Social and Political Responsabilities of Librarians

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Social Issues

- **Society divided; social inequalities; class struggles; social divides (unequality of access to information and its tecnologies).**

- **Rich and poor countries of information and technologies**

- **Mexican rich libraries (minority: special/corporate/on the work, academic, and school private libraries) and poor libraries (majority: public, school and academic from the public interest).**

- **Democratic versus anti-democratic polity (authoritarianisms, totalitarisms, autocracies...).**

- **Library polity as agent of change.**

- **Participación en gremios representativos (AMBAC, CNB, otros).**

- **Freedom of expression and access to information (intelectual freedom) as a democratic polity.**

- **Library legislation (free and free of charge universal availability of publications, and document information, and equal access to the Internet, etc.).**

Causes of the Lack of Social and Political Compromise

- Individualistic tradition versus a social and cooperative tradition.
- Apathetic and conformist attitudes of librarians.
- Librarians forgotten of their university ethics.
- Scarce participation of librarians in library polity.

Consequences of the Lack of Social and Political Compromise

●	Low or none social acknowledgement of the LIS profession.

●	Low library wages.

●	Direction and top management library positions taken by non professional librarians under favouritism and nepotism grounds.

●	Middle and low management positions taken by practical librarians.

●	Government and other non library institutions impose the standards and guidelines on library topics,

●	Library legislation made by non professional or practical librarians.

●	None or scarce presence of libraries and LIS profession in the national socio-economical and cultural development.

●	Hopelessness and impotence of the practical librarians.

●	Widening of the rich and poor documental-library information divide.

●	Widening of the rich and poor divide of access to documental-library new technologies.

●	Hampering of the freedom of access to documental information.

Social and Political Challenges

●	To search through the use of information and knowledge for the balanced transformation of society and nature (science, tecnology, democracy and ecology).

●	To adopt a librarians' (both professional or practical) social and political attitude.

●	To organize in established or new library guilds (Mexican Library Association, National College of Librarians, etc.).

●	Creation of a national workers' union for librarians that indeed defend the librarians' interests, unlike the current associations.

●	Creation of the National Legislation Day for Libraries (where elected members of Congress be asked by law to increase public funds for libraries).

●	Professional education of both practical and professional librarians (to pursue degrees in LIS of undergraduate, master's, doctoral, post-doctoral, or other levels) with national scholarships (Mexican National Council of Science and Technology, Mexico's Exterior Relantionships Secretary) and international scholarhips to study abroad (Fulbright, Alban, Mexico's Exterior Relantionships Secretary).

● 	Critical and systematic research and publication of the current national library situation in non-library mass media.

● 	**To convince the government, the private sector, international organisms and institutions:**

- · 	**To create an Effective National System of Information (unlike the dead word of the current library law).**
- · 	**To create automated union catalogues with free, free of charge, unhampered, democratic and socially equal universal access to documental information in full text of all types of publications.**
- · 	**To establish unhampered, free of charge and fast inter library loan.**
- · 	**Of the importance of the documental information and its technologies for the social, economic, and cultural development of the country.**
- · 	**To legislate on the library cooperation among rich libraries (private institutions) and poor libraries (the majority of the public institutions).**

Recomendations for Librarians

● 	Solid social and political compromise in general and in favor of the poor and underdeveloped side of libraries and documental information.

● 	Proficiency of the English language (and others, as current "Esperantos" rather than submission to nations) and expertise in documental information technologies.

● 	Rigurous academic education (undergraduates, masters, PhDs, Post-docts, and so on).

● 	To fight against poverty in general and against the poor side of library and documental information development in particular, and not only for their personal benefit.

● 	Strategic planning, vision, leadership, strenght, perseverance, daring, effectiveness, attention, dedication, courage, and discipline to achieve always victory in their personal or social aims.

● 	Global thought and local practice (but with a socio-political spirit with solidarity and internationalist, without xenophobies or chovinisms, although without overlooking the local developments of their local communities).

● 	To adopt an ethics of a professional, socio-political, progressive and proactive kind, with a secular, critical, eskeptical and pro-scientific thought (putting aside of their ethics systems of thought of antediluvian, dogmatic, religious, mythical or fantastic origins which are not based on the material, natural, and physical facts and which do not stand the scrutiny of openness to the critique and scientific evidences, altough all of all this does not imply they should lose their own beliefs).

Recommended Readings

- Sagan, Carl (1997)*. **The Demon Haunted World: Science as the Candle in the Darkness***. New York: Ballantine Books. Specially the chapter *"The road to freedom"* where Ann Druyan is co-author.

- Covey, Stephen R. (1990)*. **The 7 Habits of the Highly Effective People Efectiva: Restoring the Character of Ethics.*** New York: Franklin Covey Co. & Simon and Shuster, Fire Side Book, (1. Be proactive, 2. Begin with an end in mind, 3. First things first, 4. To think Win/Win, 5. First listen, then be understool, 6. Sinergy, and 7. Sharpening the saw).

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