Leadership that crosses boundaries

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Introduction and Framework
The Book
Conception of the Book

• International and Fulbright experiences – transforming individual’s character, knowledge, and experience

• Desire to identify others with similar experiences

• Power of sharing: reliving experiences through narrative and exchange

• Limited existing titles in International Librarianship
Framing

• Fulbright charge:
  – *We must try to expand the boundaries of human wisdom, empathy, and perception and there is no way of doing that except through education*

• International librarianship stems from a desire to bring about political change, transcultural understanding, collaboration, and mutual respect

• Accounts that tell stories of American librarians who traveled to Central America, the Caribbean, Central Europe, Africa, the Mediterranean, and Asia to participate in Fulbright librarian-initiated and sponsored projects
The Cyprus Project

Because What is Known Must Be Shared
Worlds divided…inseparable in fate

Elements and Characteristics:
Greek text with phonetically pronounced Turkish words
The Cyprus Project

Bibliotheke = Demokratia + Kritike Skepse

Library = Democracy + Critical Thinking
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Competencies and Best Practices
Competencies

• Courage – fearlessness – sense of blind faith

• Spirit of adventure: *expect the unexpected*

• Journey outside comfort zone: 
  letting go of control, known quantities

• Independence – autonomy – self-starter

• Yet consummate collaboration abilities
Specific Cultural Assets

• Flexibility: Ability to pivot – fine tune plan on the ground – think on your feet

• Listening-observation skills: Eye contact, body language, social cues-behavior norms
  [gender issues]

• Preparation: Research – books about sponsor country – meet with scholars with knowledge base
Specific Cultural Assets

- Humility: Open to ability to learn
- Acknowledge that American assumptions, norms, and behavior are cultural constructs
- Embrace *failure* as opportunity to learn and grow
Best Practices

• Request orientation from Host if not provided one

• Seek Letter of Introduction to validate your status, affiliation, and sponsorship

• Confirm at start shared understanding of expectations and deliverables

• Always take cues from your Host

• Establish periodic check-ins to monitor progress of project
Cultural Anecdotes

• South Africa:
  Business meeting etiquette

• Vietnam:
  Collection development strategies
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Deliverables and Sustainability
Experiences and Lessons

- Toronto-Addis Ababa – Information Literacy and educational leadership
  *Formative evaluation, cultural briefings, agreements*

- Fulbright-Hays, Morocco and Tunisia
  *Grant application process, language pre-requisites, cultural cuing*

- Steve Biko Centre, South Africa
  *Networking and contacts, creating transparency and comfort*
Experiences and Lessons

• Building capacity in Tanzania
  *Local leadership first (Village information officers), establish outcomes*

• Lubuto Library Partners – Zambia
  *Partnering “authority,” local representatives, country development goals*

• Peace Corps – Library Projects
  *Pre-service training, sustainability, generalists’ training, program alignment*
Anecdotes

• Hosting problems and celebrations

• Group dynamics

• Adventure forth
Sustainability

• Sharing – Professional development, leading training, exchanges, PR

• Impact – Curriculum changes, service, personal development, professional and research partnerships, relationships and bridging

• Deliverables-templates – Content, OERs, action plans, toolkits, LIS education
Thank you

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