

Within the physical library, one could argue that collections have represented the most important element, with services and infrastructure supporting the collections. In the digital world, these elements are becoming blurred. It may be appropriate to assert that the *principles* by which libraries (and archives and museums) have operated remain valid, but the *practices* need to be reconsidered. Not surprisingly, libraries are facing new challenges, and opportunities, with the development of infrastructure to support digital collections and services.

At the heart of this infrastructure development effort is the repository. There are many definitions for repository, but for the purpose of this discussion, the most useful one is offered by Cliff Lynch who stated a “repository is a set of services that a university offers to the members of its community for the management and dissemination of digital materials created by the institution and its community members. It is most essentially an organizational commitment to the stewardship of these digital materials, including long-term preservation where appropriate, as well as organization and access or distribution.” (<http://www.arl.org/newsltr/226/ir.html>)

The emphasis on both services and preservation is particularly noteworthy. From a preservation perspective, it is important to note that both open standards and open source augment our ability to support digital preservation. (http://www.ils.unc.edu/callee/oss_preservation.htm) From the service perspective, the types of viewing, manipulation, and repurposing envisaged by a growing number of classicists, and summarized by Greg Crane (<http://www.dlib.org/dlib/march06/crane/03crane.html>) almost certainly require complete access to digital texts, raising important questions about large-scale digitization efforts such as the Google Book Search and the Open Content Alliance. (<http://www.opencontentalliance.org>).

As an example, consider that there is a growing emphasis on tools that support classification and organization of content along various dimensions (instead of relying upon classification by traditional library-based approaches), allowing researchers to assemble multiple lenses into corpora, or even create “virtual collections” that represent “mashups” of content and services from multiple sources. Additionally, as disciplines embrace data-driven scholarship, the connections between data and the analysis of such data may lead to new forms of “publication” that include both results and tools for processing data. The Johns Hopkins Libraries are building such a data curation system for astronomers; it will be interesting and important to determine if such systems can be adopted for use by humanists.

How will various digitization efforts compare in their ability to support new modes of digital scholarship for classicists? Are the libraries involved with Google Book Search (<http://books.google.com/>) providing only part of the solution? Even more disconcerting is the idea that these libraries, though well intentioned, may even inhibit the ability of scholars to work with digital texts in a manner that supports new scholarship. Will Google work with the scholarly community to build tools and services, or only consider commercial opportunities? How can the Open Content Alliance be engaged to maximize the benefits to the scholarly community? Without an explicit consideration of such questions, the entire academic community runs the risk of creating digital libraries that support only limited use of content and constrained development of services.