

Some points from Neil Gaiman's Lecture (English fiction writer; from October 2013):

## Neil Gaiman: Why our future depends on libraries, reading and daydreaming



- Literate people read fiction. "Fiction... it's a gateway drug to reading."
- Libraries allow low/no cost access to fiction and freedom to find information.
- All fiction is good: "...not everyone has the same taste as you."
- Sci Fi and fantasy readers grow into more innovative citizens
- We have now moved to an information glut (where previously we had information scarcity). "We are going to need help navigating that information to find the thing we actually need."
- There will always be a place for printed books.

Some points from Neil Gaiman's Lecture (English fiction writer, from October 2013):

### **Of particular importance for Wellington:**

Sci Fi/fantasy builds an innovative society. "I was in China in 2007, at the first party-approved science fiction and fantasy convention in Chinese history. And at one point I took a top official aside and asked him: Why? SF had been disapproved of for a long time. What had changed?"

It's simple, he told me. The Chinese were brilliant at making things if other people brought them the plans. But they did not innovate and they did not invent. They did not imagine. So they sent a delegation to the US, to Apple, to Microsoft, to Google, and they asked the people there who were inventing the future about themselves. And they found that all of them had read science fiction when they were boys or girls."

### **The importance of librarians:**

"They were good librarians. They liked books and they liked the books being read. They taught me how to order books from other libraries on inter-library loans. They had no snobbery about anything I read. They just seemed to like that there was this wide-eyed little boy who loved to read, and would talk to me about the books I was reading, they would find me other books in a series, they would help. They treated me as another reader – nothing less or more – which meant they treated me with respect. I was not used to being treated with respect as an eight-year-old."

### **On branches:**

"Libraries really are the gates to the future. So it is unfortunate that, round the world, we observe local authorities seizing the opportunity to close libraries as an easy way to save money, without realising that they are stealing from the future to pay for today. They are closing the gates that should be open."

"This is not a matter of party politics. This is a matter of common humanity."

Quotes and photo from <http://www.theguardian.com/books/2013/oct/15/neil-gaiman-future-libraries-reading-daydreaming>