Introduction

The explosion of large amounts of digital research data available to historians creates a demand for academic librarians to develop a new collaborative role with researchers and computer technologists. This literature review revealed opportunities and barriers to the progression of collaborative digital humanities projects between historical researchers, academic librarians, and computer technologists.

What the Literature Revealed

- Barriers to Collaboration
  - Smaller academic institutions do not have digital resources or partnerships with larger institutions.
  - Brick and mortar structures seen as outdated and inconvenient; internet has all the answers.
  - Digital content growing too quickly; how to keep up?
  - Reluctance to change on the part of faculty and librarians.
  - Librarians need to be more proactive about professional development and seeking out partnerships in digital humanities via campus meetings and digital humanities conferences.

- Innovative Institutions

Potential Solutions

- Education and training for librarians already in the work force.
- Librarians and faculty partnering in instruction for students in digital research methods.
- Collaboration between researchers, librarians, and computer technologists from the beginning of digital humanities projects.
- Change in perception from service-oriented librarianship to an equal, skilled partner in digital humanities projects.
- Reference interview becomes a “browseability” interview and a mutual give and take of information between librarian and researcher.

The Librarian is Key to Collaboration & Resources

“Librarians are almost always helpful and often almost absurdly knowledgeable. Their skills are probably very underestimated and largely underemployed.”
- Charles Medawar

“In the non-stop tsunami of global information, librarians provide us with floaties and teach us to swim.”
- Linton Weeks

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