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gained several insights from the first day of the Asian Pacific Specials, Health and Law Librarians Conference, *Creating our Future*. In his keynote address Barry Jones outlined priority areas for Australia's development:

- we must end the colonial model of economic dependence—exporting cheap raw materials and reimporting them as expensive manufactured products;
- we need to create an inventory of high value-added goods which sell on reputation;
- we need to encourage clustering, the interaction of industry groups;
- we need to create a career structure for scientists, technologists and engine industry;
- we have to rethink our concepts of comparative advantage and disadvantage;
- we have to grasp the significance of the information industry.

Every one of these can be applied directly to libraries. For example, when I reviewed the corporate libraries in the Department of Education in Queensland, it was clear that a new organisational structure was required. The existing network was fragile, with significant service gaps and service duplication. The challenge was to develop an organisational model which would meet the needs of a Department in the process of devolving operations and control, but which, by providing a sustainable organisational ecology, would be more robust than traditional networks. 'Clustering' was the solution.

Barry Jones also observed that we have come to accept top-down policy reform as the norm.

If Librarians are to be change agents, rather than victims, we must discard the idea that in every situation we need a leader to come

down off the mountain, explain the vision, and provide us with the checklist of commandments which will achieve success and happiness.

We have to realise that each one of us has total responsibility for achieving the moral purpose of libraries—creating a learning society. The individual librarian is a critical starting point. Leverage for change can be greater through the efforts of individuals. Each of us has more control than we tend to exercise over what we do, because it is always our own motives and skills that are at question. Each and every librarian must strive to be a change agent.

Shared vision is important but for it to be effective you must have something to share. If the vision is handed down from on high, the best one can hope for is compliance. Working on vision means examining and re-examining, and making explicit to ourselves why we became librarians. What difference are you trying to make, personally? Creating a vision forces us to take a stand for a preferred future. To articulate our vision of the future is to come out of the closet with our doubts about our organisation or our profession and the way it operates.

Personal purpose and vision are the starting agenda, but personal vision in librarianship is too often implicit and dormant. It is often expressed negatively (what people want to get rid of, or not see happen), or narrowly in terms of means (bigger budget).

As Barry Jones pointed out, we are in a strategic position, but we need to conceptualise our roles on a higher plane than we currently do.

Wendy Fortington gave us a sobering warning about how vulnerable special libraries can be, and

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demonstrated that even a horrendous experience can be a source of learning. The lesson which comes out of the BHP library closure is that, however much we think we understand the purpose of libraries, we have to demonstrate their utility in the language of the library users and funders.

Useful learning experiences are frequently unplanned and unforeseen. On the way out three of us decided that we could not spend the day at the Conrad without experiencing the Casino.

We walked into a busy place, where everywhere seemed to know what they were doing, where there were very few clues about what the purpose of the place was, and virtually no useful signage. All the 'pokies' appeared to take \$1 tokens. We wanted to play with something slightly cheaper, our total pot being our combined loose change. Eventually we found the change booth and were told that 20¢ machines were scattered through the 'collection'.

The first machine we found was literally a poker machine. None of us play poker. The directions were confusing and somehow we hit an unmarked button which resulted in a flashing sign which said, **Attendant Called**. After some time an attendant arrived. We explained that we hadn't a clue about what we were doing. The response was perfunctory—it was made pretty clear that (a) we were idiots and (b) she had more important things to attend to.

Our gaming machine literacy is certainly not concomitant with our needs, but despite that we didn't do too badly, so the whole experience ended up costing us 20¢ each, a bargain fee for a lesson in how our users, and funders, must feel on numerous occasions. ■