

## Purpose

The NZ Library & Information Management Journal (NZLIMJ) is published by LIANZA and focuses on library and information management issues relevant to New Zealand. NZLIMJ is not limited to a specific information sector or to articles of a particular type, but is intended to reflect the wide-ranging interests and needs of information professionals in New Zealand, including librarians, records managers, and archivists.

NZLIMJ is published online twice per year and is hosted on the LIANZA website.

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Ms Amanda F Cossingham - The Open Polytechnic of New Zealand  
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Dr Daniel G Dorner - Victoria University of Wellington  
[dan.dorner@vuw.ac.nz](mailto:dan.dorner@vuw.ac.nz)

Ms Jan Irvine - The Open Polytechnic of New Zealand  
[jan.irvine@openpolytechnic.co.nz](mailto:jan.irvine@openpolytechnic.co.nz)

Dr Gillian Oliver - Victoria University of Wellington  
[gillian.oliver@vuw.ac.nz](mailto:gillian.oliver@vuw.ac.nz)

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## **Editorial: Conferences, community, and communication**

**By Brenda Chawner**

Members of New Zealand's information professions are fortunate in having a number of local professional conferences to choose from each year. These include the LIANZA conference, the National Digital Forum, ARANZ the conference, the New Zealand Law Librarians' Association symposium, InternetNZ's NetHui, Te Rōpu Whakahau's Hui-a-tau, as well as numerous weekend schools organised by LIANZA regional branches. In addition, the School Librarians' Association of New Zealand Aotearoa holds a conference every second year. These face-to-face meetings provide attendees with valuable opportunities to attend sessions on a range of topics, discuss issues with colleagues from other institutions, and meet old friends and acquaintances. However it is much harder for people unable to attend to learn what was covered in the various presentations and discussions. Even though most sponsoring organisations make most conference papers (or at a minimum, presenters' slides) freely available on their websites, it can require time and dedication to track them down.

This issue of the NZLIMJ is the first of what I hope will be an annual 'conference' special issue. It features Andrew Booth's keynote address from the 2011 LIANZA Conference, discussing the importance of evidence-based approaches for library and information practice. Cherie Tautolo's paper, from the same conference, reflects on techniques used to increase equity of access for Māori students and older students at the University of Auckland's Tai Tokerau Campus, Whangarei. Vye Peronne and John Robson discuss the University of Waikato's project to digitise selected issues of the *British Parliamentary Papers*. This paper was originally presented at the 2011 National Digital Forum. These three articles represent only a small fraction of the presentations given at recent conferences, but overall they illustrate the breadth of topics covered at these, and other conferences.

The other articles in this issue include Loriene Roy's discussion of continuing education opportunities available from the American Library Association and its various divisions, Smita Biswas and Stephanie Smith's article about Tauranga City Libraries' response to the Rena grounding on the Astrolabe reef off the Bay of Plenty coast. The issue concludes with Bruce White's bibliographic essay reflecting on recent writings on the future of the Internet, and their implications for information services.

Overall, the papers included in this issue of NZLIMJ show that conferences, community, and communication are all components of a modern information professional's life, and remind us that we don't exist in a vacuum.

# **Evidence Based Library and Information Practice: Harnessing Professional Passions to the Power of Research**

**By Andrew Booth**, Reader in Evidence Based Information Practice, School of Health and Related Research (ScHARR), University of Sheffield

## **Abstract**

Every day practising librarians and library managers face decisions that impact upon the success of their services. Should they follow their instinct or should they meticulously plan every step of their response? This is where an evidence based approach ought to enter the picture but it often falls victim to its own mythology. Evidence Based Library and Information Practice (EBLIP) is typically portrayed as the triumph of scientific rationality over individual initiative and enthusiasm. Its adherents are misconceived as following an almost mechanical “cookbook” approach at the expense of the flair and creativity of the “masterchef”. In reality, both ingredients are equally important – the evidence based practitioner typically arranges a work surface of evidence based tools and techniques before bringing them to bear creatively upon a problem of pressing concern. Returning to LIANZA, the scene of the first international presentation on EBLIP over a decade ago, provides an opportunity for the author to describe how the fundamental model of evidence based practice has been developed, enhanced and improved to emerge fit for purpose in advancing our professional passions.

## **Introduction**

At first sight the combination of “passion” and “research”, as encapsulated in the title of this article, may appear a strange juxtaposition. Evidence Based Practice, with its roots in scientific rationalism (Nolan & Bradley, 2008), is typically portrayed as the antithesis of “passion”. Within this article I intend to outline why Evidence Based Library and Information Practice (EBLIP) may rightly be construed as a passion. I am then going to explore characteristics of the profession that require careful consideration within the context of EBLIP. I shall then conclude by summarising some current developments in the paradigm as well as speculating upon some future directions.

## **On Passion**

In our early years as a professional many of us may have rejoiced in the label “bibliophile” reflecting an initial passion for books. As we proceed through our professional “adolescence” we respond to the strictures of our leaders and educators in declaring our “passion” for people, even if the real intent of many of us is simply to spell “books” as p-e-o-p-l-e! In this connection it was gratifying to encounter the blog of a recent library school graduate, already practising their profession although not yet able to secure employment, who declares:

“[her] passion for sharing information and helping to connect people to the information that they need” (Jones, 2010)

This article will highlight a third, more mature passion, namely the passion for continually monitoring, evaluating and improving our practice and for engaging with research, as both a

consumer and as a producer. In this regard I am very influenced by a schema of Mardis (2011), itself derived from the work of Stokes (2007), which depicts the relationship between research and practice within each of four quadrants; practice, research, practice-based research and research-based practice. When charting our own passions we need to re-orientate ourselves beyond the bottom left quadrant towards the two quadrants on the right hand side. It is noticeable that neither of these right-hand quadrants requires us to completely separate ourselves from our practice orientation. Neither, to the contrary, do we need to inhabit the quadrant completely associated with Research. In reinterpreting the original schema I have added the sense that as we become more mature practitioners we seek insights of greater generalizability that we can transfer throughout the rest of our professional lives to other contexts and other settings.

Generalizability ↑	<i>Research</i>	<i>Practice Based Research</i>
		Engaging with Research as a producer
	<i>Practice</i>	<i>Research Based Practice</i>
	Sharing Information  Connecting People to Information	Engaging with Research as a Consumer  Monitoring, Evaluating and Improving Practice
<b>Maturity</b> →		

Figure 1 - Based on, and adapted from, an original idea by Mardis (2011) derived from Stokes (2007)

### On Being Rational

However let us commence by dispelling our first myth, namely that “**EBLIP is the Triumph of Scientific Rationality over Individual Initiative and Enthusiasm**”. We should perhaps start by acknowledging that passion itself holds hidden dangers for ourselves as a profession:

For many library staff, being “right” is a passion. On issues that seemingly should have any number of acceptable answers, pitched battles are waged to ensure that all are swayed to THE obvious correct answer (Busby, 2008)

Busby continues by acknowledging that although this passion may originate from the best of intentions this may result in unintended confusion for our user communities:

The motivations are the best! The banner of the user is waved high -- our users are always first and foremost in guiding our decisions! Yet our users’ perception of a Google searchable free web crash everyday into the library’s efforts to spread information literacy throughout the campus and the community (Busby, 2008)

## **Does the librarian know best?**

This in turn leads to a second myth, what I facetiously term the “Divine Right of Librarians”, namely that **“The Librarian Always Knows Best”**. We should ask ourselves “Does our passion for our profession colour our view?”, that is “Do we see our library world through rose-coloured, library-tinted glasses?”

The gap between what we as library staff observers perceive and the perceptions of our student users is well attested by research carried out by Sue McKnight (2009) at Nottingham Trent University. This research found that items perceived as irritants for users by library staff bore little if any correlation to the major irritants as perceived by the students themselves. Clearly so-called “user-oriented services” informed by such misperceptions are likely to fall considerably short of standards for high rates of user satisfaction.

## **The Profession**

Having flagged up the potential vision deficiencies that relate to our passion for our profession it is timely to consider some cognitive biases that may impair professional judgements and managerial decision-making. Generically, that is across multiple professions, the following types of bias have been identified (Eldredge, 2007):

Primacy Effects	We place disproportionate importance upon information initially provided in a sequence of far more information rather than giving equal consideration to all information.
Recency Effects	We place disproportionate importance upon information provided at the end of a sequence of far more information rather than giving equal consideration to all information.
Stereotype	We form rigid perceptions based upon incomplete information about another individual or about a group.
Perseverance of Belief	We persist in believing previously acquired information even after it has been discredited.
Selective Perception	- Prior expectations cause us to filter how we perceive a situation despite the existence of facts that should contradict these prior expectations.

**Table 1 Some Common Cognitive Biases (from Eldredge, 2007)**

And, of course, we all suffer from Question Framing Bias<sup>1</sup>, don’t we?

What if we turn our attention specifically to ourselves as a profession? Before identifying such weaknesses it should be noted that the following list of biases does not represent the harsh judgements of an outsider looking in. In fact these cognitive biases are derived from those self-identified by a group of librarians themselves. Results, although preliminary, suggest that librarians have two primary cognitive biases in their practice (Eldredge, 2007):

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<sup>1</sup>Causing a decision to be directed by the way that “the question” has been phrased, the range of those alternatives considered, or the permitted outcomes.

- *status quo* - preferring things as they are, and
- *déformation professionnelle* - or seeing the world through the eyes and biases of one's profession

Before automatically taking issue with such severe pronouncements, thereby demonstrating our vulnerability to *déformation professionnelle*!, we should consider just one example of a perspective that we might summarily dismiss as being merely perverse. In a study by Goodall & Brophy (1997) one interviewee described how "not having information skills training" can be:

good because you have to learn the hard way. You tend to have better skills if you have had to find your own way around - but it would've been nice to have been eased into it, in a bit more structured way as well

I am reminded of a distinction, first encountered when at library school in Aberystwyth, namely between dictionaries that are prescriptive, that is they spell out how a word should be used, and those that are descriptive, that is they outline how a word has been used (Morris, 1952). It seems to me that when we train others in information skills we tend to be prescriptive, suggesting that there is a single right way of searching. Would it not be preferable to be more descriptive, that is to find out how users are accustomed to searching, and then seek to harness these already-present skills within appropriate search strategies?

To extend my example, in my own field of health librarianship I frequently observe that librarians criticise the Google search as a means of locating reliable medical information. Yet, in my personal experience, I frequently find that a journal abstract from PubMed MEDLINE will almost invariably appear within the first ten results on a Google page. I hasten to add that I have no evidence base on which to centre the following observation – in fact this is a research question just crying out to be addressed. However might we just speculate whether using this particular search route, supplemented by such tools as algorithms to match Related Articles, might yield comparable results to a technically-precise Boolean constructed search strategy?

The brief consideration above serves to illustrate how Evidence Based Practice can be seen as an ***antidote*** to our misplaced professional passions and to our primary cognitive biases. However my primary objective is to demonstrate that it should be possible to harness both passion and evidence based library and information practice together in a fruitful alliance. In other words I wish to encourage ourselves, as librarians, to "back up our passion". This rallying call derives from interviews conducted by Helen Partridge and colleagues (2007) from Queensland University of Technology when exploring librarians' perceptions of the contribution of evidence based library and information practice. One interviewee described how:

I'm very passionate about things, so I made sure that I had something to back up my passion (Partridge et al, 2007)

while another reflected how so-called "hard" data can be used to reinforce professional passion and judgement:

being able to prove what we do in libraries or how it's done in libraries, or why we do things or how we do things, but be able to prove that by either statistics or understanding of what's been done before (Partridge et al, 2010)

## Research, Reflection and the Library Profession

Does the library and information profession need research? This brings me to a third persistent myth, that is where colleagues conclude that "**We Don't Need to be a Research-Based Profession**". Here I return to an analogy first explored at the European Association of Health Information Librarians in Krakow (Booth, 2007), that of the Barber versus the Surgeon. Of course "the barber's art of shaving beards and cutting hair" dates from time immemorial. In fact "long before there was history, there were razor blades, found among the relics of the Bronze Age". [BBC Website]. In contrast the profession of surgery is of comparatively recent origin. Although both these professions share the similarity of taking a sharp knife and using it to achieve a predefined objective no doubt you all would state a preference as to which one you would most like operating upon you. Wherein lies the difference between these two activities? Well, whereas the art of the barber has remained essentially unchanged over many millennia, the profession of the surgeon continues to evolve, stimulated by technical improvements and technological innovation. In short the surgeon has the ability to utilise an embodied evidence base of professional knowledge populated by experience and reflective practice:

Is it not in the building up and transmission of an evolving body of knowledge? How is this corpus developed? – surely it is through reflective practice? As a professional surgeon performs a procedure he reflects on how it might be enhanced and improved. He may invent a new version of a procedure and is perhaps rewarded by having it henceforth attributed with his name! (Booth, 2007)

As librarians we therefore need to ask ourselves, will we....,

continue as barbers simply acquiring the same inventory of skills and repeating the same practices? Surely the challenge is to reflect on our practice, to build up a body of evidence based library and information practice and to communicate it to others (Booth, 2007)

In reaching such a conclusion I acknowledge the influence of other commentators (Partridge & Hallam, 2007), most noticeably Juznic & Ubanić (2003) who state that:

If research is absent, nonexistent or even scarce, there is no profession, but only an occupation grounded in techniques, routine and common sense

Not that evidence based practice simply constitutes an attempt to put retreads or remoulds on the well-worn tracks of research utilization. Instead, evidence-based practice is "founded on the premise that professional practice should be based on up-to-date, valid and reliable research" (Brice & Hill, 2004). In short it seeks to use research in an attempt to identify best practice and combine this with the best (i.e. most efficient, most effective and most appropriate) use of resources. As Williamson (2002) observes:

Research allows professionals to add value to their work practices and...the use of research in practice clearly differentiates between [those] professionals who

maintain the status quo without question and those who strive to develop their work practices through continual evaluation and investigation (Williamson, 2002).

It is in this attempt to provide added value to our services that we must seek a context in which:

Research and professional practice are inextricably linked and, consequently, research skills are a *prerequisite* [italics added] for those who want to work successfully in information environments (Harvey, 2002).

Again the prominence of this particular skill sets stems from a recognition that the 'work of professionals is being transformed' - professionals cannot be effective unless they have a working knowledge of research and its many tools and techniques. Indeed Marshall (2003) goes further in pronouncing that:

The health and future of any profession depends on the members' ability to evaluate both themselves and their professional practice (Marshall, 2003)

## The Power of Research

Is all the above to overclaim on behalf of the merits of research? No, because the impact of research can be felt at so many important levels. For example at a professional level research can:

- inform practice,
- assist in the future planning of the profession,
- raise the profile of the discipline, and
- the reputation and standing of the library and information service itself.

We should add to this the benefits to be realised at a personal level by involvement in research. In this context research is able to:

- broaden horizons
- offer individuals development opportunities

Such manifold benefits from pursuing a profession based on judicious use of evidence, including that derived from research lead McNicol & Nankivell (2001) to conclude that.

"Research should be promoted as a valuable professional activity for practitioners to engage in"

## Alternatives to Evidence Based Practice?

Unsurprisingly there are those, myself included, who resist an attempt to impose a homogenous "vanilla" flavour of decision-making over the top of all contexts for library practice. However espousal of evidence based practice need not necessarily come from an uncritical acceptance of the paradigm. It simply comes from a recognition that evidence based practice may not be the best way of making decisions, it is simply the best available at this particular point in time. In seeking to dispel a fourth myth, namely, "**There are Better Alternatives to Evidence Based Practice**", we are reminded of a facetious article in the British Medical Journal which identified seven alternatives to evidence based practice (Isaacs & Fitzgerald, 1999). Table X reproduces these alternatives. However, lest we should be

misunderstood we should acknowledge that the Armani suit, while prevalent within the discipline of surgery, is more likely to be replaced by the “No money” suit in a librarian context :

**Eminence based LIP** — More senior the colleague, less importance placed on anything as mundane as evidence. Experience worth any amount of evidence.

**Vehemence based LIP**—Substitution of volume for evidence for brow beating your more timorous colleagues.

**Eloquence based LIP** —Suntan, carnation in button hole, silk tie, Armani suit, and tongue - all equally smooth. Sartorial elegance and verbal eloquence powerful substitutes for evidence.

**Providence based LIP**—If practitioner has no idea what to do, decision best left in hands of the Almighty.

**Diffidence based LIP** —Some see a problem and look for an answer. Others merely see a problem. Diffident [practitioner] does nothing from sense of despair.

**Nervousness based LIP** —Fear of litigation (or the sack)

**Confidence based LIP** – You definitely believe that you already know what this is!

**Table 2 Alternatives to Evidence Based Practice (Adapted from Isaacs & Fitzgerald, 1999)**

To this long-established list of dangerous professional passions we should perhaps add an eighth alternative, **Propaganda based library and information practice** whereby practitioners simply select that element of the evidence they believe most likely to drive forward the innovation or practice for which they have a passion!

In contrast, my argument very much focuses on the need to align Evidence, the values of our Profession and our Passion. Such an alignment is alluded to in the *Journal of the Medical Library Association*:

My hospital is on a path to excellence in patient service.....based on the knowledge that all of us in health care believe in our purpose, in our worthwhile work, and in making a difference. The...flywheel of change and improvement turns ever faster when all of us align our principles [*Profession*], our passion, and our results [*Evidence*] (Quoted in Hill, 2007, Italic parentheses added)

### **So What Exactly is EBLIP?**

The distinction between research and evidence based practice is not an immediate one to grasp. This is attested to by the experience of a participant on one of our EBLIP courses, fortunately only an experience limited to the beginning of the course:

Meanwhile, I struggled a bit with the EBLIP course as I didn't quite understand at the beginning the difference between research and using evidence based practice to make workplace decisions. Much of what was outlined in the EBLIP literature was to do with evaluating previous research (or actually, previous ‘what we did in our

'library') to build a business case or plan for proceeding with something in the workplace. The whole point was to avoid re-inventing the wheel.

Such a distinction becomes clearer when we examine an authoritative definition for evidence based library and information practice (Booth, 2006):

Evidence Based Library and Information Practice (EBLIP) seeks to improve library and information services and practice by bringing together the best available evidence and insights derived from working experience, moderated by user needs and preferences.

The EBLIP process involves:

asking answerable questions, finding, critically appraising and then utilising research evidence from relevant disciplines in daily practice. It thus attempts to integrate user-reported, practitioner-observed and research-derived evidence as an explicit basis for decision-making (Booth, 2006)

I have previously conceived the vital interdependence of these three dimensions, i.e. user-reported, practitioner-observed and research-derived, as three cogs. The point of this analogy is that, although EBLIP has apparently focused on research, some would say to the neglect of the other dimensions, all three are required to align and interact. This is particularly the case if we are to advance library decision-making and move ourselves from ineffective, or at least non-demonstrably-effective practice, towards effective practice.

The process by which this is to be achieved has been commonly described as the 5A process – in essence a model that, as I have remarked elsewhere (Booth, 2011), bears great similarities to that required for effective information management:

**A**sk a focused question

**A**cquire the evidence

**A**ppraise the studies

**A**pply the findings

**A**ssess the impact...on your own service and on your own personal development  
(Booth, 2009)

### **ADAPT not ADOPT**

Myth No 5 is that "**We Must Adopt Evidence Based Practice Exactly as it is**", an off-the-peg solution with its origins in the autonomy of the medical practitioner. In fact one of the refreshing characteristics of the Evidence Based Practice movement is that every profession that has sought to engage with it has ended up adapting or reinventing it. One need only think of the configuration of evidence based social care, with its emphasis on the involvement of the client, to illustrate that the priority is to adapt, not adopt. What are the characteristics of our profession that seek to reshape EBP into EBLIP? Initially we sought to translate concepts, such as the focused question, directly into our own domain. However

following a very stimulating 5<sup>th</sup> EBLIP conference in Stockholm my colleagues and I identified two main problems with uncritical adoption of the EBP Model (Booth, 2009).

Firstly EBP “is conceived and expounded around the concept of the individual self- directed practitioner” (Booth, 2009). In the reality of our library setting our route to evidence based practice comes via the involvement of the team, not through individual autonomy. This model also carries the associated implication “founded on assumptions of rational decision-making, that it involves a logical and sequential procession through five tasks and their subsequent resolution” (Booth, 2009). Again the reality is that we may progress more iteratively, consulting, responding to feedback, taking a step backwards to re-examine a course of action through a refreshingly different perspective. As a research nurse had previously observed: “The 5 stage model of the evidence-based practice process is a deliberate simplification of a complex iterative process” (Newman, 2006). For this reason I have proposed that EBLIP is characterised by a different variant of the EBP process (what I have labelled EBLIP 5.0, after the 5<sup>th</sup> EBLIP Conference), namely:

**Articulating the Problem**

**Assembling the Evidence Base**

**Assessing the Evidence**

**Agreeing the Actions**

**Adapting the Implementation (Booth, 2009)**

Of course even recognising that the path to individual instances of evidence based practice can be iterative, recursive or even regressive is not to ignore that some systemic barriers will also exist. This is why we could say that our own evidence based practice is in the hand of the FATES, an acronym for the following barriers (Koufogiannakis & Crumley, 2006):

**Funding**

**Access**

**Time**

**Experience**

**Support**

Focusing more at an individual practitioner level, Pfeffer & Sutton (2006) (cited in Hiller et al, 2008), in an influential article in *Harvard Business Review*, seek to address the question: “What makes it hard to be evidence-based?” and arrive at the following diagnosis

- There's too much evidence
- There's not enough good evidence
- The evidence doesn't quite apply
- People are trying to mislead you
- You are trying to mislead you
- The side effects outweigh the cure
- Stories can be more persuasive

It is interesting in this context to see that, beside the often reported effect of the bias and opinion of others (People are trying to Mislead you), there is recognition of a less-explicit factor, our own passions and cognitive biases (You are trying to mislead you) – which is, of course, where we came in!

### The Future of EBLIP

Our sixth and final myth is that **advocates of EBLIP are simply jumping on the nearest propitious vehicle**, whether that variously proves to be a bandwagon or a gravy train. Of course it is difficult to counter such an accusation when my own involvement in the movement brings me a sponsored place to such a beautiful and stimulating location as New Zealand! However EBLIP is a movement that, by its very nature, seeks to counter the uncritical acceptance of any unbridled passion. In 2003, almost a decade ago, I sought to locate the novelty of the EBLIP movement within a more sustainable approach to critical inquiry, via reflective practice:

the long-term future of evidence based [library and] information practice probably lies not in a single-minded focus on research-derived evidence but in a more encompassing approach that embodies reflective practice....the ability to critically analyse, make informed judgements and direct actions can be triggered by any number of catalysts, of which research evidence may be just one.... (Booth, 2003)

Indeed I followed this up several years later by developing a model (the Five Mirrors of EBLIP) that links reflective practice to the contribution of evidence based practice (Booth, 2010). In my 2003 paper I continued by making the apparently gloomy pronouncement of the demise of the movement under the heading “EBLIP RIP!” stating that:

ultimately evidence based practice will contribute to a toolbox from which the reflective practitioner will occasionally draw. The ultimate objective of evidence based information practice is thus to write itself out of existence! (Booth, 2003)

Undoubtedly those who heard my original pronouncement that evidence based practice would write itself out of existence will express surprise that this remains my verdict. While I draw tremendous optimism from the isolated instances of excellent evidence based practice that pepper our profession this is tempered by a realism that progress has been slower than anticipated, and has been unconcerted. In more recent offerings I have chosen to look for another driver that may yield further momentum to the adoption of evidence in our day-to-day practice. Instead of pinning hopes to the professional characteristics of reflective practice, such momentum may, instead, derive from a drive towards knowledge translation. I conclude with the delicious irony that EBLIP may itself need to be “translated” if it is to succeed in becoming a fundamental ingredient of our professional passion!

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## **Despatches From Down Under: Digitising the British Parliamentary Papers on New Zealand**

Vye Perrone

University of Waikato Library

[vperrone@waikato.ac.nz](mailto:vperrone@waikato.ac.nz)

John Robson

University of Waikato Library

[jrobson@waikato.ac.nz](mailto:jrobson@waikato.ac.nz)

## **Despatches From Down Under: Digitising the British Parliamentary Papers on New Zealand**

### **Abstract**

This paper outlines the significance of the British Parliamentary Papers (BPPs) relating to early New Zealand and explains why they deserved to be made available online. Digitisation projects are complex, and implementation requires a range of skills and knowledge that not all libraries will have available. In particular, developing the technical specifications for a project and managing digital library software may require considerable technical knowledge, especially if the material being digitised does not have a straightforward document structure. It is hoped that descriptions of the challenges encountered throughout the BPP process will provide libraries embarking on their own digitisation initiatives with a greater awareness of this complexity.

The digitisation of the British Parliamentary Papers was made possible by a Make it Digital Award from DigitalNZ.

### **Background**

For several years, University of Waikato Library staff have been identifying material for digitisation in order to provide wider dissemination and access to significant New Zealand content. Among the projects already completed are digital versions of the *Index of Māori Names* (the Fletcher Index), New Zealand content from the *Illustrated London News*, *The Ancient History of the Māori* (available on CDROM) and the *New Zealand Short Story Index*.

In 2007, a decision was made to extend the University of Waikato Library building and refurbish the existing part. This caused staff to start examining material held in some of the dark corners of storage and several exciting discoveries were made. Lurking on the shelves and gathering dust were several old foolscap volumes containing reports and despatches that had plied between the Colonial Office in London and its representatives in New Zealand. Known collectively as the *British Parliamentary Papers* or *BPPs*, these were recognised as being the same material reproduced in 1969 in facsimile by the Irish University Press. However, because these were originals, the contents were out of copyright and thus a good candidate for digitisation.

### **Why Digitise these British Parliamentary Papers?**

Researchers and historians have been delving more and more into the early history of New Zealand to explain the present in terms of our past. The signing of the Treaty of Waitangi is the most significant event, but how the Treaty came to be written and signed and what it actually means are still not fully explained or understood (Orange, 1987; New Zealand Ministry for Culture and Heritage, 2007). The New Zealand government was not then established and government publications such as the *New Zealand Gazette* and *Appendices to the Journals of the House of Representatives* would not appear until the mid 1850s.

The *British Parliamentary Papers* began in the late 1830s when no local collection or publication of such material was being made. The reports, statutes, correspondence and other documentation sent between the Colony and the Government in Britain that comprise the *BPPs* therefore provide a significant source of important and to date, largely untapped information about all aspects of life and events in New Zealand in the mid-nineteenth century.

The 1840s was also the time when the New Zealand Company was at its most active. Some information about the Company and its operations can be sourced elsewhere, but the *BPPs* offer a considerable wealth of material from the Government's point of view. During this period the Governors of New Zealand were functionaries of the Colonial Office back in London and their powers were limited (McLintock, 1958). Hundreds of despatches were sent regularly each year from New Zealand reporting on activities, seeking authority for decisions taken, and requesting permission for future moves. The Colonial Secretaries and their staff for their part sent hundreds of despatches the other way giving orders and or permission, and rebuking or praising actions of the Governor and his staff. As the New Zealand government established itself and began to assume more responsibility for running the colony, the significance of the *BPPs* diminished, though reports were still being sent into the twentieth century.

To our knowledge, few libraries in New Zealand hold copies of the original *BPPs*, though some do hold a facsimile set reproduced in 1969 by the Irish University Press. That set was issued with an index, but that index is not easy to use and is limited in its entries. Given that few libraries held the *BPPs* it is likely that many historians would have little knowledge of their contents and the potential jewels held therein. We determined that by offering a digitised version more people would be aware of their existence and be able to easily browse, search and read online. A free and public access to a digital collection of the British Parliamentary Papers relating to New Zealand should be of wide benefit.

For our project it was decided to focus on material produced from their beginning in the mid-1830s until the 1880s by which time the *Appendices to the Journals of the House of Representatives* were publishing most if not all material.

While the University of Waikato did not possess a complete set of all the Parliamentary Papers relating to New Zealand produced in this period, it was decided that we held enough to build a significant digital collection, with the possibility that more could be acquired and

digitised later if there was sufficient use of the initial set of papers. There was an added appeal to digitising this material, in that the contents would complement the National Library of New Zealand's project to digitise and make available the similar *Appendices to the Journals of the House of Representatives* through *AtoJs Online* (now available at <http://atojs.natlib.govt.nz/cgi-bin/atojs>).

#### **Funding and 'Make it Digital'**

Waikato originally had 17 bound volumes that contained papers varying in size from a few pages to over 500 pages. Included in them were despatches, correspondence and other subsections all of which varied in size from 30 lines to over 40 pages. In some cases (about 60) there were foldout pages of varying sizes. These were mainly maps but included some tables. Many pages had prominent marginalia, which could create problems when doing the OCR (Optical Character Recognition) work on the pages necessary to make the content searchable. In total there was about 2,300 foolscap pages to be scanned and OCRed, with the possibility of another 2,500 pages if further papers relating to New Zealand could be acquired.

The digitisation projects previously undertaken by the University of Waikato Library had been relatively small scale, and the *BPPs* represented a much larger undertaking. We soon realised that this project was too big to be done within the confines of existing budgets and staffing, especially at a time of a major building refurbishment.

We became aware of DigitalNZ's Make it Digital Award (<http://makeit.digitalnz.org/about/award/>) and applied for funding. We were fortunate in being successful and were granted \$10,000 for which we are immensely grateful. This allowed us to outsource the scanning and OCR work to a commercial company, plus fund the employment of contract staff to perform some of the more tedious yet necessary tasks involved with file conversion and merging, and metadata addition. The 'Make it Digital' grant process was further helpful in that it supported our cause; indicating that there was enough interest to make it worth the time and effort it would take to complete this project.

While the grant meant we had resourcing support, it also came with an obligation to produce a finished product within a specific timeframe. This would require more structured project processes than was needed for previous digitisation initiatives which were generally implemented by the Library's New Zealand Collection staff as time allowed within their normal routines and responsibilities. Thus the grant also provided the opportunity to develop and test a more structured framework to encompass future digitization initiatives for the Library.

## **Planning, Processes and Challenges**

A detailed description of the process we used is beyond the scope of this paper, particularly as much of it would be BPP project-specific. There are many excellent resources that can provide guidance in this area. For example, Puglia (2000) and Chapman (2000) were helpful in providing technical explanations and best practice suggestions in preparation for developing the details needed to begin scanning; the first part of *How to build a digital library* provides a good overview of the theory of building digital collections (Witten, Bainbridge & Nichols, 2010). DeGracia (2009) gives an excellent rundown on the technical aspects of planning, and the Make it Digital Guides (<http://makeit.digitalnz.org/guidelines>) have a lot of helpful information provided in the context of the digital content lifecycle.

What follows therefore, is a focus on the aspects of the process that proved challenging, either at the outset, or as the project progressed.

All too often there is an assumption that the key aspect of a digitisation initiative is the scanning of the material to be published online. In fact this is only one part. Other key decisions needed before starting include:

- If you are not the copyright holder for the material to be digitised – do you have permission to copy?
- Where will the digital files reside and can that server manage the access level (e.g.: openly accessible, members-only, require registration) you envision applying to the digital collection?
- What software will be used to manage the files and build the collection?
- What search and browse facilities will users need? Can the selected software provide this?
- What metadata (technical, administrative and descriptive) will be applied and what purpose will it serve? How will this relate to the search and browse options you wish to provide?
- Have you defined the specifications for the image capture and text capture?
- Is OCR necessary? What level of error is acceptable? Has time been factored into the project for correcting OCR errors if accuracy is important to the project?
- What scanning equipment do you have access to and does it do what you expect – can it scan at sufficient resolution, can it reproduce colour if needed?

There are no simple hard and fast rules that will provide answers to these questions. To some extent, the choices available for a given project will depend on the nature of the

material being converted. So one of the first challenges facing those initiating a digitising programme will be to determine what the planning should comprise!

Comprehensive planning, or at least discussion around all aspects of the project may be quite a challenge in some libraries. Often, library staff may prefer to focus on the pragmatic ‘doing’ rather than planning; thus those wanting to get on and start scanning, or preparing the work for scanning, may view many of the detail-level questions and discussion as things that could be sorted on-the-go. This willingness of library staff to put all hands on the pump to get the job done can be a great strength in a digitisation project, but it can also result in time-consuming mistakes. This risk can be mitigated by careful planning and ensuring that the project team has or can acquire the breadth of skills necessary for the size and complexity of the planned project.

### **Standards**

The purpose of digitising this work was to improve access to New Zealand information rather than to preserve the original; thus our focus was on doing what we could with the time, money and people available to get the content ‘out there’, rather than building a highly sophisticated, timeless, digital collection. However, we still wanted to ensure that the content would be accessible for as long as it remained useful to researchers. We therefore sought to use common standards in both digitising and describing the content that would support sustainability, interoperability and potentially, reusability.

An important factor in our selection of Greenstone Digital Library Software to build and publish this digital collection was because it supported emerging digital library standards and incorporated common document formats and metadata standards. Furthermore, Greenstone collections could be served over the OAI protocol for metadata harvesting (OAIPMH) and exported into the METS metadata encoding and transmission standard (Witten & Bainbridge, 2005).

### **Technical Specifications**

The Archives New Zealand Digitisation Standard (2007), particularly the Checklist of Best Practise Recommendations (Appendix 3) and Recommended Technical Specifications (Appendix 5) was a good starting point for developing the more detailed technical specifications.

We still needed to work out how much of this was necessary for our project given that we were not digitising for archival purposes. For example, this standard recommends that the digital capture be done at 600ppi and our in-house scanner could only scan to 400ppi. Even though we were outsourcing the scanning, we planned to use our in-house scanner to add to the collection later, so we wanted to develop specifications that would cover future development where possible.

As part of the Make it Digital Award we had help from staff at DigitalNZ (<http://www.digitalnz.org/>) who were then working on the *AtoJs Online* (<http://atojs.natlib.govt.nz/cgi-bin/atojs>). They provided a copy of the technical specifications for that project, which we initially thought would provide the technical information that our project team collectively lacked - we now had a trusted guide to an acceptable set of digitisation details for a large part of the project. Since the works contained related content, and both projects were using Greenstone software, we assumed that we would just need to do some simple edits – substituting relevant BPP data for AtoJs-specific data.

We soon realised however, that the *AtoJs* project involved a more sophisticated level of digitisation than was planned for the *BPPs*. In this, the search terms are highlighted directly within the page images. This requires the coordinates for each word in each page to be identified and stored as metadata (lots and lots of metadata). We decided to take the simpler route of making the OCR text available – this would display the highlighted search terms, plus have the benefit of letting searchers see where errors in the OCR process resulted in false results.

More work was then needed to identify which parts of the *AtoJs* specifications would apply to our project. This was no simple task – it required someone to have (or in our case, quickly gain) a good technical understanding in order to unpick the *AtoJs* requirements and customise them appropriately for the *BPPs*. For example, one part referred to the requirement of Report-level METS XML files – this meant we needed to figure out if METS was relevant to our project and if we needed to do anything, or if it was just something that Greenstone would handle behind the scenes.

Despite that, having access to the technical specifications for the *AtoJs* was tremendously helpful – it provided a structured process for us to identify what we knew and understood, or understood but needed to work out the particular requirements for our project, or just didn't understand at all. Without this, we may well have ploughed ahead in ignorance of the mistakes we could have been making.

It was decided that pages would be scanned with a resolution of 300dpi (dots per inch) with 8-bit greyscale colour-depth. For each page of each despatch a set of files would be produced: TIFFs for master copies and for OCR processing; GIFs for web display of the page images (GIFs rendered the serif font in the text images better than JPEGs); PDFs would be created for downloading and printing despatches and plain text files for OCR output, suitable for use with Greenstone's indexing and search facilities (the text files are auto-converted to HTML by Greenstone to enable the searched text to display so that users can see where their search terms appeared in the retrieved text documents).

## **Scanning**

Once the technical specifications were completed we sought quotes from potential suppliers to undertake the scanning and OCR work. NZMS (<http://www.micrographics.co.nz/>) was selected, and an initial teleconference with them was held to determine how the items would be shipped, scanned, stored and organized, prior to being returned to us. This reinforced our belief that we did the right thing by outsourcing this work for this project: Their questions about the nature of the material to be digitised and our expectations for the end result, surfaced more aspects of the process that we had not realised we didn't know. It also meant that we could leave NZMS with the responsibility for providing the technical metadata relating to the images (file name, image type, resolution, colour, pixel dimensions, print size, number of pixels).

NZMS were knowledgeable about their business, and our New Zealand Collection Librarians were knowledgeable about the content of the material to be converted and how it was likely to be used. This shared expertise meant that this part of the project turned out to be reasonably straightforward, particularly after some test scans, file conversions and OCR output assured us that the image quality was acceptable and that the marginalia would OCR sensibly. We decided not to OCR the supplementary fold-out material or tables, and that we would generally accept most errors in the OCRed text but would manually correct the spelling of names and other words that could be important search terms.

## **Software Challenges**

We had decided at the outset that we would use Greenstone Digital Library Software (<http://www.greenstone.org/>) to manage and build the *BPP* collection. In retrospect though, this may not have been a good decision, as customizing Greenstone turned out to be one of the biggest challenges of the project.

We had used an earlier version of Greenstone for a previous digital project and it was also being used for *Papers Past* (<http://paperspast.natlib.govt.nz/cgi-bin/paperspast>) and the *AtoJs Online*. Given that our key audiences were likely to be similar (historians for example) we felt that using the same software and a similar interface would provide users with a familiar environment, and the project team with a ready-made template for the website layout and search functionality. Because one of the aims of Greenstone is to empower librarians and others to build their own digital libraries (Greenstone, n.d.), we assumed that we would be able to do this without needing to have a great deal of technical knowledge or support on hand.

While Greenstone may be excellent for a simple implementation of things like a collection of images, it took a great deal of customizing and troubleshooting to do what we needed it to do. The BPP project turned out to be far more complex than we first realised, mostly because we were not undertaking a direct conversion of a set of print resources. Rather, we

were extracting unique, New Zealand-specific content from a broader work, and the structure of the original volumes was irrelevant to the intended structure of the new digital collection.

We decided to use the Colonial Office filing numbers to structure the collection and to guide the file naming. Because so many of the despatches have similar titles, the filing numbers were important to help group related despatches.

*A typical despatch from 1847: Despatch 04 from document 892 from Governor Grey to Earl Grey:*

No. 4.	(No. 25.)	No. 4.
COPY of a DESPATCH from Governor GREY to Earl GREY.		
		Government House, Auckland, March 25, 1847.
MY LORD,		
I have the honour to report, that I arrived here late, upon the 22nd inst., having completed all the arrangements I contemplated, in the Southern Settlements. The short period of time which has elapsed since my return to Auckland, has prevented me from completing, in time for the present opportunity, the Despatches which explain in detail, the several measures I have adopted.		
I am, however, unwilling to lose this opportunity of stating, that affairs throughout the whole of these Islands, are proceeding in a most satisfactory manner. Commerce and agriculture are rapidly extending the improved methods of cultivation adopted by the natives; the large quantities of wheat they now produce, and the erection of mills throughout the country, some of which are their own property, are gradually rendering them an agricultural population, whose property will be too valuable to permit them to engage in war; and although there are still some warlike spirits who may occasion partial disturbances, I do not see any probability of any extensive outbreak ever again taking place.		
The revenue, as might be expected, is rapidly increasing, indeed, so rapidly as to surpass my most sanguine expectations; and as the natives, under the present system of taxation, contribute largely to that revenue, every improvement in their condition will afford the means of providing more efficient protection for property, and for the future peace of the country. Her Majesty's subjects, both European and native, appear to appreciate fully the advantages of their present position, and not only evince the most gratifying contentment, but generally afford me the most cheerful and active assistance in carrying out my various measures. I need hardly add, that this assistance is most valuable to me, and that, in the case of the native chiefs, it has recently enabled me to arrange, in the most amicable and advantageous manner, the great mass of the land claims in the Southern Districts, which, had they not met me in a spirit of the fullest confidence, I should have found it most difficult to adjust satisfactorily.		
I trust, in a few days, to have an opportunity of transmitting to your Lordship, detailed accounts of my recent proceedings in the Southern Settlements.		
I have, &c. The Right Hon. Earl Grey, &c. &c. &c.		
G. GREY.		

Each despatch (or equivalent) needed to be treated separately, with its own unique identifying number and filename, while still recognizing the filing number originally applied by the Colonial Office. A single Filing Number could result in hundreds of page images (all requiring unique filenames) that would be able to be displayed individually or grouped to form a single, multi-page document when needed. While Greenstone could have handled mismatched file names, it would have required more manual intervention than adapting our naming convention and renaming files.

Despite much pre-planning, our carefully thought through file-naming structure and conventions had to be adjusted part-way through. The documents themselves were

sometimes, but not consistently, further organised into series with appendices, cover pages and tables of contents, or foldout maps. This complicated the file naming schema we had started with, particularly when sub-series, or appendixes within sub-series, were discovered during scanning. The naming convention was particularly important because the ability of Greenstone to automatically build collections is dependent on filenames matching across the file types (e.g. the text file must have the same name and case as its corresponding image file).

The discovery that the BPPs had a far more complicated hierarchy of documents and communications than we initially realised, resulted in one of the biggest challenges of the project and caused major delays in going live. The Systems Consultant was now faced with a change in requirements with a revised file naming convention and a new document hierarchy that would have a significant impact on Greenstone's ability to build the collection. The large number of images and their related text files at the despatch level had to be reorganised, making sure that all had the correct series and filing numbers, to ensure that the Despatch level files would inherit the appropriate metadata from the Series and Filing Number levels. Lots of tweaking was required to make the complex *BPP* structure fit into Greenstone's document hierarchy concept. This would have been much less of a problem if our project had a simpler and more logical structure (for example, pages within chapters within books) or even if we had been aware of the greater complexity in the structure of the *BPPs* when developing our technical specifications.

Another challenge lay in getting Greenstone to display the multiple page images comprising a despatch as a single scrolled down image and text file. The plug-in Greenstone uses to build a document hierarchy was not flexible enough to accomplish this, so changes to the configuration file and the Greenstone source code were necessary to achieve the outcome. Similar challenges were encountered by the Web Developer when early user testing alerted us to a mismatch between user expectations of the search experience and the default experience being delivered by Greenstone. Thus considerable exploration was required to ensure the 'exact phrase' search facility was working as our users expected. All this meant that a lot of the customisation, including features unique to the *BPPs* collection, had to be achieved by staff who were learning an unfamiliar programming language and data structure on the go.

We were fortunate to have two programmers as part of the project team (the Library Systems Consultant and the Library Web Developer) plus occasional advice from experts in the University of Waikato Computer Science Digital Libraries Programme. This expertise turned out to be vital to the success of the project, in terms of having the technical resources to resolve some of the software configuration issues. Thus, libraries undertaking relatively complex digitisation programmes should be aware that while Greenstone provides considerable functionality and has proved its worth supporting excellent high profile digital collections (and it is free), it can present considerable challenges without access to such technical expertise.

## **Metadata and File Manipulation**

As part of the preparation for scanning, a list was created of all the despatches recording their title and date together with the names of the sender and recipient if indicated. This information would later be copied to the Dublin Core title fields within Greenstone. Greenstone has its own metadata scheme, automatically taking the title from the file names, however because of the complexity of the document structure of the British Parliamentary Papers and the repetitive nature of the despatch titles; it was not possible to rely on Greenstone's generation of title metadata. One of the strengths of Greenstone is that it has several predefined metadata sets which can be adopted fully or partially. We added title and date to the Dublin Core set, plus two custom fields: *Sent from* and *Sent to*, leaving Greenstone to automatically generate any other necessary technical metadata.

Even with this minimal-level addition of metadata, this task proved challenging as it was repetitive and tedious – requiring the extraction of titles and dates from the despatches and transferring this to the relevant metadata fields in Greenstone. Staff found the OCR checking less onerous because it was not done in detail and the errors provided amusement at times. Some examples of errors detected included:

Major Eraser	for	Major Fraser
giants of confiscated	for	grants of confiscated
aimed rebels	for	armed rebels
Wellington Bangers	for	Wellington Rangers
Loo Papers	for	100 Papers

Where despatches stretched across more than one page it was necessary to blend the resulting multiple image files into a single PDF for downloading and printing at the despatch level. This work was done by project assistants, paid for by the Make it Digital Award, and required attention to detail and considerable concentration in order to ensure the files were merged accurately.

We were fortunate in having a several staff (permanent and contract) who could share the more mundane work, interspersing it among other tasks, as there was a limit to how much of the checking and copying work someone could do in one sitting while still maintaining accuracy.

## **Copyright**

DigitalNZ provided very helpful advice on copyright issues – an area we had not given much thought to beyond ensuring that the material we were making available in this new digital collection was in the public domain. There were however, other things to consider: What terms of use did we want to apply to our collection? How would we protect our own intellectual property relating to the digital collection? Armed with examples of use and rights statements from other libraries' digital collections we were able to make some reasonably quick decisions in this area – particularly as a fundamental precept of this project from the start had been to make the material widely and freely available. The resulting statements can be seen on the BPP site under Terms and Conditions.

### User Expectations and Feedback

Before we officially went live, we sought feedback on the collection from historians and others who had supported our application for the Make it Digital funding. While feedback was generally positive, it also included practical comments that the icons we were using were confusing; that it would be helpful to include information on the page about which symbol to use for truncation; that 'exact phrase' was not working as expected; that the default search type would change after searching, and that it would be preferable not to have the search box automatically clear after a search. Most of these problems were able to be fixed reasonably quickly. However, as noted earlier in the discussion on software challenges, the issues with the phrase searching took considerable time to resolve.

The most common feedback we received however, was a request for the user's search terms to be highlighted in the page image. Some users cited *Papers Past* as an example of how they expected the BPP results display to work. As noted earlier, we had decided not to provide this level of functionality, believing that having the search terms highlighted in the OCRed text file would be sufficient. In retrospect, perhaps we would have been better off not trying to build similarity between the *BPPs*, *Papers Past* and *AtoJs* and thus not raised user expectations unrealistically. We were able to provide some resolution though, by adding a note "view computer-generated text", with a link to the OCRed version of the page where the search terms would appear highlighted.

After going live and publicising the collection we received further feedback: Requests for shorter, more manageable links to specific despatches (the URLs generated by Greenstone are often very long), and requests for the Filing Numbers to be a searchable field. A workaround was developed for the long URL problem by adding a facility for users to "get a shorter URL" for retrieved documents. While we can understand the request for the Filing Number to be a searchable field it would take a great deal of work to add this now. We have not however, ruled out the possibility of adding this functionality in the future.

The British Parliamentary Papers. Colonies: New Zealand was launched towards the end of 2011. Work on this is ongoing. Two more documents were acquired recently and these are

being processed for the collection now. Problems with adding the printable PDFs to the collection has been resolved and these will be available soon. The collection is available at <http://digital.liby.waikato.ac.nz/bppnz>

## Conclusion

One of the key challenges facing any digitisation project team is ensuring that relevant expertise is available when needed. It is critical that there is someone on the project group who can identify the appropriate technical specifications, software functioning and processes needed to achieve the desired outcome. However, it is also critical that there are people with good knowledge of the content being digitised and an understanding of its uniqueness and usefulness. Add to this, someone with the ability to structure content and understand the impact of this on searching and browsing, plus people are needed to do a considerable amount of data entry or routine work. The true challenge is being able to bring these understandings together at the right time so that all aspects work in concert to achieve the project aims.

The successful digitisation of the British Parliamentary Papers was a direct result of the expertise and commitment of the people who contributed, not just University of Waikato Library staff, but also those who provided advice, did the scanning or gave feedback on the various iterations of the digital collection as it progressed.

Looking back, there were several times when a more experienced digitisation team would have known that it was time to stop, revisit the project requirements and consider starting parts of the project over again. Much of the time we were learning as we went, and although it is easy to look and see how we could have done things better we try to keep in mind that both the work done and the lessons learned from our mistakes were valuable. Despite the challenges, the collection is now online and we have a group of people in the Library who are far more informed about digitisation and eager to start the next project in order to apply and consolidate the lessons learnt from the BPPs project – two worthwhile outcomes.

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## **Empowering students to achieve: Improving equity of access in the Tai Tokerau Library, University of Auckland.**

R. Cherie Tautolo

Te Tai Tokerau Librarian

Te Tumu Herenga, The University of Auckland Library

[c.tautolo@auckland.ac.nz](mailto:c.tautolo@auckland.ac.nz)

### **Abstract**

The University of Auckland Equity Policy states that equity groups require the removal of "barriers to improve access, participation, retention, progression and success" (McNaughton & University of Auckland Equity Office, 2009, p. 1). Students from identified equity groups are at high risk of not completing their qualification. University study can be a daunting experience, particularly for students who have no family experience of tertiary education. Many students begin their academic journey with a passion to make a difference, (for example, as a qualified teacher) in their community. However, some encounter obstacles in the academic environment which can affect their tertiary success. At the Tai Tokerau Campus, Whangarei, Māori and mature aged students are two groups recognised as being vulnerable to barriers to successful academic outcomes. Mindful of this, the Library provides a safe and welcoming environment for users. Initiatives implemented to tailor library services to our students' particular needs include: information literacy workshops; a relevant collection; increased accessibility to Māori language readers; and a new library layout. Underpinning these initiatives is a library team committed to a kaupapa of empowering vulnerable students to achieve their academic goals. Students from these equity groups now leave feeling confident and ready to work in their communities as qualified teachers.

### ***Mere's Story: A fictionalised account***

*The librarian screwed up his face like a dried-up lemon. "What do you mean? Don't you know how to use the catalogue? I taught you that last semester during library orientation", he growled. Mere cringed with embarrassment, looked down and sighed. "It's ok, never mind," she mumbled, as she left the library.*

*It was July 2007. Mere had borrowed her brother's car and driven one and a half hours from Kaikohe to get resources for her assignment. Having plucked up all her courage to ask for help, she was told that she should already know how to use the catalogue. If she had known that would be the response, she wouldn't have wasted her time nor the petrol required, driving to Whangarei. She had spent most of the previous night in Kawakawa Hospital with her asthmatic daughter, but made the trip because she knew that she needed to get into the library.*

*Mere began the Bachelor of Education (Teaching) degree with the cohort based in Kaikohe in 2006. In 2007 she transferred to the Tai Tokerau campus when the course in Kaikohe was disestablished. She deferred in 2008 to have baby number four, resuming her studies again*

*in 2009. Against the odds, Mere was extremely committed to completing her degree. She was passionate about making a difference for Māori children by becoming a qualified primary school teacher, despite having left school aged 14, and having no previous university study experience. No-one in her family had ever completed school to the end of Year 13, let alone a tertiary qualification.*

*When Mere arrived back at the Tai Tokerau campus in March 2009, she was determined not to let her fear of the library stop her from following her dreams, and achieving her goals. She held her breath and walked through the library door. Some changes were immediately noticeable. Just then a friendly face approached her. It was Rangi, her old friend from Kaikohe. "Kia ora e hoa. Welcome back. Come and meet the others," Rangi said. Mere was surprised to see such a busy place, and even more so, that a number of the students in the library were Māori. That was a contrast to what she remembered from 2007. She followed Rangi over to the photocopier, glanced around the room for the librarian, and discreetly asked, "Hey, is that battleaxe still in charge?" "Nah, he's gone," was Rangi's reply. "They sent someone from Auckland." Just then the photocopier jammed, and a librarian, whom Mere didn't recognise, materialised. "Are you okay there? Let's see what's wrong".*

*"The wairua feels different in here", thought Mere to herself. She looked around, noticing a number of changes: new librarians who smiled, and greeted students by their names – and one of them was brown, no less! The layout was different. There were separate areas for quiet study and open tables for discussion. The coffee table and chairs had a study group discussing their group presentation. That ghastly and depressing painting was gone, and a huge tapa cloth had taken its place.*

*Above all, the atmosphere in the library had changed. It was welcoming and more relaxed. Mere listened further, noticing something else: chatter and laughter. Those voices made her feel more comfortable; the surrounding environment seemed less threatening, less formal. The librarians seemed to encourage students to seek assistance and were happy to help. In turn, students were comfortable to ask questions and ask for help.*

*Mere took a deep breath and nervously wandered over to the counter. With her face burning in anticipation, she hesitated: "Excuse me, I haven't been here for a while. I wouldn't have a clue about how to use anything. Can you please show me how to find books about globalization and schools?" "Sure, no problem" was the reply. "Tēna koe, my name is Sarah. What's yours? "I'm Mere", she whispered. "I'll tell you what," Sarah continued, "instead of leaning over this desk, let's go over there to a computer. You log on and we'll go from there". The librarian smiled and moved around the desk. Mere sighed with relief. She turned towards the computer carrels, and thought, "I might just be able to do this."*

*With the enhanced support provided in the library, most of Mere's cohort worked together to overcome the hurdles of their third year study, graduating BEd the following March, in the local town hall. By then, Mere was teaching in a local school, making the difference she had so keenly sought in her family, her community and her own life.*

University study can be a daunting experience, especially for those without a family experience of tertiary education. University systems are multi-faceted with enrolment,

student services, academic support, library and other systems in place which students encounter as part of their academic journey. The first semester can be harrowing as students familiarise themselves with the complexities of those systems. Stories like Mere's are not uncommon on our campus. Consequently, our library has identified the importance of adapting library services to better support student needs. Such support includes tailored information literacy workshops, a relevant collection, and a user-friendly library layout.

I have been a librarian at the University of Auckland Library for 20 years. In January 2007, I arrived in Whangarei to relieve a staff shortage for five weeks while a new librarian was appointed at the Sylvia Ashton-Warner Library, Tai Tokerau Campus. We refer to our library as the Tai Tokerau Library, to make a distinction between the Whangarei and Epsom branches of Sylvia Ashton-Warner Library. Five years on, I am still here. I have enjoyed the experience in Whangarei because it has enriched both my personal and professional lives and I have been moved by the support of both staff and students during some difficult times. My personal experience of libraries began as a five year old public library user. I was a very shy child, but with time and familiarity, my confidence in using library systems grew. As a middle-aged woman of Pasefika descent, the quest for Western cultural capital, and opportunities made possible as a result of formal education, are amongst the reasons my ancestors made the socially and economically perilous voyage from their island-nation homes to Aotearoa. Joining the public library and reading 'the classics' was part of that quest, as was the academic journey that followed, which culminated in becoming a qualified librarian. Because I have felt comfortable in libraries for so long, as a librarian, I strive in my professional work to help others achieve that sense of ease too, particularly those from disadvantaged backgrounds.

The Tai Tokerau Campus in Whangarei, was established in 1992 as a campus of Auckland College of Education (ACE). In 2004, ACE joined the University of Auckland, making Tai Tokerau, the most distant University of Auckland campus. The University of Auckland library provides services across 5 campuses to 40,379 students. At the Tai Tokerau Campus, the student population is comprised of 868 students, with 197 on-campus students and a further 671 extramural students. However, despite the student population differences between Auckland and Whangarei campus locations, some student experiences are universal. Those common experiences may include the complexity of the university system, feeling unwelcome at times, the need for culturally safe spaces, and the formality of libraries (Tuhou, 2011).

Student retention is a key goal for every academic institution. Kelly (1995) as cited in Mezick, (2007),

argues that libraries are an integral part of the college experience and identifies academic libraries and librarians as playing a pivotal role in the education and retention of students. Librarians, acting as teachers and counsellors, address student needs on a daily basis. Through their observation of and interaction with students, they

are aware of deficiencies in student skills that may be indicative of high-risk students. Smalls (1987) observed that library services can provide a diverse and personalized approach to meeting differences in information-processing capabilities and ability levels of students. She believes that programs designed to meet individual needs and abilities are essential to effective retention strategies (p. 562).

Findings in the research literature, and my own experience, support the belief that access to library resources is critical to academic success. In Mallinckrodt & Sedlacek's study of multicultural student retention (1987, cited in Martin 1994), campus amenities including the library are definitively linked to academic achievement and retention. "The strongest relationship [in the study] was between African-American student retention and use of the undergraduate library" (Martin, 1994, p. 3).

Students from identified equity groups are at high risk of not completing their qualification. The University of Auckland Equity Policy states that equity groups require the removal of "barriers to improve access, participation, retention, progression and success" (McNaughton & University of Auckland Equity Office, 2009, p. 1). Of the 197 Tai Tokerau on-campus students, 51% are Māori. Having a large proportion of Māori students on campus reaffirms the relevance of providing appropriate services for Māori students. Of this 51% Māori cohort, 51% are at least 30 years old. This older Māori cohort is approximately ¼ of the Tai Tokerau on-campus student population. In terms of age distribution, approximately 48% of the on-campus student group is under 30 years and 52% over 30 years old. The sizeable over 30 years group (with little family experience of tertiary education) may require further IT support for less experienced computer users, and more academic skills support for those whose formal education ended some time ago. The University of Auckland Equity Policy also includes students from rural areas and students from low socio-economic backgrounds. Our student population has members from both those groups thus providing a further impetus for equity driven initiatives.

### **Information barriers**

Six principles of 'information seeking behaviour' are identified by (Harris & Dewdney, 1994) to highlight an organizational approach to help-seeking research. The principles are:

1. Information needs arise from the help-seeker's situation;
2. The decision to seek help or not seek help is affected by many factors;
3. People tend to seek information that is most accessible;
4. People tend to first seek help or information from interpersonal sources, especially from people like themselves;
5. Information seekers expect emotional support; and
6. People follow habitual patterns in seeking information

**Principle 1: Information needs arise from the help-seeker's situation**

Information needs arise from a specific context, people's perceptions of their situation and their expectations of the information which will achieve their goal (Harris & Dewdney, 1994). In the vignette, Mere's visit is driven by the need to get to the library. She borrows her brother's car and drives an hour and a half, motivated by the goal of acquiring resources so that she can complete her assignment. Part of the library's role is to understand Mere's situation and motivation in seeking help, be aware of approaching student assessments and assist as required. Tamaira (2007) investigated the information seeking strategies of Māori whakapapa researchers in public libraries. The information need was to gain an identity or sense of rootedness with their research and a connection with their iwi/Māori heritage.

**Principle 2: The decision to seek help or not to seek help is affected by many factors and;  
Principle 3: People tend to seek information that is most accessible**

Help seeking is required when a person does not internally know the answer to a problem (Meyers, Nathan, & Saxton, 2007). Family and friends are perceived as the most helpful sources of information over institutional and media sources, even when the source may be unreliable. Issues of control are central in this principle because the seeker can decide when to seek help and when to end the search (Harris & Dewdney, 1994). However, when students are enrolled in an academic institution, their library access may be controlled by institutional rules which determine; library opening hours, borrowing rights and fine limits. These are rules outside the control of the help seeker and can thwart the quest for information. Principle 3 advocates that people seek the easiest way possible to resolve problems and supports the need for "information [to] be physically, psychologically and intellectually accessible" (Harris & Dewdney, 1994, p. 23). The library's responsibility is to provide electronic access and a relevant physical collection. Other barriers such as unsuitable opening hours, discrimination, and institutional regulations must also be considered if students from identified equity groups are to be adequately supported.

**Principle 4: People tend to first seek help or information from interpersonal sources, especially from people like themselves and; Principle 5: Information seekers expect emotional support**

Prior experience and knowledge is sought by help seekers from those who "are socially close and/or who are like themselves" (Harris & Dewdney, 1994, p. 25). The support of Māori staff is key to addressing Māori students' needs at the Tai Tokerau Campus (Auckland City Libraries & Worth, 1995; Lilley, 2008; Szekely, 1997; Tamaira, 2007; Tuhou, 2011). That said, non-Māori staff must also form relationships with Māori students with the view to increasing library user confidence. Our library team prioritises this objective. Principle 5 relates to the "value [of] support and sympathy as much as information in resolving the difficulty...[explaining] why interpersonal sources are valued more highly than mass-media sources" (Harris & Dewdney, 1994, p. 26). In the vignette, Sarah the librarian attempts to remove barriers in her encounter with Mere, by introducing herself, smiling, moving around

the desk toward her, and working together in a shared space. Sarah's behaviour provides emotional support to Mere and establishes rapport between them.

#### **Principle 6: People follow habitual patterns in seeking information**

Unless dissatisfied, users will continue to visit a past source of information. Information is sought from sources which are accessible, and interpersonal rather than institutional - unless there is a need to avoid an interpersonal source (Harris & Dewdney, 1994). Similarly, satisfied library users are likely to revisit the library. At the Tai Tokerau Library, we strive to offer a service which encourages patrons to return by, offering appropriate information literacy workshops, providing a relevant library collection, building relationships with patrons, and creating a welcoming environment.

#### **Creating a welcoming environment**

Kravity, Lines & Sykes (1991 as cited in Martin, 1994) state that because of experiences of racism and marginalisation, libraries may be perceived suspiciously by some people of colour. Consequently, with a 50% Māori student population at the Tai Tokerau Campus, library services and staff training must be developed in light of those historical experiences. "A welcoming, inclusive environment leads to student persistence; ...students who are engaged are more likely to persist and graduate from college; more interactions lead to stronger engagement" (Emmons & Wilkinson, 2011, p. 146). Supporting a sense of belonging for library patrons is made possible by providing a welcoming environment. Strategies to achieve this include, firstly, evaluating the physical facilities. This means providing a library layout which reflects the backgrounds of ethnic minorities, and an inclusive library collection to serve a diverse population. The vignette describes the tapa cloth which now hangs in the library. Mere notices the tapa cloth and it (along with other changes) makes her feel more at ease. Haro (1981) (as cited in Adkins & Hussey, 2006) investigated themes which deterred Latinos from using libraries, highlighting "the influence of cultural hegemony on the library as members of the community do not see their own views and needs reflected in the institution" (p. 462.)

At the Tai Tokerau Library, distinct areas were created to serve particular purposes and improve the library layout. The public space around the lending desk, copier and printer was cleared of shelving. A reading area was created in the corner away from the congestion of printing, laminating and copying queues. In the back part of the library, a group study space on open tables was established. Those with laptops often congregate there. Beyond the group discussion area, at the back of the library, separated by shelving, is a quieter space, with eight study carrels. Study areas closer to the lending desk are generally spaces where quiet discussion is tolerated whilst silent study is encouraged further back in the library.

At the same time, more engaging staff practices have been implemented. These include expecting staff to make efforts to be friendly to patrons, to use Māori greetings, correctly

pronounce Māori names and words, and practice a personal approach to helping patrons. These practices combine to result in more confident users and higher rates of return patronage (Auckland City Libraries & Worth, 1995). Using te reo Māori is particularly relevant on our campus. By acknowledging patrons in culturally appropriate ways, those patrons feel respected and culturally valued. Long (2011) investigated Latino students' perceptions of the academic library, concluding that Latino students frequent libraries where they feel culturally validated and are more likely to seek support from librarians who are seen to be of the same ethnicity. Mere's experience of a librarian who is friendly, greets her in te reo Māori, shows interest in her problem and offers support in resolving it, gives her confidence that she can complete her studies. Non-verbal behaviours - such as smiling, looking up from work, and moving away from the desk to engage better with the patron are equally as important as other considerations (Stock, 2010).

### **Cultural capital**

Long (2011) describes the dominant ideology which libraries represent as 'cultural hegemony' in terms of the languages of signage, book selection, appropriate noise levels, and types of acceptable and discouraged activities. Cultural hegemony may be manifested in institutional goals and influenced by the value judgements and backgrounds of librarians who select collection material, serve patrons and determine the culture and vision of the library (Adkins & Hussey, 2006). Librarians must be conscious of their role as part of the dominant cultural value system and provide those who are unfamiliar with library systems with the tools to negotiate that unfamiliar pathway. Many Latino students in Long's study did not use the library until later in their undergraduate education. "[A student] explained that his lack of knowledge of the library's purpose and his late usage of the library were consequences of educational inequities" (Long, 2011, p. 5).

At the Tai Tokerau Library, I experienced a similar situation with a mature aged first year student who shared that he used only the public library to find resources for university assignments. At the end of semester one, when we were better acquainted, I asked him why he did not use the university library. He said that the university library was unfamiliar and he did not know what was held there whereas the public library was well known. His comment reflects the importance of making the purpose and role of the academic library and librarians known to patrons. I reflected upon his feedback and amended my practice with year one students. Long (2011), believes that "the academic library is arguably alien and does not translate easily to [student] personal experiences with libraries in other contexts of their lives. This might explain [some student] detachment and relatively late use of the academic library" (p. 7).

### **Information literacy workshops**

Information literacy workshops give librarians the opportunity to show the scope and usefulness of library resources in a contextually relevant and practical application. The optimal approach is when an information literacy workshop is shortly followed by a tailored

academic skills workshop (or vice versa) so that students are equipped with the required academic expertise to effectively research and write their assignments. "Success for information literacy initiatives lies with librarians, especially in building effective relationships with teaching faculty" and convincing teaching staff to gift class time for further information literacy workshops (Julien & Pecoskie, 2009, p. 150). Workshops should be contextualised with related search strategies and examples from actual assignment questions. An inclusive teaching environment is encouraged by a non-authoritarian approach which invites input from the group, thus making the session more relevant and building rapport. "Librarians who recognise that they are both learners and teachers can create nurturing, sharing, inclusive instructional settings which are enabling and supportive of joint investigation"(Huston, 1994, p. 88). Whilst library workshops at the Tai Tokerau Library are held with groups of up to 20 students, those who require further support are encouraged to arrange an individual follow up at another time.

### **Library collections**

With the exception of the Post Graduate Diploma in Business, (Māori Development), the courses taught at Tai Tokerau campus are predominantly from the Faculty of Education. They include a Bachelor of Education, (primary teaching) in both English and Māori, and a Graduate Diploma in secondary teaching. Distance students include early childhood and post graduate students across all faculties. In view of the qualifications offered, the library collection must reflect the needs of students enrolled in those courses. An extensive Māori collection exists to support the requirements of students and extra shelving has been installed to accommodate this growing area. Currently, a project is underway to reclassify the Māori junior readers using *Ngā Kete Kōrero*, a literacy levelling model. The framework is designed to increase user accessibility by providing a more meaningful way for identifying Māori junior reading levels. Apart from the Tai Tokerau collections, students have access to, and are able to request resources from the other 15 University of Auckland library collections.

### **Relationships**

Building personal relationships with library patrons has been instrumental in improving the profile of the Tai Tokerau Library and helping to shape library services. The focus on building these relationships has meant being able to personalise the approach to patrons. For example, after forming a relationship, the librarian can seek answers from patrons. This question was asked of an older Māori first year student. "I have not seen many of your class in the library this semester? Can you tell me why that is? Is there something I can help with?" An honest answer followed. "I feel embarrassed because it's often really busy in here and everyone looks like they know what they are doing and I don't." Without the already established rapport and trust in our relationship, neither of us would have comfortably shared their thoughts. I then proceeded to conduct a library tour with the student, encouraging him to seek assistance if required and assuring him that with time he would feel confident in using the library. To my surprise, he returned ten minutes later with a classmate and with his new found know-how, confidently showed his friend around the library. I

promised to organise a class library tour very soon. After that encounter, I noticed more regular library attendance by those older students and with time, a sense of ease when they were in the library. "According to Mellon's theory, library-anxious students feel that other students are adept at using the library, while they alone are inept; their incompetence is a source of embarrassment and consequently should be kept hidden; and asking questions reveals their ignorance" (Jiao, 1996, p. 152).

Relationships between library and non-library staff are equally important in improving equity of access and the success of the library. I have consciously worked on establishing good relationships with all staff. Targetted information literacy workshops have been scheduled during lecture time because of good relations and academic favour. If faculty staff cannot allocate in-class time to library workshops, I approach the student leaders of the class and organise a suitable time for the workshop to be held in a time outside of class. The response from students is positive and most attend. Fortunately, I have not experienced "faculty [who]...regard user education as an 'extra' rather than an integral part of students' education" (Julien, 1998, p. 308).

### Rapport

The advantage of a small campus is that it is easier to form close relationships with staff and students. By actively forming and nurturing those relationships, patrons have responded positively, they feel more welcome, relaxed and confident. I believe this has been the cornerstone of the library becoming viewed as the 'campus hub'. A friendly greeting and willingness to know the names of patrons is appreciated by all library users. One of the comments in the 2011 Faculty of Education student satisfaction survey endorsed this point, stating "[library staff] are always understanding and remember our names". In the time taken to build rapport, students particularly, are establishing confidence in using the services offered and approaching library staff. The first librarian in the vignette destroyed patron confidence with his chiding remark that the student should already know how to use the catalogue. In the vignette, Mere valiantly returned to the library - but in reality many patrons do not. This sentiment is echoed in Szekely (1997) whom describes a small group of Māori in a public library being 'growled'. Such abrasive inter-personal dynamics are easily experienced as a clash of cultures, which quickly and often irretrievably destroys rapport between library staff and Māori patrons. The embarrassing shame of being scolded by librarians results in a negative experience for the group which may result in members choosing not to return. According to De Plevitz (2007) and Liuvaie (2008) (as cited in Tuhou 2011), if students hold adverse views and experiences of the university library, they are less likely to return after a setback.

### Silence in libraries

Some people struggle with the norm of libraries being silent places. Both Dunker (2002) and Szekely (1997, p. 54) concluded that "libraries were perceived to be places of silence and were variously described as 'dry and unexciting', 'clinical', 'not welcoming', 'cold' and 'too

formal.” The vignette describes Mere’s observation of allocated spaces for quiet study and group study and this model is echoed at the Tai Tokerau Library with the intent of providing different areas to fulfil different purposes. The survey conducted by Auckland City Libraries and Worth (1995) endorses that “there’s too much quiet space and few gathering places, Māori like to talk and this is against Pakeha notions of libraries” (p. 10). Mere is comforted by the sound of chatter in the library because it quashes the feeling of formality and creates a relaxed atmosphere which is likely to encourage her to return to and use the library.

### **Māori staff and Māori students**

A key factor in helping patrons feel culturally safe is a Māori specific library, with assistance from Māori library staff (Tuhou, 2011). In the vignette, Mere notices more Māori students when she returns to the library and she feels more at ease. Her surprise at seeing Māori patrons in the library is echoed by Auckland City Libraries and Worth’s survey (1995), which says that “one of the major reasons that Māori feel uncomfortable is the lack of Māori staff and other Māori patrons” (p. 10). As a member of an ethnic minority group, I have known similar experiences in other contexts and I know the unsettling sentiment of ‘feeling out of place.’ Consequently, it is essential to normalise a presence of Māori students (and staff) in the library so that when Māori students look around the library they see other Māori students and staff. Teaching staff at our campus reinforce that normalisation by: bringing their students to the library to show them particular resources, holding small group discussions in the library, integrating library workshops into the class timetable, suggesting particular readings and encouraging students to seek library assistance. “Indeed, it appears that when teachers confer in the library with beginning researchers, these students develop positive attitudes towards library research” (Jiao, 1996, p. 160). The library’s significance in the students’ journey is thereby validated by that academic endorsement for “observing faculty in the library [gives] students the message that the library is an important resource” (Jiao, 1996, p. 160).

A University of Waikato study examined the library metaphor in a Māori context, investigating how Māori use libraries, computers and digital libraries. The findings suggest that unfamiliar situations with unfamiliar people can be a barrier to patrons accessing libraries, and inexperience of how information is organised in a library system affects the user experience of not only the physical library, but also the digital library too (Duncker, 2002; Tamaira, 2007). Participants shared that they were “more likely to learn how to use the library more efficiently if another (usually Māori) person took a hands on approach in showing them how to use the resources and orient them in the environment” (Tamaira, 2007, p. 11). A preference for personal support over technological aids was found in a further study of Māori public library users and Māori staff. (Simpson, 2005 as cited in Tamaira, 2007).

Sometimes however, (and even when library staff are Māori), Māori patrons may not readily ask for help for fear of bothering the librarian and being a nuisance (Duncker, 2002). Swope

and Katzer (1972, cited in Jiao, 1996), believe that the main reasons “students with specific needs would not ask for assistance from a librarian were that they did not want to disturb the librarian; felt their questions were too basic; or were dissatisfied with the previous service of the librarian” (p. 152). Library staff must be mindful of those anxieties and encourage a safe environment for patrons to feel comfortable to seek assistance. At the Tai Tokerau Library, we purposefully ask patrons whether they require assistance as soon as they enter the library, assuring patrons (if they apologise for taking up our time) that helping them to resolve their information need(s) is our job. In the vignette, Mere is understandably demoralised when she is dismissively scolded for seeking assistance from the first librarian.

### **Integration into campus life**

Working as one part of a small campus sometimes requires collaborative support in areas which are not traditionally core library services. Participation in campus life further reinforces relationships between students, Faculty of Education staff, other university staff and the library, and strengthens the larger Tai Tokerau community. On our campus, library staff actively support and attend Education faculty initiatives such as powhiri for new staff and/or students, the faculty student orientation programme, Huarahi Māori student celebrations and campus graduation. The library also participates in university equity initiatives such as New Start, a preparatory course for intending university students.

Furthermore, I have shown my personal support by attending tangi, student hui and sharing (as part of a lecture) my experience of Pasefika education in Aotearoa. Supporting these events builds a personal rapport with individuals, profiles the library, and strengthens its role in campus life, as well as affirming an important aspect of tikanga Māori. It also upholds my personal philosophy about, and commitment to, supporting staff and students during times of success and personal loss.

### **Relationships and reciprocity**

I have also benefitted from the rapport and relationships built over the last five years at the Tai Tokerau Campus. There are two events which are particularly memorable to me. The first one happened when students on campus gathered outside the library one particular day at 11am. They had discovered that it was my birthday and equipped with guitars, assembled on the steps of the library to sing ‘Happy Birthday’, first in English, then in Māori. A tower of cream puffs and chocolate sauce appeared and was distributed. It was a very special moment, and I was humbled when told that that has never previously happened for any staff member on campus.

The second incident occurred when the first year Huarahi Māori class (at the time) unexpectedly presented me with a beautiful handmade card. They discovered that I was seriously ill and wanted to show their aroha and support. The card itself was a thoughtful gift, along with the messages conveyed, but the korero and especially beautiful waiata

accompanying its presentation were even more touching. These gifts are only two examples of the love and kindness I have received from students and staff in the last five years and I am very humbled by that support.

Undoubtedly, the happiest day of the academic year is graduation day, held annually in March. Graduands, (some donned in korowai) and campus staff (including librarians) march through the central Whangarei streets toward the town hall flanked by friends, family and well-wishers. Upon reaching the hall, participants are greeted by a powhiri, and staff and students file in to commence the formal ceremony where well-wishers karanga and voice their support. At 2011 graduation, for the first time, graduands were Faculty of Business students as well as those from the Faculty of Education. Graduation day celebrates a culmination of student achievement, community celebration and campus success. Graduands, like Mere in the vignette, are now qualified to become registered teachers and serve their families and communities.

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## **Documenting Rena**

By Smita Biswas, Collections & Information Manager & Stephanie Smith, Specialist Information Librarian: New Zealand Room, Tauranga City Libraries

### **Abstract:**

*On 5 October 2011 the container ship Rena ran aground on the Astrolabe Reef, causing massive ecological damage and a storm of reaction in the community. The New Zealand Room at Tauranga City Libraries collects material about major events in the western Bay of Plenty and this was no different: we were always going to capture different aspects of the Rena disaster. However, the crucial factor that distinguished this event from previous ones was the flood of born-digital material it generated, from sources as diverse as Maritime New Zealand and Twitter. It was impractical to print everything to store as a traditional paper archive, and inappropriate to save it in Council's digital records management system. The library's recently-acquired Tauranga Memories Kete proved a useful vehicle for collating this material. We set aside a digital basket for public contributions and retained a Local History basket for more formal records. The challenges included how exactly to save the material, how to link it to our catalogue, how to capture digital ephemera such as Tweets, and what to do about intellectual property. Not all of the issues are fully resolved. The Rena Kete will be a work in progress as long as the ship is troubling the waters of the Bay of Plenty.*

This article is a brief account of Tauranga City Libraries' response to the 2011 grounding of the container ship *Rena* off the Bay of Plenty coast, with particular emphasis on how staff collected and provided access on the Tauranga Memories Kete to the born-digital ephemera that was generated by the disaster.

From the *Bay of Plenty Times* on 5 October 2011: 'Rena, a 236m cargo vessel, struck the Astrolabe Reef, north of Motiti Island, around 2.20am. Authorities are assessing whether oil has spilled from the ship.'

This began the generation of formal sources of information. But on the same morning, users of the online social networking service Twitter reacted to the event, posting 'tweets' (short messages of up to 140 characters) using the hashtag or topic '#Rena' and the first photograph was put up using TwitPic which allows images as well as text-based messages to be 'retweeted'.

[@SueHawkinsNZ](#)

October 5, 2011 View of The [#Rena](#) from my place; calm seas, blue skies, good day for a rescue.



*The first photo of the Rena posted on Twitter, 5 October 2011*

By the morning of 6 October Tauranga City Council was requested to activate Civil Defence measures. The Council's Communications team went into full production, turning out media releases, fact sheets, and email updates – almost 90 % of these born digital. Who was collecting them?

By 7 October the number of tweets went up to several hundred, and with more posted every second. Who was archiving these?

By 8 October YouTube videos were being uploaded by citizens of Tauranga. Surely this was a primary resource?

By 10 October, with the oil spill crisis deepening, two Facebook pages had been set up.

Was this type of information generated through the social media important, or was it mere chit-chat?

Journalist Mallary Jean Tenore, in her 2011 article *In real-time, journalists' tweets contribute to a 'raw draft' of history*, highlights the story of Andy Carvin, NPR's senior product manager

for online communities. His tweets from Cairo, Tripoli, and Sanaa (in the Yemen) gave followers of the 'Arab Spring' uprisings a glimpse into the front lines of a revolution. Carvin, a former coordinator of the Digital Divide Network, recently purchased his own archive of tweets from the Library of Congress, which has started archiving tweets from 2010. So convinced is Carvin of the long-term value of these tweets that he plans to turn them into a database. Ms Tenore makes a crucial point when she says that 'real-time tweets hold long-term value'. Journalists who are embedded in war zones or chronicling humanitarian efforts are essentially providing us with a 'raw draft' of history, whether they are aware of it or not.

Previous New Zealand experience supports Tenore's comments about the value of tweets. Their worth had been proved during each of the Christchurch earthquakes, when Twitter showed its value as the fastest news platform with information spreading spontaneously from user to user, along with images and video of the destruction (Crowe, 2011). In the early days of the *Rena* disaster we saw the usefulness of tweets at first hand, whether it was keeping the public updated on the state of the ship, asking for volunteers, or warning people to keep off beaches. The information was being produced and disseminated instantly. Much of it was practical – calls for volunteers for beach clean-ups or other urgent work, warnings about keeping off beaches and not fishing or eating shellfish, updates on the state of salvage operations. It was not only Tauranga's community which responded spontaneously: tweets were being sent by journalists from all the major New Zealand newspapers and TV channels, such as the *Bay of Plenty Times*, *New Zealand Herald*, and TV3, also from organizations like Maritime New Zealand and Greenpeace New Zealand.

The following snapshot of the tweets generated between 5 October – just hours after Rena struck the reef – to 15 October 2011 shows how Twitter users passed on practical information and rallied community participation in the cleanup:

[MsAngelaBeswick](#) Angela Renee

MNZ says beaches will remain off limits until at least Monday [#Rena](#)  
[pic.twitter.com/eifxAZ4a](http://pic.twitter.com/eifxAZ4a) 15 Oct

[1 hour ago](#)

[nzheraldtv](#) nzherald.co.nz video

[#Rena](#) oil spill: Weekend forecast: animation shows the forecast for the movement of oil over the next few days. [nzherald.co.nz/nz/news/video....](http://nzherald.co.nz/nz/news/video....)

[1 hour ago](#) 15 Oct

[IntBirdRescue](#) Bird-Rescue.org

Honored to help [@Massey\\_Uni](#) at [#NZOilSpill](#) with six members from oil spill wildlife team on [#Rena](#) disaster: [ow.ly/6XRAH](http://ow.ly/6XRAH)

[4 hours ago](#) 15 Oct

[MaritimeNZ](#) Maritime New Zealand

Reminder of community briefing today 2.30pm at Waihī Beach Community Centre,Waihī Beach Road, Waihī Beach [#rena](#)

[4 hours ago](#) 15 Oct

[FairgroundNZ](#) Brian N

Driving from Akl in the AM, helping clean up oil on Manganui Beach, then coming back in the PM. Anyone keen to join me? [#rena #nzoilspill](#)

[18 hours ago](#) 14<sup>th</sup> oct

14 th oct

[Mya\\_NZ](#) Mya

[#Rena](#) volunteers urgently need a vehicle for transporting supplies [#NZoilspill](#) can anyone help? Go to: [facebook.com/renakairun](http://facebook.com/renakairun)

[1 hour ago](#)

13 Oct

[IAmJohnLai](#) John Lai

Want to volunteer with the [#rena](#) oil spill clean up ? call 0800 645 774 [#KeepNZClean](#)  
[Please RT]

[13 Oct Favorite Retweet Reply](#)

[Mya\\_NZ](#) Mya

Urgent request for vehicles & baked goods for clean-up crews pls RT if you can:  
[@FoodnFlowers](http://facebook.com/renakairun) thx [#rena](#)

[1 hour ago](#) 12 Oct

[GarethMP](#) Gareth Hughes

It looks like 200-300 t of oil has entered the environment from [#Rena](#) so far.

[11 Oct](#)

[nzherald](#) nzherald

A reminder: to report oil coming ashore from the [#Rena](#) spill, call 0800 645 774 (0800 OIL SPILL)

[11 Oct](#)

[di\\_twhitter](#) Di W

If anyone in Wellington feels their skills could be of help and need to get to Tauranga, I can create a car pool and get you there. [#Rena](#)

[8 Oct](#)

[SueHawkinsNZ](#) Sue Hawkins

Sea is calm, like a lake. Belies the tragedy unfolding on the horizon [#rena](#)

[8 Oct](#)

[AlistairWilk](#) Alistair Wilkinson

Conditions too bad for on water recovery work now [#Rena](#)

[7 Oct](#)

NEWS  
JUNKIE

[NewsJunkieNZ](#) News Junkie

Urgent request for volunteers from NZ Wildlife Health Centre re: [#rena](#) Oil Spill Cleanup:  
[#nzoilspill](http://ow.ly/6Q22l)

[7 Oct](#)

[Community\\_Radio](#) CommRadioHamilton

CALLOUT FOR [\*\*#VOLUNTEERS\*\*](#) available to assist with the urgent cleanup of oil leaking from the container vessel [#Rena](https://bit.ly/qludY5) [bit.ly/qludY5](https://bit.ly/qludY5)

[7 Oct](#)

**How did Tauranga City Libraries deal with this deluge of born-digital and community- and social media-generated content?**

New Zealand Room staff look after the documentary heritage of the western Bay of Plenty. We collect information about local people, places and events. For nearly forty years archives and files of interesting ephemera have been kept, along with collections of published material. We were always going to try to capture as much information as possible about the *Rena*. Previous disasters, such as the Edgecumbe earthquake of March 1987, the Ruahihi canal collapse of October 1981 and the floods of 18 May 2005, are all documented here. If you ask for information about the 1980s events you will be directed to scrapbooks, vertical files and the local history card index, and accounts of the 2005 floods from the local press are indexed in the newspaper section of the library's on-line catalogue. Was this disaster any different from the others in the way it would be recorded?

It was. As librarians we were finding it hard to ignore the kind of valuable born-digital information that emerged about the *Rena* disaster as it was unfolding. It was being created and used by people who use Twitter and other social media as their normal means of communication, sent and received on their smartphones 24/7 within seconds of being generated. As collectors of ephemera, how could we ignore the ephemeral information that was being produced via the social media? Indexing articles and saving relevant newspaper articles, posters and fliers wasn't going to be enough. Should we consider social media contributions irrelevant just because of their origins in Twitter or their publication by the community of Tauranga on the Tauranga Memories Kete?

From 7 October 2011, two days after the full scale of the disaster hit us, staff of the New Zealand Room began to save all materials that were being generated about *Rena*, irrespective of their format. We had been keeping paper copies from Day 1. Our colleague who is in charge of the hard-copy ephemera files had been on leave: he returned to an in-tray loaded with printouts of warning notices, and whole segments of newspaper entirely devoted to the *Rena*. In addition, with access to the rich historical resources of the collections, we began background research in order to write about the Astrolabe Reef. (For example: how did it get its name? What other vessels have been wrecked, or nearly wrecked, there?)

The *Rena* source material we collected, or expect to collect could be roughly divided into:

1. Printed publications: books – the first, entitled *Black Tide* (April 2012), will no doubt be followed by more; hard-copy newspaper articles; magazine articles; reports, e.g. the interim Marine Inquiry report (number 11-204), or from a possible Royal Commission of Inquiry in the future. They are usually treated as ‘normal’ library items, to be accessioned and catalogued, or indexed, or stored in hard-copy ephemera files.
2. Tauranga City Council responses to the crisis: business documents generated in the course of activities such as providing staff for the control centre. They are (or should be) stored by their creators in DataWorks, TCC’s electronic documents and records management system, though we did collect the briefing updates which were circulated to staff.
3. ‘Born digital’ official responses, e.g. from Maritime New Zealand.
4. ‘Born digital’ media responses, e.g. from local, national and international news organisations.
5. ‘Born digital’ informal responses, from members of the public (tweets, blog posts, Facebook pages, photographs, videos, etc., etc.).

Our big question was what to do with the items generated under categories 3, 4 and 5, because there were so many of them, adding a different dimension to the *Rena* story. We did print out a certain amount, some of which were for the ephemera files, while others would be bound and put into the collection. However, it was impractical to print everything to store as a traditional paper archive, and inappropriate to save it in Council’s digital records management system, which was only for TCC-related documents (we checked).

Moreover, we wanted the material to be easily accessible to the public, which was not the case with much of the TCC material, and we wanted minimal changes to the character of the electronic documents. The ideal situation would be to have born-digital material available as it was intended – digitally.

So, on 10 October 2011, we set up a separate basket on the Tauranga Memories Kete about the grounding of *Rena*, to allow the community of Tauranga to upload the stories and some of the thousands of images that they were creating. We also started embedding some of the community-generated YouTube videos in the Kete.

One of the contributors was a volunteer of the Oiled Wildlife Response [OWR] Unit, who has been recording his diaries about his heart-wrenching attempts to save the penguins and other sea birds devastated by the oil spill right from 7 October.

These items from our Kete were harvested and linked immediately with the rest of the formal content that was being created from newspapers and TV, by Digital New Zealand. It created a goldmine of primary information.

**Tauranga Memories : Rena - NZ's Biggest Ecological Disaster**

Home | Browse: Site or Rena - NZ's Biggest Ecological Disaster | About | Help | Contact | Add Item | Register | Login

« Previous | Viewing: 7 of 38 | Stop results slideshow | Back to results | Next »

**The continuing diaries of a volunteer responding to MV Rena grounding, Astrolabe Reef, Mount Maunganui, 5th October 2011**

[Topic» Event](#)

**The diaries of a volunteer responding to MV Rena grounding, Astrolabe Reef, Mount Maunganui, 5th October 2011**

Monday 17 October to Wednesday 19 October; Days ten to twelve; Mauao work has been ramped up with an extra layer of DoC personnel to handle the increased traffic of penguins being oiled. We are getting tired but are getting to know the true amount of birds on Mauao and Moturiki. Another trip to Motutau is planned for Thursday night.

Thursday 20 to Saturday 22nd October, Days 13-15; Follow-up trip to Motutau / Rabbit Island

We returned to Motutau / Rabbit Island for a post-slick check on the Rewa Thursday night. Our first night stretched our resources thinly, and we ended up with boxes of penguins awaiting uplift the following morning. The worst ones received treatment in our field hospital, which was set up on the landing beach. We called in more support with two extra people arriving for Friday night, which stretched the availability of flat tent sites to the max! The second night was less intense with two crews working the sectors of rocks that we had reconnoitred earlier in the day. The penguins rafted up just offshore on dusk, and then they all came in at once, creating a traffic jam at the hospital! Saturday morning dawned flat, so we packed up camp and had all the gear.

Tags: Grounding of Rena, penguins, gulls, Motutau, Rena Oil spill, Oiled Wildlife Response Team Unit

Related Items (29)

Images (29) ▾

20 more like this >

Screenshot of community content from Rena Kete on TaurangaMemories

**Tauranga Memories : Rena - NZ's Biggest Ecological Disaster**

Home | Browse: Site or Rena - NZ's Biggest Ecological Disaster | About | Help | Contact | Add Item | Register | Login

« Previous | Viewing: 15 of 38 | Stop results slideshow | Back to results | Next »

**Rena by James**

[Topic» Event](#)

Poem by James (age 9) Matua Primary School.

Colossal, dangerous  
Sinking, spilling, pumping  
Oil killing marine creatures

Tags: Rena Oil spill, poetry

Related Items (0)

Create | Link Existing | Remove

Other Resources

Screenshot of poem by nine-year-old from RenaKete on Tauranga Memories

Above are two examples of very different community-generated content posted on the *Rena Kete*, one from the OWR volunteer and one from a concerned nine-year-old.

We also managed to link the [Tauranga Memories Kete to the Twitter feeds on Rena](#), which was very successful in capturing them. We decided not to use the content from the two Facebook pages relating to the *Rena* grounding, as they were copyrighted to the individuals who started them. However we requested membership and posted on these Facebook pages asking them to contribute to Tauranga Memories. As a result some of the *Rena* Facebook members uploaded some great photos and some fabulous You tube videos on to the Tauranga Memories

The screenshot shows a Microsoft Internet Explorer window with the following details:

- Address Bar:** Results in topics for your search 'rena oil - Tauranga ...'
- Left Column (Search Results):**
  - Grounding of Rena** (Event)  
The diaries of a volunteer responding to MV Rena grounding, Astrolabe Reef, Mount Maunganui, 5th October 2011  
[more >](#)  
Related: 2 Topics and 98 Images  
[Thumbnail images: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5]  
2011-10-12
  - The Rena by Deryn Pittar** (Event)  
I'm retired and have lived in Papamoa since 2000 and like most of the residents, I moved here. We are all new to this lovely seaside suburb of Tauranga City.  
[more >](#)  
Related: 6 Images  
[Thumbnail images: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5]  
2011-10-16
  - Black Tides Haiku by Rhiannon Bond** (Event)  
My name is Rhiannon Bond, my family and I live on Papamoa Beach Road. We have always wanted to live by the beach. This oil spill has turned our dream  
[more >](#)  
Related: 6 Images  
[Thumbnail images: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5]
- Right Column (Resources):**
  - More Resources**
  - Results via DigitalNZ**
    - [Thumbnail images: 1, 2, 3]  
Rena from Motutau, Oiled Wildlife Response tea...  
[more >](#)
    - [Thumbnail images: 1, 2, 3]  
Oil on Mount Maunganui Beach Wednesday 12 Octob...  
[more >](#)
    - [Thumbnail images: 1, 2, 3]  
Oil check, petrel, Oiled Wildlife Response team...  
[more >](#)  - Powered by **DIGITALNZ** ATIHIO AO TEAROA
  - Twitter**
    - "Tide of Ink – Media froths over black wave" ne...
    - Rena oil spill: Missing \$12m cover 'Govt error'...
    - "Tide of Ink – Media froths over black wave" ne...  - [more >](#)

Screen shot linking Rena Kete content with Twitter & Digital NZ

We also retained a Local History closed basket for more formal records. The Local History Kete ([http://tauranga.kete.net.nz/en/tauranga\\_local\\_history](http://tauranga.kete.net.nz/en/tauranga_local_history)) is where we store and make available material from our local history web site, images from our collection of historical photographs, and stories researched and written by staff members. This was where we decided to store more formal information about the *Rena*, such as official updates from Maritime New Zealand, archived web pages from newspapers, links to other digitally published material, and anything else we were to research, write or gather ourselves.

## Challenges

Challenges we faced in this project included technical issues of how to organise the material, how to link it to our catalogue, how to capture the digital ephemera such as tweets, and what to do about intellectual property. Not all of the issues are fully resolved. For instance, how much repetitive information do we retain? Do we keep links to web sites which may not be permanent? The *Rena* Kete will be a work in progress as long as the ship is troubling the waters of the Bay of Plenty.

We had some doubts about saving links to web sites, as we didn't know whether they would be persistent URLs. There have been some excellent photographs on some of the local newspaper web sites, but the likelihood is that they will not be there for long – not at any rate for as long as we as archivists and librarians would like, since our time scale is different from that of journalists. One of our cataloguers expressed concerns about cataloguing material we don't physically hold. Some of the material we saved as web archive pages, which is an option offered by Windows when saving web pages. Some of it we copied and pasted into Word documents, though we had some misgivings about the copyright status of this action. We decided to ask Maritime New Zealand for permission to retain its updates by this method, and received a prompt and positive response.

A screen shot of search results from the Tauranga City Libraries catalogue

The screenshot shows a computer window titled 'Catalogue Results - words or phrase "rena"' with a toolbar above it. The main area is labeled 'Search Results' and displays a list of 27 titles found for the search term 'rena'. Each result includes a checkbox labeled 'Keep', the title, author, publisher, year, and a note that 'No copies available in any library.' Below the list is a blue circular icon with a white book symbol. To the right of the search results are two panels: 'You Found Titles in Categories:' and 'Library Info'. The 'Categories' panel lists General Biography, General World History, Home Economics, Literary History and Collections, Recreation, Leisure, and Societies and Clubs. The 'Library Info' panel lists Library Website, Library Hours, Searching Help, New Top Titles Fiction, New Top Titles Non-Fiction, New Top Titles Magazines, New Top Titles CDs, and New Top Titles DVDs. At the bottom left is a 'Done' button, and at the bottom right are zoom controls showing '110%'.

## Conclusion

Our goal has been to provide an accessible, comprehensive and permanent set of resources about the *Rena* grounding and ongoing related events. We know that students will want to research the *Rena* in the future: it is bound to feature in the curriculum at some level. With that aim in mind we have tried to capture as much information as we can from as wide a variety of sources as possible. Until we implement federated searching our patrons will still have to look in several different places to find everything we hold about the *Rena* – the library catalogue, the newspaper index, Tauranga Memories, hard-copy ephemera files – but they will be rewarded with a rich variety of material.

One of the strengths of the Kete has been its ability to capture not only the facts but the feelings – as expressed, for instance, in the poem of the nine-year-old boy quoted above. It is hard to underestimate the level of emotion caused in the Bay of Plenty by the *Rena* grounding, by the spills of oil and other pollutants, and by the deaths of birds and sea creatures. The *Rena* grounding has been and continues to be a profound and traumatic event for this area. It has affected lives and livelihoods, restricting the gathering of kai moana and the professional and recreational uses of the coastline and waters of the area. People have been angry and distressed. For those who have been moved to write poetry, take photographs, or to tell their stories about how the *Rena* has affected them, Tauranga Memories provides a safe and trusted repository to store it and communicate it to others.

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<http://www.poynter.org/latest-news/top-stories/147294/in-real-time-journalists-tweets-contribute-to-a-raw-draft-of-history/>

## **Continuous Professional Development: Opportunities within the American Library Association**

### **Abstract**

Librarians in Aotearoa/New Zealand have many options for advancing their skills and knowledge through joining learning communities. These options extend globally and include many free, low-cost, and fee-based professional development activities offered through the American Library Association (ALA). For those seeking certification, the ALA-Allied Professional Association (ALA-APA) has an on-going Certified Public Library Administrator program. Dues are low for international members: \$78 USD per year for general ALA membership which includes free membership to ALA's International Relations Round Table (IRRT). ALA membership conveys discounted rates for conference registration, webinars, and online courses. International members are also encouraged to submit manuscripts to publications such as IRRT's newsletter, *International Leads*, and to participate through activities including the Sister Libraries Initiative. Many ALA awards are also open to librarians and libraries across the globe from those recognizing excellence in public relations to the annual Galaxy of Stars, honoring individual library workers during National Library Week.

Staff development remains one of the most important and timely aspects of library work. It is a need that grows with the emergence of new formats of materials, changes in services, and community demands including shifts in demographics (WebJunction, 2009). In an environment where workers may prefer face-to-face training experiences, but staff development funds have been reduced, work settings are seeking means to deliver education and training to groups, either within their work settings or to individuals according to their own pace and time preferences.

This article presents a brief introduction to continuous professional development offerings in the librarianship sector within the United States largely through offerings from the American Library Association (ALA). It outlines opportunities for librarians within Aotearoa/New Zealand to participate in these activities, many of which are free, or do not require fees or membership dues, and are accessible through distance delivery. These opportunities might especially appeal to librarians seeking professional registration or revalidation through the Library and Information Association New Zealand Aotearoa (LIANZA).

### **Continuous Professional Development = Continuing Education**

Literature within the United States more often refers to continuous professional development as continuing education, a phrase that retrieves 1,500 hits when entered into the subject database, "Library Literature and Information Science Full Text." Continuing education, also referred to as professional development and, more recently, as updating or retooling, encompasses the approaches and content tailored for information workers to advance their learning and education once they are in the workforce.

One trend in the continuing education scenario is that individual learners are now finding others of like mind and joining or establishing their own learning communities

(Signorelli and Reed, 2011). The desire to participate in continuing education extends across type of library or information setting, position, and position levels.

The importance of continuing education is included in criteria for applications seen in recent job vacancy announcements such as the following:

- Digital Access Librarian: “Monitors trends and best practices in web technology, content management, usability, user engagement, and web based discovery” (University of Notre Dame, Digital Access Librarian, 2012).
- eLearning Librarian: “Maintain[s] awareness of current trends in services to online students and will actively seek out emerging technologies that may facilitate or enhance library services and instruction to online students” (Wake Forest University, 2012).
- Electronic Resources Librarian: “Monitors trends and best practices in library resource access and discoverability” (University of Notre Dame, Electronic Resources Librarian, 2012).
- Information Services Librarian: “Demonstrate[s] willingness to engage in continuous service improvement/ assessment programs and on-going training opportunities including Web-based and self-instruction.” (Michigan Technological University, 2012).
- Library Director: “Encourage[s] professional development of staff to ensure a highly skilled and knowledgeable workforce” (University of Wisconsin-Parkside, 2012).

The minimum requirement for those seeking most entry-level library positions within the United States is completion of a master’s degree from one of the 58 graduate programs in the United States or Canada accredited by ALA. Upon graduation, the requirement for continuous professional development resides with the employer and/or the individual librarian. Sources of continuing education include national, regional, and state library associations, state libraries, library and information science (LIS) programs, and online training providers. References to continuous professional development exist within the competency documents prepared by various professional associations, as illustrated below. These lists of competencies demonstrate that professional communities have expectations for career-long involvement in continuing education.

- School Librarians: “Candidates are committed to continuous learning and professional growth and lead professional development activities for other educators” (American Library Association, American Association of School Libraries, 2010).
- Art librarians: “Art Information Professionals contribute to the advancement of the art library and visual resources professions. Evidenced by a combination of the following:
  - a. knowledge sharing that includes publication and presentation of research findings as well as professional networking activities;

- b. participation in life-long learning and professional development activities that build on existing knowledge and experience" (Art Libraries Society of North America, 2005).
- A competent children's librarian working in a public library:  
"Stays informed of current trends, emerging technologies, issues, and research in librarianship, child development, education, and allied fields.  
Participates in local, state, and national professional organizations to strengthen skills, interact with fellow professionals, promote professional association scholarships, and contribute to the library profession.  
Pursues professional development and continuing education opportunities throughout her/his career" (American Library Association, Association for Library Service to Children, 2009).

- The Medical Library Association recognizes that "Because education cannot be limited to any one phase of an individual's career, a larger frame of reference—a continuum of learning—is needed to influence professional performance in the twenty-first century" (Medical Library Association, 2012).

Some professional organizations affirm the role of the library manager in supporting the continuing education needs of his/her employees. Under the library management competency area, music librarians "ensure that staff continue to receive training by providing access to continuing education and other opportunities for improving skills and knowledge" (Hunter, 2002). Managers of young adult librarians must "design, implement, and evaluate an ongoing program of professional development for all staff, to encourage and inspire continual excellence in service to young adults" (American Library Association, Young Adult Library Services Association, 2010).

#### **Librarian/Library Worker Certification within the United States**

The ALA-Allied Professional Association (ALA-APA) is a non-profit organization affiliated with but separate from ALA. The ALA-APA has two charges, one of which is to provide voluntary certification of library workers in specialization areas beyond the education provided with the entry level master's degree (American Library Association-Allied Professional Association, 2012, Welcome). The ALA-APA oversees two recently launched certification programs.

The Library Support Staff Certification (LSSC) Program is open to library workers including individuals who reside outside of the United States. Qualified applicants must have completed at least a high school degree or its equivalent, commonly the passage of the General Educational Development or GED examination. Additionally, they need at least one year of salaried or volunteer experience in a library within the five years prior to their application,. LSSC applicants complete six courses or create a portfolio demonstrating the acquisition of skills related to six of ten sets of competency areas. The three required competency sets are foundations of library services, communications and teamwork, and technology. Applicants then choose to study in another three competency areas ranging

from adult readers' advisory services to supervision and management (American Library Association-Allied Professional Association, competency, 2012). LSSC opened in January 2010; by January 2012, eleven individuals had completed their LSSC.

Master's degree librarians with three or more years of supervisory experience can seek CPLA (Certified Public Library Administrator) recognition. Candidates complete four courses in core areas and three electives in content areas such as budget & finance, management of technology, and planning and management of buildings (ALA-APA, 2012, certified). By mid 2011, 45 individuals had completed their CPLA and an additional 139 were working toward their CPLA. CPLA recognition is open to librarians living outside of the United States, including those residing in Aotearoa/New Zealand.

#### **National Response to Continuing Education Needs within Librarianship**

A chronology of ALA's involvement in continuing education from the establishment of the ALA Office for Education in 1964 to the three Congresses on Professional Education held from 1999 to 2003 is outlined on ALA.org (ALA, 2003). Varlejs explains that ALA's historic involvement in education has focused on graduate level preparation for those entering the field (Varlejs, 2009). More recently, ALA has affirmed a stronger commitment to continuing education. In 2010, ALA Council, the policy setting body of ALA, approved "education and lifelong learning" as one of eight key action areas. Specifically, the key action areas form the outline for ALA's 2010-2015 Strategic Plan along with the mission, core values, and goals of the association. The goals identify the Association's focus over the next five years. Under the goal area of transforming libraries, ALA has declared its focus to "increase opportunities to share innovative practices and concepts across the profession, nationally and internationally, and among all libraries" as a priority (American Library Association, 2010). Continuing education and lifelong learning—for librarians and the communities they serve—is recognized as a necessity within the Core Competences of Librarianship (American Library Association, 2009).

With membership in ALA and its units dropping slightly, the organization increasingly is seeking ways to stay connected with and improve member services. This includes delivering continuous education directly to members. ALA offers a broad range of resources and events to anyone interested in libraries. The task for those interested is to identify those resources.

#### **The Professional Support Structure of ALA**

ALA has twenty-five offices at the national headquarters in Chicago and in the nation's capitol in Washington, D.C. Membership activities are distributed among eleven divisions, eighteen round tables, and hundreds of committees. Governance is structured around elected officers, an executive committee, an executive board, and a policy-setting council. Temporary Member-Interest-Groups (MIGs) can be established to provide structure to the exploration of topics of recent interest. All of these units conduct their work throughout the year. Membership efforts are supported by over 200 ALA staff members and managed by an executive director.

Within ALA there is one round table specifically devoted to continuing education, the Learning Round Table. Information about the Learning RT is found at the

ALAlearning.org portal, which includes information consisting of tweets, notices, and postings on a popular groups' blogs. Since 2005, the Round Table has hosted the LEARNRT Training Showcase at the ALA Annual Conference, a poster-session featuring twenty to thirty speakers.

Some ALA divisions have committees charged with continuing education tasks. The Association of Library Services to Children's Education Committee was established "to review the elements considered essential to the formal academic and continuing education of children's librarians. To inform the ALSC board of members needs and concerns regarding continuing education, and to assist in the initiation of programs and new publications to meet these needs and concerns" (American Library Association, Association of Library Services to Children, 2012). The Association of College & Research Libraries (ACRL) has an ACRL Professional Development Coordinating Committee (American Library Association, Association of College & Research Libraries, 2012). The Library Leadership & Management Association (LLAMA) has a Continuing Education Development Committee (American Library Association, Library Leadership & Management Association, 2012). The Public Relations and Marketing Section of LLAMA organizes the annual PR Xchange Best of Show competition, recognizing excellence in nine categories including annual reports, calendar of events, and children and young adult reading programs (American Library Association, 2012, ALA press release). The Public Library Association has a Continuing Education Advisory Group (American Library Association, Public Library Association, 2012, PLA Committees). ALA units share updates on their continuing education activities at the annual meetings of the ALA Education Assembly that takes place at the ALA Annual Conference each summer.

While some ALA Divisions, including the Public Library Association and the American Association of School Libraries, host their own conferences or other training events, much of the energy within these numerous units culminate at the two annual events: the ALA Midwinter meeting, held in January or February, and the ALA annual conference which takes place in late June or early July. To provide scale to ALA's activities, consider what happens during the ALA Annual Conference, an event that still often draws an attendance of over 20,000 people to 2,000 activities that occur on-site over a four-day period. The annual conference features unit sponsored or co-sponsored continuing education sessions ranging from pre-conference workshops, keynote speaker presentations, to awards ceremonies, and social events such as a scholarship bash providing entertainment while raising money for ALA scholarship funds and, new this year, an inauguration brunch to welcome the 2012-2013 ALA President, Maureen Sullivan, to her year of service.

The International Relations Round Table (IRRT) organizes conference activities with the needs and interests of international delegates in mind. IRRT announces an open competition six months before the annual conference, calling for proposals for presentations to be given at the pre-conference, the papers session, and the international poster sessions. The IRRT Chair also organizes a special program addressing a variety of topics. He or she is open to considering suggestions for speakers. IRRT also organizes an international visitors' center and the popular international reception at which the recipients of the year's Presidential Citations for Innovative International Library Projects are presented and celebrated. All IRRT committees accept virtual members although the International Reception, International Papers, International Posters, International Reception

Committees also need members who are able to be on site to assist at the events the committee hosts.

ALA is striving to provide more opportunities for members to engage with each other prior to, at conference, or after the event. The Networking Commons in the convention center allows physical space for small group gatherings that can either reserve a table in advance or organize a meet-up on site. Traditionally, ALA units planned their programs eighteen months in advance of the annual conference. ALA is incorporating new ways for members to share information at conference by collapsing the lead submission time to accommodate new presentation formats or coverage of more timely issues. The 2012 Annual Conference will also feature Ignite Sessions-- speakers presenting twenty slides on a topic over five minutes—and 45-minute Conversation Starter discussions on new topics. A virtual conference will take place after the ALA Annual Conference, featuring speakers who were unable to present at Annual. Conversation Starters, Ignite Sessions, and Virtual Presentations are accepted through a vetting process with public voting and input from ALA staff and an advisory group.

#### **Opportunities Provided with ALA Membership**

ALA membership brings many perquisites—including a print magazine (*American Libraries*), a weekly online newsletter (AL Direct and, soon, an international version), access to an online jobline (JobList.org), discounts on ALA publications, products, and graphics, and conference and meeting registration discounts. The basic ALA dues rate for international members is \$78 USD a year; additional dues are charged for round table or division membership (American Library Association, 2011, International Membership).

ALA units offer numerous fee-based online courses and webinars. Registration rates are based on membership level and vary depending on whether a registrant is a member of ALA and a member of the unit hosting the course or webinar. Event registration lists international attendance rates as well as rates for group participation.

A sampling of online courses currently or recently offered includes:

- “Children with Disabilities in the Library,” a six-week course hosted by the Association of Library Services to Children (ALSC)
- “Connecting with ‘Tween Readers,” a four-week course hosted by the Association of Library Services to Children (ALSC)
- “From 0 to 60: Implement eBooks in Your Library Program in 4 Weeks,” hosted by the American Association of School Libraries (AASL)
- “Inquiring Minds Want to Know: Infusing Literacy Skills into the Inquiry Process,” a four-week course hosted by the American Association of School Libraries (AASL)
- “Mobile Apps: What You Need to Know,” a three-week course hosted by the Association of College & Research Libraries (ACRL)
- “The Reference Interview,” hosted by the Reference and User Services Association (RUSA)

- “Introduction to Spatial Literacy and Online Mapping,” hosted by the Reference and User Services Association (RUSA)

Recent or current webinars are one to two hour events offered by ALA units that include:

- “Steps in a Digital Preservation Workflow,” hosted by the Association for Library Collections & Technical Services (ALCTS)
- “Storytelling 2.0,” hosted by the Association of Library Services to Children (ALSC)
- “Every Child Ready to Read: New Conversations on Research, Relationships and Partnerships,” hosted by the Association of Library Services to Children (ALSC)
- “Embedded Librarians: Integrating Information Literacy Instruction at the Point of Need,” offered through the Association of College & Research Libraries (ACRL)
- “Being an Effective Facilitator,” offered through the Association of Specialized and Cooperative Library Agencies (ASCLA)
- “A Person of Interest: Safety and Security in the Library,” offered through the Library Leadership & Management Association (LLAMA)
- “Return on Investment in a Tough Economy: Defining the Value of the Academic Library,” provided by the Library Leadership & Management Association (LLAMA)
- “Creating a User-Centered Website for Your Library,” offered through the Public Library Association (PLA)
- “Ready, Set, Go! 30 Ways to Reach Reluctant Readers in 60 Minutes,” offered through the Young Adult Library Services Association (YALSA)

#### **Free Continuing Education Opportunities Not Requiring ALA Membership**

ALA.org also provides free resources that do not require ALA membership. These include online courses, archived conference presentations, webinars, event planning resources, and tool kits.

#### **Free Online Courses**

- **Turning the Page 2.0**

Anyone interested in libraries can register for “Turning the Page 2.0” a six-week online course on library advocacy developed with funding from The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation (American Library Association, Public Library Association, 2012, turning). Attendees can opt to register for a facilitated version or an unfacilitated option; both require a commitment of three hours of work per week including an hour within the class and two hours of class preparation. The facilitated format includes the option of participating online and receiving personalized feedback from the workshop facilitators. Content includes data from studies on how the public and elected representatives perceive the library, how to use these results in telling the story of your library while building leadership skills and community relationships, and how to ask your constituency for funding support. At the end of the course, registrants will have developed a customized Advocacy Work Plan.

- **Hosting Public Issues Forums in the Library**

On February 21, 2012, ALA issued a press release announcing a new free webinar series for librarians on how to host public issues forums (American Library Association, 2012, ALA press release: ALA Center).

This series is sponsored by two ALA units—ProgrammingLibrarian.org and the Center for Civic Life with funding through the ALA Cultural Communities Fund. The focus is on helping librarians learn how to organize and deliver public conversations about important—and sometimes difficult—topics. The two last sessions took place on April 24, 2012 and May 22, 2012. The first webinar covered how to moderate a discussion forum, while the second focused on basic management of the forum, from choosing the topic to preparing attendees.

#### **Archived Conference Presentations**

- **Trends in Library Training and Learning**

ALA's Learning Round Table and WebJunction, the public access computing community portal, co-hosted a two-day free online seminar in August 2011. Nationally known speakers including Char Booth and Sarah Houghton-Jan covered topics such as "Getting Admin Buy-In for Training" and "Happiness through Personal Learning." Audio, handouts, and chat logs are available (WebJunction, 2011).

#### **Free Webinars**

ALA offers a number of free stand-alone webinars that are archived after the initial presentation.

- The ALA Washington Office hosted recent webinars on "Digitizing Hidden Colleges: Success Stories from Small and Medium-Sized Digitization Projects" and "Confronting the Future of Public Libraries" (American Library Association, Washington Office, 2011).
- One thousand viewers attended the live free webinar, "Job Hunting for Today's Libraries in Today's Job Market," offered by the Library Leadership & Management Association (LLAMA). The slides and video are still free on the LLAMA website (American Library Association, Library Leadership & Management Association, 2011).
- Free webinars are offered from the Public Library Association including "New Lessons in Library Leadership," "Every Child Ready to Read Sneak Peek Webinar," and "Nancy Pearl Presents: Books That Make Great Gifts." Find the links on the PLA website at <http://www.ala.org/pla/onlinelearning/webinars/ondemand> (American Library Association, Public Library Association, 2012, on-demand).

- Free webinars through the Young Adult Library Services Association (YALSA) include “Don’t Get Lost in Translation: Connect with Your Teens through Summer Reading” and “Programming for Teen Read Week” (American Library Association, Young Adult Library Services Association, 2012).
- ProgrammingLibrarian.org provides links to free webinars on topics including “Ten Tips for Books Programs for Babies” and “Museum/Library Partnerships That Work!” (ProgrammingLibrarian.org, 2011).
- Advocacy University is a content-rich area developed by the newest ALA Office, the Office of Library Advocacy. This area contains a suite of webinars that help librarians perform in their role as advocates for libraries (American Library Association, Office of Library Advocacy, 2011).

### **Free Event Planning Support**

ALA provides support for a number of national library celebrations. ALA.org provides background on these “Celebration Week and Promotion Events” along with promotional materials such as bookmarks, posters, and press documents. These events range from Teen Tech Week to Preservation Week and the new Digital Learning Day scheduled for 2013 (American Library Association, 2012, celebration). ProgrammingLibrarian.org provides a calendar of these events. While American-centric (e.g., American Artist Appreciation Month), some events are also acknowledged internationally such as Global Youth Service Day, Earth Day, and International Day of Peace. (ProgrammingLibrarian.org, 2012) The ProgrammingLibrary.org website was developed with by the American Library Association’s Public Programs Office with funding from the United States Institute of Museum and Library Services. The main features of the website are a library of resources and a blog. The library of resources has strong basic content on topics such as author events, marketing, program planning, and program evaluation.

### **InterNational Gaming Day@Your Library**

On November 11, 2011, over 1,400 hundred libraries around the world participated in the ALA sponsored National Gaming Day@Your Library (American Library Association, 2011, national). The day’s events are organized to demonstrate that libraries sponsor a range of events and services with collections expanding beyond the printed word. ALA coordinates a national video game tournament and works with gaming companies to distribute free sets of selected board games. The initiative’s website provides a free press kit with logos, customizable InterNational Gaming Day posters, and sample materials to distribute to the press. Sample materials include a draft letter to the editor of local news and draft public service announcements (PSA) for use on radio programming.

**Children's Day/Book Day. El Dia de Los Ninos/El Dia de Los Libros** is designated as a day to celebrate children's reading in any language. A tool kit along with further information is available (American Library Association, Association for Library Services to Children, 2012).

### **Free Tool Kits**

Tool kits provide packaged background information on a variety of topics. They usually include practical advice, abstracts of case studies, statistics, guidelines, quotations, and/or other resources such as bibliographies and advice about working with the media.

Tool kits abound on ALA.org. Topics include:

- AASL Advocacy Toolkit (American Library Association, American Association of School Librarians, 2012)
- Advocating for Better Salaries and Pay Equity Toolkit (American Library Association- Allied Professional Association, 2007)
- Advocating in a Tough Economy Toolkit (American Library Association, Office for Library Advocacy, Advocacy University, 2009)
- Guide to Building Support for Your Tribal Library (American Library Association, Office of Literacy and Outreach Services, 2008)
- Out in the Library: Materials, Displays and Services for the Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, and Transgender Community (American Library Association, Office for Intellectual Freedom, 2006)
- Parent Advocate Toolkit (American Library Association, American Association of School Librarians, 2012)
- Privacy Tool Kit (American Library Association, Office for Intellectual Freedom)
- The Small but Powerful Guide to Winning Big Support for Your Rural Library (American Library Association, Office of Literacy and Outreach Services, 2011)

### **Writing and Collaborating**

In addition to exploring the continuing education options available through ALA.org, there are many opportunities for contributing to ALA publications or collaborating with ALA members. A listing of ALA and ALA-APA sponsored publications is available online (American Library Association, 2012, American Library Association periodicals). Of special note is *International Leads*, the quarterly newsletter of IRRT. IRRT also sponsors the Sister Libraries Initiative, details of which can be found on the wiki. (American Library Association, International Relations Round Table, 2011).

### **Recognizing Excellence Within You**

Finally, many ALA Awards are open to applicants around the world and in some cases there are few nominations. A listing of awards and their criteria across ALA units is found on ala.org (American Library Association, 2012, awards).

One noteworthy award that libraries outside of the United States can apply for is the John Cotton Dana Library Public Relations Award. Called “the most prestigious award of the American Library Association,” the JCD Library Public Relations Award recognizes up to eight outstanding public relations initiatives. In 2011, the Edmonton (Canada) Public Library received a JCD award for “Rebranding the Edmonton Public Library” and other libraries in Hamilton, Ontario, Richmond, British Columbia; Calgary, Alberta; Dartmouth, Nova Scotia have received JCD awards one or more times. Recipients are recognized at a formal reception and each receives a \$10,000 USD grant. For a listing of previous winners from 2001, see the website (John Cotton Dana Public Relations Award, 2012).

### **Summary**

Whether or not you can physically attend an ALA event or whether you can manage to pay ALA dues, you can take advantage of ALA products and services. As Chair-Elect of ALA’s IRRT for 2012-2013, I invite you to share these offerings and keep ALA in mind as you develop your own continuous professional development plan.

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## Cybertopia, Dystopia or More of the Same—Recent Writings on the Unknowable Future of the Internet

Naughton, John. (2011). From Gutenberg to Zuckerberg: What you really need to know about the Internet. London: Quercus.

Carr, Nicholas. (2010). The shallows: What the Internet is doing to our brains. New York: W.W. Norton.

Postman, Neil. (2005). Amusing ourselves to death: Public discourse in the age of show business. Rev ed. New York: Penguin.

Shirky, Clay. (2010). Cognitive surplus: Creativity and generosity in a connected age. New York: Penguin.

Morozov, Evgeny. (2011). The Net delusion: The dark side of Internet freedom. New York: Public Affairs.

One suspects that the title From Gutenberg to Zuckerberg was the choice of its publisher rather than of its author, John Naughton, because the sense it gives of having arrived at a destination is precisely the opposite of the book's message. As he describes it, the Internet is very much a work in the early days of its progress and in the history of media technology there have been many more beginnings than endings. So Mark Zuckerberg is not the culminating point of the last 450 years of cultural change, rather a name that makes for a clever bit of wordplay in the title.

On the other hand Johannes Gutenberg has never had it so good. Ever since Marshall McLuhan plucked him from obscurity in the 1960s, he has been the brand name for the last major media revolution in the western world, the fifteenth century invention of movable type. Over time this deceptively simple innovation led to the mass availability of affordable books, the rapid spread of literacy, the widespread use of languages other than Latin in written texts and the loosening of church and state controls over individual minds and lives; this in turn brought about the reformation in religion, the rapid development of science and industry, the development of new literary forms like the novel, the growth of participatory government and a culture of enquiry and debate, in short most of those things that make the modern world different from the fifteenth century.

If the fifty years before the publication of The Gutenberg Galaxy in 1962 had seen the spread of other mass media such as recorded music, cinema, radio and television, these had still not brought about a comparable degree of fundamental change—it has only been the rise of the

Internet that has raised the possibility that we are experiencing another media-led cultural revolution of Gutenberg proportions. If we take the impact of culture on human life seriously, and if we understand the impact of technology on culture, then this makes it a matter of the first importance. Naughton makes the point that those involved in and affected by historical revolutions generally have only a hazy perception of events as they unfold, and even less of a grasp on their long-term implications. Although we now have a much greater awareness of the processes and possibilities of technologically-driven change than was possible in the fifteenth century, we have not, either collectively or individually, had much success at predicting the developments that have unfolded over the past twenty years; most attempts to do so have generally been based on extrapolating the most recent set of changes out into the indefinite future. By 1473, Naughton points out, eighteen years into the Gutenberg era, no one would have suspected that historians of the future would come to credit his invention with the Reformation and the rise of science, and we can expect similarly unpredictable and substantial change and disruption this time around. This might seem like an obvious point—and rather a disappointing one for those wanting a crystal ball approach—but, prior to the introduction of the Web in the early 1990s, mass participation in the Internet had not been widely foreseen and the dotcom crash of the late 1990s was widely perceived as the passing of a geeky fad, compared by some to CB radio. At that time Amazon was operating at a loss and social networking was something that happened at conferences and other face-to-face occasions.

Naughton takes Gutenberg seriously. It is easy to look back at the past and assume that what happened could not have happened otherwise, or that it resulted from the operation of abstract forces of "progress," in which contingency, luck, coincidence and individual lives played no part, but the unique skills that Gutenberg brought to his enterprise—metallurgy, metal casting, ink making and press construction (derived from winemaking), not to mention the raising of finance—suggest that the development of modern printing in Europe was not an inevitability, at least not at that time and in that manner. This is important for our understanding of the development of the Internet.

The social and political consequences of the print revolution may have taken centuries to emerge, but that they did so at all was due to changes brought about in human cognition and the way in which people interacted with one another and the world. Where reading had been the preserve of the very few, and confined almost entirely to the religious domain and to a very limited number of texts, the cheap replication of large numbers of texts created two new entities, the writer and the reader. Reading was essentially a private activity, but it transcended space and time and put the individual in touch with other minds and thinking. Over time, reading made possible the extended development and refinement of ideas, and made a space for a richer and more concentrated thought life than was available in an oral society. For the writer it became possible to reach and shape an audience, to make contact with those unknown individuals who might be prepared to listen, understand and act on their words. (Naughton also credits printing with the rise of "individualism," but this is a debatable point. Arguments that people in the past, and those living in oral cultures, were

and are less fully formed than those living in literate and print-based cultures ignore the fact that the evidence is necessarily skewed in favour of those who are able to leave a written record. It could even be argued that people in oral societies, with more highly developed memories, more extensive networks of relations and connections and a shared store of anecdote, legend and history lead richer interpersonal and "internal" lives than most citizens of modern mass societies.)

Turning to the Internet, Naughton adopts an ecological metaphor to describe the interaction between media and human society: "Any change in the environment – in the media which support social and cultural life – will have corresponding effects on the organism." Identifying cyberspace as "a place all on its own" he recounts its utopian beginnings as a "a space in which corporations and commercial interests were largely absent." In 1996, John Perry Barlow's Declaration of the Independence of Cyberspace ringingly declared it to be "an act of nature [that] grows itself through our collective actions" quite separate from that other space in which governments and businesses operate. "Where there are problems," Barlow declared, "we will ... address them by our means." Quite who "we" were was less clear but it probably didn't include the massive commercial interests like Amazon or Google who were already joining the early adopters. However, the idealistic and anarchic strain of the early Internet is not to be lightly dismissed, and Naughton points to its ongoing influence in such areas as wikileaks and the open software movement.

Alongside this utopianism there has been a equally strong dystopian counterpoint—the sudden mass availability of unfiltered information included, as newspapers obsessively pointed out, bomb-making recipes, pornography and, as blogging and other self-publishing channels became available, a cacophony of opinion, misinformation, disinformation and mindless trivia. What was worse the Internet was seen to be interfering with the very way in which our minds work, psychically rewiring us into shallow easily-distracted multitaskers and undoing much of Gutenberg's good work.

Naughton's third chapter, *For the Net, Disruption is a Feature Not a Bug*, is a brief history of the Internet, looking at those events that could have happened otherwise and arguing that continuing change is built into the very fabric of the network. The TCP/IP protocol grew out of the US Defense Department's ARPAnet project in the 1970s, and was deliberately designed to be both robust and flexible by having no centralised control and by not being optimised for any specific application. It was simply a system for sending ones and zeroes between points on the network and the system itself was agnostic as to what they were, forming the basis of our so-called Net neutrality. It was the openness of this architecture that made possible a number of what Naughton calls first and second order surprises, things that were possible because, fundamentally, nothing that was possible was disallowed.

The first of the first-order surprises was the World Wide Web, developed by Tim Berners-Lee at the CERN laboratory in Geneva in the early 1990s. Naughton gives us a nice account of

how a relatively simple set of protocols (HTML), designed to allow scientists in different parts of the world to share documents, was both powerful and "open" enough to become the main road on the "information superhighway." (Naughton largely ignores the pre-Web Internet culture of the 1980s based around online bulletin boards, Usenet groups and FTP, and takes no account of the possibility that another protocol such as Gopher, also under development in the early 1990s and with a less permissive structure than HTML, could have achieved the critical number of users, the so-called "network effect," that would have made it the main road instead.) Although the work on HTML was carried out relatively quickly once the resources were in place, Berners-Lee had been thinking about his document-sharing system since the mid 1980s and his various proposals had been greeted with only lukewarm enthusiasm by his superiors. In the end it was only the relatively open culture of the non-profit-driven research lab environment that allowed the project to proceed, and we possibly owe the openness of the Web (the "end-to-end principle") to the leanness of this environment. The really important point, however, looking back at the history of HTML, is that it might just as easily not have happened, or that we might have been left with a number of competing protocols and no superhighway at all. Alternatively, had the Web come out of a commercial environment things could have been very different—Microsoft Web or iWeb! None of us has ever directly paid for a Web browser, for example, but it would be highly unusual for a knowledge worker in the modern world not to have made use of paid-for word processing at some stage—most of us do so on a daily basis. iWeb in particular presents an intriguing prospect—an enticing but expensive multimedia digital paradise running on any Apple device and open to any developer to create content of which Apple Inc approved and from which they took their cut.

Things that work reasonably well, as the Web does, tend to be taken for granted as part of the natural tendency of the world to progress, but in 1999 the second of Naughton's first-order surprises was indeed a great deal more surprising: Napster, the peer-to-peer (i.e. computer-to-computer) system created by a nineteen-year-old, that allowed digital music files to be shared between any two Internet users. At this point the true meaning of Web openness became dramatically apparent; Shawn Fanning's system involved a massive breach of copyright, and was shut down within a couple of years, but there had been absolutely no technical barrier to its creation and dissemination. What was worse for the stunned and disrupted recording industry, by the time Napster disappeared the mp3 cat was well and truly out of the bag and peer-to-peer filesharing had become normalised and ineradicable.

The third first-order surprise was even more alarming and sinister in a way that Napster, which can be seen as an act of genuine, albeit illegal, generosity, was not. From the mid-1990s on, the sudden upsurge of connection to the Internet of millions of PCs, many operated by naïve users, created an ideal environment for the growth and spread of the malware, spyware, bots, botnets and spam that we still endure on an everyday basis. This is the downside of Internet openness; for example, the protocol under which email operates (SMTP) does not have a provision forcing senders to authenticate themselves, and therefore enables the low-risk and low-cost sending of massive amounts of spam that has in turn

significantly compromised the effectiveness of email (the first Internet application many of us used) as an everyday tool. Contrary to Barlow's declaration of independence, the "we" of cyberspace was really just the same old "us"—criminals, vandals, advertisers and just plain nuisances included—that we had been all along.

Naughton's second-order surprises, "innovations that built on the openness of the first-order surprises," are Wikipedia and Facebook, both examples of Web 2.0 or the participative Internet. As originally conceived of by Berners-Lee, the Web was essentially a read-only environment, a means of creating access to finished documents and other digital objects, but the needs of ecommerce had led to mechanisms through which users could interact with websites. By allowing users to talk back to it, the Web had gone from being a broadcast medium to a social one, and Web users now had the ability to become participants without going to the trouble of creating a website. There is not space here to discuss the pros and cons of Wikipedia as an academic information source, but its continued existence and the fact that it has become indispensable to many or most of us as an everyday fact-checker probably speaks for itself. Naughton quotes James Boyle on the subject of "cultural agoraphobia," that "we are very good at seeing the downsides and the dangers of open systems" [i.e. Wikipedia] but that "it's easier for us to understand the benefits of closed systems [i.e. Encyclopedia Britannica] and harder for us to see the downsides." Similarly with Facebook, the power of the Network Effect has made it, at least by my observation, the preferred social space for a generation of students, often displacing the formal (closed system) shared spaces provided by their own institutions as they create their own course-based (open system) Facebook groups away from the prying eyes of lecturers. It could be argued that blogging and Twitter are better examples of truly participative Web 2.0 applications, but Facebook probably earns its place purely in terms of penetration. There may be millions of blogs and bloggers, for example, but most people don't blog, whereas "everybody" (at least among active Web users) either "does" Facebook or has made a conscious decision not to. Wikipedia is similarly ubiquitous, appearing high in the lists of Google results and requiring a deliberate avoidance by those who choose not to use it. The network effect is a powerful force.

A persistent concern about the Web 2.0 is that it is "killing off" established media and professions, such as newspapers and journalism, and replacing them with the well-meaning, but lower value, work of amateurs in the form of bloggers. (Dan Rather called them "guys in pyjamas".) Naughton adopts an ecological approach, likening the newcomers to introduced species that inevitably change the environment they enter, but that eventually find their niche without necessarily displacing the previous inhabitants. Printing had already done this, lessening but not destroying the influence of the individual preacher in religion by making a variety of sermons available to believers, and in more recent times television had modified, but not displaced, newspapers, radios and cinema. Bloggers, he argues, have entered into a symbiotic relationship with journalists, able to keep stories going long after they would have disappeared from front pages or news bulletins, while the professional media provide wider exposure, larger financial resources and more solid credentials. The relationship between

the Guardian newspaper and WikiLeaks is an example of this; although it eventually dissolved into distrust on both sides (in itself a telling point and one that does not necessarily contradict Naughton's ecological thesis), this was only after the Guardian had allowed Julian Assange a greater visibility, credibility and freedom from interference ("freedom of the press" is still more secure for established media), while the Guardian in turn gained exclusive access to a mass of material from which high profile stories could be mined. The relationship between established media and bloggers is never an easy one, but this can work in our favour as consumers—obvious media mistakes are seized upon with glee by the blogosphere while professional journalism, or at least those sections of it that take professionalism seriously, continues for the time being as a reservoir of journalistic traditions, training and standards.

In the 1960s investigative journalism was a successful response to the threat posed by television news, but the Internet represents a more direct threat to the news media through its direct siphoning off of advertising revenues and there is as yet no obvious answer to this concern. In the final analysis, Naughton sees the traditional media as following a "lean-back" one-to-many broadcast model, while the way of the future is the "lean-forward" participative model. He is excited by the possibilities of what he terms Creativity 2.0 and Productivity 2.0, in particular the mass of do-it-yourself content that has flooded onto YouTube, such as the parodies of the Hitler movie Downfall that have the Führer complaining about, for example, Xbox 2 or the Wellywood sign. This is all very well, but somehow Naughton seems to be straining to find a killer example of user-generated creativity here. Some of the Downfall clips are indeed very funny but they depend for their effect on the original film, not only on its production values but on the fact that it is a serious and well-known mainstream work. His other example is Charlie Bit My Finger, truly a YouTube highlight but really a lucky accident and less than a minute in length. He is on firmer ground talking about the importance of remix culture, the disaggregation and recombination of both blogs and newspapers through rss feeds and, increasingly, through Twitter and Facebook. The future, he argues, will favour smaller units, songs rather than albums, headlines and paragraphs rather than newspapers, extracts rather than books—an increasing granularisation and personalisation of the content we chose to consume. There are precedents for this of course in the "commonplace books" of early modern Europe (the original personal mashups) but sampling and remixing are now happening on an unprecedented scale. Writing of "the lumbering dinosaurs that dominated the old media ecosystem," he observes that "small wonder that they feel depressed."

If part of our reaction to all of this is simply to long for past simplicities, then there is no good news. Complexity is an inbuilt feature of our new reality and is not going to go away. In an interconnected world, the individual person or enterprise has less ability to foresee events and make plans, and a great deal of activity takes place outside of formally organised structures such as marketplaces or educational institutions. Where new structures, such as TradeMe or eBay, have come into being they have created their own sets of rules along with new sets of possibilities and risks. This breaking of barriers has extended even to the

computer itself, with desktop and laptop computers no longer operating as standalone digital domains but giving way instead to the new realities of cloud and mobile computing. The Internet itself, Naughton points out, has become our computer, and with this there is a necessary trade-off in terms of both privacy and autonomy. Meanwhile the Web continues to evolve in terms of both functionality and complexity, with rss feeds allowing us to personalise our web interactions and APIs (Application Programming Interfaces) giving web designers the tools to create mashups from disparate pieces of web content, such as the use of Google maps on local body or commercial websites. According to Tim Berners-Lee the next step is the Semantic Web, where artificial intelligence will allow search engines to interpret the meanings of words on web pages rather than simply carrying out crude (but effective) character-matching operations as they do at present.

Space does not permit a detailed examination of the arguments around copyright here, but they are obviously fundamental to many of the issues around the Internet as a channel for the trade and exchange of cultural objects in digital formats. Naughton makes the point that when the various copying technologies, firstly analogue systems (which created imperfect copies and carried no inbuilt transmission mechanisms) and then digital ones (which created perfect copies with no technical barriers to transmission thanks to the open architecture of the Internet) came into use in the second half of the twentieth century, they did so in a period when popular culture was heavily professionalised, in fact industrialised, and the resulting clash of interests has been particularly strong. Copyright is broken, open to profit-gouging (academic publishing) or heavy-handed legal abuse (see the case Kookaburra Sits in the Old Gum Tree v Men at Work) on the one hand while being largely ignored on the other, with the result that the law is held in contempt. Digital rights management has been the industry's response and, in my view, has some chance of success if a light and customer-friendly regime is put in place. The recently introduced Spotify could be part of the answer – it is based on a low-cost pay-for-service model with content "borrowed" from the Cloud rather than owned and locally-stored. Not all content owners are happy with this model however and it is likely that copyright will be the site of ongoing culture wars as a read-only industry strives to survive in a read-write environment.

The book concludes with an extended examination of two dystopian novels. George Orwell's 1984 offers a scary vision of a future in which life and thought are under tight control by central government and in some respects foreshadows the surveillance society we are beginning to take for granted (and which the Internet hugely facilitates) while Aldous Huxley's Brave New World represents instead a society in which the individual is trivialised and controlled by pleasure and entertainment. Naughton posits that we may have already progressed beyond the original open digital citizenship of the early Internet into a space largely controlled by the new corporate giants of the Internet industry, such as Google and Facebook, who both spy on us (with our "consent" usually conferred by mindlessly clicking on the I Agree button without reading what we've just signed up for) and delight us, while all the while selling information about us to their advertisers. In the short term this may not seem to matter very much—I never really notice ads for example—but what it means for the

Internet is that it is being shaped with the interests of those companies and their clients in mind, rather than those of the digital citizenry at large. Naughton quotes Tim Wu, whose book *The Master Switch* has described a cycle of innovation and openness in communications technologies followed by a narrowing of control and eventual monopoly. There is an upside to this of course, as anyone who has used iTunes with iPod and/or iPad will tell you, but it brings us into a quite different sort of utopia than that envisaged by John Perry Barlow.

If From Gutenberg to Zuckerberg reached a somewhat depressing conclusion, Nicholas Carr's *The Shallows: How the Internet is Changing the Way We Think, Read and Remember* could be enough to put you off going online entirely. I must admit coming to it with a degree of scepticism —alarmist titles and subtitles beginning with "How The ..." are not particularly to my taste—but found myself frequently nodding at what I was reading with a degree of rueful recognition. The book is a fully-developed treatment of the argument he made in his 2008 essay in Atlantic Magazine "Is Google Making Us Stupid?" which was that extended use of the Internet had changed the way in which we read and in which our minds deal with text. In comparison with the deep and extended reading of books, when we read on the Internet "our ability to interpret text, to make the rich mental connections that form when we read deeply and without distraction, remains largely disengaged."

Drawing on the research of development psychologist Maryanne Wolf, he argues that the debate about content on the Internet (dumbing down or digital nirvana) overshadowed the more fundamental question of its effects on the way in which we engage with, understand, store and recall information. Once again, the key figure had been Marshall McLuhan who had recognised, in his memorable phrase, that "the medium is the message," that our brains are shaped by the tools they make use of and that someone living in a largely sound-based information environment thinks in a different way from those who primarily absorb information through print. In a print-based world, for example, we make less use of memory for things that we are able to write down, but have a highly-developed word recognition facility, a larger vocabulary (being sourced more widely than simply from people with whom we directly interact) and the ability to follow, and to create, lines of thought connecting widely separated ideas, observations or domains. It is this last facility, concentrated deep reading and extended thinking, that resulted from a "virtuous cycle," whereby growing literacy had created a demand for more writing which eventually led to the sorts of lives that were situated largely within the print domain. Carr quotes the words of Wallace Stevens to describe this synergy—"The reader became the book."

It's a pretty fair point that the hyperlinked Web document and the modern multi-windowed computer are designed to distract us away from this sort of single-object deep concentration. As we read and write, if we do so in a digital environment, we also check email, follow links from the text to the dictionary or Wikipedia which may lead us to other links, receive interruptions from Facebook friends commenting on our latest status, and, if we are not careful, end up watching the proverbial snake swallowing an egg on YouTube.

To me Carr is at his best describing his own personal experience, and although the scientific evidence he uses to back up his claims is impressive I'm not sure that we needed quite so much of it in order to get the point. That the Web and our other electronic media are distracting is pretty well-understood and the need to carry out extended mental work often requires us to retreat into a quiet zone. Whether we are undergoing a fundamental psychological change is less clear, and it could be argued that despite all the distraction and noise the Internet has still tended to reinforce the importance of text among our media resources. Carr also tends to paint all change as bad, which in the end has the effect of diminishing his argument. While it is true that reading a book on an e-reader is different from reading it in print, it is not so markedly different as to obviate any advantages we might find in the digital format. (Shakespeare did not write in order to be read, for example, but his work has survived the format-shifting remarkably well and we can be grateful for being able to look his words up in a book whenever we wish to.) Rather more interesting is his attack on artificial intelligence and by implication, although he does not name it, the semantic web. One of the more inflated claims made by Google has been that eventually their search engine wouldn't just find information for us, but would be, in Larry Page's words, "as smart as people—or smarter." In fact, Carr argues, AI research has come to something of a dead-end, unable to reduce the workings of our minds to a set of algorithms that would be able to interpret the difference between "time flies like an arrow" and "fruit flies like a banana."

Both Naughton and Carr look back approvingly to the scholar and critic Neil Postman, whom Naughton in fact describes as "the most compelling media commentator of my lifetime." Postman's *Amusing Ourselves to Death: Public Discourse in the Age of Show Business* is a sustained and sobering attack on television and its role in dumbing us down and reducing the level of public debate to set positions and soundbites. As with Carr, there is much to recognise and approve of here, but by the end of the book the overall impression is that Postman hasn't liked any new media since Gutenberg and that, in his view, the world has been going to the dogs for the past two hundred years. In fact he explicitly argues that "in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, American public discourse, being rooted in the bias of the printed word, was serious, inclined toward rational argument, and, therefore, made up of meaningful content."

So when, we might ask, did things start going wrong, when did we begin to turn from serious to show biz? Postman can put a date on this; it was the invention of the telegraph in 1837 that "destroyed the prevailing definition of information and ... gave a new meaning to public discourse." By breaking the bounds of local community, where all news was immediately relevant and useful, the telegraph, and later the telephone, cinema, radio and television, had made available a diet of sensation and trivia to displace the serious and rational discourse of his beloved eighteenth century. In support of this argument he quotes Henry David Thoreau, complaining of the prospect of a trans-Atlantic telegraph that "perchance the first news that will leak through into the broad flapping American ear will be that

Princess Adelaide [daughter of Queen Victoria] has the whooping cough." I have a problem with this oft-repeated quote, which is that it precedes the American experience of the telegraph, and predicts rather than describes its effect—in other words, it is proof that the tendency towards triviality was well and truly present before the era of electronic communications. More generally, Postman's veneration of the "rational" eighteenth century makes him guilty of the golden age fallacy, a variation of the progressive fallacy which places the ideal human society not in the future but in the recent past.

By way of contrast, Clay Shirky takes a thoroughly optimistic view of the networked era while being crisply dismissive of the claims of deep extended reading; he has said of War and Peace that "it's too long, and not so interesting." This may sound somewhat glib, but his book *Cognitive Surplus: Creativity and Generosity in a Connected Age* displays a good deal of sense, learning and extended thought alongside its sometimes breathless positivity. In particular Shirky does something that the three other authors under consideration do not; where they see society very much as being shaped and determined by its media choices, he asks a more basic question, which is about the factors that determine the media choices we individually and collectively make. Like Postman, he identifies television as the dominant medium of the late twentieth century, but rather than placing the blame for its shallowness entirely on the medium he looks instead at its social meaning, likening it to the epidemic of gin drinking in eighteenth century London, which led at the time to a similar degree of moral panic ("mother's ruin") and calls for regulation. The root cause of the gin problem was not gin itself, which had been around for some time, but the social disruption caused by industrialisation and urbanisation. He does not deny that excessive gin consumption had serious consequences in itself, and that it needed to be controlled, but suggests that the gin culture was a necessary stage of adjustment to a new social reality, and that it declined once sufficient social supports were in place for the urban population to exist more comfortably.

According to Shirky the social change underlying the television (and, by extension, the Internet) epidemic was the sudden availability of unstructured free time in people's lives from the 1940s on. Where work, both outside the home and domestic, and child rearing, had taken most of people's time, there was now a surplus of available hours in the day. Smaller families and geographic separation from extended family and friends compounded this unlikely "problem" and the result was an epidemic of television watching which was, like gin, cheap, highly available and pleasantly anaesthetising, even if it did not, in the long run, lead to greater individual happiness. As an antidote to loneliness the box provided not only a family activity (reading tends to be a solitary pleasure) but also an endless supply of ready-made but fictional friends and companions.

Shirky is, then, no fan of television but he does, I think, correctly identify time availability, loneliness and social disconnection (despite "busy" modern lives we watch on average twenty hours of television a week) as the major factors underlying the heavy use and misuse of modern media. Turning to the Internet, he finds rich support for his argument in the rapid growth of Web 2.0, and this is where the "cognitive surplus" comes into play. In the

professional realm, the development of open source software like the Apache webserver has been a notable cooperative achievement, but Shirky's true interest lies with the cooperative power of ordinary people. Taking issue with nay-sayers like Andrew Keen (who in *The Cult of the Amateur* likened bloggers to monkeys) Shirky points to Wikipedia as one example among many of the power of the Internet to harness and organise disparate and geographically separated groups into powerfully functional units, comparing this effect to the "invisible college" of scientifically-minded individuals who came together around the chemist Robert Boyle in the mid-seventeenth century and went on to form the Royal Society. Social networking has made it easy to coordinate otherwise isolated individuals into ad hoc teams for highly specific purposes, with a speed and efficiency that could hardly have been imagined even ten years ago—the Student Volunteer Army that came together after the first Canterbury earthquake of 2010 and then used Facebook for a second and much more dramatic deployment in February 2011 is a striking local example.

For Shirky any positive engagement with social media is preferable to the passivity of being a mere consumer, and every posting of a lolcat to ICanHasCheezburgers is a piece of cultural production. Naturally this brings to light a great deal that is banal, repetitive, trivial or nasty (check out the comments made about operatic sopranos on YouTube) but this is only to be expected from mass participation and may be simply a stage we have to go through on the way to achieving greater collective maturity. As he points out, mass participation in any endeavour will bring down the average performance but will not affect the top end, so we still have plenty of items of high cultural value. At its best mass participative behaviour can lead to powerful social action. Shirky gives the example of the Association of Pub-going, Loose and Forward Women in the Indian city of Mangalore, formed to combat controls on women's social freedoms, but sometimes this type of activity can begin spontaneously within groups formed for different purposes. In the United Kingdom Mumsnet was originally founded as a source of advice on parenting issues but has broadened out to become a powerful and influential forum on domestic violence and rape, to the point that these are now characterised as "mumsnet issues."

It would, I think, be wrong to characterise Shirkey as a wholly uncritical cheerleader for the Internet as a social and political force for good, but he does position himself very much at that end of the spectrum. A useful counterpoint to Cognitive Surplus is Evgeny Morozov's *The Net Delusion: The Dark Side of Internet Freedom*. Morozov is a startlingly young Belarussian with an exceptionally mature grasp on the geopolitical and social realities of life in authoritarian countries, and he takes particular issue with the notion that it was the battle of ideas and the influence of western media that brought an end to communism in eastern Europe and its replacement with democracy, and with its neoconservative corollary that the same thing is about to happen with the Internet. Far from being bumbling print-age technophobes, modern authoritarians are technically savvy, whether it comes to flooding the Web with cheap and diverting entertainments, using lists of Facebook friends to compile an inventory of political suspects, or corralling the efforts of nationalist bloggers and commenters in support of their own political agendas. Using examples from a variety of

contexts, Morozov skewers the widely held belief that the Internet has inherent qualities that favour the western democratic consensus, and points out that the repetition of this position by American government officials makes it easy for the Chinese government to paint demands for Internet freedom as simply another form of political interference. All governments face demands to curb absolute Internet freedom, and one doesn't have to give in entirely to moral and political relativism to recognise that one country's freedom fighter is another's terrorist. On top of this, the same tools that can coordinate political demonstrations can also be used to facilitate widespread harassment of minorities and even genocide. We are already a long way from saving the world one Facebook petition at a time.

As a profession, librarians have engaged with the Internet longer, more intensively and perhaps more creatively than most and this may create an illusion that we are successfully riding the tiger. The idea of change itself has perhaps become such a cliche that we no longer take it seriously, but this would also be a mistake. Looking at these five books I can recognise within myself and my colleagues important elements from each of these authors. Neil Postman's passionate commitment to enlightenment values and the primacy of the book still underlies much of what we feel, even as we recognise that the world moves forward and that we need to curb our nostalgic anger. Nicholas Carr provides a powerful reminder that the voices of distraction need to be resisted and that, in the end, computers and networks are machines and tools and we are people and we do well to keep the two categories at arm's length. Clay Shirky on the other hand knows that the world is always, and never, going to hell in a handbasket and that we need to look for the positive human values in even those things that we are most tempted to deplore and to always seek to explain as well as to condemn. Evgeny Morozov, however, is a timely minder that Net neutrality includes political and moral neutrality and that powerful tools lose none of their power in the wrong hands. If you have time to read only one book, though, it should probably be John Naughton's comprehensive account of where we are, how we got here and why we don't really have a clue where we are going.