

# Cites & Insights

Crawford at Large

Libraries • Policy • Technology • Media

Sponsored by YBP Library Services

Volume 6, Number 2: Midwinter 2006

ISSN 1534-0937

Walt Crawford

## Perspective

# Library 2.0 and “Library 2.0”

## Prologue

I was reading stuff about something called “Library 2.0”—but the posts and items didn’t seem to cohere. I thought I could gather some statements, print them out, read them through, provide excerpts and commentary, and maybe make sense of the whole thing. I planned a typical PERSPECTIVE, probably 3,500 to 7,500 words (5 to 10 pages). Along with a ©4: Locking Down Technology essay (on moves to resurrect the Broadcast Flag and a bill to close the analog hole), it would be one of two major pieces in a varied February 2006 *Cites & Insights*.

Unfortunately for well-laid plans, the more I read about Library 2.0 the more confused I got—and the more I felt the need for a broad overview *not* written by an advocate or evangelist. The core essay grew to 14,000 words. Editing cut that to about 13,000 and suggested the need to add more. (Final word count: just over 26,000 words including prologue and epilogue.) The result: This special issue—which I’m releasing as a *single* HTML file because I don’t want this prologue separated from the main essay.

I don’t claim I’ve provided the broad overview I was looking for. I have not synthesized a single view of either Library 2.0 or “Library 2.0,” possibly because I’m not sure such a view is possible. I do claim that this confusing, ragged, overlong piece does more to clarify the various sets of ideas behind the term than anything I’ve seen—possibly because I’m not an advocate or evangelist for the concepts or the term.

Once it was clear that the essay had become an issue, I sent out two invitations for new comments on

Library 2.0—one emailed to a few colleagues whom I thought would have worthwhile things to say, the other an open call in a *Walt at random* post. Those calls directly resulted in eight new commentaries and indirectly in one or two more. I’ve incorporated portions of the responses, several new to the ongoing discussion (marked as “(new)” in subheadings).

### *Library 2.0 and “Library 2.0”*

I can’t say that *anything* about the concepts that make up Library 2.0 or the bandwagon called “Library 2.0” has become clear, but I do believe there’s a difference between the two. One problem with the bandwagon is that there isn’t one set of concepts behind the name. There are several: I think I can count four basic sets, and that may be low. I’m not sure they can be reconciled simply by enumerating them. Another problem is that the bandwagon attracts some who are eager to dismiss today’s libraries and librarians in favor of transformational change, as well as those whose desire is to *continue* to improve and extend library services.

## Library 2.0 and “Library 2.0”

Prologue .....	1
Sixtytwo Views and Seven Definitions .....	4
People with Lots to Say.....	6
Other Voices .....	18
Epilogue .....	31

Most concepts behind Library 2.0 are constructive, building on today’s best and improving for the future. Those concepts and tools should be—and are being—discussed, explored, and *implemented* as appropriate for various libraries depending on community needs and library resources. If there’s an argument here, it might be over relative priorities and

expectations—and possibly what constitutes success, both in new and existing services. That's the set of concepts, whether gathered under a moniker or not.

Then there's "Library 2.0," the movement or bandwagon. Some proclaiming "Library 2.0" as a movement are confrontational, deriding today's libraries as irrelevant and today's librarians as rigid and unchanging. Others are not. I find it hard to look at the term and *not* see confrontation, but that's me. "Library 2.0" as a *manifesto* is, I believe, unfortunate. I question whether "Library 2.0" adds value to the sets of concepts and tools—and I wonder whether "Library 2.0" detracts from the concepts and tools by creating divisions where none are necessary.

### *Not a Librarian; Not a Public Librarian*

I'm fascinated by the fact that most early Library 2.0 talk comes from public librarians (setting aside the vendor vector). Some of that discussion has a feel I've come to associate with academic librarians or library school faculty—informed by the energy and different environments of public libraries. That's good and healthy. It's particularly good to see that the wildly diverse range of public library communities and capabilities is being recognized in the process.

My reaction to some documents may be informed by my lack of an MLS. I have *not* been to library school. I was never inculcated with the idea that libraries—particularly public libraries—are all about information. I was impressed by Wayne Wiegand's article in *American Libraries* 36:1 (January 2005), "Critiquing the curriculum: the entrenched LIS agenda needs to change to reflect the most critical functions of the library." Which, incidentally, I retrieved and read from...my public library's website, since that old-fashioned library makes it so easy for me to view *Expanded Academic Index ASAP* and other databases using my library card number.

I don't believe public libraries have ever been most people's primary source of current information, or indeed the first place you'd go looking for information in general. I don't believe such a role is feasible or sensible (even as libraries *do* play important roles as providers of specialized and secondary information and as safety nets for those whose other information resources are impoverished). I've said so in a couple of books (*Being Analog*, for example) and several articles and columns. I believe "information" overstates the capabilities of public libraries even as it impoverishes the library's roles as place, as collection of narra-

tives (stories, if you will), as builder of local history, as the place kids learn to associate reading with fun...and so many other library successes.

If you believe libraries are all about information, I can see why you'd be threatened by the rise of Yahoo! (or MSN, if you prefer)—but newspapers, television, radio, magazines, the telephone, and other people have always been the way most people fill their everyday information needs. I'm bemused by the apparent need to make libraries the heart of the public's everyday information usage. I don't think it can happen and I'm not convinced it should happen. That colors my interpretation of what I'm reading.

I'm definitely a public library patron (and most definitely not a "customer"). I'm back to monthly visits (which puts me in a minority, I realize—I'll be commenting on *Perceptions of Libraries and Information Resources* in the near future). I use the library *building* primarily as a source of books and occasionally other media. Now that it's no longer necessary to set a proxy to use the databases, I may use the *library* more as an online resource—but certainly not as my everyday source of information. If Mountain View introduces a library toolbar for me to plunk into Firefox, I probably won't know about it—and if I do, I'm unlikely to use it. But that's me.

What I sense in some Library 2.0 messages is a view of public libraries and their missions that is quite different from what I would have assumed. Maybe that's a conversation that needs to be held. Without more explicit views of what people believe a library *should* be (and *can* be), it's hard to put their views of "Library 2.0" in perspective.

I think Meredith Farkas got it right in one of her postings (discussed in OTHER VOICES). If a miracle occurred one night and you woke up to find that your library was exactly what you think it should be—Library 2.0 or otherwise—*what would it be like?* And, once you say that, is that vision at all plausible in the real world? Those may be conversations that we need to have. If the fledgling bandwagon "Library 2.0" encourages those conversations, it's a good thing.

### *Not Entirely New*

This is the first time I've written about Library 2.0—but I don't believe it's the first time I've written about the concepts or the arguments involved. "Library Futures, Media Futures" (*C&I* 5:13, Mid-Fall 2005) falls into the same discussion space—as, to some extent, does "Predicting the Future of Academic Libraries"

(*C&I* 5:9, July/August 2005). For all I know, there have been other portions of essays that relate to these topics. Certainly, if blogging and wikis are Web 2.0/Library 2.0 tools (as they appear to be), I've discussed them at considerable length.

The name is new. Some of the concepts are decades old. Some of the tools and techniques have been around for years (or decades), while some are new. Not all *that* new, to be sure. For example, I believe that Jenny Levine's "shifted librarian" themes and Steven M. Cohen's "library stuff" themes both consist primarily of tools and techniques now being claimed as part of Library 2.0. "Everything old is new again" is one of those phrases that regains relevance every few years, in one sphere or another. Combining old concepts with new tools is automatically new, to be sure; it's one of the ways civilization progresses.

### *Puzzled but Not Antagonistic*

One reason for this prologue is that I do *not* want to stomp on people's dreams and ideals. If this issue of *Cites & Insights* is read as boiling down to "Walt Crawford thinks Library 2.0 is all a bunch of crap and should be ignored," then I've failed.

Some of the technologies being lumped together as "Web 2.0" (which may also be a lousy term) have significant value in building and improving library services in many libraries. A lot of that is being done. More will be. This is good.

For example, although I'm not a toolbar person, I'm certainly not opposed to libraries producing such toolbars. I'd love to see measures as to how many people (other than other librarians!) download them and what effect they have on use of library services. In general, I'm hoping there will be measurement of these services, particularly in those cases where there's friction between providing new services and maintaining old ones.

I would *love* to see many public (and academic) libraries expand their roles as centers for preserving local history and culture, and I believe some of the "Web 2.0" tools could be important to facilitate citizen participation in building and maintaining such living local archives. Wikis, blogs, and other lightweight and sometimes interactive tools aren't magic bullets, but this seems to be one area where they could be used effectively and economically to improve and possibly refresh an important *local* library function.

I don't like zero-sum games, and I don't think that adding Web 2.0-style services necessarily means

reducing successful services. Some libraries and librarians, however, are up against real limits. They don't all have the time, money, or attention to devote to building their own "Library 2.0" services; cooperative work may help—along with the recognition that not every librarian needs to be equally involved and that this isn't an all-or-nothing process.

I've already expressed my suspicion that most active library users are unlikely to download library search toolbars—but I'd be happy to be proven wrong. I'm inclined to believe that using IM for online reference is a good thing (presumably alongside email, phone, and in-person reference for patrons with different needs and preferences)—but, you know, virtual reference was a Movement not all that long ago. If IM makes more sense for most libraries and their users than VR (which I suspect it does)—then maybe there's reason to look carefully at a bandwagon before you commit too heavily to it. Time and attention are resources; sometimes they're the most valuable resources you have.

For some of today's most innovative libraries (e.g., Ann Arbor District Library by all accounts), it's pretty clear that there *will* be measurement—and that the initiatives are true experiments. An experiment includes the possibility of failure: The possibility that building it *does not* always mean they will come. If you haven't committed too heavily or dropped traditional alternatives, you either fine-tune the experiment—or you scrap it and try something different.

Some (probably most) of today's most innovative librarians see these new initiatives within the broader framework of successful existing services, and see the desirability of attracting new users within the framework of retaining the users who *love* what libraries currently do. I have no argument with these innovators. I wish them nothing but the best, and look forward to reading of their successes. In my opinion, their initiatives will be evolutionary, not revolutionary. I don't believe most American public libraries either require or would benefit from a revolution.

Initiatives based on newer web technologies should serve a public library's mission. I don't believe that mission will or should change all that rapidly. That mission needs to be a living document, and a realistic one. It's not precisely the same mission for every public library—and it shouldn't be. The thought of a national public library service or a uniform library service in the U.S. gives me the creeps.

I believe every state library conference should have at least one session related to some of the concepts and tools involved in Library 2.0 (not necessarily using that name). I'd be surprised if they didn't. I don't believe every state library association should turn its next conference into a "Library 2.0" gathering. I think that overstates the importance and urgency of either "Library 2.0" or Library 2.0, and presumes that there is a coherent "Library 2.0" to confer about.

---

## Sixtytwo Views and Seven Definitions

Library 2.0 is disruptive.<sup>1</sup>

Library 2.0 is a path toward improvement of services.<sup>17</sup>

Library 2.0 means abandoning services that serve small or unimportant groups.<sup>14</sup>

Library 2.0 means never having stable production-quality systems.<sup>2</sup>

Library 2.0 is not about replacing 1.0 technology.<sup>7</sup>

Library 2.0 will replace existing library services.<sup>3</sup>

Library 2.0 is about adding additional functionality—and that's threatening to some people.<sup>8</sup>

Library 2.0 is revolutionary.<sup>16</sup>

Library 2.0 is about *improving* services to patrons—not a revolution.<sup>36</sup>

Library 2.0 is not about technology.<sup>4</sup>

Library 2.0 is all about technology.<sup>53</sup>

Library 2.0 is a way of thinking and operating.<sup>5</sup>

Library 2.0 is a matter of survival.<sup>31</sup>

Library 2.0 is too much, too soon for many libraries; most would be served better by trying one or two new ideas.<sup>47</sup>

Library 2.0 discussions *must* take place in **your** library!<sup>12</sup>

Library 2.0 is a new name for ideas librarians have been discussing for quite some time.<sup>35</sup>

Library 2.0 is so urgent that every state and national library association needs to plan a Library 2.0 conference ASAP!<sup>21</sup>

Library 2.0 is sloganeering, signifying very little.<sup>42</sup>

Library 2.0 will offer services people want; current libraries offer services most people don't want.<sup>9</sup>

Library 2.0 is the wrong message at the wrong time.<sup>52</sup>

Library 2.0 means massive change in *every* library, since all existing libraries are restrictive places with rigid boundaries underpinned by change-avoidance.<sup>10a&b</sup>

Library 2.0 features may not be feasible or useful for all communities and libraries.<sup>24</sup>

Library 2.0 is the only way libraries will remain viable.<sup>11</sup>

Library 2.0 lumps disparate things with a contrived term that detracts from the real ideas.<sup>51</sup>

Library 2.0 means libraries that fill your emotional needs.<sup>13</sup>

Library 2.0 encompasses every library that doesn't want to be a relic.<sup>29</sup>

Library 2.0 as a doctrine is too universal for the needs of real libraries.<sup>39</sup>

Library 2.0 means constant change.<sup>15</sup>

Library 2.0 puts the librarian *anywhere* a user's heart takes them.<sup>18</sup>

Library 2.0 is needed if the library is to continue to matter.<sup>30</sup>

Library 2.0 is a paradigm shift that changes almost everything in a library.<sup>37</sup>

Library 2.0 is hype that can interfere with the sound ideals involved.<sup>38</sup>

Library 2.0 means the user can modify library services.<sup>19</sup>

Library 2.0 builds OPACS without local databases.<sup>20</sup>

Library 2.0 is about rock bands in the library and gaming nights as library services.<sup>22</sup>

Library 2.0 services will primarily serve the minority who are always connected.<sup>23</sup>

Library 2.0 requires that libraries have more rights with regard to their systems.<sup>25</sup>

Library 2.0 won't even require systems knowledge within libraries; you'll just run a black box.<sup>26</sup>

Library 2.0 is "L2" when you're in the In Crowd.<sup>6</sup>

Library 2.0 doesn't (or shouldn't) allow for a concise definition.<sup>27</sup>

Library 2.0 should reach critical mass within two years.<sup>28</sup>

Library 2.0 won't even require hardware, databases, or application servers!<sup>32</sup>

Library 2.0 will, *for the first time*, deliver meaningful service to end users.<sup>33</sup>

Library 2.0 principles sound vaguely familiar—like the things academic librarians have been doing for some time.<sup>50</sup>

Library 2.0 is too important to leave to librarians and users; vendors must also help to shape it.<sup>34</sup>

Library 2.0 is WorldCat with an API.<sup>40</sup>

Library 2.0 is library-centric rather than user-centric.<sup>41</sup>

Library 2.0 is confrontational: You're with us or you're against us.<sup>43</sup>

Library 2.0 could disenfranchise those who need libraries the most.<sup>44</sup>

Library 2.0 focuses on the technology end of customer service without any discussion of the other aspects of library work.<sup>45</sup>

Library 2.0 trivializes exciting and useful work that isn't "Web 2.0" enough.<sup>46</sup>

Library 2.0 gives us new tools to carry out the best practices libraries have had for many years.<sup>48</sup>

Library 2.0 will allow libraries to serve community needs; otherwise, they're only symbols of wealth and refinement.<sup>49</sup>

Library 2.0 adds even more layers of obfuscation between librarians and the public.<sup>54</sup>

Library 2.0 means making your library's space (virtual and physical) more interactive, collaborative, and driven by community needs.<sup>55</sup>

Library 2.0 is first and foremost an effort to reach out to those people who, for whatever reason, are not using the services libraries offer.<sup>56</sup>

Library 2.0 is anything that challenges the traditional approach to conducting library business.<sup>57</sup>

Library 2.0 is nothing different than what librarians have been striving for for decades.<sup>58</sup>

Library 2.0 is just a faddish catchphrase.<sup>59</sup>

Library 2.0 is an attempt to bring libraries' electronic services up to par with what people expect in a Web 2.0 environment.<sup>60</sup>

Library 2.0 is a new sense of ownership over library services and a new set of relationships with both vendors and others in the library community.<sup>61</sup>

Library 2.0 is a more intensive way of sharing all the resources that the library already offers.<sup>62</sup>

## Seven Definitions of Library 2.0

"Library 2.0 is a model for library service that reflects a transition within the library world in the way that services are delivered to library users. This redirection will be especially evident in electronic offerings such as OPAC configuration, online library services, and an increased flow of information from the user back to the library. The concept of Library 2.0 borrows from that of Web 2.0, and follows some of the same philosophies underpinning that concept. Proponents of this concept expect that ultimately the Library 2.0 model for service will replace outdated, one-directional service offerings that have characterized libraries for centuries.[3]" [Wikipedia—or Michael Casey]

"Library 2.0 sees the reality of our current user-base and says, "not good enough, we can reach more people." It seeks to do this through a three-part approach—reaching out to new users, inviting customer participation, and relying on constant change. Much of this is made possible thanks to new technologies, but the services will only be partially tech-based." [Michael Casey take 2]

"L2 is, to me, a service philosophy built upon three things; a willingness to change and try new things; a willingness to constantly re-evaluate our service offerings; and finally, a willingness to look outside our own world for solutions, be they technology-driven or not (this is where Web 2.0 fits in)." [Michael Casey take 3]

"Library 2.0 is not about technology[4]. Library 2.0 seeks to harvest good ideas from outside and use them to deliver improved and new services, often times in an effort to reach a new target population. Library 2.0 is, at its core, a way of thinking, a way of operating[5]. It's a framework for integrating change into all levels of library operations. It's in our effort to reach this new level of service that we will utilize these new, often times Web 2.0, technologies." [Casey Bisson]

"The whole 2.0 thing in general seems to be about using the hive mind and the affordances of technology to synthesize newer, better and more useful systems that then become available for everyone." [Jessamyn West]

“The idea of Library 2.0 represents a significant paradigm shift in the way we view library services. It’s about a seamless user experience, where usability, interoperability, and flexibility of library systems is key. It’s about the library being more present in the community through programming, community building (both online and physical), and outreach via technology (IM, screencasting, blogs, wikis, etc.). It’s about allowing user participation through writing reviews and tagging in the catalog and making their voice heard through blogs and wikis. It’s about making the library more transparent through its Web presence and its physical design. We need to make the library human, ubiquitous, and user-centered. This involves a change in our systems, our Web presence, and our very attitudes. It will take a lot of work for a library to be completely 2.0, but the idea should inform every decision made at the library[37].” [Meredith Farkas]

“Library 2.0 simply means making your library’s space (virtual and physical) more interactive, collaborative, and driven by community needs[55]. Examples of where to start include blogs, gaming nights for teens, and collaborative photo sites. The basic drive is to get people back into the library by making the library relevant to what they want and need in their daily lives...to make the library a destination and not an afterthought.” [Sarah Houghton]

---

## People with Lots to Say

When this essay began, I had 40-odd pieces arranged chronologically; as I went through them marking for citation and commentary, it became clear that chronological order wouldn’t work—and that I’d have to download lots of stuff, if only because key sources such as *Tame the web* use “Web 2.0” tools that discourage complete printing for radicals who use Firefox. (I guess wanting to contemplate something in print form is awfully old fashioned.)

It finally seemed more sensible to organize by person or source rather than by date. That’s what I’ve done, starting with *Wikipedia*, continuing to the person identified in that article (**by himself!**) as the originator of Library 2.0, going on to other people with lots to say on the subject, then moving to less voluminous individual perspectives. I started that

process in very late December; more quotes were added through January 6, 2006 (5 p.m. PST).

Unquestionably, the results are ragged. This lack of overall coherence is either because I’m too set in my ways, ignorant of the inevitabilities of Web 2.0 and Library 2.0, and desperate to avoid change to see the clear movement set forth here—or because Library 2.0 is a term that means whatever anyone chooses to claim it means.

I’ve cut out much of my own commentary in these sections in the interests of space and preserving the original voices, but this is my perspective, not “neutral” journalism.

### Wikipedia’s Take

The entry begins with Wikipedia’s definition (above). Michael Casey coined the term, it debuted at Internet Librarian 2005 in Michael Stephens’ speech, and it’s a “direct spin-off of the term Web 2.0.”

I would quote the set of “key principles” as well—but that would be such an extensive quotation that it could fall outside the realm of fair use. I don’t *understand* the GNU Free Documentation License well enough to determine whether it’s compatible with the Creative Commons BY-NC license that *Cites & Insights* operates under, and I’m not ready to reprint the necessary GFDL stuff...so I’ll quote key principles as they appear elsewhere. I will note two principles I find especially troubling, at least without loads of commentary I have yet to see: “Beta is forever[2]” and “Library 2.0 is a disruptive idea.[1]”

In the first case, I think there’s an enormous distinction between “Systems should continue to evolve, with new releases whenever there’s tested functionality” and “No system needs to reach production-level quality and stability,” which is my informal definition of “beta.” I don’t believe library patrons should be the testers for library systems and services, and that’s what “beta” means to me.

In the second case, I don’t get why “disruptive” is inherently a good thing or, for that matter, what’s disruptive about Library 2.0. The principle sets up a confrontation: “We’re out to disrupt the library.” If that’s not what’s meant, then explanations are needed.

If you’re wondering who serves as the authority that Michael Casey originated the term “Library 2.0,” you need look no further than the contributor of the article itself: “Mecasey.”

I find the definition bemusing, particularly since I know of only one service offering that has character-

ized libraries for centuries: Circulating books. That's certainly one-directional. Most public library patrons wouldn't consider it outdated. Are they wrong?

### Michael Casey at *Library crunch*

"Michael Casey is a self-proclaimed Library Scientist and Information Technology Theorist" according to his About page. The *Library crunch* blog ([www.library-crunch.com](http://www.library-crunch.com)) is *explicitly* all about Library 2.0.

Casey quotes Casey Bisson's summary of what Library 2.0 is about (SEVEN DEFINITIONS). He points to Michael Stephens' list of "fundamental goals" as something everyone should be able to agree on—in a post that includes the following paragraph:

One thing [Laura Savastinuk] mention[s] that goes through my mind a lot is, "what is a library?" I'm not sure we know anymore, and I fear one of the things we're going to see is increasingly diverse interpretations of what a library really is. There is no way to begin including some of the things that have been discussed as being L2[6] without thinking that libraries may soon begin deviating from each other's understanding of *library*.

I'm mystified by this. Savastinuk's message includes: "Is [a library] a building or an organization or just an idea?"

Also in the series of posts, I see a link to one of the supposed "disruptive" Library 2.0 technologies: RFID. What's disruptive about RFID? Unless, of course, it's implemented in borrower cards as well as materials in such a way as to disrupt the library "tradition" of borrower confidentiality.

Casey approves of John Blyberg's statement:

Library 2.0 is not about replacing 1.0 technology[7]. It's about adding additional functionality and if that is threatening to some people, then it means it's good technology[8].

If that's true, then I *really* wonder about "disruptive." Good libraries have been adding functionality for decades, probably ever since there have been good libraries. That's part of being living organizations.

I've only been in the library field for five decades. I don't know the longer history that well. During those five decades, I can vouch for a continuing record of added functionality and ongoing change in public and academic libraries.

Casey uses business terms for library functions—"customer" and "ROI." I believe there's a significant difference between a (business) customer and a (library) user or patron. I'm bothered by the extent to

which pure ROI measures make it easy to jettison still-important goods and services because they aren't as hot as other choices, particularly when those services favor the disadvantaged, who typically aren't high-profile or high-tech users. Casey is strong on reaching "a new target population" (although I'm unclear as to what that population is). I find myself looking for comments on forsaking *or caring about* existing populations.

Is Library 2.0 intentionally confrontational? Consider this quote:

The reality is that the number of users who have needs that are not being met outnumbers those whose needs we are meeting. In other words, we are offering services that are not wanted by a majority of our population.[9]

Proof? Are there surveys that show most people *don't* want the library services that exist, at a time when (according to most surveys) most people *use* the library, if not always on a steady basis? What "needs" (that a library can plausibly meet) are not being met?

Given Casey's statement that "Library 1.0 is whatever point you are at now[10a]," this says it nicely: "I think that what we need to remember is that Library 1.0 is a restrictive place, governed by strict hierarchies, rigid boundaries, and underpinned by change-avoidance[10b]."

Casey recognized library history in the January 3, 2006 "Born in the biblioblogosphere":

What is Library 2.0? Does it matter that we have a finite definition? Michael Stephens over at Tame the Web has a new post that asks us if Library 2.0 is more than technology. Yes, I think it is. Stephen M. Cohen over on Library Stuff argues that library 2.0 is merely a continuation of the Baltimore County Public Library's "Give 'em What they Want" philosophy of service. Perhaps. But let's look at this quote:

See that your library is interesting to the people of the community, the people who own it, the people who maintain it. Deny your people nothing which the bookshop grants them. Make your library at least as attractive as the most attractive retail store in the community. Open your eyes to the cheapness of books at the present day, and to the unimportance, even to the small library, of the loss of an occasional volume; and open them also to the necessity of getting your constituency in actual contact with the books themselves.

This was written by John Cotton Dana and published in *Library Journal's* December 1896 edition. 1896. Was Dana espousing something similar to Library 2.0? Perhaps. Has our battle been going on this long? Absolutely. Will our battle continue for another hundred years? Yep.

I bring this up because I think there's a misperception that Library 2.0 is trying to be a zero-sum answer to an age-old problem. It is not. Library 2.0 is a service philosophy—a theory, if you will—that attempts to guide libraries in their effort to win new users while, at the same time, acknowledging that our current service offerings are insufficient and inflexible. Built into L2 is the realization that libraries are never really going to be able to reach this level of Platonic ideal that so many of us set as our goal. But also built into L2 is the understanding that we will never stop trying to reach that level of service, and that we will use every tool at our disposal in our attempt. [Next paragraph appears in SEVEN DEFINITIONS as Michael Casey, take 2.]

So yes, perhaps L2 is simply a continuation of the ideas of Dana and BCPL and so many other attempts at greater and greater community reach. But Library 2.0 is not the idea of any one individual. It was born in the biblioblogosphere in the writings of many diverse thinkers, and while one concise definition will never fit L2, there is a certain understanding that Library 2.0 represents, at a bare minimum, a discussion point around which many will offer ideas and discuss solutions...

Why a “battle”? Why is it necessary to denigrate current service offerings in order to suggest new ones? How about saying “We’re doing great for some people. Can we reach others *with appropriate library services* within our resources?” The answer will frequently be yes, and the tools will frequently (I suspect) be ones borrowed from “Web 2.0.”

In preparing this article, I read through every post on Casey’s log (up to January 6, 2005). I haven’t quoted them all. You can (**and should**) read them yourself. I see grousing about being too attached to successful services and systems. (How can you be too attached to success?) I see indications that, as far as Casey’s concerned, *every existing library* is a hide-bound hierarchical organization that avoids change.

What I don’t see in Casey’s comments are examples of services demanded by library users (other than technogeeks) that current libraries aren’t capable of performing and aren’t experimenting with, and in some cases implementing. I don’t see recognition of the significance of circulating physical materials. I don’t see *explication* of the vast potential audiences that libraries aren’t reaching because they’re not 2.0ish. I get the distinct impression that Casey thinks current public libraries are failures. Else why the insistence on disruption rather than improvement?

Here’s a recent statement from Casey, indirectly in *Tame the web*:

I find it ironic that, as someone who loves technology and is desperate to see it better integrated into library

operations, I find myself arguing over and over that Library 2.0 is not strictly a tech-driven philosophy. L2 is first and foremost an effort to reach out to those people who, for whatever reason, are not using the services libraries offer[56]. Many Web 2.0 applications will assist us in this effort, but so will non-tech approaches. Teen concerts and gaming nights are but two small pieces in the L2 arsenal, but if they help us reach those non-users then they need to be included.

I’m constantly reminded that not all libraries have the same technological resources, work within the same political frameworks, or have the same financial abilities. If L2 is to be inclusive then it must offer services to a broad spectrum of libraries. If L2 is to be successful it cannot simply focus on the technology, it must use whatever tools are available to go after new users. [Next paragraph appears in SEVEN DEFINITIONS as Michael Casey, take 3.]

These paragraphs are less confrontational than earlier ones—and the first paragraph shifts Library 2.0 in a very different direction, making it *primarily* about reaching new users. The second paragraph recognizes the real world—except that it suggests that this inchoate set of ideas is a set of services. As to the definition: I agree that this philosophy makes sense at least as part of a library philosophy, and would comment that many libraries and librarians have been doing that for many years, even if Casey does say we’re all in rigid, hierarchical Library 1.0.

### Michael Stephens at *Tame the web* and *ALA TechSource* blog

If Casey originated the term Library 2.0, Stephens has done the most among non-vendors to build the bandwagon for “Library 2.0,” using not one but *two* high-profile blogs and speaking engagements.

November 14, 2005, *ALA TechSource*:

This is a given in my world: To remain viable[11], interesting, and relevant, libraries should seek methods to get out into the community, engage users with services and conversations, and offer collaborative spaces both online and in beautiful physical buildings.

“[R]emain viable, interesting, and relevant”—Stephens starts from the position that today’s libraries do *something* right. I find little to disagree with in that paragraph: Those are desirable things to do. Stephens then tells librarians that they should all (apparently) be out there using these “social tools,” a list that seems to keep growing. I’m inclined to agree that most libraries need to have *some* people who are familiar with social software applications (although not every staff member and certainly not every piece of social software!),



so I'm not going to argue this one. "All it will take is time and some patience" only goes so far, however, particularly as social software proliferates. I'm not sure that I see blogs and flick.r as equivalent, or that I see blogs as inherently social or participative in nature. Without comments enabled, blogs are just lightweight publishing tools.

Four days later, Stephens points to the Talus white paper (below) and says firmly that Library 2.0-related discussions "*must* take place in **YOUR** library[12]." (Emphases in original.) No matter how small, no matter how poorly supported, *every* library must be discussing Library 2.0 *right now*: That's strong stuff. He offers his own take on the four Library 2.0 "principles" set forth in the white paper and adds three of his own (at the end):

- The library is everywhere
- The library has no barriers
- The library invites participation
- The library uses flexible, best-of-breed systems
- The library encourages the heart
- The library is human
- The library recognizes that its users are human too.

Discussing the need for the library to be everywhere, he notes a doctoral student saying how easy it was to use Google from her cell phone to find information. Stephens asked, "Did you even think about the library?" and she said "No." My immediate question: *Why should she?* The library has *never* been the primary source of immediate information for most people, nor can it serve that function. A library that attempts to be all things to all people, to serve all information needs under all circumstances, is a library that will fail: Its people and other resources will be stretched too thin to do anything well.

As to Stephens' three principles, I won't comment on the first for the moment, although looking at his commentary, I have to admit I've never looked to libraries to "fulfill...my emotional needs[13]." I don't look to *any* secular institution to do that. The second is simply wrong. *Librarians* and library staff are human. Libraries are institutions.

That same post quotes Michael Casey in a manner I find consistent with Casey's early posts—and inconsistent with my idea of what libraries and librarians should be about:

"We also need to look at all of the services we offer and ask ourselves, 'Do they still serve our customers?' and

'Do they serve a *large-enough group* that our ROI is positive?'[14] he queries. "Library 2.0 is, perhaps above all else, the idea of constant change[15]. Not only constant library change, but the recognition that our communities are constantly changing and that our services to them must change proportionally." [Emphasis added.]

The first makes sense despite the unfortunate "customers." The second is too businesslike and dismissive for my taste, and clears the way for further disadvantaging the already disadvantaged. A good public library is, in my opinion, something more than a simple reflection of current community desires. It should serve the "long now" and strive to serve portions of the public served badly by society as a whole.

Comments clarify Casey's attitude: "[W]e speak in terms of revolution, in this case a revolution in the way library services are conceived and delivered.[16]" He's rejecting the notion that an existing library automation vendor can be useful in defining Library 2.0: "I am hesitant to look to those companies that fueled Library 1.0 as the purveyors of ideas that will bring about our understanding of library 2.0." Does this extend to librarians—that anyone involved in the present is unqualified to contribute to the future? That's the way revolutions usually work, and it means I have no business even *commenting*. Stephens says he agrees with Casey's comment.

Before moving to Stephens' own blog, it's worth noting a conversation with Michael Casey posted December 15, 2005, after a number of librarians raised questions about Library 2.0. Casey stresses "bringing in new users" in the context of using limited resources. Stephens generalizes that "our users are the ones using some of the Web tools and sites..." noting Yahoo 360 and MySpace, and talking about gaming sessions at libraries as "a little bit of the future." Really? What portion of the population uses Yahoo 360? Stephens asks one of those self-answering questions: "Are some librarians roadblocking L2?" Confrontation, pure and simple—and the astonishing notion that "L2" is already so advanced and has such momentum, less than two months after first mention, that "roadblocking" is a possibility.

In this discussion, Casey seems to change gears: "I hope we can see L2 as a path toward change, toward improvement of services[17]." He continues to focus on "the masses that do not yet use our services." Stephens brings up "the heart" again: "Wherever a library user's heart takes them is where the librarian should be—in person or online.[18]" This seems to

portray “the librarian” as a full-time online psychotherapist. There are *many* places “a library user’s heart” may take them that librarians don’t belong, at least not in a world with more than one institution and with real limits.

Another conversation was posted January 5, 2006, this one with Michael Golrick. I’ve excerpted some of Golrick’s comments under his own name; here’s a noteworthy comment from Stephens:

L2 certainly is not one size fits all or seeks to only serve users who are plugged in at home, but isn’t it oh-so easy to focus on the coolness factor of tools like flickr and forget that many, many folks have no need for a spiffy tagged photo of a library program? I wonder if some of the solutions I’ve pondered, such as digital creation stations, where the library would provide state of the art PCs to create just about any type of content one’s heart might desire and training sessions for folks on those tools might help the folks that don’t have access at home? Circulating laptops, like Darien Library does in Darien, CT, might be an option as well.

It’s true enough that “many folks have no need for a spiffy tagged photo of a library program.” Otherwise, these suggestions run up against real-world limitations, although they admittedly bring the public into the library: How many libraries can afford enough “state of the art PCs” to serve the extended needs of content creators, or to circulate laptops? Is this a good use of library resources for most libraries? As Golrick says, training is great: No disagreement here.

### *Tame the web*

On his own blog, Stephens quotes Casey’s definition (actually that from Casey Bisson, quoted in SEVEN DEFINITIONS) approvingly, but also says “Absolutely!” to Jessamyn West’s definition (ditto). West’s definition is much less disruptive and revolutionary (and conflicts with Casey’s “not about technology”). But what about “the hive mind”? Here’s the first definition from our friend *Wikipedia*: “A hive mind (sometimes spelled hivemind) is a form of collective consciousness strongly exhibiting traits of conformity and groupthink.” Surely that can’t be what Stephens is applauding? I would have thought social software and collaborative systems were about differences and clusters of agreement, not about “conformity and groupthink,” and that libraries in particular would avoid groupthink. I set this down to definitional difficulties within Library 2.0 and around its edges.

On December 7, Stephens collected various “Library 2.0 principles.” Some I haven’t already noted:

- Browser + Web 2.0 Applications + Connectivity = Full-featured OPAC[20]
- Library users should be able to craft and modify library provided services[19]
- Harvest and integrate ideas and products from peripheral fields into library service models
- The library facilitates the user’s discovery of their many information options and how to choose wisely from among them
- The library integrates itself into those places, physical and virtual, where learning takes place.

The first of these is mysterious. *Somewhere* there must be at least two levels of database/server functionality (bibliographic and location data, and circulation data), and I don’t see how that arises from the equation provided.

On December 22, Stephens responds to the suggestion for a Library 2.0 conference with this: “Every state library association should be planning this type of conference—or say, a NATIONAL LIBRARY ORGANIZATION might plan it for all of us—ASAP![21]”

Other than changing Library 2.0 from a bandwagon to *the* bandwagon, Stephens gives his list of “Defining moments: Library 2.0 events of 2005.” Blake Carver told Stephens that he’s not a fan of Library 2.0 (Stephens now uses “L2” most of the time), to which Stephens replied “if naming the concepts got people thinking and talking about change in libraries [I’m] all for it.” Librarians have been thinking, talking about and *carrying out* change for a lot longer than Michael Stephens has been alive, without always feeling the need to wrap a hip term around it. That’s one of the assumptions that bothers me in these discussions: Before Library 2.0, librarians and libraries did not change. Sez who?

Here are the “defining moments[22]”—particularly interesting given Casey’s assertion that “Library 1.0 is whatever point you are at now.”

- The Ann Arbor District Library website (which features a blog as the home page).
- 2005 as tipping point for IM (pointing to a website with a list of 50 libraries using IM reference—ten of the 50 being public rather than academic). “If your library hasn’t considered it, please do so in 2006! Rock ON!”
- The TALIS White Paper (see under Talis)
- *LibraryCrunch* debuts—in other words, a *blog* is a defining point!

- Social Software at Conferences: Internet Librarian 2005, which was “blogged, wiki’d and flickered like crazy.”
- Rock the shelves: “Band night” at the library (another Michael Casey “defining point,” apparently).
- The gaming symposium.
- Flickr libraries.
- SJCPL Wiki Subject Guides. SJCPL is Stephens’ library. The subject guides are librarian-created using a wiki, and allow discussion from users (not direct editing of the subject guides). As of December 28, 2005, users have added discussions to two of the 17 guides—which, this early, isn’t bad.
- The Conversation Begins—that is, the discussion of which this PERSPECTIVE is part.

Even though every library today is Library 1.0, the one mentioned first in this list of defining moments (AADL) is trying initiatives and looking at the results. John Blyberg discusses that in a fine post that should be read in context: [www.blyberg.net/2005/12/04/lessons-learned-aadlorg-30/](http://www.blyberg.net/2005/12/04/lessons-learned-aadlorg-30/)

A January 2, 2006 update brings together comments on Stephens’ list of “ten L2 events of 2005” and responses to one of the comments. Some excerpts and notes follow, noting that these aren’t all Michael Stephens’ voice. I moved some of them to other sections as appropriate.

[Steve Lawson of *See also*]: “I think that “Rock the Shelves” and the Gaming Symposium are fantastic, but I’m not sure how they fit the L2 meme. I have been thinking of L2 as the library version of Web 2.0: lightweight, social computing applications to meet users’ needs when, where, and how they need it.

If we include innovative programs for young people like gaming and music, where do we draw the line? Is a poetry slam L2? Summer reading programs? Is the new coffee cart in my college library L2? I don’t mean that cynically—I’m really curious to hear what Michael and others think, and am willing to change my mind.”

[Michael Stephens’ response:] Thanks for the comment. I totally understand your thinking. It’s confusing attaching a name to this huge thing we are discussing. I’m still trying to make sense of it all. Each time we encounter a good question or another viewpoint, the concept that carries this meme comes clearer to me.

The problem here is that Michael Stephens is doing more than anyone else—to insist on a name and to turn it into a movement.

I believe L2 is bigger than technology and bigger than just planning for fabulous library services. The biggest

part in my thinking is the personal bit: librarians embracing change to become master of all information tools, digital and otherwise. A deep sea-change for some folks from the “we’ve always done it this way” mode to one of “Bring it on, baby, bring it on...” when encountering the wide ripples of change coming at us daily. This is the heart of L2 for me... Librarian 2.0. if you will. So it’s about tech and it’s about not huffing and puffing when a library wants to implement IM or DDR and it’s about the Coffee Cart if that makes a welcoming space all the more inviting for users and so on.

There’s a huge gap between “we’ve always done it this way” and embracing *all* change for the sake of change—the “bring it on, baby” attitude. I would suggest that “master of all information tools” is an implausible role for anyone, much less every librarian.

Maybe we should reinvent ourselves and our libraries.

This moves from improvement to revolution—a stance that requires some showing that today’s librarians and libraries are failing, as opposed to being less than they could be.

After several commentaries (which now appear in sections on Michael Casey, Stephen Abram, and John Blyberg), Steve Lawson replied (in part):

I think I’m more or less convinced that a broader definition of Library 2.0 is the proper way to go. I have been lucky, in that during my five years as a professional librarian, I have worked in libraries that embraced change and collaboration. So to that extent, my entire career has been L2. Given these parameters, the director at my library is very L2, and I don’t think she is familiar with the term (yet). In the three years I have been at Colorado College, the library has found a new home for the student writing center, added a multimedia lab, added a coffee cart, and may be the new home for the IT help desk; all these changes with the goal of providing help (or caffeine!) to students when and where they need it, even at the expense of giving up some space (always at a premium, of course)....

Some possible dangers to the more inclusive definition: If L2 just means “responding creatively to change,” some of the energy around the idea might dissipate as people say “we have always done that.” Too wide a definition also lends itself to parody: these new user-empowering bookmarks are L2! Open stacks are L2! Michael’s anti-establishment hair is totally L2! ;)

Michael Casey says every library is Library 1.0. Steve Lawson disagrees. After seeing some of the comments—specifically Blyberg’s “anything else new and exciting that is counterintuitive to the library stereotype”—I’m not sure it’s *possible* to parody “Library 2.0.” (Another comment from Steve Lawson appears later, a response to my open call.)

I don't believe Michael Stephens would dismiss today's libraries as worthless or on the verge of failure, although he never disagrees with those who do. I do believe he overstates the rigidity of current libraries, the extent to which disruption is necessary or desirable, and—by a long shot—the extent to which it would make sense for *all* library associations to arrange their conferences around “Library 2.0” as the most important game in town in 2006. Stephens wants libraries to improve (or continue to improve) and thinks that social software and other “Web 2.0” concepts and tools can help that improvement. I see nothing wrong with that.

### John Blyberg at *blyberg.net*

John Blyberg is lead developer at Ann Arbor District Library and runs [www.blyberg.net](http://www.blyberg.net), which I'll admit is sufficiently code-heavy at times that I only recently added it to Bloglines. Ya gotta love a blogger who starts a blog in August 2005, posts two posts, then isn't heard from again until October 28, 2005—without apology or comment. My kind of blogger (sincerely)! I requested permission to quote nearly all of some of Blyberg's posts; he immediately granted it and looked forward to my criticism.

The first Library 2.0 commentary I can find in Blyberg's log dates from November 8: “Library 2.0 Perils.” He comments on a blog posting about Web 2.0 issues and relates them to Library 2.0—noting that AADL is “working very hard...to bring a number of major Web 2.0 features online.” Maybe his hard work is what brings forth these sensible commentaries, excerpted below (omitting the fourth, since it forms the basis for Blyberg's November 20 post):

1)...Before we hype features that the technology elite embrace, ask, “[W]ill our patrons feel the same way?” The other consideration you may want to make is, “is it technically feasible to offer these features?” In some libraries, the answer to both these questions might be ‘no.’[24]

2)...[M]uch of the social-oriented software requires a permaconnection. I'm used to being online all the time and when I go to my full-blown-geek conferences, I'd say that about 80-90% of the attendees have laptops. When I went to IL05, I'd reckon that percentage was around 35-30%. Apparently, that was the highest ever at an IL, and IL attracts the ‘techie’ library people. When I look at...graphs...for all four branches in Ann Arbor, I see peaks of 10-15 simultaneous wifi users. While 2.0-type functionality doesn't necessarily require a permaconnection, I'd venture to guess that these per-

maconnectees are the minority who will appreciate and use those features[23].

3) It's one thing to talk about Web 2.0 or Library 2.0, but if you're only talking about it, that's not implementing it in any meaningful way. To implement it, you need to fully understand the technologies behind it. Ajax is a great example... I see “Ajax” bandied about like a tambourine at a Phish show, but if you've used it, you'll agree with me that it's a tricky beast to get working properly... Gmail is the only semi-widescale use of Ajax that I know of, and tightened-down Windows 2003 policies break it.

These excerpts all make sense to me.

Blyberg's second major commentary on Library 2.0 is on November 20: “ILS Customer Bill-of-Rights.”

There is a lot of talk about what Library 2.0 is, what Web 2.0 means to us, and what technologies can benefit us (RSS, tagging, etc). Fine. ILS vendors are going to see this as a potential gold rush and try to capitalize on it at, what I fear, is our expense. And we may quite possibly be enabling them.

Why do I say this? Well, first, let's look at what's at stake here. Essentially it's our data: our catalogs, our patrons, our website content, our library programming, etc. This is our precious gold. This is the raw material that we will use to shape the future of library services. The traditional business model that ILS vendors have pursued (and forced on us) does not give us the freedom to use our own data in the way that we're ultimately going to want to use it.

That's where the problem arises. If we put pressure on ILS vendors to begin providing new Web 2.0 type services, they most certainly will. They'll charge for it, you'll pay it and finally have RSS feeds, blogging functionality, whatever. Excuse me, but that's crap.

Let me use RSS as an example. RSS 1.0 was born December 2000. RSS 2.0 in September 2002. It's almost 2006 and ILS vendors are just now starting to unveil some RSS feeds. We shouldn't be treating those announcements like watershed moments. They're tidbits of “too-little-too-late” packaged in shiny wrappers, served with a helping of “Who's your Daddy?”

No, that's not ok. It's certainly not innovative. We need another model that will allow us to handle progress ourselves because we can not, must not, rely on our vendors. So what should we be asking them for? In the face of Web 2.0 advancements, what is something concrete to demand of vendors that will enable us to implement our own individual visions of Library 2.0 and prepare us for what comes after?

I envision a library Bill-of-Rights with four simple, but fundamental must-have's from your ILS.[25]

1) Open, read-only, direct access to the database.

When I say “open” I mean, we should be able to run any query at all against our own data, however absurd it

may be. “read-only” because I understand the need to protect data integrity, but no harm can come, whatsoever, from getting your own data out...

2) A full-blown, W3C standards-based API to all read-write functions

This is the big one, because all else stems from here. We ought to be able to access every level of functionality inside our automation system using an open standards API...

Given these tools, libraries would be empowered to roll out new services and features in their time-frame, not that of the vendor. Vendors could still (and should still) provide templates for the more popular features such as RSS, but we wouldn't be reliant on them....

3) The option to run the ILS on hardware of our choosing, on servers that we administer

We should have access to the machines that run our ILS. This does two things.

First, it ensures that we're not being taken advantage of. If vendors know that we can log in and install better alternatives to the software and hardware they are reselling us (I'm thinking backup software in particular), they might be less apt to screw us with our pants on.

Second, it gives us the flexibility to run software locally doing tasks that we might not otherwise be able to do, such as cron jobs that parse logs, data files, etc....

4) High security standards

I've made no secret of the fact that I think library infosec is unacceptable. Vendors need to step up now, review their best practices, and implement some very radical changes to the way they're handling everything from roll-outs to patches to access protocols....

Looking at this list of four fundamentals, I'm thinking, “this is as basic as it gets.” This is not shoot-for-the-moon stuff. Yet, if conceded these features, we'd be given all the tools we need to permanently change the way we adapt to emerging trends.

I quote that much for two reasons: Because it connects the Library 2.0 discussions so far with the vendor vector to come, and because (as modified in later posts) I believe Blyberg is pretty much on the money.

This Bill of Rights presumes that there *will* be an ILS or its modular equivalent in the library—that librarians can and should build new functionality on the basis of in-house databases, not by attempting to turn everything into a web service (although much of the functionality may be delivered as web services).

Talis responded to this post. Blyberg's comment on Talis' response, which you should read directly at [www.blyberg.net/2005/11/24/talis-responds-to-bill-of-rights/](http://www.blyberg.net/2005/11/24/talis-responds-to-bill-of-rights/), does not back down on the four key rights. I

find one of Talis' (Richard Wallis') comments particularly interesting:

Personally I am hoping that eventually we will be able to run an ILS appliance (a bit like the Google appliance) where you don't know, or care, what OS or database is under the hood.[26]

The black box integrated library system? I'm not sure that would be a good thing, even it was feasible.

On December 15, Blyberg posted “Library 2.0: The road ahead”—and again, it's long and thoughtful enough that you should read it directly. (Substitute “/12/13/library-20-the-road-ahead/” for the string beginning “/11/24” above.) Blyberg admits Library 2.0 may not be the right label but finds it convenient. He does want an ideological framework—and says “a concise definition of ‘Library 2.0’ is not going to happen[27].” I've seen enough definitions to suggest an alteration: At this point, a concise definition *should* not happen.

Discussing impediments, Blyberg focuses on vendors and the lack of coders in most libraries, with secondary mention of old-timers who may find this stuff threatening. He recognizes the need to discuss “in detail, what types of features and services we want to offer under the auspices of L2” and suggests a clearinghouse—and goes on to look for Library 2.0 to reach “a critical mass within the next two years[28].” He calls it an evolution but also a movement; he talks about a new culture, then says “We can be a part of it, or we can be relics.[29]” Is any library that hasn't adopted “Library 2.0” a relic? Is the “new culture” replacing existing cultures rather than adding to them? I may be the wrong person to answer those questions.

Here's part of a short post from December 24, 2005: “Ironically, one of the major misunderstandings of Library 2.0 is the perception that it's Web 2.0 technologies adapted for libraries (most likely due to its nomenclature).” Since Blyberg focuses on so-called Web 2.0 technologies in his December 15 post, and since other commentators have explicitly used Web 2.0 as the basis for Library 2.0, it's easy to see how this misunderstanding can arise.

The most confrontational statement I've seen from John Blyberg came in response to Michael Stephens' attempt to answer Steve Lawson's comment (at the end of the Michael Stephens section):

I'd say that it would be hard to argue that anything that challenges the traditional approach to conducting library business is not considered L2[57]. At its heart, L2 is a fundamental and far-reaching shift in business strategy. So yes, coffee carts, gaming, “rocking the shelves,” and anything else new and exciting that is counterintui-

tive to the library stereotype should be considered Library 2.0.

Library 2.0 is all about *challenging* traditional library approaches? Even if those library practices are successful? Maybe so, but that increases the confrontation and weakens any philosophical approach—particularly if *anything different* is “Library 2.0.”

## Talis (several individuals)

Talis is a UK library automation vendor. In addition to Talis’ own blog, a Talis-sourced article appeared in the October 2005 *Ariadne* ([www.ariadne.ac.uk/issue45/miller](http://www.ariadne.ac.uk/issue45/miller)) and a Talis white paper appeared in November 2005. Talis people have been commenting at length on other blog posts related to Library 2.0.

“Web 2.0: Building the new library,” the *Ariadne* piece, is an informal exploration of “the recent buzz around the concept around ‘Web 2.0’” in which Paul Miller (“Technology Evangelist” at Talis) “asks what it means for libraries and related organisations.”

Early on, there’s a big bubble chart from Tim O’Reilly, “Web 2.0 Meme Map.” It’s one I could spend lots of time critiquing, particularly since some of it seems to take old concepts and rename them as part of the Hot New Thing. Best example: The so-called Long Tail, a known characteristic of magazine and book publishing and library circulation for decades, but somehow Brand New because a *Wired* editor gave it a name and proclaimed it to be a brand-new web phenomenon. Others: Blogs are “participation, not publishing,” which I regard as pure nonsense—particularly for blogs with comments disabled, which are *nothing but publishing*. Users “control your own data”—which will surprise those who look at the privacy policies for new services carefully. At least one seems mysterious: “Data as the ‘Intel Inside.’” I’m not a big O’Reilly reader, so chalk this down to ignorance.

I’m going to pass on this one, partly because RLG has a partnership with Talis, partly because I’m not that familiar with the UK scene, although I know that public libraries seem to be doing poorly there as compared to the U.S. I think you should **go read the article**. I agree that Web 2.0 is “a convenient label” (and wonder whether it’s anything more than that). I find it interesting that Talis asserts it is “actively involved in understanding *and shaping* Web 2.0.” (Emphasis added.)

The *Ariadne* article serves as a prequel to *Do libraries matter? The rise of Library 2.0*, the November white paper by Paul Miller and Ken Chad (Talis’ ex-

ecutive director). Ignoring for the moment the confrontational title, here’s the executive summary:

The library’s information provider crown is slipping. Justifiably or not, today libraries are increasingly viewed as outdated, with modern, Internet-based services, such as Amazon and Google, looking set to inherit the throne.

Even so, at Talis, we believe that there is plenty of life left in the library yet.

This survival[31] demands change though. Inevitably, as the world advances, the library must also evolve and begin to deliver its services in the ways that its modern users expect.

Library 2.0 is a concept of a very different library service that operates according to the expectations of today’s library users. In this vision, the library makes information available wherever and whenever the user requires it.

At times, realising this vision will be tough. But we believe it will also be exciting and fulfilling. In the end, we hope it will be proof that the library really does continue to matter.[30]

Libraries can’t lose a “throne” they’ve *never had*, but I’ve already beaten that one to death. As for confrontational, the white paper puts “survival” right in the summary. “Modern users” and “today’s library users” are ill defined but apparently entirely different from those who, you know, *use libraries* and consider them relevant even as collections of books and other media and associated services.

This isn’t a long paper (seven pages after the summary), nor is it hard to find. My red marks are so extensive that I’m ignoring most of them—but not all. Take this bit: “A person could easily be forgiven for believing that ordering a book from the comfort of their own home, and having it delivered straight to their door within just a few days, is less hassle than a trip to the local library.... With information now so freely available, particularly through the Internet, do libraries really matter?” Maybe leaving your home is a tribulation in the UK, but the idea that waiting several days *and paying for a book* is “less hassle” than driving to the local library to get books for free strikes me as astonishing...as does citing online book *purchasing* as an example of “information...so freely available.” Does “free” mean something different in the UK?

Reports of the library’s demise have been greatly exaggerated then. Yet, the staggering success of sites such as Amazon and Google has shown that, to meet the expectations of the modern world, libraries do have to change quite dramatically.

Maybe this paragraph makes logical sense to you. To me, the second sentence is pure non sequitur. The next paragraph discusses the limitations of services available “at a physical building.” Later, we’re told that the Web appears “almost totally free” and does not require “the traditional up-front charge”—unlike, you know, the \$5 you pay before they’ll let you in the library. Are ISPs charitable organizations in the UK, providing free connections? Do people log on for free?

We’re told “Google and the Open Access movement are challenging the publishing model for books and journals,” which in the case of Google and books is simply false. We’re told that Kids These Days (my words) demand “they have a right to use, modify, and pass on content with which they come into contact”—through a self-citing footnote to a post that establishes Miller as a “KTD are mutants” believer: “The Digital Natives don’t think like us.”

Later, Miller *disputes* the idea that OPACs are free to access and use. “This is not really the case, though” because libraries pay for data and systems. This is absurd: *Every* service that’s free at point of use is paid for by somebody somewhere. Amazon isn’t free: It survives because people buy stuff. Google isn’t free: It survives because people click on ads. Open Access journals are not, in general, done entirely on a charitable basis. OPACs are *precisely* as free at point of use as the web—except that no subscription is required.

We’re told Amazon and Google establish “a complete transformation of the software market,” a claim that Microsoft and others may find exaggerated. Sure, Microsoft’s looking toward *also* providing network-based applications—but don’t expect Word and Excel to be “transformed” out of existence any day soon.

This paper continually repeats Amazon and Google, Amazon and Google, Amazon and Google, as though the two were comparable and the only things worth mentioning. (Yahoo! now owns two of the hottest social-software properties. Are they still Web 1.0, as one commentator had it?) Amazon is an online store network with interesting added capabilities. Google is an ad-supported search engine with interesting added capabilities. Neither replaces libraries or intends to.

Now we get the description of “the new application model”—and it’s one in which “there is no need to buy and install hardware, operating systems, databases, and application servers.[32]” You’re going to run your library’s circulation systems, acquisitions systems, and online catalog—separately or as an inte-

grated system—*without databases and servers*. How? That’s not spelled out, but apparently all you need is a “web browser running on a simple PC connected to the Internet.” Where does the data reside? Not spelled out—but in my heart of hearts, I believe there must be databases, operating systems, and servers *somewhere*, and that using that nasty old hardware and software somewhere else won’t be any more free than today’s library systems.

After that, there are several paragraphs of Web 2.0 blather—this generation’s version of object-oriented programming, 25 years later. Components can be reused; applications can build on other applications; “mash-ups” can combine different components—and *anyone can do it!* “A moderately skilled individual can combine (‘mash-up’) these different components to quickly and easily create quite sophisticated applications.” And *it’s all free!*

“Put simply, libraries *must now begin to use* these Web 2.0 applications if they are to prove themselves to be just as relevant as other information providers, and start to deliver experiences that meet the modern user’s expectations.” (Emphasis added.) There it is: “Modern users” are those who assume everything’s free and do everything on the web—the “permaconnected,” as John Blyberg puts it.

The last three pages offer Talis’ view of “the principles of Library 2.0” (already quoted earlier). The expansions are interesting and UK-centric. Apparently Talis believes the UK should have a “truly national library offering” instead of the “highly fragmented offering” currently available. In the U.S., I suspect local public libraries (and their communities) *value* their localization and would oppose being swept into a national library. A demo shows library holdings being “integrated into” Amazon or eBay—but that pervasiveness only works if users decide they should go to Amazon via a library portal or are using a library toolbar. Is Amazon anxious to inform would-be book purchasers that their library has the book they seek?

A bit later, the writers seem to suggest “a single global (and free) library catalogue,” and go on to assert (indirectly) that monopoly is preferable to competition. We’re told none of the existing systems “offer *any meaningful service* to a population of end users.[33]” That’s quite a statement. Instead, we must have One World Catalogue. Somehow, this aids the “democratisation of information”—again, to my mind, self-contradictory, as monopolies do not generally improve democracy.

The following paragraph says a lot—in that the authors felt it appropriate to include it:

A great many libraries today may be regarded as serving an ageing and diminishing segment of society. They are faded, shabby; a home for musty books. Although certainly not justified, in a world of Google and Amazon, libraries may be perceived to be irrelevant.

Google and Amazon, arbiters of relevance. Libraries as homes for “musty books.” Sad.

As I read the white paper, it *appears* to call for truly open library systems and APIs. Which makes the interchange with John Blyberg a bit ironic: When push comes to shove, the people at Talis are *not* willing to agree libraries should have open read-only access to *the library's own database*, for example.

These two papers struck me as odd, albeit clear in asserting that “Library 2.0” is basically Web 2.0 with a different first word. Lengthy comments on other Library 2.0 postings suggest that Talis is taking a proprietary interest in “Library 2.0,” urging people to respond to their ideas rather than adding Talis’ contributions to a broader librarian-centered discussion.

I’ve already discussed Michael Stephens’ response to the white paper, an uncritical bit of cheerleading and bandwagon building. Comments attached to that post are more critical. Laura Savastinuk says, “A company dedicated to making money from libraries should be viewed with some caution when they begin touting an idea, which at its core is one of openness and defined by free services, as their own brainstorm... Ultimately, Library 2.0 should be defined and shaped by librarians and library users.” (I’m relieved I’m not the only one who felt that Talis seemed to be suggesting “Library 2.0” was its own brainstorm.)

Then there’s Paul Miller’s marathon single-paragraph 700-word comment, defending Talis, establishing that he’s one of the New Guard (“There are an awful lot of our colleagues who are firmly rooted in the world of Library 1.0, and who do not even realise that something better is possible”), and *taking issue* with the idea that librarians and library users should shape Library 2.0! “Of course library staff and library users should be involved in shaping the future of the library and the services it provides. But so should those companies that truly care about the library.[34]”

Miller also claims the white paper “was not an attempt to capture, subvert and dominate the current Library 2.0 meme. Rather, it was a contribution to an ongoing debate.” Two things wrong with that: First, there hadn’t been any apparent “debate” as of Novem-

ber 21, as opposed to assertions and bandwagon-building. Second, Miller’s stream of comments *seem* intent on focusing attention back to the white paper...which, notably, *never mentions* any other progenitors of Library 2.0 notions, any more than did the *Ariadne* article. That article’s footnotes aren’t quite Harnadian in the extent of their self-citation, but ten of 13 library-related footnotes are Talis sources, and none of the other early Library 2.0 people is mentioned. One does not optimally contribute to an ongoing discussion by citing only yourself.

“To quote Laura again, ‘A company dedicated to making money from libraries.’ I would rather describe us as ‘A company dedicated to providing the tools that enable libraries to do what they do.’” It reminds me of Microsoft’s “Your potential. Our passion” ads: Making money is just one of those side effects.

There’s this from Marc Webb: “I’m fascinated by this discussion of Library 2.0. What fascinates is the idea that anything presented in it is novel in the slightest. These ideas are the core of what librarians have been discussing for quite some time.[35]” To the extent that Library 2.0 is *not* just Web 2.0 with different wording, this is an awfully good point.

Talis people see it differently. Here’s a December 6, 2005 Paul Miller post on *panlibus*, a Talis staff blog: “The library 2.0 debate—a call to arms.” *A call to arms?* (And it’s still “debate,” not “discussion.”)

The Library 2.0 term is proving a valuable focus for discussion around the next generation services from which current and potential library users might benefit, the services that libraries might offer, and the new ways in which library system vendors such as Talis could and should engage with a range of current and future stakeholders in helping to make more of this real...

Library 2.0 is *not* a Talis-only thing. To work, it never could be.

We didn’t invent the term, Michael Casey did. He doesn’t work for us yet.

We do, however, recognise its value in providing a convenient hook upon which to hang a range of related debates, and with which to drive forward the fundamental changes that we believe are required in library systems and the ways in which online library services are made available. Our white paper is one contribution to this evolving discussion, but Library 2.0 underpins everything that we are seeking to do as we transform both the company and the services it offers....

[Skipping paragraphs about vendor roles]

So, to get to the point, Talis is actively contributing to this (and other) debates. A number of the biblioblo-



gosphere's A List are also weighing in with thoughtful input.

To be blunt, though, where are the other ILS vendors? Do Sirsi/Dynix have a view, Stephen? Do any of the others, where there isn't even an engaged individual to ask? III? Endeavor? Ex Libris? VTLS? The rest?

Have any readers who said you wanted your vendors to contribute had any luck getting their thoughts?

Surely there can't be anything that these companies want to hide, and surely they must see the value of change (even if they agree that changing will be painful)?

Let's have the debate. Let's gather input from as many perspectives as possible. Let's be open and inclusive, and let's build something better.

At least here Talis disclaims credit for the name. Unfortunately, the last few paragraphs are a not-too-subtle slam at other library automation vendors for not being fully involved in a "debate" that hasn't really started, in a "movement" that amounts to a couple of dozen bloggers and Talis. The first paragraph is milder than the white paper's seeming statement that current libraries fail to provide any meaningful service, unless the implication is that only next-generation services should survive. The post also seems to center "Library 2.0" on library automation vendors and their services. Finally, there's that interesting comment about the "biblioblogosphere's A-List," a list that most people who might be part of it deny exists.

Portions of a January 6, 2006 *panlibus* post by Paul Miller, "Library 2.0, and a penchant for lists."

...Richard MacManus, a long-time proponent of Web 2.0, even wrote, back on 18 December, that "Web 2.0 is dead." He was arguing that the term itself has possibly outlived its usefulness and, whilst I have some sympathy for the underlying reasoning, I currently disagree and feel that both 'Web 2.0' and 'Library 2.0' continue to have value as convenient labels with which to associate a raft of important changes, some of which are radical, but many of which are little more than incremental.

The value lies in the sum of the parts, not in any single thing, and the labels serve to draw those many parts—those small pieces, loosely coupled—together. The importance for Library 2.0 is that it is all happening now...

Broadly: People can reach content over fast networks, via connections that never close; People can create content, using affordable and accessible software and hardware; People want to reuse content, and are challenging the barriers erected in their way; Content can be shared, technically, and appropriate rights can be respected; Functionality can be delivered at the point of need, rather than languishing within a single system; New ap-

plications can be built quickly, easily, and cheaply, leveraging existing components and data; A growing number of content curators want to share.

Personally, I am increasingly of the opinion that we are wasting our time trying to nail down concrete definitions of either Web 2.0 or Library 2.0. Neither is a concrete thing to be narrowly scoped, and the landscape within which both reside is in flux, rendering anything but the most vague definition obsolete soon after it is agreed. We help no one if we conduct flame wars over whether or not some new capability, or some alternative perspective, fits within a definition that was cast in stone far sooner than it should have been.

I think we do understand what Library 2.0 is about (and that it's more than technology!). Of course, some people give more emphasis to some areas than others, and I might personally question the Library 2.0-ness of an X-Box in a library, but consensus does appear to be evolving around participation, openness, the value of the Platform, taking content and services to people rather than expecting people to come to them, and more.

Although certainly not the genesis of the term, our November white paper did play a role in stimulating the current debate. We shall be releasing a revised version shortly, which will hopefully have a similar part to play in moving us to the next level.

I note that both Michael Stephens and Walt Crawford are inviting comments on Library 2.0 and, whilst both should of course have given me a call (!), it will certainly be interesting to see what sort of material they receive.

How to deal with this? It seems to be a vision of Library 2.0 as being for the permaconnected—and the permaconnected as important enough that any institution not catering to them will be "consigned to expensive obscurity" until it's shut down. "People" in the third paragraph is surely true of some people—and largely irrelevant to *most* people (I believe). Somehow, we're expected to sign up for a crusade without agreeing on the *meaning* of the crusade. Once again, this isn't and shouldn't be a "debate"—it should be a series of discussions.

Finally, while Talis disclaims origination of "Library 2.0," Miller seems to think Talis holds such a special place in the discussion that it's appropriate to make that suggestion in the final paragraph—even in jest. This is of a kind with his attempt to shame other library vendors into assuming that a term tossed about by Talis and a few dozen bloggers should be their highest priority for public discussion.

---

## Other Voices

I couldn't come up with a reasonable organizing principle for the thirty-odd commentaries in this section. Chronological didn't cut it. Gathering all those who seemed to hold one perspective seemed artificial and seemed to turn a discussion into an oddly disjunctive debate. Separating out "new voices" (responses to my blog call and email that haven't previously been public) also seemed artificial.

When all else fails, alphabetize. But I'm alphabetizing "online-style"—by first name. There's still not a logical flow of commentary between sections, but I don't think *any* arrangement would have created such a flow. Items marked "(new)" have not previously appeared (except in some cases as comments at *Walt at random*). I did make one exception to the first-name alphabetic sequence for a pseudonymous post that seemed appropriate as a closing gesture.

### Aaron Schmidt at *walking paper*

"[G]etting out there" (November 25, 2005) does not use the term "Library 2.0" directly. The post is about social software and its potential for libraries, offering some good reasons to consider them: They're fun, cheap and easy; "Internal utility" (the tools can be useful for library staff; "leadership" (promoting the library's web presence and instructing users); and "reputation"—the reputation of libraries in general.

Schmidt's list of tools librarians should be trying is long, but he isn't viewing this as a "you must" situation. "Panacea? No, of course not. A step in the right direction? Yes."

### Angel at *The gypsy librarian*

Angel finds himself "caught in the middle" in a December 6, 2005 post and a December 7 followup. He notes Meredith Farkas' discussion (see under Meredith Farkas) and takes a different tack:

I don't think the whole issue is so much that the Web 2.0 advocates don't defend the concept. I think they actually defend it very well. In fact, they do so a bit too well. That may be part of the problem. At times, the advocates seem to say you are with us or against us[43]. They say you should be doing X or Y and wonder why the rest of us don't see it as self-evident. The ones who think it is hype only seem to get their suspicions that it is all hype confirmed. The nature of the conversation has been confrontational from the start. I am sure the 2.0 advocates did not intend it that way, but by taking

an attitude of "this is best, here is why, and you will fall behind if you don't adopt (or adapt)," it just makes others question and say "oh, really?"

Angel has mixed feelings—but is concerned by "the attitude of join us or be square." He discusses the difference between hot ideas and working them out. He notes that we rarely hear about failures and that advocates haven't convinced or educated others very well. While he's all for collaboration, better service and access, and openness, "I don't assume...every library has to have every new 2.0 toy or gadget. What may work for you may not work for me." Angel labels himself as Generation X. He's *not* an old fogey waiting to retire. He sees the need for "a true conversation" and wants to see more bridges.

The followup provides more insights on the impact of labeling (generational or otherwise) and the difficulty of finding a middle way on confrontational issues. It's good reading. I suggest reading both posts in sequence.

### Bill Drew at *Baby boomer librarian*

One interesting aspect of "Library 2.0" is that, other than the Talus version, most prime movers have been *public* librarians. "Academic libraries and Library 2.0," posted November 28, 2005, takes Michael Stephens' seven principles of Library 2.0 and tests them against Drew's academic library, SUNY Morrisville. Drew buys into most of the needs, thinks Morrisville is doing well on some and wonders how to do better on user participation, and believes it's impossible to use flexible, best-of-breed systems "without lots of money or real changes in perspectives"—after all, an academic library really *can't* just scrap its integrated library system. He's convinced that Morrisville "encourages the heart" and does well on "the library is human" and "recognizes that its users are human too." The kicker comes in the final paragraph:

Many of the ideas considered part of Library 2.0 have actually been part of best practices for libraries for many years. The new technology just gives us new tools to do more and to do better.[48]

For Drew, most of the principles aren't new. In that sense, "Library 2.0" is truly all technology.

### Brian Smith at *Laughing Librarian (new)*

Didn't Library 2.0 really happen decades ago, when libraries started buying the books that people wanted to read, in addition to "books that are good for you"? As far as I can tell, that's what the Library 2.0 boils down to:

being user-driven, saving the user's time. Not exactly new ideas.

"Library 2.0" is just a faddish catchphrase[59]. Ignore it, because it'll be gone in 6 months. The only things labeled "2.0" with which library folks need to be concerned are pencils. And maybe RSS feeds.

Smith isn't dissing the concepts—just the bandwagon and the "newness."

### Casey Bisson at *MaisonBisson*

"Library 2.0?" on December 2, 2005 says, "Library 2.0 isn't about software, it's about libraries. It's about the evolution of all of our services to meet the *needs* of our users." After some discussion of photography and painting, Bisson comes to this conclusion:

We have two choices. We can continue to operate by the old rules and hope that we find wealthy patrons to support us as symbols of the wealth and refinement of our communities. But, if we look hard, I think we'll find that we can apply the core values of librarianship to current technologies and new service models, and rather than becoming a sort of art, we will be valued for serving the needs of our communities.[49]

If anyone objects to my word "confrontational" to describe some Library 2.0 advocates, read this post twice. Bisson appears to say libraries operating by "the old rules" (anything other than Library 2.0?) are nothing more than "symbols of the wealth and refinement of our communities"—only Library 2.0 will allow libraries to serve community needs. That presumably means the *entire* community. He seems to suppose that *everybody* uses web-based tools for all information interactions and does not consider checking out books and media, storytelling, reference or other current services "serve the needs of our communities." I find that astonishing and unsupportable. It flies in the face of all those communities that pass tax overrides and bond issues to build physical libraries and book collections, even though most of the librarians involved don't promise that all will become Library 2.0: Surely those communities can't all be made up of "wealthy patrons"?

Since, in a later post, Bisson dismisses qualms about the term "Library 2.0" with a simple "So what," maybe I just don't understand the subtlety of his declaration that libraries don't serve their communities with existing services.

### Charles W. Bailey, Jr. at *DigitalKoans* (new)

Blogs, tagging, Wikis, oh my! Whether "Library 2.0" truly transforms libraries' Web presence or not, one

thing is certain: the participative aspect of 2.0 represents a fundamental, significant change.

Why? Because we will ask patrons to become content creators, not just content consumers. And they will be interacting with each other, not just with the library. This will require what some have called "radical trust," meaning who knows what they will do or say, but the rich rewards of collective effort outweigh the risks.

Or so the theory goes. Recent Wikipedia troubles suggest that all is not peaches and cream in Web 2.0 land. But, no one can deny (ok, some can) that participative systems can have enormous utility far beyond what one would have thought. Bugaboos, such as intellectual property violations, libel, and fiction presented as fact, of course, remain, leading to liability and veracity concerns that result in nagging musings over control issues. And it all is mixed in a tasty stew of promise and potential danger. This is a trend worth keeping a close eye on.

I added paragraph breaks.

### David King at *dave's blog*

"Why Library 2.0?" (December 8, 2005) notes some of the other posts, "how it's about serving our customers, how it's not about technology, etc." As to Library 2.0 not being about technology, King says "yes and no." The "No" part is striking:

Technology is really just one of many tools to get at the heart of library 2.0, which is CHANGE. Libraries haven't really changed for A LONG TIME. And now we are changing in a big way. Our missions have changed, our collection development policies have changed, our staffing has changed, our primary services are changing, the formats of materials that we own and loan—changing.

If you believe that your library and many others have been changing all along, you might take issue with this—and might wonder just how the fundamental library mission has changed.

The "Yes" part is that it's all partly technology, spelled out in some detail. Here's King's take on current library technology and what "our patrons"—presumably *all* "our patrons," at least in Kansas City—are doing and expect:

Of course Library 2.0 is all about technology[53]. But not technology for technology's sake. Not technology like silly, archaic, doesn't-really-make-sense-to-anyone-outside-the-library-world automation systems. The technology I'm talking about goes back to the concept of meeting your customers where they already are. Our patrons are using web 2.0 services. They are using cell phones. They are gaming, IM'ing, chatting. they are consuming digital content. And we as libraries need to be there, if we want to meet and greet our patrons.

If *everyone* in Kansas City—or even a majority—uses web 2.0 services, games, IMs, and will only use li-

brary services that work that way then it's a lot more up to date than I imagined and makes Mountain View look like a technological backwater by comparison.

### Eli Edwards at *Confessions of a mad librarian* (new)

The concepts of Library 2.0 are thrilling and intriguing and exciting. Better OPACs and ILs, patron-centered services, making and keeping libraries at the forefront of communities—yes. I can't help to wonder that these are things we should be striving for, should **have been** striving for a long time and continuing to strive for, regardless of whether there's new language, new tools or new expectations.

Does using the language and tools of Library 2.0 help us achieve this faster and more fluidly? I hope so. And as in many other things, balance seems to be key for successful implementation: we cannot afford to leave users behind if we truly want to be leading institutions in our communities. Moreover, we should not be distracted by internecine battles over which generation is in charge and which sides are "fetishists."

Resources are scarce in many environments and quite a few workers are wary (and weary) of new ideas that seem to require time and labor away from their already burdened schedules and backlogs. But I hope that if library workers and info pros cooperate in maximizing their resources and appreciate the needs of all of the stakeholders in their libraries, our institutions and the discipline of librarianship can avoid the wild pendulum swings of short-sighted boosterism for change and equally myopic phobia of such change, whether we're talking about electronic catalogs, comic books and videos in the library, remote reference, or microfilm replacing print archives.

I added paragraph breaks and changed orthography slightly. I particularly like the comment about wild pendulum swings: As important as change can be (and always has been), change for change's sake serves no one well.

### Jessamyn West at *librarian.net* (new)

Library 2.0 is about taking the ISAR [information storage and retrieval] system that we learned about in library school—complete with feedback systems and improvements and changes based on feedback—into providing patrons with service that allows for more patron-staff interaction, more non-mediated patron-library content interaction, and more interactivity and openness in the library generally.

Technology allows us many more ways to carve up and provide access to specialized subsets of data. This can be as basic as keyword searching to pick out the books about Mozambique in the library to create a display, or

providing IM reference to patrons who use IM. Businesses use this to make their products and services easier to use for the wired generations. Libraries can be using this to provide better, more customizable services that not only offer content to patrons but allow them to help create and modify that content. I love to curl up with a good book also, but books don't have to go away just because you can IM with your librarian or create podcasts @ your library.

I see it as a more intensive way of sharing all the resources that the library already offers[62].

See also West's definition and comments elsewhere.

### Laura Crossett at *lis.dom*

Crossett posted "low tech library 2.0" on January 4, 2006. It's an alternative take on the principles of (some variants of) Library 2.0, within the physical space of the library and on no real budget:

Michael Stephens reiterates that library 2.0 is more than technology, to which, I imagine, some of us are saying, "Well, thank goodness!" Not all of us have us have huge budgets to send people to conferences or the space/time/staff support/equipment to hold DDR nights or coworkers who are hip to (or interested in being hip to) the latest hot tags on del.icio.us. Many of us are still operating in .98 beta.

But does that mean we can't use any of the principles of library 2.0? (Which, as many others have pointed out, are not so different from the principles of Ranganathan). No. This, then, is my inaugural post for a series on low tech library 2.0. I've been trying to come up with more ways for YA patrons to contact me. Since we don't have a YA space in the library—just some bookshelves and a bulletin board—and since I work in the children's room, out of sight from the YA shelves, I don't see them very often. Since my library doesn't allow IM, they can't IM me. Since many of our patrons don't have home internet access, IM and e-mail wouldn't be an option for them anyway. So I went with a very old-fashioned idea. Pictured above...are some of the most recent suggestions that have come into the suggestion envelope I put on an empty slot near the YA magazines as another way for the YA patrons to communicate with me. How is this L2.0?

It's where the patrons are—literally. There is a suggestion box up near the front of the library, and there's an electronic one buried in the library catalog (which I can't link to directly, since the catalog runs on sessions). Neither of these are very user-friendly, nor are they where teens congregate.

It's as anonymous or as open as the user wants.

It's interactive—I post responses to the requests (e.g., "Okay, the first few volumes of Ceres Celestial Legend are in my next book order. The latest in the Alice series is Alice On Her Way, which we own, and there's a new

one called Alice in the Know coming out in a few months, which I'll definitely get.")

It's my attempt to connect in some way with patrons and to make them feel that they have some connection with the library and with "their" librarian.

Service-oriented librarianship, interacting with users and showing that their thoughts are being heard: Great library service. Library 2.0? Not really—just great, innovative library service suitable to the setting and the need.

### Luke Rosenberger at *lbr* & *The gordian knot*

Rosenberger's January 6, 2006 *The gordian knot* post notes my call and finds that he couldn't cope with the 200 word limit:

Web 2.0 is the end of the one-way diatribe that was a vestige of Mass Marketing in the Mass Media age—Web 2.0 is about building a platform for a conversation where the voices and information flow freely. Some industry pundits have taken to using the term "read-write web" to express this idea. To me, Library 2.0 is about crossing that same threshold—from the library as a one-way conversation to the "read-write library." What does that mean?

In Library 1.0, the resources, the authorities, the information we managed lived on the shelves, between the pages, or behind a login that we knew and managed. Knowledge came down off the shelf, we checked it out to the patron, they took it home & digested it, and they brought it back so someone else could benefit from it. In Library 2.0, however, the content and information we manage is just as likely to come from the patrons themselves. Sure, back in Library 1.0 we were more than happy to include manuscripts and published works by local authors and researchers in our local history collections; in some adventurous libraries, we even collected 'zines. But we didn't have a way to actually provide a platform for our patrons to publish their own ideas, thoughts, and experiences—they had to find the means on their own. Now it's different—now we do have the means, and if we take seriously our professional mission to collect and preserve the collective knowledge and experience of our communities, we may very well start considering it a responsibility. Library 2.0 should be for us, in part, what StoryCorps has been for radio—we offer our communities the tools, the hosting, the infrastructure, and they bring the stories for us and others to learn from. The examples that are out there already are inspiring: Ann Arbor District Library has pictureAnnArbor, whose "mission is to gather, capture and share information and images that reflect everyday life in our community." The Western Springs History site built by Thomas Ford Memorial Library and the Western Springs Historical Society is another example, which reminds me of a story I heard of a UK library that made a major project of encouraging its patrons to build a comprehen-

sive local history of the area—inside Wikipedia (anybody out there remember the place?)

A few academic libraries have dipped their toes in this water by beginning to establish themselves as institutional repositories, but that's just a start. This is pretty scary stuff, of course, because it upsets the roles we have developed so carefully. We can't do "collection development" on a blog that we host for a patron or community organization—because we have no idea what that patron might write in the future. What if it's something controversial? Will we be forced to ask that patron to take down "inappropriate" material, or will we stand up to pressure and defend the citizen's right to post that material on library webspace? And our usual circ statistics certainly won't give any indication of all this information exchange between our patrons. But the change—the participation of our patrons—goes even further...

In Library 1.0, we professionals did the cataloguing. We decided what subject headings and classification would apply to our materials. In Cataloguing 2.0, however, we invite our users to tag materials with headings that have meaning for them. In Library 1.0, our tech services folks built, configured and ran the OPAC interface. If you wanted to use the OPAC, you came to our website and used it as we gave it to you. In Library 2.0, however, sharp patrons like Jon Udell and Edward Vielmetti build catalog interfaces that suit them—and then offer them up for others to use as well. We have no idea how you're interfacing with our system—an RSS feed from Library Elf, using our Z39.50 data in LibraryThing, using an IM bot to search from your mobile phone (like Makebot), or a custom tool like LibX.

Of course, in Library 1.0, we were happy to take patrons' suggestions. That was part of our outreach, our way of staying in touch with our community, going clear back to John Cotton Dana in 1896—we did surveys, we held focus groups, we assembled advisory committees, we posted suggestion boxes. Just make sure you submit your suggestion in triplicate and Library 1.0 will take it under advisement. But we never confused the suggestion box with the stacks—if the patrons had something to say, it went into the suggestion box, it wouldn't become part of the "collection." The collections and services of Library 2.0, on the other hand, are built by, built from, and built for patrons' own voices, images, video, audio, writings, needs, preferences, program code, scripting, ideas, and innovations.

...The bottom line is: to me, Library 2.0 is a conversation, where the information, expertise, knowledge, resources, and materials available are just as likely to come from the patrons as they are from the shelves. As librarians in this new environment, our goal should be to encourage the broadest possible participation in the "read-write library," using all the tools available to us (new or old), and continue to do what we do best—make connections between people and the information sources they need, whether those come from the shelves, from

their neighbors, from their ancestors, or from their children.

I find this fascinating and worth pursuing. I suspect Rosenberger agrees that patron-originated tagging (call it “folksonomy” if you wish) should enhance or work alongside professional cataloging rather than replacing it. I’m almost certain Rosenberger agrees that there needs to be a well-designed and constantly improving catalog interface for the huge number of patrons who *aren’t* about to roll their own—and that good library systems people will observe what pops up from “superpatrons” and use it to improve that default interface. I believe a lot of libraries have welcomed suggestions from patrons, not “submitted in triplicate,” but his point is taken.

I hope (and believe) Rosenberger recognizes that patron-originated materials do *not* replace collection development, but can certainly add to it and make the library more effective as a place where local culture is collected and preserved. I’ve always believed that good public (and academic) libraries should pay special attention to the records and ideas of their own communities. Using “Web 2.0” tools to make that operation more powerful is in the long tradition of library creativity and change.

If the first post I’d seen about Library 2.0 was Luke Rosenberger’s, I might be helping to build the bandwagon.

One caveat: Web 2.0 by no means ends mass media; it simply provides some great alternatives. TV isn’t going away, and neither are other mass media. Most people don’t really want to create or participate most of the time, I suspect. For most of us some of the time, for many of us most of the time, and for some of us all of the time, consumption is just what we want. The creative and participative minority is important; it’s still the minority.

## Lorcan Dempsey

As of this writing, Lorcan Dempsey hasn’t written about Library 2.0 as such; the one and only time that phrase appears (as of December 28, 2005) is as a link to a Ross Singer blog posting that is not, shall we say, supportive of the “Library 2.0 meme.”

Dempsey *has* discussed library possibilities that could be linked to “Web 2.0” and the like. I’ll point you to “Systems in the network world” from April 6, 2005 ([orweblog.oclc.org/archives/000622.html](http://orweblog.oclc.org/archives/000622.html)), a foundational discussion expanded on in later posts. I’m pointing rather than quoting simply because, as is

frequently the case, Dempsey’s writing is eloquent and rich with ideas and would suffer in the excerpting.

Jumping forward to December 18, 2005, skipping many highlights along the way, “On demand services...” wonders when we will see on-demand library systems, which could be one aspect of “Library 2.0.” To some extent, we already have: SerialsSolutions’ OpenURL resolver is only available as a “hosted” service, where the software and knowledge-bases reside at the vendor but appear as distinct locally branded instances. I’ve probably used a dozen different SerialsSolutions instances; they’re *quite* distinct, except for one common assumption that will disappear in the next release. As far as any library patron is concerned, the resolver is local software.

“Potential advantages are lower cost of ownership, less risk, and smoother and more frequent upgrades. Potential disadvantages include less local customization and flexibility.” I think that’s right. I also believe that it wouldn’t make sense for *all* library software to be on-demand, and I don’t believe Dempsey is suggesting such a radical change. “It may be that one reason we have not seen more on-demand solutions from existing library vendors is that running the two models together is difficult.” There’s more here and it’s worth reading.

## Mark Lindner at

### *...the thoughts are broken...*

Lindner thought about responding to my call, but didn’t because of my 200-word limit. Excerpts from “My 1<sup>st</sup> L2 comments” on January 4, 2006:

I added a comment to Sarah [Houghton]’s post which is a very succinct commentary on my views (so far) on Library 2.0. Here it is in its entirety, although I highly suggest you read Stephen, Sarah, and Michael’s posts, a) because they are good, and b) for context:

Were not bookmobiles, phone and email reference...a great leap forward for the profession? Was not the catalog card or even library hand for that matter? Our technologies will continue to evolve and they will change how we do things, as they always have. The main relevant question is “Why we do things?” Subsequent to that being answered come the questions of “How?” And that is what I see as mostly lacking in much of the current discussions. The “Why?”

I do agree that this may be a (recurrent) wakeup call for many within the profession, but I don’t see much new either, with one exception. Michael Casey quoted Dana from 1896 but he could have as easily [gone] to 1876, and earlier with a tad bit more difficulty.

The one main new thing I see is the ease of feedback to the field, and/or discussion *despite* the field, that goes on now.

One of my main complaints about this whole Library 2.0 meme...is the almost complete ahistoricity of much of its most proponents, and particularly the most ardent. Thus, I was completely enamored of Michael Casey for quoting Dana from 1896. [See under Michael Casey.]

I believe the historical links are emerging.

### **Meredith Farkas at *Information wants to be free***

A December 1, 2005 post, “Web/Library 2.0 backlash,” makes some points about the “argument”:

It’s interesting to watch the lack of dialogue between librarians who are rah-rah Web/Library 2.0 advocates and those who think it’s all a bunch of hot air. It’s like two parallel conversations, with no intersections between the two conversations. The pro-2.0 people don’t defend the concept and the anti-2.0 people don’t seem to acknowledge any legitimacy of the idea.

Farkas understands why people dislike “Web 2.0” and sees it as being “90% hype, especially when so many of the Web 2.0 products are not particularly useful and do the exact same thing.” To her, the good parts of Web 2.0 are *not* revolutionary. She’s not sure perpetual beta is a good thing—and feels “Web 2.0 is about putting out a lot of barely useful, half-finished applications in an attempt to capitalize on the foolishness of venture capitalists and other investors.”

She does not see Web 2.0 and Library 2.0 as being the same thing. “Library 2.0 is obviously not about making money; it’s about improving services to our patrons.[36]” After noting some *serious* talk, she says, “If a buzzword is going to get librarians to talk about this stuff, then I’m all for it.” On the other hand, a confrontational buzzword can stop some discussions cold—and her lead sentences suggest that this may be a problem with “Library 2.0” as a term.

She agrees the term is too vague and comes up with her own definition (in SEVEN DEFINITIONS). She apologizes in advance for “paradigm shift”—but the last sentence certainly sounds more transformational than additive, more confrontational than not. Ross (Singer?) notes in a comment, “My problem is not around the ideals that ‘Library 2.0’ is espousing. It’s hitching the wagon to the Web 2.0 hype that makes me leery... ‘Hype’ isn’t the way to bring them around to ‘our way of thinking.’ In fact, it’s a very dangerous dance. And THAT’S my criticism/apprehension [of] ‘Library 2.0’[38]”

“A clear vision for the future of your library” on December 12, 2005 shows Farkas still “not comfortable with” aspects of Library 2.0—and finding an epiphany of sorts from her second job as a therapist, where she found herself uncomfortable following the same model for all situations.

I know Library 2.0 isn’t a strict doctrine, but I’m still uncomfortable with doctrines in general. Libraries around the world are in such different places—in terms of technology, their population, and the needs of their population. There are libraries out there that still don’t even have an ILS. What does social software and the usability of library middleware mean to a library with a card catalog and no Web site? To them, improving services may mean building a Spanish-language collection to meet the needs of a growing immigrant population. Or it may mean raising money for a bookmobile. What if they’re in a rural area with a largely elderly population. Do those patrons want the same things that patrons at the Chicago Public Library want? Do we really need a Library 2.0 or do we just need to make our libraries as usable as possible and meet the needs of our service population?[39]

She then asks the “miracle question”: “If a miracle occurred one night and all of the problems with your library were gone (or we miraculously reached library 2.0 overnight), how would you know that a miracle had occurred? What would be different? What would the library be like?” She suggests answering that question—finding that vision—will help you build a “clear roadmap for reaching your goal.” Would that goal be anything that the people mentioned so far would recognize as Library 2.0? If it was not, would it matter? I would add one more question: What new problems would there be? After all, it’s almost universally true that new solutions bring new problems.

### **Michael A. Golrick at *Thoughts from a library administrator***

Golrick cites the Talis white paper as starting it all, in “Library 2.0—Does it disenfranchise those who need us most?[45]” posted December 19, 2005. He agrees with some of the philosophy—and sits there as City Librarian “in a community which has computers in only slightly more than half of the households.” What will the rest of the households do with all the “Library 2.0” tools? Are they disenfranchised—put in a situation where the permaconnected get *superior* library service as compared to traditional library users?

He notes that his library *already* meets many of the Library 2.0 principles (as do many other public libraries) including user participation and flexibility.

He believes “most libraries...do a spectacular job of getting incredible value for the resources we expend.” He wants to be sure “the regulars” aren’t disadvantaged by the rush to new approaches. And he believes “some of the thinkers...forget about the real-world issues which so many library administrators face.” In a followup the next day, he notes Meredith Farkas’ piece, saying she “asks all the right questions,” and comes to his own conclusion for now:

I’m open to suggestions for more to read about Library 2.0, but at the moment, I still think that all that Library 2.0 is about is customer service. Library 2.0 simply focuses on the technology end of customer service without any discussion of the other aspects of library work[45].

Michael Stephens posted an extended conversation with Golrick in a January 5, 2006 *ALA TechSource* post. It’s **worth reading** on its own, but I’ll cite a few of Golrick’s comments (one of Stephens’ comments appears in his section).

Back in the late 1980s, customer service became the buzz in library land. As I noted before, at the heart of L2 is excellent customer service. The one thing that’s different is technology may be the way to deliver service to a SEGMENT (not all) of the new generation....

What I worry about is choosing to focus on one group of users to the exclusion of others. ..[W]hat about those who lack technology? What about those who lack language skills? How are we going to serve those users? The public library movement has its roots in acculturating immigrant groups. We need to continue that role, because the immigrants are certainly coming. In my city’s school system, there are about seventy-two different languages spoken as the primary language at home. That is a challenge. How does the technology vision of L2 help libraries to meet that challenge? I’m not really sure. I do know that it is a challenge that my library needs to continue to meet...

Technology is a tool. It is a tool that is not going to go away. You do not have to “like it” or even “get it” as long as there are library staff members who do. Am I as good at technology as I was even five years ago, never mind fifteen years ago? No, but I understand the big concepts, and know when to ask for help.

There’s more, all of it good. It’s clear that Golrick is not opposed to the ideas behind “Library 2.0.” He does make an interesting point, one ignored by some Library 2.0 advocates: It really isn’t necessary for *every* librarian to “get it” as long as some of them do—and as long as it’s possible to achieve change when change is appropriate.

## Morgan Wilson at *explodedlibrary*

“Why I don’t like these labels” (December 5, 2005) doesn’t represent opposition to some of the ideas:

If I think about the individual applications and services which tend to be associated with this technology, I can say that like Fiona on her *Blisspax* blog, I use a lot of them and generally appreciate what they can do.

My main issue is with the 2.0 labels themselves. Why is it necessary to lump all these disparate things together? After all many of them pre-date the popularity of the 2.0 labels and they did ok before this started. I think being labelled with a contrived 2.0 term actually detracts from what each one of these ideas has to offer[51].

What I really object to is the language suggesting that Web 2.0 (or Library 2.0) is a revolution which people must either believe in entirely or be a clueless luddite. No, I would rather pick and choose. After all, isn’t that one of the common threads in all this technology—empowering people to pick and choose?

Wilson also notes that the backlash isn’t coming from neo-Luddites; it’s coming from people who may use the technology but are sick of the hype. He also notes that “Web 2.0” will run its course as a term, at which point “Library 2.0 is going to look ridiculously 2005 and librarians will look daggy [it’s an Australian blog] for embracing it.”

Marketing libraries is important and necessary—but this Library 2.0 concept is the wrong message at the wrong time [52]... [While some of the concepts are good things], it’s just got the wrong name—actually any name at all causes more harm than good.

## Dr. Oliver Obst, Universität Münster (new)

In my opinion Library 2.0 could be a great step forward to a more user centered library. Because it enables the user to add the value by himself and get rid of the library. This means cataloging, filtering, searching, teaching, homepages by the user for the user. This could release staff for other tasks.

There’s no need for face-to-face interactions. Things like RSS or Weblogs or Tagging can free people from interacting with real persons (if they like so). It can enable them to create their own library catalog and interact with other patrons by tagging records and sharing usage patterns.

Assume that “get rid of the library” results from a German-to-English misunderstanding—and then consider whether getting rid of librarians in these areas is entirely desirable?



## *Publish Magazine*

“Library 2.0 movement sees benefits in collaboration with patrons,” by Jason Boog, appeared November 4, 2005 at [www.publish.com](http://www.publish.com).

When students research term papers via Google and bloggers reiterate facts about every imaginable topic, they are stealing work from us, say some librarians.

*Bloggers* are “stealing work” from *libraries*? That’s a new one to me. If anything, I would think mainstream media might make such a complaint. The next three single-sentence paragraphs follow from this claim of stolen work:

So at the Internet Librarian conference last week, over 100 library professionals speculated about *how to survive* in a world of Web-based, user-created content. [Emphasis added.]

They’ve dubbed their initiative **Library 2.0**.

These innovative librarians realize that some Web 2.0 technologies, such as blogs, wikis and online databases like Google Print, are already competing for the attentions of library patrons.

No minced words here: Library 2.0 is about *survival*. Blogs and wikis are “competing for the attentions” of library patrons.

We learn that this *movement* will “break librarians out of brick-and-mortar establishments” so they can interact with patrons through blog comments, IM and Wiki entries—which, presumably, could be and are being done *from within* actual buildings, but never mind. (Apparently, telephone and email reference service are brick-and-mortar bound while IM breaks out of the building. Who knew?)

The piece quotes Jenny Levine saying that dependence on “closed-source vendor programs for data management” is “a crippling Web 1.0 service provider model.” This is contrasted with blogs, IM and Wiki-style projects where the software is free. How do you replace an online catalog and circ system with blogs and Wikis? Not mentioned.

“Library guru” Jessamyn West says we’re still suffering from the limitations of catalog cards “but words are cheap and we should use more of them,” then identifies “three basic methods of classification: by the author, by the expert and by the people.” The writer calls *librarian.net* “a central clearinghouse site for Web-fascinated librarians.” Sorry, Jessamyn, you may be a guru, but that description overstates the nature of your blog. Jenny Levine talks about attaching lots of tags to cataloging records without disrupting the original labels.

The close has West noting that many libraries she works with “are in towns where they can’t get high-speed access. How can [libraries] be obsolete when people out here aren’t fully using them yet?”

This article doesn’t clarify Library 2.0 except to make it more confrontational—a matter of survival, talking about libraries being obsolete, focusing on a few *additional* applications as though they negate the need for library systems. Some innovative practices in libraries are mentioned, specifically those of Aaron Schmidt “using Library 2.0 tools”—remarkable for a movement that started after he did these things. They’re all interesting; *they’re all additions*.

## *Rochelle Hartman at Tinfoil + raccoon*

“Rejoicing and crying over ‘Upgrading to Library 2.0,’” posted November 26, 2005, refers to one of Michael Stephens’ posts and adds an “in-the-trenches perspective.” She points out real-world issues for many librarians in many libraries, in a post well worth reading on its own. She concludes:

As much as I love learning about Library and Web 2.0 and finding ways to make technology work for patrons and colleagues, I’m not sure that many (most) libraries are ready to take even the baby steps suggested by Michael.

The real-world post drew real-world comments, several from other librarians at Rochelle’s library, and this from Lori Bell, who knows the library well:

I think all the Library 2.0 stuff is very exciting, but I think if a library can do 1 or 2 of these things, they are doing well in this era of budget cuts and staff shortages[47]... I am continually amazed by all of the innovative and outstanding activities and programs happening at your library. [mentioning some]... Hopefully an outsider’s perspective will make you realize that you are bringing Library 2.0 to Bloomington and central Illinois and doing a darn good job of it.

Worth repeating: For real-world libraries, doing “1 or 2 of these things” well—which Rochelle’s library apparently does—may be a lot more important than think tanks, committees, conferences, and “Library 2.0” as a movement.

## *Ross Singer at Dilettante’s ball*

“Library 1.7.02-4 pre 6” appeared November 20, 2005. Here it is in full (with permission):

I really, really hate this Library 2.0 meme for a couple of reasons.

1) All of our problems will not, in fact, be solved with AJAX and web interfaces.

2) In fact many of our problems cannot be solved by technology at all (try doing interesting and meaningful and different work with the current body of MARC records out there and see what I mean).

3) This quest for 2.0 would be better served if “2.0” was a milestone on the journey to “Library 4.5”—I mean, come on folks, let’s get back into innovating.

4) I think it trivializes some actually *exciting* and *useful* work that I fear will continue to fly under the radar because it’s not “Web 2.0” enough[46].

Maybe hype is necessary to rally the troops, but I really wish vision would get more attention.

Singer is anything but a believer in the status quo. He’s interested in and involved in new projects. “Exciting” and “useful” link to innovative project descriptions from the Access conference and on Dan Chudnov’s blog, respectively. I question the parenthetical phrase in item #2. He finds the lumping together and the terminology both troublesome.

Comments on the post included Jonathan Williams being “absolutely astounded at the speed with which Library 2.0 has been picked up, *at least by library bloggers*” (emphasis added). Dan Chudnov suggests the need for “slick, useful presentations” (with an emoticon—don’t take it too seriously), and Roy Tennant adds a solid suggestion:

Well, slick presentations have their purpose, but even more impressive can be running code that solves problems. Pain avoidance can be a powerful motivator. If we can build applications and services that prevent or alleviate pain, the slick presentations won’t matter.

### Roy Tennant (new)

Part of the difficulty in talking about Library 2.0 is the squishiness of the definition. A blogger may want to make the case that Library 2.0 is mostly about new methods of communication and social networking, whereas someone else may advocate that Library 2.0 is but Web 2.0 from a library perspective. Meanwhile, people such as Michael Stephens want the term to include virtually anything that is not a “traditional” library way of doing things.

For myself, I find that the more the term is made to encompass the more uncomfortable I get with using it. Under the broadest definition, I’ve been doing “Library 2.0” my entire professional career, since I’ve been on the cusp of change from the beginning. So therefore it loses any useful meaning to me.

The definition that resonates the most for me is Dan Chudnov’s: “\*every single thing\* we do, every bit of information we publish, every way we publish it, EVERYTHING, is available via a few simple, standard protocols that \*anybody\* with an animal book [a book from

O’Reilly] and a text editor can make do what THEY want.”... This also seems to be the point of view that Talis is taking as well... So this is getting at a definition of Library 2.0 that I can get behind, although I don’t find it necessary to label it as such. The important thing is to *do it*—whatever you want to call it.

Moving beyond silo-ized “destination” systems to expose our information and services in a wide variety of methods to a diverse set of consuming applications is a *good thing*. Doing so potentially enables much more compelling and useful services than we presently offer, and can in fact lead to services that we haven’t even imagined yet. If that’s Library 2.0, then so be it. Call it whatever you want, just stop anguishing over it. As Dan Chudnov says, “Now stop boring us, and help build it.”

### Ryan Eby at *libdev*

Eby raises questions in “Hiding complexity in Library 2.0” (November 28, 2005) about potential difficulties with a more open architecture for an OPAC-equivalent. Sure, you should be able to tweak, add, or hide features “your patrons don’t need” (although I wonder how you know what *all* of your patrons need), but how do you maintain usability as you use all this flexibility? I was surprised by one clause: “It also allows those with other requirements (such as privacy) to tweak it to meet their guidelines.” This seems to suggest that professional librarians in some libraries can reasonably conclude that privacy doesn’t matter. I would hope privacy is one of the non-tweakable *mandatory* aspects of any library system.

Eby notes that the “feature list” for Library 2.0 keeps getting longer. “Can you keep you[r] OPAC from becoming a confusing mess? ... When someone visits your OPAC are they eased into what’s available or hit head on by the thousand options they have?”

“Can you be trusted with Library 2.0?” posted November 30, 2005, addresses some issues raised by John Blyberg and Talis’ response. “[The Talis] white-paper seems to give the impression that libraries should be able to build their own services while it would be a support nightmare for them to have access to the ILS data.” Reading more closely, Eby thinks that Talis’ idea of Library 2.0 is “WorldCat with an API[40]” and notes that many would find it difficult to give up local control over data. Eby also believes the “OPAC created by [many developers] would likely be much better than any vendor supplied solution,” which may be true but raises the question: After so many years of work on such systems, why aren’t they known as real-world solutions yet? In any case, Eby

says “the message I’m starting to get from these conversations is that librarians can’t be trusted with library 2.0.”

### Sarah Houghton at *Librarian in black*

Houghton offers her definition of Library 2.0 (in SEVEN DEFINITIONS) in a December 19, 2005 post. There’s a considerable contrast between her definition and some of the others. I wonder whether public libraries *need* to be relevant to most “daily lives.” I can’t imagine using my own library on a daily basis, although I’m back to using it regularly.

She posted “Library 2.0: New or no?” on January 4, 2006, partially in response to Steven Cohen’s post (see elsewhere):

Steven Cohen is wondering if Library 2.0 is really all that new, or if we’re just packaging an age-old value in a new shiny wrapper. I think it’s a little of both.

It seems like Library 2.0 is serving as a kick in the pants for many libraries... How long have there been console video games? 20 years? And just now we’re getting them in as library programming? Perhaps Library 2.0 is just one of many perpetual regularly scheduled library-world wake up calls to re-focus on the users and what they want. I also think that Jenny Levine’s mantra, that Library 2.0 is about collaboration and making what we do/have integrated into users’ daily lives, is definitely a new concept. And the technology part of it is new, imho. There are some amazing things we can do with our resources and services with today’s technology. Of course that will continue to evolve as years go by. But I think that part of it is relatively new. The only precursor that comes to mind in the immediate past is the introduction of public computers into the library. Taking advantage of delivery methods (e.g., podcasting, instant messaging) and consumer technologies (e.g., PDAs, iPods, and other MP3 players) to deliver our content and services is a great leap forward for the profession.

One could ask whether every social phenomenon automatically deserves library programming, but that may be too strong. Have libraries had books on videogames? Yes, for years. Do most libraries have soap opera programming? Not that I know of, any more than most of them have wine tastings. Focusing on what the users want is fine, as long as those wants make sense within a library context. I think it’s reasonable to inquire as to whether every New Thing makes sense.

### Stephen Abram at *Stephen’s lighthouse*

While I think it’s good to have conversations about all the 2.0 issues and to try to get a working definition that’s useful, I think I like Michael’s wide cast better. It’s

all about strategy. We’ve spent far too many years defining these web things in a narrow technologically-focused way. In some respects that takes our collective eyes off the ball—getting users in the door or to the site, delighting them, serving their real needs, improving the community, assisting the learner to learn, making a difference, etc. etc. Does it serve our professional and institutional needs to take a narrower (almost geeky) definition of the 2.0 meme?

A good question—but it raises the question of why the “meme” needs to exist at all.

A post in January 2006 discussed social software and some questions that librarians ought to ponder. Without including the long list of social software candidates, I agree with Michael Stephens (who quoted this segment) that the questions and approaches to answers are significant:

Key questions: What are they doing right? What can we learn from them? What can we copy? What are the best features, functions, etc.

I’m no expert but the answers have to be somewhere in: How they link people of like interests; how they link people and content; how the users define their own social networks and the purpose for them; how one might manage this so that it doesn’t become ‘just dating’; how they manage profiles; how they manage ‘reputation’; how they manage user-driven privacy level management. [Collapsed to save space]

It’s important to consider how these tools and solutions work within a library context—and, I would argue, for libraries to assure that users *understand* privacy and the potential consequences of giving it up. (My attempt at using Orkut was wrecked on the “just dating” reef—after a few weeks, I couldn’t see any functionality other than dating and strange Eastern European communities. The account may still be there, but I assure you that I am not.)

### Steve Lawson at *See also...*

I believe that Library 2.0 is most recognizable (and useful) as an attempt to bring libraries’ electronic services up to par with what people expect in a Web 2.0 environment[60]. Look at the “Core Competencies” and “Design Patterns” of Web 2.0 in Tim O’Reilly’s article “What is Web 2.0” and think about library examples:

“Cooperate, Don’t Control”: patrons hacking together AIM bot searches of the catalog (Edward Vielmetti); third parties getting RSS feeds for patron records (Library Elf); stable URLs for catalog records (Open WorldCat).

“Harnessing Collective Intelligence”: blogs (with comments enabled) as the library home page (AADL and several others); user reviews in the catalog (Open

WorldCat); exploring the use of user-added tags in the catalog (no live examples that I know of).

Embracing the “perpetual beta” by adding features and services as soon as they become practical, and not waiting for a “monolithic release.”

I am sympathetic to those, like Michael Stephens and company, who argue for non-technology applications of these patterns, but I find it much harder to draw clear L2/non-L2 distinctions off the Web.

These are all additions, some more disruptive than others—and I would note that constant updates don’t represent “perpetual beta”; they represent an approach toward updating *production-quality* services.

Lawson posted “Library 2.0: groping toward a definition through comments” at *See also...* on January 5, 2006. It’s mostly links, and a good set of them, but there’s one paragraph (and another sentence) that I believe is worth quoting here:

I’m feeling a bit more charitable towards the idea that L2 isn’t just a web design philosophy, and groping toward an idea of a “pattern language” that might help us distinguish a “Library 2.0” program from a simply “good” program... Library 2.0 doesn’t have to be entirely new or revolutionary to be worthwhile.

My response might be: Why is it *necessary* to flag a “good program” as being “Library 2.0,” as opposed to it being a good (new?) program? How does the term “Library 2.0” add value to the concepts and technologies within the many definitions of that term?

### Steve Oberg at *Family man librarian*

“Inner circles in library blogland” (December 9, 2005) takes issue with the “inner circle syndrome in library blogland”—seeing the appearance of “an elite clique of library bloggers...all of whom know each other, give presentations at a bazillion different conferences together... constantly make references to each other’s postings, often echo what each other is saying, and on and on. One current focus of their attention is something referred to as ‘Library 2.0.’”

Regarding “Library 2.0” itself, while he’s all for participation and other newer technologies,

I am cautious about the way Library 2.0 is pitched or hailed as a ‘movement’ or ‘rallying cry’ as many seem to do, seemingly without critical evaluation or assessment. There is also an inherent meaning to the term that anything pre-Library 2.0 is passé, old, even perhaps retrograde, and I object to that.

There’s a lot more here—and the post drew one of Paul Miller’s lengthy comments (which again gives one the sense that Talis wishes to own “Library 2.0”).

It’s possible to agree with his caution even if you disagree about the signs of an inner circle of frequent speakers and bloggers that all first-name one another, jump on the same bandwagons, and cross-post. I’d like to think the latter is only partly true, but I can no longer naively assert that it’s wholly imaginary.

### Steven Bell at *ACRLog*

“What do you know about Web/Lib 2.0” (December 5, 2005) suggests a few places for people new to the concept to go—and notes up front, “While I don’t think they will change your world, the papers and subsequent discussions are of interest and make for some worthwhile reading.” Bell doesn’t find Library 2.0 revolutionary. He notes that his main impression is that this “sounds vaguely familiar, sort of like the things academic librarians have been doing for some time now[50].” Which isn’t to say librarians don’t need to be aware of new tools and technologies and the need to remain innovative.

I doubt that many academic libraries make heavy use of the social software tools espoused by (some) Library 2.0 advocates or use modular library automation systems based on open source software, but good academic libraries certainly pay attention to the supposed principles—as do good public libraries.

The reading list is unusual. Bell begins with Talis pieces and non-library Web 2.0 articles, only then moving to Michael Stephens at *ALA TechSource*, ending with Bill Drew. Bell says of Stephens that “his own vision may be a bit too tech fad-oriented for some” and that “it adds a good perspective to the conversation.” Bell wants to add two more principles, the last two noted under Michael Stephens.

### Steven M. Cohen at *Library stuff*

Cohen has stayed away from “Library 2.0” in his blog, *Library stuff*. He noted why in email (and said I could publish this paragraph):

I don’t read anything Library 2.0(ish) because I’m still baffled about it. I “get it,” but I don’t understand why I need to “get it.” Our libraries’ online presence needs to be better. Really? We need to reach out to our communities more. Really? We need to keep up with technology. Really? It’s nothing different than what we’ve been saying over the past 10 years. And copying Web 2.0 (which really doesn’t mean anything anyway) is boring and dull.

Cohen is *at least* as aware of the software being lumped under “Web 2.0” as anybody in the library field, more so than most, and has been spreading the word about new tools for more than five years.

A few days after Cohen's email (January 2, 2006), he posted "Library 2.0—Questions and Commentary."

I don't talk about "Library 2.0" here for many reasons. Well, I guess I do write about Library 2.0 issues without actually using the wordage, but I rarely write "Library 2.0." First, I haven't seen a clear definition of the term. Michael Stephens has mentioned that he thought Sarah Houghton's definition was one of the best he's seen...

I do have a few questions though: How is any of this stuff new? Haven't the goals of libraries for the past umpteen years been to be driven by the community? Isn't that the basic premise of what a public library is? Charles W. Robinson came up with "Give 'em What they Want" a long time ago, which aims to make libraries relevant to what patrons "want and need in their daily lives." Also, how is a gaming night different than any other methods used by YA librarians to get teens and pre-teens into the library?...

Don't get me wrong. We definitely need to continue our interactions with patrons and make all libraries (not just public!) a part of the community.... But to think that "Library 2.0" is something different that what librarians have been striving for for decades is, in my opinion, wrong[58]. Yes, we need more interactivity with the library catalog (I've spoken many times on the two-way-street approach). Yes, we should use the new web tools available to us to build online communities. Yes, blogs and wikis work well in a library setting. Yes, yes, yes. I'm with you. Let's give the library back to the community, but let's not kid ourselves into thinking that this is one of those "ah hah!" moments in the history of librarianship...

I do believe in what is being touted as "Library 2.0." I just don't think it's anything new whose theories haven't been written about before in many LIS books and articles. Show me what's so new about it, besides the technology aspect. If it's just about the technology, then I don't buy it, because technology is a ubiquitous concept that is changing everything, not just in libraries.

## T. Scott Plutchak at *tscott*

Scott's December 7, 2005 "Librarian 5.0" calls for "a little more imagination and a bit more historical perspective" from the Library 2.0 enthusiasts.

Certainly, making good use of the latest tools & gadgets & gizmos to do a better job of reaching out to our communities and providing better services is something we should all be doing—but this isn't really anything new.

The move from closed to open stack libraries: radical user empowerment. Replacing the book catalog with "that marvel of human ingenuity, the card catalog." He suspects telephone reference was cutting edge when it first appeared.

"What strikes me about much of the Library 2.0 discussion is how *library-centric* rather than *user-centric* it is[41]." He quotes himself a decade back:

Our job is *not* to build a better library. Our job is figure out how to make the very best use of our particular skills, tools, talents and abilities to help the people in our community do a better job of getting and managing the information that they need. Sometimes that means that we'll be doing things that everybody expects from libraries, but sometimes it means we'll be doing things that nobody ever associated with a library. And sometimes it means we'll stop doing "library" things, because they're not really the things that our people need the most.

I might take issue with "information," but Scott is a medical librarian, and in that setting I think the term is perfect—for medical libraries, but not for public and most academic libraries. After some additional discussion, he says we should use all of the available tools, "just don't get hung up on thinking that the tools provide the magic. Librarians do."

Scott is harsher in a December 20, 2005 post, "Writing and thinking," that is *not* a "Library 2.0 post." It includes these pointed comments—and, although Peter Suber does his best to steer a middle course, I'd even agree with the final sentence:

Working in the web world makes good writing difficult, because good writing takes time. And sloppy writing enables sloppy thinking. "Web 2.0" actually speaks to something specific and so it makes sense to me—"Library 2.0" is sloganeering that signifies very little[42]. "Open access" has become a label that can be slung around wildly with each walrus, queen or fuzzy-headed caterpillar giv[ing] it just the meaning that they want it to have, and ignoring all other nuances.

Scott responded to my blog invitation by pointing to a January 5, 2006 post, "Why I dislike the 'Library 2.0' tag." It's an eloquent discussion of why "Library 2.0" as a term isn't all that helpful—and why Library 2.0 as a set of concepts isn't that revolutionary:

The notion of using the best technology available, including all of the Web 2.0 tools, to improve library services and to reach out more directly to our communities is one I absolutely applaud. And I think that this graphic representation of how we might be looking at what we're doing has real potential. But the terms that we use to describe things are important, both in what they say directly and in their larger context, and "Library 2.0" fails to be really useful in both of these.

As a denotation of something specific, "Library 2.0" is logically vacant. This becomes clear when you begin to parse some of the chatter about whether it refers just to the technology or to something broader. If it is just the technology, then what in the world is so different about

IM, Blogs, Wikis or whatever this year's cool tools are? Librarians have always used the latest technological tools. Fifteen years ago it was gopher. Twenty-five years ago it was databases distributed on CD-ROM. Thirty years ago it was 2nd generation ILSs. Thirty-five years ago it was online bibliographic databases, and so on. In the late 19th century it was the invention of that technological marvel of human ingenuity, the card catalog. The notion that Web 2.0 tools are so radically different that they create a demarcation so significantly different that it represents a radical shift from all that has gone before strikes me (if you'll excuse me) as somewhat naïve and historically ignorant.

On the other hand, if Library 2.0 is about more than the technology—about a focus on customer service, reaching out, embracing change, listening to users etc., etc., then what the hell was Library 1.0? Does this imply that the libraries that I've been working in for nearly a quarter of a century, and the libraries in which my mentors worked and their mentors worked were somehow anti-customer service? That they weren't interested in reaching out to their communities and tailoring services to meet their needs? Why have I been going to "managing change" workshops for my entire professional life if trying to change how we do things is an idea that just arrived? If "Library 2.0" is going to mean something it has to mean something substantially different from "Library 1.0." I can't see it. If people have trouble defining Library 2.0, they need to try defining Library 1.0.

But more troubling to me is a subtler connotation inherent in the term. I understand that the pro-"Library 2.0" folks are all about better customer service and a focus on the patron. I believe that. And yet, I still see too many posts where the focus is still on the library and not on the relationship between the librarian and the community. There is still far too much focus on using these tools to get people into the library...

The post goes on to discuss the potential for reaching patrons who *can't* come in to the library, and that doesn't just mean web-based services. I'll leave you to read the remaining paragraphs in their original setting and I **recommend that you do so**; it's strong stuff, but it's covering somewhat different ground.

### Thomas Dowling (new)

Dowling brings an optimistic perspective to this, along with recognition that the ideas mostly aren't all that new:

I can't think about the ideas behind Library 2.0 without getting hung up on the phrase itself. Libraries started getting on the web more than a decade ago, and had pre-web online service long before then. We started putting up major search services and tons of content years ago. Yet the implication is that somehow we're still stuck on Library 1.x?

Nomenclature aside, to the extent that I can get a handle on what Library 2.0 actually is, it seems to be the idea that we should make our services more powerful, more technologically adept, and more available to our users—including the thought that our services should go where are users are, rather than the other way around. There's nothing really earth-shattering there, but it's refreshing to hear those ideas expressed occasionally. There are some flavor-of-the-month technologies involved, with AJAX on the client and Ruby on Rails on the server and so forth, but I have to assume that they'll be old hat by the time Library 2.1 rolls around.

What really is new and exciting, in my experience, is that the Library 2.0 banner is being picked up by librarians who insist that it move forward with all due speed. If there isn't a commercial option that meets their needs, they will turn to a growing set of high quality tools to build—and share—the solutions they want. Library 2.0 is not fundamentally a new set of library services, or even a new set of ideals for those services. It is a new sense of ownership over those services and a new set of relationships with both vendors and others in the library community[61].

### Travis Ennis

"Library 2.0" (December 16, 2005) makes it clear that Ennis, a library school student, sees an in-crowd: "...The meme, Library 2.0, L2 if you are in the in-crowd, has really taken off and discussion is happening everywhere."

Ennis doesn't care for "Web 2.0" but *likes* Library 2.0 because he thinks it "is more of a change in thinking among some librarians, although certainly not all." Some of us would claim that the *thinking* (that is, principles) in Library 2.0 are mostly not at all new—and "certainly not all" is not a bad description for two dozen or so bloggers and the legendary Internet Librarian Hundred.

Ennis doesn't buy that Library 2.0 is not about technology: "it surely is an important part of it." He wonders where all the coders and developers come from to create these wonderful new services—or if we'll rely on vendors to do it. It's a long list of questions, worth considering. "I know that I'd like to see the answers, but I've yet to even see these questions asked seriously."

I would note that Ennis is now trying to do weekly roundups of blog posts relating to Library 2.0 and "Library 2.0." I wish Ennis well in that effort.

### TangognaT

"Library 360" on November 30, 2005 offers a different spin. She's fine with the technologies involved and

doesn't mind using "Library 2.0" as an umbrella term "passed back and forth among geeky librarians," but notes that it adds even more layers of obfuscation for the public[54].

Her solution is delightful: A new movement called Library 360. With that, I can only say that you need to read the post ([www.tangognat.com/2005/11/30/library-360/](http://www.tangognat.com/2005/11/30/library-360/))

That touch of humor may be the right point to end this interminable series of quotes and comments.

---

## Epilogue

I'm sorry about the clutter of superscript numerals in the "Library 2.0 is..." section and boldface bracketed numerals in the definitions and primary sections. I'm also tired of being accused of raising straw men and making up quotations nobody could possibly have said. Every superscript numeral matches a boldface bracketed numeral. They're not in order because editing didn't work that way.

You can accuse me of overinterpreting what was said. You can accuse me of quoting what people *said* instead of what they *meant*. I have no insight into the innermost thoughts of the writers. Those who reject the possibility of extrapolating from what's said to what appears to be meant may be unhappy. I would remind them that this is commentary, not journalism.

*Of course* I chose snappy phrases; that's the whole point of the introductory statements. But they're phrases *people used* in almost every case. I don't intend to repeat this exercise in future essays, but in this case the statements are so varied and frequently so mutually contradictory that I could see the "straw men" assertion coming. Now I can be accused of raising the "straw man" straw man: That is, nobody will accuse me of raising straw men. I hope I turn out to be guilty of that!

The title of this PERSPECTIVE and issue makes a distinction I regard as useful but that isn't integrated into the ongoing discussion:

### *Library 2.0*

Library 2.0 encompasses a range of new and not-so-new software methodologies (social software, interactivity, APIs, modular software...) that can and will be useful for many libraries in providing new services and making existing services available in new and interesting ways.

Library 2.0 also encompasses a set of concepts about library service, most of them not particularly new. Those methodologies, applications and concepts will continue change within libraries.

Some changes will improve a library's standing in the community. Some may bring in new audiences. Some may make libraries even more important as centers of the culture and history of their cities and academic institutions, involved in recording and creating that culture and history. Some will go unused and if tracked properly may be abandoned. Some of those changes may be viewed as disruptive. Some just won't be feasible for some libraries.

With luck, skill, and patience, those new services and ongoing changes will continue to make libraries more interesting, more relevant, and better supported. I'm all in favor of that Library 2.0.

### *"Library 2.0"*

"Library 2.0" is hype, a bandwagon, a confrontation, a negative assertion about existing libraries, their viability, their relevance, and their lack of changes, and—astonishingly—an apparent claim that two months of discussion by a two or three dozen bloggers makes a Movement that is so important that every library, no matter how small, *must* be discussing it right now, and that every library association should be focusing its next conference on the Movement.

I'm skeptical about "Library 2.0"—and I think it's a disservice to the ideas in Library 2.0. I don't believe that it adds value to the concepts and tools.

As a blogger, I'm impressed. Without the mutual reinforcement and bandwagon-building of the biblioblogosphere, there's no way a small group of people at a November 2005 conference could be making this much noise this quickly. Noise does not a movement make, however, and certainly doesn't justify a call for everyone to abandon everything else to focus on Library 2.0 or "Library 2.0." (Should every vendor be preparing position papers? Certainly not in January 2006; some of them *must* have better things to do—such as, for example, enabling open read-only access for knowledgeable librarians.)

We don't need a name or a bandwagon to discuss, demonstrate and build real-world uses of the new tools, techniques, and philosophies. Most of the philosophies aren't new. The claim that they are is part of a generational disconnect or deliberate confrontation with older librarians. Similarly, the assertion that libraries haven't changed for a very long time is an

outright dismissal of the hard work that generations of librarians have carried out and continued to carry out. I find it unfortunate at best, offensive at worst.

Some uses of “Library 2.0” are offensive. Some are confrontational. Sorry, guys, but “the old guard” isn’t going away any time soon—and those old patrons who mostly want buildings full of books aren’t going away any time soon either. They are, *not* incidentally, the people who vote for library bonds and tax overrides—and there’s reason to believe that a substantial portion of the public *wants* libraries full of books even if they don’t themselves use those libraries very often. Some of those patrons will love some of the new services that come under the Library 2.0 rubric, as long as they don’t detract from the successful old services and collections. Some simply won’t use them; that’s OK, as long as the new services don’t displace or weaken successful existing services.

Maybe there’s a need for more conversations about what libraries can and should do and be. If you accept that it’s not possible to be the primary current information source for the whole community and that you can’t do everything for everybody, you can start to focus on where new resources should be used, within the context of today’s community, tomorrow’s needs, and those not well served by other community services. I don’t believe those conversations are specific to Library 2.0 or “Library 2.0.”

### *Take a deep breath*

My own suggestions for librarians and other library people reading this and thinking about Library 2.0:

Relax. Take a deep breath.

If you’re an ALA Midwinter person, enjoy San Antonio. As you’re touring exhibits and participating in discussion and interest groups, pay attention to new service possibilities that rely on “Web 2.0” tools—and think about how such tools might be used to create your own new services.

When you get back and have a few minutes free, take a look at Ann Arbor District Library, St. Joseph County Public Library, Metropolitan Library System (Illinois), Kansas City Public Library, and some of the many other innovative public and academic libraries. See if what they’re doing makes sense in your environment—or if they bring other possibilities to mind.

You’ll hear about these and other ideas at your state conference and during ALA Annual; I can pretty well bet on that.

Some of the tools and concepts can be used with little or no monetary investment and expertise.

Some of them won’t work out for you; some will.

If you’re not already doing so, read some of the blogs and articles by librarians who are *doing* these things—some mentioned here, some not.

Don’t worry about doing it all—you can’t.

Do keep an open mind to ideas and tools that started outside the library field—if you haven’t already been doing so.

Consider the benefits of change, but don’t assume that all change is inherently good.

Do all this, and you’ll probably build better libraries and enjoy your work more in the process.

Finally, don’t worry too much about “Library 2.0”: it’s just a name.

### *The name does matter*

I’m biased. I care about semantics, and would think that every librarian should have a respect for language. I believe names *do* matter. I’m a touch over thirty. I’ve been involved in change throughout my five-decade career, and I resent being told that no change has occurred. I’m not a revolutionary and I believe that “evolution” has worked remarkably well.

For me, “Library 2.0” is a rallying cry that carries too much baggage. I don’t believe the term adds value to the concepts and tools—and I believe it’s possible that “Library 2.0” gets in the way of Library 2.0. You may disagree.

---

## Masthead

*Cites & Insights: Crawford at Large*, Volume 6, Number 2, Whole Issue 72, ISSN 1534-0937, a journal of libraries, policy, technology and media, is written and produced by Walt Crawford, a senior analyst at RLG.



*Cites & Insights* is sponsored by YBP Library Services, <http://www.ybp.com>.

Hosting provided by Boise State University Libraries.

Opinions herein may not represent those of RLG, YBP Library Services, or Boise State University Libraries.

Comments should be sent to [waltercrawford@gmail.com](mailto:waltercrawford@gmail.com). Comments specifically intended for publication should go to [citesandinsights@gmail.com](mailto:citesandinsights@gmail.com).

*Cites & Insights: Crawford at Large* is copyright © 2005 by Walt Crawford: Some rights reserved.

All original material in this work is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial License. To view a copy of this license, visit <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/1.0> or send a letter to Creative Commons, 559 Nathan Abbott Way, Stanford, California 94305, USA.

URL: [cites.boisestate.edu/civ6i2.pdf](http://cites.boisestate.edu/civ6i2.pdf)