Not Done Yet: Charting a New Course for Librarianship

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Overture
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• “...to practice without theory is to sail an uncharted sea; theory without practice is not to set sail at all.”
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• “To me ... theory is like vegetables, I don't like eating it but I realize I have to in order to stay healthy”
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The Question

What is the future of libraries?
Common Vision

• Librarians, their skills, and preparation are the key to any future for the library
• The library as place will continue to play an important, but different role, in libraries. The library will become much more of a trusted community space with ample opportunities for learning and discourse.
• Education and learning will be the core of library service
• The information world is increasingly digital, and librarians have a strong role in helping make sense of this digital world for their patrons
• There is a need for better data and methods for determining the impact of library work
• Federal and global policies on intellectual property, openness of government information, and privacy in forums outside of the library will have a huge impact on the library’s future
Domination of Technology

“Put bluntly, technology and trends in the information industry are dominating discussions of the future of libraries and drowning out the more profound discussion of how libraries can be trusted sources of information in the proper functioning of society”
Refining the Question

What is the future of libraries?
Refining the Question

What should be the future of libraries?
Refining the Question

What should be the future of libraries and librarians?
What should be the future of libraries and librarians in a democracy?
Navigation

World circa 1507
Navigation
Navigation

The Hobe Dyer Equal Area Projection
This map may belong to the family of Cylindrical Equal Area projections in which meridians and parallels are straight lines. Other projections of this family include the Lambert, Gall, and orthographic. In the present case the ‘globe’ is projected on an oval that, like the globe, is divided into 360° north and south. In order to preserve the equal area property, the shapes of the landmasses become progressively altered towards the poles. Noteworthy, the map is well preserved.

Cities
- New York
- London
- Tokyo
- Moscow
- Rio de Janeiro

Oceans
- Pacific Ocean
- Atlantic Ocean
- Indian Ocean
- Arctic Ocean
- Southern Ocean

Countries
- United States
- Brazil
- China
- India
- Australia
- Russia

Continents
- North America
- South America
- Europe
- Asia
- Africa
- Australia

Navigation

- How to use the map
- Direction markers
- Distance measurements
- Time zones

Legend
- Rivers
- Roads
- Airports
- Borders

Scale
- 1:150,000,000
- 1 inch = 4,500 miles
- 1 cm = 87 km

Usage:
- Educational
- Travel
- Research
Navigation

- Conceptual Framework Allows you to Learn from the Past, Maneuver in the Present, and Create the Future
From Collection to Scholarship
From Collection to Scholarship

From Dissemination to Action
From Collection to Scholarship

From Dissemination to Action

From Sharing to Social Good
Knowledge as Thing versus Knowledge as Action
Origin of Printing
Origin of Printing

Artifact to be Preserved

http://quartz.syr.edu/rdlankes/blog/?p=516
Origin of Printing

Artifact to be Preserved

http://quartz.syr.edu/rdlankes/blog/?p=516
Origin of Printing

Religious Truth

Artifact to be Preserved

The User Defines Context, Not the Object or the Facilitator

http://quartz.syr.edu/rdlankes/blog/?p=516
"I then bequeath the whole of my property...to the United States of America, to found at Washington, under the name of the Smithsonian Institution, an Establishment for the increase & diffusion of knowledge..." - James Smithson (1765-1829)
Participatory Librarianship

• Knowledge is Created Through Conversation

• Libraries are in the Knowledge Business

• Therefore, Libraries are in the Conversation Business
Conversation is not a Metaphor

- Conversants
- Language
- Agreements
- Memory
  - Why Libraries, Archives and Museums Must Work Together

http://quartz.syr.edu/rdlankes/blog/?p=495
The Pressure to Participate

- People Need to be Active Constructor of their Knowledge

- They want Tools that Allow and Facilitate Conversation and Participation
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Facilitation Not Access

- Access
- Knowledge
- Environment
- Motivation
Now the Future

**QUESTION:** What should be the future of libraries and librarians in a democracy?

**FRAMEWORK:** Participatory Librarianship
Now the Future

**QUESTION:** What should be the future of libraries and librarians in a democracy?

**FRAMEWORK:** Participatory Librarianship

Agenda, Not Predication
Simple Idea: Dewey-Level Shift

- Technical Systems
- Physical Spaces
- Services
- Collections
Systems

- Discovery NOT Inventory
- Stop Adding Lipstick to a Pig!
- Stop Having “Next Generation Catalogs” Conversations - Commit to this being the Last Generation of Catalogs
- It is Time to Replace them with Real Tools of Discovery and Knowledge, and Not Inventory

http://quartz.syr.edu/rdlankes/blog/?p=566
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Have a question? Get live answers 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Welcome to Ask Us 24/7 - a service of Western New York, Rochester and Syracuse area Libraries. We can provide answers to your reference questions and provide information on your local library.

To get started, fill out the form on the right. A librarian will be with you shortly. You will not necessarily be chatting with a librarian from your local library or even your community. This is a global, cooperative service staffed by reference librarians from Western New York, as well as other states and countries.

If possible, please have your library card handy, as this will be useful in accessing articles and other resources through the library's website.

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Last updated May 2008

Scapes: http://quartz.syr.edu/rdlankes/blog/?p=460
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Services

• Proactive Service from Librarians with Strong Identities
  • In Your Face Librarianship

• Distributed throughout the Organization
  • The Library at the Conversation, Not the Other Way Around
Governance

• Collaborative
• Problem Based
• Fluid and Continuous
  • Not Committees and Teams
The Collection

• A Picture of the Organization, not of the Consumption of the Organization

• Invest in Tools of Creation instead over Artifacts of Other’s Creativity
The Mission

• To Facilitate the Knowledge Creation of its Community through Conversation
Libraries are PERFECTLY Situated

• We Function as Authorities NOT Authoritarians
  • We are Honest Brokers, Facilitators of Community Conversations

• We are Tool Builders
  • Need to Stop Riding the Waves, and Become Wave Machines

• We Provide the Connective Tissue to our Organizations
We Must be Prepared

• Must be Radical Change Agents
  • THINK BIG!!!!!

• Fix Our Innovation Economy
  • Library Vendors as Market Places Not Full Solutions
  • Don’t Just Hire Innovators, Create and Nurture Them

http://quartz.syr.edu/rdlankes/blog/?p=477
The Future is Everyone’s Business

- “Gratitude never radicalized anybody”  - Gloria Steinem
- Don’t be Loved to Death
- Don’t be a Spectator to Your Own Irrelevance
- “Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it's the only thing that ever has.”  - Margaret Mead
Slides, Projects, and Opportunities

www.DavidLankes.org