

Coming soon!



Public Libraries and Social Justice

John Pateman, Information for Social Change, UK and John Vincent, The Network, UK

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Created a century and a half ago by the middle classes partly for their own use, the public library has nonetheless from the start professed itself to be the servant of the social whole. However, although over successive generations it has catered well for a traditional auto-didactic working-class clientele, the public library has been less successful in addressing the needs of those at the margins of both society and social opinion. In light of this historical legacy as well as the ongoing diversification of society, Pateman and Vincent's call to prioritise the social-justice purpose of the public library is not only appropriate but also timely.

– Alistair Black, Professor, Graduate School of Library and Information Science, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, USA

The need for public libraries to tackle social exclusion and engage in social justice becomes ever more urgent as the gap between rich and poor continues to widen, and the very survival of public libraries in the heart of the community is open to debate.

If public libraries are to develop and grow in the future and become relevant to the majority of their local communities, then they need to abandon outmoded concepts of 'excellence' and fully grasp the 'equity' agenda. This book examines the historical background to social exclusion and the strategic context in terms of government and professional policy. The authors propose a compelling manifesto for change and outline practical ways in which public libraries can be transformed into needs-based services.

Contents: Contents; Introduction; An historical view; What is social exclusion?; Strategic context; Tackling social exclusion; Developing a needs-based library service; Where next?; Index.

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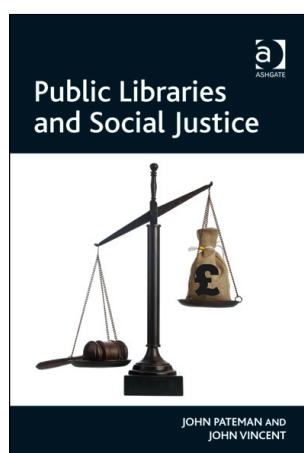
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