From the bronze age to big data: why knowledge matters
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• Shooting at Pulse Nightclub in Orlando
• Bombings in Istanbul, Dhaka and Baghdad
• Police killings of Alton Sterling and Philando Castile
• Brexit…
• Spike in child poverty
• Delays to state pension for hundreds of thousands of women
• Children with mental health problems being denied treatment
• DWP delaying the release of benefit death reports
• Junior doctors contract being forced through
UN reports government austerity policy a breach of international human rights
What’s happening

- Cuts in all sectors – library stock, opening hours, staff
- Value of the £
- Library closures
- Deprofessionalisation
- Redundancies / removal of posts
- Commercialisation
- Un- and low-paid apprenticeships
- Surveillance / filtering / privacy / Prevent agenda
- Librarians not viewed as valuable to institutions
The professional is political
1. Concern for the public good in all professional matters, including respect for diversity within society, and the promoting of equal opportunities and human rights
2. Concern for the good reputation of the information profession
3. Commitment to the defence and the advancement of access to information
4. Provision of the best possible service within available resources
5. Balancing the needs of actual and potential users and the reasonable demands of employers
6. Equitable treatment of all information users
7. Impartiality, and avoidance of inappropriate bias
8. Respect for confidentiality and privacy in dealing with information users
9. Concern for the conservation and preservation of our information heritage in all formats
10. Respect for the integrity of information and for the intellectual effort of those who created it
11. Maintaining and improving professional knowledge, skills and competences
12. Respect for the skills and competences of all others
Libraries are central in achieving social justice. It's that simple.
“I think people in this country have had enough of experts”
“The whole purpose and aim of libraries in a democratic country is to encourage individual citizens to think things out for themselves, freely and without pressure; how to base their reasoned opinions on observed facts; how to live a full, creative life of their own, a life that is intellectually honest and independent.”

Raymond Irwin (1950)
“Librarians have a social responsibility to ensure that people get correct information. It is a matter of ethics that they challenge misinformation, particularly when this is used by a small, powerful clique to wage wars and kill people on false pretexts.”

(Durrani and Smallwood, 2008)
Our worth is about more than money
“The distribution of information involves political and social, as well as economic, considerations” (Usherwood, 1989)
Previous actions have “created financial rods for our professional backs” (Usherwood, 1989)
The problem with “positive narratives”
Innovation?
“they ought to be not just book lending centres. The advent of record libraries is a step in the right direction. In my view they should become cultural centres in the widest sense of that term – a place where people can gather to talk, to hear a variety of discussions – the very heart of the local community..so that people can get a meal and a drink where there is a multiplicity of activity – record recitals, discussion groups, poetry and play readings, exhibitions reflecting the work of local cultural and social organisations, and the meeting of local societies.”

Howell (1967). ‘Public library services in England and Wales’
Libraries are not neutral
Actually it *does* matter
Bear witness to negativity
“Speaking truth to power means comforting the afflicted, and afflicting the comfortable. None of us has a monopoly on the truth. There is the truth, and there is the way to the truth. We must be humble enough to accept that we only know the truth that we know, at any given point on our life’s journey. But the truth that we do know, we must speak it. We must have the courage to say what we see.”

Tavis Smiley
“Cynicism and despair can only assist those who wish to remain in power”
Spaces of possible action
Talking about important stuff is important.
Public service convictions must resurface, and considerations beyond those of the bottom line prevail.

Usherwood (1996)
Stuff we can do

• Use our practical experience
• Use our international networks
• Use our body of knowledge
• Use our academic expertise
We are making (slow) progress.
You want to protect your privacy online but don't know how to do it?

CryptoParty Newcastle
Join us on 22 May from 13:00 at Newcastle City Library
www.cryptoparty.in/newcastle
We need to pull our socks up
We need to ask questions
We need to fight battles we can’t win
We need to support and challenge each other
We *don’t* all need to be leaders
We need representation
We need to recognise our role and responsibilities
We need to give accounts
We need to critically reflect
We need to speak up
• Advocacy
• Workforce
• Standards and Innovation
• Operations
Advocacy Outcomes

• The general public are informed about the **need for library and information skills** to make effective use of knowledge, data, information and technology;

• Employers create **attractive, well-paid opportunities** for **skilled and qualified** library, information and knowledge management professionals, support their CPD and invest in information skills for their workers;

• Policymakers understand, invest in and develop policy which **promotes the interests** of library and information services;

• Where necessary, the interests of our members and the public are **defended against the negative consequences of policy**.
We need support, transparency and communication from our professional body.
“That CILIP actively oppose those public authorities and work with senior library staff over the “amateurisation” of the Public Library service by offering library buildings and contents to be run by the local community with little or no funding for professional or paid library staff. This is resulting in public libraries being run by volunteer staff and taking away work currently done by paid professional and library assistant staff. All current public library service points staffed by paid local authority library staff should be the current base-line - and where such actions are suggested by the local authority and senior library staff, CILIP should support the opposition to such proposals and say so publicly.”

Andy Richardson, resolution submitted at CILIP AGM September 2015
CILIP Response

• Ensure that it is reflected in CILIP’s ongoing advocacy and campaigning
• Review CILIP policy based on evidence and research
• Get views from special interest and regional groups
• Position statement in six months (March 2016)
• Guidance on using position statement for advocacy
We need to leverage our privilege
We need to be both excellent practitioners and committed members of society.
THANK YOU

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