May 16, 2007

Cataloging Policy & Support Office
Library of Congress
Washington, DC 20540-4305

Dear Colleagues,

This is to recommend a new subject heading:

CRITICAL LIBRARIANSHIP

SN Here are entered materials on the "critical library community"--
also known as alternative, progressive, radical, and socially
responsible--"where considerations for the human condition
and for human rights take precedence over other professional
concerns."

UF Alternative librarianship
Librarians--Social responsibility
Librarianship, Critical
Progressive librarianship
Radical librarianship
Socially responsible librarianship

RT Librarians--Professional ethics

BT Libraries and society
Libraries--Moral and ethical aspects
Library science--Philosophy
Radicalism

The innovated form may be immediately applied to:

Librarianship and Human Rights

A twenty-first century guide

TONI SAMEK

This book aims to disseminate broad aims of critical librarianship.

⌐ **XXV** ¬

Many of the strategies showcased in this book are practised in the international critical library community, where considerations for the human condition and for human rights take precedence over other professional concerns. This critical community, from which this book draws upon for its optimistic vision for the future, has built up its visibility and momentum over the course of many decades.

⌐ **xxiii** ¬

A key challenge then for twenty-first century library and information communities, starting with educators such as this author, is to foster language and a culture of critical librarianship which better support core library values and that encourage and promote active participation in the amelioration of social problems.

This book strongly supports the international library movement known in the twenty-first century as *critical librarianship*, which aims to blur these lines and to expose them as both counter-intuitive and counter-productive to the development of more humanistic (and less techno-managerial) library and information work.

⌐ **7** ¬

Index

⌐ **193** ¬

Example

Critical library movement

The *critical library movement* is, perhaps, the best example of how *movement* is manifest in library and information work for social change. This author's description of critical library movement provides historical context. The critical library movement (which incorporates, at least, progressive librarianship, socially responsible librarianship, activist librarianship, radical librarianship, independent librarianship, alternative librarianship and anarchist librarianship) 'has a tradition that dates from the late 1930s in the US when library activists of the 1930s pressured the ALA to be more responsive to issues put forth by young members involved in such issues as peace, segregation, library unions and intellectual freedom. By 1940, a new group called the Progressive Librarians' Council emerged in order to provide a united voice for librarians who sought change in the association. By the end of its first year, the Progressive Librarians' Council had 235 members. Many were involved with ALA's Staff Organizations Round Table, formed in 1936 and Library Unions Round Table, formed in 1940. In addition, the Progressive Librarians' Council Bulletin provided a forum for activities on behalf of freedom of expression. The Bulletin printed outspoken opinions "not tolerated" by the traditional communication organs – Library Journal, Wilson Library Bulletin and ALA Bulletin. [Thus since, the critical library movement has produced its own vehicles of discourse with a network base in such places as Africa, Argentina, Austria, Canada, Germany, Mexico, Sweden, the UK and the USA]. This discourse gained significant momentum in the late 1960s/early 1970s in the USA and elsewhere in the 1980s. In the last decade, the decentralized and multidirectional technology and communications infrastructure of the Internet has greatly enhanced relationship building, grassroots democratic organizing and the development of 'new citizenship groups' around the discourse and practice of critical librarianship.'

Source: Samek, T. (2004). 'Internet and intention: an infrastructure for progressive librarianship', *International Journal of Information Ethics* 2(11): 2–5. [In summer 2005, the online journal name changed to *International Review of Information Ethics*.]

Retrospective assignment candidates:

+Alternative library literature: a biennial anthology (1984-2002)

+Bundy, Mary Lee/Frederick J. Stielow, editors, Activism in American librarianship, 1962-1973 (1987)

+Roberto, Katia/Jessamyn West, editors, Revolting librarians redux: radical librarians speak out (2003)

+West, Celeste/Elizabeth Katz, edirors, Revolting librarians (1972)

Also suggest assigning (with --PERIODICALS subhead) to:

+Counterpoise

+Information for social change

+Progressive librarian

+SRRT newsletter (ALA Social Responsibilities Round Table)

+Booklegger magazine

+Synergy (1967-1973)

+Sipapu

+Library juice (online resource)

With best wishes,

Sanford Berman
4400 Morningside Road
Edina, MN 55416