

## A work session for journalists, librarians and citizens

April 6-7, 2011 / MIT / Cambridge, Mass.

(immediately prior to the

National Conference for Media Reform)

# BEYOND BOOKS



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## NEWS, LITERACY, DEMOCRACY AND AMERICA'S LIBRARIES

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For three centuries, in American towns large and small, two institutions have uniquely marked a commitment to participatory democracy, learning and open inquiry -- our libraries and our free press. Today, as their tools change, their mission of civic engagement and information transparency converge. Economic and technology changes suggest an opportunity for collaboration among these two historic community information centers -- one largely public, one largely private. How?

On Wednesday and Thursday, April 6 and 7, 2011, [Journalism That Matters](#), the American Library Association, the [MIT Center for Future Civic Media](#), the [Media Giraffe Project](#) at UMass Amherst and the [New England News Forum](#) invite you to join "Beyond Books: News, Literacy, Democracy and America's Libraries," a work session for civic engagement and information transparency, in Cambridge, Mass., immediately prior to the [National Conference for Media Reform](#).

With via a pre-event social network, an evening agenda-setting dialogue, a day of roundtable planning and action commitments, we'll discover what's possible at the intersection of public spaces, open documents, citizen reporting and journalistic purpose. Questions we may ask:

- What might libraries do to facilitate community social news networks?
- Must free speech be absolute within a taxpayer-supported institution?
- How do we define the boundaries between engagement and partisanship?
- As cable fades, are libraries poised to become public-access media centers?
- Should a library operate a news collective, non-profit or citizen-journalism service?
- How can libraries help preserve a free digital information commons?

For more information and to register go to:

<http://www.biblionews.org>



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## EVENT DETAIL

“Beyond Books: News, Literacy, Democracy and America’s Library – A Work Session for Journalists, Librarians and Citizens,” is a two-day event on April 6-7 at the MIT Center for Future Civic Media culminating in a free public event at the Cambridge [Mass.] Public Library. ( See: <http://www.bibliionews.org> and “Project Narrative,” attached) It will consider how journalists and librarians can work together to promote civic engagement and open information access. It is designed to engage the voices of between 80 and 120 librarians, teachers, graduate students, journalists, technologists, scholars and citizens in dialog, discussion and work.

Besides the SOIS, other co-convenors of the April 6-7 event include the Library Leadership & Management Association, the MIT Center for Future Civic Media, the Cambridge [Mass.] Public Library, Journalism That Matters (JTM) the New England News Forum, and the Media Giraffe Project at the University of Massachusetts-Amherst.

The event seeks to identify recruit, and begin training journalists, technologists and other members of the public to uncover, study and test new methods of access to public information and civic engagement, particularly in common purpose between and among libraries, journalists and local news providers. It will:

- (a) Outreach to library and information- science thought leaders, especially graduate students, for their participation both on site and through extensive pre- and post-event virtual proceedings and networking.
- (b) Prepare, convene, report and provide post-event assessment and next steps for “Beyond Books: News, Literacy, Democracy and America’s Libraries.”





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## **“BIBLIONNEWS / BEYOND BOOKS”** **PROJECT NARRATIVE**

For three centuries, in American towns large and small, two institutions have uniquely marked a commitment to participatory democracy, learning and open inquiry -- our libraries and our free press.

Today, as their tools change, their mission of civic engagement and information transparency converge. Economic and technology changes suggest an opportunity for collaboration among these two historic community information centers -- one largely public, one largely private -- to eliminate barriers to information access and civic engagement. How?

On Wednesday and Thursday, April 6 and 7, 2011, the Library and Leadership Management Association, [Journalism That Matters](#), the MIT [Center for Future Civic Media](#), the [Media Giraffe Project](#) at UMass Amherst, the Cambridge Public Library and the [New England News Forum](#) will facilitate a symposium and work session for civic information transparency that builds from and beyond books.

This work session for journalists, librarians, scholars and engaged citizens is entitled: “Beyond Books: News, Literacy, Democracy and America’s Libraries.” Via a pre-event social network, an evening agenda-setting dialogue, a day of roundtable planning and closing action commitments, we’ll discover what’s possible at the intersection of public spaces, open documents, citizen reporting and journalistic purpose.

The capability of newspapers to provide community information is declining. At the same time, informal sources of local information are rapidly increasing.

Libraries and legacy media have always shared a common purpose - helping us acquire the information we need to be engaged, informed (and entertained) citizens. They used different tools - newspapers, broadcast stations and books. Now the tools are converging - web search, data taxonomies, database creation and analysis, social networks - as librarians and journalists together foster civic literacy and engagement.

Librarians want to expand public access to accurate information, including trustworthy local news. So do journalists. How do we expand libraries as community information centers beyond books - perhaps even beyond their four walls -- facilitating and engaging with journalists? What can libraries and journalists do -- together -- to foster improved access to community information?

Thus, as the tools and mission converge, it's time to ask: "What's possible at the intersection of libraries and journalism that serves the information needs of communities and democracy?"

## **SYMPOSIUM OBJECTIVES**

- CONVENE -- Bring together thought-leaders in journalism and libraries/information science, especially among graduate students who are already “digital literate.”
- EDUCATE -- Identify professional development process (including courses and programs) for librarians who want to understand how to reach out to “unexpected” collaborators such as journalists (legacy and new), forming common purpose around community engagement, access to information and civic-issues discussion.
- TECHNOLOGY -- Understand how tech convergence is bringing the tools of the journo/library silos closer. Define the resources which need to be created to apply social networking and other technologies.
- COLLABORATE -- Focus on understanding and building clearer rules of the road for public-sector / private-sector collaboration on civic, engagement, literacy and information-access issues.
- PROCESS -- Through the “Beyond Books” gathering itself, demonstrate a new form of public engagement through the “open-space” convening approach that could be used by library leaders in community settings.

## **CONVENING QUESTIONS**

Journalism That Matters events use principles of “Open Space” to foster dialogue, discussion and participant-created agendas. We surround this format with significant, web- and multi-media pre- and post-convening support to ensure specific outcomes. Among some of the convening questions we are likely to address:

- What might libraries do to facilitate community social news networks?
- Must free speech be absolute within a taxpayer-supported institution?
- How do we define the boundaries between engagement and partisanship?
- As cable fades, are libraries poised to become public-access media centers?
- Should a library operate a news collective, non-profit or citizen-journalism service?
- How can libraries help preserve a free digital information commons?

## **WHO IS INVOLVED**

With support from IMLS, the Beyond Books organizing group will be able to underwrite travel and lodging stipends to bring at least 10 graduate students from U.S. schools of library and information science to Cambridge April 6 and 7.

A growing list of experts at librarianship, civic engagement, journalism and new media are confirmed as participants in “Beyond Books.” The most undated list may be found online at: <http://www.journalismthatmatters.org/bibliionews/whos-coming>

## **ABOUT JOURNALISM THAT MATTERS**

Journalism That Matters has been conceiving and conducting seminars and conferences since 2001 which seek to bring journalists out of their “silo” for ground-breaking engagement with technologists, media-literacy experts, citizen journalists, social scientists and under-represented communities. This is our first collaboration with MIT and its Center for Future Civic Media.

More than 10 public events have been held in locations like Santa Clara, Calif., Kalamazoo, Mich., Amherst, Mass., St. Louis, Seattle, Washington, D.C., Memphis, Tenn., Detroit, Mich., Minneapolis, Minn. and Philadelphia.

JTM has a history of partnering with academic institutions including The George Washington University, the University of Washington, University of Massachusetts, the University of Minnesota, St. Petersburg, Fla., the Donald W. Reynolds Journalism Institute at the Missouri School of Journalism, Yahoo Inc.

Foundations which have supported JTM’s work include the Kellogg Foundation, the Ford Foundation, Mott Foundation, Park Foundation, Fetzer Institute, Blandin Foundation, Scripps-Howard Foundation, Knight Foundation and others.

In December, 2010, Journalism That Matters became a not-for-profit corporation organized in the state of Washington. A request for 501(c)3 tax status is pending with the U.S. Internal Revenue Service. It’s directors include Michael Fancher, retired executive editor of The Seattle Times; Christopher Peck, editor of the Memphis Commercial Appeal; Stephen Silha, former chairman of the Washington News Council, Peggy Holman, author and institutional change facilitator; Bill Densmore, director, Media Giraffe Project and Michelle Ferrier, professor, Elon University.

### **About Bill Densmore**

Bill Densmore is director of the Media Giraffe Project and the New England News Forum, both research efforts in the journalism program at the University of Massachusetts Amherst. He is also a director of Journalism That Matters and a 2008-2009 Fellow at the Donald W. Reynolds Journalism Institute of the Missouri School of Journalism. He is president of CircLabs Inc., and founder of Clickshare Service Corp., two Internet technology companies, and former publisher of weekly newspapers in Berkshire County, Mass. He lives in Williamstown, Mass.

MORE: <http://newshare.typepad.com/about.html> / <http://tinyurl.com/densmore>

### **About Peggy Holman**

Peggy Holman is a cofounder and executive director of Journalism That Matters. She consults with organizations and communities, increasing their ability to achieve what is most important to them through growing their capacity for inviting the emergence of new ideas and relationships. She is a co-founder of the Open Space Institute (US). Her first book is *The Change Handbook: Group Methods for Shaping the Future* (Berrett-Koehler, 1999), co-edited with Tom Devane. Peggy’s latest book, *Engaging Emergence: Turning Upheaval into Opportunity*, (Sept. 2010) supports people in facing disruptions and inviting others to join with them to realize new possibilities. It uses numerous journalism stories as examples.

MORE: <http://peggyholman.com/about/>

**SOME**  
**CONFIRMED PARTICIPANTS**  
**(as of Feb. 23)**

**Libraries/museums**

1. Susan Flannery, director, Cambridge Public Library, Cambridge, Mass.
2. [Alan Inouye, Ph.D.](#), director, [Office for Information Technology Policy](#), American Library Association, Washington, D.C.
3. [Barbara M. Jones](#), director, [Office for Intellectual Freedom](#), Amer. Library Assn., Chicago
4. [Nancy C. Kranich](#), advisory board chair, American Library Association's [Center for Public Life](#). (and past ALA president) / Rutgers Univ. library, Highland Park, N.J.
5. Jacqueline Rafferty, president, [Mass. Library Assn.](#) / director, Paul Pratt Memorial Library, Cohasset, Mass.
6. [Donna Nicely](#), member, [Knight Commission on the Information Needs of Communities](#) / director, Nashville (Tenn.) Public Library
7. [Laurie Norton Moffatt](#), CEO/director, the [Norman Rockwell Museum](#), Stockbridge, Mass. ([Four Freedoms Forums](#))
8. Leigh Montgomery, chair-elect, news division, [Special Libraries Association](#) / newsroom librarian, The Christian Science Monitor, Boston (a)
9. [David Weinberger](#), author, "Too Big to Know" (forthcoming book) / co-director, [Harvard Library Innovation Lab](#), Cambridge, Mass.

**Engagement experts**

10. [Linda Fantin](#), assoc. director, [Public Insight Network](#), American Public Media, St. Paul, Minn.
11. [R. David Lankes](#), author, "[The Atlas of New Librarianship](#)" / director, Information Institute of Syracuse University, Syracuse, N.Y.
12. [Fabrice Florin](#), founder, [NewsTrust.net](#), Mill Valley, Calif. (a)
13. [Alison Head](#) / [Project Information Literacy](#), Univ. of Washington
14. [Peter Levine](#), director, [CIRCLE](#), Tufts University, Medford, Mass.
15. [Ray Oldenburg](#), author, "[The Great Good Place.](#)" retired sociologist, Pensacola, Fla.
16. [Richard Rowe](#), chairman/ceo, [Open Learning Exchange](#), Belmont, Mass.

**Researchers**

17. [Renee Hobbs](#), professor and director, [Media Education Lab](#) at Temple University, Philadelphia, Penn. (a)
18. [Dietmar Wolfram](#), acting dean, School of Information Studies, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee
19. [Charles Benton](#), Chairman and CEO, [Benton Foundation](#), Evanston, Ill.

**Media/Journalism**

20. [Joe Bergantino](#), director/co-founder, [New England Center for Investigative Reporting](#) at Boston University (a)
21. [Tom Flanigan](#), board president, [Institute for 21st Century Agoras](#), Barrington, RI