

A section of this special Millennium issue of the *Letter of the LAA* contains one-line predictions from various folks answering the question "Where will libraries or librarianship be in 2010?" I began to write a line or two in response to this question and ended up composing an entire article. Begging the indulgence of the editor, here is my "more than one-line" prediction.

2010 is not that far away, less than 10 years. In the grand scheme of things, it's only a blink of an eye. But we do live in an era of great and ever-increasing change so, accordingly, much will be different in a decade. At the same time, however, there will be much that will be the same as or similar to today's library world.

I would never pretend to have any prescient abilities but here are a few items that I think we might see a decade from now. What I mention here applies to all types of libraries, to anything that is called a library.

- The Library of 2010 will, like the Library of today, be a multi-format institution. We tend not to dispose of material lock, stock, and barrel, even if formats die (for instance, the library where I work has quite an extensive microcard collection, a dead format for sure). This, of course, is the one of the roles of libraries, the preservation of facts, information, and knowledge. And in 2010, we will require a physical structure to contain these formats. So, libraries as buildings will still be a strong presence ten years from now, regardless of future format changes and digitization efforts.
- Delivery of library services to the desktop PC, at work or at home or in-library, will continue to expand. It may even be quite commonplace in ten years, the preferred format for information access.
- Library staff will have to work very, very hard to keep up with our patrons, both in terms of service and technology. We will be constantly meeting and creating demand. The technology-related skills of patrons of all ages will be ever-increasing; as a result, some (perhaps many) libraries and library workers will continually struggle to keep up though some may not be successful in doing this.
- The Library will still be the most-used facility in any community, be it a municipality, a school, a college, or a university campus. Hopefully, the decision-makers in these communities will recognize and support this fact.
- Lastly, and most importantly, I think (hope) the Library of 2010 will still be a place where library workers and library patrons will feel welcome and comfortable, maybe even more than at present.

As I said I'm no soothsayer. My crystal ball is cracked and murky. My predictions could be way off. So be it. However, if I'm at least somewhat on the

mark, I think a “2010 Library” could be somewhere I could work. And as for post-2010, who knows...I’m not touching that one!

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