The future has already arrived. It's just not evenly distributed yet.

-William Gibson

# Our Job in 10 Years: The Future of Academic Libraries

John Dupuis, York University Janice Mutz, Lakehead University

OLA Super Conference, February 25, 2010



## On predicting the future:

Predicting the future may be difficult...We have to be able to look at the evidence provided by the past and the present, and then do what hurricane forecasters do: figure out a range of likely future scenarios and prepare for them as best we can.

### -Rick Anderson

"Future-Proofing Libraries: Strategies for Acquisitions, Cataloging and Collection Development"

The Serials Librarian Vol. 55 (4) 2008

# Libraries of the Future Blog for the JISC Campaign

### The Research Library in the 21st Century: **An Invitational Symposium**

September 11 - 12, 2006 Austin, TX

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT AUSTIN

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#### Overview

This is the site for the British Library/JISC/RIN/RLUK/SCONUL Libraries of the Future study (September 2009 - April 2011). being conducted by Curtis+Cartwright Consulting Ltd.

The site provides details of the project, the sponsors, the project team and will host published outputs as they become available. It also provides information restricted to participants in the project including workshop information, input materials and speaker biographies.

We welcome any comments or questions about the project please see the contact page for details.



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### And Now for Something Completely Different: Our Future from Outside the Box

an ALCTS Symposium at ALA Midwinter 2010

Friday, January 15, 2010, 8:30 am-5: pm Boston Convention and Exhibition Center, Rooms 252 A/B

Several cutting-edge thinkers will prepare short opinion pieces on future trends/issues/developments that are likely to impact research, instruction, and scholarly communication. These essays will serve as the found Session # 602 discussions between some of these thinkers, selected responon emerging roles for libraries and librarians, particularly collecti The Future of Libraries is Now: The Deans Panel services librarians. This symposium will build upon the themes Symposium, "Living Digital."

3:45 PM

Dr. Kenneth-Roy Bonin, Professor and Director, School of Information Studies, University of Ottawa; Dr Seamus Ross, Dean and Professor, Faculty of Information, University of Toronto; Thomas Carmichael, Dean, Faculty of Information and Media Studies, University of Western Ontario; Moderator: Dr. Ken Haycock, Professor and Director, San Jose School of Library and Information Science

Hundreds of students are enrolled in Ontario's post graduate library studies programs. These students will drive the future of library and information science. What are the trends, perspectives, and learning opportunities available to students, and what do we as employers need to be ready for as we welcome the future into our organizations?

No Brief Candle

Reconceiving Research

Libraries for the 21st Century

August 2008

Add to My Super Conference

## This is not a presentation

# Think of it as the unconference portion of OLA 2010

## This session belongs to all of us

# It's a conversation about the future of our shared profession.

# We're just the ringleaders and facilitators

## Provocative, Being

Be a library provocateur by making bold statements like:

- Library instruction doesn't work.
- Library catalogs are obsolete.
- Reference is dead.
- Librarianship is not a science.
- Google wins.

Be careful not to be *too* provocative, lest you run the risk of talking yourself out of your cushy job.

-A Librarian's Guide to Etiquette

http://libetiquette.blogspot.com/2007/10/provocative-being.html

## Assumptions

- All of our institutions are different
- There is no single future, only a multitude.
- Our first loyalty is to our patrons
- Our focus is educational mission of our institutions
- Libraries and librarians have something useful to offer
- The genie is out of the bottle, there's no going back
- Baby, bath water
- No one else is going to stick up for us

## Three Key Questions

- What is our relationship to stuff?
- What value does our physical space add to the educational experience?
- What is our area of expertise on a campus full of experts?

## A reality check

- Who owns a cellphone?
- A smart phone?
- An ebook reader?
- Who's tried accessing their library's eresources on one of those devices?
- Facebook?
- Twitter?
- Blog?
- IM/Texting?
- Pew Millennials quiz?

Laptops, WiFi and online catalogues make the traditional library obsolete.

-Henry Petroski ASEE Prism Magazine My challenge is serious. In 10 or 20 years, we won't need buildings to house books. No library. Who is going to need librarians?

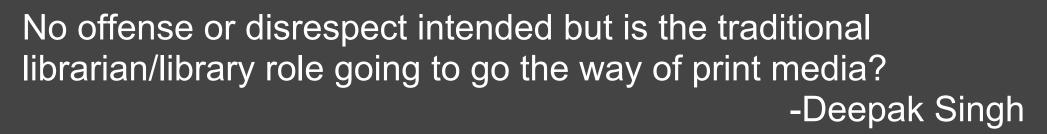
-Daniel Lemire

http://twitter.com/lemire/statuses/6348788631

Burn down the library. C'mon, all the books in the world are already digitized. Burn the thing down...Stop air conditioning the books. Enough already.

-Adrian Sannier

via http://acrlog.org/2008/08/19/library-as-place-for-air-conditioning-books/

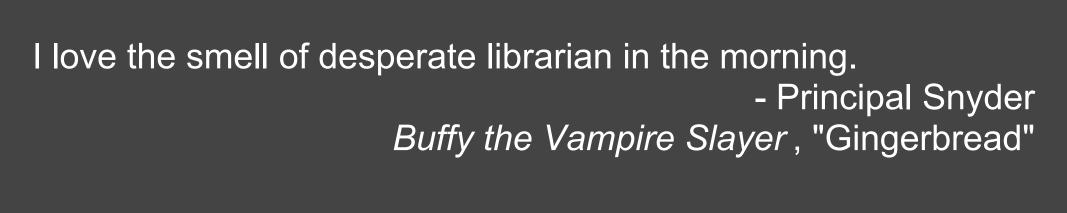


http://twitter.com/mndoci/statuses/8264399362

But, overall, I think libraries are headed in the same direction as bookstores and in obedience to the same logic—falling in tandem with the rise of ebooks.

-Tim Spalding

http://www.librarything.com/thingology/2010/02/why-are-you-for-killing-libraries.php



Could academic libraries start to disappear from the landscape in the 10-20 year timeframe?

Yes.

Let's talk about how we can keep that from happening.

## Some thoughts

**Attention** is the first currency of the digital realm... **Reputation** is the second currency of the digital realm...

To me this means that in the digital realm, you have to stop thinking that you're in the XYZ business...and start thinking that you're in the attention and reputation business.

-Richard Akerman

http://scilib.typepad.com/science\_library\_pad/2008/01/the-currencies.html

One of the great strengths of Friendfeed is that it has promoted conversations across boundaries that are traditionally very hard to bridge. The ongoing collision between the library and scientific communities on Friendfeed may rank one day as its most important achievement, at least in the research space.

-Cameron Neylon

http://cameronneylon.net/blog/friendfeed-for-research-first-impressions-of-sciencefeed/

We always tell our students that not everything is available for free on the internet...

What happens when the free stuff truly becomes "good enough?"

Should we work for or against that possibility?

What if Google buys Elsevier?

Thomson?

SirsiDynix?

Can you imagine a day when we buy all or nearly all of our books from Google?

How about other content too?

Will we move from collecting the whole world for our patrons to collecting our patrons for the whole world?

(paraphrased from Dorothea Salo)

When you see a great big room full of books, do you see it as something alive or as something dead?

How will the movement to Open Access for scholarly content affect our collections budget?

What happens to the money that is saved?

What's the media business model in a world where the marginal cost of each copy is zero?

This is why I've always found the publishing disdain for "user generated content" to be so perplexing. The fundamental job of publishing is curation -- finding good stuff and bringing it to an audience that might not otherwise encounter it.

-Tim O'Reilly

http://radar.oreilly.com/archives/2008/01/wikipedia\_community\_publishing.html

## Second Life, Joining

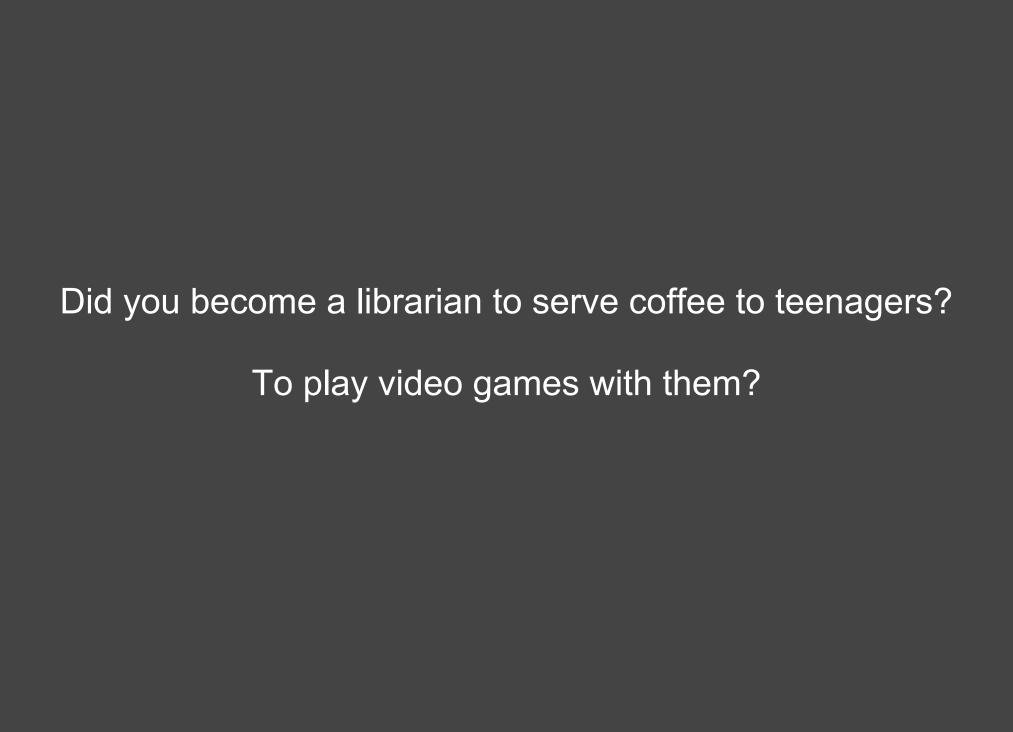
Librarians should think twice before joining Second Life in an attempt to connect with patrons. Your patrons don't want to be friends with you in real life, so it's not likely that they'll be interested in hanging out with your avatar.

-A Librarian's Guide to Ettiquette http://libetiquette.blogspot.com/2007/02/second-life-joining.html

Library 2.0 proponents have a lot to say about what we should do differently, but far less to say about why we should do it. At times, when someone's vision of a not-too-far-in-the-future library service begins to sound like an iTunes store for the e-book reader, committed librarians begin to wonder, "What would be the point?"

-Rory Litwin

http://libraryjuicepress.com/blog/?p=353



Is a bookless library just a glorified study hall or student centre?

But I leave u with this to ponder: are your librarians your rockstars in your community? Should they be? If so, how do u get there?

-David Lee King

http://twitter.com/davidleeking/status/5021416848

How and where we interface with our users is where the rubber meets the road and should merit a little more thought then simply thrusting a MySpace page in their face or building a new library in Second Life — a service our users overwhelmingly do not use and, which seems to me, like a creepy post-apocalyptic wasteland.

-John Blyberg

http://www.blyberg.net/2008/01/17/library-20-debased/

I have always wished for my computer to be as easy to use as my telephone; my wish has come true because I can no longer figure out how to use my telephone.

-Bjarne Stroustrup

http://www.research.att.com/%7Ebs/bs\_faq.html#really-say-that

Accept the new search paradigm. Accept the short-term risk to avoid long-term disintermediation, give up our rules and make complexity simple."

-Jane Burke (VP Serials Solutions)

from "Discover vs. Disintermdiation" Presentation at Charleston Conference, Nov. 2009

Are ebook readers a disruptive technology for libraries? Or just a passing trend?

#### Which device wins?

Desktop, laptop, netbook, ebook reader, cellphone, smart phone, tablet.

Or is it combination of devices?

## An exercise

- Think of all the most disruptive forces and trends we've been discussing
- Apply them to two areas of our current situation
- One related to stuff and one to services
- Think of the best thing that could happen in the next 10 years and the worst
- Divide your sheet into four quadrants

# The future of...Pick one from each column!

- 1. Books
- 2. Scholarly monographs
- 3. magazines
- 4. Journals
- 5. Aggregators
- 6. A&I databases
- 7. Digital content collections
- 8. Archives
- 9. Special collections
- 10. Newspapers
- 11. Data
- 12. Images
- 13. Film
- 14. Music

- 1. Reference
- 2. Computer labs
- 3. Social media/networks
- 4. Curriculum integration
- 5. Information literacy
- 6. Leaning commons
- 7. Cafes
- 8. Library website
- 9. Faculty Liaison
- 10. Digitization projects
- 11. Institutional repositories
- 12. Online tutorials
- 13. Virtual worlds
- 14. Journal hosting

# The way forward

#### We have to:

- Be at the forfront of changes in scholarly communications
- Be the social learning space on campus
- Engage our campus communities
- Have a role in the institution's educational mission
- Provide virtual spaces that are invisible, social, scalable...
- Decide what's worth paying for
- Focus on content not container
- Avoid vision drift

## Preparing for the future

We need to practice our own lifelong learning preaching.

- Web 2.0, learning about and learning in
- Read books
- Trend watching
- Blogs are a wonderful source
- And not just library blogs...
- Conferences
- And not just library conferences...
- The scholarly literature
- And not just the LIS scholarly literature...
- Experiment with new technologies, programs and processes, without being afraid to fail

### Contact

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