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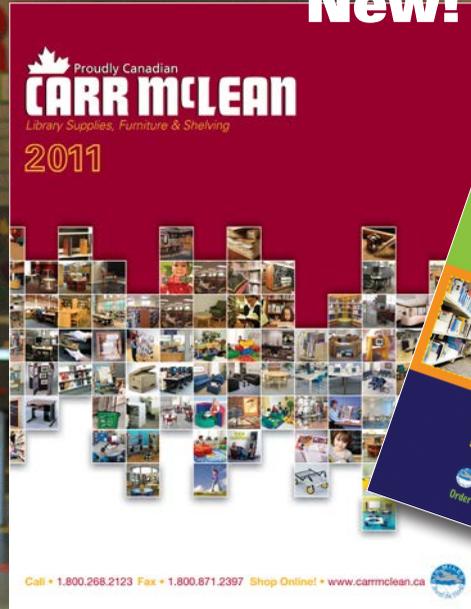
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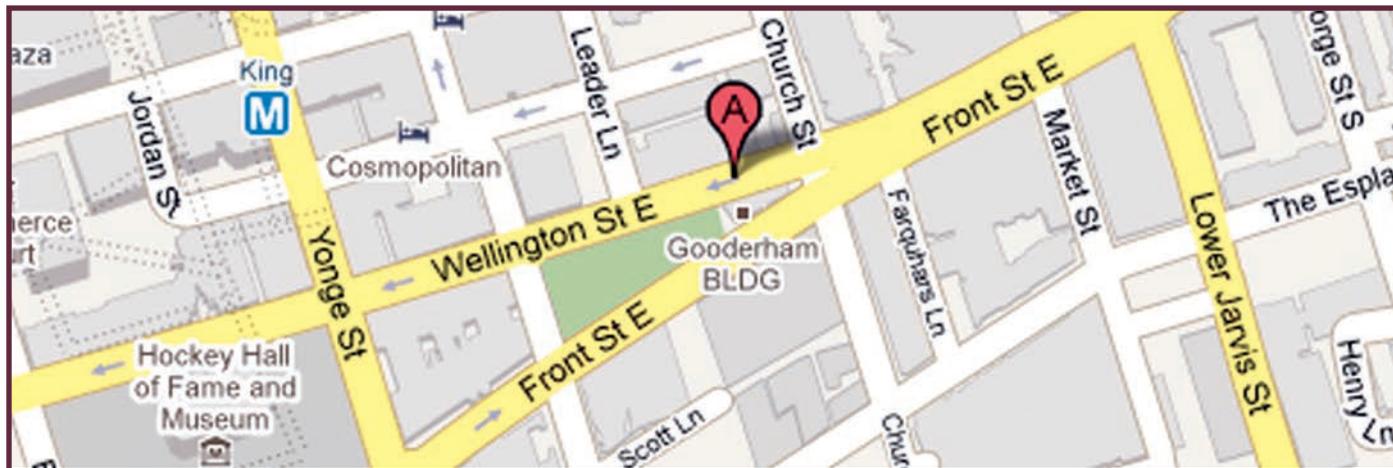


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Access is the official magazine of the Ontario Library Association, published quarterly for members as a continuing education service to keep them informed of its activities and of events, trends, and issues affecting the association as well as libraries all across Ontario and beyond. The magazine is a forum for discussion, a place for news, and a source of ideas for the development and improvement of librarianship in the province.

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On the cover: The Fort Frances Public Library

Cover photo by Jennifer Krag and architecture by Chamberlain Architect Services, Ltd.

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from the editor

By **Wayne Jones**

One of the main reasons I like being a librarian ...

(or whatever someone who has an MLS from 1984 is called these days) is that my profession is one of the chief promoters of freedom of information and freedom from censorship. Libraries are in the business of providing information to their various user communities, purchasing all kinds of resources and making them easily available, and thanking you for accessing those e-journals from home, bringing back your books on time, and taking part in a wide range of programs and instruction.

Libraries also vigorously defend their right to collect books along the whole continuum of general acceptability, everything from the classics that everyone has to read in order to be even a semi-informed member of a literate society, to challenging literature of all kinds that various pockets of citizens find offensive, inappropriate, and downright unacceptable for some reason. One of my favourite events on the library calendar is Freedom to Read Week. Earlier this year at Queen's University Library we invited faculty members, library staff, members of the Kingston literary community, and others to read from challenged (and challenging) works of all sorts, and it was exhilarating to be in the audience during those awkward moments when offensive ideas were being presented, or a librarian was reading aloud some pretty "bad" words in the middle of the day.

The Ontario Library Association also plays an important role in promoting freedom to read and in denouncing censorship, and Leslie Holwerda's piece in this issue of *Access* illustrates the point, and OLA's exemplary reaction. The key principle, as Leslie points out, is not whether you agree or not with the narrator of *The Shepherd's Granddaughter*, but rather that you see the importance of allowing all points of view. Check out the full article on page 10.

There was a great posting on the Monkey See blog on the NPR site this summer, praising libraries for being defenders like this: "Libraries get in fights. Everybody likes a scrapper, and ... there's a certain pleasantly plucky quality to the current perception of libraries and librarians." (In fact, six reasons were cited for why librarians are "standing on the edge of [our] pop-culture moment": check them all out at the July 20, 2010, posting at npr.org/blogs/monkeysee.) It's good to see the stereotype contradicted, and for libraries to be aligned with – and champions of – some of the key tenets which make a free society free in the first place.



I've heard that you can't judge a book (or a magazine) by its cover, but ...

those of us involved in the production of *Access* over the past year or two have really liked the series of photos of library buildings that we've been featuring on the covers. They've given the magazine a nice professional look at the same time that they've showcased some impressive architecture and emphasized the continuing importance of the "bricks and mortar" in providing library services. Well, the one on this issue of the magazine will be the last one in that series, and with the winter issue we're going to be starting a new theme. We haven't worked out the style and all the details yet, but there's a change coming.

As for the issue in hand, on behalf of the editorial team, the contributors, and OLA HQ staff, I hope you'll find something (or a lot of things) of interest. And don't forget to check out *Access Online* as well (accessola.com/accessonline), where you'll find as usual a few things that we weren't able to fit into the print magazine. Stay tuned also, here in print and there on the web, for some changes coming to the online version ...

.....
Wayne Jones is Head of Collection Development and E-Resource Management at Queen's University and Editor-in-Chief of Access. wjones@accessola.com

e-book evolution

Ontario publishers evolving and expanding e-offerings

Independent book publishers in Ontario — ranging from academic, general trade, niche and children's publishers — are proceeding at full speed to ensure the breadth of their content is available to the increasing number of Canadians who want to read e-books.

Did you know?

- Hundreds of e-books from Ontario publishers are currently available
- Over 5,000 e-books will soon be available from these publishers
- Over 80% of these publishers are incorporating e-book production alongside standard production
- Almost 35% of their backlist is already converted to digital formats with more coming weekly

The Organization of Book Publishers of Ontario (OBPO) encourages Canadian libraries to enrich their Canadian e-book collections. Look for books from our memberpublishers through your digital distributors.

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ontario snapshot

LIBRARY NEWS, PROGRAMS,
AND RECOGNITION

Gerstein Celebrates Centennial

This October at the University of Toronto Libraries, the Gerstein Science Information Centre will be celebrating the centennial of its 1910 renovations and expansion. Originally built in 1892, the building had to be expanded in 1910 to accommodate students and 250,000 books. Even today, library users are impressed with the glass floors in the stack wing, as well as by the fact that much of the collection is underground. The early renovations were modern at the time and the library continues to win accolades for current renovations and additions. Recent renovations have revealed a stunningly beautiful original ceiling with an exquisitely carved wooden vault and a massive skylight the length of the building. Centennial celebrations will be held during the year.



New Huntsville PL Rotary Teen Space

A year of planning by Chief Librarian Maureen Cubberley and Rotary Club of Huntsville Past President Barbara White made the new Rotary Teen Space come true. The cyber-lounge opened March 24, 2010. Board Chair Barbara Stephen, Barbara White, and Mayor Claude Doughty cut the ribbon. Funding for Teen Space came from the Rotary Club of Huntsville (\$12,000), the Friends (\$3,000 towards computers; \$1,000 for collections), and \$3,500 from general donations. Features include six new internet-access workstations; two tubular steel-framed sofas; comfy chairs; Puzzlotts; a CD spinner; and a birch wood mural.



Amy (left) and Adam in deep discussion over their Claymation scripts.

Pembroke Kids Try Claymation

This summer, the Pembroke Public Library tried out a new program called Animation Club. The first session focused on Claymation, involving children developing a plot, setting, and characters using building objects and their imagination.

We suggested they make the character from wire, clay, and fabric, and the children also brought toys from home. The kids built their own stages out of paper, paint, and household items. When everything was done, the children used digital cameras to take still pictures of their characters. They then moved things slightly and repeatedly, and took more pictures until their scene was complete. The children then transferred their pictures to Windows Movie Maker to complete their movies.

—Lindsay Hammel

ABO-FRANCO: PRIX MICHELINE PERSAUD

Louise Godbout-Legault a débuté sa carrière dans les bibliothèques publiques au Québec et en Ontario. En 1989, elle se joint au Service des bibliothèques de l'Ontario sud, d'abord comme coordonnatrice des services en français, ensuite comme traductrice. Elle est responsable de la traduction et de l'adaptation en français des 18 cours EXCEL, permettant aux petites bibliothèques d'avoir des gestionnaires qualifiés. En 2006, Louise accepte de nouveau d'être coordonnatrice, poste qui réunit dorénavant tous les services en français du SBOS. En 2010, Mme Godbout-Legault se voit décerner le Prix Micheline Persaud. Bravo, Louise!



Photo by Maria Smit, Branch Supervisor

Springfield Library Reopens in New Location

Elgin County Library has moved its Springfield branch from a facility shared with a fire hall to a brand new centre called Malahide Community Place. The new library is larger, with space to accommodate a teen area, plus space to grow the library's collection. Community response was overwhelmingly positive. More kids than ever signed up for this year's summer reading club and the preschoolers have a colourful new area for storytime. There is also plenty of comfortable seating for adults to browse their favourite magazines and newspapers.

RIDING TO READ IN DURHAM

Ride to Read – a partnership of the eight Durham Region public libraries (Ajax, Brock, Clarington, Oshawa, Pickering, Scugog, Uxbridge, and Whitby) and Durham Region Transit – launched in July. The program was geared to elementary-school-aged children during the summer months to enable them to access Summer Reading Clubs by way of public transit. All elementary-school-aged children who registered in a Durham library's Summer Reading Club were able to ride Durham Region Transit buses at no charge in July and August using their library card with a valid sticker as a transit pass. The program proved to be a popular one. It lowered barriers to library access, fostered literacy and reading during the summer months, and increased awareness of transit services and routes. All participants found it worthwhile.

—Rhonda Jessup

Owen Sound's Transliteracy Conference

The Owen Sound & North Grey Union Public Library hosted its first annual Transliteracy Conference in early June. Literacy and basic skills workers and library staff participated in this amazing professional development opportunity. The conference focused on 21st-century learning tools with an emphasis on online collaboration. Transliteracy has been defined as "the ability to read, write and interact across a range of platforms, tools and media." More than 100 participants from across Ontario gained hands-on experience and left the conference eager to incorporate transliteracy skills in their promotional and educational work.

STANLEY CUP COMES TO ORONO

Thousands of people from Clarington and surrounding areas packed into the village of Orono on July 8 to welcome Chicago Blackhawks player Bryan Bickell and the Stanley Cup! Ready Reader, mascot of the Clarington Public Library and part-time resident of the Orono Branch, was there to get a peek at the famous cup and celebrate with the community and enthusiastic crowds. As part of the victory celebrations following the NHL series playoffs, each player of the winning team gets to spend a day with the Stanley Cup. Bickell elected to spend his day with his earliest fans, supporters, and family in his hometown of Orono. Riding through the parade on the town's vintage fire truck, Bickell spent the afternoon signing autographs and posing for photos at the local arena where he got his start playing hockey.



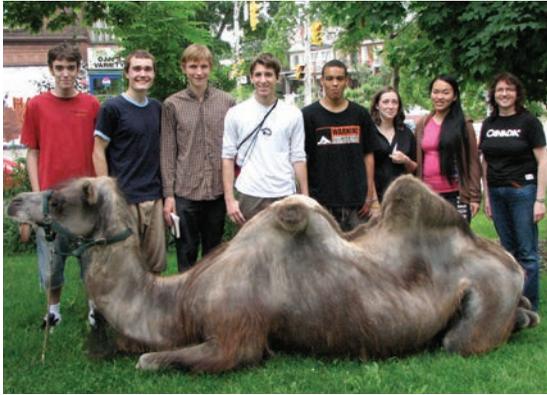
Explore!

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Learn!

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First Ever Read-a-Thon Brings Camel to Harbord Collegiate's Front Lawn

On Wednesday, June 23, students of Harbord Collegiate Institute got more than they expected when they returned to school to receive their final marks. Greeting students on the front lawn of the school was Alice the two-humped Bactrian camel. Alice's visit was a gift from the Toronto Zoo for raising more than \$1,500 for the Adopt-an-Animal program.

Earlier in the year a group of interested students met with teacher-librarian Lydia Perovic to sign up for the school's first Read-a-Thon for Charity. Students were required to read outside of school hours and collect pledges, enabling them to earn community service hours for their involvement.

Students decided to adopt Inukshuk, one of the polar bears recently returned to the zoo and classified as threatened. The money raised ensures the care of the polar bears, as well as their newly built habitat, the Tundra Trek.

In addition to Alice's tour of Harbord, Read-a-Thon students were treated to a unique behind-the-scenes expedition with the zookeeper – an "up close and personal" visit with the lions, wallabies, and kangaroos. Several students also attended the exclusive Parents' Day at the Zoo.



ADULT LITERACY LEARNERS' CONFERENCE A GREAT SUCCESS!

The 2010 Adult Literacy Learners' Conference was held once again at the Toronto Public Library, North York Central branch. More than 200 people gathered together June 10 for the annual conference. The highly anticipated event was coordinated by the Metro Toronto Movement for Literacy. The conference included two professional development opportunities for adult literacy students followed by lunch. This year's theme was "Hands On" and included topics such as What to Do in an Emergency?, Dub Poetry, and

Qigong. There were also some very special guests present, including award-winning author Marsha Forchuk Skrypuch. The event ended on a high note with the 2010 Golden Oak Award Ceremony. With an adult literacy learner as the emcee and several learners as presenters, the ceremony was definitely the highlight of the day.

—Rachelle Gooden

CHANGECAMP FOR CHANGE

On May 8, 2010, the Windsor Public Library hosted the Windsor-Essex ChangeCamp; more than 40 community members took part in this unconference. ChangeCamps are gatherings that encourage small group discussion around an open-ended question. Windsor's question: "How can we re-imagine Windsor-Essex as a stronger and more vibrant community?" The answers can be found at wechangecamp.ca.

— Mita Williams



Library Yoga: Wednesday night yoga on the lawn of the Haliburton County Public Library, Dysart Branch.

Copyright Update

The Copyright Modernization Act was introduced June 2, 2010. OLA has a review of the proposed bill and its implications for the library and information management sector on the “issues” section of the website. The bill has some specific intentions including updating the rights and protections of copyright owners in the context of the internet and digital technologies. There are provisions to permit educators and libraries to make greater use of materials in digital form. The proposed update includes technological protection measures, punishments for infringement, and reductions of damages should this occur for libraries, archives, and museums (LAM’s).

OLA’s Human Library Program Update

The association’s newest team is the Human Library committee consisting of members from various library sectors. The purpose is to develop an Ontario-branded program and tool kit that will enable any type of library to host a human library in their community. The ultimate result will be to help libraries forge stronger community connections, heighten the library profile, and contribute to greater understanding and tolerance in our communities. The committee is currently developing the branding and program ideas with a plan to launch the province-wide initiative in 2011.

Celebrate Our Accomplishments!

People are what make the library and information management sector a vibrant part of community and culture. The OLA and its divisions offers an award program that recognizes achievement. Consider nominating a colleague for an OLA award. Recipients are showcased at the Super Conference and in the spring issue of *Access Magazine*. Deadline for nominations is November 15.

OLA Elections

Are you interested in getting more involved in your profession and your association? Consider running for a position on your divisional council. Terms are typically three years. Councils meet four times a year and develop programs and issues important to members. Nomination deadline is November 15 and elections are held in December.

Nomination forms for awards and elections are on the website.

The Government of Canada’s Digital Advantage Consultation

The consultation paper on a Digital Economy Strategy for Canada states, “Digital technologies are critical to every aspect of our economy and society. That is why a strategy for the digital economy is needed to ensure that Canada is positioned to benefit from the opportunities that it presents.”

Ontario’s libraries are integral to supporting a digital economy strategy. The OLA’s response can be read on the “issues” section of the website.

Knowledge Ontario Matters!



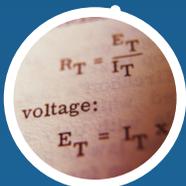
Almost 10 years ago, OLA members developed a vision for transforming the lives of Ontarians through equitable access to information resources and services from Ontario’s libraries. The vision, previously named the Ontario Digital Library, became a reality in 2007 when Knowledge Ontario was incorporated. The academic, school, public, and government library sectors have collectively accomplished something truly remarkable. We have been able to provide an amazing suite of services by working together and significantly lowering the cost of doing so to government. While the government of Ontario provided funding to get KO to this point, there is no further investment directed to KO for the next year. We are now at a crossroads in sustaining and growing what has become an essential resource for our libraries, students, adult learners, and everyone in Ontario. KO is in the process of implementing a sustainable funding strategy but requires immediate support from each of the library sectors to continue. Details and advocacy tools can be found on OLA’s website.

Forest of Launches Reading* October 25

Schools and public libraries can register at OLA’s web site for any or all of the Forest programs. Registration provides tools and resources for hosting the program in your organization, and enables your readers to officially vote for their favourite book on April 23 when the program closes.



make
More
connections



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See how to make more connections for your library, at www.worldcat.org.

Shepherds and Nerds

How Nominees Are Chosen

Annual Red Maple

I thought we had selected another Red Maple list to be proud of. The 2010 list met the selection criteria set out by OLA, including a variety of genres, male and female protagonists, cultures, relevance, readability, and literary quality. I thought the Selection Committee for 2010, composed of professional teacher-librarians and public librarians from across Ontario and of which I was the chair, had performed our roles as readers, reviewers, and selectors very, very well! Each member has had experience with readers at the Grade 7 and 8 level, and we have all worked with readers in this age group and have all read fiction at this level extensively. I am proud of this list of nominees we came up with, the top 10 books of the more than 80 titles read by my committee:

After by Hazel Hutchins
Greener Grass by Caroline Pignat
Leaving Fletchville by Rene Schmidt
Lunch with Lenin by Deborah Ellis
Night Runner by Max Turner
The Shepherd's Granddaughter by Anne Laurel Carter
Starclimber by Kenneth Oppel
Submarine Outlaw by Philip Roy
War Brothers by Sharon E. McKay
Word Nerd by Susin Nielsen

Each book was read by all committee members and reviewed online between December 2008 and August 2009. After determining which books were personal favourites, each member created a list of individual picks, and the final list of nominees

was compiled based on those lists. We met via teleconference and discussed each title and agreed each book had a place on the final list, and announced the list in October 2009.

The Shepherd's Granddaughter and *Word Nerd* have both been challenged by members of the public. *Word Nerd* has been challenged by people who feel the language used is inappropriate. *The Shepherd's Granddaughter* has been challenged by those who feel students will be unfairly influenced against the Israelis in Palestine, and as a result there have been requests to censor, ban, and remove the book from libraries and schools.

The Shepherd's Granddaughter is a fictional account of a young Palestinian girl, Amani, and the story is written from her point of view. Her perspective is certainly slanted towards the Palestinian experience, as you might expect, but most fiction is typically written from one character's perspective, allowing us insight into their motivation and their reactions to events. Amani dreams of becoming a shepherd like her grandfather. She is struggling to overcome many challenges, one of which happens to be the political situation of her homeland. Grade 7 and 8 readers are able to understand the use of perspective and have been taught to recognize point of view in writing. One of my readers has expressed an interest in reading a novel with the "other side" of the story.

As librarians and teacher-librarians we need to offer a variety of texts to our readers. Reading should open their eyes to new places and ideas, as well as existing situations not yet experienced or understood. Good Canadian fiction makes readers stop and think, question their attitudes, question the book, and then form an opinion of their own. Alternatively, readers are

Chosen for the Awards



By Leslie Holwerda

free to assess a book, determine it is unworthy, and discard it if it offends their personal beliefs or does not meet their reading requirements at the time.

Readers in schools are given opportunities to take part in moderated discussions with peers, teachers, online, in classrooms, and in library situations. Literary quality is discussed as well as issues that arise from the content, including bias and point of view.

A novel is a perfect opportunity for families to initiate dialogue about subjects that may not usually be discussed. Questions may arise that discussion and research could answer. Further reading of companion texts which reflect the “other side” of the story is important in order to clearly understand the events and situation depicted in a fictional account of the same events. (For some suggested companion texts for *The Shepherd’s Granddaughter*, visit reachandteach.com.)

The Ontario Library Association’s Statement on the Intellectual Rights of the Individual says:

“intellectual freedom requires freedom to examine other ideas and other interpretations of life ... including those ideas and interpretations which may be unconventional or unpopular ... it is therefore part of the library’s service to resist any attempt by any individual or group ... to curtail access to information, the freedom to read, view, and listen by demanding the removal of or restrictions to library information sources in any format.”

OLA has also endorsed the School Library Manifesto, which states:

“The school library provides information and ideas that are fundamental to functioning successfully in today’s society ... The school library equips students with lifelong learning skills and develops the imagination, enabling them to live as responsible citizens.”

And to put it simply: readers have the freedom to choose to read, or not to read, *The Shepherd’s Granddaughter* or any of the other wonderful nominated titles on the Red Maple list. That is each person’s individual decision.

And a final word: over 10,000 Ontario Grade 7 and 8 readers who voted on April 23, 2010, selected *Word Nerd* as their favourite book of the 10 nominees.

.....
Leslie Holwerda is the teacher-librarian at Loughheed Middle School in Brampton. She has been a teacher-librarian for eight years and has been an avid Red Maple reader and supporter for at least that long. She is the Selection Committee Chair for the 2010 Red Maple list and loves every one of the titles selected.
leslie.holwerda@peelsb.com

Background: Limitations of Print Map Indexes for Aerial Photograph Collections

The University of Ottawa Library has more than a quarter of a million aerial photographs in its National Air Photo collection. This is a subset of the comprehensive collection of National Air Photos housed by the National Air Photo Library (NAPL). Aerial photography is significant because it records natural and constructed features on the surface of the earth. Urban planners, cartographers, historians, and developers all make use of the kinds of information captured in such photographs taken from the air.

Photos at the University of Ottawa Library are stored vertically in metal boxes on floor-to-ceiling shelves, separate from the rest of the library collection. The numbering and shelving system does not lend itself to being “browsable” on the shelf. Up until this past year, clients and staff used paper map indexes and a card catalogue to identify and locate photos in our collection.



Figure 1 A typical paper air photo map index with hand-drawn flight line and photo locations is shown here for the Lesser Slave Lake area in Alberta, Canada.

GOOGLE MAPS FOR INDEXING AERIAL PHOTO

To organize collections of recently captured photographs, paper air photo indexes are created by the flight crew at the end of each photo acquisition mission. As seen in Figure 1, indexes are created by drawing the flight path of the aircraft (which is represented by a line and a dot for every fifth photo) over top of a pre-existing map of the area. Each time a new roll of film is loaded into the camera a new unique roll number, which is registered with the NAPL series of roll numbers, is assigned. Subsequently, each film exposure which is shot in sequence on that roll is assigned its own photo number. A card catalogue is also maintained and may provide additional metadata, such as altitude, year, lens, and scale. With these two tools a client can find an air photo two ways: by air photo index (if location is known) or by card catalogue (if photo and roll number are known).

The shortcomings of this system stem from the fact that all of the air photos are marked by hand on multiple map indexes, since every time a mission is flown for a given area a new index map is created. As a result, a client may need to sort through numerous air photo map indexes until he or she finds one that covers the desired location. The geographic region which the client is looking for may extend beyond the boundaries of more than one map sheet, further complicating the search process. As well, our paper indexes are falling apart

because they are not printed on acid-free paper and the ink used to draw the flight lines has begun to fade.

The air photos in our collection are valuable and will become increasingly so for historical aspects of geographic information systems (GIS) technology-based research, especially when photos are georeferenced (latitude and longitude are identified on the corners and in the centre). Eva Dodsworth points out in her article “Historical Air Photo Digitization Project University of Waterloo Map Library” (*Partnership*, 2008): “A georeferenced image has the benefit of situating the location of the photo accurately on the earth’s surface. A user can compare, for example, the past and the present with very close precision” (www.criticalimprov.com/index.php/perj/article/view/836/1360) Libraries need to make it easier for researchers to explore and access such items in our respective collections. A pending renovation, a need for more space, and a concern for preserving the usability of our air photo collection were the combining circumstances which drove us to create an online index. We anticipate such a look-up tool will help maintain and enhance searchability and discovery of the air photos in the short and long term.

Conversion to an Online Index (2007-2009)

Over a six-month period, student employees systematically worked through the paper card catalogue of our holdings to create lists of photo and roll numbers in Excel spreadsheets. As we progressed, batches of this inventory were sent to NAPL. NAPL matched the data by the unique combination of photo and roll number and provided us with additional metadata they have for each photo. NAPL sent back embellished Excel files detailing altitude, scale, film, lens, and dates for our photos. Most crucially, the metadata included longitude (value x) and latitude (value y) of the centre point and the four corners for each photo. This is the essential data which will eventually make it possible to plot a digital representation of each photograph in our collection using Google Map markers. (A “marker” acts like a virtual thumbtack to pinpoint a location on the map.)

In the next step of preparation, leading to the Google Maps API mash-up, the Excel files were mapped using the x

and y centre point values in Esri ArcGIS software and then aggregated to a single file. In the ArcGIS environment it was straightforward to check anomalies once the photos were mapped by their geographic coordinates. In the initial ArcGIS import, eight photos stood out erroneously in the Southern Hemisphere (well outside the scope of our collection). The photos were identified and their geo-coordinates were corrected, in consultation with NAPL.

In order to make information available over the web, all records were exported from a local ArcEditor desktop client into our web server’s MySQL database. Data was transferred in eight slices of subsets that were small enough for importing into MySQL with few problems. The size of the collection (a quarter of a million air photos) poses challenges for Google Map rendering. If we were to generate all the photos, 250,000 markers all at once, the map would appear as a splotchy outline of Canada.

By **Erin** Forward and **Cameron** Metcalf

PHOTOGRAPH COLLECTIONS

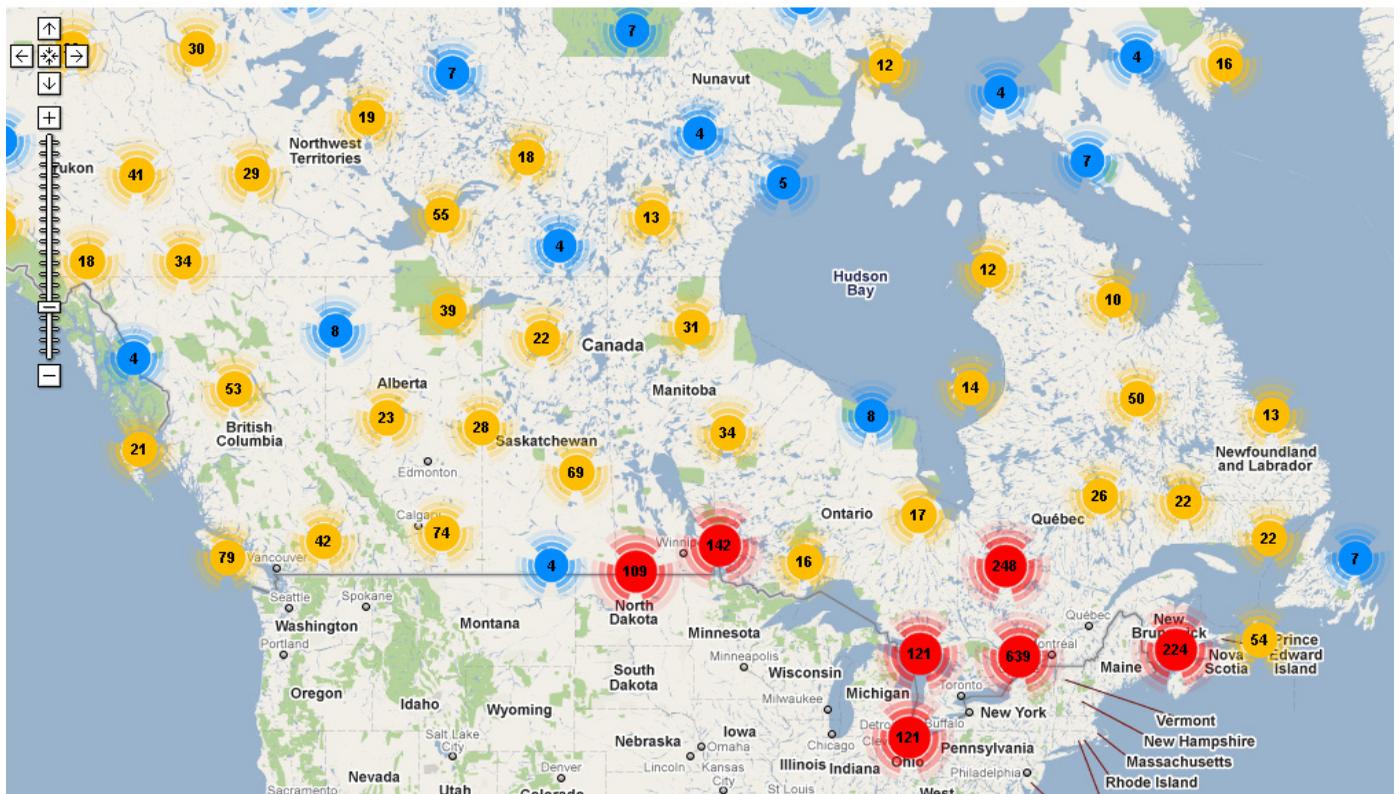


Figure 2 Screenshot of an early mash-up attempt using MarkerClusterer for our collection. Note that the numbers represent a count of total flight lines, by roll number for that area (not a tally of individual photos).

The Google API works very well on the client-side approach to coding, by delivering results fairly quickly: between five to ten seconds in most browsers, when working with fewer than 1,500 markers at a time. We experimented with marker clustering solutions to show fewer photograph results at a time. Individual markers appear as the user zooms into the map at higher levels of detail.

Working with the MarkerClusterer tool involved parsing search results, with PHP, into .xml or .json (mark-up which is a little lighter than XML) (see googlegeodevelopers.blogspot.com/2009/04/markerclusterer-solution-to-too-many.html). This was straightforward to code and it produced an aesthetically attractive solution. See Figure 2. However, there were access issues for the end user. If a geographic region happened to contain 20,000 photos (well above the 1,500-marker ceiling), the rendering took too long (40 seconds or more) or the website would crash altogether.

These issues could be avoided by bundling pre-queries for specific areas of Canada, but this involved too much speculation and second-guessing of our researchers' requirements. We resumed development by focusing on the fundamental advantage of having our coordinates housed in a database. We now allow the user to select any spot on the map, rather than pre-limiting results by geographic area or by date.

In our current iteration, results are limited by two constraints: allowing no more than 1,500 results to be returned within a maximum radius of 30 km. Clicking on the map returns a pop-up form with the geographic coordinates for that point on the map. See Figure 3. Clicking "Go" submits a query to MySQL searching for photos which are geographically closest. It then finds the next available photos and as the search progresses the circular perimeter expands until it reaches a 30-km radius or a maximum of 1,500 photos. See Figure 4. From these results, users can click individual markers to read the photo metadata and further filter results by flight line or by year. See Figure 5.

Next Steps and Future Development

While this new look-up tool in Google Maps has enabled users to browse our collection of national air photos, many opportunities remain to expand its features and scope. We intend to resume investigation of marker clustering by re-coding a server-side solution. This would reduce the "clunkiness" of our application and allow users to simply scroll and zoom a map (without clicking a submit button) to navigate our collection holdings. We also plan to provide more information about each photo from the individual marker pop-up windows. In the next version, clicking the map marker will allow the user to clearly visualize the geographical coverage for each photo by projecting a rectangular polygon shape over the map and may ultimately offer a thumbnail image of the air photo itself in an .html pop-up window.

We also still need to integrate provincial collections and photos from the US Navy. We intend to develop inventories

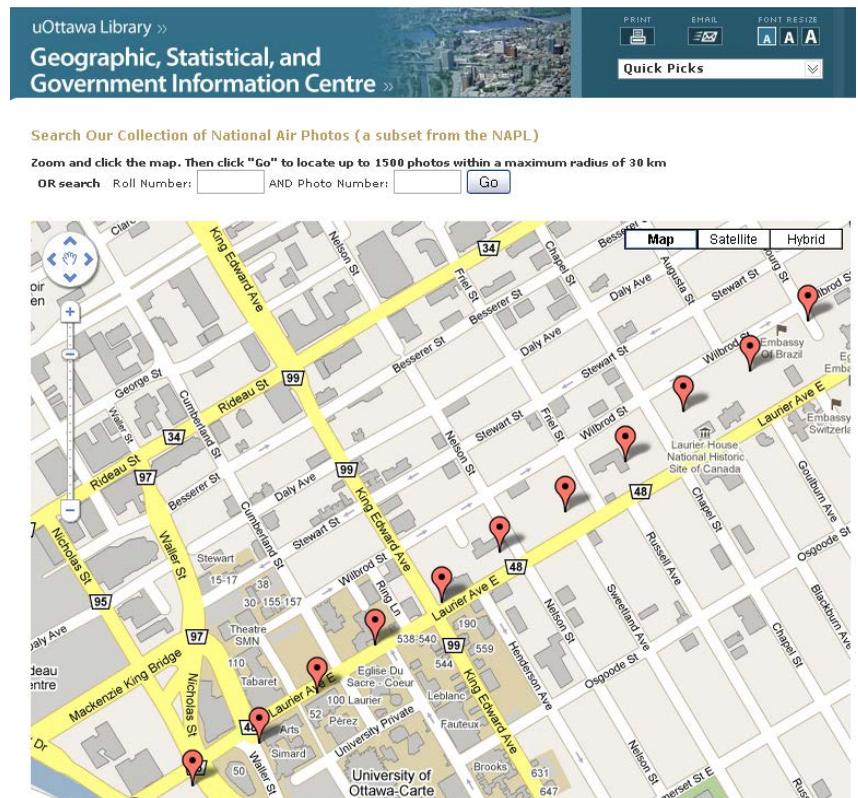


Figure 3 Screenshot of MySQL query: a location is clicked on the map to show the geographic coordinates and then the database is queried ("Go") to see if air photos exist covering the University of Ottawa Campus.

Search Our Collection of National Air Photos (a subset from the NAPL)

Zoom and click the map. Then click "Go" to locate up to 1500 photos within a maximum radius of 30 km

OR search Roll Number: AND Photo Number:

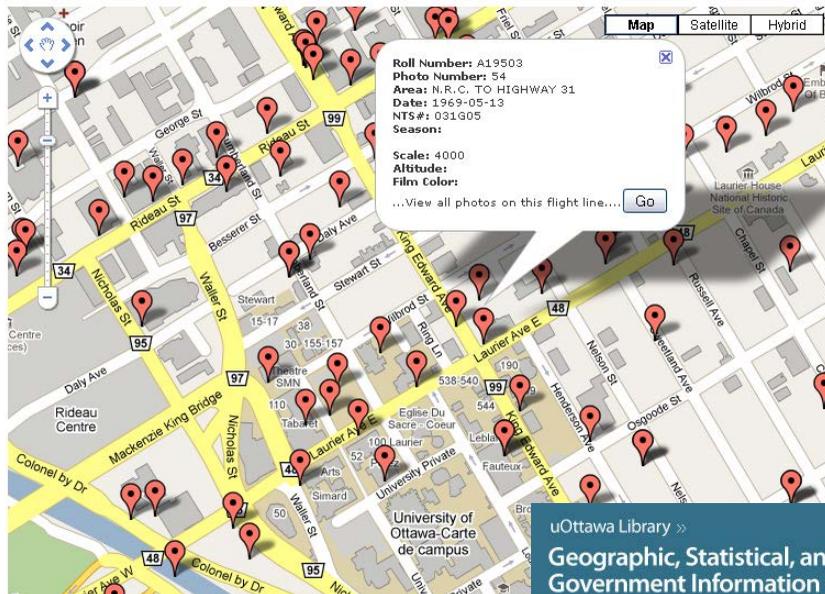


Figure 4 Screenshot search results from the previous form submission: each marker represents a different photo from various flight lines. Results may be filtered, i.e. all the photos on the 1969 flight line may be displayed by clicking "Go."

Figure 5 Screenshot of query results displaying single flight line of 1969, in the vicinity of the University of Ottawa campus based on a filter of the preceding query in Figure 2.

for these collections and expand the scope of georeferenced photos in our look-up tool. Once all of our federal, provincial, and private aerial photograph collections are amalgamated in our existing system, we will have developed a truly rich platform for the researcher to peruse the entire air photo collection held at the University of Ottawa. Researchers will have their own keys to unlock and browse through our treasured map storage room.

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Zoom and click the map. Then click "Go" to locate up to 1500 photos within a maximum radius of 30 km

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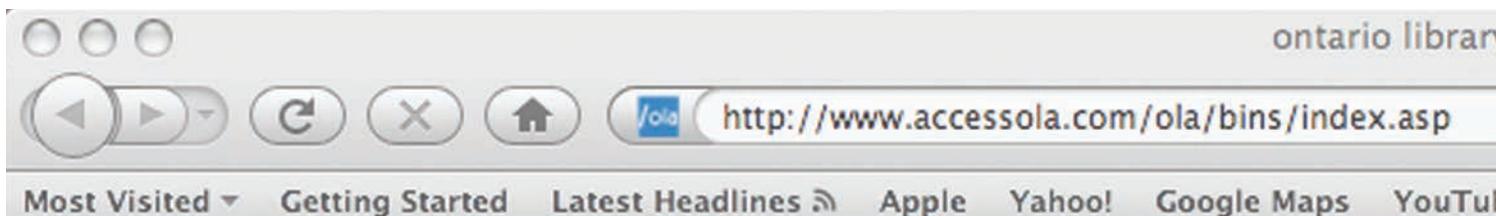
Erin Forward has a BA in Geography and Geomatics and is the Cartographic Metadata Analyst in the Geographic, Statistical and Government Information Centre, University of Ottawa Library. eforward@uottawa.ca

Cameron Metcalf has an Honours BA in Literary Studies and History from McMaster University and an MLIS from Dalhousie University. He is the supervisor of the Geographic, Statistical and Government Information Centre, University of Ottawa Library. cmetcalf@uottawa.ca

10 WAYS

By Ian Hunter

TO PROMOTE THE LIBRARY BOARD'S WORK ON ITS WEBSITE

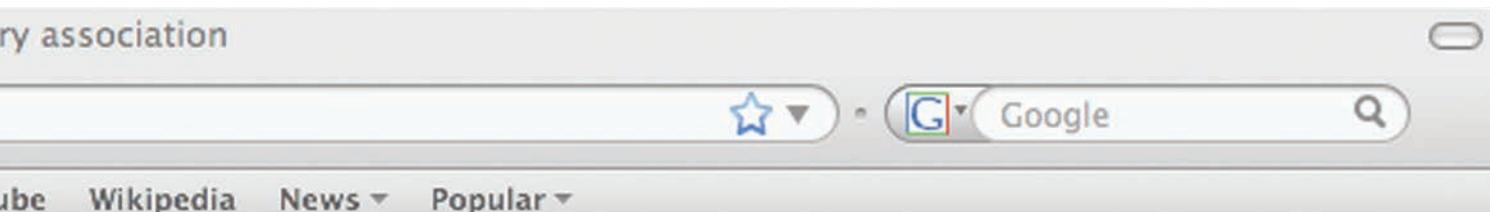


- 1** It's incredible to find that some libraries don't even list who their library board members are, or they dump the board names on the website below the heading "Library Administration." The trustees should be listed under their own heading, along with a photo and a short biography. The community deserves to know its library leaders.
- 2** While some websites do include the list of board meetings, it should also include meeting agendas, related reports, as well as the meeting minutes or highlights of decisions. These documents help the community understand the issues facing the library and how the library functions, e.g., the complementary roles of the library CEO and the board.
- 3** The website visitor needs an efficient method for reaching the library board. In the past, a mailing address and a phone number for the CEO would do. Now, people expect to be able to contact the library board members via e-mail as well. Use an e-mail address like libraryboard@smithville.ca rather than a website "contact us" form that does not provide senders the ability to have a copy of their message to the board.
- 4** The municipality will soon be making new appointments for the library board, so the website should have targeted information on the library that would be of interest to potential trustees, along with details on how to apply.
- 5** Every library board should have an up-to-date strategic plan, and this plan or its summary should be on the website, with information on the actions the board is taking to carry out the plan. This further informs the reader on the key role played by the board in helping the library grow and prosper.
- 6** Aside from the obvious patron-centred board policies (e.g., the appropriate use of the internet in the library), the website could also include a broader scope of policies – for example, ones that clarify how the library is governed. The board's policies, when approved or amended, are in the meeting minutes, so why not present a complete listing of these board policies on the website itself?

Too often, library boards have an almost invisible presence on their library's website. These boards may feel that the website is mainly for patrons reserving books, learning about programs and activities, or finding out when the branches are open. With this assumption, they are missing great opportunities to further the board's work.

Website visitors may also be seeking information about the library itself, how it is run, who is in charge, and even how they can help the library with its mission. Without this key information readily available on its website, how is the community going to get active and involved in its library?

What improvements can you make to your library's website, and why are these improvements important? Listed below are 10 features you may want to consider.



7 The website deserves a special place where the board, or the board chair as its spokesperson, can share information directly with the community. The news could be in the form of a blog, a regular board online newsletter, media releases, or a combination of them all. Why should the CEO be the principal purveyor of news about a library renovation or building project, when the initiative comes from the board?

8 In the course of its work, the library board may deal directly with many outside parties, including all levels of government, government agencies like the Ontario Trillium Foundation, architects, library automation specialists, and others. Library users and others would gain a better understanding of this work by seeing a listing or contact list of all these people who play an important role in the advancement of the library.

9 The board can make a clear and unequivocal statement about its accountability and that it cares about how people feel about their library by adding to the website a special appeal for people to come and address the board about issues of concern. These issues may for example relate to board agenda items, or perhaps some longstanding concerns in the community. The website would have all the information the public would need to initiate this dialogue.

10 Finally, the library board should use the website to express their willingness to go out and speak to community and service groups about the library, its importance, and challenges for the future. By developing these new personal contact opportunities, the Library may be surprised with the new financial and vocal support it receives.

Stepping out of the shadows and into the limelight may be uncomfortable and even unsettling for some trustees, but library leadership means making your presence felt, and that includes on the website.

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Ian Hunter is a retired member of the Kanata and Ottawa Public Library boards (1995–2003). An Ontario Library Boards' Association (OLBA) volunteer since 2001, he was president in 2004. judyian@sympatico.ca



An OPEN LETTER on School Librarians

Earlier this year, author Helaine Becker sent this letter to *National Post* columnist Lorne Gunter.

Dear Mr. Gunter,

I was enjoying your analysis of *Easy Rider* in this morning's *National Post* ("Getting over *Easy Rider*," June 2, 2010) when I was caught short by this sentence: "The teens who were prompted by its anti-establishment message to pledge themselves to change the world are today school librarians and public broadcasting technicians living in suburban bungalows, looking around the next bend at pensionability and wondering whether to open a B&B in Niagara."

Yikes, there's a sweeping stereotype!

I know you were trying to humorously make a point about becoming the essence of establishment self-focus. But clearly, you have not met many school librarians, nor do you fully appreciate what they do every day. (I can't speak for the broadcasting technicians.)

I am not a school librarian, but in my career as a writer of children's literature, I have had the great privilege of meeting and spending time with hundreds of school librarians across North America – from Nunavut to New Brunswick, from the Jane-Finch Corridor in the GTA to the rural communities of Manitoba, Alberta, and Yukon; in Texas, California, New York, and Lima (Peru). Virtually every single one of the people I met are still honouring that pledge to change the world. Don't be fooled by the prim reading-glasses-on-chains cartoon image.

Teacher-librarians are true revolutionaries, trying to change and improve society by empowering its most vulnerable members: children.

Their working conditions: abysmal.

Their weapon: literacy.

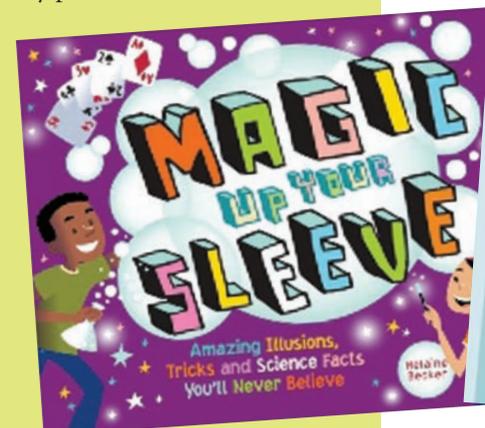
Their opposition: entrenched bureaucracy that gives lip service to literacy and equity, but shows its true

colors by gutting schools of books and trained staff.

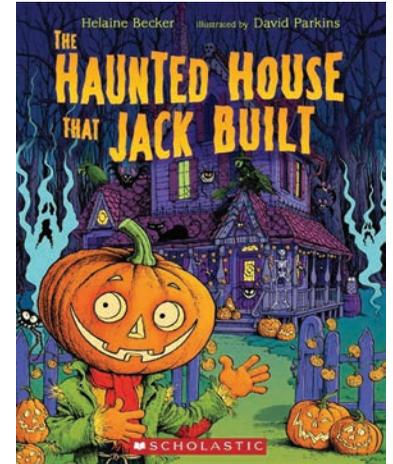
Meet, for example, Nina W., a school-librarian in the great state of California who currently has responsibility for three inner city schools, virtually no support from administration (when I visited her two weeks ago, nearly 600 teachers had just been let go and were engaged in costly and divisive legal hearings instead of teaching in the classroom). Yet despite being stretched nearly to the breaking point, Nina still managed to administer a Reading Is Fundamental book program for kindergarten and first grade students, organize author visits to inspire hundreds of children, and facilitate delivery of books – collected on an independent book drive – to needy schools.

Or meet Fabienne T., who works in a remote Northern community. Her student body contains a high number of kids who come to school hungry, tired, and unprepared to learn because of upheaval at home and in their community. For these children, literacy is truly a foreign concept – their own culture did not even have a written language 40 years ago! Many elders there are actually suspicious of reading as a form of learning, since their own educational system involved a more active approach: being out on the land. Yet Fabienne cheerfully strides from school to school, bringing books and enthusiasm and a desire to help improve the opportunities available to her charges. Those opportunities will only open to them when they possess the skills needed to "make it" in the contemporary world, so with her copies of *Clifford the Big Red Dog* and *Twilight* in hand, Fabienne is truly managing to change their worlds.

Or why not let me introduce you to Jenny E., who teaches in a



By Helaine Becker



tough primary school in one of Toronto's most challenging neighbourhoods. To see what she has done with these old-too-soon kids is nothing short of miraculous, and she's been doing it for more than 20 years, day in and day out (I'm sure the number is higher than that, but I don't want to embarrass her!).

The crisis facing school libraries today is an issue that has not yet surfaced in the Canadian consciousness. Yet let me assure you, it is very real, pervasive, and will have long-term consequences. Only a tiny percentage of Canadian school libraries meet the minimal standards (set by the Canadian Library Association) required to achieve learning objectives in all curricular areas, not just literacy.

A fully functional school library is the heart of a school, providing necessary sustenance and support for teachers and students. It is at the vanguard of "best practices," incorporating information literacy into school culture, and it is the avenue through which students learn how to do research, analyze sources, and interpret media messaging.

School librarians are professionally committed to freedom of thought and speech, and to the notion that teaching kids how to learn is the root of all education. If that's not progressive, I don't know what is.

I know, I know, you didn't really mean to disparage school librarians – yours was a throwaway comment designed for a laugh. But it perpetuated a lie, and was a disservice to some of the most revolutionary members of our society. But here's the good news: you can easily correct that disservice!

Let me suggest that, next fall, you accompany me to some repre-

sentative school libraries in the GTA. Let me show you how we are letting down Canadian students by underfunding our school libraries. Let me show you how the mouth-noises that insist "we support literacy" are a lie when in fact the school libraries in our country are short of books and staff.

On a personal note, it was in a school library that I first fell in love with books. That early exposure and support have enabled me to live a full and productive life as a literate citizen.

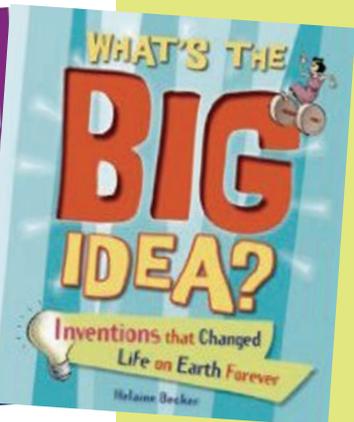
When I speak to kids during my school presentations, I often ask them, "Why are you learning how to read?" The typical response is, "So I can get a job one day," or "So I can get good grades." Or simply a shrug of shoulders – we are made to read and write because the grownups want us to.

I tell the kids that all of those answers are acceptable ones, but are not the best reasons. Do you really want to learn to read just so you can grow up to become an obedient worker bee, or to boast a meaningless A on meaningless report card? No. The real reason you should want to learn how to read well, write well, and speak well is because these are the tools that give you power – both the power over your own life, and the power to persuade others to make improvements to our world.

School librarians are bringing power to the people, every day. Please give them their due.

Sincerely,
Helaine Becker, Author

.....
Helaine Becker is the award-winning author of Magic Up Your Sleeve, Secret Agent Y.O.U., and Boredom Blasters. Her latest book, The Hilarious History of Hockey, was published by Scholastic Canada in August.





CONFERENCE

By Ashley Sealy

How many graduate students can say that they have attended lectures in their pyjamas? I can. I am completing my Masters in Library and Information Science from San José State University (SJSU). The program is completed entirely online. The School of Library Science (SLIS) student never actually has to set foot on San José soil. However, I will be visiting the campus for convocation. I cannot imagine never taking advantage of the fact that my school is in sunny California.

of an Online Student

SESSIONS

I initially found the idea of online learning to be daunting and unfamiliar. As a long-time employee of the Toronto Public Library, I have a number of friends and colleagues who obtained their masters degrees from the University of Toronto and the University of Western Ontario. Although I have heard great things about both programs, the idea of relocating or commuting from home to both work and school again didn't appeal. I was completely unaware of the fact that SJSU has the largest ALA-accredited program in the world and was a great option. Like the students, the faculty are located worldwide. This allows the school the ability to utilize skilled and knowledgeable faculty, regardless of their geographic location. I attended a presentation at the OLA offices at which SJSU SLIS director Dr. Ken Haycock (a fellow Canadian) spoke about the program. There are a number of misconceptions regarding online learning. I am often asked to share my experiences and I'm eager to do so because I realize that I almost missed out on this opportunity simply because I was not aware of the school and the dynamics of online learning.

First, many people seem to be under the impression that distance learning is somehow lesser than the traditional academic experience. It is my sincere hope that this falsity dissipates as technology continues to make online learning more common. Online learning involves a great deal of hard work and diligence. In fact, I found that unlike my undergrad where I was not necessarily required to participate unless there was a project or assignment, most online courses require online posts regarding course material a few times a week. This facilitates thinking and discussion among fellow students and also requires me to keep up with course content. For me, this was definitely beneficial.

The online student should be very comfortable with technology. Luckily, I use the computer very frequently professionally, academically, and recreationally. I would suggest that those who don't must still be very comfortable with the computer and the internet as well as with the idea of learning about new technologies. I appreciated the fact that SJSU utilizes cutting-

edge trends in social and professional computing in both course content and delivery. New students are required to complete a single-credit Online Social Networking course with short units on such tools and technology as Microsoft Office and Second Life. When the student has successfully completed all the tutorials and assignments in this short course, they have demonstrated the technological capability and comfort required for the program. An online management system called ANGEL is used by SJSU. Students use it to submit assignments, view grades, and track progress. ANGEL also includes forums and message boards to chat with other students in courses. I find ANGEL easy to navigate and user friendly. It is helpful to be able to access content from all of my courses in one place.

I am also often asked whether the online learning experience has been isolating. There are times that it can be. However, the vast majority of courses that I have taken have made use of web conferencing. Using a web conferencing platform called Elluminate, students and course instructors are able to meet and interact. An inexpensive headset with headphone and microphone allowed me to have audio conversations, hear lectures, watch video and PowerPoint presentations, and share workspace with other members of the SLIS community in real time. It is important to note that these meetings usually end up being later in the evening for me as most other students are on Pacific Time. The program also involves quite a bit of group work. This requires a bit of careful planning about when and where to be online. But it adds greatly to the experience and allows even more opportunity for interacting and networking. San José State is just one of many options for online learning. I hope that these will be recognized as excellent options for individuals pursuing graduate studies in library and information science. It is a choice I am very glad to have made. Plus, I think I work best in my PJs.

.....
Ashley Sealy is Senior Library Assistant at the Victoria Village branch of the Toronto Public Library.
asealy@torontopubliclibrary.ca

Planet B612 and Beyond

By H el ene Merritt

I re-read *Le petit prince* by Saint-Exup ery last night because it is the single most frequently requested book for people learning French as a second language.

Then again, you may just want to read the original one more time.

.....
H el ene Merritt is a children's librarian with the Ottawa Public Library. She loves good books, good friends, good food, and especially good cuddles with her cats.

It is redundant to question why *Le petit prince* is so popular: it is the charming tale of a prince leaving his planet and exploring other worlds, meeting a businessman, a king, a drunkard until finally arriving on earth and having a dialogue with a snake, a fox, and a pilot.

So is the wisdom inherent in the tale: the need for patience in taming, the importance of a single rose in the midst of a garden, the beauty of stars. Still there are other books to learn from. Perhaps not as universal in their appeal, but worth reading nonetheless.

There are picture books and nursery rhyme collections with CDs to help learn the rhythm and the cadence of the language. Also available on CD are finger plays, again to learn pattern and sound repetition. What better way to learn a language than from the simplest elements as presented in traditional rhyme?

Among the easy fiction is the  cole d'Agathe series with warm, engaging characters and an approachable vocabulary. Slightly more difficult but equally enchanting are the Petit Nicolas books by Goscinny, illustrated by Semp e. Made into a movie, these school boy adventures appeal to young and old alike. The series *Les aventures de Billy Bob*, by Philippe Chauveau, offers silly and humorous stories that are easy to read.

More challenging in reading level and storyline are the stories in the series *Pavillon noir*. High adventure meets historical fiction in such titles as *L'or du serpent   plumes*. Canadian writer Gabrielle Roy has published a lovely collection of stories called simply *Contes pour enfants*, with four tales about animals

and mischief.

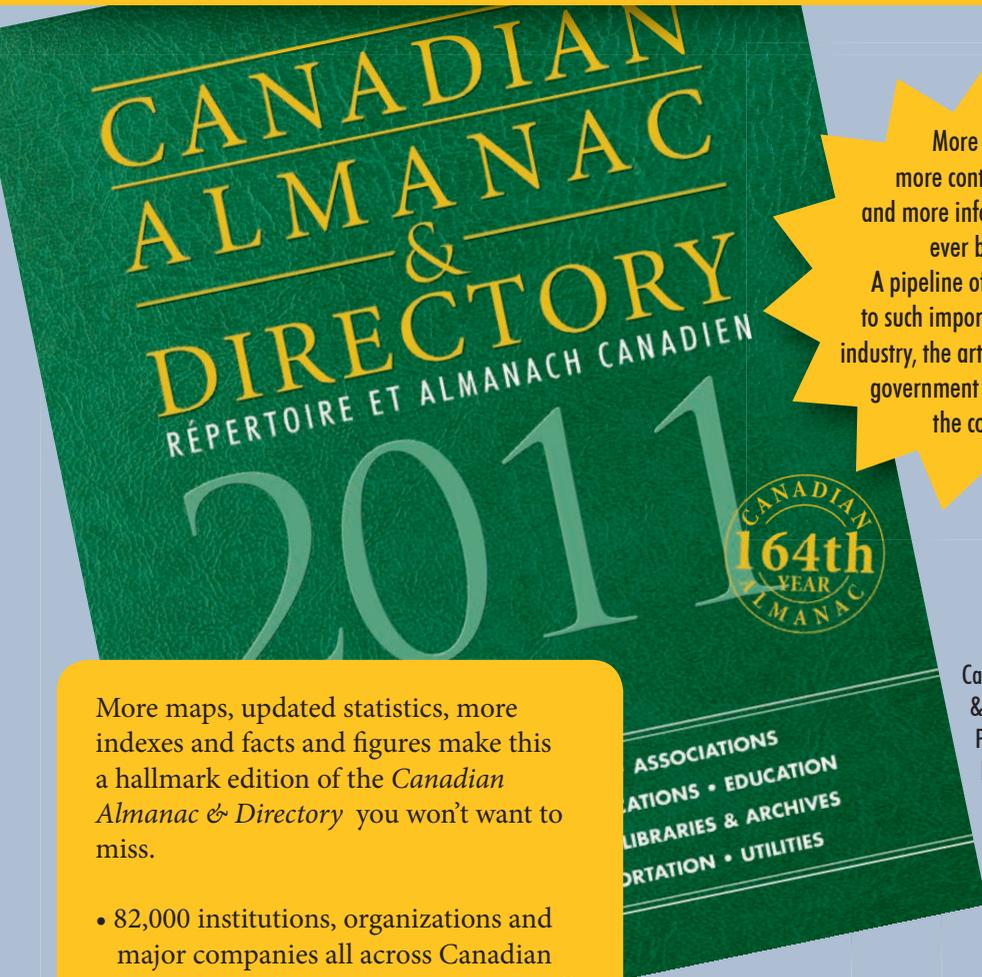
There are magazines, such as *Pomme d'api*, *Mes premiers J'aime lire* (with accompanying CD), *J'aime lire*, *DLire*, and *Les explorateurs*. There are titles for every taste and every reading level. And let's not forget the "bandes dessin ees" from Tintin (my favourite is *Les bijoux de la Castafiore*) to *Les Schtroumpfs* to *Monster Allergy*. One series or another is sure to appeal.

There are also a number of attractive non-fiction titles from cookbooks to folktales to superlative craft books for the beginner and the more advanced reader.

And if after having tasted all these tempting morsels, you want more of *Le petit prince*, perhaps you could try the most excellent *Le dernier voyage de Saint-Exup ery* by Carl Norac, illustrated by Louis Joos.



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BEYOND ALIGNMENT

Engaging Academic Libraries in the Transformation of Universities

By [Michael Ridley](#)

Alignment is the Holy Grail of most organizational planning.
I think it's an empty cup.

By seeking “alignment” with their institutions, libraries chart a conservative, passive approach in times that call for risk and disruptive innovation. I worry that merely aligning with the directions of our universities undermines the potential that academic libraries have to lead their institutions into a transformational future.

Recently I heard the provost of a highly regarded Canadian university say that the reason universities were so successful is because they effectively resist change. In other words, we know our core purpose and methods, and we stick to them (despite the whims of the age). Wow. Can you say “massive denial”? The history of higher education suggests that nothing is further from the truth: the university has survived and thrived precisely because it has been about change – change that sometimes had it far out in front of the society that supported it (a reason why the town-gown relationship is often strained).

Universities are transitioning through a period of seismic change. The challenges and opportunities are many and various; it is also very clear that while the status quo is not acceptable, the preferred paths forward are not obvious. If libraries are to shake off the “alignment” constraint and take on a proactive leadership role, they will first need to fully understand the key issues facing our universities. So, I offer you three lucid and provocative books that frame a number of these challenges. Your task is to bring the thinking of our profession to bear on the issues raised by these authors. I think we have much to offer but we must provide it in the context of overall university view-

point not the more narrow library perspective.

The Marketplace of Ideas: Reform and Resistance in the American University by Louis Menand examines four areas, core to the academy, that need significant change. In doing so he cautions that “trying to reform the contemporary university is like trying to get on the Internet with a typewriter.” Yikes.

He goes on to describe the struggle to preserve a liberal arts education, the lure of interdisciplinarity, and the uneasy role of humanities in modern times. Perhaps the most controversial chapter is entitled “Why Do Professors All Think Alike?” Menand calls for a substantive reform of the doctoral process – a process that creates graduates in the image of the past, and thereby limits growth and diversity. For Menand, reform of doctoral education is the key to academic transformation.

If *The Marketplace of Ideas* is about questioning some of the underlying philosophies of higher education, *Academic Transformation: The Forces Reshaping Higher Education in Ontario* by Ian D. Clark, Greg Moran, Michael L. Skolnik, and David Trick is about questioning the nature of the whole system (at least in Ontario).

The book pokes at a number of sacred cows. Foremost among these is the desire of all Ontario universities to be research institutions (as opposed to “merely” teaching institutions). The research institution values, and tries to integrate, both teaching and research. This homogeneity of institutional models, very unlike virtually any other similar jurisdiction in the world, sets up other factors that, in the analysis of the

authors, creates an insurmountable burden on the system in Ontario. The core observation: the economics and effectiveness of continuing with a homogenous research university model are unsustainable given the current and future challenges.

Two new types of universities are recommended. First is a solely undergraduate university whose focus is exclusively teaching (very common in other jurisdictions but completely absent in Ontario). Such an institution would not seek research funding nor employ research faculty. Second is an open university for “open admissions” – not necessarily an online university but open in the sense of accepting all qualified applicants and working to assist them to be successful and, possibly, transfer to other university programs.

If the two previous books were asking for reforms in the current system of high education, *DIY U: Edupunks, Edupreneurs, and the Coming Transformation of Higher Education* by Anya Kamenetz asks, “who needs the system anyway?” The DIY U or the Do-It-Yourself University “means the expansion of education beyond classroom walls: free, open-source, vocational, experiential, and self-directed learning.”

The “open education” movement argues that the expensive, rule-based, technology-averse, traditional universities

no longer serve the student or society. So who needs them? By establishing “personal learning networks” that use open courseware, connectivity, sharing, and access to global expertise, a student is able to assemble their own learning plan and accomplish what existing institutions are unable to do. These new, open institutions can be very powerful and still offer the credentials that students desire. For example, what if Google University emerged? Free. Effective. Doing no evil, except perhaps drawing all our students away. DIY U is a wakeup call ... and an opportunity.

As universities struggle with their future and the issues identified in these books, we have an opportunity (obligation?) to fully engage in that debate and to bring to the table new perspectives that will offer transformational change. Where I see a vibrant academy, I also see libraries and librarians fully engaged in dialogue about the future of the university. It is there I see not alignment but provocative, visionary leadership.

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2.0 watch

DISPATCHES FROM THE FRONT
LINES OF WEB 2.0

THE FUTURE

By [Amanda Etches-Johnson](#)

I remember first hearing about the “real-time” web about 15 years ago.

Back then, there was a neat little startup called PointCast that used push technology and a variety of information sources to stream real-time information to your desktop via a screensaver style application. Part of the fun of the application was the ability to customize the types of information that streamed to your screen. You could have up-to-the-minute weather reports! And a stock ticker! And headlines from your favourite news source! It was exciting! And fun! I remember feeling like I was living in the future! Except it was a rare day when all your information sources worked the way they were supposed to. The application was buggy and unreliable, and few people actually had the bandwidth to reliably stream content. And then PointCast disappeared and my screensaver reverted to a boring series of landscape images. Which was pleasant, to be sure, but not exactly “the future.”

Nowadays, no one really talks about the real-time web anymore, but that’s mostly because we’ve settled into just expecting real-time updates from many of our online haunts. Take the Facebook newsfeed, for example. When Facebook switched the behaviour of its newsfeed to an automatically refreshing stream, no one really noticed. The same thing

happened with Twitter. Remember the day when both sites went from requiring a browser refresh to see new content to automatically refreshing that content for you? Neither do I.

Similarly, Google Wave launched a few months ago to surprisingly little fanfare. Billed as the next great collaboration tool, Google Wave was likened to a cross between instant messaging, email, and social networking. It had all the potential to be pretty groundbreaking, but after about 48 hours of mild buzz, people stopped talking about it. The progression from static to real time is no longer groundbreaking because we’ve been hearing about the real-time web for years and every development and enhancement on the web has been leading us here. Of course, Google pulled the plug on Wave just a few weeks ago, but most tech commentators agree that the service provided an interesting proof-of-concept and that “Wave-like” features will eventually make their way into Gmail, Google’s email platform. And we probably won’t even notice.

So, why *now*? Why is the web finally living up to the real-time promise? The obvious answer is that the technology that powers the web has sufficiently evolved to fulfill that promise. To start with, physical networks are mature enough that bandwidth is no longer an issue, certainly for information providers, but also for the large majority of end-users. Additionally, we now have tools like jQuery (a JavaScript

WELCOME TO THE

RE IS NOW

library) and Ajax (asynchronous JavaScript and XML), two web-scripting components that push content to users without requiring that they do anything to receive real-time updates in their browsers (like your self-updating Facebook newsfeed, for example). Furthermore, whereas the real-time web has emerged without standardization in the way the technology has been implemented across websites, the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C) announced earlier this year that they will be developing standards for the real-time web and push notifications, a welcome development that will promote interoperability and provide a foundation for future development.

Then there is the social web. In December 2009, Google launched real-time results in its search engine that tap into the wealth of content generated by the social web. Perform a search in Google on any popular topic and you will see a pane included in your results list that is devoted to real-time updates from Twitter that match your search terms. With the amount of content that is generated on the social web, the real-time web is actually richer and more interesting than we could ever have imagined in a pre-social web world. So much so that it wouldn't be a stretch to claim that social media and its participants have propelled the real-time web to fruition.

So, with the real-time web finally hitting its stride, what will be the impact on libraries? As with most things web-

related, the most significant impact of the real-time web on libraries will be evolving user expectations for everything from library communication to library applications and interfaces. The real-time web is changing the way users expect to receive information, and there is already considerable anecdotal evidence to suggest that users turn to Twitter first for status updates from their service providers before they pick up the phone to call them. Library users are no different.

Then there is the real-time search experience. While it is probably safe to assume that users won't expect to see results from Twitter in library catalogues anytime soon (hopefully), we *can* assume that our current search applications (both the ones we own and the ones we subscribe to) will have to undergo a major functional overhaul to keep up with user expectations for real-time search results. If we have any hope of meeting user expectations and enhancing the user experience, we would do well to ready ourselves and our systems for real-time technologies and practices. After all, the future is now!

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E REAL-TIME WEB

Your Suggestion Box:

By Catherine Baird

More Than Just a Cupcake with Sprinkles



Remember in elementary school when you brought in cupcakes for your whole class on your birthday? Suddenly you were the centre of attention in the schoolyard. Everyone was telling you how nice you were and inviting you to play jump rope or tag with their group of friends? How many times did you get invited back to play with that same group the very next day?

To be sure, the cupcakes are a nice gesture. On the friend front, it never hurts to do nice things for others. But if that's the only effort you put into relationship and friendship building from your childhood on, chances are you find yourself a bit of a lonely soul these days.

When you think of public relations – you know, interacting with the public – you might think of free giveaways, press releases, and official spokespersons. These are our cupcakes. If you're technology-focused, public relations might evoke various social networking buzzwords or 2.0-isms (you know the usual suspects). These cupcakes have sprinkles.

What I'm recommending in this column – re-envisioning the suggestion box as a public relations tool – isn't as easy as giving out cupcakes. In fact, it's more like eating humble pie. But the effects will be longer-lasting and further-reaching.

The suggestion box is prone to being forgotten. Whether it's a physical box somewhere in your library or a virtual box on your library's website, this longstanding tradition brings with it some common myths and anxieties:

- “The suggestion box is just for people who want to complain.”
- “You only get negative comments and never positive ones, so it's not really representative.”
- “Sure that's a problem, but do we really want to advertise it?”
- “Some people just like to complain, but we don't need to change what we do just because of them.”

“We should embrace an overactive suggestion box because it means that our patrons care about the library and have a vested interest in seeing it change.”

Let's face it. No one enjoys getting criticism. And we can rationalize away criticisms of our libraries just like we would rationalize away criticisms of ourselves. If you don't like me, there must be something wrong with you. It's certainly easier to dismiss suggestions that we don't particularly want to address rather than tackle the seemingly insurmountable feat of making a policy or procedural change. Despite our knee-jerk reactions to the negative suggestions we receive at our libraries, we really do want the suggestion box venue to be an active component of a public relations plan. We should embrace an overactive suggestion box because it means that our patrons care about the library and have a vested interest in seeing it change. And while it may be true that some people can't change, I think we've proven over and over again that libraries can. Why not involve users as much as possible?

So, you're willing to listen. Now you need to let your users know you're listening. First, whether your suggestions come to you in print or binary code, try to post responses quickly to both the positive and negative suggestions you receive. Have those who have the power to make changes at your library involved in responding. Even if you can't take action immediately, or ultimately decide to keep the status quo, everyone appreciates knowing that someone serious is taking them seriously. And remember, answering suggestions doesn't cost you anything, except time and effort.

Second, report back on suggestions internally to library staff to promote a culture of user-centredness. If everyone sees that this is a library that makes changes based on user feedback, they're more likely to take the same approach in their day-to-day work.

Be honest, but fair. You can't spin everything positively. Sometimes you have to admit that you're not doing a very good job at something. Engaging in public relations is always

riskier than issuing a press release or investing in paid advertising because you don't have complete control over what is being said about your library. In the case of the suggestion box, this is certainly the case, unless you moderate your suggestions and display only the notes that portray your library in the most positive light. If that's what you're doing, please see this column's earlier article on authentic libraries (winter 2010).

Consider taking a medium-risk approach as well. Discover suggestions beyond the library venue. Use tools such as Hootsuite to monitor who's talking about your library on Twitter or sign up for Google alerts to regularly search for online posts, stories, or news about your library.

The risk can and will pay off. Praise from a patron who is happy with how you handled a complaint or suggestion is worth more than a couple of hundred free pens. You may even find your patrons going to bat for you in online comments to other suggestions that criticize some action (or lack thereof) taken (or not taken) by your library. Isn't that the kind of friend you really want?

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The Romance & **THE REALITY**

By **Jennifer** Green

I have always loved to read. Ever since I was a kid, when I would hide under the covers with a flashlight so I could read when I was supposed to be asleep, to my last job as a book editor, to my new career as a librarian.

So it shouldn't be surprising that, at library school, I had grand dreams of recommending fabulous books to patrons, of encouraging readers to find books and authors they absolutely love, and of having them return to tell me how much they enjoyed a title we'd found together.

As a librarian at the Oshawa Public Libraries, I spend much of my time on the reference and RA desks, answering questions of all kinds. I get a little thrill whenever I'm scheduled on the RA desk, hopeful that I'll help someone find the perfect author or book. Of course, as many of us know, those moments can be elusive. Often patrons just want the next title in a series or the newest bestseller, but can't find it on the shelves. Sometimes they've read or seen a great review and all they want is that particular book. With questions like these, there's no in-depth readers' advisory interview involved, and when I was

starting my career, it was somewhat disappointing. That being said, I'll never forget the first person who came to the RA desk and said, "You're going to think I'm stupid. I don't read fiction – never have – but I want to start. *What should I read?*"

This was the kind of question I'd been waiting for! Before I could ask, she did admit she'd read some fiction in high school, but she hadn't liked any of the titles. I've since heard this from other patrons – what they're told to read isn't what they want or like, so they lose interest in reading altogether. It's a shame, but I sympathize. Not everyone wants to read Shakespeare or Hawthorne. As a librarian, though, I'm happy if people are reading anything, whether it's a magazine, a graphic novel, a classic, or the latest bestseller.

Having a better understanding of what she didn't enjoy reading and why, I realized I had to think on my feet. Maybe she had other interests that would give me a clue. "Are there any TV shows you like?" I asked; she nodded quickly and mentioned *Bones* and *CSI*. What did she like about them? Definitely the forensics and solving the mystery. Now I was getting

somewhere. From those two TV shows, I was able to show her forensic mysteries by authors like Kathy Reichs, Tess Gerritsen, and Jeffery Deaver. If she liked these, I told her there were also several authors who wrote historical novels with similar themes, suggesting a new area of fiction she may not have considered.

She was still open to more suggestions at this point, and wondered if I had any personal recommendations. Immediately, titles and authors ran through my head, and I asked her what else she might be interested in. She mentioned she also watched *Oprah* and wanted to learn more about the topics on her show. I'd read a couple of Oprah's book club titles, so grabbed *Pillars of the Earth* by Ken Follett and *Midwives* by Chris Bohjalian – two very different titles from each other and the mysteries I'd already given her, but still keeping her in her comfort zone.

Once she had the books in hand, I explained that she was welcome to come back if she needed more help, and not to feel pressured to read everything we'd found if she didn't enjoy them. I myself learned that rule the hard way – I

remember picking up a title (of my own choosing) in high school, beginning it, hating it, and putting it away *three times* before finally finishing it; I don't like starting something I can't finish. Now, if I can't get into a story within the first couple of chapters, I move on. There are too many great books to waste time on one you don't enjoy.

Ultimately, I never saw that patron again, so I never found out if she discovered an author she really loved or if she decided she liked fiction. Although not knowing what happened to her stinks, I still get that little high from helping the next person who says, "I don't like to read, but I thought I'd try. **Where should I start?**"

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The Power of C: Collaboration

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Free at Last International Statistics Join the Open Access Party

By [Amanda Wakaruk](#)

Want to compare literacy rates across a continent? Need to know which countries received development aid over the past decade? Worry about the authority of the statistics you found using Google? Not anymore! Many official international statistics have been liberated for public consumption by their compilers and are now available openly on the internet.

Most statistics are collected by national agencies and compiled by international organizations that control for issues like reliability and harmonization. These organizations often support the development of statistical capacity and output in the home nation where quality can vary widely. While impressive strides have been achieved over the past four decades, the field is relatively young, and most reliable economic comparisons originate from the inter-war period. Furthermore, statistics are rooted in context; policies and politics shape their collection, compilation, and dissemination. Finding the series you need is only the beginning – interpretation, as always, requires critical thought.

1 UNData data.un.org

The UNData portal was born of the United Nations Statistics Division's (UNSD¹) "Statistics as a Public Good" initiative (associated with Swedish health professor Hans Rosling of GapMinder² and Google Public Data) and since 2008 provides free access to series from over 24 databases (some of which were previously fee-based). Search by keyword using the main Google-esque interface or access specific series by clicking on "Databases" and then "Sources." The most active compilers of

the UN family all contribute: World Bank, International Labour Organization, World Health Organization, etc. Coverage therefore includes agriculture, education, employment, environment, health, human development, industry, economy, tourism, trade, etc. What makes this tool a treasure, however, is not breadth but depth: each search result produces a table followed by source notes including links to the originating publication, database, and/or agency. On the down side, its functionality (with options to limit, sort, and export data on the fly) is tempered by occasional glitches (e.g., numerical sorting might not do what you expect) and gaps in the data can be confusing to those unfamiliar with the series. While issues of functionality can be explained by the beta nature of the site (see data.un.org/History.aspx) the latter is often associated with the socio-political history of the field of international statistics.³



2 World dataBank (World Bank) data.worldbank.org
 In late April 2010, the World Bank announced free, open access to over 2,000 indicators (with hundreds going back fifty years or more) previously available through (fee-based) databases like World Development Indicators, Global Development Finance, and Global Economic Monitor. Not only does this suite of products include variables about economic conditions (including financial indicators), education, gender, health, and population, it provides aggregates by income level and OECD inclusion. Furthermore, the Global Economic Monitor provides daily, monthly, and quarterly compilations of financial indicators (not always easy to find). To access the full spectrum of series from any database, click the “Databank” button  linked from all

statistics pre-dating the United Nations is short, making this publication (from its predecessor) an important one. *The Statistical Yearbook of the League of Nations*, available via a 2001 digitization project, includes figures from 1913-1944 that describe population, trade, finance, communications, and employment, although breadth of coverage can vary by year. It also includes input from countries that were not League members (e.g., United States, Russia). Want to compare national unemployment rates during the 1930s? How about the number of telephones or automobiles by country in the early 1920s? This is the place to find it.

4 National Statistical Agencies: UNSD Website unstats.un.org/unsd/methods/inter-natlinks/sd_natstat.asp
 Don't forget the data collectors! Many national statistical agencies have been making their output available on their

sub-tab pages off the main page (Countries, Topics, etc.). But don't click too fast! There are also task-driven paths noted on these secondary pages ... find series by country, topic, database, or drill right into the indicators. Look closely for some of the finer features: the “notes” button provides information about the variable and its source; the “format report” function can re-orient output (e.g., it might make more sense to have the countries listed in the rows instead of the variables); the mapping function creates visual representation of retrieved series. If blank cells and missing years are evident, remember that the World Bank's statistical indicators evolved alongside its policies (e.g., economic well-being and infrastructure in the 1950s-1960s and health, nutrition, education, and family planning later on) and check the notes for context. If you're having problems, try Firefox and/or Explorer for PCs.



3 Statistical Yearbook of the League of Nations www.library.northwestern.edu/govinfo/collections/league/stat.html
 The list of sources for reliable and comparable international

web sites for years. Just be very careful about comparing statistics drawn from separate statistical agencies. Let's not forget what happened to David Frum in 2006.⁴

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NOTES

1. The UNSD was preceded by the United Nations Statistical Office (UNSO).
2. GapMinder's tagline is: "unveiling the beauty of statistics for a fact based world view" (gapminder.org).
3. For more on the fascinating and very human progress of international statistical compilation and dissemination, see Ward, M. (2004), *Quantifying the world: UN ideas and statistics* (Bloomington, IA: Indiana University Press).
4. Frum mistakenly compared statistics from the US Bureau of Statistics and Statistics Canada, writing that "Canada's overall crime rate is now 50% higher than the crime rate in the United States," as part of the article "Reaping what we sow," published in the January 3, 2006, issue of the *National Post* (page A14). For added commentary on this statistical mishap, see: Gardner, D. (2006, February 15), "Crime story depends on the teller," *Ottawa Citizen*, p. A13.

The Royal L



A visit to the Royal Library of Denmark (Det Kongelige Bibliotek) is at first a bit overwhelming, and yet at the same time incredibly welcoming. With such thoughts, I opened the door and stepped into what would become a guided lesson in coexistence and collaboration.

By [Laura Banfield](#)

Coexistence and Collaboration



Opened in 1999, the main building of the Royal Library, the Black Diamond, is impressive. Situated on the quayside, the exterior is comprised of black marble and glass with floor-to-ceiling windows reflecting images of the sites across the harbour and the boats upon the water. The interior is characterized by a sense of openness and light with an eight-storey atrium in the centre. It houses a bustling café, bookstore, concert hall, exhibit rooms, stacks, special collections and reading rooms as well as administrative and staff workspace. Bridges connect the Black Diamond to the older Royal Library building (1906) which contains more reading rooms, collections, and work areas and has a view of the Library Garden which is home to a statue of Soren Kierkegaard. There is a peaceful coexistence between the old and the new.

Yet more impressive than the architecture and the location, the Royal Library represents a unique collaboration between the National Library of Denmark and the University of Copenhagen Library. Together, they are blending the National Library's mandate of cultural preservation and celebration with the university's mandate of access and study.

The advantages to this collaboration are many. The collections of the National Library, which includes the original works of Hans Christian Andersen, and the University of Copenhagen-

Library of Denmark

Library are largely complimentary. In merging the collections and internet resources, the costs of maintaining both have decreased for the two libraries, and access to and use of such collections have increased.

This is particularly noticeable in the area of digitization and electronic resources. The expertise and mandates of the staff from both areas of the Royal Library have been brought together to balance the demand for digitizing what was produced in the past (national library) and accessing what is produced now (university). In this regard, the co-operative application of technology is liberating the collections and promoting a democratic evolution in their use – greater access for greater numbers of people.

In merging the collections and working more closely with the university, the National Library's obligation to open the collection to the public and to celebrate Danish heritage and cultures is being achieved in a variety of different ways. The library calendar is marked by a series of events and exhibits.

Many of the National Library's collections, including pieces from the Danish Cartoon Museum, can be seen on display in the hallways, foyers, and reading rooms. Rotating exhibitions such as S7N (Seven), a collection of contemporary photos from the National Photo Museum, and Undercover, a mixed media exhibit exploring materials preservation and access, celebrate the past and present in a way which honours the Danish experience and the work done by the library to preserve it.

Other aspects of the collection and themes of cultural interest are brought to prominence through the hosting of debates, lectures, concerts, and readings which are often moderated, contextualized, or even delivered by members of the University of Copenhagen community. These public events serve to promote both the National Library and the university and further strengthen the ties between them.

Out of this has also emerged a Students Only! club with cultural events and scientific discussions geared towards meeting the interests of university students. Some events are exclusively for students and some aren't, but in either case the high number of students registered for the club (more than 5,000) and their regular attendance at events are proof of the Royal Library's

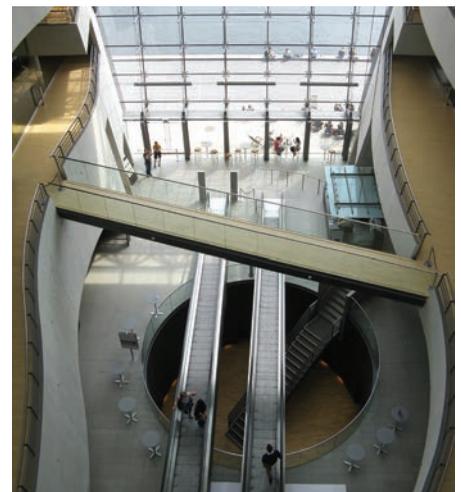
success in reaching out and making the library a student-friendly place.

The Royal Library has become more than just a place for students to study and do research. Through the merging of the National Library and the University of Copenhagen Library the Royal Library is successfully blending Denmark's cultural heritage with the present.

As I left at the end of the day, the concert hall was being prepared for the next performance, a new exhibit was being mounted, the entrance was still surrounded by full bicycle racks, and people were enjoying the dockside seating. The library was alive and humming with activity, even in the quieter spaces.

The author would like to extend a thank you to Jytte Kjaergaard, Communications Consultant at the Royal Library Copenhagen Denmark, for providing a tour of the Black Diamond and an explanation of the library services and structure.

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"What is your favourite Canadian consumer health website?" This is the question the Consumer Health Information Providers Interest Group (CHIPIG) put to health information providers in March 2010. We wanted to update the list that we had created in 2006: since then, three of the websites that were on that list no longer exist and another has changed its URL.

By Mary Anne Howse

TOP 10 Canadian Consumer HEALTH WEBSITES

Background and Rationale

In 2004, the Canadian Internet Project released its survey findings and reported that 54% of Canadians used the internet to seek health information. The survey found that most consumers used a general search engine such as Google or Yahoo! and typed in keywords (Zamaria, Caron, & Fletcher, 2004). The Canadian Internet Project released its findings from its second survey in 2008. That report found that the number of Canadians using the internet to find health information had jumped to 70%. The second report concluded that the internet is becoming an important part of the lives of most Canadians, who turn to it almost instinctively when seeking information (Zamaria & Fletcher, 2008).

Because of the changes to websites on the original list, as well as the results from the latest Canadian Internet Project survey, members of CHIPIG felt that it was the right time for an update.

The 2010 Survey

In January 2010, a subcommittee of CHIPIG, was formed to create a new list. Members of the subcommittee were Tom Flemming (retired), Mary Anne Howse (Women's College Hospital), Erica Lee (AIDS Committee of Toronto), Lily Mac (AIDS Committee of Toronto), Marg Muir (Sunnybrook Health Sciences Centre and Trillium Health Centre), and Liz Puckering (Mississauga Library System).

We developed and administered an online survey using Survey Monkey. The survey circulated through various librarian listservs. We asked health information providers to submit their favourite Canadian consumer health websites, listing reasons for their recommendations. Criteria for the submitted websites included credibility, currency, interactive features, and authorship. They also had to be Canadian with a consumer focus.

Fifty-two people responded to the survey: 86% were librarians, 35% worked in a hospital or health centre library, 33% worked in a public library, 56% lived in Ontario, and 25% in British Columbia. We also got responses from people in Alberta, Nova Scotia, Quebec, and Newfoundland and Labrador. Of the 123 website suggestions submitted, 53 were unique Canadian websites.

Choosing the Top 10

There was no clear favourite: the top 3 recommendations tied at 10 votes each. (In 2004 the late great Canadian Health Network was a clear winner.) Those websites chosen had different focuses. They tended to fall into a few categories such as women, children, disease-specific, and health promotion. We decided to compare the websites in each category and selected the ones that stood out. Our top ten choices were sites that met our criteria of quality and suitability of information for consumers, coverage and scope, website design and usability, interactivity and appeal to consumers. We favoured sites that were simple to use and engaged consumers. Because our choices were the best in different subject areas, we felt that we couldn't rank them as one, two, three. Instead we chose to list them alphabetically.

Top 10 Canadian Consumer Health Websites (2010)

AboutKidsHealth aboutkidshealth.ca	Heart & Stroke Foundation heartandstroke.ca
Canadian Cancer Society cancer.ca	Here to Help heretohelp.bc.ca
Canada Safety Council safety-council.org	PasseportSanté passeportsante.net
Caring for Kids caringforkids.cps.ca	Sexualityandu.ca sexualityandu.ca
Dietitians of Canada dietitians.ca	Women's Health Matters womenshealthmatters.ca



Honourable Mentions

Canadian AIDS Treatment Information Exchange
catie.ca
Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety
ccohs.ca
Canadian Virtual Hospice
virtualhospice.ca
Canadian Women's Health Network
cwhn.ca
HealthLinkBC
healthlinkbc.ca
Public Health Agency of Canada
phac-aspc.gc.ca

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Zamaria, C., and Fletcher, F. (2008). CanadaOnline!: The Internet, Media, and Emerging Technologies: Uses, Attitudes, Trends and International Comparisons. ciponline.ca/en/docs/2008/CIP07_CANADA_ONLINE-REPORT-FINAL%20.pdf

Mary Anne Howse is a member of CHIPIG, a collaborative effort of information providers who work in hospitals and other health care institutions/agencies, public library systems, and associations across Canada. maryanne.howse@wchospital.ca

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FINDING THE SILVER LINING

By Catherine Davidson and Jane Schmidt

While market indicators may be pointing to a gradual economic recovery, the impact of the recession continues to reverberate in the library world.

Public libraries, despite providing vital resources and services to their communities (including an ever-growing corps of jobseekers), often have had to respond to budget cuts by reducing hours and closing branches. School libraries are often the first to be hit during budget reduction exercises. And academic libraries are scrutinizing every aspect of their operations to identify savings and efficiencies.

It's not all doom and gloom, however, and as the saying goes, it's a shame to waste a good recession! Tough economic times are the perfect opportunity to take a long hard look at the way we operate. We can ask ourselves questions like: "Why are we doing x task anyway? Is it still providing value?" and "Do we really need to keep both our online and our print subscription?" and "Is there a smarter way to ensure that x task is completed efficiently and accurately?"

This is also where libraries can capitalize on the myriad services our vendor partners have to offer us. Clare Appavoo, of Coutts Information Services, observed that in light of tighter budgets, librarians are thinking more creatively about how to spend their dollars. Coutts is finding an increased interest in patron-driven selection programs for e-books, but also for print books. These plans enable libraries to do collection develop-

ment "just in time" rather than "just in case," all while maintaining control through a carefully defined profile.

Heather Berringer, of YBP Library Services, has noticed a lot of workflow reconsideration, particularly in technical services. She notes that it's often worthwhile to take advantage of the services your vendor can provide at no additional cost. These can include generating reports (more important than ever for making informed decisions based on real data), making recommendations, and connecting you with peer institutions that may be engaging in unique and innovative solutions that coincide with your own institutional goals.

Many academic libraries are thinking very carefully about the methods used for collecting. Berringer notes that many libraries have transferred series standing orders to approval plans to enjoy deeper discount and greater convenience. The sustainability of the cost of maintaining a print and online collection is being questioned more widely, and many libraries are shifting their thinking about the need for both. Initiatives like the OCU Thunder Bay Agreement, whereby coordinated retention and collaborative storage of print journals is being explored, will allow academic libraries to make decisions about weeding and discontinuation of print with increased confidence.

Vendors are also branching into arenas that have not typically been their purview, such as marketing and fundraising.

“It’s often worthwhile to take advantage of the services your vendor can provide at no additional cost.”

Springer hosted a Marketing 101 session for OCU librarians, and also seeks cataloguers’ feedback through a MARC record advisory council. Gale Cengage is actively involved in connecting potential donors with their products. Salvy Trojman, Director of Cengage’s Digital Archive Program for Canada, has seen his marketing department cater specifically to the needs of library development (fundraising) departments. Gale Cengage has had a presence at ALADN (Academic Library and Development Network) conferences, exploring opportunities to find donors interested in contributing to the cost of a digital acquisition.

Vendors can also provide usage statistics for libraries who want to better understand how the resources they are purchasing are being used. Such stats help determine popularity, as well as inform marketing efforts by highlighting under-utilized

products. They can also demonstrate value. When trying to make the case for increased, or even sustained, collections budgets, it is helpful to be able to speak to “bang for your buck.” Even if one resource costs several thousand dollars, as long as the usage patterns indicate very low cost per use, it is easier to make the case to protect funding.

Of course, we can hope for a brighter economic future. On a global scale, Canadians have fared well. For this we can be thankful, as well as for the opportunities presented to us to be more savvy and cost efficient.

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The Public Library Catalogue as a Social Space Usability Studies of User Interaction with Social Discovery Systems

By Louise F. Spiteri and Laurel Tarulli

The public library catalogue has long acted as an important and fundamental medium between users and their information needs. The traditional goals and objectives of the library catalogue are to enable users to search a library's collection to find items pertaining to specific titles, authors, or subjects. Today's library catalogues are competing against powerful alternatives for information discovery. Services offered by sites such as Amazon (amazon.com) and LibraryThing (librarything.com) allow members to interact with the catalogue and with each other by creating and participating in discussion groups, tagging or classifying items of interest in language that reflects their needs, sharing reading, listening, or viewing interests, and providing recommendations and ratings for selected items. These types of services serve to heighten library users' expectations of a library catalogue.

As an extension of the physical library, a space now often considered as important in a social context as it is in fulfilling information needs, the library catalogue's additional features assist in finding users where they are and promoting social interaction and discovery between each other, library staff, and the library collection. With an emphasis on user-centred collections and grassroots readers' advisory services, the features offered in social discovery tools have the potential to impact and enhance all of our core library services.

As the number of libraries implementing social catalogues continues to grow, the need to evaluate the usefulness of these features is essential in determining how these catalogues are being used – specifically, how and with which frequency are patrons using faceted navigation and user-contributed content such as tagging, reviews, ratings, and other sorting features. In Canada, where the implementation of social catalogues has been limited, there have been no comprehensive studies to evaluate their usability amongst library users and staff. Usability studies are essential, however, to examine the extent to which a product can be used by specified users to achieve specified goals with effectiveness, efficiency, and satisfaction in a specific context of use (ISO, 1998). Usability testing is important to enable an organization to a) inform the design of social discovery tools (social catalogues), b) reduce or eliminate design problems and user frustration, and c) create a record of usability benchmarks for future growth.

With the assistance of a research grant from OCLC/ALISE, we are beginning the first stage of a proposed three-stage research project. The first stage, which will take approximately a year to

complete, consists of transaction log analysis that will provide a metric snapshot of how patrons are using social discovery tools. The next stage of the research will involve a comprehensive usability study that examines:

- the extent to which public library users, librarians, and library staff can efficiently access, use, and interact with social discovery systems
- public library users' perception of, and satisfaction with, the benefits of social catalogues, and
- librarian and library staff perception of, and satisfaction with, social catalogues.

In particular, we are examining and comparing how library users access, use, and interact with social discovery systems used in two Canadian public library systems.

Public libraries, which once had a near-monopoly as information providers, face increasing competition from online information providers who, with deeper pockets than most public libraries, can create discovery systems with the latest technologies to provide quick access to information. For public libraries, implementing a social discovery system requires a significant investment of time, labour, and money. As a result, it is important to determine which features are essential to fulfil the needs of users and libraries. The results of this project may provide important insights into the design and modification of social catalogues to ensure they provide the best user experience.

There has been much discussion about the importance of providing enhanced content and social features in library catalogues to improve the search and discovery experiences of users. What is lacking, at present, however, are rigorous usability studies to determine the extent to which the assumed benefits of these enhanced catalogues are realized. In other words, do social discovery tools actually enhance the users' experience and meet their information needs? Our research seeks to answer this question.

Reference

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What do library technicians do?

By Donna Brown

Results of the latest biennial OALT/ABO Salary & Library Profile Survey are in, covering type of library, membership status, education and experience, job responsibilities, types of library systems, and salaries. It's helpful to members in making comparisons and job choices, and also to the association in planning.

Nearly one-third of survey respondents belong to more than one library association, with the OLA being the most common second membership of OALT/ABO members, and the most common membership reported by non-members.

The survey confirms what LTs know but the library world is hardly aware of: 46% have a degree or diploma in addition to the library technician qualification, up from 41% in the 2007 survey and 38% in 2005.

Not all LT graduates have "library technician" as a job title. 42% of respondents gave "library technician" as their title; another 21% have "technician"; another 12% have "assistant." But 14% have a title signifying management: head, coordinator, supervisor, manager, administrator, team leader, etc. Earlier OALT/ABO surveys have shown that LTs in special libraries are most likely, and in school libraries least likely, to have management-type job titles. In all, 76 unique job titles were recorded. Educators will learn what actual tasks are being undertaken by LTs in the workplace. The survey asks about main activities in three areas: technical services, public services, and management responsibilities, which we hope helps to guide the development of the LT curriculum. In technical services, it is circulation, cataloguing, book processing, and acquisitions that have for several years been the most often noted. This year, "internet/web design and maintenance" showed a surge. In public services, ready reference and general public enquiry has been the leading activity for several years (80% of respondents this year), with internet research second, although this latter has slipped a bit recently (to 50%), perhaps as our clients become better at web searching themselves. The interesting surge this year was "brochure/sign design."

I contacted a few of the individuals who shared their job titles and main responsibilities with me:

Web Architect – Marion Doucette of the County of Huron, Information Technology Division reported that she is responsible for: "Planning, coordination, accessibility, and maintenance of

the county's full web portfolio; selecting web applications software platforms; creating original web content where required; ongoing site analysis on system volume and traffic patterns; and developing and delivering training to end-users on software applications."

Circulation Coordinator – Jeff Corbett of Ralph M. Besse Library, Ursuline College listed his major duties as: "Coordinating the circulation of items including check in and out; manage student volunteers; reconciling the weekly money intake from fines payments, photocopiers, etc.; handling movement of items to/from our consortium libraries."

Coordinator of Technical Services – Marcia Jackson-Friginette of Whitchurch-Stouffville Public Library reported her major responsibilities as: "Ensuring proper function of our ILS (Polaris); coordinating the technical services operation of the library; cataloguing; information desk."

Document Analyst – Millie Yip from Imperial Oil noted that she "issues technical documents as per engineers requests, ensuring they are delivered via Document Manager and FileNet."

Library Officer, Collection Management – Kathleen Dahl from Beryl Ivey Library, Brescia University College indicated a variety of duties including ordering and receiving new materials; cataloguing and processing; and serials and claims.

In management responsibilities, noted by more than 45% of respondents, purchasing has been a lead activity for some years, with training/mentoring surging to second place this year.

As expected, the respondents with the most experience are the most likely to have management responsibilities, but many individuals with less than five years experience have some management duties, particularly training. Over half of the respondents (53%) have supervisory responsibilities, a factor of both experience and type of library: respondents in school and public libraries are more likely to have supervisory responsibilities, whereas respondents in special and government are least likely to be supervisors.

It is evident that the role of the library technician has evolved, and is wider and more varied than many of us imagine.

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Donna Brown is the External Communications Coordinator of the Ontario Association of Library Technicians/L'Association des biblio-techniciens de l'Ontario (OALT/ABO). She is a library technician at the Health Sciences Library at the Northern Ontario School of Medicine West Campus. donna.brown@nosm.ca

the next generation

STUDENTS LOOK AT THE LIBRARY
AND INFORMATION COMMUNITY
WITH FRESH EYES

The Social Consequences of Digitization

By **Karen** Pollock

The popularity of the internet in the Western world, and the potential for large and easily accessible digital libraries, lead students of library studies to question what the role of librarians will be as the digital age progresses. The continuation of high enrolment in social programs offered in public libraries suggests that librarians will continue to be valued for their informational knowledge and resources, as well as their leadership in public outreach.

Furthermore, the effectiveness of digital cataloguing and assurances by scholars such as David Weinberger that all information will be easily retrievable are not enough to dispel the fact that the multitude of physical material still requires librarians' expertise to identify and locate information useful for academic studies, legal purposes, and other uses. However, those who study the politics surrounding the current electronic book movement may arrive at the conclusion that the main crusade for the digitization of books, namely Google's Library Project, is incapable of fulfilling the most significant role that librarians have played since time immemorial – the provision of affordable and easily accessible information, primarily in the medium of books whether they be physical or electronic.

Given the advantages of electronic books available through the internet, digitizing the entire collection of the world's largest and most authoritative libraries appears to have become the natural quest of the digital age. We want our information to be free and digitization is how we plan to achieve this. Furthermore, we recognize that electronic literature available in its entirety through the internet may increase accessibility and facilitate the dispersion of literature throughout society. However, digitizing large library collections without proper funding is neither an in-

expensive nor a short-term endeavour for public and academic libraries.

A number of powerhouse corporations, including Google, Yahoo!, Microsoft, and Sony, have also recognized the potential of electronic libraries as the way in which books will be sold in the future. These corporations have partnered with publishers to build their electronic libraries, and also with libraries to digitize physical collections of existing published material. Librarians involved in the decision to enter into these partnerships perceive such agreements as a highly efficient way to achieve the funding necessary to digitize their collections and make them freely available.

Current students of library studies, especially those attending technology-oriented schools such as the University of Toronto's Faculty of Information, are prompted to question how these partnerships will affect the physical and digital libraries which we will go on to manage. The means by which librarians choose to digitize library collections today will dictate the architecture of electronic libraries. Librarians and current students of library studies understand electronic libraries as the means of widespread and free distribution of information and literature in the digital age. However, those of us monitoring the politics behind these agreements notice a critical dilemma: while librarians strive to ensure greater ease and dissemination of information and literature in the changing digital age, there is some concern that such partnerships may result in corporate gatekeepers.

While these collaborations will provide libraries with electronic collections, the agreements often deprive libraries of certain rights. One example is the right to share electronic materials with third parties: libraries with significant electronic collections will not be legally able to lend their electronic materials, thereby forcing them to purchase electronic collections from one of the





corporations involved. One prediction is that the fee would be similar to the cost of subscription to academic journals, which may not be affordable for most libraries.

For current students in library studies, issues with digital information are often at the forefront of the curriculum. Given the role of current and future librarians as developers of digitized library collections, it is imperative that analysis of these issues extend beyond the technical. We must not ignore the social consequences that digitization decisions by librarians will have on the future of electronic collections.

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Karen Pollock is currently a graduate student at the University of Toronto's Faculty of Information, where she is pursuing critical studies of technology and information.

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The Next Generation of Librarian Twittarian

By Alessya Quattrociocchi

When I signed up to be a librarian, or rather fell into the career of librarianship, I knew I was going to have a long and difficult road ahead of me fighting against the “hoarders of all information,” as I like to call them. You know those few. The ones that actually like the smell of books with yellow pages and broken binding and those who know that “Alice in Wonderland” is actually “Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland”? They’ve been around long enough to see the demise of card catalogues and tight buns, yet one thing they can never let go of is their collection. In their minds, you never know when that one patron will come in for that one book and so, that is justification enough to keep it on the shelf for at least another 20 years. Now what I didn’t expect was for a whole new crop of these people to emerge in the information age. But they’re here. And they’re archiving our tweets.

CAREFUL WITH YOUR MISTWEETS

Twitter has decided to donate all public tweets to the Library of Congress. That means important notices sent out by the president or by corporations, along with the conversation you had last night with your best friend. Now what I find a little creepy about all of this is that my future child may be able to walk into the local library and see what I ate for breakfast 10 years ago or find out what I really thought of their dad while we were just dating. Not necessarily two things that I either find important or worth saving.

So why is this happening? Is this the library’s way of showing the world that they are hip and with the times? Because they do realize that Twitter will soon be taken over by some other social media site some day, right? And then will they have to

start archiving those conversations too? A decision like this has my mind completely boggled because it just doesn’t seem well thought out. Archiving every single tweet that has ever come out publicly could be compared to the library shelving every single book that comes through its doors whether donated, sent by publishers, or brought in by employees cleaning out their house. And why would we do that? We are trained at weeding out what’s relevant and worth keeping and that’s what we should continue doing.

A TWITTARIAN?

For lack of a catchier term to refer to a Twitter librarian, I’ve invented “Twittarian.” The person who needs to be hired to sort through all those public tweets and decide if “I <3 Justin Bieber” is considered classic material. With the abundance of Hollywood celebrities on Twitter, the site has been promoted as more of an extension to the tabloids. And can you imagine the uproar of celebrities when they find out that every word that comes out of their mouths will forever be available to be used against them in the future? Don’t they already sue photographers for this? But come to think of it, it would be pretty cool for my children to see the first words spoken after the first black president was inaugurated or to see how the world reacted when the King of Pop passed away. There is definitely some validity to public tweets being archived, but just not all of them. We already have librarians who sort through the authenticity of web pages, so it’s not a far stretch to have Twittarians. So, Twitter executives, if you’re out there ... I’m looking for a new job.

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Alessya Quattrociocchi is a Children’s Librarian for the Toronto Public Library and, yes, she’s on Twitter.
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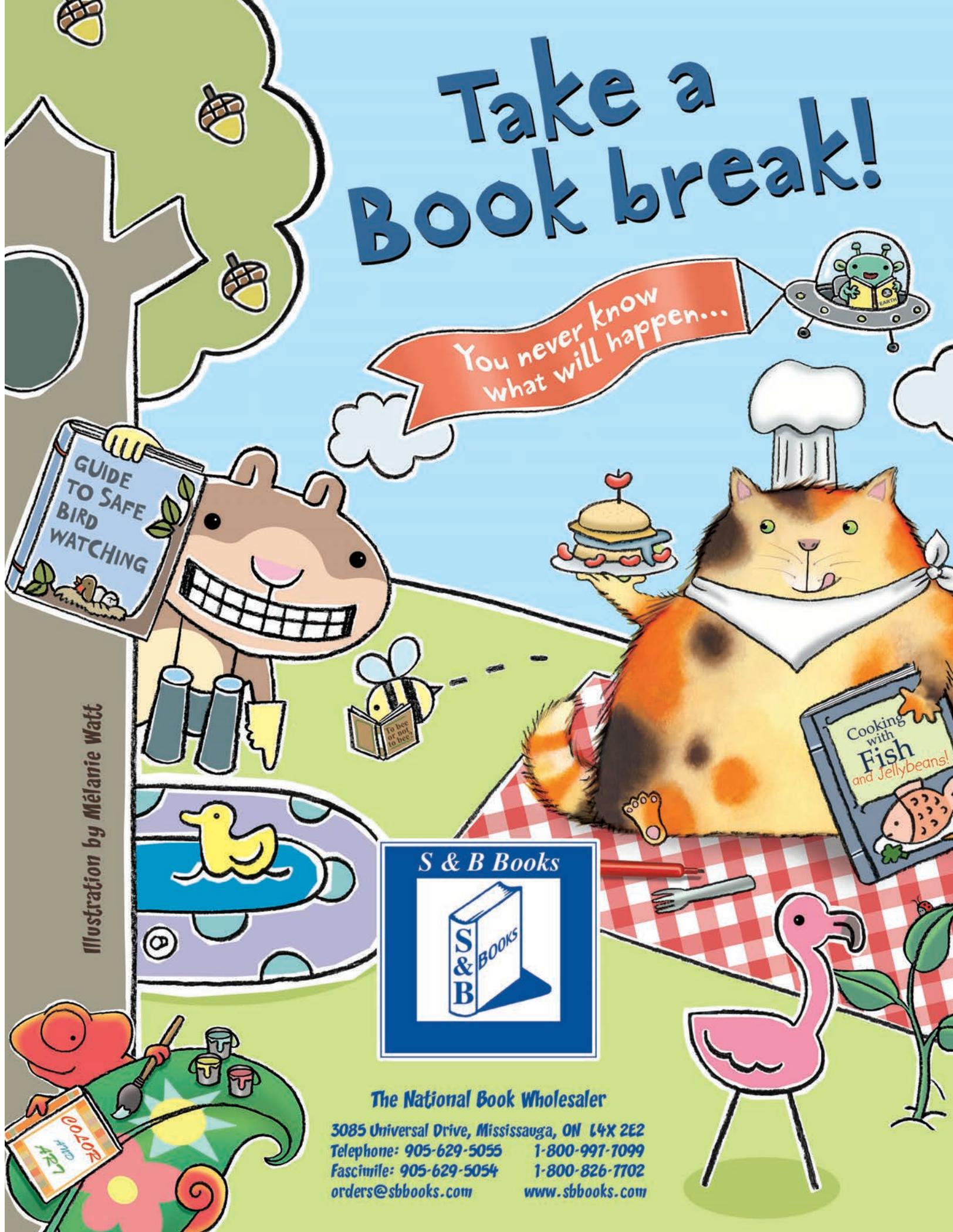
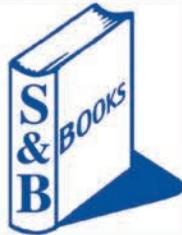


Illustration by Mélanie Watt

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