



Provocative Statements (after the meeting)

February 20, 2009

All statements are prefaced by “Within the next 5 years...”

1. ... all librarians will be expected to take personal responsibility for their own professional development; each of us will evolve or die. Budget pressures will force administrators to confront the "psychological shadow" cast by tenure and pseudo-tenure that has inhibited them from performing meaningful evaluations and taking necessary personnel actions. Librarians who do not produce will be reassigned or fired. -
2. ... collection development as we now know it will cease to exist as selection of library materials will be entirely patron-initiated. Ownership of materials will be limited to what is actively used. The only collection development activities involving librarians will be competition over special collections and archives.
3. ... ~~Google will meet virtually all information needs for both students and researchers. Publishers will use Google as a portal to an increasing array of content and services that disintermediate libraries. All bibliographic data, excepting what libraries create for local special collections, will be produced and consumed at the network level.~~
4. ... knowledge management will be identified as a critical need on campus and will be defined much more broadly than libraries have defined it. The front door for all information inquiries will be at the university level. Libraries will have a small information service role.

5. ... libraries will have given up on the "outreach librarian" model after faculty persistently show no interest in it. Successful libraries will have identified shared goals with teaching faculty and adapted themselves to work at the intersection of librarianship, information technology and instructional technology.

6. ... libraries will provide no in-person services. All services (reference, circulation, instruction, etc.) will be unmediated and supported by technology.

7. ... libraries will have abandoned the hybrid model to focus exclusively on electronic collections, with limited investments in managing shared print archives. Local unique collections will be funded only by donor contributions.

8. ... library buildings will no longer house collections and will become campus community centers that function as part of the student services sector. Campus business offices will manage license and acquisition of digital content. These changes will lead campus administrators to align libraries with the administrative rather than the academic side of the organization.

9. ... the library community will insist on a better return on investment for membership organizations (e.g., CRL, DLF, CNI, SPARC, ARL, ALA). All collaboration of significance will be centered around either individual entrepreneurial libraries (e.g., HathiTrust, OLE), or regional consortia.

10. ... 20% of the ARL library directors will have retired. University administrators will see that librarians do not have the skills they need and will hire leaders from other parts of the academy, leading both to a realignment of the library within the university and to the decline of the library profession.