

REWORKING MYTH:
CASTING LOTS FOR THE FUTURE OF LIBRARY WORKPLACES

by

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DEDICATION

For Mara, who has probably sacrificed more than I have to make this work possible; Elizabeth, and other children to come, who will, hopefully, benefit from our sacrifice; my parents (by birth and by marriage), whose support has been unfailing; and the many friends, family, colleagues and others who listened politely to my ideas.

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this work is to provide understanding regarding the future of library workplaces by, first, establishing the relationship between Joseph Campbell's functions of mythology in traditional cultures and workplace texts, and then showing libraries as workplaces with such texts. With this framework in place, it is possible to pick-out the fundamental cycle inherent in library workplace cosmology, highlight pedagogical cycles inherent in library texts, and generate an informed understanding of future cosmological and pedagogical trends using educated extrapolation of such cycles.

These steps all serve to lay further groundwork in understanding library workplace mythology and its sociological effects, and, using the relationship between ever-moving cosmological and pedagogical cycles, it becomes possible to form an educated picture of future library sociology. In the end, library workplace mythology has no new revelations about the direction of library workplace sociology, only new ways of dispelling predictions often made about the future of libraries and their workplaces. By looking at library workplaces as sites of mythology, this work offers expectations that the same cycles inherent in past and present library workplaces will continue to overcome changes in the technological, political, and social constructs of future library workplaces.

INTRODUCTION

Preface

I find it astonishing that this one project has drawn on and informed so many personal and scholarly interests—all at the same time. As a Masters student in English, especially one interested in the genealogy of literary traditions and stories, and a former librarian with a curiosity about how and why specific policies and procedures are adopted and adhered to in some cases and discarded in others, perhaps it was inevitable that I would begin to view libraries with a mythical eye. It is just this view of libraries that my title is meant to imply.

It is my understanding that a master's thesis is generally written for a very specific audience and relevant to a relatively narrow field of study. For instance, theses for English departments might reasonably examine a common theme that runs through many of Faulkner's works. This thesis is, of course, similar in both form and content to such theses, but because it is motivated by multiple interests and cross-disciplinary thinking, it is no surprise that this work relies on and provides original scholarship pertaining to at least three separate topics of study: mythology, the workplace, and library science.

Accordingly, scholars interested in mythology should read this work as a justification for including workplace mythology in general, and specifically library workplace mythology, as a canonical form of myth-making and worthy of the same study as mythologies generated by more traditional cultures. Often workplaces like libraries are seen as merely extensions of the culture from which they spring. Though there is

truth to that way of thinking, looking at libraries as sites of myth-making allows this work to span multiple cultural backgrounds such as India, Egypt, and the United States without losing sight of the original mythology about and within library workplaces.

Similarly, scholars interested in workplace culture, and perhaps in workplaces generally, should see my work as an extension of previous thought about workplace culture. Anthropologists in particular have been studying corporations and similar business-like organizations for decades—but I have yet to see an anthropological study of libraries. I find this amazing, since libraries—and consequently their workplace cultures—have been a cohesive, if not consistent, culture for longer than most of today’s nations.¹ The difference between this work and previous workplace cultural studies is that my thesis takes the idea of a workplace culture one step further. It is logical, for instance, that the peoples of India or of Africa have both a culture and a highly developed mythological tradition. I propose that the same concept holds true in library workplaces, that as sites of culture they have also developed a mythological tradition.

Likely the most obvious benefactors of this study are those interested in Library Science, since the bulk of my research is directly related to libraries and librarians. I claim no revelatory predictions concerning the direction of libraries—but my research does provide a unique look at the cycles of library workplaces and how library workplace mythology (the stories and pedagogy that individual library employees use to guide

¹ Take, for example, the ancient Alexandrian library, which is used as an example throughout this work. Ptolemy I (Soter) was said to be its founder, which puts its opening sometime after 300 B.C (Bowman 22). It was not the first library, nor the first building used for books and staffed for that purpose. In fact, few traditional cultures can match library workplace culture for longevity.

decisions in the workplace) both informs future sociality and shapes perceptions of library workplaces.

When I write of workplace mythology, I am reveling in the study of how the ethics and ideals upon which constituents of a particular culture base their everyday decisions and evaluate performance. On the first floor of Montana State University's Renne Library, next to the public elevator, hangs a plaque. This plaque contains a quote from Archibald MacLeish, which captures the durability, the importance, and the essence of change that are at the heart of library mythology. It reads, "What is more important in a library than anything else--than everything else--is the fact that it exists." MacLeish captures, in this brief quote, the heart of what it means to work in a library (as a librarian, and, sometimes, as a scholar). This quote shows what a mythological study of library workplaces reveals about libraries and the people who run them—that in spite of the many cultural, technological, and other challenges, libraries exist, and will exist.

The simple quote above may construe a too-simplistic view of library workplace mythology; do not be deceived. Though this work is broad-minded, it is not a comprehensive examination of the multiple mythologies that run through library workplaces. I have only touched upon certain specific instances of library workplace mythology in order to establish patterns and attempt a practical extrapolation of future possibilities. The work that attempts to trace all the threads of mythology that run through the long and varied past of library workplaces would be both long and complex indeed.

Library as Place, Library as Workplace

It is interesting that the concept of “library as workplace,” a topic often discussed in library journals and other books about library employment (and hidden in the background of any discussion of the library as place), is not often included in discussions of library as place. For example, in his article “The Research Library as Place: On the Essential Importance of Collections of Books Shelved in Subject-Classified Arrangements, Thomas Mann, reference librarian for the Library of Congress,” shows the negative effects of completely digitizing and key-word searching library collections by citing instances when his own research activities were more effective than library catalog and Internet key-word searches. Inherent in his overt references to personal, on-the-job research activities is an unmistakable, though less apparent, reliance on his own experience with the library as work-place—a term hereafter simplified to library workplace(s).

With the advent of Internet search sites like Google.com, which provide certain information access services previously available through libraries, librarians have become increasingly aware of the changing needs of both library users and library workers. This digital paradigm often influences thought about the seemingly unavoidable changes libraries are destined to make. Often, as Thomas Mann suggests in the same article quoted above, “[t]he ‘evolution’ to digital forms, it is asserted, is simply ‘inevitable’; and traditional libraries that fail to make ‘the transition’ will be ‘left behind’ as outdated ‘book museums’” (191). Mann definitely sees this total shift to completely digitized libraries as anything but inevitable, though he acknowledges other viewpoints that depict

library digitization as a certainty. His argument against what many see as inevitable regarding library workplaces shows the diversity and complexity of libraries and that there is no easy understanding of the various elements that generate such places because a workplace as dynamic as libraries have become changes on multiple levels and to various degrees.

This mutability within library place and workplace may seem unique to our digital age, but it is not. In *Library: An Unquiet History*, a history book that nevertheless relies heavily on library workplace experiences, Harvard librarian Matthew Battles gives a broad history of libraries around the globe. He also hits upon a division in understanding of library workplace paradigms strikingly similar to the one generated by Mann when he writes that “The Ptolemies [rulers who created the ancient library at Alexandria] didn’t see their library as a universal repository devoted to the preservation of liberal learning, however much our cherished origin myth may have us believe it was so.”(31). Battles’ statement is interesting because of what he seems to take for granted: the idea of a shared, “cherished myth” about the origins of library workplaces.

A previous citation shows Mann quoting specific terms—but from whom does he take such general terms like “evolution,” “inevitable,” and “left behind” with respect to library digitization? Since he doesn’t cite specific sources, it is most likely he is simply using quotes to emphasize a cohesive argument or position on the subject. Further, without a specific text to quote from, how can Mann be so certain about the tenets of pro-digitization librarians as to quote them? For that matter, how can proponents of digitization coalesce without some form of unifying document? Likewise, Battles’

assertion of an “origin myth” in the same paragraph as his refutation of its historical context generates a sense that the historical and contemporary depictions of how library workplaces began and the meaning behind the word “library” were constructed after the fact. This renders, at least partially, the historical facts surrounding the same “origins” less important to library workplaces and generates other questions. Why does Battles refer to library workplace’s adoption of a historical discrepancy as a guiding myth, in spite of historical evidence to the contrary? Is his usage of the term correct? The way Battles uses the word “myth” suggests one possible way of answering the above questions about library workplace—and others—that is, by viewing library workplaces as groups capable of generating their own mythology. Unfortunately, there are no studies of library workplace mythology available, because like Battles and the few others who mention libraries in conjunction with mythology, the subject is only ever mentioned in passing. In order to bridge the gap between mythology and library workplaces, it is logical to turn to either those who study mythology, those who study workplace culture, or (as this work does) rely on a combination of both.

Mythical Criteria

To begin, mythologist Joseph Campbell provides some helpful statements regarding what a mythology is. His depiction of the functions myths serve as a convenient heuristic, or a necessary framework from which to view a workplace—and especially a library workplace—not only as a place with culture and folklore, but, sometimes, as a place with mythology. Campbell gives four categories that describe the functions of mythology in a cultural setting. He writes:

Myth basically serves four functions. The first is the mystical function...realizing what a wonder the universe is, and what a wonder you are, and experienc[ing] awe before this mystery...The second is a cosmological dimension...showing you what the shape of the universe is but showing it in such a way that the mystery comes through...The third function is the sociological one—supporting and validating a certain social order...[and] there is a fourth function of myth...that is the pedagogical function of how to live a life under any circumstances. (The Power of Myth 38-39)

Campbell's classification of the functions mythology serves both as excellent criteria from which to assert workplace mythology as a bonafide part of the mythological canon and as a framework for a detailed examination of workplace mythology. This is not to say that the word "myth" does not come up in conjunction with other studies and texts concerning workplaces, but these texts do not approach myth in the same over-arching way as Campbell.

For example, Harrison M. Trice and Janice M. Beyer, authors of a fairly recent textbook on workplace culture, *The Cultures of Work Organizations* (1993), aptly describe certain types and functions of myths in a workplace context.

Myths...are used to explain the origins or transformations of things of great importance. The explanations they provide stimulate, rationalize, and organize actions; they provide the "final warrant of authority" for much that occurs in social life...for example, all human cultures have myths about the origins of their physical and social worlds that guide much of what happens in their societies...the events depicted in myths never happened; they were imagined. Nevertheless, myths have a kind of integrity and truth in that they must be deeply rooted in a set of cultural beliefs before they will have any power or grip on people...they have been aptly called "things that never happened, but always are." (105)

Trice and Beyer are not wrong in their assessment of workplace mythology and their textbook provides helpful information relating to workplace mythology. However their textbook (and others like it) treats workplace mythology with much the same obscurity as

literature concerning “library as place” treats library workplaces. In fact, if combined, the few helpful citations in Trice and Beyer’s textbook (most of which repeat or resemble the information in the previous quote) take up less than one of its over 500 pages. Light treatment aside, their description of myth is both accurate and in step with Campbell’s four functions. However, ending their discussion with a vague explanation that such myths are “things that never happened, but always are” also serves to muddy understanding about workplace mythology, while Campbell’s four functions of mythology provide a great deal more clarity.

In light of the clearer picture of mythology Campbell provides and the workplace experience evident in studies like Trice and Beyer’s, it is clear that the best way to understand workplace mythology is by using a combination of both anthropological studies of workplaces and mythological theory. Considering the obvious merits of such a combination, it is surprising that no texts have attempted this approach.

A Sociological Foundation

Workplace mythology, like other mythologies, must begin first with a culture. This element of mythology falls directly under the sociological element of mythology, since it establishes the rituals that people create as a part of culture, and the cultural element of workplaces is well defined by anthropologists.² That workplaces have culture should not come as a surprise, since, as anthropologists Michael Jones, Michael Moore,

² In 1998, Brendan Koerner, wrote an article titled “*Into the Wild Unknown of Workplace Culture*” which stated that, “of the 2,000-plus anthropologists in the United States practicing outside academia, more than 40 percent work as consultants to the business world” (56).

and Richard C. Snyder aptly explain in their preface to Inside Organizations:

Understanding the Human Dimension:

All people tell stories. They celebrate, ritualize, play, and use figurative language. They participate in traditions that convey meanings, recall past experiences, and act as symbols. If these expressive forms and communications processes are manifested in other social settings, then they must also occur in organizations. (13)

These types of activity, even in the workplace, establish a social order and provide an excellent basis for discussing the sociological function of workplace mythology.

To understand the social aspect of workplace mythology, it is important to know what anthropologists mean when they use the term *culture*. In the above quote they use words like “stories,” “ritual,” and “play” to describe culture, but what *exactly* do these terms mean from an anthropological perspective? Anthropologist Marc Tyrell comes close to an acceptable answer when he writes:

Anthropologists use the term *culture* with two completely different connotations...The first concerns the ability of humans to generate organizations, belief systems, and the like between themselves and their environments. The second meaning refers to the specific, historically situated interface structures of a particular group... (86)

Essentially Tyrell’s first connotation of culture boils down to the various social and societal acts that generate a society. The second connotation he defines really only extends the first to include the entire group of rules and people that generate a society. Tyrell’s distinction between connotations is, therefore, unimportant in a discussion of workplace mythology, with respect to Campbell, because both connotations lead directly to the sociological function. Jones, Moore, and Snyder define culture more broadly, and more succinctly when they explain that culture “provides a single term with which to refer to assumptions, values, and ways of doing things thought to characterize an

association of individuals” (17). This second definition of culture fits more closely with the idea of workplace mythology because it also encompasses Tyrell’s two connotations with a single definition. Jones, Moore, and Snyder not only give culture character, they explain that modern social structures like the workplace have close parallels to previous cultures and that, because of these parallels, “researchers of organizational cultures [which includes anthropologists] have been led to a second field, that of folklore and mythological studies” (17). They continue by providing both a reason for delving into mythology and folklore and a fairly extensive list of characteristics that workplaces exhibit with regard to mythology and folklore. “A basis for inferring patterns in culture,” they continue,

is found in symbolic behavior and expressive forms like stories, rituals, and ceremonies...Among the many kinds of folklore manifested in organizational settings are metaphors and proverbial expressions; argot and jargon; storytelling; jokes and joking relations; rumors and gossip;...recreation, games and play; and celebrations are ceremonies, rites of passage, and ritualizing... (17)

What an anthropological understanding of the workplace does, essentially, is to use symbolic behavior and expression to show evidence of culture in nontraditional settings, where it was previously thought not to exist. In turn, a mythological study of workplace is concerned with close study of the same behavioral and expressive symbols to reveal their intrinsic value as a unique variety of mythology. A mythological study of workplace also aims to understand, categorize and appreciate the mythology of a given workplace in relation to mythology as a whole.

Mythology, however, is not to be found in all workplaces that have a social order. The sociological function of myth is only fully realized in workplace culture when a

workplace has been around for long enough to develop a mythology. Campbell illuminates this progression in The Power of Myth. “Now, in a culture that has been homogeneous for some time,” he begins,

there are a number of understood, unwritten rules by which people live, there is an Ethos, there is a mode, an understanding that, ‘We don’t do it that way’[,] [a]n unstated mythology, you might say. This is the way we use a fork and knife, this is the way we deal with people, and so forth. (10)

Campbell’s statement shows that homogeneity and time tend to lend themselves to an environment necessary for workplace mythology to develop. What workplace culture and the sociological function of organizational myth allow is an understanding of a particular social order. Whether the workplace has a specific mythology that acts to normalize this social order or not stems primarily from the homogeneity and duration specific to a given culture. In fact, because of this, the sociological function of myth might be considered a primary function of myth (though Campbell does not suggest such a classification).

The Mystical Connection

While the sociological function of myth is necessary, the many parts that make up a society might remain simply an order accepted by society, save that when there is something mystical or unexplainable about an order—for example the origins of libraries, a mythology results. This makes the mystical function of mythology a primary function as well. The mystical function of myth, according to Campbell’s description, is what cannot be known about the order or culture that produces. Mysteriously, the culture which produces mythology is, in turn, affected by the mythology that it produces. As

discussed above, Campbell makes a connection between the mystical and cosmological functions of mythology when he defines the cosmology as an order, but an order that allows “the mystery” to “come through.” It is worth remembering that the quote from anthropologists Trice and Beyer, above, leaves their description of mythology on a particularly mystical note by referring to myths as “things that never happened, but always are.”

Mythologists like Campbell, and to some extent literary critics like Northrop Frye, are able to study the mystical function of myth because, as Frye puts it, “It does not matter two pins to the literary critic whether such a ritual had any historical existence or not” (109). The reason for this is that mythological critics are more interested in the myth than in its origins. Their study allows the *mystery* inherent in the mystical function of myth to exist, even while studying what makes the myth unique or categorizing it, because they are less interested in dispelling the mystery inherent in mythology than in understanding its implications and permutations. In short, they allow the mystical, because conflicting stories within the same mythology are viewed as an integral part of mythology rather than inconsistencies to be rooted out and explained away. When stories and people move from the realm of folktale into the complexity necessary for mythological understandings the change that occurs is the mystical function of mythology and it marks the difference between workplace folklore or workplace culture and workplace mythology. It is this complex, mystical element of library workplace mythology which exists in the uncertain balance between its many elements or, to take license with another of Campbell statements, “Myths are clues to [the] spiritual

potentialities [of workplaces]” (The Power of Myth 5). And it is these “spiritual potentialities” that allow library workplace mythology the opportunity to become a mystery that generates awe both for the mystery and, in turn for the rituals and their established meanings.

While the sociological and mystical functions of myth are indispensable and, thus, primary functions of mythology, there are Campbell’s other functions, the cosmological and pedagogical, which may be seen as secondary functions based upon the primary (though, to be clear, Campbell does not make this comparison either). Another of Northrop Frye’s statements, that “Myth gives meaning to ritual,” (107) is a good description of the pedagogical and cosmological functions of myth. Both the prolonged sociological order provided by mythology and the “spiritual potentialities” shaped by the mystical notions of workplace mythology give rise to secondary mythological functions: the cosmological—which gives sociological practices depth by positioning them historically—and the pedagogical—which give the sociological functions purpose by providing universal examples of acceptable social behavior. These two functions establish meaning for sociological rituals, influence the future sociological course of the workplace, and are, in turn, influenced by sociological constructs because of the mystical interplay inherent in and between Campbell’s functions. It is instructive to point out, here, that the mystical function of mythology unravels Campbell’s division of mythology into discrete parts, but, since his divisions are instructive and give an easily adaptable shape to a discussion of mythology, this work applies them as a useful vehicle from which to examine workplace mythology.

Informed Mythical Projection

This mystical interplay between the functions of mythology is what makes educated theory about the future of library workplaces possible. For example, though many concerns about libraries as workplaces center on current or future sociological changes, such changes are due more to the dynamic nature of library workplace pedagogy and cosmology than to any specific social variance. In fact, sociological changes are induced by pedagogical or cosmological changes (or, more commonly by some combination of both) that, because of the mystical connection discussed above, shift the sociological framework and worry library employees.

In light of the interplay between Campbell's functions of myth, Mann and Battles become important to a discussion of the change in library workplace mythology for two reasons. First, each concerns himself (knowingly) with the current and/or future sociology of library workplaces. Second, each (perhaps unknowingly) functions well as a starting point for understanding a particular function of library mythology. On one hand, Battles is naturally paired with library cosmology both because his book focuses on the historical origins of libraries and because he speaks of an "origin myth," which is a cosmological construct, within the same context. On the other hand, Mann's concerns for the terminology which denotes self-fulfilling predictions about the online future of library workplaces are inherently pedagogical.

Understanding library workplaces in terms of Campbell's mythological functions reveals Battle's "origin myth" as a concept continually under construction. Because of this mythological construction, the overall sociological construct of the library as a

workplace is highly susceptible to cyclical shifts between times of disparate and cohesive of library workplace cosmologies.

This ever-changing mythological construct for library workplace mythology can also help explain Mann's worry that librarians see completely digitized libraries as inevitable. In this instance, Mann suffers from a shift toward the external mythology of library workplace, which is introduced, at least in part, by the adoption of digital technologies into the library, and though, as Campbell cautions, "[y]ou can't predict what a myth is going to be any more than you can predict what you are going to dream tonight" (The Power of Myth 41). examining the various cosmological and pedagogical elements of library texts—both written and verbal—reveals shifts in library workplace mythology which justify Mann's fears of complete library digitization.

Truly, the purpose of this work is to provide a foundation for understanding the future of library workplaces by: (1) establishing the relationship between the functions of mythology in traditional cultures and workplace texts, (2) showing libraries as examples of workplaces with such texts, (3) marking-out the fundamental cycle inherent in library workplace cosmology, (4) highlighting pedagogical cycles inherent in library texts, (5) generating an informed understanding of future cosmological and pedagogical trends using an educated extrapolation of such cycles, and (6) using the relationship between ever-moving cosmological and pedagogical cycles to forecast a future library sociology.

With these goals in mind, Chapter 1, uses Peter Tommerup's anthropological study of the Hughes Aircraft Corporation in conjunction with the theoretical conclusions of mythologists Joseph Campbell and Claude Levi-Strauss to form a picture of workplace

mythology. Chapter 1 then discusses the one of the “origins” of library workplace myth—the ancient Library of Alexandria—along with its modern counterpart, the Bibliotheca Alexandrina.

The Alexandrian libraries are examined for four reasons. First, Battle’s original statement alluding to a library workplace cosmology occurs in reference to the ancient Library of Alexandria. Second, the relationship between the ancient Library and the more modern Bibliotheca Alexandrina is unique in that the modern version is largely a mythological representation of the ancient. Third, the historical and mythological progression from ancient to modern Alexandrian library is an excellent model for understanding the workings of library workplace cosmology. Finally, the discussion surrounding the construction and future of the Bibliotheca Alexandrina—with its attempts at a universal collection and its online efforts—is an excellent springboard from which to jump into a discussion of how library workplace cosmology is beginning to restructure around ideas like the universal library—represented by both ancient and modern Alexandrian libraries—and the Internet.

Chapter 2 attempts a closer look at Mann’s fears about complete library digitization by, first, combining Stephen Stern’s anthropological study of the Garret Corporation with additional mythological theories from Joseph Campbell to create a viable theory of workplace pedagogy. It then moves into a comparison of two library workplace pedagogies: Ranganathan’s Five Laws of Library Science and the nebulous tenets of Library 2.0 services. While these are only two of the many pedagogies in Library workplaces, they were chosen because they represent similar goals, but are

developed around different origins, periods of time, and values. Present library workplace pedagogies (like Library 2.0), while essentially an outgrowth of previous pedagogies (such as Ranganathan's Laws), form a pendulum-like shift between internal and external views of library workplaces that is useful for marking out a similar trend in Library workplace pedagogy, especially as it relates to the Internet.

Chapter 2 finishes by tracing the trends of current library workplaces and confirming that Mann's fears of a shift toward Internet-based library workplaces are indeed valid, at least to some extent. It does this by revealing the ways that general library pedagogy (represented by documents generated by the American Library Association), library specific pedagogy (represented by documents created for the Montana State University Libraries) and pedagogy specific to librarians (gathered via individual interviews with librarians and other staff at Montana State University's Renne Library) are swinging toward Library 2.0 pedagogical constructs and other cosmologies with origins outside of libraries. Chapter 2 also addresses the fact that Library 2.0 pedagogical principles are often at odds with older, library-born pedagogies like Ranganathan's laws.

Finally, the conclusion picks up the unraveled strands of cosmological and pedagogical discussion where each chapter left off: the Internet and library workplace future. In the end library workplace mythology has no new revelations about the direction of library workplace sociology. However, it does contain new ways of dispelling predictions often made about the future of libraries and their workplaces and offering expectations that the same cycles inherent in past and present library workplaces

will continue to overcome changes in the technological, political, and social constructs of future library workplace cosmologies in spite of new complications with respect to changes in physicality and classification engendered in the shift toward digital and online library collections and workplaces.

COSMOLOGICAL CONSTRUCTION: BUILDING THE BIBLIOTHECA
ALEXANDRINA AND REBUILDING LIBRARY MYTHOLOGY

This thesis makes much of Matthew Battles' offhanded comment concerning a library "origin myth" centered around the ancient Library of Alexandria, but what exactly does it mean to have an origin myth for library workplaces, and what purposes would it serve? Cosmologically, workplace mythology allows participants to understand the importance of their workplace and its position historically both in the company and among other companies, while a workplace's pedagogy allows them to understand the correct way to act within their workplace. The cosmological function of myth, as taken from Campbell's above explanation, "show[s] you what the shape of the universe is but...in such a way that the mystery comes through." At first, Campbell's explanation may seem contradictory. For example, why would myth first reveal the order of the universe and then remove its own credibility by introducing mystery into the order? To make sense of how Campbell defines cosmology, it is helpful to view it in relation to oral mythology.

Claude Levi-Strauss, anthropologist and mythological thinker, wrote that, "there is a kind of continuous reconstruction taking place in the mind of the...listener to a mythological story" (49). This continuous reconstruction seems to fit with Campbell's "mystery" requirement, and the reconstruction Levi-Strauss mentions at least implies that mythological stories produce an order. Elsewhere, Levi-Strauss clarifies the connection between this ordering and reordering process and oral histories. He writes that in non-archival [oral] histories, "it is as if a diachronic succession of events was simultaneously

projected on the screen of the present in order to reconstitute, piece by piece a synchronic order...” (38). Combining both statements made by Levi-Strauss creates a much clearer picture of what Campbell must have meant because the order created by mythology is not fixed, especially with oral mythology. Mythological order comes from the placing of like stories on top of one another simultaneously until specificity is blurred and only the similarities between stories is recognizable. This allows an order to form from the hodgepodge of stories while the unknown aspects contained in all of the specific stories preserve space for the mystery Campbell ascribes to it.

As mentioned earlier, this process is not found in mythology alone, it also occurs in what is termed *oral history*. Levi-Strauss emphasizes the similarity between mythology and oral history when he muses that “the gap between mythology and history can probably be breached by studying histories which are conceived as not at all separate from[,] but as a continuation of myth” (41). Oral histories, with their telling and retelling mirror mythological trends like the continual reconstruction of order and the layering of like stories on top of one another until only one story is told as representative of all. In essence, oral histories are, or are well on their way to becoming, a part of mythology because they are formed in the same way.

Because mythology can be said to derive from oral history and interaction between coworkers is often oral, workplace mythology is often portrayed as an oral mythology—though written documents and other forms of communication within and about a workplace contain similar properties. Peter Tommerup’s anthropological study

of the Hughes Aircraft company similarly shows that “Organizational history is largely oral history” (319). According to Tommerup,

By examining narratives concerning an organization’s past, much can be learned about participants’ collective reality—its values, attitudes and beliefs—thereby illuminating both the process and the fundamental role of myth making. (319)

An examination of the myth-making involved in workplaces is just what Tommerup’s discussion of Hughes Aircraft gives. His study also supplies an excellent practical example of the cosmological function of workplace mythology. The study found that folklore surrounding Hughes Aircraft origins and history coalesced around Howard Hughes (the company’s founder) and Pat Hyland (a long serving general manager). Tommerup also found that no folklore addressed any company managers between Hughes and Hyland. (320) The reason Tommerup gives for folkloric fixation upon only two of many leaders is that, “these stories commemorate only the most salient and deeply felt aspects in the present of past events and their protagonists” (320). In light of the layering that occurs in the production of mythology, which blurs specifics and highlights “the most salient and deeply felt aspects” of culture, it is unsurprising that workplace mythology preserves only the most important and deeply felt concepts—those that show a person the shape of a past changed to inform the present.

Tommerup feels these tales reveal a mythologized sense of history—or what Campbell might call a cosmology—for Hughes Aircraft. “Overall,” he explains, “what emerges is a relevant and deeply felt ‘human history’—a shared portrayal of a company’s culture as it has been understood and *evaluated* by employees over an extended period of time. (330, original emphasis). Along with confirming the existence of what Battles calls

an “origin myth” in a workplace setting other than libraries, Tommerup’s study gives clues as to the cosmological purpose of origin myths in the workplace. The stories “evaluated” by generations of employees place the company within a history and differentiate a given workplace from other workplaces. The important aspects of workplace mythology are deeply felt precisely because they allow participants to understand their workplace’s historical, current, and future relationship to the workforce, the world, and, perhaps, as Campbell says, to the universe. However, it is important to remember that, just as with Hughes Aircraft, the mythological history of library workplaces may not match the facts surrounding its history, and the history of libraries is far more diverse and steeped in tradition than Hughes Aircraft.

Ancient Library as Metaphor

As mentioned earlier, Matthew Battles speaks of a “cherished origin myth,” and his phrasing ties into the cosmological function of library mythology. If Battles’ statement holds true, then librarians have developed a mythological view of their workplace past which informs their present—in much the same way as Hughes Aircraft employees have done.

Curiously, elsewhere in Battles’ writing, he describes much the same process for library history that Levi-Strauss proposes in his theories regarding oral histories. “The lens of retrospect compresses the millennia,” Battles writes, “[and] places Theodosius (sixth century A.D.) on the same ground occupied by Cleopatra and Archimedes (who lived in the first and second century B.C. respectively)” (Battles 32). Furthermore, what Battles labels “the lens of retrospect” seems to generate the same historical

inconsistencies as Tommerup describes in Hughes Aircraft folklore, and—more importantly—Levi-Strauss’s “diachronic succession of events,” which are “simultaneously projected” shown earlier to describe the process of myth-making. It is just this collapsing of history and events into a single story that generates mythological cosmology within library workplaces and joins many disparate narratives to create one meaningful whole.

The general cosmology of library workplaces and mythology is not static. Generations of librarians have evaluated historical events, and current librarians constantly incorporate new information and events, while smoothing over dissimilar narratives, to highlight the most “salient” and “deeply felt” aspects of library workplace culture. In many ways, this has been going on for centuries longer than most professions. In an essay on Umberto Eco’s *Name of the Rose*, historian J. O. Ward aptly describes what the formation of a library workplace cosmology does to historical libraries. “Why” he asks, “is Eco’s library so unlike anything that can possibly be said to have existed in its era? The answer is, of course, that it is not a library at all. It is a metaphor...” (Ward 171). Essentially the cosmology of libraries as workplaces generates what the word “library” stands for—it creates and recreates the “metaphor.”

Battles’ use of the ancient Library of Alexandria is excellent as an example of modern library cosmology because he sets the ancient library up as the center of an origin myth. Perhaps it is fitting, then, that classicist Wendy Brazil refers to Alexandria as the “Umbilicus³ of the Ancient World” (35), since unraveling Battles’ origin myth leads

³Once dry, papyrus sheets were wrapped around a peg, called an *umbilicus*, to form a scroll (Battles 28).

directly to the ancient Library of Alexandria, and its modern metaphorical form—the Bibliotheca Alexandrina—a library with deep roots in the past, present, and future of library workplace cosmology.

Revealing Ancient Cosmological Disconnects

The ancient library is traditionally touted as one of the greatest libraries—perhaps the greatest ancient library—but, even the name “Library of Alexandria” is generated by a particular cosmology that does not give any indication that Alexandria had more than one library. This is the generally accepted view. Those who study ancient Alexandrian Egypt show differing cosmological constructs, and therefore even their understanding of what the word “library” means can be different.

For example, renowned Egyptologist Fayza M. Haikal writes an article intended to show that libraries “were not a total novelty in Ancient Egypt, but rather a modernization and revitalization of an existing tradition in a forward leap on the infinite journey of knowledge” (Haikal 39). In doing so, she introduces a cosmology concerning the Alexandrian Library that is quite different from Battles’. “Indeed, temples and tombs are libraries, in as much as their walls preserve the oldest and longest religious books that we have in Egypt and maybe in the world,” Haikal writes, “in addition to historical records, geographical texts and a large variety of inscriptions and scenes providing invaluable information on the economy of the country, its social life and the level of its scientific achievements” (Haikal 39).

For Haikal, the ancient Library of Alexandria is not the origin of modern libraries, but merely a grand idea built from even more distant origins—a pit stop on the “infinite

journey of knowledge.” It may be better to use the phrase “Libraries of Alexandria” since Haikal is not the only scholar to draw attention to the fact that there were multiple libraries in Alexandria before and during the time of the most famous of these libraries. The libraries that comprised what most people think or speak of as *The Library of Alexandria* existed as two separate collections. As Battles explains, “Both collections were housed in the royal precinct, the Brucheion, and are often spoken of as a single entity” (Battles 23). One library lay “within the palace,” while the other was “outside the palace” as Haikal tells it (54).

It is generally accepted that the first was established by Ptolemy I (Soter) who ruled Lower Egypt from Alexandria after the collapse of Alexander the Great’s empire. (Battles 26; Harris 42) It was connected to the Temple of the Muses, or “museum,” (Johnson 52) and was located within the palace area (Bowman 224). This was the beginning of both libraries, since subsequent Ptolemies, notably Ptolemy II and III (Bevan 124-125), added substantially to the collection and all three brought scholars to live in Alexandria, use the library (Johnson 52,) and educate the royal children (Haikal 53).

The second seems to have been created as an overflow for the original library, as a result of Ptolemy II (Philadelphus)’s active efforts to enlarge its collections (Johnson 52). The second library (often referred to as the “daughter library”) was housed in the Serapeum, or Temple of Serapis (Johnson 52-53; Battles 23; Bowman 225), outside the palace, but still within the city of Alexandria (Johnson 53).

Both are supposed to have housed scholars and scholarship from their inception until their destruction in what Michael H. Harris calls, in his update of Elmer D. Johnson's *History of Libraries in the Western World*, "the prototype of the great national, or universal libraries, of modern times" (47). The two libraries also probably shared separate fates: the Museum Library is said to have burned in 48 B.C. the time of Julius Caesar—as an accident—and the other more than 400 years later, at the hands of Christians who destroyed the Serapeum in 391 A.D. and, presumably, the daughter library contained within it (Qassem 210). This is generally agreed to have happened before the Muslim occupation of Alexandria (Qassem 207-211; Battles 23).

Current workplace cosmology about libraries tends to gloss this over, forming one Library of Alexandria from these two, which is a practice that exemplifies the process of myth-making. However, a library cosmology that combines two libraries which likely shared both direction and funding from first the Ptolemies and subsequent Roman rulers, would not be particularly noteworthy because the two libraries would already have been one library in the same sense that Harvard University (or any university) has many libraries, but all are identified with Harvard. They ostensibly work toward a similar goal, are affiliated with and funded by the same or similar people and are, generally speaking, the same library.

However, the difference between a university library and the Library of Alexandria is, as James Thompson points out in his *Ancient Libraries*, that "[t]he fame of the Libraries at Alexandria...is so great that one almost omits to consider that many small local libraries have also been found in Ancient Greece" (Thompson 24). Not to mention

that those libraries were established at least partially on the initiative of Ptolemy II (Canfora 184), which makes it much more likely that they existed in Alexandria as well as Athens. As famous an institution as Harvard University is, it has not developed into a mythological structure representative of all library activity in Cambridge, Massachusetts by subsuming the presence of the Cambridge Public Library system's seven, fully functioning libraries ("Welcome"). Haikal also describes other, less common libraries that may have dotted Alexandria: one in the "Ramesseum, Ramses II's memorial temple" (43; Canfora 191), various other "temple archives presenting a miscellany of texts related to the economic life and administration of the temple mixed with religious compositions" (51), and a surprisingly large institution referred to as "the House of Life," which "create[d] religious and scientific texts" (47) and employed people who performed duties similar to modern reference librarians (47-48).

A Deceptively Cohesive Cosmology

The cosmology surrounding the Library of Alexandria, filtered as it has been through the evaluations of generations of librarians and library patrons alike, layers together not only the two most famous libraries, but also generally includes potentially public libraries and other, more eclectic collections kept during the same time period in order to develop what Battles calls a "cherished origin myth." This generates a common understanding of the Library of Alexandria as a place where bookish scholars preserved history and performed many of the same tasks as university professors and librarians perform today—an understanding which does not necessarily match up with historical and archaeological findings.

Library workplace cosmology's formation engenders the removal of disparate and eccentric stories in favor of a generally unified and universally applicable understanding about where libraries come from and where they belong. Because this process creates something generally accepted and informative, such cosmology can be accepted as a cohesive representation of the workplace—but this is, as with the ancient Library of Alexandria, not entirely correct.

Roger S. Bagnall, a professor in Classics at Columbia University, reminds readers of his article “Alexandria: Library of Dreams,” that in consequence of the

disparity between, on the one hand, the grandeur and importance of [the ancient library of Alexandria], both in its reality in antiquity and in its image both ancient and modern, and on the other, our nearly total ignorance about it...a whole literature of wishful thinking has grown up, in which scholars—even, I fear, the most rigorous—have cast aside the time-tested methods that normally constrain credulity... (348)

That the most rigorous scholar should rely on such unlikely sources to support his or her claims makes no sense, unless the ancient library is understood mythologically (in the way Battles suggests) as an “origin myth.” This thought also seems to have occurred to Bagnall, since he draws much the same conclusion. He writes: “[T]he Library of Alexandria bequeathed the image of itself, the idea of a large, comprehensive library embracing all knowledge...This image was passed on to the Renaissance and the modern world, and every one of our great contemporary libraries owes something to it” (361). It is as Bagnall says, all great libraries owe something to the ancient Library of Alexandria—even if the historical facts and figures don't agree concerning specifics about exactly how much they owe.

Present and Future Cosmologies

One fascinating permutation of the cosmology surrounding the ancient Alexandrian libraries comes in the form of the recently constructed “Bibliotheca Alexandrina”—a library built in Alexandria as a modern version of the ancient library. As such it is an iconic building, and such buildings are, according to Charles Jencks, a post-modern architectural critic, prone to “cosmic overtones” (16). Jencks’ observation proves true, since, in many instances, the new Bibliotheca Alexandrina shapes itself according the cosmology, or “cosmic” influences, which have grown around the ancient Library of Alexandria, rather than just the few historical and archeological facts we have about the ancient library.

Because the Bibliotheca Alexandrina is literally a concrete example of library workplace cosmology, the building represents, in a very tangible, physical way, the contemporary mythology concerning both the ancient Library of Alexandria and the purpose of library workplaces in general. First, the Bibliotheca Alexandrina highlights much the same division in recent opinions regarding the origins and purposes of library workplaces generated by its predecessor. Second, the Bibliotheca Alexandrina represents a more modern adoption of a cohesive library workplace cosmology—in spite of previously mentioned divisions. Finally, a discussion of the Bibliotheca Alexandrina’s extensive collection and acquisition goals leads particularly well into a discussion of the present uncertainty about the future of library workplace cosmology in a digital age.

Revealing a More Modern Disconnect

One example of the cosmological disconnect highlighted by the Bibliotheca Alexandrina begins with a statement taken from archaeologist Grzegorz Majcherek's essay "Academic Life of Late Antique Alexandria: A View From the Field;" he writes:

The [ancient] Alexandrian Library has always been a great, living legend that archaeology has tried vainly to come to terms with... Archaeology has proved almost completely powerless in the face of this myth, failing to keep step with changing reality. The Bibliotheca Alexandrina stands rebuilt in new form, as an ultra modern library, yet we are still looking for an answer to... simple questions of key importance [including]: Where was the original Library? (191)

How, then, can the Bibliotheca Alexandrina be comfortable telling visitors to its website that "[t]he new Library of Alexandria, the Bibliotheca Alexandrina, is... [l]ocated on a superb site on the historic eastern harbor of Alexandria, *almost exactly* where the old library and the royal palace of the Ptolemies once stood..." ("The Landmark Building," emphasis added). The author of this material *does* base his or her claims upon a 1993 archaeological survey (Bibliotheca Alexandrina 18), but it is interesting that this claim is not validated by Majcherek's earlier statement, since the above quote was published in 2008 and the book it appears in was published in conjunction with, of all places, the Bibliotheca Alexandrina. Surely, if the Bibliotheca Alexandrina's claims were to be collaborated, then it ought to be in a publication envisioned and commissioned by the very library in question. This inherent confusion about what the goals and history of the Bibliotheca Alexandrina are or ought to be is described well by Amy E. Schwartz, a writer for the Washington Post. "The granite exterior wall [of the Bibliotheca Alexandrina] is patterned in alphabets, an assortment of characters and hieroglyphs from 200 different writing systems ancient and modern," she writes,

They mingle to project the sense that the building is a mysterious receptacle of some sort—a jar, a jug, a scroll—crammed with strange messages. And the impression is exactly right, because the building promises and implausible but somehow still thrilling answer to an old dream. (Schwartz)

Another example of this is how J. Tocatlian, a former leader in the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), begins an article on the modern Bibliotheca Alexandrina with a description of

the greatest archaeological campaign of all times [which] was initiated when Unesco launched an appeal to the international community to save the treasures of Nubia...the campaign...saved dozens of temples and lifted Abu Simbel and Philae beyond the reaches of the rising waters of the Aswan High Dam. (Tocatlian 39)

Seemingly, he considers the Alexandrian project a descendent of this archaeological feat, for he writes, “Once again, Unesco was called upon to address an appeal to the international community for the revival of the Bibliotheca Alexandrina...” (39). What is strange about the comparison he makes is that it shouldn’t work with the Bibliotheca Alexandrina project, since it was not an attempt to save archeological remains, as the Nubian project mentioned above certainly was, but a project that “attempt[s] to transpose the ancient idea into modern terms,” (Tocatlian 40) and which did not, in fact, worry much about the archaeological treasures of Alexandria until prompted to do so (Stille).

Alexander Stille , a writer for *New Yorker* describes much of this in an article titled, “Resurrecting Alexandria; Can Rebuilding the great Library Also Redeem the City?” Specifically, some of the most prominent disconnects he illustrates for the Bibliotheca Alexandrina project came from political infighting between key figures and unanswered—perhaps unanswerable—questions. One example of the political infighting between the Bibliotheca and Alexandrian officials concerning the project started over

what materials ought to be included in the Bibliotheca Alexandrina's collections. Stille writes:

Empereur [an Alexandrian scholar] also discovered, quite by accident, that the new library had missed an opportunity to obtain fifty thousand books weeded out of the University of Alexandria's collection, which ended up being sold on the street for about a dollar apiece...In London or Paris antiquarian shops, each of these books would have sold for hundreds if not thousands of dollars. Reportedly, the university librarians had first offered them to Zahran [a library official] but were told that the new library was not interested in old books...Zahran denied that he had ever refused any books and insisted that the incident was the result of a regrettable miscommunication. (Stille)

Regardless of what the proper course is for the new library, or the reasons for his insistence on referring to the internal problem as a "miscommunication," Zahran is, in some sense, correct. The different cosmological understandings behind the Bibliotheca Alexandrina engender a mingling of conceptions concerning where the symbolic library came from and where it is headed, that is anything but cohesive.

Yet another example of cosmological "miscommunications" comes when attempting to form a "universal library," something that the cosmology of the Great Library of Alexandria has come to symbolize. Stille explains that

Grunberg [a French librarian working at the Bibliotheca Alexandrina] and his Egyptian colleagues recognize that the goal of building a universal library 'makes no sense.' Even the Library of Congress, in Washington, with a hundred nineteen million items in its collection, is selective in its acquisitions, and the cost of being even quasi-universal comes to some three hundred and eighty-six million dollars a year" (Stille).

However, even though a universal library "doesn't make sense," it does make just as much sense as building the Bibliotheca Alexandrina—since the entire structure is, in essence, a monument of and to library workplace cosmology.

As for the unanswered questions, Stille phrases them well. They are: “What does it mean to “revive” an ancient library whose exact location and contents are unknown?” and “Can a library that will start with two hundred and fifty thousand books—far fewer than the number in the library of a small four-year university—hope to live up to its grand claims?” (Stille). It is the answers to, or attempts at answering, questions like these that best explain why layering or consolidation of library cosmology is so important.

A Necessary Cosmological Consolidation

The answers to Stille’s questions may not make sense archaeologically, or historically—very often not even practically, as Grunberg and other librarians at the Bibliotheca Alexandrina obviously learned—but when understood in the sense that such statements rely on library workplace cosmology and are formed by layered stories rather than verifiable, tangible facts, much as Hughes Aircraft employees did while attributing stories of their company’s origins—they begin to convey cosmological meaning. The cosmological function of myth engenders meaning for those who subscribe to it, but that meaning comes at a cost. Cosmology, by its nature, also erases specific facts in favor of an overall schema that create what Campbell explains above, and those extraneous facts and stories left out of the cosmology are what generate not only the important mystical element of mythology, but also historical inaccuracies with respect to specific facts..

The Bibliotheca Alexandrina, as a project, embodies this process. In creating the structure, “little” problems like uncertainty about the actual location of the new library’s ancient counterpart and the lack of knowledge concerning its disappearance become less important than knowledge that the ancient Library of Alexandria existed, and that the

principles espoused by its newer version give the cosmology surrounding the ancient library and current library workplace cosmology very specific shape and substance—and point toward future cosmological trends. The design of the Bibliotheca Alexandrina attests to this. According to Tocatlian,

The design of the [Bibliotheca Alexandrina] is in the form of a circle, which becomes its predominant symbol...the circle is a symbol of unity and continuity that embraces the past, present and future...[the library's] cylindrical masonry form emerges from the earth like the rebirth of an earlier form. (43)

Tocatlian describes the Bibliotheca Alexandrina's function physically and metaphorically—it literally emerges from unknown origins as a myth made tangible and rendered, at least momentarily, as a cohesive whole.

With the Bibliotheca Alexandrina comes the reconciliation of new stories and facts with the old cosmology, and, while much remains unchanged, the cosmology as a whole has reconfigured. This phenomenon is also mirrored physically by the Bibliotheca Alexandrina because the site chosen for the new library could possibly contain the archeological remains of the old site, especially if we believe the Bibliotheca Alexandrina's claims to be “almost exactly” on the original site.. Birger Pearson, a noteworthy religious studies professor who writes about the new library, says it well when he explains, “As it is, we are faced with an anomaly of supreme irony: planning for a “revival” of the famous Library of old involves obliterating for all time part of the archaeological record beneath the ground” (106). Because of this, the Bibliotheca Alexandrina represents a complete change in cosmology from old to new, even physically.

Referring to this consolidated cosmology as “new” is somewhat of a misnomer—since what is new is the cohesiveness portrayed by the library workplace cosmology as a result of the Bibliotheca Alexandrina. In fact, the overall claims made by the consolidated cosmology are not particularly different from the previously accepted cosmology. Battles’ writing exemplifies both cosmologies fairly well. He writes:

The libraries [the ancient Museum and its “daughter library”] always had a grander mission than any of [the individual cultural struggles of the time]: they sought to compile and contain the entire corpus of Greek literature, as well as the most significant works of many foreign languages. Thus was Alexandria’s the first library with universal aspirations; with its community of scholars, it became a prototype... (30)

The feeling that the ancient Library of Alexandria belongs at the center of a discussion about library workplace cosmology is evident in that Battles refers to it as a “prototype.” The literature associated with the Bibliotheca Alexandrina uses much the same terminology when speaking of its predecessor, though it takes the cosmological language up a notch. “[Ancient Alexandria’s] lighthouse, the Pharos, was considered one of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World. A greater legacy was the Ancient Library of Alexandria,” the online information proclaims, “To this day [the ancient Library] symbolizes the noblest aspirations of the human mind, global ecumenism, and the greatest achievements of intellect” (“Reclaiming the Legacy”). While acknowledging the contribution to the world made by the Great Lighthouse as one of the Seven Wonders of the World, the Bibliotheca Alexandrina consolidates library workplace cosmology around the idea that the Great Library was an even greater legacy. Considering the discussion above about all of the *unknown* facts concerning the ancient library, such a statement can only be considered reasonable as a part of library workplace cosmology.

This smoothing-over of the unknown parts of the ancient library's location and the circumstances surrounding its disappearance can even turn such problematic gaps in understanding into consolation, rather than confusion, for libraries and their employees.

Consider another of Ward's statements:

[t]he disasters of late antiquity had the general effect of rendering ancient literature a manageable corpus again. Had it all survived, our own libraries would have long since burst—as they will do in the near future unless some similar catastrophe wipes out most of our extant holdings (or puts them on the Internet!). (Ward 167)

Though Ward obviously intends his evoking of the transition from print to Internet resources to be read humorously, it does bring up an interesting point of view. The library cosmology inherent in his off-handed comment explains away the loss of the ancient library, for all of its significance and importance, as fortuitous—possibly even necessary—in that it allowed us to develop the Internet *before* our libraries burst, rather than after. Ironically, it is exactly this sense of the order of things, with a clear place for libraries and library workplaces, that provides what Campbell describes as the cosmological function of mythology: it gives library employees a definite shape for their universe (at least as far as the workplace is concerned) and gives them a past, a future, and an arrow pointing at the present, saying, “You are here.”

Layering a Future Cosmology

It is particularly interesting that the wording used to describe the Bibliotheca Alexandrina's mission and role both in Alexandria, Egypt, and in the world, easily aid in a discussion of future cosmological trends of library workplace. For example, one article on the Bibliotheca Alexandrina states that “Egyptians of today see [the Bibliotheca

Alexandrina] as pointing toward the future by remembering the grandeur of the past” (Crooker). Since this is the purpose of library cosmology, it is certainly easy to see that how organizations and cultures view their past will have a substantial effect on how they shape their future. For this reason, it is possible to extrapolate a future library workplace cosmology from current and previous trends.

It is hardly possible, for example, to mistake the future cosmology inherent in a statement from a rather lengthy article on freedom of expression and of access to information in Egypt, which briefly mentions the Bibliotheca Alexandrina: “Ptolemy Soter’s order at the end of the fourth century BC to ‘collect all books in the world’ is now echoed at the end of the twentieth century A.D. by the call to collect ‘the writings of all peoples’” (Salem 44). Now, forget for a moment that a “universal collection” makes no practical sense—even according to librarians working in the Bibliotheca Alexandrina—because such endeavors are currently underway, impractical or not. It seems that the “spirit” of the ancient library present in library workplace mythology has discovered a possible outlet for its universal aspirations: the Internet. For starters, the Bibliotheca Alexandrina’s informative brochure admits that “[G]enerally speaking, the Library relies enormously on E-Resources including subscriptions to journals and databases” (Bibliotheca Alexandrina 19). Certainly, this is not new to the Bibliotheca Alexandrina—many, if not most university libraries and public libraries alike find it necessary to subscribe to online databases in order to provide patrons with more information than they can possibly store physically. The fact that nearly all libraries rely

on the Internet as a part of their everyday services only strengthens the idea that the future of library cosmology lies, at least to some extent, online.

However, the Bibliotheca Alexandrina (and other prominent libraries) aren't stopping at databases of journal articles. According to an *American Libraries* article:

Since its official opening, the [Bibliotheca Alexandrina] has established itself as a force to be reckoned with—as a partner with the Library of Congress in building a World Digital Library...and as a participant in the Internet Archive, a complete snapshot of all the web pages on every website from 1996 to the present. (“Bibliotheca Alexandrina at 5”)

Rather than generating a project that makes no sense, it seems that both the Bibliotheca Alexandrina and the Library of Congress share a cosmology that makes a universal collection of Internet websites from 1996 to the present sound important and possible. In addition to the joint projects mentioned above, the new library has created an organization geared toward its “universal” goals. According to the Bibliotheca Alexandrina's informative brochure,

The International School of Information Science (ISIS) is mainly a research institute. It was founded to initiate, develop, carry out, and promote research and development of activities and projects related to building a universal digital library. ISIS is guided by the [Bibliotheca Alexandrina's goal] to ...provide universal access to human knowledge. (Bibliotheca Alexandrina 27)

If Alexandria's Bibliotheca Alexandrina and the United States' Library of Congress are any indication, future workplace cosmology is pointed directly at Internet resources and the idea of “universal knowledge.”⁴

⁴ Coincidentally (or perhaps not) Google.com has developed a similar goal, though with a different cosmological impetus. Even the title of the book *Google and the Myth of Universal Knowledge*, by Jean-Noel Jeanneney, serves as a good example of the discourse surrounding this concept.

This shift in cosmological leanings also creates a shift in sociological practices amongst libraries—don't forget, Ward's earlier statement describes the placing of library texts on the Internet in the same context as the wiping out of the ancient Alexandrian library's "extant" holdings. Battles describes what this shift in cosmology means for library workplace sociology in this way:

What we face is not a loss of books but the loss of a world. As in Alexandria after Aristotle's time, or the universities and the monasteries of the early Renaissance, or the cluttered-up research libraries of the nineteenth century, the Word shifts again in its modes, tending more and more to dwell in pixels and bits instead of paper and ink. (Battles 213)

A cosmological shift in library workplace mythology toward completely digitized libraries would lead directly to what Battles refers to as a "loss of a world." And this shift is not necessarily impossible. Consider Mann's statement, quoted in the introduction to this work, that "the 'evolution' to digital forms, it is asserted, is simply 'inevitable'; and traditional libraries that fail to make 'the transition' will be 'left behind' as outdated 'book museums'." Who, exactly, is Mann quoting? It is unlikely he quotes merely one person. What is much more likely is that he quotes ideological phrases from a library workplace cosmology that is rapidly gaining momentum, but that has not yet consolidated into *the* library workplace cosmology.

It is evident that library workplace mythology has a pattern. For example, the ancient Library of Alexandria, as explained earlier, was not one cohesive whole—nor were its goals particularly well consolidated—at least not insofar as the facts and traditions concerning them have been passed down to us. However, somewhere between the death of the old library and the opening of its successor in 2002, the cosmology

surrounding the ancient Library of Alexandria consolidated—otherwise the Bibliotheca Alexandrina could not have been constructed around the “spirit” of the ancient Library.

A similar trend seems to have been taking place since the modern consolidation. Ward highlights at least part of this shift well, with his discussion concerning the shift in technology between ancient papyrus and the more modern parchment. “The shift from scroll to codex must have meant the loss of many treatises that were not thought worthy of the effort of transcription,” he explains,

We must imagine something like the shift from print to the Internet today, with print being represented by scrolls and the Internet representing the new wave, the codex. If some of our more advanced and fashionable librarians today had their way, what was generally useful would be put on the Internet, and everything else—including 90% of what we set our students and read for our research in the humanities – would be junked.
(Ward 166)

Ward has much the same tone as Mann, in that he attributes the possible changes in library sociology to “fashionable” librarians—though he does call them “advanced” as well. His statement depicts the cycles of library workplace cosmology. He portrays a “junking” of most of the old cosmological order—at least in terms of humanities research—in favor of the new, digital one. With this in mind, it is easier to finish tracing the cycle of library workplace cosmology.

The ancient Library was not, to our knowledge, operating under a consolidated cosmology. Somewhere between the ancient and modern Alexandrian libraries, the cosmology coalesced enough to envision the Bibliotheca Alexandrina. Sometime after this, possibly in conjunction with the advent of Internet technology, library workplace cosmology began to look more divided, much like in ancient Alexandria’s Library. Now,

Ward has depicted—but not necessarily predicted—what will happen if library workplace cosmology recoalesces around the Internet and the ideal of “universal knowledge.”

Unlike Tommerup’s description of Hughes Aircraft mythology, the cosmology that shows libraries are destined to combine with the Internet is not alone in library workplaces, and this complicates matters. Such pedagogies, many of which include books *and* the Internet, though the Internet must figure prominently in any future library cosmology because it has become entrenched in how people interact and do business (a concept discussed at length in Chapter 3). In fact, Stille asks still more questions in his article, the answers to which highlight the importance of the Internet to future workplace mythology. These questions are:

Does it make sense to build a library designed to hold eight million books at a moment when so much information is moving from printed to digital form? In the age of the Internet, does it even make sense to conceive of a universal library in terms of glass, aluminum, and concrete? (Stille).

Such questions hold some very positive answers, as far as library workplace cosmology is concerned. Ismail Serageldin, Director of the Bibliotheca Alexandrina, provides a very insightful answer to Stille’s first question when he expresses his beliefs that:

Libraries and books, both of them, have a wonderful future ahead of them...Libraries are going to be the portals through which people will go...whether it be to imaginary lands, to the historical past, or to understand the marvels of cutting edge science, it will all be organized by libraries but available online. (“Bibliotheca Alexandrina at 5”)

If Serageldin is to be believed, the future of library cosmology contains libraries with books in them, and the Internet is staying as well.

It is fitting that Matthew Battles generates answers to Stille’s second question as well as the most interesting thoughts about library workplace cosmology, since this

works begins with his depiction of the ancient Library of Alexandria as an “origin myth.” “Here in the stacks, the library may seem the place where books go when they die,” he writes,

In their totality, they disappear amid their own splendid mystifications. From age to age, libraries grow and change, flourish and disappear, blossom and contract—and yet through them all we’re chasing after Alexandria...haunted by the myths of knowledge and of wholeness that books spawn when massed in their millions. (Battles 214)

Battles, like Stille and Mann, conveys awareness that the Internet is being incorporated into library sociology because he begins by talking about the “death of books.” And he certainly describes the cycle library workplace cosmology has been through—including what he describes as “myths of knowledge” and “wholeness” spawned by books, phrases which recall the apparent consolidation and layering that create meaning from workplace mythology. In fact, according to Battles, “[T]he very fact that the library has endured these cycles seems to offer hope. In its custody of books and the words they contain, the library has confronted and tamed technology, the forces of change, and the power of princes time and again” (Battles 213-214). Battles takes refuge in the fact that library workplace cosmology has shifted before and will continue to shift—a feature of library workplaces that attests to the longevity of libraries and their employees.

Really, Amy E Schwartz’s depiction of the Bibliotheca Alexandrina’s construction site is also an excellent description of library workplace cosmology. She writes, “What struck me most was that the building was not invisible. It was not a carefully labeled grouping of evocative fragments; it was not a vanished legacy. It was being constructed, put together, put up.” Library workplace mythology is, much as the Bibliotheca Alexandrina during Schwartz’s visit, constantly “being constructed,” “put

together,” or “put up,” and it looks like library workplace cosmology is getting ready for remodel that provides considerably more than just Internet *access*.

SHIFTING MANTRAS AND MISSION STATEMENTS:
ENLIGHTENING LIBRARY PEDAGOGICAL MYTHOLOGY

Libraries are special places—as one of the reference librarians interviewed as part of a research study conducted at Montana State University’s Renne Library for this thesis⁵ explained, “One of the benefits of working in a library is the atmosphere. There’s something very special about libraries, there’s something sacred about sharing knowledge and about it being passed down.” Many librarians share this sense of “specialness” about libraries and library workplaces. However, what makes libraries sacred is never as universally agreed upon as some would like to believe. As with library workplace cosmology, so with library workplace pedagogy—disparate elements underlie the illusion of cohesion.

In his essay, “The Research Library as Place: On the Essential Importance of Collections of Books Shelved in Subject-Classified Arrangements” (quoted in the introduction) Thomas Mann criticizes a “too-facile” premise about libraries: that “a transition from print to electronic sources is taking place, coupled with the belief that collections of printed books no longer require the care and attention previously given them...” (192). Mann seems much less worried about the Internet taking over libraries completely than about the shift in thinking that privileges the Internet to the exclusion of

⁵ It is important to note that the research study I mention was conducted in conjunction with this thesis and sanctioned by Montana State University’s Institutional Review Board (IRB), and it was part of a genuine study, rather than an ad-hoc discussion with various professionals. In all, the twelve library employees interviewed included employees from the MSU Libraries’ administration, collection development team, reference team, digital access and web services team, IT services, special collections, cataloging team and circulation team (in order to get a diverse cross section of library employees). Before library employees were interviewed, each signed a form approved by the IRB, which provided interview questions in advance, indicated their consent to be interviewed, and gave permission to use information from the interview in this work. For materials and documentation concerning this study, please refer to Appendix A.

other print sources. Though he may not know it, his worries center around a potential shift in library workplace mythology that privileges Internet-based pedagogical principles over others.

Workplace mythology's tendency to perpetuate specific sociological orders is pedagogical because workplace pedagogy shows an employee (as Campbell puts it) "how to respond appropriately to any given situation," (The Power of Myth 39)—regardless of position or rank. In his study (discussed in detail in Chapter 2), anthropologist Peter Tommerup explains what may be described as the pedagogical function of workplace mythology; he found that "[w]ithin...corporate mythology is an ethical system..." (320). Campbell's theorizing mirrors Tommerup's conclusions, though with more imagery. He states that:

It is the business of mythology proper, and of the fairytale, to reveal the specific dangers and techniques of the dark interior way from tragedy to comedy...Even when the legend is of an actual historical personage, the deeds of victory are rendered not in life like, but in dreamlike figurations; for the point is...that before such-and-such was done on earth, this other more important, primary [thing] had to be brought to pass... (Hero with a Thousand 29)

Further study of the pedagogical function served by workplace mythology lies in understanding the messages conveyed by a given mythological personification or guide that serves as a model for constituents of the organization. For instance, Matthew Battles' idyllic version of the Alexandrian Library espouses "the preservation of liberal learning." Whether it is the "ethical system" that Tommerup posits or the order of operations that Campbell describes above, workplace pedagogy wraps the complexities of workplace culture and mythology into an identifiable whole.

Elsewhere, Campbell speaks further about the ethical systems humans design when he asks, “[W]hat is a myth? The dictionary definition of a myth would be stories about gods. So then you have to ask the question: what is a god? A god is a personification of a motivating power or a value system in human life and in the universe” (Power of Myth 28). This motivating power or value system need not conform to a historical fact to be myth—as is evident in Tommerup’s study of Hughes Aircraft. In the study, he found that Hughes Aircraft employees tended to represent more than one company leader, and thus more than one historical era, with one or two protagonists in stories about their company’s past. Thus, their memory of the company’s past serves a different purpose than historical accuracy. It represents the value system of Hughes Aircraft, which is displayed in a more distilled, concise way through Hughes Aircraft mythology.

Later in The Power of Myth, Campbell describes the process of mythologization more succinctly. He writes that “[w]hen a person becomes a model for other people’s lives, he has moved into the sphere of being mythologized” (20). To illustrate this idea, I quote the results of an anthropological study of the Garrett Corporation done by Stephen Stern. Stern finds that Clifford Garrett, the company’s founder, “is esteemed by company employees very much as totems are by members of tribal societies” (Stern 282). Pedagogically, this statement makes Garrett both a guiding force for the company and a totemic guide for its employees (in Campbell’s terms, totems are treated as gods). “Garrett’s name is featured whenever the history of the company is recounted,” Stern continues,

His name is likewise recalled in ceremonies that celebrate the company successes and in rituals that reward outstanding individual achievements...by focusing on these concrete manifestations of Garrett's role in the company, employees are able to keep alive company values, maintain unified goals, and derive meaning and purpose from their employment. (282)

Clearly, Garrett fills Campbell's requirements as a "personification of a motivating power or value system in human life" and his modeling of particular traits for employees—both upper and lower level—to follow make him a pedagogical figure within the Garrett Corporation's workplace mythology. This elevates him from the realm of folklore into mythology proper. As a totem, according to Stern or as a god, according to Campbell, Garrett guides his employees. This fulfills the pedagogical function of mythology, since when employees of the Garrett Corporation find themselves in an unfamiliar situation, they need only ask themselves what Mr. Garret would do under the same circumstances to understand how to behave in their workplace.

Ranganathan's Pedagogy

Like the Garrett Corporation, librarians have developed a "motivating power or value system" which both represents their workplace and describes a pedagogy for librarians to follow, though it would be more correct to say that libraries have developed representative "pedagogies" for their workplace, since both internal and external library mythologies have multiple pedagogical approaches.

The fact that librarians place significance on pedagogy is exemplified by the first sentence in the American Library Association's (ALA) Code of Ethics. "[W]e recognize the importance" they declare, "of codifying and making known to the profession and to

the general public the ethical principles that guide the work of librarians...and library staffs” (“ALA Code of Ethics”). However, unlike the Garrett Corporation, libraries have not erected a single, totem-like figure as representative of an interior “way of doing things.”

One reason for this may be that the long and varied history of library workplaces has produced many outstanding librarians worthy of emulation, while the Garrett Corporation has had a comparatively short time and can boast only one pedagogically sound figure. Another possibility is the necessity of anonymity discussed in Shiyali Ranganathan’s Five Laws of Library Science (first published in 1931). While discussing the type of spirit necessary for library staff, he proposes, “The propensity to claim credit completely to oneself should be completely got over. Self should be suppressed to such a degree that every member is prepared to pass off all work as anonymous” (351). Though a conscious effort to erase self may not always be present in library employees, the nature of the work, especially at the reference desk—that is, the fact that library projects are often performed between patron’s questions by reference desk staff as a whole—lends itself to anonymity.

Ranganathan, himself, seems a prime candidate for library totemization—as with Garrett in the Garrett Corporation—and, in fact, many librarians do hold Ranganathan in high esteem. During my internship at Montana State University’s Renne Library, more than one librarian referred to Ranganathan’s “Five Laws.” Ranganathan’s *Five Laws of Library Science* grew out of his certainty that libraries are governed by “laws” in much the same way scientists explain phenomena in the natural world. It is, likewise, this

concept which underlies the discipline of Library Science (which explains why many programs offering Masters degrees in Library Science still mention Ranganathan and his laws). Though Ranganathan's theories and philosophies about the purposes and underlying principles are somewhat dated by nearly eighty years of technological innovations, his laws represent certain portions of library workplace pedagogy in nutshell form. This makes the Five Laws an excellent organizational strategy for discussing pedagogy-related documents created by libraries and librarians. Ranganathan's Five Laws of Library Science capture his belief that the "elemental principle[s]" (26) of librarianship are:

1. Books Are For Use (26)
2. Every Person His or Her Book (81)
3. Every Book Its Reader (258)
4. Save the Time of the Reader (287)
5. The Library is a Growing Organism (326)

In his forward to Ranganathan's The Five Laws of Library Science, P.S.

Sivaswamy Aiyer supports the Five Laws with a simple statement that:

"The enormous increase in the issue of volumes since [Ranganathan] took charge of the [The Madras University] library is a striking testimony to the soundness of the principles on which it has been run and to the efficiency of his management in spite of the very defective housing conditions under which the library has been working" (12).

Though Aiyer shows respect and perhaps a bit of awe at the accomplishments of Ranganathan, he certainly doesn't seem to be suggesting that all librarians pattern their workplace habits on stories of Ranganathan's journey through the Madras University Library. That being said, W. C. Berwick Sayers, writer of the introduction to The Five Laws of Library Science seems to think librarians could use a good dose of Ranganathan. "He deals with all the questions which exercise the minds of European librarians" writes

Sayers, “He writes, too, as an educationist—*as all good librarians should...*” (Sayers 16, emphasis added) , and it he doesn’t stop there. “To those who are new to [librarianship],” he continues, “it may be a wonder that so much can be made out of what superficially appears to be so simple a craft, but a perusal of Mr. Ranganathan’s pages will take the beginner a long way along the path of enlightenment” (Sayers 13). Were all librarians to follow Sayers’ last phrase, and believe that Ranganathan behaves “as all good librarians should” they could easily set up Ranganathan as a pedagogical totem for library workplace mythology.

As much as they obviously respect Ranganathan, librarians (with the possible exception of Sayers) do not personify his library pedagogy by embodying it in a larger-than-life Ranganathan because, as quoted above, Ranganathan himself suggested that the spirit of librarianship promotes ideals like “[s]elf should be suppressed” and passing off “all work as anonymous.” Such totemizing does not suit their workplace environment. Even Sayers, who champions Ranganathan, is actually championing the writing, rather than the writer. Remember that it is “a perusal of Mr. Ranganathan’s pages” that Sayers says, “will take the beginner a long way along the path of enlightenment,” not Ranganathan himself. Sayers’ appropriation of Ranganathan’s laws as a way to enlightenment illustrates a much more prevalent occurrence in library workplace mythology than totemic figures: the trend toward mantra-like goals.

Just as repeatedly intoning the name of Amida Buddha is a part of Shin Buddhism’s prescribed behavior in attempts to reach enlightenment (Shigehero 110), librarians’ goals and their workplace repetition have a pedagogical effect on library

workplace mythology. From this perspective, the respect due Ranganathan in the internal pedagogy of library mythology comes not from recognizing him as “*The Ranganathan*,” whose deeds form a totemic version of library pedagogy from which neophytes and veterans alike may derive guidance, but as the creator of the “five laws of library science,” the digestion of which will bring librarians “a long way along the path of enlightenment.” Ranganathan himself refers to the “magic of the *mantra*[:] ‘Books are for Use’” (40, original emphasis), the pedagogical power of which influences librarians’ sense of “how to respond appropriately to any given situation.” This mantra-like quality of Ranganathan’s five laws is evident in the comment of one MSU library administrator: “[Ranganathan’s laws are] something that always...resonated with me. And sometimes when I feel like I’m losing my way, I kind of go back to those principles and think about them a little.” This indicates a repetition of Ranganathan’s laws as a way of re-centering or “enlightening” oneself with respect to the workplace. Examining general library texts, texts specific to individual libraries, and individual librarians’ personal, or verbal, “texts” through Ranganathan’s laws reveals that librarians’ interior workplace mythology contains a goal-oriented, mantra-like pedagogy which librarians use to guide themselves. This is important because it shows that different workplaces, just as different nations, may generate diverse mythologies.

In the interest of generating a more complete picture of library workplace mythology and the mantra-like ethical statements that guide it, it is important to understand some of the various influences on library workplaces. Library workplaces gather pedagogical substance from multiple sources. One type consists of general

organizations, which are composed of individual librarians and endorsed by multiple libraries. These represent an important facet of library mythology. Though their tenets and programs are voluntary and, ostensibly, they generate and influence library pedagogy on a grand scale, the opinions and documents created by library associations have little “bite” when it comes to changing individual librarians’ workplaces. Pedagogically, an individual library’s guiding documents have a much greater effect on library workplaces, since employees are expected to adhere to the pedagogy adapted by their institutions. However, it would be a mistake to assume that even intuitional decisions and documents that influence the job requirements of librarians hold greater influence on library workplace pedagogy than individual librarians because, at least to some extent, employees generate their own environment. Therefore, I examine overarching library pedagogies like Ranganathan’s Five Laws and Library 2.0 service methodologies as they relate to the American Library Association (ALA), specific library workplaces like the Montana State University (MSU) Libraries, and individual librarians and library employees in order to illuminate some of the more interesting developments between library-based and externally based pedagogical concepts (including the lively debate over the usefulness of MARC records in libraries toward the end of the discussion).

Books Are For Use

Ranganathan’s use of the word “mantra” in conjunction with the first law of library science, “Books are for use,” evidences just how important he finds it. While the implications of this law seem very basic—meaning that books are meant to be used, rather than locked away for protection—their pedagogical effect is undeniable. Because

books are no longer the only source of information, it seems in keeping with the spirit of this law to update the wording to reflect the wider variety of texts available in libraries today. “Sources of Information are for Use”, allows us to discuss libraries in a broader and more contemporary way.

Ranganathan’s reference to the first law as a “mantra” is not the only time he infuses the first law with religious significance. “Every reader should feel the presence of the radiant personality of the librarian,” Ranganathan writes later:

Krishna-like, the librarian should now and again be by the side of every reader. He should not settle down in his seat; nor should he escape into the retiring room. He should move among readers; he should be ever accessible to them. (71)

A Westernization of Ranganathan’s phrasing should not be out of keeping with his main objective; the new phrase would read, “Librarians should be god-like.” Evoking mythological concepts, such as deity and the process of enlightenment, strengthens the argument that libraries have workplaces with their own mythological pedagogy. Thankfully, though his above religious references may indicate a vague sense of how librarians ought to conduct themselves under any circumstance, Ranganathan is practical enough to direct librarians toward library patrons, to “move among them,” and work “by the side of every reader.”

Ranganathan also uses a quote from one of his colleagues to illustrate the ramifications of what it means to be a god-like librarian. His colleague was “convinced that:

The equipment of the library will never be finished until it have upon its staff men and women whose sole work shall be, not the care of books, not the cataloguing of books, but the giving of instruction concerning their use. (52)

It is not difficult to see that modern library reference services stem from a long line of librarians who subscribed to this line of pedagogy, since current reference librarians' main concerns rest with instruction in the use of library resources, and less with the care, cataloging, and selection of library resources. One MSU reference librarian put it even more bluntly. In an interview he held that "a reference librarian's job is to work ourselves out of a job. If libraries...were easy enough to use without help then...we'd move on to another project."

Much of the pedagogy inherent in the ALA's Code of Ethics feels similar to Ranganathan's first law. For instance, the ALA claims to "uphold the principles of intellectual freedom and resist all efforts to censor library resources." ("ALA Code of Ethics") Championing uncensored use of materials, by its very nature, upholds the idea that books should be used, rather than chained up.⁶ MSU's Collection Development Librarian even used some of the same terminology as Ranganathan to explain this pedagogy. "Libraries are the great equalizers," was the explanation, "[t]here weren't libraries in the past, and then the books were chained. Being able to share information is an equalizer." This "equalizing spirit" is inherent in both Ranganathan's statement about proper, anonymous staff spirit in a library *and* in his interest in a Krishna-like librarian.

The ALA also champions similar pedagogical principles which "do not allow...personal beliefs to interfere with fair representation of the aims of our institutions or the provision of access to their information resources" ("ALA Code of Ethics").

Another ALA document that aligns well pedagogically with the law that "Books are for

⁶ In his explanation of the first law, Ranganathan refers to the actual chaining of books in medieval libraries (26). The chaining here is metaphorical.

Use” is the organization’s “Key Action Areas.” According to the ALA, these action areas are guiding principles for how to invest the energy and resources of libraries. The document contains much the same wording as the organization’s Code of Ethics. “Intellectual freedom is a basic right in a democratic society,” as far as the ALA is concerned, “and a core value of the library profession” (“ALA Key Action Areas”). And Ranganathan says much the same thing in his five laws.

As discussed earlier, though the ALA and Ranganathan often agree pedagogically, looking at the ALA’s pedagogical views alone cannot provide library workplace mythology with a strong, basic pedagogy. To a large extent, this is true of Ranganathan’s laws as well—neither they, nor the ALA documents can have a pedagogical impact on individual librarians or library employees unless individual library workplaces adopt such principles—no matter how well worded or recommended such pedagogical sources may be. However, I discuss their broader views first because they provide an excellent general view of some broad library pedagogies.

With this in mind, it is pertinent to look at mission statements from the MSU Libraries. The MSU Libraries’ documentation is used not because they are abnormally rich in interior workplace mythology, but because research interviews were conducted with many staff members in the university’s Renne library and much may be learned about the mythological pedagogy in a single institution by examining both the “official” documents that govern libraries and the “unofficial” texts of individuals within the library workplace. One important passage from the MSU Libraries’ vision statement will show that they are, at least in part, pedagogically aligned with Ranganathan’s first law:

Staff will be the key to success of the Libraries, serving as highly trained information experts who provide the vital links between information and clientele. Teaching information-literacy skills and concepts, procuring, licensing, and organizing information and client services will be staff priorities. (“Vision Statement”)

This portion of the MSU Libraries’ “vision” for librarians fits well with Ranganathan’s “Krishna-like” librarian, who moves among readers and is ever accessible to them, and ALA’s librarian, who champions “intellectual freedom.” An attitude that is similarly concerned with finding people for books might be what I heard from one librarian who was a “real proponent of being involved with the university on multiple levels.” Certainly, with this attitude, the pedagogical force behind “books are for use” carries into current library practices.

Every Person His or Her Book

Some of the “client services” mentioned in the above quote from the MSU Libraries’ Vision Statement fall directly under Ranganathan’s second law of library science because they allow “Every Person His or Her Book.” At the beginning of Ranganathan’s discussion of the second law, he associates the above phrase with another, similar phrase: “Books are For All.” However, according to Ranganathan’s pedagogy, neither phrase entitles patrons to each and every book they request. He explains:

[T]he business of the library staff...is not merely to dole out across the counter the books that are asked for. On the other hand, their business is to know the reader, to know the books, and to actively help in the finding by EVERY PERSON HIS OR HER BOOK.” (246, original emphasis)

The ALA document on ethics, quoted earlier, follows the second law even more closely than the first. The organization begins its list of ethical codes with “We provide the highest level of service to all library users through...equitable access; and accurate,

unbiased, and courteous responses to all requests” (“ALA Code of Ethics”). This type of unbiased, courteous response is, of course, reliant upon the “Krishna-like” librarian required by Ranganathan’s first law.

Another permutation of the second law, the librarian who knows the reader and the books well enough to find every reader a book, is also evident in the ALA’s code of ethics. The eighth and final code states that the ALA strives

for excellence in the profession by maintaining and enhancing our own knowledge and skills, by encouraging the professional development of co-workers, and by fostering the aspirations of potential members of the profession. (“ALA Code of Ethics”)

The second law essentially acts as bookends to the ALA’s Code of Ethics with an interest, first, in providing equitable access and courteous librarians, and last, in promoting these types of librarians in their efforts to become “Krishna-like.” As with Ranganathan, the ALA is equally committed “to the promotion and development of library collections and services for all people” (“ALA Key Action Areas”), or, in Ranganathan’s words, “Books are for all.”

Similarly, the MSU Libraries’ administrative goals take a step into Ranganathan’s pedagogy with their first statement. “The Libraries’ mission,” they begin, “is to facilitate student and faculty success by providing access to information and knowledge” (“Administrative Goals”). This quote is also reminiscent of Ranganathan’s laws that “Libraries are for use” and “Every Reader His or Her Book.” In a similar vein, MSU’s Collection Development Librarian suggested that one good reason for being involved with committees on campus with other departments is to “keep...an ear out in campus committees [and] to be aware what library resources need to be available to support that

coursework.” This constant vigilance, in order to give every reader an opportunity for relevant information, is the essence of getting “every reader his or her book.”

Every Book Its Reader

Ranganathan’s third law is characterized, first, by the importance it places on “open access” or, as Ranganathan explains it, “the opportunity to see and examine the book collection with as much freedom as in one’s own private library” (211-212). This meaning is synonymous with current librarians’ interest in providing “open access” information to their patrons. An experienced librarian practices the third law when he or she

instinctively relates readers to books and conversely a book frequently suggests a reader to whom it will appeal. He knows his community and is familiar with its mind, spirit and dominant interests. He seeks to have his finger on the pulse of his public and is ever on the wait for an opportunity to find a reader for every book (269).

Perhaps it is this need to have a finger on the pulse of the public, which leads the ALA to promote lifelong learning. Under the heading, “Diversity,” the ALA promotes “continuous, lifelong learning for all people through library and information services of every type” (“ALA Key Actions”). Promotion of diversity allows for the library, as a whole, to have fingers on multiple pulses, and therefore, according to Ranganathan’s pedagogy, accomplish finding a reader for every book.

In the same pedagogical spirit, MSU Libraries’ vision statement sets

a priority [on] research in appropriate professional areas, on constantly evolving information technology, and on the best ways to provide services, education, and information resources to clients.

This aligns well with the ALA's and Ranganathan's pedagogies by generating librarians proficient both in getting information to researchers, a principle from the second law, *and*, conversely, by matching researchers to books. Keeping with this pedagogy, another MSU librarian felt that "the goals of a library should be acquiring and providing access to library resources of a diverse nature...in a way that is easily accessible," and accessible books are at the heart of "every book its user." Essentially, librarians can embrace two laws with one act by being educated and understanding the patrons they serve.

Save the Time of the Reader

Ranganathan's fourth law seems commonplace today, since it assumes library users' time is too valuable to waste in lengthy waits for library services—a concept bred into our current society awash with time-saving devices like email, jet airplanes, and cell phones. But, even in 1939, Ranganathan writes, "[T]he effect of the fourth law has been to revolutionise the method of keeping library records. The old bound books have been completely given up and loose cards have taken their place...Library Science owes the invention of the card system to a sincere desire on the part of librarians to [save the time of the reader]" (312). Many, if not most, current library users do not remember card catalogs well enough to use them—but that is a testament to the thoroughness with which libraries have adopted Ranganathan's fourth law as pedagogy. It is likely that Ranganathan never imagined the card catalogs of today, but he did imagine the possibility of a library without books. "Who knows," he wonders, "that a day may not come when the dissemination of knowledge, which is the vital function of libraries, will be realized even by means other than those of the printed book?" (353). That day has

come, though Ranganathan certainly could not have envisioned just how much time the user would save via modern inventions. As an MSU library administrator aptly put it, “There was no way to manage practically the large academic catalog without automating it.”

Ranganathan’s fourth law may be dated, but it has modern permutations in the ALA’s ethical codes. “We provide the highest level of service to all library users” their first code explains, “through appropriate and usefully organized resources...” (“ALA Code of Ethics”). Thus, organization of library resources becomes important to librarians, in order to save their patrons’ time. However, automated systems are not the only time-saving innovations in the library. In fact, it is often a helpful reference librarian who saves researchers time, and it seems that this is one of the reasons reference librarians join the profession. One reference librarian explained, “The real hook for me is being able to help people...it really makes me feel great when I’m able to help somebody relieve stress or anxiety.” Another shared a similar story, though he attributed “feeling great” to “endorphins.” Whether through automation or well-trained librarians, libraries buy into pedagogical approaches like Ranganathan’s in order to save the time of readers.

The Library is a Growing Organism

From a pedagogical perspective, one of the most interesting of Ranganathan’s laws is his last. Rather than generate a static, stable pedagogy, Ranganathan ends his pedagogical laws by eschewing the idea that library workplaces are unchanging. “A far less pardonable thing [than underestimating library growth],” he writes, “is to set about organizing a library as if it would be stationary, as if neither the books, nor the readers,

nor the staff would grow in number. There could be nothing more reprehensible...” (327). Perhaps this view of libraries as growing, changing organisms is what has given Ranganathan’s pedagogical views such longevity within library culture because the pedagogy is built to change.

The spirit of change and incorporating newer and larger ideas lends itself to current library pedagogy. For instance, the MSU libraries’ mission statement requires that “[e]lectronic and other non-print formats...be assimilated continually so as to complement the collection of books, periodicals and other physical formats” (“Vision Statement”). Because libraries follow Ranganathan’s “growing organism,” or similar pedagogies, they are constantly looking for new ways of doing things. “I have concerns for the profession,” explains one reference librarian, “that we look for new buzz. A lot of the efforts we put into things do not bear fruit. Sometimes we want to do whatever we think will please our users.” However, the same librarian seems to find this trait beneficial. He felt that “libraries will continue to explore new things and ask, ‘Where are our new roles?’” In fact, it is the spirit of embracing change—and a somewhat “mystical” uncertainty—that seems to lend itself so freely to integrate libraries with the Internet. As a result, the exterior pedagogy that comes with such an external resource has had a tremendous influence on library workplaces and their pedagogies.

Library 2.0 as Pedagogy

Ranganathan, though he wrote before the invention of computers, let alone the Internet, envisioned a time when the printed word would not be the only way of transmitting information. Earlier, Ranganathan was quoted, writing “Who knows that a

day may not come when the dissemination of knowledge, which is the vital function of libraries realized even by means other than those of the printed book?" It is with concept in mind that I shift pedagogical inquiry about library workplace mythology toward the Internet and Library 2.0 services.

"Library 2.0" is a term that emerged in 2005 as a spin-off of the term "Web 2.0." It is characterized by its fluidity of form and application, and the openness with which it changes itself to become useful, based upon input from individual users. Most importantly, Library 2.0 uses Web 2.0 as a model. (Cohen v) Laura Cohen describes Library 2.0's relationship to Web 2.0 in her introduction to the book *Library 2.0 Initiatives in Academic Libraries*. She writes:

Library 2.0 is a response to Web 2.0...Web 2.0 is characterized by networked communities on which users contribute content, interact, and collaborate...Library 2.0 is an endeavor to incorporate this culture into the culture of libraries [t]hrough the use of 2.0 tools and with a 2.0 mindset, librarians provide services... (v)

One of the best ways of looking at Library 2.0 as a pedagogy comes from an administrator of the MSU Libraries administrator who related exuberantly to me that

[t]he future of academic libraries is almost unbounded. You have to say, 'You love Google? Google works for you? How do we get our stuff in Google?' not, 'How do we look like Google?' or faux Google. If in fact the network *is* your desktop, how do we put ourselves out there so that you stumble over us?

Based on this statement, it would seem, that Library 2.0 services, with their focus on patrons, their dynamic nature, and their time-saving capabilities would lend themselves to Ranganathan's laws of library science. In fact, they may easily be seen as an outgrowth, or perhaps, an updated version of these pedagogies—hence the 2.0 terminology. It is important to note, that, in spite of the many similarities between the two pedagogies,

there are striking differences in the types of library services and attitudes each advocates for library employees. This will become evident, later on, in a discussion of the merits and detriments of the more traditional MARC record classification systems developed by libraries and librarians and the proponents of exterior-type XML-based classification systems.

However, the term “Library 2.0” embodies, in its very origins, an external pedagogy the likes of which have begun to proliferate in library workplace mythology, and, consequently, in library texts and sociology. The same library administrator felt that “if libraries don’t continue to look at how they can best support the next generation of learner, and very soon the next generation of researcher, they will become hidebound.”

In his master’s paper, Michael C. Habib also traces the origins of Library 2.0. “Seeing as the 2.0 [in Library 2.0] comes directly from the term Web 2.0,” he begins,

it is clear that the term roughly describes the relationship between Web 2.0 and libraries. Worth noting is that Library 2.0 also borrows concepts from Business 2.0, which preceded Web 2.0. (9)

Clearly, the origins of Library 2.0 are not in libraries. The name itself implies that what Library 2.0 represents is an exterior methodology, hence the 2.0, applied to library services. Habib’s proposed definition of Library 2.0 confirms its external nature. Below is Habib’s definition:

Library 2.0 describes a subset of library services designed to meet user needs caused by the direct and peripheral effects of Web 2.0 services leveraging concepts of the Read/Write Web, the Web as Platform, The Long Tail, harnessing collective intelligence, network effects, core datasets from user contributions, and lightweight programming models. (Habib 22)

As Habib suggests, the concepts inherent in Library 2.0 are “caused by the direct and peripheral effects of *Web 2.0* services,” and so is Library 2.0’s pedagogical construction.

In order to compare the pedagogy of Library 2.0 with that of Ranganathan, it is necessary to distill Habib’s definition of Library 2.0 services into “broader” mantra-like phrases which embody the conceptual frameworks borrowed from Web 2.0. Thus the Pedagogy embedded in the Web 2.0 methods Habib uses to define of Library 2.0 (Read/Write Web, the Web as Platform, The Long Tail, Harnessing Collective Intelligence, Network Effects, Core Datasets From User Contributions, and Lightweight Programming Models) may be rewritten as the Library 2.0 “Laws:”

1. Libraries Act as a Crossroads of Information
2. Libraries Conduct Their Core Business on the Web
3. Libraries Service Small Niche Groups.
4. Libraries value Quantity in Users

As with Ranganathan’s laws, these “laws” of Library 2.0 serve as a pedagogical construct only insofar as individual library workplaces assimilate them into their workplace, and to the extent that library workplaces adopt Library 2.0 pedagogy, they are adopting an external pedagogy into their workplace—though it is no less goal-like.

Libraries Act as a Crossroads of Information

The first law of Library 2.0 combines principles from four of the seven Web 2.0 principles in Habib’s definition: read/write web, harnessing collective intelligence, core datasets from user contributors, and lightweight programming models. Each of these contributes ideas of collecting information from multiple sources and distributing it to multiple sources, as well as manipulating information and how it is distributed—hence the “crossroads” analogy—and each generates an external pedagogical view of how

libraries and librarians should conduct themselves that is not unlike Ranganathan's first law, but that is derived specifically from external sources (as discussed above). Yet again, this pedagogical, workplace construct is particularly well illustrated by a quote from an MSU library administrator. According to her, librarians and libraries

make it possible for students to get the most out of their education while they're here...[a]n individual student can feel like they have a home here. The goal of the library is to pull together the information resources and skills, push them out virtually, and still maintain a place...where students can learn. It's really become more about community, I think.

This makes sense—especially when placing library workplaces in the context of discussions of “Library as Place.” If libraries are becoming a place where scholars (both students and other researchers) can come and *work* alongside the librarians, whose workplace has always included an element of research (both for patrons and their own job-related research).

Additionally, in his section explaining the Read/Write Web component of Web 2.0, Habib explains that “Old Media, including Web 1.0 sites, were defined by a one way broadcast...However, the web was designed to support multidirectional information flows...the Internet can be dynamic” (12). And it is just this “dynamic” flow of information that seems of interest to librarians. The MSU Libraries’ library instruction program uses a great deal of Library 2.0 pedagogy—specifically as it relates to the dynamic flow of information. One section states:

The Library Instruction Program is fluid, changing to meet patrons’ needs as technology modifies the way information is accessed, as curricular and administrative needs change, and as a result of program evaluation. (“Library Instruction”)

Note the multiple uses of words like “change,” “fluid,” and “modify”—which are synonymous with “dynamic.” While this could be interpreted as a part of Rananathan’s “living organism” with built-in growth and change, it fits better with Library 2.0 leanings, since it is not the library as an entity that has been modified, but the ways in which information is accessed. The library instruction program further fosters Library 2.0’s dynamic view of library interactions since it “facilitates access to the vast resources available to the university, fosters a sense of independence and responsibility, and encourages a collaborative relationship between librarians and other teaching faculty” (“Library Instruction”). This collaborative relationship between librarians and teaching faculty is particularly close to Library 2.0’s crossroads of information, since it allows for “multidirectional information flows.”

Because of its roots in Web 2.0, Library 2.0 also bases its pedagogy on obtaining core data sets from users and harnessing such collective intelligence toward improving library workplaces, or as Habib puts it, “Utilizing the collective intelligence of users describes one method Web 2.0 services employ to continually improve based on user contributions” (18). In a related way,

Web 2.0 companies also excel in collecting and analyzing customer actions...Users’ explicit contributions and implicit actions are then collected, organized, and analyzed to extract collective knowledge that can be applied to...direct improvement... (Habib 20)

On top of a dynamic flow of information, Library 2.0 advocates a dynamic *use of* information a concept that fits well within the library, but comes from an exterior source—at least in this instance.

The MSU Libraries' vision statement, examples from which I quoted earlier with Ranganathan's pedagogy, take first steps into Library 2.0 with goals that:

The Libraries will also develop greater involvement in the life of the university by fostering a higher profile, by strengthening relationships with departments, individual faculty, administration, and other staff, and by working with faculty and students on collection development and the planning of services and facilities ("Vision Statement")

The shift into "working with faculty and students on collection development and the planning of services and facilities" is also a shift into Library 2.0 pedagogy. This language of dynamic information use continues. "Our vision is of a library staff working in partnership with academic community," another passage reads, "in a creative, open environment, where the focus is on meeting information needs of the MSU community and state" ("Vision Statement"). This is not to say that the MSU Libraries make their goals with Library 2.0 pedagogy in mind, but that they have begun to meet goals both new and old using Library 2.0 models, rather than more traditional, library based models. One of the ways that the MSU Libraries are attempting to meet these information needs is to hire a "digital initiatives librarian" who is excited about the change and fluidity in libraries and conceptions about librarians. "I feel like I'm fulfilling an emerging role," he explains, "which is sort of information management and releasing information." It is clear that the MSU Libraries' vision contains Library 2.0 leanings, especially where library improvement and endorsement are concerned.

The ALA code of ethics may not seem to embrace certain components of Library 2.0. One such component concerns the "lightweight programming models" borrowed from Web 2.0 which, "partly include...simple ways to loosely share and process datasets between partners. This enables mashups and remixes of data" (Habib 20-21). MSU

Libraries have embraced this portion of mashing up data—with the free-flowing information and regeneration of data. One librarian likes “the fact that we have a combination of formats and resources right now like the ability to produce some original stuff. We’re producing digital collections; for example, we’re providing access to streaming video right now...” It is uncertain where this sort of pedagogy will lead libraries, but the pedagogy of the MSU Libraries and their staff aligns with both internal workplace pedagogies, like Ranganathan, and external pedagogies, like Library 2.0.

Libraries Conduct Their Core Business on the Web

One of the most interesting developments of Library 2.0 pedagogy comes from a basic Web 2.0 principle. Habib explains that, “By their very nature, companies described as Web 2.0 conduct their core business on the Web.” (15) By adopting a Web 2.0 understanding of the library, what Library 2.0 adopts is the idea that libraries conduct their “core business” on the Web. One way of assessing where a library’s core business lies is by examining where the bulk of its collection resides, and according to the MSU Collection Development Librarian, “the biggest chunk of the MSU Libraries is out online.”

The MSU Libraries’ vision shows a changeover from more traditional pedagogies to Library 2.0 pedagogy. “Library services and resources available at MSU Libraries will shift,” it explains, “from one based on resident collections to one based on access to the more diverse and greatly expanded world of electronic information” (“Vision Statement”), and this shift is evident in interviews with staff members. For instance, according to the MSU’s Collection Development Librarian the “collections budget is the

largest part of the budget for the MSU Libraries [and] about 80% of MSU Libraries' Budget is actually going to purchasing things online.”

The MSU Libraries' intentions aside, the mandatory shift from physical collections to diverse and expanded access from the “world of electronic information,” is only possible via the Internet. MSU's Special Collections Librarian was certain that, “Academic Libraries have a real problem in that there is a vast inventory of materials that will never be referred to again in their three-dimensional form and are probably nothing more than decoration.” Such certainty is a sure sign that some librarians feel a library's core business is online—a pedagogical shift toward Library 2.0.

In keeping with this goal, MSU's Digital Access and Web Services (DAWS) team has begun placing library resources in various high-use web venues. “Our initiatives last year,” shares their team leader, “was to start sprinkling resources into the research workflow of students, faculty and staff—so, really finding ways to promote library resources in sort of non-traditional environments like iGoogle, Yahoo portal, [and] Facebook to a degree...” What is really behind this shift is the Library 2.0 pedagogy. Web 2.0 assumes that the core businesses that adopt Web 2.0 pedagogy (as Library 2.0 does) really have a mostly online presence. Perhaps this is why a library administrator at MSU explains that libraries “continue to look for ways to bring the richness of what used to exclusively be done at the reference desk out into the online environment.” This is not, strictly speaking, different from the chat or email services that have been offered at many libraries for many years—except that there seems to be a pedagogy forming around such

features that is gaining momentum and has gained a much more powerful influence in library workplace mythology since it coalesced around the name Library 2.0.

Libraries Service Niche Groups

Ranganathan's laws of "Books are for Use" and "Every Reader His or Her Book" fit very well with "The Long Tail" of Library 2.0. "The Long Tail," Habib explains, "is a term introduced by Chris Anderson to describe how the web makes it possible to provide services to small niche groups" (16). This is something libraries are already well suited for—as the ALA key actions show. Under the heading, "Diversity," the ALA promotes "continuous, lifelong learning for all people through library and information services of every type" ("ALA Key Actions"). "Every type," of necessity, includes niche groups—though with the vast array of information, libraries often rely on mainstream information to the exclusion of these niche reading communities. One benefit of the Library 2.0 pedagogy is its ability to provide niche readers with "their books."

University libraries are particularly full of "niche readers" since the university communities they serve are divided, necessarily, into people whose workplace goals often include defining their specific reading niches. MSU fosters this type of niche-service, by creating a reference staff that divides itself up among the various university departments. For instance, one reference librarian explained, "I'm a liason to a [specific] college, so we're just focused. My job for that is to outreach and teach, so not only students [of that college], but faculty." Such service is Library 2.0 in nature, though it is not incompatible with pedagogies like Ranganathan's, because it suits the nature of universities' niche-like informational needs.

Libraries Value Quantity in Users

Habib explains that Web 2.0 principles include a reliance on social networks. He quotes Fred Stuzman, who writes that Web 2.0 services, which incorporate “social technologies[,] benefit from an economy that awards value to the service as more people join the service. This, of course, is the network effect; a network gains value as more people join the network” (19). Thus, Web 2.0, and consequently Library 2.0 pedagogy, focus not only on the quality of network users, but on the quantity of users to perform services because of the “economy that awards value to the service as more people join the service,” rather than simply the quality of network users.

The MSU Libraries’ vision statement shows affinity for this pedagogical turn. In one section, the document explains that:

Given the vast amount of information available in electronic formats, individual libraries will no longer be self-sufficient. This will necessitate the increased sharing of resources among institutions through alliances of electronic networks and databases, which in turn will further broaden the resource base. (“Vision Statement”)

Here, the value of individual holdings is insufficient, though librarians certainly combine resources in hopes of getting worthwhile sites. Only by “increased sharing of resources and alliances of electronic networks and databases” can value be found. And where is it found? In a broader “resource base”—hopefully, but not necessarily tied directly to quality. This is not to say that MSU Libraries does not value quality databases—but because the focus is based, pedagogically, in Library 2.0 (and, consequently, Web .20 pedagogy), the values of databases are evaluated in terms of both quality *and* quantity, rather than quality alone.

This mentality is not necessarily to say that libraries and librarians do not desire quality encounters with patrons. In fact, MSU's Digital Initiatives Librarian said:

More and more I want to see us get people at the point of need and really help them. Those are the kind of experiences that people are going to carry and evangelize, they'll say 'Look, here's what the librarian did for me.' Rather than being dragged here by their US 101 instructor...

However, the same librarian felt that these sorts of encounters were more likely to occur when users came to the library themselves, rather than "being dragged." With this desire, libraries, including the Library of Congress, have begun feeding library resources into popular sites such as Flickr and iTunes. The reasoning behind this, as described by the same librarian, is that "[r]ather than relying on people coming to me, I'm going to put [information] out there...and see...[what happens]." This type of thinking involves quality *and* quantity. It is felt that broadcasting library services broadly to people via the Internet, a concept aligned closely with Library 2.0 pedagogy, allows more possibility for quality encounters "at the point of need."

A Practical Example

This discussion of interior- and exterior-based workplace pedagogies begins with the suggestion that pedagogies like Library 2.0 are related to earlier pedagogical understandings, such as Ranganathan's Five Laws. However, it is important to stress that Library 2.0 pedagogy is *not* a direct descendant of Ranganathan's, or any other library-based pedagogy—and that is where the current debate about the future of library workplaces gets a bit ugly.

Take, for example, the discussion surrounding an article published in October of 2002, titled “MARC⁷ must die.” In the original article, Roy Tennant proclaims the obsolescence of MARC records and asserts that XML⁸ is its obvious replacement. Some of his reasons are that “MARC has always been an arcane standard. No other profession uses MARC or anything like it” (Tennant). He also suggests that XML is the best replacement because “the wider information technology industry is moving wholesale to XML as a means to encode and transfer information.” Essentially he urges libraries and librarians to adopt flexible and in favor of MARC classifications—and arguing for the types of pedagogical changes inherent in the previous discussion about Library 2.0 (and from the same source).

If Library 2.0 pedagogical principles were completely an outgrowth of earlier library workplace pedagogies, then the response to Tennant’s urgings (as intentionally inflammatory as his article title seems) might have taken hold a bit more quickly—but that is not the case. Instead, for each of the three months following the publishing of “MARC must die,” *Library Journal* published a different letter to the editor with a negative response to Tennant’s declaration. Each of these is interesting because, though each response covers different aspects of classification, all are united behind library-based pedagogy.

⁷ “MARC” stands for “machine-readable cataloging” (Tennant) and is the computer database format that replaced the index card catalogs previously used in libraries. In literature about libraries, these records and the systems built to retrieve information placed in MARC records are still often referred to as the “catalog.”

⁸ According to *Creating a Winning Online Exhibition* by Martin R. Kalfatovic, XML is a web-based, computer programming language similar to HTML—but with three distinct advantages: 1) Extensibility: users may “specify their own tags or attributes in order to parameterize or otherwise semantically qualify their data” (58), something that MARC records already do, 2) Structure: XML allows for “deep structures needed to represent database schemas or...hierarchies” (58), which is similar to a MARC classification of information, and 3) Validation: XML allows “consuming applicatons to check data for structural validity on importation” (58), a trait not found in MARC classification.

In first letter, J. McRee Elrod is astounded that, “people can contemplate ignoring the lessons learned in over a century of bibliographic history and consider repeating earlier mistakes” (10). The third letter, by Rebecca Guenther, explains that Tennant’s views of MARC classification show his “Anglo-American bias,” and that “MARC is used worldwide with a variety of cataloging rules” (12). Elrod’s and Guenther’s responses becomes even more interesting when considered in a mythological context because the lessons learned within, scope of, and the history of, workplaces are really the stuff of mythology.

The second letter is a bit different than the others, and is more biting. It is a “parodic response” titled “Web departments must die!” written by Daniel CannCasciato. As the title indicates, this letter is a direct attack on the external pedagogical source for Tennant’s article—the Internet. The parody involved may have bouts of humor; but, when looked at as a mythological occurrence, it is clear that CannCasciato subscribes to the widely accepted workplace pedagogy concerning MARC classification. It is particularly noteworthy, in a study of library workplace mythology, that the title of CannCasciato’s letter singles out the *workplace* from which the external pedagogical suggestions come.

Lest this be an unfairly biased examination of the scholarly conversation around MARC classifications and XML, it is important to note that in four months after Guenther’s letter, *Library Journal* published a letter, written by Chad Abel-Kops, defending Tennant’s suggestions. Abel-Kops uses much the same language as Tennant, explaining that, “[w]hile users have always complained about the rigid nature of the

catalog, it didn't become so embarrassing until the widespread use of the Internet and the birth of search engines and alternative catalogs such as Google and Amazon.com" (10). He also finds it "troubling that Tennant's recent criticisms of library catalogs...met with such antagonism from many in the library community" (10). He ends with a jab at opponents, hoping that "[m]aybe [change] will come faster as new constituents enter the debate who know that the hallmark of librarianship is promoting 'service' not 'servitude'..." (10). Abel-Kops is not the last to write about this, but his response is an excellent one to end on, because he defends an external pedagogical view of libraries in much the same way as Elrod, Guenther and CannCasiato.

The arguments contain language intended to update, or upgrade, current library practices in much the same way that Library 2.0 proponents seek to upgrade former library services by implementing external concepts. The "discussion" over MARC or XML based classification systems reveals the same divisions over traditional, internally based library workplace pedagogy and external pedagogy that shows up in an examination of Ranganathan's Five Laws and Library 2.0 (though perhaps with a bit more flavor).

External Sociological Shifting

The pedagogies of the ALA and the MSU Libraries' documents and most librarians align well with both Ranganathan's Laws *and* Library 2.0 concepts. This illuminates the flexible nature of library workplace's mythological pedagogy. It also allows observations about mythological trends with respect to library workplaces.

It is interesting that the pedagogical examples from ALA administrative documents align themselves much more often with Ranganathan, while the MSU Libraries' documentation formed the bulk of examples aligned with Library 2.0 pedagogy. This is not to say that MSU's Libraries have abandoned more traditional pedagogy, but it *is* true that key portions of their documentation certainly embrace Library 2.0 pedagogy. This indicates that the ALA's pedagogy, which is voluntary and which has no real force unless applied to specific librarians by specific library administrations, does not embrace Library 2.0 pedagogy. On the other hand, the MSU's Libraries' administrative documents, the effects of which are more compulsory than those of the ALA, do embrace Ranganathan's more traditional pedagogy, but are increasingly aligned with Library 2.0 concepts. This indicates a shift in the MSU Libraries' pedagogy, as indicated by the mandated "shift" in their vision statement from resources "based on resident collections to one based on access to more diverse and greatly expanded world of electronic information." In turn, it is logical to infer that if the required pedagogy embraces Library 2.0 concepts, it is much more likely that social aspects of library workplaces will also shift toward Lib 2.0.

Most of the MSU librarians interviewed felt that the profession was in a state of change—for good or bad. "The struggle for libraries...right now," explains MSU's Collection Development Librarian, "is that there are sort of differing perceptions of what a library is and it's a struggle amongst librarians. It's really a difficult thing, I think we're having a bit of identity crisis." Some librarians were experiencing what a Reference Librarian called a "general anxiety about what the future holds." The

Reference Librarian continued, “We just don’t know what the future holds for libraries.” Many, however, embraced this change whole heartedly. Unsurprisingly, considering his duties, MSU’s Digital Initiatives Librarian explains: “The profession, right now, is changing. The earth is moving and we’re kind of trying to find our way. Some people would find it unsettling, but I find it kind of exciting.” While not all agreed that the coming changes were good, MSU librarians had some specific directions in which they thought libraries would be going ranging from libraries playing an intermediary role to the formation of an information commons. One common theme between all of these was that most of their projections for the future had roots in Library 2.0 pedagogy.

Regardless of what other pedagogies libraries embrace, the more closely they align themselves and their workplace with external pedagogies like Library 2.0, the more likely librarians are to feel sociological shifts away from more traditional library workplace mythologies toward external mythologies of library workplace.

CONCLUSION

Chapters 1 and 2 unravel specific library workplace cosmologies and pedagogies in an attempt to reveal the direct relationship between shifts in secondary mythological functions and the changes in the more primary sociological functions of workplace mythology. This process also reveals the underlying reasons behind the “identity crisis,” to borrow a previously quoted phrase, felt by certain librarians. What looking at the past and present of library workplace pedagogy and cosmology reveals are trends toward online and Internet-based library workplaces, which confirm what Mann already points out—the existence of a “premise...that a transition from print to electronic sources is taking place...” (191). Frankly, Mann is restating the obvious.

Mann and others paint various versions of what the shift from library workplaces might look like. Viewing library workplaces as mythological constructs may not generate particularly revolutionary findings, but such a look has something more to offer concerning certain common scenarios portrayed by librarians who write about library future. Often, predictions (interior and exterior to library professions) center around perceptions that the Internet is a unique event unlike anything in the history of libraries or that the arrival of the Internet as the beginning of the end of libraries.

The Internet as New Technology

The cosmological discussion in Chapter 1 makes it evident that the Internet is but one of many technological advances adopted by library workplaces. Each of these technologies, in turn, has shifted both the cosmology and sociology of library

workplaces. For example, Chapter 1 makes use of two statements by J. O. Ward that are also particularly useful illustrations in the current context. In one section of his essay, he makes a direct comparison between ancient and modern technologies used by library workplaces. He writes, “We must imagine something like the shift from print to the Internet today, with print being represented by scrolls and the Internet representing the new wave, the codex” (166). It is precisely this comparison that I wish to make between the changes libraries have always undergone with respect to new technology and those being made in libraries today.

First, the cosmology of library workplaces shows us that there are always changes. The history of the Alexandrian libraries illustrates this concept. It is probable that the ancient Library of Alexandria began as a collection in the Temple of the Muses—much like the collection in the temple of Ramses II. Changes in the politics of the area generated a larger collection, necessitated the construction of a “daughter library,” and changed library workplace sociology—if for no other reason than that the library staff and scholars would have had to find materials in more than one building. The destruction of the ancient Alexandrian libraries was also due, according to various versions of the story, to changes in the political and/or religious atmosphere. The historical veracity of such accounts is less important, mythological speaking, than the message they convey—that the history of libraries is a history of change.

On the other hand, such cosmology also gives us examples of changes that are a blessing rather than a curse. The Bibliotheca Alexandrina, as an institution, may act as an example of this way of thinking. Its programs and goals show clearly that the Bibliotheca

Alexandrina has embraced the library workplace trends toward the Internet as a positive change. For example, Chapter 1 reveals that the modern library has combined with the Library of Congress to form the World Digital Library and also participates in a project that attempts to compile what amounts to a universal database of web pages from 1996 to the present. Practicality aside, goals and programs such as these highlight the positive possibilities inherent in technological shifts within library workplaces.

Ward's analogy easily makes a comparison between the technological changeover from scroll to bound book and, now, from book to the Internet, but there are certain differences between the two. For example, the scroll and the book are essentially the same, physically speaking. The reader holds them; words are printed on sheets of some kind and stored on a shelf—perhaps to be examined later. However, the same is not always true of books and the Internet. Computer screen display pixels, are not easily held, and, though the same types of information may be accessed via the Internet and computers, it is not placed in an order on a shelf—in fact, it can be difficult to find certain types of information for a second reading.

These physical differences are important, but they do not even touch the differences in how information is interpreted and organized between printed and electronic formats. Such differences are illustrated very well by the discussion surrounding Roy Tennant's "MARC must die" (discussed in Chapter 2). An earlier quote from Matthew Battles describes the situation. "What we face is not a loss of books," he explains, "but the loss of a world...the Word shifts again in its modes, tending more and more to dwell in pixels and bits instead of paper and ink." The "world" Battles says is

facing loss is books—physical, tangible books with predictable organization. The differences between books and the Internet belie the comparison of a technological shift between them and earlier technological changes because it is also a shift in nature from the physical to the ephemeral.

One brief example should suffice to illustrate this shift. Reputable books generally have indexes, which are very handy for users—especially librarians. The index of a book contains words and phrases that occur regularly within the text of the book and provide a fast way to access specific and meaningful text within the many pages of the book. In contrast, websites often use search engines, which operate using “key words” and “tags.” While it is true that the bibliography of a book uses what may be termed “key words,” the difference between a printed bibliography and a search engine is that the bibliography at the end of a book doesn’t change from minute to minute. Because the Internet changes constantly (an unsurprising statement, in light of Chapter 2’s discussion of Web 2.0 principles) trying to generate a bibliography of it would be like trying to catch water. It is this change from the physical and durable book, to the mercurial and intangible Internet that frustrates a direct comparison between current technological changes and previous changes.

Perhaps it will be as Ismail Serageldin, director of the Bibliotheca Alexandrina says, that “Libraries and books, both of them, have a wonderful future ahead of them...” If Sarageldin is wrong, does his enthusiasm prove that Internet technology spells the end of library workplaces. Why should the Internet prove to be any greater threat to library workplaces than parchment or the bound codex?

The Mutable Meaning of “Library”

Mann and those like him seem worried about the loss of the current version of what Campbell refers to as the “motivating power” or “value system” within library workplace pedagogy. And, in that sense, Man is right to envision traditional paradigms as “under siege” (191), but library workplace pedagogy is often under siege. Because the pedagogical trends of library workplaces shift back and forth between various pedagogies, traditional ways of doing things are frequently—perhaps constantly—shifting. In fact, both of the general pedagogies examined in Chapter 2 provide room for an element of change within their prescribed ways of doing things. Since both pedagogies are capable of embracing elements of change without causing a wholesale shift in library workplace pedagogy, library workplace mythology engenders a need for changeable pedagogy.

Ranganathan’s fifth law, “the library is a growing organism” immediately conveys a sense of the acceptance of change, since to grow, organisms and, apparently, library workplaces, must change. Chapter 2 quotes a portion of his writings, which decry the “organizing a library as if it would be stationary...” and he further states (under the heading “Evolution”) that another attribute of growth is the “variation and evolution of new forms” (762). Ranganathan’s library pedagogy comes with a built-in acceptance of the dynamic nature of library workplaces. Perhaps that is why his pedagogical concepts are still studied in many graduate level courses for information science students—libraries were changing when he wrote his Five Laws just as libraries today change and the libraries of tomorrow will have the same need to embrace change.

The pedagogical principles embodied by Library 2.0 concepts might easily be seen as an extension of the “organic” library workplace pedagogy expressed by Ranganathan’s laws, with one important exception—they spring from different origins. Library 2.0 concepts are derivatives of Internet 2.0 concepts, and, therefore may be even more adapted to change than previous pedagogies introduced into library workplace mythology. The pedagogical concept presented in Chapter 2, that, according to Library 2.0 pedagogical principles, libraries are beginning to act as a crossroads of information highlights some of the more pertinent elements of a pedagogy based upon change.

For example, the MSU Libraries describe their lower division LIBR 121 course as “fluid, changing to meet patrons’ needs as technology modifies the way information is accessed, as curricular and administrative needs change, and as a result of program evaluation.” The MSU Libraries’ awareness of the need to change, and the variety of factors that may induce change shows how “fluid” the library workplaces really are (even if specific librarians and libraries sometimes have trouble sorting out the benefits of MARC classification or XML).

It is worth noting that, in his attempt to find homogeneity within Library 2.0 methodologies, Habib hits upon the importance of change from without as well as within. In addition to factors within the library workplace, Library 2.0 pedagogy encourages changes induced from outside the traditional boundaries of library workplaces—a natural tendency derived from association with the Internet. As Chapter 2 quotes Habib, these factors, “describe...one method Web 2.0 services [and consequently Library 2.0 services] employ to continually improve based on user contributions.” So, while the Internet

certainly is “the end of libraries” as we know them, it is far from the end of libraries.

Pedagogically speaking, Library 2.0, based as it is upon Internet principles, embraces the fluidity that library workplace pedagogy has accepted for many years.

A Mythology to Call One's Own

The notion that library workplaces are moving more and more toward an acceptance and reliance upon the Internet is hardly new or novel. Where, then, is the merit in predicting the future of library workplaces via mythological examination, if it tells us what most already suspect? Educated predictions based on workplace mythology are different than other types of predictions for three reasons. First, they are based upon the cycles of workplace cosmology and pedagogy, rather than on the worries and fears current librarians have about sociological changes. Second, they show sociological change as a natural part of a cycle, rather than an abrupt removal of all old ways in favor of the new. Finally, the future of library workplaces, viewed through the lens of library workplace mythology, shows library workplaces as they have always been. They are groups of people that have been, are, and will be capable of adapting to cultural, religious, political, and technological changes (even those which change the very nature of how we retrieve and process information), while maintaining a core identity that represents a desire to learn, a love of information, a willingness to adapt, and a fascinating mythology that is all their own.

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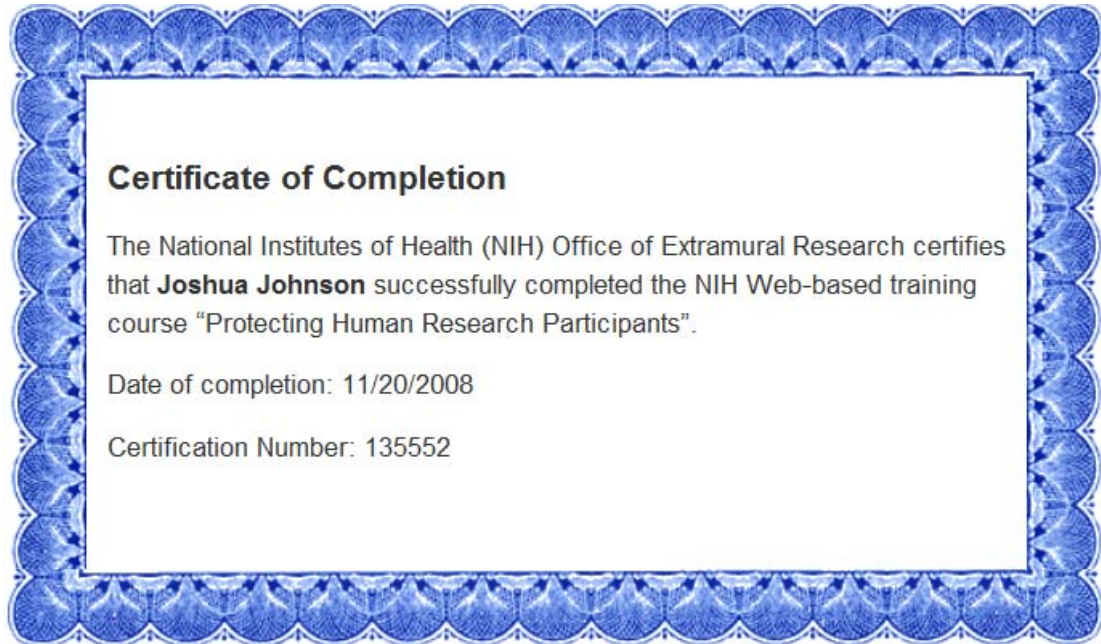
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APPENDIX A

LIBRARIAN INTERVIEW MATERIALS

Certificate of Completion: Required IRB Web-Based Training



IRB Approved Subject Consent Form

**SUBJECT CONSENT FORM
FOR
PARTICIPATION IN HUMAN RESEARCH AT
MONTANA STATE UNIVERSITY**

Thesis Title: *Reworking Myth: Casting Lots for Library Workplace Culture*

Research Title: *Investigation of Library Workplace Mythology*

You are being asked to participate in a study of workplace mythology and workplace culture. The results of this study will allow further understanding of both the dynamic nature of libraries as workplaces and generate data from which to extrapolate possible trends in future Library workplaces.

You were selected for this study based on your employment for and involvement with the Montana State University's Renne Library.

Participation:

This study will involve a personal interview.

If you agree to participate, notes will be taken on your interview, which will also be recorded. The interview length will vary, but should last 15 to 30 minutes.

Risks:

There is a possibility that information you provide will be traced back to you. Though information gathered in this study will not name individual participants, the title of your workplace (MSU's Renne Library) may be mentioned in conjunction with your job title, allowing persons to match your name to your responses with moderate effort.

Benefits:

The study is of no personal benefit to you.

Confidentiality:

Information given to the study will contain no names. Due to the nature of the study, however, job titles and the name of your workplace may be used in conjunction with one another—which makes it possible to identify you with minimal effort.

Your Rights:

You may withdraw yourself from this study at any time.

You are encouraged to ask questions about the study, information you provide the study, and/or other study-related topics. Such questions should be directed to Joshua Johnson: joshsoffice@gmail.com or (406) 451-8105.

Additional questions about the rights of participants (human subjects) can be answered by the Chairman of the Institutional Review Board, Mark Quinn, (406) 994-4707.

AUTHORIZATION: I have read the above and understand the discomforts, inconvenience and risk of this study. I, _____ (*name of participant*), agree to participate in this research. I understand that I may later refuse to participate, and that I may withdraw from the study at any time. I have received a copy of this consent form for my own records.

Signed: _____

Witness: _____

Investigator: _____

Date: _____

APPROVED
MSU IRB
11/20/08
Date approved
NA
Expiration date

Request for Interview (Email Format)

[Name],

I would like to set up a 15-30 minute interview with you because of your employment and involvement with MSU's Renne Library as [role in library].

I am conducting research about libraries, library culture, and library mythology in conjunction with my LIBS 576 internship course (with Jan Zauha and Jason Clark) this semester *and* as a portion of my master's thesis in English literature. Information obtained from an interview with you is vital to my research.

The interview formally consists of seven questions--though, depending upon time constraints, and subject interests, more may be asked.

1. What role do you perform in the library?
2. How is your role related to the library as a whole?
3. How did you become interested in working in libraries?
4. For what reasons do you continue working in libraries?
5. What benefits or drawbacks do you perceive in working in libraries?
6. What do you perceive as the goal(s) of the Renne library and/or libraries in general?
7. What purposes to libraries serve?

I am keenly aware of your busy schedule. If you are available to interview, I will be happy to accommodate your schedule. I am conducting interviews December 1-8, 2008 on Mon/Wed/Fri afternoons and Tues/Thurs mornings and afternoons. I am, however, willing to accommodate whatever meeting time best fits your schedule. Please contact me via email (return email address) or phone (return phone number) to set a time for our meeting.

Attached you will find a .pdf version of the consent form required by the Institutional Review Board (IRB) to conduct this research. Please feel free to review it.

Thank you for your valuable time,

Sincerely,

Joshua Johnson
English Graduate Teaching Assistant
Montana State University
[Return email address]
[Return Phone Number]