

LIBRARIES AT THE CROSSROADS : CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES IN THE SECOND DECADE OF THE 21ST CENTURY



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Outline

- A journey to the generations of the 21st century: characteristics and experiences
- Libraries and the generations
- Moving on the 2nd decade: characteristics
- Challenges & opportunities
- Conclusion

The Generations

Generation	Year	Other Names
Baby Boomers	1946 to 1964 (Wikipedia) (Strauss and Howe “ <i>Generations</i> ”: 1943-1960)	
Generation X	(1961-1964) 1965 to 1981 1961-1984	Gen-X, “baby bust” (“latchkey kids,” “video-generation”)
Generation Y	1980-1999 (Wikipedia) 1981-2000 1982-2001 (9/11)	Gen-Y, Millennial Generation, Baby Boom Echo, Echo Boomers

Source: Deupree, Aaron. The generations



What is your age?

A – Millennial (< 30 years)

B – Generation X (30 to 45 years)

C – Baby Boomer (46 to 63 years)

D – Mature (> 63 years)

The Baby Boomer Experience

- Sputnik; walk on the moon
- New technology: transistor radios, television, space race
- Assassinations: JFK, Robert Kennedy, Malcolm X, Martin Luther King
- Music: Rock and Roll, Beatlemania, Motown US (Woodstock, Vietnam War),
- India (independence), Canada (Trudeau)

Source: Wikipedia





Baby Boomer Traits

- Optimistic/Idealistic
- Competitive
- Traditional
- Corporate loyalty
- Team oriented



What is a Gen Xer?

- Born 1965-1980
- Come of age during time of economic and political ups and downs
- Grow up in the shadow of the Boomers
- Sandwich between two larger generations



Gen X Traits and Values

- Self-reliant
- Seeks balance
- Informal
- Pragmatic
- Technoliterate
- Fun
- Individualistic
- Skeptical

The Generation X (1961-1984)

Generation X is consistently characterized by being the first generation to grow up as 'latchkey kids' having a set of parents working outside of the home.

Generation X grew up with:

- cold war
- MTV
- the first wave of computers and modern technology





Experiences of Generation Y

“Y2Curious: America's Generation Y has grown up around various phenomena including the Internet with online chatting, Wikipedia, YouTube and its numerous informational resources, digital video and music, Tickle Me Elmos, continued abuse of underage drinking and iPods.”

Source: Yan, S. (2006, December 8).
Understanding generation Y. *The Oberlin Review*.



Who are the Millennials? (1982-2004)



- Comfortable with technology
- Adapt well to working in a team/collaborative environment
- Comfortable with change, open to learning
- Eager to contribute
- Aim for efficiency in execution
- Willing to question conventional wisdom
- Culturally and environmentally aware
- Proficient at multi-tasking

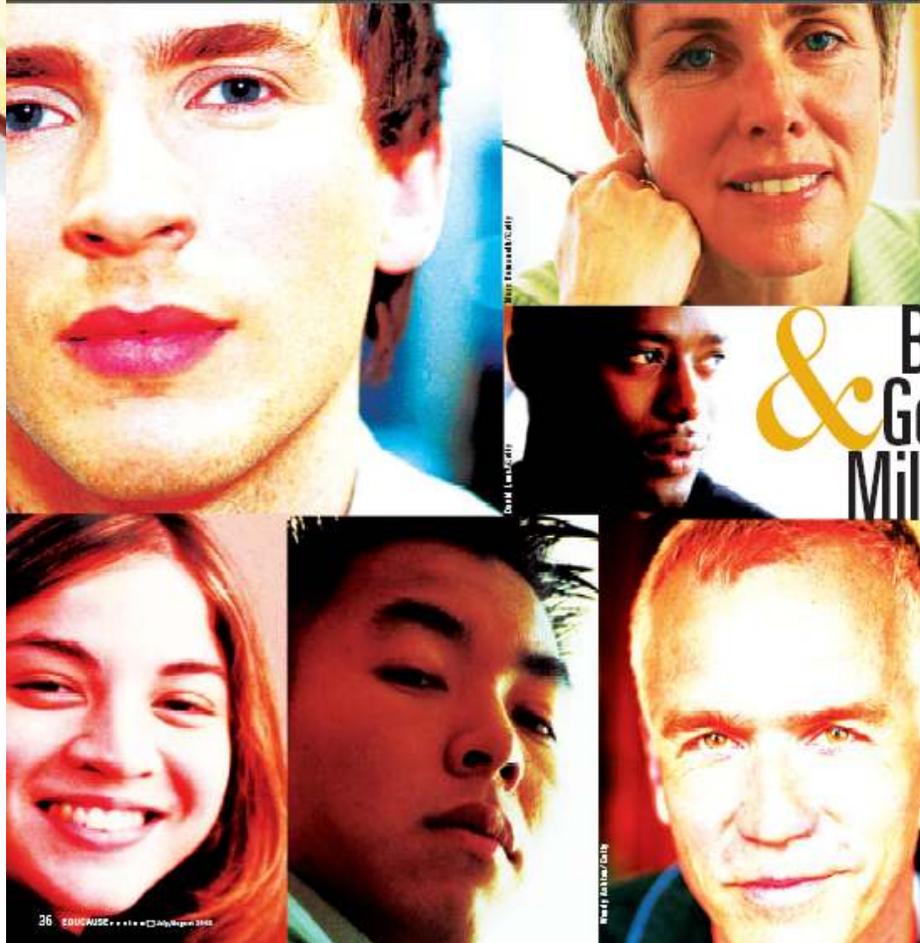




Attitudes of Millennials

- *Computers aren't technology*
- *Typing is preferred to handwriting.*
- *Staying connected is essential.*
- *There is zero tolerance for delays.*
- *Consumer and creator are blurring.*
- *Reality is no longer real. (Perspectives)*
- *Doing is more important than knowing.*
- *Learning more closely resembles games than logic.*
- *Multitasking is a way of life.*

Generations and Education



An essential component of facilitating learning is understanding learners. The learning styles, attitudes, and approaches of high school students differ from those of eighteen- to twenty-two-year-old college students. The styles, attitudes, and approaches of adult learners differ yet again. How well do college and university faculty, administrators, and staff understand these differences? How often do they take the differences into account when designing programs or courses?

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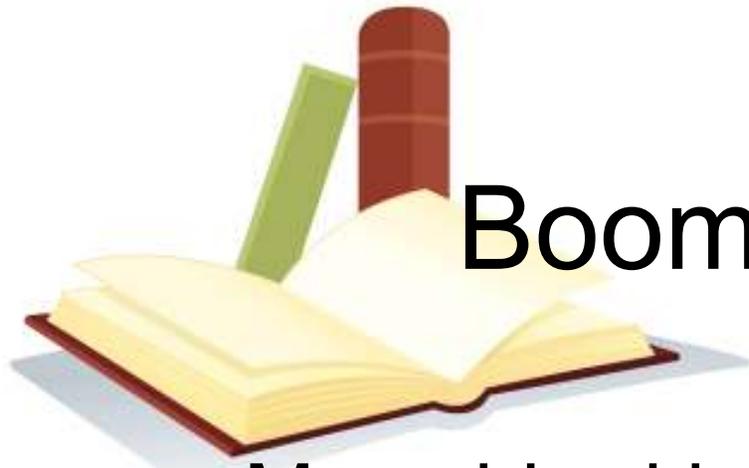
Boomers
& Gen-Xers
Millennials

UNDERSTANDING THE
NEW
STUDENTS

By Diana Oblinger

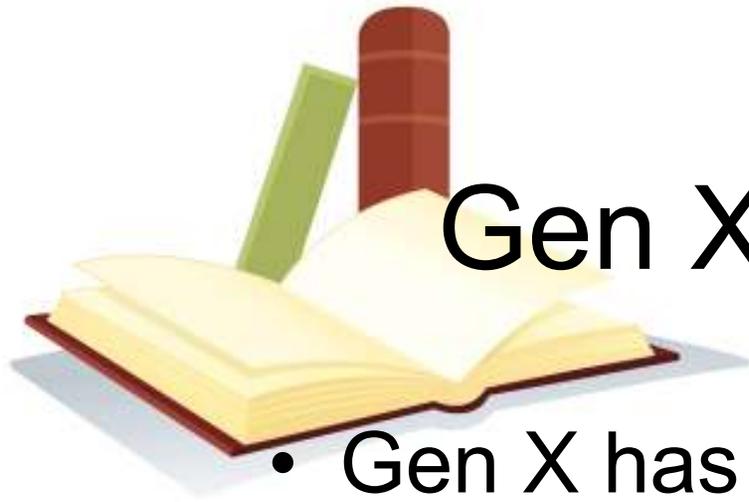
Libraries and the Generations





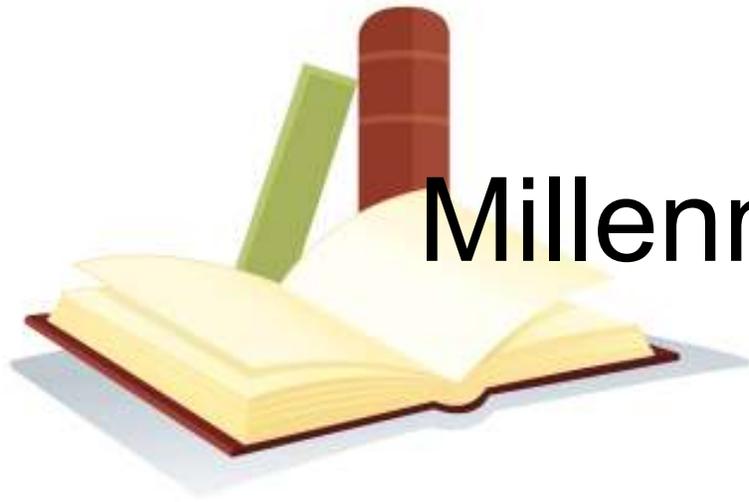
Boomers and Libraries

- Many hired in late 60s and 70s during a library profession growth spurt.
- Typewriters were in vogue.
- Print periodical indexes were popular.
- Boomers used card catalogs; boomers created card catalogs.



Gen X and Libraries

- Gen X has grown up with online catalogs and databases as they evolved
- Gen X librarians need to manage Boomers
- Gen X needs to be prepared for retirement of the Boomers



Millennials and Libraries

- Desire instant gratification
- Are achievement oriented
- Expect to be rewarded on own merit
- Multitaskers
- Expect nomadic, anytime, anywhere communication

Why address generational issues?

- Because our “info-centered world” has produced a high degree of “generational mixing in the workplace” as never seen before
- Because differences among generations “based on economics, demographics, and world views” produce workplace problems that “must be confronted to be solved.”

Source: Zemke, Raines, Filipczak /Generations At Work

Why address generational issues?

- Because we want to attract younger generations to the library profession.
- Because we want library services to be attractive and viable for younger generations of library users.
- Because we want to avoid generation myopia and generational prejudice



Age has anything to do with adopting (and adapting to) new technologies, particularly when it's information professionals we're talking about.

Source: Marydee Ojala, "Talk About My Generation," *Online*. July/August 2005, p. 5



“NextGen librarians tend to be more narrowly focused. They seem to be much more interested in machines than in public service”

Source: Gordon, Rachel Singer. *The Nextgen Librarian's Survival Guide*, 2006, p 109

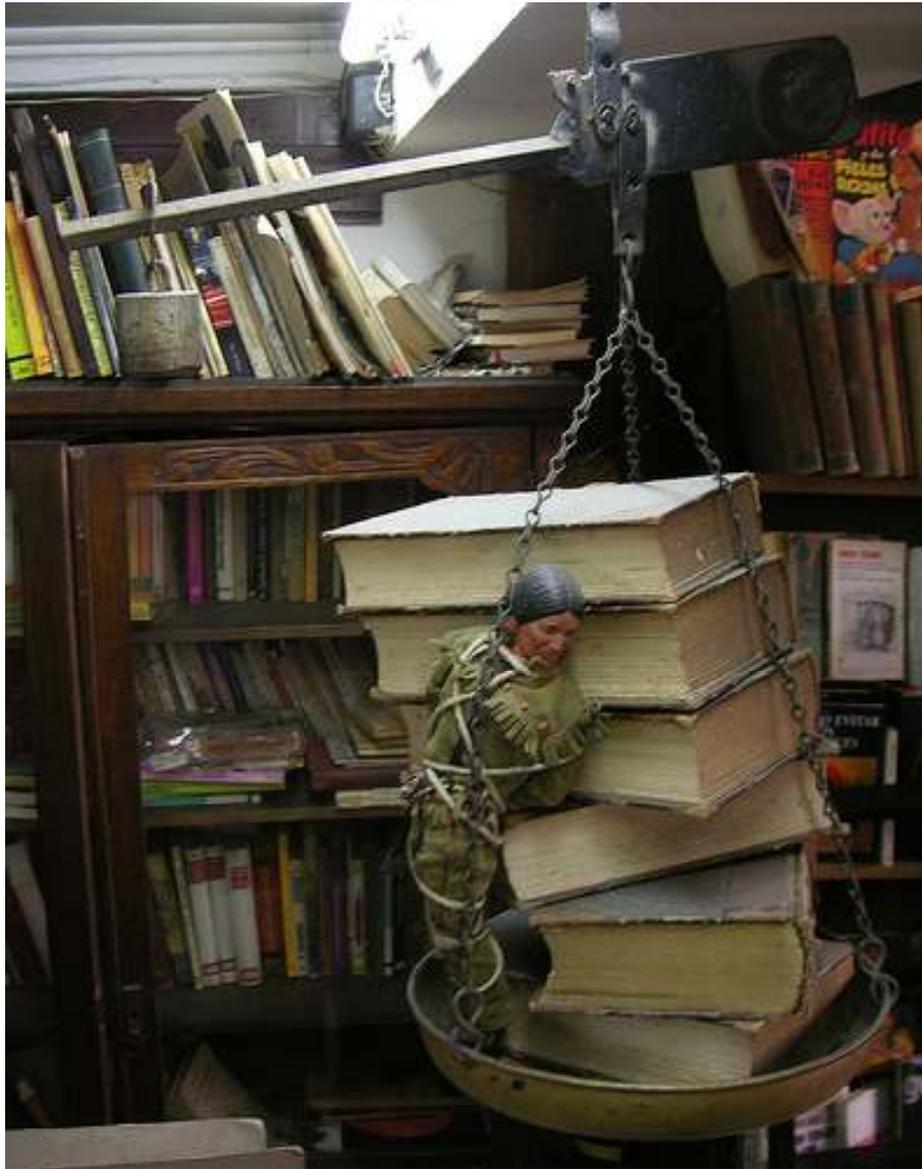
Characteristics of the 2nd decade of the 21st century

- A world of advanced media, technology, and electronic conveniences
- Population is diverse
- Education become a "borderless society" - the age of everything-everywhere
- Growth of information/learning commons
- Virtual teamwork gains popularity in the LIS profession

A world of advanced media, technology, and electronic conveniences

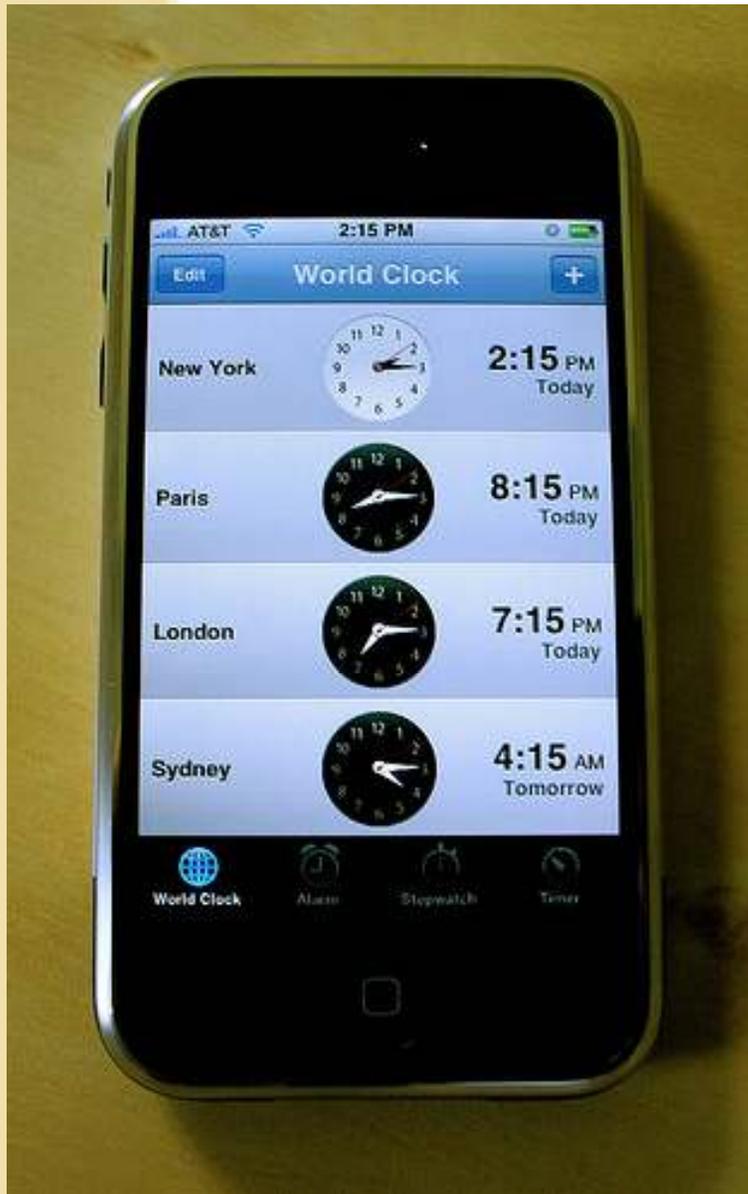
- From desktop to mobile to handheld devices (IPODS & blackberries) as connecting tools to internet
- Broadband access and wireless connection
- From Web 1-2-3 and beyond
- From Library 1.0 to Library 2.0





**Web 2.0
changes
the balance of
power
in our libraries**

Source: Kathryn Greenhill <http://librariansmatter.com>



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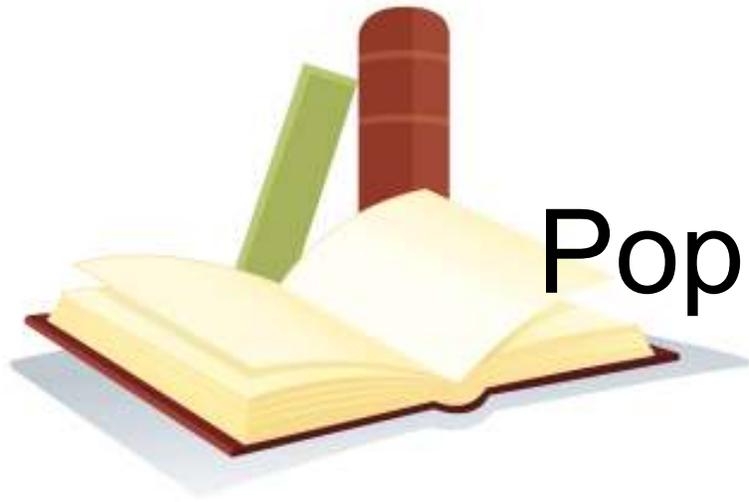
Mashups for Granny?

If only I could find the price
of **cat food** along
my **bus route** correlate it with the
pension day **weather**
and see it on a **map** ...



Mashups

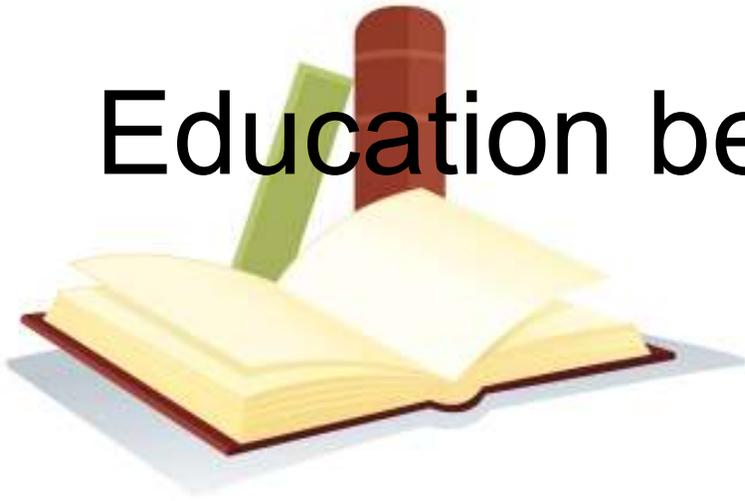
Source: Kathryn Greenhill <http://librariansmatter.com>



Population is diverse

The millennial generation will increase as baby boomers shrink.

Education becomes borderless



- Classrooms without walls
- Knowledge becomes interdisciplinary
- From conventional to web-based curriculum



Information /Learning Commons

- An open environment with seamless, coordinated resources and services
- The use of the state of the art technology for research and coursework
- Intimate spaces for faculty and access to experts in research, technology writing and the various disciplines



Source: Kathryn Greenhill <http://librariansmatter.com>

Virtual teamwork gains popularity

Composition: librarians, library technicians and information systems specialists from different departments or institutions that communicate via e- media to span time and geographic barriers to generate ideas and alternatives for issues that affect library operations.

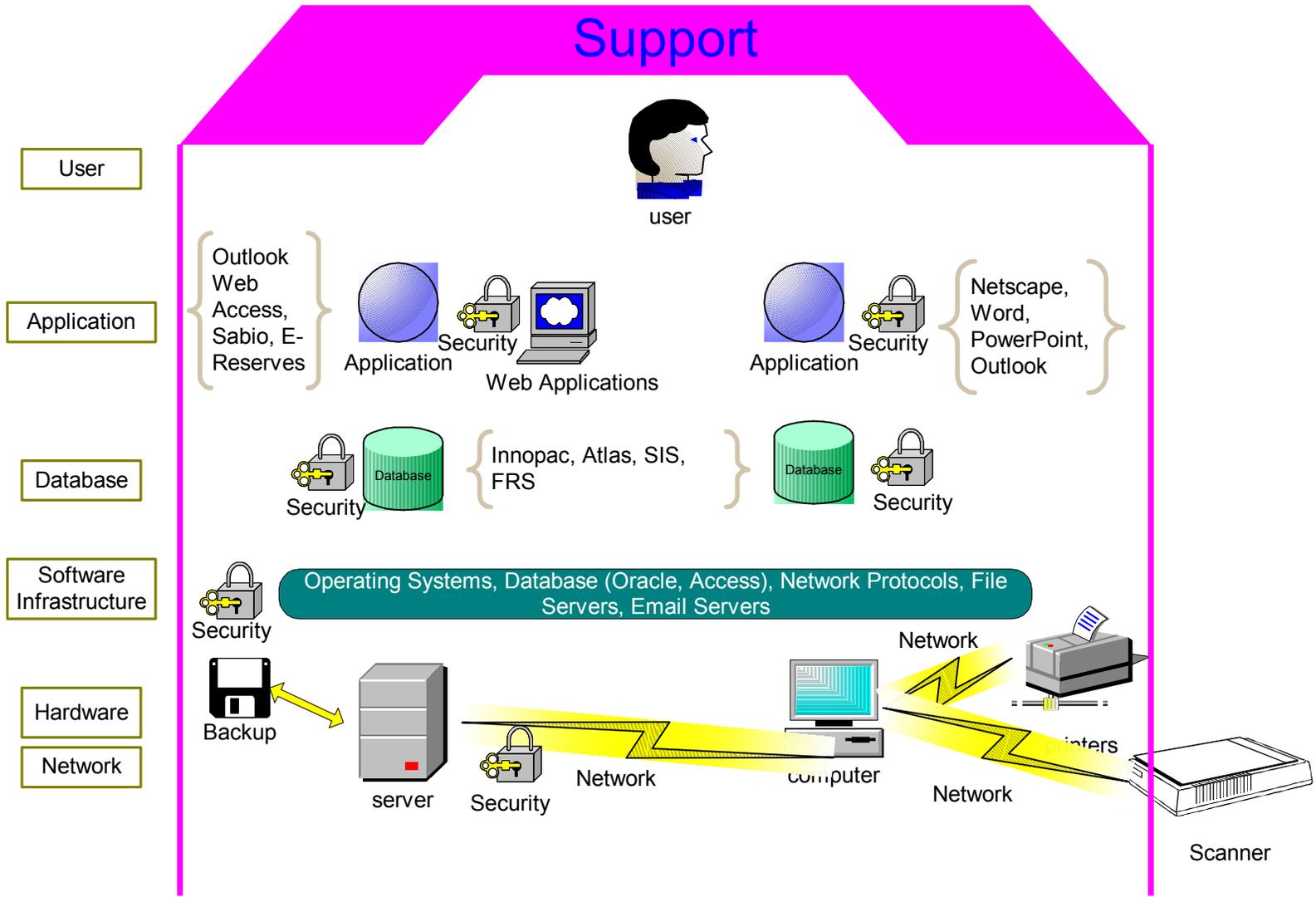
Benefits: operational budget savings , increased job productivity and job flexibility



CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES



Challenge 1: Supplanting "library programs" with "technology initiatives"



Source: www.librarytechnology.org



**Help us take advantage of
the computers we already
have...**

... in our pockets!





Challenge 2: Shaping the new library space/dspace



Use our buildings in different ways



Source: Kathryn Greenhill <http://librariansmatter.com>



Challenge 3: Meeting the needs of the “digital natives”



- Challenge 4: Balancing LIS
Education, practice and
research



Moving on : The 2nd decade Opportunities are tremendous

- Embedded librarianship
- Collaboration takes place beyond the institutional & geographical boundaries
- The emergence of online virtual worlds, and three-dimensional environments,



What would it take
for us to move forward?

- Position ourselves to be...
 - Responsive
 - Innovative
 - Competitive
 - Flexible
 - Circumspect



Conclusion

Famous Quotes

***“There is nothing permanent except change”
-Heraclitus***

***“It is not the strongest of the species that survive, nor the most intelligent, but the one most responsive to change “
-Charles Darwin***



WE, therefore

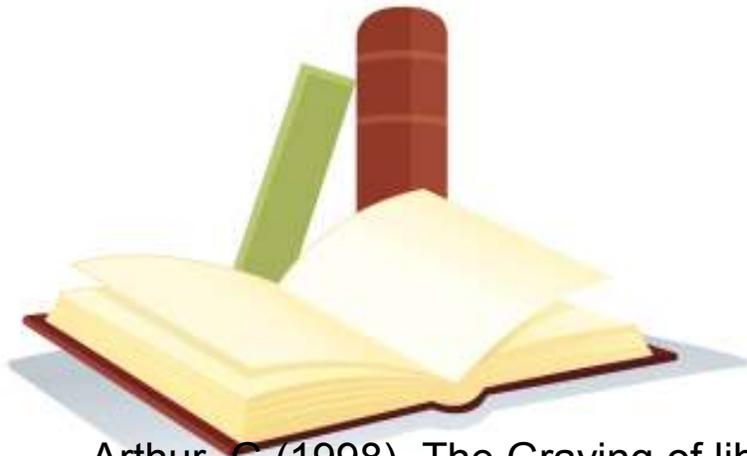
***Embrace change and be an agent of
change***

***Be a risk taker, even if we fail, we will
be noted***



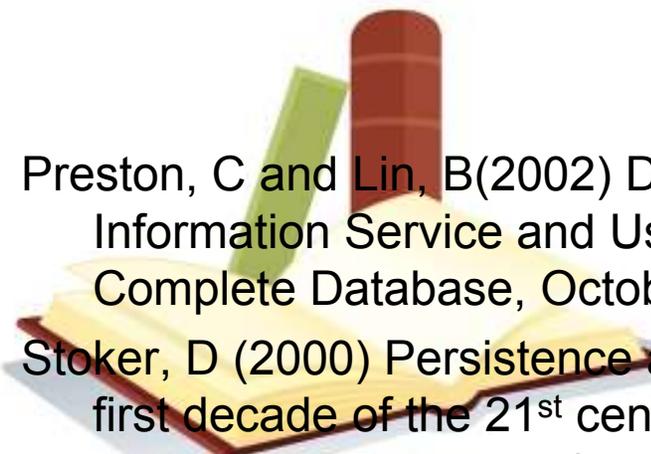
*THANK YOU
FOR
LISTENING!!*





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