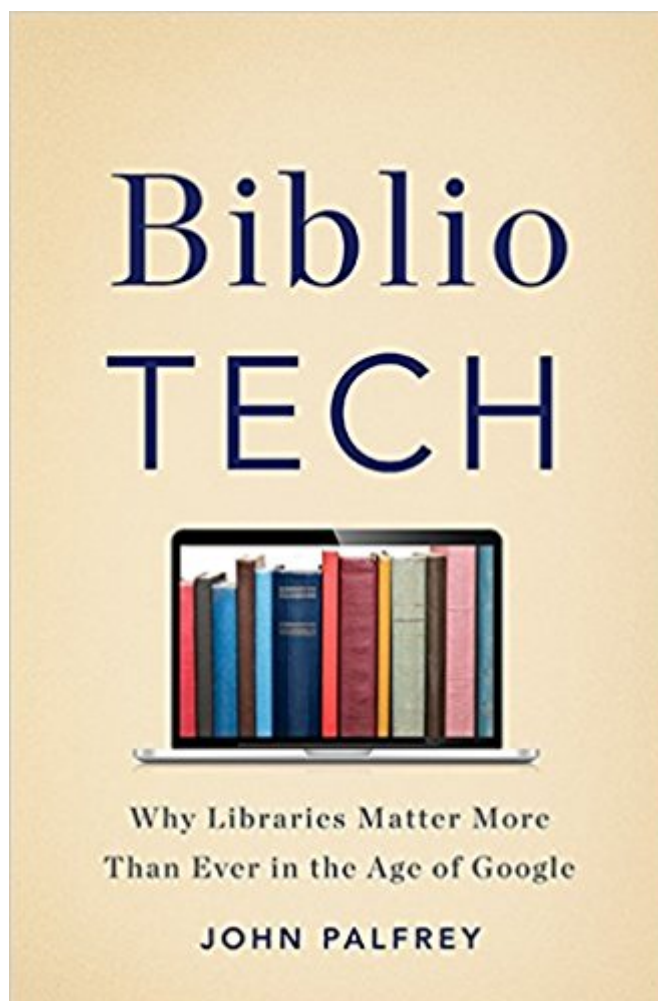


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BiblioTech: Why Libraries Matter More Than Ever In The Age Of Google



Synopsis

Libraries today are more important than ever. More than just book repositories, libraries can become bulwarks against some of the most crucial challenges of our age: unequal access to education, jobs, and information. In *BiblioTech*, educator and technology expert John Palfrey argues that anyone seeking to participate in the 21st century needs to understand how to find and use the vast stores of information available online. And libraries, which play a crucial role in making these skills and information available, are at risk. In order to survive our rapidly modernizing world and dwindling government funding, libraries must make the transition to a digital future as soon as possible—by digitizing print material and ensuring that born-digital material is publicly available online. Not all of these changes will be easy for libraries to implement. But as Palfrey boldly argues, these modifications are vital if we hope to save libraries and, through them, the American democratic ideal.

Customer Reviews

Jim Leach, former Chair of the National Endowment for the Humanities; In *BiblioTech*, John Palfrey sums up the seminal function libraries have played in inspiring and preserving creative thought over the ages. Then, with confident optimism, Palfrey makes it—counter intuitively—clear that the digital age has expanded the function and energy level of libraries. In a splintered world, these book-centric institutions have also become singularly safe and welcoming tech havens where the public can seek knowledge and gain access to wide-ranging perspectives about events and circumstances, real and fictional. It is the library where the imagination is un-shackled, where the past and present can be civilly probed and the future contemplated, alone or together in community. As a society we short-change these civilizing institutions at our peril. —Deborah L Jacobs, former City Librarian of the Seattle Public Library; John Palfrey has crafted a bold new vision and compelling argument for the power and value of public libraries. Perhaps more importantly he warns us of the unfortunate future for free societies if we simply stay the course and don't—create a new nostalgia—for the digital age. Many speeches have been given and books written on the topic of the—future library,—but this is the finest and most inspiring call to true action I've read. *BiblioTech* should be required reading for not only every librarian, but every library supporter and policymaker. —John Willinsky, Khosla Family Professor of Education at Stanford University; In this engaging shout-out to public libraries as bastions of info-age equality and opportunity, John Palfrey presents a compelling vision of a—network-scale—revitalization of their contributions to learning and

community. — Jonathan Zittrain, Vice Dean for Library and Information Resources at the Harvard Law School Library, and co-founder of the Berkman Center for Internet & Society; John Palfrey's *BiblioTech* is a sparkling call to action for libraries everywhere; urging them to collaborate and adapt to survive in the ever-expanding, increasingly digital information landscape. Libraries that heed Palfrey's call will find themselves poised to rise to the occasion of the twenty-first century and continue to fulfill their core societal functions: building communities, democratizing access to information, and educating the next generation. — Maureen Sullivan, former President of the American Libraries Association; John Palfrey, a true visionary who deeply understands the enduring importance of libraries, makes an urgent and compelling case for the transformation and sustainability of this critical education institution. This is a must-read for anyone who wants to understand why it is so critical to make a renewed investment in this essential democratic institution. His brilliant and lucid analysis offers a path, and describes how policy makers, community leaders, librarians, and technologists can work to ensure that libraries will enable everyone to be successful in a networked world. — Luis Herrera, City Librarian of the San Francisco Public Library; In *BiblioTech*, John Palfrey offers fresh perspectives and keen insights on the importance of libraries in the digital age. He reaffirms the value of libraries as purveyors of knowledge and information in democracies around the world. Yet, he reminds us that we must leverage our core values and skills as collaborators, networkers, and community builders for libraries to remain relevant. *BiblioTech* is a call to action for libraries to claim their role as key innovators in learning, addressing digital literacy, and bridging the technology divide in order to thrive in the Age of Google. — Robert Darnton, Carl H. Pforzheimer University Professor of History and University Librarian, Harvard University; John Palfrey makes a convincing case for the ever-increasing importance of libraries in 'the age of Google.' With wit and wisdom, he shows how they can help create a democratic digital future; provided that we overcome a nostalgic view of their past and an inadequate understanding of their place in the current information environment. — Brian Bannon, Commissioner, Chicago Public Library; *BiblioTech* offers a historical account of libraries' iconic past and chronicles the environmental shifts and dangers we may face if we fail to support and lead their next evolution. As libraries experience unprecedented instability, John Palfrey's *BiblioTech* offers unique insight into the complex challenges and opportunities in the digital and physical world while giving hope for a successful future. This is essential reading for librarians, educators, policy makers, and all who care about the public institutions that support the citizens who are the basis of a vibrant democracy. — Tony

Marx, President and CEO of the New York Public Library; John Palfrey insightfully charts the information revolution's path through the world of libraries, where he has been an innovator. We are indeed at an exciting moment. — Susan Hildreth, former Director of the Institute of Museum and Library Services; BiblioTech is a must read for anyone who cares about the future of libraries. John Palfrey has eloquently identified the essential role libraries play in keeping our democracy strong and has clearly articulated the challenges facing libraries today. This is a true wake-up call. We may very well fail our communities and society if we do not invest in library innovation that supports access and preservation of knowledge at scale. — Seattle Post-Intelligencer's Book Patrol blog; [A] lucid, passionate account of the state of American libraries; a handy guide for how to begin to right the ship. — LibraryCity.org

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