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The Academic Heritage of Library and Information Science: Resources and Opportunities.

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ABSTRACT

Schools of Documentation, Librarianship, and Information Management have inherited multiple traditions: bibliography, documentation, librarianship, information retrieval, computing, informetrics, communications, archives, information systems, publishing, and more. We are concerned with documents (books, records, data, speech, symbolic objects) and with the creation, dissemination, and utilization of knowledge in society. The scope is large if we consider who uses documents and why. We deal with very complex matters: human understanding and belief, information technology, and social policies. There are intellectual problems and practical problems of social significance and complexity. New technologies (writing, printing, digitization, telecommunications) constitute new means, not new ends. We can and should rethink and redesign everything as technology changes what is feasible. These schools have focused on a small number of students.

Professional education discourages interest in the nature of the field. The ideal professional program would be within a broader concern with the production, distribution, and utilization of knowledge. It would be scholarly and scientific and critical, drawing on formal techniques (algorithms) and social sciences (cultural anthropology, policy analysis sociology), and also humanities (rhetoric, semantics, epistemology). Our importance comes from the importance of our problems and the relevance of our instruction, research and public service to those problems.

INTRODUCTION

My charge is to introduce the conference theme “Celebrating Our Traditions, Sharing Our Dreams, Shaping New Strategies.” However, I use “heritage,” which has some advantages over “tradition.” Not all traditions are good ones. “Heritage,” like an “inheritance,” whatever assets one inherits, has more of a sense of something one has a choice to use or not. Some of it we want to keep and to use. Some of it, perhaps, could be passed on to the Salvation Army. Comparing what we have with our goals helps us define what additional resources we need to build a better future. So I will celebrate *our* heritage, share *my* dreams, and reflect on new strategies.

Schools of Library and Information Science (LIS) have inherited a patchwork of different but related traditions: bibliography, documentation, information retrieval, librarianship, social studies of information, computing, informetrics, communications, archives, sundry sorts of information systems and services, publishing, and more.

By “our” heritage, or tradition, if you prefer, I refer not only to the schools that are the institutional members of this Association but *any* school of Information, of Information Management, of Information Anything, if it is concerned with the facilitation of human access to and use of information for supporting purposeful action, with how to understand and to improve the creation, distribution, and utilization of knowledge, with what Patrick Wilson so succinctly summarized in his essay “Bibliographical R & D” (Wilson, 1984).

And this is *my personal* dream. I am not speaking for the University of California, Berkeley, or anybody else, but for myself.

OUR HERITAGE

The good news about our heritage, I suggest, is that we have underestimated it, especially, but not only, the antecedents of information science in Europe in the first half of the twentieth century. (The American Vannevar Bush became an icon in the field partly because he could write so well and partly because neither he nor others acknowledged the pioneers who had had his ideas before he did.)

Where to begin? Custom dictates that at this point one refers to the library at Alexandria, which was burned and of which nothing remains, and invoke the name of Assurbanipal, king of Assyria in the seventh century BC, or Callimachus, a cataloger in ancient Egypt. But their connection with the present is a thin one.

Assurbanipal, that ruler sublime,
Built the first library ever in time.
But what can he do for us,
He, or Callimachus?
And their names are so difficult to rhyme.

Bruno Delmas in his excellent history of the development of Documentation in France makes an interesting remark. Something happened in the world, he says, in the 1880s. He doesn't explain that something, but whatever it was, the conditions had become ripe for Documentation--we would now say Information Management or Information Science--to mature as a *métier* to meet a widely felt need (Delmas, 1992). I believe that Delmas was right. (Dewey and the events of 1876 were a few years earlier but Dewey precocious.) The years from the last quarter of the nineteenth through the 1930s will come to be regarded as a renaissance period in the arts, culture, science, and engineering. It was the formative period of electricity, internal combustion engines, impressionism, relativity, electronics, aviation, radio, movies, television, and so much more. It was also when scholars, bibliographers, and librarians began to mobilize to deal with the "flood" of documents, what was later called the "Information explosion."

This period, the last decades of the nineteenth century and the first few decades of the twentieth century, were also a renaissance period for Library and Information Science. Classification schemes that shape us now were developed then. The essential features of our present ideas of digital libraries were first discussed. Quite sophisticated ideas about "documents" and their social role, about hypertext, workstations, reading texts remotely on cathode ray tubes, the use of electronics for document retrieval were all under development or under discussion by the 1930s. The technological modernism of those days' policy-makers, with its rhetoric of systems, standards, organization, information machines -- engines for social progress! -- is still with us, especially among policy makers and the technologically oriented. There was, at least in some quarters, an expansive view of LIS as bringing solutions to the needs of scholars, governments, corporations, organizations, everyone. The close relationship between library practice, business practice, publishing, and the need for innovative standardized technologies for coding and for storing was recognized. Melvil Dewey's contributions are well-known. He wrote in English. Many of the other practical visionaries, such as Paul Otlet, Wilhelm Ostwald, Emanuel Goldberg, Georg Schneider, and Suzanne Briet, wrote in French or German, and are largely forgotten. There are rich opportunities for anyone willing to undertake archaeology on LIS. (For a convenient introduction to recent work on the history of Information Science see Hahn & Buckland (1998) and Bowden, Hahn & Williams (1999)).

If we look for influences on contemporary LIS, we find a patchwork of traditions. Librarianship is a large element, of course, but there are several others. We could engage in genealogy, tracing our intellectual ancestry, and, doubtless, quibbling over terms and definitions. But we live in the present and we should rejoice in a large, impressive heritage, however higgledy-piggledy it may sometimes seem. The challenge is to analyze our assets, to invest shrewdly, to dream, and to build an even better future.

MY DREAM

My dream is very simple: that we embrace and build expansively upon our full heritage.

First I will list what I consider to be the key ingredients of our heritage, and, for me, the order is significant. Later I will consider the shaping of new strategies.

We are concerned with:

1. *Documents*. I use “document” in an broad sense of any “thing” that is regarded as signifying: Books, records, data, speech, signs, symbolic objects,... Information is not, in itself, important, only in its relationship to what people do or might know. We are, thereby, concerned with the creation, dissemination, and utilization of knowledge. I take documents, in that broad sense, to be the anchor of our field (Buckland 1997).

2. *Ideas*. We are academics. The institutional membership of the Association for Library and Information Science Education is populated with scholars, both students and faculty. It is our role and our obligation to be dealing with ideas, ideas for and ideas about our field. Everyone should think. We professors are paid to think.

3. *Problems*. You cannot be seriously concerned with ideas without encountering intellectual problems and you cannot contemplate for long the creation, dissemination, and utilization of knowledge without becoming aware of practical problems of great social significance and great complexity.

4. *Complexity*. Anyone who is interested in what human beings know is necessarily dealing with very complex matters: human understanding and belief, information technology, and social policies. We live, unavoidably, in a very complex landscape in which we must learn to work with both formal techniques and humanistic analyses. We can and should be scholarly in all we do, but we can be “scientific” (formal, quantitative) only in limited areas within our sphere of interest (Buckland, 1999).

5. *Technology*. I deliberately left technology to next to last. The extensive changes in information technology--writing, printing, digitization, telecommunications--are self-evident, even if their consequences are not. New technologies constitute new means, not new ends, but they also change what is feasible. Our field is always heavily dependent upon technology *because* we deal centrally with documents. Changes in the technological substrate mean that we can and should rethink and redesign everything we do as the technology changes.

6. *Education*. The institutional members of this Association are all educational programs. Who are we to educate?

In brief, my dream is to build expansively on a heritage that I see as broadly concerned with documents, knowledge, ideas, tackling major social problems of great complexity, changing technology, and an open-ended educational mission.

A bad dream

There are alternatives. For a narrow, restrictive, exclusive scenario, hardly a dream, consider the book *Change and Challenge in Library and Information Science Education* (Stieg, 1992), which provides a conception of LIS (primarily librarianship) that emphasizes the teaching of professional and technical skills. There is no interest in teaching anything else or anyone else. It is a conception of LIS that lacks exploration of what might be intellectually interesting. It is not the place to look for constructive discussion of what research the faculty might do or what kind of doctoral dissertation research could be done. LIS research is viewed skeptically and, amazingly, the book eventually proposes that research should not be done in schools of LIS. Professionally useful instruction is all. Ordinary academic inquiry is

absent, and for this reason any school of LIS that followed this book cannot justify being in a university. For anyone who is sympathetic to the idea of having at least some LIS programs in research universities, this book is discouraging. What is worse, and difficult to accept, is the number and stature of LIS educators who wrote positive reviews of it and who should have known better. (For a critical review see Wilson (1993)). Let us distance ourselves from it and turn to the shaping of more positive strategies.

STRATEGIES

1. *Documents*. Once we accept an inclusive notion of “document”--digital or otherwise--as any representation of meaning, or any object to which meaning as ascribed, it is clear that the terrain is large if we pause to consider who uses documents and why.

- Lawyers and law courts use documents as evidence, as proof.
- Educators use documents (textbooks, instructional materials) to teach, both to empower teachers and, also, by presenting what is to be taught, diminish dependence on teachers. (In the nineteenth century textbooks were seen as a means to making instruction teacher-proof.)
- Scientists use documents (articles, offprints) as the archive of achievement and for personal status.
- Media specialists and publicists use documents to persuade.
- Governments use documents to exercise social control.
- Religions use documents to assert authority and to encourage adherence.
- Patriots use documents to commemorate and to induce loyalty.
- Artists create documents to inspire and to challenge.
- Commerce is based on documented transactions and the transition from paper to reliable digital documentation is a major contemporary challenge in commerce.

These few examples make it clear that documents pervade our social world. Examining, comparing, and understanding these and the many other variations in the social role of documents and of the influences of unstable technology constitute a rich challenge, which, I suggest, should be an important part of our strategies. (This section draws on the ideas of Professor Niels W. Lund, University of Tromsø, Norway).

2. *Ideas*. In dealing with ideas we need to be scholarly, scientific, and critical, all three, as best we can. This trinity of academic virtue--being scholarly, being scientific, and being critical--deserve some attention for they are not the same. Being scholarly is not the same as being erudite, but, rather, is characterized by the affirmative search for evidence that might contradict our best ideas. That search is the hallmark of good scholarship in all areas, in sciences, in the humanities, in professional practice, in LIS. Being scientific means constructing formal, refutable explanations of phenomena of interest, but being scientific is not always feasible. As Aristotle said, “...it is the mark of the educated man and a proof of his culture that in every subject he looks for only so much precision as its nature permits” (Aristotle 1955, 27-28). There are limits to being “scientific,” so those wanting to be resolutely scientific limit the range of their interests.

Being “critical,” in this context, does not mean being hostile, but questioning the assumptions and procedures being used in scholarship, scientific or not. Critical commentary, in this sense, is important, but, because it challenges assumptions, does not make for popularity.

We are academics in universities. Academics in universities have the opportunity both to study things in themselves (creating knowledge) and also to apply our expertise to problems important to society. In the late nineteenth century the finest universities were the German universities. Then, Americans (and everyone else) who wanted the best education went to German universities. The enormous superiority of German universities was based on a quite conscious acceptance by all parties of an academic duality: Universities were funded to serve national needs and were expected to do that, yet at the same time the scholars had to be free to investigate whatever and however they saw fit. It was a brilliant strategy for the century that it lasted.

Higher education in the USA has been heavily influenced by two German traditions: reverence for research and a differentiation between “technical” higher education and “academic” higher education. This last distinction is evident in Germany in the traditional, separate existence of a “university” and a “technical university” in the same city. The same distinction can be seen in large US universities where it has been common practice to organize a university in two divisions: Typically there is one very large faculty group for academic disciplines (“Letters and science”) and, separately, several smaller units for law, medicine, business administration, engineering, and so on (“professional schools”). A department of library and information science is usually, though decreasingly, a small, separate professional school outside the College of Letter and Sciences.

“Liberal arts” is a traditional collective name in the USA for academic subjects that are not professional, technical programs. “Liberal Arts,” therefore, includes all the natural and physical sciences, social sciences, and humanities, but not professional schools. Chemistry, economics, and anthropology are included in the liberal arts, but not chemical engineering, business administration, law, or medicine. Professional schools are intended to be useful. “Liberal arts” are perceived as educational in some purer sense. They are expected to be intellectually interesting, whether or not they may also be, accidentally, one might say, of some practical usefulness. But something more than merely interesting is expected, because a well-educated person will have insights derived from the liberal arts. To use a German word, an element of *Bildung*, of culture and enlightenment, is expected.

Even outside the USA, where the distinction between “liberal arts” and technical, professional education may be absent or differently expressed, schools of LIS are universally expected to provide a useful, professional education. Schools of LIS are not funded to be interesting or to provide *Bildung*, but to produce technically competent, useful professional employees. As a colleague states it: Students need credentials; they will tolerate being taught; and the faculty sneak in some education. That limited focus may be the best that can be hoped for, but it has had some negative consequences. An exclusive emphasis on professionally useful education discourages interest in the field of LIS itself, in the nature of information and information technology, and in the intellectual history of LIS because there are always more apparently useful agenda. It diverts us from examining the *nature* of our field. Hundreds of books have been published on aspects of LIS, mostly “how-to” books, as is to be expected. But, eighty-five years after ALISE was founded, books that provide a general, conceptual introduction to *scope and nature* of LIS are not common. How many can you identify since Pierce Butler’s thin polemic *Introduction to Library Science*, published back in 1933, which disparaged professional practice while revealing little familiarity with the state of the art. If you look below the surface, this skillfully written text is remarkably empty of content. None of the pioneers of library science is mentioned, nor are their ideas. It is rather like an introduction to Economics that omitted Adam Smith, Lord Keynes, their ideas, and almost everyone else’s.

If your university’s president were contemplating whether to increase or decrease the campus investment in LIS and asked you to for an academic introduction to the field, a what would you supply?

A Fantasy

Setting aside what reading you supplied, let us imagine that your university’s president believed that we are moving into an Information Society, wanted to position the university where the action was perceived to be, and wanted to invest university resources into the study of this phenomenon. It is a quite plausible scenario. Consider the rhetoric about how society is being transformed as we move into an “Information Age.” If only a fraction of these claims were true, dramatic changes to contemporary society are happening, developments of the greatest importance to us all. And if these developments are important, then they deserve a lot of attention and critical analysis. And they should be of interest to large numbers of students. Many different academic departments have interests in one or more aspects of information in society and these interests are to be encouraged. But if this matter is so important, the president has concluded, it deserves an academic department that has this area as its primary problem area. It needs an academic department whose central concern is the study of information and the

production, distribution, and utilization of information in society. What academic department could be better positioned for this undertaking than a school of LIS?

So let us imagine that this university president were to mandate that an existing LIS school, with or without a new name, should undertake this one role, but with one condition: Since there was so much to study the school should be discontinued professional education because the priorities and resources required for professional education would interfere with this new high purpose.

In US terminology, the school would become a liberal arts department because the topics to be studied would be studied in their own right. In the USA it would be located in the College of Arts and Sciences, presumably in the social sciences division. It is assumed that its classes would be of widespread interest to students. The importance of teaching the best that can be said concerning information and society provides the element of *Bildung* that distinguishes the interesting-and-worthwhile from the interesting-but-trivial.

So, would a liberal arts department of LIS be possible? I suggest that any view of LIS is incomplete and lacking in coherence if it *could not* envision a liberal arts program. Further, I suggest that any school of LIS in which the faculty *could not imagine* such a program is already academically underdeveloped. A liberal arts department of LIS could be a very interesting place, but would it be economically viable? Probably it would, in any university in which resources follow instructional workload. (Communications is said to have been the most popular undergraduate major on some campuses.)

Am I recommending the establishment of a liberal arts school of LIS, a “just-plain-interesting” LIS department? No, I would see that as a desirable but not the optimal approach. I dream of an even better strategy. (For a fuller discussion see Buckland (1996)).

3. *Problems*. You cannot be seriously concerned with ideas without encountering intellectual problems and you cannot contemplate for long the creation, dissemination, and utilization of knowledge without becoming aware of practical problems of great social significance and great complexity. Some academic departments are defined primarily by their tools, by their “discipline”; others, typically professional schools, are defined by the problems they address. Our schools of LIS are firmly in the latter category and it would betray our heritage and it would be politically dangerous for us to forget that. Our claim to a place at the university table is based on the importance and the complexity of the problems we address and the relevance of our instruction, research and public service with respect to those problems, not on any claims to have tradition or to be a “discipline.” Since when did business schools claim to be “a discipline”?

The one reason not to have a liberal arts department of LIS, is that there is an even better strategy: A school that has professional education *within* an academic environment that accepts a liberal arts perspective: that is to say, one that acknowledges that an *exclusive* concern with useful professional education alone is not enough, one that is scholarly, scientific, and critical, where applicable, not only utilitarian. (Professional education is more than technical education, because of the professional socialization involved, but that is a topic for another time.)

Harking back to our examples of how document-permeated our society is, think of the different kinds of analysis needed to round out our understanding and our designs—economic, cognitive, political, anthropological, semiotic, technological...—and how such exploration could lead us into many parts of our campus. The intellectual challenge is enough to last all our lifetimes.

But then add on the implications and potential for changes in technique and in technology. The challenge is exhausting to contemplate! Geographical information systems open up new possibilities for a very wide range of people and industries, from the military to humanities. Digital libraries is a phrase applied both to the digitization of library services and also to making the contents of any complex repository accessible. Websites, intranets, and extranets constitute a new genre of document storage and presentation, a new form of library, in effect. Competitive intelligence, the collection and analysis of information about others, is, in some ways complementary to corporate knowledge management, which

is, largely, the creation and use of encyclopedic knowledge of one's own organization. There are so many fronts to work on! Clearly schools of LIS have to be selective about which application areas they undertake to cover, depending upon resources, interests, and opportunities.

Corporate Knowledge Management as example.

As just one example, the creation, dissemination and utilization of knowledge in organizations has become a hot area in business management circles under the name of Knowledge Management. Much, not all of the issues, can be seen as an expansive interpretation of what corporate special librarians believe they could and should be doing. Ninety-five years ago, Paul Otlet called it "administrative documentation." Even if some of the recent hype were to diminish, important, enduring issues will remain. I wonder about any school of LIS that is *not* considering course-work in this area.

4. *Complexity.* Anyone who is interested in what human beings know is necessarily dealing with very complex matters: human understanding and belief, information technology, social policies,... We live, unavoidably, in a very complex landscape, in which we must learn to work with whatever tools we can draw upon. This raises two important strategic issues: requisite expertise and economies of scope.

Requisite expertise. We can and should be scholarly in all we do, but we can be "scientific" (formal, quantitative) only in limited areas within our sphere of interest. I have found it helpful think in terms of LIS as having two foundations: The technical side, which is what everyone expects whenever one refers to "information systems;" and a human and social side. Any school that does not build and respect both sides cannot address the whole. The range of our interests, dealing as it does with very varied interactions between human beings and documents (broadly understood) entails wide-ranging examinations of human behavior in relation to technology, society, and knowledge. We have to draw not only on formal ("scientific") techniques (algorithms, mathematical and statistical tools), but also social sciences (cultural anthropology, policy analysis, management and leadership), *and* humanistic (rhetoric, the art of persuasion; semantics, the study of meaning; epistemology, the investigation of knowledge itself). One of the enduring mysteries of LIS education is why, considering our necessary concerns with representation, meaning, knowledge, and understanding, the role of humanities disciplines, notably linguistics, philosophy, and rhetoric, is so widely overlooked.

The problems that we presume to tackle require all the different tools we can muster and we have to live and to work together on shared goals with fundamentally incompatible mentalities (Buckland, 1999). To hire only technical and technological specialists, for example, would indicate a severely narrowed vision.

Economies of scope. A central strategic challenge has to do with what economists call "economies of scope." Different application areas of information management have grown up with differing traditions, techniques, and terminologies. Each situation is unique in its context. Yet there are similarities. The challenge is to understand what is, or could be, shared and what is necessarily different. For this we need an analytical and comparative approach, requiring a broad understanding of tools and an understanding of the context. Tools are not enough. If you want to contribute in the area of bioinformatics, for example, you need to invest in some familiarity with bioinformatics "on the ground," not assume that generic information management tools will suffice. It is the same with library services, and every other application area.

5. *Technology.* I left technology to next to last, partly because it is so often the starting point for discussion, partly because everyone else focuses on it, and partly because the only justification for attending to technology lies in the previous four points. Changes in technology change the means, but not necessarily the goals. We need to re-design. Improved efficiency is doing the same things better. Re-design is doing different, better things. I agree with a statement attributed to Herb Simon, that the essence

of professional education is a concern with design. How can a service be designed? How could it be designed better?

6. *Education*. The institutional members of ALISE are all educational programs and they have, hitherto, with few exceptions, been narrowly focused and exclusive, effectively limiting their scope to their own majors, to tiny fraction (maybe one percent) of the student body of their own institutions. If, like me, you consider LIS to be of great intrinsic interest and of great social significance, why hide it? If you don't consider it to be of interest and of significance, it is time for a career change. In my dream we share with all who have an interest.

Recall the rhetoric about how society is being transformed as we move into an "Information Age." These developments are important. They deserve attention. Many different academic departments have interests in one or more aspects of information and these interests are to be encouraged. But if this matter is so important, it deserves an academic department that has this area as its primary problem area. It needs an academic department whose central concern is the study of information and the production, distribution, and utilization of information in society. What academic department could be better positioned for this undertaking than a school of LIS?

In universities it is normal for students to select classes that are interesting. The idea that a school of LIS might offer classes that are simply interesting for the general student population has been remarkably absent. In a program entirely dedicated to professional education there is no place for the idea that LIS faculty might share their enthusiasms through intrinsically interesting courses for anyone who wishes to learn. Yet what faculty-member in LIS does not have some knowledge of some topic that could well be of interest to at least some of that very large percentage of the university student population that is not already preparing for a career in LIS? What of the "liberal arts" of LIS, topics explored more for their intrinsic interest rather than their practical utility. There seems no better way to foster understanding of the nature and contemporary concerns of LIS than to share them with those who wish to know. It is not only teachers in training who have an interest in educational issues. Likewise, one does not have to be committed to becoming a professional politician to find political science interesting. One does not have to intend a career as an LIS professional in order to have an interest in such information policy topics such as privacy, censorship, the "information superhighway," and freedom of access to government records.

There is an additional motivation. As Peter Lyman has explained, contemporary liberal arts education in the USA is generally weak and is obsolete in its treatment of the nature and role of technology, of information technology, and, indeed, of information itself. "Liberal education is incomplete if it does not prepare educated people to address the presence of technology--and more importantly, the presence of the information products of technology in the modern world--in an informed and critical way." (Lyman, 1995, 4). Schools of LIS are, or ought to be, exceptionally qualified to remedy this defect.

For five years I taught an undergraduate course entitled "Information Systems" which explored what various notions of "information" and "information system" might include, the social, political and economic aspects of information management and information technology; and so on. Privacy issues and the discovery that information systems have a cultural basis and bias consistently arouse interest. Students are surprised by how widely the meaning of the word "information" varies from one context to another. Exploration of the characteristics of retrieval systems includes exercises that do result in useful skills, but utility was not the primary intent. It was, quite simply, an invitation to explore our field. (Some of the course materials are temporarily available at <https://courses.ischool.berkeley.edu/i101/s97/index.html>).

Students have very little basis for knowing what to expect of such a course. Most expect a utilitarian class that will teach them how to search in online retrieval systems. Others expect a narrowly focused introduction to library science techniques about which they have vague, limited, and old-fashioned expectations. At the same time, widespread rhetoric about "the information society" has created an awareness that there may be something to be studied. However, awareness that there already is a rich, complex and interesting field to be explored concerning information-digital or otherwise, how it is

managed, and how it influences daily life, is ordinarily absent. In part, this low level of awareness is to be expected. How could they know, given the long-term public silence of inward-looking LIS schools preoccupied with the students already in their own professional programs? There is a substantial latent demand for a liberal arts (read “interesting”) introduction to topics in LIS.

Another undergraduate elective, only one of many possible examples, is a class which examined information management and information policies in relation to cultural knowledge. Entitled “Access to American Cultural Heritages,” it explores ways in which knowledge of cultural heritages and of ethnic identity is formed or influenced by a variety of interpretative sources including encyclopedias, library classifications, indexing terminology, school textbooks, historic site interpretation, and so on. (Some course materials are at <https://courses.ischool.berkeley.edu/i142ac/f03/index.html>). The subject matter is of lively general interest in a world preoccupied with ethnicity and the politics of identity.

The course was derived, in part, from some components of our graduate professional program, then the Masters of Library and Information Studies, notably material on the handling of socially sensitive topics in indexes and encyclopedias. Professors of LIS are unlikely to find the contents or the approach in this class to be more than a rearrangement and extension of existing material. What was more radical is that the class is not for our own majors. It is not intended as professional education. And, therefore, it is not what one would expect in a serious, practical, professional school. The reaction of professors in other departments has been exactly the opposite. They assume that any academic department would want to attract the attention of a wide range of undergraduate students. They usually think that the contents and approach of the class are highly original and they are surprised by the idea of LIS as the source of a class with such content. Quite apart from their intrinsic merits, these courses provided an effective window through which the rest of the campus could begin to understand and to appreciate what our field was about.

These two examples are ones I myself have taught. Clearly there are many different ways in which information and information management have an impact individuals and on society. Economic, political, social, legal, and cultural issues are abundant and prominent in so many ways that the opportunities to draw on our heritage far exceed the resources of any school to provide them. In practical reality, no school of LIS can cover all of its interests and, certainly, none should claim a monopoly. Rather, there should be a broad vision within which each school would do its best, drawing upon such academic resources as it can muster.

There are compelling economic, intellectual, and political reasons why new strategies should be expansive, inclusive strategies.

BACK TO OUR HERITAGE

Historians - explore *all* of our field, please!

If we do not share our heritage and interests with others, we cannot expect to be understood and will continue to have unknowing others think that our concerns are a “new” field. Evolving in interesting ways, yes; new, no.

If we understand our own heritage and build on it, broadly, inclusively, strategically, and in an outgoing way, we can and should have, individually, interesting lives, flourish institutionally, and collectively contribute to the rest of the world.

That is my dream.

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