Water to the Thirsty

Reflections on the Ethical Mission
of Libraries and Open Access

Matilde Fontanin, Paola Castellucci
University "La Sapienza", Rome

«Every day, enough data are being generated to fill all US libraries eight times over. [...] we shall have 8 zettabytes of data by 2015.»

Luciano Floridi, The Fourth Revolution, 2014

Data
revolution

ICT devices to navigate the ocean of data

«[...] but at the same time they are the sources of further data, which in turn require, or make possible, more ICTs. It is a self-reinforcing cycle and it would be unnatural not to feel overwhelmed.»

Luciano Floridi, The Fourth Revolution, 2014

Should
libraries try
and tame
data or will
machines
make them
redundant?

Norbert **Wiener** (1950): machines can carry out better and faster than humans repetitive tasks, but **creativity, ethics, empathy** and **imagination** are **human**

NESTA «**Creativity Vs Robots**» report (2015): creativity and imagination are **core skills** to be successful on the **job market**

David **Bawden** (2018): in **50 years' time** computer rooms will be outdated, not libraries

Unexpected
consequences
of an
expected
evolution

Hess – Olstrom:
science as «**commons**»

Harnad: knowledge is
«**written in the sky**»

Science needs
a free debate

OPEN ACCESS: science as a commons is available to **every** «curious mind» [BOAI]

Greco: advancement in science cannot happen without democracy (**scientific exodus**)

Libraries are
invited to ...

« [...] join us in the task of **removing the barriers to Open Access** and building a future in which **research and education** in every part of the world are that much more **free to flourish**»

Budapest Open Access Initiative, 2002

Librarians as mediators

«**Librarians** and other information workers **organize and present content** in a way that **allows an autonomous user to find the information s/he needs**. Librarians and other information workers help and support users in their information searching»

IFLA/FAIFE Code of Ethics for Librarians and other Information Workers, 2012

The mission of the digital library ...

« ... is to **give direct access to information resources**, both digital and non-digital, in a structured and authoritative manner **and thus to link information technology, education and culture** in contemporary library service [...] the **dissemination** of information enables **citizens** to participate in **life-long learning and education**.»

IFLA/UNESCO Manifesto for Digital Libraries, 2010

Bridging the digital divide

*«... is a key factor in **achieving** the **Millennium Development Goals** of the United Nations. **Access to information resources** and the means of communication supports health and education as much as cultural and economic development.»*

IFLA/UNESCO Manifesto for digital libraries, 2010

«Boring», but
with an historical
view

Peter Lor

Academic libraries
for repositories

Recognized

Libraries for
critical thinking

Not recognized

Warriors, allies or spectators: stakeholders' perception of the
role of libraries and librarians in the fake news phenomenon

Matilde Fontanin
University «La Sapienza»,
Rome, Italy

Henry Roth

Call it sleep

Paola Castellucci

Carte del nuovo mondo

Banche dati e Open Access

il Mulino Saggi

Libraries can help overcome the divide

Physical dimension

- connection and technical skills

Cognitive dimension

- Democracy is endangered by too little as well as by too much information (Marchionini)

Inclusion (special needs)

- W3C Consortium; IFLA Libraries Serving Persons with Print Disabilities Section

Findability issues

Tracking Open
Access resources

Researchers
vs. Laymen

Search engines

Free of
charge vs.
Open Access

Predatory
publishers

Networking
against illicit
behaviours

The huge mass of online information makes librarians more useful for distribution, curation, mediation

The Open Access Movement (OA) made great steps forward (BBB declarations)

Librarians and the OA movement share the commitment to grant direct access to information resources for the advancement of knowledge (IFLA Code of Ethics)

As advocates for OA, librarians get involved in the research process and become researchers themselves

Recapitulating

David, before the
kitchen sink,
«became aware
that this world had
been created
without thought of
him.»

Thank you for listening

Matilde Fontanin & Paola Castellucci

matilde.fontanin@uniroma1.it,
paola.castellucci@uniroma1.it

«Nasone», photo by **kajojak**

27 Sep 2009, Rome

<https://bit.ly/2QA46x1>

Licence: Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivs 2.0

Generic (CC BY-NC-ND 2.0)