Why you might care what I had for breakfast

lessons learned in
the social tech
salt mines

Jessamyn West

<librarian.net/talks/nhla10>
04nov10
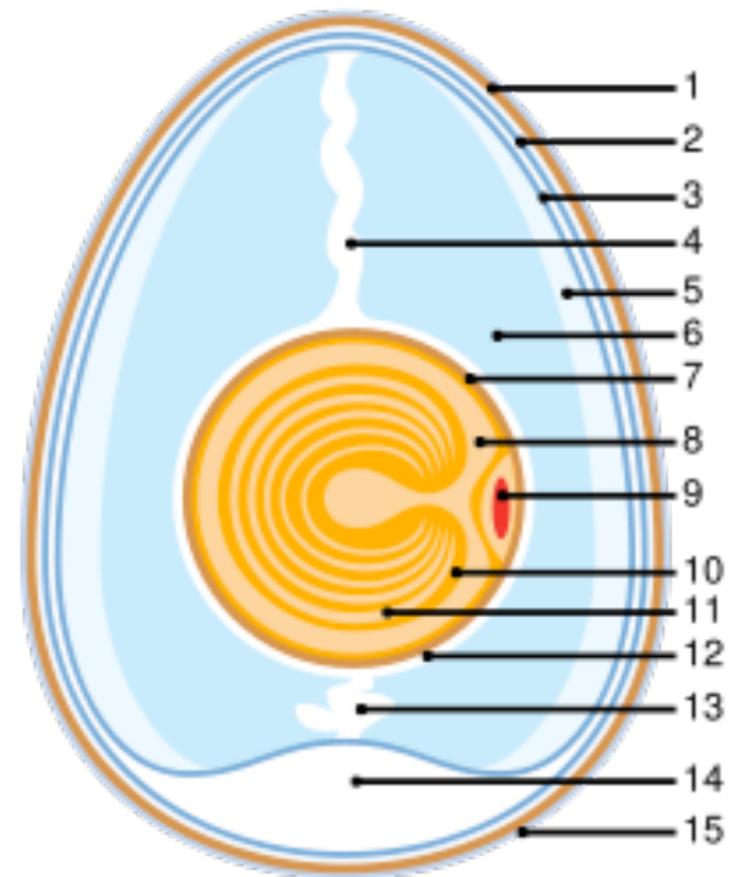
So I was asked to talk today about "a day in the life of me" and/or rural librarianship stuff. I've been doing a lot of travelling and talking to a lot of people lately, and these are the things that have been on my mind. That might be useful things for other people to be thinking about.

I am not really a librarian

or am I?

FA 2.55 (1) 1895

Brochure series of architectural

illustration

DATE | ISSUED TO

NOT TO LEAVE LIBRARY

NOT TO LEAVE LI

FA 2.55 (1) 1895
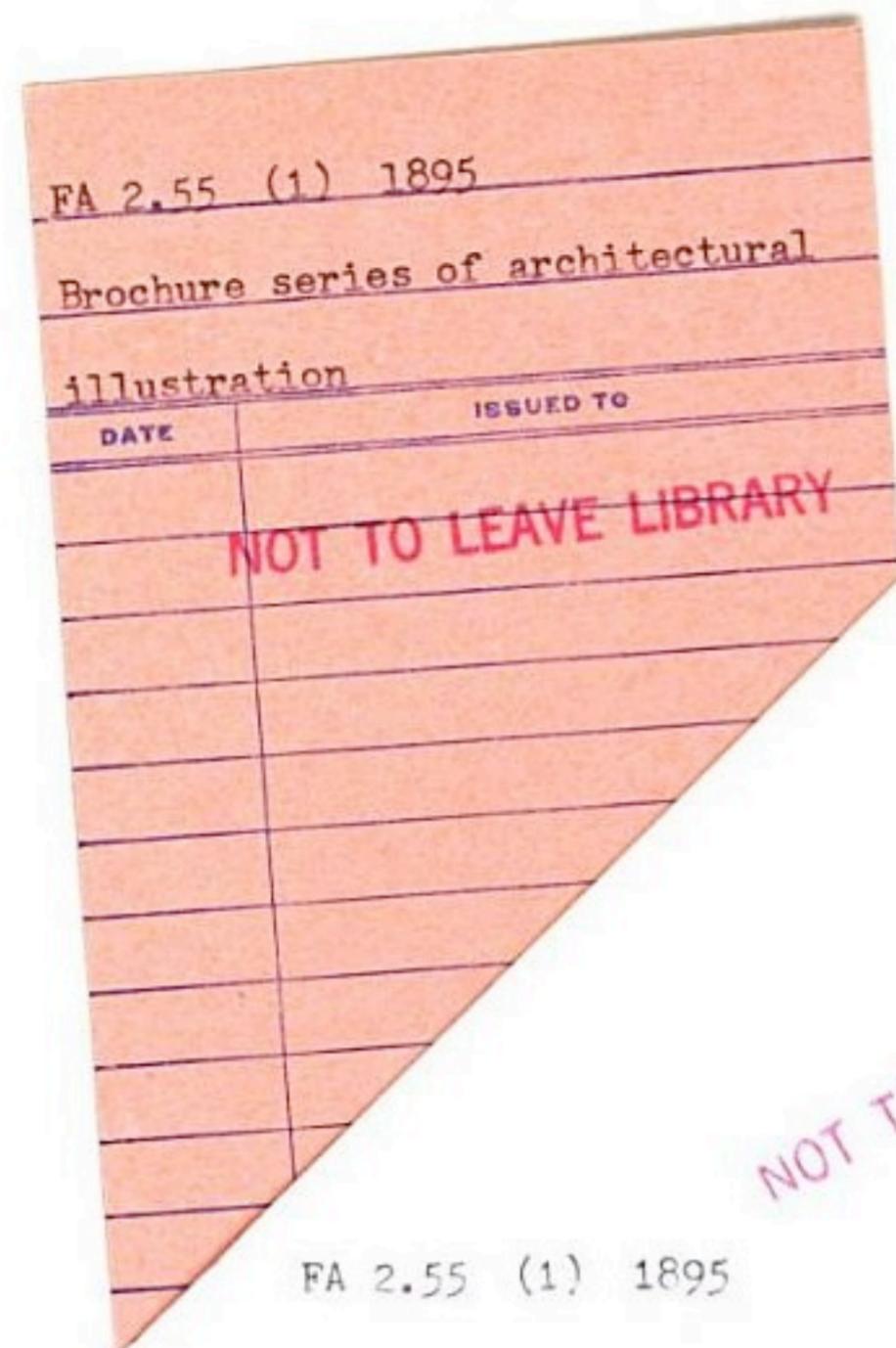
First off, I have an MLib from UW and I've done various library jobs, but really my main love is working with computers and this is not enough for a library job in Northern New England, so I do a lot of technology instruction. I live in Randolph VT, I mostly work at the vocational high school staffing a drop-in time and teaching adult ed classes at night. I teach someone to use a mouse once or twice a month. It's a balance, if I lived someplace more urban, I'd have lots of computer/library work.

My last regular library job: I did about 85% of an automation project at the Tunbridge Library and we got to the "okay now here is your part" part of it and I waited and waited and it never happened. I stepped down from the project in December 2009 and it's still not done.
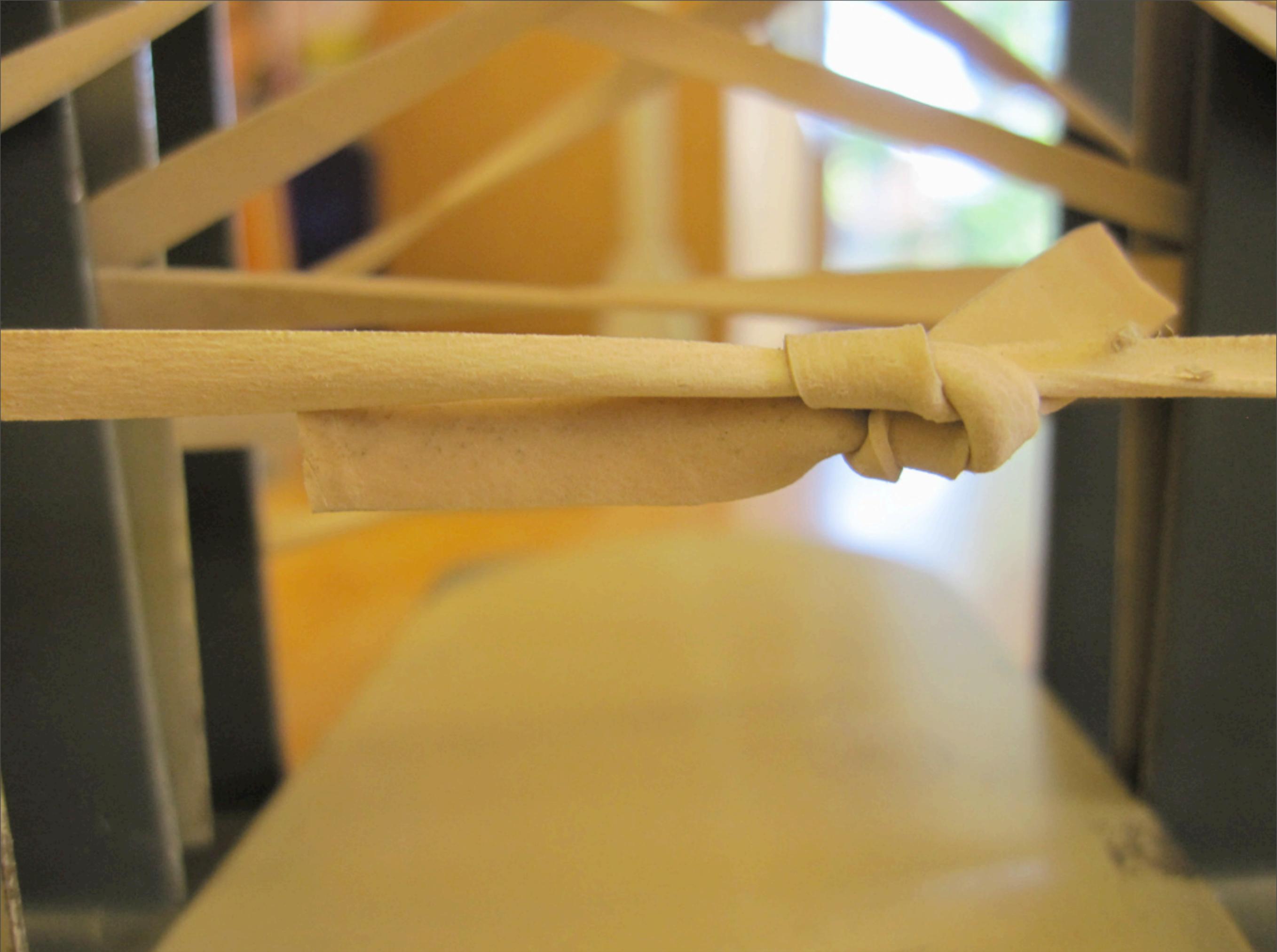
I fill in at the Kimball Public Library in Randolph where I make $8/hour. One of the last times I was there, they gave me the job of wrapping rubber bands around bookends to hold signs for the booksale. No big deal, we all pitch in. I noticed this rubber band...

*Meta**Filter***

MetaFilter   AskMeFi   Projects   Music   Jobs   Podcast   IRL   MetaTalk   Admin

Tuesday, November 2, 2010 12:42 PM

Home   FAQ   About   Archives   Tags   Popular   Search   Random
New Post   My Profile   Preferences   Recent Activity   Favorites

Recent Posts | My Favorites | Popular Favorites | My Comments | Recent Comments

15 links and 691 comments posted since your last visit

November 2

An Open Letter to Mark Gatiss A personal reaction to **the horror aficionado's recent series**. (**Watch here on iPlayer**.) [**more inside**]
posted by **mippy** at 12:38 PM - **0 comments** - **Post a Comment** +

Seasonal Poetry in Sanskrit : The blog Sanskrit Literature has been running an excellent series on plants that appear in sanskrit poetry. Some examples : **Jasmine** (malati), **Lotuses and Water Lilies, Mango.**
posted by **dhruva** at 12:03 PM - **0 comments** - **Post a Comment** +

Super There Will Be Blood **in-game footage**. Bonus: Zardoz the video game - **intro**.
posted by **fearfulsymmetry** at 12:01 PM - **5 comments** **5 new** +

It's Election Day in America, and as is so often the case in this **fickle** land, the results of the 2010 midterm elections are up in the air. Although President Obama's party is expected to suffer significant losses, **record numbers of districts remain competitive**, and even minute errors in polling could mean the difference between **a historic Republican landslide** and **an unexpectedly robust Democratic defense**. At stake are control of not just the Senate and House, but myriad state and local offices, many of which will play key roles in the dynamics of the 2012 presidential race -- and, more subtly but no less crucially, the once-in-a-decade **congressional redistricting** process. Much uncertainty surrounds the behavior of the electorate -- how many will turn out, and how informed will they be? To help move those statistics in the right direction, look inside for voter guides, national and state fact checkers, and an assortment of other resources to keep tabs on as the results roll in. [**more inside**]
posted by **Rhaomi** at 11:45 AM - **43 comments** **43 new** +

Transgender Man Plays on Women's College Team. A guard for George Washington University's women's basketball team is a transgender man. **Kye Allums**, who was born female and has not undergone any hormone treatments, changed his name from Kay-Kay to Kye within the last year and was relieved not to lose his scholarship.

Contact Activity (hide):

Parasite Unseen posted **We All Scream for Ice Beer...** to Ask Metafilter. 26 minutes ago

dhruva posted **plants in sanskrit poetry** to MetaFilter. 38 minutes ago

MrMoonPie had a comment with 14 favorites in MetaFilter. 40 minutes ago

mareli posted **Poem about runners?** to Ask Metafilter. an hour ago

loquacious added **Curious Artificer** as a contact. 8 hours ago

spiderskull had a comment with 16 favorites in MetaFilter. 10 hours ago

spiderskull had a

Suffice to say I don't make ends meet with library work. Since 2004 I've also had one of those online jobs people covet so much. I am the COO or community manager for a group blog called MetaFilter.com We have more registered users than live in any one city in Vermont about 50,000.

*Meta*Filter *Admin*

<3 you are the smiling buddha

- EDIT MALL | CHARTS
- last 100 flags
- charts
- admin: activity, notes, labs
- post to sideblog, music challenge
- MeMail search

Pending: anon askmefi, projects

FAQ: Add a question | View submissions

[   ] userid search

[   ] username search

[   ] user email search

[   ] ipsearch

THINK SAFETY

0

days

since a
bannin'

flag hotspots (last 100)

2 mefi	97274	[x]	other
1 mefi	97254	[x]	breaks guidelines, other
1 mefi	97273	[x]	other
1 mefi	97264	[x]	other
1 mefi	97271	[x]	fantastic post, other
1 mefi_comment	3357530	[x]	offensive/sexism/racism
1 mefi_comment	3357508	[x]	noise
1 mefi_comment	3357500	[x]	noise
1 mefi_comment	3357438	[x]	offensive/sexism/racism
1 askmefi	169517	[x]	display error

good spots

3 mefi_comment	3356727	[x]	fantastic comment
3 mefi_comment	3356320	[x]	fantastic comment
2 mefi_comment	3355605	[x]	fantastic comment

Search [threads only ▾] for: [   ] [since day one ▾] [Search MetaFilter]

cf uptime: 1 day, 8 hours, 42 minutes.
main free: C: 23%, D: 84% | db free: C: 44%, D: 88%

I check in via a web interface and answer emails, fix people's comments, chime in on policy issues with my co-moderator and occasionally time people out or ban them. It's been a busy week this week. People love to talk about politics.

MetaFilter

Tuesday, November 02, 2010 11:47 AM

Home   FAQ   About   Archives   Tags   Popular   Search   Random
New Post   My Profile   Preferences   Recent Activity   Favorites

jessamyn's profile (website) ✎ edit profile [edit account]

[   ] search activity

Info
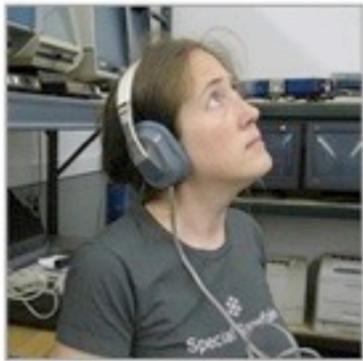
Name: jessamyn charity west
Email: jessamyn@gmail.com
Birthday: September 5
Location: vermont 🌐
Occupation: librarian superhero
Gender: thundersweater
IM:
Also On:
Joined: January 28, 2000

Contributions

MeFi: **84** posts 🔊, **2704** comments
MetaTalk: **63** posts 🔊, **10994** comments
Ask MeFi: **42** questions 🔊, **8050** answers
Music: **2** posts 🔊, **119** comments, **2** playlists
Projects: **2** posts, **44** comments, **83** votes
Jobs: **1** post
IRL: **1** post, **16** comments

View all activity

Favorites: **1431**
Favorited by others: **30606**

🏷 I was a **back tagging** superstar!

Social

Links to: **642** users
Linked by: **688** users

MeFi tags: **poetry** (4) **history** (3) **music** (3) **obit** (3)
obituary (3) **vermont** (3) **youtube** (3) **art** (2) **diy** (2)
libraries (2)

Ask MeFi tags: **software** (4) **travel** (4) **australia** (2)
blog (2) **email** (2) **excel** (2) **laptop** (2) **mac** (2)
vacation (2) **writing** (2)

Nearby users: **FauxScot** (2 miles) **Mblue** (2 miles)
terrapin (10 miles) ▌**turtlegirl** (10 miles) **deCadmus**
(21 miles) **SirStan** (22 miles) **meinvt** (23 miles)
GodricVT (23 miles) **rossmeissl** (24 miles) **VTscapes**
(25 miles) and **51 others**

About

What's the deal with your nickname? How did you get it? If your nickname is self-explanatory, then tell everyone when you first started using the internet, and what was the first thing that made you say "wow, this isn't just a place for freaks after all?" Was it a website? Was it an email from a long-lost friend? Go on, spill it.

We're sort of a social network in that people can "friend" each other and there's a heavy meetup component to what we do, so much so that we launched a part of the site called IRL earlier this year which is helpign people plan over 100 meetups per month. This is my profile page, it links to my profiles on other social networks, shows who I am linked to. I've met 450 users of the site. Not much as a percentage, but not bad. My feeling about social technology is that if it's not helping you do something in your "real life" [if you'll excuse my slang: "get laid or get paid" as the kids today say"] it's maybe not solving a problem for you. It's easy to hide from the offline world in the online world.

Finding obscure DVDs

According to this, it used to be on TV quite a lot so there is a decent chance that someone's got a recording of it which you might be able to find via tape traders or other less-legit-than-buying sources. Universal Pictures is the distributor and there's got to be some reason they didn't release it the same way they released The Monolith Monster which it used to double-bill with in 1957. Interesting question.... [**more**]

posted to Ask Metafilter by **jessamyn** at **9:50 PM** on October 27, 2010 [IP:**whois**|**search**] [**+**] ✓ marked best answer

Teenager Needs Gift That Isn't Boring

I'd suggest yeah, ipod touch, cool case, iTunes gift card and a GameStop gift card [for the systems he already owns] which pretty much sums up what the only teenager in my life wanted, other than paintball gear and cash.

posted to Ask Metafilter by **jessamyn** at **9:21 PM** on October 27, 2010 [IP:**whois**|**search**] [2 favorites **+**]

As a writer, what does it mean to be "on word count?"

I've always done about what Sidhedevil does. I write a regular column for a print magazine and they pretty much expect me to come in at about the word count they've asked for, consistently. Editing down a little bit is not a big deal but editing a lot really is a big deal. When I submit my column to them, I include the word count in the subject line. When I submitted my first column, they'd asked for 1200-1300 words and I delivered 1450-ish with the assumption they could edit it down and they... [**more**]

posted to Ask Metafilter by **jessamyn** at **5:19 PM** on October 27, 2010 [IP:**whois**|**search**] [**+**]

How do you travel?

I check out a few things beforehand like Wikimedia Commons photos of the place and Flickr photos of the place, see what looks interesting. I Google the name of the place and the words quirky/weird/unusual/strange/interesting and see what shows up. When I'm there I stay with people [if I can, via couchsurfing.com or airbnb.com] or someplace that's not a chain hotel and someplace preferably that is not in the chain hotel district. I try to take public transportation everywhere [not cabs if... [**more**]

posted to Ask Metafilter by **jessamyn** at **4:56 PM** on October 27, 2010 [IP:**whois**|**search**] [4 favorites **+**]

Ask MeFi: 42 questions 🔲, 8050 answers

But the main reason I've stuck around – besides it being nice to have a job at all – is because we have a QandA site, one of the best ones out there if I'm being immodest. Anyone who is a registered member [$5 one time fee, keeps the spammers out] can answer questions that anyone else asks. You can ask a question a week and we have a feature where people can ask anonymous questions. I've answered about 8000 questions (actually fewer because I'm also the mod so some of those numbers are "stop hollering at each other" comments) and you can click through and see all of my answers. I'd love it if my library could do that.

AskMe's Soliciting book recommendations

especially loved AskMes of the broadest sort

- universal books 🔗
- how did you find your favorite book? 🔗
- what single book is the best introduction to your field 🔗
- vacation reading, but not too light 🔗
- perfect non fiction books 🔗
- books every girl should read 🔗 (and the ultimate result of the question) 🔗
- books for boys 🔗
- great books 🔗 more great books 🔗
- a novel from every country 🔗
- fantastic books for 2007 🔗 for 2006 🔗
- all time favorites 🔗
- must reads 🔗
- a book everyone should read, and why 🔗

We have a wiki where people create Frequently Asked of MetaFilter lists. Here's a page from the wiki that shows off questions about what to read. It has a thousand booklists. One thousand.

My subset of the Library of Congress

October 1, 2010 10:32 PM [🔶] Subscribe

I'd like to put a personal library of around 200 books in order by **the Library of Congress Classification System**. I plan to take them off my shelves then scan all of their ISBNs for inclusion on **LibraryThing**... Then what? How do I get LCC numbers from ISBN numbers for ordering/labeling? How should I label them?

FWIW, I own an inkjet printer.
posted by **phrontist** to **computers & internet** (5 comments total) [edit] [IP:whois|search] [add to favorites] 9 users marked this as a favorite [!]

How old are your books, many include the Call Number on the verso page, the page after the title page with other cataloging information, and where you'd likely look for the ISBN in the first place.
posted by **dipolemoment** at **10:39 PM** on October 1 [edit] [x] [IP:whois|search] [+] [!]

LibraryThing will p   hing searches
hundreds of librar   erso is the
easiest place to fi   yourself, too.

As for labelling, I   protectors from
Brodart or a simila
posted by **wdenton** a

Oddly, the **export**
posted by **phrontist** a

You can also look at worldcat.org for the le

In one of the school libraries I worked at I

posted by 🔷 **momochan** at **6:45 AM** on October 2

LibraryThing puts books into your library by matching the provided info (like the ISBN) against a data source (amazon, libraries, the library of congress), grabbing all the fields from the record found in that data source (title, author, LCC, etc.) and then using those fields to make a LibraryThing record.

When you enter your books, use a reputable library (LoC, even!) as the data source (the *Search Where?* bit in the *Add Books* page). Amazon does not track LCC numbers, so if you use that as a source, your books will not have that info.

Once your books are in, complete with LCC, edit your view style to include LCC numbers, sort by LCC, and shelve accordingly.
posted by **zamboni** at **11:01 PM** on October 1 [edit] [x] [IP:whois|search] [+] [!]

You can also look at worldcat.org for the loc number, and I also have used openlibrary.org but they don't have the range of books that worldcat does.

In one of the school libraries I worked at I used a ptouch labeler for labeling my books. It was quick and easy.
posted by 🔷 **momochan** at **6:45 AM** on October 2 [edit] [x] [IP:whois|search] [+] [!]

We have a lot of librarians that interact there. Thanks to a script that works in conjunction with Greasemonkey you can tell who they are when you browse the site. This is a real "outside the box" sort of thing and it makes me happy to see so many librarians, over 200 librarians, library workers and library students. If you're interested, drop me an email, I'm always trying to sneak more librarians in. You have to put up with a lot of internet people, they're usually not any worse than your standard patron, but they have their own quirks.

But back to me and my stupid breakfast. For what it's worth the answer to the what I had for breakfast question is always COFFEE and I never talk about it on Twitter. So a little about my day. I get up, have coffee, turn on the computer and work on the website. When people ask me how much I work I usually say "Oh about 10–15 minutes per hour" and they say "oh that's not much" and then I say "every hour I'm awake" I may have a poor life/work balance but does it matter, if you love your job?

TO, MY, VERY, BEST
FRIEND, SINCERE
LY, MISS, JASMI
I WANT TO THAN

YOU FOR LETTING
ME TAKE THE
FREE COMPUTER
COURSE AT

My in-town job is at RTCC where it's "how to use a mouse" or "what is email" classes. I taught a "how to use facebook" class last week which went well but it got hampered because the students I had weren't so good at basic things like scrolling. Really if you're offline in 2010, you're offline for a reason. I'm sure you all know what many of those reasons are. I'm starting to think less in terms of how to teach people who haven't lerned yet and more about the social safety net in place for people who possibly can't learn. It keeps me up at night sometimes. Here is a note I got from a student. Wonderful man, he may have trouble ever really understanding something like PayPal. He falls victim to scams.

Malwarebytes' Anti-Malware

| Scanner | Protection | Update | Quarantine | Logs | Ignore List | Settings | More Tools | About |

Malwarebytes' Anti-Malware scanner welcome screen
Welcome to Malwarebytes' Anti-Malware scanner. Please select an option below. Before running a scan, close all running applications to ensure a prompt completion.

Select a scanning option below and then click 'Scan'.

⦿ Perform quick scan

The quick scan will use Malwarebytes' quick scanning technology to scan your system for the most common types of malware.

◯ Perform full scan

The full scan will analyze all hard drives specified by the user. This is the most thorough scan available by Malwarebytes' Anti-Malware.

Scan

Exit

The good news is, I am good with scams! Well, I see them for what they are and I can methodically teach people how to get rid of them. I had a person at drop-in time this week who had a virus. A virus that looked like a program that was saying her computer was infected. I went through the steps of fixing it [with her looking over my shoulder "What are you doing now?" and jumping every time the computer beeped or I had to restart.] It took about an hour. She asked me the very reasonable question "what would I have done if you weren't here?" I said that was a good question.

rural digitization project?

creating a culture that understands the tools.

WITHOUT A NET

LIBRARIANS BRIDGING THE DIGITAL DIVIDE

JESSAMYN C. WEST
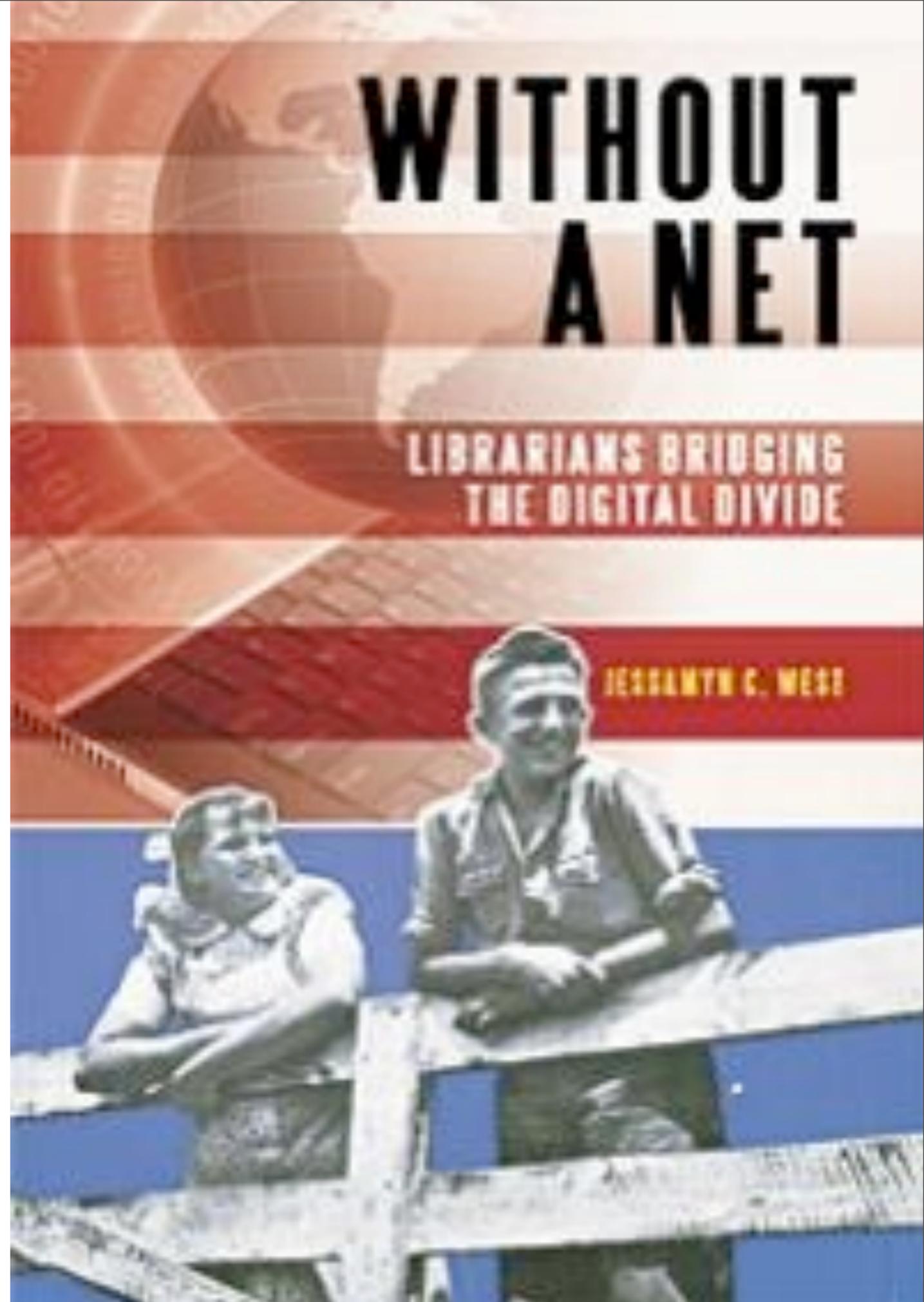
The really nefarious thing about the digital divide is how it's like poverty. You're not poor because you don't have any money. You're poor because you don't even know anyone who has money, you live in a poor culture, you never learn what you need to get out, and institutions exist that help keep you and your family poor and ignorant. With the digital divide, the nefarious part is that networked communities and concepts are not just growing, but growing and learning new things at a faster rate. So the people learning about the mouse this week, might be up to scrolling NEXT week, whereas we're getting new HTML standards that include geolocation and our computers upgrade our software weekly. I wrote a book about this but I'm very cognizant that it will be outdated by the time it's printed.
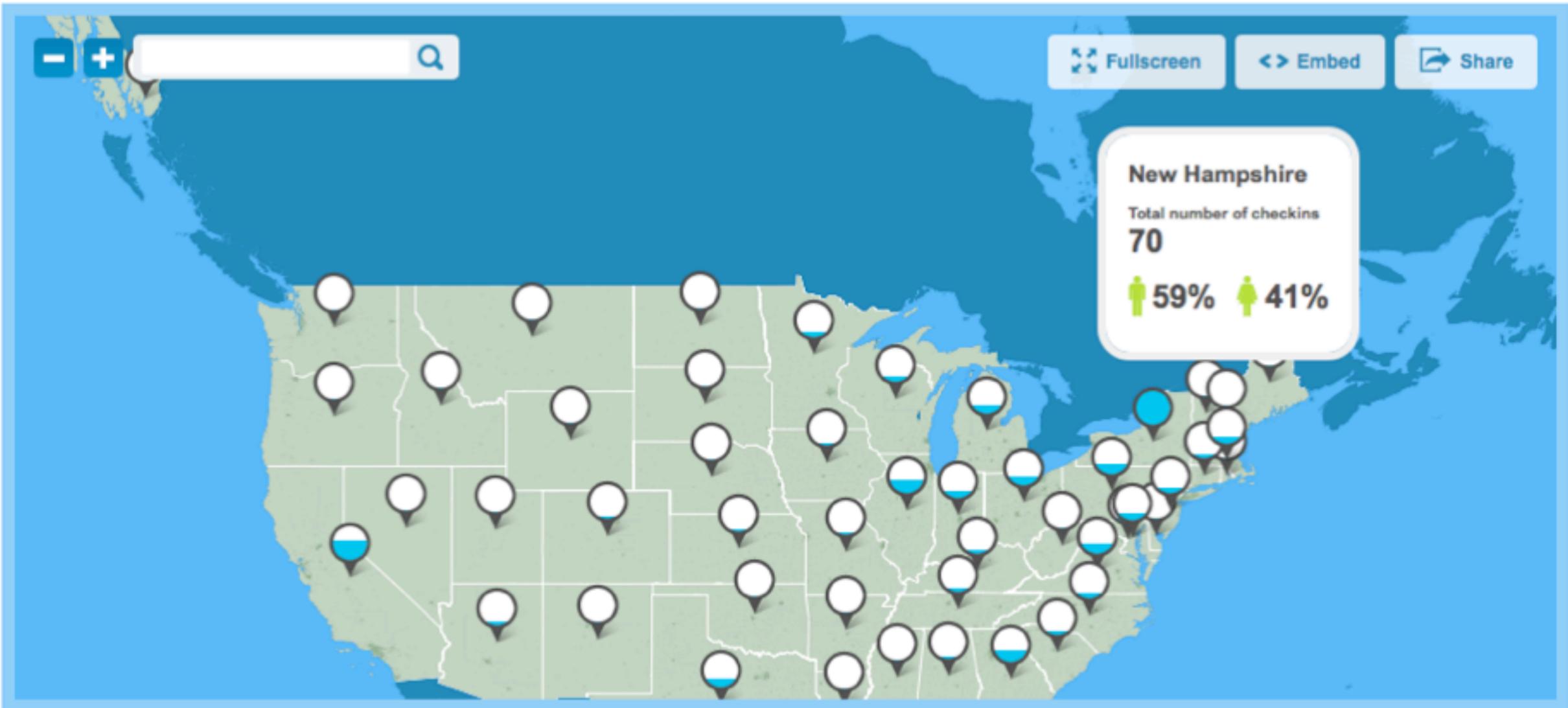
Back to the "why we need these tools" thing. I think about the reasons we nominally have libraries in the first place, because we're a democracy and we need an educated populace and people need places to inform themselves, free from people who desperately want to influence them to serve their own ends. So how about those elections? It was exciting to watch results come in... in other places besides Vermont. We're expecting to have to get the side judge results in the weekly paper. Actually I called someone yesterday and got them. This is FourSquare's election page. I would have killed for a page with VT results anywhere on the internet, even if it was someone's twitter stream.
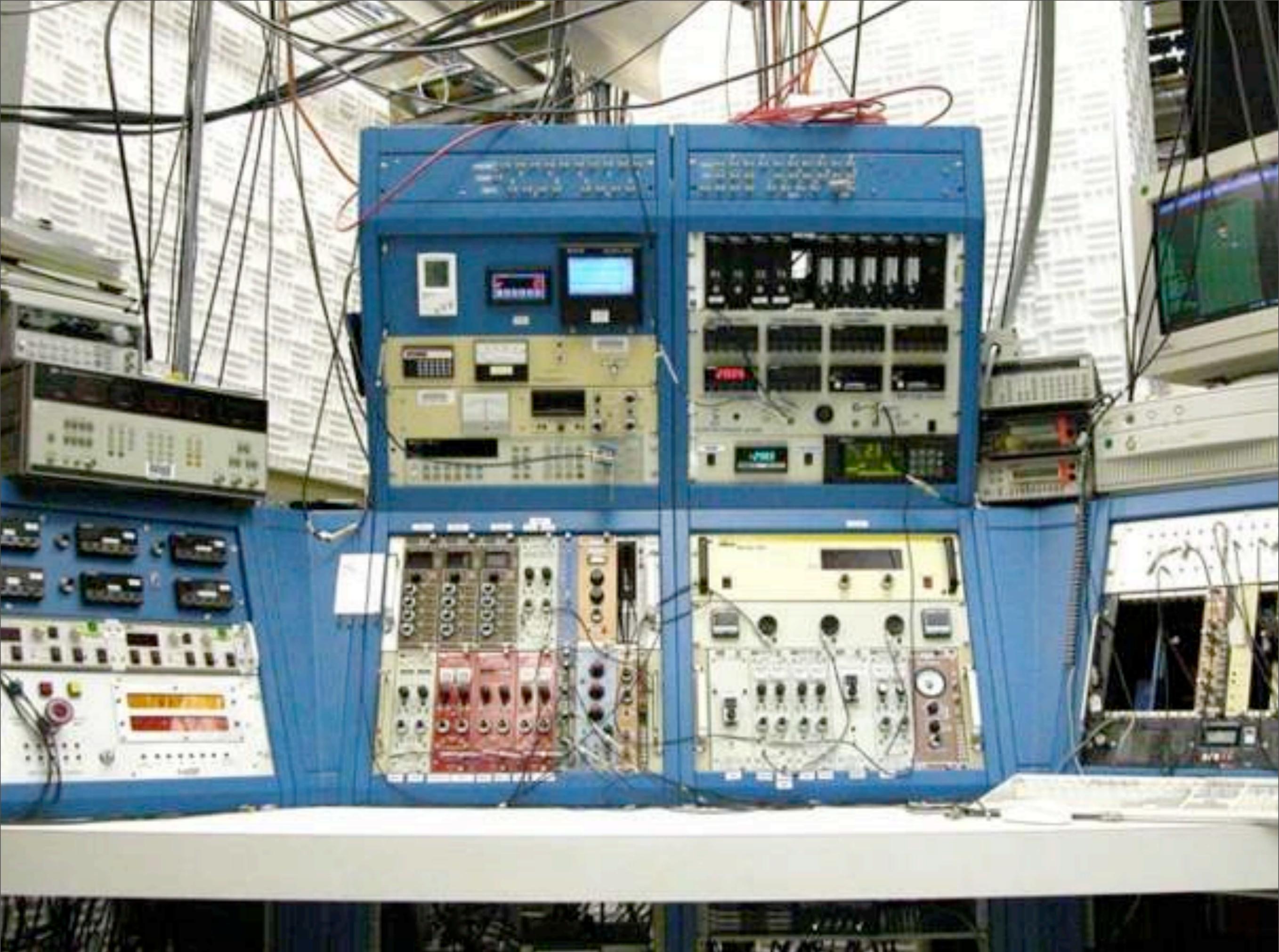
And so back to Twitter (which is just shorthand for all social software really, flavor of the month and all that) and the "why do I care what you have for breakfast?" crowd and I have a few answers for them. Answers as someone who stands solidly with one foot in the high tech beep beep beep world of "the future" and one foot firmly and happily in the digital divide, helping people make sense of their systems. We will be getting more technology, not less. People will be more confused, not less.

breakfast = smalltalk
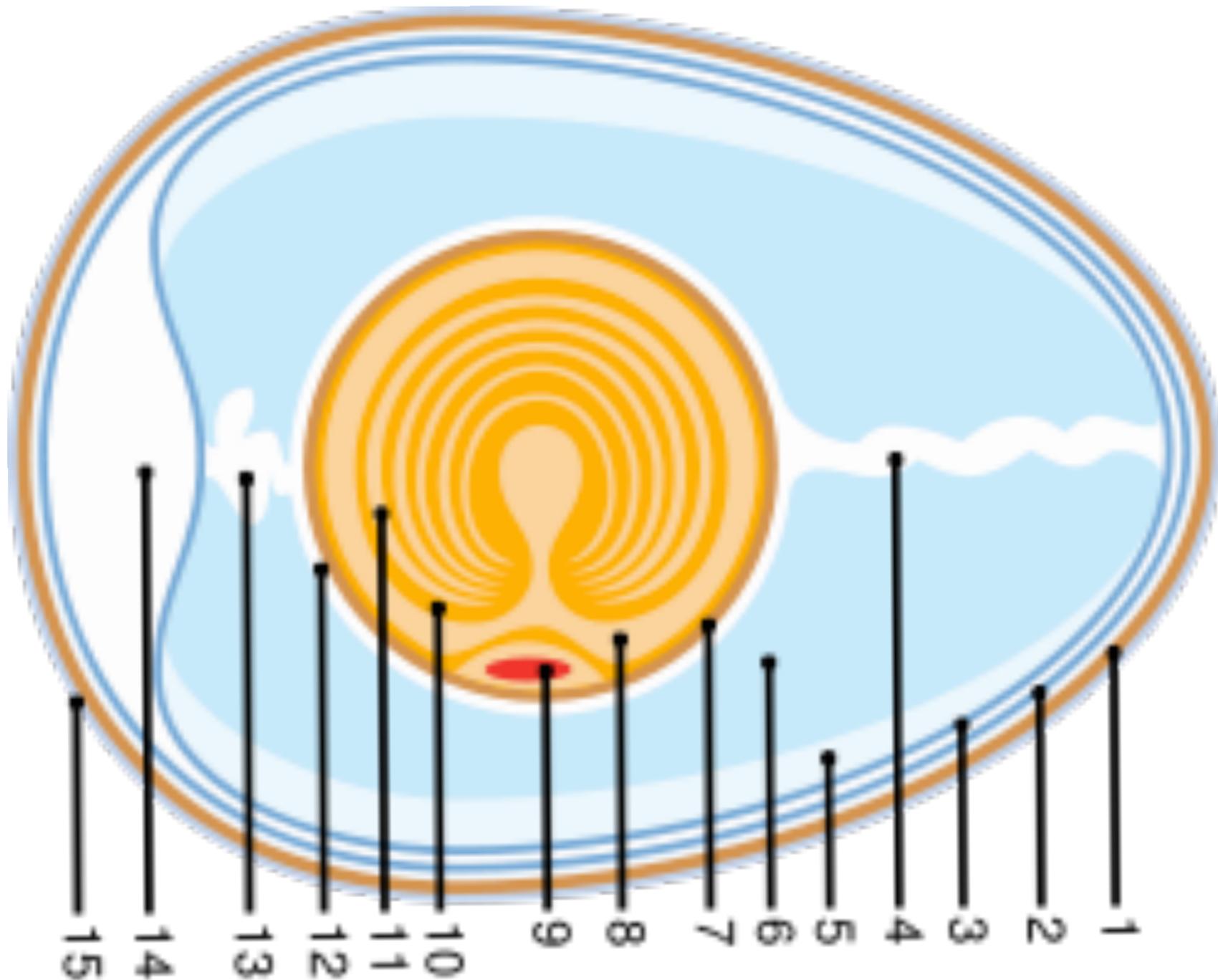
First, the breakfast thing. It's a shorthand way of saying smalltalk. Now you can make smalltalk with people online. This may not mean much if you're not involved in building community with those people, but maybe you are. In fact, you definitely are. When my local library asked me "should we be on twitter?" I could see that the response they were looking for was "no" and I tried to give them some compelling examples of why they should at least try it. We have unmet information needs in my community. I'd like to know the election results. I'd like to know if the library is closed because of a snowstorm without having to go there.

use economies of scale

MyBestFace — an OkCupid experiment

Not logged in

Have the world pick your best photo
Upload a few photos of yourself and we'll send you a detailed report showing you which is best.

Here's how it works

1. Upload some photos of yourself

2. Analyze pairs of other people

3. Get your detailed report & discover your best photo

Start here (it's awesome)

Choose a photo
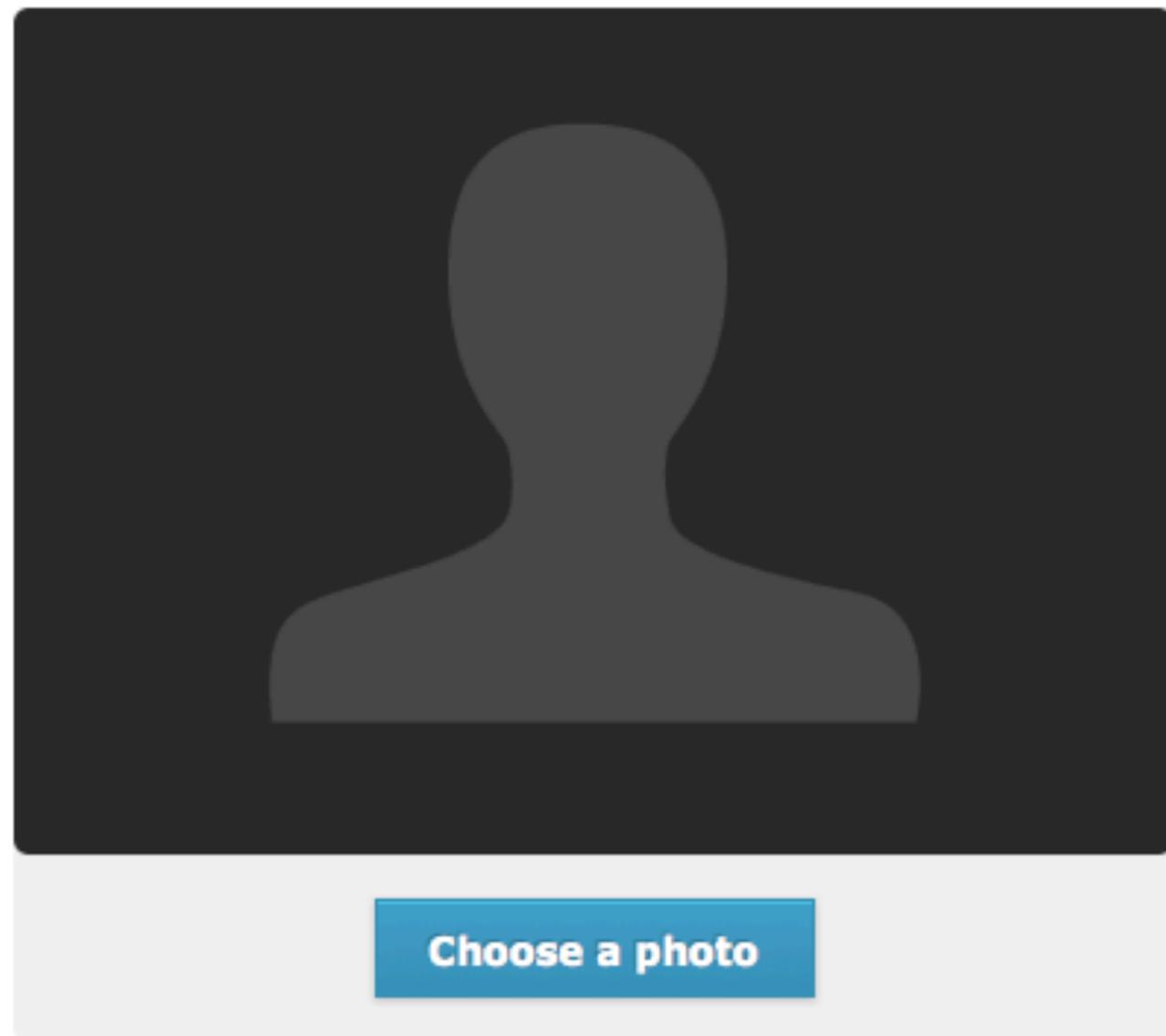
And there are more serious social utilities. I made a joke earlier about getting laid or getting paid. I'm not an online dater, but a lot of my friends have met people using dating sites combined with meetups or whatever. It's tough being single in rural america. What if you could focus group test your headshot to see how it works among the type of people you actually like? Actually, you can! I don't mean to be all "hey rocket jet pack!" but there are solutions to problems out there in the online world, but people need to be able to get there in order to explore. People are doing things using the hive mind that we've only dreamed about.

I am here

Every time I use my smartphone to keep myself from getting lost, or find a coupon online to save money, or follow the world series on twitter via my friends, I marvel at how this connectedness, both being on the internet and being linked up to other people, is so integral to how I interact nowadays, and so useful not just in a "I woke up and had some coffee, my hair looks weird" way.

tools: we have them

Lending Period

Tools in **BOLD** may be borrowed for three (3) days.

All others may be borrowed for seven (7) days.

Berkeley Public Library
Tool Lending Library
1901 Russell Street at MLK
www.berkeleypubliclibrary.org/tool
510-981-6101

LATE FEES

Fines vary from $1.00/day to $15.00 day
Check your due dates carefully!

Fines Per Day	Carpentry and Woodworking	Fines Per Day	Concrete and Masonry	Fines Per Day	Floor and Wall
$1	Awl	$15	**Cement Mixer, Electric**	$1	Caulking Gun
$2	Brace	$2	Cement Mixing Box	$2	Carpet Cutter
$1	Brace Bit	$1	Chisels,(brick,cold,bull point)	$2	Carpet Edge Trimmer
$1	Butt Hinge Marker	$2	Concrete Tamper (Jitterbug)	$5	**Carpet Knee Kicker**
$1	Cabinet Scraper	$15	**Concrete Vibrator**	$15	**Carpet Power Stretcher**
$1	Chalk Line	$15	**Demolition Hammer**	$5	Carpet Seam Iron
	Drills (see pwr tools)		**(30 lb Electric)**	$2	Carpet Seam Roller
$1	Draw Knife	$1	Float (Magnesium, Wood,	$2	Carpet Shear
$1	Flat Bar		Rubber)	$2	Carpet Stair Tool
$2	Hammers, Various		Grinder (see pwr tools)	$1	Drywall Mudknives, Various
$1	Level, Various Sizes	$1	Grout Float, Various	$1	Drywall Corner Knife
$2	Mallet, rubber	$5	House Jacks, Various	$1	Drywall Hand Sander
$1	Miter Box	$2	Mortar Hoe	$1	Drywall Pole Sander
$1	Nail Puller	$2	Mortar Mixing Box	$2	Drywall Mud Pan
$2	Nail Set	$15	**Rebar Cutter/Bender**	$5	**Drywall Screwgun**

So at the risk of an overliteral metaphor. I see this, this connectdness and this network as yet another tool that we can be using to do what we do already, fill unmet needs, help keep the connections going. Because even though I'm not, most days, working as a librarian...

I spent my day connecting people to information, and each other. Just like you. Thanks