

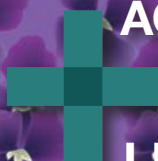


SUMMER 2011 VOL.17 NO. 3

ola.access

ONTARIO LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

**PATRON-DRIVEN
ACQUISITION**



**LES LIVRES
NUMÉRIQUES
EN FRANÇAIS**

**EVA
DODSWORTH
ON WEB MAPPING 2.0**

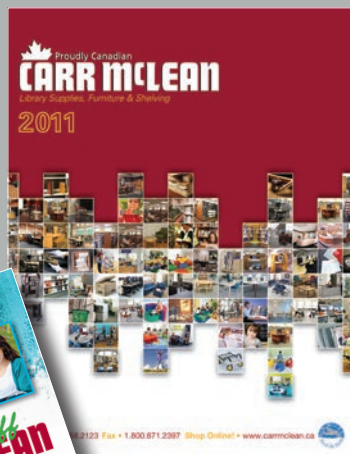




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As web mapping's popularity continues to increase, author Eva Dodsworth says it may be time for librarians to explore how this technology can be used in library communication, teaching, and research.

14 PDA: Patron-Driven Acquisition Steering Ebook Collections in a New Direction

BY AARON LUPTON

Last fall, 16 Ontario Council of University Libraries institutions collaborated with ebrary to adapt a patron-driven acquisition (PDA) model for ebook collections. What is PDA and why is it important? Author Aaron Lupton explains.

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BY JANE HILTON

Chances are the people stumbling into your public library with glazed, shocked looks on their faces are your newest board members. As the past president of the Ontario Library Boards' Association, author Jane Hilton stresses the importance of a proper job description for each new member, as well as a thorough and effective library orientation.

18 On Personality and Perception The Changing Role of the Public Librarian, or, Why Your Institution Needs to Hire a New Grad

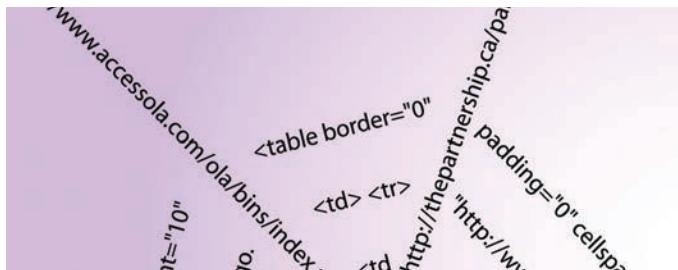
BY AMBER HUTTON

Every librarian has an important role to play in connecting a diverse and changing community to information, as well as to each other. In this piece, author Amber Hutton argues it is essential that we shift the framework of our professional discourse to acknowledge and champion this human agent – the librarian – as the change agent.

20 Les livres numériques en français: Où les trouver? Où les acheter?

PAR MONIQUE BRÛLÉ

Il existe plusieurs sources de livrels en français, dont plusieurs sont gratuits. Monique Brûlé vous propose des pistes de solution afin de bien garnir votre liseuse cet été!



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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.



On the cover: Eva Dodsworth on Web Mapping.
Cover Photo created by Brian Pudden, OLA.

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from the editor

Welcome to the summer issue of **Access**.

By **Wayne Jones**

I thought I would take the opportunity to report on some of the topics and issues which were discussed at the annual meeting of the editorial board of the magazine, which was held over lunch on the Thursday of this past Super Conference.

We started with a review of the main successes during 2010, the main one being of course the fact that we managed to produce another four issues of the magazine, with truly excellent and engaging content from editors, columnists, and writers from across the OLA membership. I'm very encouraged that we routinely receive at least a few unsolicited features for every issue of *Access*, and that members also are generous in supplying us with news stories and other events that we can include in the Ontario Snapshot and Flashpoint sections.

As usual, the magazine's web presence was a hot topic of discussion. We are planning a revamp, which will likely happen this year, and there were several ideas on what could be changed:

- including reader feedback in the form of not only letters and commentary, but also more social-web-based interactions as well
- keeping *Access* up to date with new and refreshed content continuously, including news, and so potentially eliminating or reducing the need for news (Ontario Snapshot, Flashpoint) in the printed magazine
- leveraging the use of the web so that the content isn't all merely text and photos (video, for example)

At the meeting, we also discussed plans to review all the editorial content, partly with an eye to refreshing it if necessary, but also trying to determine what are the gaps in coverage. Are there topics and viewpoints which are consistently under-covered (or not covered at all) from issue to issue? A few columns have already ceased, and I'm hoping that there are even more that we can add. Another thing we will be considering, especially as the web version develops its own content, is rotating content between the print and the web – for example, regularly featuring a column in the printed magazine that generally appears only online.

We generally agreed to change the format of the spring issue of *Access*, in which the practice has been not to include features (that is, pieces from the divisional editors), but to instead cover the OLA award winners with an extended section in which they answer a couple of questions relating to their award and other activities. Several alternatives were suggested: asking some of the award winners to contribute features, or featuring profiles of the award winners all through the year instead of in a single issue. We also discussed other conference-related content that could be in the spring (or other) issues, such as pieces from or based on the presentations by keynote speakers.

And, finally, we will likely be carrying out a survey of the OLA membership to get your input both on the current content of the magazine, and on the things you think should be included that are not being covered right now. Which parts do you read, which parts don't you read, which parts do you wish were longer, or shorter, or done differently, or not in the magazine at all?

Thanks for reading, enjoy this issue, and as always, please contact me any time if you have comments, concerns, or questions. And especially if you have something you'd like to write about for *Access*.

.....
Wayne Jones is Associate University Librarian (Collections and Technical Services) at Carleton University, and Editor-in-Chief of Access. wjones@accessola.com

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- 1867-2006

Alphabetically by province then by riding name. Notes on each riding name include: date of establishment, date of abolition, former divisions, later divisions etc. followed by election year and successful candidate's name and party. (By-election information follows.)

- 2008

Arranged like the 1867-2006 results with the addition of all the candidates that ran in each riding, their party affiliation, and number of votes won.

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Each provincial chapter includes:

- Statistical Information
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- List of current Cabinet Members
- Dates of Legislatures since Confederation
- Current Members and Constituencies
- Biographical sketches*
- General Election and by-election results
- 2010 Election Results

Courts: Federal

Each court chapter includes a description of the court (Supreme, Federal, Federal Court of Appeal, Court Martial Appeal and Tax Court), its history, and a list of its judges followed by biographical sketches* of the judges.

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The 2011 edition will be ready to ship in April, make sure your reference collection includes this latest edition.

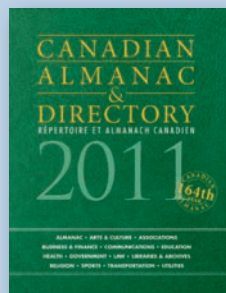
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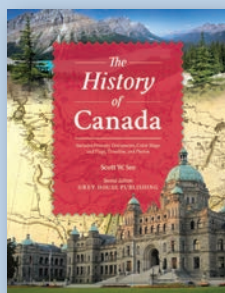
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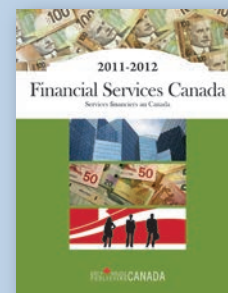
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ontario snapshot

LIBRARY NEWS, PROGRAMS,
AND RECOGNITION

What's Your Story? Comic Book Literacy Day

Holy animated action! Librarians and comic book lovers championed the cause against the diabolical arch enemy, Low Literacy, on March 16 during Comic Book Literacy Day at the Central Library in London. Authors and illustrators of comic books and graphic novels were on hand doing presentations, workshops, and book signings. Kids were reading, drawing, and being superheroes everywhere during the March break event. Comic Book Literacy Day was presented by Heroes Comics in partnership with London Public Library, United Way of London & Middlesex, and the Child & Youth Network. More than 800 people of all ages attended.



Scott Library's Twitter Feed gets Noticed

In February, Klara Maidenberg created Scott Library's presence on Twitter, with the goal of engaging York University's community and promoting library services and collections. The response has been tremendous and new followers join daily. Assistant Librarian Peter Duerr joined Maidenberg in establishing a network of "feeds" from Scott Library's varying departments to provide a newstream for followers. The tweets have ranged from workshop announcements to service hour changes. However, the Twitter feed has had some unexpected uses. When a fire alarm prompted an evacuation of the library, Klara tweeted to let students know the building was closed. This prompt action was noticed by York's student newspaper, *Excalibur*, which printed a feature on the library's efforts to keep the student body informed via a new medium. You can view the feed at: [twitter.com/](http://twitter.com/ScottLibrary)



Below: Klara Maidenberg and Peter Duerr of Scott Library



Photo credit: Stephen Hong

Party in the Peacock



On the evening of Friday, March 4, Robarts Library at the University of Toronto underwent an extraordinary transformation. The second floor was converted from an academic library into a dance floor and all-round party place. Party in the Peacock was a well-received, student-driven fundraising event to support the Robarts Revitalization Project, which is intended to expand student study space. The event had something for everybody: students' photography and artwork were displayed throughout, the group study area became a crowded dance floor with a driving beat, and the cafeteria provided a welcome spot to socialize. More than 600 students enthusiastically participated.



Above: *Chance the Retriever* listens attentively as six-year-old Kelsey reads to him from her favourite storybook at the Perth & District Union Public Library. Dog owner Judy Stewart looks on. *The Paws for a Story* program gives children a chance to practice reading in a non-threatening environment – a dog won't correct you if you make a mistake. This program will continue every other Saturday until June.

The Closet Collection

There is now a donated collection of gay pulp erotica at the University of Western Ontario Pride Library. Spanning four decades, the collection holds more than 1,000 titles. Currently, we are cataloguing this material, but beyond bibliographic information, we are developing searchable



platforms that incorporate themes, tropes, and subjects. Unfortunately, similar collections are often catalogued simply under the subject heading “gay fiction.” Students seeking to investigate issues of race, for example, would face difficulties determining which specific texts address this theme. To meet this challenge, we hope to develop a searchable controlled vocabulary. However, we are building this taxonomy largely from scratch. We are encountering the issue of accuracy: do the chosen thematic words accurately and appropriately capture and contain the cultures represented within this collection? Are we the right librarians for the task? We are always looking to fellow librarians and library students for advice, feedback, and support.

— Lizzie Kerr and Richard Anderson

A Scrabblicious Family Literacy Day

Scrabblicious was a week-long Scrabble tournament that took place in the auditorium of Stratford Public Library. Following the theme of Play for Literacy, this event encouraged participants and spectators to discover the fun of playing board games, thus using literacy and numeracy skills. Prizes and refreshments were included in the fun. The Stratford Scrabble Club played a key role in planning and implementing this fun family event.

Right: Two young ladies enjoy a friendly game of Scrabble during Family Literacy Week at Stratford Public Library.



A Book Sale for a Better World

From March 30 to April 3, 2011, the Whitchurch-Stouffville Public Library held its annual book sale. The sale was the most successful ever, raising more than \$16,600 to help fund the summer reading program, author visits, and new collections. This year for the first time, the Whitchurch-Stouffville Public Library partnered with Better World Books, a group which collects and sells books online to fund literacy initiatives worldwide. The unsold items from the book sale will be donated by Better World Books to a community in South America.



Ottawa's Downloadable Music

The Ottawa Public Library (OPL) has brought a new digital collection to its virtual shelves. The collection, called Freegal Music, offers library customers access to thousands of downloadable songs from the Sony Music catalogue. Library cardholders can select and download three songs of their choice per week, sampling them before actually committing to a download. Customers may browse by artist or by genre from dozens of categories, including a selection of French music. Once a track has been downloaded, the user owns it – it does not need to be checked back into the library. “Music is a valuable cultural resource,” says Diana Pepall, Manager for Collection Management at OPL. “Now 35 percent of the music market is available on OPL's website, and new music will be added every week.”



Prince Edward County's Unique March Break Camp



It was a celebration of fun and learning en français at the County of Prince Edward Public Library's inaugural March Break French Immersion Art Camp 2011. The week began with Christine Renaud, who heads Outreach and Programming at the library and is bilingual, leading 18 youths ages six to 13 in creating papier mâché bowls. Painting, sculpture, and art projects in other media were also created during the week, all while learning French through conversation, short lessons, and music. "The response was so positive," says library CEO Barbara Sweet, "there are many requests to run the program again." Sessions are planned for the summer at two of the library's larger branches.

Engaging Performances Re-Open Bathurst Clark

Bathurst Clark Resource Library kicked off its grand re-opening celebration on March 10 with lively, engaging performances by the Toronto Waldorf School Performing Arts Vocal and String Ensembles, Westmount Glee Choir, and musicians and vocalists from St. Elizabeth Catholic High School. More than 200 people enjoyed the festivities and explored the library's fresh new look. The completed renovations include the addition of a new Check Out Desk, new seating and lounge areas, an expanded teen area, a charming art wall, and much more. The improvements contribute greatly to the library's warm and welcoming environment.



Brooklin's New Community Gathering Place

Much to the delight of the entire community, the Brooklin Community Centre and Library opened its doors on November 15, 2010. The 40,000-square-foot, two-storey building includes a seniors' activity centre, a youth centre, a pre-school program space, a gymnasium, a large multi-purpose room, and a number of smaller meeting and craft rooms, as well as a greatly expanded library branch. The 10,000-square-foot Brooklin Branch, a branch of the Whitby Public Library, features larger programming space and new and enhanced collections that attract residents of all ages. The library's display space for materials, comfortable seating and study areas, wireless access, and a warm and welcoming atmosphere, along with all of the amenities and programs provided by the community centre, make the Brooklin Community Centre and Library a true community gathering place in the downtown core.



Ryerson's New Barcode Scanning App

Ryerson University Library was recently honoured with the 2011 OLITA Award for Technical Innovation. Graham McCarthy, Innovative Technologies Librarian, and Steven Marsden, Junior System Programmer, developed an ISBN/QR barcode scanning application now available on iOS and Android. If you need to quickly see if a book is available at the library, this application can be used to interpret QR and ISBN barcodes. Scanning the ISBN of a book will look for the item in the library catalogue. The application will interpret the data and display the results on screen, or if the data contains a URL, it will launch that website.

From left: Stephen Marsden, Chief Librarian Madeleine Lefebvre, and Graham McCarthy, accepting the OLITA Award for Technical Innovation for 2011 at the Ontario Library Association Super Conference.

The Super Conference Virtual Experience Has Arrived!

Did you miss out on Super Conference 2011? Or did you double book your schedule and miss an interesting session? Now is your chance to catch up on many of the brilliant speakers and inspiring plenaries experienced during the conference.

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Not sure how any of this works? You can always preview any session or access one of our many FREE sessions! We've included videos from the Michael Wesch and Atom Egoyan plenaries as well as a spotlight session from Tonya Surman of the Centre for Social Innovation. As a bonus feature we've also included personal interviews with library leaders such as Mike Ridley, Stephen Abram, and Nicole Engard.

So come and join the Virtual Experience – all the fun of Super Conference, minus the snow-storms!

RA in a Day

This popular full-day symposium sponsored by OPLA will run on Friday, October 21, 2011 in the Bluma Appel Salon at the Toronto Reference Library. Serving today's readers is rapidly evolving and changing as technology brings new possibilities and opportunities to the reading experience. This year, RA in a Day will feature presentations on reaching readers virtually, and offer strategies and solutions to effectively respond to the way readers are now accessing our collections and services. Registration will open in early August.

Guest Speaker: Charlotte Gray, author

Confirmed panelists include:

Michael Ciccone, Director of Collections, Hamilton Public Library

Karen Potash Estrovich, OverDrive, Inc.

Duncan Smith, founding partner and Product Manager, NoveList

OLA Community

Are you a member? It is free and there are multiple forums set up for discussions ... Visit OLA online today to join.

Check Out a Human Book @your library'

Libraries in our society are under a constant challenge to present programs and information in a way that is "new" and innovative, and in a manner that will attract the interest of the public. The Human Library program endeavors to do that by fostering meaningful interpersonal dialogue between people who would normally not have the occasion to speak to each other.

The Check Out a Human Book @ Your Library committee developed a toolkit for public, post-secondary and school libraries in Ontario by gathering best practices and encouraging libraries to participate in similar events. This project will increase the visibility of libraries and strengthen community partnerships. Libraries are an excellent venue for holding such events as they are considered to be a trusted and nonpartisan environment. The toolkit was launched spring 2011 – find it on OLA's website and coordinate a Human Library at your organization!



Annual Institute on the Library as Place 2011: Planning Boot Camp

A Libraries 2020 Initiative hosted by the Ontario Library Association*

Tuesday July 12, 9-5, Toronto
(location listed on OLA's website)

Planning a new facility? Re-designing a space? Involved in the building of a multi-use space?

This one-day intensive boot camp will prepare your organization for a new space project of any size. In the morning, participants will learn how to create the vision, build a use study, create a use case, and select the architect/space planner.

The afternoon is hands-on, focusing on developing case studies based on recent library space planning and building projects. The resources and case studies provided will provide participants with a practical tool-kit to begin their own work plans.

Space is limited to 60 participants.

*Libraries 2020

The Symposium: Libraries 2020, held in September 2009 and funded from the \$15 million contribution from the Ministry of Culture, focused on the future of public libraries. Administered by the Ontario Library Service North and overseen by a Steering Committee of representatives of OLS North, the Southern Ontario Library Service, the Federation of Ontario Public Libraries, Knowledge Ontario, and the Ontario Library Association.

Upcoming OLA Events Not to Be Missed!

Visit the OLA web site for updates on the following programs and events in development:

- RA in a Day: October 21, Toronto
- Super Conference 2012 – Innovation!
Have a great idea for Super Conference? Interested in presenting? The call for proposals deadline for Super Conference 2012 (February 1-4) is May 13.

Ontario's Provincial Election, October 6, 2011

You can determine the future of Ontario's Libraries:

Engage your local candidate ...



"A properly funded school library has a direct impact on student achievement and reading engagement. Not all of Ontario's schools have well-resourced school libraries. If elected, what is your commitment to ensuring the best educational experiences for young Ontarians?"

"Public libraries support economic development, life-long learning, digital literacy, and community engagement. Yet provincial funding has not kept pace with increase in service demands. If elected, how can you help secure an increase in funding for public library services?"

"Knowledge Ontario provides a suite of digital services that can be accessed from school, public, or academic libraries in Ontario. The organization enables students to get real-time research help right from home, creates local digital community collections, and provides access to information online for all Ontarians, yet provincial government support has dwindled. If elected what will you do to continue this valuable service?"

Visit OLA's website for more election issues, resources, and contacts.





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Expanding Library Communication and Services with Web Mapping 2.0

By Eva Dodsworth

It's nothing new that librarians are continuously required to broaden their traditional knowledge set to keep up with the digital tools that university students, staff, and faculty are utilizing. As information providers, our role is often to be ahead of the curve – to be prepared and ready to speak the same language when it's time to communicate library information to our users. When new databases are acquired, we learn them before we teach them to others. When a new social tool emerges, we too become proficient in it and discover ways to utilize it for information literacy, promotion, and outreach.

New forms of communication provide new ways to share information. Social networking tools such as blogs, wikis, Twitter, pictures, and videos are used by many to enhance information sharing. The latest technology to enter the mainstream information economy is internet geographic applications (Web Mapping 2.0), which is significantly increasing society's geographical awareness, as well as providing an alternative format to presenting and accessing information (Muki Haklay, et al., 2008). As a social and organizational tool, it is being integrated into several web environments and applications. As web mapping will most certainly continue to increase in popularity, it may be time for librarians to explore how this technology can be used in communication, teaching, and research.



Geographic Awareness and Web Mapping Literacy

Geographical information technology is becoming a central component for managing, analyzing, and visualizing the world's information (Benjamin Tuttle, et al., 2008). Everyday information is being mapped, or geo-tagged, by mainstream society – traffic, distribution of events, placemarks, images, videos, trail routes, taxi fares, personal information, and much, much more. Since 2005, when Google, Microsoft, and Yahoo! released free web-mapping applications, the rate of growth and interest in web-mapping technology has skyrocketed. This interest in spatial information and map overlays is providing users with the means to understand their own world, their own neighbourhoods, and communities of interest. Groups and individuals are using interactive applications such as Google Maps to add their own information – photos, videos, placemarks, and hyperlinks with which they can easily share this collection of research with others (imbed in a webpage, email, create a widget).

Because of this rise of geographical information dissemination, there appears to be an increase in people's ability to use the properties of space to communicate, reason, and solve problems. Spatial literacy provides the individual with skills such as geographic orientation, and understanding direction, distance, and coordinate systems. It includes an understanding of graphical design (e.g., symbols on a map) and the ability to deduce conclusions and make decisions based on information displayed in a map. As the National Research Council (NRC) noted in a paper entitled *Learning to Think Spatially*: "Without explicit attention to [spatial literacy], we cannot meet our responsibility for equipping the next generation of students for life and work in the 21st century" (NRC, 2006).

Quite a bit of research has been conducted over the last few years on the use and benefits of web 2.0 applications in libraries. Libraries tend to use a handful of the same social tools, which closely parallel the ones used most by library users. Curtis Rogers (2009) conducted a survey of American library staff members to determine the variety of web 2.0 and social networking sites utilized to promote library services and programs. Among the highest ranked were Facebook (71.4%), Flickr (49.6%), and blogs (47.4%), followed by Twitter and Meebo (36.1%) and YouTube (35.3%). The survey did not include web 2.0 mapping applications, which was found to be a common omission among surveys studied.

A quick search on the web revealed the number of users registered with the above web 2.0 applications. As of early 2010, Facebook had 400 million active users; Flickr had 27 million users registered; 184 million blogs have been created; Twitter had 105 million users; and YouTube had 258 million registered users. Astonishingly, Google Earth has had more than 600 million downloads, surpassing even the number of Facebook users. Clearly this reveals the number of people using this application, and hence the importance of incorporating this application into both research surveys and into the library's communication, research, and teaching campaigns. If there is this much interest in Google Earth, then related mapping programs are likely to be of interest to library users as well.



Incorporating Web Mapping 2.0 Training into Academic Libraries

Regardless of subject speciality, all library professionals work collaboratively to foster independent and lifelong learners within the academic community. Information literacy skills are taught in a number of different ways and formats, but will mostly require training and experience on the part of the library staff member offering the services. Web mapping 2.0 training can be initiated by a staff member or group of staff members already well rehearsed in the subject matter. Most institutions have a GIS or map librarian with a strong background in the field. An introductory workshop introducing staff to the concepts of online mapping may trigger the interest and awareness that they need to respond to related subject matter as it comes up in the news, in the library, and in their personal lives. The traditional division between GIS and all other subject fields is ceasing to exist. GIS is a multidisciplinary field, being used by students and professionals across all subject areas. Library professionals have the opportunity to delve into this intriguing and popular technology as it will be, if it isn't already, a skill that library users eagerly inquire about, digest, and utilize for the remainder of their lives.

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By **Aaron** Lupton

Last fall, 16 OCUL (Ontario Council of University Libraries) institutions collaborated with ebrary to run a pilot of their patron-driven acquisition (PDA) model for ebook collections. What is PDA? Essentially, it's a practice where instead of librarians choosing which ebooks to purchase for their patrons, the library automatically purchases any ebook that receives a certain amount of usage. In other words, if the patron uses it, the library buys it.

PATRON-DRIVEN ACQUISITION:

Steering Ebook Collections in a New Direction

Each OCUL school contributed a set amount of money to the pilot, based on the size of their institution. Together, these contributions would pay for the titles selected by the users. Once the money was used up, the pilot would end.

But first, the OCUL ebooks committee had to decide which ebrary titles to make available as possible purchases. A number of criteria were applied to the original collection of almost 100,000 titles. These involved excluding publishers already owned by the consortia, establishing a price ceiling (\$200), imprint dates from 2000 to 2010, and English and French language. In the end, 38,000 titles were selected to be part of the pilot.

The next big decision for the ebooks committee and ebrary was to determine what would constitute a purchase. Ultimately it was resolved that any title having 25 unique uses would trigger a purchase. In mid-August, ebrary sent OCUL the MARC records for all titles, which were made available for download to each institution's catalogue.

After an initial test week, the pilot was officially launched on September 20, and after just 10 days, all of the money had been used up, with a total of 467 titles purchased to show for it. Each one was then loaded into each institution's catalogue.

Of course, this process did lead to some hiccups along the way. Only titles that experienced 25 interactions were purchased. If users had read a title say, 20 times, it disappeared once the pilot was over, leading to frustration among some users. These complaints were predictable of course, but libraries deliberately did not want signal to their users that these particular titles were part of a PDA pilot, in order to avoid skewing results and having a "buying binge" ensue. To address this issue, reports indicating titles used less than 25 times would be made available to each individual



“Could patron-driven acquisition replace traditional collection development practices? Is this the best way to build ebook collections? What do the selections tells us about our users?”

institution in the event that they may wish to acquire them individually for their own collection development purposes.

What was the value of the pilot to OCUL? According to price tags on each ebrary title, the number of ebooks acquired amounted to 7.5 times what small schools contributed, 3.75 times what medium-sized schools contributed, and 2.5 times what large schools contributed. For example, a book with a list price of \$72.95 cost a large school \$32.12 in this consortial approach.

One of the interesting challenges of the pilot lay in the fact that each school naturally has its own pre-existing unique ebook collections, meaning that there could be a good chance that duplicate copies might be acquired through the pilot. Anticipating this, it was agreed beforehand that ebrary would credit OCUL for any ebrary titles already owned by the participating schools.

So, what did the users end up purchasing? An initial look at the results reveal that the most popular subjects were business and economics, medicine, and computer science, and that the most common publication years were the three prior to the pilot launch – 2009, 2008, and 2007. Mind you, there was a rough correlation between the number of titles in each subject purchased and the number of titles in each subject that were available to be purchased in the pilot.

Work has just begun on the process of sifting through the data and assessing the process of the PDA pilot in hopes of determining its true value and significance. Could patron-driven acquisition replace traditional collection development practices? Is this the best way to build ebook collections? What do the selections tells us about our users?

All of these questions remain up for discussion, as does how a similar pilot might be done differently the next time around. Several OCUL librarians presented on the pilot at the Electronic Resources and Libraries 2011 conference in February, and two members of the project planning team will be discussing the experience at the Northumbria International Library Performance Measurement Conference in August. If you are interested in PDA, keep your eyes open for more discussion!

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Governance

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In the Beginning

By Jane Hilton

Chances are the people stumbling into your public library with glazed, shocked looks on their faces are your newest board members. Municipal councils have completed the selection process and those appointed to the library board will govern and set the direction of the public library for the next four years. Hopefully, the new board member's dewy glow of enthusiasm will not be diminished by the steep learning curve and the barrage of information that threaten to overwhelm even the most agile mind.

Orientation

Conducting an orientation session for the entire board is essential so that board members can find their bearings in the new environment and learn what is expected of them. It is also an opportunity to build a supportive working relationship among board members. The board functions as a team and even the most qualified board member needs time and information to feel comfortable so they can effectively lead and govern the library.

By their very nature, orientations impart information: a lot of information which the board member is expected to retain. A single event to review the mission, vision, strategic plan, legislation, bylaws, policies and procedures, financial statements, and statistical information about the library system is mind-boggling, to say the least. Add to this the comprehensive tome (Orientation Manual) bestowed on board members, and which they are expected to read and absorb, but which is also large enough to serve as an effective doorstop.

"Bored" orientations do not achieve the desired outcome, so consider various presentation options, tours of facilities, or short introductions by key staff on what they do. Ensure that board members have little gems like the OLBA's Cut to the Chase (accessola.com/olba/pdf/cut_to_the_chase.pdf), a quick reference guide outlining principles of governance in an easy-to-read, four-page format. Find out how effective the orientation has been by conducting an evaluation survey.

One of the major hurdles in the beginning is for board members to understand the difference between their role and management's role. Board members should be doing due diligence and asking the right questions but should not be dipping their fingers into operations.



Job Description

A good way to establish clear responsibilities and expectations is to develop a job description articulating the role of a board member.

While not inclusive, the following can be considered as areas of responsibility for a member of a public library board:

Accountability:

The Library Board, as a corporate entity, is collectively accountable to the community, funders (municipalities and Ministry of Culture and Tourism), and other stakeholders.

Responsibility:

Board members are responsible for acting in the best interests of their diverse community by making informed decisions about effective library services, using their skills, knowledge, and an inclusive perspective.

General Duties:

- Participate in the development of a mission, vision, and strategic plan.
- Monitor the performance of the library in relation to core values and objectives.
- Establish and review policies that guide organizational practices.
- Advocate for the value of the library in the community.
- Prepare for and regularly attend board and committee meetings.
- Participate in board meetings and support board decisions.
- Abide by the legislation, bylaws, code of conduct, and other policies that apply to the board.
- Maintain the library's financial stability and ensure that there are adequate resources.
- Participate in the hiring and annual review of the CEO.
- Listen and understand community needs and concerns.
- Keep informed of community issues relevant to the library.
- Represent the library in a positive and supportive manner at all times and in all places.
- Participate in a board evaluation and board development planning.

General Qualifications:

- Demonstrate a strong interest in the library and promote the library's value.
- Become knowledgeable about the community.
- Commit to the library's vision and mission, strategic plan
- Dedicate time to board activities.
- Be willing to learn about the library and its services.

"Bored" orientations do not achieve the desired outcome.

Board Development

Orientations take place at the beginning of a term but they undergo a paradigm shift to board development. Board members are not born with a natural instinct for governance – rather it needs to be learned and perfected through education. A series of sessions and strategies strengthens the board's knowledge, skills, and governance capacity. Board members don't know what they know, so it's important to start and to maintain a culture of ongoing learning.

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By Amber Hutton

On Personality and Perception The Changing Role of the Public Librarian Why Your Institution Needs a Connector

Traditional discourse tends to anthropomorphize the public library, asking: “How can the library better serve the community?” This effectively leaves the librarian, or any human agency, entirely out of the discussion. The library context may be transforming, but the need for a professional on the front-lines of the evolution remains. Indeed, it is the librarian who authors the evolution. Today, the librarian has an important role to play in connecting a diverse and changing community to information and to each other. As such, it is essential that we shift the framework of our professional discourse to acknowledge and champion this human agent – the librarian – as the change agent.

But once we re-establish this human agent, who is this person to be? How is this person to be constructed in the professional discourse, and how will they be experienced out in the community? As we cannot hope to reinvent the institution without reinventing ourselves, we need to come to terms, once and for all, with the grain of truth behind the persisting stereotype of the spinster librarian: passive, matronly, and ultra-conservative. Significantly, personality testing and profiling provide some interesting evidence regarding those who pursued librarianship between 1940 and 1979. Professional entrants tended to be sedentary, unassertive, disinclined towards initiative or leadership, self-effacing, lacking confidence, and passive to needs for change (Agada, 1984). These research findings tell us something about the kinds of individuals historically attracted to library work.

Conversely, the new librarian, as described by the Urban Libraries Council of Chicago, is a “connector” (ULC, 2005).

A connector is a “special kind of community leader who opens doors for other people. A connector is a person who is trusted, is influential, and has a wide circle of relationships.” This accurately describes the next-generation public librarian who will be able to engage a community within the physical library space and in virtual community spaces, enhancing programming by introducing online forums, open blogs, or digital book lists. The new librarian will be a leader and an advocate, who seeks to provide access across interests, economic statuses, and cultures to create a library that is fully integrated and relevant in the life of the community.

Historically, librarians considered themselves shepherds of good taste, the mediating force between the public and the proper books to read. At other times, they have been considered neutral to a fault, not taking a stand on issues relevant to the society they served. Unrelenting stereotypes are grounded in representations of, and positions taken by, the profession in the past. A librarian who sheds the mask of neutrality and shares thoughts, opinions, hobbies, and interests with the community, is a librarian who embodies advocacy for the importance of these institutions. Those who pursue a career in public librarianship now are early adopters of technology who are eager to work with all the available tools to connect people to the information they need, as well as to other people.

A thriving public library today requires a librarian who operates as an active community participant rather than just a facilitator. In order to do this, we must step outside of the library, offering programs in non-traditional spaces, partnering with local organizations, and fostering meaningful relationships with MPPs and decision makers. The new public



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Public Librarian, or, to Hire a New Grad

librarian is informed and passionate about digital rights management, copyright, censorship, and teaching the self-sufficient user to evaluate information. While it is difficult to forecast the future of the public library with absolute certainty, through strategic changes and adaptability we can at least ensure that public librarians and the social good they do remain a relevant and essential part of the community.

Still, it is not enough to embrace technological and social change as it is thrust upon our institution; we must actively seek to create change – change in our communities, in our libraries, and in the perception of the next generation of librarians as they lead the revolution.

Thankfully, a stereotype is not a death sentence; new associations can be created by changing the context, and opening a public dialogue with our communities where we make sure to write ourselves into the stories we want to tell about the future of this venerable institution.



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Les livres numériques en

Où les

Par Monique Brûlé

L'avènement du ebook (ou livrel) semble déjà bien entamé du côté de l'offre de livrels en anglais, comme le témoigne le prochain Digital Odyssey qui est dédié cette année à cette forme de publications. Mais qu'en est-il du livre numérique en français? Cet article tentera de vous donner un portrait global de l'offre autant du côté québécois qu'ontarien et international et vous donnera des pistes de solutions pour pouvoir bien garnir votre liseuse en matériel de lecture.

Depuis l'an dernier, les éditeurs québécois et canadien-français ont à leur disposition un entrepôt numérique où ils peuvent déposer des versions numériques de leurs publications. Cet agrégateur de contenu numérique, connu sous ANEL-De Marque, offre aussi des services de promotion et de commercialisation de ces publications. Le public peut effectuer des recherches dans l'entrepôt par l'entremise du site de la vitrine: vitrine.entrepotnumerique.com. Une fois le livre numérique retrouvé, la vitrine propose ensuite une librairie où l'utilisateur peut l'acheter.



Les librairies proposées sont nombreuses, mais mentionnons les suivantes : Archambault (jelis.ca), Librairie Pantoute (librairie-pantoute.com), Librairies indépendantes du Québec (livresquebecois.com), Librairie Mosaïque (librairiemosaïque.com) et Renaud-Bray (renaud-bray.com). Ces librairies offrent, en plus des livrels entreposés sur l'agrégateur, d'autres productions numériques provenant de la France et autres pays de la francophonie mondiale. Les formats offerts sont en majorité soit le ePub ou le PDF.

Il existe aussi des bases de données qui offrent des livres numériques consultables en ligne. Ceci est le cas du site Tumblebooks (tumblebooks.com). Plusieurs des bibliothèques publiques ontariennes possèdent un abonnement à ce service virtuel qui offre plusieurs livres en français pour les enfants et les adolescents. Les livres pour enfants sont aussi lus à haute voix.

1 français. trouver? Où les acheter?



Enfin, il existe plusieurs sources de livres numériques en accès libre et gratuit. Ce sont pour la plupart des livres dont la date de publication est antérieure à 1961 et dont les droits d'auteurs ne sont plus visés par la loi canadienne. La Bibliothèque électronique du Québec (beq.ebooksg gratuits.com) propose quelque 1 300 volumes qui sont dans le domaine public et qui ont été numérisés en format PDF ou ePub. Par exemple, certains grands classiques du 20^e siècle sont offerts en version numérique, tel que *Vol de nuit* d'Antoine de Saint-Exupéry. On y retrouve aussi une collection de la littérature québécoise telle que *Maria Chapdelaine* de Louis Hémon. Mentionnons ici d'autres sites de livres gratuits: ebooks libres et gratuits (ebooksg gratuits.com) et le Projet Gutenberg (gutenberg.org).

Vocabulaire du livre numérique

(tiré de l'Office québécois de la langue française)

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Monique Brûlé est Chef des services communautaires et aux bibliothèques du Conseil des écoles catholiques du Centre-Est. Elle est présidente de l'ABO-Franco, et a mérité le Prix Micheline-Persaud en 2009. En plus de sa maîtrise en bibliothéconomie, Monique détient un baccalauréat en musique, et joue la flûte traversière dans L'Ensemble à vents d'Ottawa.

wide angle

TAKING A DIFFERENT VIEW OF
LIBRARIES IN TRANSITION

You Are Your Synapse Why Cognitive Neuroscience is the Future

The digital revolution has captured our attention and imagination. It has transformed our present and defines our vision of the future. But let's look farther over the horizon – way farther over the horizon. As we ponder the future of libraries, we need to look past the digital. The next transformation is not about the digital but the biochemical.

Advances in cognitive neuroscience promise to completely redefine our understanding of information, knowledge, and, almost certainly, libraries. We need to start thinking about the physiology of information, neural prosthetics, cognitive pharmacology, and the possibility of a “post literate” world.

Information is signal; information is noise; information is flow. It is power, transformation, liberation. It wants to be free (sort of). It is said to be an activity and hence a verb and not a noun. In our field (“all things information”) we characterize information in a myriad of ways. I want to suggest we think about it differently. Very differently. And then I want to suggest something provocative. Yes, welcome back to the wacko zone.

We encode information or data using a variety of tools. Obviously the most basic construct is the alphabet – an extraordinary creation. Equally powerful has been digital encoding. The simplicity of the bit (one or zero) gives it an enormous power for representation and communication. But the alphabet and digital bits are not the information: they are the way information is described or communicated. They are the user interface for information.

We study the nature of information from many perspectives: economic, social, political, semantic, ethical, technical, philosophical. I want to explore the physiology of information. Not the containers, not the conduits, not the conveyors or the toolsets. When it is reduced to its essence, what is information?

And the answer is biochemicals, neurotransmitters, proteins, synapses, neurons, and an extraordinary density of interconnections. It is physiological.

What we do know about neurology ought to have one immediate impact: we need to stop thinking of the brain as a computer. The metaphor is well past its best-before date. Our memories (the things we know) are not stored on some sort of neural “hard drive” ready for processing. Instead they are an ever-changing contextual soup of interactions, relationships, errors, repairs, and, quite often, recreations.

Or, as Joseph LeDoux notes succinctly in *The Synaptic Self*, “you are your synapses.” I know this extreme reductionist perspective takes a lot of the fun and romance out of information (and perhaps our profession). Sorry. However, if we know how information is represented physiologically, could we synthesize that information? Could we artificially replicate it or create it on demand?

Wacko zone? Perhaps not.

If we can understand information (data) at a physiological level and can artificially create it (or nurture it), some fundamental things about what we do change. Instead of learning about calculus perhaps you could, for example, ingest something that would synthesize that understanding in your brain. Grow information. Let the process create the biochemicals, set off the neurotransmitters, assemble the proteins, thicken a myelin layer, or whatever the processes might be. Perhaps this is just very bad pseudo-science (or good science fiction: remember Philip Dick's short story “We Can Remember It for You Wholesale,” or its film adaptation, *Total Recall*?).

What to think about all this? It's compelling, in a horrifying sort of way; repellent, in the most intriguing way possible. However, over the years library science has developed a

Uses of Libraries

transformational partnership with computing. The next deep relationship is likely to be with neurology. I've always thought that what we do is ultimately about the "life of the mind." It would appear that is more true than ever.

By Michael Ridley

Michael Ridley is the Chief Information Officer (CIO) and Chief Librarian at the University of Guelph. mridley@uoguelph.ca

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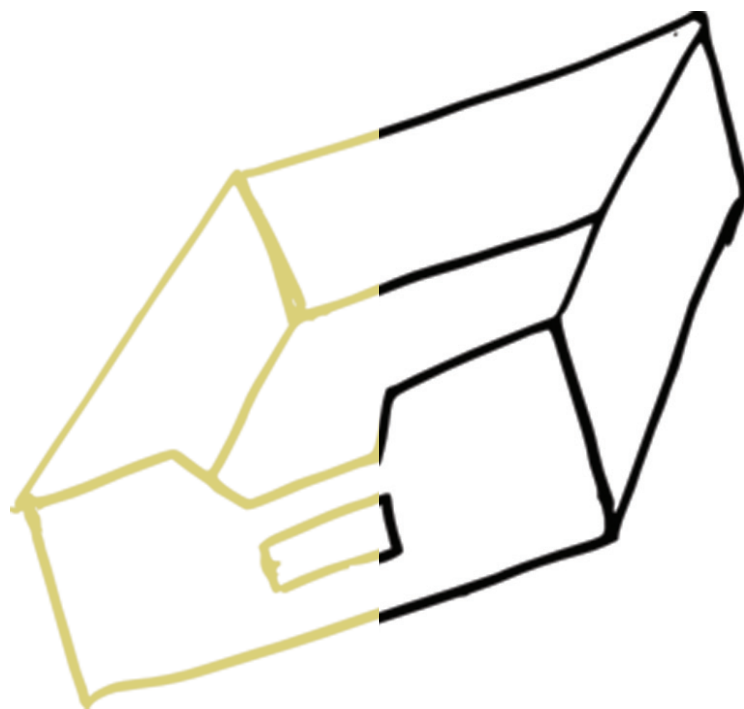
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on the verge

DISPATCHES FROM THE EDGE
OF THE WEB



By [Amanda](#) Etches-Johnson

It was just three short years ago that I was writing the inaugural article for the 2.0 Watch column, and here we are, changing things up again. Astute readers will notice that what was once a column about all things social media is now “On the Verge,” a decidedly broader-focused series of articles that take a step back from the narrow lens of the social web to bring the broader web context into focus. And what better way to launch a column about technologies and ideas on the edge of the web than a discussion of, you guessed it, library web design.

Call me crazy but I’m guessing that most of us don’t think of library web design as being “on the verge” of anything, other than a constant source of annoyance to our users. That’s probably because most library websites are cluttered, bloated, and difficult to navigate. The single biggest reason for this is that over the years, we’ve overstuffed our websites with so much extraneous content that they have essentially become our “junk drawers,” where our users have trouble finding the information they need because the good stuff (maybe five percent of your site) is hopelessly obscured by all the junk (the other 95 percent).



EMPTYING THE JUNK DRAWER

Increasing Usability by Decreasing the Size of Your Website

As a usability and design enthusiast, I have spent enough time on library websites to know that one of the main reasons why so many of us are now dealing with that junk-drawer-website syndrome is because of our “just in case” approach to web content. Ours is a profession of helpers, so naturally we’re driven by a deep-rooted impetus to include on our websites every conceivable piece of information our users could ever want, just in case they come looking for it, even if that’s once every six years. Even with the recent upsurge in interest in web usability within the library community, few realize that the first rule of web usability is to keep your web content (the number of pages on your site and the number of words on each page) to the absolute, bare minimum, so that the essentials are easily findable and no page, paragraph, bullet, or word is extraneous.

Of course, we’d all like simple, minimal, uncluttered websites that feature no more than a few pages of only the most essential content. But how do we get there? The temptation is probably great to grab that junk drawer, dump out all the contents, and start afresh. However, you’d do well to resist that temptation and instead begin with a content audit – a simple inventory of every page (yes, every page) on your website, then checking your site analytics to get a sense of what gets viewed and what gets passed over. Another useful technique is to simply ask your users what they visit your website for (consider asking

the question via a simple web survey to hit a large number of users). You probably won’t be surprised by most of the responses you will get (library hours, catalogue searches, etc.), but you will hopefully learn a thing or two about your users’ goals that will help you pare down your site’s content to the essentials.

I’ll be the first to admit: a project to scale back the size of your website is neither edgy, nor is it sexy. It’s probably not going to win you any awards, and it most certainly will win you a few arguments with the web content folks at your library (“You want to delete what? I don’t care if it only got two hits last year, I spent a month developing that subject guide!”). But here’s something else you should know: I just spent three days at a library technology conference where, during a day’s worth of sessions devoted to library web design and development, there was one piece of advice I heard more than any other. That advice? Scale back your websites: your users will thank you. I couldn’t agree more.


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library marketplace


MARKETING,
COMMUNICATIONS,
AND LIBRARIES

Communications in Back



Most marketing and communications literature written for the library world are great at giving you ideas on how to trumpet your wonderful collections and services, and maximize the positive exposure your library receives. But what about advice on what to do when your library receives negative publicity? The reality is that at some point, whether deserved or not, your library may be the recipient of some negative attention – this could be in the form of a newspaper story, television coverage, or even comments made through social media outlets.

A recent glance through some of my favourite books on marketing and communications in libraries have little content that deals with this essential topic – the one exception I stumbled across was Peggy Barber's and Linda Wallace's *Building a Buzz: Libraries & Word-of-Mouth Marketing* (ALA, 2010) by Peggy Barber and Linda Wallace. The authors have included a brief section titled "Dealing with the Negative," and although the section is somewhat diminutive, their advice, their advice, and the topic itself, deserves some wider exposure.



Barber and Wallace preach three words of advice: plan, prepare, practice. Planning refers to anticipating potential negatives, and having a response ready. Let's say you are about to make a change in your library that you know may be unpopular – reducing study space, closing a branch, increasing fines, or limiting access to public workstations. If you know your library community well, you will be able to anticipate when a change has the potential to invoke a negative response. Have your response ready.

plan. prepare. practice. plan. p



and Times

By **Cecile** Farnum

Prepare your staff should they receive comments or inquiries – this could be in the form of a Q&A sheet, or some suggestions on how to respond if queried by patrons. You might also want to designate a specific staff member to respond to questions if many of your staff feel uncomfortable.

Practice what you preach – not only should you provide staff with opportunities to practice these skills, but if you are the marketing and communications guru in your library, you should also be well versed in how to respond to negative attention. Unfortunately, it's human nature to avoid thinking about the worst case scenario. But consider how quickly web 2.0 technologies can aid the spread of negative commentary. As practice, you might consider your approach if interviewed by a member of the media about a particular issue, and what points you would like to raise as response. If you work in an organization that has a public relations department, they could offer some suggestions and guidance on media relations.

In addition to *plan, prepare, practice*, I'd like to add in a few axioms of my own. It's also important to *remain calm*, and *learn* from the experience. No library is immune to negative attention, and although you may feel that your reputation may be sullied forever, that's simply not the case. The positive contributions of your staff and the quality of your collections and services will continue, and at the end of the day, this is what your patrons care about. And as with anything in life, try to look at it as a learning opportunity. Having gone through this experience, you will be better prepared to deal with negative attention if and when it happens again down the road.

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Cecile Farnum is the Communications and Liaison Librarian at Ryerson University Library & Archives. cfarnum@ryerson.ca

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random library generator

MEET ONE OF
OLA'S 5,000
MEMBERS

An interview with random OLA member #8: **Laura Prinselaar**

By **Robin** Bergart

While Southern Ontario was enjoying its first hints of spring, and students at my university were shucking off their jackets and shirts, I contacted Laura in Thunder Bay where they too were experiencing unseasonably warm weather at -7° C. I peppered Laura with questions about her role as Children & Youth Services Librarian at Thunder Bay Public Library, and showered her with queries about life in the exotic (to me) far north.

How in the world did you wind up in Thunder Bay?

I was very lucky that a job came up shortly after I finished library school. I grew up here. My family is here. I graduated from the University of Western Ontario in August 2010 and started this job in December.

How did you decide to go to library school?

I worked in an academic library during my undergraduate degree and enjoyed it. I did my MA in English at Lakehead with a focus on children's literature, so it seemed like a logical, good idea to combine this with librarianship. I love interacting with people and I'm passionate about children's literature.

Tell me about working at your library.

Well, I don't have a typical office. My desk is on the floor of the children's department. So I can see when people are looking for something and I can help them. I really enjoy that. I am responsible for collection development for the teen section, and the new teen website, and I create programming for babies, children, and teens. I love playing with the babies! Children that age are so great. I tell my friends about the lovely babies I meet.

Also, the staff in the Thunder Bay Public Library system are incredibly supportive and welcoming. There's a strong sense of community. They do silly things sometimes, like a Free Chocolate Day when people's names are drawn for prizes of chocolates and cupcakes.

The patrons are strong supporters of the library too. They came as kids, and now they bring their kids and even grandkids. There's lots of community history in the library.

Laura

What's the most surprising thing about your job so far?

What a wide variety of paranormal romances there are for teens! The *Twilight* series kicked it off and now there's not just vampires but fairies and zombies. Some are a little out there, and are becoming increasingly implausible, like enchanted animals or spells that were cast 1,000 years ago and happen to be taking effect now – but for only 15 minutes on Tuesdays.

If a patron asks you to buy a book that you think is ... crap ... do you do it?

I don't make value judgements on people's reading taste. If I read poor reviews of a book but I know there is enough interest in it, I will buy it. I respect people's choices and passions and try to support them. I just think it's great that people are reading.

What's your take on reading scary stories to children?

I think kids can handle a lot. We underestimate them. Some are more sensitive or imaginative than others, but I wouldn't stop a kid from reading something they picked up and were interested in, even if I thought it might be scary.

So let me ask you a bit about living in Thunder Bay. Many Southern Ontarians go north for vacation. Where to people from Thunder Bay go?

South, where it's warm!



What are some things people are ignorant about when it comes to Thunder Bay?

Just how far it really is. It takes 18-20 hours to drive from Toronto. Also, it can get really warm in the summer, up to 30°C for days in a row.

Do you feel it's easy to stay in touch with the library community in the rest of the province?

I do pay attention to what's going on and I have friends from library school that I talk to and learn about what's going on in their libraries. It's fun to compare notes. For example, I was talking to Scott Robins [Random Library Generator #7] who works in Toronto, and around Christmastime we had decorations everywhere in our library. There was not an unadorned wall in the place. By contrast, Scott said his public library doesn't do much in the way of decorating for the seasons. But here it's a big part of the culture, everyone adding their personal touches.

Admittedly, this is a randomly generated question. What's your dream lunch?

Anything with chocolate milk.

And finally, let's play the "How well do you fit the librarian stereotypes" game.

Like to cook? – No. I eat a lot of cereal

Read mysteries? – No, do librarians read mysteries?

Gardening? – No, I kill green things.

Do you socialize with other librarians? – Yes, I do.

Do you own a cat? – Yes! He's very handsome. His name is Mr. Bundles, Esq. I gave him a normal name at first, but it didn't fit. I was calling him "Bunny" but I didn't want to confuse him, so it became "Mr. Bundles." "Mr B." to his friends.

Can you give us a teaser about the next OLA member you've picked to be interviewed for this column?

Gisella Scalese, the Education Librarian for Lakehead University, was my supervisor when I worked there, and is an amazingly warm and friendly person.

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Image credit: M. J. D'Elia

Prinselaar





readers' advisory

PROMOTING ENJOYMENT
AND PASSION FOR THE
WORLD OF BOOKS

Get Out of Your

We all tend to fall into familiar reading patterns: for some it's hard to move out of those comfort zones. Considering the wide variety of customers and reading tastes you will come into contact with, it stands to reason that to be able to confidently recommend titles in a wide variety of genres, you need to read at least a few titles from each genre. There are always tools to use when your knowledge of a genre is failing you, but why not also build on your weaknesses – it can only make you better! These ideas might help to jostle you out of your reading rut.

Track your reading habits

Most people have a good idea of what they like to read, but may not know exactly what appeal factors lead them to certain books. As an exercise, make a list of the last 10 books you've really enjoyed and try to identify what aspects of each book appealed to you. You may want to do this using one of the online bookshelf sites like GoodReads, LibraryThing, or Shelfari, and then continue to use this method to track all your reading.

The benefit of these sites, which are very similar in functionality, is that you can not only list and review titles you have read and get recommendations from other readers, you can also assign certain tags to each title, and then be able to sort your titles into groups based on these tags. You could use appeal factors as tags and then be able to quickly pull up titles to match a patron's interests.

Make a reading resolution

After taking stock of your reading habits, you should have a clear picture of what areas of the collection you are weak in. Resolve to read at least one book from each of your weak areas every year. It's a no-lose situation, because even if you don't end up a fan, you will be able to speak about the genre or author with more confidence.

Survey your colleagues

Ask colleagues to recommend a few books for you to try in their favourite genre or add a book sharing segment to your regular departmental meetings. Have everyone mention what

they are currently reading and talk briefly about whether the book appeals to them and why. This will have the added benefit of improving their own advisory skills. You could even expand this beyond your library and ask friends and family what they've been reading.

Browse like a patron

When you are pulling books for a display or tidying or reorganizing your collections, take a moment to browse the books on the shelf. Some of the best books I've found have been by happy accident.

Lead bookclubs

In our library we have fiction and non-fiction book clubs run by library staff. Rather than have the same person read each book and lead each month's group, we divide up the responsibility to give all staff a chance to explore different areas of the collection and books that they may not have chosen to read.

Do a genre study

Explore a genre that you're not familiar with by developing a genre study to be shared with your colleagues. In our library, we hold a monthly genre talk where one staff member researches a genre of their choice and then presents it to staff. In doing this, you will be exposed to titles and authors you may not have been familiar with and may even be inspired to try one or two.

Track trends

Keep up to date on what books are being featured on the talk show circuit, national public radio, and in the books sections of major newspapers – never underestimate the power of the media to get people interested in a book. You'll start to see where your patrons are getting their information on new books. In addition, you might come across something that you never would have thought about reading.

Also, many book-related websites create "best of" lists at the end of each year, some listing mainstream titles and others



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focusing on very specific genres. You'll find a very useful link list to all of these sites on the blog, Largehearted Boy (largeheartedboy.com), under the heading "Best Books of 2010."

Successful readers' advisory requires an ongoing effort. We can't read everything, but by branching out a bit, our patrons might think we do!

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By Nicole Adams



This column locates and describes five open sources for religious data:

By **Jennifer Dekker**

1 **Statistics Canada (statcan.gc.ca)**
Statistics Canada, our nation's official statistical agency, collects some information regarding participation in and beliefs about religion, though it is less detailed than in many countries. A guide to religious data from Stats Can sources is available at: statcan.gc.ca/search-recherche/bb/info/3000017-eng.htm. It offers summary and highlight tables for religion data in all provinces and territories based on 2001 Canadian census data (updated every 10 years). There are tables which break religious affiliation down by age, language, labour status, and industry. Data from the Marriage Database (terminated in 2003 due to changing definitions of marriage in various jurisdictions) are available for 2000 to 2003. These data record same- and mixed-religion marriages according to variables selected by the user. (For example, from 2000 to 2003, the number of marriages between a Jewish groom and an Orthodox bride were 21 in 2000, 21 in 2001, 24 in 2002, and two in 2003.) There are also a number of published reports available here dating back to 1999 and as recently as 2008 on various topics, including "Who's Religious?," "Hate Crime in Canada," and "Are Children Going to Religious Services?" as examples.

Open Religion Data

2 **Association of Religious Data Archives (ARDA) (thearda.com)**
Founded in 1997, this archive collects data contributions from prominent scholars and research centres worldwide, though its content bias is decidedly American. The project is housed at Penn State University and is funded by private philanthropic organizations and the university.
ARDA compiles both historical and current data but is limited in its international data. Statistics representing countries outside the US are very basic and are drawn from US sources. However, the ARDA is a valuable tool for American religious data backed up by a well-staffed research and web development team. ARDA also offers widgets including GIS maps (based on US Zip codes), a Congressional membership widget, a "Compare Yourself to Others" widget, and a widget for US denominations.



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Adherents.com

Adherents.com is a collection of references to statistical sources on religious adherence, including published membership statistics and data on more than 4,200 religions, churches, denominations, religious bodies, faith groups, tribes, movements, and cultures. Adherents.com is the most broad religious demography tool available online. Although its coverage may seem unsystematic and perhaps superfluous, if one can avoid being overwhelmed, this website is a good secondary reference source to religious demography, especially for minor religious groups.

4

World Values Surveys (worldvaluessurvey.org)

Though the World Values Surveys (WVS) cover a far greater range of topics than religion, they are important sources of religious data for a number of reasons. First, they are the first major international statistical collaboration of all five continents on topics related to values in our lives. Secondly, the statistics have been validated and replicated since the early 1980s (most recently in 2005). Thirdly, a search of secondary research indicates WVS data are the primary source data of many articles, books, and even spin-off databases such as the World Database of Happiness (worlddatabaseofhappiness.eur.nl). The WVS offer a good number of data-capturing manifestations of religiosity, secularity, and a range of behaviours and beliefs falling within these two poles.

ARIS (American Religious Identification Survey) (american-religionsurvey-aris.org)

The most recent data available are from 2008, but this survey traces changes in religious affiliation in the US since 1990 (the ARIS time series). Three surveys in total have been administered. The original was the “National Survey of Religious Identification” developed at the Institute for the Study of Secularization in Society and Culture. Detailed information is available on the site, including survey questions, full and summary reports, and specific analyses (such as the profile of American Jews, Latino Religious Identification, and Atheist/Agnostic data).

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Religion

Modern Librarianship from a Global Perspective

Remarks by
Fenghua Wang
Information Resource Officer, U.S. Department of State
U.S. Embassy
Ottawa
March 29, 2011



By **Fenghua** Wang

I'm honoured that you all came to this breakfast at such an early hour. Thank you very much. I am looking forward to the opportunity to get to chat with you and share our experiences. Last month, I had the pleasure of meeting seven Canadian librarians sponsored by the State Department to visit U.S. libraries.

I was an academic librarian at the University of Pennsylvania before I joined the State Department eight years ago. As a regional Foreign Service librarian, I have had opportunities to live in other countries and travel to many more. My job is to support the U.S. Embassy library programs and share U.S. library models with my embassy colleagues. In this capacity, I have worn many different hats. I have been a library consultant, a trainer, an architect, an event organizer, a human resources specialist, and a fundraising consultant. I have conducted many workshops around the world on this topic in particular. Well, I certainly live up to the stereotype of librarians – *being all things to all people*.

I have to say that I have enjoyed all these roles. They allowed me to constantly learn the best practices from the U.S. and around the world. Along the way, I have met many helpful librarians who are always willing to teach me and share their experiences. You occasionally hear about professions where people refuse to share: librarianship certainly is not that profession.

Because of that, librarians tend to be the first to adopt new technologies. We tend to be trendsetters while businesses tend to follow. For example, libraries were the first ones to start using the internet in the early '90s, years before businesses. Librarians first started using social media, like wikis, blogs, and other tools, years ago while others just started using these more recently.

I grew up in northeastern China in a very remote region near the Russian border. There were no public libraries in my town, and its one bookstore only sold communist propaganda. My first library experience was at university in China, and it had closed stacks. That was the first time I learned about the card catalogue. Essentially, I didn't know *anything* about public libraries until I came to the U.S. I remember how amazed I was by all the information in Dialog when I took the online searching class in the library school in Illinois. It was unheard of in China. The China I grew up in had strict information control. But, believe me, today's China is much better than 20 years ago.

In a controlled society, *information is definitely power*. That's one reason that our embassy libraries in some societies play such an important role in information dissemination and providing current and authoritative knowledge to the local people who would otherwise have no access to current news. Cuba is one of these countries. After the genocide in Rwanda, our embassy's library was the only place that people could visit, whether they were Hutus or Tutsis, without worrying about being judged. They were just library users who came to read or use the internet.

To support our embassy library programs, my office at the State Department in Washington centrally subscribes to databases and makes them available worldwide. Last year, we dedicated about a million dollars to create a virtual library called eLibraryUSA, which includes many databases like EBSCO and Gale, as well as resources on business, science, the environment, and some foreign languages. Right now, our users can only access these databases by coming to the embassy libraries or information resource centers (IRCs) or our partner libraries. However, our goal is to allow them to be searched remotely. A team in Washington is in the process of implementing Primo, a discovery tool that will overlay books and articles from the subscribed sources, and publications harvested from open access resources. Our Embassy IRC will be sending more details soon.

Since Hillary Clinton became the Secretary of State two years ago, social media has been implemented in all U.S. embassies as a public diplomacy outreach tool. However, many of our embassy libraries started much earlier. A few IRCs created their embassies' Facebook pages, Twitter sites, and blogs in 2008. Our embassy in Ottawa uses its Twitter site as a crucial tool to take part in the conversations ongoing in the Canadian twitterverse. U.S. Embassy Jakarta's Facebook page has over 311,000 fans. They achieve this by using Facebook strategically as a social interaction tool between Indonesians and Americans. I hope after you get back to your computer today, you will all become fans of the Embassy Ottawa Facebook page. If you use Twitter, I hope you'll follow their tweets as well.

Last year, the State Department created a "23 Things" tool to train our Embassy librarians worldwide on the various social media tools. Today, the "23 Things" is talked about in the corridors of the State Department. During the American Library Association and Computers in Libraries conferences,



many libraries talked about how they use podcasts and Skype in their programs. We feel proud that in the State Department, we have been doing these things for years. These tools are now part of our everyday work. We regularly organize remote speaker sessions across the world using Adobe Connect, a remote conferencing software similar to Skype.

Following the lead of American libraries, we are now looking into introducing another wonderful outreach program to our embassy libraries and their partners: GAMES. I spend many weekends and evenings playing computer games, and I have a good excuse ("I'm working"). As I am sure all of you know, games can not only teach math and literacy, they can also promote team work, strategy, trade, negotiation, cooperation, and inter-generational activities.

Again, thank you very much for coming. I'm looking forward to meeting all of you and discussing how we can continue to collaborate.

Fenghua Wang joined the Foreign Service at the Department of State in 2003 after having worked as an academic librarian for 10 years. She served in Kenya and South Africa for five years before she returned to Washington, DC, in 2008 to cover the Caribbean and Canada.



KEY SOURCES OF HEALTH INFORMATION & STATISTICS

By **Jeff Moon**

"Health information is one of the most frequently sought topics on the Internet." (McMullan, 2006).

While this particular quote refers to the self-diagnosing surfer crowd, it applies equally well to academic and policy researchers. Health-focused reports, statistics, policies, and laws are all in high demand. Finding these resources can be challenging. This article highlights a selective list of key Canadian health information sources.

Library of Parliament Research Publications and Legislative Summaries **parl.gc.ca**

The Library of Parliament's Virtual Library contains reports and legislative summaries on a vast array of topics, including health. These publications are concise, objective, and often include background, a chronology, and references.

Agencies and Departments

Government agencies and departments also are a rich source of health information. On these pages, look for key links such as:

- Publications and Reports
- Statistics
- Databases
- Media Room
- A-Z Index
- Research

Key departments/agencies include:

Health Canada **hc-sc.gc.ca**

While appearing at first glance to be strongly consumer-oriented, this site also has a Science & Research section, with a subsection for Reports and Publications. Topics covered include biotechnology, ethics, and the development of health policy.

PHAC - Public Health Agency of Canada **phac-aspc.gc.ca**

Created in response to the SARS epidemic, the PHAC has since evolved to become a key site for a broader range of health information. The Research & Statistics link is dedicated to surveillance programs for issues such as antimicrobial resistance and congenital anomalies; look for the Reports link under each program.

CIHI - Canadian Institute for Health Information **cihi.ca**

Not surprisingly, CIHI is a rich source of health statistics, reports, and analysis. The recently redesigned CIHI website



provides multiple access points to all of these types of information. The main content links titled Applications and also Products are not terribly evocative of what you'll find in each, but what you do find is quite impressive, particularly compared to the rather anemic content of the previous CIHI website. Of particular note is the Topic Index link under Applications.

Health Council of Canada healthcouncilcanada.ca

Established in 2003 by Canada's First Ministers, the Health Council of Canada monitors and reports on the status of health care in Canada. Check out the Online Library and the rich collection of Health Care Links this site has to offer.

Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care health.gov.on.ca

Provincial ministries of health are another excellent source of health information, not surprisingly, given that health care is a provincially delivered service. Taking Ontario as an example, you'll find links to legislation, publications, and policies.

LHINs and CCACs

Local Health Integration Networks (LHINs) work in partnership with local stakeholders to determine health service priorities for their regions. Each LHIN has its own website, but they all have the same convenient layout.

lhins.on.ca

Community Care Access Centres (CCACs) are funded by LHINs, and facilitate the provision of care in their community. There are 14 LHINs and 14 CCACs in Ontario. Check out the Publications link.

ccac-ont.ca

Statistics Canada statcan.gc.ca

When it comes to statistics, you can't forget Stats Can. Check out the Health in Canada feature on the main home page. This portal provides multiple ways of accessing a wealth of health statistics and reports. One highlight is the Health Profile tool – type in a place name and retrieve a table of over 90 detailed health measures. Statistics Canada also conducts major health surveys; take a look at odesi.ca to find examples such as the Canadian Community Health Survey.

Conclusion

In addition to this necessarily selective list of sources, consider the following when approaching a health-research question:

1. Search your local university library catalogue and/or article indexes
2. Consult a Government Information and/or Data Librarian
3. Try using Google Custom Searches that target your search to government web domains; examples of this can be found at: library.queensu.ca/webdoc/gov/canada_federal
4. Consider contacting government agencies/departments directly; finding the right person can often get you the information you need
5. Don't let statistics (or even survey data) scare you off!

Source


McMullan, Miriam. 2006. "Patients using the Internet to obtain health information: How this affects the patient–health professional relationship." *Patient Education and Counseling* 63(1-2): 24-28.

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Jeff Moon is the Data and Government Information Librarian at Queen's University. moonj@queensu.ca



especially for LTs

NOTES FROM AND FOR
LIBRARY TECHNICIANS



There's a popular "library technicians booth" at the OLA Super Conference, where the college coordinators of the Library and Information Technician (LIT) programs offered through Algonquin, Mohawk, and Seneca share a booth with OALT/ABO, the library technicians' professional association. It was there that I had time to find out how the programs have changed over the years since I graduated, and also how they keep their courses current and relevant.



SHARPENING OUR SKILLS

By Donna Brown



Dolores Harms Penner of Mohawk College explained that the curriculum for each of their courses is updated on an ongoing basis, which is the case for the other library technician programs as well. It's important to know that even if a course has the same name as when you took it, the content will have been updated in the meantime. Mohawk's online LIT courses are a great way for a graduate LT to update skills. The course that has the most changes each term is Electronic Publishing and Emerging Library Technologies. At present, the course includes modules on blogging, social media, wikis, screen recording, image editing, and Creative Commons licensing. Mohawk's course on Cataloguing Electronic and Internet Resources continues to be popular, and a related course on metadata is under development.

Information Work courses at Mohawk are updated regularly to cover new digital sources for reference work, and they are a popular choice for graduate library technicians. Another course that is under development as part of Mohawk's program is Instructional Strategies for Library Technicians. This is intended to better prepare library technicians for presenting formal sessions in classrooms and labs, as well as more informally with in-depth assistance at the reference desk.



Deborah Kay, from Seneca College, explained that their college has undergone a complete curriculum re-alignment because new content is added on a regular basis and eventually subjects just contain too much information. An example is the library automation course, in which licensing of electronic sources was taught. This content has now been moved to a new acquisitions course focusing on electronic resources. Some areas that were expanded include the content for electronic and digital resources in new acquisitions and cataloguing courses; instruction and readers' advisory in an expanded library programs course; and more searching in their three searching courses. They have also moved their web page creation and web 2.0 tools to an expanded library promotions course.

For many subjects in the Seneca program, the content continues to change on a regular basis. An example is the library automation course. They are always updating the information on integrated library systems and including new tools such as the discovery tools for library catalogues. In the reference and searching courses, new resources are added as they become available. Seneca does not offer online courses but graduate library technicians can certainly choose courses offered on-campus.

Helena Merriam of Algonquin College said that their college has introduced some new courses to the program, including French-language courses, to assist students in the Ottawa job market. In addition, they are now offering a course on marketing, as well as a special-collections course. The marketing course has been introduced with support from the employer community. The need to understand marketing in all types of libraries and by all employees is more important than ever. The special-collections course is unique: they are co-teaching it with faculty from the Applied Museum Studies Program, giving students some exposure to the museum conservation and exhibition labs. In this course, students learn how to appraise rare documents, learn the history of the book trade, and learn how to preserve, conserve, and exhibit materials.

Algonquin also offers a Directed Research Seminar course, which allows a select number of students, by invitation of

the faculty, to participate in a research study, using a real-life example or client. This provides students with an opportunity to learn how to do primary research and a chance to work outside the classroom and participate in a real project. Like Seneca, Algonquin only offers the courses on-campus.

OLA offers the programs of the Education Institute (EI) at OLA member rates to members of OALT/ABO. EI programs are ideal for the working library technician, as they're usually audio or web seminars just one hour long. They're also given by experts from across Canada.

Another option graduate LTs may consider is obtaining a Post Diploma Certificate offered online through the University of the Fraser Valley in BC. It's a part-time program designed to address issues directly related to our profession, and to meet the needs of working professionals. The program is delivered jointly with the Library and Information Technology and Continuing Studies Departments of the university.

And finally, for many graduate technicians who do not feel inclined to become a student again, a good way to keep current is by reviewing websites of library associations, as well as blogs, listservs, etc. Conferences, workshops, and professional meetings also provide important opportunities not only to gain information but also to allow the opportunity to meet colleagues who share common interests. These networks provide some of the best channels for keeping up to date.

As CLA's recently revised Guidelines for the Education of Library Technicians (cla.ca/Content/NavigationMenu/CLAAat-Work/InterestGroups/LibraryTechnicians/CLA_LTIG_guidelines.pdf) puts it: "In this way, the standards of education recommended by these guidelines may be extended beyond the library technician program itself, and the standard of performance of graduate technicians can be maintained at an optimum level of quality."

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Donna Brown is the External Communications Coordinator for the OALT/ABO and works as a Library Technician with the Health Sciences Library at the Northern Ontario School of Medicine in Thunder Bay. donna.brown@normed.ca

LIS scholars at work

RESEARCH FOR
PRACTICE

Automatic Multilingual Picture Indexing Is on the Way

By James M. Turner and Claire Nigay

In a number of research projects over the years, we've shown that the most popular tags users attach to "ordinary" pictures are the same as the indexing terms professional indexers assign to the same pictures. We've also found that if the pictures are tagged in English, good equivalent tags can be generated automatically in French, using web translators. This works just as well if the starting language is French and the tags are automatically generated in English.

However, these two languages share the same alphabet and also have a lot of words in common, so we wondered whether this method would also work for other languages. The ideal situation would be that tags given in any language can be translated automatically into any other language. Once all the pieces are in place, this means that anyone could put in a search statement in any language, then picture databases indexed in any of a number of languages could be searched, and the pictures from all the databases would be returned to the user.

Although the quality of automatic translation still leaves a lot to be desired, the problem is not the same when pictures are being indexed. In this case, translation software is not asked to find equivalent idiomatic expressions or to decode the structure

of continuous narration, but only to find an equivalent name for an object. With this in mind, we set out to collect data in 10 languages which use a variety of alphabets, to see whether the tags for the same pictures would be equivalent. We built a simple website called IconoTag, where we put 12 photos and asked participants to tag the photos in any of these languages. Using Facebook contacts, we recruited people who speak any of the following languages: English, French, Chinese, German, Arabic, Spanish, Russian, Swedish, Portuguese, and Greek. These people made versions of our online instructions so that participants could read them in their own language. On the home page of the site, users clicked on the language they chose, then were taken to the version of the site built in that language. They then had the possibility of writing up to five tags for each photo.

The photos were selected using criteria we had used in other projects: simple images (only one or two objects to name), complex images (more than two), and abstract images as a kind of control. For these, we expected a broad variety in the tags people would give, because the objects in the photos were not obvious.

Although we haven't finished the data analysis, we have done enough to see the tendencies. Very encouraging correspondence rates were obtained among all the languages analysed so far: English, French, Chinese, Spanish, and German. We were even surprised to see close correspondences among these languages for the abstract photos.

For most of the images, the same term or equivalent is in the first position (the term named the most often by hundreds of participants), including one of the complex images (no. 5) and one of the abstract images (no. 6). There is also a great deal of overlap across languages in the terms named second, third, and fourth most often. This means that if any of the top four terms were used in a search statement, it would likely retrieve the picture if it were tagged in any of the languages in our experiment.

With this work, we've gotten some empirical support for the idea that automatic multilingual picture indexing is not only doable, it is probably inevitable, as long as the web keeps developing as it has so far.

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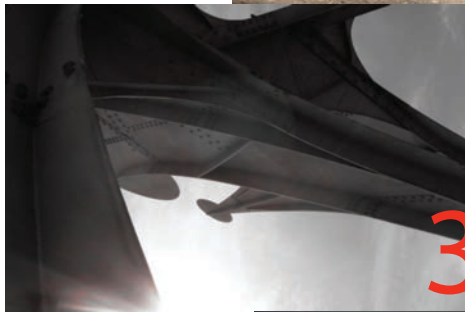
The twelve images IconoTag participants were asked to tag.



1



2



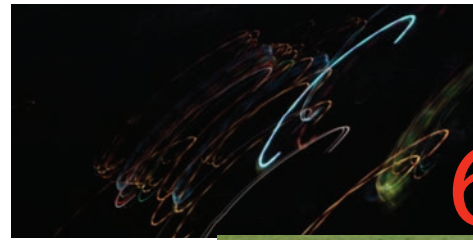
3



4



5



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7



8



9



10



11



12

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the next generation

STUDENTS LOOK AT THE LIBRARY
AND INFORMATION COMMUNITY
WITH FRESH EYES

Creating Social Capital Is



In my experience, the prescribed neutrality of libraries is often debated. In practice, working with people is never neutral. Public libraries have always provided services to the individual but also perform services for the greater community good.¹ Recent library literature states that libraries are actively engaged in building community and social capital,² the promotion of intellectual freedom, and universal access to information.³ Research also asserts that libraries encourage civic engagement through programming, upholding democratic ideals, and encouraging social trust through the provision of neighbourhood resources.⁴ These facts might lead one to believe that all library professionals are doing their utmost to be socially inclusive. Regardless of what library professionals would like to believe, library culture can propagate social exclusion. Although staff members may be caring individuals, the library, as an institution, can draw a line in the sand between insiders and outsiders based on policies and processes.⁵ It is not acceptable for library professionals to ignore the marginalization of certain groups in what aims to be an inclusive environment.

I believe that library professionals must promote social responsibility and be politically engaged. It's not enough to state that services and programs exist and expect marginalized individuals to seek them out. The fact remains that public libraries have developed punitive policies, written literature focusing on the "problem patron,"⁶ implemented fines for overdue material, and require identification and proof of

address for membership.⁷ To many socially excluded people the library may have an oppressive atmosphere and rules that are strange, distancing, and ultimately unwelcoming.

Library literature states that libraries contribute to social values that are becoming accepted as critical to the basis of modern society.⁸ It's imperative to the future of the profession that library professionals maximise this asset – and work with communities to create strength. Library professionals must engage in careful, strategic action to continue to move the library forward as a resource for all community members, including the socially excluded. Not only should this involve library professionals but it must be led by individual community needs. The service-planning process should include feedback from hard-to-reach groups on meeting their needs regardless of preconceived ideas.⁹ Librarians must become involved with community development groups, planners, and the government to reach out to those who have previously been systemically excluded from library resources and services. This brand of outreach will not only build partnerships and ties for the community peoples, but it may also help to position the library as a relevant institution for those who don't use the library for information finding.

While there are those in the profession who would advocate for a more neutral stance, it is relevant to consider both the constitution and the mission of the ALA and its conception of librarianship. The ALA constitution states that "the object of

a Role of the Public Library



By Leah Rucchetto

the American Library Association shall be to promote library service and librarianship.”¹⁰ The ALA mission is “to provide leadership for the development, promotion, and improvement of library and information services and the profession of librarianship in order to enhance learning and ensure access to information for all.”¹¹ In my mind both these statements are upheld only through active engagement within the community. The Working Together Project calls for librarians to develop relationships with those who are excluded from community life, to learn from community members in their space, collaborate with them to develop library services, and be prepared to work as a partner rather than a decision maker.¹² It calls for public librarianship to create a library service that reflects the whole community. Creating this standard of service is the best way to improve library and information services and the profession of librarianship and realistically the only way to continue to move the profession forward.

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the last word

5 Reasons I Won't Lose My Job to TECHNOLOGY

By **Alessya** Quattrociocchi

Once upon a time, I used to be worried that e-readers would take over my job. It appears that people have using social media and technology simply because someone else has told them to, without giving proper thought as to whether it would actually be useful in the industry. Librarian interviews are dotted with questions regarding web 2.0, and training workshops lean towards the use of technology. It's something we can't really run away from. Well, I'm here to challenge that school of thought. And so, I have devised the 5 Reasons I Won't Lose My Job to Technology.

1 Storytime with an e-reader

Picture this. The librarian is sitting at the front of the room, with 20 little children in front of her. Eagerly anticipating the story for the day, the librarian pulls out a Kobo. The children begin to inch closer, squint their eyes, and ask why the picture is so small. Enough said. This also translates to sitting in front of a computer while showing a great story on Tumble Books. And by the way, those fascinating, moving pictures are more like watching a TV show than using that great thing we all have, called an imagination, to create our own pictures in our minds.

2 One in four Canadians is illiterate

I just attended a workshop where I learned this interesting fact, and *Canadians* refers to people who were born in Canada and went through the Canadian school system. I found this statistic quite shocking. Now, if we decide to put all of our information online or create these fancy devices to transmit it, it doesn't necessarily mean that a greater number of people will actually be reading. In fact, I had a patron ask me the other day how to spell a certain word. Assuming that this person probably felt intimidated by opening a huge dictionary (especially after learning this new little statistic of mine), I showed them how easy it is to simply type the word into Google and have the correct spelling pop right back at you! It was when I saw the confused look on the patron's face that I realized they didn't know how to use the internet or a keyboard either. Point for needing a librarian in person.

3 Not threatened by online information

Many people like to use the argument that because "everything can be found online," there is essentially no need for librarians.

Well, the reality is that the majority of printed information is out in the open for customers to freely access in the library, as well. Someone who looks up information using World Book Online can walk into a branch, go to the shelves, flip through the *World Book Encyclopedia*, and go home, without any librarian intervention. And so, there technically is no need for librarians with printed information either. But, fortunately for me, just like there will always be people who walk past the self-checkout line in the grocery store to go see a cashier, there will always be people who stop by the reference desk. In my case, I may simply pick the book off the shelf for them or even flip through it to find the exact information they need. Either way, the librarian is still a necessity.

4 Book clubs without librarians

For those avid readers who just love to share their opinions, book clubs are a dream. It's social, it's fun, and it revolves around their favourite pastime: reading. Having a great librarian lead the talk can make or break the quality of the whole event. It's not just about sharing opinions, but about looking deeper into the text to pull out themes and values that we all can relate to. And sometimes, just sharing some tea and cookies can brighten our day. Not so easy through a computer. We lose the socialization, the guided discussion – and the free cookies. Why not join an online book club, you say? Well, if I really wanted to just let the world know about the book I finished reading, I'd go on Facebook. But if I wanted the atmosphere and the feeling of being among peers who adore the same hobby I do, I'd go to the library. And then join their book club.

5 The librarian is your friend

On some days, most of my time can be spent simply listening to patrons' life stories. From when they were young, from their time in the military, about their vacation last week, and their hopes and dreams for the future. Children tell me all about what they learned at school and parents share their struggles with how to raise the brightest kids. The librarian is always there, with a friendly smile, not only to assist in finding the best resources to get you through some of life's biggest moments, but to lend an ear. And that is something that can never be replaced.

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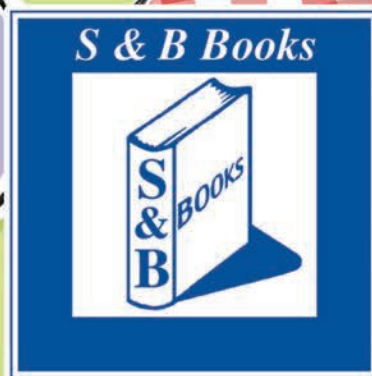
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