Ways to Disrupt the Boundaries between Campus and Community

For everyone: Shift your understanding of your library’s mission to recognize that the library, even at an elite private university, exists to serve the community beyond students and faculty directly enrolled or employed at your institution.

We want to create the Third Library out of the First (and Second) Library. How do you think we ought to get started?

For those who implement library services: Know that a “service mentality” can be a powerful way to start a collaboration, but also a potential point of exploitation.

For those who develop library services: Be prepared to change your library’s mission statement to backstop these new priorities.

For those who perform outreach: Know that some of these projects might be in opposition to the priorities of university administrators and boards: in some cases, be willing to articulate their impact on traditional university stakeholders while fighting to expand what leadership considers a vital library project.

For those who perform research or instruction: Work with library partners to build a network of relationships to subvert traditional academic hierarchies.

For those whose roles are situated outside traditional academic structures: The onus of collaborating and outreach should not always be on community members who lack formal institutional affiliation.