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Name: S. Lief Adleson

Institutional affiliation: CEO of Books From Mexico

Biographical statement:

Born mid-century in California and raised in the rural hinterlands of the state's most northern district, Adleson showed an interest in living dangerously at an early age. While attending the University of California in Santa Cruz, he worked as a forest fire fighter for six seasons, specializing in helicopter operations for four of them. After one year of tranquil university studies he was granted a year's leave of absence to follow riskier endeavors. He hitchhiked from San Francisco to Panama with virtually no money, learning Spanish and surviving by working as truck drivers' helper, cargo loader, day laborer, calligrapher, and handyman.

Upon returning to UC Santa Cruz, he demonstrated his interest for Latin America by creating a new undergraduate degree program there: Latin American Studies. He was granted a degree with honors *in absentia* (1973), because he was spending his free time in Mexico working on an independent oral history research project about the lives and labors of Mexican oil workers. Eventually this passion for Mexican labor history led him to pursue a doctorate at El Colegio de México (1982), where he garnered financial support and recognition from such organizations as Industrias Resistol, the Organization of American States and the Social Science Research Council. Six years of secure employment at the Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia felt too protected, so he quit (tenure and all) to seek full-time thrills as a specialized book vendor.

Notwithstanding having experienced robberies, extortion, fraud, and death threats, he continues to enjoy the excitement and constant variation associated with discovering and acquiring new publications in the nation's capital and in the Mexican hinterland.