

# Reinventing the OPAC

*People who cannot invent and reinvent themselves must be content with borrowed postures, secondhand ideas, fitting in instead of standing out.*

–Warren G. Bennis<sup>1</sup>

*The definition of insanity is doing the same thing over and over and expecting different results.*

–attributed to Benjamin Franklin by Brainyquotes.com<sup>2</sup>

In trying to figure out how best to present all of the data, opinions, and current discussion swirling around the whole “future of cataloging” issue, and since I have already stated my opinion in chapter 1 (which is that the era of the library OPAC is over), I thought it best to just provide a kind of written mashup of all the good resources, presentations, and even listserv posts regarding the whole topic. There seem to be two major paths forward so far: reuse, reinvent, reconceptualize the current OPAC and its data in forward-thinking, new ways; or dump the “lipstick on a pig” concept and just start building and working with users in Web/Library 2.0 and 3.0 directions. The many and varied opinions and quotes regarding the former are provided in this chapter. All of these links, quotes, and opinions are must-read pieces.

## Perspectives on the OPAC’s Future

### Papers, Articles, and Reports

#### *“ILS Assessment: A Background Document”*

Revised background document created for a one-day symposium on the future of the Integrated Library System hosted by the University of Windsor, Nov. 15, 2006 (dated June 1, 2007)

<http://infoservices.uwindsor.ca/dist/backgrounder.pdf>

This is a fact-based, economics-reality look at the future of the ILS in libraries. There are numerous statements from other related documents that warrant quoting (references are provided in the document):

Today—information resources are relatively abundant and user attention is relatively scarce [dis-

persed]. The network is now the focus of a user’s attention, and the available collection is a very much larger resource than the local catalogued collection. This poses major questions for the future of the catalogue and this is bound up with the difference between discovery (identifying the resources of interest) and location (identifying where those resources of interest are actually available). There may be many discovery environments, which then need to locate resources in particular collections. While the catalogue may be a part of the location process its role in the discovery process needs to be worked through. (Dempsey, 2006, p. 2)

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[Consider a business model]—in healthy businesses, the demand for a product and the capacity to produce it are in balance. Research libraries invest huge sums in the infrastructure that produces their local catalogues, but search engines are students’ and scholars’ favourite place to begin a search. More users bypass catalogues for search engines, but research libraries’ investment in catalogues—and in the collections they describe—does not reflect the shift in user demand (Calhoun, 2006, p. 15)

\* \* \*

The time and energy required to do Library business is unsustainable. We have people performing duplicative work throughout our system. We are unable to share matching resources or records across our multiple catalogues, content management systems, and differing standards. These

redundancies have opportunity costs in terms of services we do not have the time or staff to offer. We all agree that the cost of our bibliographic services enterprise is unworkable as we move into an increasingly digital world, yet a solution is nowhere in sight. (Univ Calif., 2005, p. 9)

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The OPAC of the future will not be our most important finding tool. . . . The OPAC should function well alone but recognize its position in the larger scope of available information (the catalogue of the future will feed end user discovery tools as well as be a discovery tool in its own right) (Tennant, Nov. 10, 2006).

\* \* \*

What may come:

1. systems environments need to become simpler. We will see more hosted solutions, better integration options in a web services environment and some consolidation of supply
  2. for ILS vendors an interesting shift away from their historic core towards e-resource management and in some cases towards digital asset management
  3. we will see less focus on the integration of library resources with each other as an end in itself, and more on the integration of library resources with user environments (portals, LMS systems, etc.)
  4. data and services need to be made available in ways which better facilitate their recombination in different user contexts.
  5. look again at opportunities to centralize services and data
- (Dempsey, Feb. 22, 2005)

#### *"Bibliographic Challenges in Historical Context: Looking Back to 1982"*

Norm Medeiros, "On the Dublin Core Front," column in *OCLC Systems & Services: International Digital Library Perspectives* 23, no. 4 (2007)

This is a look back at an article by Nancy J. Williamson titled "Is There a Catalog in Your Future?" that appeared in 1982 in *Library Resources & Technical Services*. Medeiros provides a quote by Williamson that predicted even that far back the future place of the catalog:

I see a catalog in our future, but a catalog which will not be the major focal point in gaining

access to information, and one which will play a diminished role in that world. While the role of the library as a recreational institution does not appear to be in serious question, its survival as an information agency will be dependent on its ability to redefine its procedures and goals in terms of the bibliographic universe as a whole. In doing so, it will be necessary to place its basic tool—the catalog—in its proper perspective with other access tools. In brief, librarians must consider the ways and means of developing information services as opposed to providing access to specific collections or particular databases.

Medeiros also mentions a statement by R. David Lankes at the ALCTS 50th anniversary conference in June 2007, and comments on Lankes's presentation:

The persistent problems of the catalog exist less with its business modules and more with its front-end. R. David Lankes, an invited speaker at the ALCTS National Conference, made the observation that only in libraries are customers given access to the inventory system; in no other line of business are customers given such a privilege. Yet libraries not only provide such access, they do so knowing that the interface provided is not good. An undercurrent of Lankes's speech, which was even more pronounced during the breakout sessions that followed, is that the time has come to peel away the discovery component of the catalog from its business core. Other information players do search better than libraries; we should let them do it.

#### *"Relevance Ranking of Results from MARC-Based Catalogues: From Guidelines to Implementation Exploiting Structured Metadata"*

Alison Dellit and Tony Boston, National Library of Australia staff paper, Feb. 26, 2007

[www.nla.gov.au/nla/staffpaper/2006/documents/Boston\\_Dellit-relevance-ranking.pdf](http://www.nla.gov.au/nla/staffpaper/2006/documents/Boston_Dellit-relevance-ranking.pdf)

This report details how Libraries Australia is positioning itself in the "long tail" environment, providing users with new tools to assist them in resource discovery in large stores of records through relevance ranking and clustering of search results. The report also looks at clustering technologies, such as the North Carolina State University Library Endeca project, the Aquabrowser tool, and LibraryThing. Some comments on tagging and social networking are also included. The following quote about opening up collections through new search technologies is extremely valuable (references are provided in the report):

In a 2003 report prepared for the Library of Congress, Marcia Bates presented a detailed review of studies covering use of card and online catalogues. Using data from both card catalogues and online catalogues, she concluded that: "The average user identifies their search terms with the whole subject query. It does not occur to them that it might be called other things by the catalog. They look up their topic, do not find it, therefore the library must not have anything on it." She estimated that just a third of first time subject searches matched the assigned Library of Congress subject heading. She also quoted the blunt assessment of CR Hildreth, from a 1997 study: "users of this online catalogue search more often by keyword than any other type of search, and their keyword searches fail more often than not."

This trend will only increase as users bring expectations developed through Internet use into library environments. They will not click a drop-down box to work out which field they should be searching upon, nor do most people think about constructing a search query using a machine-friendly syntax. Because large numbers of people expect results to be listed in order of relevance, they will assume that if there is nothing relevant on the first page, there are no relevant results. They will not try to get a result set small enough to browse, they will want the system to give them what they want, quickly and painlessly. Using new search technologies, we can meet this expectation.

Since it was first popularised by Google, relevance ranking has transformed the way that people search. Before relevance ranking was popularised, most search technology focused not on bringing relevant material to the top of the list, but on eliminating irrelevant material from the result set. This approach did not always make it easy to find material if the result set was large. It made it harder to search very large databases, within which many items might be somewhat relevant.

With relevance ranking, users do not have to despair of a large result set. In fact, most users do not notice how big the result set is. Instead, they notice whether the results listed in the top half of the first page provide what they want. Rather than scanning the whole list, users will jump straight to a "good enough" relevant result in the first few, or will choose one of the first few results as a starting point to browse for more relevant items. Clustering of results, by subject,

author, genre format or date, can allow users to easily refine a search, with one click of the mouse. New methods of browsing—via peer recommendations, or through subject taxonomies, or related websites—have emerged. Users now browse along individually tailored paths, rather than a linear shelf order, and often browse a vast variety of material formats in one session.

During 2006, Libraries Australia implemented relevance ranking as the default sort order for both the simple and the advanced search as well as via Z39.50. We are currently working on a prototype that will include the clustering of search results, suggestions to users for better searches, and recommendations from users. These developments were the result of a project run in mid-2006 examining the best relevance ranking methods for bibliographic records.

### *Two Columns by Roy Tennant on the Future of the Library Catalog*

[www.libraryjournal.com/article/CA273959.html](http://www.libraryjournal.com/article/CA273959.html)

[www.libraryjournal.com/article/CA302427.html](http://www.libraryjournal.com/article/CA302427.html)

"Library Catalogs: The Wrong Solution" (Feb. 15, 2003) and "The Right Solution: Federated Search Tools" (June 15, 2003) provide the opinion of a well-known contributor to *Library Journal*. Roy lists reasons why library catalogs don't work with today's users, and why federated search tools do work.

### *"The Online Library Catalog: Paradise Lost and Paradise Regained?"*

Karen Markey, *D-Lib Magazine* 13, no. 1–2 (Jan./Feb. 2007)

[www.dlib.org/dlib/january07/markey/01markey.html](http://www.dlib.org/dlib/january07/markey/01markey.html)

This think piece states right from the beginning that new directions for the online catalog will not work. The author provides an alternative plan for approaching today's library users, but this direction will require fundamental change and extreme paradigm shifts in order to succeed. As early as the 1980s, user assessment was informing librarians that online catalogs weren't working, but these pleas for change were ignored for a number of reasons, stated very clearly in the article. If libraries want to redesign the online catalog, Markey states what needs to happen: post-Boolean probabilistic searching, embrace subject cataloging, and expand with qualification metadata. In addition to a lengthy and comprehensive bibliography, this article is required reading for all librarians, both public-oriented and technical services-oriented. Technology and systems people in libraries will be needed in order to move towards the model that Markey proposes.

### *“Resource Description and Access (RDA): Cataloging Rules for the 20th Century”*

Karen Coyle and Diane Hillmann, *D-Lib Magazine* 13, no. 1–2 (Jan./Feb. 2007).

[www.dlib.org/dlib/january07/coyle/01coyle.html](http://www.dlib.org/dlib/january07/coyle/01coyle.html)

This is another strongly worded statement to librarians concerning market share in the new information universe. According to the authors, the new cataloging rules known as RDA are only “a rearrangement of the cataloging rules, and are not the right starting point for libraries.” They also state “too many librarians still consider themselves the only true experts both in bibliographic metadata and creation and in service to information seekers, behaving condescendingly to others newer to the information enterprise. But users have spoken with their keyboards, overwhelmingly preferring non-traditional and non-library sources of information and methods of information discovery.” I found their quote from a recent LRTS article by Mark Sandler quite telling: “It is potentially a world of disintermediation for libraries of all types, but especially for those research libraries that have historically defined themselves in terms of the extent of holdings rather than the relevance of services.”

### *“Academic Library Futures”*

Roy Tennant, *Library Journal*, Dec. 15, 2006

<http://libraryjournal.com/article/CA6396388.html>

This is a great opinion piece. His most telling quote is “We no longer have iconic status within our institutions—indeed, virtually overnight, we are now perceived as irrelevant by many.” Tennant states three challenges: we must reconceptualize the role of the academic library; we need an agile, imaginative, and engaged staff; and we need new tools that many library vendors are not even considering.

### *“Has Cataloguing Become Too Simple? Why It Matters for Cataloguers, Catalogues, and Clients”*

Paul Staincliffe, *New Zealand Libraries* 49, no. 10 (2004)

[http://eprints.rclis.org/archive/00007468/01/Catalog\\_simple.pdf](http://eprints.rclis.org/archive/00007468/01/Catalog_simple.pdf)

This is a strong statement regarding the viability and future of the MARC format. It is almost a diatribe on how cataloging managers and library administrators have abandoned cataloging principles and practices for the bottom line, for example, this quote: “We have a new breed of manager who want numerical results, the widest possible access, derived copy at any cost and who focuses on increasing productivity with static or diminishing resources.” Obviously, this author does not work with the day-to-day figures of running a library. Staincliffe makes some good remarks, but overall his opinion has many flaws. For instance, the quote below is quite wrong:

the vendors are going to have to provide a FRBR/XML system. MARC format doesn’t translate otherwise as an interoperable standard:

Something Tennant, and we, must appreciate is that no vendor is going to switch from a AACR/MARC system to an FRBR/XML system in the foreseeable future. The profession as a whole has to accept the following about the MARC format:

- Few catalogues are not built on it
- Vast amounts of money are invested in it
- Viable alternatives are either theoretical or untested on a large scale
- There would be a huge impact on the profession of adopting another format:
- It is going to be in use for many years to come.

I have to include this quote that Staincliffe includes, by Derek Law at the 2002 LIANZA, just because it contains a word that one usually doesn’t associate with librarianship!

Librarians have become besotted by a restless search for the latest bright baubles of information technology, who find the provision of a coloured screen web-based windows environment a substitute for thought and who blow in the wind—or is it the flatulence—of every new management fad. I want to suggest to you that the way to deal with the storms of the future is to hold fast to that which is at the core of our profession and to look at a future which has solid roots in our professional present and in the culture of library and information science.

If only holding to the “core” meant that our users really cared, or would increase our market share, or help pay the bills!

### *Perceptions of Libraries and Information Resources*

OCLC report, Dec. 2005

[www.oclc.org/reports/pdfs/Percept\\_all.pdf](http://www.oclc.org/reports/pdfs/Percept_all.pdf)

This is a report on the results of a survey of 396 college students aged 15–57, from six countries, on their use of library resources. An astonishing 89 percent of them began their information search on a search engine. Only 1 percent ever start their information search on a library catalog. If you haven’t read it yet, or at least the executive summary, this is a must-read with actual user information and data.

### *“Changing Markets, Changing Relationships: How Libraries and Vendors Respond to the ‘Next Generation’ Challenge”*

Mark Andrews, *Library Hi Tech* 25, no. 4 (2007)

This article examines the current situation with library catalogs, what new features and services need to be added to make them viable, and how library systems vendors are responding to provide these features and services. Some discussion of open-source software is also provided. In the conclusion, the author lists what needs to be in the modern integrated library system, as well as what should be required in any fourth or future generation OPAC. Contains a nice bibliography of sources.

#### *"Toward a Twenty-First Century Library Catalog"*

Kristin Antelman, Emily Lynema, and Andrew K. Pace, *Information Technology and Libraries (ITAL)*, Sept. 2006, pp. 128–39, available through the Creative Commons Attribution NonCommercial 2.5 License

[www.lib.ncsu.edu/staff/kaantelm/antelman\\_lynema\\_pace.pdf](http://www.lib.ncsu.edu/staff/kaantelm/antelman_lynema_pace.pdf)

This article describes the Endeca Information Access Platform as applied to the North Carolina State University Libraries' online catalog, providing relevance-ranked keyword search results and tools that leverage the rich MARC metadata for new functionality and user collection browsing. The conclusion mentions three features that have yet to be implemented: natural language query expression, expanded coverage and scope, and relevance feedback methods.

#### *"Handle Records, Rights and Long Tail Economics"*

John Erickson, *D-Lib Magazine* 12, no. 9 (2006)  
[www.dlib.org/dlib/september06/erickson/09erickson.html](http://www.dlib.org/dlib/september06/erickson/09erickson.html)

Erickson examines the issues related to the implementation of "long tail" ideas, those tools and services that it would take to succeed in rights transactions and metadata services. He quotes a list from Guy Kawasaki's "cynic's checklist," which I quote here as well:

1. *Low-cost production*: The cost of creating useful metadata and "registering" the item in a supporting service should be minimal.
2. *Un-demanding, un-selfish, un-financially motivated, just-plain stupid, or just-plain smart producers*: The objective of the operator is to engage as many participants as possible, and good things will happen.
3. *Near-zero inventory carrying costs*: The reality is that metadata-based services do incur costs, including hardware, support, storage, and bandwidth. Reduce costs by leveraging metadata persisted "in the infrastructure" as much as possible.

4. *Near-zero selling and marketing costs*: Licensing templates should be ready-made and easily associated with items.
5. *Near-zero support and training costs*: No active "training" should be required to either offer items or transact rights. Let the community do the training via Wikis!
6. *Fast fulfillment*: Rights should be easy to transact, and the results are immediately available, including "instant royalties" to the provider.
7. *Infinite selection*: Any creative work can be the basis for a rights transaction.
8. *Singleness of purpose*: Focus the metadata and/or the service on what the item is; avoid the "general purpose".
9. *Highly optimistic, if not delusional, personalities*: When creators consider making their works available for transactions, they should have faith, because a certain amount of speculation is essential to the Long Tail working . . .

He then adds some additional items from Chris Anderson:

1. *Self-service*: Give customers all the tools they need to manage their own accounts.
2. *"Freemium" services*: "Give your service away for free . . . acquire a lot of customers very efficiently through word of mouth . . . then offer premium priced value-added services or an enhanced version of your service to your customer base."
3. *No-frills products*: Don't make consumers pay for what they don't need.
4. *Crowdsourcing*: Let customers do the work of building the service; they will expand it far beyond what employees could do on their own.

#### *"Serially Speaking . . . The Changing World of Catalogs and Cataloging"*

Laura Kane McElfresh, *Technicalities* 26, no. 6 (Nov./Dec. 2006)

and

#### *"Dollars and Sense . . . Three Little Words"*

Sheila S. Intner, *Technicalities* 26, no. 6 (Nov./Dec. 2006).

These two articles look at similar situations in the cataloging world: current pressures on cataloging depart-

ments to learn about metadata and yet maintain current standards; and the lack of assertiveness, communication, and visibility of the both the work and the people in technical services.

### *“Changing Roles of Academic and Research Libraries”*

essay derived from the Roundtable on Technology and Change in Academic Libraries, ACRL, Nov. 2–3, 2006  
[www.ala.org/ala/acrl/acrlissues/future/changingroles.cfm](http://www.ala.org/ala/acrl/acrlissues/future/changingroles.cfm)

This essay examines the new academic environment in which libraries must now compete. No longer deemed indispensable, academic and research libraries are coming under greater scrutiny from within their own institutions, having to compete for scarce funds with academic departments that provide more potential for prestige and return on investment. The report indicates that libraries must broaden the catalog of resources they provide in support of academic inquiry and discourse, must foster the creation of new academic communities on campus, must support and manage the institution’s intellectual capital, and must become more assertive in helping their institutions define strategic purposes. Some definitive quotes from the report:

Today’s library staff must include people who see themselves as active contenders in a race for relevance, regard, and resources.

\* \* \*

Library staffs in general must become more agile, more highly attuned to, and more aggressive in proclaiming just how different the world of knowledge has already become.

### *“Changing Roles of Academic and Research Libraries: A Response”*

Julie Todaro, Dean of Library Services at Austin Community College, Austin, TX, May 2007

[www.ala.org/ala/acrl/acrlissues/future/response.cfm](http://www.ala.org/ala/acrl/acrlissues/future/response.cfm)

This is a very well written response by ACRL Vice President Julie Todaro to the report quoted above. She tries to provide some strategies and steps by which academic and research libraries can address some of the issues mentioned in the report.

### *“NYU 21st Century Library Project: Designing a Research Library of the Future for New York University”*

Cecily Marcus, Lucinda Covert-Vail, and Carol A. Mandel, Jan. 2007

<http://library.nyu.edu/about/KPLReport.pdf>

This detailed, 57-page document reports the results of a study of NYU faculty and graduate student needs for research and teaching. Sixty-five conversations were held, and what emerged were some very interesting results. Overall, the study found

- Users want social classification/folksonomy/tagging options.
- Users have questions about intellectual property and mass digitization.
- There is a growing science of self-governing networks.
- Users are concerned about mining/tracking/republishing personal resources.
- Users want technical efforts to build unified search interfaces.
- Users want Web 2.0 technologies.

In the conclusion, the NYU Libraries decided to work on these objectives:

- Provide a stimulating, adaptable environment that facilitates the creative work of scholars.
- Be a vibrant enabler of individual and community intellectual life.
- Enable collaboration and connections across disparate disciplines.
- Make the discovery process more powerful
- Expand beyond the traditional conceptions of the library.
- Create more spaces and mechanisms for inspiration.

What I found particularly inspiring was the document’s definitions and discussion of “true success” vs. “settling” (found on p. 45), and how the NYU Libraries’ immediate next steps would be to build a learning organization, expand a network of stakeholders, and re-brand the library. It will be interesting to see how “successful” they are!

### *“A Bibliographic Metadata Infrastructure for the 21st Century”*

Roy Tennant, *Library Hi Tech* 22, no. 2 (2004): 175–81  
<http://roytennant.com/metadata.pdf>

This insightful and forward-looking article details Tennant’s opinions and requirements for the library catalog of the future. Summarizing, he indicates that it will have to be versatile, extensible, open and transparent, to have a low threshold and a high ceiling (be easy to use, open to all, yet provide the tools necessary for complex activities), to have cooperative management, and to be modular, hierarchical, granular, and graceful in failure. For an interesting reference to this article by Tennant, see his March 21, 2007, posting in AUTOCAT archive titled “Roy Tennant on RDA.”

***"Catalog/Cataloging Changes and Web 2.0 Functionality: New Directions for Serials"***

Rebecca Kemp, *The Serials Librarian* 53, no. 4 (2007), preprint available

<http://library.uncw.edu/web/faculty/kempr/Kemp-Catalog-Web-2-0-2007-03-12.pdf>

This article discusses how to incorporate Web 2.0 tools and services into the online catalog, especially in regards to serials records. There are some excellent comments, and the background research and bibliography are top notch. The quote that stood out most to me is this one:

Before investigating Web 2.0 features, it would be useful to answer the question, 'Why should online catalogs take advantage of these features?' Proponents of Web 2.0 applications tout their abilities to meet the information needs of today's patrons, who include the much publicized 'Millennial generation.' The Millennials, undergraduate-aged library patrons among us today, grew up using computers and the Internet. An Indiana University cataloging white paper reports the Millennials' information preferences and expectations: '(1) a wide variety of choices; (2) continuous improvement in products and services; (3) the ability to customize and personalize their library services; and (4) instant gratification.' These four expectations have become typical now in people outside the Millennial age set, as noted by Karen Calhoun: even faculty and graduate students 'use information that they know to be of poor quality and less reliable—so long as it requires little effort to find—rather than using information they know to be of high quality and reliable, though harder to find.'"

***"The Peloponnesian War and the Future of Reference, Cataloging, and Scholarship in Research Libraries"***

Thomas Mann, June 13, 2007

<http://guild2910.org/Pelopponesian%20War%20June%2013%202007.pdf>

This is one of many articles by Library of Congress reference librarian Thomas Mann concerning the recent reduction of services and personnel in LC cataloging operations. It attempts to address the abandonment of cataloging standards, principles, and tradition taking place in librarianship at the moment. While all of his arguments are valid, Mann does not address the primary reasons for the demise of current cataloging in research libraries: unnecessary redundancy, money, an aloofness and disdain in the profession towards users' information preferences and needs, money, little understanding of the current environ-

ment in regards to library management and administration, money, etc.

***"Structures, Standards, and the People Who Make Them Meaningful"***

David Bade, May 9, 2007

[www.loc.gov/bibliographic-future/meetings/docs/bade-may9-2007.pdf](http://www.loc.gov/bibliographic-future/meetings/docs/bade-may9-2007.pdf)

This is one of the many opinion papers presented at the LOC Bibliographic Futures meetings. Bade presents some strong arguments suggesting that *more* structured metadata will be needed in the future, not less. I agree with most of his statements except the statement that library administrators and managers have to find a new economic model in which to do this. We cannot maintain the old model of redundancy, local practice, and twiddling with MARC records. Automatically generated metadata may not be trusted, as he states, but then what else in life can be trusted? And since when was LOC trusted? That myth went out the door decades ago.

***"Being a Librarian: Metadata and Metadata Specialists in the Twenty-First Century"***

Karen Calhoun, preprint Dec 17, 2004, as submitted for publication in *Metadata and Digital Collections: A Festschrift in Honor of Thomas P. Turner*, ed. Elaine Westbrook and Keith Jenkins, Scarecrow Press, 2005  
<http://ecommons.library.cornell.edu/bitstream/1813/2231/1/Calhoun-20041217-final-preprint1.pdf>

This essay looks at the changing landscape and marketplace for catalogers, cataloging, and metadata. As the author of the LC report on cataloging, Calhoun brings a unique perspective regarding these issues. Table 1, "Challenges facing traditional library cataloging," and Table 2, "Information forecasts and implications for metadata specialists," are of especial interest. Calhoun espouses the value of metadata and metadata specialists, indicating that cataloging as it is currently practiced and taught will not survive in the new millennium.

***"The Challenges of Change: A Review of Cataloging and Classification Literature, 2003–2004"***

Shawne Miksa, *Library Resources and Technical Services* 51, no. 1 (2007): 51–68

[http://courses.unt.edu/smiksa/documents/Miksa\\_Challenges%20of%20Change\\_LRTS\\_Jan2007.pdf](http://courses.unt.edu/smiksa/documents/Miksa_Challenges%20of%20Change_LRTS_Jan2007.pdf)

During the two years that Miksa documents, a tremendous amount of change and discussion occurred on these topics, and the length and breadth of this article indicate how the literature reflects these issues. Topics such as FRBR, metadata, XML, authority control, and subject retrieval are among the contents of this article.

*"Principia Bibliographica? Balancing Principles, Practice, and Pragmatics in a Changing Digital Environment"*

Dick R. Miller, Oct. 2006, preprint

[http://elane.stanford.edu/laneauth/Principia\\_CCQ.pdf](http://elane.stanford.edu/laneauth/Principia_CCQ.pdf)

Miller is better known as the developer of XOBIS, an XML schema for MARC. In this article, he expounds on how catalogers and librarians can and should work in the new Internet environment. His final section, "My Silo Is Better Than Your Silo vs. Distributed Cooperation?" is especially good reading. There are many MARC bibliographic and authority record examples throughout the piece.

*"The University Library"*

Andrew Abbott, Provost's Task Force on the University of Chicago Library, May 2006

Executive Summary: [www.lib.uchicago.edu/staffweb/groups/space/finalreport.pdf](http://www.lib.uchicago.edu/staffweb/groups/space/finalreport.pdf)

Full Report: [www.lib.uchicago.edu/staffweb/groups/space/abbott-report.html](http://www.lib.uchicago.edu/staffweb/groups/space/abbott-report.html)

This is a fascinating study and report on the future use and design of the research library at the University of Chicago. Originally appointed by the provost, this task force has written an extensive and thought-provoking document related not only to their own library, but research libraries in general.

*Melvyl Recommender Project*

California Digital Library, July 2006

Executive Summary: [www.cdlib.org/inside/projects/melvyl\\_recommender](http://www.cdlib.org/inside/projects/melvyl_recommender)

Final Report: [www.cdlib.org/inside/projects/melvyl\\_recommender/report\\_docs/Mellon\\_final.pdf](http://www.cdlib.org/inside/projects/melvyl_recommender/report_docs/Mellon_final.pdf)

Full Text Extension Supplementary Report: [www.cdlib.org/inside/projects/melvyl\\_recommender/report\\_docs/mellon\\_extension.pdf](http://www.cdlib.org/inside/projects/melvyl_recommender/report_docs/mellon_extension.pdf)

This project examined how popular commercial services like Google, Amazon, and eBay have evolved quickly in the Web environment to address user needs and demands, while library OPACs have not. This study explored methods and feasibilities of narrowing this gap. In the final report, it became quite clear that academic users prefer relevance-ranked results sets to those that are unranked. Other recommendations are contained in the executive summary. The supplemental report was issued in October 2006.

*"The Great Pig Roast"*

Robert Fox, column in *OCLC Systems & Services: International Digital Library Perspectives* 23, no. 2 (2006)

This column is a take-off on the common phrase "putting lipstick on a pig" in reference to how librarians keep trying to make our OPACs look and work better with little

viable result. Fox discusses here some of the current open-source solutions that are helping to reinvent and even improve library OPACs.

*"How Digital Technologies Have Changed the Library of Congress: Inside and Outside"*

Laura E. Campbell, Associate Librarian for Strategic Initiatives and Chief Information Officer, Library of Congress, April 2007

[www.sis.pitt.edu/~repwkschop/papers/campbell.pdf](http://www.sis.pitt.edu/~repwkschop/papers/campbell.pdf)

This position paper needs to be read by all library cataloging personnel. It describes just how dramatically the organization of the Library of Congress has adjusted to focusing on the digital environment over the cataloging environment. Some fascinating quotes:

The Library of Congress comprises six service units—Office of the Librarian of Congress, Congressional Research Service, Library Services, Law Library, U.S. Copyright Office and Office of Strategic Initiatives, which, among other programs, leads the National Digital Library Program and the National Digital Information Infrastructure and Preservation Program (NDIIPP). These service units, which have pursued a "silo" approach to achieving goals for most of their existence, are now having to work more closely together in new networks being forced upon the institution by the advent of the digital age. Various types of "social" investments are required in order to form these partnerships.

Practices that were developed primarily for published materials must be changed, and the changes that need to be implemented are requiring archival institutions to transform the way they have been doing business—in some cases for centuries, as in the case of the Library of Congress.

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For most of its history, the Library of Congress, like most centuries old organizations, has been slow to change. Until about 20 years ago, in the so-called analog age, the Library was seen as a somewhat insular government agency with few ties to the broader community of content creator and collecting institutions.

We have always served the U.S. Congress in its lawmaking duties through our Congressional Research Service, and researchers traveled (and still do) from across the nation and around the world to use our unparalleled collections. But



we did not serve readers under age 18 nor did we have special programs for educators and, of course, you had to get here to use our materials.

That has all changed and so has our approach to working with outside organizations. When, in 1994, we started our flagship Web site, called American Memory, we said from the beginning that we would build this digital resource for the nation with other repositories nationwide. Although the majority of the site's content comprises digitized versions of unique materials from the Library of Congress, a substantial portion of the site, 23 of the 137 thematic presentations, are the result of collaborations with other institutions. This is significant because not only were we working with nearly two dozen institutions in a single program but also, for the first time in our history, our "collections" now included materials that were not housed at the Library.

The digitization of the Library's collections also had varying effects on our staff. Some curators and reference specialists resisted the idea of placing "copies" of original works online for scholarship purposes. Others sniffed at the idea of serving those who were not "serious researchers." But the head of our agency, Librarian James H. Billington, by force of his will and his political instincts, took the Library headlong into the digital age. He realized that if the Library was to remain relevant in the latter part of the 20th century and beyond, we had to make ourselves useful to the broader American public—Congress's constituents. That decision is responsible for the enormous success of our National Digital Library (NDL) Program and its auxiliary Educational Outreach Program, and has resulted in the Library's leading role in the dissemination of electronic information.

***"Faceted Navigation and Browsing Features in New OPACs: A More Robust Solution to Problems of Information Seekers?"***

Kathryn La Barre, *Knowledge Organization* 34, no. 2 (2007)

Extended abstract available at <http://dlist.sir.arizona.edu/1912/01/71%5FLa%5FBarre%5F%28extended%292.pdf>

Although available only as an extended abstract at this time, this article provides a history of papers and documents related to the future of the catalog and the problems with contemporary OPACs in libraries. The bibliography in itself is worth accessing this abstract.

***"The Library Catalogue in the New Discovery Environment: Some Thoughts"***

Lorcan Dempsey, *Ariadne*, issue 48 (July 2006)

[www.ariadne.ac.uk/issue48/dempsey](http://www.ariadne.ac.uk/issue48/dempsey)

This thoughtful and insightful article on the future of the library catalog summarizes Dempsey's opinions on what librarians need to do to make the OPAC a discovery tool.

***"Economics of Bibliographic Control"***

Rick Lugg, Working Group on the Future of Bibliographic Control: Economics and Organization of Bibliographic Data, July 9, 2007

[www.loc.gov/bibliographic-future/meetings/docs/ricklugg-july9-2007.pdf](http://www.loc.gov/bibliographic-future/meetings/docs/ricklugg-july9-2007.pdf)

This is the paper that became the focus of discussion after the third meeting of the LC BCWG, focused on getting away from perfection and reducing costs.

***"Rethinking the Catalogue"***

Alison Dellit and Kent Fitch, paper presented at the Innovative Ideas Forum, National Library of Australia, April 19, 2007

[www.nla.gov.au/nla/staffpaper/2007/documents/Dellit-Fitch-Rethinkingthecatalogue.pdf](http://www.nla.gov.au/nla/staffpaper/2007/documents/Dellit-Fitch-Rethinkingthecatalogue.pdf)

Provides four basic strategies for re-imagining library OPACs: rethink cataloging, create an interactive space, unify information resources, and improve access.

***"Demise of the Local Catalog"***

Roy Tennant, *Library Journal*, July 15, 2007

[www.libraryjournal.com/article/CA6457238.html](http://www.libraryjournal.com/article/CA6457238.html)

This piece examines recent developments, including FRBR and WorldCat Local, that focus on user needs rather than library-centric needs.

**Talks, Lectures, and Presentations**

***"Going Virtual: Technology & the Future of Academic Libraries"***

John Hubbard, presentation, Library Council of Southeastern Wisconsin Annual Conference May 16, 2007, Milwaukee, WI

[www.mcfls.org/librarycouncil/lcacademic.pdf](http://www.mcfls.org/librarycouncil/lcacademic.pdf)

This is an excellent presentation, both challenging and controversial in its data and message. It basically illustrates the reason why libraries and librarians just aren't "getting it." I especially found the slide and graph "What's wrong with this picture" very telling about how far away from our users we really are. I also like the various quotations that Hubbard provides at the end of the presentation.

***“The Catalog of the Future: Learning, Teaching, and Research: An Infopeople Webcast”***

Karen Calhoun, presentation, March 9, 2007  
[www.infopeople.org/training/webcasts/webcast\\_data/173/Infopeople-calhoun-revised4.ppt](http://www.infopeople.org/training/webcasts/webcast_data/173/Infopeople-calhoun-revised4.ppt)

This up-front, in-your-face presentation by the author of the infamous LC report states how wide the disconnect is between the library OPAC and our users. For instance, the information in this slide says it all:

They like

- Multimedia environments
- Figuring things out for themselves
- Working in groups
- Multitasking
- Active engagement & learning directly related to courses

We offer

- Text-based environments
- Systems that require prior understanding (or librarian help)
- Services for individual use
- Catalogs, databases, etc.

All staff in technical services need to see the data and information contained in this presentation.

*Karen Calhoun’s “Changing Nature of the Catalog and Its Integration with Other Discovery Tools”*

[www.loc.gov/catdir/calhoun-report-final.pdf](http://www.loc.gov/catdir/calhoun-report-final.pdf)

***“Innovation in Academic Libraries: Theory and Practice”***

Kathryn Deiss, presentation, Texas Library Association, April 13, 2007

<http://kathryndeiss.pbwiki.com/f/TLA%20Innovation.ppt>

In this presentation, Deiss discusses some of the challenges and changes that need to occur in academic libraries in order to make them more relevant in today’s information landscape: concepts such as risk taking, directional and intersectional innovation, dichotomies, and a tolerance for failure are key.

***“The Battle for Mindshare: A Battle beyond Access and Retrieval”***

John J. Regazzi, 2004 Miles Conrad Memorial Lecture, 46th NFAIS Annual Conference, Feb. 23, 2004

[www.nfaais.org/publications/mc\\_lecture\\_2004.htm](http://www.nfaais.org/publications/mc_lecture_2004.htm)

This presentation examines the overall information landscape from an economic and industry point of view, related to the economics of purchasing and selling content in the academic marketplace. With lots of data, graphs, charts, and information, it provides a very different perspective of the information universe, outside of the familiar academic viewpoint.

In order to illustrate how academic librarians are out of touch with the information-seeking practices of their users, take a look at his slide “Shifts in Mindshare: Who Has the Mindshare Lead?”

*“Shifts in Mindshare: Who Has the Mindshare Lead?”*

<http://rsinger.library.gatech.edu/SMUG/pix/regazzi.jpg>

***“The Future of the OPAC”***

Michael Vandenburg, presentation, GLUG meeting, May 2006

[www.gaug.org/conference2006/future\\_of\\_opac.ppt](http://www.gaug.org/conference2006/future_of_opac.ppt)

This excellent presentation examines what OPACs don’t do well and what the OPAC of the future needs to do. Examples of tools and services both inside and outside of the library environment are provided. LibraryThing and other open-source systems are discussed.

***“Amazoogle? GoogleAmazon? User Searching Behavior and Expectations for Library Catalogs”***

Athena Salaba, presentation, Kent State University 2006 Technical Services retreat, April 25–26, 2006

[www.library.kent.edu/files/Athena\\_Salaba.pdf](http://www.library.kent.edu/files/Athena_Salaba.pdf)

If you are looking for a concise yet precise bibliography of all the “future of cataloging” papers up until April 2006, this presentation provides that. Discusses the PEW Internet survey, looks at user expectations and tools available in the marketplace, and then provides some recommendations to bring current OPACs up to speed. Very well written and a good presentation to use for showing library staff what is happening out there.

***“The Millennial Generation Joins the Library Community”***

Marshall Breeding, presentation, Managing Electronic Collections: Strategies from Content to User, Sept. 28, 2006, Denver, CO

<http://staffweb.library.vanderbilt.edu/breeding/presentations/niso.ppt>

This provocative presentation explores the differences between millennial users and their habits and information-

seeking practices, and the services and tools that today's libraries offer. Illustrates how important multimedia, gaming, multitasking, and resource discovery are to this group of users. Some great information to share with your own staff.

### ***"Trends in Library Automation: Meeting the Challenges of a New Generation of Library Users"***

Marshall Breeding, presentation, OCLC Office of Research Distinguished Seminar Series, Nov. 29, 2006  
[www.oclc.org/research/dss/ppt/breeding.ppt](http://www.oclc.org/research/dss/ppt/breeding.ppt)

This presentation provides a current snapshot of the library automation market. Examines business perspectives, product and technology trends, and provides some statistics related to the new library search model.

### ***"On Competition for Catalogers"***

Karen Calhoun, PCC Participants meeting, Jan. 2006  
[www.loc.gov/catdir/pcc/CalhounPresentationALAMidwinter2006.pps](http://www.loc.gov/catdir/pcc/CalhounPresentationALAMidwinter2006.pps)

This presentation looks at the current crisis of finding suitably qualified and knowledgeable catalogers who can hit the ground running when they are hired. It discusses how library schools are not training catalogers, as well as the de-emphasis within libraries on the OPAC.

### ***"In the Flow: From Discovery to Disclosure"***

Lorcan Dempsey, presentation, CIC Library Conference, Minneapolis, MN, March 19, 2007  
[www.oclc.org/research/presentations/dempsey/cic.ppt](http://www.oclc.org/research/presentations/dempsey/cic.ppt)

This presentation is chock full of statistics and research related to library users and scholarly communication. Dempsey discusses four types of discovery environments that he sees libraries providing in the future. Includes some very detailed graphics and illustrations.

### ***"A Future for the Library Catalogue"***

Thom Hickey, presentation at The Future of the Catalog . . . Deconstruction or Reinvention? Fall Program, Delaware Valley Chapter of ACRL, Nov. 3, 2006  
[www.oclc.org/research/presentations/hickey/acrldvc2.ppt](http://www.oclc.org/research/presentations/hickey/acrldvc2.ppt)

This is an excellent presentation on future OPACs: what they should be and do, and even whether they are important, by OCLC's chief scientist.

### ***"The Catalog's Future"***

Karen Calhoun, presentation at The Future of the Catalog . . . Deconstruction or Reinvention? Fall Program, Delaware Valley Chapter of ACRL, Nov. 3, 2006  
[www.acrl-dvc.org/programs/catalog.pdf](http://www.acrl-dvc.org/programs/catalog.pdf)

This is a very cool, graphically based presentation on the catalog as it used to be, and as it needs to be, in order to be viable for users in the present and future.

### ***"MARC Forward"***

Sally H. McCallum, presentation, RLG Member Forum, Aug. 2006

[www.rlg.org/en/pdfs/Forum.8-06.McCallum.pdf](http://www.rlg.org/en/pdfs/Forum.8-06.McCallum.pdf)

This presentation iterates and describes the ten format attributes of the "forward" environment related to MARC: XML, granularity, versatility, extensibility, modularity, hierarchy support, crosswalks, tools, cooperative management, and pervasive. Sounds pretty similar to the list by Tennant in his "Bibliographic Metadata Infrastructure for the 21st Century."

### ***"Cataloging for the Future"***

Barbara Tillett, 2004 Phineas L. Windsor Lecture, University of Illinois Graduate School of Library and Information Science, Oct. 13, 2004

[http://puboff.lis.uiuc.edu/catalog/windsor/windsor\\_tillett.html](http://puboff.lis.uiuc.edu/catalog/windsor/windsor_tillett.html)

This is both a historical and a future-oriented lecture on cataloging by one of the primary movers behind FRBR.

## **Music Videos**

### ***"The OPAC Sucks"***

Video and lyrics by Brian Smith, The Laughing Librarian blog, Nov. 26, 2006

[www.laughinglibrarian.com/2006\\_11\\_01\\_archive.html#116457278842388906](http://www.laughinglibrarian.com/2006_11_01_archive.html#116457278842388906)

I must admit, I'm not much for YouTube stuff, but this video and its lyrics are quite entertaining and creative. The lyrics are available online (see the URL in the gray box).

### ***"The OPAC Sucks": Lyrics***

[www.laughinglibrarian.com/bd\\_opac.htm](http://www.laughinglibrarian.com/bd_opac.htm)

### ***Video Showing Users' Current Dilemma with Our OPACs***

[www.libraries.psu.edu/instruction/time.mov](http://www.libraries.psu.edu/instruction/time.mov)

This video offers a compelling demonstration of the problems with library discovery systems. A user tries to get access to *Time* magazine on the Penn State University Libraries Web site. It's the California Bibliographic Services Task Force (BSTF) report condensed to a minute-long video and set to music.

## Blog, Wiki, and Listserv Posts

### *"Re: WG Meetings on Future of Bibl. Control"*

Charley Pennell, post to AUTOCAT listserv, July 13, 2007

The ILS as a direct patron interaction tool is what is on the way out. The ILS of today, which basically evolved out of inventory control systems from the 1980s (Plessey, CLSI, Geac, DRA, III, etc.), is simply not capable of delivering a resource discovery product that is competitive with what is currently available to the public on the open Web. Not in retrieval or sort speed, nor in functionality. This is why many of us are now looking at catalogs that operate against snapshots of bibliographic data hauled out of the ILS, like Endeca and Scriblio, or on applications which are external to the ILS, but which mine ILS data through the back door using SQL or API. So the ILS isn't "out" for staff, just for the public.

### *"Models for Technology Innovation in Academic Libraries 2007"*

[www.njla.org/njacrl/ModelsTechInnov.doc](http://www.njla.org/njacrl/ModelsTechInnov.doc)  
and

### *"Survey Results: Nine Questions on Technology Innovation in Academic Libraries"*

ACRLog blog, April 6, 2007

<http://acrlblog.org/2007/04/06/survey-results-nine-questions-on-technology-innovation-in-academic-libraries>

These resources concern the "Top Ten Models of Technology Innovation" from an informal survey conducted by the ACRL–New Jersey chapter, which asked which academic libraries were centers of technology innovation on their campuses. First on the list is the Endeca Project at North Carolina State University. The others include the University of California–California Digital Library (CDL) and MIT's DSpace. These projects illustrate some of the more innovative and productive approaches to the challenges of drawing users into the OPAC.

### *"Time for a Paradigm Shift in 'Cataloging' AKA Make Worldcat a Wiki"*

Allen Mullen, post on the NGC4LIB listserv, Oct. 5, 2006  
<http://article.gmane.org/gmane.culture.libraries.ngc4lib/774>

This is a strong statement related to discussions on the future of cataloging by one of NGC4LIB's subscribers. He presents a negative opinion.

Our ILS has been down most of the morning, partially explaining the following meme dump.

After approximately 20 years of cataloging for academic, special, and public libraries, as well as for an outsourcing agency, and seemingly endless hours of applying local adaptations to MARC, Dublin Core, and hybrid metadata schemes for many types of resources, from books to web sites, from centuries old manuscripts to yesterday's digital photographs and almost everything in-between, I have come to believe that the repetitive nature of the overwhelming amount of work that we collectively accomplish offers a largely inefficient and substandard service to our patrons. Furthermore, our devotion to our processes and rules can constitute a barrier to many of us in the cataloging field being truly involved with our patron communities and other information professionals to take risks and try out new avenues for improving access to our resources. Our processes and rules, as glorious an achievement as they are (and I truly believe this as well), risk being an impediment.

Instead of each library using locally adapted versions of bib records from huge databases like Worldcat, I believe we should migrate to multifaceted local interfaces to those databases and the rest of the information resources that are important to our patrons. The bibliographical databases themselves (like Worldcat) should comprise record sets that are being enriched and enhanced by everyone—MARC catalogers, reference staff with privileges and social taggers alike, who are granted wiki-like access to add and modify them. Build rich resources globally and filter locally to suit local tastes and preferences. Make Worldcat a wiki!

Oh the horror!! We share a devotion to the idea that we as catalogers are the arbiters of access to bibliographic information, and that our local policies are fundamentally necessary to best serve our local communities. We believe that our interpretations of the rules are correct. And in the fold of this faith, thousands and thousands of cataloging staff members like me who range from highly trained and experienced scholars with encyclopedic knowledge of the rules and policies, to part-time volunteers who do the best they can with whatever guidance they have access to, do largely the same thing—adapt the same bibliographical records over (and over and over), all the while sincerely believing that this is the most effective approach to serving our patrons.

Come on—is it really?

I believe we could better serve patrons, in terms of rich access to what they seek whether in our local collections or elsewhere, as well as provide more efficient (more powerful at lower cost) local services if we move away from local online catalogs completely and at the same time, extend and refine online public interfaces to collaborative and collective databases and tools and people. I believe it could better serve our patrons to develop faceted local access to bib records that might include but are not limited by LCSH, NLM, MARC, Dublin Core, social tagging, etc. Why should our patrons be limited by LCSH's shortcomings if other subject access added to the same record proves itself better. If it doesn't, we can limit to LCHS headings. Let the "marketplace" of choices prevail. I also believe MARC and its future progeny should be only one realm of the many possible ways that these databases can be take in and represent bibliographical data.

I realize that there is also an inventory control (acquisitions, circulation, inventory and database maintenance, etc.) aspect to ILS systems that would be affected by such an evolution. However, I'm not convinced that there are valid reasons for full local MARC (or Dublin Core or whatever) records to be maintained in myriads of local systems in order to provide these functions. Even if this is not so, I think an argument for largely eliminating local adaptation of national bibliographic records merits examination.

I urge catalogers to look up from Catalogers Desktop, folks (no offense to CD intended). Something along these lines or somehow related to this is likely going to develop and it will radically change local cataloging processes whether we believe it is going to happen right now or not. I don't argue that we purposefully don't serve our patrons as well as we can—most of the catalogers I know and have known truly desire to be of service in their profession. Rather, I argue that we are having a hard time realizing that the way we are going about it may become irrelevant. We can be agents of a coming paradigm shift or defenders of the passing paradigm. We can have the bathwater and all the rubber ducks too—if we don't continue to hold fast to the idea that our library has to have it's own bathtub with a few drops of our local H2O added.

Now—back to looking up in the rule books and rule interpretations, etc. to determine what punctuation should precede the "!" subfield of the XXX field in BLANK format MARC records—all,

of course, to better serve the folks who will come in the library's door looking for this material.

Besides that, if I'm wrong, I still believe in doing what I devote myself to doing as well as I am able to given the circumstances I involve myself in.

### *"Dartmouth Biomedical Libraries October Conference—Keynote"*

Meredith Farkas, Information Wants to Be Free blog, Oct. 27, 2006

<http://meredith.wolfwater.com/wordpress/index.php/2006/10/27/dartmouth-biomedical-libraries-october-conference-keynote>

Here are some great comments posted by Meredith Farkas, reiterating remarks made by Roy Tennant, a well-known outspoken speaker on issues related to the future of the OPAC, in a keynote address that he gave at the Dartmouth Biomedical Libraries conference:

Keep the priorities straight—it's about the customers stupid! Don't make decisions based on what is easiest for you. Don't expect your users to look at things the way you do (librarians like to search, users like to find). Use your services like a patron would to see if it's usable for them. Usually you will find that your services and systems are not easy to use. Talk to your users and find out what they want/need.

\* \* \*

"Once you've done it, they can't tell you that you can't"—take risks, be opportunistic, better to beg forgiveness than to ask permission (omg, I so agree with that!).

Sometimes you really have to get your tail in gear or miss out. Watch out for critical action points—the times when inaction will lead to failure. At those times, give it everything you've got to make it a success. Sometimes the difference between failure and success is making effort at that critical junction.

Teamwork is all about paddling together. You need to strive to work effectively with your team members. If you don't feel motivated or effective, you will be a drag on everyone else. Get out of the game if that is the case.

\* \* \*

"Always rig for a flip"—plan for disaster, because it can happen when you least expect it. Envision worst-case scenarios so that you can plan for dealing with those issues.

Anything worth doing is worth doing with a sense of humor—learn to laugh at yourself. Have fun with what you're doing.

Sometimes decisiveness is more important than the decision itself—there are often several “right answers” in any situation in libraries, but a decision has to be made. Even not making a decision is making a decision.

\* \* \*

Things Roy knows are true

- Neither an early adopter nor a latecomer be. Let other people (early adopters) play with the technologies and hit the rapids. But don't be the last person to adopt a technology.
- Never underestimate the power of the prototype. Roy is a big fan of prototyping—depicting graphically what you have in mind or wire framing, etc. It's very difficult to explain your ideas until people have something to look at.
- Back it up or kiss it goodbye.
- Buy hardware at the last possible moment. Things are getting so much more affordable and better, so only buy something when you absolutely need it.
- Never buy software with a zero at the end of the release number
- Disk space is cheaper than dirt
- If you can't be with the operating system you love, love the one you're with. Use the tool that's in front of you to get the job done. When you can, choose the tool, but if you can't, make the best of it.

What we must do—Collectively

- Create and facilitate change—both in ourselves and our organizations. How can we make change less scary?
- Reward innovators and punish loiterers. Hire people based on personality rather than skills. You want someone who can change and continue learning.
- Invest in people and infrastructure—give your staff the tools they need to be effective. Otherwise, they will waste a lot of time waiting on outdated computers or waiting to be able to make a change to something.
- Use the best people for a job—committees can kill good ideas. You need a task force who will actually get things done.
- Use technology to create more efficient ways to work.

What we must do—Individually

- Learn as we breathe. We need to learn all the time without even thinking about it.
- Make strategic learning decisions. You can't learn everything, so focus on what is most important for that particular time. Learn only as much as you need to complete that task.
- Say it simply
- Strive for flexibility. Learn to deal with uncertainty.
- Share ideas; build prototypes.
- Take risks
- Push your organization into the future (kicking and screaming).

### “Groups: DEFF Report”

Lorcan Dempsey's Weblog, Feb. 5, 2007

<http://orweblog.oclc.org/archives/001262.html>

Dempsey comments on the DEFF (Denmark's electronic research library), related to research showing that users are not searching on OPACs.

The report discusses how DEFF will organize itself around the tiers of its architectural model: joint Information Supply, Middleware and system architecture, and ‘The meeting with the user’. Here are some points that struck me as I read it. This is not a summary.

- Libraries are reducing investment in routine activities to focus on where they can most create value for the user. This leads to a focus on both ends of the value chain: use of resources, and creation of resources.
- Cost and complexity need to be driven out of library activity. This drives an interest in standardization and consolidation. One example here is the move to create a consolidated ‘integrated search’ at the group level, where metadata and full text are indexed in a national service for general access. Document delivery and collecting data on user behavior to drive other services are other examples given.
- There is some discussion of the union catalog as a switch between Google Scholar and individual library collections. Disclosing library resources to Google through the union catalog and other resources is a pattern we are becoming familiar with as we want to avoid the many-to-many problem that arises if libraries expose metadata individually.

- There is some discussion of library support for research and learning workflows, areas which become more important.

The report is well worth a read. One major focus is how selective collaborative—and out-sourcing can create systemwide efficiencies and increase impact. Another is that this is a necessary direction if resources are to be freed up to more fully engage with local learning and research behaviors.

*Discussion Paper about Library Development in Denmark*

www.deff.dk/content.aspx?itemguid={C017EFBD-93EC-4815-9777-E3B79B8CDA2}

*“Re: What Is in This ‘Next Generation’ Library Catalog Thing?”*

William Denton, post on the NGC4LIB listserv, March 18, 2007

<http://article.gmane.org/gmane.culture.libraries.ngc4lib/1615>

I recommend Vernor Vinge’s 2006 novel RAINBOWS END to anyone thinking about the future of libraries. He’s the computer scientist/SF writer who came up with the idea of the technological singularity. (Wikipedia has a good article on it.) The book is set in the 2030s, just this side of the singularity. It involves the wildest library digitization project you’ve ever heard of, and it’s worth reading for that alone.

Vinge describes a world of ubiquitous computing, one where contact lenses or glasses go beyond heads-up displays and into computer-mediated reality.

Everyone is on the network all the time, and so is everything they own.

Read it and ask, “What do librarians do in a world like this?” Anyone who is unsettled by all the changes in the field in the last ten or twenty years, or the pace of change now, will have a knot in their stomach. It’s enough to make any of us wonder where the hell things are going.

This list is about the next-generation catalogue. I think the current generation will start to die out soon, and perhaps SirsiDynix’s announcement about this new system they call Rome will help push people away from aged ILSes to new ones, with new catalogues that are the start of the next generation.

I think free and/or small software projects will lead the way for the next generation; I think of Koha, Evergreen, and LibraryThing. Larger systems and commercial vendors will follow, but slowly. The next generation will be much like this generation, but it will work better, look nicer, be more distributed, and have open APIs.

The generation after that takes us to Web 3.0 or the Semantic Web or whatever. Talis, the UK company, is skipping the previous step and working to get the jump on this. What the big search engines will be like then and how much they’ll have invaded/taken over what librarians think of as theirs, I have no idea.

That one-after-next generation will be where no-one goes to OPACs any more and people really start to have their own personal branches of the One Big Library.

That’s when things start to get unspeakably freaky.

So, while we’re building the next generation catalogue now, we need to keep our eyes on the one that comes after it.

*“Whitepaper on the Future of Academic Libraries”*

Brian Surratt, on his Texadata blog, March 29, 2006  
[www.texadata.com/2006/03/whitepaper-on-future-of-academic.html](http://www.texadata.com/2006/03/whitepaper-on-future-of-academic.html)

Surratt offers ruminations on the future of academic libraries in the new information marketplace. The quote given below states some important points related to OPACs:

Our patrons no longer perceive that we provide unique services. We do not have a monopoly on publicly available information; rather, our broader culture is an information culture. The Google search engine is the first choice of many for information needs. Our major newspapers publish online with up-to-the-minute coverage. Apple’s iTunes service, providing digital music and video, is a mainstream commercial success. The situation is similar within the academic culture. Commercial publishers have begun to offer information services direct to the consumer, bypassing the library. Google developed Google Scholar, a free search engine just for scholarly content. Open-access projects such as arXiv, the Public Library of Science, and the Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy have demonstrated that scholarly content can be delivered free on the web, completely external to traditional library services.



Whether we are aware of it or not, we compete for the attention of our patrons who have alternatives for information access. We exist in an expanding information culture in a mature information age. Academic libraries can remain relevant in this age, but the key to our success will be in developing new services that are valuable to our patrons in the context of the broader landscape. Our professional values should remain our guide, but our means must change. In order to evolve our services, we must understand, embrace, and adapt to modern times. Foremost, we must thoroughly understand the needs and desires of our patrons, and strive to meet those needs. In addition to this, we must understand the information culture from multiple perspectives and seek opportunities to innovate and improve our services in ways that support our values.

### *"Is Your OPAC Fun? (A Manifesto of Sorts)"*

Tim Spalding of LibraryThing

[www.librarything.com/thingology/2006/12/is-your-opac-fun-manifesto-of-sorts.php](http://www.librarything.com/thingology/2006/12/is-your-opac-fun-manifesto-of-sorts.php)

This wonderful opinion piece is related to the newest fun OPAC out there. Spalding provides a list of how to make your OPAC more "fun":

- Provide blog widgets and RSS feeds so patrons can show off what they're reading and what they thought of it.
- Let people find what they want, but let them also get entertainingly lost. Encourage exploration, serendipity and lost-ness.
- Give authors, subjects, languages, tags and other facets their own pages. That stuff's interesting, and can lead one delightfully astray.
- Allow patrons to interact with the catalog via tags, ratings and reviews. (And would it kill you to give them patron pages?)
- Link outward. The web is fun. Point to it.
- Allow (static) inbound links. What are you, a bouncer?
- Let patrons access your data via API. Some clever patron will do something fun you hadn't thought of.
- Give patrons a reason to check in every day—something about the books, and ideally about them and the books, not some "trick" like free movie passes.
- Talk to patrons in their own language (eg., with tags), not in some crazy argot, where "cooking" is "cookery" and "the internet" is "the information superhighway."

- Give patrons fun, high-quality recommendations.
- Give patrons enjoyable metadata. I don't intend to read any of the books in today's NYT Book Review, but I loved reading about them.
- Let users interact socially around the books they read. (Obviously, anything social needs to be voluntary.)
- Make it usable and findable too.

### *"Burn the Catalog"*

Timothy Burke, Swarthmore College, Jan. 20, 2004  
[www.swarthmore.edu/SocSci/tburke1/perma12004.html](http://www.swarthmore.edu/SocSci/tburke1/perma12004.html)

An academic historian states his opinion on how academic libraries and the tools that they provide for research are not keeping pace with the tools available on the Internet. In the end, he suggests just throwing away library catalogs and building an Amazon-plus. This piece shows how even the humanities are starting to change.

### *"The Network Reconfigures the Library Systems Environment"*

Lorcan Dempsey's Weblog, July 6, 2007

<http://orweblog.oclc.org/archives/001379.html>

This extensive blog post by Dempsey details many of his opinions and visions towards moving library systems, and hence the library catalog, towards creating richer user services. Some selected quotes from this posting (which has some very good graphics as well) are given below:

We can expect to see simplification and rationalization in coming years as libraries cannot sustain expensive diversity of management systems. The National Library of Australia's discussion of a 'single business' systems environment, or Ex Libris's discussion of Uniform Resource Management are relevant here. It is likely that there will be a growing investment in collaboratively sourced solutions, as libraries seek to share the costs of development and deployment.

\* \* \*

Libraries have thought about discovery. There is now a switch of emphasis to disclosure: libraries need to think about how their resources are best represented in discovery environments which they don't manage.

\* \* \*

We are used to thinking about better integration of library services. But that is a means, not an end. The end is the enhancement of research, learning and personal development. I discussed above how we want resources to be



represented in various discovery environments. Increasingly, we want to represent resources in a variety of other workflows. These might be the personal digital environments that we are creating around RSS aggregators, toolbars and so on. Or the prefabricated institutional environments such as the course management system or the campus portal. Or emerging service composition environments like Facebook or iGoogle. As well as in network level discovery environments like Google or Amazon that are so much a part of people's behaviors.

### *"Lifting Out the Catalog Discovery Experience"*

Lorcan Dempsey's Weblog, May 14, 2006

<http://orweblog.oclc.org/archives/001021.html>

Dempsey suggests that there are a number of discovery contexts in the library catalog that need to be reexamined, disconnected, and re-embedded into other environments. He lists four of these (and indicates that there can be more):

- local catalog discovery environments
- shared catalog discovery environments
- syndicated catalog discovery environments
- leveraged discovery environments

He explains each of these in detail, and provides links to similar posts in his blog regarding his opinions on this topic.

### *"Laundry List for NGC"*

Amy Ostrom, post on the NGC4LIB listserv, Dec. 12, 2006

<http://article.gmane.org/gmane.culture.libraries.ngc4lib/1226>

This posting lists what one librarian and Web interface designer feels needs to be included in any "next-generation" library catalog.

- I want it all in one place with option to see more or less (if it's on a booklist let me know, if it has reviews let me see them, put it all in the same place; if the library has it in audio and book format, put it in the same record!, seriously, if one type isn't in, I'll take another format—I don't want to click on 15 records just to find something; I also want to be able to hide some stuff if it is too cluttered)
- I want descriptions, dangit! And why does no software exist for integrating series information in the catalog?? I want to know what the next book is! (nothing like clicking on

something you think you know what it is, and then it really isn't. I HATE that for something I might be interested in, I have to go to Amazon first to find anything)

- I want to see related/similar materials (I want a smarter version of <http://www.literature-map.com/>, either to graphically display the closeness of the book/author, or to at least list what others think are close)
- I want to make wishlists and my own booklists (heck, if I read an awesome series, I want to let others see these books if they share similar tastes; also I may not have time to read right now, but doesn't mean I want to forget a book I found that might be worth reading later)
- I want pictures! (I am visual, I'll know it's the right book if I can see it first; I want to see a sample of the content as well, but would settle for a description)
- I want suggested searches and ways to narrow or broaden the search I made (if I can't remember the name or misspell it, I want it to act like Amazon and pull up suggested spellings or related searches, also broken down by category)
- I want the search to pull up the RIGHT materials (rank by popularity would work better than what item was last cataloged; Amazon is very good with its algorithm, it's not that hard to replicate—we can record how many times a record was viewed and how many times it was checked out, we know its publication date, we know its format, why can't we organize the search better?)
- I want an RSS feed for new items based on a search query (heck yeah I want to know what just came in without going to the catalog every day so I can get my hold on it ASAP, but I don't want to know EVERY item that is purchased, only what I am looking for; great for current awareness as well)
- I want to see the newly available items, especially in DVDs, CDs, and games (not just an RSS feed out, but actually on the site!)
- I want to know how long the wait list is, in days and or queue location (if it's too long, I'll just go buy the item)
- I want permalinks, so I can link to a book from my blog to the catalog instead of to Amazon or remember easily how to get back to it without running the search again (I am all about promoting the library, but Amazon is better than the library could ever be with

marketing and promoting, let's take their example!)

- It would be awesome to create my custom display, so I see what I want in the color I like (okay, it's a stretch, but it's all about customizing and personalizing these days)
- I want a map to show me the general shelf I might find my item (so many times an item was pulled out of the general collection and I pull my hair out in frustration)
- I want a library where I only have to sign in once, ONCE! (in my library catalog, every time I place a hold I have to enter my information; I log on, and I get signed out after maybe ten minutes of idleness—I'm probably surfing Amazon to find the RIGHT book . . .)
- I want to be able to turn on alerts for things like service outages, due dates, and overdues with quick access to renew, let alone modify my account profile and add password hints . . . (people are very forgetful)

So, from these wants, here is a basic (non-comprehensive) list of features we need to build a better catalog:

1. XML format
2. More (and better) content
3. More pictures
4. Smarter search engine
5. RSS on the fly
6. Commenting!! Commenting!!
7. User accounts
8. Single sign-in
9. User created lists/content
10. Permalinks
11. FRBR 2.0
12. Highly customizable interface
13. Highly user-friendly account settings/options
14. Smart spell-check aka related spelling/search terms
15. Organizable search results

So for those who aren't very technical and are kind of freaking out about the grocery list, the basic configurations should still be in tact with ability to enable the customization tools. I am tired of code that is falling apart, person-

ally, and I would love to have a "skin" collection similar to MySpace, where you can pick or share your theme (with small customizations for name, etc), so the smaller libraries can also have a pretty catalog. Or even being able to share the customized configuration files without loss of security? Seems like the world, but aren't we paying a fortune for these systems?

### *"Universal Search and the Rich Texture of Suggestion"*

Lorcan Dempsey's Weblog, May 18, 2007

<http://orweblog.oclc.org/archives/001354.html>

This post is a discussion of Google's corporate strategy of developing a unified search across all of its services. Dempsey provides some interesting commentary about how this is a major new direction for the company and could revolutionize the information industry. He quotes one newspaper as saying that the effort would be "a result of two years' work by more than 100 engineers and involve a major revamping of the company's software platform."

### *"Weinberger's Well-Ordered Miscellany"*

Karen Schneider, ALA TechSource blog, May 3, 2007

[www.techsource.ala.org/blog/2007/05/weinbergers-well-ordered-miscellany.html](http://www.techsource.ala.org/blog/2007/05/weinbergers-well-ordered-miscellany.html)

This is an extensive post on David Weinberger's book *Everything Is Miscellaneous*, dealing with many of the traditional and time-honored values that libraries hold dear and chucking them out of the window. While it is difficult to describe the meat of the book in its totality, Weinberger basically indicates that chaos is the new rule of the third order, or digital environment. The old rules of the first and second order (the book and the card catalog worlds) do not work in the third order. One important quote of Weinberger's included in this blog posting says it all: "We've only forced ideas into unambiguous categories through authority and discipline."

### *"Talking about the Catalog"*

Lorcan Dempsey's Weblog, June 20, 2006

<http://orweblog.oclc.org/archives/001044.html>

This page includes links to 28 opinions and blog postings by Dempsey on the topic of the library catalog. Topics include "The integrated library experience that isn't," "New model library system vendors," "Who is the catalog for?" "Libraries, logistics and the long tail," "The user interface that isn't," "Making data work—catalogs and Web 2.0," and "Rank, recommend and relate." This URL provides a convenient base to Dempsey's thoughts on the topic, without having to troll blindly through the blog.

### "The Virtues and Limits of Cataloging"

Eli Jacobowitz, Clarifying and Explaining blog, Feb. 9, 2007  
<http://pages.slc.edu/~ejacobowitz/?p=12>

This short blog post by the manager of digital technology at Sarah Lawrence College is about librarians' concerns about the quality of cataloging. I can relate to many of his comments:

Librarians cringe at amateur cataloging. It's like home dentistry.

\* \* \*

The bottom line is, you need a degree in Library Science to do this right. Where does that leave the vast amount of digital information that is piling up? Early projections are speculative, but . . . the amount of information in the world doubled in roughly three years. It is a serious and valid question whether it will be humanly possible to catalog even the fraction of information that we find worth keeping. This limitation, combined with the competition of amateur, democratic, rough-and-ready categorization, means that professional cataloging must adapt or die. The good news is that the information technology community is finally ready to hear what the librarians have been saying. The brute force, flat data approach doesn't scale.

\* \* \*

Eventually, robots might catalog for us. (Librarians shudder). What we now know is just how far away that is—bot catalogers will need much better AI than currently exists. But in order for this project to even be possible, we have to make our data bot-readable. That means implementing some of the cataloging technologies invented and refined by librarians over the centuries.

### "Broken, Huh?"

Jonathan Rochkind, Bibliographic Wilderness blog, May 25, 2007

<http://bibwild.wordpress.com/2007/05/25/broken-huh>

This blog post, which I quote in its entirety, has some excellent wisdom and thinking behind it. All those who keep trying to defend current cataloging practices should read this because it gets to the basics of the issue: the users don't use the catalog, and we don't have the money to keep up something the users don't access.

A definitive argument/explanation for why/what is broken in our current environment has yet to be written, and is not an easy thing to do. All I can do is provide a sketch of some notes toward that thesis, which I'll try to do here.

1. The issues brought up in the LC working group's Users and Uses meeting are one good place to start for some overall background. Karen Coyle provides a good summary that includes some of the issues.
2. There is far too much duplication of labor among working catalogers. We lack a good *technical and customary* infrastructure for *efficiently sharing* corrections and improvements made in one location with the larger community. We fail to take advantage of as much work as we could for the larger good, and have significant resources being spent on duplicating data.
3. There are *very basic* questions of *high interest* to our users that our data set is *unable to answer*, even though *we are spending time recording information* that *ought* to be available to answer these questions. One very good example—and it's just one example—is Roy Tennant's analysis of the inability to say whether full content is available online *even though we are already spending time recording URL information*.

We do not spend nearly enough time investigating and identifying and working to solve these sorts of problems. Why did Roy have people on AUTOCAT telling him this problem was clearly imaginary, and didn't exist?

4. We have drawn a wall around *what is and what is not of interest to 'cataloging'* that is not necessarily backed up by any good rationale. Many things that we decide are not of interest (like the above issue?) are in fact of high significance to the success and ease our users will have in carrying out the tasks we mean to support. We do this even within the data found in a MARC record, and also according to type of material and source of data. I don't mean that "Catalogers" need to apply the exact same standards to journal articles, institutional repository metadata, data from Lorcan's other three sources of metadata (thanks Peter). But we do need to consider it our responsibility to figure out how all these things can fit together. Catalogers need to be metadata professionals stepping up to figure out the overall control regime that can fit these things together.

We need to think seriously about how we will share our metadata with other communities and vice versa.

As an aside, a “pet peeve” that actually isn’t a “peeve” at all, it’s a serious problem, is the MARC-8 character encoding.

5. Related, we have too many different standards, controlled vocabularies, standards bodies, organizations, sub-communities with overlapping domains and which produce un-harmonized data, without enough coordination. One example of the problems this causes is form/genre information. Form/genre is of high interest to our users. And it is found in at least half a dozen places in the MARC record, from at least three different controlled vocabularies from three different places—LCSH \$v information; GMD/SMD; and MARC allowed coded values and guidance from MARC itself (which does count as a controlled vocabulary!). How can we help users find what they need and understand what they’ve found (see faceted browsing) in terms of form/genre from this mish-mash?

To be clear, form/genre is conceptually a *very difficult problem*. Although it may seem simple to the users (“I just want to find videos/biographies/science fiction! What’s the problem?”), we all know that it’s a conceptually thorny set of concepts that are difficult to deal with systematically. That’s no excuse for not working on it though, and the apparatus we have in place instead binds us in inertia.

That’ll do for a start. Something deserves to be said more generally about creating data that’s of use to machine processing (for the end goal of presenting things to users in better ways, naturally! We don’t care about the machines for the sake of machines) *as well as* for direct human consumption (Human finds record somehow->what we record has to be intelligible to human once found). But I’m still working out how to say/justify that clearly for an audience that doesn’t already agree with it.

Now, these are some *very difficult problems*. That we have them is not indication that 100 years of cataloging practice has “failed”. In fact, the metadata system/environment we have now was very intelligently optimized *for the social, economic, and technical context of the mid 20th century*. It is arguably the *best* that could be done in that context. But that’s not the context we are in anymore. We have new demands and new possibilities and new challenges. Yes, “the cataloguing community have just been overtaken by a tsunami of change in the last

ten years” (although I’d say it’s not just about the fact that information resources are increasingly *digital form*. That’s in fact *less* significant to me than the change from card catalog to online environment, which I think we still haven’t made successfully—and that’s going on 20, 25 years.) The result is a broken system.

In the 21st century, our library metadata environment (by which I mean the interacting system composed of people, institutions, organizations, rules, standards, data sets, computer software—“system” in the sense of General Systems Theory, I don’t just mean “system” in the sense of “Systems Department”)—is in fact, I still argue, *broken*.

It is the role of a professional and strong community of catalogers to work on fixing it. Don’t forget that Lubetzky [1], Cutter, Panizzi—all were in fact “*cataloging radicals*” challenging and rethinking how things had always been done *for new social, economic, and technical contexts*. Where is our Lubetzky for the 21st century?

[1] “Unfortunately, standard rules had become too much of a good thing. An undue proliferation of rules was the topic of “Crisis in Cataloging” as identified by the Librarian’s Committee of 1940 at the Library of Congress and immortalized by Andrew Osborn, one of the members of the Librarian’s Committee, in 1941.

“The Library of Congress together with ALA took the lead to examine the rules, and Seymour Lubetzky was hired to discover ‘Is this rule necessary?’ usually answering, ‘no’. Catalogers had become too focused on creating the perfect record according to LC standards, which they also complained not even LC had achieved.”

From “Cooperative Cataloging: past, present and future”, by Barry B. Baker. Has also been published as Cataloging & classification quarterly, volume 17, number 3/4 1993?-T.p. verso. Found by me via a Google search.

[Text associated with this footnote includes a hyperlink to this URL: <http://books.google.com/books?id=AVnpwHYP-nIC&pg=PA28&lpg=PA28&dq=lubetzky+%22is+this+rule+necessary%22&source=web&ots=ip4XxPVanV&sig=y59TgYwaWM7CJ4SjSEKNM0PJ8-U.>]

### “Technical Services Meetings at ATLA Annual Conference: An LC Perspective”

Christine Schwartz, Cataloging Futures blog, June 29, 2007  
[www.catalogingfutures.com/catalogingfutures/2007/06/tom-yees-presen.html](http://www.catalogingfutures.com/catalogingfutures/2007/06/tom-yees-presen.html)

This blog post offers comments on a presentation by Tom Yee, Assistant Chief from the Cataloging Policy and Support Office at LC. Here are the bullets of information that are important:

- LC is evaluating the Library of Congress Subject Headings (LCSH)
- They are looking at the application and structure of the subject headings, in particular, considering pre-coordination vs. post-coordination. A report on this issue should be available soon.
- In a move toward economy, commonly used subject strings will be added to the LC authority file
- Developing Class Web and machine manipulation of subjects headings are being worked on also
- Because of budgetary constraints at LC, they are under pressure to work better, cheaper, faster
- There is a renewed interest and work being done on genre/form headings by the moving images, cartographic, and music cataloging communities
- There will be a physical reorganization of the staff at LC combining acquisitions and cataloging (their website already reflects this change)
- Lots of strategic planning is going on at LC
- LC management is asking the question: What do we need to provide some access to a book and get it out? One approach is to do some materials as minimal level cataloging: MARC encoding levels “3” or “7”
- Some of these minimal level books will not be classified if they are going to off-site storage
- Because of the budget, as catalogers retire they are not being replaced. So, the workflow is being changed with technicians doing bibliographic description and the professional catalogers doing classification and subject analysis
- Because of these changes at LC, Tom suggested that catalogers should try to add good quality cataloging into OCLC WorldCat. (It definitely seems, to me, that we can no longer rely so heavily on the Library of Congress as the standard bearer for cataloging print materials.)

### *“Electronic Resource by Any Other Name”*

Alexander Johannesen, Shelter.nu Articles blog, March 16, 2007

<http://shelter.nu/articles/2007/03/electronic-resource-by-any-other-name.html>

This vocal contributor to NGC4LIB and AUTOCAT produced a very interesting post regarding today’s libraries, and what the library of the future needs to be (or not to be). Some of his more interesting quotes:

How do we know that we’re delivering systems that are supposed to help them in whatever quest they have? Right now I feel we’re second-guessing on every level on that question; we design systems with a specific set of features in the hopes that we help at least a given percentage of users. I’d stress that we really need to work it the other way around, as usability has shown us time and time again that guessing what the user wants will always fail; we need completely open systems where the user narrows the features until the goal is reached! This is what we humans are about, isn’t it? First we read the table of contents or the index (both from which you gain a sense of overview), then jump to the right chapter for the details, and from there make decisions on where to go next.”

\* \* \*

Clay Shirky points out that we design software in such a way that we force people into patterns of behaviour that in real-life would be classified as sociopathic. It’s a fun exercise, so let’s try it out:

- If a person were like Ebay, she would rate friendship on the basis of their monetary status. She would hold anyone accountable to any vague notion of interest. She would set a minimum value on all her belongings.
- If a person were like Flickr, she would rate friendship on the quality of your visual presentation. She would say that you look great when you don’t. She would come to your side only if you’ve got something she likes the look of. She loves personal attention based on how she looks.
- If a person were like Google, she would rate friendship based on how many other friends you’ve got and how they talk about you. She would be our friend if all your friends tell her about you. Also, she would be holding up little noticeboards with ads on them in generic conversation.

But we can try out this experiment with our own systems, too:

- If a person were like our OPAC she would have constant bed-hair and mismatching garments of clothing, and ask you specific questions in a language you don’t quite understand. She would answer you in really long sentences, and often say things that have nothing to do with the subject. She’s our friend for a while

until she decides to burst into crying fits or ignore you completely. She would give you nothing, only point in various directions as an indicator of where things might be.

- If a person were like an ILS she would behave differently depending on how you start your conversation. She would completely redress and change her hair color between conversations. She speaks several languages in various modes of perfection, albeit not always the language that you understand. She is clever in many things, but never the thing you want her to be clever at. All her sisters seem smarter and prettier than her, yet her sisters friends claim the same about her.
- If a person were like our cataloging software, she would be incapable of starting a conversation, but once you got going you had to speak to her in a very concise and cryptic language which you need huge volumes of books and rules to master. She would value your friendship for very short periods of time, and would know nothing of you between conversations. She would have lots of clothes on in various colors and sizes, never sure of whether to use good ol' buttons or more modern zippers or velcro. She will recite to all her friends word for word what you're saying.

I like his openness and frankness when discussing these issues. Sometimes we need this type of "prophet" to help us think and rethink.

### *"Framework for a Bibliographic Future"*

Draft for discussion by Karen Coyle, Diane Hillmann, Johnathan Rochkind, and Paul Weiss, on the futurelib wiki, May 2007 revision

<http://futurelib.pbwiki.com/Framework>

This wiki is a cooperative bibliographic framework for the future, open to all for comment and revision, drafted by some leading librarians. Has some great graphics for discussion and visual effect.

### *"Disintegration, Disenchantment, Distrust, and Development"*

Candy Zeman, Tech Tidbits blog, Dec. 5, 2006  
[www.polarislibrary.com/forums/blogs/techtidbits/archive/2006/12/05/Disintegration\\_2C00\\_-disenchantment\\_2C00\\_-distrust\\_2C00\\_-and-development.aspx](http://www.polarislibrary.com/forums/blogs/techtidbits/archive/2006/12/05/Disintegration_2C00_-disenchantment_2C00_-distrust_2C00_-and-development.aspx)

This is an interesting diatribe on the woes related to the library OPAC. Zeman points out the differences between the "death of the ILS" and "the OPAC sucks."

### *"Is There a Bibliographic Emergency?"*

Open Libraries blog, July 10, 2007

<http://bookism.org/open/2007/07/10/is-there-a-bibliographic-emergency>

Based on the third meeting of the LC BCWG, a synopsis and summary of the speakers, presentations, and topics. Specifically focused on the economics and challenges of the current information environment.

### *"Simplicity Is Not Merely the Absence of Complexity"*

Steven Bell, Designing Better Libraries blog, July 31, 2007

<http://dbl.ishost.org/blog/2007/07/31/simplicity-is-not-merely-the-absence-of-complexity>

This post examines the challenge between choosing simplicity and/or complexity in relation to library processes and procedures.

### *"Hot (MARC) Metadata"*

Nathan Rinne, post on NGC4LIB listserv, July 31, 2007

<http://article.gmane.org/gmane.culture.libraries.ngc4lib/2657>

I quote this in its entirety:

I am amazed at the evident impasse here. I do not understand the "either-or" mentality here. I personally do not understand how Eric (Lease Morgan) can say everything that he says and still think that librarianship, library cataloging, library catalogues, can survive. In my mind, he inadvertently empties out the content of the profession, more or less making it irrelevant (please read: <http://slc.bc.ca/response.htm>)

I hope everyone is willing to suffer my getting philosophical again.

I posted the following on AUTOCAT the other day, and it sums up what I think is the true value and contribution of librarianship (Yee: "human intervention for the organization of information, commonly known as cataloging")

"Everyone is so big on "conversation" these days: Conversation is knowledge, etc. (I think "content", in some sense, too). Admittedly, I think blogs for instance, are great, even as they admittedly can give us just another way of avoiding the "on the ground", "face-to-face" realities we physically encounter. And of course, I don't deny that in all of this participating, dialoging,

conversing, etc. there is “love” and “community” to be found online (see Clay Shirkey here: <http://tinyurl.com/2em6zs>), in some sense, but it seems to me that love is **\*especially willing\*** to engage in difficult and substantial conversations surrounding practical, on the ground realities (not displacing the need for theories!)—something I do not sense is happening in the area of vocabulary control for instance (do some in the library / library cataloging world think this is going to mysteriously happen “on the fly”, “as we go”, etc.? [like Wikipedia]—are there more concrete reasons [besides faith] for thinking these things will be effectively taken care of that I am not aware of?)

Now—and I am getting to the point—it seems to me that it is not only an act of love to pay close and careful attention (being like a collector who finds things to be interesting and unique) to specific items as well as the broader [again: unique and interesting] contexts that we, as catalogers deal with. It is also love when librarians **\*explicitly recognize the need\*** to call something out there in our shared world **\*these words and not other words—this form and not other forms\*** for the sake of common understanding (we may not totally agree with everything, but . . .)—because we ultimately want to not only be able to recognize others, but to be involved with them—and to hopefully accomplish great work with them. This is what catalogers do as they carefully and lovingly examine and describe items in their larger contexts for the sake of making things findable through words that the wider community can recognize and identify with (not always their first picks, but we try to fix that to by working together). Clay Shirkey may call what we do “imposing your words, classifications, taxonomies on me” (i.e. power, domination, see his article “Ontology is Overrated” for more) and look for love in other places, but I would appeal to him to recognize that if that is indeed the case to some extent, there is also great love mixed in here as well. Now—if we in the larger library community don’t see the importance of the hard work of doing this among ourselves—and this is where the lack of emphasis on cataloging in our profession comes in—how will we find good, effective cooperation (hopefully for the common good) with the other metadata communities?

Or does anyone think all of this can be taken care of by making all our authority records web-pages (URLs), or something like that? I am interested to hear more about how this might work, practically speaking? Anyone want to tackle that?

## Web Sites

### *“Key Resources in the Field of Library Automation”*

Marshall Breeding, Library Technology Guides Web site, 2007

[www.librarytechnology.org/automationhistory.pl](http://www.librarytechnology.org/automationhistory.pl)

This colorfully illustrated chart presents in reverse chronological order the dubious and fascinating history of OPAC vendors from 1968 to 2006. Shows how volatile the market is and how small the number of library OPAC vendors has become.

### *Library of Congress: Working Group on the Future of Bibliographic Control (LCWGFBC)*

[www.loc.gov/bibliographic-future](http://www.loc.gov/bibliographic-future)

This is the place to go to listen to, read, and review all of the information and presentations from the three town hall meetings held by LC around the country related to the immense changes and challenges faced by LC in cataloging practice and policy. There are some interesting opinions and frank economic challenges for LC in the future; those in library administration already know that the purpose of these meetings is to provide the illusion that LC cares about the library community’s opinions and concerns. In reality, it is pretty much a fact that LC cataloging operations will slowly be outsourced and/or greatly downsized; these changes have been in the works for over a decade now. I would especially point readers to “Economics and Organization of Bibliographic Data” by Karen Calhoun, the background paper for the third meeting. I quote footnote 6 here to illustrate how libraries must now move to a more business-like economic model in their approach to information:

Some may argue that the notions of “return on investment” and economic value are irrelevant in libraries. Are they? It is true that scholarship, intellectual freedom, the contribution of libraries to research, teaching and learning—and yes, bibliographic control—are properly understood as socially desirable goods that are and should be subsidized and protected from market forces. Nevertheless, individuals and governments do make choices about socially desirable goods, because the amount of resources available to society is always fixed, and choices must be made. For example, the resources that are invested in interstate highways are not available for investment in alternatives such as large scale, modern public transportation. So, competition and economic forces are active determinants in both the marketplace and public sector. The resources we as a society collectively invest in scholarship, public higher education and library

ies are not available for investment elsewhere. And, the resources that are invested in library catalogs are not available for investment elsewhere in libraries.

*"Economics and Organization of Bibliographic Data," by Karen Calhoun*

[www.loc.gov/bibliographic-future/meetings/docs/LC\\_WG\\_Bibliographic\\_Control\\_Briefing-Calhoun\\_1.pdf](http://www.loc.gov/bibliographic-future/meetings/docs/LC_WG_Bibliographic_Control_Briefing-Calhoun_1.pdf)

### *The Future of Cataloging*

AFSCME Local 2910: Library of Congress Professional Guild Web site

[www.guild2910.org/future.htm](http://www.guild2910.org/future.htm)

This Web site contains all of the papers Thomas Mann has written on the current crisis with LC cataloging, as well as papers by others. Among other opinion and discussion papers, "What Is Going On at the Library of Congress" and "More on What Is Going On at the Library of Congress" by Thomas Mann, "The Future of Cataloging" by Deanna Marcum, and the infamous LC report by Karen Calhoun can all be accessed here.

### *Beyond the OPAC: Future Directions for Web-Based Catalogues*

Australian Committee on Cataloguing, Sept. 18, 2006  
[www.nla.gov.au/lis/stndrds/grps/acoc/papers2006.html](http://www.nla.gov.au/lis/stndrds/grps/acoc/papers2006.html)

This Web site is associated with a conference held in Australia and featuring a number of interesting papers and presentations on the future of the OPAC. Some of them are vendor-specific: for example, the Scott presentation is Voyager-specific. Here is the list of papers from the Web site:

- **Beyond the OPAC: future directions for web-based catalogues**  
Martha Yee, Cataloguing Supervisor, UCLA Film and Television Archive
- **The well connected catalogue**  
Patricia Scott, Denise Tobin and Helen Attar, University of Adelaide
- **Setting a new standard: Resource Description and Access (RDA)**  
Deirdre Kiorgaard (ACOC)
- **The potential impact of RDA on OPAC displays**  
Ann Huthwaite and Philip Hider (ACOC)
- **OPACs and the real information marketplace: why providing a mediocre product at a high price no longer works**  
Lloyd Sokvitne, Senior Manager (Digital Strategies), State Library of Tasmania

- **Seeding search engines with data from the Australian National Bibliographic Database (ANBD)**

Tony Boston, Assistant Director General, Resource Sharing, National Library of Australia

- **Applying FRBR to library catalogues: a review of existing FRBRization projects**

Martha Yee, Cataloguing Supervisor, UCLA Film and Television Archive

- **Managing OPACs: approaches to the process of OPAC change and development** (panel discussion)

Lisa Billingham, Del Shiers, David Wells, Shane White

### *Lorcan Dempsey, Recent Presentations*

OCLC Office of Research Web site

[www.oclc.org/research/staff/dempsey/presentations.htm](http://www.oclc.org/research/staff/dempsey/presentations.htm)

Just to cover myself, here is the Web site where Dempsey maintains all of his presentations. It is more convenient to point to where they are than try to describe each one separately. Every one of these presentations is well constructed and full of statistics, as well as of the opinions by a leading scientist/librarian. Dempsey is considered a leader and innovator in the area of reinventing the OPAC, and meeting users' needs at their level of interest.

## Books

### *Selected Quotes by Maurice B. Line*

from the book *Lines of Thought: The Selected Papers of Maurice B. Line* (L. J. Anthony edition, 1988)

quoted in posts on the AUTOCAT listserv, March 6–7, 2007

I found these quotes highly enlightening and a cause for foreboding, especially since they come from a librarian.

[XXXXXX] is one of the most remarkable examples of trying to solve a problem by committee, with predictable results . . . No data on users' needs were collected: instead cataloguers discussed how to change the rules, rather as if hens were to gather together to discuss the design of eggs. [no original source cited]

\* \* \*

We do not want our catalogues to stand as the largest monuments in an extensive cemetery of dead books. [from *On the Construction and Care of White Elephants: Some Fundamental Questions Concerning the Catalogue* (with M. W. Grose) (1986)]



\* \* \*

Some schemes . . . have appeared, but the impact on library classification has been very small. Bliss is used by few libraries other than those in Institutes of Education (which happened to be founded about the time Bliss was published), and Colon is surely hardly used at all. It is possible that, in addition to the very important research carried out by the Classification Research Group and others, a rather different set of questions require fuller examination. In seeking theoretical perfection, it is easy to forget one essential ingredient for a perfect theory—that it must work in practice. At present, some classification research has about as much relevance to modern library function as Christian theology—in the academic sense—has to practical Christianity. [from *How Golden Is Your Retriever: Thoughts on Library Classification* (1969)]

\* \* \*

It is often not uncommon to see backlogs of anything from 6 months to 2 years in libraries, particularly academic libraries. Never mind whether the readers are waiting for the books, or if the funds will ever be available for cataloging them properly; standards must not be reduced. [no original source cited]

\* \* \*

One characteristic of the perfectionist is that in order to live with his own perfectionism, and knowing that he cannot attain it himself, he must find others who are also imperfect, preferably more imperfect than himself. Few things therefore so rejoice the librarian as when in stocktaking he comes across someone else's mistake, be it large or small. [no original source cited]

\* \* \*

This persists in the 'more voluminous than thou' complex—the use, as a standard measure of comparison between libraries, of the number of volumes a library holds, as if bulk is somehow a measure of quality. With libraries, as with women, sheer bulk should be totally irrelevant as a measure of quality. [from *The Search for the Ideal* (as Agnew Broome) (1974)]

Ignoring the words of committees is a lot more difficult than ignoring the needs of users. [no original source cited]

\* \* \*

As Ranganathan said, "Save the time of the user." [no original source cited]

\* \* \*

Can we have fewer papers on "How I run my library good" and more on "what my users feel about my service?" [from *Ignoring the User: How, When, and Why* (1980)]

## New, Exciting Next-Generation Catalogs

These are examples of what I consider to be next-generation library catalogs, if there can be such a thing. Many of these OPACs take advantage of existing metadata and incorporate new user tools and services, thus putting much more "lipstick on the pig," but at least they also include a makeover and plastic surgery. Some of these "new" OPACs use open-source software, tools, and products produced through grants, and/or Web 2.0 technologies.

### "Examples of Possible Next Generation Library Catalogs"

futurelib wiki, last updated Aug. 21, 2007

<http://futurelib.pbwiki.com/Examples>

This wiki page lists next-generation catalogs for library managers and librarians to examine and play with. Includes (among others) the Georgia Pines/Evergreen open-source ILS, the Nelsonville Public Library in Ohio/Koha open-source ILS, and the State Library of Tasmania.

### "How Libraries Are Using LibraryThing"

The LibraryThing Blog, Sept. 16, 2006

[www.librarything.com/blog/2006/09/how-libraries-are-using-librarything.php](http://www.librarything.com/blog/2006/09/how-libraries-are-using-librarything.php)

and

### "Danbury, CT, Kicks Off LibraryThing for Libraries!"

Thingology Blog, May 14, 2007

[www.librarything.com/thingology/2007/05/danbury-ct-kicks-off-librarything-for.php](http://www.librarything.com/thingology/2007/05/danbury-ct-kicks-off-librarything-for.php)

Another open-source catalog, LibraryThing features FRBRization, large-scale tag-based discovery, and book recommendations all rolled into one. Built on the basic concept of YouTube and Flickr, it lets people catalog their books for free and share them with the world. Has many cool social networking tools. As one person states, it's fun, no wonder everyone is using and playing with it.

### eXtensible Catalog (XC) blog

<http://extensiblecatalog.info>

[www.extensiblecatalog.info/?page\\_id=15](http://www.extensiblecatalog.info/?page_id=15)

Called a Library 2.0 project, this is an open-source library system heavily influenced by the FRBR model. The sec-

ond URL provides access to a number of presentations and graphics that describe the development, testing, and implementation of XC done by the University of Rochester. See also the report, dated July 20, 2007, on a recent survey on OPACs.

### *"eXtensible Catalog Survey Report"*

[www.extensiblecatalog.info/wp-content/uploads/2007/07/XC%20survey%20report.pdf](http://www.extensiblecatalog.info/wp-content/uploads/2007/07/XC%20survey%20report.pdf)

### *The American University of Rome New OPAC Interface*

April 2007

[www.galileo.aur.it/opac-tmpl/npl/en/libweb/AURLibraryCatalog.ppt](http://www.galileo.aur.it/opac-tmpl/npl/en/libweb/AURLibraryCatalog.ppt)

[www.galileo.aur.it/opac-tmpl/npl/en/libweb/AURLibraryCatalog.pdf](http://www.galileo.aur.it/opac-tmpl/npl/en/libweb/AURLibraryCatalog.pdf)

These presentation slides, available online in PowerPoint and pdf formats, show an innovative use of the Koha open-source software to create a new catalog interface for the library at the American University of Rome.

### *Demo of OpenLibrary*

<http://demo.openlibrary.org>

This is the demo site for OpenLibrary open-source catalog software. Run the demo to see features and tools.

### *WorldCat Local Announcements*

<http://newsbreaks.infotoday.com/nbReader.asp?ArticleId=35939>

<http://www.lib.washington.edu/about/worldcatlocal/what.html>

[http://libraries.universityofcalifornia.edu/about/uc\\_oclc.html](http://libraries.universityofcalifornia.edu/about/uc_oclc.html)

[http://libraries.universityofcalifornia.edu/about/uc\\_oclc\\_faq.html](http://libraries.universityofcalifornia.edu/about/uc_oclc_faq.html)

These announcements are linked to WorldCat Local as a next-generation library catalog for a number of universities, including the University of Washington and the University of California systems. UW has launched a beta version of WorldCat Local for its OPAC, and the UC System is looking into WorldCat Local as the next Melvyl (union catalog for all UC campuses). This may have broader implications for OPACs, as a new next-generation union catalog for the UC System may mean the end of locally maintained OPACs at each UC campus.

### *Apache "Solr-ized MARC Catalog"*

Peter Murray, Disruptive Library Technology Jester blog, June 4, 2007

<http://dltj.org/2007/06/miami-video-solr>

This post discusses the announcement that Miami University had incorporated the open-source software Apache Solr to construct its video catalog.

### *"What Difference a Good Tool? Using Endeca for a Faceted Catalog"*

Emily Lynema. presentation at The Future of the Catalog . . . Deconstruction or Reinvention? Fall Program, Delaware Valley Chapter of ACRL, Nov. 3, 2006

[www.acrldvc.org/programs/Lynema.ppt](http://www.acrldvc.org/programs/Lynema.ppt)

This is another good presentation from this conference. It discusses the Endeca-based library catalog at the North Carolina State University Libraries.

### *Phoenix Public Library*

[www.phoenixpubliclibrary.org](http://www.phoenixpubliclibrary.org)

The Web site of the Phoenix Public Library incorporates the Endeca search platform and the Book Industry Study Group BISAC headings as a way to enhance access to its nonfiction titles. The library has reinvented its OPAC for its users.

### *NINES*

[www.nines.org/collex](http://www.nines.org/collex)

Using aspects of Google Book search, records-based faceting, WorldCat Local, social networking, and Blacklight, this is an interesting experiment that provides access to information and research tools for scholars and researchers of nineteenth-century culture.

### *Shelfari*

[www.shelfari.com](http://www.shelfari.com)

Similar to the LibraryThing service, Shelfari uses social networking tools to help users compile virtual book shelves and share with their friends.

### *Evergreen*

[www.open-ils.org](http://www.open-ils.org)

This is an open-source ILS initiative led by the Georgia Public Library Service. The Georgia Library PINES consortium of over 265 public libraries and some Canadian libraries are the primary incorporators thus far.

### *Project Blacklight*

<http://blacklight.betech.virginia.edu>

The University of Virginia has taken the lead in open-source Solr developments, and its Project Blacklight OPAC is based on this faceted browsing software.

### *Endeca at the NCSU Libraries*

[www.lib.ncsu.edu/endeca/presentations.html](http://www.lib.ncsu.edu/endeca/presentations.html)

This is a one-source stop for information and presentations on the Endeca software implementation at North Carolina State University.

### *“Why Web 2.0 Is Leading back to Full Cataloging”*

Rory Litwin, Library Juice blog, May 6, 2007

<http://libraryjuicepress.com/blog/?p=256>

This is a blog posting related to why Web 2.0 cataloging Web sites like LibraryThing and Last.fm are so popular. Some sections of this post are included here:

We often think of Web 2.0 sites in terms of the idea of “tagging instead of cataloging.” In fact, rich 2.0 sites, the ones that do a lot of data processing to create their services, usually have both free-form tagging by users and standards-controlled metadata about objects, and it is actually often the latter that drives the main functionality of the sites. This is the case with both Last.fm and LibraryThing. The real functionality of both Last.fm and LibraryThing, though, rests not on user tags but on the standards-based metadata for the objects in it—books for LibraryThing and music tracks for Last.fm. In both cases, casual users can simply rely on the data that the system loads into their profiles automatically . . .

\* \* \*

The functionality of LibraryThing is enhanced because of the fact that it makes use of cataloging that has already been done by professional catalogers. Data in LibraryThing that comes from Amazon is not as rich or as accurate as the data from research libraries, but in most cases it is quicker to get, and it is still based on essentially the same Z39.50 standard, which is in turn based on cataloging standards.

\* \* \*

So . . . If sites like Last.fm eventually become a part of life for the majority of people, I think there will be an emergence of support for the role of professional catalogers somewhere in the system, so that the majority of users, who “just want it to work,” will be satisfied. Free-form tagging has its place, but where consistency and accuracy counts, as it does in many Web 2.0 sites, I think reliance on users will turn out to have been a dead-end, and there will be a new appreciation for our professionalism.

### *McMaster University Endeca Catalog*

<http://libcat.mcmaster.ca>

This is another implementation of a next-generation library catalog using the Endeca software.

### *UCLA Film and Television Archive*

William Denton, The FRBR Blog, Feb. 7, 2007

[www.frbr.org/2007/02/07/ucla](http://www.frbr.org/2007/02/07/ucla)

This blog posting details the new OPAC interface of the UCLA Film and Television Archive, linking pre-existing technology (Voyager catalog) with some local tweaking.

### *UCLA Film & Television Archive Web Site*

[www.cinema.ucla.edu](http://www.cinema.ucla.edu)

### *“WPopac: An OPAC 2.0 Testbed”*

Casey Bisson, Maisonbisson blog, Feb. 9, 2006

<http://maisonbisson.com/blog/post/11133>

and

### *“Casey Bisson Named One of First Winners of Mellon Award for Technology Collaboration”*

Open Libraries blog, Dec. 4, 2006

[www.bookism.org/open/2006/12/04/casey-bisson-named-one-of-first-winners-of-mellon-award-for-technology-collaboration](http://www.bookism.org/open/2006/12/04/casey-bisson-named-one-of-first-winners-of-mellon-award-for-technology-collaboration)

These blog posts describe a mashup of a library catalog with the tagging functionality of blogging software and the \$50,000 Mellon award for technology collaboration by won by the creator of this catalog.

### *Talis*

[www.talis.com](http://www.talis.com)

This is the Web site of a company that has a number of technologies and services related to next-generation catalogs. Company representatives actively post and discuss Talis codes, software, and services on various library listservs.

### *Roselle Public Library District OPAC*

[www.catalog.roselle.lib.il.us/aquabrowser](http://www.catalog.roselle.lib.il.us/aquabrowser)

This is an implementation of the Aquabrowser topic maps software into a public library OPAC.

### *Athens County Public Libraries OPAC*

<http://search.athenscounty.lib.oh.us>

This is an implementation of the Koha ZOOM faceted-browsing technology into a public library OPAC.

*TALIS Plus (State Library of Tasmania Catalogue)*

<http://catalogue.statelibrary.tas.gov.au>

Based on the Verity search engine, this next-generation catalog uses faceted browsing and searching.

*"LibraryThing and AquaBrowser My Discoveries"*

Thingology blog, Aug. 7, 2007

[www.librarything.com/thingology](http://www.librarything.com/thingology) (Select Archives link for Aug. 2007.)

In an innovative teaming, Aquabrowser works with LibraryThing to launch My Discoveries, which gives Aquabrowser a series of desirable social features like tagging, rating, and reviews, and LibraryThing brings in its 21 million tags and its recommendations.

*"Raising Arizona"*

Karen G. Schneider, ALA TechSource blog, July 23, 2007

[www.techsource.ala.org/blog/2007/07/raising-arizona.html](http://www.techsource.ala.org/blog/2007/07/raising-arizona.html)

This is a discussion of the innovative moves by the Maricopa Public Library and the Phoenix Public Library to get away from shelving by Dewey classification and use the Book Industry Standards and Communications (BISAC) headings instead. A user-centric approach.

*"Redesigning the OPAC: Moving outside of the ILMs"*

Lloyd Sokvitne, Sept. 2006

[www.nla.gov.au/lis/stndrds/grps/acoc/documents/Sokvitne.doc](http://www.nla.gov.au/lis/stndrds/grps/acoc/documents/Sokvitne.doc)

This piece describes the process that the State Library of Tasmania went through to redesign and develop a new OPAC using Verity K2 software.

**Notes**

1. Warren G. Bennis, quoted on Quoteworld.com, [www.quote-world.org/quotes/1227](http://www.quote-world.org/quotes/1227).
2. Attributed to Benjamin Franklin, Brainyquote.com, [www.brainyquote.com/quotes/quotes/b/benjaminfr109067.html](http://www.brainyquote.com/quotes/quotes/b/benjaminfr109067.html).