“Are we going to move increasingly in the direction of automating nineteenth-century librarianship, or are we going to use automation to produce a new librarianship totally different from both the past and present?”

Frederick G. Kilgour, 1977
Speculation Ahead!

What do I know of [the library’s] destiny? I could tell you more about radishes.

Gary Houk (by way of Samuel Beckett)

Challenges, Problems & Facts

“We don't know what the Web is for but we've adopted it faster than any technology since fire.”

David Weinberger in The Cluetrain Manifesto
Cyberspace. A consensual hallucination experienced daily by billions of legitimate operators, in every nation, by children being taught mathematical concepts...A graphical representation of data abstracted from the banks of every computer in the human system. Unthinkable complexity. Lines of light ranged in the non-space of the mind, clusters and constellations of data. Like city lights, receding..." --William Gibson, *Neuromancer*
Transformation or Reformation?

• What is the relationship of the library catalogue to the web?
  – Does every library need one?
  – Is ‘complete’ bibliographic description necessary?
  – Does ‘third-party’ cataloging still make sense?
  – Is the OPAC for inventory control or discovery?

Technology is an enabler

The web provides a mechanism to support librarians’ expanded role in the digital age

• Anytime/anywhere access to knowledge resources
• Support new methods of teaching and learning
• Authoritative electronic content
• Users are in control, but they want professional assistance around the clock
• Increasingly networked environment
Nearly three-fourths of respondents (71%) report that they are able to find the information that they look for on the Web ‘Most of the Time’.

Q515 Thinking about your study assignments, how often do you find the information you look for on the Web?

Most of the time: 71%
Some of the time: 27%
Not very often: 2%

Base: All Qualified Respondents (n=1,050)

Overall, students tend to choose for themselves which Web resource to use.

Q430 Please indicate who influences your decisions to use each of the following Web resources for your assignments.

- **Web Portals (n=867)**: 68%
- **Search engines (n=1,013)**: 34%
- **Online Encyclop (n=726)**: 15%
- **Online Study Aids (n=414)**: 32%
- **Ask an Expert/Tutoring (n=249)**: 38%
- **Articles and Info sites (n=748)**: 67%
- **Essay or paper websites (n=280)**: 66%
- **Public library websites (n=615)**: 66%
- **Online study groups/Instant messaging/Chat rooms (n=273)**: 67%
- **College/University websites excluding campus library (n=621)**: 58%
- **Campus library website (n=866)**: 89%
- **Specific course-related websites (n=950)**: 61%

Base: Respondents using Web Resources
It is still about FINDING content

The top reasons given by respondents not using the campus library website have more to do with the information and content within the site and less with the organization of the site itself.

Q545 Why don't you use the campus library’s website? Please check all that apply.

- Other websites have better information: 43%
- The website doesn’t have what I need: 23%
- I didn’t know the library had a site: 20%
- Too many clicks are needed in order to find anything: 12%
- The website is too disorganized: 12%
- The website is too cluttered: 11%
- I can't tell where I am within the site: 6%
- I can't get back to where I want to be once in the site: 3%
- I can't find the website: 3%
- None of these reasons: 27%

Base: Respondents who don’t use the Library Website (n=292)

The Future of Library Services

- Reference & Resource Sharing (D2D)
  - Enable users to move easily between the library and the web.
    - Abebooks  [www.abebooks.com]

- Technical Services
  - Collection Management
  - Cataloging

- Knowledge Management
• 1. Readers want to be able to find things
2. Readers want your advice
3. Readers want up-to-date, quality content
4. Readers want relevant and straightforward content
5. Readers want to do things
6. Readers want to interact
7. Readers want privacy
– From Content Critical by Gerry McGovern

“Libraries now find themselves forced to a dynamic state of instability, which should not be confused with insecurity. Since the age of Pericles, the most unstable periods in human history have been the most productive periods. Certainly, the period of instability into which libraries are now entering ..... will be one of the intellectually productive periods in librarianship.”

Frederick G. Kilgour, 1966
Thank You