Futures for Academic Libraries

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Public Goods

Public good (Samuelson):

“Each individual’s consumption of that good leads to no subtraction from any other individual’s consumption of that good.”
"Its peculiar character, too, is that no one possesses the less, because every other possesses the whole of it. He who receives an idea from me, receives instruction himself without lessening mine; as he who lights his taper at mine, receives light without darkening me."

"Inventions then cannot, in nature, be a subject of property."
The library provides . . .

Access

Reliability

Provenance

Authority ?

All of which are essential for scholarship
Ideas must be conveyed to qualify as ideas.

And those ideas need to be in libraries so that others can access them.
Libraries and scholarship
Some economics of libraries

You are here
If you are going to have a university, you are going to have a library.

(If you are going to have anything where you need to keep information in places where it can be reliably reused, you are going to have a library.)
What does this mean?

**Cost for users:** relatively low
- Time
- Research
- Travel

**Cost for libraries:** relatively high
- Building
- Infrastructure
- Maintenance
- Staff
- Acquisitions
- And on . . .
Digitization can change it all

You are here
Once Upon a Time, Printing...

Was expensive, and Publishers, librarians, & tenure review committees were happy.

Now it essentially costless, and everyone is miserable.
Was also once expensive and is now cheap, and woe is us.

What’s wrong with this picture?

The business model no longer fits the business(es).
Cheap copying ought to help

Publication facilitates collaboration, standing on the shoulders of both giants and pygmies, which is the fundamental method

And new information technology greatly reduces the cost of publication, improving access across time and space . . .
Except for the most arcane materials and users, that which is not available online will simply not be read.
2. Choose a search set

- General Interest
- Arts
- Business + Economics
- Engineering
- Government Info.
- Health Sciences
- Humanities
- News/Current Events
- Science
- Social Sciences
- Kresge Library
  Business School resources...

1. Enter word(s):

Example: marx and economics
cancer or neoplasm or carcinoma
Information/Artifact
Libraries are worth a lot

Google Checks Out Library Books

The Libraries of Harvard, Stanford, the University of Michigan, the University of Oxford, and The New York Public Library Join with Google to Digitally Scan Library Books and Make Them Searchable Online.

MOUNTAIN VIEW, Calif. - December 14, 2004 - As part of its effort to make offline information searchable online, Google Inc. (NASDAQ: GOOG) today announced that it is working with the libraries of Harvard, Stanford, the University of Michigan, and the University of Oxford as well as The New York Public Library to digitally scan books from their collections so that users worldwide can search them in Google.

"The libraries of Harvard, Stanford, the University of Michigan, the University of Oxford, and The New York Public Library Join with Google to Digitally Scan Library Books and Make Them Searchable Online."
Provisioning we can access the materials.
The goal of copyright

“\nThe Congress shall have the Power...To promote the Progress of Science and the useful Arts, by securing for limited times to Authors and Inventors the exclusive right to their respective Writings and Discoveries . . . \n”

The original requirements for gaining copyright protection (i.e., registration, publication, & limited scope and endurance) were more consistent with “learning” and promoting access than with promoting property.
Copyright

Flowchart for determining copyright status

1. Published before January 1, 1923?
   - Yes: Expired
   - No: Published before January 1, 1978?

2. Published before January 1, 1949?
   - Yes: Was copyright registration renewed in year preceding the 28th anniversary of publication?
   - No: Published before January 1, 1969?

3. Published before January 1, 1969?
   - Yes: Published before January 1, 1978?
   - No: Expires later of:
     - (1) December 31, 2047, or
     - (2) Date of expiration that applies to works not created (fixed) before January 1, 1978 (see bottom right of chart).

4. Expires later of:
   - (1) December 31, 2022, or
   - (2) Date of expiration that applies to works not created (fixed) before January 1, 1978 (see bottom right of chart).

5. Published before January 1, 2009?
   - Yes: Was for hire, anonymous, or pseudonymous?
   - No: expires at earlier of:
     - (1) 95 years from publication, or
     - (2) 120 years from creation.

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The street value of copyright

Out of print: \( \approx 95\% \)

Presumed in copyright: 66.6%

Unknown: 5%

Public domain: 28.4%

UM’s print collection: 7.3 million volumes
IP laws are increasingly acting as fences, preventing important research from occurring.
An example

**Project:**
documentary on the evolution of video games and gaming culture

**Items to be included:**
television coverage, commentary, advertisements, clips from games and movies, interviews
And the barriers it hits

Rights to be cleared:
producers, television networks, actors, game
authors & designers, game, publishers, advertising
agencies, advertising publishers, copyrighted material in games,
movie publishers, parent companies, movie directors & producers, subjects . . .
Elements of a solution

Revise individual libraries’ missions to exploit the technology

- Sharing and scale
- Local layers on top
- (cataloging as poster child)
Elements of a solution

Digitize wherever possible, and use digital copies wherever appropriate
- Information to Artifact continuum
- PoD in lots of settings

Preserve and curate the old and the new

Provenance and Reliability in Digital Media
- Requires very strong collective institutional commitments from nonprofits.

(Display the treasures)

Teach Scholarly Method (remember the undergrads)
And wants it to serve the institution, as inexpensively as possible, which means
• Support Scholarship
• Teach School
• Save money (could be lots)
• Make the place look good

Keep the Faculty Happy

Demand Demand Demand Demand
In the U.S., we don’t have institutions that are organized at the scale and scope that the technology allows (except for Microsoft and Google, an instructive tale.)

The institutions that we do have (notably the publishing industry) don’t much want to become something else, and why would they? (Schumpeter on creative destruction.)

The university itself is not exempt, but the library is both a likely and a good place to start.
Two Futures