



Transforming the Research Library Workforce: A Scenarios Approach

ARL Fall Forum
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+ The Four Scenarios



#1: Research Entrepreneurs



#2: Re-Use and Re-Cycle



#3: Disciplines in Charge

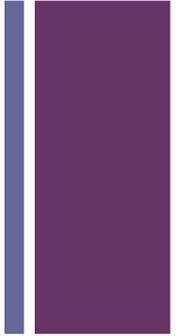


#4: Global Followers





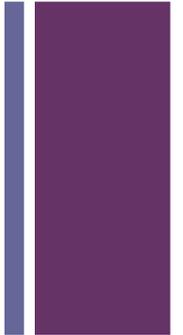
RLLF Project Objectives



- To walk the scenarios out a bit further (imagine what the research library might look like?)
- To test the use of scenarios as a planning / discussion tool with current, aspiring and future research library leaders
- use the ARL scenarios as a lens through which to view workforce transformation.
- To make clear recommendations for how ARL libraries prepare for various futures



Facilitated Conversations



- RLLF Fellows (October 2011)
- ARL Directors (May 2012)
- UCLA Senior Fellows (facilitated by Dr. C. Lowry) (August 2012)

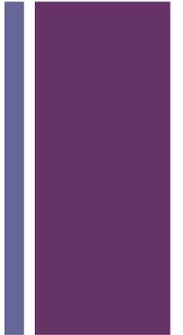
What will Hannah need?
If there is a library, what will it look like?
What skills, competencies will be needed?
How should we prepare?



KEY FINDINGS



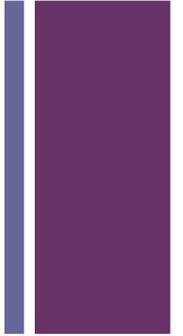
Reactions



- Future is not always heartening.
 - Re-use / Re-cycle scenario “grim.” (RLLF)
 - “We are not on this track. Are becoming obsolete” (UCLA)
- Mixed emotions: “exciting but frightening.” (UCLA)
- ARL Directors less alarmed by what they saw. Less concerned or surprised that they did not explicitly see the library in Hannah’s world.

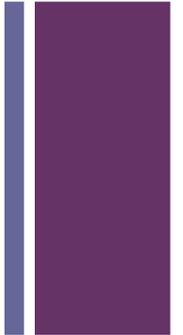


Critical Importance of the Conversation



- “Need to distribute understanding through our organizations” (ARL Directors)
- Put the local situation into a **global context** for library staff (ARL Directors)
- Prepare senior university administration (“do not see the changes coming or the potential roles”) (ARL Directors)

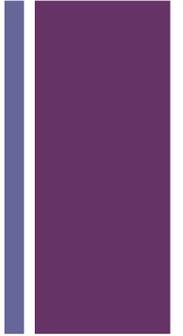
+ Size of the workforce



- Clear recognition from all groups that the size of the workforce will diminish
- Fewer staff for traditional face-to-face services (circulation, reference, instruction)
- Need “virtual teams with remote contributions” (ARL Directors)



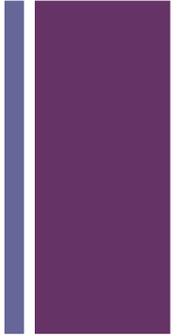
Composition of the Workforce



- Fewer lower-skilled staff
- A greater mix of credentials: Librarians working along side other professions (GIS specialists, data specialists...)



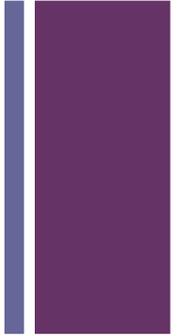
Collaboration: No longer optional



- “The granular institution-specific approach to information resources is unsustainable.” (ARL Directors)
- The concept of the single author, single institution is gone, especially in STEM. (ARL Directors)
- “Librarians take unique information resources and expertise and work with other institutions to be **mega-library brokers.**” (ARL Directors)



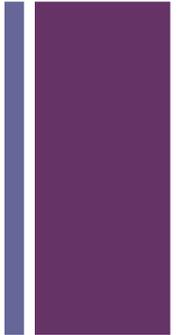
Data Management / Curation



- Are no longer in the business of providing access to peer-reviewed literature. (RLLF)
- Key roles: preserving and curating data, advocating for open access.
- “Info professionals are expert navigators who build portals and guide researchers to credible, authentic data.” (UCLA Fellows)



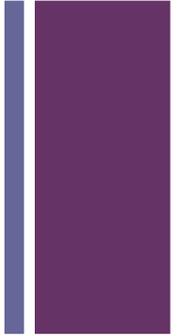
The Librarian



- Continued importance in our organizations.
 - Small number suggested forgoing MLS in favour of advanced degrees with library-like certificate
- Components of the old skill set no longer valuable. Dramatic retooling required.
- Diminished role for “teaching and learning” in the 2020 university. Instruction is important now, but isn’t our future. (RLLF, ARL Directors)
- Role will change to more of an “informationist” (with focus on big data) and a “collaborationist” (connecting researchers with other researchers, grant funding, etc.) (UCLA)



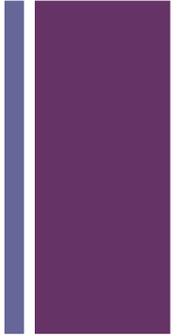
New Skills & Competencies



- Agility: “If stuck in a traditional mindset, will impede the organization.” (ARL Directors)
- Deep subject expertise. Less room for generalists.
- Deep IT skills
- Intellectual property / rights management
- Dramatically enhanced cultural and linguistic diversity, cultural sensitivities (RLLF)



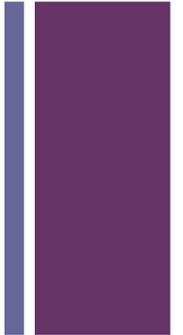
New Skills & Competencies



- Entrepreneurialism (creativity, project management, leadership, fundraising, competitive intelligence, “marketing on steroids,” risk taking (ARL Directors))
- New literacies (geospatial literacies, data visualization...)
- Capacity for supporting deep collaboration with faculty. “A broker of deep collaborations with others.” (UCLA)



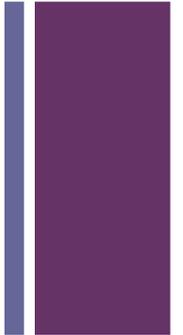
Preparing for the Future: Recruiting



- Hire for competencies (technology skills, deep data, deep subject, cultural / language skills, etc.) rather than credentials.
- Hire for “potential” (attitudes, aptitudes) rather than “years of experience” (ARL Directors)
- Create career opportunities with new titles and new responsibilities to attract non-MLS professionals (ARL Directors)



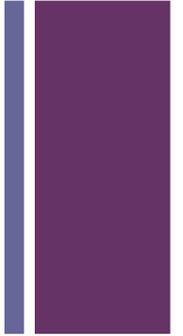
Preparing for the Future: Recruiting



- Compensate for responsibilities (at levels that compete with the market place).
- Directors see a larger role for themselves in recruiting the right people – become “hands-on” for all professional hires. (ARL Directors)



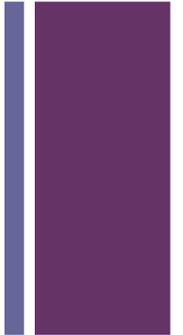
Preparing for the Future: Retraining & Retooling



- Streamline current workflow. Eliminate routine work wherever possible. Free up existing capacity and repurpose them.
- Get staff out of the library (“see and be seen” on campus)
- Offer rich training & development opportunities as broadly as possible.
 - Cultivate your “stars” selectively (offer deep opportunities to those who are the most receptive).
- Embed librarians in research teams now (even small projects).
- Cultivate data management / digital scholarship skills now.



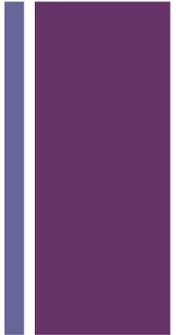
Preparing for the Future: Retooling & Retraining



- Seek out real and meaningful collaboration projects with other institutions (test relationships, pilot radical concepts, and just do it!...)
- Create a “culture of collaboration” between MLS and non-MLS within our organizations
- Reshape, restructure and redefine MLS or MLIS education (to more closely reflect our future needs)
- Be ready to disrupt the organization at least in small ways to affect change.
- Selectively forget the past. Streamline the present. Work to the future.



Future of the Research Project



- Near term outcomes:
 - ARL Fall Forum presentation (today)
 - Publication for ARL Research Library Issues (RLI)

- Long term outcomes:
 - ?

- Questions for the Audience
 - What alternative channels of communication should we pursue?
 - Are there other people or groups we should bring into the conversation?
 - What is the best way to use these findings to affect current practice in ARL libraries?



Questions