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# Living on the LAM: Libraries, Archives and Museums in the Digital Age

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# Living on the LAM:

Libraires, Archives and Museums in the Digital Age



# The LAM:

Lam – in flight, usually in the sense of a fugitive

L.A.M. – Libraries, Archives, and Museums (Cultural Heritage Institutions)



# Lam vs L.A.M.

Libraries, Archives, and Museums are facing unprecedented change in the digital age.

Is there a role for these historically stable cultural heritage institutions in the age of Google and the global web or are they fugitives that will be caught, incarcerated and eventually disappear?

# Libraries : the next 10 years

- E-journals are dominant, newspapers will disappear
- Mass digitization of library collections (besides Google Books)
- Downsizing of local print collections but the rise of large scale print repositories
- E-books will reach critical mass
- Music CDs and VHS and DVD will disappear – move to streaming
- Special Collections will become more prominent-unique content
- Fascination with the object
- Large scale digital libraries such as Europeana and Digital Public Library of America

# Libraries : the next 10 years

- Transformation of library spaces
- Shift in library services (reference to consultation)
- New roles for librarians (research and data based)
- Radical collaboration between libraries
- Mobile is the norm
- Open access will grow and publishing ecosystem will change radically
- Self-publishing will increase radically
- Linked Open Data and data reuse
- Move from search to discovery
- Data sets
- Data management and data curation

# Challenges for Libraries

- Connecting users to our resources
- Dependence on Google/Bing or other commercial entities
- Invisibility
- Lack of Information literacy skills on the part of users
- Intellectual property, copyright, and DRM
- Social media
- Changes in scholarship – blogs, webpages, media journals, open access,
- Access vs. Ownership
- Collection stewardship/preservation
- Budget
- Professional development

# Challenges for Libraries

- Collecting the uncollectable (grey literature, the web, digital ephemera, Twitter, large scale digital things (astronomy, etc))
- Demise of the university press as we know it
- Changing roles of publishers in general and rise of self publishing
- Changes in journal publishing
- Difficulty in developing and curating an e-collection (changing pricing models, DRM, etc)
- Publishers doing direct marketing
- Publishers refusing to sell e-content to libraries
- Data management

# Archives : the next 10 years

- Archives as key collections of primary source materials will become more important to scholarship (especially undergrads)
- Archives will digitize many of their collections to promote discovery and access (sometimes for commercial gain)
- Archives will begin to collect (willingly or unwillingly) digital archival collections
- Archivists need to figure out how to collect and curate digital collections



# Challenges for Archives

- Huge backlogs of unprocessed physical collections that are undiscoverable and unusable (staffing issues)
- Archives are legacy collections (often donated by families). In a digital environment this will be harder to capture and donate.
- Archival collections contain many ephemeral items that provide the social context for a research project as well as primary source materials (letters, diaries, etc). With so much of today's social context being digital ephemera, much of this may not be captured or capturable.
- Many archives have not figured out how to archive and or preserve digital materials (especially if there are obsolete formats)
- Collecting and preserving digital archives at scale is difficult and costly (e.g. White House web, presidential papers, etc)

# Museums : the next 10 years

- Museums will digitize their collections to provide access and discovery
- Museums will begin collecting digital art and culture
- Digital exhibits will increase
- Rise of virtual museums
- Augmented reality will enhance physical exhibits
- Museums will increase their marketing to connect to other cultural/entertainment venues to draw in customers (physical and virtual)
- Museums and individuals will build virtual exhibits that will cross museum borders (e.g. curate a digital exhibit that includes for example work from Colby, the Met, and the Victoria and Albert Museum in London).

# Challenges for Museums

- Mass digitization of their collections
- Making their digital collections discoverable
- Collecting and curating digital art and culture
- Integrating digital and physical collections
- Competing with collectors for art and artifacts
- New competencies for staff to deal with digital collections



# Challenges and Opportunities for Faculty

- Global research will become easier and more complex
- Forms of scholarship will expand, change, and old forms may die
- Working with students will become increasingly complex
- Information skills for both researcher and student will become more important
- Faculty will be able to make their research have a broader reach through new tools and services
- Faculty will increasingly want additional support services for information , technology, and data management
- It will be easier for faculty to embed resources, services, and expertise into their courses.
- New forms of pedagogy, student engagement, and assignments are likely to emerge

# Challenges and Opportunities for Students

- Student expectations that all information is digital and accessible
- Student demand for more global, non-western, non traditional information will increase
- Lack of sophisticated Information skills
- Copyright, intellectual property, and digital rights management
- Students will push the envelope on new types of assignments and scholarship
- Ability to study, research, and collaborate locally and globally simultaneously
- “Writing and communication skills” will be increasingly important across a variety of media

# Challenges and Opportunities for Librarians, Archivists, and Museum staff

- Potential for greater opportunities to work with faculty and students
- Opportunities to develop new roles
- Opportunities for building local, regional, national, and international alliances that will make a greater array of rich resources to students and faculty.
- Opportunity to play a key educational role in helping students build robust Information skills
- Opportunities to engage faculty, students, researchers abroad with complex physical and digital primary sources
- Opportunities to involve students and researchers in digitization and metadata enrichment of archival materials
- Opportunities for museum integration into local and regional curricula while allowing others to integrate these resources at the national and international level
- Opportunities for museum staff, archival staff, and librarians to help students develop complex digital exhibits and curatorial skills

# In Conclusion

**Libraries, Archives, and Museums are likely to be here for the foreseeable future though they will definitely change. We may need to develop new metaphors to describe them.**

- **Library as collection, coffee house, global community, brain, ideas and engagement, destination, and global bookstore are a few possibilities**
- **Archives as history vault, treasure chest, scholars portal**
- **Museums as store, exploratorium, classroom, cathedral, window to the world**