



## The University Library as a Key Player in the Research Evaluation Process

Keith Webster  
17 April 2009

*Information  
Specialist as Team  
Player in the  
Research Process*

*Julie M. Neway*

## Key ideas

- The notion that libraries should be passive providers of information is redundant
- The information landscape is becoming complex
- Librarians can be and should be active parts of their clients' research communities
- We should not sit in libraries waiting for things to happen
- There is much in academic life to which we can contribute

# Outline

- What is a Library today? Tomorrow?
- Pathways to transformation
- The changing research environment
- What is a Librarian?
- What role for Librarians in the research environment? In research evaluation?

## Collection-centric - 1st generation



## Client-focused - 2nd generation



## Experience-centered - 3rd generation

Looking for educational impact.

Choice of study experiences to enable appropriate engagement with information.

Interacting with information printed, digital, moving media and other people



Talking in booths



Reading in garden, by stream with fish

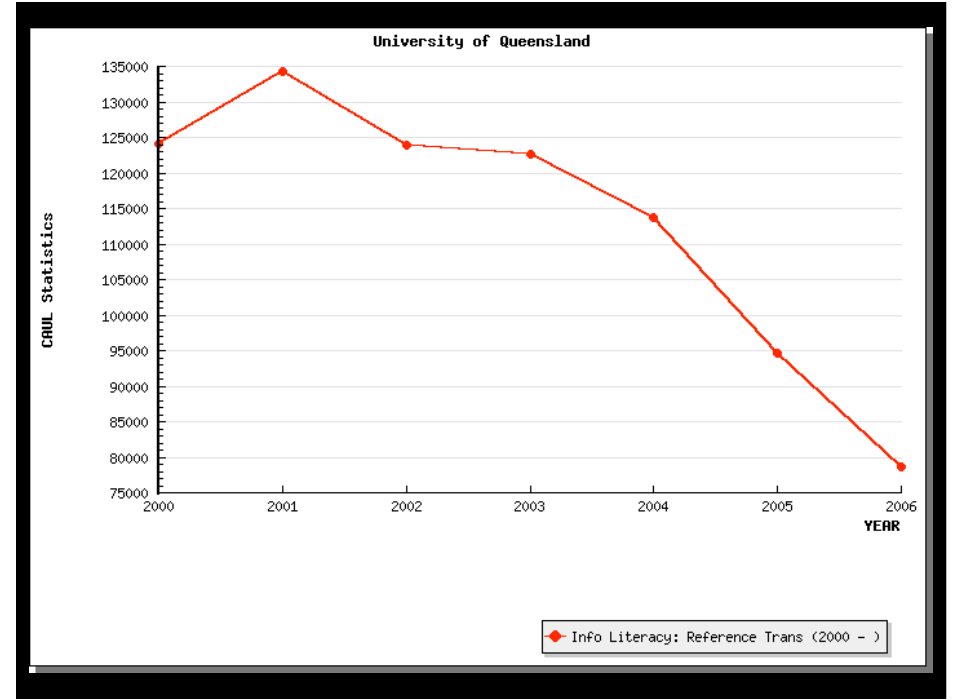
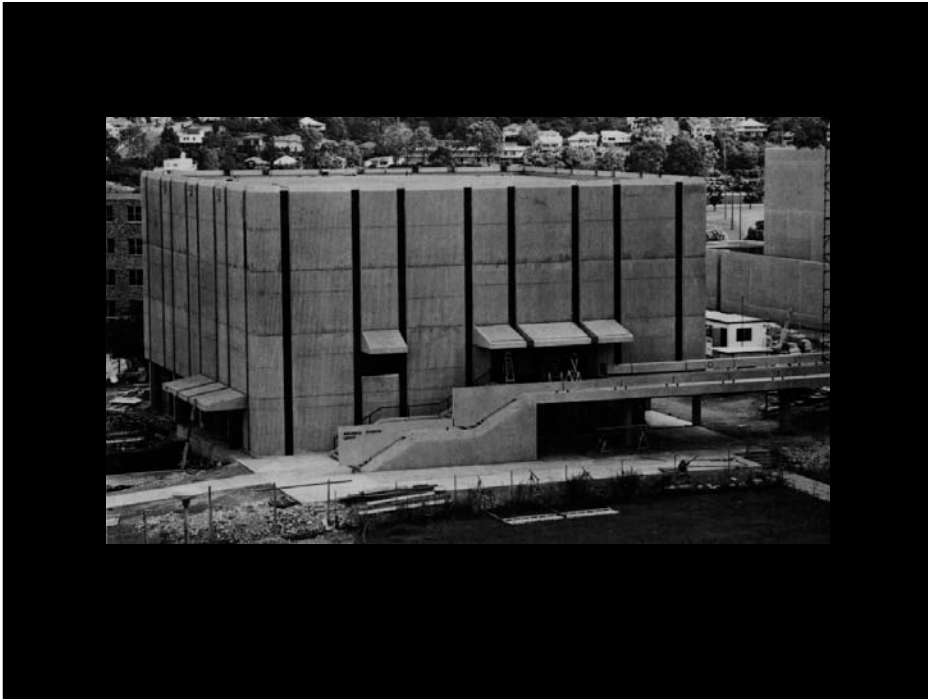
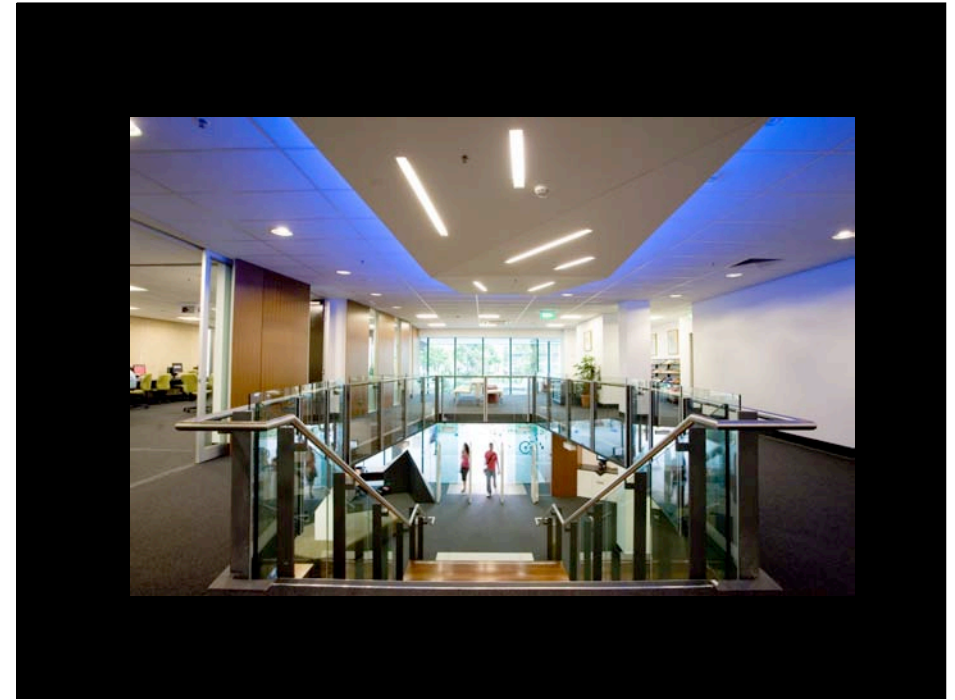
Spatial experiences need to be appropriate to study behaviour.

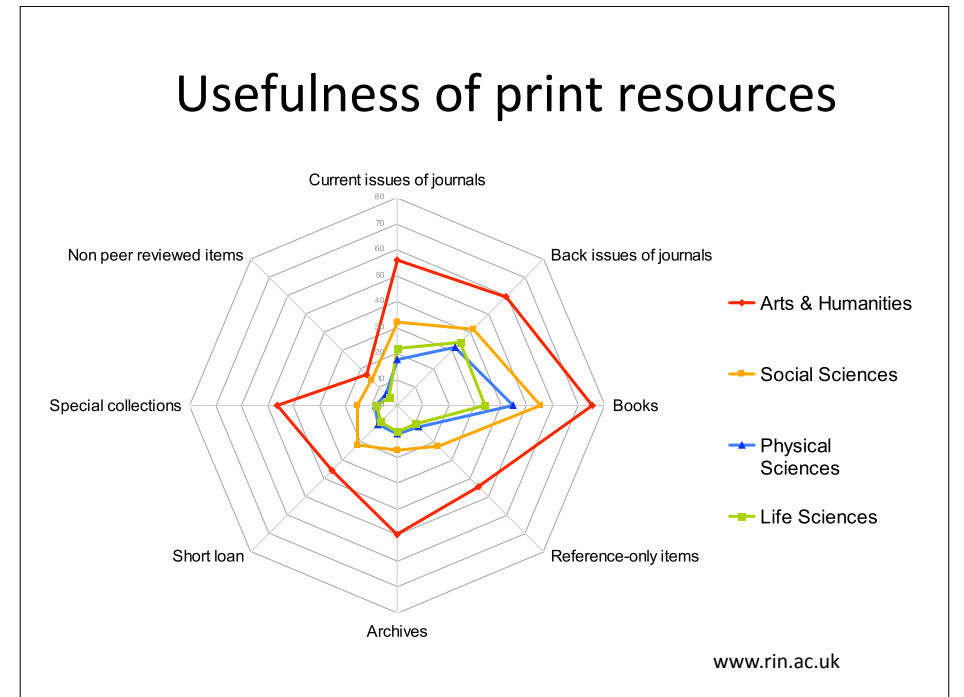
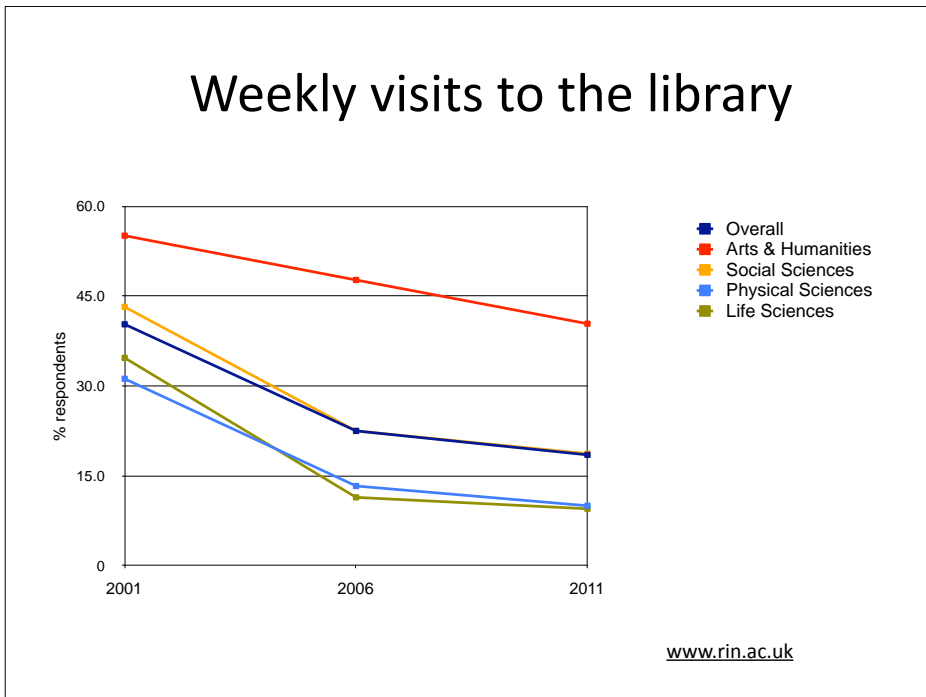
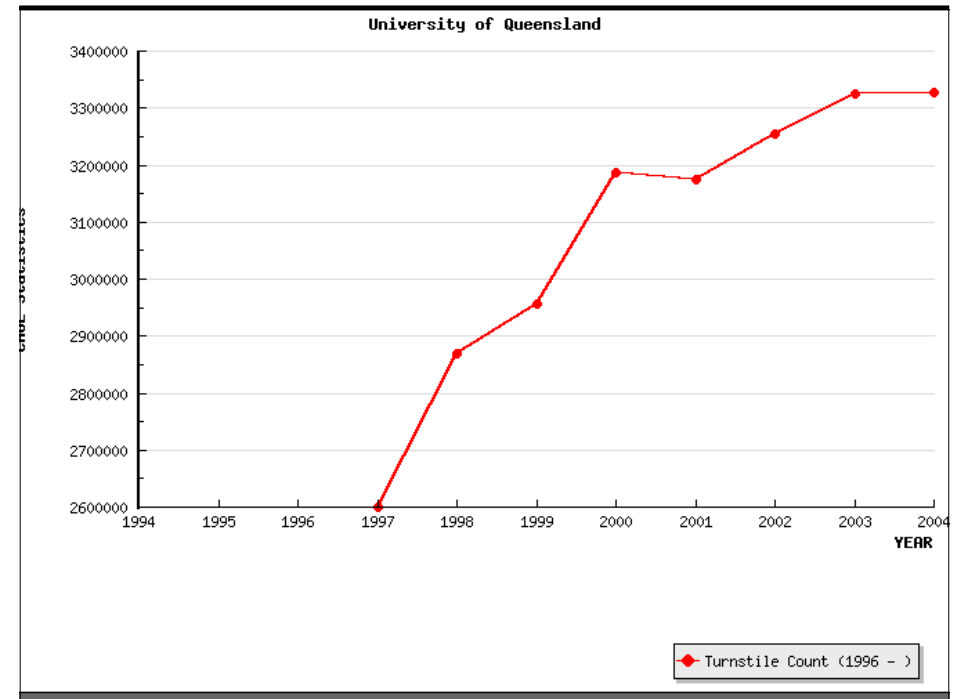
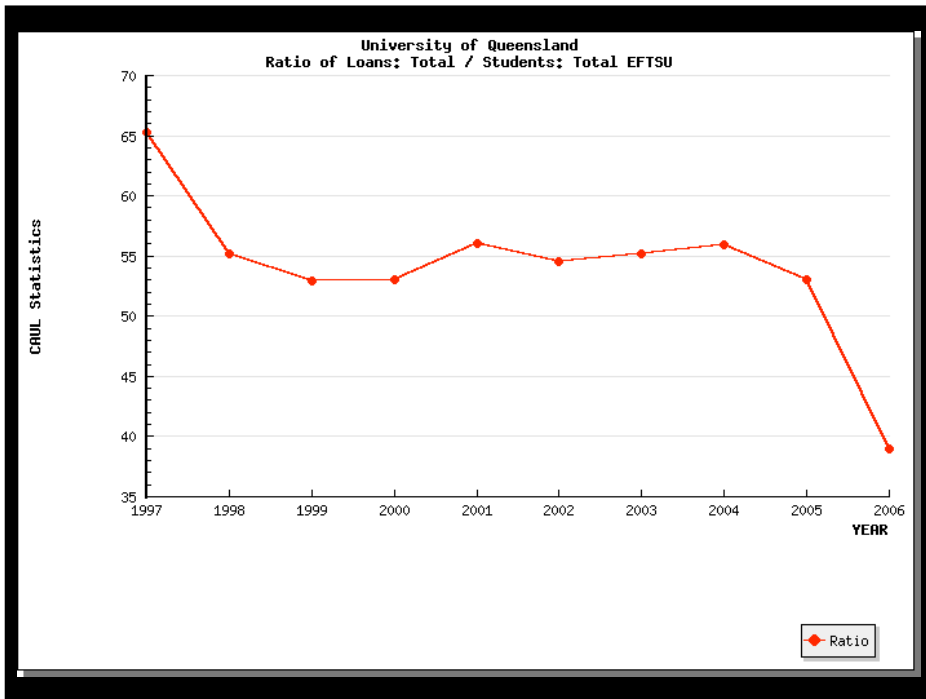
## Connected Learning Experiences - 4th generation

Creating spaces based on pedagogy

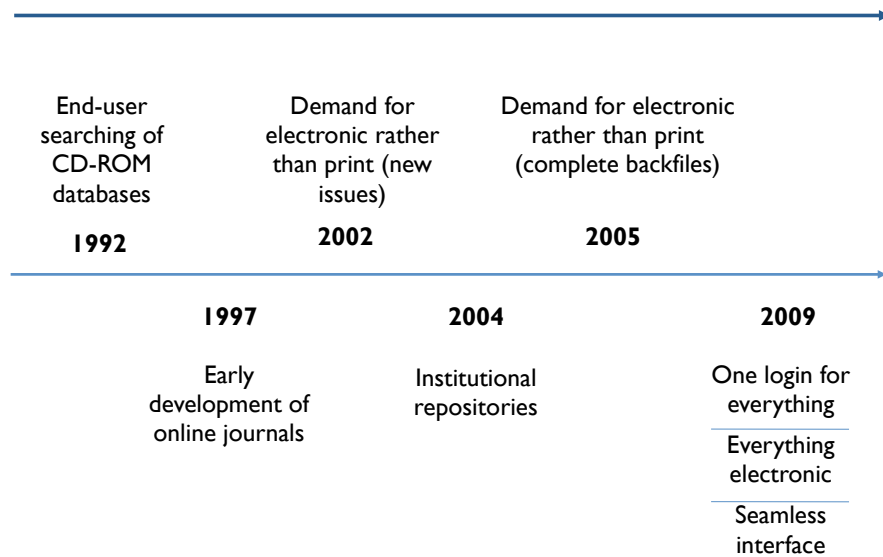
Looking at the whole campus as a learning environment







## Changing user demands



## How to proceed?

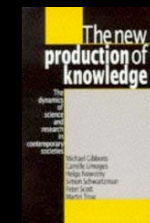
- Continue and complete migration from print to electronic
- Retire legacy collections
- Continue to repurpose library as primary learning space
- Extend focus of collection development from external purchase to local curation
- Reposition library expertise and resources to be more closely embedded in research and teaching enterprise

Adapted from David W Lewis

## Changing research

## Shifts in knowledge production

- Mode 1 and Mode 2
- “Traditional science” and reflexive research
- Triple helix of overlapping interests (university, government and industry)



## Funding structures and requirements 1

- External funding
- Diverse source of funding
  - Government
  - Not-for-profit
  - Industry
- Economic outcomes
  - increase wealth creation & prosperity
  - improve nation's health, environment & quality of life
- Innovation
- Improved competitiveness
- “Commercialisation” of research
- Less “curiosity-driven” activity

## Funding structures and requirements 2

- Evaluation, evaluation, evaluation...
  - cost-effectiveness or “value for money”
  - economic and social relevance
- Requirements of research assessment
  - increased quantity of published outputs
  - increased “quality” of outputs
- Compliance requirements
  - published outputs in open access
  - storage and re-use of data sets

## Players in the formal scholarly communication process

### **Scholars**

do research  
write articles and  
provide quality assurance through peer  
review,

### **Publishers and learned societies**

accumulate  
copy-edit  
provide quality assurance through peer  
review  
produce  
market  
distribute,

### **Academic libraries**

buy  
archive  
provide access.

## Players in the formal scholarly communication process

### **Funders**

establish research priorities  
provide resources,

### **Scholars**

do research  
write articles and  
provide quality assurance through peer review,

### **Publishers and learned societies**

accumulate  
copy-edit  
provide quality assurance through peer review  
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### **Academic libraries**

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## Emerging practice

- Diverse location of research (university, hospital, industry, research institutes)
- Collaboration amongst teams
- Interdisciplinarity and transdisciplinarity
- Focus on problems rather than techniques
- Changing modes of communication (more informal and ICT based)
- Guarding of intellectual property

## ICT and e-research

- Democratisation of informal networks
- “De-formalisation” of formal networks
  - open publishing and self-archiving
  - open peer review
  - blogs and discussion boards
- Pervasiveness
  - Inter- and multi-disciplinary
  - Mainstream

## A pathway for the future

- Understand the researchers' experiences
- Integrate with their workflow – using the Web 2.0 mentality
- Play to our core strengths



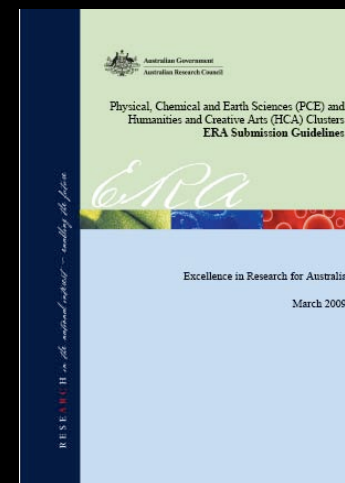
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## Research assessment

UK Research Assessment Exercise (1980s)

New Zealand Performance Based Research Fund (2003/2006)

Australia ERA (2009/2010)



# Implications for libraries

- Institutional focus on research may reduce funding to support teaching
- Pressure on researchers may require libraries to become more student focussed
- Emphasis on e-learning
- Greater demand for research collections
- Focus on collections for immediate use rather than “just-in-case”
- Institutional infrastructure - repositories etc
- In-house research evaluation support

But there are lots of opportunities - if we seize them

## What is happening in the world is bypassing university libraries

Peter Murray-Rust  
The scientist's view  
JISC Libraries of the future debate, April 2009

### TOP 10 Annoying Responses When You Tell Someone You're in Library School

- |    |   |   |  |
|----|---|---|--|
| 10 | I'd love to be a librarian because libraries are so quiet.                        | 5 | I think it's wonderful that you can pursue a hobby like that.        |
| 9  | I thought about becoming a librarian, but I need enough income to support myself. | 4 | You have to go to college for that?                                  |
| 8  | You need a graduate degree for that?  | 3 | I don't see much purpose to libraries; I buy all my books at Costco. |
| 7  | I thought the Internet put libraries out of business.                             | 2 | I'd love to be a librarian because I'd love to read at work.         |
| 6  | Don't you have enough college degrees now?  | 1 | You have to go to school for that?                                   |

— JANE G. GRESHAM, SCHOOL OF INFORMATION RESOURCES & LIBRARY SCIENCE, UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA, TUCSON

## Researchers and discovery services

### Behaviour, perceptions and needs

A study commissioned by the Research Information Network

November 2006



“...contact with librarians and information professionals is rare”

“...researchers are generally confident in their [self-taught] abilities... librarians see them as..relatively unsophisticated”

“...librarians see it as a problem that they are not reaching all researchers with formal training, whereas most researchers don't think they need it”

The part that academic librarians should play remains unclear

Raise awareness of research, its management and evaluation amongst library staff

Provide advice on data management and research evaluation to researchers

Data curation is vast, complex and requires subject input

Researchers' Use of Academic Libraries and their Services  
A report commissioned by the Research Information Network and the Consortium of Research Libraries

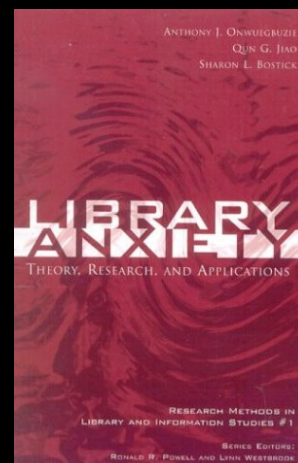
April 2007



## Library anxiety

“The image of librarians in popular culture discourages a user from approaching a librarian”

Nilsen and McKechnie, 2002



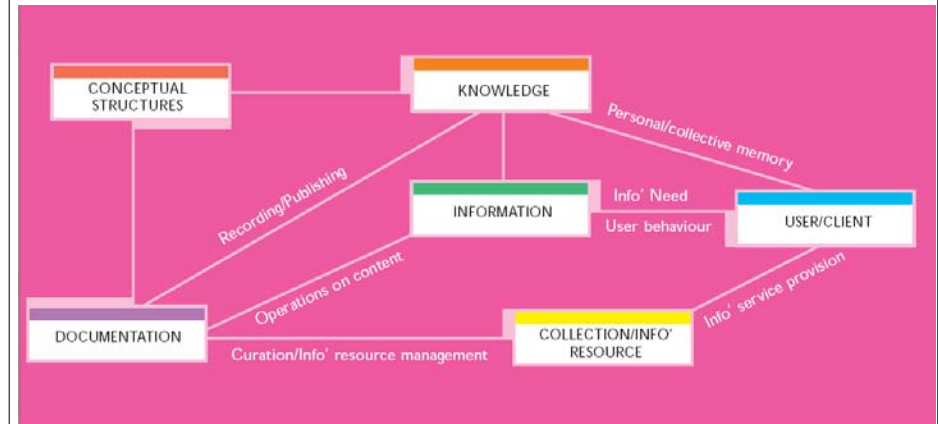
## Libraries or Librarians?

- We promote the Library
- Visit the Library to X,Y or Z
- Satisfy your information needs at the Library
- Rather than:
  - Consult the Librarian to A, B or C
  - Your Librarian is a highly-trained professional
- Our view of the profession itself, and of our skills, should not be limited to a building with four walls

# Come back to our core knowledge

- Librarianship is a profession of searching, discovery and analysis
- Too often we are viewed as keepers and protectors, as curators and gatekeepers
- We are a profession educated to solve information problems

## CILIP BODY OF KNOWLEDGE CORE SCHEMA



## Resources and tools

- Collection development: Specialist books
- Know what is good scientific practice in each field
- How to search, find and critique the literature old and new
- Help with literature searches and bibliographies
- Help with updating services eg RSS feeds etc
- How to use search tools
- Know about publication changes in online and print
- Knowledgeable about technology
- Provides online tutorials on every aspect of thesis production
- User education and 'how to manage consumption rather than content'

## Disciplines

- Know the disciplines
- Know the research methodologies in competing paradigms of a discipline
- Be able to refer to the best theoretical underpinnings in subjects
- Know who's who in the subject fields
- Know the key journals in the disciplines
- Knowledge of impact factors eg h index and JCR

# Research

## General

Research ethics and plagiarism; copyright  
Aware of social and cultural values the researcher must respect  
Research savvy

## Guidance

Have model PhD theses for each subject  
Know about thesis structure  
Have models of literature reviews in every subject

# Research

## Process

Help students relate the theory to their study  
How to write a good introduction and conclusion  
Know about academic writing and needed writing skills  
How to prepare a bibliography  
Referencing techniques  
Data management practices

## Publication

Understand order of authorship for publication  
Know where to publish and how to choose journals

# Other

Understands teaching and learning – theory, methods, paradigms, styles

Knowledge of digital rights and intellectual property

Effectively markets him/herself and the library and its services

Supports open access

Actively involved in institutional repositories; find ways of 'harvesting e-resources'

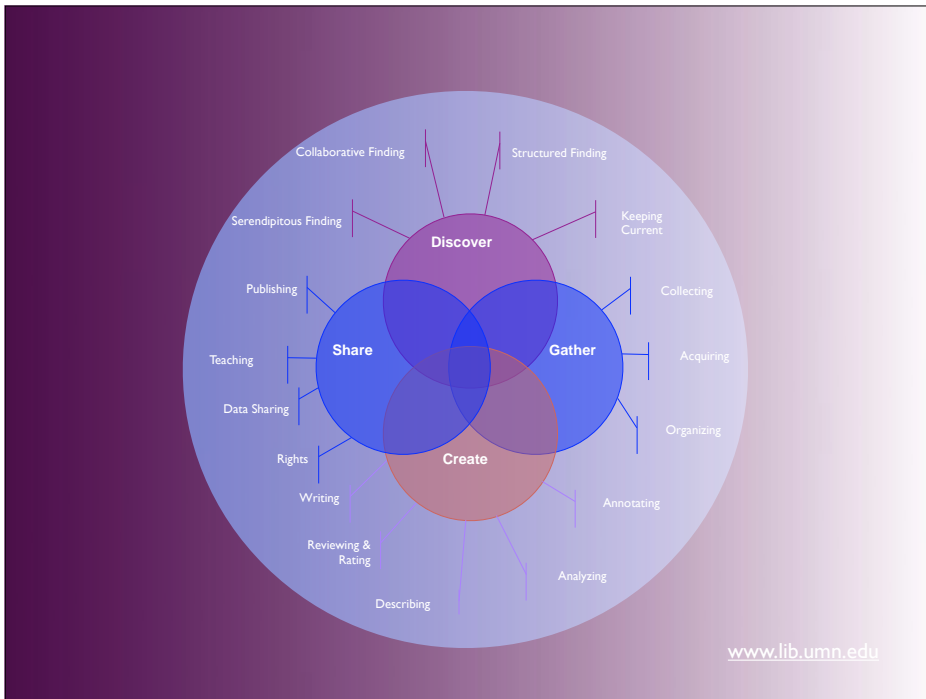
Forward thinking about acquisitions and collection development

Support collaboration; sharing and promoting access to resources  
– promoting access and curation in the new information age –  
knowledge management

Explore new ways of servicing an increasingly remote user population

# So what can we do in our institutions?

- Research support must be a given
- Understand the research culture of our institutions
- Understand government and funders' expectations



## Support research evaluation

- Provide access to the tools
- Provide expertise
- Tie together disparate elements of the research evaluation enterprise
- Act as honest brokers



“I love you, my dear library”

## Understand what is expected

- Raise the difficult questions
- Articulate changes in the landscape
- State our potential role

## Changing nature of scholarly communication

- Traditional journal articles remain strong, but accompanied by:
  - Open access
  - Repositories - institutional and disciplinary
  - Working papers, pre-prints
  - Blog posts and wiki content
  - Social networking sites
- How will these be “measured” or reviewed?

## Other environmental factors

- Economics of publishing, cuts and budget constraint
- Whither the scholarly society publisher?
- Faculty are our collaborators - they innovate, they drive change, we need to work together

## Disciplinary differences

- Well understood by librarians
- Changes in scholarly communication may accentuate the difference between some disciplines
- But might also reduce traditionally sharp divide between science and humanities

## Playing to our strengths

- We have been long-standing users of citation indices
- We know our way around the system - but need to do more
- This needs to be informed by strong understanding of research and disciplinary practice

## New measures

- What can we help to develop for new forms of communication?
- What can we detect in the changing scholarly landscape?
- What place will other surrogates of impact take?
- For example, downloads from repositories, COUNTER data, Google analytics

## There are great examples of this already

- Institutional repositories
- Research support services
- Academic information specialists
- Metadata expertise
- Researcher ID
- People Australia

## Conclusion

- We have worked hard to build new services and structures to reflect a rapidly changing research environment
- Librarians have the skills to play an important role in research evaluation
- We have the good standing in our universities - and beyond - to maximise our role
- We should construct an *l*-index to record and measure the impact of our work

