

EDITORIAL FOR ISC NO. 21

by John Pateman and Ruth Rikowski

We begin this issue with a piece by **Kingsley Oghojafor** who considers how to write, compile and sell an e-book on the Internet. He says that:

Whether you are a Librarian who has vital information to share with your other Librarians or an Information Professional who wants to sell what you know in an e-book format, you can easily write and self-publish your own e-book. (p.1 [21])

He then lists some of the simple steps that are involved in writing one's own e-book. Firstly, he highlights the importance of finding a subject to write about that the author is passionate about and secondly, the importance of researching the subject thoroughly. Thirdly, the process of writing the book itself, fourthly, the preparation of a cover for the e-book, fifthly, compiling the e-book, sixthly, selling the e-book and finally, marketing the e-book. Oghojafor concludes by saying that:

The book will show you exactly how you too can become a self-published e-book author. It will take you step-by-step through idea conception, writing and editing, compiling with free or paid e-book compilers, publishing, and most especially marketing the finished e-book to millions of people on the Internet, for fun or profit. (p.7 [27])

Clearly, being able to write, compile and sell e-books can be highly beneficial for progressive library and information workers throughout the world, and can provide us with the opportunity to spread our ideas and our messages to a wider audience.

We then have an article by **Zapopan Martin Muela Meza** which is entitled *Information needed to cope with crisis in the lives of individuals and communities: an assessment of the roles public libraries and voluntary sector agencies play in the provision of such information*. Zapopan considers how community information services help people in different communities cope with their daily life. He highlights two broad categories in this regard - survival information, such as health, housing and income and citizen action information. The latter is needed if people are to be able to participate in the social, political, legal and economic process, Zapopan says. He then analyses some of the roles that public libraries and voluntary sector agencies should play in helping to provide this service, such as the role they can play in helping to alleviate inequality and in promoting community based research. He concludes by saying that:

...librarians and information workers, in order to serve well, pertinently, effectively and efficiently must include in their job description the flagship duties of going out to the streets. They need to walk and stroll around the community veins and arteries... (p.9 [51])

Two articles in this issue, from different sides of the Atlantic, look at the barriers that exist for some people who need public libraries the most but use

them the least. **Annette DeFaveri**, who works at the Vancouver Public Library (VPL), considers *Breaking Barriers: Libraries and Socially Excluded Communities*. This is a very grounded essay, based on both research and practice, into how the public library as an institution is inherently and inevitably exclusive. Annette describes some very real situations which take place at issue and enquiry desks every day – situations which humiliate working class people and turn them off libraries. This article has been used to raise awareness among front line staff at VPL and it is ideal training material – accessible, well written and punchy. In a companion piece **John Pateman** considers *Culture, Identity and Libraries*, in the second of his series of articles for ISC on public libraries and the working class. John considers social class as an important aspect of culture and identity. The working class have always had a very strong culture and language but, as Michael Collins has pointed out in his excellent book “The Likes of Us” (and accompanying Channel 4 program), over the last 50 years the working class have been changed from the salt of the earth to the scum of the earth by middle class commentators. John makes the point that class, like race, can only ever be self defined, as a key aspect of personal identity.

This is then followed by a short piece by **Martyn Lowe** entitled *Key worker status for library workers*. Here, Martyn highlights the fact that library workers undertake important, highly skilled work, but on low pay. Therefore, that all library workers should be classified as Key Workers, and that their grades and pay should be improved, in order to reflect this key worker status.

We have 2 pieces by **David Nderitu** on globalisation. The first is entitled *Failed Globalisation Policies Effects on African Faiths* and the second is *Pain of Globalisation*. In the first piece, David Nderitu considers the fact that, at first, many Africans saw hope in globalisation. However,

In Africa, liberalisation was chaotic. The Africans broke down all trade barriers. Anyone could bring anything, anyhow, anytime (AAA)...Control was being lost and some people became filthy rich and most became terribly poor. It was an economic disaster, which only ended making a bad situation worse. The leaders had been told to liberalise so that they could remain in power. (p.1 [9])

So, a chaotic situation ensued, which only led to a widening of the gap between the rich and the poor. He says that moral questions will undoubtedly start to be raised and that, perhaps, in time people might start to think about a socialist alternative.

It may be that the scales are starting to tip back to the socialist economies...not just from the effect of ‘globalisers’ alone but any small yawn from nature, due to large world population will increasingly create larger catastrophic situations which will seem to spell the apocalypse. In that case, standing shoulder to shoulder in a threatened situation is the only natural process unless we want to aid the demise of the civilisation, as we know it. (p.2 [10])

In *Pain of Globalisation*, David Nderitu begins by considering the American invasion of Iraq. America

...decided to go it alone and attacked Iraq. After all it was armed with Skyhawks, Tomahawks or any other sharp-eyed hawks like Dick Cheney... (p.1 [11])

Nderitu makes the point that during the Cold War between America and the Soviet Union, many nations supported America, but now they feel betrayed. He goes on to speak about the inequality and suffering that those in the developing world suffer from in general, and says that:

The rich will have their way, while the poor will suffer what they must... (p.2[12])

He then considers globalisation, once again, saying that it has not brought prosperity to Africa. Instead, it has come to mean '...colonisation, poverty and slavery redefined.' When developing countries borrow money for capital investments, to try to improve their situation, they find that the borrowing terms are so severe that they are still further impoverished. Furthermore, that:

*There is no limit for globalisation. Globalisation is a black hole for the poor countries...globalisation means that which works for a few and disregards the majority.
(p.3 [13])*

Ruth Rikowski's article in this issue is entitled *Rethinking the 'balance in copyright': 3 parts to the balance, not just one!* Ruth argues that the library and information profession literature and, indeed, the copyright literature in general just focus on the main balance in copyright, whereas there are, in fact, three parts to the balance, and not just one. Furthermore, that in order to be able to fully grasp this notion of the 'balance in copyright' there is a need to express this 3-dimensional process in the copyright literature.

Her examination of this topic led on directly from her work on the World Trade Organisation's agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS). Many different intellectual property rights are covered in TRIPS, but it is the copyright and patent sections of TRIPS that are particularly relevant for the library and information profession. Furthermore, it is interesting to note that, as Ruth explains in her book *Globalisation, Information and Libraries*, moral rights have been excluded from the copyright section of TRIPS.

However, in regard to the balance in copyright, specifically, there is a need for a 3-dimensional approach, Ruth says. Firstly, there is the main balance – endeavouring to maintain a balance between the rights of creators of works and copyright holders and the free flow of information of those works, but there is also a need to maintain a balance for each half of the balance. Thus, in regard to the rights of creators of works and copyright holders (the second part of the balance) – there is a need to try to maintain a balance between moral rights and economic rights, and there are 4 moral rights and 6 economic rights.. In regard to the free flow of information (the third part of the balance), there is a need to try to maintain a balance in regard to various aspects of this, such as free access to information, intellectual freedom, freedom of expression and freedom of information. However, in order to achieve any kind of balance it would become necessary to use some kind of weighting system,

Ruth suggests, but that in an ultimate sense, using any such weighting system will be impossible. Ruth concludes by saying that:

...once we are into the complexities of weighting, it will then become apparent, I suggest, that establishing any fair weighting scheme will be impossible, and that, indeed, achieving the balance in copyright in any ultimate sense is actually impossible. Let us, then, give further philosophical thought to the balance in copyright issue, and clarify our thinking. (p.6 [p87])

As Ruth emphasises in her book, we need to move out of this mode of thinking and terminology altogether, and instead use Marxist terminology and concepts in order to understand the world that we live in today, with all its complexities.

Using libraries in Nigeria as tools for education and national development in the 21st century, by **Rose B. Okiy** explores the place of education as an instrument per excellence for national development and that of libraries as the centre of academic excellence in educational institutions at all levels are discussed. The unenviable state of the provision of library resources and services in most libraries in Nigeria is considered. The 21st century being an information society powered by information in all its ramifications, this article advocates that libraries in the entire educational system in Nigeria be totally overhauled so that they can be well stocked with up-to-date and relevant books and other Information Communication Technology (ICT) facilities prevalent in the electronic libraries of this 21st century. These being the kind of libraries through which pupils and students can acquire the skills to access and utilize information properly in their educational pursuits and hence transfer such skills to decision making processes in their working life, and nation building. Government is encouraged to provide adequate funds and other necessary resources to equip all types of libraries in Nigeria so that they can be used as effective tools for education and national development in Nigeria in the 21st century.

Martyn Lowe considers another medium of popular culture in his article *Going to the Movies*. As Martyn concludes “No movie can or should ever be seen, except within its true social and historical context, and that is the point I really wish to emphasise. For the rest there is just escapism and entertainment. Now just what movie do I want to watch tonight?” Yet another medium – documentaries – is the subject of *Imperialism, Censorship and Fascism* by **Fernando Buen Abad DomÁnguez**. As the title implies, there is a direct link between imperialism, censorship and fascism: “Direct or indirect censorship, whether ideological or economic, expresses the fascist parasitism and degradation of Capitalism which, leaning on policemen of conscience intends to keep watch over information, reality and ideas. Censorship puts forward a civil war of meanings. Not having understood the economic roots of Imperialism, without a profound diagnosis of its political and social implications, and not considering censorship the worst enemy of the documentary field, it is impossible to take even one step forward towards solving the current practical tasks of the International Movement of Documentarists.”

Finally, we have a report of **Ruth Rikowski's** book launch for her book, *Globalisation, Information and Libraries: the implications of the World Trade Organisation's GATS and TRIPS Agreements*, and this was held at London South Bank University on 26th April 2005. Some 70 people attended and it was introduced by Professor Deian Hopkin, the Vice-Chancellor at South Bank. Ruth spoke about her book and how exciting it was – getting her first book published. There were also 8 other speakers. Martha Spiess who has worked with Indymedia Maine, and is the sister of Jim Grieshaber-Otto, who co-authored the first book about the impact of the General Agreement on Trade in Services on Canada's public education system, came over from the States specifically to video the launch. There is a report of the launch in this issue, which has been compiled from information obtained from the DVD that Martha Spiess made of the launch.

We also have a number of reviews on books about globalization and global capitalism. *A World to Win: a rough guide to a future without global capitalism* by **Paul Feldman and Corinna Lotz** is reviewed by John Pateman. The facts and figures in this book give plenty of ammunition to campaigners who are arguing for a more just world, politically, economically and environmentally. But the Trotskyist political argument – that socialism in one country is not possible and that the only solution is a world revolution - is not credible. John Pateman also reviews *Globalisation, Information and Libraries* by **Ruth Rikowski**. This clear and well written book not only explains the intricacies and implications of the World Trade Organisation's GATS and TRIPS Agreements; it does so using an Open Marxist analysis. This book is also reviewed by **John Vincent** who thinks that "Ruth is absolutely right in her recognition of the dangers posed by the GATS and TRIPS, and has argued persuasively about the problems posed by increasing commercialisation and privatisation of libraries, of a 'public good'.. Her Open Marxist analysis of the issues – and her analysis of the work of the WTO and the threats of global capitalism – are ground-breaking and extremely important... this is a book of immense importance – and, at the same time, manages to be highly readable! We should all read it – and think twice before looking at money-making schemes!"

This is followed by two book reviews, on: *E-book publishing services: how anyone can write, compile and sell e-books on the Internet* (by Kingsley Oghojafor), and *Helen Macfarlane: a feminist, revolutionary journalist and philosopher in mid-nineteenth century England* (by David Black) – both reviewed by Ruth Rikowski. Helen Macfarlane was the first person to translate Marx and Engels *Communist Manifesto* into English, and David Black in his book, seeks to rescue her from obscurity.

We hope you enjoy reading ISC 21. We always welcome your thoughts and contributions, so do feel free to contact us:

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