

University of South Florida

From the Selected Works of Kathleen de la Peña McCook

2015

Social Media- Wikipedia, Twitter,Blogs, Lists and LIS News-2000-2015

Kathleen de la Peña McCook



Available at: https://works.bepress.com/kathleendelapena_mccook/24/

2015

Social Media Profile- Kathleen de la Peña McCook

2000-present

- + Twitter
- + Wikipedia
- + Blogging
- + Discussion Lists
- + LIS NEWS



Looking back on 15 years of social media engagement I realize it has been a great part of my academic work and am beginning to document it here.

Twitter- Joined 2008--continues.



<https://twitter.com/klmccook>

Wikipedia



User:KmcCook

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/User:KmcCook>

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia.

I began editing Wikipedia in 2007 continuing to today. . I am a member of the unreferenced articles project because I am a librarian and can search databases to add citations. I also review new pages, focusing on pages by or about women because of the gender imbalance of Wikipedia. I hope I can help to encourage women. I teach a course on the history of knowledge management and my students have the option of learning to edit Wikipedia beginning with tutorials and making good use of the Teahouse. I also teach a course on Wikipedia Governance.

Read about my classes here: “ [Librarians as Wikipedians: From Library History to “Librarianship and Human Rights”](#) in the journal, [Progressive Librarian](#) Summer 2014 #42- pp. 61-80.

http://progressivelibrariansguild.org/PL_Jnl/contents42.shtml

I am a member of the [Category:Wikipedian librarians](#)

Article on my work teaching Wikipedia:

McCook, K. P. (2014). Librarians as Wikipedians. *Progressive Librarian*, (42), 61-81.

https://www.academia.edu/7212096/Librarians_as_Wikipedians_From_Library_History_to_Librarianship_and_Human_Rights_-2014

BLOGGING

I edit or edited these blogs:

❖ [Librarians and Human Rights](#) (ongoing)

Established in 2005 to recognize the work librarians do to sustain, support and defend Human Rights.

Librarians, Libraries and Library Associations who made a difference-

❖ [Librarians Build Communities](#) (ongoing)

Is a blog, supported by Valdosta State University, that continues my earlier blog, [A Librarian at the Kitchen Table](#). It was initiated in January 2010.

- ❖ [Librarians Build Communities](#) The Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) awarded Georgia Public Library Service (GPLS) a 2009 Laura Bush 21st Century Librarian Program grant to fund the GPLS "Librarians Build Communities" program, which provided the scholarships needed to prepare 45 students to be public librarians and provided them with expertise in community building. Courses were offered at Valdosta State University, [Master of Library and Information Science \(MLIS\) Program](#).

The mission of the Master of Library and Information Science (MLIS) Program is to provide a quality publicly supported education for generalists and specialists in the library and information science fields. Its primary focus is to educate librarians for academic, public, and special libraries in Georgia.

"This grant will help GPLS strengthen community support for public libraries in Georgia, address Georgia's shortage of librarians and provide a model for other states."

❖ [A LIBRARIAN AT THE KITCHEN TABLE](#)

LIBRARIANS BUILD COMMUNITY BY WORKING AS ADVOCATES FOR HUMAN RIGHTS.
2001-2011. CONTINUES AT "LIBRARIANS BUILD COMMUNITIES."

Community Building blog—

2001-2011 and continued by the blog, [Librarians Build Communities](#)

<http://librarianoutreach.blogspot.com/>

The ISSN for my stand-alone blog, **LIBRARIAN**, was 1932-8559. It is available on the "Wayback Machine" from [April 7, 2005](#) and [February 11, 2012](#).

https://web.archive.org/web/*/librarian.lishost.org

I sent downloads of the blog in paper to the American Library Association Archives as I have some concern that electronic versions are unstable and may disappear.

[Kathleen de la Pena McCook Papers, 1976-2012 | The American Library Association Archives](#)

2 supplemental blogs I ran for a while. Books, politics and libraries.

[Librarian 1.2](#)

And [Librarian 1.3](#)

I am now editing Wikipedia rather than individual observations on my own blogs.

❖ UNION LIBRARY WORKERS (2002-2012..passed it on)

I started and edited the [Union Library Workers](#) blog from 2002-2011. Annual reviews based on the blog appeared in the journal *Progressive Librarian*.

The UNION LIBRARY WORKERS blog is a project of the Progressive Librarians Guild (PLG), an organization devoted to the open exchange of radical views on library and information issues.

<http://unionlibraryworkers.blogspot.com/>

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Discussion lists

I began and continue to moderate several electronic Discussion lists:

[Human Rights and Librarians discussion list](#) (ongoing)

Founded January 2008.

Librarians committed to the promotion of human rights through libraries and library services. This discussion list is managed in collaboration with the blog on "Librarians and Human Rights" The blog was established in 2005 to recognize the work librarians do to sustain, support and defend Human Rights. see here: <http://hrlibs.blogspot.com/>

"Whereas recognition of the inherent dignity and of the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world"...Universal Declaration of Human Rights--December 10, 1948.

[A LIBRARIAN AT EVERY TABLE](#)-ALAET—which began in **February 2002. (ongoing)**

<http://mailman.acomp.usf.edu/pipermail/a-librarian-at-every-table/>

The a-librarian-at-every-table Archives

You can get [more information about this list](#).

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"StanleyK" is an uncensored discussion list for those who teach in library and information science education programs and those interested in issues relating to the education of librarians. This list is not moderated. Founded 2007.

Named for Poet Laureate Stanley Kunitz whose writings in Wilson Library Bulletin were important to the passage of the Library Bill of Rights. (passed on moderation responsibilities in 2012)

<https://groups.yahoo.com/neo/groups/StamleyK/info>

[FLAM- Florida Libraries and Museums](#)- (ongoing) The FLAM list is the place to post information about cultural heritage with a focus on Florida's libraries and museums. Broader posts are welcome as well, as libraries and museums converge in some purposes. Our differences are also to be celebrated.

The flam Archives

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September 2002:	[Thread] [Subject] [Author] [Date]	[Gzip'd Text 21 KB]
August 2002:	[Thread] [Subject] [Author] [Date]	[Gzip'd Text 2 KB]

The ISSN for my stand-alone blog, **LIBRARIAN**, was 1932-8559. It is available on the "Wayback Machine" from [April 7, 2005](#) and [February 11, 2012](#).

https://web.archive.org/web/*/librarian.lishost.org

I sent downloads of the blog in paper to the American Library Association Archives as I have some concern that electronic versions are unstable and may disappear.

[Kathleen de la Pena McCook Papers, 1976-2012 | The American Library Association Archives](#)

sample pages from 2008.

Librarian

Libraries as the Future of Culture and History. ISSN 1932-8559

Librarian

Libraries as the Future of Culture and History. ISSN 1932-8559

Literary Translation. No. 5.5.2008. 80.
May 4th, 2008

"The A to Z of Literary Translation: W, X, Y & Z " by Georgia de Chamberet
at **Words without Borders.**

Posted in [translation](#) | [No Comments »](#)

'Reading First' is Ineffective. No. 5.2.2008. 79.
May 2nd, 2008

Students enrolled in a \$6 billion federal reading program that is at the heart of the No Child Left Behind law **are not reading any better than those who don't participate**, according to a U.S. government report.

The 211-page study, **Reading First Impact Study**, analyzes the performance of students in 12 states who were in grades one to three during the 2004-05 and 2005-06 school years.

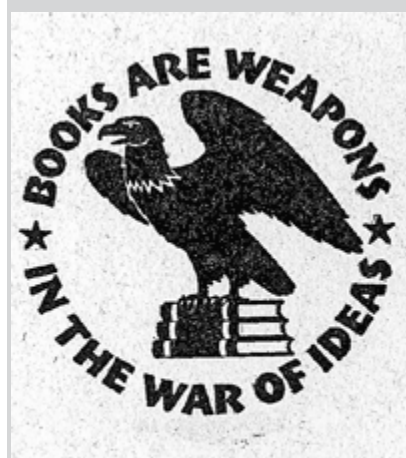
The study **concluded** that as a result of Reading First, teachers were spending about 45 minutes to an hour longer each week helping students with essential components of reading instruction, including phonics, vocabulary, fluency and comprehension.
=====

Feb. 28, 2007. The New Standard reported – A government audit has found that a federally funded literacy initiative **has been run more like a sales pitch for private interests** than an education-reform effort. A **scorching internal review** of the Bush administration's reading program

in 2006 found the Education Department ignored the law and ethical standards to steer money the way it wanted. The government audit is unsparing in its review of how the billion-dollar-a-year Reading First program has been beset by conflicts of interest and willful mismanagement. It suggests the department broke the law by trying to dictate which curriculum the schools must use.

Posted in [George Bush](#), [reading](#) | [No Comments »](#)

Miriam Braverman Memorial Prize Winner, 2008. No. 4/29. 2008.78.
April 29th, 2008



Graphic from *The Printing Trades*,
by Jacob Loft, 1944

Media	Release
Contact:	
Dr. Terrence W. Epperson	
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April 29, 2008	
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE	
Miriam Braverman Memorial Prize Winner Announced	

(The College of New Jersey, Ewing, NJ) – The Progressive Librarians Guild is pleased to announce the winner of the 2008 Miriam Braverman Memorial Prize. This year's prize has been awarded to Miriam Rigby for her essay entitled "Just Throw It All Away! (and other thoughts I have had that may

bar me from a career in archiving)." Ms. Rigby is currently enrolled in the MLIS program at the University of Washington's Information School and plans to graduate in spring, 2008. Essays were submitted by library and information science students from colleges and universities in the United States and Canada. Their papers considered such subjects as the USA Patriot Act, health literacy outreach, and humanism as critical librarianship.

Ms. Rigby's essay will be published in the forthcoming issue of [Progressive Librarian](#), the journal published by the Progressive Librarians Guild. She will also receive a \$300 stipend for attendance at the 2008 American Library Association's annual meeting in Anaheim, CA, and an award certificate at the PLG annual dinner on June 29, 2008. The Miriam Braverman Memorial Prize is awarded annually for the best essay written by a student of library/information science on an aspect of the social responsibilities of librarians, libraries or librarianship. The prize is named in honor of Miriam Braverman (1920-2002), an activist librarian who was a longstanding member of the Progressive Librarians Guild and a founder of the American Library Association's [Social Responsibilities Round Table](#). She was a strong proponent of the social responsibilities perspective within librarianship and an inspiration to younger librarians entering the field.

The [Progressive Librarians Guild](#) (PLG) was founded in 1990 and is committed to supporting activist librarians and monitoring the professional ethics of librarianship from a perspective of social responsibility. For more information, visit the Guild's website at: <http://libr.org/PLG/> ###

Posted in [Progressive Librarians Guild, Social Responsibilities Round Table](#) | [No Comments »](#)

Andrzej Stasiuk
April 29th, 2008



Posted in [cigars, cigarettes](#) | [No Comments »](#)

Jack London at Geneva's 22nd annual salon du livre. No. 4. 29. 2008. 77.
April 29th, 2008



An exposition about celebrated American novelist and short story writer Jack London is one of the feature attractions of Geneva's annual international book fair, getting under way Wednesday at Palexpo. The fair has set aside 100 square meters to exhibit documents and photographs of London (1876-1916), reputed to be the most read author in the world,

widely translated in multiple languages, including

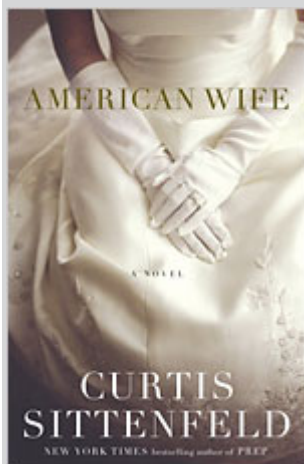


French.

Posted in [books](#) | [No Comments »](#)

Becoming Laura Bush _American Wife_. No. 4.27.2008. 76.
April 27th, 2008

“ How then can she be — or so it seems — happily married to a man hell-bent on weakening civil liberties? ...She’s a former librarian who knows just how crucial privacy and intellectual freedom are to a democracy.”



Curtis Sittenfeld’s new book, is essentially an imagining of the life, from childhood through the White House, of Laura Bush.

Many librarians have asked how a librarian could accept government attacks on civil liberties and pointed out the ironies.

Progressive Librarians Guild Opposes ALA “Award” to Laura Bush

Posted in [George Bush](#), [Progressive Librarians Guild](#), [civil rights](#) | [No Comments »](#)

Cynthia Ozick Wins PEN/Nabokov Award and PEN/Malamud Award. No. 4.26.2008. 75.
April 26th, 2008



Writer and critic Cynthia Ozick has won not one but two lifetime achievement awards.

The \$5,000 PEN/Malamud prize for short fiction, and the \$20,000 PEN/Nabokov award for “enduring originality and consummate craftsmanship” were judged by different panels but agreed to present the honours in tandem.

“A master of many forms, Cynthia Ozick takes her place beside the very finest novelists, essayists, and short story writers. A prodigious imagination, a relentless intellect, an endless appetite for investigation and truth telling: all these we have come to expect from her work. She rearranges the mosaics of history and reinscribes the palimpsests of tradition as she explores the attachments and detachments of place and time in ways at once immediate and enduring. Insisting always upon the primacy of the word, of the sacred calling of the writer, she has, in over

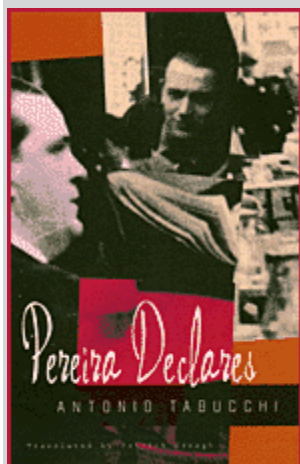
twenty books, challenged, invigorated, and delighted her devoted, always grateful, sometimes chastened readers.”

Cynthia Ozick has published widely— beginning with the novel *Trust* in 1966. Over the years she has written poems, short stories, essays, novels, and a play. Among them: *The Pagan Rabbi* (1971); *Bloodshed* (1976); *Levitation* (1982); *Art & Ardor* (1983); *The Cannibal Galaxy* (1983); *The Messiah of Stockholm* (1987); *Metaphor & Memory* (1989); *The Shawl* (1989); *Fame & Folly* (1996); *Heir to the Glimmering World* (2004); *The Din in the Head* (2006); and *Dictation* (2008).

Posted in [literary awards](#) | [No Comments »](#)

Between Politics and Poetry. No. 4.26.2008. 74.
April 26th, 2008

Workplace Speech



“Standing Up, Speaking Out, Through Disappointment to Hope: Between Politics and Poetry.” [a draft, partial version of a paper for the [Canadian Library Association](#). May 22, Vancouver].

Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers.
—Article 19- [Universal Declaration of Human Rights](#).

Fear of speaking out at work is a manifestation of larger political and social forces than simply a dysfunctional administration at one's place of work. If we assess our working life as part of a system we will begin to see where repression comes from and we can begin to develop a philosophical, ethical and political framework to overcome fear. Certain kinds of governments unleash and empower the petty dictator within some bureaucrats. Without a larger world view than our cubicle in our office in our building we can easily be made to feel threatened, marginalized or isolated when we speak up for what we deem is right action. And there is nothing good about being threatened, marginalized or isolated. But some of us take stands that make us so. Why some will advocate for values like [Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights](#) and others will not, is likely due to a lack of focus in LIS education on ethical issues and by the profession at large.

Librarianship had a recent case (1999) of a major workplace speech controversy when Sanford Berman was to be given a reprimand and demotion at the Hennepin County Library following his speaking out against the library's cataloging policy (Berry). Berman's efforts to stand for workplace speech have been discussed by Carney in his article on democratic communication in the library workplace:

"On January 18, 1999, Sanford Berman sent three of his superiors a memo expressing his opinion on proposed changes regarding the cataloguing of library materials. Berman's superiors responded to his seemingly harmless memo with a written reprimand, accusing him of unprofessional behavior, stating "You have the right as a citizen to express your opinion. You may not initiate discussion of that opinion on work time nor route that opinion to staff at work" and that "...further counterproductive behavior" would result in "...further discipline."

Berman resigned.

In spring 2005 Berman put forth the proposition in the *Journal of Information Ethics* that ALA adopt a policy on workplace speech. With some modification from Berman's proposal, a resolution "Resolution on Workplace Speech" was passed in June 2005 and a policy incorporated in the ALA Policy Manual.

54.21 Workplace Speech

Libraries should encourage discussion among library workers, including library administrators, of non-confidential professional and policy matters about the operation of the library and matters of public concern within the framework of applicable laws. (See Current Reference File": Resolution on Workplace Speech, 2004–2005ALA CD#38.1)

I offer my recent experiences to demonstrate how daily work in the 21st century is a constant effort to be true to values of human rights and social justice and the many ways that workplace speech can be repressed. I write from the point of view of a citizen of the United States and an employee of the state of Florida. I tell you at the outset that I speak only for myself and not my university. My name is Kathleen de la Peña McCook and I am a professor of library and information science at the University of South Florida (USF) in Tampa. I am also an active member of the union, the [United Faculty of Florida \(UFF\)](#).

The case of Sami al-Arian

The University of South Florida (USF) employed Dr. Sami al-Arian as a computer engineering professor. Outside of work Dr. al-Arian was very active in, and very outspoken on, a number of pro-Palestinian and Islamic issues. On December 19, 2001, the university president announced Professor Al-Arian's imminent termination. Since this termination involved Professor Al-Arian's due process and academic freedom and tenure rights, my union, the United Faculty of Florida (UFF) quickly became involved. Over holiday break in 2001-2002 we organized a mailing and protest of the university's labor action. The UFF defends the contract by which professors at USF are hired, and any violation of the contract threatens the entire faculty at USF. During 2002, and into 2003, UFF assisted Al-Arian in his confrontation with the USF Board of Trustees. On February 20, 2003 Dr. al-Arian was arrested for supporting terrorism. Although acquitted of most of the charges, Dr. al-Arian remains in jail (see United Faculty of Florida; Free Sami al-Arian).

The al-Arian case illuminated for me the intense fear that workers experience regarding their employment. During my union's defense of Dr. al-Arian we had members resign because they were either afraid to be part

of his defense or because they felt he should be terminated. The union never took a position on Dr. al-Arian's guilt or innocence, simply on his right to due process. Florida is a so-called "right to work" state which means that although all are covered by the collective bargaining unit, paying dues is not required. When I recruit for union membership (only about one-third of the USF faculty are paying members) I am often told that there is "fear" of reprisal for union membership and that supervisors might not support tenure for those belonging to the union. In truth the union protects workers, but so much disinformation has been spread that faculty express great anxiety.

The al-Arian case was a direct result of the attacks of September 11, 2001 because Dr. al-Arian appeared on a TV. talk show—The O'Reilly Factor—and his exercise of free speech stirred up much public concern. Jeb Bush, then governor of the Florida (1998-2006) issued a press release calling for Dr. al-Arian's termination. Jeb Bush had dismantled the entire state university system and replaced it with trustees appointed by him who were inclined to follow his directives. It took the union several years to be re-established, but this did happen after much intense effort. (American Federation of Teachers).

Florida Librarians and the Very Petty Governor Jeb Bush

Open speech in Florida's public institutions had slowly shut down under Governor Jeb Bush since the 2000 presidential election in which Florida played such a central role for his brother's eventual selection by the U.S. Supreme Court. In 2002 librarians invited Professor Lance deHaven-Smith, a widely published and quoted professor of public administration at Florida State University to speak to a state library program on trends in Florida politics. However, prior to his presentation at the library program deHaven Smith wrote in a column:

"One must assume that this is why Florida Republicans have become so aggressive in punishing their critics, insisting on total loyalty from professional staff, drastically reducing civil service protections, and interjecting politics into the administration of Florida's public universities," he wrote. "It also explains their actions in blocking and disrupting the

proper execution of Florida election laws in the disputed 2000 presidential election.”

And then deHaven-Smith followed these comments on Sept. 2, 2002 with a guest column saying that Al Gore got the most votes in Florida two years ago and would have been declared the winner if the state had been allowed to recount all uncounted ballots.

Three days later, as Martin Dykman reported in the *St. Petersburg Times*, deHaven-Smith got word that he was out as a luncheon speaker at the state library conference. A consultant at the Bureau of Library Development explained that “preparing for our transition” to the governor’s office “is making folks sensitive to anything which may be construed as inappropriate. This has had an impact on the Conference agenda . . .”

Librarians in the state of Florida were put on notice that crossing the governor would have repercussions. On January 21, 2003 Jeb Bush announced plans to dismantle the State Library of Florida. The sudden “retirement” of long-time State Librarian Barratt Wilkins, the appointment of a successor, Judi Ring, without a search, and Jeb Bush’s statements about government—evidently aimed at the state library— in his inaugural address:

“There would be no greater tribute to our maturity as a society than if we can make these buildings around us empty of workers; silent monuments to the time when government played a larger role than it deserved or could adequately fill,” seem to have been the result of his displeasure at librarian advocacy (Dillinger & McCook).

The Florida Library Association (FLA) issued a resolution on February 21, 2003 against the planned elimination of the Division of Library and Information Services and the dispersal of the State Library collection. A coalition was formed and public support generated to defeat Jeb Bush’s plans. Standing together librarians were able to reverse Bush with support of the legislature. However, at the end of his term in 2006 Jeb Bush took a

final petty action and cut nearly \$6 million in library support. There was payback for standing up to his wishes.

As I look back at Florida during the Jeb Bush years it was like Portugal in the late 1930s under António de Oliveira Salazar in the days leading up to total control. It is through reading and literature that we can gain the best understanding of how a government sets the tone for repression that eventually becomes fear to speak at work. This does not usually happen all at once. I recommend to you *Pereira Declares* by Antonio Tabucchi in which the protagonist, a journalist in Lisbon (1938), slowly realizes that by acceding to government censors in the choice of books he reviews that his culture is being compromised. :

"Well then, said the editor-in-chief, I really didn't expect this latest thing. What latest thing?, asked Pereira, That panegyric on France, said the editor-in-chief, has caused a lot of offence in high places. What panegyric on France? asked Pereira totally bewildered. Come now Pereira ! exclaimed the editor-in-chief, you published a story by Alphonse Daudet about the Franco-Prussian War which ended with the phrase" 'Vive la France!'. [p. 109]

War in Iraq-Discussion Curtailed Among LIS Students: "Befehl ist Befehl"

In February 2003 students at the University of South Florida School of Library and Information Science (SLIS) were discussing the possibility of war in Iraq on "ALIS" (Association of Library and Information Science), the School's electronic discussion board. Without notice the director of the SLIS shut down the discussion board and restarted it with a moderator as censor designated to read the posts and delete those deemed controversial (no notice or criteria provided to members). Prior to this the discussion board had been completely without moderation. I filed a grievance under the contract of my union—the United Faculty of Florida—and the shutdown and censorship of the discussion list was deemed to be a violation of academic freedom. It was restored but marginalized. There was no more school promotion of the discussion list as a vehicle for student information.

However, although individual colleagues noted their sympathy I was also shunned to some extent and viewed as belligerent for fighting the

shutdown. I asked the person directed to moderate the list why s/he had done so and got a shrug.

We must all recognize that "Befehl ist Befehl" is not a new defense. Stand up and be ready to be alone.

Gay Pride in Hillsborough County, Florida (Tampa)

In June 2005 a student at the School of Library and Information Science at the University of South Florida created a display of young adult books on gay themes and set it up at a branch of the Hillsborough County Public Library in Tampa. The display upset a parent who protested to the county's governing board. When this occurred three of us on the School of Library and Information Science faculty worked to develop a support group and made efforts to challenge the Hillsborough county commission's vote. We lost. I was most amazed, frankly, about the little support we received from the larger library community in spite of the protection of such a display under the American Library Association policy, "Access to Library Resources and Services Regardless of Sex, Gender, Identity or Sexual Orientation."

Only a few students and one brave school library media specialist spoke up in public forums. A read-in was sponsored to discuss the books banned from display and support was small. The conservative tone of the employing county seemed to have had power over many librarians' inclination to speak in support.

Later that summer of 2005 the American Library Association Council adopted the resolution on Workplace Speech which could be applied to the Hillsborough County incidents: "Libraries should encourage discussion among library workers, including library administrators, on non confidential professional and policy matters about the operation of the library and matters of public concern within the framework of applicable laws." As noted above this resolution was incorporated into the ALA Policy Manual as Policy 54.21 "Workplace Speech."

As Linda B. Alexander discussed in *American Libraries*: The Hillsborough County gay pride ban shows why the resolution on Workplace Speech is crucial. County employees, specifically librarians, were afraid to speak up

against the ban against Gay Pride because of a rule that county employees are not allowed to share information with the media about their opinions of events in the workplace. This is counter to the ALA resolution, which asserts that "library staffs are uniquely positioned to provide guidance on library policy issues that is informed by their experience and education." When librarians were not allowed to speak out to defend their First Amendment rights, the public could only assume that librarians were not solidly against the commission's action nor solidly for the cause of intellectual freedom. Although this was not the case, Hillsborough County public librarians remained tight-lipped due to fear of reprisal.

Is the pressure to get along more important than Human Rights? I know that by standing up to the County Commission and going to Library Board meetings to protest this action that I have lost the friendship of library administrators in Hillsborough. On a personal basis this makes me very sad. However, I think that Human Rights are more important than caving to a Board of County Commissioners that does not believe in Human Rights for everyone. I am very proud of the [Florida Library Association Boycott of Hillsborough County](#). The state library association did the right thing. (Oder).

Bart Birdsall, a Hillsborough County School Library Media Specialist spoke up bravely in defense of intellectual freedom in this case and was honored by *Library Journal* as a '[mover and shaker](#)' in 2006. Birdsall sent emails from his home account to the Hillsborough county library director, protesting censorship of Gay Pride, and was warned by the school board to keep his political opinions away from work. Two days later, Bart Birdsall stood with a bullhorn in front of the public library where a county commission meeting was underway, reading aloud from books taken off the display. Birdsall said, "My freedom of speech means more to me than any job...and some gay teen may be watching. I will stand here and read for her or him, so she/he sees an adult who stands firm and isn't afraid to be openly gay."

While the end result was a county-wide ban on the use of any county facilities to celebrate Gay Pride in spite of community comment and protest (the ban remains in effect at this writing in April 2008), there has been a statewide conversation about workplace speech. Gay and lesbian people have been denied the right to celebrate Gay Pride Month using

Hillsborough county resources, but the state library association took a stand. This action was recognized by Toni Samek in her book, *Librarianship and Human Rights*.

When library administrators follow the will of anti-free speech politicians, the people lose. Carney has observed that when library workers stand up the people gain voice:

“When the library worker is unable to challenge these practices, factors, and limitations, the defense of universal intellectual freedom and freedom of expression is inhibited as the voices that wield more power are allowed to dominate the dialogue of human communication. Challenging the hierarchical organizational structure that is common to the library as a place of work may then be looked upon as a first step toward the development of an egalitarian free speech situation, where intellectual freedom actually exists along side real social and economic equality.”

Standing up for Unions in the LIS Curriculum

Recognition of the increasingly repressive 21st century academic environment in the United States is important in the context of discussions of Workplace Speech. While we might think that all faculty are adherents of workplace speech, it seems that some side with administrations without a second thought and thus against unions. Some who teach future librarians seem to assume all graduates will be administrators and thus exercise self- censorship as regards analysis of unionization.

Library educators who belong to the Association for Library and Information lost when it came to debating issues about unionization on their discussion list—a flaccid public sphere. The Association for Library and Information Science Education (ALISE) has long had one central discussion list called JESSE. JESSE is moderated and censored. In summer 2007 I had been writing about the Vancouver Public Library strike at the blog, [Union Librarian](#). Over 800 library workers had been on strike for pay equity in Vancouver (Galanopoulos). This was the longest strike in library history. A simple post to the JESSE discussion list about the strike was ruled unacceptable by the moderator of JESSE (McCook, 2008). Discussion off the JESSE list found a number of professors felt the censored nature of

the JESSE list went against the values that ought to inform the teaching of librarianship. A habit of reflection would require that educators have the opportunity to carry on discussions in an uncensored fashion about issues that affect the profession.

How can students learn to stand for their public when professors will not stand for them? If the JESSE list moderator would not allow discussion of a strike of library workers in Vancouver, then we see that workplace speech is an issue that needs attention in the academy as well as the local library.

LIS educators must reflect on the nature of discourse in our own discipline if we are to be effective advocates for intellectual freedom. Additionally, LIS educators should consider themselves as part of the university community at large and take into consideration the American Association of University Professors 2007 report *Freedom in the Classroom*, which concludes:

"We ought to learn from history that the vitality of institutions of higher learning has been damaged far more by efforts to correct abuses of freedom than by those alleged abuses. We ought to learn from history that education cannot possibly thrive in an atmosphere of state-encouraged suspicion and surveillance."

The adoption of the "[Position Statement on Information Ethics in LIS Education](#)" by ALISE is a step forward in guaranteeing that these issues, including workplace speech, will be addressed in programs of LIS education. I am most grateful to my colleagues here today who persisted in passage.

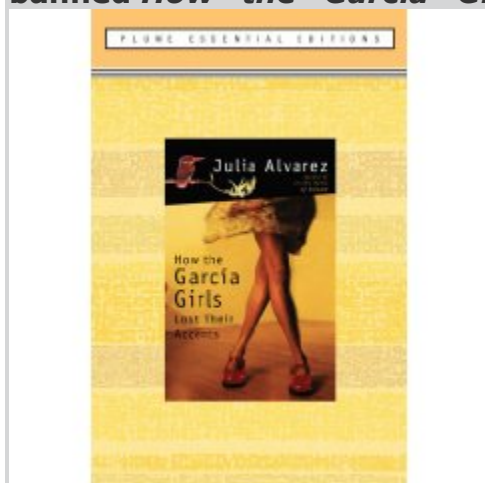
Disappointment and Hope

In the United States it has been very difficult to speak out on war, peace, science or education since the selection of George W. Bush in 2000. Speaking out on things big and small has been a challenge if one has an opinion that differs from or disproves current U.S. government policy. So, gradually if the political environment remains toxic the whistleblower is moved from the status of truth-seeker to pariah as was reporter, Dan Rather (Blumenthal). In my own case I was banned from the Higher Education Service Learning Discussion by the U.S. government because I

pointed out a case of disinformation even though I was an early adopter of the service learning model in LIS. (Criticizing Bush Administration Policies is not Allowed; McCook, 2008).

It has been difficult not to be disappointed as those in charge—in the workplace, in professional associations, in local government, in state government and in federal government – gradually drift to accede to the dictates of those in power. The ALA has given Laura Bush accolades and publicity in spite of her censoring anti-war poets and her support of the USAPATRIOT Act (Progressive Librarians Guild; “Leaving the American Library Association Conference Early”).

Think of what Julia Alvarez said in an interview after Johnston County banned *How the García Girls Lost Their Accents* in December 2007.



“I always wondered, in the Dominican Republic, “How could it have happened to a whole country? It was a whole country, and then it was just one man.” You think of Nazi Germany and wonder, “How could you have let that happen?” It’s isolated incidents. You think, “It’s just because that book was problematic,” or “It’s just because that person was troublesome,” and then one day you wake up, and the shelves are empty of many books. Or, a whole group of people are gone, because they didn’t belong. Suddenly, you live in a world that you allowed to happen.” (as quoted in Saldaña).

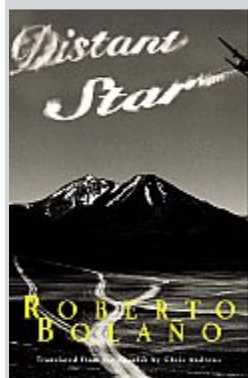
So, we let it happen that ALA gives awards to the wife of a man who has condoned torture and the erosion of civil liberties. We let it happen that the LIS professional association will not allow discussion of unions on the

professors' discussion list. We let it happen that a county commission orders a library system to end the celebration of Gay Pride while teen suicide is a pressing social problem. And worse, because people won't like us if we bring these up things, we seldom do.

If you are here in this audience then you are concerned about the erosion of freedom. This gives us all hope that together we will seek to understand and there will be many of us who will take from what we know of literature and poetry and share it and then elect the governmental bodies that will free democracy.

I recommend to you one final book, *Distant Star* by Roberto Bolaño. In part it entails a look at the horror men do to each other and the guilt that those who survive it feel. If we are afraid to criticize the smallest thing, then we learn through a book like *Distant Star* how violence and patriotism might converge if we do not stand up.

" –and Carlos Wider wrote: Death is cleansing , but so unsteadily, given the adverse weather conditions, that very few spectators, who by now had started to get up from their seats and open their umbrellas, could understand what had been written. All that was left in the sky were dark shreds, cuneiform characters, hieroglyphics, a child's scribble. " (p. 81).



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Kathleen de la Peña McCook teaches at the University of South Florida. She does not speak for USF.

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Appendixes

- 1) UDHR-French
- 2) UDHR-Spanish
- 3) Resolution on Workplace Speech (2005)-American Library Association
- 4) Position Statement on Information Ethics in LIS Education
- 5) Questions & Answers on Speech in the Workplace: An explanatory statement of the ALA Code of Ethics.

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1) UDHR-French
 Tout individu a droit à la liberté d'opinion et d'expression, ce qui implique le droit de ne pas être inquiété pour ses opinions et celui de chercher, de recevoir et de répandre, sans considérations de frontières, les informations et les idées par quelque moyen d'expression que ce soit– Article 19- Déclaration universelle des droits de l'homme.

2)UDHR-Spanish

Todo individuo tiene derecho a la libertad de opinión y de expresión; este derecho incluye el no ser molestado a causa de sus opiniones, el de investigar y recibir informaciones y opiniones, y el de difundirlas, sin limitación de fronteras, por cualquier medio de expresión. –Artículo 19 - Declaración Universal de Derechos Humanos

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3)Resolution on Workplace Speech (2005)-American Library Association

WHEREAS, The American Library Association is firmly committed to freedom of expression (Policy 53.1.12); and
 WHEREAS, The library is an institution that welcomes and promotes the expression of all points of view; and
 WHEREAS, Library staff are uniquely positioned to provide guidance on library policy issues that is informed by their experience and education; now, therefore, be it
 RESOLVED, That ALA Council amends Policy 54 (Library Personnel Practices) by adding:

54.21 Workplace Speech
Libraries should encourage discussion among library workers, including library administrators, of non-confidential professional and policy matters about the operation of the library and matters of public concern within the framework of applicable laws.
Adopted by the Council of the American Library Association
Sunday, June 26, 2005
In Chicago, Illinois
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4) Position Statement on Information Ethics in LIS Education
Ratified at the ALISE Business Meeting held on January 10, 2008.

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5) Questions & Answers on Speech in the Workplace: An explanatory statement of the ALA Code of Ethics. [Adopted July 2001; Amended January 2004, June 26, 2006, January 24, 2007].

Since librarians have a special responsibility to protect intellectual freedom and freedom of expression, do librarians have a special responsibility to create a workplace that tolerates employee expression more than other professions?

Yes. Libraries play a special role in ensuring the free flow of information in a democratic society. Librarians are often called on to fight censorship and resist efforts to restrict individuals from receiving information and expressing ideas. If library workers are denied the ability to speak on work related matters, what does this say about our own commitment to free speech? We need to demonstrate our commitment to free speech by encouraging it in the workplace.

Do I have an ethical obligation as a professional to raise questions and initiate change about policies I believe to be detrimental to the public interest or to the profession?

The first tenet of the Code of Ethics of the American Library Association

begins “we provide the highest level of service to all library users... .” Examples of possible conflicts between your vision of highest level of service and your employer’s could include: you are a library director and your trustees insist on filtering but you disagree; you are a children’s librarian who disagrees with your library’s policy of fines for children; you are an academic librarian who disagrees with your university’s lack of privacy policy for electronic resources. In these and other situations, you should and probably will feel an ethical obligation as a professional to speak out and make your library values known. You will have to use your professional judgment as to when and how to do so, and you must be prepared to accept the consequences. Libraries are encouraged to adopt ALA policy 54.21 on Workplace Speech. This does not provide full legal protection for employees but does help promote free speech in the workplace.

Does the First Amendment apply to workplace speech?

Through the Library Bill of Rights and its Interpretations, the American Library Association supports freedom of expression and the First Amendment in the strongest possible terms. The freedom of expression guaranteed by the First Amendment, however, has traditionally not been thought to apply to employee speech in the workplace. The doctrine of “employment at will” (which is applicable in most states) has meant that just as employees may resign at any time, so too may employers dismiss employees at any time unless the dismissal is for prohibited reasons (e.g. racial or age discrimination). Some employers may believe that if employees were given full rights to free speech on work related issues, loyalty and discipline would be weakened and the coordination needed for the effective and efficient functioning of bureaucracies would dissolve. Many court decisions support employers on this issue.

Does this mean I have no free speech rights as an employee?

If you are a government employee, the Supreme Court in *Pickering v. Board of Ed.*, 391 U.S. 563 (1968) applied a balancing test between the

interests of a citizen speaking on matters of public concern and the interests of the government as an employer promoting the efficiency of public services. If you are a government employee, and you speak on a matter of public concern, and it doesn't hamper your employer's ability to provide public services, then the courts may be on your side. Subsequent Supreme Court decisions have further defined public employees' free speech rights on the job. Please see the resource guide for more detailed information.

What about whistle blowing?

According to Black's Law Dictionary, whistle blowing refers to an employee who reports, and may also refuse to engage in, illegal or wrongful activities of an employer or fellow employees. There are federal and state statutes to protect employees from retaliation for disclosing certain employer misconduct. Check to see if these statutes apply to your situation.

What about questions of library policy? Do I have free speech rights to speak on internal library matters?

Since the relationship between employee and employer is a contractual one, employee speech is governed by the employment contract, not the First Amendment. The speech environment in a library as a workplace may vary according to the organizational hierarchy and an employee's place in it, the organizational culture, and the personalities that make up that culture. If you are a member of a union, check your union contract to see if it offers any protection. If you are a librarian who has tenure or an arrangement similar to tenure, check your tenure or reappointment documents.

What are some issues to consider when speaking out on a library policy matter?

Try to know all the facts on the issue and attempt to understand it from your employer's point of view. Is the issue important enough to you to risk retribution? Assess your place in the hierarchy and know your workplace culture: you may have more job security than you think. If you are in a union you may be protected by your union contract. A tenured librarian may have more freedom to speak out than a new librarian. Library directors may be expected to make their views known to their trustees. Your boss may be more receptive to criticism at certain times than others. Some bosses may be open to disagreement in private but not in staff meetings. Some may prefer a verbal conversation to a written memo. Consult with your colleagues. Do your colleagues agree with you or are you alone? Can you build support among your colleagues for your position? Can you get others to raise the issue for you or can you do so anonymously? Will it be possible to work from within for change? If your convictions are strong enough, are you willing to resign? You will have to exercise your own professional judgment in assessing your workplace environment.

As a library administrator should I solicit the opinions of my staff on policy and procedural matters?

The fifth tenet of the Code of Ethics states "we treat co-workers and other colleagues with respect, fairness and good faith, and advocate conditions of employment that safeguard the rights and welfare of all employees of our institutions." The eighth tenet states, "we strive for excellence in the profession by ... encouraging the professional development of co-workers..." For a long time, hierarchical models of organization involving centralized decision making and strict control of information were thought to be the most efficient way to organize libraries. Many current organizational theories and models seek to promote more flexibility, experimentation, and organizational responsiveness. If librarians and library staff are excluded from discussions on policy and procedural matters, they may become bored, dissatisfied, and disillusioned with their work.. They may lose their initiative and ability to envision new ways of providing services. The most creative people on staff may seek opportunities with other organizations. Not soliciting opinions from your staff could actually result

in less efficiency for your library, impair your ability to adapt to a changing environment, and impede your ability to provide the best service to your users. Library professionals in leadership positions should encourage discussion on policy and procedural matters, adopt ALA Policy 54.21 on Workplace Speech, and refrain from actions that result in a chilling effect on employee speech.

If I speak out in the workplace on a matter of professional policy, and my employer retaliates against me, will the ALA support me?

The ALA does not at this time provide mediation, financial aid, or legal aid in response to workplace disputes. Your employer has an array of sanctions that may or may not be imposed on you, including but not limited to: reassignment, passing you up for promotion, passing you up for raises, denying you tenure, passing you up for the best assignments, and ultimately dismissal. If you decide to speak out on a matter involving professional policy, it will be a matter between you and your employer. The ALA does administer the LeRoy C. Merritt Humanitarian Fund, which has provided financial assistance for librarians who have been discriminated against or denied employment rights because of their defense of intellectual freedom including freedom of speech. More information on the fund can be found at www.merrittfund.org.

Where can I find more information?

Questions about “Speech in the Workplace” can be directed to the Committee on Professional Ethics c/o the Office of Intellectual Freedom, ALA, 50 E. Huron St., Chicago, IL 60611.

Resource

Guide

The following sources were consulted in compiling this Q&A and provide further information on this issue:

Code of Ethics of the American Library Association — Statements of guidance for Library Professionals. See especially tenets I, II, and V.

See also the British Library Association's Code, 2f, refers to the issue directly. See also the Ethical Principles and Code of Professional Practice for Library and Information Professionals of the Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals.

ALA Policy 54.21 Workplace Speech. "Libraries should permit and encourage the full and free expression of views by staff on professional and policy matters."

"How Free is YOUR Speech?" A skit written by the Committee on Professional Ethics.

Library Bill of Rights and Its Interpretations. See especially tenets III and IV, and the Universal Right to Free Expression.

Legal Cases and Analysis
In *Garcetti v. Ceballos*, 126 S. Ct. 1951 (2006), the Supreme Court held that when public employees make statements pursuant to their duties, the First Amendment does not protect the employee from discipline imposed by the employer.

See Krystal LoPilato, "Garcetti v. Ceballos: Public Employees Lose First Amendment Protection for Speech Within Their Job Duties," 27 *Berkeley J. Emp. & Lab. L.* 537, 2006.

For a general overview of the legal precedents governing public employees' free speech rights, see "Exploring Constitutional Conflicts: Free Speech Rights of Government Employees."

David L. Hudson, Jr.: "Balancing Act: Public Employees and Free Speech," First Amendment Center, First Report Series, December, 2002. (PDF) Additional legal reviews and analysis: Emily Holmes Davis, "Protecting the Marketplace of Ideas: The First Amendment and Public School Teachers' Classroom Speech," 3 *First Amend. L. Rev.* 335, Spring 2005;

William W. Johnston, "Insurrection or Duty: When Government Employees Speak," 4 *Tex. Rev. Law & Pol.* 489, Spring 2000;

Jennifer Elrod, "Academics, Public Employee Speech, and the Public University," 22 *Buff. Pub. Interest L.J.* 1, 2003/2004;

Jeffrey A. Shooman, "The Speech Of Public Employees Outside The Workplace: Towards A New Framework," 36 *Seton Hall L. Rev.* 1341, 2006;

Randy J. Kozel, "Reconceptualizing Public Employee Speech," 99 *Nw. U.L. Rev.* 1007, Spring 2005;

Keith G. Munroe, "Focus: Constitutional Protection: Freedom of Speech And Public Employees," 8 *Nevada Lawyer* 10, January 2000; and

Andre G. Travieso, "Employee Free Speech Rights in the Workplace: Balancing the First Amendment Against Racist Speech by Police Officers," 51 *Rutgers Law Review* 1377, Summer 1999.

For an article about library organizational culture with references to articles on organizational theory see, Brian Quinn, "The McDonaldization of Academic Libraries?" *College & Research Libraries* 61, no. 3 (May 2000).

Two discussions of the issue as it relates to libraries are Tim Wojcik, "The First Amendment In-House: A Librarian's Work in Practice," About.com 'Librarians and Library Science' (accessed February 6, 2007), and

Lillian N. Gerhardt, "Ethical Back Talk: V," *School Library Journal*, (October 1990).

Engineers sometimes face their own variation of this issue. See IEEE Ethics Committee, "Draft Guidelines for Engineers Dissenting on Ethical Grounds." See also American Association of University Professors, Academic Freedom and Tenure.

For general treatments see Richard Lippke, "Speech, Conscience, and Work," *Social Theory and Practice*, 18, no. 3 (Fall 1992);

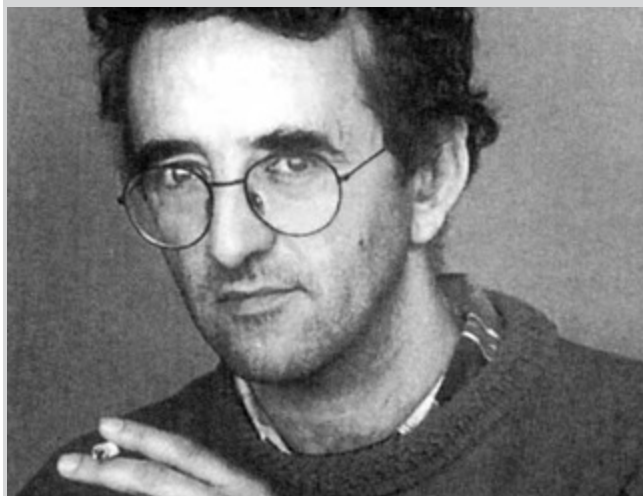
Mike W. Martin, "Professional Autonomy and Employer's Authority," in *Profits and Professions: Essays in Business and Professional Ethics*, Clifton NJ: Human Press, 1983.

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Adopted July 2001; Amended January 2004, June 26, 2006, January 24, 2007

Posted in [American Library Association](#), [Canada](#), [George Bush](#), [Jeb Bush](#), [KdlIPMcC](#), [Spanish literature](#), [USAPATRIOT ACT](#), [War in Iraq](#), [censorship](#), [civil rights](#), [democracy](#), [disinformation](#), [fiction](#), [human rights](#), [intellectual freedom](#), [librarian education](#), [politicians](#), [social justice](#), [torture](#), [unions](#) | [No Comments »](#)

Roberto Bolaño Ávalos
April 26th, 2008



Posted in [cigars](#), [cigarettes](#) | [No Comments »](#)

Night Train to Lisbon No. 4.21.2008.73.
April 21st, 2008

***Night Train to Lisbon* by Pascal Mercier (2004) translated from the German by Barbara Harshav. New York: Grove Press, 2008.**

Epigraphs

Michel de Montaigne, *Essais*, Second Book, I, "De l'inconstance de nos actions."

Fernando Pessoa, *Livro Do Desassossego*.

At the Spanish bookstore on Hirschengraben.

San Juan de la Cruz

"*Um Ourives Das Palavras, Lisboa*" by Amadeu Inácio De Almeida Prado.

Bubenberg Cinema.

Georges Simenon, *L'homme qui regardait passer les trains*

At the bookstore of Julio Simões.

Luís Vaz de Camões

Francisco de Sá de Miranda



Fernão Mendes Pinto

[Camilo Castelo Branco](#)

[José Maria de Eça de Queirós](#), *O Crime do Padre Amaro*

Assisant Bookkeeper, [Bernardo Soares](#).

..Horace, Saphho, Marcus Aurelius, Book of Job,

"When dictatorship is a fact, revolution is a duty." [p.69]

[Biblioteca Joanina](#) built by King João V in 1724.

Posted in [Book I'm Reading Now](#), [reading world](#) | [No Comments](#) »

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2 supplemental blogs I ran for a while..

[Librarian 1.2](#)

And [Librarian 1.3](#)

I am now editing in Wikipedia rather than individual observations on my own blogs.

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LIS News- Early days--

Before blogging on my own I often blogged at [LISNews](#) and posted news items and interacted with other members. The blog LIBRARIAN I did from 2005-2011 was hosted at LISHost.

My first post at LISNews was in 2000:

[Dialogue 2000 Town Meetings](#)

Kathleen de la Pena **McCook** writes \"I am seeking information and hoping this may be a way to ...

And my last was March 2009.

[In Hernando County, This is the kind of compromise we're forced to make when we decide we hate taxes more than we love democracy.](#)

If "McCook" name is put in the search box at [LIS news](#) there are 9 pages of result lists.

[Librarian And Information Science News](#)

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