ANZTLA

Australian and New Zealand Theological Library Association Limited

ANZTLA Newsletter No. 56
August 2005

Conference Issue

Keynote Address by Edmund Campion

Library Services to Multicultural Users
by Moira Bryant, Chris Harvey and Judith Bright

Performance Indicators for Libraries
by Isabella Trahn

Customer Satisfaction
by Beth Marnane

AUSTRALIAN AND NEW ZEALAND THEOLOGICAL LIBRARY ASSOCIATION LIMITED
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ANZTLA is an association of libraries and individuals involved and interested in theological librarianship. It seeks to co-operate with the Australian and New Zealand Association of Theological Schools and to promote its aims and objectives insofar as they apply to libraries and librarianship. However, membership is open to all libraries and individuals sharing the interests of the Association, upon payment of the prescribed fee. ANZTLA holds an annual conference and local chapters of the Association in the major cities provide a forum for local interaction.

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Contents

Signs of Change, Works of Creation: The Library and the Church Historian

Keynote address to the 20th Annual Conference of the Australian and New Zealand Theological Library Association
7 July 2005, Sancta Sophia College, Camperdown, Sydney

by Edmund Campion

One of the joys of the recent Sydney Film Festival was the world premiere of a documentary, 'Silma's School' directed by Jane Jeffes. "Silma" is Mrs Silma Ahrim, an Islamic mother who founded the Noor Al Houda Islamic College in Western Sydney ten years ago. Islamic schools, I'm sure you've noticed, are a new feature of the Australian educational landscape. A few years ago, I was asked to bring the Macquarie Encyclopaedia of Australian Events up to date in its 'Religion' section; and for the year 1989 I nominated the opening of the Malek Fahd Islamic School at Greenacre in outer Sydney. Within a few years, I wrote, it had over 1000 pupils enrolled at primary and secondary levels. I continued: The largest Islamic school in Australia, it offers the normal state educational curriculum with an Islamic ethos.

Mrs Ahrim's Noor Al Houda College is part of the same movement. She began in 1995 in four demountable classrooms, sold to her by the Catholic Education Office for one dollar, on land leased from the Federal Airports Authority next to Bankstown Airport. Her school thrived. Within four or five years, however, they discovered that the land they had leased was toxic — it was a filled-in rubbish dump, and thus immensely dangerous. The school had to move to find new premises. Two or three places turned them down when they found out they were Muslims. Then they were welcomed at what had once been the Camden Theological College. Noor Al Houda College was liable for any diseases that their pupils might have contracted on the old site. How liable? They didn't know. Then there was all the expense of moving and setting up again. So Mrs Ahrim sued the Airport authority (who, it turned out, knew they were leasing poisoned land to the Muslims). The case went backwards and forwards in the courts for five or six years as the airport authority resisted the school's claims, until earlier this year when it was settled in the school's favour by the Supreme Court of NSW. (The last I heard, the airport authority was appealing).

'Silma's School' is an immensely interesting documentary. It took me into a world I knew about, but didn't know. I think you too will enjoy it when it appears on ABC TV later this year. Coming home from 'Silma's School' at the Sydney Film Festival, I got to thinking about what I'd seen and what it might mean in the great narrative of our Australian story, and I want to say something about those thoughts on the bus, because I think they relate to your vocations as librarians.

The appearance of Islamic schools in recent years is a bright signal of change in our educational patterns; the recognition that Australia is now a pluralist community; that there are many different ways of being Australian. Once upon a time, the ruling view

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in society had been that there was really only one way of being Australian: to be Australian was to be proud to be British; to glory in being a member of the British Empire; to celebrate Empire Day each year and wave the Union Jack.

Not everybody went along with that. Noticeably, in historical and demographical terms, these were my own community: the Irish Catholics (who were the largest minority group in the community, and so the first ethnics). We celebrated Australia Day, not Empire Day. The flag we waved was the Australian flag. And as for all of us Australians being Britannically the same, we thought the essence of democracy was to be pluralist.... to allow (perhaps even, to encourage) difference and diversity. So, at great cost, both human and financial (we were a poor community), for something like a century, we kept our schools open, without state aid: our schools, where our own traditions, our own culture, our own stories, our own ways of being Australian could be transmitted to generation after generation. So when Mrs Silma Ahrim came along, wanting to start an Islamic school, to transmit to generations of Muslim children their own traditions, their own culture, their own stories, their own ways of being Australian, she found the ground prepared for her. Nowadays, cultural diversity is so commonplace that there must be people who imagine that Australia was always like this. No, it wasn't.

No one is born with good manners or a prose style, are they? You've got to learn these things — manners or a prose style — you've got to work at them, you've got to be encouraged to achieve them. Similarly, a society is not genetically tolerant or courteous or civil — citizens have to work at these qualities, to actualise them. This is especially true if, like modern Australia, the society aims at cultural diversity. Surrounded by 'the others', you must work hard to achieve courtesy, civility, toleration and freedom for people to be themselves. While you are thinking globally, you must act locally.

Then I remembered a visit to Melbourne a few weeks earlier. I was invited by the Islamic Council of Victoria to speak on 'Vilification: the Jewish and Catholic Experience in Australia'. In my talk I told the audience that one of the strategies employed by a Jewish roof body facing vilification half a century ago was to get their people to stop crouching, to walk tall. Afterwards, at question time, a lady at the back of the hall stood up and said this: "When you said that about not crouching, that meant something to me. You see, when 9/11 happened, people started shouting at me in the street, and so I crept along with my eyes down, not looking at anybody. And after a while I stayed at home, frightened to go out. I stayed there for three days. Then I thought about it, and I prayed about it, and I made myself go out. I made myself walk along with my head up, and I looked people in the eye, and I smiled at them. And you know what? They all smiled back."

I have long held that librarians are agents of civilisation in our world

Well done, citizens of Melbourne, making a culturally diverse society work. When I heard that story, I thought of something John Henry Newman wrote: "I am a link in a chain of connection between persons." For our culturally diverse society to work, we need people who will be links in the chain, bonds of connection between persons, who will think globally but act locally.

But why, precisely, share these musings on the bus with a conference of librarians? I have long held that librarians are agents of civilisation in our world. Indeed, because I believe that, I have devoted portions of my public life to the support of librarians, holding office in bodies such as the State Library Council of New South Wales and The Library Society at the State Library. I have seen, in small country towns, how creative librarians can be; how libraries allow people to take charge of their own lives; how libraries allow people to create their own futures, to escape controls put on them by circumstances or other people.

And librarians at religious colleges or theological institutes? It seems to me that they are in a special category. For the library of a religious group has a filial relationship to its parenting body; it is there primarily to

serve the teaching of that parenting body, to promote research on that body, to warehouse its history, to foster its theology and spirituality, its intellectual traditions and received wisdom. All these things, and more, I am sure you do; and it must be interesting, at a conference like this, to compare and contrast the differing ways in which you librarians fulfil these tasks.

I want to suggest that there is something more you can do, of your own volition. Ideas are caught, not taught. Librarians in religious settings can become culturally creative forces by opening up to their library users the worlds of 'the others'. Oh, I know there are courses available to your students on comparative religion; but I am thinking of something more domestic, more casual, more come-by-chance in your libraries. I like to think of a library where the religious student might come across material from outside his or her own faith tradition; not formal or even didactic but an odd pamphlet or magazine or memoir or stray publication that just happens to be lying there because the librarian put it there, using perhaps some of that loose mosey that all librarians have rattling round a bottom drawer of their desk.

To walk into a library is to begin a great adventure — you never know what you might find there. And that happens every time you go there, doesn't it? So I am thinking of what a student might pick up, just by chance, about a faith tradition studied perhaps formally and academically but never really known as a culture, a language, a way of looking at the world and God, a way of life rather than a set of beliefs in a book, or a creed. Stumbling across other people like this, entering their worlds almost without noticing — that can lead to an enlargement of courtesy, civility, sympathy, indeed empathy. Now, I am not arguing for clearing out of your libraries books that tell what, in the author's opinion, is wrong with other faith traditions. Our conversations with each other should be robust. Nevertheless, I think that librarians can do a service to Australian pluralism by consciously opening other worlds to your library's users.

Now I want to explore another possibility with you. This week in Sydney, at the University of New South Wales (UNSW), the International Conference of Historical Sciences has been taking place. It is the first time this world congress of historians has met in Australia. Yesterday and today there have been sessions devoted to the topic, 'Religion and Memory' planned as tributes to two Sydney church historians, Tony Cahill of the University of Sydney and Patrick O'Farrell of the University of NSW, who died within days of each other 18 months ago. In particular I want to tell you about a tribute to O'Farrell; and to do so I will have to put on my hat as a Catholic church historian, which is what I am — you wouldn't want me to change my spots this late in my life, would you? Anyway, I'm confident that from what I say from the perspective of a Catholic Church historian, you will be able to translate to your own tradition and make the appropriate connections and applications.

To walk into a library is to begin a great adventure - you never know what you might find there. And that happens every time you go there, doesn't it?

First: some background. Patrick O'Farrell came here from New Zealand on a PhD scholarship at the newly established Australian National University in Canberra. His field was the labour movement; and from this research came his first book, a biography of the New Zealand labour leader Harry Holland. But no writer, as Miles Franklin said, is satisfied with only one book. So Patrick and his constant confidante, fellow researcher and wife, Deirdre, began casting about for a new topic. Thus they discovered the lack of a compact history of Australian Catholics.

And so, in August 1968, came The Catholic Church in Australia: A Short History 1788-1967. Sourced largely from the Sydney church archives and written in six months, it sold 10,000 copies. Those are impressive sales figures; but alone they don't tell of the full impact of O'Farrell's work, for single copies went through many hands, they were passed round and read in convents, teachers' colleges, parish discussion groups and through library

use. Its reception was generally favourable: in The Anglican newspaper, Francis James, that ecclesiastical leprechaun, said that when the history of his own church came to be written, he hoped they would do as good a job as O'Farrell. The impact of the Short History was wide; it was also deep. Let me remind you, those were turbulent years — the era of Vatican II (1962—1965) and the birth control encyclical Humanae vitae (1968) – and in this foundation-shaking era O'Farrell gave Catholics something solid to hang onto: their history. It is worth noticing the importance of this, since Catholic identity and spirituality is rooted in history, so O'Farrell's book had a large pastoral significance.

"But no history is final," as he himself wrote in an expanded version of the history published in 1977. Expanded is the right word here: the Short History had 278 pages of text; this new book, The Catholic Church and Community in Australia : a History weighed in at 429 pages of text. The author's bibliography in each book tells something of what had been happening between publication: the 1968 bibliography has 95 items alongside nine unpublished theses and research papers; by the 1977 publication, however, the bibliography had grown to 216 items with 54 theses and research papers. History is a moving frontier, one knows; but here is a remarkably rapid expansion of territory. Spare a thought for the librarians trying to keep up with this moving frontier, with all this new material to access.

Now, in the middle of all this new territory stood Patrick O'Farrell himself, as teacher, supervisor, examiner and writer, an historian at the height of his powers. He had gone to teach history at the UNSW in 1959, at the age of 25, and he was to remain there, in the School of History, until his death on Christmas Day 2003. By the time the 1977 book appeared he was becoming recognised as a significant Australian historian, the dean of Australian Catholic historiography. Some years later, I would write of him in an American historical journal, these words: "To him, more than to any other individual, is owed the fact that Catholic intellectual life in Australia is noticeably historical, rather than theological, philosophical or biblical."

So for the 1968 book, 95 items and nine pieces of research; for the 1977 book, 2l6 items with 54 theses and research papers. What did this mean? It meant that O'Farrell could revise the estimates and judgments of the 1968 book, because more material had become available to him. To see what a difference the nine years between 1968 and 1977 made, take a look at his pages on the first Catholic archbishop, John Bede Polding. In Canberra while gaining his doctorate, the young New Zealander had come under the influence of an older man, a confident Thomist and former Dominican, Timothy Suttor. Suttor had learned to venerate Polding from the Sydney archivist J. J. McGovern, who in turn as a boy had learned his veneration from his parish priest at Newtown in Sydney, Archdeacon Cassidy, Polding's last Benedictine postulant. Here was an apostolic succession: Polding, Cassidy, McGovern, Suttor, O'Farrell.

O'Farrell's veneration for Polding was reinforced when he began to work with Dr Con Duffy in the Sydney archdiocesan archives — for 'Uncle Con' pressed his own reading of history on anyone who worked in his archives. And so Polding became a hero to O'Farrell too: his chapter on Polding's "Benedictine dream" was highly sympathetic. It was influenced too by Timothy Suttor 's Hierarchy and Democracy in 1965.

In 1973 however, John Hosie a Marist historian, published a revisionist article in The Journal of Religious History which so upset Polding's admirers that they organised a day of rebuttal against John Hosie. By then too, Mary Shanahan (formerly of Sancta Sophia) had published her life of Polding's unfortunate Vicar-General, Henry Gregory, in 1970. So when O'Farrell came to expand the Short History, he had all this augmented material on which to work; rightly in my view, he never lost his veneration for Polding, but the portrait you get of him from the 1977 book is darker than that of 1968.

You can see the same process — more material leading to more nuanced, or revised, or augmented assessments — in the 1977 book's treatment of Caroline Chisholm and Jeremiah O'Flynn and Bishop James Quinn and the Australian Jesuits and the churches in World War 1 and Melbourne lay intellectuals, and in attitudes to international affairs in

the interwar years. But not, noticeably, in its treatment of B. A. Santamaria and his Movement, which did not change from the 1968 book's bland description (because Gerard Henderson's seminal work on Santamaria would not be published until 1982).
Critics of the Short History had called it "a bishops' book", and so it is — a book sourced largely from the archives of the archdiocese of Sydney could scarcely be otherwise.
For those are the bishop's archives, they mirror his episcopal policy and his interests.
O'Farrell's histories did not carry footnotes; to see where his material came from, you go to his two volumes of Documents in Australian

I've been trying to persude you all to find a place in your libraries for the voice of the people

Catholic History where you may be surprised to find so many pastoral letters and episcopal statements: these are the stuff of his history - 'head office history' - not the view from the pews. O'Farrell himself made no bones about this, writing in his preface to the 1977 book: "I still view the Roman Catholic as, historically, a hierarchical and clerically controlled church, and make no apology for the continued substantial attention I have given to bishops and priests, their characters, policies and conflicts. This appears to me an appropriate reflection of historical reality, and I remain unmoved by suggestions that the contemporary role of the laity should be read back into the past."
So, regarding bishops as an essential element in the Catholic thing, O'Farrell gave them plenty of space in his history; and he used the opportunity of those extra 150 pages in the 1977 version, to give them more space, exploring there, for instance, the politics of episcopal appointments. Not that Patrick O'Farrell was a flatterer. No way. In the Sydney archives he found the spiritual diary and introspective jottings of the fourth archbishop, Michael Kelly, a mitred mediocrity; and he spread this material over five derisive pages of his book. Furthermore, in some circles, the best remembered sentence of Patrick O'Farrell comes from his review of Tom Boland's biography of the esteemed Queensland archbishop, Sir James Duhig; O'Farrell asked of the archbishop."Would you buy a used car from this man?' No flatterer, he.

So O'Farrell, like a good historian, used the opportunity of the nine years between books, to produce a better book. Not that it was simply more of the same. No. There was much fresh material in the 1977 book.

In 1969, John Neylon Molony had published The Roman Mould of the Australian Catholic Church, which challenged O'Farrell's heavily Irish account. Molony enunciated his thesis on his first page: "The Catholic Church in Australia has no spirit, no liturgy and no law that is not almost entirely Roman." To this O'Farrell replied in 1977: "The agencies for transforming the laity were to be Irish episcopal authority and church discipline, Irish priests and religious teachers, Irish devotional practices." And over the next seven pages he argued that, "the question of whether Ireland or Rome was the dominant influence on the Australian church is a false and misleading one ... the two influences were blended, but it was an Irish blend.'

Here's another example of new material. In 1975, International Women's Year, Patrick and Deirdre O'Farrell published together a booklet, Women: Australian Catholic Opinions. It is perhaps the least read of his publications but he was tender of its reputation. When, two years later, a book on Australian Christian women came out and did not mention the O'Farrell booklet, Patrick rubbished it as unscholarly. The 1975 booklet was a first draft of what became new pages in the history, a welcome appearance, given the centrality of women in the Catholic story. In terms of space, there is a curious absence of religious sisters in the O'Farrell histories, apart from their tensions with bishops. Yet religious sisters were the true makers of Australian Catholicism. Somewhere — but I cannot now find the reference — O'Farrell regretted that he had left out of his story the Catholic hospitals and other institutions of social service; which is a proper regret since they empowered the women who ran them in ways that, at the time, were unique in Australia. I would add that in the 1977 book, in additional pages on the reception of Vatican II in Australia, there is no treatment of the extraordinary rethinking that went on in convents throughout the country.

Perhaps an explanation of both absences is that before 1977 the relevant books had not yet been written; they would come later, individual histories of hospitals and of religious congregations and even biographies of religious sisters. An historian cannot make bricks without straw.

But what new riches there were in the 1977 book, alongside the ever present bishops: Aborigines, sectarianism, wowserism, birth control, migrants , Queensland, the laity. To find a place for the laity, he opened up his narrative at several points. Yet something is absent — what is it? Is it that one scarcely gets from this history a sense of what it felt like to be an Australian Catholic? I've already called it 'head office history', to distinguish it from history that is alert to the experience of popular religion. Katharine Massam, Professor of Church History at the Uniting theologate in Melbourne has a book, Sacred Threads, that offers a sharp contrast to the O'Farrell works. For Katharine Massam gives you the world of the people in the pews: the sights and sounds and smells and tastes and feel of popular religion. Sacred Threads was published only in 1996 — too late for Patrick. For that matter, Massam says in the book that the first Australian article on popular religion was published only in 1978 — again no straw for the 1978 book there either.

There are signs that Patrick knew what was absent from his pages: he knew for instance, that single sentences listing catalogues of devotions were not enough to convey the vividness of the experience. Similarly, in two sentences he glided over the pamphlets of the Australian Catholic Truth Society — pamphlets sold at every church door for a century in millions of copies. These were the layman's library, clues to what was in his or her head. As were the popular religious magazines which had remarkable circulation figures; for the Catholics, the Methodists, were magazine readers. There's one sentence on parish missions, those heart-stirring revivalist meetings that took parishioner to new heights of emotional religion. Indeed, the parish itself as a social centre — with dances, house parties, picnics, car drives, fetes, concerts — has gone missing from these pages. The Holy Name Society, that exemplar of muscular Christianity is there, but fleetingly. And the St Vincent de Paul Society is explored only as evidence of clericalism. Here's a last item of complaint. One critic noticed the absence from the O'Farrell Documents of the Green (or Penny) Catechism, the little book that generations of Catholic school children learned by heart

Q. Who made the world?
A. God made the world.
Q. Why did God make us?
A. God made us to know, love and serve Him here on earth; And to see and enjoy Him forever in Heaven.

O'Farrell's critic said that the Catechism was the single most important document in Australian Catholic history. Patrick O'Farrell must have read that criticism, because in 1977 he added a paragraph on the catechism, without quoting from it.
Well, as he himself wrote in a 1998 article, "God spare us from silly whingers." I mention these criticisms, however, because this is where you come into the story, librarians I mean.

The question is, where do you find the sources for writing a history that accounts for the people in the pews? Not in the archives at head office, that's for sure. The true archives of people religion are in the popular religious magazines. But what library has runs of these evanescent, flimsy, fragile publications? Who collected them? Forty years ago, where would Patrick O'Farrell have found them? I've said that the pamphlets of the Australian Catholic Truth Society were a layman's library; but where were they forty years ago? (The library I worked out of did not start collecting or cataloguing them till after O'Farrell had done his work). Where are the prayer books that people all used in those days? And the holy pictures they used as bookmarks? Sources of their inner lives. I've said that histories of hospitals and schools and other institutions are now being written (and they can give you the lived experience) but they are usually published locally; so how does a librarian find out about them and get copies?

Similarly, the Australian Dictionary of Biography (ADB), that finest communal project of Australian intellectual life, I'm sure you agree, can tell you about the nabobs and magnificoes

of your church, the hierarchs; but where do you learn about the parish workers, literally the people in the pews? Parish bulletins do not survive to tell their stories of faith at the grassroots; but there are some good parish histories (and many bad ones): where are they? How does a librarian get them? If someone wanted to write about the Green Catechism or its equivalent would you have it? Some of the richest, most suggestive material is in out-of-the-way places, places you cannot expect our librarians to know about. One example must suffice. I've spoken about parish missions, but where can you read about them? The best account I know is in the The Boy Adeodatus, the autobiography of the old Marxist art historian Bernard Smith who, as a young teacher in the country, attended a parish mission (to see what it was like, I suppose) and then wrote about it at length.

Sometimes I dream about making a collection of jokes about religion in Australia: they might tell us something useful about our history. It's sometimes said, isn't it?, that the settler history of Australia can be summed up by saying: Anglicans made the laws; Presbyterians made the money; and Catholics made the jokes. It's noticeable that, so far as I know there's only one church in history in Australia that has an index entry for 'jokes': it's a Catholic history. And in the great eleven volume Bicentennial history, Australians: A Historical Library there is, in the whole vast acreage, only one joke: it a joke about Catholics. So this is an under-researched field: who knows what research might reveal, what explanations might be made? What, for instance is one to make of the man who walked into St Paul's Anglican Cathedral in Melbourne while the choir was rehearsing. He had been a choir boy himself and as the choir sang he began to sing along with them. It was too much for the choirmaster. Who came down and told the man to keep quiet. What, said the man, are we not told in the Bible to raise our voice in songs of praise in the house of the Lord? Is this not a house of the Lord? Certainly not, said the choirmaster, this is St Paul's Anglican Cathedral Melbourne. What might a perceptive commentator make of that?

What, for that matter, might a perceptive commentator make of the man who was travelling by train on a long journey in the West of NSW. After some time a worried man came through the carriage, 'Is there a Catholic priest here?' 'Is there a Catholic priest here?' and back again, 'Is there a Catholic priest here?' Until the man cleared his throat and asked tentatively 'Um, perhaps I can help; I'm a Methodist minister...' 'You're no good: we want a bottle opener.'

In all of this, I've been trying to persuade you to find a place in your libraries for the voice of the people, not just for the religions of the hierarchs and theologians but the religion of the grassroots. Otherwise the lived experience of the people in the pews will be lost to future historians; and future historians will wonder what it felt like to be an ordinary believer in Australia at the beginning of the 21st century. But they will wonder in vain. Or will they? It's up to you.

Cultural Competency in Theological Libraries

by Moira Bryant

Paper delivered at the Workshop on Library Servies to Multicultual users at the 20th Annual Conference of the Australian and New Zealand Theological Library Association 8 July 2005, Center for Ministry, North Parramatta

Background

I have recently returned from attending the American Theological Library Association's conference in Austin, Texas. One of the main impetuses for attending was that several sessions were built around the theme of 'Cultural competency in theological libraries'. The presenters at each session were theological librarians who at an earlier stage had 'sat on the other side of the fence' and experienced first hand some of the challenges of being students within the American educational system, that resulted from being from a non-white cultural group. These librarians described themselves as Japanese-American, Chinese-American, African-American, Hispanic, Mexican and Taiwanese.

Although the sessions were presented with a North American slant, I would like to share with you some of the main messages which had an impact on me.

Some of the questions discussed were:

Are there current practices in our institutions that work against diversity?
How can we generate new ones that value diversity?
Are there strategies we can take back to our institutions to generate a culture of respect for diversity?

Culture

Culture has been defined as "the shared values, traditions, norms, customs, arts, history, folklore and institutions of a group of people". These can be racial, ethnic, religious or social groups.

Why should theological librarians be concerned about culture?

1. Understanding culture helps us to understand how others interpret their environment. We know that culture shapes how people see their world and how they function within that world. Culture shapes personal and group values and attitudes, including perceptions about what works and doesn't work, what is helpful and what is not, what makes sense and what does not.

2. Understanding culture helps service providers avoid stereotypes and biases that can undermine our efforts. It promotes a focus on the positive characteristics of a particular group and reflects an appreciation of cultural differences.

Factors that influence culture

We know that cultural influences shape how individuals and groups create identifiable values, norms, symbols and ways of living that are transferred from one generation to another. Race and ethnicity are commonly thought to be dominant elements of culture, but a true definition of culture is actually much broader than this.

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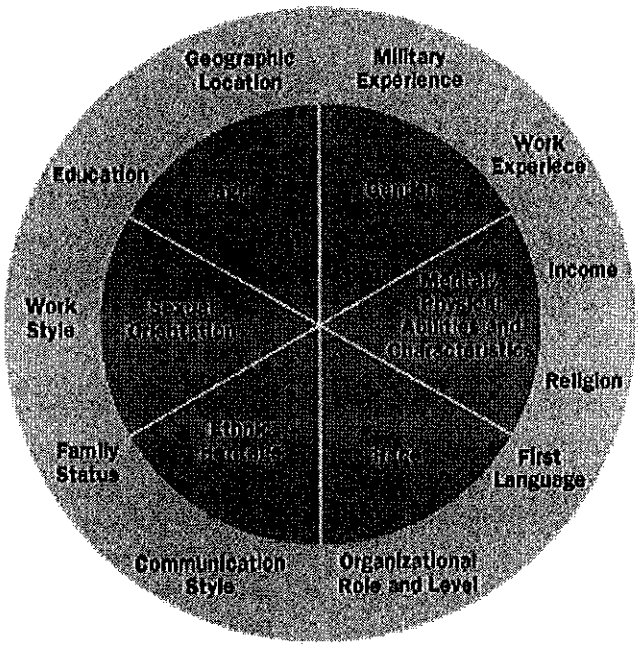
The Diversity Wheel

(from Implementing Diversity © 1996. Irwin Professional Publishing.)

This model illustrates both the primary and secondary dimensions of diversity that exert an impact on each of us at home, work and in society. While each dimension adds a layer of complexity to individual identity, it is the dynamic interaction among all the dimensions that influences self-image, values, opportunities and expectations. Together, the primary and secondary dimensions of diversity give definition and meaning to our lives by contributing to a synergistic, integrated whole -- the diverse person.



The model of the diversity wheel has been developed to illustrate the various dimensions that can contribute to the complexity of cultural diversity. It illustrates both the primary and secondary factors of diversity that exert an impact on each of us at home, work and in society. These dimensions of diversity contribute to the whole person.

Primary dimensions of diversity are age, ethnic heritage, gender, mental/physical abilities and characteristics, race and sexual orientation. These core dimensions exert an important impact on our experiences, values, assumptions and expectations throughout every stage of life.

Secondary dimensions include educational level, income level, geographic residence, individual experiences, identification with community groups. These are generally less visible and many contain a greater element of choice.

Cultural competency is generally defined as "a set of congruent behaviours, attitudes and policies which are integrated into the practice methods of a system, agency or its professionals, that enables them to work effectively in cross-cultural situations".

When professionals are culturally competent, they establish positive helping relationships, and improve the quality of the services they provide.

There are five essential elements that contribute to a system's ability to become more culturally competent.

1. Valuing diversity + accepting and respecting differences.

   The system should value diversity. You cannot begin to put in place the policies and procedures needed to become a culturally sensitive service if staff members do not value diversity.

2. Cultural self-assessment

   The system should have the capacity for cultural self-assessment – in order to determine what you need to know, you must first know where you are.

3. Consciousness of the dynamics of cultural interactions

   The system should be conscious of the dynamics that have occurred in the past when cultures interact and how these experiences may have been passed down between generations.

4. Institutionalization of cultural knowledge

   The system should institutionalize cultural knowledge – this means that everyone in the organization needs to be culturally competent.

5. Adapting service delivery so that it reflects an understanding of the diversity between and within cultures.

   The fifth element of cultural competency specifically focuses on changing activities to fit cultural norms.

There are many complex features inherent in communication, the environment and people's expectations. These can be major factors contributing to effective inclusive practice within a culturally diverse community. I have used the word 'communication' in preference to 'language' since much of the communication we need from others to make us feel good is not spoken at all.

Some suggestions and examples of how to be more culturally competent in Communication

Speaking

- Need to explain library concepts clearly. Avoid jargon.
- Avoid complicated, long sentences and be careful about the use of humour, sarcasm and irony.
- Be aware of colloquial expressions and idioms.
- Establish appropriate modes of address and naming.
- Speak at a comfortable listening speed and volume. Remember shouting never increases understanding.
- Monitor speaking styles for clarity. Be aware of possible problems with accents.
- Face people when speaking.
- Use a respectful tone of verbal and non-verbal communication. Be aware that there may be an unconscious inclination to 'talk down' or to talk simplistically to international students or local students if English is not their first language.

Listening

- Recognise that people who are using English as their second or third language can experience frustration and isolation from not being able to express themselves fully in English, especially when they are used to being highly successful in their own language and culture.
- It can also cause frustration for the listener who may have difficulty understanding the speaker.
- Listen to the words and try to picture what the speaker is trying to say, while being sensitive to feelings they are experiencing about speaking in English.
- If you don't understand, say you don't and ask the speaker to repeat what they said. Resist pretending to understand.
- Summarise or paraphrase what they are saying and if appropriate, reflect feelings by saying 'I understand what you need'.

Understanding

- Make it a regular practice to check for understanding. Give permission to ask questions.

- Encourage people to be comfortable in saying 'I do not understand'.

Non-verbal

Non-verbal communication is complex and no one is expected to be an expert.

- Indicate that you are giving the speaker your full attention. Adopt an open posture and perhaps lean slightly toward the speaker.
- Use open-handed gestures since in some cultures it is offensive to point.
- Lack of eye contact should not be equated with lack of attention as some cultural groups avoid direct eye contact as a sign of respect.
- Be aware of different amounts of body space since preferences for physical contact and proximity can vary.
- In some cultures 'yes' or a nod of the head might mean 'I hear you' but not necessarily 'I understand you'.
- Be aware that in some cultures, having women in positions of authority is not the norm.

Some other general observations that may enhance cultural competency

Avoid over generalizing behaviour (expecting particular culturally based behaviour from an individual because that person comes from a certain cultural group) or having stereotypical expectations of people (positive or negative). Try to identify assumptions that may be made about people. Physical appearances can be deceptive and identity with a particular culture does not necessarily imply identical life experiences.

A common observation when assisting some people from alternate cultures is their reluctance to ask questions. There are many reasons contributing to the hesitancy to speak freely. Some people might not understand the need to ask, or may feel uncomfortable in doing so because they believe it is rude or because they lack the confidence to use English publicly. Others may have difficulty asking, because in their culture they are accustomed to being told everything on a 'need to know' basis. They may assume they have been given all the information they require and therefore will not ask for more.

Appreciate the challenges and stresses of adjusting to change. People can face challenges and adjustment stresses when they live and work in a new culture. Their familiar locations, customs, symbols of regular day-to-day life are taken from them. This is sometimes described as 'culture shock', i.e. when a person in a new culture finds that the unwritten rules that worked at home, no longer work. Their adjustment to change can be characterized by a series of phases which can influence perceptions and responses to others and to events around them. Students might experience initial euphoria at having arrived at theological college, but this can then be followed by bewilderment and uncertainty, discouragement and a yearning for home, perhaps ultimately even by depression.

Encourage the view that the library is a safe place and the library staff are persons with a sympathetic, listening ear. Take responsibility for familiarizing yourself with diverse cultures. Be aware of what may be happening back home which may be cause for anxiety. Make them welcome, convey the message that they are a person and we don't just provide resources for their academic study.

Stranger in a Strange Land

by Chris Harvey

Paper delivered at the Workshop on Library Servies to Multicultual users at the 20th Annual Conference of the Australian and New Zealand Theological Library Association 8 July 2005, Center for Ministry, North Parramatta

Yassou, ladies and gentleman and good afternoon. My name is Christopher Harvey and I am the Librarian at St. Andrew's Greek Orthodox Theological College located at Redfern in Sydney. I am here to speak to you about my experiences of working in a multicultural environment.

I'll start off by telling you a little about myself, as you can obviously tell by my surname Harvey I'm not a Greek. I'm of Anglo-Irish descent, born in Sydney, a lapsed Anglican, and my experience with Greeks was minimal prior to my starting work at the College in May 1996. My experience of the Greek mind and culture were limited to minimal contact with the local greengrocer, café proprietor or local fish and chip shop owner. Not a good start.

Time

The Greek sense of time, where to start. There isn't one, but they do manage to get things done even though there is a mad rush of activity towards the end, if a deadline is involved. When asked by one of the students, lecturers, or administrators for any assistance I've learnt to ask: "Yesterday, today or tomorrow?"

However, if there is no deadline I've gotten into the habit of saying that it will happen like the "defteri parousia", just have some patience.

Another point about time concerns the students. It's not uncommon for a student to come racing into the library five minutes before closing and ask for assistance, as they have an assignment due very soon, if not tomorrow. "Always more than willing to help."

I've been undertaking a theology degree through Saint Mark's Theological College in Canberra, which I finish next year.

I've asked on many occasions past and present students why they don't get their assignments done when they get them and why they leave everything to the last minute. The standard answer is, "I work well under pressure".

However, I think Archbishop Stylianos has the correct answer when he says all students are lazy and theological students are the laziest.

A final word on time.

Each year in September the students go away on the Friday afternoon for a weekend retreat. They have never left on time, ranging in running late from about ten minutes to about four hours. I suggested one year that they (the students) organize a book. They all chip in $1.00 and nominate a time, and whoever gets the closest to the time they leave gets all the money. The students I mentioned this to were mortified that I could tease them so much.

Chris Harvey is the Librarian at St Andrew's Greek Orthodox Theological College in Sydney.

Solutions

- Expect the unexpected. Also, having been employed at the Archdiocese for over nine years now I know when the busy times of the year are. Constantly remind the students to get the assignments done ASAP.

- Have patience.

Conversations

This was one of the major culture shocks for me. When I first started at the College I was amazed at the number of heated arguments. When I made enquiries to several staff and students at the College about this they were non-plussed. But I have since discovered that in the majority of cases what I thought was a heated argument is just a normal conversation in the Greek language.

Solutions

- Don't assume.

- Do your job and do it well.

Which brings me on to the next topic, language.

Language

When I started at the College I couldn't read or speak Greek. I can now read it, but still very slow and speak it a little, even slower and it's more ecclesiastical Greek rather than conversational Greek.

I still find it exceptionally difficult understanding conversational Greek. If the situation arises where only Greek is spoken by someone I'll usually ask someone to assist and in most cases they're usually more than happy to help out and a three-way conversation ensues.

I'm not sure how many of you have ever watched the Greek news on SBS, but a normal conversation in Greek is like that. No gaps, breathings or breaks between the words, and spoken at a speed that is just astounding.

This reminds me of how the New Testament was written in the original Greek. No gaps or punctuation.

Solutions

- Maintain a good work relationship with the students, staff, and lecturers.

- Listen well.

- Write things down. Learn more Greek.

Gossip

This is something at the College that I find very disconcerting. However, it is also an efficient way of getting information.

Because a large proportion of our students live at the College, as they are from interstate and live in such an enclosed environment, gossip is a problem.

Solutions

- Don't talk about your private life.

- If something is told to you and it's gossip, don't pass it on.

Conclusion

I'd like to close by saying that even though, especially when I started at the College, there was a degree of culture shock on my part I have learnt to deal with it.

I have now been the Librarian at St. Andrew's for over nine years. I enjoy my job immensely (still don't like getting up in the morning, but once I'm up and at work, it's good) and find that the students, staff, and lecturers at the College (and within the Archdiocese) are friendly, supportive, generous and always hospitable.

They have made this stranger feel most welcome.

Thank you for listening ladies and gentlemen.

Service to multicultural users: a bicultural perspective

by Judith Bright

Paper delivered at the Workshop on Library Servies to Multicultual users at the 20th Annual Conference of the Australian and New Zealand Theological Library Association 8 July 2005, Center for Ministry, North Parramatta

Background

New Zealand has become significantly multi-cultural in recent decades, and has the largest Polynesian population of any city in the world.[1] Not surprisingly, this is also mirrored in those using theological libraries in Auckland. However, working in a multicultural environment in an Auckland theological library, and especially one that belongs to the Anglican Church, there is a need to take into account the underlying Maori-Pakeha bicultural setting dating from 1841, into which all other cultures come.

Biculturalism

This is a uniquely New Zealand situation, which I know some of the Australian members have been exposed to before, but I need to give you a bit of background as to what is meant by biculturalism in a New Zealand context. There are differing views of the reality of biculturalism. Sir Paul Reeves, former Anglican Archbishop and former Governor-General of New Zealand probably summed it up reasonably well, when he said

> *We talk about biculturalism and there's a Pakeha understanding, and then there's a Maori understanding. The Pakeha understanding of biculturalism is being sensitive to Maori issues, and Maori understanding of biculturalism is sharing power where the decisions are made.[2]*

Pakeha is a Maori word which has various translations but which the Church has defined as being "all people who are not Maori." Maori are the indigenous people of Aotearoa New Zealand, known as tangata whenua, which can translate as people of the land. Thus it is Sir Paul's words – the sharing of power rather than the being sensitive to Maori issues, that has significantly influenced how the Kinder Library provides service to users of many cultures.

Treaty and tikanga

The 1841 Treaty of Waitangi was the basis for relationships between Maori and non-Maori in New Zealand and, arising out of that, the Anglican Church has applied the principles of partnership and bicultural development. This has become the basis on which the Anglican Church constitution was rewritten to allow for three cultural groups or tikanga - Maori, Pasefika and Pakeha - as having equal status and decision making within the Anglican Church.

You may well ask how the Pacific comes into this. The Anglican Church also has a partnership with the Diocese of Polynesia,

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Judith Bright works in the Kinder Library at St John's Theological College, Auckland and was President of ANZTLA from 2001-2003

which has been part of the New Zealand Church since 1925. In 1990 with the change of constitution it became a full and equal partner.

Kinder Library

The Kinder Library, while no longer a part of St John's College, is the library for the College and for the whole Anglican Church, and therefore its primary clientele come from all tikanga of the Anglican Church, - Maori, Pasefika and Pakeha - and also from the Methodist Church's very multicultural makeup.

So who are our key users? There are the obvious three partners of the Anglican Church. First of all Maori. For most these days English would be a primary language, but they will regard te reo – their own language - as being able to convey things that English never will. Within our Pacific partnerships, first languages will be Tongan, Samoan, Fijian, and Hindi. The Pakeha include New Zealanders of many cultural backgrounds, from fifth generation of the 1840's English, Irish and Scots settlers through to relatively recent Asian and other immigrants. As well, we have traditionally, since 1849, had students from Melanesia – the Solomon Islands, Vanuatu, and sometimes Papua New Guinea.

Trinity Methodist Theological College, which is also a key user of the library, has a majority of its students from Pacific Island cultures.

Key concept

What does service to multicultural library clients mean to those of us working in the Kinder Library?

First of all, and most significantly, it means that right at the policy making level, all three tikanga must be involved. It means that we are obliged to do our best to provide a service which does not disadvantage any one of those groups. It means that we are often seen by some tikanga as not meeting those requirements.

It means giving each cultural difference full and equal importance in the life of the Church.

The library is governed by a Committee which has representatives of each part of the partnership. This ensures that at the policy making level we try to take into account all library user needs.

Library staff backgrounds

Our experience in providing service to clients from a variety of cultural backgrounds is that the cultural background of a library staff member plays a significant role in their relating to library users.

Some examples. We had Koloti Ma'u, the librarian from Sia'atoutai Theological College in Tonga on our staff for six months. Koloti was Tongan. We have a lot of Tongan students. No matter what the student wanted, and no matter whether or not Koloti knew a lot about what the student wanted, those Tongan students would always either head straight to Koloti, or wait around until he was available to them.

We often quietly remarked about whether or not the student was getting the information they needed or not, but that was not the point. The point was that that library user felt comfortable being able to voice his request in Tongan, did not feel that he might make a mistake in front of a palangi that he perceived as possibly intimidating, and didn't feel that he might unwittingly breach a library protocol or way of doing things.

There was an added advantage: Koloti was also a Methodist Minister. Where we tended to tread carefully in trying to get overdue books returned – we were aware of the commonly known differences in possessions and ownership in some parts of the Pacific - Koloti simply waded in and told them all about their obligations to return things. When asked how he did it, he was reputed to have said that he told them "to return the books or else I'll break your fingers", but as the original conversations were in Tongan, it could have just been one of those myths. Whatever it was, it was effective.

Now we have Denise Tauira, a very willing volunteer from Tahiti, whose husband is part of the Pacific student community. Although she isn't in the library for the same number of hours that Koloti was, we do notice a gravitation towards her by Pacific library users.

For several years, Linda Papuni was a member of the library staff. Linda is Maori: again there

was that unmistakable move by library users towards one that Maori students recognised as being able to meet them where they were at. The level of library training and skills was irrelevant to the user: it was the perceived ability to feel comfortable, to not have to explain oneself to non-Maori. In this case it was not a language issue - Linda was not a fluent Maori speaker – but a cultural issue. We also have a Librarian who is Chinese on the staff.

Recently, the Library Oversight Committee held a hui or gathering at which representatives from our three cultural groups had the opportunity to take part in strategic planning for the library. This is at decision making level, and we are required to take notice of their suggestions. Caucusing took place in cultural groups, so there was no pressure from only one group on others. Then all groups agreed (amazingly) on future directions and priorities.

One direction that we are seeking budget approval for in 2006 is a new position for a qualified and experienced librarian who identifies as Maori and speaks the Maori language. We believe that this appointment will go a long way towards supporting our commitment to a bicultural library, but it will also enable our Maori users to have their information needs supported in the best way possible, not only by someone who speaks Maori and has the cultural understandings, but who also has good skills in finding appropriate information.

One of the most challenging aspects of working in a multicultural environment is to move from the position/perspective of the majority (in our case Pakeha) and being seen to accommodate other viewpoints and perspectives, to one of developing an appropriate library service together, and empowering others. It is not easy, and requires considerable dialogue, time and understanding.

There are some suggestions within Maori librarianship that the Western model of organising information that we use is one that is not appropriate for Maori. Rowena Cullen, from the department of Library and Information Studies at Victoria University, Wellington, in a paper presented at the 62nd IFLA conference, writing on libraries and biculturalism says

> *"Working within western paradigms of knowledge, instruction, learning research and management, can we really hope to resolve the dichotomy which underlies the conflict between Maori and Western concepts of knowledge? How do we answer Maori students who challenge traditional classification structures and suggest that different ways of classifying Maori material may be found which fit better with the structure of Maori knowledge... rather than the nineteenth century knowledge structures of Dewey et al, which reflect a nineteenth century world order".[3]*

One of the most challenging aspects of working in a multicultural environment is to move from the position/perspective of the majority (in our case Pakeha) and being seen to accommodate other viewpoints and perspectives, to one of developing an appropriate library service together, and empowering others. It is not easy, and requires considerable dialogue, time and understanding.

To date, I have not done enough work in this area to fully understand the implications of this for libraries that provide service to Maori or to other cultural groups. But it is an interesting and challenging idea.

In practical terms, some of the things we have done

Our introductory library pamphlet has been written in English, Maori and Tongan. It should be done in some other languages, but we haven't followed up on the necessary willing workers to do the translation for us. It also needs updating, and we are a bit behind on

that.

We have split our in-house library orientation session into two groups – those who are reasonably familiar with libraries and those who are not. This second group inevitably includes those for whom English is a second language. This enables people to voice questions (sometimes) that they wouldn't do in front of others who don't have the same concerns. It also lets them see that they are not the only ones who do not feel comfortable in a library. We are aware that a high proportion of our Maori and Pacific students are meeting tertiary study for the first time.

We have moved our Maori resources into a separate collection – something I have mixed feelings about, as in some ways it makes it harder to locate things, rather than easier. But it does assist in acknowledging that we recognise the need to take biculturalism seriously.

We actively pursue books and other resources which deal with theology in the context from which our students come. There are never enough of these published, and it is always pleasing when a significant piece of work is done as master's thesis or research essay. We actively seek other such research from other universities and theological colleges. One example here would be the purchase of the microfilm of all the theses done at the Pacific Theological College.

Room for improvement

There are many other areas in which there is room for improvement. While many of the staff, including me, have probably instinctively tuned into some cultural needs, we know that we have only made a start, and that there is a long way to go. For example, if someone is hovering near the front of the library but doesn't come to the desk, (and it is most often Pacific or Maori clients) we will approach them. Likewise, if they appear to be sitting in front of the catalogue and not actually finding anything.

We are still not adequately effective in the library orientation that we do do. It shows up later, in teaching part of a master's level research methods paper, when some students are still not sufficiently familiar with basic library use. One of these issues I think is having compulsory information literacy courses, preferably built into assessment so that it can't be avoided.

Work is being done in New Zealand on creating an appropriate Maori subject headings thesaurus to enhance ways of locating materials in catalogues. There is the ever present issue of non-Maori writing about Maori, and issues of accuracy, and for the Pacific, a concern that research about Pacific issues should take place in the Pacific. There is limited publication in indigenous languages, and almost nothing in theology. There are issues to do with the appropriateness of some historical material being held in libraries instead of with the tribes it came from. There are issues to do with the formats of academic materials, and how in the future we might consider more materials in formats that better relates to people who come from an oral rather than print-based culture.

So we at the Kinder Library in Auckland feel that we have only just stepped onto the edge of what is possible in providing an information service which appropriately serves the needs of all our clients. I think it is a matter of "watch this space".

[1] http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Auckland,_New_Zealand. Accessed 4 July 2005

[2] http://anglican.webstation.net.nz/main/biculturalpolicy/ Accessed 29 June 2005

[3] http://www.ifla.org/IV/ifla62/62-culr.htm Accessed 18 April 2005

My Journey in Australia

by Barnabas Bonggun Kim

Paper delivered at the Workshop on Library Servies to Multicultual users at the 20th Annual Conference of the Australian and New Zealand Theological Library Association 8 July 2005, Center for Ministry, North Parramatta

My name is Barnabas Boggun Kim. I came from South Korea in 1999 and I began studying English in one of the language colleges in Sydney in 2000. Then I took the International English Language Testing System (IELTS) and had a good result so that I could enter this college, the Uniting Theological College (UTC). Since 2001 I have been studying theology, I have done BTh and I am doing my MTh, so the Camden Library has been my second home for the last four and a half years.

When I entered Pukyung University in Korea in 1979 (that is a 20 year gap) to study the Bachelor of Environmental Engineering, there was no computer and no net-work system at all. I had never seen a computer in my university life until I graduated in 1983. And also I had never borrowed a book from the library; this was because the Korean education system was influenced by Japan and the USA. There were no essays, no worksheets, no case-studies, no learning-cells at all, but always 100% exams, 40% half-semester exam and 60% final semester exam. That's all.

The problem was that if I did not follow the professor's teachings, the mark was always zero, it meant fail. I had to buy many expensive books, which they forcefully recommended every year, and had to follow their teachings throughout the classes, whatever they said. So I did not need to borrow any book from the library, but it was a place for studying in silence in order to prepare for exams.

However, at UTC my experiences in this Camden Library are totally different, as an ethnic student. Firstly, English is not my first tongue. So when I came here, I really needed someone's help. This was because everything was unfamiliar to me at the beginning. Without help, I could not survive.

Moira and the staff, with kindness from their warm heart in this library, helped not only me but also many ethnic students in a lot of ways. For example, how to use computers, how to get access to search information, how to find the location, how to keep the regulations, and how to use the copy machine. I really appreciate it. Now I am so familiar with this place it is my second home.

Secondly, as I mentioned I never experienced borrowing books before I came here, but a new experience began. When I borrowed some books from here for the very first time, "Wow, I can I borrow books? It was great." But after that it made me crazy. When I opened the book, I did not know much about the language. There were too many unknown theological words..

So I had to look up the dictionary, around 200 words a day for thirty weeks. I had to write down on the notebook the page, the line, the paragraph in order to understand what it meant. But I found it was not going to work. For example, if I borrowed a reserve one, I had to get it back three days later. So it was a serious problem for me as a second language

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Barnabas Bonggun Kim is from South Korea. He is studing for his MTh at the Uniting Theological College in North Parramatta.

student. I changed my strategy, not to borrow the book all the time, but to make copies often within legal permission. As a result, I have been exploring and building up my theological and biblical knowledge and insights from resources in the Camden Library.

Finally, there is an important and thoughtful consideration for the ethnic students at UTC. This library began to put out some Korean theological books and biblical commentaries, so that the new and old Korean students who have not enough understanding of theological terms can journey with those resources. This is wonderful cross-cultural movement here, I really appreciate it.

To conclude, Moira and the library staff sometimes want me to help with some library works, especially translation for example. If Moira finds some new Korean student, then she wants me to help how to use the system. I am so pleased to help others because I was helped in many ways here. How can I ever thank you enough? Thank you.

I leave you with some questions. What brings you together to live in Australia? Where did you come from? Now where/how/with whom are you going? What makes you go forward to the future? I come empty-handed, I go empty-handed. That is human? And how?

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Cheap, useful and fairly valid performance indicators for tertiary libraries

by Isabella Trahn

Paper delivered at the the 20th Annual Conference of the Australian and New Zealand Theological Library Association 8 July 2005, Veech Library, Strathfield

Introduction

Some of you may think that what happens in performance measurement at a very large university library such as UNSW is not so relevant to you because of differences of size and complexity. In fact, much of what the largest libraries do in this area does not have a particularly high technological component. The overall pressures faced by both large and small academic libraries are essentially the same. All library staff have "day jobs", so when it comes to getting the information to manage a tertiary library what is needed is to get and to use relevant information as quickly and painlessly as possible.

This paper looks, in the main, at quantitative measurement.

Cheap, useful and fairly valid definitions

Why this title? Some of you may recognise that the adjectives in the title of this paper can be attributed to Swinburne University's Derek Whitehead. Derek wrote a commonsense paper on university library statistics in 2003 using those three practical qualifiers. The PowerPoint slides of Derek's paper can still be accessed through the CAUL Statistics website (www.caul.edu.au)[i] which is a useful website recommended to anyone interested in performance assessment both for its content and for useful links.

* Cheap
* Useful
* Fairly Valid

To these three I would add three more necessary adjectives. Performance measurement in its practical application within our time-impoverished work lives needs to achieve worthwhile purposes or it is not worth doing. Our working hours are too short and too crowded to do otherwise. The three additional descriptive qualifiers I would add are:

* Contextual
* Selective
* Common sense

Cheap

Cheapness, of course is a very subjective quality. The eye-of-the-beholder factor is influential and cheapness is not an absolute. One library's cheap is another's prohibitively expensive. To undertake a full Rodski[ii] survey is expensive, and to do it regularly adds up to a tidy sum. On the other hand, allowing a large catalogue of user woes to remain not properly identified or addressed may result in a vastly more expensive outcome for the library in the medium term. When user support is vital and university resource allocation starts to turn Darwinian, a little investment in data as ammunition for the library cause can reap dividends. Thus cheapness and usefulness are linked. The more useful a set of indicators, the more reasonable a resource outlay to provide these may appear to be. Value for money may be a better description than cheapness. Positive cost benefits in terms of the use of your time makes the relevant performance measure more attractive.

Isabella Trahn, B.A. (UQ), Dip. Lib.and M. Lib. (UNSW) is the Quality and Planning Librarian, University of New South Wales Library. For the past decade she has had in her portfolio, responsibility for, and an interest in benchmarking and quality issues, statistical reporting and surveys for UNSW Library.

Of course, cheap may be best in the first place and most fit for the purpose. Within a specific service excellent results can be achieved, for example with something produced and implemented at absolutely minimal cost such as a simple, well designed page for feedback together with an effective, low key, timely way to deliver and retrieve the information. Two recent examples, one implemented, one not, for other reasons, of potentially cheap qualitative data gathering of this type in our Library illustrate the role of simplicity. The first proposal was a small sheet, distributed and collected by security staff as part of their supervision duties in a pre-examination study hall, extending the hours of opening period. Ultra cheap, not costing extra staff time, these sheets have the possibility to provide very valuable feedback, basic statistics and a range of grateful user comments appropriate both for the improvement of the study hall mode and for providing strong user endorsement for the relatively new policy. Result – cost marginal, benefit positive. The second was a simple form collecting brief reflective comments by staff on out of hours shifts at reference desks to describe their experience of the volume and type of user during out of hours opening. This built up, in conjunction with simple quantitative data, a distinct picture of user behaviour, despite individual staff differences in reporting business.

As with a budget area such as staff development, if you have large resources available, a whole range of ambitious activities can be provided, but if you simply don't have the budget, it is still surprising the range of opportunities which can be provided using imagination, ingenuity and the resources around you, particularly if your Library is set within the university context, on a shoestring budget. Many years ago I presented a staff development program for 200 staff, for six months with a zero budget, apart from salary, using university expertise, then available without direct charge.

Usefulness

Commonly suggested uses for performance/ indicators include:

- Aligning services with institutional requirements
- Monitoring trends
- Seeing if you are at the top or bottom of the peer totem pole which may indicate self-congratulatory celebrations or, alternatively, desperate improvement measures are in order
- Basing changes in policies and procedures on real data
- Identifying specific areas for priority improvement
- Making claims for additional resources
- Justifying resource expenditure
- Exploring the level of user satisfaction with services
- Investigating the relative importance users place on services
- Investigating how services and resources are being used

There are many more worthy reasons and I'm sure you can add many other reasons to these. We will return to these practical outcomes again later.

Steve Hiller from the University of Washington Libraries, who was in Australia recently for the Victorian-based training provider CAVAL, considers the following to be useful questions to ask. "Do we have the data? Do we need the data?" These two questions nicely encapsulate situations in individual libraries where there are always gaps in data collection just when and where you really need them and yet where the volume of existing data collection would indicate that there may be some unnecessary work going on – just because it always has. Steve Hiller and Jim Self from the University of Virginia Libraries are currently American Research Libraries Visiting Program Officers undertaking a national program to raise the level and quality of Library performance assessment in US research libraries. The ARL website another recommended source of data for those interested in performance measurement.[iii]

Perhaps it is no longer useful to collect data you have been collecting forever. Examples of "traditional" local counts which one of our departments had been meticulously keeping for 30 years but which are not longer collected are "mail items opened" and "journal issues entered". These counts show the busyness (or perhaps lack of busyness) of a small part of our Library, but how many mail items opened is

good performance? And what does that have to do with supporting research and learning and teaching? It is the business of the Library which is important, not the busyness.

In these days of fewer staff and staff over-commitment for almost everyone in the tertiary sector, the temptation to spend valuable time documenting busyness still persists and is ever more tempting to try to justify our current overworked state. Our Library departments tend to do this monthly in their reports which slide into compilations of busyness with little comment on outcomes or issues of importance. University administrations tend not to be very sympathetic when what we are saying is Look see how much activity we have! Look at our dedicated staff! 'Beyond busyness' is a more useful area to focus upon.

Fair validity

If all Library managers were completely honest they would admit that many of the measures and statistics that they produce are often imperfectly designed and collected or based on historical figures of very dubious validity. One wonders how many of the "how big" measures are even close to reality. Some of these have been maintained for a very long time. What do you do? Take last year's figure, add items added, subtract items removed – and there is the result. Your addition and subtraction may be fairly accurate but what about the base figure lovingly handed down from fifty or a hundred years ago? How valid are totals combining films and books, microfiche and tapes, sheets of maps and DVDs? Is a 900 page medical dictionary equally valid to a microfiche with three images on it?

Contextual

As much of what is discussed here indicates, figures by themselves are fairly meaningless. Only where the context denotes some form of comparability will some figures begin to make sense and the possibility of any type of comparison between institutions become even remotely possible. Looking at roughly like institutions tends to be done by broad groupings and categories. This type of approach is demonstrated by loose Australasian groups of tertiary libraries such as:

Group of 8
Universitas 21
ATEN libraries
The gum leaf universities
NULG
ANZTL.

Our Australian Defence Force Academy campus is a good example of a library sensibly looking towards its natural peers to continue its performance measurement. ADFA looks at, and is developing relations with, smaller military libraries around the world rather than looking to the UNSW main campus library for their peers. Innovations, ratings, favourable comments are all noted carefully. Most university libraries have a very small number of "rival" institutions with which surreptitious or overt comparisons are always made. In the UK there is an 'ancient' vs. 'recent' divide and in the US overall size enables banding of broadly like institutions. Whatever the common criteria, look across the world, your peer group may well be global. Don't just look around the corner. A good grouping is also not so large that active communication between peers is difficult.

This is all part of the process of looking for context and perspective. The Society of College, National and University Libraries (SCONUL), the organisation of UK university and national libraries, suggests that all statistical statements be accompanied by contextual information and an example of this approach is demonstrated here by the Council of Australian University Libraries (CAUL) which finishes the annual statistical survey with the institutional data which it takes directly from the Department of Education, Science and Training (DEST) in order to minimise reported variations which might distort the other statistical items. The suggestion is that nothing should be discussed without contextual data. Complex institutions are so much themselves that it is unfair to compare otherwise.

A word about selectivity

One interesting development in the UK some years ago was the emergence of projects to identify not more than one dozen key performance indicators which could be used to solve the issue of information overload for university managements. The principle behind this project is a good one. Find what

works. Make sure it is clear. Make sure it is appropriate, and enjoy the focussed effort rather than trying to maintain too broad an approach.

Common sense

I don't think there is any need to expand on common sense for this audience.

Performance indicators and measures

So much for adjectives. As for the noun, there are many definitions of performance measures. For the practising manager, context in performance measurement is also the key. My personal preference for a definition of performance measurement and indicators is one which I quoted in Guidelines for the Application of Best Practice in Australian University Libraries; intranational and international benchmarks (Canberra, DETYA, 2000)[iv] which I co-authored with Anne Wilson and Leeane Pitman. The definition is by Pieter Te Boekhurst who has worked closely with Roswitha Poll at Munster University Libraries. Both Roswitha and Pieter have published extensively in the area of statistics and performance measurement. Te Boekhurst says:

"Performance measurement is comparing

WHAT A LIBRARY IS DOING
(PERFORMANCE)
With
WHAT IT IS MEANT TO DO (MISSION)
And
WHAT IT WANTS TO ACHIEVE (GOALS)

The extent to which goals are reached can be determined by using performance indicators."[v]

I mention The Guidelines publication because it is a useful summary of the state of performance measurement in Australia and beyond at the time of publication over 5 years ago. One of the themes of the chapter on performance measurement and a concept which I adhere to in day to day management is indicated by the definition above. That is that indicators of any sort only have meaning in the organisational context. The more I have had to do with benchmarking over the years the more I can see measures tempered by the nature of individual institutions and individual libraries. Apparently striking differences or apparently striking similarities can both be incredibly deceptive. Like individuals in a team, organisations have their own DNA, if you will and many valid reasons for particular outcomes.

The judicious use of measures or indicators as shown by the definition above is not only a mechanism for day-today management and improvement, it is also a way to explore the impact of services, to test out wider options, to justify resource allocation and potentially to benchmark with others. As such it is an important part of strategic planning. Out of context, an indicator indicates nothing useful. This relates well to the old quality adage: FITNESS FOR PURPOSE: doing what is right for US. I was reminded of this yesterday at the Australian Universities Quality Agency conference here in Sydney, where the notion that AUQA audits do not critique organisational goals, but look at how fit the organization is for its stated purpose. Are they doing what they say they do?

Performance and statistics

Looking at first level sources of data for performance measures brings us to the fascinating area of management statistics. Counting, often and widely, is the oldest and most widely practised method to try to describe size and busyness of libraries, so no discussion of performance measures can omit statistics and their derivatives.

Mine is bigger than yours

Bland figures indicating institutional and/or library size (institutional population, budget size, staffing composition, floor space, number of seats, numbers of computers); information resource dimensions (holdings of physical and electronic resources) and/or service use and patron perceptions (circulation, accesses and downloads for electronic resources, service ratings in client surveys) build a picture which may be used in a managerial sense for many purposes but this picture only realises its true potential as a source of sensible library performance indicators when it can be shown that, as Te Boekhurst says, the picture of PERFORMANCE is firmly set within the context

of MISSION and GOALS.

More than the numbers

What does having a budget of $22 million for your Library tell you? Does it mean that, if another Library has a budget of $30 million and has a similar institutional population they are remarkably better off? It may be that the second institution has a whole range of disparate campuses and must provide services across time and distance and in a profile of uneconomic small clusters of services. It may be that "total budget" figures may, or may not include a range of discretionary funds. There may be, and usually are, a whole range of reasons why what seems apparent, is not necessarily so. The apparently most straightforward of figures cannot tell the whole, or even the necessarily true, picture.

The threatening nature and power of numbers can be illustrated by a story. Some years ago the four Australasian members of the international university grouping which goes under the title "Universitas 21" spent some time putting together common Library profiles. The profiles were long and detailed and the effort expended not inconsiderable. The University Libraries concerned were Queensland, UNSW, Melbourne and Auckland. It was fascinating to watch the then university librarians looking at the "comparative" figures diligently compiled by their staff for the purpose. Those four university librarians could see so many "yes but..." and "this doesn't include" and "but you do x...." interpretations of the most basic reported aspects that there was the potential for whole segments of meetings to be contained in discussing caveats. After a few short years, maintaining the full profiles lapsed, although individual libraries did continue using the format as they found it internally useful. I suspected particularly that figures which reflected favourably tended to be believed and those which did not, tended to be seen to contain flaws.

Counting busyness

It is natural that Library staff, who serve users with such dedication over many years, for mainly intrinsic rather than financial rewards, wish to prove that they are not idle, that their efforts have encompassed all this work.

Measures of busyness and activity may be used for self-congratulatory purposes to indicate how much "more has been done with less", but busyness is a very overrated measure. Busyness is better expressed in terms of the allocation of staff time spent. Most universities do not want to know how busy Library staff have been. They want to know whether the mission of the library is being fulfilled, how much "bang for their buck" they are getting. The real question is whether the proportions of staff time dedicated to particular activities moves the organisation forward. Is the effort going where it should be? At another level, so does AUQA. Are we doing what we say we do and how do we demonstrate this?

Classic busyness: What is "Number of reference inquiries"

The "how big" material figures can deceive but the "how many" service figures can be a whole other dimension of things not being as they seem. What is an "inquiry" or "reference" statistic and can numbers of (reference) queries tell you anything? CAUL sensibly did not collect this figure as a compulsory field for many years. Each institution, and even units and individual team members within each institution have an idiosyncratic accretion of definitions of "reference".

For example, in our Library, for many years, statistics were kept of "inquiries at reference desks." Then, aware that these figures covered a multitude of sins, the collection of these was further differentiated into "reference", "directional" and "technical". Even within these there are debates about what is/should be classified under "reference". We know there are discrepancies in what is recorded where, for service desks just one floor apart. What we also know is that the idiosyncrancies within each area are fairly consistent over time because of local unit traditions. Individual desk trends over time are thus of value, but even they have to be related to events such as changing desk hours and do not tell a simple story. Some staff maintain inquiries may be fewer, but they are more complex. Other measures are needed to illuminate whether this perception is fact. More of this below. Questions need to be asked. What else is going on? Inquiries are declining, but what about information literacy figures – are they

going gangbusters? It's useful to have more to give university administrators than figures in decline. Unfortunately, unless your Library has its e-reporting in place, that is exactly the direction for the bulk of current traditional statistics.

The usefulness of numbers

So, should CAUL stop collecting the AARL statistics and the ARL in the US discontinue their 60 year tradition? No, they shouldn't. What both those bodies have done is to create large data banks and some tools which now enable useful (our second adjective) customised analysis at point of need, for a specific purpose. CAUL have followed the lead of ARL and enabled interrogation of their statistics database by individuals, when needed. This is a practical exercise in efficient individual control and provides hitherto cumbersome opportunities for the exploitation of the data. Customised use makes the collection and collation of the data more worthwhile. The new developments on the CAUL Statistics site kept for so long have enabled DIY trend analysts to customise the bank of statistical data carefully and comprehensively .

The real value in any statistical figures lies in trend patterns, especially over time, but also across a sector. Trend analysis has become easier to maintain and provides far more visual impact with each improved version of Excel. Within the Library, or particularly in dealings with university management committees with short attention spans and a lifetime of assumptions about academic libraries, the power of the image is exceptional. Eyes which glaze over when faced with banks of tables or which become absorbed in an academic analysis numerical minutiae, lighten up at a bank of rising or falling bars or galloping coloured segments of pie charts.

The power of the image encapsulates dull statements in exciting ways and shouldn't be underestimated.

The usefulness of indicators: simple combination indicators/ratios

Over the years CAUL has responded to the realisation of the limitations of "how big" and "how busy". CAUL has introduced next stage indicators of the dollar per population member variety which combine two streams of data to give simple measures which can be ranked.

Look at the ratios on the CAUL Statistics site; they are much more dramatic in terms of comparisons and the ability to grasp the wide range of resource richness and poverty between Australian university libraries. These indicators have a strong corrective property. Number of seats means nothing. Number of seats per student starts to mean something. Dollar expenditure on journals may not mean a whole lot, except a sharp intake of breath by a university administrator, but dollar spent on serials per academic staff member/researcher may mean a little more.

These measures generally bring the user into some perspective in terms of resource allocation averaged over all such individuals. It is easy to picture one user with a large pile of dollars, many seating options, groups of eager staff available to assist them, and then another user, with a tiny pile of dollars, half a chair and librarians no where to be seen. Tables of large numbers are harder to embrace. Simple ratios are a favourite category of mine. They also tend to have management impact.

Another approach using simple combinations includes one recommended for SCONUL librarians a few years ago. This was to combine measures for reference desks and information literacy and to express this in terms of overall staff hours dedicated to these activities rather than attempting to count queries and information literacy sessions. Since many librarians see so-called reference as a specialised type of information literacy activity, this makes sense in that context. Staff hours is a measure underutilised but one administrators understand. Your Library spends $12 million per year on staff. They are paid x at this level and y at that. These sorts of figures mean more than statistics such as 250,000 queries answered per year. Staff activity measures of this sort begin to educate management on the hidden costs of, for example, information literacy. It takes how much staff time to prepare for eight hours of in-house course instruction?

CAUL Performance Indicators

Most of you would be familiar with the three

longstanding CAUL indicators:

1. Client Satisfaction
2. Document Delivery
3. Materials Availability

These were developed by CAUL, adapting models from elsewhere in the early 1990's. By 2000 at least 25 of Australia's universities had used or were using some or all of these irregularly or regularly, in their search for management information.

Document delivery is an area which, in the past, has seemed to lend itself to basic fill rate and turn-around-time indicators. Relatively few libraries used CAUL Indicator 2. Most libraries seemed to prefer internally developed measures.

Materials availability was, and is, the most used CAUL indicator across Australia. In a large student population, where coursework dominated the environment during the years when physical volumes were critical, this was a very useful measure of student (not exclusively but mostly) frustration. The indicator is no longer for us as central. There is no *a priori* reason why the indicator couldn't be used in the online environment, and we have tried to get users to respond to e-availability questions as part of the indicator, but we have found that the indicator doesn't reflect a dual reality and thus is becoming more and more marginal each year.

In a survey done as part of the Guidelines work, half of responding university libraries wanted CAUL to publish further indicators to cover electronic resources and their use. Other areas of need identified by that survey included measures of:

- costing and cost effectiveness
- targeted client satisfaction
- information literacy

So how far have we come in the last 5 years?

CAUL has not worked on electronic measures itself, apart from hosting discussions on the topic, but there has been significant progress over the past five years in the global arena, and progress has been surprisingly extensive.

Those electronic measures

Electronic measures have finally arrived, and are now available for use after almost ten years of experiment. The measures are here. They have been described; training materials for collection are starting to become available. Not unexpectedly, the how many (ownership) and how much ($) figures for electronic materials came first. Usage figures have been more difficult and controversial, but even these are now becoming regularised and routine. These e-measures, however, are so far mainly considered optional (read experimental) within official data collection by bodies such as CAUL, ARL and SCONUL. The move for e-measures from optional/experimental/pilot status to mainstream seems to have taken 5 years or more, but the move is almost complete. Working librarians have not necessarily been aware of this progress. Usage figures, until recently, have been the real focus for concern and confusion. CAUL has been using "provision of stock" figures for some years. Pity the staff member who has to complete the electronic serials components of the annual CAUL return. The so-called deemed list is almost routine, but still has challenging aspects. Cost figures in terms of expenditure on e-resources as a proportion of materials expenditure have also made more regular appearances in recent years.

The E-measures we now have available have been standardised and tested over a range of experimental projects for the assessment of electronic library services. In the US, John Bertot has worked with Charles McClure in this field since the mid 1990's. Their list of emetrics consists of 110 measures for electronic libraries produced for the e-Metrics Instructional System and was originally developed for museums and public libraries in the US. These two academics then became part of the ARL E-Metrics Study Team. An e-metrics manual has recently been developed by the pair, together with Andy Lakos of Canada's University of Waterloo. The e-metrics project is slowly proceeding in the ARL way by being tested with a small group of ARL Libraries and then rolled out to more and more libraries.

SCONUL in 2005 introduced a range of new and amended statistics to cover e-metrics, These are based on the University of

Central England 'E-valued Toolkit' of sixteen measures. Charles McClure was the advisor for the E-valued project so these are at least international in scope. The Toolkit measures are grouped under the three areas of:

- Provision of stock
- Use of Services
- Costs

UCE provides training in the collection of the data to UK university staff.

COUNTER

To provide reliable data for the use of e-resources, it has been apparent for some years that the compliance of the publishers is absolutely necessary. Librarians in a number of countries valiantly attempted, for some years, to use their own ingenuity and resources to define consistency in usage across the providers. Libraries across the world were trying hard by 2001 or so to provide e-journal and database usage statistics of a basic sort. Some ARL libraries attempted to analyse, for a defined set of title the basics:

- number of sessions
- number of searches
- number of items viewed/downloaded

Across the Atlantic SCONUL and Joint Information Services Committee also had a project. Even CAUL had their first project running. It was hard work. It soon became apparent that only the publishers themselves could provide the information needed in any sort of standard format. Until that happened, no matter how hard librarians might try comparable figures were elusive.

For librarians in 2005, probably the most spectacular development in this area is the global emergence of the COUNTER[vi] compliant framework over the last three years and its adoption by a huge array of electronic journal publishers.Counter (Counting Online Usage of NeTworked Electronic Resources) began and continues to be based in Britain but has grown from a modest project to an international system endorsed by vendors, industry associations, library consortia and individual libraries. COUNTER recently won an international award in recognition of the exceptional global collaboration between those naturally friendly groups – librarians and journal publishers. It is very impressive how much has been achieved in a couple of short years. The challenge now that COUNTER compliancy has swiftly moved to encompass virtually all significant e-publishers is to use the data as it was intended for e-resource management within libraries.

Like most large libraries UNSW Library had bright individuals who tried to provide reports for four categories of electronic materials:

- databases (for example Medline, of which we had over 95,000 searches in May 2005 alone, or, a less used database World of Science of which we had just on 250,000 searches last year)
- aggregates (such as Proquest)
- publishers collections (such as Science Direct from which there were more than 617,000 full text downloads last year)
- e-mosos (monographs on standing orders for example Routledge encyclopedia of Philosophy or Brittanica Online)

Thanks to COUNTER we have been able to set up monthly and annual reports based essentially on statistics on the numbers of searches and full text downloads. These reports will then appear on our intranet to assist, in particular, those making decisions about value for money prior to renewal time around September. There are some further ratios which can usefully be extrapolated (e.g. $ cost per download). In setting up the reports for technicians to use and compile there is the recognition that the system is all still a little bit clunky in the sense that there is a need for the Library to be proactive. The data only comes on a (virtual) plate when called for. The librarians/technicians must still go to each publisher website when alerted to new statistics, but at least the staff know that, almost all the publishers we have are at least partly COUNTER compliant, which should mean that the data is comparable.

For E-books there is also a draft COUNTER standard so that this happy situation of comparable statistics should soon pertain to all the major e-book publishers. Since e-book collections can often substitute titles based on usage this will be a valuable resource.

The Quantitative in the Qualitative measures

Most qualitative is not separate from the quantitative. Qualitative programs express their top level results in quantitative ways. Qualitative measures can also be reduced to quantitative data for example, the CAUL Rodski indicators and profiles.

Online surveys have given us greater participation rates, ease of administration and much fuller user comments in the free form components of our surveys – it's much easier to type than to write in comments on a paper form. Analysing these can be a guilty manual pleasure or subject to rigorous textual analysis, but it is the quantitative results which when displayed have the most impact. Participation in the Rodski survey across CAUL has been very salutary for UNSW. Having that wide range of data available has provided evidence that many Australian university libraries have a much greater share in the affections of their users than we have. There are many reasons for this. One of the most compelling one for us is demonstrated by the example that our only significant branch library is consistently reaching very high levels of user satisfaction, far higher levels than those shown for our main library. Part of it is excellent staff but part of it is also that very potent 'small is beautiful' factor. Our branch library has poor physical accommodation, but is very atmospheric, complete with balcony, umbrella and resident cat.

Those of you from small libraries should rejoice. Small size is the greatest predictor, all things being more or less equal, I think, of user satisfaction. It is very hard, in my opinion, to love a fourteen storey concrete tower. Rodski overall numbers can be viewed by members of contributing libraries on the CAUL Rodski Indicator Portal. Working through user comments may yield the best benefit, but staring at a graph with the categories of Rodski from your peers etched across the chart above you is truly humbling. Quantitative data wins out, even for the qualitative tools.

Reference & information literacy

From the old reference fill-rate, through WOREP, to CRIG and the ASK model – measures relating to reference have been a minefield. I don't intend to go through this area in detail here, but I do want to mention some commendable work currently being done by the UNISON Reference and Information Services Interest Group on Digital Reference Key Performance Indicators, because this group has a worthy current project which tackles a specific area for e-measures. They (the pioneer group from UNSW, UTS, Macquarie, Sydney and Southern Cross) are proposing a multiple approach based on the ASK model (attributes, staffing, knowledge) to yield both quantitative and qualitative measures for e-reference. Their project is a worthy one and well worth tracking to the conclusion.

The digital reference project approach includes:

- trialling a digital reference client survey
- trialling a survey on staffing and staff training for digital reference
- trialling a digital reference statistical survey

Statistical information being gathered includes:

- service hours open
- service hours staffed
- transactions (reference,non-reference, referrals, follow-ups)
- terminated transactions, time taken, responses turn around time, numbers of users (by category)

Contextual information is also being gathered.

This project is notable because it is cheap, useful, fairly valid, selective, common sense contextual – all my criteria for quantitative data gathering. Watch out for results.

Information Literature/effectiveness of teaching

This is a complex issue to address. Really to get research-based data, your students would have to be split into groups, exposed to a thorough information literacy regime, pinpointed through curriculum mapping and planning and controls and measured on entry and exit to the institution. Some US universities are, theoretically, in a position to do so because of the so-called "capstone" courses which check on key competencies before

graduation. Those US institutions now have common, compulsory programs on entry and exit. There is potential in the US-based SAILS (Standardized Assessment of Information Literacy) project [vii] for a vehicle to assess information literacy skills. SAILS is now in a period of review and even the project staff are not clear exactly what is the appropriate level to use their material (based on meeting the ACRL standards). Is SAILS appropriate for first year students and/or for final year students? Can you really use the same tool at such different levels? There are still more questions than answers. SAILS also relies on quantitative assessment data to report to institutions. There is no avoiding the power of the numbers.

As much as we would like to focus on learning outcomes – what exactly did the students learn? It is sadly true that these sorts of noble professional topics, which have recently been exercising our minds at UNSW, are so easily overcome, even in the university context by the powerful fascination with numbers – with quantitative data. Let me explain.. This year we introduced an online "enabling" tutorial and quiz which has been made mandatory by the Academic Board. We debated at length just what are the entry level skills and knowledge which can reasonably be expected of entering students so that they can undertake their course based information literacy, with confidence. What we had to do in practice to answer that was to develop a tutorial, implement a post-tutorial quiz and introduce a "pass mark" of 80%. What did the academic staff want to know about our progress? Completions rates. Pass rates. Numerical comparisons between Faculties. What we have concluded, after the first 5000 or so students have completed the tutorial and quiz is that what we had produced either more than met, or met, or didn't meet student needs in various measures and that our approach was adored by many and criticised by others. We have more than 2000 sets of evaluative survey data to analyse as I speak. What we did find was that students did this online tutorial from home (85 %), did it very early (mainly prior to session), exactly as we had hoped, and that 5000 students started their program at UNSW knowing a little more about the world of information than they did before. Numbers don't tell it all but they are inescapably fascinating.

[i] CAUL Statistics Website available at www.caul.edu.au
[ii] Rodski Research at www.rodski.com.au
[iii] American Research Libraries at www.arl.org
[iv] Wilson.A., Pitman, L.,Trahn.I, Guidelines for the Application of Best Practice in Australian University Libraries: intranational and international benchmarks. Canberra, DETYA, Evaluations and Investigations Programme, Higher Education Division, 2000. See Publications section of the AARL website for a link to the electronic edition
[v] Wilson, A et al. p.45
[vi] COUNTER at www.counter.org.
[vii] Project SAILS. www.projectsails.org

Biographical note:

Isabella Trahn, B.A. (UQ), Dip. Lib.and M. Lib. (UNSW); worked initially at the National Library of Australia and then for thirty years in university libraries, mainly at UNSW.
For the past decade she has had in her portfolio, responsibility for, and an interest in benchmarking and quality issues, statistical reporting and surveys for UNSW Library.
She was fortunate enough to undertake an extended study tour in 1998 to research quality management and benchmarking in a series of overseas libraries. In 1999, she was part of the team which produced two publications for DEST on Best Practice in Australian Libraries and then delivered a conference paper at one of the well known Northumbria Conferences on Performance Measurement in the north of England in 1999 on that national project.
Currently she is doing many other things besides but still has some involvement with performance measurement. Preparing for this paper was a great opportunity to review some more recent developments in performance measurement.

Customer Satisfaction in 21st Century Libraries

by Beth Marnane

Paper delivered at the the 20th Annual Conference of the Australian and New Zealand Theological Library Association 8 July 2005, Veech Library, Strathfield

Libraries are changing, and the measurement of their performance must change too. How do we judge what is important to library users? Measures can tell us where we've been, where we are and in what direction we are heading. They can also guide our decisions. (1)

Let's consider our educational environment and some of the changes which are impacting on library services and resources. Some of our students at University of Technology Sydney (UTS) are studying courses entirely in an "online mode". To them we are a virtual university with a virtual library.

The most noticeable changes in university libraries in the twenty-first century is the increasing use of online resources. As well as the development of huge amounts of scholarly material in electronic formats, there is an increasing amount of "free" information available online. This is mainly through the development of networks, including the internet and the World Wide Web. There has been a noticeable improvement in the quality of information which is freely available. There is still rubbish, but now we have reputable sources such as news, health care, and government services where most people would expect to find information online. At UTS, our research shows that the majority of our customers use the web everyday, whereas they may only use the library once per week.

Google describes itself as the developer of the world's largest search engine, offering the fastest, easiest way to find information on the web. You may have heard of Google's new Scholar Service. (2) Google applies its own search technologies to selected online papers and citations. Many of the search results turn out to be to citations to offline resources, which is only moderately useful as most researchers would like to get immediately to the full text. However this service is still in Beta test mode at this time and you can see the potential for rapid improvement, especially with the wealth of a commercially successful company such as Google behind it. Recent developments such as this suggest researchers will rely as much on search engines such as Google and Yahoo in the future as they have on libraries and Abstracting & Indexing services in the past. (3)

Another major change is the heightened consumer awareness in general society which has lead to the demand for increased accountability by all stakeholders. For example, the Australian government has established the Australian Universities Quality Agency (AUQA) which is an independent national agency that promotes, audits, and reports on quality assurance in Australian higher education All universities (and that includes their libraries)are required to be audited by AUQA in order to demonstrate that they are providing quality management.

"In the free market environment, education is

Beth Marnane is the Library Lending Services Manager at the University of Technology Sydney

increasingly seen as a commodity purchased by consumers from providers..." (4)

We must be accountable to our administration – by providing value for money and working to support the goals of our organisation. We must also be accountable to our customers as they are becoming increasingly assertive about receiving good service. "These two areas of accountability are not unrelated. The opinions about the library that are held by our customers – ie staff and students - will eventually influence the views of those who allocate resources". (5) So there is an imperative to confirm with our customers that we are meeting their service needs. This is why we use performance measures.

Performance measures are useful in general. They can

- Tell others what we actually do
- Show changes in the type or balance of services or activities
- Help us to understand the customer better and find out if we are meeting their needs
- Help us to plan
- Provide evidence for funding – for our future needs and to prove we are managing in a cost-effective manner

Cost effective and sustainable

A lot of new measures are developed as projects. Will they be sustainable when the pilots finish, and they must be included into the normal running of the institution? In the interests of working smarter, not harder, this would be my wish list for effective performance measures:

- Deliver a good response rate
- Require minimal effort for library staff in administration and analysis
- Be cost effective
- Build on and use the expertise of others
- Ask the right questions
- Focus on outcomes
- Present the results in a format that is easy to understand (6)

International Trends

Let's look at some national trends in performance measurement in libraries. In the USA, the Association of Research Libraries (ARL) has committed a lot of resources to the identification and development of performance measures which "strike the right balance between measuring the continuing and the emerging realities of the modern research library." (7) In October 1999, the ARL Statistics and Leadership Committee supported the initiation of specific projects to advance what has come to be called the New Measures Initiative. (8) In the United Kingdom, the Society of College, National and University Libraries (SCONUL) has also been pursuing similar goals. The efforts of both areas are remarkably similar and can be summarised as focussing on:

1. Development of ISO standards
2. E-Metrics
3. Learning Outcomes
4. Qualitative Measures

This paper is concerned with Qualitative measures.

Developing customer focus and tailoring to their needs

Ideally, measurement gives us unbiased evidence which enables us to make informed decisions when planning for the future. It can confirm what librarians think they know, or it can indicate services that are not working effectively or not valued by our customers - therefore not worth continuing. It can lead to insights into ways in which current modes of information delivery impact on customers.

Qualitative measures – input from the customers

Customer satisfaction is dependent on a mix of their perceptions, expectations and importance. You can measure performance for example by the number of online journals the library provides access to, and you may meet internal goals in terms of providing resources, but it is possible that customers are not satisfied with the resources or access to them. (9) Customers might prefer the results to be full text, or the use of the software may be difficult, or network access may fail frequently, or they may be located in some place on the website where they can't easily be found!

You can also have services which the customer rates as very important, but they may have low expectations. For example, everyone may like to have a computer each, but may expect to have to wait some time in a queue to get to a computer. In a service environment, the service needs are defined by the customers.

Within a service quality assessment model "only customers judge quality: all other judgements are essentially irrelevant"... (10) Therefore we should be aware that for the purposes of performance measures, the term "quality" is defined as "perceived quality" rather than "objective quality" that is, it is dependent on the customer's perception of what they can expect from a service and what they believe they have received, rather than any "objective" standard as determined by a professional group or in conventional performance measurement. (11) The perception of the customer is really all that counts. Customer satisfaction surveys are a very effective way of gaining feedback about service quality in general.

Types of qualitative measures
Gorman (12) refers to four types of qualitative measurement

- Observation
- Interviewing
- Group Discussion
- Historical Investigation

Interviews are the most popular and useful tool and they can take many formats. With large numbers of students or customers, group interviews or surveys are probably most effective. Some of the more effective tools which could be used to measure online resources and services would be customer satisfaction surveys and exit surveys, the latter pop up as customers leave a website. Surveys usually only give an indication of problems or issues in general terms. They need to be followed up with more in-depth analysis which can be achieved through focus group discussions. Focus groups are usually homogenous – ie representatives from the science faculty or representatives of postgraduate students. The added benefit of focus group interviews is in the interaction between group members as well as with the interviewer.

There is another group method called "nominative group technique" which does not use homogenous members but aims to be as varied as possible. This is valuable before setting up a survey by identifying issues and describing them in the language of the customer.

I will be giving examples of observation and a group interview – or a customer survey.

Observation

An example of observation or a field study was conducted in the University of Toronto Library, which is a large research library in Canada. A field study was conducted of the information behaviour of members of the Faculty of Pharmacy in 2003. (13) The primary goal of the field study was to understand the way that the scientist (or the end-user) went about finding information from the context of their everyday research activity. Some of their findings demonstrated:

- That the information systems the library taught people to use in the library instruction programs are not necessarily the systems they actually use - particularly in the case of younger academic staff.
- That the library's perceptions of frustrations their users encountered in accessing a variety of information resources –each with its own interface – were confirmed.
- That it was a significant problem to receive too many or too few results in answer sets. – Confirming the library's view that users need to be taught how to search effectively. But 92% of use of the system was from outside of the library as researchers worked remotely. So they were considering a pilot project to develop a Web services based system.
- That useability of university library websites must be considered one of the most significant usability issues encountered by researchers – As a result they redesigned their website to display the most frequently used links at the top of the page. (As obvious as this may appear, such a "user designed" approach to an academic library website is uncommon; most library sites exhibit a content-based organisation).

This is an example of how performance measures resulted in identifying some services being ceased if they were not valued by customers. Other areas were identified which could be usefully developed or improved.

THE UTS experience and LibQUAL
In 2004, UTS Library was the first Australian site to use LibQUAL+ customer survey. In my opinion, it was a good example of an effective performance measurement tool.

LibQUAL+ uses gap analysis technique to measure the difference between customer expectations and service delivery. LibQUAL+ had 22 core questions plus A box for open ended comments was also provided. This seem like a small number of questions, but the shorter the survey, the better the response rate. There was a very user -friendly web interface, no technical expertise required. The results were presented immediately after the survey closed in a .pdf document on the website. We received 3,200 usable responses which were presented in graph form by the following groups:

- Undergraduate Students
- Postgraduate Students
- Academic Staff
- Library Staff

Because of the large respondent pool, we had the ability to do reliable subgroup analysis or analysis on differences within the group". (14)

Comments

1400 comments were received from the survey. Analysis of the comments was particularly useful as they provided more information to flesh out insights developed from the quantitative data received. Comments were in Excel or SPSS. We worked in Excel which was sufficient for our purposes. Whilst the comments were all made available for library staff to read, it was best to separate them into broad categories. This made it easier for the relevant support areas to deal with specific issues relating to them.

Customer Feedback Limitations

Having impressed you with the importance of customer feedback I now want you to keep in mind some limitations about your customers' comments:

- They may be biased by their experience of libraries so far – if they have experienced better financed libraries their expectations may be high. If they have never experienced better libraries, then they might give a good satisfaction rate without good service.
- They may be biased because of the time they are asked – early in semester if they are a new user, they might require different services to a more experienced user.
- Customers only know what they have experienced. Their view is personal and backward looking.
- They are not experts in the areas of technology, etc and do not know what is possible. If you listen too closely you run the risk of small, incremental changes rather than bold improvements.
- They should be asked to focus on outcomes, not solutions – particularly in focus group or interview follow ups.

Customer surveys will only provide general information. They will still need to be followed up with further research activities such as focus groups or interviews to clarify identified issues.

Value-added as a calculation and contribution

The difficulty for libraries is to identify what is the "value-add" of the services which they provide. It is a balancing act between what each of our stakeholder groups require. If they could, each group would put a bias in their own favour.

For example, in the university environment, the government, which is our funding source, would like us to cut costs. Academic staff would like us to provide access to all online journals in their subject area, regardless of costs. Students would like us to provide information in packages to suit their needs and experience level, regardless of the fact that there could be many thousands of them. For all of these groups the library would like to retain a positive image. How is this balance achieved? We need to interpret and present the results of our performance measures in terms and language which are suitable for each of our stakeholder groups.

It is most effective to be selective and present only the key findings, not the entire report. Ask yourself if your funding body will understand it. Make sure that you have already considered and prioritised potential actions and follow up activities.

Managing Expectations

Customers' perceptions of service quality can be influenced either by raising their perceptions or by lowering their expectations. The expectations which customers bring to the service affect their evaluation of its quality. The higher the expectation, the higher the delivered service must be to be perceived as high quality. So managing customers' expectations...is an essential part of a strategy to attain perceived quality service. (15) Therefore without making any other changes, we could improve customer's perception of service adequacy by managing their expectations better- using strategies such as better or more targeted publicity.

At UTS we have found some success in managing expectations by putting together a "Client Service Charter" (16) which gives service guarantees for the library but manages expectations by indicating that some of our guarantees are dependent on other factors, such as the input of Academic Staff. One example is:

From the UTS Library Client Services Charter ...The Library ensures.... there is adequate access to information resources for new courses.....however

We ask you (ie the Academic Staff)...to provide advice on course developments so that a Library impact statement can be properly prepared within the Faculty's timeline for approval....

In conclusion, the twenty-first century library exists in an era of accountability, customer focus and transition driven by technology. We need to aim for multi-dimensional library assessment in order to present a complete report as we account for our activities. Change is constantly with us, so mechanisms to identify trends and develop new performance measures are required. We need to demonstrate the value of what we are doing to our stakeholders. Measuring customer satisfaction is a very useful tool to achieve this.

Notes:

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(8) ARL New Measures Initiative http://www.arl.org/stats/newmeas/newmeas.html

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(10) Zeithaml, V.A, Parasuraman, A, Berry, L.L, (1990) Delivering quality service: Balancing customer perceptions and expectations. New York: Free Press p.16

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(13) Clinton, Marshall. (2004) 'Be nimble...be quick: responding to user needs. Insights gained through an information behaviour study'. Library Connect Newsletter October, Volume 2, No. 3. pp2-4 http://www.elsevier.com/framework_librarians/LibraryConnect/lcvol2no3oct2004.pdf

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(15) Zeithaml, V.A, Parasuraman, A, Berry, L.L, (1990) Delivering quality service: Balancing customer perceptions and expectations. New York: Free Press

(16) UTS Client Services Charter http://www.lib.uts.edu.au/about/cscharter

Kim Robinson
Youngest Honorary Life Member

During the year a nomination for Honorary Life Membership of the Association was received by the Board from Catherine Halsall of the Sydney Chapter. Kim Robinson was the member nominated. Kim's contribution to, and history of, involvement in ANZTLA is well-known and the Board found it easy to approve the nomination. Below is Philip Harvey's speech given at the Conference Dinner in Sydney, where Kim's HLM was conferred.

Kim is known to all of us who have been part of ANZTLA for any length of time. The first time I met Kim he was wearing a silver owl on his chunky jumper, a cause for comment. It was only later that I learnt that Kim is an owl collector – high brow owls, low brow owls (it's a tongue twister), decorative and designer and demure owls - and that Moore College Library is lined with boobooks, tawny frogmouths and every kind of owl in every kind of material form. These presences are a cosy friendly greeting to visitors to the Library, all those except the Malaysian students who apparently complain because Malaysians are superstitious about owls. You can't please everyone. As I say, most of us have got to know Kim well over the years. However, even those with long memories may not know some of his direct roles in ANZTLA affairs.

1. Editor of the first two issues of the ANZTLA Newsletter (1987)
2. One of the original indexers on the Australian Religion Index (ARI) (1989-1999)
3. Australian Executive Committee member of the Forum for Theological Librarians in Asia (ForATL) (1997-2002)
4. Editorial Coordinator of ARI (1996-1999)
5. President of ANZTLA (1997-2001)

Kim was one of the founding fathers of ANZTLA and founding fathers have a lot of work to do. When Kim once gave a public accolade to Lawrence McIntosh for his contribution to the Association he remarked that he thought of Lawrence as the Daddy of Them All, at which Lawrence himself was heard to murmur, "No wonder I feel so tired." And certainly Kim's support from the very start in making ANZTLA happen is something many of us are well aware of. It can be said that he has seen the times.

Based at Moore College Library here in Sydney, Kim has contributed much to the life of the Association. He has worked on all Sydney conferences and has been a strong presence at nearly all other conferences over the years. He has represented ANZTLA at various international organisations and conferences, including the General Assembly of Bibliotheques Europeenes de Theologie (BETH) and at ABTPATL.

Kim is known for his candid manner on many issues, also for his sensitivity to the needs of others in the Association. He is also known as the acme of aplomb. In this respect I ought to recount the famous dinner at a Brisbane conference where he arrived at the restaurant for the annual dinner dressed in a magnificent white Moroccan cloth shirt. Kim can be seen in such flowing garments on regular occasions. He found himself at a particularly rowdy table. Readying himself to deliver a presidential speech between courses he suddenly watched a full glass of red wine flying from the direction of one of the more excited New Zealand delegates. The result was a large wine stain all over the shirt. Not one to take umbrage easily, bloodied but unbowed, Kim stood to give his speech above the noise of the restaurant. Kim will not be interrupted or thrown off his game. He rose above the clamour to give his speech, the picture of grace in adversity. This is how I remember Kim best and it is with this in mind that I ask you to congratulate Kim as the newest Honorary Life Member of the Association.