

# The Future of Librarianship

R. David Lankes

Professor Syracuse University's iSchool



<http://www.paleofuture.com/>



The February 1, 1939 issue of *Vogue* ran this photo of the 21st Century man.

*Gilbert Rhode banishes buttons, pockets, collars, ties. The man of the next century will revolt against shaving and wear a beautiful beard, says the designer of boilers, pianos, clocks, and metal furniture. His hat will be an antennae - snatching radio out of the ether. His socks disposable, his suit minus tie collar and buttons.*

<http://www.paleofuture.com/>

YOU

# The Future

- Apps will replace books as the primary means of distributing content
  - Apps will exist in walled gardens
- Information will become a commodity traded for privacy and attention
  - Proprietary interests as sole stewards
- A few libraries will continue to exist primarily as archives of unique content
  - Staffed by subject experts

**Are You OK With That?**

# Are You OK With That?

You are not a user, you are not a customer, or consumer -  
you are a participant in control of your world and able to  
shape it

# Are You OK With That?

What is the future of libraries?



# 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?**

# Refining the Question

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

# Changing Nature of Librarians

- Unshackled from the “Collection”
  - Our Communities Are Our Collections
  - Collection Development - Connection Development
- The Ascending Resource of the Library
  - Unlike the Peaking Collection

The mission of librarians is to  
improve society through  
facilitating knowledge creation  
in their communities

THE GIFT OF  
ANDREW CARNEGIE  
TO THE CITY OF DALLAS

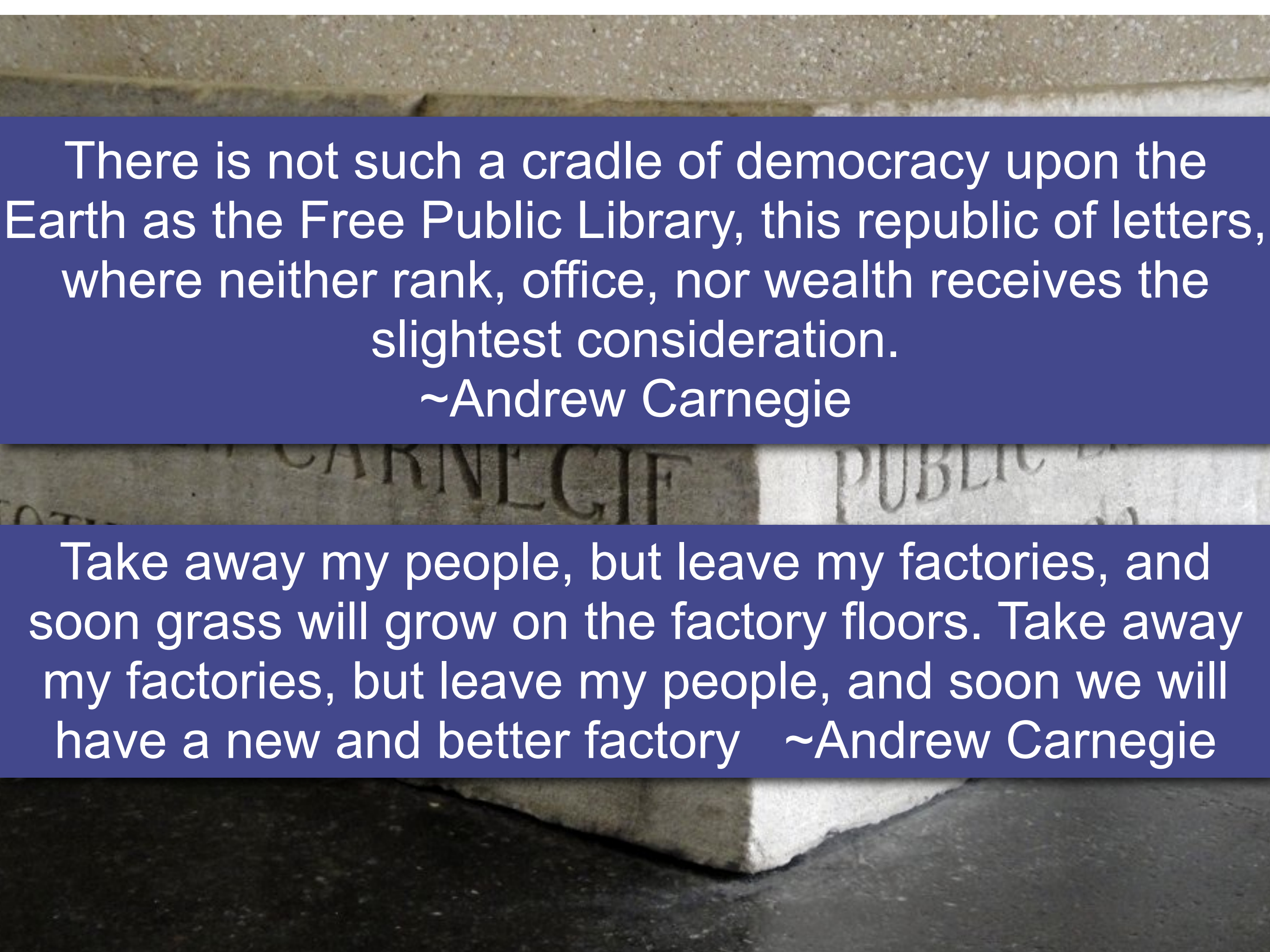
DALLAS  
PUBLIC LIBRARY  
1900

There is not such a cradle of democracy upon the Earth as the Free Public Library, this republic of letters, where neither rank, office, nor wealth receives the slightest consideration.

~Andrew Carnegie







There is not such a cradle of democracy upon the Earth as the Free Public Library, this republic of letters, where neither rank, office, nor wealth receives the slightest consideration.

~Andrew Carnegie

Take away my people, but leave my factories, and soon grass will grow on the factory floors. Take away my factories, but leave my people, and soon we will have a new and better factory ~Andrew Carnegie