Research article

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Intellectual Freedom and Social Justice: Tensions Between Core Values in American Librarianship

Abstract: Over the past few years, tensions between two core values in U.S. librarianship, intellectual freedom and social justice, have roiled the profession. This conflict was most recently seen in the insertion and subsequent removal of "hate groups" to the list of entities that cannot be denied access to library meeting rooms in the American Library Association's Meeting Rooms Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights. This paper is intended to provide context for this conflict. It begins by situating its arguments within ethical philosophy, specifically the study of values or axiology. It then provides an overview of the theoretical foundations of the values of liberalism. Next, the paper discusses the values of truth and freedom from harm in librarianship. Finally, it suggests that a fuller understanding of the library's place within the public sphere is a possible model for mitigating the tensions currently found in American librarianship. The paper is intended to provide a theoretical foundation for further research.

Keywords: Values in librarianship, intellectual freedom, social justice

1 Introduction

The summer of 2018 was a contentious one for librarianship in the United States. First adopted in 1939, the American Library Association's (ALA) Library Bill of Rights (LBR) is a set of guidelines that state what users can expect from libraries. The guidelines are lofty and, in order to provide more information for developing actionable library policies, the ALA also provides interpretations of the various principles found in the LBR. The interpretations run the gamut from "Access to Digital Resources and Services" to "Visual and Performing Arts in Libraries" (see http://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/librarybill/interpretations). During the annual meeting of the ALA held in June 2018 in New Orleans, Louisiana, the "Meeting Rooms" interpretation was amended to state that hate groups could not be excluded from using library meeting rooms. How this language was added to the interpretation remains unclear and it was eventually removed, however, the addition of the term "hate groups" set off a firestorm of discussion both online and off.

In her regular column for *American Libraries* magazine, which is published by the ALA, Meredith Farkas (2018) stated that this incident demonstrated a collision of values in librarianship. It was a clash between one of the core values of "open and equal access to the library for all members of our communities" (p. 54) and another core value of intellectual freedom. She then wondered what librarians should do "if a perspective repudiates the dignity and worth of our patrons" (p. 54)? Farkas ended by requesting that the ALA provide more guidance in creating justice-minded policies. This question of what to do when a person's right to intellectual freedom comes into conflict with another person's right to human dignity

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exemplifies a long-standing tension in the core values of librarianship.

For the purposes of this paper, intellectual freedom can be understood as a state wherein individuals have the right to have their own beliefs and ideas as well as the right to explore and express these ideas and beliefs without fear of reprisal. It is generally understood to be "classically" liberal value. Freedom of expression is a broader term that focuses on the communication of ideas and beliefs to others. However, this term is sometimes used interchangeably with intellectual freedom in the U.S. since it is usually the communication or expression of beliefs and ideas that is the target of censorship. Social justice is a somewhat nebulous term but refers to not only resource distribution but also to "distributive justice (outcome distributions) to procedural justice (fairness in resolving conflicts and making adjustments) to redistributive justice (how people react to the breaking of social rules)" (Jaeger et al, 2017, p. 3). Historically in American librarianship, practices that incorporated these ideas combined under the title of "social responsibility" and were usually juxtaposed to "neutral" policies that eschewed viewpoint discrimination. Social justice is designated as a "progressive" value in common parlance. However, as will be elucidated below, both intellectual freedom and social justice are, in fact, liberal values.

This paper is intended to provide context for the perceived conflict between intellectual freedom and social justice in American librarianship. It begins by situating its arguments within ethical philosophy, specifically the study of values or axiology. It then provides an overview of the theoretical foundations of values of liberalism. Next, the paper discusses the values of truth and freedom from harm in librarianship. Finally, it suggests that a fuller understanding of the library's place within the public sphere is a possible model for mitigating the tensions currently found in American librarianship. The paper is intended to provide a theoretical foundation for further research.

2 Axiology and Meta Axiology

This paper is a meta-axiological study of librarianship. That is, it is the study of values that guide a particular profession in a particular context. Axiology is the study of values and comes from a Greek words for worth, *axios*, and reason, *logos*. In his paper on axiology, Samuel Hart (1971) noted that it was a relatively new area of study in the early 1970s and it is still not accepted by all philosophers. For example, the *Routledge Encyclopedia of Philosophy* does not use the term "axiology" in its article on "values." Instead the encyclopedia article is, in fact, a work of axiology and describes three theories of values: subjectivism, objectives, and New-Kantian rationalism (Thomas, 2016). The encyclopedia includes a separate article on axiology, which shares an author with the values article. The article on axiology focuses on the field itself and states that "axiologists study value in general rather than moral values in particular and frequently emphasize the plurality and heterogeneity of values while at the same time adopting different forms of realism about values" (Smith & Thomas, 2016, Section 1). Not surprisingly many axiologists are focused on questions such as "what does it mean for something to have value" or "where do values come from."

However, somewhat in contradiction to the *Routledge Encyclopedia of Philosophy* article, there is a subarea within the field called moral axiology that focuses on the description and evaluation of moral values. In his book, *Axiological Ethics*, John N. Finlay (1973) uses the term "value" to indicate

> a philosophical equivalent of the goodness, the excellence, the desirability, and what not which we attribute to contain sorts of objects, states, and situations: such value is very plainly correlated, and correlated in principle, with attitudes that we shall call ' valuations" for which well-established philosophical term[s] 'cherishing', 'setting store by', 'esteeming', 'prizing,' having a pro-attitude towards may serve as ordinary or new-fangled equivalents (Findlay, 1973, p. 6).

That is, values signify what matters to a person or group of people.

In this paper "value" is defined as a goal towards which librarianship should work and is not necessarily referring to economic value. In librarianship, professional values inform practice. For example, in his book, Michael Gorman (2015) provides the following list of values for librarianship: "stewardship, service, intellectual freedom, rationalism, literacy and learning, equity of access to recorded knowledge and information, privacy, democracy, [and] the greater good (p. 35-37). This paper is primarily concerned

with two of these values: intellectual freedom and the greater good. Although not completely synonymous with social justice, Gorman defines the latter value as "seeking through all of our policies and practices to work for the good of all library users and the communities and societies in which they live" (p. 37). This can also serve as a working definition for social justice. For the purposes of this paper--and in keeping with how the term is used and understood in the early 21ˢᵗ century--group identity primarily refers to the groups of people who are marginalized or underrepresented in Western society. Although there is not a formalized definition of such groups, the We Need Diverse Books campaign provides a good working definition: people with "diverse experiences, including (but not limited to) LGBTQIA, Native, people of color, gender diversity, people with disabilities, and ethnic, cultural, and religious minorities" (https://diversebooks.org/about-wndb/). Understanding group identity is, as will be seen below, integral to understanding liberal values.

Rather than a work of moral axiology this paper can more properly be understood as descriptive axiology or meta-axiology. Its purpose is to describe the values of a particular set of people, in this case librarians in the U.S., as they relate to intellectual freedom and social justice. In addition, the paper is intended as an axiological study that seeks to clarify the current conflict in American librarianship. It is intended to answer the question of whether or not there are values in conflict when it comes to questions of intellectual freedom in librarianship and, if so, what those values are. Note that it is less concerned with how those values arise either in individuals or in society as a whole.

3 Liberal *vs*. Progressive

In his award-winning article titled "Intellectual Freedom is Not Social Justice: The Symbolic Capital of Intellectual Freedom in ALA Accreditation and LIS Curricula," Kyle Shockey (2016) quotes me as saying "intellectual freedom and social justice are not the same thing" in a community forum on the University of Illinois's decision to terminate Steven Salaita. Salaita, a tenured professor, was offered a job in the university's Native American Studies department. The offer was subsequently rescinded by the provost and the board after he made controversial posts on Twitter

A shorthand may be employed for describing the tensions I was trying to elucidate above: Intellectual freedom is a liberal value while social justice is a progressive value. More specifically, intellectual freedom is a classically liberal value focused on individual freedom while social justice is a progressive liberal value that focuses on harm to individual members of certain groups. The terms "liberal" and "progressive" in this initial shorthand are employed in the same way that the media has used them in the United States over the past 10 years. The clearest example of this use was in the 2016 Democratic Party primary during which Hillary Clinton was deemed "liberal" and Bernie Sanders deemed "progressive." These terms are practical labels that describe how non-conservative ideologies differ in the American political landscape. Different people define these terms in different ways (see Black, 2016; Weindling, 2019; Young, 2019) but the concepts often center on economics, the status of capitalist ideology, as well as the pace of social and economic change within a society.

In contrast to common parlance, classic political theory would define both Clinton and Sanders as liberals. In addition, a proper progressive movement no longer exists in the U.S. However, it is clear that this differentiation between "liberal" and "progressive" resonates with laypersons and it is this difference that will be teased out in this paper. Just as there are competing philosophical theories that lead to lively debate in U.S. Democratic Party politics, there are similar tensions in librarianship, most commonly seen between support for freedom of expression on the one hand and the drive to protect individuals from harm on the other.

4 A Brief Overview of Progressivism and Liberalism

In order to ward off any confusion, it is important to have a shared understanding of what is meant by "liberalism" and "progressivism." This is more difficult than it might seem at first glance since, as noted above, as these terms are often used imprecisely. This section provides a brief overview of progressivism

and liberalism as understood by political theorists, and how these terms are employed in the mainstream U.S. media.

First a slight digression is in order. Although, the political movement known as Progressivism is not the focus of this article, but it is important to have a basic understanding of the movement's tenets. Between 1900 and 1920, American Progressivism led to many social and political reforms including women's suffrage, increased regulation of industries, and the proliferation of unions. Prominent members of the Progressive Movement included the scholar W.E.B. Du Bois, politician Robert La Follette, and journalist Ida B. Wells. As Walter Nugent (2010) notes, "the consistent conviction of virtually all Progressives was that a 'public interest' or a 'common good' really existed" (p.3). Although this movement is not directly related to what is called progressivism in current American parlance, contemporary progressives do share some values with early 20th progressives including "a shared belief in society, a common good, and social justice, and that society could be changed into a better place" (Nugent, 2010, p. 5). The Progressive Movement was based in the excess of the Gilded Age and eventually petered out during the economic upswing of the 1920s.

The current movement deemed "progressive" by the media in the United States is actually a type of liberalism and is not connected to the movement described above. One way to understand political liberalism is as a "family of positions centered around constitutional democracy, the rule of law, political and intellectual freedom, toleration in religion, morals and lifestyle, opposition to racial and sexual discrimination, and respect for the rights of the individual" (Waldron, 1998, Section 1). Another metaphor, employed by Michael Freeden (2015), invokes sheets of paper that are on stacked on top of each other. Each sheet of paper has holes in it so that the values of the sheets underneath them show through. The top sheets may change places; however, the bottom sheet is always, according to Freeden, the same. The sheets are, in order, from bottom to top:

1. Human Rights – Against Tyranny
2. Economic Freedom
3. Individual Progress
4. Social space
5. Group identity (p. 13).

As we shall see throughout this article, it is Jeremy Waldron's (1987) "respect for the rights of the individual" and Freeden's "group identity" that seem to differentiate the current usage of progressive and liberal. That is, "progressivism" as it is used today privileges group identities over the individual while "liberalism" does the opposite. An example of this can be found in Sean Wilentz (2018) article on liberalism and progressivism in *Democracy*:

> Progressives and liberals also differ over the social and cultural implications of the Second Reconstruction of the 1960s...A succession of social movements, from civil rights to feminism to gay rights, followed similar paths, triumphing as brave and audacious efforts to end ancient bigotries and proclaim human rights, but also finding themselves drawn into equating freedom with the bonds of group identity, which led easily to a conflation of politics and inner feelings. Progressives kindle to an America where this sort of identity—or, currently, the intersectionality of several identities—defines both individuals and social relations, where the differences between groups of citizens are regarded as more significant than the similarities. The equality that is sought and often found is to be experienced by all of us in our bubbles (p. 10).

However, it is important to reiterate that these are, in fact, both types of liberalism as opposed to being forms of other political ideologies such as anarchism, socialism, or monarchism.

It is also important to discuss socialism briefly because it is often used in current U.S. parlance as yet another synonym for progressivism. Although it has many definitions, socialism can be understood as a critique of capitalism wherein

> for the socialist, the economic institutions of capitalism embody certain features and/or generate certain consequences that are objectionable from the standpoint of certain values; and there are possible alternative forms of economic organization which would either fully realize those values, or at least be markedly preferable to capitalism when judged in these terms (O'Neill, 2016, Section 2).

Finally, liberalism should be further distinguished from libertarianism. The latter is primarily concerned with government influence over both economic and social relationships and. Unlike classical liberalism, it places enormous emphasis on free market economics and defense of civil liberties.

Note that this paper centers on epistemology rather than economics. At its heart, intellectual freedom is about the nature of knowledge rather than the economic structure of society. Although these two can be related, economics is more related to the distribution of goods and tangible resources. While ideas are often contained in tangible goods, such as books, it is the ideas contained within rather than the goods themselves that matters more for the purposes of this paper. Therefore, when using progressivism and liberalism as a heuristic device to understand the clash of values in librarianship concerning censorship, this is not in reference to economics but to epistemology and as mentioned above the emphasis on individual vs. group rights in relation to knowledge that may be harmful.

5 Liberal Values

Freeden's (2015) introductory text offers a clear overview of basic liberal values. To reiterate, he uses the metaphor of sheets of paper lying on top of each other that allow the underlying values to shine through. The first layer of paper concerns human rights and liberty. This is the layer that is always the foundation for liberal ideology. The next layer is economic freedom and is most strongly attributed to John Locke's ideas concerning the natural right to property. Layer three is individual progress and development. John Stuart Mill is most commonly associated with this value and his work will be discussed in more detail below. Social space, the fourth layer, concerns the relationships among people in a society and interdependence. Freeden attributes this to William Beveridge who discussed how human potential is impossible without barriers against "want, disease, ignorance, squalor, and idleness" (as quoted in Freeden, 2015, p. 46). This layer will be discussed in more detail below via John Rawls's Theory of Justice. The final layer concerns group identity:

> The fifth layer constitutes a difficult terrain for liberals, interspersed as it is with some ethical and ideological quagmires. Its hallmarks are confusion and uncertainty, precisely because it attempts to amalgamate incompatible sections of other layers. The incorporation of group diversity and uniqueness into the liberal lexicon has introduced a particularistic counter-current that has partly eaten away at liberalism's former--and changeable--pretensions to universal aims (Freeden, 2015, p. 51).

This clearly demonstrates that the clash in values seen in American librarianship is, in many respects, "baked into the cake" of liberalism.

To further clarify and as noted above, there is a tension in librarianship between intellectual freedom, which might be seen as an individual value, and social justice/responsibility, which might be seen as group value. This tension is, in fact, a tension within liberalism itself. Using Freeden's categorization this is a tension between layer three, individual progress and (especially) development and layer five, group identities. In American librarianship, this is manifested especially in respect and care for people with marginalized or underrepresented group identities. These values are described in more detail below.

5.1 Individual Progress and Development

The liberal value of individual progress and development is most clearly exemplified in the writings of John Stuart Mill. In the United States, Mill's "On Liberty" (2011/1859), especially, has had profound impact on jurisprudence concerning freedom of expression and a brief overview of the work is in order. Although Mill gives himself sole writing credit for "On Liberty" in his bibliography, according to his biography it was written in collaboration with his wife, Harriet Taylor (Miller, 2019). There are a few primary themes that are especially important for understanding the value of intellectual freedom in individual progress and development. The first is that the truth will win out in the end and therefore all opinions should be

allowed. The second centers on how it is impossible for someone to know that their beliefs are correct if they do not hear the arguments of those who disagree with their opinion. These two themes eventually lead Mill to take what might be called a maximalist position regarding freedom of expression in which censorship must be eschewed at almost all costs. Mill posits four grounds for freedom of expression: 1. Silenced opinions may be true 2. Silenced opinion may contain some grain of truth even if it is held in error 3. Truth must be contested, or it is simply prejudiced opinion 4. A belief must be held with conviction from reason and personal experience (Mill, 2011, pp. 60–62). This position regarding freedom of expression is codified in the First Amendment of U.S. Constitution, which states "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances." Although often contested, jurisprudence in the U.S. takes a maximalist view of the freedom of expression. This was most recently seen in the U.S Supreme Court's (*Snyder v. Phelps*, 2011) ruling affirming the controversial Westboro Baptist Church members' rights to protest at U.S. veterans' funerals. Mill's principles concerning truth are also the primary basis for supporting intellectual freedom in American librarianship.

Mill also enumerates a harm principle in "On Liberty" that has become the subject of much debate in recent years. He states that any the only legitimate reason for "social coercion" is to prevent someone from harming another person (Mill, 2011, p. 16). Discussions of harm have increased in importance in discussions of intellectual freedom and social justice. How to define harm and whether or not certain materials should be removed or not allowed because they might cause harm to people is important for understanding the push for social justice in American librarianship.

5.2 Social Justice

Although it has been the subject of many critiques since its initial publication in the 1970s, it is important to provide a brief overview of John Rawls's theory of justice here. In "On Justice as Fairness" (Rawls, 2004), he argues that justice should be the basis of society. Rawls states that justice has two separate definitions. One is "a proper balance between competing claims" and the other is "a set of related principles for identifying the relevant considerations which determine this balance" (p. 51). There are two principles for justice as fairness: First, there must be an equality of assignment of rights and liberties. Second, inequalities must be compensated. Rawls (2004) explicitly includes freedom of speech in his list of liberties (p. 60). Rawls is also known for his idea of a "veil of ignorance" when making decisions for society which posits that political actors should act as if they do not know if their decisions will or will not have an impact on their lives. Decisions should be made behind a veil that keeps you from knowing your own place in society (Rawls, 2004, p. 52). For the purposes of this article, it is not necessary to go into depth on Rawls's theory, however, note that it is primarily concerned with the what is owed to individuals rather than harms done to groups of people.

One philosopher who discusses social justice with some reference to group identity is Elizabeth Anderson. In "Against Luck Egalitarianism: What is the point of equality" Anderson (1999) argues that the political aim of justice is "not to eliminate the impact of brute luck from human affairs but to end oppression" (p. 288). One of her primary concerns is respect for persons. Although she is primarily concerned with the distribution of goods and services in this work, she also discusses respect of persons and groups and this can be linked to the issue of harm. In order to have an egalitarian society it is necessary, according to one of Anderson's principles, to have a functioning civil society that allows for all to participate. Regarding the civil society (which includes public libraries), she notes that a

> group that is excluded from or segregated within the institutions of civil society, or subject to discrimination on the basis of ascribed social identities by institutions in civil society has been relegated to second-class citizenship, even if its members enjoy all of their political rights (Anderson, 1999, p. 317).

It is how one defines and understands exclusion that has become more salient in recent years in American librarianship. As progressive liberalism has increased its influence in the practice of librarianship, the idea that certain views may be harmful to marginalized people and should thus be excluded in order to make all feel welcome have taken precedence over the idea that all individuals have the right to explore and express views no matter how abhorrent.

6 Values in Librarianship - From Truth Alone to Considerations of Harm

The competing liberal values discussed above concerning individual progress and group identity are mirrored in the clashing values of American librarianship. From its initial professionalization in the 1870s until the political upheavals in the 1960s, American librarianship tended to foreground the individual pursuit of truth over harm to groups. This shift is most thoroughly documented in Toni Samek's (2001) monograph, *Intellectual Freedom and Social Responsibility in American Librarianship, 1967-1973*. She explores the history of Social Responsibilities Round Table (SRRT) and its positioning within the ALA against the Intellectual Freedom Round Table (IFRT). Although the complete history cannot be given here it is important to note that in the early 1970s, former chairman of the American Library Association's Committee on Intellectual freedom and Director of the Library School at the University of Minnesota, David K. Berninghausen, argued that the Library Bill of Rights "served to codify and standardize a moral stance on intellectual freedom by which impartiality and 'neutrality' on non-library issues functioned as core values for the profession" (Samek, 2001, p. 127). Many disagreed with him and contended that social responsibility made collections more rather than less inclusive. In the end, however, Samek argues that the ALA "smothered" the SRRT by allowing many different overlapping Round Tables.

These shifts can also be found within writings on the philosophy of librarianship, David Ward's (1990) article on philosophical issues of intellectual freedom puts forward a deontological, rights-based understanding of freedom of expression. Ward takes issue with Mill and states: "this is not to say that utilitarian arguments are wrong or worthless, only that they do not express the most fundamental truths about ethical issues" (Ward, 1990, p. 85). In the end, Ward argues that librarians should argue for intellectual freedom from a consequentialist, rather than rights-based point of view, since the public does in fact have the right to remove a book, but this does not make it wise to do so since such an action may lead to unacceptable outcomes (p. 90). 14 years later, the shift to considering harm in librarianship can be found in Martin Frické, Kay Mathiesen, and Don Fallis's (2000) article on intellectual freedom where they argue that librarians must keep harm in mind when considering items for collections: "There is some information that should be kept out of libraries...because merely disseminating it, or facilitating access to it, would violate rights or have bad consequences" (p.476). Following Rawls, the authors use social contract theory to state that library policy should not be based on individual rights but on societal good. This would mean that the right to intellectual freedom would be limited and certain ideas would be censored if they were deemed to be harmful. In the end they call for library policy that is based in social contract theory rather fallibilism or the idea that there is no certain knowledge, theories, beliefs, or opinions.

This shift from strongly valuing individual rights to foregrounding concern over harm to groups can be most clearly seen in the development of critical librarianship or Critlib for short. Since 2014, this has become a full-fledged movement in American librarianship. According to Critlib.org, the movement is "dedicated to bringing social justice principles into our work in libraries" (critlib.org/about/). The movement takes as one of its primary stances that librarianship is never neutral and any policies or practices that attempt to adhere to neutrality simply reinforce dominant ideologies. As Robert Jensen (2004) states in an article in the *Progressive Librarian*:

> The ideology of political neutrality, unfortunately, keeps professionals such as journalists, teachers, and librarians — as well as citizens — from understanding the relationship between power and the professions. Any claim to such neutrality is illusory; there is no neutral ground on which to stand anywhere in the world. Rather than bemoan that fact, I believe we should embrace it and acknowledge that it is the source of intellectual, political, and moral struggle and progress (p. 33).

Not surprisingly, critical librarianship's relationship to intellectual freedom is somewhat fraught. Although Toni Samek ("Critical Librarianship," 2007) noted in an interview that "the ethos of critical librarianship is inextricably linked to the ethos of intellectual freedom" (Section 4), recent academic work on critical librarianship does not explicitly discuss the value of intellectual freedom. For example, the *Journal of Critical Library and Information Studies* states in its inaugural issue that the journal seeks "seeks to publish essays and reviews that are explicit and unabashed in their commitments to social justice, ethics, and intellectual freedom" (Lau, Sellie, & Day, 2017). However, subsequent issues have only mentioned intellectual freedom in passing or while critiquing the field of information ethics and how research on the topic is exemplified in scholarly publications such as the *Journal of Information Ethics (JIE)*. On this latter point, Gr Keer and Jeffra Diane Bussmann (2019) argue that *JIE* is "solidly encased in the capitalist and colonial notions that social responsibility is an antagonist to intellectual freedom, and that neutrality is the best path towards intellectual freedom for the individual" (p. 5). However, Keer and Bussmann do not offer a broader understanding of how these ideas are not antagonistic. Since critical librarianship is a movement that has only recently gained momentum, it is not surprising that it is still establishing its philosophical foundations in relation to the values of "traditional" librarianship.

Critlib has received some pushback within the field. This is most readily exemplified in Judy Anderson's (2018) "Intellectual Freedom Equals Individual Freedom (perhaps not surprisingly published in the *Journal of Information Ethics*), which takes an explicitly individualistic stance toward intellectual freedom and argues that critical librarianship's "underlying theme of groups of people as victims in today's culture that we who are privileged must help because they cannot help themselves. one must tell others the "right" (i.e., the inclusive) way to behave" (Anderson, 2018, p. 8). Here the reader can clearly see the two aspects of liberal values in librarianship: individual progress and group identity. Although "liberal" and "progressive" librarians can sometimes take what might be seen as extreme views, the position described by Farkas at the beginning of this article is probably more prevalent in librarianship: Librarians are looking for practical and actionable methods for moving forward that take both values into account.

7 Intellectual Freedom and Social Justice

It is somewhat surprising that a book that was never even published would prove to be a pivotal moment for intellectual freedom in United States libraries. In 2016, when news that a book by Milo Yiannopoulos would be published by Simon & Schuster first leaked to the press (Grady, 2017) there was an immediate outcry in the library community. Yiannopolous was well known for his provocative statements against people and movements who work for a just society. On library social media, there were many discussions as to whether or not a library should buy the book for their collections. For example, on Library Think Tank, an open Facebook group for library issues, some librarians stated that they would never buy the book while others said that they owed it to their community members to have the book in their collections. These arguments over Yiannopolous's book and the initial inclusion of hate groups in the Library Bill of Rights, are indicative of an ongoing discussion in librarianship over what is support for intellectual freedom in a time of social upheaval.

In his article, "Toward a Practical and Normative Ethics for Librarianship," John Budd (2006) noted that intellectual freedom is a right that has no nuance. He argues that librarians should consider what kind of speech is being expressed when making decisions about inclusion in collections. Political speech that addresses a public concern, according to Budd, should be included. In his more recent book following up on this argument, Budd (2017) notes in the "What are the ethical and moral bases of the library and information professions?" chapter that the profession's tensions concerning freedom of speech date back to the development of the First Amendment. He states this as a division between consequentialist and absolutists ethics: "The freedom of speech under which we do live prohibits prior restraint on the grounds of offense that might be taken by someone, but it is concerned with the potential harm to an individual a group or the polity." (Budd, 2017, p. 134). Although the U.S. has an almost absolutist stance on freedom of expression, librarians may want to take the consequences of the circulation of certain types of speech into account in their professional lives.

Another possible foundation is to avoid conceptualizing the library as part of the individualist, "classically" liberal space of the marketplace of ideas, but to reclaim its space in the public sphere. This has long been the project of many library and information science scholars including John Buschman (2005) in his work the place of libraries within the public sphere; and Paul T. Jaeger, Ursula Gorham, John Carlo Bertot, and Lindsay C. Sarin (2014) who argue for the increased valuation of libraries in society. This reclamation of the library as a public good can be combined with a theory of how communication works in the public sphere such as Danielle Allen's (2015) flow dynamics model. Briefly, this model eschews the notion that the public sphere is a "space" and argues that it is first a "flow." According to Allen's model, there are two types of discourse: "influential," which is concerned with decision-making and "expressive," which "circulates within subnational and transitional communities and fosters shared identities, alliances, solidarities, and network connections" (p. 179). The model is somewhat complicated, but it takes a more nuanced view, as Budd called for, in order to understand how different types of discourse circulate in society. It employs the concepts of volume (how much), velocity (how fast), and viscosity or the "characteristics of the capacity of communicators to communicate within the context of their sociopolitical environment, rather than being a characteristic of the channels of communication" (Allen, 2015, p. 193). That is, rather than just considering *what* a particular material states, librarians might also consider *how much* of the material exists, *how fast* such material is being disseminated, and the *facility* of the idea to circulate within the public sphere. Although such considerations are often made in collection development policies, the flow model would allow librarians to take additional heuristics into account such as, for example, whether or not a particular material espouses a discourse that already reached a wide audience.

There is no reason to expect that the tension in U.S. librarianship between intellectual freedom and social justice will abate any time soon. The U.S. is experiencing a social crisis exemplified by the election of Donald Trump to the presidency, as well as the response to his election, and it is unknown what continuing effects this will have on American society. American librarianship is fully enmeshed in this crisis and will need to find a way forward. In order to do this, the profession must develop deeper and more nuanced foundations for its values. The use of terms such as "progressive" or "free-speech absolutist" need to be reevaluated with an eye to both the history of such terms and how they are interpreted in the current moment. More importantly, libraries and librarianship must have a fuller understanding of their place in society. As Allen (2015) notes, using spatial metaphors often circumscribes possibilities for action and librarianship would do well to consider "a model of the public sphere that constantly foregrounds the empirical realities that lie behind the well-worn critiques concerning exclusion, excessively rigid distinctions between the public and the private, and the value of diverse discourse types, from rhetoric to humor to 'dark speech'" (p. 181). That is, American libraries and librarianship need to develop a new and dynamic model for understanding its place in American society that incorporates the flow of discourse across all sectors. This new model would allow for libraries to both build on its traditional values and respond to the changing needs of society.

This paper provided a theoretical overview for understanding the values of "intellectual freedom" and "social justice" and how they are used in 21st century U.S. librarianship and has attempted to explain the foundations of the (perceived) tension in values in American librarianship. It introduced a practical heuristic for understanding the arguments of intellectual freedom and harm in the librarianship. Finally, it briefly described a theoretical foundation for ameliorating this tension through reclamation of the public sphere and a dynamic flow model of communication. The paper is intended as background for future work on intellectual freedom, censorship, and practical philosophy for librarians and librarianship.

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