



# What Students Want: Generation Y and the Changing Function of the Academic Library

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**abstract:** This article presents the results of a 2003 undergraduate library user survey as a case study of Generation Y. Survey data support four main traits attributed to Generation Y, which are discussed within the context of library use and satisfaction. Implications for future directions in academic library services based on the new ways Generation Y learn and use the library are explored.

## Background

Today's undergraduates are pushing the academic library to rethink the ways in which it presents its most basic services. The majority of college students are now part of a new generation born in or after 1982 and most often labeled "Generation Y" but also sometimes referred to as the Net Generation, the Digital Generation, the Echo Boom Generation, or the Millennials. As profiled in Neil Howe and William Strauss' watershed 2000 book, *Millennials Rising: the Next Great Generation*, the new generation is unique because they are more ambitious and optimistic than Generation X, are the most ethnically diverse (35 percent are nonwhite), and favor different values and learning styles than their predecessors.<sup>1</sup> They are the largest child generation in American history, currently making up 34 percent of the country's population, and they are the most technologically savvy.<sup>2</sup>

The implications of the Howe and Strauss study for higher education continue to stimulate discussion, some of which touches on the implications for academic libraries.<sup>3</sup> There is a growing perception that the physical library is no longer so essential to

the educational experience since students increasingly rely on the Internet and technology for their learning and communication.<sup>4</sup> A survey conducted among college students in 2002 suggests that technology's mobility is diverting Generation Y away from physically using the library in the same way students used it in the past. The survey found that 73 percent of the respondents were more likely to conduct research by using the Internet than by going to the library.<sup>5</sup> Recent library statistics appear to reflect this shift. In many academic libraries, gate counts are declining.<sup>6</sup> Furthermore, ARL statistics show that there was a 10 percent decline in circulation rates between 1991–2002 and a 37 percent decline in in-house use.<sup>7</sup> A longitudinal study of undergraduate libraries found that between 1974 and 1994 circulation figures for monographs decreased by 66 percent, and it seems this trend is continuing into the next millennium with Generation Y.<sup>8</sup> When faced with statistics like these, how can academic libraries appeal to this new, smart, internet-savvy generation and avoid becoming irrelevant?

This article reports the results of a 2003 library user survey conducted at an undergraduate library. Most of the undergraduate respondents were representative of Generation Y students, being less than or equal to 21 years of age and also having the ethnic diversity characteristic of that generation (42 percent of the enrolled students are of Asian, Black, Hispanic, or Native American origin).<sup>9</sup> Therefore, the survey results will be used as a case study of Generation Y and analyzed within the context of four proposed characteristics often attributed to Generation Y to test whether our data support these traits. There are four attributes discussed within the context of student library use and satisfaction:

1. They have great expectations.
2. They expect customization.
3. They are technology veterans.
4. They utilize new communication modes.

Because the survey was nonscientific and sampled only a small number of students, the survey research has limitations that prevent definitive conclusions. It serves as a launching point, however, for the discussion of important critical issues facing the modern undergraduate library of tomorrow.

## Methodology

The focus of our survey was to determine in what ways the Thomas and Dorothy Leavey Library at the University of Southern California (USC) has been successful in its quest to be an innovative, user-oriented library and computing center. Leavey is the undergraduate and teaching library on a campus of 30,000 students and one of over a dozen different libraries and collections. At the time of its inception 10 years ago, Leavey was considered thoroughly modern because it was one of the first libraries to merge technology, computing, and library services in an Information Commons. Now that the highly anticipated Generation Y has arrived on campus, we wanted to reassess our services and find out why students come to the library. Is it true that they use us only as a computing facility and study hall? Are we meeting their unique new learning needs? What do they like and dislike?



The survey (see appendix A) was a paper-based instrument consisting of eight questions on one sheet of paper (front and back). Two of the eight questions were free response; the rest were multiple-choice. Of the six multiple-choice questions, two were not limited to only one answer; students were told to circle all that apply. Questions were a combination of performance-based (asking for the behavior of the patron regarding specific services) and perceptions-based (asking for personal satisfaction levels or opinions) and were designed with the assistance of other library surveys already published in the literature through March 2003. Specifically, questions asked students about their status, the frequency and duration of their library visits, their use of and satisfaction with various library services, and suggestions for improvement. Questions were pre-tested on a group of students and revised before implementation. The survey administrators recorded the hour each survey was completed by the participant. For more details about the execution of the survey, please see the authors' article in *American Libraries*.<sup>10</sup>

We implemented the survey during one continuous 36-hour period. Participation was on a voluntary basis and included only patrons who were physically in the library during the survey period. We chose two consecutive days of the week in the hopes of capturing a greater diversity of students. The total number of responses was 1,982—of which 1,267 were undergraduates (approximately 64 percent). For this article, since we are examining the results in the context of Generation Y, we are only focusing on the 64 percent who are undergraduates. We recognize that this is a small sample but are considering the data only in the context of a case study. Since we did not ask for the age of the participants, it is unknown how many are actually part of Generation Y; but we do know from the fall 2002–spring 2003 university enrollment student profile data that only 20 percent of all enrolled degree-seeking undergraduates at USC were over 21 (and thus outside the scope of Generation Y).<sup>11</sup> Furthermore, only 25.9 percent of all the undergraduates sampled in our survey were seniors. This is the group that would least likely belong to Generation Y. Since there is nothing to indicate that the undergraduates we sampled from the overall USC student population are not representative of the “typical” undergraduate at USC, we feel comfortable interpreting our results as applicable to a larger pool of students.

We collected the completed surveys, coded them, and input the data into Excel spreadsheets. Then we entered the information in Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) to produce the raw percentages for each question, along with cross-tabulations of other significant variables. We recorded and tabulated data for the two free-response questions by hand. For general data on the characteristics of Generation Y, we consulted the library and education literature through May 2004.

## Discussion and Results

### Great Expectations

Today's students are both high achievers and ambitious. Howe and Strauss point out that higher standards for schools have been moving to the top of the American political agenda since the 1980s. Generation Y students face parental and self-pressure to study

hard and excel, and they have been up to the challenge.<sup>12</sup> During the 1990s, aptitude test scores rose, and a record number of students are now taking advanced placement exams in high school.<sup>13</sup> Eight out of 10 teenagers say it is “cool to be smart.”<sup>14</sup>

Our library user survey corroborates this notion of ambition. When asked in question 3 “Why do you visit Leavey Library?” and told to circle all reasons applicable, the top three responses were all related to academic achievement (see table 1). The number one response among undergraduates was to study alone (80.6 percent), followed by use a computer for class work (61.3 percent), and study with a group (55.2 percent). These study-related functions usurped other less academic functions like using a computer for personal reasons (51.1 percent) and socializing (8.8 percent).

Furthermore, when asked how satisfied they are with various Leavey services on a four-point scale in question 7, the service that ranked the second lowest—with a 2.9 out of 4.0—was study space (see table 2). Students clearly use the library as a place to study, and they would like to see the facilities improve in this regard. Of the 514 undergraduates who responded to question 8, asking for free response suggestions for improvement of services, 63 noted a lack of enough individual and group study space, while another 66 complained that the noise level is too high (probably because they are trying to study).

Millennials received more attention as children than Generation X. The 1980s was the era of the “wanted child,” and the well being of children dominated national debate.<sup>15</sup> The youth safety movement increased; children were shielded from harm because they were “vital to the nation and to their parents’ sense of purpose.”<sup>16</sup> According to Howe and Strauss, today’s college students “expect to be protected.”<sup>17</sup> Only eight students complained about the need for more security in Leavey Library in the free response suggestions for improvement question. This response was low despite the fact that there were 62 security incidents in and around Leavey Library during the fall 2002 and spring 2003 semesters—including theft, battery, and vandalism.<sup>18</sup> Students’ expectations of protection may lead them to an unwarranted sense of complacency about their safety.

Generation Y kids were, on average, part of the smallest families in history, which meant they received more parental time and resources.<sup>19</sup> The notion that they are “special” has been with them since birth—and with it a sense of entitlement. College students today expect the same kind of attention their parents gave them.<sup>20</sup> One could argue that students have expectations bordering on the unrealistic, as evidenced in a 1999 survey that revealed 62 percent of the 12–17 year olds believed they could be elected president.<sup>21</sup> According to Stephen Merritt, they want specialized housing and food service. Furthermore, they expect access to global information 24/7.<sup>22</sup>

In the Leavey library survey, 23 undergraduates wrote that Leavey should allow food and drink in the library, which lends support to Merritt’s special food service claim. In addition, students ranked their satisfaction with the hours of operation as 3.67 out of 4.0 (see table 2)—the highest of all the services—implying that students are happy Leavey Library is open nearly 24 hours daily during the academic year.<sup>23</sup> As happy as they were, however, 27 students wrote in that they wanted to see Leavey open even more hours when asked for suggestions for improvement. This strongly suggests that, indeed, students “expect that services will be available 24/7 in a variety of modes.”<sup>24</sup>



## Table 1

Percentage of all undergraduates doing each activity  
(in order of frequency)

Rank	Activity	Percentage
1.	Study Alone	80.6%
2.	Use a computer for class work	61.3%
3.	Study with a group	55.2%
4.	Use a computer for personal reasons	51.1%
5.	Check out a book	36.3%
6.	Printing	35.5%
7.	Use a collaborative workroom	30.5%
8.	Return a book	20%
9.	Check out reserve materials	19.5%
10.	View DVDs or videos	12.7%
11.	Get research assistance	12.6%
12.	Use print journals or magazines	12%
13.	Socialize	8.8%
14.	Attend a classroom or auditorium session	7.2%
15.	Get computing assistance	2.1%

## Table 2

Undergraduate satisfaction with Library Services  
(4-point scale)

Ranking	Service	Rating
1.	Hours of operation	3.67
2.	Circulation/Reserves Desk service	3.14
3.	Range of materials in library	3.11
3.	Computer workstations	3.11
5.	Research assistance	3.03
6.	Library Instruction	2.99
7.	Computing assistance	2.91
8.	Study space	2.90
9.	Print center	2.82



In a study at the College of New Jersey, educators found that the new generation of students prefers to learn in the evening.<sup>25</sup> In our survey, Generation Y accounted for a large percentage of undergraduate survey respondents during nontraditional library hours; 31 percent of all the freshmen filled out their survey in the evening between 6 p.m. and 12 a.m. Of the few people filling out the survey at night between midnight and 6 a.m., 45.8 percent of them were freshmen (see table 3). This shows that in Leavey, freshmen use the library at all hours. This raises the issue of whether decision-makers in undergraduate libraries should be prepared to better meet the service needs of freshmen after hours since this is the group with the least amount of library experience and, therefore, a potentially high-need constituency.

### Customization

Today's students came of age during the "mass customization movement," which entailed being "absolute rulers of their own digital universe."<sup>26</sup> They now expect to control "when, where, how, and how fast they learn."<sup>27</sup> Students "perceive their learning environments as boundless," and most have laptops with the same functions as the computers in the library.<sup>28</sup> In a 2000 study at the University of Georgia, most students reported using the library remotely.<sup>29</sup> In the Leavey survey, when asked in question 6 in free-response format where else on campus they go to do research, students reported using their own computer from their dormitory room or from home. Thus, they no longer tie the resources traditionally associated with the library solely to its physical place.

Due to the Internet's organization and ease of use, students doing research through this medium often encounter only customized pieces of the original whole.<sup>30</sup> They often see only the "piece" of the information that they need in isolation from its original context. In both Google and in electronic research databases, they retrieve sections of

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Web pages, reprints of articles, or chapters of books; seldom do they have to deal with the whole Web site, entire journal, or unabridged book. In the Leavey survey, only 36.3 percent of the undergraduates use the library to check out a book, and 12 percent of them come to the library to use print journals and magazines as compared to the 61.3 percent who come to use a computer for class work (see table 1).

This suggests that students prefer doing research online. Despite the fact that Leavey has a relatively small monographs and journal collection, supplemented by a system-wide electronic resources collection, undergraduates were satisfied with the range of materials in the library and ranked it 3.11 out of 4 in satisfaction and third out of 9 services (see table 2). One student even suggested we "get rid of all the books" to make more space for computers.<sup>31</sup>



## Table 3

### Undergraduates: Year versus Time of Day

	Morning (6am–12pm)	Afternoon (12pm–6pm)	Evening (6pm–12am)	Night (12am–6am)
<b>Freshmen</b>				
% within class	39.1%	23%	31.1%	6.8%
% of all within part of day	18.8%	12.3%	28.1%	45.8%
<b>Sophomores</b>				
% within class	39.4%	39%	19.7%	1.8%
% of all within part of day	25.7%	28.1%	24.2%	16.7%
<b>Juniors</b>				
% within class	42.1%	36%	19%	2.9%
% of all within part of day	30.4%	28.8%	25.8%	29.2%
<b>Seniors</b>				
% within class	38.5%	42.7%	17.9%	0.9%
% of all within part of day	25.1%	30.8%	21.9%	8.3%

### Technology Veterans

Generation Y students grew up surrounded by technology and can hardly recall a time when their music was not available on compact discs or when they could not get any information they needed off the 'Net. When it comes to technology, these students are so comfortable using it that they often feel superior to their teachers in this respect and are unimpressed by its use in a classroom setting.<sup>32</sup> As Merritt notes, Generation Y students "don't see the Internet and technology as tools; they see them as integral parts of their lives."<sup>33</sup> As such, they use the Internet and other technologies for many different purposes, including their academic pursuits. Diana Oblinger found that college students spend 11 hours per week online.<sup>34</sup> The Leavey survey confirms that students spend a great deal of time online while at the library. When asked why they come to Leavey Library, 61 percent of the respondents said they come to the library to use a computer for class work, whereas 51 percent said they come to use a computer for personal reasons. These two reasons ranked second and fourth, respectively, out of the possible 15 activities (see table 1).

Leavey Library has 180 computers in its two Information Commons, all of which offer a variety of applications for learning, including productivity tools, Internet tools, and USC's "Library Without Walls" package. Students like these workstations, and they rated them as a 3.11 out of 4 on the satisfaction scale (see table 2). However, it seems that 180 computers are not quite enough for our technology veterans—they want even more. In the free-response section asking for improvements to Leavey, 85 out of the 514 un-





dergraduates who answered that question indicated that they want more computers, while an additional 17 respondents asked specifically for more PCs (as opposed to Macs).

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Students now approach doing research with an ATM attitude; they want it to be fast and easy. Web-based resources “with seemingly

intuitive search screens can provide students convenient access to information. . . . As a result, students will convince themselves that they are fulfilling all of their research needs by using the Web.”<sup>35</sup> Students view information as a commodity and “compromise on quality in favor of low cost (in terms of time and effort) and convenience.”<sup>36</sup> Bruce Harley, Megan Dreger, and Patricia Knobloch think that students convince themselves they can find everything they need and that they no longer need help from a librarian.<sup>37</sup> According to our survey, only 12.6 percent of the respondents said they came to the library to get research assistance (see table 1). Such a low number might be attributed to this ATM attitude of self-serve convenience.

### **Communication**

Communication modes of the millennial generation have changed dramatically from their predecessors. According to Howe and Strauss, there is a new focus on teamwork; students prefer working together rather than alone.<sup>38</sup> This is reflected both in leisure activities, such as sports, as well as in the classroom where there is a new emphasis on group learning.<sup>39</sup> This focus on group learning can be seen in several places in the survey results. When asked why they visit Leavey Library, the third most popular response (55.2 percent) was to study with a group, while the seventh place response was to use a collaborative workroom—30.5 percent (see table 1). Even though 80.6 percent of the students also indicated that they come to Leavey to study alone, they clearly also come to study in groups. Leavey’s collaborative workrooms are one of the most popular features of the Information Commons and are frequently completely booked—there are not many other places on campus that feature these kinds of rooms for student use. Students like having a place to go to work with their classmates where they can talk and use the whiteboards. They like these rooms so much, in fact, that they want more. Fifty-nine respondents answered that they wanted more collaborative workrooms in the library as a suggestion for improvement.

Though students in this generation tend to identify with their parents’ values and feel close to their parents, their relationships with their teachers are slightly less harmonious.<sup>40</sup> According to Howe and Strauss, students today get along much better with each other than they did 10 years ago, but they get along less well with their teachers.<sup>41</sup> Largely, writes Kate Manuel, it is a matter of trust—“Gen Y-ers usually find peers more credible than teachers . . . when it comes to determining what is worth paying attention to.”<sup>42</sup> One outcome of this is that students are more likely to learn by trying things on their own and with their peers rather than by just listening to a teacher talk about it. Students “expect to try things rather than hear about things.”<sup>43</sup> Our survey found that



only a small number of students come to the library with the intention of asking for any kind of reference (12.6 percent) or computer assistance (2.1 percent) (see table 1). It may go back to the “ATM attitude” of students, thinking they can get everything they need on their own by using technology and without having to interact with another human being.<sup>44</sup>

Another feature of their new modes of communication is the students’ “low thresholds for boredom and short attention spans.”<sup>45</sup> This is illustrated in our survey by looking at the amount of time that was spent at the library by undergraduates. Question 5 asked for the length of the respondent’s library visit, providing eight choices in increments ranging

from less than 30 minutes to over 15 hours. By and large, undergraduates stayed at the library for shorter amounts of time than the graduate students did (see table 4). For example, out of all the respondents who reported staying at the library less than 30 minutes, 73.8 percent were undergraduates and only 26.2 percent were graduate students. There was always a much higher percentage of undergraduates than graduates who reported staying in the library during the shortest durations (between zero and three hours). An almost equal number of undergraduates and graduates stayed in the library between three to six hours. Between six and 15 or more hours, there was always a higher percentage of graduate students than undergraduates. Interestingly, we had a small number of respondents who did actually report staying at the library for more than 15 hours at a time. Graduate students, most likely not a part of the Millennial Generation, were the group who would stay and work the longest, while undergraduates preferred staying for shorter periods of time.

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## Implications for Library Services

### Implications Related to the Reliance on Peer-to-Peer Learning Preferences

According to the literature, Generation Y students look to their peers for help but have a distrusting attitude toward teachers or authority figures.<sup>46</sup> Since students feel more comfortable approaching a peer, it makes sense to try a tiered approach to reference services. Well-trained student workers can answer basic reference questions to make patrons feel more comfortable about initially approaching the reference desk; and if the question is too advanced for the student worker to handle, it can then be referred to a librarian. Anecdotally, we have observed that when both a student worker and a librarian are at the desk, student patrons will almost always approach the student worker first.

Higher education, in partial recognition of the peer-learning phenomenon, has shifted its curriculum toward more collaboration and group projects. As a result, today’s high-achieving students now need places on campus to study both alone and in groups. One of the biggest trends found in recent physical changes to academic libraries has been the addition of more group study seating for collaborative learning.<sup>47</sup> The Harold



Table 4  
Length of Visit to the Library Undergraduates vs. Graduates

Length of Visit	Undergraduates	Graduates
Under 30 minutes	73.8%	26.2%
30 minutes to 1 hour	81.6%	18.4%
1 to 3 hours	71.6%	28.4%
3 to 6 hours	52.8%	47.2%
6 to 9 hours	37.8%	62.2%
9 to 12 hours	31%	69%
12 to 15 hours	33.3%	66.7%
Over 15 hours	31.6%	68.4%

Shill and Shawn Tonner study found, as we did in our user survey, that the “demand for group study spaces often exceeds library capacity,” while there is a parallel demand for “enclosed, single-user rooms.”<sup>48</sup>

In recognition of the fact that learning is now less passive, libraries must increase the amount of interactive space for users.<sup>49</sup> It is a good idea to have mobile furniture so that there is flexibility if students want to form spontaneous groups or move around rather than remaining stationary their entire visit. At Leavey, the chairs are constantly changing location. Steven M. Foote, a library architect, discussed the demand for spaces that can be used “by combinations of faculty and students in both private and group configurations simultaneously.”<sup>50</sup> One way to increase space for student collaboration is to decrease the amount of space that books take up by using compact shelving, remote storage, or shared storage space among multiple institutions, known as “collaborative shelving.”<sup>51</sup>

Implications for Reference Services Beyond the Library

Many students now perceive their learning as mobile and use the library remotely, so it is imperative that libraries have an infrastructure that facilitates remote usage of their resources. Libraries can provide the same level of quality service to remote sites through wireless networks using methods like password protection or IP address authentication. It is crucial that the infrastructure works properly, is consistently maintained, and that any problems are dealt with swiftly since Generation Y students have extremely high expectations when it comes to technology in higher education and will not tolerate disruptions of service. The best way to insure a smooth infrastructure is by maintaining solid partnerships with computing consultants who assist with the technology, software, and hardware maintenance.

With so many students now doing library activities in remote locations, librarians need to go beyond traditional phone reference by using services such as 24/7 and



Questionpoint. These services, already popular in academic libraries, allow users to e-mail their reference questions or chat in real time with a librarian when the information need arises, regardless of where they are physically located. Despite enhanced features such as the ability to push Web pages at the user or e-mail a transcript of the transaction to the user, this is not the most intuitive device for Generation Y students. They may prefer the simpler instant messenger (IM) services they have been using as long as they can remember. A Gartner group study has predicted that instant messaging tools will be the primary means of online communication by the year 2005, and already 76 percent of the people surfing the Web use some kind of IM tool.<sup>52</sup>

Another means of helping students when they are not physically in the library is to go where they are doing their work. The undergraduate libraries at Harvard University instituted a "Roving Librarian" project in spring 2003, bringing librarians to spaces on campus where they would not usually be found, such as the student union.<sup>53</sup> By using wireless technology and bringing a laptop and research guides along, librarians can reach remote users and have a greater impact on research being done by students at their institution.

### **Implications for the Mass Customization Movement**

The biggest recent change in colleges and universities, aside from the adoption of active learning practices to cater to new student learning styles, has been assimilating the information technology revolution into research and learning.<sup>54</sup> Since today's technology-oriented students come to the library mostly to use the computers, this should be used to the library's advantage.<sup>55</sup> Millennials are known to be multi-taskers; whereas previous generations were more linear in their work, today's students use computer terminals while simultaneously doing research and talking to peers.<sup>56</sup> Research now involves technology, so a combined reference desk and technology service point in one area near the space with the computers offers opportunities to bring students closer to the reference desk and librarians. Another way to capitalize on technology is by supporting wired seating, which allows students to hook up their own laptops and still use the library research tools. This allows for more study space and appeals to students' sense of customization. The Shill and Toner study found a statistically significant relationship between the total number of data ports and post-project library usage, as well as the percent of wired seating in the library and post-project usage.<sup>57</sup> Shill and Tonner predict that laptop loaners, as an alternative to conventional computer clusters, will be a popular new service.<sup>58</sup> It should be noted, however, that it is a precarious undertaking due to the risks involved with theft, wear and tear, and the high cost of replacement batteries. Libraries can take this a step further by supporting wireless networks, thereby making a student's laptop computer able to access library tools from anywhere on campus.

### **Implications of the New ATM Attitude**

Students expect convenient, one-stop shopping when it comes to research, which can partially be addressed through the use of portals. A portal is a "network service that brings together content from diverse resources, including the library catalogue, on-line



subscription reference material, e-journals and learning and teaching material . . . presented to the user through a single interface."<sup>59</sup> Portals will reduce information overload and function more like a search engine. In a 2002 ARL survey of research libraries nationwide, only 21 percent offered a portal; but 42 percent were in the discussion phase, 10 percent were in the process of creating one, and 10 percent expected to have a portal within the next year.<sup>60</sup>

Ultimately, Generation Y demand access to information 24/7; and, as our survey showed, they use the library at all hours of the night. If academic libraries are to continue as the primary hub of learning on campus, they will need to have facilities accessible at all times in order to adequately support student education. These facilities also now include the expectation of food services in the libraries. Besides the fact that students want food and drink in the library for convenience sake, there is the argument that since we are making the library a more social, hands-on space, "the strong customary association between food and socially shaped activities" will maintain.<sup>61</sup> Recent trends in library redesign mirror the new presence of cafes and snack bars, although a surprising follow-up study by Shill found that this had no association with an increase in usage.<sup>62</sup> Libraries worried about the preservation of their collections in the presence of food might try less drastic steps such as providing covered beverages or snack vending machines in designated locations only.

## Conclusion

Our survey and accompanying research on Generation Y offer support for the four main expectations attributed to this new generation:

1. Demand for quality academic facilities and high academic achievement
2. The need for customization of technology and research
3. The need for integration of technology into learning
4. The usage of new communication modes

Although the survey has limitations by virtue of being nonscientific—not longitudinal in its analysis and having a small sample size of only 1,267 students—the preliminary findings suggest support for previous research describing the new ways in which the current generation of students utilizes the library. The survey provides a framework for understanding how academic libraries can be more responsive to Generation Y's needs as learners and researchers, and it points in the direction of further research. Libraries should recognize that, rather than supplanting them, technology "is actually serving to encourage individuals to come into the library where there is activity—where people are coming together to access, use, and turn information into knowledge."<sup>63</sup>

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## Appendix A

University of Southern California

Please help us make Leavey Library better! Take a minute to fill out this survey.

1. Status:

- |                                                                 |                                  |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Undergraduate (please check your year) |                                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Graduate Student                       |                                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Freshman                               | <input type="checkbox"/> Faculty |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sophomore                              | <input type="checkbox"/> Staff   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Junior                                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Other   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Senior                                 |                                  |

2. How often do you visit Leavey Library? Please circle your answer.

- |                          |                               |
|--------------------------|-------------------------------|
| A. Daily                 | D. Several times per semester |
| B. Several times a week  | E. First time visitor         |
| C. Several times a month |                               |

3. In general, why do you visit Leavey Library? (Please circle all that apply)

- |                                 |                                             |
|---------------------------------|---------------------------------------------|
| A. Study with a group           | I. View DVD's or videos                     |
| B. Study alone                  | J. Use a computer for personal reasons      |
| C. Use a collaborative workroom | K. Use a computer for class work            |
| D. Get research assistance      | L. Get computing assistance                 |
| E. Check out a book             | M. Printing                                 |
| F. Check out reserve materials  | N. Socialize                                |
| G. Use print journals/magazines | O. Attend a classroom or auditorium session |
| H. Return a book                | P. Other: _____                             |

4. Referring back to question #3, please rank your choices in order of importance by entering the letter corresponding to the service: (limit to top 5 choices, if applicable)

- Most Important 1.  
2.  
3.  
4.  
5.

5. How long was your visit to Leavey Library today? Circle one:

- |                         |                  |                   |
|-------------------------|------------------|-------------------|
| A. Less than 30 minutes | D. 3 to 6 hours  | G. 12 to 15 hours |
| B. 30 minutes to 1 hour | E. 6 to 9 hours  | H. over 15 hours  |
| C. 1 to 3 hours         | F. 9 to 12 hours |                   |

6. Where else on campus do you most frequently go to: (please list only your top choice)

- A. Do research? \_\_\_\_\_  
B. Study? \_\_\_\_\_



- C. Use a computer? \_\_\_\_\_
- D. Borrow materials (books etc.)? \_\_\_\_\_

7. Please rate how satisfied you are with the following Leavey services. If you have never used a service before, mark NA for "not applicable." Use the following scale:

1 = very unsatisfied    2 = not satisfied    3 = satisfied    4 = very satisfied

A. Research assistance at the reference desk (in Lower Commons)

1      2      3      4      N/A

B. Library instruction/orientation session with a class to learn about library resources

1      2      3      4      N/A

C. Computer workstations in Upper & Lower Commons

1      2      3      4      N/A

D. Computing assistance

1      2      3      4      N/A

E. Circulation/Reserves desk service

1      2      3      4      N/A

F. Study space

1      2      3      4      N/A

G. Hours of operation

1      2      3      4      N/A

H. Range of materials in the library (i.e. books, journals, videos)

1      2      3      4      N/A

I. Print Center

1      2      3      4      N/A

8. Do you have any suggestions for improvement of services at Leavey Library?

Thank You!

Leavey Library

## Notes

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2. Stephen R. Merritt, "Generation Y: A Perspective on America's Next Generation and Their Impact on Higher Education," reported by Shelley Neville, *Serials Librarian* 42, 1/2 (2002): 43-4.
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4. Harold B. Shill and Shawn Tonner, "Creating a Better Place: Physical Improvements in Academic Libraries, 1995-2002," *College & Research Libraries* 64, 6 (November 2003): 433.



5. Oblinger, 39.
6. Scott Carlson, "The Deserted Library," *Chronicle of Higher Education* 48 (November 16, 2001): A35–8.
7. Association of Research Libraries, "ARL Statistics: Service Trends in ARL Libraries, 1991–2003" (2004), [http://www.arl.org/stats/arlstat/graphs/2003/graph1\\_03.xls](http://www.arl.org/stats/arlstat/graphs/2003/graph1_03.xls) (accessed March 11, 2005),
8. Mark Watson, Jody Bales Foote, and Roland C. Person, "Twenty Years of Undergraduate Libraries: Whence and Whither?" *College & Undergraduate Libraries* 3, 2 (1996): 14.
9. "Fall Enrollment 2002 Part B: Enrollment Summary of Students by Age" (printout, Office of Budget and Planning, University of Southern California, 2003); "Fall Enrollment 2002 Part A: Enrollment Summary by Racial/Ethnic Status" (printout, Office of Budget and Planning, University of Southern California, 2003).
10. Susanna Eng and Susan Gardner, "Conducting Surveys on a Shoestring Budget," *American Libraries* 36, 2 (February 2005): 38–9.
11. "Fall Enrollment 2002 Part B."
12. Howe and Strauss, 44.
13. *Ibid.*, 9.
14. *Ibid.*
15. *Ibid.*, 32.
16. *Ibid.*, 43.
17. *Ibid.*, 177.
18. This is only getting worse. During the summer and fall of 2003, there were a total of 77 incidents in and around Leavey Library, including 20 laptop thefts.
19. *Ibid.*, 81.
20. Merritt, 49.
21. Howe and Strauss, 230.
22. Merritt, 49.
23. University of Southern California, "Regular Library Hours" (2004), <http://www.usc.edu/isd/libraries/hours/matrix/> (accessed March 24, 2005).
24. Oblinger, 40.
25. Sheesley, 36.
26. Manuel, 203.
27. Carole A. Barone, "The Changing Landscape and the New Academy," *EDUCAUSE Review* 38, 5 (September/October 2003): 42.
28. *Ibid.*
29. Sheesley, 28.
30. Bruce Harley, Megan Dreger, and Patricia Knobloch, "The Postmodern Condition: Students, the Web, and the Academic Library," *Reference Services Review* 29, 1 (2001): 25.
31. Incidentally, Leavey already took steps in this direction in 1998. It utilized space previously reserved for shelving books on the 2nd floor to make room for a second Information Commons. Over 20,000 books came out of the stacks and were sent to storage or taken out of the library system entirely.
32. Oblinger, 39.
33. Merritt, 46.
34. Oblinger, 39.
35. Harley, Dreger, and Knobloch, 25.
36. Sheesley, 31.
37. Harley, Dreger, and Knobloch, 25.
38. Howe and Strauss, 4.
39. *Ibid.*, 44.
40. Oblinger, 38.
41. Howe and Strauss, 181.
42. Manuel, 208.





43. Barone, 42.
44. Harley, Dreger, and Knobloch, 26.
45. Manuel, 205.
46. Manuel, 208.
47. Shill and Tonner, 450; Scott Bennett, *Libraries Designed for Learning* (Washington, D.C.: Council on Library and Information Resources, November 2003), 11.
48. Shill and Tonner, 451.
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53. Harvard University, "Reference on the Road: A Roving Librarian in Loker Commons Brings Library Services to Students," Harvard College Library (2005), <http://hcl.harvard.edu/news/stories/libinloker.html> (accessed March 11, 2005).
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58. Shill and Tonner, "Creating a Better Place," 448.
59. "LibPortal," LISU Loughborough University (2003), [http://www.lboro.ac.uk/departments/dis/lisu/pages/projects/libportals\\_project.html](http://www.lboro.ac.uk/departments/dis/lisu/pages/projects/libportals_project.html) (accessed March 11, 2005).
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61. Bennett, 39.
62. Shill and Tonner, "Creating a Better Place," 457; Bennett, 18; and Shill and Tonner, "Does the Building Still Matter," 143.
63. Freeman, 169.