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The Darien Statements on the Library and Librarians

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The Darien Statements on the Library and Librarians

Written and endorsed by John Blyberg, Kathryn Greenhill, and Cindi Trainor

The Purpose of the Library

The purpose of the Library is to preserve the integrity of civilization.

The Library has a moral obligation to adhere to its purpose despite social, economic, environmental, or political influences. The purpose of the Library will never change.

The Library is infinite in its capacity to contain, connect and disseminate knowledge; librarians are human and ephemeral, therefore we must work together to ensure the Library's permanence.

Individual libraries serve the mission of their parent institution or governing body, but the purpose of the Library overrides that mission when the two come into conflict.

Why we do things will not change, but how we do them will.

A clear understanding of the Library's purpose, its role, and the role of librarians is essential to the preservation of the Library.

The Role of the Library

The Library:

- Provides the opportunity for personal enlightenment.
- Encourages the love of learning.
- Empowers people to fulfill their civic duty.
- Facilitates human connections.
- Preserves and provides materials.
- Expands capacity for creative expression.
- Inspires and perpetuates hope.

The Role of Librarians

Librarians:

- Are stewards of the Library.
- Connect people with accurate information.
- Assist people in the creation of their human and information networks.
- Select, organize and facilitate creation of content.
- Protect access to content and preserve freedom of information and expression.
- Anticipate, identify and meet the needs of the Library's community.

The Preservation of the Library

Our methods need to rapidly change to address the profound impact of information technology on the nature of human connection and the transmission and consumption of knowledge.

If the Library is to fulfill its purpose in the future, librarians must commit to a culture of continuous operational change, accept risk and uncertainty as key properties of the profession, and uphold service to the user as our most valuable directive.

As librarians, we must:

- Promote openness, kindness, and transparency among libraries and users.

- Eliminate barriers to cooperation between the Library and any person, institution, or entity within or outside the Library.
- Choose wisely what to stop doing.
- Preserve and foster the connections between users and the Library.
- Harness distributed expertise to serve the needs of the local and global community.
- Help individuals to learn and to use new tools to create a more robust path to knowledge.
- Engage in activism on behalf of the Library if its integrity is externally threatened.
- Endorse procedures only if they guide librarians or users to excellence.
- Identify and implement the most humane and efficient methods, tools, standards and practices.
- Adopt technology that keeps data open and free, abandon technology that does not.
- Be willing and have the expertise to make frequent radical changes.
- Hire the best people and let them do their job; remove staff who cannot or will not.
- Trust each other and trust the users.

We have faith that the citizens of our communities will continue to fulfill their civic responsibility by preserving the Library.