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Library Services for Social Development: Some Considerations

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Abstract: Information is an indispensable factor for promoting the development of society. In today's world information acquires the status of merchandise, and can be sold according to the laws of supply and demand that govern the commercialization of any product. In the majority of developing countries, and especially in Latin America, the library has been

lacking in its function of guarding knowledge and also of disseminating this potential wealth. Third World librarians need to develop a critical sense regarding information policy, particularly in terms of the issue of information transfer. The librarian's profile must be characterized by specific qualities such as that of an agent for change, capable of managing information resources with the skill required by the information sector.

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Abstract: On the basis of the experience gained by implementing the German national Internet information server for the social sciences, some general reflections are made on the status of providing information by this communication channel. For a certain time the dissemination of information via the Internet will mean an extra workload for the majority of traditional participants in the information market. Other information and publishing media like books, journals or databases will remain the central part of the market. On the other hand it is obvious that Internet information activities will have an essential impact in the near future, while the market players' positions will undergo a fundamental redefinition. Before entering the new market, information providers must analyze carefully their own goals, strengths and possibilities. The task of social science information specialists is to assure the scientific quality of the information they are offering.

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by José Antonio Frías.....31

Abstract: The effectiveness of education in stopping the spread of AIDS in this decade has been amply illustrated. The author states that libraries have a responsibility to act as a central source of information, and as a social service unit to the community to respond to the challenge of AIDS for the following reasons: 1) their well-recognized informative function; 2) they can be found not only within the nucleus of large cities, but also in rural areas; 3) they can serve as support for health and related organizations in their fight against AIDS by helping to distribute information. Examples of successful library programmes undertaken in Spain are given, including the development and upkeep of a collection of special materials; the production of bibliographies; and the organization of exhibitions, workshops, and debates,

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by Laurence Hallewell.....38

Abstract: Western books, learned and popular, arrived with the conquistadors within 50 years of the European development of printing. Mesoamerica already had its own indigenous books, although most of these were destroyed as part of the ideological aspect of the conquest. Printing came to the New World within 50 years of its discovery. The survival of these early books owes much to the religious orders, and the 18th century expulsion of the Jesuits and their fine libraries was a calamity. It was, however, but one aspect of the changes in society during the Age of Enlightenment which culminated in Latin American independence. Unfortunately the independence struggle was followed by internal factional conflicts, with Brazil and Chile the only countries achieving conditions stable enough for library development to proceed. Elsewhere stability returned in the second half of the 19th century, often accompanied by the nationalization of the libraries of religious foundations. Special departments of rare books in national and other major libraries did not arrive until the

present century. Lack of institutional continuity is a major obstacle: large provide collections often end up in foreign libraries. That things are changing for the better is illustrated by recent Brazilian instances. Preservation of collections once formed is another matter. Latin American paper quality in the past has often been very poor; even now acid-free paper is seldom used.

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Abstract: This article discusses progress in preventative conservation through the use of permanent paper since the author's earlier article, "Permanent Paper: A progress Report" which appeared in IFLA Journal 17(4)(1991). Among the developments covered are: 1) two very similar permanent paper standards both covering coated as well as uncoated papers; 2) the revised ANSI/NISO American National Standard Z39.48 (1992) and the new ISO international standard ISO 9706 (1994); 3) two new directories of papers meeting these two standards, one for Europe and one for the United States and Canada; 4) a survey of the knowledge and use of permanent papers by European publishers; 5) plans of the IFLA Section on Conservation, including a satellite conference in Budapest, 15-17 August 1995; and 6) suggestions for the future.

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