Libraries, Technocentricity and Learning

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In the current environment:

- Libraries are enormously important
- Librarians are valuable colleagues
- Far too few people consciously realise this
The pursuit, production, dissemination, and preservation of knowledge are the central activities of a civilization. Knowledge is social memory, a connection to the past; and it is social hope, an investment in the future. The ability to create knowledge and put it to use is the adaptive characteristic of humans. It is how we reproduce ourselves as social beings and how we change – how we keep our feet on the ground and our heads in the clouds.

*Louis Menand, quoted by the Lancet Commission on Education of Health Professionals for the 21st Century, 2010*
The modern university can offer:

- Excellent teachers
- A framework within which to learn
- Opportunities to work with others
- Excellent resources
PAPERCHASE: A COMPUTER PROGRAM TO SEARCH THE MEDICAL LITERATURE

Gary L. Horowitz, M.D., and Howard L. Bleich, M.D.

Abstract This report describes PaperChase, a computer program that permits users to search medical literature by author’s name, journal of publication, title word, or medical subject heading (MeSH term), as indexed by the National Library of Medicine. PaperChase was installed in the medical library of Beth Israel Hospital in Boston, with a data base of 400,000 references — nearly all the articles shelved there.

During the first year of operation, 1032 medical students, house officers, practicing physicians, and other library users, without formal instruction or user’s manual, conducted 8459 searches and displayed 399,821 references, 97,769 of which they selected for printing. Among users who conducted an initial search, 49 per cent returned to complete five or more searches, and 14 per cent returned to complete 20 or more. The large number of satisfied users and the low installation and operating costs suggest that PaperChase could be a valuable means of providing widespread computerized bibliographic retrieval. (N Engl J Med. 1981; 305:924-30.)

All medical schools and many hospitals have medical libraries. Libraries catalog books by author, title, and subject and usually shelve them according to the organ system or medical specialty to which they pertain. Journals, however, are another

Although the ELHILL program can meet the needs of many people, use of this program to search the MEDLINE data base has two important limitations. In the first place, it requires the services of a specially trained librarian, who conducts the search. During
New expectations

- New technology e.g. the handheld computer disguised as a mobile phone
- New ways of interaction e.g. social networking leveraged for learning
- Increased student mobility
“Once I learn how to use Google, isn’t that all the education I really need?”
Technocentricity: an approach that places technology in a central role and relegates people to a secondary or lesser role

*Seymour Papert, 1985*
Real learning

- Not about access to facts
- Not about accumulation of data
- Definitely about integrating information into what we already know
  - Becomes transferable from familiar to new and challenging situations
  - Potentially a platform to generate further knowledge
- Usually about interacting with other, more knowledgeable people, and with peers
“You have to attend classes. You can’t just follow me on Twitter.”
A transformative education

- Teaching people to "mobilise knowledge and to engage in critical reasoning"

- Helping them to learn about "searching, analysis, and synthesis of information for decision making"

*Lancet Commission on Education of Health Professionals for the 21st Century, 2010*
The library as an academic unit

- Must retain an academic "presence"

- Must not become just a provider of specialised technology services

- Must not be reduced to a non-academic line of reporting
Emphasise relevance

- Provide enabling skills to commencing undergraduate and research students
- Contribute to enhancing the student environment for learning
- Contribute to educational design and development
- Directly support individual researchers and the institution's research enterprise
Welcome to the ELISE access page

The ELISE tutorial provides the basic information you need to get started in your first year of study at UNSW. Completion of this tutorial & passing the quiz with at least an 80% passing grade is mandatory for all commencing undergraduate students.

Non-completion of the tutorial & quiz will block you from enrolling next semester.

By week 5 of your first semester, you are required to: (1) complete the Tutorial – (2) pass the Quiz – then (3) provide Feedback on your experience with the tutorial and quiz.

For more information see: ELISE FAQ
ELISE

- Covers a broad range of topics
  - University study skills
  - Tackling a research assignment
  - Using the library and its services
  - Academic writing
  - Plagiarism
- Quiz allows multiple attempts, provides automated feedback, passing score is 80%
- Overwhelming support from students
Emphasise relevance

- Provide enabling skills to commencing undergraduate and research students
- Contribute to enhancing the student environment for learning
- Contribute to educational design and development
- Directly support individual researchers and the institution's research enterprise
“It’s called ‘reading’. It’s how people install new software into their brains”
Question & Answer

Tweet to #k111
Libraries, technocentricity and learning: Changes in learning, research and information needs and behavior of users

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<table>
<thead>
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<th>Time</th>
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<tr>
<td>10:20</td>
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<tr>
<td>10:45</td>
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| [M111] | **21st century librarians for 21st century libraries**  
Alena Ptak-Danchak (University of Oxford, UK) |
| [M112] | **What do we do for our users? New services for the research and learning communities at a research university**  
Dr. Wolfram Neubauer (Swiss Federal Institute of Technology Zurich, Switzerland) |
| [M121] | **Redefining the service experience: forging collaboration between librarians and students**  
Andrea Phillips, Jenny Ellis (University of Melbourne, Australia) |
| [M122] | **Library services for the future: engaging with our customers to determine wants and needs**  
Sue Roberts (State Library of Victoria, Australia),  
Alison Stevenson, Maureen Gildea, Rachel Esson (Victoria University of Wellington, New Zealand) |

**Q & A**

| [S111] | Platinum Sponsor Presentation - Elsevier  
(12:20 – 12:30) |