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The New Zealand Library & Information Management Journal

Purpose

The New Zealand Library & Information Management Journal is published by LIANZA with support from the School of Information Management at Victoria University of Wellington and is intended as a national forum on library and information management issues in New Zealand. It is not limited to a specific information sector or to articles of a particular type; rather, the content seeks to reflect the wide-ranging interests and needs of information professionals in New Zealand.

NZLIMJ is published in an online format biannually and hosted on the LIANZA website. Print editions of the *Journal* are distributed to all current LIANZA members.

Editorial Board

The *NZLIMJ* Editorial Board fulfils two functions. First, and principally, members of the Board provide double blind peer-reviews of articles submitted for publication as reviewed articles. Second, the Board provides such advice to the Editor as may be requested from time to time on other matters related to journal content.

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Introduction to the New Zealand Library and Information Management Journal

“A library, to modify the famous metaphor of Socrates, should be the delivery room for the birth of ideas – a place where history comes to life.”

This quote by Norman Cousins, a prominent political journalist, author, professor and world peace advocate is still very relevant as we reflect on and consider the role of modern libraries in the 21st century. At the Public Libraries Summit in February 2007 I said libraries should be dangerous places and they often are! As champions of freedom of access to information they are at the heart of the democratic process. Informed citizens are empowered citizens and libraries ensure the free flow of information for the generation of new ideas, independent thought and of civil engagement.

So what services do libraries need to provide in the future? How can they make the most of the opportunities offered by the digital world? And how can they help to meet and fuel New Zealand’s aspirations to be a world leader in best use of information and technology to reach our social, cultural and economic goals? These are some of the questions that have driven me as Minister responsible for the National Library and which have also driven the Labour-led government’s very recent announcement to invest \$69 million in the redevelopment of the National Library of New Zealand.

This investment is very timely; the Library’s collections are, after all the nation’s richest and most valuable heritage collections, estimated at more than \$1 billion and they deserve investment in how they are preserved, protected and presented to the world. We need a national library that builds on the past and maximises digital opportunities. We need to provide an environment that is inclusive, sustainable, creative and engaging for all who visit, literally and virtually.

This announcement also reinforces the value we see in libraries as places that expose people to ideas, and allow creativity to thrive. At their core, libraries are trusted spaces that foster learning, debate and argument. They allow everyone and anyone to access information whether for recreation or for the generation of ideas and knowledge creation. To be able to do this well, libraries also need to be able to support their citizens in a world that is increasingly digital and virtual. The roll-out of the Aotearoa People’s Network is a great example of how crucial libraries are in the digital world bringing free broadband to communities around the country and enabling more New Zealanders to benefit from creating, accessing and experiencing digital content in an environment

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where there is support from library professionals to mentor and tutor people to best use the resources.

I have also appreciated the sector's leadership in engaging with the New Zealand Digital Content Strategy with such energy and vision. In the digital world it is the content which fills the broadband pipes which will deliver an economic and cultural benefit for New Zealand. Libraries understand that this is fundamental to our future and programmes such as EPIC, KRIS, Matapihi and NDHA are all evidence of this.

New Zealand libraries have a key role to play in transforming our country into a knowledge society and economy that is first-class, innovative and constantly improving. In turn libraries need to, and are, transforming themselves as they connect communities in new and innovative ways. In undertaking this job, libraries will continue to be the "delivery room for the birth of ideas".

I believe that the new, rebuilt National Library will be a hub for libraries and for all New Zealanders as we transform our society and economy to take advantage of the digital world – as well as building on our shared heritage.

Hon Judith Tizard

Minister responsible for the National Library of New Zealand

Editorial

This is my last Editorial for the NZLIMJ and although in many ways it is a relief to hand over responsibility for the Journal to a new Editor (stay tuned to your news satellites for an announcement), I actually feel a mix of melancholy and regret. Establishing the new format of the NZLIMJ has been a privilege and I cannot thank the Editorial Board enough for their work, peer reviews and advice during the past two years.

Now that we are underway there are several ideas I will not be able to implement but I will leave some notes on the virtual desk for our new Editor. I'm quite certain that this journal will continue to grow and flourish; certainly the standard of content and ideas put forward continues to surprise me.

It is very important for the profession to have a journal for its reflections, ideas and reports and the NZLIMJ and its earlier form New Zealand Libraries have been in this role for some eighty years.

During a weed of duplicate stock at one of my previous places of employment I was offered a full run of NZ Libraries dating back to 1937. I didn't have room for them all, nor did any of the other libraries they were offered to, and I was sad to see them go out to the public but also delighted to see them be quickly taken! I did retain the first bound edition and as we push forward it is humbling to know that I am just one Editor in a long chain and that this issue adds to a legacy of excellence, sharing and debate in our profession.

As the journal continues under guidance of the new Editor I will be delighted to see the new ideas in every issue.

E hara taku toa i te toa taki tahi engari, he toa taki tini
Our achievements are not ours alone but belong to the many

Glen Walker,
MLIS, ALIANZA

The Treasury's Prescription for the National Library in 1994 and its Aftermath: A Case Study in the Conflict between Economic Ideology and Library Realities

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Abstract

This is the revised version of a lecture prepared to complement "Full Speed Astern: Managing the Alexander Turnbull Library through the Turbulent 1970s and 1980s" which will appear in the Turnbull Library Record late in 2008.

In 1994 a Treasury "discussion document" proposed the disposal of all the National Library's collections except the New Zealand content of the Alexander Turnbull Library and the management of the remaining services on a user-pays basis to maximise revenue for the Crown. The National Library began the disposal of its General Collection, developed a marketing plan and created a superstructure of marketing managers to control all services to the public and other libraries. After the abandonment of the National Document and Information Service (NDIS) the whole marketing structure collapsed. Neo-liberal economic theory failed to match library realities.

The *Dominion* billboard on the morning of 31 May 1994 declared "Treasury Wants to Sell Rare Collections" and the front page story outlined one of the proposals in a "discussion document" prepared by Treasury to "provide input" into the preparation of the National Library's 1994 Strategic Plan. According to the *Dominion's* story Treasury had concluded that owning and adding to the Alexander Turnbull Library's non-New Zealand collections was a low priority for government and consideration should be given to "scaling this back over the medium term," a Treasury euphemism for selling off the rare European books and manuscripts, the John Milton collection, rare non-New Zealand books, fine printing, early printed Bibles—collections recently estimated, by Treasury demand, to be worth some \$250 million, about six times the amount for which the Government Printing Office had been sold in 1989.

Government ministers quickly dissociated themselves from this proposal, with the minister in charge of the National Library shrugging it off as "just a suggestion by one Treasury officer," and both he and the Minister of Finance denied any intention of selling off any of the Turnbull collections. There was a barrage of protest in the media with a strong editorial in the *Dominion*—

“Grandmothers Not for Sale”—that called the proposal *ignorant* because it overlooked that Alexander Turnbull’s collection was bequeathed to the Crown with the intention that it be preserved on behalf of the nation, *perverse* because the collection is just as much a part of New Zealand’s heritage as are carvings, hei tiki and huia, *obtuse* in dismissing Milton’s works and rare Bibles as non-New Zealand, and *short sighted* because no-one would ever leave anything to the nation again if misguided Treasury zealots would try to convert it into cash at the first opportunity.

What none of the newspapers disclosed, nor the *Listener* which carried a fuller article later that week, was that this was only one of dozens of proposals based on the rigorous application of neo-classical economic theory, relating not just to the Turnbull but to the whole of the National Library which, if they had been implemented, would have seen most of the collections sold off or given away, the Library reduced to about one tenth of its size, and the remainder managed as a business on a user-pays, full cost-recovery basis.

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Some fourteen years later it is worth analysing in detail the Treasury’s thinking about the National Library because the economic fundamentalism that it represents is still alive and well in the senior reaches of the public service, awaiting the right climate to flower again. The Discussion Paper was not just idle doodling by some junior with too much time on his hands as the Minister attempted to imply, but an official document signed by a mid-level Treasury manager “for the Secretary to the Treasury”, and it was never repudiated or revised by Treasury. The National Library’s management tried to pass it off as no more than two government departments “exchanging ideas”, but in those days, when Treasury stood over the rest of the public service like a colossus, having kneecapped all opposition to its fundamentalist economic theology, a “suggestion” from Treasury was equivalent to having two large men in expensive Italian suits, spoiled only by the bulges under their left armpits, taking you by both elbows, lifting you off he ground, and whispering in your ear that they wanted to discuss an offer you couldn’t refuse.

The Discussion Paper (Treasury, 1994a) begins by assuming that the National Library’s sole purpose, as a government department, is to contribute to the outcomes laid down in the current government’s policies. There is no mention anywhere in the document of the statutory responsibilities of the National Library so carefully enumerated in the 1965 Act. Government had decided in the 1960s that it was necessary to insulate the National Library from fluctuations in the policies of political parties by providing a purpose enshrined in legislation: “to collect, preserve and make available recorded knowledge, particularly that relating to New Zealand, to supplement and further the work of other libraries in New Zealand, and to enrich the cultural and economic life of New Zealand and

its cultural interchanges with other nations”, and laying a number of statutory functions on the National Librarian including those of developing and maintaining a national collection of library resources, providing access to these collections, and housing the complete collections of the Turnbull Library, including its rare books. Treasury’s proposals overrode these statutory duties and as such appeared to be unlawful without major change in the National Library Act.

After briefly outlining the government’s current economic and cultural policies, the National Library’s contribution to economic policy is identified by Treasury as the provision and dissemination of information. The government’s purchase and ownership interest is in the Library promoting the efficient creation and dissemination of knowledge. But the government’s interest is limited to cases where there is evidence for market failure and where the National Library is the most efficient mechanism available. The Library’s contribution to cultural policy is to ensure that a comprehensive record of the documentary heritage of New Zealand is available—note, no more than just *available* -- for current and future generations. In general terms such a collection could contribute to maximising understanding and appreciation of, and access to and participation in New Zealand culture and the promotion of New Zealand’s cultural identity. The paper warns that the government has a wide range of other interventions available to achieve these particular objectives.

The National Library’s “interventions” in the marketplace are listed—owning and purchasing library materials, lending materials, providing reference services, services to schools, advice to other libraries and policy advice to government—and a stern warning given that all these “interventions”, that is the spending of the taxpayers’ money by an agency of government, had to be consistent with the macroeconomic goal of reducing government spending in order to stimulate a competitive economy. That is, less spending by the National Library as a matter of government policy.

Information is identified in the paper simply as a commodity in the marketplace. As such, incentives need to be in place to encourage its production by allocating private property rights, and it needs to be marketed to potential users at its true cost. Therefore Treasury proposed that the various information services of the National Library should be provided on a full cost recovery basis where there is no clear government interest in purchasing subsidised or free services. The supposed benefits of charging regimes would be better library services more responsive to user needs, more effective targeting to those who need it the most (assuming that those who need it the most would be prepared to pay the most), encouraging clients to use alternative providers such as regional libraries where this is more efficient, and saving costs by promoting more efficient allocation of resources, including more informed decision making by both the library and users. Having to pay cash for services is seen to sharpen up decision-making by buyers and sellers. The argument that information is a public good, freely and widely available, is firmly rejected—it is neither non-rival nor non-excludable.

The Treasury paper then goes on to analyse the information market and concludes that libraries are a decreasingly significant segment of the market and that the majority of the players in the market are from the private sector operating under normal incentives for the generation and dissemination of information. Libraries are undercapitalised and lack a tradition of developing value-added products for sale on the open market. They are not well placed to compete with commercial information providers and are vulnerable in the market place.

This was at a time when libraries were attempting to clamber on to the information bandwagon, and the National Library of New Zealand had just announced, in its 1994 Annual Report, that the “National Library’s business is information.”

Treasury’s conclusion was that there was no apparent market failure in the provision of information that required intervention by central government and that therefore government had no purchase or ownership interest in the National Library’s General Collections and that consideration should be given to “devolving its ownership out to other libraries as a medium term strategy”. Thus in the medium term the General Collections and the lending and reference services based on them should be dismantled and in the short term they should be managed on a full cost recovery basis.

The services provided to schools are identified as inputs to the educational services supplied by schools and it is recommended that a change should be made to fund schools to purchase these services under contract. Such contracts should be competitive, with schools free to contract with other suppliers such as local public libraries. This is the standard purchase-provider split, with individual schools directly funded by government as purchasers, and the Schools Service as a provider in competition with others in the marketplace. Such a purchaser-provider split would, it was predicted, encourage better library services to schools more responsive to users, allow more effective targeting to schools that required more assistance, enable schools to use alternative providers, and through competition it was hoped to improve the quality of the National Library’s services, and save costs by promoting more effective use of resources and more informed decision making. The creation of a market for information resources for schools would encourage the growth of alternative providers and as this market emerges it may be best for the National Library to devolve its ownership out to alternative suppliers as a medium term strategy. Thus in the medium term the schools collections and the lending and reference services based on them should be dismantled, and in the short term they should be managed on a full cost recovery basis.

The advice on the development of school libraries being given to schools free of charge was seen to be crowding out other private providers. Instead, it was urged, schools should be funded to purchase this advice, with the National Library providing a service at full cost recovery. Alternative suppliers would be encouraged into this new marketplace and the National Library would be enabled to scale back this activity. Similar arguments applied to advice on library services to Maori. Users would be better off with direct funding to purchase services at full

cost recovery. Thus in the medium term advice on school libraries, and library services to Maori, should be dismantled, and in the short term they should be managed on a full cost recovery basis.

Reference, research and tracing services should also be moved to full cost recovery because it was argued that the failure to charge is crowding out suppliers of alternative information management products, encouraging over-use of resources, and discouraging dynamic development of alternative products.

The government may have an ownership interest in the Bibliographic Network, but only because it is necessary for the bibliographic control of the heritage collections in the Turnbull. Devolving ownership to a club, a consortium of users, could be considered to reduce the financial risk (that is the cost) to the Crown.

Not even policy advice to government escapes the guillotine. It is conceded that the government will have to purchase policy advice relating to information and cultural issues since the market is unlikely to provide it to the standard required. But doubts are raised about the comparative advantage of the Library in both areas and the initial conclusion reached that the library should have only a secondary opinion role to the Ministry of Commerce for information and Cultural Affairs for culture.

But all was not lost. The Discussion Paper recognised that the National Library's "information business", described as an unnecessary intervention in the market for information, and the Turnbull's "heritage business" were "predominantly different". The provision by government of cultural heritage collections, with their high costs and low demand, was reluctantly accepted as an example of market failure but only because of the popular expectations of cultural heritage as a national treasure needing to be available without

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significant cost barriers. Heritage collections are then declared not to be a public good, but merely a merit good, and any government expenditure on them had to be carefully weighed against other cultural spending priorities, along with all other spending priorities, the government's overall fiscal objectives of less government expenditure to minimise the distorting effects of government interventions, and the minimising of risk by the divestment of assets.

Treasury concluded that the government was likely to wish to continue to build the core New Zealand heritage collections at the existing rate but that there had to be productivity improvements to ensure that the cost of the output kept on falling. That is, do the same with less money. But access to the collections (reference, delivery to reading rooms, cataloguing, indexing, etc) did not involve

market failure, was not a public or a merit good to be funded by government, and should be operated on a full long run marginal cost recovery basis. That is the users ought to pay for access to the collections. Treasury conceded that government may, if it so wishes, for equity reasons and because means testing was unlikely to be cost effective, subsidise individuals and “perhaps researchers” to get access to the collections without direct payment. However full cost recovery for commercial users was to be considered. No doubt those who could prove that they were not commercial users but genuine not-for-profit researchers or poor students would be issued with a concession card to be clipped for every item delivered or question answered by reference staff.

Treasury’s view was that the Turnbull should focus its access services not on individuals but on commercial information providers who would add value by transforming the collections into other forms which individuals would like to purchase. “This could be done by franchising private information providers to access and transform the information base”. Full cost recovery by the library for its reference services would, of course, encourage other providers to develop services in competition with the Library and such competition would, of course, improve the Library’s own services.

This account of Treasury’s proposals may seem to be tendentious, repetitious and abstracted from reality, but it is necessary to convey both its content and style.

The response by the senior management of the National Library to these extraordinary proposals, many of which were patently contrary to the National Library Act, is illuminating. No attempt was made to get a legal opinion, the Treasury paper was not referred to the Trustees or the Special Committee for the Turnbull, and neither the Friends of the Turnbull nor the National Library Society knew anything more than what was reported in the media. The National Library management’s initial response to Treasury, before the story broke in the media, was that the suggestion that owning and building on the non-New Zealand Turnbull collections was a lower priority “bears further consideration”, and that the Library was “actively exploring opportunities” to improve cost recovery from the Turnbull. A “tailored and more focussed” General Collection, neither duplicating nor competing with other providers, would, they argued, justify a continued purchase interest by government. Consideration was being given to cost recovery in the areas of reference, research and tracing, and the Library was intent on establishing a clear second opinion role with government (NLNZ, 1994a). In a separate paper on schools services the case for maintaining the status quo in the medium term was argued persuasively, but with a major review promised for 1999 (NLNZ, 1994b).

Treasury’s response was to insist that the upcoming multi-year plan be submitted to the Minister of Finance and that the Minister responsible for the National Library had to deal with ownership and access to the non –New Zealand heritage collections, cost recovery for the Turnbull’s heritage collections, ownership and cost recovery for the General Collections, the funder-provide split for schools

services, cost recovery elsewhere, a marketing plan, and a new management structure (Treasury, 1994b).

In due course the final multi-year plan indicated that expenditure on and use of the General Collections would decline, the size and structure would change, and there would be consideration of the transfer of some sections to other ownership, and that the question of ownership would be kept under review. This was well before an independent review of collection policy recommended disposal of a substantial proportion of the collections. Reference and bibliographical services were expected to operate on a full cost-recovery basis in the short to medium term. No changes for development advice to libraries, schools and Maori would be introduced in the short term but there would be a review after two years when the transfer of services to other agencies and the introduction of cost recovery would be options for consideration. However, the plan did argue for continuing government intervention through the National Library in the provision of information to support government economic policies because of the current weakness of the market (NLNZ, 1994c).

Two strong arguments were presented, first that no distinction could be made between New Zealand and non-New Zealand heritage collections in the Turnbull, and second that there should be no change in the ownership of the schools collection and services to schools in the short term. In both areas the National Library was on strong ground—the National Library Act and the Turnbull Regulations prevented the disposal of any part of the Turnbull’s collections, the Act provided specifically for the further development of all the Turnbull’s collections, including rare non-New Zealand books, and government policy, announced in 1993 after the collections were recorded in the National Library’s accounts as an asset was that “the National Library will continue as a going concern and that the collections will not be sold.” As well as this the Minister of Education and the Minister responsible for the National Library had already agreed in February 1994 to funding a five-year School Libraries 2000 Programme, which was substantially a revamping of the existing Schools services.

The first that the Trustees knew that the Treasury’s proposals involved more than just the non-New Zealand Turnbull collections was at their 10 June 1994 meeting when a copy of the Treasury’s brief 4-page outline of the issues it wanted addressed in the multi-year plan, and the National Library’s Multi-Year Plan, were tabled. The brief Treasury summary of these issues provides only a pale reflection of the force and intent of the original 17-page discussion paper. If the Trustees had seen the whole of the Treasury proposals to strip the National Library down to the carcass of the Turnbull they would have reacted strongly. However, what they had seen was enough for the Trustees to make a submission to the Minister on the nature of the heritage collections and the market value of information. Unfortunately no copy of this submission can be found in the files of the National Library or of the responsible minister, Hon. Roger McClay. The Trustees endorsed in principle the Multi-Year Plan, with its promise of

reductions in the General Collection and more cost recovery across the whole of the National Library.

To assist the National Library to follow its prescriptions Treasury imposed an “incentive funding” regime, brutally starving the Library of cash to force it to raise revenue. In the five years 1995-1999 government funding dropped by 1.82%. Over the same period total government expenditure rose by 17.85%; health spending rose by 36.85% and education by 22.82%. Total expenditure on the Library dropped by 3.26%, the National Library’s funding as a proportion of total government expenditure fell by a massive 20%, and as a percentage of GDP it fell by 16.5%. These figures were compiled by Dr Don Gilling of Economic and Social Research Associates from official sources. These are actual figures; if account is taken of the underlying inflation index over the period of 6.85% there was a government disinvestment in the National Library of well over 10%.

One of the first actions to refashion the National Library in the new Treasury image was to set up a major review of collection policy, the progress of which was closely monitored by Treasury, finally completed towards the end of 1996 (NLNZ, 1996a).

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It provided the rationale for the disposal of materials from both the General and the Schools collections. The General Collections would be tailored to have a smaller component of overseas published resources and trimmed by disposing of materials not aligned with the proposed collection policy and the new strategic directions, with an eye to better asset management and the overhead costs of retention. By 1999 189,450 titles out of 710,000, or 26.6% of the General Collection, had been identified as low use and candidates for disposal, and 60,000 were set side for a final decision on disposal. Most of these had been given away or sold off before the new Labour Government in 2000 stepped in and stopped further disposals. This exercise in asset reduction was in line with Treasury’s narrow concentration on economic values: a reduction in assets reduced the risk to government, the transfer of assets out of government hands stimulated economic growth, and the costs to government of storage and control were diminished. Treasury thinking was reflected in the capital levy, a tax of 10% on all assets owned by government agencies. The collections of library material in the National Library were not exempt. In the real world a library’s collections are its *raison d’être*, in Treasury’s world of neo-classical economic theory they are a financial liability. A reduction in the Library’s collections, or better still no collection apart from the Turnbull’s New Zealand component, was the object of policy. Treasury was not prepared to admit that a levy on the value of the collections was nonsense when it came to a library, so when the capital

charge owed by the National Library, at \$76M, became larger than the total government funding for the Library's operations, the ownership of the Turnbull collections, which attracted a capital charge of over \$50M, was transferred from the National Library to the Crown in order to preserve theoretical purity.

Another step, in February 1994, was to commission a report from Duncan McLachlan and Associates on the "Future Funding Viability" (ability to attract sponsorship) of the National Library's exhibition programme.

The next major step was to realign the management structure with the new imperatives to generate revenue. A Manager of Marketing Services was appointed in August 1995 in the salary bracket \$62,000 to \$93,000 and became one of the senior management team. Focus groups were set up for a rebranding project for the National Library, together with a consultant and a branding project team of five. Five other market managers were recruited from private enterprise, then a marketing consultant on contract, and two support staff, and a marketing project involving six project teams each with a team leader, and a project administrator and a project facilitator, all to gather ideas on generating revenue from user charges. The "Brief for Change Management in Marketing" of 23 May 1996 (NLNZ, 1996b) made it clear that the marketing managers would "essentially drive the business and services" offered by the National Library. The Manager, Marketing Services, was made responsible for product and service development, collection/database policy, service delivery, sales, document supply and related routines (including reference, heritage research and interloan services) and information broking, exhibitions and public events and publications. When a Maori Manager was appointed in 1995 he was designated as part of marketing, to report to the Manager of Marketing for everything except strategic issues.

An internal consultant, later assisted by an external consultant, spent over two years designing a new management structure to pass power for all public services from the librarians to the marketing managers.

The job of Chief Librarian of the Turnbull was rejigged as the Manager of the Library Information Resources Unit, responsible for the behind-the-scenes collection development and preservation and the data-bases, but not for any of the direct services to individual users, even from the Turnbull collections. The marketers noted that the Turnbull culture was a barrier to exploiting the Turnbull collection for revenue.

The new National Document and Information Service (NDIS), a high-tech replacement for the computer systems supporting the National Bibliographic Network and the Kiwinet databases was enthusiastically promoted as a miracle worker capable of generating rivers of gold, but only if the staff had the right attitudes to the paying customers. One staff member neatly caught the NDIS euphoria in a poem, "A Millenium is Coming (an NDIS Presentation)" with the chorus

See the gateways waiting open
See the ports are standing by
And in seconds they'll transport us
To that NDIS in the sky,
Where all information's money,
It's stashed waiting there in banks,
When we start to make a profit
They'll sell us to the Yanks

We'll be counting, counting, counting, we'll be counting as we go,
We'll be counting NDIS dollars, we'll be counting NDIS dough.

Expensive human mediated services were to be reduced or charged for (genealogists and academics were to be investigated as revenue sources, and university historians received a warning that they would have to set aside a percentage of their research grants to buy services from the Turnbull), the current book-based services to schools were to be replaced by online services, and the new computer based services marketed strenuously to universities, the large public libraries, businesses and schools. An immediate increase in revenue of 50% was predicted by the marketers.

All the market managers were in place by December 1996 and the new customer focussed revenue generating National Library was poised for action, and then everything collapsed. First of all, NDIS, the sophisticated online system that would enable slow, expensive human based services to users to be replaced by digital services focussed on fee-paying customers, proved incapable of delivering on its promises and was abandoned in February 1997. Originally estimated to cost \$6.9M it swallowed some \$29.7m (Davies, 2002). Then the marketing managers, in search of revenue streams from the customers, became increasingly bewildered and disheartened as they came up against the reality that library services are very price sensitive and user charges are likely to depress demand significantly and dry up those revenue streams. Most of the market managers were gone by the end of 1997, but by then they had cost the taxpayer over \$1M with nothing to show for their time except reams of inoperable marketing plans. Government initiated a review of the National Library to re-define its core business, and a new chief executive replaced the management structure with one that "emphasises the value the Library places on professional librarianship". The Manager of Marketing Services disappeared from the senior management team and the Marketing Services unit was downgraded and renamed as Corporate Communications.

The depressing (or encouraging, depending on your point of view) story of the collapse of the National Library's pursuit of cost recovery between 1994 and 1997 provides another example of reality striking back at dogmatic theory. The attempt by the National Library's management to implement Treasury's faulty theories about libraries and information drove it down the path of cost recovery and the shedding of assets to reduce the financial risks to government. In order to make the theory work in practice the National Library was restructured around

income generation, professional librarians were confined to the back rooms and marketing managers took control over the provision of services to the customers.

In the second century AD Ptolemy, accepting without question the dogma that the sun had to revolve around the earth, was able to construct a model with a complex combination of epicycles and eccentrics that proved remarkably accurate in accounting for planetary movements including most of the irregularities in the movements of the sun, moon and planets as they, in theory, circled around the earth. As more irregularities were discovered, more epicycles and eccentrics were added to correct the model until the observations fitted the theory. In the end, reality, the heliocentric universe, could no longer be avoided and the Ptolemaic model collapsed and was consigned to the dustbin of history. But it provided enough approximate answers to survive for over 1000 years. The National Library, in order to make Treasury's revenue centred universe work, resorted to constructing more and more managerial epicycles, eccentrics and bizarre accretions, more and more removed from reality, to fit the theory, but to no avail. Its ideological model was so disastrously wrong that it couldn't provide any answers at all and it collapsed after three years. It was impossible to protect flawed ideology from the inevitable attack of real factors. Reality, with its unforgiving gaze and razor-sharp teeth, reared its head, as it is wont to do, and eviscerated a daft theory.

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Why and How Librarians Must Take Asia Seriously

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Abstract

We are in the midst of a huge shift in the global balance of economic, intellectual and cultural power towards Asia. New Zealand's government, business and community leaders insist that New Zealanders urgently need to find ways of expanding and deepening their knowledge of Asia to prepare for the region's impact on their environment, their jobs, their living costs, their values and their identity. Hence New Zealand libraries need national policies and local strategies to build and protect access to quality resources, to ensure the free movement of cultural and intellectual knowledge, and to be aware of issues around the production and flow of information, from and about Asia. This paper is both an opinion piece and a synthesis of my professional experience as an Asian specialist in an academic library. I review the government's 'Seriously Asia' project, consider local conditions, propose solutions, describe relevant country specific trends in print cyberspace and librarianship, and conclude with issues in bibliographic management. I am covering a lot of ground but I have had to be alert to all these factors in my work, and wish to address the whole library community with it's diversity of needs, interests and experience.

Introduction

Until recently work in the Asian Languages Collection at the University of Auckland Library was rewarding but isolated from the mainstream General Library by the particular constraints of working with East Asian writing scripts. Now we are fully integrated and connected to Asia through the convergence of communication and information technology at the same time as Asia booms. Public and tertiary institutions are now able to offer full-text Asian language databases and links to Asian internet resources on library-wide systems, however there is awareness that information and communication technologies can be utilised to control the interpretations of events.

Librarians can discover and make available information and opinion about Chinese nationalism, intolerance and persecution of ethnic, spiritual and labour

movements. They can contribute to rethinking social issues within our Asian communities. For example, a printed and bound copy of the threads of a local Chinese blog about the Tibetan uprising was placed on the open shelves. The posts replicated the reports printed in the government approved Chinese press, until an anonymous argument for freedom of religious belief and expression encouraged an open review of the consensus opinion displayed in the preceding posts.

Pluralistic perspectives on Asian society, politics and economics, accounts and analysis of social movements and human rights violations are difficult to find where controls on behalf of undemocratic elites are in force, but from outside those national boundaries cultures actively protecting freedom of information allow open debate.

Background

Today's global consciousness encourages study and research on anything from ethnicity, through class to cultural production and consumption that takes account of the complexity of their interconnections and the cycles of their change. Area studies gathers interest in interdisciplinary learning and knowledge utilising different principles, aims and methods of research in the humanities and social sciences.

It is possible to collect professional critics and expert opinion around debates and conflict in geo-politics, history, sociology and culture. Not only is informed discourse published in reputable journals, and books held but also other creative content in graphic novels, anime and movies.

From desks in New Zealand, it is not easy to identify and buy the more controversial material in the areas for which we are responsible, nor is it possible for one librarian to stay current with all the swings of public debate and popular culture amongst many millions of people. Happenstance and experience help to identify a topical author or issue, although perhaps New Zealand is too small and geographically distant to build a comprehensive collection.

Seriously Asian library patrons

All New Zealand libraries have experienced dramatic increases in Asian visitors of the last decade. The latest results from the 2006 census confirm that in the last 5 years the number of people identifying as Asians almost doubled to make up 9.2 percent of the total population. Significantly, a third of this group were young adults and two-thirds lived in the Auckland region. Today one-fifth of all Aucklanders identify with one or more Asian ethnic groups. Most recently there has been a surge in the population of Indians and Koreans compared to the Chinese, with Indians on track to catch up with Chinese in numbers. Chinese, Koreans, Chinese-New Zealanders, Korean-New Zealanders and New Zealand – Indians are changing our cities and towns, educational institutions and workplaces and the clients and collections in libraries. Research and anecdotal

evidence also shows that these communities face barriers to full participation in New Zealand society. New Zealander-born citizens express a range of opinions about these migrants from pragmatic financial opportunism to anxiety for a fragile bi-cultural identity (M.Tornquist, 2006).

Distinct physical features and mannerisms raise the profile of certain migrant communities disproportionate to their numbers and for some Asians this invites prejudice and isolation. Libraries can counter ignorance and exclusion with resources and services. The Asian collections are well used on weekends by families, while during the week journals and books in the students' own languages create a haven of familiarity from the foreign world beyond. The elderly Chinese gentleman who comes to read the latest magazines not available elsewhere has been visiting for over a decade and illustrates the role of the collection to no.

Libraries can counter ignorance and exclusion with resources and services.

Libraries should not only serve present interests but also collect the documentation of this actual migrant experience. Locally published magazines, newspapers and newsletters are the written record of these communities who are underrepresented in the mainstream media. We now have local historians desperate for archives from earlier waves of Chinese migration and we know we need to do better this time and actively gather all material in Chinese, Korean and other migrant community languages, before they are lost forever, to ensure that a rich heritage of primary resources is held into the future.

The books newspapers, magazines and audiovisual material that libraries make available and the directories of credible web resources reflect the interests of the communities they serve, and provide opportunities for patrons to expand, or reflect on, their knowledge, assumptions and values.

Libraries are public spaces where contested opinions and ideas can be accessed and considered to allow new understanding and tolerance of competing viewpoints. Books and articles that counter nationalist historic analysis and accepted intellectual and literary canons encourage readers to question assumed facts and habits of thought. For example, Falun Gong appeared a decade ago as a new Chinese spiritual movement resisting the government's ban on their freedom of practice and belief. Their numbers and alternative authority lead to repression and their responding high profile tactics to raise awareness of their persecution upset local sensibilities. Librarians may be ignorant, or sceptical about Falun Gong claims and strong beliefs, and professionally wary of being manipulated however the LIANZA's (Library and Information Association of New Zealand Aotearoa) endorses the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions' (IFLA) Statement on Libraries and Intellectual Freedom which refers to Article 19 of the United Nations Declaration of Human

Rights, and has its own Statement on Intellectual Freedom adopted in 2002, that declares.

No library materials should be censored, restricted, removed from libraries, or have access denied to them because of partisan or doctrinal disapproval or pressure. This includes access to web-based information resources.

What do the New Zealand born and educated make of the recent expatriate Chinese displays of patriotism in response to attacks on the Olympic flame, or the Bali bombings in 2002? Two years after the Seriously Asia conference (see following section) a working group convened to evaluate progress in New Zealander's knowledge and understanding of Asia and reported-

Right now, we're not doing that as effectively as we could. Only a few New Zealanders understand the region well enough to see the opportunities before us. Most of us don't speak its languages, or understand its cultures. Although it's made up of more than 20 distinct countries and markets, many New Zealanders don't even distinguish one from another. Changing that is a challenge for all sectors of New Zealand society, but it's a challenge worth facing. Our future depends on it (Steeds, B., 2006).

Seriously Asia project

While libraries may meet the needs of their Asian patrons at the local level, as a profession librarians are not yet framing policies that engage with the government led national response to Asia. Almost five years ago the Prime Minister, Helen Clark launching the 'Seriously Asia' project made it clear that New Zealand has to do more.

We must have an effective understanding of the part which the Asian region will play in New Zealand's global destiny. We must also develop the knowledge and skills we need to influence the course of events. (Clark, 2003)

The first priority of the Seriously Asia project was to identify goals and practical actions to improve New Zealand's links with Asia, premised on a major concern that our perceptions of the region were outdated and too limited to trade only. Sir Dryden Spring, the Asia New Zealand Foundation chairman, succinctly described the vision of the project beyond its present focus.

The biggest challenge before us is to turn words into reality...to get all New Zealanders to take ownership of what needs to be done to create an Asia-literate society by 2020 (Asia New Zealand Foundation, 2006).

Keeping up the momentum the Foundations' imperatives were adopted in government policy documents

To succeed in an increasingly globalised environment, we need access to overseas networks, and linguistic and intercultural skills in ways that we have never needed them before. (Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, 2007)

Librarians need to utilise their co-operative networks and associations to really inform their communities about Asia, to facilitate New Zealanders to live and work with Asians, and to encourage young local Asian citizens to synergise their heritage and their potential as New Zealanders. The objectives of the Seriously Asia project would be well served by a national strategy and investment in libraries providing Asian expertise and knowledge to resist discriminatory access by censorship and the push to profit from the commodification of information.

The Asia Knowledge Working Group, set up following the Seriously Asia launch, looked to the media, business, education and cultural sectors for pragmatic strategies for furthering the project and reconciling the issues relating to local Asian communities with the challenge of engaging with over half of humanity living in Asia. The scope and results of their research did not identify the role of libraries or information services to improve understanding, but the contribution of library-based knowledge practices are implicit.

New Zealand is at the top of the OECD for research productivity, but the lack, in both public and private sectors, of capability for research and analysis on Asian issues from a New Zealand perspective is perceived as a major weakness in New Zealand meeting its policy objectives. (M, Tornquist. 2006)

Taking Asia seriously

In 2006 the British Library consulted with its stakeholders on a new strategy with the apt title 'Reflecting a changing world'. The Executive Summary reassured them that much business was to continue as usual but that "other aspects of our content strategy require us to shift our focus and reprioritise".

This means taking account of today's pattern of international research, and today's economic and political environment. For instance, we need to give greater priority in our collecting to China, India, Anglophone Africa, and some South American countries. (British Library, 2006).

The media picked this as a wind of change in the venerable institution, reporting that an extensive study led librarians to conclude that "academics in India and China will be generating the big ideas in science, technology and economics." (Asthana, 2006)

Cognisant of its geopolitical place in the world the National Library of Australia has developed extensive collections in Chinese, Japanese, Korean, Thai and Indonesian, which are matched by only a few overseas libraries. Specialist staff, with language skills, acquire and catalogue Asian items and provide a reference service. Without an established export book trade in Southeast Asia the NLA depends on its Acquisitions Office attached to the Australian Embassy in Jakarta to ensure Indonesian journals, newspapers and books are collected, and researchers facilitate deposits of ephemera, archives and publications from other parts of the region. The co-operation between the NLA and the Australia

National University in collecting Asian language and Asia-related material makes Canberra a major centre for Asian research.

Treaty of Waitangi obligations and our special relationship with the Pacific mean resources must be allocated to these priorities. The National Library of New Zealand's collection policy ensures that the significant record of New Zealand and Pacific documentary heritage or taonga is collected and preserved. Is there recognition that Asia has almost replaced the West in the Pacific and takes on a dominating role in every aspect of island life? The National Library of New Zealand acknowledges that the continuing needs of researchers will be best served by other institutions and plans to cooperate with these to facilitate access to the full range of information available "to enrich the cultural and economic life of New Zealand and its interchanges with other nations" (National Library of New Zealand. 2004).

This idealistic vision ignores pervasive control of access by governments and corporations. It reinforces the outdated and naïve perceptions of the world and New Zealand's place in it. In light of the British Library's explicit recognition of Asia as the cultural and intellectual powerhouse of the future it would be relevant for New Zealand to articulate a national strategy for co-operative or co-ordinated policy on access to resources about and from Asia. If the country needs a deep and broad understanding of Asia to inform debate and decision making then a national a strategy to resource a freely accessible stream of knowledge and intelligence is necessary.

Seriously Asian librarians

Are libraries setting goals and priorities to ensure that they are relevant to Asian migrant groups of varying cultural, social, linguistic and educational backgrounds? Is a pool of Asian librarians being enabled to learn the skills required for positions of responsibility so that appropriate decisions about specialised services are made. Asian librarians will bring valuable insight into the organisation and ownership rights of different communities' heritage, and can interpret requests and results to build cross-cultural understanding and serve specific needs. Investment in the different models of creation, access to and use of knowledge are critical to culturally relevant finding aids. It is difficult to find Asian trained librarians who would bring outside knowledge and experience, nor is it common for someone to work well across several Asian languages. In scanning the Asian librarian pool in New Zealand at present there is a critical shortage of Korean, Japanese and Southeast Asian specialists, while many Chinese migrants with local qualifications are competing for library positions.

Asian information landscapes

For those interested in the information landscapes of East and Southeast Asian countries I offer this overview from reading and valuable discussions with many

the economic and social leader in the region. Malaysia, Indonesia, Vietnam, the Philippines and Thailand are striving to build telecommunication infrastructures and services for their youthful populations, but they are hampered by scarce resources, the regulatory climate and the development of interfaces and resources in the vernacular languages. Cambodia and Laos are struggling with poor literacy rates, the destruction of infrastructure during communist revolutions and their national libraries are still in a lamentable state. Publishing is dominated by the public sector and NGOs, particularly from the Philippines in the English language by university and institutional presses because of the Manila base for internationally-funded development agencies serving the larger region. Thailand and Vietnam have a market for domestic publishers and also for locally translated foreign books which has raised concerns about the scarcity of skills and for the quality of the product. There is little book trade across Southeast Asia because people are not really interested in one another's literature, history, arts and ideas. The Institute of Southeast Asian Studies in Singapore focuses on issues of stability and security, economic development and political and social change, and has a publications unit at its centre in Singapore. The Australian National University's Asia Pacific Press is a specialist publisher on economics, development, governance and management in the Asia Pacific region. The Asian Studies WWW Virtual Library produced by the Internet Publications Bureau, Research School of Pacific and Asian, also at ANU is the most comprehensive online research tool.

Australian RMIT aggregates digital information in English about Southeast Asia from a number of indexing databases on their Informit platform, some of which can also be freely accessed from the original creators. Included are bibliographic databases produced by the Australian APEC Study Centre, Ohio University Library's index of articles on Southeast Asian countries, and the National University of Singapore Library's bibliographic databases relating to Singapore, Malaysia, Brunei and ASEAN. The coverage includes education, business, law, science and technology, politics, government, economy, demography, trade and investment data, human resource development, energy, telecommunications, conservation, fisheries, transportation, and tourism. The online Bibliography of Asian Studies is the most authoritative tool for identifying sources in Asian humanities and social science. For less well resourced libraries Asia-Studies Full-text Online is an aggregated collection of academic and research full-text reports covering business, government, economic, and social issues. In East Asia business is a major arena of government interest and policy so it would be wise not to neglect relevant information sources. China Infobank from Beijing aggregates fifteen databases of information on economic news, business law, statistics, media information, China and Hong Kong public companies, industry products, and government organizations and has an English language section. Japan market watchers can access business intelligence via Nikkei Premium, the English-language version of Nikkei Telecom 21, Japan's largest database service.

As for electronic resources in Asian languages, Chinese vendors recently burst on the scene offering a suite of aggregated full-text journal and e-book databases

with advanced search functionalities at a single interface. Chinese Academic Journals on the CNKI platform (Chinese Knowledge National Information) from Qinghua (Tsinghua) Tongfang, or East View Information Services in North America, has a base 7,500 Chinese language periodicals and additional database packages of newspapers, archives and reference tools. WangFang data has fewer titles with the greatest number in science and technology, as is the case with Chinese Scientific Journals Full-Text Database. Of political interest is the People's Daily Online, the electronic version of the principle organ of the Communist Party and one of the largest newspapers in the world available by subscription in simplified and traditional Chinese, and partly translated into English. Issues over copyright, price algorithms, contractual obligations and service have made us cautious with what we subscribe to or buy. The connection between New Zealand and China can be overloaded at prime time and using mirrors sites with an English interface from the U.S.A or Australia is more reliable. A growing number of e-book publishers have come onto the scene. Superstar blazed a trail and then collapsed due to copyright irregularities only to rise again as Datastar. Until December 2007 Apabi, a spin-off from Beijing University offered books in a Netlibrary style regime, and promoted its reference and newspaper databases from the same interface, before collapsing.

Japan funds high-speed network innovation via the National Institute of Informatics to offer access to Japanese scientific research on various platforms, while the National Diet Library maintains the free and only comprehensive bibliographic online journal index. This has been repackaged in MagazinePlus to include additional indexing of popular magazines in a subscription database from Nichigai. Of the three main national dailies the Asahi Shinbun offers the best full-text database. Commercial vendors of e-book and newspaper databases are parsimonious with their licence agreements and are being tackled by American libraries to offer better consortium deals and improved interfaces and functionalities for a different overseas market. The massive online entertainment industry continues to surge. With more than 50 million Japanese subscribing to content services on their hand-held devices to fill commuting hours, mobile-phone sales of e-books, particularly manga, increased more than three-fold in 2006 compared to much smaller Internet e-book sales (Anime News Network). Where Japan delivers on free digital information is in the rich world of manuscripts and books. Every museum and library is scanning and indexing archives to high standards on the open web.

The South Korean phone e-book market was expected to follow an equivalent exponential expansion last year. Many private companies offer full-text databases by subscription. Korean Information Service System (KISS) provides the greatest proportion of journal titles, and along with Nuri Media's DBpia covers almost all serials published by research institutions. KISS, like Chinese databases include the option of individual fee-based access using pre-paid cards. Much classical literature and historical annals is available on the National Institute of Korean History website, as is access to the archive database of the major newspaper *Donga ilbo*. Major American librarians recently organised a

Asian-specialists. I am conscious of my oversimplification of national characteristics and conditions and hope this encourages further questions. I have limited professional experience with the South Asian sub-continent. There is a free and well established press in India and a booming ITC industry spurring interest in digital libraries, but numbers of people with internet access as a percentage of the total population is less than half of that in China. Despite a growing middle-class acquiring tertiary education in well endowed institutions half the population is illiterate because negligible public funding. Internationally recognised Indian research is still relatively minor and the National Library of India does not have an online catalogue, and nor does Bangladesh which has had its own National Library since 1973. The National Library of Sri Lanka established in 1990 has a stock of 250,000 books and the National Library of Pakistan, inaugurated in 1993, has a collection of 130,000 volumes.

The People's Republic of China has about 160 million internet users comprising only 12.3 per cent of the total population so the potential of connectivity is just beginning. The government has extensive and elaborate mechanisms of internet censorship and blocks access web sites related to Taiwanese and Tibetan independence, Falun Gong, the Dalai Lama, the Tiananmen Square incident, opposition political parties, or a variety of anti-Communist movements will frequently find themselves blocked. (OpenNet Initiative, 2005) . However the associated support groups and campaigners make skilful use of the internet to maintain pressure on the Chinese government, to distribute information and to effectively build international support. The communist state created three separate co-operative library sectors, public, academic and science and technology, at the national, regional and municipal levels. From the 1970's library automation and later networking without a ITC commercial sector demanded sophisticated programming skills from librarians and the service orientation of the profession is still in the early stages.

The publishing industry is booming and in 2005, 222,473 titles were published around China, an increase of 6.8% compared to the previous year (China Book International). In absolute terms of value, it is the fourth largest market in the world and only in its early stages of growth (Richardson, 2005). Despite the pirated and forged research material, and pulp non-fiction abetted by misleading marketing, it has gone from a famine to a feast within a decade for librarians buying Chinese language material. In 2004 the State Department established the Chinese Publishing Group Co. to bring some order and credibility to the industry. The market is easing and diversifying for overseas buyers, but those controversial titles, often marked for limited distribution or internal research, printed in small runs and then confiscated, are the most difficult and valuable to acquire from overseas. A free market has improved the quality of paper, binding and design and vendor communication and delivery. Developing a Chinese language collection today demands skill, knowledge and determination.

Although Japan aspires have the first nation-wide fibre optic network it has an internet usage rate below South Korea and Hong Kong, which are all less than

the rate in New Zealand. A recent move by the Japanese government to review open access to internet content targeting activity in the blogosphere and online forums, has raised valid public fear for the freedom of information and expression. (Salzberg, 2007) The world's most active online community are overturning the traditional vertical flow and centralised control of information in Japan. The National Institute of Informatics (NII) manages the union catalogue using its own MARC record as distinct from the National Diet (Parliamentary) Library's (NDL) standard where authority work is done. NDL manages preservation and bibliographic access to much of Japan's literary heritage while the NII concentrates on access to science and engineering information. Librarianship struggles for professional recognition - university librarians are limited-term academic posts, staff are considered administrators and public librarians are rotated from a pool of city government employees. There is a huge open and regulated publishing industry and the large distributors such as Kinokuniya and the Japan Publications Trading Company have a long history of selling to overseas libraries. The second-hand book market is an excellent source and any library establishing a Japanese collection would do well to locate cheaper items there.

South Korea has highest rate of broadband penetration in Asia which reflects the rapid rise of this half of the divided peninsula nation. After the Korean War and the transformation into a modern centralised state a new library service supported the Korean authoritarian regime's focus on reconstruction through technology and science. South Korea's subsequent democratisation resulted in more public spending on libraries, and investment in digital technology is spurring improvements to content and delivery. The small size of the country means Seoul is not only home to the National Library of Korea and the National Assembly Library, but libraries of several major universities and other special libraries. Book prices are standardised and titles are selected from Aladdin or Kyobo Mungo websites, deal directly with Pamun for serial subscriptions, but rely on a Korean book vendor in Auckland to manage details of ordering, freighting and payment. Like South Korea, Taiwan donates generously to counter the hegemony of mainland China and we collect Taiwanese material to provide an alternative view from across the strait. The Republic of China has created databases now available from OCLC but classical Chinese literature and annals. A vendor in Beijing supplying major western libraries with North Korean titles has been recently established.

All Southeast Asian governments defend web surveillance and regulation in the name of national security, but the internet is also the safest and most public sphere for civil society to voice opinion. Singapore, with the benefit of English language competency, and an innovative library service, is considered

All Southeast Asian governments defend web surveillance and regulation in the name of national security, but the internet is also the safest and most public sphere for civil society to voice opinion.

consortium to bargain for prices relative to anticipated usage and appropriate licence agreements from Korean vendors who are still unfamiliar with the place of Asian libraries and Korean studies in universities abroad. There is no nation-wide internet in North Korea, since it is illegal, and no infrastructure even exists to host it.

Seriously Asian collection management

Bibliographic management of Asian resources is a subject of much debate. Visionaries expect progress from today's inefficient search and retrieval to user-selected preferences for language and script, and shared international authority files. Since the arrival of Unicode, the universal encoding standard for all the characters used in writing the world's languages, and input method editors (IMEs), there is the technological ability to process search queries in the vernacular scripts but most western library systems have not incorporated this functionality. Catalogue records for Asian materials are created according to North American standards using MARC 21 Model A, developed in the early 1980's for multiscript records. Main entry fields are transliterated into Latin script and linked to equivalent 880 fields in the original vernacular script. This allows libraries to display the multiscript records where possible, or if not, a full Romanised record is available. Romanisation, the transliteration of pronunciation of the written text into Latin script, is however an inexact science.

Chinese characters represent monosyllabic morphemes, not words, and many share the same pronunciation. Moreover Asian scripts do not have cues as to where a word starts or ends. The modern western transliteration system for Chinese, pinyin, separates words into meaningful linguistic units, but because standards for aggregating these syllables are not clear, distinct monosyllables are used by western bibliographic utilities.

Library of Congress bibliographic rules prescribe plain pinyin without tonal diacritics, rather than Hanyu pinyin which has markers indicating each of the four distinct tones used in standard Modern Chinese. This combination of high homonymy, non-intuitive conventions for spacing and non-tonal Romanisation of Chinese script make western bibliographic records for Chinese resources problematic for both cataloguers and catalogue users.

A 2002 study by a leading Canadian researcher found that one-third of the participants claiming to be knowledgeable with pinyin struggled with simple retrieval tasks using pinyin and "that for around half of all queries issued the participants were unsuccessful". (Arsenault, 2005)

Standards for Romanisation based on phonetic structure and an approximation of Latin word division have also been created for Japanese and Korean. The Library of Congress has had to resolve many cases where the rule is not clear or even conflicting by applying cumbersome markers. Hepburn Romanisation for Japanese is increasingly familiar to patrons and Romanised Korean follows the McCune-Reischauer system. However the diacritical conventions often impact

on display at times of local system upgrades, and are neither familiar to our patrons nor able to be entered into search fields. Standards are core to bibliographic control but East Asian librarians must use sets of standards which are a compromise between accuracy and practicality. Fortunately western libraries with Asian language collections will benefit from producers of integrated library systems targeting the expanding Asian market.

At the University of Auckland library records are being enriched with table of contents in the vernacular script in preparation for improved free-text retrieval of East Asian terms. The Asian languages collection conforms to internal standards and indexes by Library of Congress subject headings with their strong western bias unrelated to Asian intellectual and cultural world views. Name authority work also presents difficulties. Librarians are creating name authority files in multiscripts and multilingual Romanisations, but another option would be to have linked parallel authority files. Libraries with Asian collections are looking to Hong Kong's leadership in co-operative authority work with mainland China and Taiwan, and related projects across East Asia. And the Library of Congress also has plans for providing global authority files. There are still major obstacles to sharing resources across national bibliographic utilities within Asia where there are few standards and different rules

This heritage of written characters and syllabary in East Asia reflects the history of ideologies about knowledge and literacy. The Chinese Government's revision of their character set to spread the new political philosophy stands in opposition to Taiwan's maintenance of traditional characters. Writing entered Japan and Korea from China but local syllabary that accounted for actual pronunciation were also developed to promote literacy outside the court and amongst women. Hangul, a phonetic script anatomically representing the speech sounds, was created by Korean King Sejong in the mid-fifteenth century for documents in the public domain, but Chinese characters continued to be used for their greater precision and status.

Today South Koreans only use Chinese characters in newspaper headlines and for some book titles and authors. However nationalistic North Korea proscribes any such usage. Japan allowed multiple readings of the same Chinese character, and then created hiragana and katakana from Chinese calligraphy for grammatical functions. Consequently complexities of input, display and indexing of characters are a challenge for all libraries with Asian language material.

Conclusion

Asia is a hybrid entity with diverse and pluralistic values bridging ancient traditions and rapid modernisation. Culturally rich and dynamic, it is home to many of our migrants, to the biggest Muslim and Buddhist populations, to the largest democracy and to some of the most closed regimes. In much of the region there are growing economic, education and health divides. New Zealand is benefiting from established and burgeoning growth in some parts of Asia and contributing aid to stalled development in other areas.

The Seriously Asia project and its successors insist on the vital importance of expanding and deepening New Zealander's knowledge of Asia but libraries are conspicuously absent from this vision. The library community must discuss its responsibilities for this national project and design services and resources that deal with knowledge creation, ownership, and management, intellectual freedom and information access, in Asia, and for Asians in New Zealand.

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The Complementarity of Tags and LCSH - A Tagging Experiment and Investigation into Added Value in a New Zealand Library Context

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Abstract

This study investigated the complementarity of user-assigned tags and Library of Congress Subject Headings (LCSH) assigned by cataloguers in a New Zealand library context. In order to identify the added value of tags in a library catalogue, the study experiment asked 20 adult New Zealanders to tag between 9 and 15 books from the general collection of the National Library of New Zealand. A total of 897 tags were allocated to 217 books. Seventy five percent of the tags did not match any LCSH, which indicates a high level of tag complementarity. The experiment also showed that the majority of the non-matching tags were either of a more popular language (21.63%) or indicated a different point of view through a related term (19.29%). Different levels of specificity were also common: 14.16% of the tags were broader terms, and 19.62% were narrower in scope than the LCSH. The results did not show significant added value in regards to New Zealand English vocabulary, or concerning currency of the terms.

The study also identified indications of collaborative value. Tags that had been allocated to books about similar topics were grouped together to form tag-clouds. The average number of allocated tags within each tag-cloud was 24.4 tags, and an average of 2.9 of these tags, or 11.9%, were shared by two or more people. However, the vast majority of the shared tags were only shared by two people, while a higher degree of collaboration was relatively rare.

Introduction

It is not a new observation amongst librarians that Library of Congress Subject Headings (LCSH) is a ‘controlled vocabulary’ that does not always suit New Zealand library users. This problem can be solved by adding New Zealand equivalent terms as cross-references, so that when searching for “pigs” one is prompted to use “swine”. However, there are not always cross-references available, so it is suggested here that libraries let catalogue users assign their own keywords, or tags, as a complement to controlled vocabularies. Theoretically,

user-assigned tags could provide additional access points, and the co-existence of tags and controlled vocabularies, such as LCSH, could thus enhance the discovery of documents in a library catalogue. Tagging could add value in the specificity, currency, popularity (sociolect) and the geographic (dialect) character of the tags compared to LCSH. The collaborative nature of tagging also presents a value in the diversity of tags and the possibilities of sharing information.

Sadeh (2007) discusses Web 2.0 issues facing libraries, and emphasises that today's information seekers are different from yesterday's, and that libraries must "look for ways to adapt to a changing world and keep their services relevant" (p. 307), also underlining that today's "users base their expectations for IR [information retrieval] searching (that is searching for library materials) on Internet IR" (p. 311).

Literature review

Some studies have compared users' search terms with controlled vocabularies. Nowick & Mering (2003) found a discrepancy between users' terms and three controlled vocabularies, one of which was LCSH. In fact, only 30–40% of the queries in their study had an exact LCSH match. In this case, the context of the research was in a specialised area, "Water quality," and LCSH was not specific enough. Spelling variations and LCSH can often be an issue as it is a controlled vocabulary based on American English. In this study 5-10% of the queries involved a variation in spelling, so the authors concluded that it would be helpful to use "free text" keywords, i.e. "natural language," in addition to controlled vocabularies. Plummer (2006), similarly in a specialised area, compared common vocabulary used by mathematics educators to the ERIC thesaurus and LCSH. By extracting terms from standard mathematic documentation and comparing them to the controlled vocabularies, she found that 4 LCSH out of 10 matched, 4.5 were close, and 1.5 terms had no LCSH equivalent. Plummer concluded that LCSH needs to be more compatible with standard mathematics terminology.

Trant (2006) discusses the findings of a trial of collaborative tagging in a museum context, and the findings suggest that tags can bridge the gap, that is to say, the "semantic gap between the professional, curatorial language of art history and the public perceptions of its visual evidence" (p. 3). Chan (2007, p. 4) seems to agree, and suggests that controlled vocabularies would complement keyword searching: "Controlled vocabulary thus serves as the bridge between the searcher's language and the author's language." Matusiak (2006, p. 293) compares the assigned controlled vocabulary on a digital image database created at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, to user-assigned tags on Flickr for similar photos. She concludes that the images indexed using a controlled vocabulary have: "not only more detailed description, but also indicates the relationship between terms," while the tags differ from the controlled vocabulary terms not only in depth, but also concerning "users' perspectives as the focus on different aspects" (Matusiak, 2006, p. 294).

With every new technological innovation, the possibility for user contributions increases (Fox, 2006). While he claims that controlled vocabularies are useful in some instances, services should also be developing for users to organise information using their own words and point of view. Fox contends that “we must also create services that allow patrons to organize information according to their own cognitive models [...] enable patrons to catalog, organize and syndicate lists of resources using vocabulary terms that they devise according to specialized needs” (p. 169). These access points created from a special needs point of view will assist other users with the same or similar needs, e.g. they will “appeal to like minded users and within communities” (p. 168). Fox is thus illustrating the fact that the way in which an item is catalogued or tagged, or both, can vary in different communities, which may of course be defined by a common interest, but also, if interpreted literally, by geographic location.

Macgregor & McCulloch (2006) underline difficulties with tags, such as low precision and lack of collocation, and therefore predict the co-existence of controlled vocabularies and user-assigned tags. Also Etches-Johnson (2006, p. 58) suggests that controlled vocabularies and folksonomies “co-exist harmoniously”, due to the lack of “see” references in the controlled vocabularies.

When comparing natural language with subject descriptors (controlled vocabulary), Vorbij (1998), on the other hand, justified the presence of controlled vocabulary by illustrating that subject descriptors (controlled vocabulary) enhance access, with a relative recall of 86%, compared to 48% for title keywords.

Study design

Introduction

This was a quantitative study. It consisted of an experiment, the presentation of the results of the experiment in the form of statistics and frequency tables, and a discussion that takes previous research and the body of literature into consideration. The discussion attempts to interpret the experiment results in order to achieve the study objective.

Methodology

It is important to emphasize that this study is referred to as an “experiment”, while the methodology may not entirely fit this description of “experimental research”. However, there is a comparative component between LCSH (control group) and user allocated tags (experimental group), but due to a lack of randomness, the relatively small sample size, and the risk of subjectivity in the coding of tags, the study could be better described as having the methodology of a “quasi-experiment”.

Data collection, delimitation, and sample

A total of 20 people were approached to tag a total of 217 documents. Each participant assigned tags to between 9 and 15 documents. Each document

consisted of a photocopy of the cover or the title page, a contents page, and an abstract or summary of a book. Because of the delimitation of the study, the document selection criteria was based on three points in order to test the “No match” sub-categories of complementary value, particularly those categories indicating a New Zealand vocabulary and the currency of the term (outlined below). The criteria were as follows:

- New Zealand content
- General subject matter
- Include some topics that are inclined to change or rapidly evolve

Volunteers were not required to be competent in a specific area as the scope of the documents was fairly general and concerned New Zealand topics (with the exception of some documents relating to currency, the last bullet point above), therefore rendering the selection of volunteers easier, the sole criteria being age and nationality, that is to say, adults living in New Zealand. All the documents were selected from the National Library’s general collection.

Term comparison and coding of tags

Once the documents were returned by the participants with assigned tags, they were compared to the catalogue records’ existing LCSH. The study was using a “nominal level of measurement” when coding the user-assigned tag. The coded categories were named as follows:

- **A. Match**
- **B. Partial match**
 - ◇ Cross-reference (CR)
 - ◇ Spelling variation (SV)
 - ◇ Tag appears in subdivision (SD)
- **C. No match**
 - ◇ Specificity:
 - Broader term (BT)
 - Narrower term (NT)
 - ◇ Related term or different point of view (RT)
 - ◇ Geographic differences in vocabulary:
 - American vs NZ vocabulary (NZV)
 - ◇ Currency of term (CoT)
 - ◇ Social differences in vocabulary
 - Popular language (PL)

Tags that fell into group A were not complementary to the LCSH heading, and tags that fell into group B and C added value. The higher the percentage of B and

C tags, the less relevant the LCSH was, and the more complementary the tags were. Clearly, The LCSH tags differed from participant's ways of describing the content of the book.

The group C sub-categories gave an indication of why the tags were adding value and what kind of value they were adding. These categories were based on what some of the literature suggests are reasons why user-assigned additional keywords (tags) enhance findability and retrieval of documents. The NZV and PL sub-categories, for example, provided a bridge in a vocabulary gap due to geographical or social differences respectively, that is, New Zealand versus American vocabulary, and professional versus public view. The NT sub-category reflected specificity, and the CoT sub-category added value to documents on rapidly changing subjects by providing a more current term.

Group B sub-category definitions

In order to divide the tags into the different sub-categories, certain criteria were assigned to each sub-category. Group B sub-categories' criteria were as follows:

B1 (CR): The user-assigned tag is cross-referenced in one of the cataloguer-assigned LCSH.

B2 (SV): The tag has a non-geographic spelling variation compared to the main LCSH, such as plural, genitive and so on, which is not cross-referenced.

B3 (SD): The tag appears as part of the main LCSH, in a subdivision, or is inverted compared to the LCSH term.

Group C sub-category definitions

Group C sub-categories were given the following criteria:

Specificity

C1 (BT): The user-assigned tag is a broader term, authorised or not, and does not appear in the cataloguer-assigned LCSH cross reference. This category also includes tags that are combination of broader subject and form.

C2 (NT): The user-assigned tag is a narrower term, authorised or not, and is not included in the cataloguer-assigned LCSH cross reference. This category also includes tags that are a combination of narrower subject and form.

Related term or different point of view

C3 (RT): The user-assigned tag is a related term (and not considered popular language) that is not included in the cataloguer-assigned LCSH cross reference. These terms may express a different point of view, and include tags relating only to form by itself.

Geographic differences in vocabulary

C4 (NZV): The tags are the New Zealand or British equivalents to cataloguer-assigned LCSH, spelling variation or difference in vocabulary, and are not included as LCSH cross references.

Currency of term

C5 (CoT): The user-assigned tag is more current than LCSH.

Social differences in vocabulary or expression

C6 (PL): The tag is a more popular, or less formal equivalent of cataloguer-assigned LCSH (which may be BT or NT), including informal acronyms and shortenings, phrasal constructions (containing none of the cataloguer-assigned LCSH), and combination of terms in an unconventional way.

Collaborative value

In order to test whether any collaborative value was added, documents about similar topics were coded and grouped together into 15 groups. Tags from each group were compiled into frequency tables. Due to the relatively small sample, each document would not have enough tags to create frequency tables of their own, thus the grouping of similar topics. The more terms assigned with a relatively high frequency indicated collaborative value. In other words, the more people used the same tags, the greater the indication of collaborative value.

Limitations of study

The small sample size limits the possibility of transferability and generalisation, though the results give an indication of a phenomenon that could be investigated further in a larger study. Other research could likewise study different demographic groups, something this study does not do. One logistical limitation of the study design is the fact that the volunteers were not viewing the entire document, but were rather analysing the contents as far as possible with the information provided, and assigning tags based on the title page, contents page and summary.

There was a certain degree of subjectivity involved regarding two areas of the study: document selection and the division of tags into groups and categories. The document selection, as well as the size of the document corpus, may have affected how some group C (no match) sub-categories were tested. The division of tags into groups and categories was not always clear in that many tags could qualify for more than one group or category.

Regarding collaborative value, the small sample size that led to the grouping of documents on similar topics into groups in order to increase the number of tags in each topic, presented two limitations: the sample size itself and the fact that the tags did not relate to exactly the same documents. Because of this it was stated that it only represented an indication of collaborative value.

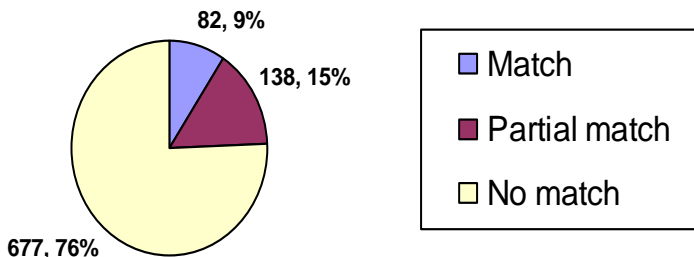
Results

Match, partial match, or no match

The distribution of tags into the three main groups A (match), B (partial match), and C (no match) showed that the vast majority of tags qualified for group C. This broad division of the tags gave an overall indication of both the degree of complementarity of the tags, and how closely following LCSH was in this context.

Eighty two tags of a total of 897, or 9.14%, were an exact match, that is, the tags were exactly the same as the LCSH. 138 tags, or 15.39%, were either cross referenced, inverted, part of LCSH, or had a minor non-geographic spelling variation. 677 tags, or 75.47% did not match, and differed according to the group C sub-categories criteria explained in detail later. Figure 1 shows a summary of these results. The division of group B, partial match, into sub-categories is then accounted for below.

Figure 1 A visual representation of Table 1 in the form of a pie chart, showing the clear majority of group C non-matching tags.



Partial match

In order to identify the way in which the user-assigned tags added value, and to what degree LCSH was accurate, sub categories of group B and C were constructed. The result of group B sub-categories showed that the majority of the tags in this group were found as part of LCSH. 79 of the 138 tags in group B belonged to this category, which constitutes 8.81% of all tags. 43 tags, or 4.8% of all tags, in this group were cross-references, and only 16 tags, or an overall 1.78%, had a minor non-geographic spelling variation. Figure 2 below presents a summary of the group B sub-division results.

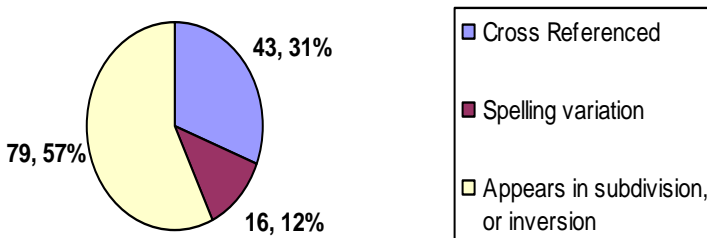


Figure 2 A visual representation of group B sub-categories showing the division of the partial match sub-categories.

No match

A total of 677 tags, or 75.47% of all tags, did not match LCSH and qualified for Group C. There was an equal spread of the tags amongst four of the sub-categories in this group. The biggest sub-category in the group was C6 (popular language), which had 194 tags, or 21.63% of all tags. This category was closely followed by C2 (narrower term), with 176 tags, or 19.62% of all tags. The third largest sub-category, C3 (related term), included 173 tags, or 19.29% of all tags, and the fourth category was C1 (broader term) with 127 tags, constituting an overall 14.61% of all tags. Only five tags, or 0.55% of all tags met the criteria of category C4 (New Zealand vocabulary), and only two instances of category C5 (0.22%), indicating a more current term, were found. Figure 3 below gives an overview of the results in regards to group C.

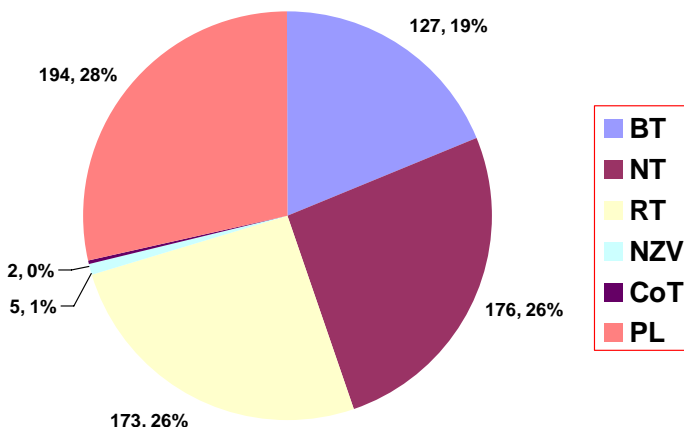


Figure 3 A visual representation of group C sub-categories. The pie chart shows broader terms (BT), narrower terms (NT), related terms or a different point of view (RT), Geographic differences in vocabulary (NZV), and Social differences in vocabulary or expression (PL). Very few tags indicating a more current language (CoT) were found.

Summary of results

To summarise the results of the study, Table 4 below lists the frequency and percentage of all groups and sub-categories measured. A high majority of non-matching group C tags were found, and within that particular group there was a relatively equal spread of tags between broader, narrower, related, and popular terms. Very few instances of geographic variation, and the currency of term categories were found.

Table 1 Overall frequency distribution

| <i>Tag category</i> | <i>Frequency</i> | <i>%</i> |
|--|------------------|----------|
| A.Match | 82 | 9.14% |
| B.Partial match | 138 | 15.39% |
| Partial match sub-categories | | |
| B 1 CR | 43 | 4.8% |
| B 2 SV | 16 | 1.78% |
| B 3 SD | 79 | 8.81% |
| C. No match | 677 | 75.47% |
| No match sub-categories indicating a complementary value | | |
| C 1 BT | 127 | 14.61% |
| C 2 NT | 176 | 19.62% |
| C3 RT | 73 | 19.29% |
| C 4 NZV | 5 | 0.55% |
| C 5 CoT | 2 | 0.22% |
| C 6 PL | 194 | 21.63% |

An overview of the frequency distribution of all groups and categories.

Indication of collaborative value

The average number of tags allocated to each of the 15 different subject groups, or the average amount of tags per tag-cloud, were 24.4. The average number of tags per tag-cloud that were used by more than one person was 2.9, or 11.9%. The overall collaborative average was 43.5 of the 366 tags, or 11.8% of all tags in the 15 tag-clouds. Table five below illustrates in more detail how the sharing of tags was distributed:

Table 5 Frequency distribution of the degree of collaboration

| Degree | Frequency |
|--------|-----------|
| 2 | 30 |
| 3 | 4 |
| 4 | 2 |
| 5 | 4 |
| 6 | 0 |
| 7 | 2 |
| 8 | 1 |

The most common occurrence was the appearance of the same tag twice within a tag-cloud. There were 30 instances. The highest degree of collaboration was eight people using the same tag, with only one instance of this.

In between the two extremes of complementarity, the same tag was shared by three people four times, and five people also used the same tag on four occasions. Only two cases of four and seven people sharing tags were identified.

Discussion

The overall vast majority of group C (75.47%) seems to suggest that user-assigned tags do complement LCSH. 677 of a total of 897 user-assigned tags did not match. This result supports the fact that Trant's (2006) claim, that is, tagging of images can bridge the gap between a professional language and that of the users, could also apply to documents in a library collection. This result also "concur[s] with the general unity of previous research, that natural language aids document retrieval, in that tags as natural language provide additional access points which include a variety of perspectives in addition to that of the controlled vocabulary. The low percentage of terms (9.14%) matching LCSH (Group A) indicates a high level of variation between users' tag assignment and catalogue-assigned LCSH, and consequently a relatively low match with LCSH in this context. Matusiak's (2006) study confirms this type of variation, and found differences in depth and perspective. Both Plummer (2006) and Nowick & Mering (2006) had a relatively high matching percentage, 40% and 30-40%, compared to the 9.14% in this experiment.

Fifteen percent of the tags were either cross-referenced, had a minor non-geographic spelling variation, appeared as part of LCSH, or were inverted. Although these tags did not match LCSH exactly, they would still be searchable by keyword, or lead the searcher to the right terms to use via cross-references, but they add little value. Tags with minor spelling variations add value in that, unless they are truncated in a search formulation, these terms can result in no-hit searches.

Figure 2 above shows that of the 15.39% partial match tags, only 4.8% of all the user-assigned tags were cross-referenced. A cross-reference suggests another search term to the user, and is a way of controlling synonyms, homonyms and related terms. This result confirms that only a low percentage of terms are generally cross-referenced, and it therefore indicates that user-assigned tags add value to catalogue records in this regard. Bates' (2003, p.2) findings support this result: "traditional cross-references seldom equal the number of search terms nor their informality or range".

Nowick & Mering's (2006) study found that 5-10% of the terms included a spelling variation. This study's overall 1.78% appears to be relatively low, but Nowick & Mering included geographical differences in spelling, that is, British versus American English, while this study only included differences such as plural and genitive forms of the terms. Despite the low percentage, these tags still add value.

Nearly nine percent of all the user-assigned tags appeared as part of LCSH, or were inverted. This means that they add little or no value, since the terms would

have been covered by LCSH in a keyword search. However, they do indicate a difference in structure of the terms.

If Table 1 above, which illustrates the distribution of the main groups, confirms the question as to whether tags add value or not, it is the sub-categories of group C (no match) that provide answers to the second part of the question posed in the problem statement: how will tags add value, or in what way are they complementary to LCSH? Each sub-category indicates different kinds of added value. The most prominent sub-categories were: popular language (PL), narrower term (NT), related term (RT), and broader term (BT). Twenty two percent of all tags were of a more popular language than the LCSH equivalent. These tags add value in that they bridge the gap between a more formal language used by the cataloguers (LCSH), and the users' own language. Trant (2006) found a similar result in the tagging of images in a museum context, and the majority of the literature claims, likewise, that natural language aid retrieval. Also Chan (2000) believes that there is a difference between the searcher's language and the author's language, and that controlled vocabularies and natural language (tags) would complement each other. The relatively high percentage of related terms (RT) in this study (19.29%) suggests that tags add value in the contribution of a different point of view, which confirms Matusiak's (2006) claims that user-contributed tags reflect different perspectives compared to controlled vocabularies.

Apart from a more popular language and related terms, specificity in the tags was equally prominent. Out of all the tags, 14.61% were broader terms, and 19.62% of the tags constituted narrower terms, which also illustrates that the users' points of view can differ in comparison to controlled vocabularies. Nowick & Mering (2003) found in a similar manner that LCSH lacked specificity. The most interesting, and somewhat surprising, result was the low percentage of the two categories indicating currency (CoT) and geographic differences in vocabulary (NZV). Only five tags of 897 (0.55%) met the criteria for the sub-category indicating a geographic difference in vocabulary. This suggests that LCSH was efficient in providing terms that were current enough in the context of this study, and that most of the New Zealand-specific vocabulary had cross-references; hence according to this result there is subsequently no added value in this regard. Gordon-Murnane (2006) lists currency as one of the advantages of tags, but this study found very few instances of tags in this category. Only two tags (0.22%) were more current terms than their LCSH counterparts. It is possible that the sample is too small to test this, and that the document selection might also have influenced this outcome.

The overall majority of non-matching tags also demonstrate a general need for libraries to develop more systems based more on user-interaction

The overall majority of non-matching tags also demonstrate a general need for libraries to develop more systems based more on user-interaction, something that

is already happening more and more outside the library sector as technology evolves. Fox (2006) agrees with this need for libraries to adopt these technologies, in particular with regard to empowering users to organise information using their own language. Mann (2006, 2007) is an active defender of controlled vocabularies, his point being that researchers rely on the browsing possibilities, and on the collocation of similar material. In other words, while folksonomies are inclusive when it comes to terms and different perspectives, a keyword search relying only on, for example, tags, is without a doubt excluding items due to the lack of precision and cross-references or including items due to a lack of precision. This means that tags have an inherent lack of precision, but are more inclusive in perspective than controlled vocabularies. These are all valid points, yet it does not mean that tags have to be entirely disregarded, but rather that they could perhaps “co-exist harmoniously” (Etches-Johnson, 2006), and that the users could benefit from both systems, especially since most libraries will always deal with both print-, and web-based resources. Weinberger (2007a), claims that tagging and folksonomies allow people to create a “new infrastructure of meaning”, referring to the different aspects of a document in which people could be interested, again highlighting the issue of perspective, inclusiveness, or point of view, with regard to a certain piece of information, which was proven to be true in this study in the overall 19.29% of related terms. But the question of precision still stands, and there clearly seem to be advantages to both systems. Calhoun (2006, p. 32) states in her report that there was a general agreement that “there must be good accepted ways to rely on or reuse metadata from outside the library and having this metadata co-exist with manually created records”. Could tagging perhaps be one kind of *metadata from outside the library*?

Etches-Johnson (2006, p. 56) claims that “the real value of social bookmarking tools is in the tags themselves and the manner in which those tags build a community of expertise”. The key idea behind the collaborative aspect of tagging is that a user can see which resources other users have listed under the same tag, and can therefore increase his or her list of relevant resources, which may not have been otherwise found. Although this study found some indications of collaborative value, this was relatively minimal. The average of 2.9 shared tags per tag-cloud does however indicate collaborative possibilities. This means that there was collaboration to some extent in 11.9% of the tags in each subject. The fact that there was an average of 24.4 tags per cloud might overshadow this to some extent, and in addition to this, most of the collaboration was on a low-scale: Table 5 illustrates that the vast majority of collaboration consisted in two people sharing the same tag. However, what is not taken into account here are the minor spelling variations, such as plural and genitive, for example, iPod versus iPods, which again illustrates the weakness of folksonomies. Despite the relatively limited findings in regards to collaborative value, there is still some evidence indicating the possibility of the “forming of groups that create a local culture” (Weinberger 2007b, p. 131).

Summary, conclusion, and suggestions for further research

Summary

The frequency distribution of the three main groups A, B, C, and in particular the great majority of non-matching tags in group C (75.47%) and the low 9.14% of matching tags, confirms an overall indication that tags are complementary to LCSH. In general, tags add value in that they are more popular terms (21.63%), they reflect specificity through narrower terms (19.62%) or broader terms (14.61%), or they constitute a different point of view through a related term (19.29%). The indication of any collaborative value was present but minimal.

Conclusion

The majority of group C, non-matching tags, suggests that tagging would be complementary to LCSH, in that tags would provide additional points of access that are either in a more popular language, indicating a different perspective, or are more or less specific than LCSH. The fact that LCSH is a controlled vocabulary based on an American vocabulary is not an important factor in this context according to the results. Neither is the currency of the LCSH, which was current enough for most of the items in this study. In order to benefit from both the inclusiveness of tags and the precision of controlled vocabularies, this study agrees with the majority of suggestions about the co-existence of both vocabularies to ensure enhanced document retrieval, to build a bridge between the controlled, or professional language, and that of the users.

Suggestions for further research

Tagging being a relatively new way of organising Internet resources, and this study being demographically very general, it could have been interesting to compare the outcome of this study to similar studies delimited to different age groups. Kajewski (2007) highlights that today's younger generation is the more competent with Web 2.0 technology, and that they also represent the library users of the future, and the future of libraries will in part depend on how well libraries adapt these new technologies. It would therefore have been interesting, and it seems relevant, to delimit the study to people aged between 15 and 22, for example.

Similarly, a narrower study delimited to a specific subject and to specific users, perhaps within a specific organisation, could be more indicative of the collaborative values of tagging.

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Back and Beyond: New Zealand Painting for the Young and Curious

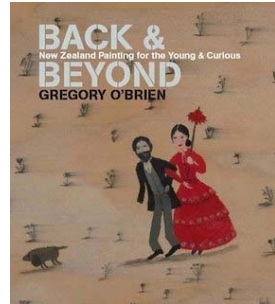
by Gregory O'Brien

Reviewed by Jane Wild

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Gregory O'Brien's sequel to 'Welcome to the South Seas' (2005) is a deceptively big book. The author mines his extensive knowledge of New Zealand art history and builds a resource, both quirky and insightful. Open the book to the end papers. The maps depicting the Shaky Islands (a riff developed in the introduction) include a book plate 'Welcome back to the South Seas' and a virtuoso performance by the author and artist. You might want to use this as your way in, possibly with a throw of the dice and some counters. Come back to it when you are closing the book and locate the artists you have been introduced to.

In the illustrated introduction you meet the author and his view of the Shaky Isles. Comments from the artists come in as well. Frances Hodgkins advises,

"As in mountaineering, so in art. There is only a very narrow edge of safety on which we can walk".

With O'Brien as our guide we can walk across New Zealand, "back and beyond", several hundred years in relative safety. O'Brien describes the process as "poozling and journeying". It allows for juxtapositions of contemporary and historic in an exhilarating tour.

The four chapters made me see the book as a gallery with four rooms all curated by Gregory O'Brien. As you read and observe his floor talk will play. The book format allows you to switch it off and navigate at will. Pausing in each room includes the following adventures:

In 'Way Back When', the first chapter there is a moa hunting opening which opposes 'Maori rock drawing' in South Canterbury in a version copied by Theo Schoon in 1946, with Harry Watson's woodcut of 'George', a farmer / saint riding a moa and spearing a taniwha (2004). The images are dense in art historical references and the accompanying text is conversational, mostly about moa sightings.

In 'Dreams and Discoveries' there is a painted saw by Tony De Lautour, 'Settling scores' (1995) facing the famous Charles Heaphy watercolour of the 'Kauri forest, Wairoa river' (1839). O'Brien's text / talk includes observations – see the jacket draped on the planks and questions. These questions are useful prompts for talking with the student audience.

'Citizens and Saints' includes the 'Self portrait: still life' by Frances Hodgkins (c1935) with a close observation of the elements she has included in the painting. This is developed further in the activities section of the book where you can think about the elements you might include in your own portrait.

The last chapter, 'No time like the Present' features 'A Shaky Island recipe' with a full page image of Marilyn Webb's 'Ngaruhoe Snow' (1982) as a pudding in eruption. The artist included the Aunt Daisy recipe of the same name in her exhibition and O'Brien provides it in full, alongside an accomplished study of the mountain by E. Mervyn Taylor (1953).

Teachers can lead their pupils through the thematic chapters to achieve a thorough and thoughtful discussion of New Zealand art. The Curious can move at random and enjoy the contrasts. The endpapers can be played as form of index. Librarians will be pleased to note the bibliographic references and gallery websites in 'Further information'. I recommend Back & Beyond for public, school and university library collections, in addition to presents for young and curious. O'Brien is an exceptional tour leader.

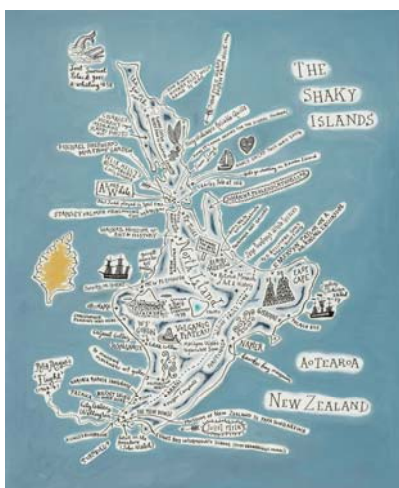
Back and beyond: New Zealand painting for the young and curious

Gregory O'Brien

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Endpapers for Back and Beyond c. Gregory O'Brien

The University of Google

by Tara Brabazon

Reviewed by Bruce White
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Tara Brabazon's vigorous polemic against the role of new learning technologies in tertiary education in *The University of Google* (Brabazon, 2007) will strike many chords with both librarians and teachers in our universities and polytechnics; students who believe that attendance at lectures is unnecessary and that Google has superseded research of the published literature, administrators and politicians who believe in the cost-saving potential of the technological silver bullet, as well as the difficulties experienced in extending the benefits of advanced education beyond the confines of the socially and economically privileged, these are all too familiar daily issues for many of us.

Brabazon's core argument is that the arrival of digital technologies, at a time of increasing student rolls, declining comparative funding and increasing pressure on universities to make themselves socially and economically relevant, has lead administrators to impose digital technology on the academic community in the name of flexible learning . This has been at the expense of traditional teaching and learning practices that gave students the guidance, encouragement and inspiration to develop into educated citizens and independent thinkers. Nowhere, argues Brabazon, were these values more in evidence than in the face-to-face lecture, and its downgrading and even disappearance are seen as a root cause of the decline of quality education in countries that have embraced the new computer-based paradigms.

The book is divided into three sections based around the themes of Literacy, Culture and Critique. Part One, *Literacy*, examines the erosion of information literacy that has resulted from over-reliance on Internet sources and the impact of the digital culture on students' approach to study and scholarship, as well as the potential for the new environment to exacerbate social inequalities in access to education and learning. Brabazon outlines her critique of flexible learning which she sees as offering a second-best and second-rate alternative to full-time face-to-face tuition. Part Two, *Culture*, develops these themes into a detailed critique of the effects of flexible learning on the educational environment with particular emphasis on the digitized lecture and the over-dependence of universities and students on virtual learning environments such as Blackboard and WebCT. Part Three, *Critique*, further extends these ideas into an examination of the



university's role in providing students with the ability to engage fully with the world through the development of critical literacy that enables them to see beyond the worldviews presented to them by politicians, the media and other opinion-shapers. The book ends with a consideration of the importance of critical literacy in the "post-9/11 world" and indeed its whole structure is underpinned by an awareness of social and political factors and their interaction with tertiary education.

There is undoubtedly a good book waiting to be written on these topics but unfortunately *The University of Google* is not it. Brabazon is a powerful advocate of information, cultural and critical literacy but her book falls short of exemplifying these values ; its consistent flaw is to *assume* the rightness of her argument rather than to *prove* it and to ignore the possibility of credible alternative positions. Almost any piece of evidence seems to count in favour of Brabazon's anti-digital thesis while the case against it scarcely seems to exist. Her critique of Google is a typical rather than an extreme example:

Brabazon is a powerful advocate of information, cultural and critical literacy but her book falls short of exemplifying these values...

"Google, and its naturalized mode of searching, encourages bad behaviour. When confronted by an open search engine, most of us will enact the ultimate of vain acts: inserting our own name into the blinking cursor. This process now has a name: *googling*. This is a self-absorbed action, rather than outward and reflexive process. It is not a search of the World Wide Web, but the construction of an individual Narrow Portal."

The clumsy segue that supports this negative characterisation of the search engine by the attribution of a universal moral failing in its users (via the highly questionable definition of a word) would be simply laughable had Brabazon not used the word *Google* in the title of her book and employed such headline-ready *soundbites* as "Google is white bread for the mind". The reader waits in vain for the killer punch, the clinching argument that Google has had a negative effect on students beyond what we already know; that there is a lot of silly stuff on the Internet that they need to be warned about if they don't know it already. In a book rich in anecdote Brabazon is well able to adduce examples of students with naïve and mistaken beliefs but it is perhaps here that the argument is at its weakest. If the main evidence that information literacy is in crisis is to be found in the jejune statements of the young then we need at the very least some indication that earlier generations possessed notably superior skills and understanding. This necessity does not seem to have occurred to Brabazon and instead in a rare excursion into the past (page 71) she is able to cite an example of gross information illiteracy from the 1970s that would seem to undermine her whole argument that the Internet has made things dramatically worse. There is very little, indeed nothing, in the form of hard comparative research to support this conclusion.

None of this would matter too much had Brabazon not taken a topic of some importance and subjected it to an unrelentingly one-sided treatment. In particular, flexible learning and distance education merited a considerably more nuanced treatment. Writing of podcasts (page 87) she states that “once more, a technological change in learning is justified through flexibility and convenience, so that it does not disrupt students’ ‘social obligations’.” The quotes around ‘social obligations’ say it all. Do these trivial ‘social obligations’ include not living in the city where your course is taught, work and family ties or any of a host of reasons that might preclude taking a face-to-face course? Modern society has a critical need for lifelong learning opportunities; distance education and flexible learning are serious undertakings by teachers and researchers who address the problems that Brabazon is content merely to identify. The heart-warming anecdote on page 88 about a disadvantaged student who attended lectures and wrote her honours dissertation on her family’s kitchen table could have been, but was not, balanced by any number of similar stories of distance students who did something much the same. Similarly, a central book about the use of new technologies in tertiary education, Diana Laurillard’s highly-regarded *Rethinking university teaching* (2002), is not mentioned by Brabazon despite dealing in considerable detail with the same issues.

Given that she finds it so wrong-headed the widespread adoption of digital innovation in tertiary education would not be easy for Brabazon to explain were it not for the existence of a conspiracy made up of all the people she dislikes, from the humble administrator who misdirected her photocopying up to Tony Blair and George W. Bush. Her targets are not hard to dislike – neoliberalism, managerialism, university managers, politicians, budget cuts and stroppy students – but the possibility that academics themselves have played a major role in the digital revolution is not addressed. There are undoubtedly many points of truth in this account, many cases of ill-considered innovations and botched implementations, but the overall picture of the academic community as lacking in agency stretches our credulity beyond breaking point. Linking educational changes to political and social phenomena is an important explanatory tool but surely any measurement of causality so finely calibrated as to detect the impacts of the December 2004 Asian tsunami on the regulatory policies and curricula of British universities in 2006 needs more explication than it is afforded on page 11. At other times she is content to grasp at almost any evidence that can be used to wrong-foot opponents, so that a report in the *Guardian* on student contracts is faulted for appearing on the front page on the fifth anniversary of 9/11. Bristling of this sort pervades the book and the cumulative effect is to make one feel as if one is being browbeaten into agreement. Allowed to stand on its own her argument might have been more convincing.

To accuse Brabazon of lacking all nuance would do her something of an injustice. Any account of this length is bound to present many aspects of its subject and this book contains a lot of interesting material albeit that it is not well integrated into the central line of argument; it undoubtedly raises some important issues and draws attention to the need for retaining traditional educational and scholarly values within the new environment. Unfortunately, however, its

excessively personal nature and overall lack of balance make it a less than reliable guide to a topic of great current and future importance.

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BOOK REVIEW

Ka Taoka Hakena: Treasures from the Hocken Collections

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On its publication late last year Ka Toaka Hakena was rightly celebrated by New Zealand's Librarians, arts and literary figures and, unusually, the media. This warm recognition must have been very welcome for those intimately involved with the Hocken Collection over the years, in this celebration of its centenary.

The book is presented in a sturdy hardcover and beginning with a cover showing the art Deco building currently home the collection is effortless elegant throughout. The book begins with several introductory essays, describing the genesis of the collection and life of its benefactor, Dr T.M. Hocken, and then describing the slow growth in resources throughout the last century.

Dr Hocken emigrated from Britain in 1862 and set up a medical practice which saw him become a prominent and respected member of Dunedin society. An educated and enterprising man, Hocken set about collecting the ultimate record

of New Zealand recorded history. Dr Hocken was a tireless fieldworker, his diaries recording many trips around the country to visit historical sites, collect material and recording information and stories firsthand. Massing thousands of books, manuscripts, images and material of all kinds, Hocken was well aware of the importance of his collection and his stated intent to donate it to the people of Otago and New Zealand actually inspired the building of a suitable library to house it.

This book is a visual collection of several hundred items from the Hocken Collection each with an informed commentary and concise explanation of historical relevance.

Postcards, photographs, paintings, watercolours, sketches, records, maps and posters all feature in this delightful wander through our history, every page revealing something new and diverting.

All pictures in the book are presented in full-colour and great clarity – it is hard to believe that any improvement in capturing these (sometimes centuries old) items is possible short of a one-on-one visit. Someone with an eye for design has done an outstanding job in laying out this book, in making every page a fresh experience and echoing the nature of the pages contents.

At first brush the concept of the book seems interesting, the ideal coffee-table book which can be picked up and any page flicked to but what the reader soon finds is that they are hooked into following a carefully constructed journey. How can you read a letter from ‘Frame to Baxter’ on one page and not flick immediately to the next? On one page there is a book from 1621, a few pages later are samples of Tapa Cloth collected first by Captain Cook and little further on are some letters from Stewart Island written upon leaves and posted. The unpredictability of the book (and the Collection) is both astonishing and delightful.

The Hocken Collection has expanded greatly over the century since it was gifted to the people and has been duly respected, admired and, most importantly, used by generations of visitors and despite various battles over scope and resourcing and indeed buildings over the years, it now has pride of place as one of the nation’s greatest heritage centres, “a place of many treasures” (p.26) and has been further shared in the publication of this outstanding book.

This book is not comprehensive, but nor is the Hocken Collection, though both will continue to delight. An absolute must for all New Zealand libraries and, I suspect, for many New Zealand Librarians.

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