

Virtual Service

- **Digital reference** is a service by which library reference service is conducted online, and the reference transaction is a computer-mediated communication
- Text message
- IM
- Skype
- OCLC's QuestionPoint

Other virtual spaces

- Gaming
- Second Life – a real virtual space

Second Life

- Developed in 2003 by Linden Labs, Second Life is a multi-user virtual environment in which users can build their own characters, create their own worlds, communicate with other virtual users, and explore worlds created by others. A user's persona is called an avatar, and Second Life avatars can be covered with any color of clothes, skin, and hair. In fact, the avatar does not need to maintain the human form; avatars can be males, females, rodents, cubes, or anything in-between.

How are libraries exploiting SL?

- Second Life is found to be a valuable tool for training and development through developing models;
- In 2007, Second Life Library 2.0, from Alliance Library System, served 6,769 users by answering thousands of questions of users from several continents;
- Reference librarians collaborating throughout the physical world are able to provide 24/7 reference service using SL. SL librarians can hand electronic notecards to virtual students as a way of pointing users toward various web resources.