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## THREADS POSTSCRIPT

That was a lot to absorb, and you may be swimming a bit. I also can't end the narrative section of the Atlas without addressing the question I get at the end of every presentation on new librarianship: What exactly should I do now? OK, standard caveats apply here about how your context and your community will ultimately dictate the answer to that, but here is a plan of action to at least get you started. I'll break down my advice by the potential readers I outlined in the introduction.

### PRACTITIONERS

Practitioners, the first thing you should do is start mapping the conversation as outlined in the Assessment Agreement in the "Communities" Thread. Ideally, this should be part of a larger strategic planning process where you build a demographic profile of your service community to identify the stakeholder groups in the community (so students, faculty, staff or teens, seniors, businesses, etc.). With this map in hand, you can begin a substantive dialog (read: have meetings and focus groups) first with internal staff (if you have any) and then with representatives of the identified stakeholder groups (who you have already engaged and identified as part of mapping their conversations) to ask the question, "How can we help make this community a better place?" This is the first real step to developing a new social compact.

The central point of this discussion should be the map, but it should also make clear your mission and values. The map of the conversations should be as expansive as possible, directly linking to usage data of existing services, artifacts used as part of the community conversations, census data, transcripts of the focus groups, and so on. In fact, my hope is that these maps would be made widely available online so that they can be linked across communities and types of libraries.

Bottom line, don't just sit there; start looking for conversations.

### LIBRARY AND INFORMATION SCIENCE SCHOLARS

On the research side, scholars need to do what they do best. Poke and prod at the framework. Where you find an acceptable generality, fill in the detail in terms of theory, method, and results. Where you find error or can disprove an assertion, do so. I would only ask that if you negate a portion of the Map, you suggest an alternative or a replacement. The field needs the big picture and not just for target practice.

For my colleagues in LIS schools, let us begin in earnest a conversation of curriculum and accreditation with the accrediting agencies. This debate should not be about developing some universal curriculum. Rather, it should be on general principles of preparation (symposia and practica, best practices in co-learning, the formal education ladder, etc.). We must also directly engage with professional library associations and consortia to bring some coherence and sense to continuing education. Note, I did not say bring coherence and sense to the consortia, but rather partner with them so the lines between learning and practice, school and profession, and professor and mentor melt into a rich tapestry of opportunities.

To make that concrete, I recommend creating a central service where providers of instruction can register their opportunities and learners can seek out these opportunities. The system should allow the creation of recommended learning plans that a learner can adopt and annotate. The system should also allow materials, webcasts, podcasts, and the like to be added and from the service embedded into websites and learning management systems. I, of course, would recommend these materials be organized around the Atlas concepts of core values and skills, but not exclusively. For those who prefer, say, ALA's core competencies or SLA's competencies, the materials should be mapped to this system.

Of course such a system should not be just a set of links to artifacts but should allow real ongoing conversations about the things librarians need to know and the sequence in which they need to learn them. Such a system could be used as part of accreditation statements as well.

### STUDENTS

Demand more. Demand more input into your classes. Demand more and continued access to the field. Demand more than an apprenticeship program. The reason you need to encounter more friction during your education is not so you get worn down but more finely honed.

Just as innovation in librarianship is no longer confined to the academy, neither are you. The work you do, your assignments, can now form a working service, a living portfolio. Take an interest you have (reading, NASCAR, science fiction, knitting, whatever) and go out and build a community to serve. Maybe you will do this as a place-based service in your local community, but increasingly you can go online.

Identify the potential members and their conversations. Then build services around that community to facilitate conversations. Don't worry about the collection; remember the community is your collection. Use open source software, or the plethora of hosted solutions (or build it in Facebook), and provide real services to real members every day. Refine the services with every class. Once it has a substantial level of use, either make it your job or take it to a potential employer. Instead of asking for a job with a transcript, you can make the hiring institution a proposal: Hire me and I come with experience and a community for your organization.

## MEMBERS

Demand more. Your library should be staffed by the most amazing information professionals you can imagine. If all they do is organize a collection, you are losing out. As a member, you should have a voice in how the library is run and the services it offers. Of course this comes with the responsibility to be part of those services. Offer to answer questions in your area of expertise. Offer to share a collection that will be of use to the larger community. Translate interfaces and build foreign language guides if you're fluent in another language. Invite the librarians into your communities. Host an "Ask a librarian" night at your church, temple, mosque, business, or school.

Most important, when the librarian asks you what you are talking about or asks about the biggest problems you are dealing with, tell them. Don't just tell them the ones you assume the librarians can help you with because you never know.

## THE WHOLE COMMUNITY OF LIBRARIANSHIP

Our next task, yours and mine, is to seek out those who share our views and together form a movement. With that movement we will engage those who disagree. We shall sit and listen and adopt their best ideas, hoping that as we do so, they will adopt ours. Then we will work hard to refine our ideas, seek out best practices, and all the time continue talking and informing each other, becoming a participatory network.

This doesn't mean we need a new conference because every conference should be about new librarianship. We don't need a new organization, a new mailing list, or a new journal. Instead, every journal on librarianship should be about new librarianship; every list, every organization. We will assume roles of leadership when offered. In

time, we will discard any modifiers like "participatory" and "new" and simply be librarians, part of a better society, respected by our communities, and devoted to our members.



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# The Atlas of New Librarianship

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