

Resources on the Net

Past, Present, and Future of Academic Libraries

Compiled by Chris Bober

The following is a continuation of Resources on the Net: Past, Present, and Future of Academic Libraries, published in the Summer 2009 issue of Education Libraries.

Early Predictions

Campbell, J.D. (2006, January February). Changing a cultural icon: The academic library as a virtual destination. *Educause Review Magazine*, 41(1),16-31. Retrieved from <http://net.educause.edu/ir/library/pdf/ERM0610.pdf>

Campbell calls into question the future of academic libraries in the light of advances in digital technology and what will become of the physical library in the next decade. He believes that the primary role of the academic library will be as a virtual destination. He discusses the seven "creative and useful services that have evolved within academic libraries in the digital age: providing quality learning spaces; creating metadata; offering virtual reference services; teaching information literacy; choosing resources and managing resource licenses; collecting and digitizing archival materials; maintaining digital repositories."

Lewis, D.W. (2007, September). A Strategy for Academic Libraries in the First Quarter of the 21st Century. *College & Research Libraries*, 68(5), 418-434. Retrieved from Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis Scholar Works Repository website: <https://scholarworks.iupui.edu/handle/1805/1592>

Lewis presents a survival strategy for the near future of academic libraries. The five points of the strategy are "1) complete the migration from print to electronic collections; 2) retire legacy print collections; 3) redevelop library space; 4) reposition library and information tools, resources, and expertise; and 5) migrate the focus of collections from purchasing materials to curating content."

Mullins, J. L., Allen, F. R., & Hufford, J. R. (2007, April). Top ten assumptions for the future of academic libraries and librarians: A report from the ACRL research committee. *College & Research Libraries News*, 68(4). Retrieved from Association of College & Research Libraries website: <http://www.ala.org/ala/mgrps/divs/acrl/publications/crlnews/2007/apr/tenassumptions.cfm>

In 2007, the ACRL Research Committee prepared a planning document for the next ten years that reported on the most pertinent assumptions for the future of academic libraries and librarians. The report was not meant as a forecast, but as an encouragement "to embrace the changes and opportunities that are already occurring and to build into their libraries a culture that will continue to embrace change and opportunities that the future will bring."

LIS Educational Challenges

Aharony, N. (2008, January). Web 2.0 in U.S. LIS schools: Are they missing the boat? *Ariadne*, 54. Retrieved from <http://www.ariadne.ac.uk/issue54/aharony/>

Aharony asks whether library and information science schools in the United States are familiar with new technological changes and innovations, and whether the different Web 2.0 applications are being integrated into the curriculum. An examination of the web sites as well as a survey of 59 U.S. LIS programs revealed that only a small number of programs offered a specific course on Web 2.0 or even courses which explored basic Web 2.0 concepts. The author recommends "that the different issues and applications of Web 2.0 be thoroughly taught as a separate course in the LIS curriculum and not as partial topics in another course. Expanding the curriculum will equip new generations of librarians with competencies and skills that fit a modern, dynamic and changing work environment. This course should include theoretical explanation as well as practical experience of the various applications of Web 2.0 such as: blogs, wikis, RSS, flickr, collaborative favorites, tagging and Folksonomies, instant messages, social networks etc."

Choi, Y., & Rasmussen, E. (2006, September). What is needed to educate future digital librarians. *D-Lib Magazine*, 12(9). Retrieved from <http://www.dlib.org/dlib/september06/choi/09choi.html>

Choi and Rasmussen's concern is that recent LIS graduates lack the necessary skills to work in increasingly digital library environments. They surveyed digital library professionals in academic libraries in the United States to identify their current activities and skills and to detect any gaps in their training. The survey results helped to develop a suitable profile for digital librarianship, and to point out the "implications for the design of digital library education that meets real workplace needs."

Professional Challenges, Opportunities and Trends

Fox, R. & Stuart, C. (2009). Creating learning spaces through collaboration: How one library refined its approach.

Educause Quarterly, 32(1). Retrieved from

<http://www.educause.edu/EDUCAUSE%2BQuarterly/EDUCAUSEQuarterlyMagazineVolum/CreatingLearningSpacesThroughC/163850>

This article is part of a special issue of *Educause Quarterly* entitled 'Learning Spaces', and it is of special interest to library space planners. Creating new roles for libraries in research, teaching, and learning involves both a physical and a virtual restructuring of its spaces. The author's share three major insights for success: "Eliciting user input increases a renovation project's effectiveness. Incremental renovations permit testing assumptions about learning spaces along the way. Continuous assessment informs upgrades and future projects, increasing their impact." Links within the article to video and slideshow presentations are particularly effective in demonstrating key strategies and decisions.

Lippincott, J.K. (2008, December). Mobile technologies, mobile users: Implications for academic libraries. *Research Library Issues*, 261,1-4. Retrieved from Association of Research Libraries website:

<http://www.arl.org/bm~doc/arl-br-261-mobile.pdf>

It is widely acknowledged that mobile devices are increasingly being used to search for information as well to communicate. The author presents the results of a survey designed to ascertain what roles libraries can play, "and perhaps more importantly what roles should they play in delivering content that is configured for mobile devices, in developing services aimed at mobile device users, and in configuring physical spaces to respond to mobile device users' needs?" The results of the survey indicated that mobile devices are being adapted to library applications in only a small number of institutions. Guidelines to develop a plan that integrates mobile devices into academic libraries are also presented.

Lowry, C. B., Adler, P., Hahn, K., & Stuart, C. (2009, February). *Transformational times: An environmental scan prepared for the ARL strategic plan review task force*. Retrieved from Association of Research Libraries website:

<http://www.arl.org/bm~doc/transformational-times.pdf>

The report of the Task Force on the Review of the ARL Strategic Plan provides recommendations for the directions and priorities of ARL's strategic plan over the next five years (2010–14). The report identifies a number of potential threats to libraries. These include: "outsourcing of dissemination activities and a growing role for content industries in setting policies and defining services could further erode research institutions' control of the intellectual assets produced by research and teaching; and If libraries turn inward and focus on protecting local resources, they could pull back from essential cooperative work." Libraries, by addressing these threats, have an opportunity to consolidate their positions as they continue to support research, teaching, learning, scholarly communication, and public policy.

Maron, N.L., & Kirby Smith, K. (2008, November). *Current models of digital scholarly communication*. Retrieved from Association of Research Libraries website: <http://www.arl.org/bm~doc/current-models-report.pdf>

Maron and Smith present the results of their 2008 study conducted on behalf of the Association of Research Libraries. They set out to investigate new models of digital scholarly works in everyday use across disciplines. They identified eight major types of digital scholarly resources: electronic only journals, reviews, preprints and working papers,

encyclopedias, dictionaries, and annotated content, data, blogs, discussion forums, and professional and scholarly hubs. It is of particular value to university librarians, as it points out the ways that they “can play a central role in sharing information about these digital resources with the campus community, and in guiding new projects toward success.”

O’Dell, J.(2009, May). Libraries and the future of search. *Library Philosophy and Practice*, 11(1), 1-13. Retrieved from <http://www.webpages.uidaho.edu/~mbolin/odell.pdf>

This article discusses the future of libraries within the evolving nature of information searching. Search engine builders like Google are in the process of developing variations of a ‘smart search engine’, which if successful, could possibly eliminate the need to organize records. These activities are found to be in direct opposition to Libraries traditional roles of creating, classifying, and then organizing records into a system used to retrieve them. Should these smart search engines prevail, there is a risk for libraries in that library users “might no longer need a basic understanding of the organization of information because that capacity will be built into the search engine's data or text mining capabilities.”

Stuart, C. (2009, June). Learning and research spaces in ARL libraries: Snapshots of installations and experiments,” *Research Library Issues*, 264, 7–18. Retrieved from Association of Research Libraries website: <http://www.arl.org/bm~doc/rli-264-spaces.pdf>

This study was undertaken to ascertain what initiatives ARL libraries were taking to provide learning and research spaces for their communities. Stuart here provides a glimpse into the results of the ‘Innovative Spaces Survey’, which uncovered a total 98 noteworthy examples that were being supported in the reporting libraries. The complete survey results are available by linking to the following: <http://www.arl.org/bm~doc/innovative-spaces-2009.pdf>

Oblinger, D.G. (Ed.) (2006, October). *Learning spaces*. [Electronic version]. Retrieved from <http://net.educause.edu/ir/library/pdf/PUB7102.pdf>

This 446 page e-book, published by Educause, presents learning space design from the perspective of faculty, learning technologists, librarians, and administrators. It distinguishes itself from earlier publications for its focus on the heretofore neglected issues of “learner expectations, the principles and activities that facilitate learning, and the role of technology.” Three trends form the background to this study: “Changes in our students; Information technology; Our understanding of learning.”

Featured case studies include Duke University’s Perkins Library.

Shumaker, D. & Tyler, L. (2007, June). Embedded library services: an initial inquiry into practices for their development, management, and delivery. *Special Libraries Association Annual Conference*. Denver, CO. Retrieved from Special Libraries association website: <http://www.sla.org/pdfs/sla2007/ShumakerEmbeddedLibSvcs.pdf>

Embedded librarianship is a relatively new phenomenon that focuses on the user and brings the library and the librarian to the user, regardless of the media used or the user’s location. In this presentation, Shumaker provides survey evidence of the planning that has taken place in various types of organizations, as well as profiling the duties and responsibilities of embedded librarians. One of the notable trends discussed is that “virtual embedding appears particularly strong in Higher Education, with its increased emphasis on web-based distance education as a substitute for or enhancement of traditional classroom instruction. “

Stoerger, M. (2009,July). The digital melting pot: Bridging the digital native-immigrant divide. *First Monday*.14(7). Retrieved from <http://firstmonday.org/htbin/cgiwrap/bin/ojs/index.php/fm/article/view/2474/2243>

Stoerger challenges some widely held misconceptions that educational technology advocates espouse about millenials when comparing them with preceding generations. Millenials are not all necessarily born tech-savvy, and the value of gained experience must also be incorporated into future curriculum design. Stoerger prefers to use the term ‘digital melting pot’, defined as “the blending of individuals who speak with different technology tongues. Instead of segregating individuals based on their skills or lack thereof, the digital melting pot is a place where all individuals,

including those with low levels of competency, experience technology in a way that fosters opportunities without barriers.”

Stuart, C. (2008, December). Virtual Resources & Instructional Initiatives: Snapshots of Library Experiments. *ARL: A Bimonthly Report*, 261, 5-8, Retrieved from <http://www.arl.org/bm~doc/arl-br-261-vrii.pdf>.

Stuart summarizes the findings of a recent survey of ARL libraries on virtual resources, instructional initiatives, and learning spaces. This report looks at a number of innovative and noteworthy experiments in the areas of instruction programs and virtual resource development. The following important themes emerged in the responses: collaborations with academic faculty; digital images; podcasts/vodcasts; blogs; Facebook; short web tutorials; specially assigned librarians; immersion in special collections; mentoring/training of instruction librarians; plagiarism and ethics; customer-informed training, faculty workshops; student research competitions.” The complete survey results, covering all three areas under study, includes a keyword searchable list of 18 subtopics, and is available from <http://www.arl.org/rtl/roles/vrii/subtopics.shtml>

Compiler’s note: Text that is enclosed within quotations marks has been taken directly from the source document.



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