Global Issues and Local Action:
The Rights to Intellectual Freedom and Information Access, and What That Means
for U.S. Libraries

Judianne E. Morrissey, Delgado Community College

Abstract

Discussions regarding intellectual freedom, censorship, and information access are nothing new. There has been, however, an explosive rise of information and communication technologies (ICTs), allowing almost instantaneous connections that can be and are formed from opposite sides of the world, between individuals with no prior contact and perhaps little in common besides access to communication devices. This makes it necessary to reevaluate how we view intellectual freedom and information access as human rights, particularly as rights that enable democratic growth. Are these rights universal, or are they merely cultural imperatives – and how should the distinction determine our actions as librarians? How vital are rights to intellectual freedom and information access in the creation and maintenance of democratic societies? What can we learn from recent events, particularly the 2011 Egyptian revolution and the Occupy Wall Street movement? Finally, how can libraries and librarians in the United States act locally – both politically and practically – to foster these freedoms globally?

Keywords: Intellectual Freedom; Censorship; Information Access; Information and Communication Technologies; Social Activism; 2011 Egyptian Revolution; Occupy Wall Street

The Promise of Digital Democracy: A Study in Chatter

The ability to access information has always been important to the formation and maintenance of democratic society. As Vaidhyanathan said, "Information is special. It is the raw material of deliberation. And rich deliberation is the foundation of healthy democracy."[1] With the advent of the digital age, there was hope that the digitalization of and increased access to information would, in turn, lead to a spread of democratic growth globally – a glorious 'Information Age' that would see the end of totalitarian regimes, among other evils. As information and communication technologies (ICTs) became more common and spread worldwide, however, despair set in. People seemed more likely to play games and chatter idly online than to participate in sophisticated dialectic and higher learning. Eric Fish observed, "As the Internet age has matured…this exuberance over its democratic potential has been tempered by skepticism about whether the Internet will truly improve the quality of democracy."[2] Then, in the spring of 2011, came the revolutions that swept through northern Africa, most notably in Egypt, where Mubarak was ousted after decades of power in a corrupt and unpopular government by ICT-dependent protestors.

"Make no mistake," Sohair Wastawy wrote. "Access to information, in a country with limited resources, served as the first catalyst for the Egyptian revolution that began January 25 and resulted 18 days later in the resignation of President Hosni Mubarak after almost 30 years in office."[3] It was waning hope

fulfilled – information access, carried by ICTs, leading to rapid democratic change. Wastawy continued:

> The internet, along with Facebook and Twitter, was the Open University that facilitated learning about democracy for Egypt's young people. The revolution had been brewing for the past 10 years or so, increasing by the day as more people acquired mobile devices. The ground in Egypt was ripe for revolution: Corruption was at its peak, information was accessible, self-publishing and editorials had become an acquired right and gave a voice to many, telecommunications provided a platform, and Tunisia offered the spark.
> But the erosion of the Mubarak regime began in earnest with the growing popularity of the internet in Egypt.
> Images of corruption within the system from clandestine video recordings and snapshots were duplicated at lightning speed around the nation. Many were posted on YouTube, Flickr, and other sites. Police brutality was exposed in great part because of social media. Prior to the protests, when secret documents were leaked it only benefited a few in political circles. Although some opposition leaders were occasionally brave enough to hand sensitive documents to the media, it often resulted in the journalists getting thrown in prison and the newspapers shutting down.
> But on the internet, the release of a single document spread like a ferocious fire in seconds, and millions had access to it.[4]

While information that "facilitated learning about democracy"[5] was undoubtedly vital to the eventual uprising of the Egyptian citizenry, there was another type of information that had great impact. This second type of information – and arguably the more vital type – amounts to little more than online chatter. This information, generally trivial and splintered, snowballed into something significant. Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, and such sites provided places for individuals to report short bursts of momentarily important information and created a framework for organization and action (as did the uncountable SMS/text messages and, after the technological crackdowns of the government,

the 'voice to tweet' messages created through the cooperation of Google and Twitter[6]). Rather ingeniously, social media outlets were also utilized by youth activist organizers to confuse police forces. False meeting sites would be posted on Facebook (which, the protesters were aware, were being watched), while correct locations would be spread by more traditional means, such as through word of mouth or via telephone calls. Once protesters were gathered in the correct location, the organizers would revert to true posts on Twitter and Facebook in order to gather still more people to the area, while police forces were busy at the false meeting site.[7]

The power of idle chatter, via means not meant to transmit what is usually considered 'quality' information, to fuel democratic revolution is nothing new. Gossip and idle chatter in Paris about the king's actions and rulings formed the foundation of the French revolution and, eventually, spread much farther. [8] In fact, "[g]ossip was essential to the emergence of the Enlightenment and eventually the French Revolution - and ultimately the bourgeois revolution across Europe."[9] Two differences stand out, however, in comparing the French and the Egyptian revolutions – differences related to the use of ICTs. For one, the revolution was much more democratic – everyone with ICT capabilities, not just the intelligentsia, could hear and be heard; for another, the speed at which the revolution spread was exponentially greater.

The French revolution was slower to start in large part because only certain individuals in the capital of Paris had access to vital information – both coming out of the king's court and coming in from surrounding areas. The

intelligentsia had the time, the educational background, and the opportunity to chatter about the king's business – privileges denied to most. It took time to disseminate the information necessary to begin the revolution. Citizens living outside the city "were less likely to experience state surveillance, yet they were excluded from the sites of information exchange. The inconvenience - the expanse of time and space and the expense of traversing them - extended the rule of monarchy for a couple more decades."[10]

The Egyptian revolution, in comparison, took much less time to organize and carry out and involved a more diverse cross-section of the population. In fact, Egypt's revolution was part of a much wider revolution across the northern part of Africa, just as France's was part of a similar movement across Europe – but while the various European revolutions' beginnings spanned decades, Egypt was involved in a movement that took mere months to sweep through several nations.

The Internet and its offerings have indeed shown themselves to be powerful instruments of information access and democratic conversation. It, importantly, "facilitates mass communication in technologically-equipped societies. Unlike other mass media, the internet facilitates new forms of two-way communication and political participation, encourages interaction among citizens and public officials and provides a rich forum for discussion of contentious political issues."[11] Inherently democratic in itself, in that anyone with ICT access can hear and be heard worldwide (barring interference from censoring organizations), the Internet has shown itself to be a powerful tool for quick and decisive democratic action in 'the real world', as well.

One of the most poignant moments of the revolution showed how greatly the Egyptian people have come to value information and access to it – rings of student protestors surrounded the Bibliotheca Alexandrina to protect it during rioting.[12] Libraries have long held that information access is a pillar of freedom – and remain vital in the digital age. Indeed, the work of disseminating information and protecting access may only be beginning. At a time when "it is incumbent upon those of us who work in libraries and other information disciplines to make facts available and free for all"[13], the threat to the democratic structure and power of the Internet is growing. Eric Fish argues that the "possibility of government control over the Internet cuts out the very heart of its democratic ambitions. If the government can filter information that is posted and read on the Internet, it can effectively stifle online organization and criticism."[14] Even in putatively strong democracies, governments are involved in censorship[15]; corporate and government collusions to undermine privacy and erase anonymity also threaten the democratic strength of ICTs.

In the U.S., the present Occupy movement quickly spread throughout the nation despite questionable coverage in the mainstream media, primarily through protesters' use of social media outlets[16] and street journalism, with some using cell phones to record and broadcast events online.[17] It is interesting to note how much more quickly the U.S.'s Occupy movement spread compared to the revolutions in northern Africa, given the greater access to social media available in the U.S. The protests in Africa spread in months; it took a week for the Occupy movement to spread from New York to Chicago, and less than one month for

protests to spread to "Boston, Memphis, Minneapolis, St. Louis, Hawaii, and Portland, Maine".[18] One of the more important parties involved in the Occupy movement has been The People's Library, a "collective, public, open library of the Occupy Wall Street leaderless resistance movement" that "provides free, open and unrestricted access to our collection of books, magazines, newspapers, 'zines, pamphlets and other materials that have been donated, collected, gathered and discovered during the occupation."[19]

Libraries and librarians are needed now more than ever to safeguard information access and act as conduits for users of information – even (perhaps especially) when the information in question is merely 'chatter'.

Globalization of Intellectual Freedom as a Moral Imperative: Personal Reflections of Issues in Thailand

In 2008, I moved to Chonburi, Thailand, a relatively large city just south of the capital, Bangkok. Shortly after accepting the position of first- and second-grade English teacher at one of the premiere government-run elementary schools in Thailand, I was taken on a tour of the facilities. The last stop on the tour was the school's library. It was neatly arranged. Just inside and to the left of the glass doors was the librarian's desk; to the right was a display of ESL workbooks. Clustered in the middle of the library were ten computers. To one side was Thai fiction. Thai and English newspapers and magazines, along with comfortable seating, created a break in front of the back section of books – English fiction and non-fiction. Most of the materials looked brand-new. In fact, the director proudly stated that she herself had purchased most of the books and donated them to the school. Closer inspection revealed that most of the books were copies; at least

ten copies existed of the Thai translation of each of the Harry Potter books alone. Still, as an English teacher, I began to plan how to incorporate library visits into my curriculum. But, no – I was informed that student visits to the library were discouraged. Students might, after all, damage the books.

I was instructed to focus English teaching on conversational skills, particularly business English.[20] Reading was not a priority, beyond the level necessary for basic business skills. Critical thinking skills were neither wanted nor encouraged.

Once a day, for perhaps half an hour, students (mostly the older ones) were allowed into the library, where most of them grouped around the computers to check Facebook and email, and to play what games were available. Some students made their way to the newspapers and magazines. One or two would pick up a book. It was made very clear to me early on that further use of materials – especially those leading to critical thinking about religion, politics, or intercultural discourse – was taboo. While the school was nominally irreligious, Buddhist prayers were said every morning, and students who did not participate were punished. Teachers were discouraged from wearing red, but strongly encouraged to wear yellow; both were colors of opposing political parties. There could be no mention of tensions existing between various ethnic groups in the country, even when those tensions erupted in violence.

The injunction against such discussions extended outside school bounds as well. Some taboos are enforced covertly, through societal pressures. The freedom to choose a religion other than Buddhism does not free one from social and business expectations, which usually includes communal worship in temples, as well as maintaining office altars. Any unpleasant situation was ignored. The fact that the child sex trade was an

international tourist attraction for a city less than an hour away was never discussed; neither was the ongoing violence in the southern part of the country. In 2010, I returned to the U.S., shortly before the protests in Bangkok became violent. At the height of the violence, when scores had been killed, property damaged, and vital tourism income lost, Thai friends in Chonburi and other areas outside the capital knew nothing of it. Soldiers at the shopping centers and markets I had previously frequented were scanning for car bombs, but no one had heard of the deaths in the city two hours north. It was an unpleasant, and therefore neglected, topic of conversation.

In addition to this covert, societal self-censorship, the government uses overt measures to control information and curtail speech. Internet activity is monitored, and certain websites are inaccessible. Criticism of the royal family is a serious offense, punishable by up to fifteen years in prison. In September of 2010, the executive director of an independent news website, returning from a conference on Internet freedom in Hungary was arrested for comments posted on the website in 2008. Her arrest was only part of the wave of censorship hitting the nation after the unrest in the capital. After her arrest, the International Federation of Human Rights and the Union for Civil Liberty spoke out against

> …the use of restrictive legislation in order to silence critics of the current government's policies, in violation of the right to freedom of expression. Both organisations have observed an increasingly repressive trend of censorship in Thailand and the misuse of the Computer-related Crimes Act, the Lèse-majesté law as well as the Emergency Decree currently being enforced in seven provinces, to severely restrict freedom of expression and the media on vague grounds of protecting 'national security'. The sweeping restriction has resulted in the shutting down, blockage and censorship of reportedly as many as 40,000 websites…The Thai authorities' widespread censorship and use of legal actions against journalists have gone beyond the reasonable restrictions permissible under

international law and are in contravention of Thailand's obligations
under human rights treaties to which it is a State Party.[21]

Legal action is not reserved solely for Thai journalists. In 2009, the
Bangkok Post reported the arrest of a Swiss TV reporter. He had been arrested on
charges of defamation – over a documentary that had aired only in Switzerland in
2002. Conviction would mean a possible two years in prison and a 200,000 baht
(roughly $6,548.00 USD) fine.[22] An Australian writer was arrested in 2008 for a
novel he had written about politics and society in Thailand. He had worked as an
English teacher there for two years.[23]

The situation in Thailand is not unique. Globally, issues of intellectual
freedom, censorship, and restricted access to information prevent important
conversations at the same time that technology and international cooperation have
made universal democratic decision making possible.

Do those interested in the global development of intellectual freedom,
particularly librarians, in the U.S. have any responsibility to encourage change or
otherwise intervene in the legal and social decision making of other sovereign
nations? The answer depends on how we view the ethical status of intellectual
freedom. If, on one hand, we consider intellectual freedom to be a societal ethic[24],
one that, for instance, applies to the U.S. because 'we the people' have agreed to
adopt it, then there is no call for us to intrude upon other cultures and attempt to
change them. In the U.S., for example, societal ethics prevent citizens from eating
canines; it is not socially acceptable and may, in fact, lead to charges of animal
cruelty. In other societies, however, dog meat is considered a perfectly acceptable

food source. There seems to be no reason for U.S. citizens to attempt to change this practice.

If, on the other hand, we hold, as a universal moral truth, that all persons have the right to intellectual freedom, then we do have a duty to create and maintain the appropriate environment for its growth[25]. There are, after all, some universal morals democratic societies hold true, regardless of societal standards (such as the immorality of child prostitution and the importance of equal education opportunities for women). Where practices we consider universally immoral occur, we condemn them; despite the fact that they may not be taboo in a given culture, they are abhorrent to our ideals of human rights, especially the right to flourish as individuals.

The American Library Association has strong words to say about intellectual freedom.

> Intellectual freedom can exist only where two essential conditions are met: first, that all individuals have the right to hold any belief on any subject and to convey their ideas in any form they deem appropriate, and second, that society makes an equal commitment to the right of unrestricted access to information and ideas regardless of the communication medium used, the content of the work, and the viewpoints of both the author and the receiver of information. Freedom to express oneself through a chosen mode of communication, including the Internet, becomes virtually meaningless if access to that information is not protected. Intellectual freedom implies a circle, and that circle is broken if either freedom of expression or access to ideas is stifled. Intellectual freedom is freedom of the mind, and as such, it is both a personal liberty and a prerequisite for all freedoms leading to action.[26]

Do we believe that this statement only holds true in the U.S., or do we believe this is a universal human right? The answer to this question marks the

course of a greater conversation – whether we take action to influence organizations like the Thai Library Association[27] to create an environment where intellectual freedom thrives or we encourage them to follow their own paths to whatever ends their societies deem valuable. The stance the ALA has taken is one of global, universal ethical importance.

> Intellectual freedom is not only the bulwark of our constitutional republic but also the rallying cry of those who struggle for democracy worldwide. The metaphorical circle of intellectual freedom has expanded to global proportions over the past two decades with the advent of potent new communications technologies and the growing international recognition of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Article 19 of which declares the right of all people to freedom of expression. As the free flow of information transcends national boundaries, it becomes increasingly clear that prohibitions on freedom of expression in one country will inhibit the freedom of those in many other countries around the world. In an age of multinational media corporations, international computer links, global telecommunications, and the World Wide Web, we can no longer think simply in local terms. Promoting and defending intellectual freedom requires "thinking globally and acting locally."[28]

The course is set – having adopted intellectual freedom as a universal ethical stance, we need to now ask ourselves how we can 'act locally' to encourage the global spread of intellectual freedom and the access to information necessary to foster it, keeping in mind what changes we can expect to see – including possibly violent ones – as an outgrowth of increased information access, intellectual freedom, and the democratic conversation they naturally engender. Indeed, those changes are already occurring in unexpected areas.

The Duties of Libraries and Librarians to Safeguard Users' Rights to Information Access

The importance of information access to the creation and maintenance of a democratic society can hardly be overstated. In fact, access to information, particularly via ICTs, is coming to be accepted as a human right and is certainly demonstrating an important function as a supporter of other human rights. Librarians hold the freedom of access to information as a universal right (one particularly important to our profession) and should be concerned whenever that right is threatened.

At times, the right to freedom of information conflicts with the goals and policies of other entities – particularly government and corporate entities. The issues facing nations with only nominal democracies or totalitarian regimes are concerning, but so are those facing Europe, the U.S., and nations with stronger democracies, like South Korea. Censorship in South Korea is quite restrictive[29]; European nations pass laws restricting or denying Internet access to those guilty of online illegal activity (raising questions of whether a human right – purportedly universal and inalienable – can or should be lost to those who abuse them); the U.S. government continues to follow the provisions of the USA PATRIOT ACT, despite continuing allegations of rights infringement. Despite protests (particularly the Internet blackout of January 18, 2012) and the failure of SOPA/PIPA, further censorship is threatened in the U.S. with the continued introduction of similar bills – most recently, CISPA.

If it is true that access to information creates and strengthens democratic societal growth, then it is equally true that a government's attempts to deny or restrict access to information undermines democracy. ICTs and the Internet have

become widespread and almost instantaneous conduits to information, and have shown themselves to be vital to democratic conversation. Government attempts to interfere with these points of information access are troubling. The ability of governments to completely shut down citizens' access to the Internet, in part or as a whole, is disconcerting; the ability of the U.S. government, which controls ICANN and most root servers, to deny access globally to the majority of information on the Internet, is even more disturbing.

Of perhaps greater concern, however, is commercial interference – particularly as entities that wish to sell information access come into conflict with those who think information access is a right and should, therefore, be available to everyone. Corporations are interested in the commoditization of network priority, or 'tiering' – they are interested in making money. Tiering can (and, in many ways, does) take place in two ways. One type of tiering is user-controlled; the other is content provider-controlled. With user-controlled tiering, the user must choose a plan determining uptime, throughput, bandwidth caps, and/or latency. Of course, the more one is willing or able to pay, the better quality one can expect. These all affect *how* a user can access information. More concerning are corporate attempts to regulate *what* information users can access – through content censorship, or tiering access to certain sites (such as competitor sites) by how much a user is willing to pay to access more than the 'basic' plan's offerings. In theory, it would work much like television today – certain sites available for a set fee, others available at additional cost.

Content provider-controlled tiering would be largely invisible to the user,

although it would still greatly affect *what* information the user can access. In this case, it is not the user who pays – it is the content provider. Pricing plans would be drawn up and agreed to that would limit who or how many see a particular site, affecting the backbone of the Internet – similar to current search optimization services. Of course, those content providers with vast financial resources would be able to afford greater visibility, while those with very limited resources would be blocked from most users' view. Those who have found increasing visibility online – 'fringe' groups who face oppression, individual bloggers, and non-profit organizations, for instance – would be effectively silenced once more.

The power of other public entities to interfere with ICTs is also being noted. Recently, BART (Bay Area Rapid Transit) shut down mobile phone service in the San Francisco Bay Area subway stations in an attempt to prevent protests concerning a local police shooting. The service shutdown, however, was in no way restricted to protestors. [30] As Carrie Johnson explains, "The easiest way to describe what the transit authority did...is to call it a broad prior restraint on the communications of thousands of cellphone users — not just demonstrators, but also kids talking to their parents and adults talking to their doctors."[31] In another disconcerting event, Cornell University students began petitioning against the university's bandwidth policies, which mandate charges for use exceeding rather restrictive limits.[32] The ability of large entities to decide what and how much information the end user can access, for whatever reason, must be addressed, particularly if we are going to hold information access to be an absolute human right.

Libraries are in an awkward position. On one hand, librarians respect and uphold the law; on the other hand, librarians hold a moral obligation to users to protect their rights and provide needed information. When the two conflict, libraries and librarians are forced to choose. The more central libraries become to democratic conversation and the more vocal librarians are in protecting users' rights, the more attention they can be expected to draw from entities – government, corporate, and other – who are trying to limit or deny information access, in part or as a whole. Librarians need to lay hold to Vaidhyanathan's statement that "[l]ibraries are never as placid as they appear. They are often sources and centers of controversy and conflict. The better they are, the more dangerous libraries can seem."[33] Libraries and librarians are often called on to stand up to immense pressure to fulfill the moral obligation to safeguard users' rights to information access, and can only expect more of the same, as those rights are continually threatened.

What are libraries and librarians in the U.S., as believers in users' rights to information access, supposed to do? Of course, the American Library Association (ALA) – representing libraries as a conglomerate – is active in fighting for users' rights to access information. Most recently, it has affirmed our stance against rights infringing aspects of the USA PATRIOT ACT.

> The ALA is committed to preserving the free and open exchange of knowledge and information and the privacy rights of all library users, library employees, and the general public. It also opposes any use of governmental power to suppress the free and open exchange of knowledge and information.

The Council, in its resolution, which was passed June 28 at the ALA's Annual Conference in New Orleans, stated that the USA PATRIOT ACT includes provisions such as Sections 215 and 505 that threaten such free and open exchange of knowledge and information.[34]

Individual libraries should support and participate in the work of the ALA. What more can individual libraries and librarians do? First, libraries should be recognized and celebrated as the nexus of discussion, deliberation, and debate. Libraries should not be quiet places, when it comes to this issue. All over the U.S., libraries and librarians have been vocal in support of the freedom of information access. The work that needs to be done is both political and practical.

Politically, libraries individually need to be more concerned with the issues and actions for which the ALA is representing them. Being informed about and informing users about issues related to information access in the U.S. is vital. There are several communication outlets through which libraries can work to keep users informed – monthly newsletters, emails, blogs, and social media sites are already used for other purposes. As well as fighting *for* user rights, we should be fighting *with* users for their rights, and that requires educating users *about* their rights and the actions they can take to protect them. Education about tricks and tools to protect rights should also be given – such as using the Firefox add-on MAFIAAFire to connect to sites blocked by ICE[35], or installing Tor to protect user privacy and anonymity online[36]. In addition, thought must be given to more active participation in local and national action – as exemplified by The People's Library.

Local lobbying and political maneuvering is important – although the

ALA can do a lot of good, grassroots action is much more viable when you have a personal relationship with the politicians involved. The issues involved are various: censorship, copyright law reform, net neutrality, and user privacy are only a few of the concerns that fall under the information access umbrella. Although much information and help can be found for political action and user education on the ALA website, it takes dedicated local librarians to carry out the necessary work.

Practical actions must also be taken in the course of daily duties. The question of whether and how software violates or protects users' rights must be a big part of the acquisition decision making process. Using browser tricks and tools to protect anonymity and information access – such as MAFIAAFire for Firefox or incognito windows on Google Chrome[37] – should be encouraged. In addition, libraries should use (and encourage the use of) open source and open access resources. Libraries might also consider installing Tor on computers available for public use to further protect users' ability to access information from anywhere in the world – a service that is truly international in scope.

While national action is necessary, it is also incumbent upon libraries and librarians in nations like the U.S. to recognize and accept their status as role models in the international community. Nations like Thailand do respect U.S. institutions and do look to them for direction. In 2004, a comparison was made between various international codes of ethics (including the ALA and the Library Association of the U.K.) and the code of ethics of the Thai Library Association (TLA). There was one glaring difference – "the TLA Code of Ethics for

Librarians does not cover intellectual property, censorship, privacy, and confidentiality as the other codes."[38] The TLA Code of Ethics was then revised to include such issues[39] – a move that may lead to greater activism on behalf of library users in Thailand, especially if coupled with examples of activism from nations like the U.S. and, when possible, international activism to help bring about positive change. Maintaining Tor nodes or a Virtual Private Network (VPN) can help – creating anonymizing conduits for information access for those in areas of high censorship (and were ways many people globally aided the Egyptian people in their 2011 revolt and ouster of Mubarak)[40].

The ability to access information is critical to the creation and maintenance of a democratic society, and the right to access information is an acknowledged universal human right. Libraries and librarians have a crucial moral obligation not only to provide information access, but to protect users' rights to that access. Part of this obligation is political – using influence to create conditions where this right can flourish, including lobbying politicians, educating users, and encouraging international growth – and part of it is practical – using and encouraging the use of resources that ensure freedom of information access, even in potentially dangerous situations. While it can be expected that those most involved in information access activism will face heavy opposition from powerful entities, it is incumbent upon librarians to make a stance in support of this vital right.

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[1] Siva Vaidhyanathan, *The Anarchist in the Library: How the Clash between Freedom and Control Is Hacking the Real World and Crashing the System* (New York: Basic Books, 2004), xiii.

[2] Eric Fish, "Is Internet Censorship Compatible With Democracy? Legal Restrictions of Online Speech in South Korea," *Asia-Pacific Journal on Human Rights and the Law* 2 (2009): 44.

[3] Sohair Wastawy, "Egyptians Find Their Power in Access to Information," *American Libraries*, Wed, 02/16/2011 - 11:30. http://americanlibrariesmagazine.org/news/02162011/egyptians-find-their-power-access-information

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[6] Charles Arthur, "Google and Twitter Launch Service Enabling Egyptians to Tweet by Phone," *The Guardian*, 1 February 2011. http://www.guardian.co.uk/technology/2011/feb/01/google-twitter-egypt (accessed October 30, 2011).

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[9] Ibid.

[10] Ibid., 2.

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[13] Sohair Wastawy, "Egyptians Find Their Power in Access to Information."

[14] Eric Fish, "Is Internet Censorship Compatible With Democracy? Legal Restrictions of Online Speech in South Korea," 44.

[15] Ibid.

[16] Chenda Ngak, "Occupy Wall Street Uses Social Media to Spread Nationwide," *CBS News*, October 7, 2011. http://www.cbsnews.com/8301-501465_162-20117291-501465.html (accessed November 26, 2011).

[17] Brian Stelter, "Protest Puts Coverage in Spotlight," *The New York Times*, November 20, 2011. http://www.nytimes.com/2011/11/21/business/media/occupy-wall-street-puts-the-coverage-in-the-spotlight.html (accessed November 18, 2011).

[18] *The Week*. "Occupy Wall Street: A Protest Timeline." November 21, 2011. http://theweek.com/article/index/220100/occupy-wall-street-a-protest-timeline (accessed November 26, 2011).

[19] "About." Occupy Wall Street Library. http://peopleslibrary.wordpress.com/about/ (accessed November 26, 2011).

[20] By "business English" in a Thai context, I mean specifically English that would be used in hospitality industries – basic introductory conversations, directional phrases, and sales exchanges – not the skills necessary to conduct international business in a corporate sense.

[21]International Federation for Human Rights, "Thailand: A journalist faces criminal charges for comments posted on her website." International Federation for Human Rights. http://www.fidh.org/Thailand-A-journalist-faces-criminal-charges-for (accessed June 15, 2011).

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[23] "Writer arrested on charge of insulting Thai king." USA Today. http://www.usatoday.com/news/world/2008-09-05-2394388091_x.htm (accessed June 13, 2011).

[24] 'Societal ethics', as I use the term in this paper necessarily implies cultural relativism (a derivative of moral relativism) as opposed to moral realism, which holds all ethical standards as objective moral truths existing independent of us. The scope of this paper is too limited to fully examine these arguments. For the sake of this paper, at least, I will consider the culturally relative approach hypothetically.

[25] Such a duty necessarily implies that intellectual freedom must be encouraged or perhaps even enforced, in some manner, globally to ensure the rights of all persons. What degree of coercion is necessary is unclear, and must be considered with a great deal of care.

[26] Intellectual Freedom Manual. 7th ed. Chicago: American Library Association, 2002. xv.

[27] More information about the Thai Library Association can be found on its English-language website. Thai Library Association, "About Us." Thai Library Association. http://www.tla.or.th/english_main.htm (accessed June 18, 2011)

[28] *Intellectual Freedom Manual*. 7th ed. Chicago: American Library Association, 2002. Xvi.

[29] Eric Fish, "Is Internet Censorship Compatible With Democracy? Legal Restrictions of Online Speech in South Korea," 44.

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[36] More information about Tor can be found on their website, https://www.torproject.org/.

[37] More information on Google Chrome's incognito windows can be found at http://www.google.com/support/chrome/bin/answer.py?answer=95464. Most, if not all, browsers support a similar capability.

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