



## **BEYOND BOOKS:**

### News, Literacy and Democracy in America's Libraries

*A work session for journalists, librarians and citizens*

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

*(immediately prior to the [National Conference for Media Reform](#))*

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, economic and political realities – or fashions – invite a thoughtful examination of their roles, and the opportunity for collaboration among these two historic community information centers, one largely public, one largely private.

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 in a work session for civic information transparency that builds from and beyond books.

With 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. Among the questions we may ask:

- What might libraries do to facilitate community social news networks?
- Must free speech be absolute within a taxpayer-supported institution?
- Should librarians be more partisan than reporters? Reporters more partisan than librarians?
- Are libraries poised to become public-access media centers as cable fades?
- 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.billionews.org>