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Editorial

Libraries and Information Workers in Conflict Situations

This summer 2007 issue of the Information for Social Change (ISC) journal takes a look at the provision of information and various related aspects of library and information work within *conflict situations*. In our definition of conflict situations, we include not just wars or civil wars, but also societies in which there is major social strife. We have tried not just to include articles which address the provision of libraries within conflict situations, but also to place such work within its wider social and political contexts. In putting this journal issue together, we considered both the provision of libraries within conflict situations and those individuals and groups who work within the very culture of such library or information projects. Accordingly, we thought it important to highlight some people who provide information and help to others, who are caught up within conflict situations. We also tried to cover aspects of the work of peace libraries and coverage of various relevant resources to aid those who are working within or upon various conflict situations throughout the world. We hope that the contributions provided help to shed light on some of the many issues which confront those who labour within conflict situations on a daily basis.

Please note that this issue of ISC was developed in the spirit of our umbrella group, Information for Social Change, which has a special interest in receiving, publishing, documenting, and giving memory to information about conflicts on which very little information has been recorded to date. Our group is particularly interested in explorations of how to protect information providers in terms of their human rights (e.g., privacy; confidentiality; freedom of opinion and expression; freedom of thought, conscience and religion; peaceful assembly and association; and, protection from torture or cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment), as expressed in the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* (1948).

The international contents of this libraries and information workers in conflict situations theme issue include the following contributions: an opening poem titled "It is our time to tread our own path" by Sara Plaza Moreno, which powerfully sets the tone for the subsequent writings starting with a feature globally themed article on "memoricide" in the twentieth century by Edgardo Civallero; a probing treatment of military recruitment and misinformation and the responsibility of libraries to low-income youth by Anna Kirkpatrick; an Indonesian case look at information's role in emergent democracies by Zola V. Maddison; a discussion of where social justice and librarianship meet in the context of international librarianship, activism, and the tough subject of truth commissions by Sergio Chaparro; an annotated list honoring American librarians who have dedicated themselves to human rights and the cause of social justice

by Katharine J. Phenix and Kathleen de la Peña McCook; an introduction to Women Living Under Muslim Laws (WLUML), an international solidarity network that provides information, support and a collective space for women whose lives are shaped, conditioned or governed by laws and customs said to derive from Islam by Sara Masters; a discussion of issues, activities, and preventive measures focused on cultural property in times of conflict by Richard Saltzburg; introduction to the Civil Resistance & People Power web based annotated bibliography, which covers all aspects of the various nonviolent struggles for independence, social justice, and human rights that have taken place throughout the world since the end of WWII and contributed by this issue's co-editor Martyn Lowe; a second feature article, this one on truth, power, human rights information, and the Internet as court of last/only resort by Clay Collins; and, finally with our closing thoughts to peace, Ellie Clement's important storytelling of David Hoggett and the Commonweal Collection, a precious, unique, independent, specialist library devoted to non-violent social change.

We wish you well in your reading, especially as in the time that it has taken to put this issue together (summer 2006 to summer 2007) we have started to see a growing realisation that all new, and future wars, will be a consequence of the weather changers and resulting from climate change. We realize that climate change is a direct result of carbon emissions. We believe that we can all make individual contributions to cutting carbon emission, thus helping to stop the causes of future wars. We, in the library community, can do our bit to counter and reduce global warming (e.g., by doing an energy audit in each of our libraries, by encouraging the use of energy efficient equipment, by implementing recycling programs within libraries, by ensuring that our libraries carry local information about energy efficiency and recycling facilities, and by being selective about where we travel for work and why).

Peace,
Martyn Lowe
Toni Samek
-- August 26, 2007

Contributors

Sergio Chaparro-Univazo was born in Peru and is currently Assistant Professor at the Graduate School of Library and Information Science, Simmons College in Boston, USA. He holds a BA in Library Science and Hispanic Linguistics and Literature from Pontificia Universidad Catolica del Peru, as well as an MLS and a PhD from Rutgers University, USA. He took his MLS degree with the support of a Fulbright Scholarship. Sergio's teaching and research focus on information policy, international librarianship, digital information services, and reference. Contact: sergio.chaparro@simmons.edu

Edgardo Civallero (born in Buenos Aires, 1973) graduated in LIS in the National University of Córdoba, Argentina (2004). He currently works as an independent researcher, teacher, and writer. His activities involve indigenous and rural libraries, oral tradition, anarchist and progressive librarianship, open access, human and aboriginal rights, and alternative points of view within LIS. "Memoricide" - memory *and* library destruction - has been one of his interests after working inside indigenous communities where memory was vanishing and was partially recovered by implementing "special libraries". Contact: edgardo_civallero@yahoo.com.ar

Ellie Clement is a trustee of the Commonweal Collection (<http://www.brad.ac.uk/library/services/commonweal/index.php>) and involved in the library collective at the 1in12 Club (<http://www.1in12.com>) both in Bradford, Yorkshire, UK. For a day job, she works at the University of Bradford as their Engineering, Design and Technology Librarian. She is a chartered member of CILIP, a Fellow of the Higher Education Academy, and a mum. Contact: e.l.clement@bradford.ac.uk

Clay Collins is pursuing an M.A. in library and information studies at the University of Wisconsin—Madison, USA. He is a former research fellow at the University of Minnesota, USA Human Rights Center and a 2004 recipient of the Upper Midwest Human Rights Fellowship. Clay is currently interested in human rights informatics, informational politics, and transnational advocacy networks. He may be reached at claycollins@gmail.com

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Kathleen de la Peña McCook is Distinguished University Professor at the University of South Florida, USA. She was President of the Association for Library and Information Science Education in 1988 and was the 2002 Latino Librarian of the Year (Trejo Award). She received the Beta Phi Mu Award for distinguished service to education for librarianship in 2003 and is author of *Introduction to Public Librarianship* (2004); *A Place at the Table: Participating in Community Building* (2000); and, *Ethnic Diversity in Library and Information Science* (2000). She serves on the editorial board of *Progressive Librarian* and is active in her Union, the United Faculty of Florida. Contact: kmccook@tampabay.rr.com

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Zola V. Maddison received an MLIS and certificate in International Development, Management & Policy from the University of Washington USA in 2005. She is interested in libraries as a tool for sustainable social development and has collaborated on library projects in South Africa and Guatemala. She currently works for [WebJunction](http://WebJunction.org), an online resource that strives to enable vibrant, sustainable libraries for every community. Contact: zmaddison@gmail.com

Sara Masters worked for six years (until February 2007) as the Information and Communications Coordinator of the international coordination office of Women Living Under Muslim Laws (WLUML), an international feminist solidarity network. With many years experience of working with transnational networks and gender, Sarah is now coordinating the Women's Network of IANSA, the International Action Network on Small Arms. A long-time activist, she is also a member of Women in Black a international feminist antimilitarist network and a member of The Maypole Fund, a non-profit women's organisation granting funds to other women's initiatives around the world. Contact: sarahm@gn.apc.org

Sara Plaza Moreno (Madrid, 1972) graduated from Autonomous University with a degree as English Teacher for Children (Spain, 2006) and in Spanish Teacher for foreign people from The International Languages School "International House" of Madrid (Spain, 2004). At present she works as independent editor and writer in Córdoba, Argentina. An indefatigable traveler, she is also a tireless campaigner for reading and writing rights. As a lover of books and stories, she has discovered the most wonderful ones inside people's minds and has developed a good sense of listening to those who sit in front of her. Sara is a woman who finds her home wherever she goes, thanks to her timid smile and her respectful curiosity. Contact: mowfle2s@yahoo.es

Katharine Phenix lives in Boulder, Colorado is the Adult Services Librarian at the Rangeview Library District. Katharine wants to be known as the first person to put a bookmobile online in 1986. She has been Chair and member of the Committee on the Status of Women in Librarianship (COSWL) for the American Library Association, and co-author of several supplements of *On Account of Sex*. She is currently focusing her research on human rights and librarians and the historical and necessary relationship between the two. Contact:

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Richard Saltzburg was born in Paris, France and grew up in Berlin Germany and attended Berlin American High School. This sort of set the tone for his life, as he ended up living and working in Germany for many years after University graduation. Richard attended The University of Maryland, overseas division and graduated in Heidelberg, Germany and began working for the U.S. Army Education centers as a language Instructor. He is now pursuing a second career in library Science through The University of South Florida and will graduate in spring 2008. Contact: ricsalt@uflib.ufl.edu