

das aimed at political and social change. The initiatives discussed here describe programs designed to enhance communications and improve access to information for healthcare organizations, social service agencies, educational institutions, women's groups, and other popular agencies under the aegis of the Project for Information Access and Connectivity (PIAC), a Rockefeller and Ford Foundation-funded program. *Rowing Upstream* is the final report on this five-year program, and it attempts to assess the development and availability of African content on the Web, the utilization of and innovation in technology across the continent, growth and support of ICT in African universities, as well as examining the complex web of issues surrounding the work of local agencies, nongovernmental groups, and outside (foreign) donor agencies collaborating to enhance links within and between African countries as well as to the rest of the world.

Although sections of the book read like an annual corporate report, they are broken up by a collection of short personal narratives and observations of those "pioneers" who contributed to the various projects. Those personal narratives, though not necessarily biographical, lend a more emotional tenor to the overall story of the early years of IT development. It is this idiosyncrasy in both content and presentation that greatly improves the book's readability.

Rowing Upstream has seven chapters and three appendices. The first appendix is simply a list of the advisory committee members; the other two are more useful in that they list and describe selected Web sites discussed in each chapter and the organizations involved in the wrap-up conference of PIAC participants in 2001. The chapter on African content on the Web is the most substantial as it initiates a discussion of the definition of "African content" and raises important questions for both African and foreign producers and consumers of that content. The chapter and photo essay on ICT in unexpected places describes popular and regionally

based programs concerned with human rights, sustainable development, and community organizing and their use of the Internet, satellite communications, and radio programming to establish and enhance the exchange of information. The book also features a time line that charts the development of e-mail and Internet capability from its earliest recorded use (the first CD-ROM drive north of the Limpopo river was installed in a Malawian research station in 1987).

Rowing Upstream comes bundled with a CD-ROM that includes the full text and graphics from the book, videos from the photo essay chapter, and links to the Web sites mentioned in the book. The authors have produced a handsome and easy-to-navigate Web site (http://www.sn.apc.org/rowing_upstream) that echoes the contents of the book. The book is free via the publisher whose contact information is available on the Web site.

This book is probably not the definitive history of the development of IT on the African continent, but it does effectively provide a glimpse of the challenges faced and projects developed under the umbrella of one extensive and significant program. It also provides us with a better understanding of the various constituencies who comprise the overall African IT community, especially those organizations oriented toward social change.—*Tim Strawn, Harvard University.*

Samek, Toni. *Intellectual Freedom and Social Responsibility in American Librarianship, 1967-1974.* Foreword by Sanford Berman. Jefferson, N.C.: McFarland, 2001. 179p. alk. paper, \$35 (ISBN 0786409169). LC 00-55391.

"The question for the future," concludes Toni Samek in her study of how 1960s librarians attempted to alter the profession's definitions of intellectual freedom and social responsibility, "is whose culture is library culture?"

There seem to have been two contenders. First, the "establishment," in Samek's term, officials of the American Library Association (ALA) and top library admin-

istrators. Then, the librarians who argued that neutrality in selection served the status quo and so, in effect, was anything but neutral; who sought out alternative press publications for collections; and who fought to make ALA hear their concerns.

It is impossible to recall the 1960s without the radical newspapers and little magazines so available on the street in cities and college towns everywhere. But not so available in libraries, as Samek faults the day's librarians for staying safely within the mainstream. Such exceptions as Celeste West and others, who founded the San Francisco Public Library's Bay Area Reference Center and its newsletter *Synergy*, remained on librarianship's fringe, as did Sanford Berman (contributor of the foreword here) who failed to convince H. W. Wilson to launch an alternative literature index.

If they had less effect on collections than hoped for, radical librarians left a greater mark on the profession's central organization, ALA. Librarians, activists argued, should address social inequities by emphasizing the needs of those who,

due to race, class, or other circumstance, were kept down by institutions bent mainly on serving the dominant culture that sustained them. "One of the key characteristics of hegemony is that power is distributed across a network of civil institutions," writes Samek, who places libraries among these.

In 1967, at ALA's summer meeting in San Francisco, a small group demonstrated as General Maxwell Taylor spoke about U.S. policy in Vietnam. A year later, in Kansas City, activist librarians called on ALA to address social responsibility issues and to back librarians who took stands on intellectual freedom, complaining of a sluggish and out-of-touch bureaucracy. So begin the chapters at the heart of Samek's book, where she records the debates, actions, and inactions that took place in Washington, Atlantic City, Chicago, Detroit, Los Angeles, Dallas, and New York, as ALA conferences became a moveable arena for activists to contest the library's social role.

Any number of groups formed. Among the most durable were ALA's Social Responsibilities Round Table (SRRT),

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Freedom to Read Foundation, and Black Caucus. Others long disbanded included ACONDA, the Activities Committee for New Directions for ALA, formed to study ALA structure and goals; then ANACONDA, the Ad Hoc Council Committee on ACONDA, a second body to study the first; both dissolved, reports Samek, without resolving key questions. ALA made strategic concessions, but when "calls for social responsibility challenged ALA's vital interests," she says, "such as preservation of the traditional role and privileges of the profession or of the entrenched interests of the elite, ALA not only exercised its moral, intellectual, and political leadership prerogatives, but also flexed its organizational muscle to overcome the challenge."

In fact, Samek presents slight evidence of organizational muscle flexing. Instead, she shows more on how activist librarians were able to change ALA. The centerpiece of Samek's final chapter, for example, is a 1972 *Library Journal* cover story by David Berninghausen, director of the University of Minnesota library school. Berninghausen, who since the 1940s had been active on ALA's Intellectual Freedom Committee, wrote in support of professional neutrality, arguing that the social responsibility movement, in calls for advocacy, was itself a threat to intellectual freedom.

So much mail came in that *LJ* ran a second cover story, highlighting excerpts from dissenting letters. Many of the librarians quarrelling with Berninghausen themselves soon became, or already were, highly influential members of the profession. They included Robert Wedgeworth, Patricia Schuman, Eli Oboler, E. J. Josey, Arthur Curley, and others, not to mention the "prickly" *LJ* editorial written by John Berry. "Despite the social responsibility movement's counter-establishment tactics," Samek writes, "ALA seemed to create room to absorb the agitation, then incorporate and contain it within its institutional focus, bureaucracy, and organizational structure." There were larger implications. "While the library was po-

sitioned in the 1960s to play a role in social change, the conservative tradition and structure of the institution prevented it from realizing such a transformation."

A more generous interpretation might seem warranted. Librarian-activists of the 1960s, having inherited neither, were able to create structures and traditions having something to do with today's librarians who oppose the USA Patriot Act, Internet filtering, book banning at the local level, and a publisher trying to pull the plug on Michael Moore's *Stupid White Men*. Was ALA acting merely as an "instrument of power" when, as Samek puts it, "The Association, whether intentionally or not, delivered the *coup de grace* by smothering SRRT out with a plethora of overlapping round tables, e.g., a round table for intellectual freedom, a round table for women, a round table for international relations, a round table for government documents, and a round table for exhibits, among many others." Or, was ALA responding in the ways a large organization can to librarians who felt empowered by the first wave of activism?

Were activist librarians and ALA bureaucrats really the only two characters in the story? Having one's finger on the pulse of ALA, as every librarian knows, is not the same thing as knowing what is actually going on in libraries. What of the librarians who didn't attend conferences or write letters? What about their patrons and their communities? How much support did they give, or would they have given, to libraries with an activist mission? How were questions about intellectual freedom and social responsibility actually worked out on the library floor? What of the community members who might have liked more books about religious fundamentalism or handguns? If a library can be an active agent for social change in the first place, who decides the agenda?

These questions risk that cardinal reviewing sin, faulting the author for not having written a different book. In fairness, Samek, who teaches at the University of Alberta's School of Library and

Information Studies, chose to focus on ALA. The result is a study of what the most outspoken librarians of the day were saying to one another. Knowing what actually took place in libraries is, of course, a more difficult historical undertaking. Nonetheless, "Whose culture is library culture?" remains a question not only for the future, but also for the past.—*Bob Nardini, YBP Library Services.*

Sapp, Gregg. *A Brief History of the Future of Libraries: An Annotated Library.* Lanham, Md.: Scarecrow Pr., 2002. 295p. alk. paper, \$65 (ISBN 0810841967). LCCN 2001-49550.

This book contains five essays that survey the library literature, written between 1876 and 1999, for writing and research concerning the future of libraries. The first essay, which serves as the introduction, covers the bulk of these years, from 1876 to 1977, and the four chapters that follow divide the remaining time. Each provides a composite rendering of the prominent themes and trends forecasted therein. Gregg Sapp, science librarian at the State University of New York at Albany, presents the alternative takes and controversies surrounding the contemporary future thinking, distributing his attention among visionary writing, manifestoes, and the strategic initiatives and agenda-setting documents used to reach perceived goals.

Each of the four chapters is followed by an annotated bibliography of library futurology. There are about 100 to 300

entries in each section, including those cited in the corresponding chapters. Sapp's original annotations, approximately 250 words each, abstract and contextualize the citation by drawing out both its main thesis and its relevance to the library discourse of its time. The result is a unique and enlightening portrait of a profession in a constant state of becoming. It will be appreciated by new librarians, as well as by managers and administrators looking to set the course of their own careers or institutions.

In his introduction, Sapp reviews, in condensed form, the important anticipatory literature of a profession organizing its agenda and the conceptual framework on which it will be built. He begins with the landmark year of 1876, where, with the Centennial Exhibition as its backdrop, the nascent American Library Association opened its conference in Philadelphia with speculations about its future. Questions about the library's principal functions, the education of librarians, and the development of bibliographic and technical tools abound. The early engagement with issues that seem remarkably pertinent today reveals the plot of Sapp's book. One quickly learns that librarians are a self-conscious breed, with a heightened awareness of the vulnerability of the institution and their roles within it. Sapp makes the astute choice of opening the volume by quoting Ranganathan's fifth law of library science: "the library is a growing organism." History shows this is true. Sapp's *A Brief History of the Future of Libraries* demonstrates that, like an organism, the library and the profession have adapted in order to survive.

In the literature reviewed here, the library is often presented as a model for the future development of an egalitarian and intellectual society, just as the "End of Libraries" is predicted by others. One senses great optimism as one reads the utopian visions of yesterday. But these visions are often juxtaposed, at times abruptly, with darker horizons, even tinges of panic.

The bulk of the book is focused on the years between 1978 and 1999, a time like

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