

Rebecca M. Lee. The Situation of the Bookstore and its Implications for Libraries. A Master's paper for the M.S. in L.S. degree. May, 2001. 41 pages. Advisor: David W. Carr.

The bookstore used to be a place where people would go to buy books. They would find what they wanted, buy the book, and go home. With the advent of the superstore ten years ago, the situation has changed and grown a great deal. Today, one can walk into a bookstore and see customers using their laptops in the café, taking notes from a book, attending a children's story hour, or reading a stack of magazines. Bookstores have changed from a place of commerce to a destination, becoming in some ways, competition for the library. Using content analysis, this study examines the literature of the last ten years for the trends in the bookstores and separates them into five major categories – physical space, programming, electronic services, store types, and services. Then the data was analyzed for patterns and themes, and implications for libraries were drawn from the results.

Headings:

Bookstores – Evaluation

Bookstores – Relations with libraries

THE SITUATION OF THE BOOKSTORE AND ITS IMPLICATIONS FOR LIBRARIES

by
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A Master's paper submitted to the faculty
of the School of Information and Library Science
of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of Master of Science in
Library Science.

Chapel Hill, North Carolina

May, 2001

Approved by:

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Introduction

It's 11 p.m., and the Barnes & Noble bookstore on Manhattan's Upper West Side is packed. Browsers are thronged around the selling floor and sprawled on window seats. Upstairs, in the café, people munch sandwiches and sip espresso while listening to a symphony. Kids wander into a minitheater to watch a puppet show. Kathleen Connors, a local resident, can't believe it. "Saturday night, and all these folks want to hang out here," she marvels. Welcome to the world of Barnes & Noble superstores, the fastest-growing trend in book retailing. (Bhargava 81)

The bookstore used to be a place where people would go to buy books. The booksellers were helpful, the selection could be small but excellent, and once people found what they wanted, they bought the book and went home. With the advent of the superstore ten years ago, the situation of the book industry and the bookstore has changed and grown a great deal. Today, one can walk into a bookstore and see customers using their laptops in the café, taking notes from a book, attending a children's story hour, or reading a stack of magazines. At the information desk customers often ask for more than just the title of a book – they want information. Many bookstores now have websites and more online bookstores pop up on the Internet every week. While some of these amenities were available before the 1990's, they were isolated instances.

During the past few years, librarians in particular have begun to pay close attention to changes in bookstores. Many activities they see taking place in bookstores are activities that have traditionally been the hallmark of the library – a place to study, the summer reading program for kids, and reference information. Should librarians consider the bookstores to be competition? Should the libraries consider copying services and programs from the bookstore in an effort to bring people to the library? Some have even gone as far as to ask if

the bookstore will take the place of the library. This investigation will look at how and why the bookstore has become more than just a place for commerce. Literature from the last ten years will be studied with the research method content analysis to find what the trends in the bookstore are and what they mean for the library.

Literature Review and Context

This literature review will discuss the existing literature on the views of bookstores from within the library community in order to provide an understanding of the context in which this study is conducted. Several issues and themes found in the literature will be explained and some conflicting opinions will be explored.

Three major questions and concerns about the situation of the bookstore and its relationship to the library emerged from a thorough examination of the library literature: 1. Do libraries have anything to fear from bookstores? 2. Should bookstores be considered competitors for users? 3. Should libraries be run like Borders or Barnes & Noble superstores?

There were several 'library vs. bookstore' themes and issues found in the literature that seemed to resonate strongly with librarians. These include size and nature of collection, purpose of venue, ambience, hours, service orientation, employee skills, impact of websites, events and programming, and organization systems. While librarians agreed on some of these topics, opinion was divided on other issues, and on some points there seemed to be a discrepancy in what was perceived to be the facts.

The *purpose of the venue* was clearly an area that librarians seemed to agree on: Libraries deal in information and bookstores sell books (Strickler 48). As Leonard Kniffel asked "Do you want to buy something or do you want know something? I was a customer at B&N and a patron at the library" (38).

Ambience was perhaps the most commonly discussed theme in the library literature. It was openly recognized that amenities like coffee and café's, comfortable chairs, ample public space, and music in bookstores not only made the customer feel at home, but encouraged them to linger on the first visit and then brought them back in as repeat customers (Coffman 40; Hicks 151). Valerie Feinman summed up the difference in bookstore and library ambience with this anecdote "On a miserable wet Sunday, we stepped into Barnes & Noble and it was jammed. All the seats were filled, the aisles were filled and people were milling around reading, talking, buying. The day before, I was in my local public library – which was empty, bleak in comparison and doesn't sell coffee. So where would one rather be?" (Library vs. 7).

Librarians also recognize the impact of the bookstore's *hours of operation*. Jack Alan Hicks puts it best when he says "Bookstores absolutely murder us in one area: the hours they are open; until 11:00 at night...and they are busiest when we are closed. My patrons ask me quite directly 'when are you going to be open like the bookstores?'" (152)

Most of the literature mentioned the issue of *marketing*. Many librarians felt that libraries were lacking in this area. They seemed to agree that not only were bookstores able to market books internally with attractive displays and promotional tools, but they also advertised their programs and services to the proper channels (Sannwald 209 ; Coffman 40; Hicks 152; Library vs. 7).

An issue that has only recently been covered in library literature is the impact of library *websites*, particularly in comparison with the bookstore's websites. Many library homepages offer only the most basic services, sometimes not even offering access to the online catalog. Bookstore websites have been offering many personalized and specialized services for some time now, but libraries are only just beginning to recognize the potential of

their website to serve their patrons at home and invite them into the library for further service (Library vs. 8; Griffiths 44).

Programming in bookstores was another area that librarians discussed. Steve Coffman observed "...bookstores now offer a calendar of book talks, book signings, discussion groups, demonstrations, and performances unrivaled by all but the largest urban libraries. They have even started imitating the most sacrosanct of all public library services: story time and summer reading programs" (40). Some people were not very happy with how the bookstores handled programming, including Jack Alan Hicks who complained "Some of the competition we get is a little underhanded. They schedule book reviews...on the same days the Deerfield Public Library does. They schedule children's programs on the same topic and the same day..." (152).

While the library community agrees on many of the issues related to bookstores and the library, there are some topics where there are several different points of view and there seems to be some discrepancy in the information informing these opinions. Among these topics are size and nature of selection, service, employee skills, and organization skills.

The *selection* available in bookstores was one area where opinions differed. Some people felt that superstores were misleading the public about how many books were actually available. For example, a librarian quoted in Library vs. Bookstores thought "People often cite the large number of books that the average superstore bookstore stocks, making it 'look like a library.' These numbers are often misleading. They may have access to these quantities but stock far fewer titles" (Library vs. 7). However, Steve Coffman disagrees "First, bookstores have a lot of books. Stuff 175,000 books into a store and it's hard *not* to look like a library. The average superstore now stocks anywhere from 150,000 titles or

more, and the number seems to grow steadily. . . .the typical Barnes & Noble now houses more books than 85% of all the public library systems in the United States” (Coffman 40).

Service was another issue that librarians disagreed about. Both Raymond and Hicks felt that bookstores couldn't even begin to compare to libraries— We beat the bookstores hands down on the quality of our service. Why? Because we work at it so hard, and we respect what we do” (Hicks 151). “Libraries offer the best customer service without a doubt” (Raymond 41). But in his article, “What I Learned Working in a Bookstore, Dave Strickler concluded “What bookstores can teach us is a real commitment to user service...with knowledgeable, friendly employees at all times...and the emphasis on personalized assistance, all could benefit libraries” (48).

There were also differing opinions found in the literature about the differences between *expertise* in bookstores and libraries. Many librarians felt that the difference in employee expertise was huge. But one young woman asserted “I am a LIS student and this semester I am taking Introduction to Reference and Information Services and have found that my experiences at Borders have given me quite an edge in this class. What you refer to as a librarian's ‘unique skills’ are not unique at all, but are many of the same skills that Borders trains all its new employees in and that I have honed through daily use” (Saxton qtd. in Library vs. 8).

Opinions were divided about *organization* and as well. These discussions in the literature usually focused on browsing and classification. Some felt “It is easier to find books in a bookshop because their shelf arrangements are more logical than ours: all of their computer

books will be in the same section, neatly ordered into operating systems, networking...”

(Fred Nesta qtd. in *Library vs.* 8). But many people agreed that the bookstore is “...cluttered with no real understanding that a classification scheme can make things possible to find. No one on the staff can ever find anything” (Hicks 153).

It appears from the literature that the librarian community is not too worried about bookstores yet. They are keeping track of the situation and seem to agree with Leonard Kniffel, editor for *American Libraries*, “My sense is that for bookstores to really threaten libraries they would have to send their staffs to library school. This works to our advantage. For libraries to learn from bookstores we need only go back to some of the niceties we seem to be abandoning: tasteful signs, cozy spots, elegance, dignity, and the human touch. And for heaven’s sake, what is wrong with drinking a cup of coffee?” (38).

Methodology

In order to answer the question of how and why the bookstore has become more than just a place of commerce, the research methods of literature review and content analysis were applied to collect data and draw conclusions.

Content analysis, also called document analysis, is an unobtrusive measure first brought into prominence by Klaus Krippendorff, Ole Holsti, Eugene Webb, and others. This method is based upon the idea that humans leave behind artifacts and texts, or trace measures, that have been created with a purpose in mind. These artifacts can be considered, through inference and analysis, to reveal something of human behavior and various aspects of society (Robson 270). Krippendorff has defined content analysis as “a research technique for making replicable and valid inferences from data to their context” (21). Although many unobtrusive measures are not widely used in social science investigation, the document as artifact has been found to be particularly effective in certain studies (Webb 5; Hoslti 2).

Content analysis begins with a research question to provide focus for the exploration of the data. Then a sampling strategy must be chosen in order to reduce the scope of the data to manageable proportions. In some cases, the number of relevant documents may be so small it is unnecessary to take a sample. The next step in the process is to define categories and recording units. Themes, individual words, and paragraphs are examples of recording units. It may be important to differentiate between data that is physically present in the text, manifest content, and data that is based on inference on the part of the coder, latent content (Holsti 12). The data must then be categorized for analysis. Finally, the data

is analyzed. Usually, this is done by relating variables from the content analysis to outside variables, although other more complex techniques can be used (Robson 275).

An advantage of content analysis is that it is an unobtrusive measure. Because there is no direct contact with the producer of the data, the behavior cannot be influenced by the inquiry. Another advantage is the permanent state of the data, which means it can be reanalyzed for replication studies. There are disadvantages to content analysis. Because the documents have been written for another purpose, bias and distortion can occur. It is important to remember the purpose of the document when interpreting the results of analysis. It is also very difficult to assess causal relationships in content analysis (Robson 280).

After the research question was developed, a stratified random sampling strategy was designed. Due to the amount of literature available on the topic of bookstores, it was considered necessary to devise a sample that would limit the literature to a manageable size. It was noted after an initial search in several indexes that relevant literature dealing with bookstores falls into three basic categories: Library and Bookseller, Business and Financial, and Current Issues and News. Initially, five periodicals from each category were chosen and it was decided that they would be searched from 1990 to the present using 'bookstore' as a keyword. However, these searches resulted in only 17 relevant documents and the sampling strategy was changed to a universal sample. To do this, a preliminary search of several pertinent electronic indexes and databases was conducted using the keyword 'bookstores'. This was done to establish the boundaries of the literature and to define standard terminology to be used for specific keyword searches. The final list of searches used consisted of:

- Bookstores
- Superstores AND Bookstores
- Chains AND Bookstores
- Trends AND Bookstores
- Libraries AND Bookstores
- Competition AND Bookstores
- Comfort AND Bookstores
- Ambience AND Bookstores
- Events AND Bookstores
- Online AND Bookstores
- Entertainment AND Bookstores

Searches were conducted in five electronic databases – Academic Search Elite, LISA (Library and Information Science Abstracts), ABI/Inform, Academic Universe, and Dow Jones Interactive. These five databases were chosen for their broad scope and full coverage of the library and bookstore literature. Each standardized keyword search was performed in each database for the time period of 1990 to the present. Abstracts from all resulting hits were studied for some relation to trends in bookstores. Articles for use in this study were chosen on the following criteria:

1. Items that were purely financial or economic were excluded.
2. Items where content did not agree with search terms were excluded.
3. Items with content related to virtual bookstores and focused on technical aspects were excluded.
4. Items with one or more coding units and any discussion of bookstore history in the abstract were included.
5. Items with any discussion of trends relating to any of the coding units were included.
6. Items with any mention of bookstores and libraries were included.

After the documents were selected, they were processed in two steps. First, they were prescreened to help develop a preliminary set of categories based on themes; and coding units based on themes and individual words. Coding units included hours, coffee, café, restaurant, chairs, tables, space, ambience, atmosphere, entertainment, information

desk, service(s), selection, material use, study space, program(s), event(s), children's programs, author talks, book talks, book clubs, Oprah, marketing, libraries, virtual bookstores, online bookstores, e-book(s), print-on-demand, chains, superstore(s), and independents. An example of coding units within context is "...the store I work in is open more than a **hundred hours** a week....In San Francisco, we are **open until midnight** Thursday through Saturday, in a section of the city without much night life" (Horvath Giants 43). Broad categories consist of physical space, services, programming, electronic services, and store type.

In the second step of processing, all documents were reread, applying coding units with a high degree of inference and selecting examples for inclusion in the data set. In the example just described, the first item is very specific, but the second item is high inference. After selections were made, the list of categories and coding units were refined to reflect the data. (See Table 1 for final categories and subcategories.) The data set was then analyzed for patterns and themes.

- PHYSICAL SPACE
 - Hours
 - Coffee/Café
 - Comfy Chairs/Tables
 - Space
 - Ambience
 - Entertainment
- PROGRAMMING
 - Events
 - Children's Programming
 - Book Signing/Author Talks
- ELECTRONIC SERVICES
 - Virtual Bookstores
 - E-Books
 - Print on Demand
- STORE TYPES
 - Superstore
 - Chains
 - Independents
- SERVICES
 - Information Desk
 - Service
 - Selection
 - Study Space
 - Material Use
 - Organization

Table 1. Categories

Presentation of Data

In the last ten years, bookstores have changed a great deal. They have become more than just a place of commerce by adding amenities, programming, and services. But until the 1960's, most bookstores were independently owned and operated. They provided excellent customer service by knowledgeable staff who loved books. Although their selection was usually small, they carried current books and classics, and often customized the inventory to suit their locale. They often had a longstanding history within their community and their focus was on the customer. These shops were usually located in the central business and shopping districts of towns (Raff 1043; Kean 24; Horvath Giants 39).

Bookstore chains dominated the bookselling market by the 1980's. These stores were most often sited in suburban and regional malls, and shopping centers. According to Danuta Kean, they became "the main option for both destination and impulse buyers" (24). The chain bookstores were conveniently located, had a greater selection than many independent bookstores, and emphasized good customer service. They also had better capabilities for ordering out-of-stock books. The bookstore chains such as B. Dalton and Waldenbooks were the precursors for the superstore chains Barnes and Noble and Borders, but today they are struggling along with the independents to keep their share of the market (Horvath Giants 40; Raff 1045; Kean 24).

Although there is some disagreement on when the superstore phenomenon began – Horvath says 1991 (Giants 40), Kean says late 1980's (24), and Raff suggests 1989 (1053), it is enough for the purpose of this investigation to focus on the last ten years of development

in the bookstore industry. Leonard Riggio of Barnes and Noble, and Robert F. DiRomualdo of Borders books were the main forces behind the growth of superstores. Convenient location, breadth of selection, ambience, good customer service, extensive programs, and deep discounts are all part of the superstore concept (Kean 24; Horvath Rise 21; Raff 1045).

In recent years, technology has had an impact on the bookselling industry. Amazon.com was the first to take advantage of the Internet and has become a huge success even though it has yet to turn a profit. Barnes and Noble quickly followed suit with its own website and today, even independents are developing sites on the Internet. E-books are development that has occurred in the last three years. While not a great success yet, the electronic book is a trend that is considered to have excellent potential for the future. Most recently, the bookselling industry has begun to look at print-on-demand as being the next innovation.

When we look systematically at trends as they are portrayed in the pertinent literature, we are able to document and describe twenty-two separate factors characterizing the change in bookstores in the last ten years. These factors have been organized into five separate data sets consisting of physical space, programming, electronic services, store types, and services.

Physical Space

The first category of data is physical space. This is perhaps the easiest characteristic of bookstore trends in the last ten years to recognize. Typical traits of this change in the physical space of bookstores are longer hours, coffee, cafés, and even restaurants, comfortable tables and chairs, plenty of space, a special ambience, and a source of entertainment.

Hours

In the late 1980's and early 1990's, bookstores began to stay open for more hours. The large superstore chains usually stay open from 9 a.m. to 11 p.m. Monday through Saturday and until 9 p.m. on Sunday's, while mall based chains are often open until 9 p.m. every day. Even the larger independents are staying open longer.

- “Superstores have also brought book buying customers some benefits they probably didn't know they wanted. In San Francisco, we are open until midnight Thursday to Saturday, in a section of the city without much night life” (Horvath Rise 21).
- “When Waterstones opened in George Street in 1985, we were told we were opening on the wrong side of the wrong street, and that no one wanted bookshops opened on Sundays or in the evenings” (Lennon Reaction 20).
- “In addition, store hours increased. Monday-through-Saturday hours of 9 a.m. to 11 p.m. and Sunday hours from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. were standard. In the Rittenhouse Square neighborhood, for example, this made the store the late-evening and lazy Sunday destination of choice” (Raff 1049).
- “She said that both she and her friends were impressed with B&N's book stock and found its hours of operation more convenient than those at the Bobst Library” (Feinberg 50).

Coffee/Café

While coffee has been long associated with books, it has only been in the last ten years that coffee has been widely available in bookstores. Café's offering light meals, snacks and specialty drinks have also become more common.

- “Customers may soon be able to sip a cappuccino while the book they want is made right there in the store. Borders Group will be the first bookseller to set up the new system, in which retailers to print high-quality paperbacks in their stores in about 15 minutes” (Hanover 170).

- “Coffee drinking is also catching on as an adjunct to book buying, another trend imported from the United States. The giant new Waterstone’s book superstore that opened in Glasgow last year has a full cafe and coffee stations on every floor. The company is planning ten similar superstores. The US chain Borders is opening a book superstore on Oxford Street this summer. The promise is that its cafe will serve the very latest in lattes” (Lennon London 36).
- “For the past several years, independent bookstore owners and their intellectual friends have been attacking Barnes & Noble, Borders and other superstores that sell coffee and atmosphere along with 100,000-plus titles. Critics paint dire scenarios of monopolies stamping out diversity and quirkiness” (Postrel 32).
- “Then there’s the coffee...Coffee is intended to generate traffic, not profit” (Horvath Rise 21).
- “And if you crave more than thought for food, you can peruse your book over cappuccino or a hearty sandwich at Oxford’s adjoining restaurant, Cup and Chaucer” (Atchison Curling 138).
- “The newer stores include ample seating room and cafes that serve Barnes & Noble coffee” (Bhargava 81).
- “Some books are to be tasted, others to be swallowed and some few to be chewed and digested,” Sir Francis Bacon recommended some 400 years ago. But unable to serve Shakespeare’s pages flambé, booksellers today are doing the next best thing with the great philosopher’s suggestion. As their customers nourish their minds with books, magazines and conversation, book retailers are keeping their patrons in the store longer by feeding them gourmet coffees, elaborate pastries and desserts, specialty sandwiches, and full meals” (Prewitt 32).
- ““It will have substantial Hawaiiana and magazine sections, and is adding a café to the location. We will have a café just outside the door; the land lord has agreed to a small seating area,’ said Melzack” (Farmanfarmaian 18).
- “The stores also began to incorporate coffee bars and café tables at which potential customers could read or simply sit and talk with friends” (Raff 1049).

Restaurant

A less common occurrence in the world of bookstores, but nonetheless occurring more frequently is the combination of bookstore and restaurant. Customers tend spend more time in the store if they have the opportunity to eat a full meal on the premises. ***

- “A trend is emerging -- one which I, an inveterate reader as well as restaurant fan, embrace as heartily as Wodehouse or Updike -- of bookstores offering a menu along with a fiction section. “We have food for thought, and good food for the body,” says Joyce Menskis, owner of the popular Tattered Cover Bookstore in Cherry Creek, outside of Denver. She’s added a new chapter to her bookstore resume: restaurateur” (Ruggless 11).
- As their customers nourish their minds with books, magazines and conversation, book retailers are keeping their patrons in the store longer by feeding them gourmet coffees, elaborate pastries and desserts, specialty sandwiches, and full meals” (Prewitt 32).

Comfy Chairs/Tables

At one time comfortable chairs were found only at independent bookstores. Today, tables and chairs, along with the welcoming, overstuffed, ‘comfy’ chairs can be found in every large bookstore in the country.

- “America still stocks plenty of new and used bookstores run by clerks with the minds of reference librarians, where shabby overstuffed chairs invite you to read to you heart’s content” (Atchison Curling 138)
- “The company also developed a distinctive, attractive, and inviting fixturing for the stores. Borders furnished the shelf areas with comfortable chairs for browsers as well as nooks for them to browse in” (Raff 1048).
- “Bookends, which moved into the smallest of the Honolulu Books Shops stores in Kailua, focuses on literature and poetry, and caters to a loyal bedroom community across the mountains of Honolulu. With a total investment of \$100,000 the owners installed new carpeting and lighting, jazzed up the kids section, tucked some comfy armchairs into the 1900-square-foot retail space and brought in a new computer system” (Farmanfarmaian 18.)

Space

Although the characteristic of ample space may not be as noticeable as some of the other traits in this category, it has been noted that ‘roominess’ is a recurring description of contemporary bookstores.

- “The newer stores include ample seating room and cafés that serve Barnes & Noble coffee” (Bhargava 81).
- “...and layout, furniture and fixturing designed to encourage such individuals to start reading books they might want to buy” (Raff 1048).
- “But it’s not entirely fair to say that superstores are the Big Bad Wolf of the industry. It’s impossible to overlook the positive changes they’ve effected: the roominess, the stay all day attitude, even -- some would say especially -- the coffee bars” (Peysner 73).

Ambience

Ambience was often discussed in the literature during the last ten years. The bookstore’s décor, background music, comfortable furnishings, ample space, and café’s all provide an atmosphere that customers find welcoming.

- “For the past several years, independent bookstore owners and their intellectual friends have been attacking Barnes & Noble, Borders and other superstores that sell coffee and atmosphere along with 100,000-plus titles. Critics paint dire scenarios of monopolies stamping out diversity and quirkiness” (Postrel 32).
- “These stores are big (25,000 square feet, typically), carry huge inventories (150,000-plus titles), discount heavily (20% to 30%), and sport amenities like armchairs, library tables, and coffee bars. They sponsor poetry readings and talks by authors. They stay open late. In some places they’ve become cultural oases: in others, they’re singles’ scenes” (Norton 50).
- “It’s just that I really enjoy walking into a Barnes & Noble, hearing the soothing background music, wandering around the shelves and the sale displays, stopping for a cappuccino, and browsing for a good book to read. The pressures of the world disappear, and I am happy” (Lovelace 168).

- “It’s 11 p.m., and the Barnes & Noble bookstore on Manhattan’s Upper West Side is packed. Browsers are thronged around the selling floor and sprawled on window sets. Upstairs, in the cafe, people munch sandwiches and sip espresso while listening to a symphony. Kids wander into a minitheater to watch a puppet show. Kathleen Connors, a local resident, can’t believe it. “Saturday night, and all these folks want to hang out here,” she marvels. “Welcome to the world of Barnes & Noble superstores, the fastest growing trend in book retailing” (Bhargava 81).
- “Riggio has dragged his industry kicking and screaming into the 1990s--and he has loved doing it. Between swigs of his double espresso, he gleefully recounts the changes--from deep discounts to Sunday hours to yes, even public rest rooms--that he foisted on a reluctant industry” (Dugan 109).
- “Riggio erected hundreds of huge, freestanding bookstores of 20,000 square feet or more that were meant as destinations. He opened on Sundays and created climate-controlled village squares with cappuccino, clowns, comfy armchairs, even cooking demonstrations. With plenty of gag books and trinkets, even people who were intimidated by traditional bookstores felt welcome” (Dugan 113).
- “But it’s not entirely fair to say that superstores are the Big Bad Wolf of the industry. It’s impossible to overlook the positive changes they’ve effected: the roominess, the stay all day attitude, even -- some would say especially -- the coffee bars. “You go into one of our stores at 10 a.m. on a Tuesday and you see 40 kids,” says Steve Riggio, an executive vice president of Barnes & Noble. “People are embracing these stores and expanding the market tremendously” (Peysner 73).
- “Bookends, which moved into the smallest of the Honolulu Books Shops stores in Kailua, focuses on literature and poetry, and caters to a loyal bedroom community across the mountains of Honolulu. With a total investment of \$100,000 the owners installed new carpeting and lighting, jazzed up the kids section, tucked some comfy armchairs into the 1900-square-foot retail space and brought in a new computer system” (Farmanfarmaian 18.)
- “The designers built bookcases over the existing alcoves, installed display units from Franklin and--in true deluxe-superstore fashion--added a cafe in the back and a cappuccino bar in the front...Sofas, chairs and reading lamps are scattered around the four-floor store to make ‘patrons’ feel at home” (Angel 28).

Entertainment

The characteristic of bookstores as entertainment can also be defined as ‘destination shopping.’ With all of the amenities, services, and programs offered, bookstores are inviting

customers to ‘stop and stay awhile’ or even to go to the store with a purpose other than commerce in mind i.e. to meet friends, attend a cultural program, or study.

- “Most of all, he made bookstores fun, turning them into modern village greens where people flock as much for the entertainment value as the huge selection. “He was the first retailer to understand that the store is a stage and that the retailing is great theater,” says Leonard Berry, director of the Center for Retailing Studies at Texas A&M University” (Dugan 109).
- “Riggio erected hundreds of huge, freestanding bookstores of 20,000 square feet or more that were meant as destinations. He opened on Sundays and created climate-controlled village squares with cappuccino, clowns, comfy armchairs, even cooking demonstrations. With plenty of gag books and trinkets, even people who were intimidated by traditional bookstores felt welcome” (Dugan 113).

Programming

Programming is the second category of data. Once the territory of libraries and independent bookstores, special events can be found in just about any large bookstore and many smaller stores. Programming is divided into three subcategories: special events, children’s programs and author talks.

Children’s Programming

Once a trademark of the public library, many bookstores are providing children’s programming. Weekly story times, special Saturday events, and summer reading programs are becoming as popular as the children’s section of books.

- “The same applies to readings, signings, performances and participatory happenings for children (the Barnes & Noble store in San Jose has a mini-stage for kids’ events; our Borders store has a small amphitheatre in our children’s department). All such amenities existed before the superstore came along, but in isolated instances. Now they are a chain-wide phenomenon” (Horvath Rise 21).

Events

Events such as concerts, cultural programs, art lectures, community events, and even cooking demonstrations are becoming part of a large bookstores monthly calendar. These events are often coordinated with a certain book as a marketing tool.

- “On top of that an, extensive in-store events programme should also spread the word. In the US, 74,000 events were held in Borders stores last year. These ranged from music stars Lyle Lovett and Sting singing in one shop to groups meeting to discuss how to write a travel journal in another” (Kean Borders 26).
- “Performance areas in which authors could make appearances and in which both they and local groups could give readings or concerts were set aside” (Raff 1049).
- “The Oxford Street shop already has a wide-ranging programme of events planned, including Friday night jazz, classical music on Sundays and children’s story reading on Saturday mornings” (Kean Borders 26).
- “They offered ancillary services, such as cafes, and ancillary activities, such as readings and discussion groups” (Raff 1054).
- “City Desk Books in Los Angeles (4763 York Blvd.) specializes in books by L.A. authors. It celebrated Raymond Chandler’s 100th birthday with a party and screening of *The Big Sleep*” (Atchison Curling 138).

Author Talks

One of the highlights of the bookstore’s monthly calendar are the author talks. Sometimes these will be well-known authors touring the country, but often bookstores will bring in local authors who are just beginning to be published. These events are hugely popular with the public and provide a great deal of publicity for the author.

- “They sponsor poetry readings and talks by authors. They stay open late. In some places they’ve become cultural oases: in others, they’re singles’ scenes” (Norton 50).

Electronic Services

The third category is electronic services, a trend that has appeared just in the last few years. Online bookstores appeared first, then e-books and most recently, print-on-demand services are being discussed as the next innovation in the book industry.

Virtual/Online Bookstores

Five years ago, the innovation and success of the virtual bookstore Amazon.com encouraged many bookstores to get into the 'dot.com' business. Today, online bookstores hold a substantial portion of the market share of the book selling industry and that share continues to rise.

- “One of the few successful businesses on the Internet is Amazon.com Books, which has a database of more than tm [ten million] titles” (Winslow_ 23).
- “Take the values independent booksellers celebrate: Diverse literary voices, personal service, support for unknown authors. Jeff Bezos is delivering those values-and just about any book printed in English-via the Web. His two-year old Seattle-Based company, Amazon.com, is the world’s largest bookstore, a store with a million titles and no inventory” (Postrel 32).
- “Selling books online was a neat concept. The nation’s leading bookstore is turning it into a cutthroat business. What’s a poor startup to do?” (Stross 248)
- “Anything Amazon.com can do on the Internet, so, too, can Barnes & Noble. “There was a mystique about how difficult it was to get started on the Web,” says Steven Riggio, chief operation officer of Barnes & Noble, “but it’s quickly fading” (Stross 248).
- “BookSense.com is the e-commerce component of Book Sense, the American Booksellers Association’s (ABA) integrated marketing program designed to raise consumer awareness about the value of shopping in independent bookstores. More than 1,200 bookstore locations participate in the Book Sense program. Through BookSense.com, each participating Book Sense store has its own co-branded Web site at its own URL, its own content, and a title database of more that 2 million books” (Book Sense 28).
- “Some may think Yahoo! Inc. settled for second-best when the Internet site recently announced a portal agreement with Barnes & Noble.com Inc. after an earlier agreement with top online book vendor Amazon.com Inc. cratered, but there are signs that bn.com could seriously challenge Amazon’s leadership in the next two

years” (Hahn 13).

- “A world without retail booksellers, devoted to their inventories, their customers and their craft, is hideous to contemplate,” Epstein writes, “but the inevitability of electronic technologies forces the issue.” He is right on both counts” (Yardley C02).
- “Competition among the retailers escalated earlier this year when Barnes & Noble Inc. opened its own online bookshop, sparking a fierce price war in an industry in which profits have been scarce” (Bianco 146).
- “The internet. Marketing online. Multimedia technologies. Difficult words to ignore these days. You can’t attend a regional or national bookseller meeting without hearing them...online bookstore on some computer network they’ve joined. These terms, and the concepts and actions behind them, are changing the face of bookselling today in many profound ways” (Farrington 24).

E-Books

E-books constitute a trend that is not yet developed to its greatest potential. Books are available to load onto an electronic device; however, to many readers, the hand-held device does not match up to a real book. More and more books are available to download electronically; but so far, the market has not expanded as predicted.

- “Traditional book publishers have had a tough time lately. In the face of rising competition from various ebook options, many have adapted to electronic publishing by choosing to partner with companies like netLibrary, Versaware, and others that offer digital-conversion services. They face competition for authors from companies like Xlibris and iUniverse, which provide self-publishing options. And as reported in this issue, retail Internet bookstore barnesandnoble.com... has just entered the digital publishing arena by announcing the creation of Barnes & Noble Digital, an electronic publishing imprint” (Hane [Barneandnoble.com Launches](#) 32).
- “Power players Barnes & Noble, Microsoft, and Gemstar International Group, Ltd. (owner of TV Guide and other movie, television, and music services) have decided that there is a future in e-books” (Peek 46, 48).
- “barnesandnoble.com...has announced the creation of Barnes & Noble Digital, an electronic publishing imprint that will create a direct link between authors and their readers, give authors a greater share of the income from their works, and lower retail prices in an effort to build the emerging e-book market” (Hane [E-Publishing](#) 33).

- “The acquisition set off alarm bells throughout the literary world. ‘Chain bookselling means best-selling books will be available everywhere, but it also means that they--and the tapes and the calendars--leave no room for the small-press edition of a minor novel or a university-press edition of an important scholarly work’ ” (Dugan 109).

Print on Demand

The newest trend in the book industry is the ability to print books on demand. At this time it is not available to the public, but the potential of this new technology is already generating excitement.

- “Customers may soon be able to sip a cappuccino while the book they want is made right there in the store. Borders Group will be the first bookseller to set up the new system, in which retailers to print high-quality paperbacks in their stores in about 15 minutes” (Hanover 170).
- “As was discussed in this space several times last summer, POD—print on demand—is clearly the future of book publishing: the printing and delivery of an actual book ordered by a customer through a Web site, or the delivery of an electronic book to be read on a personal computer or a portable electronic book. This system is so much cheaper and more efficient than the one we know now—author to publisher to printer to distributor to retailer to reader—that its eventual primacy seems assured, at least until something even cheaper and even more efficient comes along to replace it” (Yardley C02).

Store Type

The next category of data is store type. The different kinds of bookstores-- independents, chain stores, and the superstore--have all contributed and responded in different ways to the changes in the book industry in the last ten years. As the market for books continues to expand, each of these store types will adapt and innovate in order to survive.

Superstores

Superstores are the newest of the store type and have caused many changes to the market. The two most distinguishing characteristics are their floor space and the number of titles they carry. Today there are four large superstore chains: Borders, Crown Books, Barnes and Noble, and Books-A-Million.

- “All over America for the past several years--From big cities like Dallas and New York to smaller burghs like Omaha and Sacramento--the same tale is being told: One of those new book “superstores”--a Barnes & Noble or a Borders--opens for business, and shortly thereafter the small independent bookstores nearby vanish, one by one” (Norton 50).
- “Thus the first point to clarify: ‘superstores’ do not equal ‘chains.’ That huge, treasureable and *independent* reader-resource in Denver called The Tattered Cover is a superstore” (McCormack 27).
- “Here is the dark, usually unspoken secret the disinformation campaign would suppress: If forced to choose, the immense majority of America’s readers would prefer their local shop to be a superstore--if they knew the truth about superstores” (McCormack 27).

Chains

Chain bookstores are the precursors of the superstore. These types of stores are usually found in malls and do not have amenities such as coffee or special events.

Waldenbooks and B. Dalton are the two most well known chains. During the 1980’s, chains were driving the market, but with the advent of the superstore, they have been downsizing.

- “The acquisition [of B. Dalton] set off alarm bells throughout the literary world. “Chain bookselling means best-selling books will be available everywhere, but it also means that they – and the tapes and calendars – leave no room for the small-press edition of a minor novel or a university-press edition of an important scholarly work” (Dugan 112).

Independents

The traditional model of the bookstore is the independent. At one time, all bookstores were independent. Owned and operated by an individual or a small group, independents are valued for their excellent service, specialized selection, cultural atmosphere, and long-standing community orientation.

- “All over America for the past several years—From big cities like Dallas and New York to smaller burghs like Omaha and Sacramento—the same tale is being told: One of those new book “superstores”—a Barnes & Noble or a Borders—opens for business, and shortly thereafter the small independent bookstores nearby vanish, one by one” (Norton 50).
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- “As Barnes & Noble’s giant big-box stores sprang up in cities and suburbs across America, the local independent bookstores fell in droves. Membership in the ABA fell from 5,132 in 1991 to 4,047 today. In 1991, independents sold nearly a third of all books, and Barnes & Noble sold only 6%. Since then, Barnes & Noble’s share has more than doubled while the independents’ has fallen nearly by half” (Dugan 113).
- “It’s a battle that independent bookstores have all but lost. With their plight compounded by the surging growth of online booksellers like Amazon.com, hundreds of small stores have shuttered as their share of book sales declined from 32.5 percent in 1991 to 17.2 percent in 1997. ‘As things are,’ says Richard Howorth, who runs Square Books in Oxford, Mississippi, and is president of the American Booksellers Association, ‘independents are hanging by a thread’ ” (Bing 10).
- “Maybe it’s fear, maybe it’s even a hint of desperation, but the new competitive reality for small, independent bookstores has inspired a curious shift in hometown allegiances, not to mention a new level of cooperation among the stores themselves” (Pedersen Booksellers 22).

Services

The final data category is services, those value-added amenities available in the bookstore at no cost to the customer. These services consist of an information desk, excellent service, selection of books available, study space, materials use, and organization.

Information Desk

Many of the large bookstores now have an information desk where customers can ask questions. They are usually staffed by several people who have access to computers with the in-store inventory system. Queries range from very simple questions about authors or titles to complicated requests for information.

- “The new breed of store spends time and money training its staff to deliver customer service and implements the principle in specific concrete ways, such as information desks” (Horvath Rise 21).

Service

The service model of bookstores today often begins with “Hello, can I help you?” and ends with putting the book in the customer’s hand. Customer service is usually cheerful, often helpful, and sometimes very knowledgeable.

- “The two colossi of the business, Barnes & Noble and Borders Group, which was spun off by Kmart last year, are battling it out for market share. Both are attracting customers by offering an enormous choice of books: up to 175,000 titles in buildings the size of small factories. These book palaces have easy chairs, couches, even coffee bars, and employees are helpful. Some shops sell records and software. All have a children’s section” (Winslow 23).
- “We always say that it is assortment that brings people into the Borders environment and it is service that helps them navigate their way through it and brings them back” (Kean Borders 26).

Selection

One of the most visible changes in trends in bookstores over the last ten years is the number of titles available in the store. The number of available titles is increased even more by the ability to order just about anything through the store.

- “In fact, the very thing that makes the superstores attractive to readers is that they have such a bigger selection than small stores (which might stock 10,000 to 20,000 titles). While it’s true that small bookstores could always order these books for you—and today you can even buy them online—nowhere else can you actually see them, let alone curl up with them on a sofa” (Norton 50).
- “We always say that it is assortment that brings people into the Borders environment and it is service that helps them navigate their way through it and brings them back” (Kean Borders 26).
- “The notion that Barnes & Noble poses a threat to literature has dogged Riggio since he closed the B. Dalton deal, and he hotly disputes the charge. He argues that since his superstores carry a vastly greater selection—at 150,000, perhaps 10 times the titles in a small store—he’s increasing choice, not reducing it” (Dugan 114).
- “My local super carries 160,000 titles—that’s *titles*; the number of *books* is several times that. A typical SIB can carry 5% to 10% as many; a medium-sized bookstore carries between 20,000 and 50,000 *books*” (McCormack 27).

Material Use

It is becoming noticeable that many people go into bookstores, use the materials, and then leave without buying anything. This is seen most frequently in the magazine section but extends also to activities such as reading fiction, taking notes, and browsing through large coffee table books.

- “Clerks at the Tattered Cover (2955 E. First Ave.) have been known to hand pencil and paper to customers to copy information from books so they won’t have to buy them” (Atchison Curling 138).
- “His favorite Barnes & Noble, a 65,000-sq.-ft. store sprawled over four floors in Manhattan’s Union Square, could be an ad for the classless society. While a man in a

business suit lounges on a bench reading the latest Michael Crichton, a homeless German immigrant who calls herself Erika Yvonne sits on the floor, furiously copying from *Revolution of the Mind*, a biography of French surrealist poet Andre Breton. “At the library,” she says, “the air and lighting are bad, and they don’t have this nice music” (Dugan 109).

Study Space

It is a common sight in large bookstores today to see people seated around the store working on homework and using their laptops for various activities.

Organization

The organization and layout of bookstores is another aspect of services available. Books arranged for ease in browsing. Many large stores have maps of the floor plan so customers can find the general section they are looking for. Shelves are usually well marked and the books are arranged alphabetically by author.

Conclusions

A summary of this investigation can be divided into five different categories. The new bookstore can be seen as different in its physical space, programming, electronic services, store types and services. The category physical space describes the aesthetic and tangible aspects of the bookstore and can be subdivided as hours, coffee and café, comfy chairs and tables, ample space, ambience, and lastly entertainment.

Programming includes any activities held by the store ostensibly to draw people in for purposes other than book buying. Of course most of these cultural and social events are designed to promote books and eventually sell them. Programming consists of the subsections events, book signings and author talks, and children's programs.

The third category, electronic services, not only includes a bookstore's website but also consists of the newer trends of e-books and print-on-demand service. E-books cannot be called successful yet and print-on-demand has not been tested in a consumer setting, however, the potential for massive commercial success is there.

Store type is considered a major category because each type has had a significant impact on the book industry. Independents, chains and superstores have all started trends, adapted because of trends, and will continue to change and grow with the trends of the market.

The final category, services, covers trends that are not quite so tangible—added-value services like personalized customer service and regard for the customer that bring the

customer back again and again. Subdivisions of services are: the information desk, customer service, selection, study space, material use and organization.

While the success of the book retailing industry today results from a combination of factors, one of the strongest points is how well larger retailers have shaped their physical spaces to meet their customer's needs. It can be seen time after time in the literature that customers are attracted by the amenities that the large bookstores offer. The comfortable chairs, tables where one can spread out, the coffee and food available in the café, and the music playing in the background all contribute to make bookstores inviting. The extended hours also have played a role in the changing face of the bookstores. In many areas, the only place other than bars that is open after 9:00 p.m. is the local Borders or Barnes & Noble. The bookstore is no longer just a place of commerce; it has become a destination – a place for entertainment and relaxation, apart from book or information needs.

Another area where bookstores are strong is their websites. The convenience of choosing books from the privacy of one's own home and then having the books delivered to your door is very appealing. The customer reviews, portions of text available, and searching capabilities of the websites are also important factors in their success.

The services offered by bookstores play a substantial part in their overall appeal. The huge selection of books and the organization by subject area for easy browsing are both attractive to customers. The cheerful and knowledgeable help at the information desk is more than adequate for most customers' needs. The use of space and materials for study occurs at many large bookstores and has perhaps developed as a result of the bookstore's provision of ample space for customers. While it appears that many customers appreciate this somewhat unintentional service, the bookstore may eventually need to make a decision to encourage or discourage this use.

In general, the activities and events in bookstores seem fairly successful. However, the strength of a bookstore's programming often depends on the media coordinator's skills and ability to build connections. Even though large bookstores have the financial backing to put on excellent programs, they may not have the expertise for it. This is especially true in the children's section

Implications for Libraries

What do all of these changes in bookstores mean for libraries? Should the trends in the book industry mean anything at all?

It appears that librarians have been recognizing some of the trends in bookstores for a while. First and foremost in this seems to be the recognition of the physical space in bookstores. There has been much discussion of whether coffee (along with other food and drink) has a place in libraries. Many librarians also seem to feel that libraries do not compete very well in the hours of service they provide. Libraries have taken note of the competition there is in programs such as story time for children and author talks that bookstores are now offering. While most librarians feel that libraries still offer a much better quality of service, some aspects of customer service vs. reference service have been discussed. The selection of books available in bookstores has also been compared to the library collection and has usually been found lacking in organization and depth. It is also important to remember that a library collection is just that—a whole collection with an organic quality because it has been carefully developed for the population and developed with permanence in mind—whereas a bookstore has a selection chosen for selling.

However, although the library community has recognized and discussed responses to some of these trends in the book industry, they often disagree on the issues, sometimes they seem misinformed, and occasionally one wonders if they have ever actually been in more than the café in their local superstore or if they are just operating on anecdotes and assumptions. Have they ever walked past the rows of new hardcovers and bestsellers into

the poetry section? Have they attended a children's story hour? Have they listened to the types of questions that are asked at the information desk? Librarians should play the role of learner when in the bookstore where they can observe another kind of information provision and perhaps make use of lessons learned in the setting of the bookstore.

There are other changes occurring in the book industry that librarians do not seem to be paying much attention to at this time. Very little has been said about the success of bookstore's websites and the potential that suggests for libraries. It does not appear in the literature that librarians are very concerned about e-books or the possibilities of the print-on-demand services.

Is it possible that librarians are underestimating the public's willingness to accept less depth for greater variety in the selection of books, only adequate customer service for the sake of convenience, and less expertise for the attraction of comfort and ambience? This is certainly what they are getting in the bookstores. Users might be willing to give up some of the quality of service and excellent organization for more comfort, ambience and a greater selection of newer books.

Librarians need to recognize more clearly that bookstores see them as competition. Why else would they be adding services such as the information desk, allowing the use of materials without purchase, and investing time and money in events like a summer reading program? It seems bookstores have recognized that the old stereotypes of librarians still exist and that these stereotypes may push away inexperienced users. These inexperienced users may find the bookstore, with its informality and welcoming atmosphere, more accessible.

Today's society is one of convenience, comfort, and economic means. Bookstores are usually situated in popular shopping districts so they are convenient to the customer.

Libraries are often located in inconvenient parts of town. The availability of books and the economic means to buy offers the customer ownership, which may bring them a sense of satisfaction and prestige. Could libraries come up with ways to provide the user with a sense of ownership?

Perhaps libraries should be paying more attention to what the user wants. The book industry depends a great deal on market research to direct their merchandising and advertisements. This is an area in which many libraries are lacking. While they don't have the huge marketing budget that a bookstore corporation has, with some work and some ingenuity, libraries could market themselves and their products and services to their community without making the library into a business.

There were three questions asked earlier in this paper: Are the bookstores competitors of the library? Should libraries fear the competition? Should libraries be run like bookstores? Libraries should certainly view the modern bookstore as competition. As the information culture in this day and age changes with the increasing attention on technology, as more and more information becomes available on the Internet and as bookstores continue to adapt to this culture – yes, the library should consider the bookstore as competition. However, as awareness and understanding of technology grows and librarians come to grips with the changes in the information culture, they will know that if they want to survive, they will need to change. But should they run their libraries like bookstores? There are some trends in which the bookstore shows strength, but it would seem possible that libraries can learn from these and adapt them to their own uses, while still keeping the purpose and mission of the library uncompromised

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