

OCLC Distinguished Seminar Series

26 October 2006

“To-morrow, and to-morrow, and to-morrow:”
the players on the curation stage

9:00-9:30 a.m.
Coffee & Pastries

9:30-10:30 a.m.
Presentation and Q&A

OCLC Online Computer
Library Center, Inc.
Smith Board Room
6565 Frantz Road
Dublin, OH 43017-3395

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*To-morrow, and to-morrow, and to-morrow,
Creeps in this petty pace from day to day,
To the last syllable of recorded time;
And all our yesterdays have lighted fools
The way to dusty death. Out, out, brief candle!
Life's but a walking shadow; a poor player,
That struts and frets his hour upon the stage,
And then is heard no more: it is a tale
Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury,
Signifying nothing.*

—William Shakespeare, *Macbeth*, Act V, scene v.

You are welcome to attend this presentation.

Regular attendees—please note the changed venue at OCLC.

Registering in advance allows us to plan sufficient refreshments and to alert you if for any reason the lecture needs to be rescheduled. Advance registration is encouraged, but not required.

Please RSVP by emailing Karen Disbrow at disbrowk@oclc.org or calling OCLC Research at (614) 764-6073 indicating your name, affiliation, and telephone number.

Curation of data (including text) is an increasing problem in the world we are moving into. You don't have to read the National Science Board's Long-lived Digital Data Collections report, or its follow-up chapters in the Cyber-infrastructure strategy to convince yourself of this.

A metaphoric reading of the Macbeth quote illustrates some of the problems. But there is a great deal of doubt about which “poor players” should own the problem!

Some of those willing to take it on do so without adequate thought, and some of those who perhaps should take it on feel it is too vast and too strange. Some believe that only domain experts can curate data (a plausible position), and conclude that therefore there needs to be a repository staffed by domain experts for every domain. Others believe that data emerges from and can only be maintained within an institutional context (the “Institutional Repository”). Some believe that sticking it on the web is enough! Some librarians don't care who looks after it, as long as it isn't them.

So who will strut and fret to ensure our precious data does last towards the last syllable of recorded time, and when needed, are not found to signify nothing?

Chris Rusbridge is Director of the Digital Curation Centre, funded by JISC and the e-Science Core Programme to provide support services, development and research in digital curation and preservation. This follows five years as Director of Information Services at Glasgow University. There his responsibilities included the library and archives, together with IT, MIS, and A/V services. For the previous five years, he was Programme Director of the JISC Electronic Libraries Programme (eLib), a major digital library R&D Programme. During his tenure at JISC, one of his major interests was preservation of digital materials, the subject of a set of JISC-funded studies, two major international preservation workshops in 1995 and 1999, held at Warwick, and two preservation projects, CEDARS and CAMILEON, in all of which he played a significant role.

Long-lived Digital Data Collections: Enabling Research and Education in the 21st Century:
<http://www.nsf.gov/pubs/2005/nsbo540/>

NSF's Cyberinfrastructure Vision for 21st Century Discovery: <http://www.nsf.gov/od/oci/ci-v7.pdf> (.pdf: 403 K/49 pp.)

Digital Curation Centre: <http://www.dcc.ac.uk/>

JISC (Joint Information Systems Committee): <http://www.jisc.ac.uk/>

e-Science Core Programme: <http://www.rcuk.ac.uk/escience/>

University of Edinburgh: <http://www.ed.ac.uk/>

Distinguished Seminar Series lectures are available online as PowerPoint and MP3 files shortly after the lecture at <http://www.oclc.org/research/dss/>. Additional information about the Distinguished Seminar Series can also be found there.

