Thank you, Kate, that was lovely and much nicer than I deserve.

So hey y'all, it's good to be back here in the Triangle where I grew up, I don't get down here enough. If you didn't already know that, it's true, I grew up down the road a ways in Raleigh, and I am a proud graduate of W.G. Enloe High School, class of 1990.

Be that as it may, I now teach at the information school up in Madison, Wisconsin. Disclaimer first: I don't teach e-resource or serials management and I've never actually done it, so if I say anything unusually fatuous about workflows or anything feel free to call me on it, but I DO teach about scholarly publishing and open access, seeing as how that's what I did before I started teaching.

And today I'm interested in the question I'm posing on this slide.
Because everybody in this ROOM, I'm guessing, has had That Conversation, that conversation where somebody hears that you’re a librarian, or for the students here, you’re going to be a librarian, and they’re all like, what do you DO exactly, it’s all on the Internet now, right?
And if you’re anything like me, your response to that is AHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHA...
And in this crowd I really don’t need to rehearse why not, we all know it already, right? Lots of stuff is still analog-only, what is digital may not be online, what’s online may not stay online, and what’s online, ESPECIALLY if it’s academic scholarship, is probably behind a paywall. Why it is so hard to drill these really very simple facts into the heads of people who have got Ph.Ds is something I just cannot understand… but I know you’ve all been there, I have too.
The theme of today’s gathering is discovery, so let’s discover and explore a new world, okay? I want us to pretend that scholarly output IS… universally... digitized or born digital. Universally online, universally open access. All of it, backfiles, current issues, whole nine yards. Let’s go completely bonkers and say yeah, monographs too, all open access ebooks.

What if? What’s that world like? What’s different about our work? What do we get to stop doing? What do we do with our time and our libraries’ money once we stop doing those things?

And I won’t lie to you, no pussyfooting around, this what-if world, this world without paywalls, is the world that I want and that I actively work toward. I think a world without e-journal and ebook paywalls is a world with a whole lot fewer pointless annoying hassles. It’s also a smarter world, a fairer world, and a better world — not just for our patrons, but for us librarians too, I really believe that.
We feel we are virtually **required to provide access**
to whatever researchers in our local community ask for while **restricting access from anyone outside**
that narrowly-defined community of users.

Instead of curators, we’re **personal shoppers**
who moonlight as **border guards**.


Because what’s the alternative? What is the status quo, really? I think Barbara Fister of Gustavus Adolphus College did a great job laying it out there in Inside Higher Ed: we have to buy what our patrons say they want, and it doesn’t matter who else might want it because it’s our job to keep them out of it. “Instead of curators,” says Barbara, “we’re personal shoppers who moonlight as border guards.”

Wow, ouch, I don’t know about you, but that’s not what I got into librarianship to do. Yet I can’t dispute this is what we’re being forced to be. The world I want gets us away from personal shopping and especially from border guarding. That’s a big part of why I want that world, and why I want you to want it.
But I’m aware of a lot of fear, uncertainty, and doubt around getting away from the personal-shopper-border-guard life toward a more open life. Hostility, even. And at least some of that hostility, I think, stems from a fear of job displacement: what will I do if the thing I do goes away? I LIKE what I do, I don’t want to give it up! And I don’t know how I fit in what comes next!

And I get that, I do, I even hear similar things from my students sometimes when I try to pry them away from unnecessarily narrow notions of what their careers can be. So I’m happy to say, I think a lot of the work that goes away in an all-open-access world is work that hardly anybody likes anyway. I also think there will still be PLENTY of work to do, and a lot of that work will be pretty familiar to serials folks. The rest, it’s totally learnable — if my students can do it, and they can and do, so can you!

Like I said, I don’t pussyfoot around this stuff: I also expect some arched backs and hissing from our illustrious sponsors today. I’m okay with that. Y’all get to decide which side of history you want be on, with this one. All I ask is that if you get mad at what I have to say, you blame me for it, not the organizers of this event. They didn’t tell me what to say, nor did they know in advance what I planned to say.
So. Starting our exploration off with selection and acquisition—selection is not and never has been my librarian specialty, but I’m well aware of the importance we ascribe to it in libraries. We like to be picky picky kitties, when we can get away with that. We like to scrutinize our food bowls, so to speak, very carefully and skeptically indeed.

And in the days when we could select, our selection enforced some market discipline on publishers and vendors. If a journal was worthless, libraries didn’t buy it and it died.
And the thing about the situation we’re currently in with e-resources is that we can’t be picky even when we want to! Not with journals, not with ebooks. In way too many cases, it’s the deal they offer or it’s nothing, and we all know those deals include a lot of scrap-metal garbage, that’s the whole POINT, ask any economist! Market discipline, what’s that? Bundling’s gotten rid of it.

You know, all the moral panic about so-called predatory open access journals publishing garbage, I want there to be a moral panic about the garbage we’re stuck buying in Big Deals that we’re paying a bazillion bucks a year for! How is sticking the entire academic library establishment with the bill for a bunch of scrap-metal dumpsters NOT a much worse problem than hoodwinking a few authors who ought to know better anyway?

Sorry, that’s a pet peeve of mine. Well, okay, not actually sorry. But moving on...
One of the things I’m pretty sure we’re not going to miss in an all-open-access world is this thing we keep having to do year after year after year — “hey, faculty, here’s what we don’t have the money in the couch cushions to buy any more, please don’t hurt us.” I mean, wow, does anybody think that’s a fun conversation? Much less all the log-searching and number-crunching and overlap-hunting and “hey, you said you were COUNTER compliant, what is this garbage spreadsheet you just sent us?” that’s part of the process. This isn’t selection, it’s anti-selection.
So, in an all-open-access world, we’ll still be selecting. What we’ll be selecting is what we add value to, what we teach, and what we promote, so yay for that. We can select what we add to our catalog or our discovery layer. We can select what we put in our LibGuides and what we teach about in classrooms. We can select what we decide to help preserve.
And we can also select the publishing efforts and even the publications we fund, when our money isn’t going to forty percent profit margins at multinational paywalled publishers. Everybody says hey, open access ain’t free, and you know what, that’s totally right! So in an all–open–access world we all get to decide again who deserves our money — which, by the way, is ANOTHER answer to the predatory–journals conundrum. If it’s predatory or garbage, we don’t fund it, recommend it, catalog it, teach it, or pay to preserve it, end of story.

Already we’re pretty spoiled for choice here. On the open–access journals side there’s the usual suspects, Public Library of Science and BioMedCentral and the Open Library of the Humanities and Collabra and their various imitators, BUT — and I love this, it makes me happy — we’re seeing real development on the open–access monograph side of the house too, and I can’t urge you strongly enough to consider supporting this, it’s really the only way that I see out of the monograph crisis that the serials crisis helped create. Knowledge Unlatched, Lever Press, Luminos from the University of California Press.

So there’s this horror scenario circulating where, like, if libraries don’t have to pay to get past paywalls we’ll have our whole materials budgets taken away from us, and I just don’t think that makes any sense! We’ll be paying into different kinds of buckets for different reasons than before, but we’ll still get to tell faculty we’re paying for the venues they publish in!
There’s one more thing I want to point out about redirecting our materials spending toward open, and it’s this: we finally, for the first time as far as I can tell, we have a selection choice that lets us spend our money on OURSELVES AND ONE ANOTHER, instead of funneling it straight to giant corporations and exploitative scholarly societies.

And I mean, I’m not bagging on scholarly societies, I get they’re important, I’m just saying, funding their activities is not and has never been a library mission, and they have gone a LONG way too far in assuming libraries owe them something. We’re not and have never been automatically in favor of bankrolling them by buying their journals at inflated prices, and no more we should be, either.

Lever Press is coming out of a consortium of small liberal-arts colleges, and it’s got heavy library and librarian involvement, it totally wouldn’t be happening without libraries. But no, it gets even better, their infrastructure is coming from the University of Michigan LIBRARIES. Knowledge Unlatched is a librarian project supported by libraries and librarians. I heard a statistic from a UK university-press conference last week, something like one in six university presses is now part of an academic library? So library-as-publisher means libraries can support LIBRARIES and our fellow LIBRARIANS with library materials money. And I kinda dig that.
That said, we ARE still going to have some communication work to do with faculty and administrators on our campuses. And I mean, it’s not that this is news, we’ve always had to have heart-to-hearts about what we can and can’t afford and why our money goes where it does. But I do think there’s a significant qualitative difference in the conversations we’ll have to have that we’ll need to be aware of, and it’s this: the easy-to-explain quid-pro-quo, insert coin get past paywall, doesn’t always work in an all-open-access world.

Now, sometimes it does. Some of us have open-access funds for author-side journal fees, and the quid-pro-quo exchange there is pretty clear. The conversation about subventions for humanities monographs is still going on, too; there isn’t as much library involvement in that as I’d like, but there is some. That conversation absolutely transfers to an open-access monograph world, and again, it’s easy to understand and value what the library is paying for.
But the bulk of the money, I think, has to be paid into organizations that aren’t specifically local. System-level investment, is what I’m saying here, without an obvious give–this–get–that sales exchange.

And these days, system-level investment without an obvious quid pro quo or a local tie can be a really hard sell to the powers that be. We don’t need to look any further than university presses for that, the local–campus disinvestment that has hurt them horribly. It’s really tempting to free-ride in tough budget times, I get that. And frankly, some librarians are doing exactly that, and some of the librarians who are doing that are probably in this room, and if I’m describing you, I’d love for you to leave this talk resolving to do better. Because we NEED to be better than that. If we just free-ride — I really believe this — we lose our shot at a better, fairer, less convoluted and expensive scholarly-communication system.

I don’t have a pat answer to this prisoner’s dilemma. I wish I did. I mean, we do have some system–level collaboration success stories in academic librarianship, things like LOCKSS and CLOCKSS, Portico and the Hathi Trust, state and regional consortia, collaborative collection development and last-copy policies… I’m betting some of you are ASERL members here, GO YOU, I totally love what y’all are doing with regional–level digital preservation. But flipping the switch to investing most of our money on the system level, instead of just bits and pieces of money around the edges — no lie, that’s going to be hard. I hope we start working on it, and how we’re going to communicate it, like, NOW.
And speaking of communication, there’s licensing and negotiation to talk about. Yeah, I see y’all making the same face as this cat. I hear you, I do.

So, I gotta tell y’all this story I heard from a friend of mine… there was a license up for renewal for a well-used resource, and the vendor insisted on two things in the new contract. First, that the library had to take on all legal liability for the actions of patrons with respect to the licensed material. I know, right? But no, no, hang on, it gets worse — second, if the library ever cancelled the resource, it then had to make sure that every single article ever downloaded since the beginning of the subscription was erased off every downloader’s computer.

With what, a MAGIC WAND? I don’t even know, people.

So yeah, I heard that negotiation went to cancellation, because the vendor just wouldn’t budge, would not step away from the stupid. There are some amazingly overreaching lawyers out there working for vendors, just utterly out of touch with reality, and you license negotiators who deal with them and their nonsense on a regular basis? Y’all are SAINTS and I bow before you.
Y'all have a million more licensing horror stories than I do, seeing as how you're in the business, but just to bring one out, interlibrary loan for the paywalled journal literature is a straight-up nightmare. It's a nightmare for us, it's a nightmare for our faculty and especially our students, it's a nightmare for everybody. And let's not lose sight of a big reason WHY it's a nightmare: the paywalled vendors put absolutely ridiculous strictures in content licenses on when ILL can be used and how it has to happen! Here, have a digital file, PRINT IT OUT and make the patron PHYSICALLY COME IN to the library to get it. Sure, that makes sense in twenty-sixteen.

And part of the reason vendors do this is they know THEY can get away with it scot-free, because everybody blames the stupid backward library for this nonsense. Like what they're requiring is our fault?

So yeah, when open access yanks this racket out from under the worst jerks, I will NOT be crying for them. Guessing you won't either.
More seriously, a license term I dearly hope we would never have to see again in an all-open world is a non-disclosure agreement. I hate these. They are loathsome. They can mean we can’t even be transparent about our budgets to the institutions that support us. For those of us in publicly-funded institutions, we have to hope people file sunshine-law requests just to be responsibly transparent, how ridiculous is that?

We and the work we do to make e-resources available are even MORE invisible to our patrons because of everything we’re not allowed to say. And of course N-D-As mean we can’t even gather together at events like this to figure out what’s a fair deal, not to mention what ISN’T.

And since I’ve mentioned market discipline, it’s obvious that N-D-As exist to avoid it. Again, if we can’t compare deals, we can’t negotiate fair ones! As much as researchers whine about author-side fees, there’s no way to get market discipline back except transparent costs and transparent pricing.

Goodbye, silence. In an open world, ain’t nobody pushing no big red button to shut librarians up.
And then there’s Aaron Swartz, who was hounded by the feds because he broke the terms of a content license he never signed. Who signed it? Some librarian at M–I–T, or, yeah, a signature authority when asked to by a librarian, but like that really makes that librarian sleep any better at night.

If you haven’t read Nancy Sims’s analysis “Library licensing and criminal law” in College and Research Libraries News, or even if you have, READ IT, it’s required reading for every serials librarian everywhere. I’ll go ahead and spoil it for you, though don’t let that stop you from reading it—in the eyes of the feds currently, we librarians are binding our PATRONS to the terms of the licenses we sign, so if those licenses have bad or easy–to–break terms in them, we are putting our patrons in significant personal legal danger.

Don’t know about you, but I will be happy when no librarians have to worry that if they sign the wrong thing some poor soul will end up on the wrong side of federal law enforcement. Bring on the all–open world where that’s not a burden we have to carry.
I wish I could TELL you all the lawyer nonsense would go away in an all-open-access world. I WISH, I really do!

Though yeah, a lot of it probably will, a lot of the ugly border-guard stuff Barbara Fister was talking about won’t be an issue any more. There should be a lot less worry over stuff like N–D As, I–L–L, electronic reserves, journal clubs, cross-institutional collaborations and who has access to what, and linking to or even posting articles in course-management systems. Creative Commons Attribution licenses, which are becoming fairly common in open-access contexts, just allow those things, no questions asked. (Non-commercial can be a problem, but I don’t want to get off-track here, so I’m noting it and moving on.) Anybody gonna miss working with the Copyright Clearance Center for every little thing? Yeah, didn’t think so.
Text-mining permissions — any of you dealing with that where you are? anybody had to tell text-miners to stop what they’re doing because they’re imperiling access across the entire campus? — text-mining should be much less of a difficulty too. I mean, bandwidth and capacity are still a thing, so text-miners will need not to be greedy jerks, but if we get the paywalls out of the way, technical problems are easy to handle by comparison.
So what are the new frontiers for license negotiators? Here’s one: research data. It’s becoming a first-order product of the research process, which means libraries need to be interested in it, and its legal status is murky as all get-out. Some of it’s copyrightable, some of it’s not, if you collaborate with a European you may have to worry about the sui generis database right, some research data gets into patent issues, campus policy around research data may or may not be clear, funder data policies are just starting to emerge, and just to add to the fun here, what faculty believe about data ownership is wrong nine times out of ten.

Yeah. Sorting all that out should keep y’all busy a while.
There’s another giant legal tangle brewing in higher education, and it touches on freedom of information as well as patron privacy, so I think it’s in our bailiwick: the problem of Big Data in education, what they’re calling “learning analytics” these days.

Let me make my stance clear on this: incessantly hunting down and recording and scrutinizing every least little behavior related to somebody’s intellectual development is NOT RIGHT. It’s intrusive, it’s unhelpful (and I say that as a classroom instructor), and the real intended beneficiaries here aren’t us or our faculty or our students, it’s sleazeball edtech startups and the usual outfits like Google and data brokers who don’t care about anything except selling one more ad. Somebody with some ethics, some grit, and some legal savvy has got to speak up about all this, and ride herd on campus IT and campus administrators and assessors and everybody else who’s all gung-ho let’s track all the things, and I don’t know who that’s gonna be if it’s not us librarians!
So, I didn’t think people were super-worried about the transferability of assessment skills. Talk about your things that ain’t goin’ away any time soon.
Even so, just in the interest of completeness, I’ll just say that there’s plenty more assessment work we can do for our libraries—assessing physical spaces including (yes) our cabinets and other storage, assessing our collections as a whole, assessing our websites, our programs, our projects and their outcomes, all that good stuff, so we can make our libraries better. And isn’t that an improvement over assessing journal usage just so we can figure out what to cancel next?
There’s another big assessment job that our institutions are starting to do, too, which is counting and measuring and assessing faculty outputs. (And just so you know, I REALLY wanted to put a photo of a cat in a litterbox on this page—faculty outputs, amirite?—but my better nature won out.) And faculty assessment is GIGANTICALLY POLITICAL, okay, and it’s completely in flux, you’ve all heard about the problems with journal impact factor as a faculty assessment measure, you’ve all heard about the rise of altmetrics. I want to urge us not to turn away from this just because it’s political, though, because I really think we can use our expertise to be faculty advocates.

As we know, the patterns of faculty output are highly variable, highly complex, and highly discipline-dependent. And as we know, journal impact factor is for JOURNALS, not AUTHORS, and even as a journal measure it’s got its issues. WE know this, we’re librarians, but I’ve seen a lamentable lack of understanding of these challenges among would-be assessors, and certainly among the non-library service providers that have sprung up to serve this need. I mean, I’m just waiting for the first lawsuit to fly, honestly, some of the faculty-assessment modalities I’m seeing are SO thoughtless and SO flawed.

Anyone who can cope with COUNTER can cope with basic bibliometrics. I really mean that. There’s opportunity here for us; we can certainly do better than what’s being done without us now.
So unsurprisingly, a lot of the work involved with e-resources has to do with the technology infrastructure around them, which as we all know is amazingly complicated, finicky, and fragile.
Is anybody really going to miss configuring and troubleshooting proxy servers and proxy access to resources? Really? Is there someone in this room so incredibly masochistic as to find that fun and rewarding? I mean, yeah, sense of triumph when you fix the ridiculous thing, but beyond that?

Yeah, so we can kiss proxy servers goodbye without giant amounts of regret, I'm thinking.
How about OpenURL and link resolvers? I mean, what a hack, right? I collided with OpenURL about a decade ago now, because there used to be a way to embed them in web pages to get picked up by citation managers like Zotero — if anybody’s curious, it was called COinS, Context Objects in Spans — but yeah, I worked with OpenURL and whoa, it’s amazingly horrible.

Anybody gonna mind if they never see an OpenURL again? I sure won’t. Anybody mind NOT paying for link-resolver software, never mind configuring it, never MIND hacking and tweaking it to make it halfway usable? Anyone? Anyone? Bueller? Yeah, no, I didn’t think so.
Anybody just viscerally attached to keeping serials knowledge bases up-to-date? How about E-R-M systems? Totally what serials librarians do for Friday night funsies, right? WOO, do we know how to party.

So what I’m saying is, a lot of the duct-tape-and-chicken-wire technology work library staff have to do around e-resources and ebooks isn’t really mission-driven, doesn’t make the world a better place, isn’t intrinsically worthwhile or even enjoyable — but it IS inordinately time-consuming, picky, and demanding work that we are forced to do because paywalls just don’t give us a choice if we want to make this stuff available to patrons at all. Lose the paywalls, lose this class of work.

And I say with Barbara Fister, good riddance to spending our valuable time and energy shoring up multinational companies’ profit paywalls. Good riddance to bad rubbish! Let it go, no regrets.

What’ll we do instead?
If keeping systems running is your bag, trust me, we got PLENTY of work for you. Just as one example, come on over here to one of my own specialties, digital preservation. Our systems are a HIDEOUS MESS where they even exist at all. And of course that hits electronic journals, CLOCKSS and Portico and the Directory of Open Access Journals don’t have anything like universal coverage yet, and the OTHER thing is, e-journals are just the tip of the iceberg of digital things we ought to be taking care of, so I can really get behind taking the effort that we’re putting into link resolvers and proxy servers and E-R-Ms and putting it toward preservation instead.
There's also the question of patron privacy in library information systems, e-resource systems hardly least. And I tell you, honestly, the more I find out about this, the surer I get that we're kind of waving our butts in the wind. Just by way of example, there's this one protocol called SIP2, stands for 3M Standard Interchange Protocol, and it was originally designed for purely library-internal use with self-checkout machines and like that, BUT... it got picked up by some ebook providers as (I think) a checkout mechanism, and unless steps are taken to secure it, it leaks lots of patron data — in the clear, not even encrypted — over the Internet. Just horrifying, darn near as bad as the Adobe Digital Editions scandal, and it's probably the tip of the proverbial iceberg.

And the fewer the paywalls, the fewer the gates, the less the D-R-M, the fewer the opportunities to track our patrons. Really that simple.
If you’re the kind of eagle-eyed inconsistency-spotter who likes nothing better than fixing bad serials data in library systems, good gravy, y’all, we got TONS of other data in dire need of fixing! I mean, none of us is living under a rock, so we’re all aware that a transition off MARC is starting, and one of the knock-on effects of that is that we’re confronting a lot of practices that were okay in the printed-library-card age but that just don’t work well on computers. That’s a lot of work to do right there.

And it’s not like all the born-digital metadata is doing real great either. I made a lot of it in my day, I know. Digital collections, institutional repositories, they’re not shrinking, y’all, and one of the big things we know about them, in part thanks to North Carolina State University Libraries research — thanks, N-C-S-U, I assign that to my students a lot — one thing we know is that metadata amount and metadata quality matter HUGELY to the discoverability of unique library materials on the open web.

So yeah, we have LOTS of data-cleanup and data-improvement work. I certainly don’t foresee running out of it during my career.
So I’ve painted a world for you, a world I want to live in, and I hope you feel a little more desire to live in it too than maybe you did coming in. And just so you know, I have a pretty big list of things in my brainstorming notes for this talk that didn’t manage to make it in. I mean it, I am not concerned; there is LOTS of library work for serials folks in an open-access world.

Still leaves a big question, though: is this world actually gonna happen? Because we can’t live in a fantasy.

And my answer is an unequivocal yes. I believe that for the serials literature specifically, universal open access will happen, or as near as makes no odds. I even think that’ll be in my lifetime, maybe before the end of my career. Monographs, that’s going to take longer, but chances are decent we’ll get there.
Because there's an elephant in this room, right? Along with all the cats — I'm sorry about that, I didn't mean to turn this into a cat presentation, it just kind of happened — there's a giant elephant stomping around among all the cats.

And I haven't even mentioned it yet, because it's a really divisive and argument-prone elephant and I didn't want to get sidetracked.
But a lot of you have been thinking about the elephant, I’m sure, so I’ll just name it: Sci-Hub. Sci-Hub, of dubious legality though it is, is the closest thing anybody’s got to a serials world without paywalls.

And you know what? People who use Sci-Hub LOVE it. Turns out a world without paywalls is pretty fast and convenient, who knew? And you know what’s more… speaking of discovery? Because Elsevier is trying to sue Sci-Hub out of existence, and because that’s made the higher-ed news, a lot more people have discovered Sci-Hub and are starting to use it. I’m guessing they’ll like it too. Why wouldn’t they?
Cat’s out of the bag on Sci-Hub. *pause* I admit that once I decided to do the cat thing I was aiming for this one.

Anyway, because of Sci-Hub, a universal open-access world suddenly appears possible where it didn’t before, for a lot of people. And there’s a real comparison for the discovery and access harm that paywalls do, which there hasn’t really been before.

And of course Sci-Hub isn’t the only open-access mover here, I’ve been pushing open access for over a decade and I’m only one among many, but I do think Sci-Hub is likely to turn out to be a massive change accelerator, just as the equally-dubiously-legal Napster was for digital music.

Something doesn’t have to be legal to jump-start systemic change.
But Sci-Hub or no Sci-Hub, we’re not going to get our all-open world immediately. And that means we’re going to be living betwixt-and-between for a while yet, which is not an easy place to live. So how do we navigate that? How do we invite the new world in while we’re still stuck with the old one?
Here is my suggested strategy for this. If I’ve mentioned something today as being something we won’t need in an all-open world, maybe push it down on the priority and effort list, ration the effort you’re putting into it. I’m not saying stop it right away, this stuff’s necessary for now. I AM saying let’s have winding it down and reallocating its resources in the back of our heads. Let’s do the outgoing stuff as quickly and cheaply as possible consonant with effectiveness and move on. Whenever something that’s on its way out can be outsourced at a reasonable price, do it. Outsource whatever’s outgoing.
But we need to keep whatever we see incoming in-house, safe and warm by the fire and well-tended by in-house library staff.

We have a history in libraries of missing opportunities that look obvious in hindsight. Web archiving, for example. Why is the non-library Internet Archive (which isn’t actually an archives either), why are they the biggest web archive? Why, for pity’s sake, are a lot of us outsourcing web archiving TO THE INTERNET ARCHIVE? Look, y’all, straight-up, we didn’t invest, they did, they win. And hey, as an educator I don’t have to care too much about that, I’m pretty much fine with one of my graduates working for the Internet Archive instead of for a library or archives —be weird if I weren’t, there is actually one person I’ve taught working there—but I don’t think Y’ALL should be fine with that.

Sure, nobody has a crystal ball. But some stuff’s obvious. Open access? Getting pretty obvious.

So. That’s my suggestion. Outsource what’s outgoing, wind it down whenever you can, but keep what’s incoming in-house.
There's one last mistake I want to caution you against, in my role as library educator, and I need you to please understand first that AS a library educator, I work for MY STUDENTS, not for libraries. My students are the boss of me, not you, so my job is getting them somewhere they're going to be useful AND HAPPY. Now, I know we've got students here from N-C Central and from U-N-C, so I ask y'all, we educators work for you, right? Right.

So here's what I have to say to librarians. DO NOT think that the way you keep what's incoming in–house is by hiring one of my new graduates to be your superhero, to swoop in wearing a big blue cape and save all y'all from having to learn about and respond to the big bad open access onslaught. That's kind of what a lot of my librarian colleagues in the libraries I've worked in thought I was gonna do, save them from having to learn and having to change, and let me TELL you, NOBODY ended up happy with that.

And so now I know what that kind of job looks like, I know what that kind of library looks like, and I warn my students to stay the everloving aitch–ee–double–toothpicks AWAY from those jobs in those libraries. If you sense that this is kind of a crusade for me? You're right.

So don't. DO. NOT. Try to do this to my new graduates, or N–C Central's new graduates, or Chapel Hill's new graduates, or ANYBODY'S new graduates. Our graduates don't exist so everybody else can quit learning and growing and changing. So I'm asking you, all of you, to own this change I've been talking about today. Own it, make this change your own, make it your library's.
The alternative, again, is a world nobody wants to live in. I tell my students this, no lie I do: if I wanted to curse y’all—which I don’t, I’m just saying—I would say, may you be the person meant when your colleague sighs heavily and says “Progress happens one funeral at a time.”

I don’t want people rooting for other people to die. That’s not a good world!
So as we come together today to learn and to grow as professionals, I ask you to believe that as puzzling as this new world I've laid out may seem, you have a place in it. I ask you to have confidence in yourselves and in one another, confidence that we can piece this puzzle together.

We got this. We do. All of us. And our cats.
So thank you for giving me your time today, and enjoy the rest of the conference!