with first-year students from orientation through spring semester. As an open-access institution in Appalachian Ohio, Shawnee State University serves an abundance of first-generation and at-risk students. Appalachian students have cultural norms tied strongly to family and place that make their college experience unique. Often coming from underfunded K-12 schools, this population needs additional support to be successful in college (Mathuews, in press).

The Clark Memorial Library recognized this and proposed early relationship building to support student success and create a welcoming climate. Greeting
students at orientation and hosting a party to welcome students to campus introduced students to library staff. As classes began students who attended these events openly greeted library staff as they stopped in between classes. The outreach librarian also visited developmental and university skills courses offered through University College. Recognizing the digital and information literacy gaps that may exist, the library felt that it was important to provide this connection early on (Mathuews, in press). These types of diversity initiatives go beyond the traditional library activities to focus on how students of diverse groups experience the university and the library, providing support to fill gaps.

University and Student Organizations

Carrying the theme of collaboration, Clark Memorial Library also partnered with the university Women’s Center. The library was able to secure funding for a book talk to support a speaker hosted by the Women’s Center focusing on sexual assault on college campuses. The book was *Crash Into Me: A Survivor’s Search for Justice* by Liz Securro. The Library offered free copies of the book to 30 participants. It was important to give the books to the students rather than have them check the books out so that the students could have a personal copy to take to the speaker’s event to have signed. This addressed any financial obstacles that students may have that would prevent them from being fully engaged in the event. The discussions focused on how the University of Virginia handled Securro’s experience with sexual assault and the structures and norms that do and should exist in our current time (Mathuews, in press).

This event was punctuated by a dinner with Securro in which the Women’s Center hosted the Director of Public Safety, the Director and Associate Director of Human Resources, the Dean of Students, Athletic Director, Legal Counsel, the Provost, and Residence Life staff (Mathuews, in press). This was an intentional guest list to reach beyond traditional audiences who typically attend such events to get through to those who possess power within the institution. In these efforts, the library has demonstrated its influence on knowledge construction on campus. By giving voice to a marginalized theme, the campus conversation can be more balanced. Interacting with University officials on the project helps to extend the conversation.

Libraries can also collaborate with international programs to gain a better understanding of how various cultures are affected by the structures of the library and how staff can better interact with students. Though not an academic library, the State Library of New South Wales in Australia has created an innovative tool to help libraries better communicate with patrons. A challenge of academic libraries is that most forms of communication between the library and the student are in the native language. Translators and multi-lingual staff are a financial luxury most libraries cannot afford. The State Library created
a multilingual glossary, freely accessible online, which translates common library phrases into nearly 50 languages. The State Library also offered a web service that offered web content in sixty-five languages. This site also offers translations of government documents and cultural information to help libraries better understand how to support a multicultural patron base (Acevedo & Lo Bianco, 2013).

Librarians at Wayne State University’s Shiffman Medical Library took this approach to the classroom. EndNote is a product that helps researchers organize articles and manage citations. Citation management tools like this can often be daunting to learn, especially when you may also be getting acclimated to a new educational culture. The Wayne State University Librarians addressed this by offering the typical EndNote instructional session in the Chinese language. Wayne State University based their project on research that cites that Asian students’ listening and speaking skills may not be as well developed as their reading skills. This is particularly challenging when the Asian culture is often more apt to view education as something to consume and observe while respecting authority. Offering a course in the audience’s native language instead of the institution’s language promotes an atmosphere where students may feel more comfortable to talk about their information needs. Methodologies where a dual-language presentation is employed also showed value because students were able to draw connections between the two languages, promoting a better understanding of English (Danquah & Wu, 2013). Offering services in multiple languages allows diverse voices to be heard. As libraries develop services and resources, it is essential to social justice goals to be aware of and consider diverse perspectives. Being inclusive with language further protects the balanced construction of knowledge on campus.

Call to Action

The library profession is rooted in social justice thinking. This makes academic libraries a natural leader and partner in social justice initiatives on college campuses. However, academic libraries are an untapped resource for this important work. Academic libraries traditionally focus on diversity initiatives to demonstrate the commitment to social justice. While this work is important, it is essential to move beyond diversity to true social justice work that focuses on the structural characteristics of libraries to ensure that students are receiving equitable service and access. Positive outcomes from this work can be magnified when the academic library collaborates with other areas on campus. Such collaboration is beneficial because it raises awareness about the value of libraries, builds a network of higher education professionals whose diverse views can strengthen the structure of the college or university, and takes advantage of shared resources.
Thus it is essential to recruit a diverse staff, train employees, and hire specialists to be mindful of their role in a social justice framework. It is essential to form advisory boards from diverse constituent groups on campus and from all levels of staffing so that they may provide a balancing lens to decisions and strategic planning. It is essential to collaborate across campus to gain a holistic understanding of the campus to better understand our diverse population and ensure inclusive services and resources.

Finally, it is important to keep the conversation fresh and keep pushing toward true social justice work. The profession must ask difficult questions and use empirical work to inform practice. Creating a body of research to inform the profession and the broader higher education landscape will propel higher education into the future of social justice work as we gain a deeper understanding of structural inequality. With such a foundation in social justice thinking, the academic library has the potential to have a meaningful impact to transform higher education.

REFERENCES


Introduction

In June of 1944 President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed into law The Serviceman’s Readjustment Act. Later known as the G.I. Bill, it became one of the most important pieces of legislation passed in U.S. history. Veterans who served in war as sailors or soldiers and who previously did not have the means to attend college were now being given the funding by the federal government to do so. Since 1944 millions of veterans have attended American universities and colleges. Currently veterans who have served after September 10, 2001 can participate in the Post 9/11 G.I. Bill which has higher payouts than in past bills and is transferrable to a spouse or child. There are additional programs such as the Montgomery G.I. Bill, Reserve Educational Assistance Program, Veterans Educational Assistance Program, Survivors and Dependents Educational Assistance Program, Educational Assistance Pilot Program and the National Call to Service Program.

In 1956 49% of all students attending college were veterans. Of the 16 million World War II veterans; 7.8 million took part in an education or training program. This bill has served many generations including current veterans.
since current legislation is modelled on the original. There have been 5,690,000 veterans who have served in the armed services from 1990 – 2010, and in 2013 there were 1 million education beneficiaries for whom the federal government paid out over $12 billion in payments. Furthermore, in the 2012-2013 academic-year for-profit colleges received $1.7 billion in Post-9/11 G.I. Bill monies. 8 out of the 10 colleges receiving the most Post-9/11 benefits were for-profit colleges. The University of Maryland and Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University were the two not-for-profit colleges that were on the top ten list for receiving Post 9/11 monies.

A Senate investigation found that Federal Government monies that went to for-profit colleges increased 683% between the years 2006 and 2010. Chairman Tom Harkin (D-IA) Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee and the Department of Education have accused for-profit colleges of targeting veterans with misleading statements about job placement and also falsifying information on grades and attendance. Over a four year span the top funded for-profit school, Corinthian College, received $186 million in Post 9/11 G.I. Bill funding. Corinthian has been accused of predatory lending: high interest rate loans and misrepresenting post-graduation job prospects. Many Corinthian campuses have since closed amid claims of financial hardship. Roughly half of Corinthian has been sold off to a student loan guaranty agency, ECMC, a subsidiary of nonprofit Zenith Education Group. Part of the sale was also an agreement to forgive $480 million worth of controversial student loan debt (controversial that is, given Corinthian’s practices and subsequent sell-off). The reason veterans are an attractive market (and that is how they are treated – as a market) for for-profit higher education is that Title IV of the Higher Education Act – the 90/10 Rule – requires colleges to fund at least 10 percent of its annual budget with non-federal monies. However, there is a loophole in the law: Post 9/11 G.I. Bill funding does not count as federal money. Hence, there is an incentive to recruit veterans who qualify for this benefit because the money for tuition is guaranteed, and unlike federal loans, there is no default rate and those funds do not fall under the 90/10 Rule. It is an invitation to exploitation.

Veterans’ Context Within Higher Education

Veterans share the same struggles as any other students entering college: navigating the campus, finding friends, managing time, and adjusting to a completely new way of living – just a few of the shared growing pains of incoming freshman. Additional challenges for veterans include feeling alone, not understanding their combat trauma, wanting to go back to the war to recapture the sense of belonging to a group, and women, who make up 15% of the military, suffer in silence even more over their traumatic experiences.
There are often family and work obligations that come with being a bit older as a veteran that are not completely typical of the average freshman: hiring childcare, working full-time jobs during the day, responsibilities for mortgages and car payments. Then there is also the frequent need for medical and mental health attention. The majority of veteran disability injuries are from Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI), wounds from explosive devices, depression, and addiction. The GI Bill is designed to help families overcome tuition costs and to gain or improve skillsets for civilian life, but it does not help with this wide variety of challenges, and a wide variety of institutions of higher education recognize this and are focusing on serving the needs of returning veterans. For instance, colleges have responded to incoming disabled veterans over the years by broad efforts to make campuses more compliant with the American Disabilities Act (ADA), to prevent veterans from feeling stigmatized by their differing abilities colleges are scrambling to help all veterans find the proper resources to successfully complete college. Navigating the enrollment paperwork, financial aid awards, and federal work study programs can be an annoyance and frustrating to any incoming freshman. Incoming freshman have to learn quickly the regulations regarding residence life, managing their class schedules and managing a social life. The situation is far more complex and challenging for veterans.

Veterans are recruited by for-profit colleges quite often because they genuinely want to help serve that community, but it must be recognized that a huge plus for the for-profit institution is that the veterans are backed Post 9/11 GI bill monies. There is also data that suggests that veterans lean more towards for-profit colleges because they are easier to navigate and the services such as on-line courses and evening courses suit their needs. Further reasons why veterans seek out for-profit institutions include; avoiding long commutes to class, avoiding sitting with people in a classroom, avoiding lectures, increased time flexibility and consequently more credit for military service with that flexibility. But this comes at a price. An analysis of the top 500 colleges that serve the veteran population found that almost 60 percent, or 3 out of 5 veterans, choose to go to a community college or a for-profit college due to convenience and support services – but there is a difference even in this population. Only 6 percent of all college students go to for-profit colleges, but among that population, those using the G.I. Bill represent 19 percent. The opposite is true for private and public non-profit colleges which capture 20 percent of all veteran students, but only 6 percent of those students using the G.I. Bill. Veterans are going to for-profit institutions for convenience, support, smaller communities, and online courses. These accommodations do support the needs of the veteran but there are underlying issues that are affecting veterans in ways that are not easily recognizable to those outside of higher education.
Institutions of higher education are steeped in practices built up over years with Boards of Governors, Trustees and Regents that can make change seem slow. One of the advantages that publicly traded for-profit schools have is that they claim they are nimble enough to move with the rapid changes that are said to drive education. One example is the for-profits’ frequent elimination of the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT), which would, on the face of it seem to be a progressive policy. The University of Phoenix website states that there are no SAT requirements for admission. Many underprepared students, including veterans, enter for-profit universities who otherwise would not be attending traditional universities. But for-profit universities are in fact in the world of pay for play and they spend a small fortune on their advertising (and not on instruction or research resources). The top five for-profit colleges spent over $4billion or 22% of revenue in 2012 on “marketing, advertising, recruiting, and admissions staffing.” The Apollo Group, parent company of Phoenix University, paid $400,000 on Google ads per day in 2012. It is of course routine for the for-profits to staff with non-tenured faculty who teach without the same academic freedoms as professors from the not for profit sector. This sector of higher education features both higher student loans and Ph.Ds. who must take teaching jobs at very low wages with few of the perks or protections of higher education. In other words, the for-profit institutions are naturally being run like corporations.

All institutions of higher education need to be well run to be successful in a very tight fiscal environment, but for-profit universities additionally have shareholders to answer to and the for-profit model simply does not allow for as much academic freedom or the right to express oneself in the classroom or with on-campus decision making and shared governance. “Traditionally, faculty have been considered expert in some field of study. Governance, in part, was a way of preserving the role of expertise in curriculum and pedagogy. In for-profit colleges, curriculum is another for market-tested deliverable. It is most often designed by a corporate level office and handed down to the Deans’ who, in turn, charge faculty with efficient content delivery.” The lack of tenure and governance for instructors in conjunction with high tuition rates, high levels of dropout rates, and student loan defaults is not the preferred educational setting to foster learning, teaching, counseling and a service oriented environment that a traditional four-year college would provide.

The Argument Against For-Profit Colleges

The argument that for-profit institutions are helping underrepresented populations: middle to lower class Socio-Economic-Status (SES) students, minorities and veterans because they do not have the stringent enrollment application process is a perverse way of legitimatizing their predatory recruiting
and lending practices. In 2010 the U.S. Department of Education re-defined “gainful employment in a recognized occupation” to determine student loans and what colleges are to receive in Title IV federal funding. Student debt burden is measured by “the ratio of monthly student loan payments to gross monthly income.”

The Department of Education’s goal is to look at the debt to income levels of students and the repayment of their student loans. Students enrolling in for-profit colleges often do not have the same pre-college training of their counterparts in traditional four-year colleges – that, after all is part of the appeal of their non-traditional intake and instructional delivery methods and marketing. Additionally, part of the appeal to veterans is their openness to those who can pay for the degree without necessarily properly assessing whether they are prepared for college level courses, but the lack of preparation may create the need for more years of schooling, hence, more loans. Two-thirds of students in traditional four year colleges receive some form of institutional aid whereas only 8% in the for-profit sector receive institutional aid, which in turn accounts for more loans. Veterans who receive money under the Post 9/11 G.I. Bill have helped for-profit colleges become thriving corporate ventures for a time: an analysis found in a 2013 that an additional 133 colleges (that is, added to the original) would have failed the 90/10 rule if veterans benefits were counted as federal monies in the equation. Traditional college counseling services may help students prevent bad decision making on loan choices and when choosing majors – the exact opposite of the marketing push of the for-profits. Traditional colleges are in fact looking to utilize institutional funds to subsidize students because close to 47% of students experience some difficulty paying back their loans. Increased costs and the lack of jobs and stagnant salaries of the recent Great Recession all add to the debt burden, but default rates are higher among for-profit institutions compared to traditional four-year public or private schools. Four year colleges are less likely to see high default rates and problems entering the labor market in part because of the campus support services provided. More research needs to be done on for-profit default rates, how the debt differs among the students of both types of institutions and the borrowers’ traits and federal loan policies.

Further Argument: Why Libraries Matter

Why is this any concern to libraries? Libraries cut across the entire spectrum of a university and its academic goals and mission. Any given Library worker – whatever their particular role – can tell you that they act as a liaison or an ombudsman for students’ to campus services and help them navigate their way. In simplest terms, the library is a clearinghouse that touches on almost every aspect and area of the university and is itself a central service point:
• Is the student exhibiting behaviors that are emotional or stress related?
• Is there a problem patron/user disrupting students’ work in the library?
• “Do I need to buy the textbook for class or does the library have it?”
• “How do I print from the library?”
• “Where do I register for class?”
• What are citations? Would I use APA or MLA for this this paper, and what are they?
• “Our library does not own this book(s); is there some other way I can get it?”
• “Can you help me find something on this subject?”
• “Is there a silent study room?”
• “Do we have a scanner?”
• “My professor said that there is a book on reserve at the library; where can I find it?”
• “I am used to my home town public library and finding a book here is completely different; can someone help me find this book?”
• “What are databases and Research Guides?”
• “I am supposed to use the electronic journals. What are those? Can you help?”
• “Does the campus have a writing center?”
• “Where do I get technical support for my laptop on campus?”
• “Is there an archives or special collections on campus?”
• “Would you be able to tell me where the campus I.D. office is?”
• “How long can I borrow this book for?”
• “Do you know where Counseling Services is and their hours?”

It is reasonably well established that veterans do better when they have resources (a support network) available to them: for veterans with PTSD “unit support” and perceived “social support” all contributed to the adaptation to college life. Veterans simply and typically bring a higher need for the services offered on campus. Clearly a myriad of issues that veterans face are similar to those of traditional students, but there is a clear need for the added services that non-profit organizations such as Student Veterans of America (SVA) provide in terms of support and resources to veterans on campus. For-profit institutions simply do not have the same broad array of services – including, often, libraries, highlighting their important role as a clearing house. According to Davis, Adams & Hardey:

The academic library is rarely mentioned in the literature on for-profit institutions, either in the higher education or library literature. The prevailing attitude toward the library in a for-profit institution is that “however important libraries may be, they are expensive
and unprofitable, they occupy what operations managers view as unproductive space, and therefore they reduce profit margins.”

Kirp, writing about the University of Phoenix, contrasts the traditional and the for-profit views of libraries: “[W]hile to academics libraries are sacred places, the Phoenix administrators contended that access to a nearby library was sufficient…”

Illustrative of this, as a reference librarian I have had to deal with a veteran student who was not thinking clearly and wanted to call in a bomb threat, leaving me no choice but to call campus Public Safety. I have also referred a student to the counseling center: they were clearly overwhelmed with their studies and their behavior and performance were suffering. These are the kind of things that are so important to a campus, but sometimes overlooked, and they are doubly important for veterans. On top of this of course, librarians add value and depth to a college education through library instruction and information literacy classes – again especially important support for veterans. The access and services that a library offers are plentiful and rich. Mission statements typically state that they “support excellence in academic and individual work, enable inquiry, foster intellectual and ethical integrity and respect for diverse points of view through user-focused services and robust collections as the intellectual and cultural heart” of their campus. A walk through the main floor of a typical academic library confirms that it is where students gather on campus to socialize and study. A 2014 study reported a 64% student satisfaction rate of their university library among college students compared to other services offered on campus.

When a student finds the time to consult with a librarian for assistance with their research they usually want a fast answer instead of learning a systematic way to go about information searching. But a veteran student may need additional attention beyond research methods to learn how to cite and to write at the college level. Websites for veterans’ information needs are invaluable tools: lists of healthcare providers, government sites, military records, and government regulations, health issues, reunions, veterans’ organizations, general military websites and history sites. But we know from social science research that the availability of information is not the key – it may well be there, but unknown; that is the essential bottleneck. Academic libraries can further assist veterans in their research their eligibility for health benefits, educational benefits, and disability benefits through the Veterans Administration website – we do a version of this all the time. Many libraries also provide resources such as Optical Character Recognition (OCR) for students who are visually impaired, a safe space for students and armed services students to study, collaborate, research and read. Virtually none of these are available or offered at for-profit institutions. They are routine among typical academic libraries.
A Dearth of Literature on Libraries and Veterans

However, the field has not examined these questions or the services veterans have been getting in any sector of higher education. A search of the database Library, Information Science and Technology Abstracts (LISTA) found a void in LIS literature on veterans and academic libraries. Using the subject terms “VETERANS – United States” returned 4 scholarly journal articles between 2001 and the present as of this writing. Only 1 article in 2001 focused on veterans using the internet to find resources. Literature on veterans returning to college from the battlefield is on the rise, but a perspective on library services is still lacking: what is missing from the literature is the important role academic libraries have in the transitioning of veterans to college. Academic libraries, librarians, and library staff have been grounded in academia and university life since the opening of the Harvard Library in 1638. Libraries and their resources have guided men and women of all walks of life for centuries; not only in their research and academic careers, but also in adapting to everyday life. With today’s technology a librarian can quickly make a research guide to help veterans navigate campus services on and off campus such as the Veterans Administration, job finding resources, interviewing workshops and corporations and municipalities looking to hire veterans. A National Public Radio piece reported on a group called Health Leads who reaches out to individuals in need of the basic things in life for survival. Health Leads informs them of the resources available to them within the Washington, D.C. area. The resources are right in their backyards but there is a lack of knowledge as to what services are available and the library acts in a very similar way pushing students through the bottleneck to a wealth of information and resources available to them.

Transitioning to college for veterans can be challenging in that they may stand out from other students because of the way they look or have aged. Other than providing good information to veterans libraries can have events and invite veteran students to an open house to meet the librarians and staff, libraries can host exhibits and programs, have specialized times to do research called research boot camp, try to provide a common learning spot for veterans, and libraries can also market to the other offices on campus to inform faculty, staff, and administration to be aware of the needs of veterans. But until we research this group and their needs, we’re just guessing. I picture a veteran-friendly library and its services as essentially a directory of information to provide both practical and academic support. An analogy that comes to mind is the entrance of a mall and the directory which lists the stores, restrooms, telephones, restaurants, mall security, Wi-Fi hotspots, ATM machines, changing stations, food courts and a map of their locations to make them findable. It is not a glamorous analogy, but it is perhaps an apt one. An article in The Journal of Business & Finance Librarianship notes a group of colleges helping disabled
veterans with business research and entrepreneurship – business librarians are helping support the program Entrepreneurship Bootcamp for Veterans with Disabilities or (EBV). Attending veterans do not have to have college degrees and no G.I. Bill monies are used.44

In Closing

The academic library is a unique place on campus that serves not only as the heart of the university but provides a level of care and assistance that would be hard to replicate. For-profits don’t even try – their lack of libraries is part and parcel of the exploitation of the veteran market and their access to federal monies. Private and public not-for-profit in the main stream of the American education system thrive on educating men and women to be better people and productive people for society. We all know that a worthwhile education will have a cost, but an ethical institution will look to best serve the student – perhaps prior to or at a minimum, alongside serving its own institutional interests. There is a need for research on the role of academic libraries serving veterans. That is, there is a need to examine just what this population both needs and perhaps already gets out of academic libraries, otherwise again, we are just guessing without data. This article and the surrounding social science literature point to the only data we have, but the literature is sparse in our field on veteran students and we should be fulfilling our roles as a learned profession and producing data. Do veterans disproportionately use the library or the writing center in the library? Only with further research on our part along with library instruction will we then know some answer to that question, and how to add to the educative experience. Unless we gather and reflect on the broader social sciences literature and produce our own studies on veterans in higher education we are replicating – at least in part – the gap the for-profits exploit. It is important for academic librarians to produce literature on veteran usage and needs in the library. Given the numbers alone and what is at stake for veterans we are doing this minority community a disservice if we do not.

NOTES

1 The author would like to thank Dr. John E. Buschman, Dean of Seton Hall University Libraries, for editorial help.


3 Ibid. 2013.


19 Ibid. 2014.
23 Ibid. 2014.
25 Ibid. 2014.
29 Ibid. 2013.


33 Ibid. 2014.


Introduction

Radical librarian. Not a combination of words that you see put together very often. However, due to the political climate of the Cold War in the 1980s, a growing group of librarians became just that: radicalized. According to Merriam-Webster, radicalism is defined as “the opinions and behaviors of people who favor extreme change especially in government [with] radical political ideas and behaviors.” Not exactly a term you would use when describing a librarian. The definition seems to run counter to librarianship, a profession that has traditionally sought to be neutral or pro-government on political matters. Further, librarians are often portrayed in the popular media as quiet, conservative book stewards sitting passively at reference desks, shushing people, and insisting on strict adherence to rules; they are not usually portrayed as outspoken protestors in picket lines railing at the powers that be and stirring up opposition to government policies. Yet, a small but courageous group of librarians, the members of Librarians for Nuclear Arms Control (LNAC), adopted a radical mindset in the Eighties because they truly believed that they needed “literally to save the world, which daily inches closer to nuclear
disaster.” The group’s newsletter, The LNAC Almanac, offers insight into the degree of radicalism and ideological justifications of these library activists. The Almanac reveals that LNAC members, driven by the threat of nuclear war, became radicals in the true sense of that word, demonstrating that librarians can move beyond their traditional neutrality and take up the mantle of social crusaders in order to protect the knowledge of civilization and its people.

The LNAC Almanac, which ran from 1984-1990, served as the main newsletter for the group. LNAC published opinion pieces and letters from its members, reports on protests and other peace activities by librarians, satires of government policies, reprints of articles by outside scholars, bibliographies on arms control, and witty anti-war cartoons penned by library staff. The Almanac provides richly-detailed content about the thinking of informational radicals, and this article offers an analysis of this content. In doing so, it finds that LNAC fit the definition of a radicalized group, and explores the ideology that the members used to step out of professional neutralism and into the political arena.

A Neutrality Mentality in Libraries

Breaking out of the traditional mold of political noninvolvement required a lot of courage for LNAC members because librarians of the early twentieth century had enshrined the ideal of neutrality. As library science departments took form at universities in the 1930s, many of their faculty preached that librarians should emulate the objectivity of the scientific professions. Karl Popper and Thomas Kuhn, two philosophers who believed that the scientific approach could be applied to human society, heavily influenced librarians towards this line of thinking. Archie L. Dick, who traced the history of neutralism in library thinking, explains that “it becomes clear in an examination of the library profession’s search for its social scientific base, following the philosophy of science path, why objectivity and neutrality assumed such prominence as professional ideals.” Librarians believed that they, as social scientists, should strive for neutrality so they could be completely objective in their book selections, reference service, and other professional endeavors. The profession’s leaders believed that librarians should certainly not engage in public discussions over the morality of particular political policies, or bias their services in favor of a specific point of view.

Several works on the ethos of librarianship in mid-century deepened the neutrality mentality. In one example work in 1962, Douglas Foskett summarized the creed of the librarian with the phrase “no politics, no religion, no morals,” an idea suggesting that the nation’s book stewards should focus on providing information services to their patrons without regards to their own personal beliefs. In 1972 David Berninghausen wrote “Social Responsibility
vs. the Library Bill of Rights”, an article that argued strongly for impartiality by librarians. He contended that ALA should not participate in radical campaigns to end racial prejudice or stop wars, believing that the association and its librarians would lose their credibility by endorsing specific causes. If libraries became tools for furthering social agendas, he warned, they would open the door for groups and governments to pressure librarians to censor materials that opposed their programs.\(^7\)

However, around the time that Berninghausen was writing, some librarians, especially those in ALA’s emerging Social Responsibilities Round Table began to resist the neutrality tradition. They countered that since libraries must stay relevant to the interests of their patrons, they could take part in current debates. They also pointed out that in trying to maintain a neutral collection, librarians would have to recognize when a collection was biased and rebalance that collection by vigorously adding books from the opposing viewpoint.\(^8\) Perhaps even more significantly, Dorothy Broderick and other socially responsible librarians argued that certain books, such as racist works, promoted ideas that subverted other people’s rights. Librarians had a responsibility to weed out books from their collections that made the bigot’s point of view seem to be on an equal footing with ideas about human dignity.\(^9\) However, despite the development of the Social Responsibilities Round Table and an ideology that qualified the traditional view of intellectual freedom, the library profession as a whole would still follow a policy of impartiality at the end of the Sixties.\(^10\)

**Works on Radicalism in Librarianship**

In taking a look at recent works on library radicals, none have focused on LNAC. However, library scholars have debated about the meaning of library neutrality in philosophical discourses and analyzed librarian activism in other chapters of America’s radical history, thus providing a background for LNAC’s story.

*The Progressive Librarian* has published a plethora of articles about the debate between neutralists and radicals in the library field. Many of the most provocative articles from the journal were compiled into a 2008 book, *Questioning Library Neutrality*. In the article “Activist Librarianship: Heritage or Heresy?” Ann Sparanese explained the crux of the issue:

The struggle is over whether we as librarians should practice total neutrality in terms of library materials and service, or encompass advocacy in our work. Should librarianship become involved in the great issues of the day, or remain a profession aloof in the abstract world that thinks of intellectual freedom in the most idealized, purist fashion?\(^11\)
Steven Joyce answers that question in another essay from the same book, arguing that advocacy is indeed possible for a librarian and pointing out the shortcomings of traditional library neutrality:

Neutrality does not exist in a vacuum; rather, it is immersed in a largely taken-for-granted and unquestioned status quo, and that status quo is certainly not neutral. If ‘neutral’ librarians are also immersed in that status quo (or dominant ideology or hegemony or discursive formation or whichever phrasing you wish to employ), can they really be neutral?12

Librarians who claim to be “neutral” thus give tacit endorsement to the prevailing ideology. In making room for social justice initiatives within an intellectual freedom framework, Joyce points out that speaking out in favor of a particular point of view does not mean that librarians are suppressing other points of view. In fact, intellectual freedom means that librarians can advocate in favor of a radical point of view as long as they allow for others to participate in the discussion as well.

Weighing into the debate with “The Myth of the Neutral Profession,” Robert Jensen argued that librarians simply cannot be neutral because they make acquisitions and programming decisions every day that take into account the needs of their communities. Librarians who think that radical ideas could help their communities could justifiably advocate those ideas. Jensen believed that the tradition of so-called neutrality has only served to neutralize librarians, tying their hands and quieting their voices in the political arena.13

In addition to these philosophical discussions, several scholars have focused on specific radical movements in the history of librarianship, such as in the essay collection Activism in American Librarianship, 1962-1973 published in 1987. Many of the essays note that the Sixties witnessed the birth of real radicalism in librarianship, buoyed as it was by the waves of radicalism in American society as a whole. A number of library historians have covered the civil rights struggle and women’s liberation movement through the profession’s main historical journal, Information & Culture.14 These campaigns to ensure equal rights for all librarians and their patrons certainly helped to kindle the fires of radicalism in the hearts of many librarians.

However, in “The War and Librarianship” in Activism in American Librarianship, Frederick J. Stielow argues that the Vietnam War was the watershed for radicalism in the library field. Up to that point, librarians had approved of most of the federal government’s policies about wars. However, the carnage, long years without victory, and funneling of billions of dollars into bombs and bullets eroded librarian support for a U.S. presence in Vietnam. Some librarians took a clear anti-war stand and formed the Librarians for Peace group,
marking the first time that librarians would truly move “beyond the stultifying social inertia wrought by decades of overly narrow professionalization and bureaucratization” and directly challenge a government policy. This anti-war strand of radicalism would clear the path for the nuclear bomb opponents of the 1980s.

Jumping to the present day, a number of books have appeared that testify to a growing interest in activism among librarians. In the book *The Generation X Librarian*, the authors dedicate a chapter to highlighting socially responsible librarians in the present and encouraging new librarians to follow their lead. In the book *Informed Agitation*, a panel of authors shed light on radical twenty-first century library groups, such as Radical Reference.

Thus, authors have discussed the radicalism vs. neutrality conflict in librarianship, and examined episodes in library activist history in the 1960s as well as in the present day. However, few have concentrated on LNAC’s radicalism, a 1980s ideology which helped provide a link between the Sixties radicalism and today’s activists. In the article “From Atomic Shelters to Arms Control”, one of the authors briefly touches on LNAC but offers no substantive analysis of the *Almanac*. This article seeks to fill this gap in the literature.

Before diving into the *Almanac*, some general works on radicalism and revolutions can help us clarify LNAC’s thinking. In *The Anatomy of Revolution*, a comparative study of several historical revolutions, Crane Briton explores the motivations behind revolutionary fervor. He finds that one of the key motivators for revolutionaries is *hope*. Revolutionaries have hope that they can make a difference, a kind of vibrant optimism that they can end an oppression, improve their societies, or change their government’s policies. Indeed, radicals are rarely pessimistic or fatalistic, as such beliefs would deflate their activist energy, leading them to accept the status quo. In another work focusing specifically on the American anti-nuclear movement, Paul Y. Watanabe and Michael A. Milburn consider psychological factors that produce activism. They find that “strong feelings of political efficacy” and the belief that activism could have a significant impact on decreasing the chances of war are two of the biggest predictors. As will be seen, LNAC librarians expressed the types of revolutionary ideas described by Briton, Watanabe, and Milburn: a hope that they could bring about real political change and a conviction that they, as America’s information professionals, had the power and the skills to help save the world.

Our article tells the story of *Almanac* in two parts. The first part shows that the *Almanac* portrays LNAC to be a league of librarians whose ideas and actions fit the definition for a truly radical group through the use of deliberate collection development, programming and exhibits. The second part breaks down the content of the *Almanac* into its elements, revealing the motivations and justifications that LNAC members had for radicalizing.
Part I: The Almanac as the Chronicles of a Radical Group

In order to understand the mind frame of the LNAC members, one must look to the political landscape of the day. The terrifying surge in the number of nuclear weapons and the increase in the potency of individual nuclear warheads compelled all Americans, including librarians, to take heed of the political debates surrounding war and peace issues during the Eighties. By 1980, the United States had stockpiled 23,764 nuclear warheads, and the Soviet Union had amassed 30,062. The total number of bombs would increase as the decade went on, topping off at an incredible 70,000 warheads by the mid-1980s. Yet, not only had nuclear bombs become alarmingly numerous by this decade, but their individual destructive power had also grown exponentially. In fact, a strategic nuclear bomb of the 1980s could explode with between 8-100 times as much firepower as the A-bombs dropped on Japan.19

Indeed, the effects of a nuclear war in the 1980s, as forecast in several scholarly studies of the time, would have been truly Armageddon-like. Projections placed the number of immediate fatalities of a U.S.-Soviet war at 1.1 billion. Another 1.1 billion people would likely suffer severe wounds, and with many hospitals destroyed, the injured would have scant hope of receiving help. Altogether, a third to a half of the human race would perish in the first few days of the war, and the World Health Organization warned that the survivors would face starvation, epidemics, loss of utilities, and anarchy. Moreover, many scientists contended that the smoke and dust generated by nuclear explosions would rise up into the atmosphere and block out sunlight for years, a phenomenon they termed “nuclear winter.” The totality of all of a nuclear war’s effects, some scientists warned, might very well result in the extinction of humanity.20

Newspapers carried these grim reports to the American people.21 Fictional movies, such as The Day After (1983), Mad Max Beyond Thunderdome (1985), and By Dawn’s Early Light (1990) brought home the effects of a nuclear exchange through graphic special effects and woeful tales of characters fighting to survive in a shattered world.22 Fictional and popular nonfiction books also compelled Americans to imagine the nightmares of a nuclear war.23

The nuclear issue gained even more urgency by what some perceived to be a reckless militarism in Washington. In his first years in office, President Ronald Reagan articulated a passionate anti-Soviet agenda and proposed initiatives to bolster America’s nuclear prowess, bringing an end to the more relaxed relationship between Russia and America during the détente years of the late Seventies. He denounced the Soviet Union as an “evil empire.”24 Reagan planned a massive military build-up that included programs for an MX missile, a weapon which would empower the United States to launch a first strike on the Soviet Union. Some Reagan administration officials also downplayed the
potential impact of a conflict, believing that Americans could easily survive a nuclear war with enough shovels (all they had to do was dig holes in their backyards, one official claimed, and throw doors over them to build fallout shelters). Some Americans feared that the Reagan administration’s hawkish rhetoric, provocative military measures, and naive thinking would drive the United States headlong off a nuclear precipice.

LNAC was just one group among many that formed during this time period in hopes of influencing the government to make a drastic change in policy. The main difference between LNAC and other groups, like Physicians for Social Responsibility or Lawyers Alliance for Nuclear Arms Control, was that while these groups could be extremely effective, they had limited constituencies. “Librarians, on the other hand, reached all the above groups as well as many others making up the diverse public of the nation’s libraries.” For this reason, LNAC members, as professionals who specialized in the dissemination of information to all Americans, believed that they were best positioned among the anti-nuclear groups to stop the approaching storm of mushroom clouds.

The extraordinary threat to humanity’s very survival would force the library profession—as no other issue before it had—to reconsider its traditional stance of neutrality. By forming the activist group, Librarians for Nuclear Arms Control (LNAC), many librarians courageously rose to the challenge of addressing the atomic issue.

Victoria Kline Musmann, director of the Santa Fe Springs City Library in California, founded LNAC in 1983. Musmann and her fellow librarians sought to ensure global salvation by pressuring the American government to reduce or eliminate its nuclear arsenal. There had already been some movement in ALA towards peace advocacy; the Social Responsibility Round Table had passed a resolution through ALA Council in 1980 calling for more efforts to find peaceful ways to resolve global conflicts. However, LNAC members apparently felt the need to create a group specifically dedicated to nuclear issues, in imitation of other professions as noted in their first Almanac issue. It is important to note that LNAC, rather than fight against the established professional associations, would advocate within the associations for greater librarian involvement in the anti-war movement.

Moving Their Profession Towards a Radical Stance

LNAC’s statement of purpose, as printed in the Almanac, shows that the members believed that librarians had a crucial role to play in the solution to the nuclear crisis and that through their knowledge and shared information they could provide their patrons with eye-opening facts about the effects of nuclear weapons:
We realize that librarians are reluctant to impose their own political and moral convictions upon the community at large, but we believe that the gravity of the nuclear threat demands our involvement. As librarians we constitute a respected and influential segment of society. We are charged with the preservation of our shared culture and intellectual heritage and we are dedicated to education and the communication of information. It is urgent that we use our resources and professional skills to inform the public about the dangers of nuclear weapons.29

Throughout the volumes of the *Almanac*, librarians relentlessly took a stand against the government’s use of nuclear weapons in an attempt to educate their fellow professionals and constituencies. The *Almanac*’s editors encouraged their readers to disseminate the *Almanac* and its anti-nuclear ideas among fellow librarians.30 LNAC’s leaders also reported on their formal dissemination activities within the library associations in the *Almanac*. In the Summer 1987 issue, LNAC’s leaders highlighted an exhibit they created at the American Library Association conference. The display gave them a foothold for radicalism in the profession, allowing them to distribute anti-nuclear materials to thousands of librarians, including a Nuclear IQ Quiz, fliers for pro-peace movies, LNAC stickers, and provocative items designed to rally both librarians and their patrons to the peace banner.31

Most significantly in its associational activities, LNAC’s members participated in bringing about a nuclear freeze resolution through the California Library Association (CLA). The nuclear freeze resolutions called for the US and USSR to stop making, testing, and developing nuclear weapons, and for the two countries to arrange a summit as soon as possible. Victoria Kline Musmann, LNAC President, proposed the freeze resolution at the CLA conference, and some of what she chose to say is radical indeed. She urged the members to vote in favor of the resolution because she believed that there was...

...a real possibility that our civilization, including all libraries everywhere, will be destroyed in a nuclear war…I know that some believe that it is unethical for librarians to endorse a nuclear freeze... that we must maintain our neutrality…One nuclear bomb dropped on either Los Angeles or San Francisco would be more destructive to the free flow of information than the most repressive censorship.32

Strong words that reflected a belief that the world was on a precipice. The CLA and ALA passed nuclear freeze resolutions in 1984, heavily influenced by LNAC’s advocacy.33 LNAC won another important victory that same year, when LNAC member Vincent Jennings (working through the Social Responsibilities
Round Table) lead ALA to join the Citizens against Nuclear War coalition of organizations.34

**Publicizing the Propaganda of Peace**

LNAC librarians sought to propagate their peace ideas among the American people at the grassroots level through public libraries. What made this group of librarians radical is that they made no attempts to stay neutral, no attempts to show the other side of the nuclear story. The *Almanac*’s authors only wanted to spread their own one-sided materials, a peace propaganda. Musmann and her daring band of librarians would take a “proactive instead of reactive” approach to the nuclear issue through deliberate dissemination efforts.35

While its members produced some original materials for the American people, LNAC’s peaceful information campaign derived its greatest strength from the capacity of libraries to distribute the materials produced by a variety of other anti-nuclear radical groups. These groups included:

- **American Friends Service Committee**
  Supplying slide shows and facts sheets from the Quakers to support peace education campaigns
- **Physicians for Social Responsibility**
  Offering books and videocassettes specializing in the medical impacts of nuclear bombs
- **Center for Defense Information**
  Producing reports on military spending and policies
- **Nuclear Information and Resource Service**
  Providing lesson plans for anti-bomb teachers along with visual aids36

Libraries could provide Americans a peace propaganda that would encompass the publications of peace groups and the ideas of the greatest anti-nuclear writers, movie directors, and leaders of the day—because libraries could offer ready access to the peace books, films, and programs created by all other activists through library’s collection funds, shelving capacity, display cases, circulation policies, meeting rooms, and networks of branches that spanned America.

Accordingly, the beginning volumes of the *Almanac* focused on the compiling of books, activities, and programs not only to educate the general public on the horrific effects of nuclear weapons but also to keep them up to date with the situation as a whole in a time when information was not as readily available. LNAC had to carry out its information dissemination mission in a time before the internet, before smartphones were in everyone’s hands, without access to unlimited information 24 hours a day. The librarians of the Eighties
therefore needed to be the window into the world of information, especially unfiltered political materials. LNAC librarians did not join the organization just because they wanted the label of “radical”; they joined because as librarians they truly believed that they had a duty to use their informational powers to keep the issue of nuclear arms at the forefront of the public awareness and in turn became the activists that we are studying today.37 These library crusaders sought to wield books, periodicals, posters, films, and programs as weapons in their fight against nuclear war, information formats which could circulate all the particulars about nuclear weapons and the effects of a war.38

The real meat of LNAC’s stance against nuclear weapons can thus be found in the extensive bibliographies of suggested book purchases and provocative programming ideas listed throughout the newsletter. LNAC firmly believed that the sources found in the libraries needed to be strongly pro-peace since the government and the media had harangued the American people with so many pro-nuclear sentiments.

Amidst the pages of bibliographies, some book titles that stand out include: Fatal Obsessions: Nuclear Weapons and Star Wars,39 Does Your Child Fear Nuclear War?,40 Nuclear Winter: the Human and Environmental Consequences of Nuclear War,41 Please Save My World: Children Speak Out Against Nuclear War,42 Overkill: Weapons of the Nuclear Age, Nuclear War, and Nuclear Winter, Growing Up Scared? The Psychological Effect of the Nuclear Threat on Children.43 This short selection of titles reflects how librarians of the Eighties made strategic decisions to stack their shelves with books that took an unabashedly anti-nuclear position. The Almanac’s columnists even suggested stocking libraries with alternative press publications by anti-nuclear groups such as Women Against Military Madness and Ground Zero.44 Further, LNAC audaciously recommended manuals and workbooks for libraries that could go beyond the provision of nuclear facts and serve as tools for local activists. For example, the Almanac’s authors advertised The Military in Your Backyard, a book published by the radicalized Center for Economic Conversion that outlined specific steps that Americans could take to put arms control proposals on local ballots.45

LNAC also supplied posters for libraries, funded anti-nuclear activists’ speeches in libraries, and offered high impact ideas for exhibits and programs, all in attempts to help sway the public to the realization that nuclear weapons were inherently evil and that if they did nothing, the world would end.46 One example can be found in the Spring 1984 Almanac, which advertised the poster session “An Educational Exhibit About the Effects and Dangers of Nuclear War” that included 16 large posters (38 in X 25 in) with titles like “Hiroshima and Nagasaki Destroyed,” “Thermal Effects of Nuclear Explosions,” “The First 110 Seconds after a One-Megaton Air Burst” and “One-Megaton Air Burst Over New York.”47 Materials like these offered very graphic, hard hitting
arguments against any use of nuclear weapons. The *Almanac* provided access to exhibits of many peace groups, supplying ordering information for displays like “Forbidden Faces” which featured photos taken by American visitors to the Soviet Union, images that helped to humanize the Russian people.⁴⁸ The *Almanac* also carried lists of films designed to “get you up off the edge of your seat” about the nuclear issue.⁴⁹ Shining with the passion that the anti-Bomb librarians had for their mission, the *Almanac* even alerted librarians to radical books for children’s story time programs.⁵⁰

LNAC called for librarians to use their training as information professionals for the common good--to take a stand against an issue that could spell the end of civilization. Many librarians agreed and even began to view it as unprofessional not to do so, as explained in the 1985 report “State Library Associations Warming Up To Freeze” which documented the success of anti-nuclear librarians in spreading their creed to dozens of state associations.⁵¹ LNAC members needed to spread their propaganda of peace as quickly as possible, to as many people as possible, because in our great country, there was only one way to implement change: and that was through the people.

**Pushing Peace in Pictures**

On top of the programming ideas and bibliography lists, sandwiched between the anti-nuclear book lists and the voting records of Congressmen, small pieces of peaceful marketing appeared in the *Almanac*. Littered throughout its many volumes were slogans, peace mottos, and political cartoons to help persuade the reader to rally to the side of peace. These small slivers of propaganda could be just as effective as the radicalized speeches printed in the column in rallying librarians to participate in the peace movement:

- Be all you can be. Work for Peace⁵²
- Stop the arms race not the human race⁵³
- Peace is our only security⁵⁴
- Give your country a birthday present: work for peace⁵⁵
- Books not bombs⁵⁶
- Question Authority⁵⁷
- War doesn’t decide who’s right-only who’s left⁵⁸

The political cartoons are an excellent view into the mind frame of the time period as well as that of the editors of the *Almanac*. Some of the cartoons are very broad in terms of nuclear weapons and the fear for the world, such as these images found in the Fall 1988 issue,⁵⁹ and the Winter 1984 issue,⁶⁰
Other images in the newsletter were more geared towards an audience of librarians, focusing on how a nuclear war would affect the profession in a satirical sort of way.\textsuperscript{61}

But in true radical librarian style LNAC did not just stop at satirical drawings or small political cartoons to make a point. They portrayed the truth of what the world would look like if the apocalypse occurred. They saw the fear in the American public and they ran with it, as this image found in the Winter 1984 issue clearly shows.\textsuperscript{62}
The Front Lines of Radicalism

Some LNAC librarians took their radicalization to the next level, going beyond the provision of books and displays, or the penning of essays and cartoons about disarmament. In fact, several members of LNAC took matters into their own hands, speaking out in public venues and participating in protests with the audacity one normally associates with radicalism. Beth Sibley, a reference librarian from UC Berkeley, and a member of LNAC, lectured on librarians as activists at the 1986 National Women’s Studies Association Conference. Her questions for the group probed whether it was a librarian’s place to pursue and influence social responsibility, arguing that librarians have been doing so for many years. Tackling hot topics of the day relevant to libraries (such as illiteracy) was commonplace, so taking the step to stand against nuclear weapons was not a far cry for them.63

Going further, a Los Angeles chapter member of LNAC, Maggie Murphy, recounted to her chapter how police had arrested Murphy and four others
for a peaceful protest when they courageously marched within four miles of the Nevada Nuclear Weapon Test Site on a day when the government was conducting dangerous nuclear testing! Murphy was not alone. In 1987, LNAC president Victoria Kline Musmann was arrested with fifty other protesters when they sat down in the middle of a road that led to a testing site in Nevada. Musmann stated that: “For me it was time to say ‘No’ to nuclear weapons in a more radical way [--] in a way that might jeopardize the normalcy and safety of my daily life.”

But the radicalism of anti-nuclear librarians does not stop there. The *Almanac* celebrated the bravery of anti-nuclear librarians outside of LNAC who could model activism. Anne-Marie Hendrickson, a New York librarian flew to Moscow and faced detainment when she and a group of six peace activists (members of the Group for the Establishment of Trust Between the Soviet Union and the United States) stood outside the entrance to Gorkey Park with leaflets speaking out against nuclear weapons and alerting Russian citizens that they needed to protect themselves from the radiation released by the Chernobyl meltdown.

**Part II: The Elements of LNAC Radicalism**

We summarized the ideas and actions conveyed in the *Almanac* in Part I, demonstrating that the *Almanac*’s contents marked LNAC’s members as peaceful advocates. In Part II, we analyze the apocalyptic-inspired radicalism expressed in the newsletter, highlighting the exact elements that provided the impetus and justifications for LNAC members to break away from the profession’s traditional neutralism.

**Element One: A Matter of Survival**

The sense that the world was on the brink of a disaster that could annihilate librarians and everyone else forced librarians out of their neutrality shells like nothing before it ever had. In 1986 the LNAC National Board commented on a vigorous letter-writing battle taking place in *Reference Quarterly (RQ)*. In the Summer 1985 issue of *RQ*, three library science professors at the University of Maryland argued that libraries should create a “national peace information network” within the nation’s public library system. In response, Connie Jo Ozinga of Seymour Public Library, Indiana, contended in a letter to *RQ* that “…I am convinced that the public library must remain neutral on social issues, no matter what the personal beliefs of the staff might be.” Sanford Berman, a cataloger at Minnesota’s Hennepin Public Library and an LNAC member, fought back in another letter arguing that “simple self-interest dictates that we try to prevent” nuclear war, as it would bring about a cataclysm that would
wipe out librarians and their patrons. “To us, it’s a matter of … survival” he explained. To save themselves and the rest of the human race from war, librarians would simply have to become radical pro-peace soldiers. Concern for the survival of the human race eclipsed neutrality as a professional value in the *Almanac*.

**Element Two: Guardians of Culture**

In addition to protecting human lives, the hearts of LNAC librarians harbored a belief that they had a solemn responsibility to preserve America’s knowledge, an idea that gave rise to radical political action if interpreted to its fullest extent. Musmann and LNAC had a grander definition of librarians than did some of their other colleagues who saw librarians as only providers of facts. In the debut issue of the *Almanac*, Musmann explained:

> The possibility of nuclear war has forced me to reexamine my own assumptions regarding the basic responsibilities of our profession. Although we call ourselves information specialists, our role is much more important. We are perceived as guardians of culture. We are the only profession dedicated to the collection, preservation, and dissemination of the collective wisdom of human civilization. We must protect our culture and intellectual heritage from nuclear destruction.

Librarian radicalism thus resulted from a need to *preempt* threats to the stored up ideas from past generations through political action, in addition to protecting the lives of the current generation.

**Element Three: Providing Books of Real Relevance**

The LNAC army also argued that providing information on serious issues like nuclear war would make libraries more relevant and meaningful to Americans, even if it meant having librarians step into the political arena. In a 1984 piece, Musmann criticized efforts that diverted “public attention away from important issues to trivia,” explaining that librarians should offer programs on nuclear winter rather than flower arranging, and supply books on missiles instead of diet fads. If librarians fulfilled their professional roles in a more substantive way, the public would give them more support. She pointed out that police and fire departments receive greater support from Americans because they deal with life-and-death concerns. Librarians should also focus on real issues, rather than just hobbies or product information. If society was hurtling towards an apocalypse, what was more real or relevant than that?
Musmann acknowledged that librarians had a duty to provide information on popular policy topics, but it was even more important that librarians bring up significant topics, like nuclear war, that did not receive enough public attention. She acknowledged that most reference librarians received few questions about nuclear war. The military-industrial complex had created “psychic numbing” in America, telling Americans that the arms race was too complicated for them and there was nothing they could do about it. Librarians could combat this mentality by building collections that made nuclear weaponry understandable to laypeople and outlined solutions to the arms race. The drive to cultivate library collections that tackled issues of real significance in American society provided some of the justification for LNAC’s radicalism.

**Element Four: Saving Youth from a Fear of Futurelessness**

Librarians also served as sentinels of the nation’s children according to many of the *Almanac*’s authors, and libraries had a duty to help them cope with nuclear issues and reduce the threat of an apocalypse. The library profession’s growing concern about the war’s impact on young minds expressed itself in the creation of a new subject heading, “Children and Nuclear Warfare” in 1984. Children’s librarians made up a large block of LNAC and the library profession, and they tried to lead librarians to take a stance that would save their young patrons from the bomb itself as well as the psychological stress produced by worrying about the bomb. One LNAC writer described the trauma inflicted by the threat of an apocalypse as a “fear of futurelessness” among youth. Many children also lacked the resources to meet their physical and educational needs while the country spent billions on nuclear bombs. The immediate, practical needs of their young patrons outshone the need for the profession to have lengthy, esoteric debates about whether or not librarians should remain purely neutral on the topic of nuclear war.

Children’s fears about nuclear war inspired many LNAC radicals to provide outlets for youth to express their concerns, and offer books with a message of hope for the new generation. Some librarians coordinated bibliotherapy programs to help children address their concerns about nuclear war, such as encouraging children to make posters about war based on books at their libraries, and displaying the posters for the public. While some Americans felt that the arms race might be too controversial and scary for children and teenagers, LNAC members felt that the right selection of constructive dovish books, written by authors with a sensitivity and positive attitude, could help youth cope with life in the Atomic Age and find ways to stop the arms race. LNAC members saw librarians as torchbearers of hope to the new generation, radicals who held up a flame of truthful, peace-based books about nuclear issues for the nation’s youth.
Element Five: Undermining Domestic Endeavors

The LNAC army also felt justified in breaking from the neutrality mentality because they thought that increasing the size of the nation’s nuclear arsenal not only made an apocalypse more likely but it also undermined social services, including libraries. The *Almanac* featured research from “The Women’s Budget” published by the Jane Addams Peace Association of the Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom in 1985, which reported that governments worldwide were spending $1.3 million every thirty seconds on war preparations. The “Budget” authors suggested an array of federal reallocations that would invest money in rape crisis centers, homeless shelters, and senior citizens. They held the conviction that the public funds spent on Stealth bombers represented lost opportunities to help society’s neediest members.79

Further, LNAC librarians believed that a pro-nuclear budget posed a specific threat to American libraries by syphoning off potential book funds into the production of warheads. One member put it graphically, lamenting that an unbelievable fortune was being spent on war preparations, but “meanwhile, you can’t ride an MX missile to work and you can’t run a bookmobile out of a tank.”80 LNAC’s sense that building more nukes and other weapons made an apocalypse more likely in the future, while also misspending funds that could go to libraries, spurred them beyond the boundaries of neutrality.

Element Six: War is the Real Enemy (not the Russians)

Another element of the radical philosophy in the *Almanac* was a belief that the most effective way of preventing Armageddon was by coming to an agreement with the Soviets for reducing the number of bombs, not increasing the number of bombs to deter a Soviet attack. They thought that armed conflict as a phenomenon, rather than a specific country, posed the biggest threat to the American people, rallying around the slogan that “war is the real enemy.”81 They believed arms control could work if the U.S. government would be willing to negotiate with the Soviet Union. In a spring 1986 essay in the *Almanac*, the authors pointed out that the Soviet Union had ceased nuclear testing in August 1985, as part of the Hiroshima and Nagasaki commemorations, and encouraged the United States to do so well. The federal government had refused; and, in fact, escalated the arms race by engaging in Strategic Defense Initiative testing.82 Espousing a different view, LNAC’s radical writers argued that the Soviets could be trusted, at least enough not to start a war if the United States shrank its nuclear arsenal. *Almanac* authors pointed to pro-peace statements from Russian leaders as evidence that there were doves in the Kremlin. For example, they cited a Russian defense leader’s statement in 1988 that called for converting ballistic missiles into baby carriages.83
In probing their thinking on this matter further, the *Almanac* revealed that many LNAC leaders believed that war resulted from distrust, and distrust resulted from lack of information or misinformation. Therefore, librarians should offer books that provided truthful information about the Soviets, portraying them as people with many of the same interests as Americans, and not as an “evil empire” as labeled by Reagan. The belief in the essential humanity of the Soviets, blended with the librarian-styled idea that the enmity driving the arms race stemmed from faulty information dissemination, helped to energize LNAC’s radicalism.

**Element Seven: Ideology Equalizers**

As pointed out earlier, some LNAC authors made an effort to justify their radicalism with the concept of ideological equalization, claiming that pro-nuclear groups already had enough voices in library collections and that librarians should add more anti-nuclear voices in order to give equal opportunities for both sides to be heard. Thus, like their activist predecessors in the Sixties, some LNAC members found room in the framework of intellectual freedom for radical advocacy, and even argued paradoxically that ensuring intellectual freedom sometimes meant advocating a particular ideology. The Nuclear Arms Freeze Resolution passed by the California Library Association declared that librarians’ “responsibility for freedom of and access to information…does not relieve librarians or libraries from the obligation to provide information and arguments from all points of view.” As a corollary, if librarians saw that a particular ideology was underrepresented in their collections or programming—or underrepresented in American society as a whole—they had the duty to advocate that ideology more vigorously than others to ensure that it had a fair chance on the stage of public opinion.

In a 1986 *Almanac* issue, the LNAC National Board noted that librarians, as stewards of books and other resources, had their fingers on the cultural pulse of America, and they could easily ascertain that the prevailing American ideology leaned towards war. LNAC pointed out that most card catalog drawers related to wars were quite full, while drawers indexing peace initiatives were sparse in comparison. LNAC noted “that the bulk of information in any society reflects the ideas of its dominant forces,” and librarians could clearly see that the bulk of information in America slanted towards militarism based on their collections. It was thus their duty to restore balance to America’s information by advocating only for peace, much like the Jedi Knights of the *Star Wars* saga who sensed that the universe leaned too heavily to the dark side and saw it as their duty to go on crusades for the good side in order to restore a balance to the force. Accordingly, restoring balance meant buying books and sponsoring programs that would advocate anti-nuclear policies, not acquiring any more...
pro-war materials. A radical, dove-biased library collection could be a counter-weight to the heavy load of hawkish ideologies in the government and media.

Element Eight: Librarians as Stimulators and Moderators of Meaningful Political Discourse

Underlying all their beliefs about the need for a radical approach to nuclear issues, LNAC members had a conviction that librarians had the power to produce political change by sparking public debates. They could do so by presenting viewpoints that challenged mainstream thinking and furnishing truthful information about key issues so that Americans could form well-educated opinions about government policies. One Almanac writer proclaimed that “by providing information about the effects of nuclear weapons and the skewed priorities of the federal budget, we help to feed the fires of dissent that have always inspired and sustained our political system.” Anti-nuclear library writers also suggested changing subject headings, such as replacing the outdated “atomic” to “nuclear” as well as creating headings for such topics as “nuclear winter,” to facilitate public access to arms race information. Librarians could also stir debates by providing radical literature that directly opposed government policies and commonly-held beliefs. In rejecting the idea that librarians should be neutralists, the Almanac’s editors quoted Patricia Case, a curator at Temple University, who argued that libraries should strive to be controversy-generators in American society by deliberately seeking to include alternative press publications in their collections.

In LNAC’s thinking, librarians should not try to create an artificial calm regarding controversial issues; in fact, they should stir up political storms. LNAC members had hope that an ongoing, nationwide discussion—fueled by the compelling arguments of dove groups and informed by the facts about nuclear warfare in library collections—would lead Americans to steer their nation’s policies towards a peaceful course and avoid the nuclear precipice. The Almanac’s authors believed in the ability of Americans to see the truth about the bomb, if their libraries would help them. Confidence in the political efficacy of librarians thus provided the foundation for LNAC’s radical efforts to halt the countdown to the apocalypse.

Conclusion: Apocalypticism as the Catalyst for Library Radicalism

The LNAC Almanac reveals that librarians can become radicals despite the profession’s traditional neutrality mentality, with the Almanac’s authors proving that librarians have the right and duty to radicalize in order to protect their ideals, collections, and patrons from destruction. LNAC had demonstrated that librarians could find a way out of its morass of neutrality debates and mobilize
themselves for a just political cause along with other professions. They had even won national attention outside their field. Leading peace authors of the day, including Helen Caldicott and Carl Sagan, commended the *Almanac.* U.S. National Security Policy Groups: Institutional Profiles, a directory published in 1990, listed LNAC alongside other American associations dedicated to defense issues.

Indeed the *Almanac* documents the stories of librarians who engaged in protests and speech-making, risking their jobs and livelihoods for their cause, and displaying the “opinions and behaviors of people who favor extreme change” as noted in the definition of radicalism at the beginning of this paper. In addition to going to the front lines of the radical peace movement, LNAC nourished the other radical anti-nuclear forces in America by disseminating a propaganda of peace through books. Essentially, LNAC librarians functioned as radicals in two ways: they wanted extreme change in their profession’s ethos, and in their government’s policies. LNAC members’ bravery and zeal, which came out in their dual radicalism, should be remembered along with the courage of their radical predecessors of the Sixties.

The radicalism in the *Almanac* flowed from its writers’ apocalypticism. It is true that intellectual freedom-based beliefs about the need to equalize dovish ideologies with hawkish ideologies in libraries had helped open the door to radical activities for some LNAC members, and helped fend off attacks from the profession’s neutralist librarians about the ethics of LNAC’s activism. However, the driving force, the fiery energy, the main argument, the strongest impactor for the LNAC members was the realization that they were in a race to stop the apocalypse and that time was running out. The conviction that a continuation of the arms race would result in a nuclear war that would destroy libraries and the rest of the Earth provided the key motivation for abandoning the traditional neutrality mentality. This belief produced several corollaries. Among them were contentions that the constant fear of the impending apocalypse traumatized the nation’s youth, and that the government’s expenditures on building nuclear weapons wasted money by merely making the end of the world even more likely.

In addition to expressing a burning desire to stop Armageddon, the *Almanac* exuded a great deal of optimism and feelings of political efficacy that galvanized radical activism. LNAC members’ confidence in their abilities as information professionals to fuel political discourse about nuclear issues, and the hope they had that the American people would stop the arms race if presented with the facts, gave the LNAC librarians the endurance they needed to run the race against the militarists who had such a huge head start on them.

Traditionalist and Sixties librarians debated about the value and ethics of neutrality as a professional ideal, with the newer librarians making some qualifications to the doctrine of impartiality. As a professional ethos,
traditionalist librarians believed in protecting intellectual freedom by building balanced collections, encompassing all points of view in services, and espousing a neutral, passive professional agenda. Socially responsible librarians of the Sixties countered that librarians could not really stay neutral, because to do so was to vote for the prevailing ideology, and librarians made value-based decisions each day about what to add or discard from their collections. Accordingly, these reformers contended that librarians should express socially responsible viewpoints in their selection of books, films, and program ideas as well as by speaking out as librarians in political venues. Ensuring intellectual freedom for these new socially responsible librarians meant adding works to a collection to balance it out against mainstream ideology and give voices to the oppressed, as well as rejecting books that argued for bigotry, evil, and the denial of the freedom of other people’s rights to express themselves. These points provided some stepping stones to radicalism.

While taking some steps towards radicalism on the points made by the Sixties librarians, LNAC librarians of the Eighties made their huge leap from neutralism to radicalism by pointing out that debates about intellectual freedom and neutrality had little meaning if libraries and their societies were destroyed. Their appeals mainly stemmed from their responsibility to take proactive political steps to prevent the destruction of library information, and more importantly, the people who used it.

The Almanac’s creators thus believed that their drive to stop the apocalypse gave them a very strong justification for a one-sided presentation of their issue; toward anti-nuclear radicalism. In their defenses against neutralist critics, the writers of the Almanac sometimes resorted to some of the same intellectual freedom arguments for activism that Sixties librarians had used, which still hinged on attempts to ensure adequate representation of all valid points of view in a library. However, most LNAC members became even more extreme in their thinking, going further in taking a stand and choosing not to worry about representing both sides of the story. The Almanac shows that they consistently chose to only focus on one angle: that of peace. And peace to them meant disarmament.

The LNAC librarians had a trump card that in their mind shattered any counter-argument by neutralists and made debates about objectivity moot—the world would probably end if librarians did not convert to anti-nuclear ideologies. Apocalyptic prophecies gave activist librarians an urgency and justification for radicalism never before seen in the profession. While librarians through the ages had sought to ward off direct threats to their collections, few had faced the kind of global threat that librarians of the Eighties faced, and the extreme nature of this threat sparked LNAC’s high degree of radicalism. The stakes had gotten higher for librarians and humanity as a whole in the Eighties than ever before. The Almanac conveys the frenzy and fervor LNAC members
felt about the nuclear issue, the explosive energies in their hearts that helped to break down the wall of neutrality. In ways never seen before in the library profession, LNAC launched a preemptive strike to change government policies, and advocated radical and detailed changes to everything from diplomacy to federal spending. Librarians of the past sometimes took political positions against the direct threats to collections posed by censorship, but this group of courageous men and women took it one step further and demanded that we the people needed to be protected from the ultimate censorship: the complete annihilation of all known information.

The argument that the *Almanac*’s writers developed—that protection of books and people beats out neutrality as the main professional ideal for librarians—provided a clear justification for radicalism in what was one of America’s most politically neutral professions. The *Almanac*’s editors noted in 1985 that:

> Society looks to librarians as specially trained professionals who provide information necessary for the common good. Our profession is beginning to realize the necessity of taking a stand on the issue which has the potential of destroying all civilization.\(^92\)

This statement encapsulates the reasoning behind LNAC’s jump from neutrality to radicalism. Librarians had a higher duty than staying neutral; they had a responsibility to spread information for the common good and uphold civilization.

In placing the *Almanac* within the general history of American activism, LNAC had forged a fairly unique brand of radical activism. They were radicals in the classic sense who participated in protests and gave speeches, but they also functioned as *propaganda publicizers* who made the biggest impact for their cause by collecting and promoting books, periodicals, films, and other informational materials that the other anti-nuclear groups of the Eighties needed. LNAC’s important, behind-the-scenes work in arming these groups for peace work is hard to measure, inestimable in its impact. Lawyers, physicians, teachers, professors, scientists, journalists, politicians, and others who fought for disarmament no doubt turned to libraries for information many times to help build their arguments, especially in the pre-internet age. Thanks to LNAC and its allies, libraries could do a more effective job of supplying materials relevant to these other groups’ peace efforts.

LNAC’s collecting crusades also helped generate general public awareness of the nuclear issue. Librarians were not experts on every political issue, nor did they have the perfect solutions to all social ills. However, as propaganda publicizers, LNAC librarians could catalyze constructive thinking about solutions by offering the public accurate reports about nuclear technologies and
budgets as well as alternative literature published by peace groups to the public. By the end of the 1980’s, there were over half a billion library visits per year in the United States.93 Thus, any library collections or peace exhibits could reach large percentages of the American population.

In their final letter in February 1990 to all members, LNAC’s Board of Directors articulated that with the end of the Cold War and the de-escalation of the nuclear build-up on both sides, LNAC had completed its mission and the organization would be simplifying and would cease publication of the *Almanac*, vividly ending the letter with “we may all be happy about recent positive progress in arms control and proud of the small part that LNAC has played in these positive events.”94

LNAC should be commemorated for its own sake, and for establishing a precedent for activism among today’s librarians. The *Almanac* reveals that LNAC’s librarians took a true grassroots movement and turned it into an organization that was poised to make a difference; it had the ability and wherewithal to take a stand and make a change. LNAC’s members conclusively demonstrated that librarians could take on the mantle of radical crusaders, engage in individual and collective activism, and overcome their neutrality mentality. In doing so, the members helped to refute the neutral notion of the librarian who remains behind stacks of books in a quiet library aloof from external political debates. It can easily be said that the Sixties librarians cleared the path for the profession’s move away from neutrality and towards political participation but the LNAC librarians paved the way with their endurance and fierce commitment to their mission of stopping the apocalypse.

**NOTES**


3 *Almanac* 1, no. 1 (Spring 1984): 1. In subsequent citations to the *Almanac*, author names will be given when listed; unsigned articles will start with the titles.

5 Ibid., 226.


29 Musmann, Almanac 1, no. 1 (Spring 1984): 3.
32 Musmann, Almanac 1, no. 1 (Spring 1984): 3.
34 “ALA, Spurred by LNAC Member, Joins Citizens vs. Nuclear War,” Almanac 1, no. 3 (Fall 1984): 1.
37 Almanac 1, no. 4 (Winter 1984): 2.
40 “MiniBib on Kinds and Nukes,” Almanac 1, no. 2 (Summer 1984): 3.
43 Ibid., 6.
47 “This Poster and 15 Others Showing Nuclear War,” Almanac 1, no. 1 (Spring 1984): 5.
52 Almanac 1, no. 1 (Spring 1984): 1.
53 Almanac 1, no. 2 (Summer 1985): 3.
55 Almanac 2, no. 2 (Summer 1985): 10.
56 Almanac 4, no. 2 (Summer 1987): 2.
57 Almanac 1, no. 3 (Fall 1984): 6.
59 Almanac 1, no. 4 (Winter 1984): 12.
60 Almanac 5, no. 3 (Fall 1988): 6.
61 Almanac 2, no. 3&4 (Fall/Winter 1985): 5.
64 “Checking Out the Chapters: Los Angeles West,” Almanac 3, no. 2 (Summer 1986): 6.
65 “LNAC President Arrested,” Almanac 4, no. 2 (Summer 1987): 2.
68 Ibid.
69 Ibid.
70 Musmann, “LNAC President Speaks for Freeze Resolution at CLA,” Almanac 1, no. 1 (Spring 1984): 3.
71 Almanac 1, no. 4 (Winter 1984): 2, 4.
72 Ibid.
73 Musmann, “A Call for Professional Involvement,” Almanac 2, no. 2 (Summer 1985): 1.
74 “New Library Subject Heading Reflects Growing Concern,” Almanac 1, no. 2 (Summer 1984): 1.
81 “Test Ban Background Notes,” Almanac 3, no. 1 (Spring 1986): 5.
82 Ibid.
86 “Peace: Controversial in Libraries?,” *Almanac* 3, no. 2 (Summer 1986): 1, 2.
89 Patricia Case, “Librarians Should be Controversial,” *Almanac* 1, no. 3 (Fall 1984): 2.
94 LNAC’s Board of Directors to LNAC Members and Friends, February 1990, included in the microfilm reproduction of the *Almanac* after the Summer 1989 issue.
Introduction: U.S. Activism Around Palestinian Issues

The need for actions around Israel/Palestine is as current today as ever. In the light of Israel’s latest massive attack on Gaza in the summer of 2014 and recent Israeli elections, this is an important moment to reexamine the ALA and IFLA history around the situation in Israel/Palestine. As media activist and author Bob McChesney says, the mainstream media rarely discusses issues unless the Democrats and Republicans weigh in. The Israeli electorate’s continuing and increasing turn to the hard right has now provoked a very public argument between President Obama and Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu, as well as the U.S. Democratic Party and the State of Israel. Netanyahu’s election eve statement declaring an end to his nominal support for a two-state solution and his racist words against a large voting turnout by Arab citizens of Israel have blown whatever was left of the polite veneer over the brutal policies already in-place. All of a sudden the mainstream media is actually discussing the relationship between the United States and Israel. This public debate will certainly have effects within the U.S. and Israeli publics, and likely help educate many more people about the brutal effects of the Israeli policies in the Occupied Territories of the West Bank, Gaza, and East Jerusalem. And ALA Council normally follows U.S. public opinion.

In addition, the current controversy adds to a very real shift of U.S. public opinion toward Israel over the last twenty years or so, especially within the U.S. Jewish community. The rise of the lobbying groups, Jewish Voice for Peace in
1996 and J Street in 2008 (‘‘Pro-Israel and Pro-Peace’’), are a good indication of this shift.

Librarians have pressed ALA to confront Israeli government censorship and the destruction of Palestinian libraries and culture since 1984. Organizing around Israel/Palestine issues has always been tough for U.S. progressives. There is perhaps no more difficult foreign policy topic due to the very close political, military, and economic alliance between the U.S. and Israeli governments and their connections with transnational corporations. This results in a U.S. mainstream media perspective that historically has nearly always parroted the U.S. government. Further, memories of the Holocaust still permeate public opinion, and there is a powerful Israel lobby consisting of both Jewish and Christian evangelical Zionists, who have their established and influential lobbying arms, such as the American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC), the Anti-Defamation League (ADL), B’nai B’rith, Hadassah Women’s Zionist Organization of America, and Christians United for Israel. Israel is often characterized as the only democracy in a “sea of Arab dictatorships.” As a result, note that current fallout from the Israeli elections has so far had zero effect on U.S. military and economic aid to Israel.

Some have asked SRRT over the years why it has concentrated on specific countries, especially Israel. The logic is very simple, as taxpayers our money is funding wars and atrocities. We therefore have a direct connection to these policies. The hope is that if a grassroots movement could mobilize enough support, it might be possible to change U.S. policies. From 1949 to 2013, the U.S. government has given more than $130 billion in direct aid to Israel, and has spent about $3 trillion on the Israel-Palestine conflict (through 2002). This is more than four times the cost of the Viet Nam War.

And there are more reasons to focus on Israel/Palestine, including a close parallel with South Africa. Depending on how one counts, the 1967 Israeli occupation of the Palestinian territories is either the longest or second longest current occupation of another people’s land. The occupation is also noteworthy because of Israel’s attempt to destroy much of the people’s culture and history, many even going so far as to argue that Palestinians are not even a separate people. And although mainstream U.S. opinion-makers try to debunk the term, Israel has indeed established a kind of apartheid regime in the West Bank, with separate roads and amenities for Israelis and Palestinians.

Progressive librarians organized through the Social Responsibilities Round Table (SRRT) and the Progressive Librarians Guild (PLG) have faced the same obstacles as other progressives who have tried to lobby for a U.S. policy based on justice and respect for all who live in Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories. Progressive librarians have had only fleeting success in organizing around ALA’s core principle of freedom of expression, and faced a coordinated national backlash from the Israel lobby as described below.
The Censorship Situation from the 1930s to the 1980s

The first ALA controversies around Israel/Palestine addressed censorship. In 1991, the American Library Association published in coordination with Article 19, the International Centre on Censorship, an annual report titled Information Freedom and Censorship. The eight-page section on “Israel and the Occupied Territories” described that year’s stringent actions within Israel and its brutal military rule of the West Bank and Gaza. For Israel itself, the report noted that censorship is based on the Press Ordinance of 1933, with “draconian powers of censorship.” Permits were required to publish, which could be suspended or withdrawn at any time, and pre-publication censorship was authorized. The Israeli Hebrew press formed an Editors’ Committee in 1948 for the purpose of self-censorship. Radio and television had “consensual censorship.” Even a Hebrew song was banned in 1991. There were increasingly harsh measures for covering the Intifada. Many Israeli Hebrew journalists were arrested, imprisoned, beaten by soldiers, and ordered dismissed from their jobs that year. Joint Israeli-Palestinian enterprises were especially targeted. Several journalists also resigned in the face of these restrictions. Israel also tried to prevent publication of a book about Mossad, its intelligence agency, in Canada and the U.S.

In 1991, Gaza and the West Bank were under the rule of the Israeli military. Many major Palestinian publications were based in East Jerusalem, which was technically considered within Israel (annexed in 1967), but were treated much more harshly than Israeli publications. Censorship had increased since the 1987 Intifada. Six Palestinian press offices were closed that year. It had become difficult to get a license to publish, and the possession of an unlicensed publication could result in heavy fines and imprisonment. Palestinian journalists estimated that 60 percent of their original material was partially or totally cut by the prepublication censor. In addition, fax machines were banned in Gaza from 1987 to 1989 and phone lines were frequently cut. About 10,000 books were banned. About 30 percent of the members of the Palestinian journalists association had been detained or put under administrative restrictions. Fifty-six Palestinian journalists were deported from 1987 to 1991, and some had been fired upon in their homes. In addition, more than fifty Palestinian writers and poets had been detained, and many were prohibited from entering East Jerusalem. Since the Intifada, Israel had used collective punishment to close universities and educational institutions; 35,000 students were affected. In response, Palestinians organized Popular Education Committees but the Israeli authorities labeled them “cells of illegal teaching.” There were about 150 “incidents” against foreign journalists by the Israeli authorities in the Occupied Territories from 1987 to 1991, including physical attacks, short-term detentions, blacklisting, and confiscation of equipment.
ALA Response to Censorship in Israel/Palestine

Although ALA Council first addressed censorship in Israel/Palestine in 1984, this action was based on the adoption of the policy on Freedom of Expression for Foreign Nationals at the 1974 Annual Conference in New York City. This preceding resolution was jointly sponsored by the Council’s Intellectual Freedom (IFC) and International Relations Committees (IRC). The policy was based on Article 19 of the United Nations’ Universal Declaration of Human Rights:

Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to see, receive, and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers.\(^8\)

This policy was adopted to regularize such concerns after approving resolutions put forward by the Intellectual Freedom Committee at the ALA Midwinter meeting on January 25, 1974, dealing with suppression of Portuguese poems, harassment of Soviet author Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn, and the burning of books in Chile.\(^9\)

ALA Council first addressed Israel/Palestine only tangentially when it reaffirmed the 1974 policy on Freedom of Expression of Foreign Nationals in 1984.\(^10\) This resolution only mentioned the Occupied Territories in a whereas clause, not a resolved clause. As opposed to resolved clauses, whereas clauses are normally used for background information and do not require any official actions. Since only the resolved clauses are codified, this language disappeared from view. That clause stated that concerning the “occupied area of the West Bank of the Jordan” the IFC and the IRC had been “…unable to ascertain the details of such constraints, but are convinced that there must be some inequity…”

It was later disclosed that the 1984 resolution was motivated by an inquiry from a “Chicago-area librarian.”\(^11\) This turned out to be David Williams, who was to play a key role in the forthcoming debates. The early 1990s struggles within ALA were foreshadowed by a prelude at the Chicago Public Library (CPL). In 1989, David Williams, CPL Middle East Bibliographer, developed a scholarly bibliography on the Palestine and Israel conflict. The virulence of the U.S. Zionist lobby first appeared in the library world when the Anti-Defamation League (ADL) told CPL’s head librarian, Samuel Morrison, that the bibliography was biased. Morrison investigated and found nothing wrong with it. But the ADL with the help of the Jewish Community Relations Council persisted with a campaign to the CPL administration and Board. They produced a 19-page criticism of the bibliography. Morrison then sent the bibliography to
four branch library heads for review. Again, they found nothing wrong, but two of them suggested adding a few more Zionist titles.

The ADL then intensified its campaign with letters to aldermen in Jewish neighborhoods. By January 1990, Morrison offered a compromise, that he would update the bibliography. The ADL then demanded including 38 specific pro-Zionist titles and prohibiting Williams from working on this and future reading lists. By mid-January, the CPL gave up and agreed to include 30 titles selected by the ADL. But the ADL’s tactics became public in a column by Dennis Byrne in the *Chicago Sun-Times*. The public, including many educators and librarians, responded with numerous letters condemning the ADL, and finally the ADL let the matter drop. Although the profession was able to defend itself in this initial local campaign, the struggle was soon to hit the national stage.

David Williams again brought the issues around censorship in Israel and Palestine to ALA at the January 1990 ALA Midwinter Meeting. This resulted in the formation of an ALA International Relations Committee (IRC) Subcommittee on Alleged Banning of Palestinian and Arab Books and Journals in the Israeli Occupied Territories. By May the subcommittee reported that the documentation submitted was biased and did not take into account the unique historical circumstances of Israel. But this finding was just a way for the Subcommittee to avoid the issues. The documentation supplied was indeed reputable, as was demonstrated by the 1991 Article 19 report published that year by ALA itself as noted above!

The SRRT International Human Rights Task Force, Progressive Librarians Guild (PLG) and other groups held a forum at DePaul University in Chicago in conjunction with the 1990 ALA Annual Conference, and the SRRT Action Council passed a resolution calling on Israel “to abide by universally recognized norms of intellectual freedom and human rights.” The ALA International Relations Committee (IRC) was not satisfied with its Subcommittee’s report and established a second subcommittee to investigate the issues. The International Relations Round Table and ACRL Asian and African Section also put these issues on their agendas.

To further discuss the issues, the 1991 SRRT International Human Rights Task Force (IHRTF) program in Atlanta featured Josepha Pick, an Israeli Jewish lawyer, librarian, and human rights activist. SRRT Action Council’s resolution condemning censorship and library closings in the Occupied Territories was considered by the IRC, which is a committee of the ALA Council. The IRC watered it down and presented their version to the Council. It was then further weakened in the Council debate. The Council rendered the resolution meaningless by even removing the term “Occupied Territories,” which some considered “Israel bashing.” In its final form, it became a bland resolution against censorship and library closures in the Middle East with very little
effect. In an “On My Mind” column for American Libraries, Zoia Horn asked, “Why doesn’t ALA treat Israeli censorship in the same way it treats that of other nations?” and “The evasion within ALA of an open discussion of the issue of Israeli censorship practices in the Occupied Territories should end.” In order to promote more dialog and fact-finding, library historian Don Davis offered to lead a SRRT travel seminar to Israel and the Occupied Territories for October 1992, but the idea never came to fruition.

The 1992 IHRTF program in San Francisco was titled “Twenty-Five Years of Military Occupation: Intellectual Freedom Cases Arising Out of the Palestinian/Israeli Conflict.” The speakers were Michal Schwarz who was arrested when her leftist newspaper (Challenge) was closed by the Israeli government; Khader Hamide, a Palestinian living in the U.S. who was one of the “LA Eight” and jailed for being affiliated with the Palestine liberation movement; and Ghazi Falah, a geographer whose library card was revoked at Haifa University when his work was questioned based on his politics. As with previous Task Force programs, the Israeli Consulate and the Anti-Defamation League were invited to speak but declined. However, Dror Greenfield of Geffen Publishing in Jerusalem defended the Israeli government from the floor. The meeting was marred by attempts at disruption, including a fire alarm, however the program was successful. It went an extra hour until 11 pm, and was covered by all the main library journals.

SRRT’s efforts paid off. Wide majorities at the packed ALA Membership Meeting and then the ALA Council passed SRRT’s 1992 resolutions on Israeli Censorship and support for deported West Bank librarian Omar al-Safi! The general resolution read:

Resolved, That the ALA calls upon the government of Israel to end all censorship and human rights violations in the Occupied West Bank and Gaza and in Israel itself, and, be it further
Resolved, That the ALA encourages representatives of the Israeli and Palestinian people in the quest for a peaceful and just solution to their conflict; and, be it further
Resolved, That ALA encourages its members to develop ways to support librarians, journalists, educators and others working for peace, human rights and freedom of information and expression in the Middle East and that the International Relations Committee (IRC) be asked to develop strategies towards these ends; and be it further
Resolved, That copies of this resolution be sent to the Israeli government, U.S. State Department, the United Nations, the Article 19 organization, International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA), and the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO).
SRRT Tensions, the Backlash, and ALA Council’s Reversal

It is not surprising that SRRT did not take on these issues until 1990. There are at least three reasons: U.S. popular support for a Jewish homeland due to the atrocities of the Holocaust, U.S. government massive military/economic/political support for all Israeli governments, and U.S. mainstream media’s continuous influential lockstep ideological support for U.S. government positions on Israel/Palestine. It has been nearly impossible to get a hearing for alternative viewpoints in mainstream American venues. And without David Williams’ persistence, it is unlikely that the SRRT Action Council would have addressed these issues for many more years. Given SRRT’s core values and such terrible injustice, it was impossible to refuse engagement when Williams challenged the Action Council to respond. Even so, a number of Action Councilors undertook the struggle with a heavy heart aware that they were confronting extremely powerful forces. Others were more optimistic.

Tensions within the SRRT Action Council and its International Human Rights Task Force (IHRTF) were also brewing. Although there were a number of Jewish librarians working on the issue (especially Sandy Berman, Mark Rosenzweig, and Al Kagan), one or two Jewish SRRT activists were very uncomfortable in dealing with Israel from the beginning of the campaign. As time went on, David William’s leadership also became a critical issue. In order to try to reduce internal tensions within the IHRTF, the SRRT Action Council tentatively approved the creation of a new specific Task Force on Israeli Censorship and Palestinian Libraries, which was formalized at the 1993 Midwinter Meeting. 23

SRRT’s victory in passing the 1992 resolution through the ALA Council was immediately under attack. Nancy John, chair of the International Relations Committee, issued a summary for the ALA Executive Board of the IRC’s Fall Orientation/Planning Meeting of October 17, 1992. Most of the report concerned the above resolution. In her report, she described it as “fundamentally flawed” and “inflammatory.” She complained that directly addressing foreign governments could possibly be “dangerous” for the Association, and she was upset about what she somehow considered lack of IRC input. Most pointedly, she called for rescinding the resolution and drafting a new one to replace it. 24

In addition, ALA’s attorney remarked that the resolution was close to being “sedition.”25 In response, David Williams issued a statement at the Midwinter 1993 Meeting in Denver on behalf of the International Human Rights Task Force urging the ALA Council against following the IRC’s proposal.26 The IRC then moved and Council approved an “amendment” to the previous resolution referring it back to the IRC for study and recommendations and advising all parties noted in the last resolved clause that the resolution was under review.27
SRRT’s victory was short-lived. The Anti-Defamation League, Hadassah, and other groups counter-organized in a big way. SRRT Coordinator Stephen Stillwell noted ADL intimidation tactics at the 1993 Midwinter Meeting in Denver; an ADL representative took hold of his conference badge pinned to his jacket to copy down his name and affiliation. Others had the same experience. Williams alleged that the ALA Office gave free guest registration to ADL representatives to pack the meetings. Helen S. Kohlman, lawyer, library trustee, and head of the 1000-member New Orleans Hadassah chapter held a cocktail party at her home with ALA officials just before the 1993 Annual Conference. More than 1500 people flooded the ALA Membership Meeting in New Orleans on June 28, 1993. The ALA Membership Meeting voted to overturn the resolution, and this motion was then automatically forwarded to the Council. This organized backlash succeeded; it was a rare instance of the Council revoking its previous resolution.

Further, there was open talk about abolishing SRRT. ALA President Marilyn Miller summoned SRRT Coordinator Stephen Stillwell to a private meeting in that regard. And Stillwell and Task Force Chair David Williams were summoned to the ALA Executive Board. Although not an ALA Councilor, this author as a SRRT Action Councilor was allowed to defend SRRT at an ALA Council Meeting, and pleaded to let SRRT attend to its own task forces. ALA president Marilyn Miller then created a special “fact-finding” “Task Force on the Conduct of ALA Meetings and ALA Values” to investigate the SRRT Task Force on Israeli Censorship and Palestinian Libraries. Councilor Herb Biblo called the creation of the presidential task force a witch-hunt, and Norman Horrocks pointed out that parent bodies were responsible for their own subunits according to ALA policy. When the Council did not support Miller’s action, she disbanded her task force.

David Williams and SRRT Internal Dynamics

As IHRTF chair, David Williams initially seemed amiable and responsible. But as time went on, Williams became confrontational and inflammatory, even with SRRT supporters, and his leadership became an overriding issue. These tensions escalated and were detailed in Williams’ 1992 report, where he complained about criticism from Al Kagan, Sandy Berman, and Nancy Gruber. Note that as secular Jews, Kagan and Berman had fully supported the campaign.

Correspondence between Williams and Action Council members during the rest of 1992 and spring 1993 were heated. He was urged not to chair the new Task Force on Israeli Censorship and Palestinian Libraries, but refused to withdraw. SRRT Coordinator Stephen Stillwell admonished him for personal attacks on himself and other Action Council members (including this author).
Williams was also severely criticized for issuing statements that appeared to represent ALA as an organization, rather than only the IHRTF or the SRRT Action Council.37

Sandy Berman sent an open letter on December 30, 1993. He wrote that, “David Williams should be applauded for raising and doggedly pursuing the issue of Israeli censorship. However, the applause ends there.” He explained that, “...Williams repeatedly practiced deceit, manipulation, abuse, and scapegoating,” and that he was “...almost unaccountable to the Task Force membership.” Berman noted that the Task Force, “...admonished him to temper his language and stop his ad hominem, vindictive attacks against adversaries.” Berman wrote that Williams was “committed to an ‘end-justifies-the-means’ brand of politics,” and “...while Williams may not himself be an anti-Semite, he certainly sounds like one...”

The SRRT Action Council refused to approve the Task Force’s 1994 budget request of $1900, and requested the Task Force members to vote on whether to retain Williams as their coordinator. However he was subsequently re-elected.38 Mark Rosenzweig observed that Williams was now obsessed with trying to thoroughly discredit SRRT as agents of Israeli censorship. Williams stated that he wanted SRRT to be dissolved so that a grassroots alternative could take its place.39 Action Council responded to Williams’ conduct by censuring Williams at the 1994 Annual Meeting, and prohibited him from holding any SRRT office for three years because of personal attacks and undermining SRRT’s ideals and goals.40 The Task Force on Israeli Censorship and Palestinian Libraries was disbanded.41 These actions placated the ALA Executive Board and ALA Council, but SRRT suffered for many years from the bitterness caused by this campaign.42

Addressing injustices in Israel/Palestine is incredibly difficult in the U.S., and calls for a reasoned approached. SRRT was forced to remove Williams from the leadership because of his obnoxious behavior, not the merits of the campaign.43 As Sandy Berman described, it “…provoked amazement, discomfort, anger, and explicit charges of anti-Semitism.”44 SRRT was right on the issues, and even reaffirmed its stand with another resolution in June 1993. SRRT also tried to rebut the claim that it was “singling out Israel” by putting forward a resolution on Egyptian censorship, but the ALA Membership Meeting defeated this effort.45

Aid to Libraries, Reconstruction, and Reading in the 1990s and 2000s

After the censure of Williams, SRRT activities turned from censorship to trying to provide material aid and reconstruction assistance to Palestinian libraries. In 1994, the SRRT International Responsibilities Task Force supported a book drive led by Margo Brault at the Louisiana State University Library for
a health sciences library in Gaza. Elaine Harger was the SRRT contact. Brault subsequently reported that the Library was pleased to receive several boxes of useful books. In November 1997, under the auspices of the Near East and South Asia Subcommittee of the IRC, Ravi N. Sharma (Library Director at West Virginia State College) and Ron Chepesiuk (Head of Special Collections at Winthrop University in South Carolina) met with President Yasser Arafat in Gaza on the PLO’s plan for a national library and the need for international assistance for Palestinian libraries. They presented a 102-page consultancy report to Arafat on April 13, 1998. Sharma took his aid proposal to the IRC, which endorsed it in a resolution for the ALA Council at the 1998 Annual Conference. The ACRL Asian, African and Middle East Section and the ACRL International Relations Committee also signed on. However the last Council meeting finished before getting to the item.

In September 1998, Margo Brault again contacted Elaine Harger about supporting the Gaza Health Sciences Library campaign. The SRRT Action Council endorsed Sharma’s 1998 aid proposal as represented in the IRC resolution at its meeting on February 1, 1999. However, this author could not find any documentation that the matter came back to the ALA Council at the Midwinter 1999 meeting.

In the spring of 2002, the so-called Israeli Defense Force again attacked the West Bank population and infrastructure. Under the pretense of hunting for militants and weapons, they killed several hundred people and severely damaged all of the Palestinian government ministries and other state structures, and most of the cultural institutions including libraries and NGO offices. They also destroyed thousands of homes, including more than 1000 in the Jenin Refugee Camp. Of particular note was damage to perhaps the most important Palestinian cultural institution, the Khalil Sakakini Cultural Center in Ramallah. There was systematic destruction of government records, including files on one million students as well as land claims and registration files. Palestinians charged Israel with trying to wipe out Palestinian history. The Palestinian Legislative Council meeting hall was destroyed as well as the compound of President Yasser Arafat. One of Palestine’s foremost poets, Zakaria Mohammed said, “Everything we have built up in the eight years after Oslo is now being destroyed.” Physical damage was estimated at $361 million. A summary document developed by Tom Twiss for the SRRT International Responsibilities Task Force (IRTF) noted damage or destruction of eleven nongovernmental archives and libraries and eighteen governmental libraries, archives, or files in government buildings.

Twiss developed several more documents for SRRT lobbying purposes. SRRT brought a “Resolution on the Destruction of Palestinian Libraries, Archives, and Other Cultural Resources” to the ALA Membership Meeting at the 2002 Annual Conference, however it could not be voted due to lack of a quorum. The resolution was endorsed by the Near East and South Asia
Subcommittee of the ALA International Relations Committee (IRC), but the full IRC completely reworked and watered it down to the point of meaninglessness when it struck all mention of Israel or ALA assistance. The ALA Council then deleted the resolved clause from the revision, which listed where the resolution should be distributed, and passed that version. Some Palestinian institutions, including Bethlehem University, applauded the strong SRRT resolution and weak ALA version including Bethlehem University. Although many in the U.S. saw the horror of these brutal attacks through US media coverage, there was predictable outrage from some Israeli and American Zionist commentators and institutions.

ALA’s Midwinter 2009 meeting took place just after another Israeli attack on Gaza, named Operation Cast Lead. At least two municipal libraries, and the libraries of the Islamic University and the Tal el-Hawa branch of the al-Aqsa University were severely damaged. And the Jawaharlal Nehru Library at al-Azhar University, donated by the Indian government, was also destroyed. The headquarters of the University Teacher Association-Palestine and a brand new Gaza Music School in the premises of the Palestinian Red Crescent Society were bombed, and a U.N. compound and a hospital were attacked with phosphorus explosives. At least 1400 Palestinians were killed and 6000 injured. This period saw the beginning of a movement for Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions (BDS) in the U.S. and Canada.

SRRT mobilized with two resolutions. Elaine Harger wrote one that would have established an ALA Gaza reading group to select a book to be discussed at the 2009 Annual Conference in Chicago. It was heavily defeated in the ALA Council. This author was shocked by the nastiness of the debate. One unthinking councilor actually claimed that SRRT was supporting Hamas! SRRT’s main resolution was on the connection between the recent Gaza conflict and libraries. It built on ALA’s 2002 resolution. It emphasized the massive death and destruction caused by U.S. weapons used by Israel, and called for the protection of libraries and archives in Gaza, and for the U.S. government to work for an immediate permanent ceasefire, and to work toward disarmament in the region. However, it was gutted by the IRC before coming to the Council. The Council then added the words “continue working” to completely change the meaning of the remaining resolved clause which was, “Calls on the U.S. government to work for a permanent peace in the region.” It now read, “Calls on the U.S. government to continue working for a permanent peace in the region,” as if the U.S. government was doing that all along!

At the July 2009 Annual Conference in Chicago, SRRT endorsed the Free Gaza Movement’s “Right to Read” Campaign. Nobel Prize Laureates Bishop Desmond Tutu and Mairead Maguire as well as Noam Chomsky had endorsed it. The international campaign was launched in partnership with Al-Aqsa University to challenge the Israeli blockade by using boats to deliver textbooks
Leaving from Turkey with a stop in Cyprus, the 6-ship Gaza Freedom Flotilla did not succeed in landing, but was brutally attacked on May 31, 2010 in international waters. Nine international activists were killed and several dozen injured. Israel claimed ten of its soldiers were injured, one seriously. This caused a major diplomatic break between Israel and Turkey.

**Divestment and the 2014 Massive Attack on Gaza Schools and Libraries**

SRRT bought two resolutions to ALA Council at the 2015 Midwinter Meeting in Chicago. Tom Twiss, co-coordinator of SRRT’s International Responsibilities Task Force, deserves the credit for thoroughly researching the matter, drafting both resolutions, and providing extensive source lists, mostly U.N. and newspaper reports, but also a report from the Gaza Ministry of Culture. SRRT’s Resolution on ALA Divestment from Caterpillar, Hewlett-Packard, and Motorola Solutions followed the Presbyterian Church USA’s recent divestment of these three corporations because of their involvement in the repression of the Occupied Palestinian Territories. This author questioned Rod Hersberger, the Senior Trustee for the ALA Endowment Fund, when he gave his report at the ALA Council/Executive Board/Membership Information Session. It was only then that we realized that ALA was no longer investing in individual stocks, but rather various kinds of mutual and other funds through their investment portfolios. Since this greatly complicates divestment, SRRT decided to withdraw the resolution until we get more specific information on how the Endowment Fund is structured. While withdrawing the resolution on the Council floor, this author asked for that specific information. We were assured by Keith Brown, ALA Senior Financial Analyst, that this was doable, but all we eventually got from Rod Hersberger was a May 2015 Powerpoint presentation that gave the barest possible information. The only significant thing we learned was that the top five portfolio holdings did not include any fossil fuel corporations! (It is amazing that they could not even keep the two divestment proposals straight. SRRT had put forward a membership resolution in 2013 concerning divestment of stocks in “the filthy fifteen,” but that resolution also failed.) Since Keith Brown has now left ALA, we have opened communications with Mark Leon, ALA’s new Chief Financial Officer.

The Resolution on the Destruction of Libraries and Schools in Gaza in 2014 became the most contentious item at the 2015 Midwinter Meeting. A propaganda campaign that appears to have started with the Association of Jewish Libraries began as soon as we posted both resolutions to the SRRT listserv during the week before Midwinter. This resolution noted past resolutions and detailed either the damage to or the complete destruction of about 270 libraries and 399 schools and kindergartens. Further it explained that many of these U.N. schools were being used to house displaced families, and although the U.N.
gave the locations numerous times to the Israeli military, they were still heavily bombed killing and severely injuring many civilians. The resolution deplored this destruction, called for protection of the libraries and cultural resources of Gaza and support for the U.S. Committee of the Blue Shield in upholding the 1954 Hague Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict, and called on the U.S. government and other governments, IGOs, and NGOs to help in the reconstruction of these libraries and schools.

It was interesting and frustrating to see how the mood shifted from day to day. Our vocal opponents appeared at both SRRT Action Council meetings, both Council Forums, and the IRC meeting. Councilors were at first noncommittal and asked many questions at the first Council Forum, an informal venue for just this purpose. We were able to answer almost all of the questions and revised the resolution adding some of the requested information. But the hostile IRC completely changed the mood. The two main complaints were that the situation in the Middle East is too complicated for ALA to engage and that the resolution was unbalanced in that Israel was also under attack from rockets fired from Gaza. A number of people spoke against the resolution on the Council floor because they said it singled out Israel, and that there were many other countries where libraries had recently been destroyed. Further they complained that it did not detail attacks on Israeli libraries and schools. However, the situation is not “balanced” on the ground and therefore the resolution could not be balanced. After some research, we have found only a very few cases of attacks on Israeli libraries and schools, and only one in 2014.

One councilor tried to add an amendment deploring the placement of weapons in libraries and schools that made them viable military targets, but this was narrowly defeated. We told the Council that we had no objection to that amendment. One of the arguments against us was that the U.N. had documented three Gaza schools that were used in this way. Our opponents claimed that there were many more. After some debate, only about 14 councilors voted for the resolution. Considering that SRRT had been partially successful in previous years with similar resolutions that were watered down but passed by the ALA Council, it might be useful to consider why this recent effort was a complete failure. The key role played by Hamas in governing Gaza might account for much of the problem. Hamas or its allies did place weapons in several schools, but more importantly our opponents cited the mostly ineffective but voluminous rockets fired indiscriminately at the civilian population in southern Israel. The Israeli government propaganda blitz in the U.S. highlighted these actions, and Hamas certainly got no traction in the U.S. mainstream media. Further, some councilors appeared to suspect that SRRT was actually backing Hamas rather than Gaza’s civilian population, libraries, and schools.

SRRT brought a revised and updated Gaza resolution to the 2015 Annual Conference in San Francisco. The revisions were based on several U.N.
reports that had recently been issued, especially the most comprehensive U.N. Gaza report that was issued just before the Annual Conference. The final total for schools and kindergartens damaged or destroyed was 536 (as opposed to 399 in the January resolution). We also included a whereas clause about the 3 vacant Gaza schools that were used to store weapons of which 2 were likely used for firing weapons, and another clause noting the fact that 3 Israeli schools were hit by rockets fired from Gaza, which resulted in damage to facilities but no fatalities. It seemed that these additions had no effect whatsoever. Although we again sent the resolution to the International Relations Committee before the conference, the IRC again took no action. Only a handful of councilors voted for the resolution on the Council floor.

The 2000 IFLA General Conference in Jerusalem

This article would be incomplete without some discussion of the 2000 Conference of the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA) in the contested city of Jerusalem, which was entirely occupied by Israel at the time of the meeting. The conference took place in West Jerusalem, which is almost entirely Jewish Israeli and with plenty of affluent neighborhoods. It is worth noting that the Israeli Organizing Committee did not comply with IFLA policies concerning inclusion and against discrimination. IFLA Headquarters asked the Organizing Committee to include representatives of the Palestinian library community in the planning and program, but the opposite occurred, and many librarians from the Global South were either refused entry to the country or had to endure long and difficult immigration and customs interrogations. For example, a funded West African speaker for the Regional Section on Africa was denied a visa. The Arab Federation for Libraries and Information announced a boycott of the Jerusalem conference and held a successful alternative conference at the same time in Cairo, and the National Conference of Palestinian Librarians called on UNESCO to safeguard the cultural identity of Jerusalem. It is also noteworthy that very few librarians from countries with large Muslim populations were in attendance. For example, there were no registrants from Iran, Malaysia, and Pakistan, and only one each from Bangladesh and Indonesia.

U.S. librarians are very prominent in IFLA, and hold many of the key committee and division chairs, as well as seats on the Governing Board. As the world’s largest library association by far, ALA pays the highest association dues. Two hundred and sixty-nine U.S. librarians registered for the conference. It is also the case that the U.S. always has one of the largest delegations not counting the host countries. (The Israeli delegation was 400.) In other words, ALA and U.S. librarians are very powerful in IFLA. Traditionally, the Western Europeans have allied with the U.S. and Canada to fundamentally control IFLA
business. It was therefore telling that these powerful players did not intervene to prevent the Israeli Organizing Committee from discriminating against Arab and Muslim majority countries. But on an even more basic level, one must ask the question, why would the IFLA Governing Board decide to hold a meeting in a contested city? Although the IFLA Executive Board claimed that the venue “…does not confer any particular recognition or status of the venue…,” the answer is clearly biased towards the government of Israel.

The Opening and Plenary Session featured an address by Shlomo Avineri, a former Director-General of Israel’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs. He welcomed the participants to the “unified capital of the State of Israel” thus explicitly promoting the politics of the State of Israel. (Note that he spoke in Hebrew instead of one of IFLA’s official languages, so those who did not understand the language and without headphones missed his remarks.) It was also bizarre that the session ended with Israeli peace songs. There was not one word of Arabic or any expression of another side to the story.

This situation was entirely predictable. Ross Shimmon, the IFLA Secretary General, stated that they only learned of the Arab boycott fifteen months before the meeting, but the Palestinians protested the venue four years before the conference. At the closing session, the IFLA President stated that the IFLA Executive Board dissociated itself from the political incidents during the conference claiming that they were beyond the control of the Israeli Organizing Committee. But of course, the Israeli Organizing Committee must have chosen the keynote speaker and could have advised him to speak in English. Although the Israeli Organizing Committee could obviously not control everything at the meeting, they were certainly responsible for major aspects of the program. The IFLA Executive Board’s statement rings hollow.

It may be that the IFLA leaders thought that the Middle East situation would significantly improve at the time they picked Jerusalem for the conference venue in 1995. If so, that was a very naïve failure of judgment. But going forward, it must have become clear that no such peace would emerge. The year before the conference was full of speculation as to whether or not the Palestinians would declare statehood or not in the face of all their frustrations. As we now know, the second Intifada erupted just after the close of the IFLA conference. At some point the IFLA leaders must have realized that they had a serious problem on their hands.

Following up on the conference, the IFLA Free Access to Information and Freedom of Expression Committee (FAIFE) promised to send a delegation to Israel and the West Bank to determine what more IFLA could do to ameliorate the situation. That delegation visit finally took place in April 2007, and the IFLA Governing Board accepted its recommendations. They included various kinds of assistance to libraries in the West Bank, a conference outside the region
to foster cooperation between the Israeli and Palestinian library communities, and publication of articles describing the effects of the occupation and second Intifada on the library situation in the West Bank. One of the recommendations called for a conference to be held in the Occupied Territories, and the International Conference on Libraries from a Human Rights Perspective was indeed held in Ramallah and East Jerusalem, March 31 to April 2, 2008.74

Conclusion

Very unfortunately, the campaign against Israeli censorship proved to be a major setback, which was used to discredit SRRT initiatives for many years. SRRT lost legitimacy in the eyes of many Councilors and other ALA members. Some ALA Councilors even talked about the need to abolish the Round Table, and the ALA President tried to convene a task force with that purpose in mind.

Further, grassroots and democratic decision-making within ALA was restricted when the Council voted that the ALA Membership Meeting quorum would rise from 200 to 1% of the entire membership (about 660 at that time). This made it impossible to hold an official meeting for many years. However, the meetings were still scheduled and took place, although no voting was allowed. These gatherings lacking a quorum became known as “chats.” SRRT of course lobbied against this change.75 The Membership Meetings were only restored in 2005, when the quorum was reduced to 75, but the bylaws were changed so that Membership Meetings could no longer override Council votes.76

In addition at the Midwinter 1994 Meeting, the Council adopted a policy written by its Committee on Organization (COO), stating that ALA is one association, “legally responsible for the actions of all its subunits.” And therefore if any subunit violated the “ALA Constitution, Bylaws, or Policies,” the Council could invoke sanctions up to the disestablishment of the unit. And that any individual who acted in such a way without the approval of the parent body could be suspended. This was later to become known as the “One Voice Policy.”77 However, SRRT has never accepted the legitimacy of this policy, and has indeed continued to send out its resolutions at various times.

In any case, there are lessons to be learned from our past organizing efforts. We were clearly not prepared for the massive national mobilization from the mainstream U.S. Zionist organizations in the early 1990s. SRRT was weakened by giving leadership to the wrong person, David Williams, who could not work within ALA or even SRRT structures. Williams’ actions made it easy for the backlash to focus on him and provided a convenient scapegoat for the forces of reaction. But SRRT’s task was nearly impossible in the face of such an organized counter-campaign. SRRT would not have been able to prevent the revocation of the resolution even if it had the most principled and impeccable leadership.
SRRT’s more recent Israel/Palestine struggles have resulted in watered down documents and our recent defeat with very little effect for ALA or government policy. We have so far had little success in changing the established paradigm within the ALA leadership and the Council, which has so far only parroted U.S. Government policy. We have had little evident impact on Israeli censorship or aid to libraries, archives, and schools. However, we have done the best we could within the established political context.

We have now faced an even more brutal attack on Gaza schools and libraries during the last summer, but the IRC did not even bother to amend what SRRT presented as it did in 2002 and 2009. ALA Council has abdicated its responsibility by taking no action whatsoever. It is obvious that unless there is a major change in world politics, we will see continuing attacks on Gaza in the future. However, it is also obvious that there is now more general opposition to U.S. policy towards Israel/Palestine within the U.S. population than ever before. The recent hard-right turn of the Netanyahu government and the Obama administration’s pushback will probably accelerate this trend. It seems that it is only a matter of time before these trends can bring significant effects, but this is a hard struggle, and it may take a long time to see real changes.

Al Kagan would like to thank, Elaine Harger, Carol Inskeep, Mark Rosenzweig, and Tom Twiss for their extensive comments and editorial advise on several drafts of this article.

NOTES

1 See also Noha Ismail, “Israeli Censorship in the Occupied Territories,” in Alternative Library Literature: a Biennial Anthology 1990/91 (Phoenix: Oryx, 1992), 79-83.
3 I intend to write another article on ALA and IFLA’s many actions around apartheid South Africa in the near future.
4 Western Sahara was a Spanish colony from the late 19th century to 1975 when Morocco and Mauritania took over after the Spanish withdrawal. Because of guerrilla warfare, Mauritania withdrew in 1979, leaving Morocco as the current colonial power with control of about two-thirds of the territory and the rest controlled by the Polisario Front and its guerrilla army.
5 For example, Noam Chomsky said, “To call it apartheid is a gift to Israel, at least if by ‘apartheid’ you mean South African-style apartheid. What’s happening in the
Occupied Territories is much worse. There’s a crucial difference. The South African Nationalists needed the black population. That was their workforce. ... The Israeli relationship to the Palestinians in the Occupied Territories is totally different. They just don’t want them. They want them out, or at least in prison.” See Democracy Now!, Aug. 8, 2014, http://www.democracynow.org/blog/2014/8/8/noam_chomsky_what_israel_is_doing


7 Pages 369-377.

8 “Policy on Abridgement of the Rights of Freedom of Expression of Foreign Nationals,” CD 57, July 12, 1974. It took ten more years to codify the policy in the ALA Policy Manual as ALA policy 58.3. When the ALA Policy Manual was recently reorganized, it became policy B6.2.2.

9 Documents 34 to 36, January 25, 1974.

10 CD 55, June 27, 1984.

11 Letter from Judith F. Krug, Director of ALA Office on Intellectual Freedom, to Stephen Karetcky, Associate Professor, San Jose State University, August 2, 1984, from this author’s personal files.


14 Speakers included the renowned exiled South African poet and activist Dennis Brutus, Dr. N. Aruri from the boards of Amnesty International and Middle East Watch, Professor Francis Boyle from the University of Illinois, and Mark Rosenzweig.

15 SRRT Newsletter, no. 96 (June 1990): 1-3.

16 Ibid., no. 97 (September 1992): 5-6.

17 The 1991 program was originally intended to be a debate, and was initially co-sponsored by the Intellectual Freedom Round Table, but when all the Jewish and Israeli officials refused to participate, the IFRT withdrew its support. See Sipapu, 21, no. 2 (1991): 6-12; and 23, no. 1 (1993): 2.

“Israel and Occupied Territories Travel Seminar Planned,” press release from the Graduate School of Library and Information Science, The University of Texas at Austin, April 25, 1992; “Intellectual and Academic Freedom in Israel & the Occupied Territories”, October 17-24, 1992, pamphlet. Both from the author’s personal files.


1991-92 CD#60. This author wishes to acknowledge David William’s commendation in his July 28, 1992 Task Force report for my “masterful job” of presenting the resolutions at the ALA Membership Meeting, from the author’s personal files.


“The Social Responsibilities Round Table Urges ALA Council not to Rescind or Alter the 1992 Resolutions on Israeli Censorship: Statement Adopted by SRRT Action Council, January 25, 1992 [sic 1993].” However, this statement was actually only adopted by the IHRTF, not the Action Council.

“International Relations Committee Report to ALA Council, Tuesday, January 26, 1993,” CD#25.2.


SRRT Newsletter, no. 109 (September 1993): 1, 7-9. For more discussion about the backlash against SRRT, see *Sipapu*, 23, no. 1 (1993): 3; 23; no. 2 (1993): 3-7, 10; and “Council, Executive Board, Membership Meeting Highlights – New Orleans, 1993,” *American Libraries* (July/August 1993): 618, 620. There was also a move in the ALA Executive Board to create another special task on the use of ALA’s name but it was opposed by newly elected Vice President/President-Elect Arthur Curley, and defeated.

Williams’ 1991 report to Action Council provoked much internal criticism. An example of this divisiveness includes a memo from Joseph Reilly to Sanford Berman,
Al Kagan, and Elaine Harger, July 23, 1991, where the author started by saying that he was strongly against doing dirty laundry in public. Another good example of William’s inflammatory style was his memo to Cynthia Johanson, SRRT Treasurer, July 12, 1991. From the author’s personal files.

“Summary Report of the Work of the International Human Rights Task Force at the Atlanta ALA Convention and Perspectives for 1992,” author’s personal files. In that report, Williams also discussed the newsletter of the Committee on Israeli Censorship, an organization that appeared to be entirely of his own invention.

Perhaps the most damning exchange was between David Williams and Sandy Berman. In William’s letter of October 28, 1992, he wrote, “I feel you have behaved in a highly unprincipled and reprehensible manner on this issue and toward me personally.” In Berman’s reply to 3 letters of February 1993, he stated that the first two were “highly insulting” and the third “highly flattering,” and that “it is nearly inconceivable that the same person could have written all 3.” He had not intended to reply but thought he now must do so. Berman wrote that Williams was untrustworthy and manipulative, and that he turned real and potential allies against him through his “inflammatory sectarian rhetoric and ad hominem attacks.” He said that Williams lacked elemental tact and civility. This author fully agrees with Berman’s remarks.

Williams replied on June 4th in a long and very convoluted letter admitting some of Berman’s points, including at times lacking tact and civility, making ad hominem attacks, and using sarcastic and hurtful rhetoric. From the author’s personal files.

Stillwell refused to acknowledge or debate the “insinuation” and “accusations.” He concluded with the understatement, “I am sure that I continue to speak for them [Action Council members] when I say that your attitude, behavior, and conduct do not make things easy.” Stephen J. Stillwell to David L. Williams, “Re: Your Letters of 3/26 and 4/24.” The letter was copied to all the members of the Action Council, from the author’s personal files. Immediately after the 1993 Annual Meeting, Williams wrote to this author stating that he was making a “political attack,” not a “personal attack.” He asked, “What ALA committee appointment will you be rewarded with, Al, for having accomplished this little piece of dirtywork? With your skills at twisting the truth and turning the victim into villain, you missed a great career in another epoch, say, that of one of Stalin’s prosecutors during the Moscow frame-up trails, or some similar enterprise... Kaganovich?!?”


Force on Israeli Censorship...”, April 7, 1994. All from the author’s personal files.

39 Williams phoned Mark Rosenzweig at 3 am on May 25, 1994, and called him a “Fucking Judenrat traitor.” Rosenzweig wrote that Williams did not pronounce the word “Judenrat” as in German as “yoodn-raht,” but as “jew-den-rat,” “...giving ‘fucking jew-den-rat traitor’ the sound of an anti-Semitic epithet, whatever else its disgusting implications might be.” The Judenrat were the Nazi-created Jewish administrative councils. His second and third calls were taken by Rosenzweig’s answering machine. Williams went further. He organized a program for the 1994 Annual Conference in New Orleans where Jeffery Blankfort discussed Zionist-Nazi collusion and the role of the Judenrat, which he connected to a discussion of the ADL in stifling the debate about Israel and the history of Zionism. Mark Rosenzweig to Al Kagan, May 25, 1994, and May 26, 1994. Rosenzweig’s email message documenting the phone calls was sent out with a censure resolution and Sandy Berman’s Open Letter to the Action Council before the 1994 Annual Conference. Emails from the author’s personal files; Adam Chandler, “Social Responsibilities Tackles Difficult Issues,” Cognotes (June 26, 1994): 9.

40 Stephen Stillwell wrote that “...members of the Action Council were repulsed by the necessity of this step, it was finally taken nearly unanimously.” SRRT Newsletter, no. 113 (September 1994): 1, 3-4; no. 117 (September 1995): 1.

41 Some members of the Task Force on Israeli Censorship and Palestinian Libraries lobbied to continue, but eventually the Action Council disbanded the Task Force and reestablished this work as a project group under the International Responsibilities Task Force. This brought these activities to an end. SRRT Newsletter, no. 110 (December 1993): 5; no. 112 (June 1994): 4-5; no. 113 (September 1994): 3; no. 114 (December 1994): 1.

42 The case of David Williams finally came to an end at the 1995 Annual Conference. Williams had appealed his censure to Norman Horrocks, ALA’s parliamentary expert. Horrocks advised that the censure would only become valid after being voted at a SRRT Membership Meeting. This action was taken. Stephen J. Stillwell, Jr. to David Williams, March 31, 1995; David L. Williams to Stephen Stillwell and Norman Horrocks, June 15, 1995; SRRT Newsletter, no. 117 (September 1995): 1. Williams continued his political work at the Chicago Public Library, hosting a series of speakers and leafleting an appearance of Elie Wiesel during the Library’s celebration of Wiesel’s book, Night, during the 2001 “One Book, One Chicago” program. He was transferred to the Bessie Coleman Branch in 2002 along with about two dozen other librarians during a “re-balancing” of the workforce. It appears that he was suspended in February 2003, and resigned in August 2004. He continues to be active in Palestine solidarity activities in Madison, Wisconsin. See “Chicago Mideast Librarian Suffers Retaliation for Doing His Job,” Electronic Intifada, November 15, 2002, http://electronicintifada.net/content/chicago-mideast-librarian-suffers-retaliation-doing-his-job/4206; Third Coast Press (August 2004), vol. 8, 7, http://www.thirdcoastpress.com/images/tcp_8aug04.pdf, accessed November 28, 2014.

43 Williams wrote 5 documents justifying his actions (the first 4 were not dated).
“Background to the Break Between Mark Rosenzweig and Myself,” “Point-by-Point Response to the Attack on Me and the ICPLTF,” “Wither the PLG?—Notes from a ‘Dangerous Man,’” “The Origins & Meaning of the Kagan/Berman/Rosenzweig Vendetta,” and “SRRT Action Council Save the ALA from David Williams,” July 1994. All from the author’s personal files.


45 *SRRT Newsletter*, no. 109 (September 1993): 1-2, 7-9; Robert I. Friedman, “The Jewish Thought Police: How the Anti-Defamation League Censors Books, Intimidates Librarians, and Spies on Citizens,” *The Village Voice* (July 27, 1993): 33-39. ALA received 156 letters on the issue (although 9 were duplicates). The Executive Board promised SRRT Coordinator Stephen Stillwell the chance to see the letters, but only 68 were made available. Only eleven of these were clearly ALA members. 21 charged anti-Semitism. The full analysis is in *SRRT Newsletter*, no. 111 (March 1994): 6. Note that Egypt was the second largest recipient of U.S. aid at the time.


Work in Palestine,” unpublished, from the author’s personal files.

MMD#5, moved by Tom Twiss and seconded by Peter McDonald.


_Resolution on the Connection Between the Recent Gaza Conflict and Libraries,_

_SRRT Newsletter_, no. 168 (September 2009): online in Minutes of SRRT Action Council Meeting I.


This section is derived from the author’s personal experience at the 2015 Chicago Midwinter Meeting and the San Francisco Annual Conference. See also “Librarians Turn Page on Israel Motion,” _Chicago Jewish Star_, 6-19 February 2015, 1, 4.

2014-2015 ALA CD#34.


2014-2015 ALA CD# 40 rev. Although the IRC received the full resolution, for some unknown reason several clauses were left off the document that went to the ALA Council. The following were unfortunately omitted: Whereas according to the United Nations Human Rights Commission, 3 Gaza universities were hit directly and 8 others received collateral damage; Whereas some Palestinian armed groups conducted military operations in the vicinity of UNRWA schools; Whereas the Israeli Defense Forces used the Beit Hanoun elementary school in Gaza for military purposes; Whereas a rocket likely fired from Gaza severely injured one person at the Eshol kindergarten in Israel. And the final words were left off the clause on kindergartens which noted that 11 were destroyed.


Much from this section comes from the author’s personal notes.


His short biography was published in IFLA Express.


Stuart Hamilton and Frode Bakken, Preliminary Report and Recommendations from

75 Mark Rosenzweig, “ALA Membership Meetings: The Quorum Question,” *SRRT Newsletter*, no. 128 (June 1998): 4-5. In 1999, SRRT urged ALA to set the quorum back to 100, and to resubmit a referendum question to the membership. See *SRRT Newsletter*, no. 133 (December 1999): 3.


Coined by student organizer Jack Weinberg during the height of the Free Speech Movement on the campus of UC Berkeley, this phrase has become inextricably linked with the political, social and cultural rebellion of the 1960s. At that time, this idea was not simply abstract; it manifested itself in day-to-day life. Young people built, created, led, educated, demonstrated, and envisioned a new world. Today, while this phrase is still culturally significant, many find it symbolic as opposed to an actual practice. In fact, even though access and availability to information has increased exponentially, we have a tendency to stereotype youth as “uninformed” and/or “untrained” and often are reluctant to provide them with leadership positions or spaces to empower themselves.

The internship program of The Freedom Archives, a small archive in the Mission District of San Francisco, is specifically designed to challenge the idea that youth are unskilled, politically naïve, and/or not yet prepared for knowledge production. Founded in 1999, The Freedom Archives contains over 12,000 hours of audio and video tapes which date from the late-1960s to the mid-90s and chronicle the progressive history of the Bay Area, the United States, and international movements. In addition to preservation, we actively create educational resources using archival materials in order to shape the
future. Furthermore, by offering high school and college students opportunities to work directly with archival materials, create their own productions, and contribute to the archives with critical thinking and writing, we seek to shift the paradigm that youth are only affected by historical events to recognizing youth as being one of the main determinants of history and social change.

The History of the Freedom Archives

_The thing the sixties did was to show us the possibilities and the responsibility that we all had. It wasn’t the answer. It just gave us a glimpse of the possibility._ John Lennon\(^2\)

Although founded fifteen years ago, the true origin of the archives takes us back to the mid-1960s in the San Francisco Bay Area in California. At that time, the Bay Area was a Mecca of political thought, cultural and artistic creation, and alternative institutions. During that time period, young people from around the country were making robust contributions to shaping a new society within the United States. The civil rights movement galvanized many young people to challenge the social order of the United States, as inspiring and successful decolonization struggles in Viet Nam, Cuba and on the African continent vividly illustrated that a new world was possible. Women’s Liberation and Gay and Lesbian movements were also underway, challenging “fundamental” assumptions on sexuality, gender roles and identity.

One way young people in the Bay Area were contributing to challenging the American empire and political repression was by producing radio programming dedicated to documenting and broadcasting the people’s history. This programming often combined in-depth interviews and reports on social and cultural issues; activist voices from a number of social justice movements; original and recorded music, poetry, and sound collages. These radio programs had names like The Midnight Flash, The Real Dragon, Communicación Aztlán, Freedom Is a Constant Struggle and, at least in the Bay Area, were mostly broadcast over KPFA and the Pacifica Radio Network, as well as KPOO in San Francisco. The other major component of the original materials is a rich assortment of programs from what became the Third World department at KPFA, some in Spanish, many in English or both, that reflected the resurgence of the Chican@ movement, of Central American liberation struggles, and very close connections to and coverage of the Salvador Allende government in Chile and its tragic overthrow by fascist generals in league with Henry Kissinger and the CIA. The vast majority of these programs were independently produced by collective groupings, all with a commitment to anti-imperialism, human rights, and highlighting marginalized voices and organizations unheard or distorted on establishment media.
The collectives that produced the weekly programs in and of themselves embodied multicultural diversity. Some had some professional radio experience—all shared a deep commitment to using the powerful tool of radio to educate and spur social change. The language was consciously anti-sexist and all stories rewritten to remove the bias of news wires, and to call nations, races, and liberation movements what they wanted to be called, rather than “terrorist,” “bandit,” “enemy,” or other derogatory terms used so frequently in the mass media. Of course, the social justice energy of the times contributed greatly to the programs—not only in reporting what was happening from an activist viewpoint, but also in the creative preparation of the programs, as ideas were debated back and forth in an intense atmosphere, working all day to broadcast first a half-hour then an hour at 6 pm every week. By the time they had gone off air, these programs constituted a record of over 30 consecutive years of activism and multicultural transformation, with exclusive *actuality*—living voices and field recordings—of a wide range of individuals, groups, and events regionally, nationally, and internationally. It is these recordings that would form the initial bulk of materials currently housed at the Freedom Archives.

**The Freedom Archives Today**

*Preserve the past — illuminate the present — shape the future.*

Freedom Archives’ motto

Today the hustle and bustle of Valencia Street is known more for its trendy restaurants, high-priced condos, and Google buses than it is for political organizing. However, tucked discreetly between storefronts is 522 Valencia, home of the Freedom Archives.

Over the past 15 years, the Freedom Archives has become a national and international source of media of great interest to young people and students, but also to teachers, diverse community organizations and media outlets, filmmakers, activists, historians, artists and researchers. We regularly produce original documentaries and educational media for use within schools and as tools for community building. For example, our film Cointelpro 101 has been featured in festivals, on campuses, in community venues, on satellite TV channels and on radio stations, as a way of building awareness of illegal and overreaching government repression against its own citizens.

Our collections include weekly news, poetry, music programs; in-depth interviews and reports on social and cultural issues; numerous voices from behind prison walls; diverse activists; and pamphlets, journals and other materials from many radical organizations and movements. These materials constitute a compelling record of 50 years of recorded sound, images and cultural diversity. The music/poetry mixes, production techniques, and sound
collages represent an innovative contribution to the art of radio and the radical cultural ambiance of “the 60s” and subsequent decades.

We’ve also designed and launched a sophisticated digital search engine that allows for increased access to our holdings through a less academic and more user-friendly exploration of our materials. The site is media-sample-driven, emphasizing a user-driven approach to searching our collections, and to make the site more fully accessible for younger generations, as well as those conducting academic-based research. Advanced users can still use Boolean search logic or comb through metadata, but all users now can use keywords, or simply explore our site by using visual and other media-based cues.

Thus, the Freedom Archives represents a departure not just in the materials it holds, but also in its deliberate reframing of the standardized and often non-participatory protocols, procedures, and practices of traditional archives.

**Our Internship Program**

*Education is an important element in the struggle for human rights. It is the means to help our children and our people rediscover their identity and thereby increase their self respect. Education is our passport to the future, for tomorrow belongs only to the people who prepare for it today.* Malcolm X

Community outreach has always been paramount to the mission of the Freedom Archives. Youth interns have served essential roles since the founding of the Archives including integral involvement in the development of the cataloging system and the initial organization of the archives. Many young people have a great deal of curiosity about the fabled period known as “the 60s,” and the Archives brought some of this history to light in exciting ways. Although they were exploring materials that were politically and historically unfamiliar to them, the programs strongly resonated with them and this helped us to recognize and establish youth as the main audience of our work. The first intern project was the Vinyl Project released in 2003. This 12” vinyl record was the culmination of a large amount of research and audio editing and contains very short, dramatic, and historic sound bites for use by spoken word and performance artists, and DJs. It includes more than 75 sound bites that feature political and cultural figures of the past and present—such as Emma Goldman, Judi Bari, Assata Shakur, Black Panther Youth, Malcolm X, Ramsey Muniz, David Gilbert, Arundhati Roy, Noam Chomsky, Dylcia Pagan, Geronimo Pratt, Cherrie Moraga, and many others. These clips were chosen, edited and finalized by the interns.

Since 2003, the Freedom Archives has maintained an active youth development program that encourages engagement with historical materials and
provides media production training as well as fostering a love for progressive history. We have developed strong, cooperative, and effective partnerships and project-based connections with a number of youth organizations, local high schools, community colleges, and 4-year colleges and universities. The Freedom Archives internship program requires no prior library or media training and includes arrangements for high-school and college students to receive academic credit. All internships are shaped around the specific student, their interests and their goals for the internship experience. This aspect of the program is a key element of sustaining the initial spirit that generated the materials; a genuine desire to empower young people to explore, question, challenge and create their own narrative instead of learning to mechanically recite names and dates.

In addition to growth in detail-oriented organization, critical thinking and writing skills, all interns receive in-house training sessions before working with archival materials. Since our founding, the Freedom Archives has worked with hundreds of young people and has had relationships with MetWest High School, June Jordan School for Equity, Urban High School, the University of San Francisco, San Francisco State University, City College of San Francisco, San Jose University, Mission High School and many others.

1. Content

There is an overwhelming need for the young people of today to have access to non-filtered, non-biased educational resources that allow them to learn more about our recent history. In order to move forward as a society, young people need to know about and understand the aims, events, accomplishments, and setbacks of influential times in our history. The archives and projects growing from the collection can help satisfy a growing interest by youth of many cultures in these social and cultural currents, and can assist them in unearthing lessons of the recent past even as they raise new concerns of their own. Educational programs utilizing multifaceted audio and/or video resources can convey recent history to high school and college students in dramatic ways that cut through the stereotypical depictions of textbooks, the mainstream media, and commercialized mass culture.

2. Skill Building and Training

Skill development is one of the core components of the internship program. One of the primary strategies we employ to make sure youth are learning is by actually allowing youth to do work. Instead of elevating the knowledge and capabilities of researchers above that of young people, we allow youth to directly work with archival materials, decide keywords, write descriptions, digitize audio, edit audio, write blog posts, etc. Youth are given training, not only about how to handle materials carefully and what preservation involves—but also training on playing, caring for and evaluating reel-to-reel tapes. As they
receive training in audio production, they are tasked with digitizing media and pulling choice sound bites from those resources that can then be shared online. The decision to allow interns such a large role in generating content not only re-affirms our commitment to acknowledging youth as important producers of history but also re-iterates to our interns that they are capable and critical contributors not just to the archives but to society at large.

3. Empowerment

Encouraging and fostering youth involvement in knowledge production empowers them beyond the physical archive space and establishes a direct connection to the values and ideology behind the creation of the original materials. It also allows them to immerse themselves in the materials and use this relationship to propel their own political engagement, educational advancement, and critical thinking skills. The relationships we develop with youth are also essential for the staff of the archives. Without the fresh, creative, and imaginative ideas and perspective of our youth interns, we run the risk of losing touch with constantly evolving current movements for human rights and self-determination. Access to these historical materials also demonstrates powerfully to young people today that youth have always propelled social change and provides concrete examples of how they can make, record, and preserve history. The history that they create.

4. The Projects

As mentioned, there have been hundreds of high school and college-age youth who have interned at the Freedom Archives. Frequently as well, graduate students from around the country come to spend some days digging into topics and issues found in the Archives, as part of work on a thesis or research paper. Interns or former interns have also been directly involved in the planning for a production of our audio CDs and DVDs. Over the last several years, in addition to audio and video, a unique collection of rare documents has grown. Many of these have been scanned and are available for free download. To provide a sense of the many projects interns have devised and completed, here are just a very few examples:

— Using the Archives to design curriculum around how sterilization continues to be used as a weapon against women of color. The Archives has historical material and testimony on the sterilization of Indigenous and Puerto Rican women, often without their knowledge, as well the protests against this practice.
— A video and supplemental one-page leaflet containing step-by-step directions on how to locate and properly address a letter to a friend or loved one in a California prison. One of the central themes in the Archives concerns
prisons, the prison movement, the many prison rebellions that took place in the 1960s and 70s, and political prisoners.

— The digitization and editing of audio and video materials for our web version of the book *Out of Control: A 15 Year Battle Against Control Unit Prisons*. The web version of this book allows readers to view, read or listen to an archival material references in the text and, if you wish, download it to your computer.

— Created and produced a radio program about colonization, land struggle and identity in Hawaii. This program was produced by a native Hawaiian intern and culminated in his re-connection with his indigenous Hawaiian heritage and his grandfather’s land on the island.

— Selected and digitized audio clips for our educational web page in conjunction with a community event we helped organize in Oakland in early May 2015, to mark the 40th Anniversary of the defeat of the US military in Viet Nam, entitled “The Spirit of Viet Nam Stronger Than the US bombs.”

**Conclusion**

*The world is yours, as well as ours, but in the last analysis, it is yours. You young people, full of vigour and vitality, are in the bloom of life, like the sun at eight or nine in the morning. Our hope is placed on you.* Chairman Mao Tse-Tung⁴

As should be evident, our programs for and by young people are at the heart of the mission of the Freedom Archives. We believe it is a unique and strong program, offering both technical and impactful education and the chance to engage with exciting materials not found elsewhere, and for interns to create their own projects. What is more difficult to convey in writing are the many interchanges between young people, Archives staff, and other volunteers, as well as the moments of discovery when an intern comprehends, for example, what the war in Viet Nam was actually about, and the mass nature of solidarity activities in the US and around the world, as opposed to the meager paragraphs offered in typical history textbooks. At the same time, Archives staff continually learns from interns and encourages their comments on the program, the ways it could be improved, what they learned from it, and their more general thoughts on the work of the Archives and ways to reach out to more young people. We propose our program and practices as a template to further liberate archive and library spaces and empower young people to engage, learn, imagine, re-define, challenge, understand, and create history.
NOTES


The revocation of Steven Salaita’s tenured professorship offer at the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign (UIUC) in August 2014 should give librarians great pause. After Salaita’s criticism on Twitter of the Israel Defense Forces’ actions in the Gaza Strip during the summer of 2014, former Chancellor Phyllis Wise informed Salaita just weeks before the beginning of his contract that his offer would not be forwarded to the University of Illinois’ Board of Trustees for approval. Later evidence indicated that major university donors threatened to withhold support should Salaita’s contract be honored (Jaschik, “The Emails on Salaita,” “Out of a Job”). Many academic organizations have condemned the University’s actions as a breach of academic freedom as outlined in the American Association of University Professors’ (AAUP) 1940 Statement of Principles on Academic Freedom and Tenure, a document which is explicitly included in tenured and tenure-track contacts tendered by the University of Illinois (American Association of University Professors, “Statement,” “Letter”).

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KEYWORDS: Intellectual freedom; Social justice; Neutrality; Library and Information Science education; Librarianship; Academic freedom.
Salaita is not a librarian. However, academic freedom bears great resemblance to American librarianship’s core value of intellectual freedom, to such a point that the American Library Association (ALA) adapted the AAUP *Statement* for librarianship in 1946 (American Library Association, “Statement”).¹ Mark Alfino characterizes academic freedom as a “form of intellectual freedom that attaches to particular professional roles (the teacher, professor, researcher, student)” (440). Salaita’s professional work about the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is deeply rooted in social justice and political activism for the welfare of marginalized people. As Joan W. Scott argues, rescinding Salaita’s contract on a “civility” claim—a discourse typically used by dominant forces to silence dissent—constitutes censorship of his teaching and scholarship due to his extramural (i.e. non-work) speech. Given the ALA’s staunch anti-censorship rhetoric for information producers and users, one would assume bodies like the ALA, or faculties of ALA-accredited schools and institutions (including UIUC) would join other academic faculties in condemning the decision of the University of Illinois’s leadership. This, by and large, has not been the case.

In December 2014, students of the University of Illinois’s Graduate School of Library and Information Science (GSLIS) hosted an open forum to discuss the Salaita controversy as it pertained to information professions.² During the discussion, GSLIS faculty member Dr. Emily Knox made a comment that hints at a longtime tension of American librarianship: “intellectual freedom and social justice are not the same thing” (Tilley; Knox, “Re: Questin”). This tension has existed at least since the formation of the ALA’s Social Responsibilities Round Table (SRRT) in 1968. SRRT faced fierce backlash from ALA members, best exemplified by then Intellectual Freedom Committee chairperson David K. Berninghausen’s 1972 *Library Journal* missive “Antithesis in Librarianship: Social Responsibility vs. the Library Bill of Rights” and its book-length explication 3 years later (Samek, *Intellectual Freedom* 49-55, 127-129; Joyce 38, 41; Berninghausen, “Antithesis,” *Flight*). Most recently this conflict manifested in the Office of Intellectual Freedom’s 2015 Banned Books Week poster. The poster, which features a dark-skinned woman whose face is obscured by a book with a red circle and an eye slit under the phrase “Readstricted,” appeared to many as signifying a niqāb and equating Islamic religious sartorial standards with censorship.³ After several petitions to the OIF to remove the poster from the ALA store and OIF’s subsequent defense of the poster, Intellectual Freedom Round Table veteran Ellen Zyroff attacked members of SRRT, claiming that removal petitions and criticism of the OIF’s decision amounted to another romp by the “Ministry of Silly Censorship,” or the “SRRT Censor Squad” (American Library Association Office for Intellectual Freedom, “Response”; Zyroff). The most recent iteration of the ALA *Intellectual Freedom Manual* acknowledges this historic conflict; former Office for Intellectual Freedom (OIF) director Judith Krug and Candace D. Morgan rhetorically ask: “Can a library committed
to intellectual freedom and to providing materials that represent all points of view also support one point of view?” (13).

The examples above illustrate that the tension between ALA’s conceptions of intellectual freedom and the social responsibility of librarianship is a serious and divisive issue that lies at the heart of librarianship’s professional ethics, action, and justification. However, this tension is rarely introduced during the training of young professionals. This oversight occurs in part because of intellectual freedom’s entrenched place among American librarianship’s core values and the ALA’s influence on library and information studies (LIS) education through the Office of Accreditation. To demonstrate the impact of intellectual freedom on LIS education, I will contextualize ALA’s definition of intellectual freedom as a core value of American librarianship, explore how this understanding of intellectual freedom adheres to classically liberal notions of neutrality versus social and political advocacy, and link ALA’s values to the stated goals and purposes of library school accreditation. To explain how ALA accreditation transmits values, I will draw on Pierre Bourdieu’s concept of symbolic capital as a theoretical lens. I posit that there is a lack of focus on the social responsibilities of librarianship within LIS curricula, particularly with respect to empowering and fighting with those who work for social justice, due to the direct conflict between the activist focus of social justice and the rhetoric of neutrality underlying ALA’s conception of intellectual freedom, which limits librarians’ agency.

**Neutrality and ALA’s conception of intellectual freedom**

The paradigm of intellectual freedom within which American librarianship operates today is a distinct and recent historical construction. It should be understood as a value informed by specific historical struggles that has led to its current interpretation as advanced by the ALA. The outcome of these struggles implies an assumption of commitment to professional neutrality, as will be discussed below.

Intellectual freedom has not always been a core value of American librarianship. Krug and Morgan characterize librarianship’s attitude toward intellectual freedom as having “undergone continual change since the late nineteenth century” (12). Intellectual freedom’s role as an ALA core value was first understood through the narrow lens of book censorship (Krug and Morgan 13). As Geller shows, librarians favored censorship, neutrality, and populism as guiding professional values in the late 19th and early 20th centuries (xvi). Freedom to read in this early context encompassed the right to morally educate the working class; early librarians viewed themselves as part of the state educational system, which was tasked with preparing students for productive citizenship (Geller 12; Knox, “View of Reading Effects” 15). Education in this
regime assumed that the outcome of engagement with a text is known or can be predicted, and that educators must lead students to morally good texts at the proper time in one’s development (Knox, “View of Reading Effects” 15-17). Thus, censorship was inherent in one’s duty as a professional librarian.

Resistance to censorship began to appear in the first decades of the 20th century; prominent librarians such as John Cotton Dana and Paul Paine began to raise the issue of censorship’s detrimental effects on the intellectual life of the United States in the midst of World War I (Geller 109-116). However, outright ALA opposition to book censorship would not find traction until the 1930s (Krug and Morgan 14). Official responses of this era only permitted limited freedom guided by apolitical neutrality (Geller 128). Librarians of the next generation, including Berninghausen, drew upon these incidents to establish a “hydra-headed support system for intellectual freedom” over the next three decades (Robbins xiii). ALA ideology opposing censorship in the name of intellectual freedom was codified with the passage of the Library Bill of Rights and the Code of Ethics in 1939 (Robbins 13-14; Knox, “Supporting Intellectual Freedom” 8). Using these documents as a base and continuous threats to freedom such as McCarthyism as a catalyst, ALA leveraged the rhetoric of intellectual freedom to gain profession-wide support for financial and legal mechanisms to defend specific publications from censorship (Knox, “Supporting Intellectual Freedom” 13-14; Robbins 153).

Perhaps the most contentious legacy of intellectual freedom’s development into a core value of the ALA is the still prevalent question of whether libraries and librarians should be concerned with advocacy or neutrality as a guiding principle. American librarians have been struggling with this question throughout the 20th century (Geller xix). Librarianship has historically claimed neutrality as a professional obligation (Samek, Librarianship 7, Intellectual Freedom 1-11). Nowhere is this more explicit than the standard set forth in the ALA’s Code of Ethics: “We distinguish between our personal convictions and professional duties” (304). This ethical standard and the accompanying standard to uphold intellectual freedom principles work in conjunction to promote neutrality and oppose the social justice advocacy potential of libraries and librarians. Noriko Asato has demonstrated the selective and agnostic application of ALA’s standards when applied to activist-focused librarians. Through its responses, the Association has consistently justified intellectual freedom for librarians only insofar as the concept allows librarians to provide neutral, unfettered access to library users (76).

Steven Joyce explains the faulty syllogistic assumptions at the heart of neutrality rhetoric, which undergird the arguments of Berninghausen in the 1970s and of Zyroff in 2015:

1. Those who hold intensely dogmatic beliefs are censorial;
2. Advocates of the new definition of social responsibility hold intensely dogmatic beliefs;
3. Advocates of the new definition of social responsibility are censorial and must, therefore, renounce the tenets of intellectual freedom (Joyce 42).

Robert Jensen further problematizes the neutrality claim—to earn professional recognition (i.e. symbolic capital, discussed below), professionals are expected to adhere to “neutrality” only insofar as their work does not question and actually reinforces the aims of the state, normalizing American exceptionalism and capitalism as common sense. This view of professionalism disallows the librarian’s social and political agency as a citizen (91-92). nina de jesus locates this discourse of neutrality-as-professionalism at an institutional level—libraries as institutions are founded on adherence to Enlightenment values (i.e. classical liberalism) and actively contribute to the continuance of the hegemonic settler colonial state. In this view, librarianship’s historical claim to neutrality is “a self-defeating one;” political neutrality is not only an impossible but also an actively harmful political position that limits librarians’ agency (de jesus). It is against this agency-removing, culturally damaging rhetoric of neutrality that Toni Samek proposes direct opposition, through advocacy, by libraries and librarians worldwide (Librarianship 8).

Whither social justice? Advocacy in American librarianship

Concern for social justice among segments of ALA membership has a long history, from the Junior Members’ Round Table of the 1930s through the Social Responsibilities Round Table of the 1970s to the progressive and critical librarianship of today (Samek, Intellectual Freedom 6-8; Joyce 38; Samek, Librarianship, 7). Some library historians trace this intellectual lineage as far back as the turn of the 20th century in the work of figures such as John Cotton Dana (Samek, “Internet AND Intention” 2). However, these movements historically constitute a fringe voice of American librarianship that has fought for broader legitimacy to affect change over a wide range of political issues both inside and outside of traditional governance structures like the ALA.

Toni Samek has shown how centering education and social responsibility can provide an infrastructure for progressive librarianship (Librarianship 47-180). Advocacy and commitment to social responsibility, formally recognized as a core value of the ALA in 2004, encompass the goals of social justice education (Samek, “Internet AND Intention” 13). Lua Gregory and Shana Higgins draw on Nieto and Bode’s excellent summation of social justice education outcomes, which states in part:

Social justice education should:
1. Challenge, confront, and disrupt ‘misconceptions, untruths, and stereotypes that lead to structural inequality and discrimination based on race, social class, gender, and other social and human differences’ (quoted in Gregory and Higgins 6).

Today the concern for social justice within librarianship literature manifests most visibly through the praxis of critical information literacy, which seeks “to dismantle the concept of library/librarian neutrality in relation to the context of information production, dissemination, and manipulation” (Gregory and Higgins 10). Critical information literacy is grounded in the educational praxis most notably formulated in Paulo Friere’s internationally renowned book *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. Still, despite its current visibility and focus on collaboration with progressive and radical education scholars, critical information literacy is only one part of Toni Samek’s proposed infrastructure of a progressive librarianship movement; the movement also centers human rights and welfare, global citizenship and democracy, and engagement in social and political movements among other concepts (“Internet AND Intention” 7-12).

Frameworks like Samek’s allow us to visualize a social justice-centered librarianship. However, progressive librarianship’s life as a large-scale movement in the United States struggles from an inability to create a broad measure of consensus on what work needs to be done, how that work can and should be done, and why that work is necessary. This lack of consensus creates a blind spot in LIS education, where the progressive librarianship movement has almost unilaterally failed to gain an official foothold.

**Symbolic capital and ALA accreditation: How neutrality meets library school**

Librarians’ education is highly influenced by the values of the ALA. Professional jobs in American librarianship commonly require an ALA-accredited degree for hire or advancement. Whatever prior life experience and knowledge library students bring to their coursework, their professional training is undergirded by the values transmitted through library school education. ALA accreditation calls for programs to develop their systematic planning and curriculum based on student learning objectives as outlined in the Office of Accreditation’s “Standards for Accreditation of Master’s Programs in Library and Information Studies” (4). The first two learning objectives demonstrate that programs should be primarily concerned with addressing “[t]he essential character of the field of library and information studies; … [t]he philosophy, principles, and ethics of the field” (Office of Accreditation, “Revised Standards” 4). Popular textbooks for use in courses covering the ethics of librarianship show a consensus about foregrounding intellectual
freedom as a primary responsibility in the training of young librarians (Knox, “Supporting Intellectual Freedom” 12). As demonstrated above, the ALA has a vested interest in maintaining and transmitting a neutrality-focused conception of intellectual freedom to library practitioners as part of the profession’s ethics. How these concepts become a basis for the assessment of library schools can be explained using Pierre Bourdieu’s concept of symbolic capital.

The importance of Bourdieu’s symbolic capital to research on intellectual freedom has been explained previously by Emily Knox and Lisa Hussey. In brief: symbolic systems shape perception of an objective reality through providing the means by which to construct an object and the means by which to signify that object’s meaning in social context. (Knox, “Supporting Intellectual Freedom” 9-10). Symbolic capital legitimizes existing economic, social, and cultural capital by granting and reinforcing systems of “objective” authority—e.g. social prestige, academic credentials, common sense. The intersection of symbolic, economic, social, and cultural capitals in the social world determines one’s relative power (Hussey 44-45). The accrual of symbolic capital is often a slow process. The American Library Association, notable for its complex structure and slow organizational mechanisms, has grown to represent the primary organizational voice of American librarianship to both professionals and laypeople (Samek, “Internet AND Intention” 5). The ALA exerts its social power over young professionals through the de facto requirement of library school coursework as terms for adequate employment through the mechanism of accreditation.

Knox identifies two of Bourdieu’s key mechanisms that support the accrual of symbolic capital in support of intellectual freedom: codification and institutionalization (“Supporting Intellectual Freedom” 8). Accreditation serves the dual purpose of both codifying and institutionalizing ALA values within the structure and assessment of library education. Institutionalization refers to the process of developing institutions whose foundations are coded with and made for the purpose of defending and transmitting values. Like the Office for Intellectual Freedom, the ALA maintains an Office for Accreditation (OA) whose responsibilities include coordinating accreditation activities for LIS programs under the authority of the Council for Higher Education Accreditation. OA and its oversight body, the Committee on Accreditation (COA), comprise the primary institutions granted authority by the ALA to act independently in rendering accreditation programming and decisions for library school programs (“Accreditation”).

Alongside institutionalization, codification confers symbolic capital to a concept by embedding that concept into the moral and legal codes that underlie an institution. OA and COA conduct accreditation activities and render their decisions largely based on two formative documents: the “Standards for Accreditation of Master’s Programs in Library and Information Science” and
“Accreditation Process, Policies, and Procedures (AP3).” As mentioned above, the Standards explicitly require that programs transmit the field’s essential character, philosophy, principles, and ethics through student learning objectives and, consequently, curriculum construction (Office of Accreditation, “Revised Standards” 4-5). This mandate leaves little, if any, room in learning objectives and curricula for advocacy and social responsibility. Programs are tasked with embedding and transmitting core values of librarianship, which includes the neutrality-grounded conception of intellectual freedom advanced by the ALA. This version of intellectual freedom is directly at odds with the mission and goals of an advocacy-focused conception of librarianship.

**Conclusion**

The ALA wields great symbolic capital within library and information studies education through the mechanism of accreditation. Professional library employment requires an accredited degree and schools that teach against the ALA’s conception of intellectual freedom risk censure from the Office of Accreditation. Graduates from schools that face accreditation censure suffer by way of limited employment opportunities. The economic and symbolic value of accredited institutions’ degrees would fall rapidly without graduate success stories, which bolster justification for the schools’ continued existence. The power relationship between the ALA and library schools underlies a trend in LIS education that privileges technocratic managerial theories and practices over the concern for human and social welfare present in progressive librarianship. The ALA is complicit in furthering this trend by maintaining an organizational commitment to embedding a neutrality-focused conception of intellectual freedom within LIS education. For the progressive librarianship movement to grow in the United States, the movement must gain a foothold in LIS education. Without continuing generations of young professionals who are cognizant of and sensitive to the human concerns and social responsibility of librarianship, the infrastructure of progressive librarianship in the U.S. will collapse. We can do better for our future.

**NOTES**

1. The statement was rescinded at the 1974 ALA Annual Meeting, according to the archived version of the 1946 document.
2. A Storify containing a record of the live Twitter coverage of the panel under the hashtag #uncivilLIS can be found at https://storify.com/AnUncivilPhD/salaita-and-the-information-professions-1.
3. The poster can be found on the ALA Store at http://www.alastore.ala.org/detail.aspx?ID=11404 or by requesting item number 5220-1531.
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Zyroff, Ellen. “[srrtac-l] Re: That Poster.” E-mail to srrtac-l@lists.ala.org. 17 April 2015.
The Union Library Workers blog (http://unionlibraryworkers.blogspot.ca/) is a project of the Progressive Librarians Guild established in 2002. The blog serves to document union activity in libraries, archives, and the information sector. The following is a review of this activity as documented on the blog in 2015.

**Reports and Publications**

- John Hyslop, President of Queens Library Guild, AFSCME Local 1321, authored a post on the Union Library Workers blog in response to the New York City Comptroller’s report on corruption within the library’s administration. His post can be read in full at http://unionlibraryworkers.blogspot.ca/2015/07/corruption-at-queens-library-statement.html
- UNISON Scotland issued *Read It and Weep: Scotland’s Library Staff Speak Out*, a report of the results of a survey of library workers across the country.
- “Showing Solidarity: 2014 Union Review” by Sarah Barriage was published in issue 43 of *Progressive Librarian*.

**Awards**

- In January, PLG Member Lincoln Cushing was honored with the Western Workers Labor Arts Award during the Western Workers Labor Heritage

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

**KEYWORDS:** Bibliographies; Labor unions – Australia; Labor unions – Bulgaria; Labor unions – Canada; Labor unions – India; Labor unions – United Kingdom; Labor unions – USA; Labor unions and similar labor organizations.
Festival in California. Cushing has published several books related to labor and social justice.

- The Calcasieu Parish Library System was awarded the 2015 John Sessions Memorial Award for its part in developing the Southwest Louisiana WORKFORCE Resource Guide.

Events & Conferences

- The AFL-CIO/ALA Labor Committee organized a labor history bus tour at the ALA Annual Meeting in San Francisco, CA in June.

Strikes & Protests

- Library workers at Queen’s University in Kingston, ON joined other support staff in an information picket in January, bringing attention to their ongoing negotiations with the university administration.
- University of Northern British Columbia Faculty Association voted in favor of strike action in January (Hyslop, 2015). In March, classes were cancelled as the workers went on strike for two weeks, ending only when the university administration moved to suspend job action (“2015 UNBC Faculty Association strike”, n.d.).


- Workers at Lucknow University in India went on strike in March (“Students in dilemma as LU strike continues”, 2015).
- Library workers and other staff at Southern Cross University in Australia, members of the National Tertiary Education Union, went on strike in March.
in response to stalled negotiations with university administration (Sloane, 2015).

• Workers in Bromley Council in England engaged in a series of one-day strikes in April in protest of council plans to reduce funding for library and other public services (Linney, 2015a, 2015b). The workers are members of Unite.

• In April, workers at Capilano University in British Columbia went on strike (“Capilano University cancels all classes due to faculty strike”, 2015).

• South East Cornerstone Public School Division library workers and other support staff, members of SEIU, went on strike in Saskatchewan in April (Park, 2015). A tentative deal was reached in May after three weeks of strike action (Schick, 2015).

• Workers in Barnet Council in England engaged in strike action throughout the year in protest of plans to outsource library and other services (Caven, 2015; Speck, 2015). The workers, members of UNISON, typically took part in co-ordinated one-day strikes. Additionally, the union created music videos about the outsourcing plans that are viewable on their YouTube channel (https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCH0-ICGzIoZZNl8cc-jmCHQ).

• In May, library and other city workers staged a protest at a Santa Cruz City Council meeting (York, 2015). The workers, members of SEIU Local 521, were protesting what they described as poverty wages, and were arrested after refusing to end their demonstration.

• Workers at the National Library of Australia and other public service workers represented by the Community and Public Sector Union engaged in mass strike action in June in protest of pay cuts (Thomson, 2015).

• In July, workers at Yarra Plenty Regional Library in Victoria, Australia, members of Australian Services Union, engaged in three days of work bans until an agreement was reached with the library administration on their new contract (Armitage, 2015).

• Clerical and technical staff at the University of Illinois, represented by AFSCME Local 3700 and AFSCME Local 698, hand-delivered postcards to the university’s president in protest of stalled contract negotiations (Wurth, 2015).

• Support staff at London Metropolitan University went on strike after three union members were given compulsory redundancy notices, including the branch secretary of UNISON (Robinson, n.d.).

• Workers at the National Gallery in London staged one-day walkouts throughout the year in protest of the planned privatization of sections of the museum’s services (Hatfield, 2015). The workers are represented by Public and Commercial Services Union.

• Workers at the National War Museum and the National Museum of Scotland,
members of Public and Commercial Services Union, went on strike in August in protest of the removal of weekend allowances for workers hired after 2010 (Weisblum, 2015).

• Librarians, teachers, and support staff represented by the Seattle Education Association went on strike in September, closing schools across the city for six days before reaching an agreement with administration (Chappell, 2015).
• Unite Community held a campaign to protest plans to lay off 88 staff and close two libraries in Kirklees, England. Unfortunately the reductions went ahead as planned, and also included the elimination of mobile library services (Lavigueur, 2015).
• Teachers and support staff in Ontario schools engaged in a work-to-rule campaign in October, refusing to carry out some of their duties as their unions engaged in contract negotiations (Mangione, 2015). The two unions, the Canadian Union of Public Employees and the Elementary Teachers’ Federation of Ontario, reached agreements with administration in early November (Csanady, 2015).
• Solano County workers in California engaged in a one-day strike amid ongoing contract negotiations, resulting in library closures (Shams, 2015).
• Thirty-seven thousand members of Front Commun went on strike across the province of Quebec, including workers at the Bibliothèque et Archives nationales du Québec (“Quebec public sector strikes”, 2015).
• The Confederation of Independent Trade Unions of Bulgaria and Confederation of Labour Podkrepa, unions representing workers at libraries, museums, and galleries in Bulgaria, held a ‘Day of Discontent’ in November in response to decreased funding and low wages (Leviev-Sawyer, 2015).

New Contracts

Workers in libraries across the United States and Canada ratified new contracts throughout 2015. These include workers at:

• Erie County Public Library in Erie County, PA (represented in AFSCME Local 2666)
• Attleboro Public Library in Attleboro, MA
• Lincoln Township Public Library in Stevensville, MI (represented by AFSCME Council 25)
• Rutgers University in New Brunswick, NJ (represented by AAUP-AFT)
• Medicine Hat Public Library in Medicine Hat, AB (represented by CUPE 46)
• Massena Public Library in Massena, NY (represented by Teamsters Local 687)
• Los Angeles Unified School District
• Museum of Modern Art in New York, NY (represented by UAW Local 2110)
• Powell River Public Library in Powell River, BC (represented by CUPE Local 798)
• Lowell Public Schools in Lowell, MA (represented by SEIU Local 888)
• Oakland Public Library in Oakland, CA (represented by SEIU Local 1021)
• Onondaga County Library in Onondaga County, NY (represented by Civil Service Employees Association)
• Belleville Public Library in Belleville, ON (represented by CUPE Local 907)
• Mineola Memorial Library in Mineola, NY (represented by Library Employees Unit of the United Public Service Employees Union)
• Morris Public Library in Morris, CT (represented by AFSCME Local 1303-105)
• McMaster University in Hamilton, ON (represented by McMaster University Academic Librarians’ Association)
• Ledding Library in Milwaukie, OR (represented by AFSCME City of Milwaukie Local 350-5)
• University of Western Ontario in London, ON (represented by University of Western Ontario Faculty Association – Librarians and Archivists)
• County of Los Angeles Public Library in Los Angeles County, CA (represented by SEIU Local 721)
• University of Illinois in Urbana-Champaign, IL (represented by AFSCME Local 3700)
• Waterloo Public Library in Waterloo, IA (represented by Communication Workers of America)
• Peterborough Public Library in Peterborough, ON (represented by CUPE Local 1833)

Additionally, workers at several libraries chose to unionize, including:

• Clerical, technical, and paraprofessional staff, including library workers, at Northern Illinois University. The workers filed a petition with the state’s labor board seeking to unionize with AFSCME. Laura Harris, an employee in the College of Education, stated: “We’re dedicated, hardworking employees, and with our union, we’ll have a seat at the table when decisions are being made.” (“More NIU employees joining AFSCME”, 2015)
• Workers at Westhampton Free Library in Westhampton, NY, who voted to unionize with New York State United Teachers union (Campbell, 2015)
• Workers at Sandwich Public Library in Sandwich, MA, who joined the American Federation of Teachers (Brennan, 2015)

Miscellaneous

• Doncaster Council in Doncaster, UK joined with the unions UNISON,
Unite, and GMB in pledging to pay all council workers a living wage ("Pay joy for 600 Doncaster council staff", 2015).

- The union representing library workers at Morris Public Library in Morris, Connecticut (AFSCME Local 1303-105) filed a grievance in February against the library’s board of directors after the board voted to eliminate the position of library director (McKenna, 2015).

- The Ontario Pay Equity Commission ordered Ottawa Public Library to increase wages and make pay equity adjustments retroactive to 2005 for its workers, represented by CUPE 503 (Ottawa-Carleton Public Employees’ Union, 2015). The Commission determined that library staff were being paid less than other city workers.

- Kitimat Public Library in Kitimat, BC was briefly closed in April after library workers refused to cross the picket lines of striking municipal workers, represented by Unifor (Orr, 2015).

REFERENCES


Memories of Dr. Miriam R.G. Braverman (1920-2002)

By Andrew P. Jackson (Sekou Molefi Baako)

Queens Library’s Langston Hughes Community Library and Cultural Center staff and members of the Board of Directors, and Library Action Committee of Corona-East Elmhurst, Inc. were fortunate to have met and known Dr. Miriam R. G. Braverman. Our sentiments stem from her personal, professional and humanitarian friendship with Dr. E.J. Josey (1929-2009), Chief, New York State Department of Education’s Bureau of Specialist Library Services during the late 20th Century. I would classify both of them as “activist librarians” (library professionals who struggled for equality within the profession and for equal access to library services in the community), in every sense of the phrase. They actively advocated for librarianship and agitated for equality within the library profession and for equity of programs and services for all communities and for library users.

The Langston board and staff were first introduced to Dr. Braveman in 1983. She and her colleagues gathered in New York City to fundraise and host receptions for Dr. E.J. Josey, candidate for President of the American Library Association. One reception was held at the home of Ms. Vivian Hewitt, and the other was held one fall Sunday afternoon at the Langston Hughes Library Center. Experiencing this gathering of politically active librarians was my first taste of librarianship in action. The room was filled with an electricity and energy...
galvanized for the mighty fight to have Dr. Josey elected as the first African American male to serve as President of the American Library Association.

As I listened to speeches by supporters and colleagues, including Hon. Major Owens (1936-2013), the first and only librarian to serve in the United States Congress (1983-2007), I knew these historical events and interactions would have a lasting impact on my library career. I learned that librarianship was so much more than just being a librarian or working at the library. It was being part of the struggle for equity of opportunity within the profession and fighting for ethnically diverse and marginalized communities to have equal opportunities for programs and services to meet their needs and nourish the future. I had known Major from our former lives, me a personnel services specialist in the Human Resources Department for the Human Resources Administration, and Owens is his position as Commissioner of the NYC Community Development Agency. My first time hearing Congressman Owens speak in his elected capacity and as a librarian helped me realize a different understanding and value of librarianship on a broader level as we in the profession inherited a responsibility to bring about change and improve our chosen profession, libraries and how they serve communities in need across the United States.

During his December 2006 speech, Congressman Owens paid tribute to Dr. Braverman on the floor of the U.S. House of Representatives. He referred to Miriam as a “Great Point-of-Light for all Americans…a great humanitarian as well as a Librarian…., who understood that the power of information was continually escalating… as an advocate in the classroom and a fighter on the street.” Indeed, those who knew her would agree she was, is and remains an etched memory of all of that and so much more than words can convey. In my mind’s eye, I first see Miriam, petite, with a warm inviting smile, eyes that sparkle. Her salt and pepper hair cut short, with a soft voice. I remember how eloquently she spoke and thinking I could listen to her forever and wished I was one of her student scholars in the Graduate School of Library and Information Studies at New York University, before it closed. I also teach library science students at the Queens College Graduate School of Library and Information Studies and strive to prepare, encourage and impact these students as did Dr. Braverman.

The relationship between Miriam and the Langston Hughes board and staff deepened in 1984, as the result of a called meeting by the NYS Board of Regents with Queens Library’s Board of Trustees and its Director, Constance B. Cooke, and the Library Action Committee’s Board of Directors and me as its director. This meeting was held to explain the impending change in federal Library Services and Construction (LSCA) Act Title 1 funding channeled through the NYS Education Department that would impact annual grants earmarked for Langston Hughes through Queens Library. Mr. Shubert, Assistant Director at the NYS Board of Regents asked the question, “What will be the future of the
Langston Hughes Library?” With that, Mr. Shubert presented Queens Library a check for $5,000 to hire a consultant to review and submit a report analyzing the operations, funding and programs and services of the Langston Hughes Community Library, and offer any necessary recommendations. The person recommended for this task was, Dr. Miriam Braverman.

Dr. Braverman met and interviewed LAC Board and members, Langston Hughes staff and local community residents. She examined the daily operations, the budgeting process and reviewed wide variety of programs and services offered. She compared these facets to the file of annual Library Services and Construction Act, Title 1 (LSCA) grant applications and final reports submitted. Upon completion of her extensive assessment, Dr. Braverman concluded:

a) Over the fifteen year history of the library (1969-1984), the Langston Hughes Community Library and Cultural Center had surpassed the goals set in the original 1968 application, to create a center that provided circulating materials on The Black Experience for Queens County as an experimental federally funded special project of Queens Library. The library was named for famed Harlem poet Langston Hughes (1902-1967) as a tribute to his vast literary contributions to the field of Black Literature for four decades. Hughes wrote more than 860 poems and his works were translated in 60 different languages. The collection is housed The Black Heritage Reference Center of Queens County, a comprehensive circulating Black Heritage collection accessible to the Queens community at large. At the time of this review, approximately 20,000 volumes of print and non-print materials on The Black Experience were available. Today, this collection boasts over 45,000 volumes of on Black Experience titles, databases, microfilm and microfiche collections, over 1,500 copies of theses and dissertation on Black Literature and over 2,000 DVD and VHS videos, as well as other non-print materials, and an art collection valued at over $250,000.

b) In addition to library services and the Black Heritage Center, the library offered a Cultural Arts Program (CAP) with musical performances, literary workshops and presentations, film screenings and discussions, cultural workshops, history lectures and panels, a variety of workshops including a theatre arts and dance workshop. These services were funded by grants from the NYS Council on the Arts, NYC Department of Cultural Affairs, Queens Borough Presidents Office. The after school Homework Assistance Program (HAP) provided tutorial services and skills development in reading, writing and language art skills for 1st through 7th graders throughout the school year and six weeks in the summer A supplemental grant from the NYS Education Department provides a 4-6 week Math and Language Arts Clinic to enhance students math, reading and language arts skills.
c) The storefront library space, a 12,800 sq. ft. two building at 102-09 Northern Boulevard, was inadequate to accommodate the programs and services offered.

d) Queens Library’s operating budget and staffing for Langston Hughes were inadequate for insufficient for the extensive programs and services offered to the community-at-large.

As a result of Dr. Braverman’s report, QL and LAC, the subsequent two years were spent negotiating a formal Letter of Agreement, signed in October 1987 that resulted in the construction of a new, two story 24,000 sq. ft. library center at 100-01 Northern Boulevard and an increase in operating budget and some additional staff. Credit is always given to Dr. Braverman for her passion for this library and her report to NYSED, and her vision for this community based library. She understood the unique relationship between Queens Library, a large metropolitan library system, and the Library Action Committee, a local community based non-profit organization. She respected the historical significance that local residents conceived of and founded the Langston Hughes Community Library under the auspices of Queens Library, and wanted it to grow to its full potential to better serve the residents of the Corona-East Elmhurst and Queens County.

My last memory of seeing Miriam was at the grand opening of our new library building on November 9, 1999. It was a warm and sunny day for November, as was the big smile on her face. She was so excited to see how far we had come since 1969. Dr. Braverman participated in the two block opening day procession from 102nd to 100th Street and had a front row seat at the opening ceremony and festivities. She was mentioned several times by different speakers. Each time she graciously blushed and said “Thank you, so much”. When she toured the building, she shook her head with admiration, smiled and complimented us on the beauty of the design. Dr. Braverman was so happy that her role as consultant and the report she submitted played a role in the growth of the library to this beautiful new setting.

The LAC Board and Langston Hughes staff are so appreciative of Dr. Braverman’s work and passion for the library services to the Corona-East Elmhurst community and to Queens County. To this day, when Miriam Braverman’s name is mentioned, a smile comes to both staff and board members at the memories we have of this beautiful person. She was a remarkable librarian, dedication to our profession. Her life is a wonderful example for future librarians. She lives on in our hearts and minds, and as long as Langton Hughes Community Library and Cultural Center lives, so does her spirit within us as inspiration for greater things to come.
The Freedom Schools, a Brooklyn librarian concludes, have fostered “equal access” in more ways than one . . .

Mississippi Summer

MIRIAM BRAVERMAN

This spring a group of librarians who wanted to participate in the civil rights movement set up the Friends of Freedom Libraries, an organization permitting librarians to provide professional services in the struggle for freedom. In June I went to Mississippi as a representative of the Friends of Freedom Libraries. Traveling over 1500 miles in nine days, I visited Jackson, Indianola, Greenville, Greenwood, Vicksburg, McComb, Hattiesburg, and Meridian in an attempt to observe as many Freedom Libraries as possible. In the leadership and ranks of the Mississippi Freedom movement, I found widespread interest and enthusiasm for the library as integral to the arsenal of weapons of the nonviolent movement. Each civil rights headquarters houses a library, which is used by students, parents, and teachers. In the story of the Indianola Freedom Library, one can see the problems and triumphs of many of these libraries, and the role the freedom movement has played in integrating public libraries in Mississippi.

Indianola, Mississippi, is in Sunflower County, in the part of the state known as the Delta. The population of the county is 14,730 white, 30,855 Negro. One third of the whites and 90.8 percent of the Negroes earn under $3000 per year. Cotton and soybeans are the main crops, the largest cotton producer being the Parchman State Penitentiary with its convict labor force; Senator Eastland is second, with a 2000-acre plantation.

In summer 1964 the Indianola Project, as the civil rights center is called, had an unattractive Freedom Library, frequented by many children, especially when parents and children over ten were at work picking cotton. The librarian volunteer civil rights worker from the North was completely new to library work; and the library had no catalog, but the one-story brick building contained a wide variety of children’s books. Adult and teenagers’ sections shelved books under such subjects as “Negro History” and “Science.”

I was not able to view this library, for in March the building in which it was located was fire-bombed and burned to the ground. Today more books are being collected and the workers look forward to building a community center and a new library.

The Freedom Libraries I visited were similar. The Greenwood library was arranged imaginatively, while in Hattiesburg and in Vicksburg rows of unattractive stacks reach up to the ceiling. In all the libraries, young people are the main users. When a civil rights worker is present, the youngsters flock in.

They don’t need Esperanto

What are the Freedom Libraries’ collections like now? They vary, depending on a project’s connections with publishers, teachers and librarians in the North. Meridian had only about 300 books, but they represented the best collection I saw, of new and up-to-date books, strong in the most popular subject, the Negro. It also had something no other place boasted — a complete, brand-new set of the Encyclopaedia Britannica. Children’s books, another popular area, were scarce, but most of their books, said the project director, are in cartons awaiting the building of the community
center, a memorial to James Chaney, Michael Schwerner, and Andrew Goodman. Most collections were uninviting in appearance, the shelves filled mostly with outdated, or often too advanced textbook type material. Many of the books sent are completely unusable. Among the unused cartons of books lying under a carport in McComb is *Esperanto for Americans*; Indianaola received 20 volumes of the annual report of the Smithsonian Institute, books, incidentally, that could have brought $200 to $300 had they been sold, and shipping costs would have been saved! Vicksburg received 50-150 copies of discarded texts, written in, with bindings broken, math and science books ten-15 years old, pre-1929 books on the American economy.

The reference and periodical collections are meager. Jackson has only four odd volumes of a 1939 *Compton’s*, and the only dictionary has no spine. The situation for periodicals varies. Hattiesburg has the best selection, five subscriptions of each issue of *Esquire*, two of *Commentary*, and *Freedomways, Liberation, Nation*, and *The New Republic*. Jackson gets only *Paris-Match*—a subscription, no doubt, left over by a volunteer last summer.

What do the libraries need most in the way of books? First, books by and about Negroes, fiction and non-fiction, for adults, teenagers and children. Also, new adult fiction and the classics, such as Hemingway, Faulkner, etc. Children’s books of all kinds; beginning books on foreign languages for teenagers are very important. Books on the new math, algebra, child care, etc., as well as copies of the Bible are in demand. One 15-year-old boy browsing in the Greenwood library told me he had lately read *Grapes of Wrath, Native Son, Gift from the Sea, Kipling’s poems, and The Sea Around Us*, and he is using a German-English dictionary as he took German in the Freedom School last summer.

The Friends of Freedom Libraries, designated by the Mississippi movement as the New York Liaison for gathering library materials, counts among its supporters the Junior Members Round Table of ALA, which voted in Detroit to support the Friends of Freedom Libraries. For those interested in making contributions, a bibliography of books on the Negro was sent from Mississippi; and we are now expanding it into the area of children’s books and other subjects on all levels. These booklists, as well as information on planning trips to help sort collections may be obtained from the Friends of Freedom Libraries, c/o Mrs. Louise Heinze, 216 E. 13th Street, N. Y. 10003.

**The public library movement**

Despite protests of some librarians in the South that the Freedom Schools retard public library development in the South, the upsurge in the Negroes’ demand for books should be credited to the Freedom Libraries. In summer 1964, for example, there was no public library service for Negroes in Indianaola. In October, project workers told me, about 15 people tried to enter the “white” library, asking for cards. They were given applications and told that the board of directors would meet to consider them. The applicants returned to ask about their cards, but the board, it seems, never met.

A few months later, when a segregated library was scheduled to open in the Negro section, a small protest demonstration by Negroes and white civil rights workers was held in front of the “white” library. After the opening, the number of demonstrators, arrests, and clubbings increased, some victims spending three to four days in jail. Several Negroes dismissed from their jobs, were told frankly it was because of their requests for library cards. These incidents, it should be noted, stemmed from requests for the privilege of using public library facilities.

After the opening of the Negro library, teachers in the Negro schools were given cards to distribute for that library. Many cards were torn up by the children; parents went to the school to protest. Today the library sits in the poor section of town, pristine in its painted, air-conditioned glory, completely boycotted by the Negro community. Should a Negro look there for books on Negro history, he will be quite disappointed, for there is only a single volume on Negroes: *The Story of Negro Folklore*.

In recent months Negroes have obtained cards in the “white” library and take out books, but all the chairs have been removed, so that no one can sit down to read or do reference work. Nor has any public pronouncement notified Negroes that they can use the libraries. Civil rights people, however, have been encouraging their use.
Public libraries in other cities show variations on this theme. The Hattiesburg Public Library, which shut down in August 1964 for a “preschool inventory” when a group of Negroes requested admission, opened in November requiring Negroes who wanted to use the “white” library to “make a special application subject to review by the entire administrative board” (see LIBRARY JOURNAL, Nov. 15, 1964, p. 4490); in June, the chairman of the meeting of the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party told me, it was still a “white” library. Vicksburg requires two cards of the Negro: one for the “white,” another for the “Negro” library. The Negro library, not allotted a budget from which the librarian can order books, must request shipment from the “white” library. In the Vicksburg Freedom Library, a crudely lettered sign reads: “Do you have a card for the (heretofore) white library? Why not? Go get one. One Man — One Book.” Jackson permits Negroes to use the main library, though here civil rights workers may not withdraw books, since they are not considered “permanent” residents. (They generally give civil rights headquarters as their address to protect their Negro hosts who would otherwise be harassed.)

Finally, in the few public libraries I visited, in the rural areas, the collections do not reflect the interests or the needs of the local Negro population nor are they especially good in meeting the demands of the white population. In one community a local clergyman who has a good personal library is being constantly called on by white people for books they cannot get in the public library.

**Federal aid and freedom**

The libraries are now signing compliance forms with the Federal government stating that their services are available, regardless of race, in order to qualify for Federal funds. But there is an ocean of difference between signing a form and desegregating in fact. My visit, coinciding with some turbulent events which revealed the mood and temper of the Negroes in the Mississippi movement, dramatized this point. I saw people piled by police into garbage trucks, arrested for violating a Jackson city ordinance forbidding demonstrations. I spoke to many as they were released from jail, still in a state of shock from the brutalities they had experienced or witnessed. It is not surprising, then, that many boys and girls should prefer to use the Freedom Library. They work after school, do their homework at night and are afraid to risk walking in the white section at night. This is underlined for Negroes in Greenwood, one SNCC worker said, where Byron de la Beckwith, acquitted for the murder of Medgar Evers rides the streets of the Negro section, particularly in front of the civil rights headquarters.

The Freedom Libraries, therefore, play a role in making available to the local Negro population books they cannot get anywhere else. Until the social system of Mississippi becomes less repressive for the Negro, the Freedom Libraries will continue to be needed.
Resolved, that the American Library Association (ALA), on behalf of its members:

Whereas our communities are faced with economic, environmental and societal changes that are of great concern to our quality of life;
Whereas libraries are uniquely positioned and essential to build the capacity of the communities they serve to become sustainable, resilient and regenerative;
Whereas library leaders, and those who inspire future library leaders, have a mandate to ensure future access to economical library services;
Whereas libraries that demonstrate good stewardship of the resources entrusted to them can build community support that leads to sustainable funding;
Whereas the people who work in our libraries and those who access services in our facilities deserve a healthy environment in which to do so;
Whereas the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) has determined that: “Human influence on the climate system is clear... Recent climate changes have had widespread impacts on human and natural systems”;¹
Whereas the American Library Association has acknowledged in its 2015 Strategic Plan that “Libraries are widely recognized as key players in economic development, in building strong and vibrant communities, and in sustaining a strong democracy” and launched the ALA Center for Civic Life (CCL) in 2010 in conjunction with the Kettering Foundation to promote community engagement and foster public deliberation through libraries; and
Whereas libraries that demonstrate leadership in making sustainable decisions that positively address climate change, respect and use natural resources, and create healthy indoor and outdoor environments will stabilize and reduce their long-term energy costs, help build more sustainable communities, and thereby increase community support for the library; now, therefore, be it

KeYwORdS: Climate change; Environmental sustainability and librarianship.
1. recognizes the important and unique role libraries play in wider community conversations about resiliency, climate change, and a sustainable future and begins a new era of thinking sustainably in order to consider the economic, environmental and socially equitable viability of choices made on behalf of the association;

2. enthusiastically encourages activities by itself, its membership, library schools and state associations to be proactive in their application of sustainable thinking in the areas of their facilities, operations, policy, technology, programming, partnerships and library school curricula; and

3. directs the ALA Executive Director to pursue sustainable choices when planning conferences and meetings and to actively promote best practices of sustainability through ALA publications, research and educational opportunities to reach our shared goal of vital, visible and viable libraries for the future.

Adopted by the Council of the American Library Association
6/28/2015, San Francisco CA
2014-2015 ALA CD#36_6515_act

NOTES

Whereas the American Library Association (ALA) has always supported the fundamental principles of government transparency and public accountability that undergird the People’s right to know about the workings of our government and to participate in our democracy;


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” (2012-2013 ALA CD#19.2 and CD#20.40);

Whereas the ALA reaffirms that “these disclosures enable libraries to support public discourse and debate by providing information and resources and for deliberative dialogue and community engagement” (2012-2013 ALA CD#19.2 and CD#20.40);

Whereas the nation’s intelligence and law enforcement agencies conduct surveillance activities pursuant to multiple legal authorities, including Executive Order 12333, the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act (FISA) as amended, the USA PATRIOT Act, and the USA FREEDOM Act;

Whereas the ALA defends privacy rights and supports government transparency and accountability; and

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KEYWORDS: Government surveillance; Right to know; Transparency; Accountability; USA FREEDOM Act; USAPATRIOT Act; Privacy; Searches and seizures; Fourth Amendment; Civil liberties.
Whereas passage of the USA FREEDOM Act meaningfully contributed to recalibration of the nation’s privacy and surveillance laws, restoring civil liberties, but accomplished only a fraction of all such necessary change; therefore be it

Resolved, that the American Library Association, on behalf of its members and the public interest:

1. Urges the President and Congress to amend all germane surveillance-enabling authorities, such as Executive Order 12333, the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act (FISA) as amended, and the USA PATRIOT Act, to:
   a. Require government agencies to obtain judicial warrants before collecting any individual’s personal information from third parties and require court approval for National Security Letters;
   b. Raise the standard for government collection of all records under FISA from “reasonable grounds” to “probable cause” and sunset Section 215 of the USA PATRIOT ACT (commonly known as the “library records” section);
   c. Limit the government’s ability to use information gathered under intelligence authorities in unrelated criminal cases, thereby making it easier to challenge the use of illegally obtained surveillance information in criminal proceedings; and
   d. Prohibit the government from requiring hardware and software companies to deliberately design encryption and other security features to facilitate government access to information otherwise protected by such features;
2. Recommits itself to leadership in the fight for restoration of the public’s privacy and civil liberties through statutory and other legal reforms; and
3. Commends and thanks all parties, both inside and outside of government, involved in developing and securing passage of the USA FREEDOM Act, resulting in movement away from overbroad surveillance laws and practices for the first time in more than a decade.

Adopted by the Council of the American Library Association
1/12/2016, Boston MA
2015-2016 ALA CD#19.1
Resolution against Islamophobia

Whereas The American Library Association policy B.3 Combating Prejudice, Stereotypes and Discrimination (old policy number 60.3) “The American Library Association actively commits its programs and resources to those efforts that combat prejudice, stereotyping, and discrimination against individuals and groups in the library profession and in library user populations on the basis of race, age, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, creed, color, religious background, national origin, language of origin or disability.”;

Whereas library staff and patrons who appear to be Muslim have been subject to verbal abuse;

Whereas arson has been used against at least one Muslim education center¹;

Whereas members of the public have been subject to threats² and abuse³ while attempting to exercise their religion; and

Whereas places of worship have been subject to vandalism⁴ and attempts at intimidation⁵;

Resolved, that the American Library Association (ALA), on behalf of its members:

1. recognizes the positive impact that Muslims have made in libraries and library science;
2. recognizes the contributions that Muslims have made to information and knowledge in regards to the sciences, mathematics, philosophy, medicine and geography;
3. stands with our colleagues, community members and users in speaking out against Islamophobia;
4. deplores the hate speech being directed at Muslims from every level of society; and
5. issues a public statement condemning Islamophobia and standing with our Muslim colleagues and users.

KEYWORDS: Prejudice; Stereotypes; Religious intolerance; Discrimination; Islamophobia.
REFERENCES


Identity Palimpsests: Archiving Ethnicity in the U.S. and Canada


Reviewed by Lincoln Cushing

Nothing about us, without us, is for us. - Slogan popularized in New Orleans during relief efforts for hurricane Katrina, 2005.

Archiving is but one step in the life cycle of a cultural document. A book or a flyer gets produced for an event or to analyze a subject; it gets distributed, later on it gets collected, and eventually works its way into some sort of a repository for care and processing. Once cataloged and made accessible, others can see it, use it, draw inspiration from it, and repeat the process.

This book addresses the archival role in this process where the subject material has been marginalized in mainstream institutions and values. There are many ways that happens – through discrimination in gender, or politics, or sexual identification – but the “wrong to be righted” here is ethnicity.

There are two major reasons why this subject, and this book, exists.

The first is the broad Civil Rights movement that swept this country in the early 1960s, a groundswell of activism that demanded that American “democracy” live up to its promise. Archivists were not immune to this call, one politically suppressed for 20 years and not significantly raised in the U.S. since the golden age of the Works Progress Administration and the Federal Arts Project of the 1930s.

The 34th annual meeting (1970) of the Society of American Archivists was held at the Shoreham Hotel in Washington, D.C. 300 people – about 60% of

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KEYWORDS: Archives; Archival practice; Marginalization; Cultural exclusion; Neutrality; Activism; Activist archivists; Historiography; Ethnicity.
those attending the conference - crowded into a momentous session called “The Archivist and the New Left.” David J. Delgado wrote this report in the January, 1971, issue of *The American Archivist*:

Howard Zinn, professor of government at Boston University, delivered a paper entitled “The Activist Archivist.” Professor Zinn stressed the need for archivists, like other professional groups, to abandon the screen of professionalism and neutrality in order to humanize their ordinary work and not to limit their concern with political issues to their spare time. He denounced those scholars who by their silence and professed neutrality “buttress the existing social order and values” of society and called for archivists to collect and preserve papers and to tape record experiences documenting ordinary lives in addition to those of the exceptional—the “lower” classes as well as the prominent, for example, women as well as men.

The movement that began with disenfranchised black people had opened the gates for a broad swath of others – women, gays and lesbians, Native Americans, and more. The genie had been let out of the bottle and could never be stuffed back in. A new generation of archivists began to rethink their profession.

The second reason has to do with new technologies and practices. In the past 20 or so years libraries and archives have struggled with declining financial support, affecting everything from acquisitions to processing to staffing. But at the same time, new tools have emerged that in some ways compensate for that loss. Among other things, the acts of documenting, cataloging, and sharing have all been made dramatically cheaper and more powerful by such technologies as digital recording and the World Wide Web.

*Identity Palimpsests* shares contemporary examples where committed American and Canadian archivists are using their skills in the service of living ethnic archives. “Ethnic” covers a lot of ground. One expects to read about engagement with First Nations or Puerto Ricans, but one also learns of the challenges of collections serving Finnish-American and German Jews.

All of these practitioners are aware of the difficulty in using archives – institutions that have traditionally largely served the elite – as dynamic springboards for supporting and empowering disenfranchised communities.

Ben Alexander (Queens College) describes the challenge thusly:

...Contemporary history is being equally shaped by new archival practices that allow for a reinterpretation (re-remembering) of familiar historical records and by technological advances in the migration of material evidences into complex digital matrices, which are reshaping the foundations of established historiographical practices in the archival tradition... (p. 187)
As with any good resource, this book examines both effective practices as well as problems.

Greg Bak and Tina Mai Chen (University of Manitoba) point out the double-edged sword of technology and its application, as well as the challenge of drawing in citizen-archivists:

Familiarity with Flickr, YouTube, Wikipedia, and other social media technologies provide the illusion that organizing information is a simple process, a mere matter of tags and Google.” (p. 218) and warn “It is dangerous to uncritically promote and celebrate digital archives as community engagement”. (p. 219)

And M. Mark Stolarik (University of Ottawa) declaims business decisions (or political decisions masked as business decisions) that undercut socially valuable collections:

I am distressed by the continuing rejection of material artifacts by libraries and archival institutions. A case in point is the Balch Institute for Ethnic Studies. Even though I left the Institute on a solid foundation in 1991, my successor…tired of the incessant fundraising necessary… and with the approval of the Trustees negotiated a merger with the larger Historical Society of Pennsylvania. [As a consequence of the merger] the HSP decided to de-accession the material artifacts…and the 4,395 artifacts that the Balch Institute had collected and exhibited for about 30 years were dispersed to other museums or auctioned off. (p. 65)

Despite this sad tale (a version of which can be drawn from almost all repositories) Stolarik still defends the huge value of such collections and their caretakers:

...All scholars in the USA and Canada should be grateful for the work of the Immigration History Research Center at the University of Minnesota and the Balch Institute for Ethnic Studies…They contain thousands of linear feet of materials that document most of America’s ethnic groups. These archives have been processed and preserved by professional librarians and archivists and are readily accessible for research purposes.

The title and recurring motif of this book is a palimpsest, an early form of information media recycling. It’s similar to the visual art phenomenon of pentimento. When parchment was the medium upon documents were prepared, it was not uncommon to scrape off old content in order to add new text and illustration – but traces of the original inscription would often remain, elusive
reminders of what had been before. This book offers hope that those traces can
be restored and elevated to their legitimate place in history and social practice.