Libraries, Trust, and Diversity of Information
Matt Lee

While social media has never exactly threatened libraries, it has changed the way that people ask and answer questions. With a network of friends, acquaintances, and caring strangers a wall post away, why go to your library for answers to questions? A new report from an unlikely source hints at the biggest reason: diversity of information.

The Edelman marketing firm puts out an annual report called the “Edelman Trust Barometer” that tracks public trust in big-picture entities like business and government. Their most recent report <http://www.edelman.com/trust/2010/> finds a notable drop in the number of people who cite friends and peers as credible sources of information. Only 25% of survey respondents trust friends and peers compared to 45% who did so a year ago.

What that has to do with diversity of information in a second, but first, two big caveats: One, this survey question asked about friends as a source of information about companies. Two, the survey only includes higher income individuals (top 25% of income categories). Nonetheless, I can’t refrain from extrapolating wildly from its findings.

An analysis of this report <http://www.steverubel.com/trust-in-friends-declines-trust-in-experts-ri> has intimated that our current economic climate has made people more cautious about decisions. When last year a person might have acted solely on input from friends and peers, this year finds more people relying on additional sources of information. In the words of the report: “specialist sources most credible” and “expert voices most trusted.”

Clearly, libraries offer access to specialist sources via reference materials and the like. And we also connect people to expert voices via publications and community partnerships and knowledge. But that’s not all we do. We also provide access to other levels of information, including friend and peer input via library events, meeting spaces, and Internet access to social media. The benefit of going to a library with a question is not simply to get a book about the topic at hand, but to have access to multiple types of sources that can speak to the question’s full context.

If the move reflected in Edelman’s report is indeed derived from an unsettled economy driving individuals to diversify their information seeking, there is no better place than the library to do that diversifying. Libraries are “free” and info-diverse, after all. Because of that, if libraries were included along with business and government in Edelman’s big-picture trust analysis, there’s no doubt we’d be found the most trustworthy of all. ■
Technology in the Classroom: Migrating to e-Textbooks

Carla Pfahl

While very little has happened in the past with e-readers integrating into classrooms, we may see a shift towards more use in 2010 and the years to come. The market for e-readers is expanding quickly with new devices hitting the market at competitive prices. As companies try to promote their products, one area that will gain more attention this year is in the area of e-textbooks.

Publishers are starting to tap into this market as well. According to a Wall Street Journal article in February titled “Textbook Firms Ink E-Deals For iPad,” some publishers such as McGraw-Hill Cos., Houghton Mifflin Harcourt K-12, Pearson PLC’s Pearson Education, and Washington Post Co.’s Kaplan Inc. have begun working with ScrollMotion Inc. (http://www.scrollmotion.com/), to develop electronic versions of their textbooks. One e-reader in particular that publishers are focusing on is Apple’s iPad, (http://www.apple.com/ipad/).

Since Apple unveiled the new iPad in January, there has been a lot of buzz around this new device and the door it opens for e-readers. Of the e-readers currently on the market, Apple’s iPad is the most versatile in function. (See a comparison of current top e-readers at <http://paidcontent.org/table/e-reader-comparison-chart/>.) As stated in the Wall Street Journal article, Apple did not specifically create the iPad as an educational tool. However, “the iPad’s use in schools was one of the focal points of discussions in developing the product” (Trachtenberg and Kane B.1).

Not many e-textbooks have been sold up to now. This is due to the facts that not many have been available, not many students have an e-reader (or access to one), and also that many students are not aware that they are available. However, with the introduction of the iPad, more attention has been given to e-readers for education. In a January article from The Chronicle of Higher Education, “Tablet May Help E-Textbook Market, Publishers Hope,” the iPad is described as “an iPhone on steroids” and with Apple’s “cool factor,” students may be more willing to give e-textbooks a try. Also, the cost of e-textbooks is normally about half the price of print textbooks.

Besides being an e-reader, the iPad has the possibility of becoming an ultra modern educational tool. The iPad is small enough and light enough to carry around in a backpack, but it is also big enough to display content easily. As Trachtenberg and Kane reported, the iPad can be used for taking notes, creating charts and mathematical equations, and can be taken on field trips. Beyond that, the iPad could replace a teacher’s desktop or laptop computer, allowing them to move about the classroom with it while being connected to an interactive whiteboard. It could bring about a completely mobile classroom (B.1).

Whether or not the iPad and e-textbooks will transform the classroom is yet to be seen. However, this new technology has opened the door to new opportunities and may bring about interactive e-textbooks. Trachtenberg and Kane noted that, “the features of ScrollMotion’s iPad deal with publishers include applications to let students play video, highlight text, record lectures, take printed notes, search the text, and participate in interactive quizzes to test how much they’ve learned and where they may need more work” (B.1). It will be very interesting to see the progress e-readers and publishers make in 2010.

To read the full articles you can find the Trachtenberg and Kane article in ELM’s ProQuest Newsstand Complete and Young’s article in Educator’s Reference Complete.


Cognitive Psychologists Test the Validity of Learning Styles

Jennifer Hootman

A group of four cognitive psychologists were commissioned by the Psychological Science in the Public Interest, journal of the Association for Psychological Science, to review and study the validity of research on learning styles. Their study entitled, “Learning Styles: Concepts and Evidence,” stated that researchers have yet to conclusively establish that students learn better when taught according to their preferred learning style. One of the outcomes of this study has been a call for school funds that are currently being used to support learning-style assessments and teaching tools to be re-directed to support evidence-based teaching practices instead.

There are many, however, who have been hesitant to fully accept the findings of this study and argue that anecdotal evidence suggests that students do learn better when
taught in their preferred learning-style. Don Knezek, CEO of
the International Society for Technology in Education, stated
that test scores alone cannot be the sole means of accurately
assessing a student’s learning and the corresponding
instructional approach. Knezek further explained, “We need to
inspire students to learn . . . Students are saying they are bored
with learning. One way we can make learning relevant and
exciting for them is by finding out what they prefer, how they
want to learn, and tailoring instruction to that (Stansbury 36).”

Importantly, the scientific study didn’t necessarily disprove
the usefulness of the learning-style theory. Instead, it focused
on critiquing the methodologies of past and existing research
about that theory. Nonetheless, it has all but completely
undermined the validity of teaching to specific learning-styles.

Mel Riddile, associate director of high school services at
NASSP (National Association of Secondary School Principals),
offered a more balanced approach to the discussion. Riddile
stated that, “Rather than assessing students’ learning styles
and then targeting instruction accordingly, perhaps a better
approach would be to integrate all of the various modalities
into one’s instruction (Stansbury 36).” Known as “Universal
Design for Learning,” this approach gives all students in
the classroom an opportunity to acquire and demonstrate
knowledge in a variety of ways. A more flexible learning
environment created through differentiating instruction would
accommodate differences in how students learn without being
bound to a specific learning-style test.

Like most disciplines, education is constantly in motion with
researchers producing new findings that add to our ever-
evolving understanding and practice of teaching and learning.
What’s your take on the controversy over the learning-style
theory? Let us know at <mtxref@umn.edu>.

To read the entire study <http://www.psychologicalscience.
org/journals/pspi/PSPI_9_3.pdf>.

To research more on this topic, try searching a number of
the ELM databases including Academic Search Premier,
Educator’s Reference Complete, ERIC, and Expanded
Academic ASAP <http://elm4you.org/databases/>.

Stansbury, Meris. “Learning-style research under fire .” eSchool

On the Road with Minitex Reference Services

Real Learning for the Real World
Matt Lee

How do you learn about new developments in areas of
personal and professional interest? Talking to people?
Reading particular publications? Attending events? Are
those strategies different than ones you may have used ten
years ago?

Buffy Hamilton, the Unquiet Librarian <http://
theunquietlibrarian.wordpress.com/> and Georgia-based
media specialist, would most likely say that while the
sources you use for learning remain similar, the delivery
mechanism has changed radically in the last few years.
Hamilton led a recent workshop in Alexandria, MN, called
“Real Learning for the Real World” to discuss that new
delivery mechanism. The event revolved around Hamilton’s
concept of Personal Learning Networks (PLNs). These are
customized collections of social networks and RSS feeds
that bring learning opportunities directly to you. Built on
free aggregator platforms like iGoogle or Google Reader,
PLNs provide a constant stream of relevant, diverse input to
drive personal and professional learning.

Creating a PLN for yourself can allow you to follow updates
from influential individuals, publishers, and organizations
to keep you abreast of trends in your field. But in a school
setting, librarians can also create PLNs for their students.
These might be focused on particular projects and draw
relevant information from multiple sources into one place.
Tools Hamilton recommends to help create these student
PLNs, or dynamic pathfinders, include Netvibes, Pageflakes,
and wikis.

To learn more about the components of a PLN and to find
examples of, and testimonials about, student PLNs, visit
Hamilton’s online guide <http://theunquietlibrary.libguides.
com/pln>.

Thanks go out to the partners of the North Star Library
Consortium for bringing this amazing school librarian
and educator to Minnesota to share her knowledge and
experience.
One of the newer gems in ELM is the database CAMIO, or OCLC’s Catalog of Art Museum Images Online. This database is a growing collection of online works of art from around the world. An exciting addition to CAMIO is the permanent collections of the Walker Art Center and the Minneapolis Institute of Arts. These two collections alone include over 4,000 images of paintings, prints, sculptures, watercolors, textiles, architecture, jewelry, photographs, installations, books and decorative arts.

The entire CAMIO database contains around 95,000 images dating from 3,000 B.C. to today. Many other museum and gallery collections are available through CAMIO including the Frick Collection and Art Reference Library, Library of Congress, Metropolitan Museum of Art, Boston Museum of Fine Arts, San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, Victoria and Albert Museum, and the Whitney Museum of American Art, just to name a few.

On CAMIO’s home page you’ll find the following statement, “CAMIO is licensed for use by students, faculty, and researchers at subscribing institutions. Works of art may be used for educational and research purposes during the term of the subscription, if they are properly credited. Images may not be published or otherwise distributed.” Along with content rights-clearance for educational use, some other benefits of CAMIO include the ability to download high-resolution images as well as to print and e-mail them. One of CAMIO’s strengths is in locating hard-to-find contemporary art. With CAMIO, you can present images in the classroom, download them for research and study, and use them to illustrate papers and other assignments. Of course, proper citation to works must appear when images are used. Furthermore, one can compare works of art side-by-side, run a slideshow of marked items from a set of search results, and create an html page of marked items.

In CAMIO, you can limit a search by collection and browse the database by type of artwork. So, you can browse all of the “paintings” and from those results narrow further by format which includes such details as “oil on canvas” or “oil on panel” or “watercolor on ivory.” In addition to limiting by format you can also limit by creator, date, and subject. I ran a search for Warhol, and I got 123 results. I then limited it by museum to Walker Art Center, and I got 11 results. You can search by keyword or phrase, and in the advanced search, you can search in the creator, subject, description, title, publisher, contributor, type, and date fields. You can also search CAMIO by proximity. For example, you can run a search that looks something like this: The word “Warhol” within “10” words of “soup” yields Andy Warhol’s Chicken Noodle, from Campbell’s Soup I. When using the proximity search, you do need to limit your search by museum or collection.

The high-resolution images in full color and the ability to search across different collections and media make CAMIO a great place to go for images and art. Educators can use these images to engage students with primary sources and to learn about works of art and their creators.

Upcoming Webinars

Minitex Reference Services is pleased to announce the following upcoming webinars. Please register today before sessions become full! To get more information and to register go to <http://www.minitex.umn.edu/events/training/>.

- Accessing Your ELM Usage Statistics
  - Art Resources in ELM
  - Britannica for Academic Libraries
  - Business Resources in ELM
  - Health and Medical Resources in ELM
  - History Day Resources
  - Locating Consumer Information in ELM
    - OCLC Indexes in ELM
    - Science Resources in ELM
Online Resources to Add to Your Toolbox
Jennifer Hootman

Gleaning from February 2010’s eSchool News, I found a few online resources in the Netwatch section that may be worth bookmarking.

History.com

Looking for more curricular resources such as video clips, biographical profiles, and a timeline of milestones? If so, check out History Channel’s offerings for Black History month. For instance, at <http://www.history.com/content/blackhistory> you’ll find an interactive timeline of black history in the United States from 1619 to 2009. Clicking on any of the images in the timeline will lead one to more information on the event. There are also 65 profiles on African-American icons and 17 short video clips.

Additionally, in researching Black History or any historical topic, don’t forget to check out the Britannica databases available through ELM <(http://elm4you.org/databases/). You’ll find a rich multimedia collection and reference material.

Mathtrain.TV

Sixth-grade math teacher, Eric Marcos, and his students at Lincoln Middle School in Santa Monica, California, have created a free educational tool, Mathtrain.TV, that implements a peer teaching strategy in the form of math video tutorials. These students created a series of math video tutorials using a tablet PC and Camtasia Studio to be used in classroom instruction. The tutorials are under a Creative Commons license. They have been reviewed and in some cases edited by a math teacher. One can rate and comment on the videos. The topics include prime factorization, multiplication, probability, finding the missing angles to a triangle, finding percents using proportions, multiplying polynomials, and more!

Financial Football

Q. What do teaching fiscal skills and the game of football have in common?

A. Financial Football.

Financial Football, paid for by Visa Inc. and released by New York Comptroller Thomas DiNapoli, pairs building skills in balancing a checkbook, reporting a lost or stolen credit card, foreign currency literacy, understanding acronyms like “IRS,” calculating interest, understanding money market accounts and more with playing football. Players get to choose their own NFL team and can play against one another. With each question answered correctly, students score first downs, gain yardage, and score points. Tougher questions can be selected that are worth more yardage. The new game is targeted towards high school and college students.


Twitter and Blogging is for Old People (and by that, Pew means 30+)

Matt Lee

As with John Denver, it appears that blogging and Twitter become more appealing as one ages. A recent Pew Internet and American Life report finds that the number of teens and twenty-somethings who maintain blogs has fallen since 2006 and use of Twitter among this age group continues at a negligible pace. The report, called “Social Media and Young Adults,” looks at Internet activity and access. It comes to the potentially confusing conclusion that young people gravitate toward short forms of communication online on social networking sites like Facebook or MySpace, but go almost out of their way to avoid short-form communication on Twitter. We are left to chalk up this Twitter-aversion to, perhaps, the random whims of young people, or the lack of peers on that site, or the more outward nature of Twitter (compared to “closed” networks of friends on Facebook or MySpace). Whether you view it as a bellwether of tech things to come or fodder for outreach to young library users, it’s worth a peek, as Pew reports tend to be.

“Social Media and Young Adults” <http://www.pewinternet.org/Reports/2010/Social-Media-and-Young-Adults.aspx?r=1>

- 14% of online teens now say they blog, down from 28% of teen Internet users in 2006.
- 8% of Internet users ages 12-17 use Twitter.
- 81% of adults between the ages of 18 and 29 are wireless Internet users.
- Three-quarters (75%) of teens and 93% of adults ages 18-29 now have a cell phone.
- Over the past ten years, teens and young adults have been consistently the two groups most likely to go online, even as the Internet population has grown and even with documented larger increases in certain age cohorts (e.g. adults 65 and older).
TED: Ideas of Things to Come

Matt Lee

The annual TED conference brings together “the world’s most fascinating thinkers and doers, who are challenged to give the talk of their lives (in 18 minutes).” Many of those talks are recorded and posted online, and they are an absolute goldmine for challenging and innovative ideas. This year’s conference was held in mid-February and is sure to unearth some new “ideas worth spreading.” <http://www.ted.com/>

TED was initially focused on technology, education, and design, but those boundaries have expanded and many sessions provide direct connections with the library world. Especially if you think about them long enough. An excellent example of this is a presentation from last year’s conference called “The Sixth Sense” <http://www.ted.com/talks/pattie_maes_demos_the_sixth_sense.html>. In it, researchers demonstrate a simple creation made using readily available technologies (projector, camera, and cell phone) that create an “anywhere Internet” of sorts. The device projects interactive multimedia content onto any space. Read newspapers with embedded video against a white piece of paper. Dial a phone number by projecting an interactive phone dial onto your opened palm. Flip through photos against a blank wall. See book reviews projected onto a book’s title page.

What does this mean for libraries? If it seems to imply a future where online content is mashed up and inserted into daily life, we might see applications that bring relevant database content into areas of book shelving or walking-encyclopedia-librarians with shareable access to entire library collections. Think about it long enough and you’re sure to stumble across some ideas of things to come. That’s the way with TED.

Library Shanty

Beth Staats

Some of us in the Twin Cities metro area may have seen it in person but for those of us who missed out, LibraryJournal.com gave us a peek at one of the works of art temporarily seen on Medicine Lake during the 4-weekend long Art Shanty Project. The Art Shanty Project is “an annual community of temporary shelters put up by artists for four winter weekends on Medicine Lake.”

This year Lauren Herzak-Bauman created the Library Shanty containing a collection of books cataloged by LibraryThing. The books could be checked out for use in the Shanty or by other Art Shanty residents. To see photographs of the shanty and read the full article: <http://www.libraryjournal.com/article/CA6717808.html>.

Announcements From the Field

New Associate Dean of St. Kate’s MLIS Program

Dr. Deborah Grealy has accepted the position of Associate Dean for the MLIS program at St. Catherine University. After serving more than 30 years, Mary Wagner, the former MLIS Program Director, will return to teaching in the program.

Dr. Grealy comes to St. Catherine University from the University of Denver where she was an Assistant Professor and former Director of the Library and Information Science Program in the Morgridge College of Education. She received a Ph.D. in higher education with a focus on the adult learner from the University of Denver, a master’s in library science (MLS) from the University of Oklahoma, a master of arts in history from Kent State University as well as a bachelor of arts from Kent State in anthropology and English.

Dr. Grealy is not only an experienced higher-education administrator, but also an experienced librarian with a strong record of service to the profession. She has served as a member of the Colorado Library Advisory Board; on the board of directors for the Collaborative Digitization Program; and on the executive board of the Rocky Mountain Chapter of the Special Libraries Association, which honored her with a “Meritorious Achievement Award” in 2000.

Dr. Grealy is an award winning author, whose most recent contribution to the scholarship of our field is titled “From Research to Practice: The Scholarship of Teaching and Learning in LIS.”
**Sisters in Crime & Lunch for Libraries**


Of further note, Sisters in Crime is pleased to announce the first “We Love Libraries” lottery. Monthly grants of $1,000 will be awarded from January through December 2010. At the end of each month, a winner will be drawn from entries received through their website at <www.sistersincrime.org>.

To enter, complete the entry form and upload a photo of one or more of your staff with three books in your collection by Sisters in Crime members. You can find a list of members on the website here <http://sistersincrime.org/displaycommon.cfm?an=1&subarticlenbr=54>.

After the random drawing on the last business day of the month, the winning library will be contacted and announced. All branches within a larger system may enter; however, once a library in the system has won, no other libraries within that system can win the grant. Those not successful in one month will automatically be entered for subsequent drawings. Grants must be used to purchase books and may not be used for general operating expenses. Book purchases are not restricted to the mystery genre nor to those by Sisters in Crime members. There is no cost or obligation other than allowing Sisters in Crime to post winners’ photos on their website.

Questions? Contact: <http://sistersincrime.org/displaycommon.cfm?an=6>  

**New Things On a Stick: Web 2.0 Learning Continues**

February 3rd marked the kickoff for the latest version of 23 Things On a Stick, self-paced on-line learning brought to Minnesota library staff by the seven multicounty, multitype library systems. With this version of 23 Things On a Stick there are no registration requirements, no blogging, no deadlines--and no prizes, either.

The 2010 version takes the form of Things On a Stick News, a monthly newsletter sent to subscribers’ emails. Each newsletter highlights two or three Things that can be used in libraries or at home for productivity, creating content, organization, communication, and more. The newsletter itself highlights the Things; further detailed descriptions of the Things and how to use them are archived on Things On a Stick News Archives blog.

You can subscribe from the Archives blog or from a newsletter issue. Please share the newsletter with your colleagues & others who may be interested. The subscription is free and all are welcome to use this easy method of keeping up with new tools and ideas.

* Archives Blog  
  <http://thingsonasticknews.blogspot.com/>

* Newsletter Archive  
  <http://archive.constantcontact.com/fs095/1102349987427/archive/1102969343602.html>
In our tutorial series, “2.0 Tools in 2.0 Minutes,” we look at web tools that can benefit librarians professionally. The most recent addition to this series covers iCyte, a webpage archiving tool. Check it out along with other videos in the continuing collection:

- iCyte <http://z.umn.edu/icyte> Save websites or portions of websites for later use.
- Yahoo!Pipes <http://z.umn.edu/yahoopipes> Monitor multiple online sources and set up filters to deliver relevant information automatically.
- Greasemonkey <http://z.umn.edu/greasemonkey> Customize and optimize how specific websites look and work.
- RSS Feeds <http://z.umn.edu/rssfeeds> Increase your info-seeking productivity by pulling valuable information to you.
- Zoho <http://z.umn.edu/zoho> Free access to office applications like word processors, spreadsheets, and presentation software from anywhere with an Internet connection.

There are plenty of great 2.0 tools that can steal your time, but we think these actually can save you time. Let us know if there’s a 2.0 tool that makes you more productive – drop a note to <mtxref@umn.edu>.

Webinars When You Want Them
Jennifer Hootman

Webinars are a great way to share ideas and provide instruction. However, have you ever wanted to attend a live session and not been available for the offered date and time? Or have you tried to register and found the session to be full? Or perhaps you’ve been registered for a webinar but had to cancel. If you’ve answered “yes” to any of these questions or if you just want to review portions of a live session, then you’ll want to check out all of our archived webinars. You can find the following webinar recordings from Reference Services here <http://minitex.umn.edu/events/training/archived.asp>.

Viewable in Internet Explorer web browser.

ELM

- Art Resources in ELM
- Britannica for Schools
- ELM Databases for Grades K-5
- ELM Databases for Grades 6-8
- ELM Databases for Grades 9-12
- Health and Medical Resources in ELM
- History Day Resources
- Locating Consumer Information in ELM

Hosted webinars with guest presenters:

- All About PubMed
- Consumer Health Information on the Internet: Where to Look and What to Look Out For
- Doing It With Drupal
- Google for Research: Tips & Tricks for Expert Searching
- Wikipedia: The Educator’s Friend(!)

2010 ALA Midwinter Meeting Highlights

Additionally, Anne Hatinen (CPERS), Rita Baladad (CPERS), and I recently teamed up and held a webinar about our experiences at the 2010 ALA Midwinter Meeting. If you weren’t able to attend ALA Midwinter, check out our archived webinar which highlighted the meetings we attended, the local libraries we visited, and side trips into Boston we made. Look for “2010 ALA Midwinter Meeting Highlights: Or Boston Briefly” at <http://minitex.umn.edu/events/training/archived.asp>.

Do you have a great webinar idea or any reference-related or ELM topic you would like to learn more about? We’d love to hear it! Let us know at <mtxref@umn.edu>.
Minitex will be closed on Friday, March 19, 2010