Thinking About the Future: Trends, Signals, and Values for the Library of the Future

Miguel Figueroa
American Library Association
Center for the Future of Libraries
Basic Rules
4 Steps From Jane McGonigal

Collect signals from the future

Create personal foresight

Combine signals into forecasts

Play with the Future

Play with the Future
How do we think about the future?

“Foresight is thinking ahead to how trends, issues, and developments that can be observed in the present are likely to shape alternative futures

• What are the key forces that are shaping the future?
• What might be their possible outcomes?
• What implications could they have for the learning and actions that must happen in the present?”
Round 1: Changes
The year of TECHNICAL EDUCATION
The year of TECHNICAL EDUCATION
The future will be defined by leaders who understand the larger context in which they operate...Not by navel gazing.
Sharing Economy

Live there. Even if it's just for a night.
Round 2: Outcomes and Forecasts
CREATIVE PLACEMAKING
PROGRAMS
COLLECTIVE IMPACT
CONNECTED TOYS
Round 3: Personalize It
ACCESS
CIVIC COMMONS
CREATION & EXPRESSION
DEMOCRACY
DISCOVERY
DIVERSITY
EDUCATION
INTELLECTUAL FREEDOM
LITERACY
PLACE
PRESERVATION
PRIVACY
PUBLIC DISCOURSE
SERVICE
TRUST
“The power for people to influence their future is related to the quality of their vision.”

“The future is always a combination of what the world does and what people do about it.”

“Values can be used as a reality check... when people identify values they think are most important, we can ask them whether these values are reflected in the world they are creating.”
Round 4: Play
The signals for the future arrive as inbound change (change that happens to us), but we build our future through outbound change (change that we create ourselves).
“If we shape our vision around only what seems possible today, we surrender our opportunity to structure a really great life for ourselves. Big changes and compelling visions require some leaps of faith.”
Some Things to Remember
There are many futures, not just one.
The 21st Century is a terrible time to be a control freak.
It’s a Multi-Player Game
We have to become collaborators for the future

- Respect and integrate knowledge and practice across multiple disciplines into greater understanding and performance
- Generate new thinking that leaps over present problems and limitations
- Unify individual perspectives and strengths into collective intelligence
Thank You!!

Visit our website
www.ala.org/libraryofthefuture

Join our newsletter
http://tinyletter.com/libraryofthefuture

Share your thoughts
mfigueroa@ala.org