

## Introductory note<sup>1</sup>

by Mikael Böök

I do not think that Ken Williment's article<sup>2</sup> fits very well into the issue on Information Ethics [...] My eyes are fixated -- perhaps too fixated! -- on the ongoing transformation of the information technology and, therefore, on information as "any difference that makes a difference" (Gregory Bateson). I am trying to find out how this technological transformation and that stripped definition of information relate to ethics, considering that ethics is, above all, about how we treat each other. The issues which Williment puts on the table in his article are without doubt closely related to ethics, and indeed also to social politics. For instance, he is a critic of the ideology (illusion) of the public libraries which pretends that they include all classes of people. And he wants the public library to actually do what it says that it does. According to him, librarians should therefore engage in outreach activities, to find out the needs of the excluded people and to satisfy those needs. It is true that the needs of the excluded are, in part, also information needs. The excluded need information that 'makes a difference' *for them*. Here we have another excellent starting-point and viewpoint for the ethics of information work. And it surely could be very important for the community building if at least some of the public librarians would engage more in outreaching activities. (Others might be too shy, or introvert, or nerdy, to do so, and ought not to be pressed too hard, in that case.) For political reasons, I would like to suggest that the librarians do this ethical information work and community building together with the social movements of the social forums. The right thing to do now for me is to stop here and split the articles of this ISC issue in two parts.

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<sup>1</sup> From an email to the Editorial Board of ISC.

<sup>2</sup> It takes a Community to Create a Library. See below. Ken Williment's article was originally published in *Partnership: the Canadian Journal of Library and Information Practice and Research*, Vol 4, No 1 (2009).