

The story of the library is like the sinking of the Titanic.

It's rare to find readers in libraries. How shall we make visible the invisible sinking of the library? Scream for help that's how!

Personal computers are lined up like ashtrays with sign up sheets, login passwords and all the clatter and noise that goes along with them. Teens wear headphones, play computer games and adults "check" email. When did the computer take over the library? How do we reclaim that valuable space for desks, chairs, and *books*?

The library is now a baby sitting drop off station for parents. Kids dance and do the pooky wooky in loud song while the near extinct reader scoots around the library looking for a quiet place to read and study. *Yikes! There aren't any chairs, not enough desks, the noise reaches every corner of the library!! Where does the reader go?* Maybe Starbucks will have a seat and it will probably be less noisy too.

Libraries used to be sacred places where people whispered and respected the quiet and privacy of the reader. Entering a library was like walking into a church, people trusted one another and respected the individuals quest for knowledge. Now desks are covered with notebook computers rather than books and many people visit the library like a customer shopping at Blockbuster looking for a good flick.

There is nothing more beautiful than a reader collapsed onto a comfortable sofa at the local library snoozing with a book covering half his face like it's a fuzzy blanket. Now security guards patrol the library and kick these people out. Yet a fifteen year old is behaving like he's at an arcade, howling over a computer game, parents are talking to

their kids like they're on a playground, others are queued up on scarce chairs looking dead faced waiting to use the Internet.

Those who need the library the most beg like dogs to keep it open. Almost every night the sounds of glittering fireworks can be heard over San Diego. People watch them like they're reading a bestseller book. Seaworld spends millions on these environmentally damaging fireworks, but how much does Seaworld contribute to the local library? Expensive boats fill marinas but there isn't enough money to keep the library open.

The ship that holds humanity and beckons each of us to explore the universe, our minds, and imaginations is falling apart. There's a crack in the hull, the library system is sinking, we're all on board but who will rescue us? Without renewed love for the reader, the library will be on the bottom of the ocean. Teachers, parents and citizens will scratch their heads and say, "Remember when we had a library?"

"There was a library dad?" a ten year old asks his father in amazement.

"Yes, son it was a special time, it was the greatest hope. I wish you could have seen her."

"Maybe they'll make a movie about it dad!!!"