

History Has Its Eyes on You: Lighthouses and Libraries Weathering Storms of Change

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Great Lakes Resource Sharing Conference

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<http://tinyurl.com/SeemanGLRS2017>

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Program Outline

- Introduction
- Lighthouses Then and Now
- Lighthouses as “Public Good”
- Libraries as “Public Good”
- Connections for Librarians
- Future Challenges for Resource Sharing
- Envisioning the Library of the Future

South Haven (MI) Light

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About the title....

- Comes from Lin-Manuel Miranda's Brilliant Musical, *Hamilton*.
- Song titles can be used in practically any context (3rd time I have used it in my presentations).
- George Washington sings to Hamilton:
*I was younger than you are now
When I was given my first command
I led my men straight into a massacre
I witnessed their deaths firsthand
I made every mistake
And felt the shame rise in me
And even now I lie awake
Knowing history has its eyes on me*



Alexander Hamilton Statue
– Central Park, NYC (2017)

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Lighthouses Then and Now



Sandy Hook (NJ)
Lighthouse

- Boston Light – first lighthouse in the United States (first lit in 1716)
- Sandy Hook NJ is the oldest working light (1764)
- Fort Gratiot – Oldest in the Midwest (1829)



Fort Gratiot Lighthouse
(Port Huron, MI)

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Lighthouses Then and Now

- Long, long before Boston, Sandy Hook and Fort Gratiot, there was a lighthouse in Alexandria (Pharos of Alexandria), Egypt that was one of the Seven Wonders of the Western World.
- It is estimated that it stood 103-118 meters tall – or 2x taller than Old Barney (NJ) – our 4th tallest light.
- Also in Alexandria was possibly the most famous library of all times.



Barnegat Lighthouse
(Long Beach Island, NJ)

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Lighthouses Then and Now

- Location of lighthouses along the ocean shores and great lakes were strategic.
- Lights were naturally placed in harbors (often range lights) and along the shore.
- Lights are typically 20 miles apart because light could be seen around 10 miles.
- Each light had their own signature pattern for the lamp as well as a unique pattern for daytime identification.




Absecon Lighthouse
(Atlantic City, NJ)

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Lighthouses Then and Now

- Lighthouse automation changed everything. Electrical lights were introduced in the 19th Century.
- Automation of lights started as early as the 1920s, but took place in greater fashion after World War II.




McGulpin Point Lighthouse
(Mackinaw City, MI)

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Lighthouses Then and Now

- Ship radar and navigation tools have become more sophisticated.
- Even smaller vessels are *likely* to have GPS tools to help them find safe harbor.

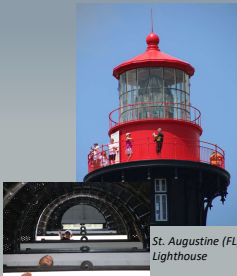


Freighter Philip C. Clarke passing Port Huron (MI) on the St. Clair River

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Lighthouses Then and Now

- Changing roles and function of lighthouses.
- Now, primarily historic sites and tourist attractions.
- Some through State Parks and National Park Service.
- Buildings are not well suited for repurposing.
- Transition from life saving to educational and cultural roles.




St. Augustine (FL) Lighthouse

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Lighthouses Then and Now

- While their functions and value have changed, the lights are still lit at night.
- There is a value in providing these aids to navigation.
- There may be small vessels that do not have advanced radar that larger ships have.
- To argue that we do not need lighthouses is to argue that all books are online. Not there yet.



Round Island Lighthouse
(Mackinac Island, MI)

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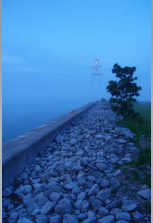
Lighthouses as a "Public Good"

- What is a "Public Good"?
- Traditional economists saw lighthouses as a "public good"
- John Stuart Mill in *Principles of Political Economy* (1848) stated:
 - "it is a proper office of government to build and maintain lighthouses, establish buoys, etc. for the security of navigation: for since it is impossible that the ships at sea which are benefited by a lighthouse, should be made to pay a toll on the occasion of its use, no one would build lighthouses for motives of personal interest..." (from Coase, 1974)

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Lighthouses as a "Public Good"

- Paul Samuelson in his *Economics: An Introductory Analysis* (6th Ed, 1964) stated:
 - "Take our earlier case of a lighthouse to warn against rocks. Its beam helps everyone in sight. A businessman could not built it for a profit, since he cannot claim a price for each user. This certainly is the kind of activity that governments would naturally undertake." (from Coase, 1974)
- Other examples from economists including Henry Sidgwick, & A. C. Pigou are shared as well.



Grand Marais (MI) Light


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Lighthouses as a “Public Good”

- In his challenge to the notion of the lighthouse as a “public good”, Coase looked at the British Lighthouse System in the 19th Century.
- Coase connected that the lighthouses in the UK were managed by Trinity House, a private corporation charged by royal charter over 500 years ago (<https://www.trinityhouse.co.uk/about-us/trinity-house-faq>)
- So if the British lighthouses are managed by a private corporation, are their management a “public good?”
- Coase, Ronald H. "The Lighthouse in Economics." *The Journal of Law and Economics* 17.2 (1974): 357-76.


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Lighthouses as a “Public Good”


- Barnett, William, and Walter Block. "Coase and Van Zandt on Lighthouses." *Public Finance Review* 35, 6 (2007): 710.
- Block, Walter, and William Barnett. "Coase and Bertrand on Lighthouses." *Public Choice* 140.1/2 (2009): 1.
- Conway, Hannah Caroline. "Illuminating Science: The Lighthouse as Public Good and the Role of the Scientific Expert in Nineteenth-Century British Lighthouse Reform." ProQuest Dissertations Publishing, 2015.
- Elodie Bertrand. "The Coasean Analysis of Lighthouse Financing: Myths and Realities." *Cambridge Journal of Economics* 30.3 (2006; 2005): 389.
- Krause, Martin. "Buoys and Beacons in Economics." *Journal of Private Enterprise* 30.1 (2015): 45.
- Laurent Carnis. "The Political Economy of Lighthouses: Some further Considerations." *Journal des Economistes et des Etudes Humaines* 20.2 (2014): 143.
- Lindberg, Erik. "From Private to Public Provision of Public Goods: English Lighthouses between the Seventeenth and Nineteenth Centuries." *Journal of Policy History* 25.04 (2013): 538-56.
- Van Zandt, David E. "The Lessons of the Lighthouse: "Government" Or" Private" Provision of Goods." *The Journal of Legal Studies* 22.1 (1993): 47-72.

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Lighthouses as a “Public Good”

- However, the tradition in the United States is for publicly funded and managed aids to navigation.
- 1789-1910 - United States Lighthouse Establishment & United States Lighthouse Board - Department of the Treasury (9th law passed by Congress)
- 1910-1939 - Bureau of Lighthouses - Department of Commerce
- 1939 - Joined the United States Coast Guard - Department of the Treasury (etc.)
 - <http://www.terrypepper.com/lights/lists/chronology.htm>



Little Sable Point Lighthouse (Mears, MI)

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Lighthouses as a “Public Good”

- There is no question that maintaining buoys, towers, lights, lighthouses, daymarks and shapes is an expensive and labor-intensive undertaking. But the unalterable fact is that these physical aids are essential to the safety of navigation on our waterways. Funding this infrastructure is always going to be a challenge. It is my opinion that the Coast Guard is the best organization to provide national-international continuity, and they should receive sufficient funding to provide for the continued maintenance of these critical navigation items.

Captain Lynn Korwatch (executive director of the Marine Exchange of the San Francisco Bay Region) hearing before the Subcommittee on Coast Guard and Maritime Transportation of the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, February 4, 2014. (Finding Your Way: the Future of Federal Aids to Navigation, p. 26)


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Lighthouses as a “Public Good”


- Core element in this discussion is “nonexcludability”
- “In its purest form, non-excludability means that once a good has been created, it is impossible to prevent other people from gaining access to it (or more realistically, is extremely costly to do so).”
 - Blakeley, N., Lewis, G., & Mills, D. (2005). *The Economics of Knowledge: What makes ideas special for economic growth?* New Zealand Treasury.
- Excludability is when you can prevent consumers from getting access to a good or service who have not paid for it.

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Lighthouses as a “Public Good”

- If we think about the true nature of a “Public Good” – it is about providing a service for people who extend beyond who will pay taxes or fees.
- Faro Paredón (Ciego de Avila Province, Cuba) – not near a port and serves as a beacon for all ships traveling north of Cuba. First lit in 1859.

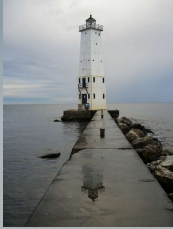


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Lighthouses as a “Public Good”

- Despite the general recognition that lighthouses are an important aspect of a community, they are not funded without restraint.
- The fact that we cannot have maritime travel without them, does not mean that they are impervious to change.
- Constant reflection is needed to chart the course forward.



Frankfort (MI) Light

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Libraries as a “Public Good”

- How many times have we heard that libraries are the “heart of the institution”?
- We are not revenue driven – in fact, we are revenue-averse.
- We look at community outreach at Universities – a large percentage of work for the public good comes from libraries and archives.
- Our goals are to provide services for patrons who are with us now as well as those who will come years from now.



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Libraries as a “Public Good”

- “Critical Librarianship” – a social justice mission for libraries.
- Universities need libraries as a means of acquiring information for the diverse research activities on campus.
- While this hits at the core of an academic campus, does that ensure a library’s longevity?



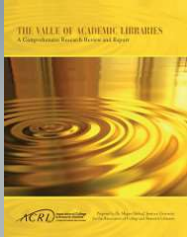
New York Public Library - Schwarzman Building (Fifth Avenue). Quote from 1 Esdras (Book of Ezra)

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Libraries as a “Public Good”

- ACRL Publication 2010
- Oakleaf, M. J. (2010). *The Value of Academic Libraries: A comprehensive research review and report* Association of College and Research Libraries
- Does this reflect a “tipping point”?



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Connections for Librarians

- So where are the connections between Lighthouses and Libraries, especially during dramatic change? Plenty!
- Perception is Reality
- Free Rider Problem
- Different Dynamics of Building Use
- Imagery is Important
- Embracing the Change

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Connections for Librarians

- **Perception is Reality**
- Administrators are looking at space and wondering if it is being used the best it can be?
- Librarians criticize Greta Van Susteren plenty after ‘vanity projects’ comments
- <http://ihenow.com/2ejbBbP>

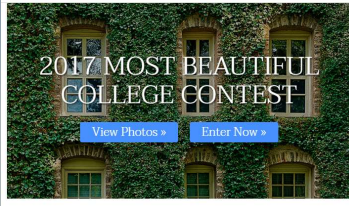


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Connections for Librarians

- Perception is Reality
- Travel + Leisure Photo Contest – June 4th



2017 MOST BEAUTIFUL COLLEGE CONTEST

[View Photos >](#) [Enter Now >](#)

Think your alma mater should top the list? We want to see your best photos from college campuses around the country. Whether it's a breathtaking commons design or jaw-dropping library architecture, show off why your campus deserves the title (and bragging rights) of America's Most Beautiful Campus.

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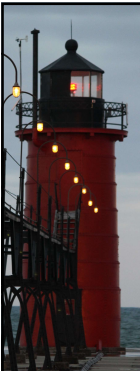
Connections for Librarians

- Free Rider Problem
- Plagues both lighthouses and libraries.
- Both are very large centralized expenses that many members of the community fail to understand the overall value.
- While librarians serve the whole campus, academics primarily are focused on one specific area.
- Do people care about a lighthouse on Isle Royal (MI) or ancient Greek History if they are not your destination or field?



Squirrel at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor


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Connections for Librarians


Different Dynamics of Building Use

- Lighthouses
 - Beautiful
 - Historic
 - Historically significant as architecture
 - No real other purpose except as a home



St. Joseph (MI) Pier Light


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Connections for Librarians


Different Dynamics of Building Use

- Libraries
 - Large
 - Easily repurposed
 - Perception of better use of space by administrators (many reports to this end)
 - Easily flipped into large student space
 - Easily flipped into staff or lab space
 - Easily flipped into anything....




Kresge Business Administration Library (University of Michigan) During Renovation

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Connections for Librarians

- Imagery is Important
- Lighthouses lead you to safety & safe harbor.
- Symbols of harbor communities (Ludington, Michigan – image from an email about the top 10 reasons for locating to Ludington)
- Lighthouses can help when you are lost – provided you see them.



1 | Scenic Harbor Community

It's not going to come as a surprise that one of the best things about living in the Ludington Area is the ambience of small town living on Lake Michigan. Lake visitors, locals enjoy frequenting the beach, walking the break wall to visit the lighthouse, and pulling up in the beach parking lot to watch the sun disappear beyond the horizon. Only we get to do it every day of the year!

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Connections for Librarians

- Imagery is Important
- Libraries have books.
- Libraries are your connection for information.
- “The fountain of wisdom flows through books” inscribed in this library.
- Libraries can help when you are lost – provided you connect with them.




Skillman Branch, Detroit Public Library

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Connections for Librarians

- **Embrace the change**
- Automation started changing lighthouse staffing needs after World War I.
- Automation accelerated after World War II.
- Changing technology enabled lighthouses to operate lighthouses with occasional visits.
- Lighthouses have transitioned to historical sites and museums.



Marblehead (OH)
Lighthouse

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Connections for Librarians

- **Embrace the change**
- Whether we want it or not, things are changing for libraries and on our campuses and communities.
- Education is also changing for higher education in general (Purdue recent purchase of Kaplan University).
- Space demands on campuses that will see us with less real estate.
- New libraries are student spaces, not for print materials.
- Moving back to closed stacks environment (after being open stacks for years).

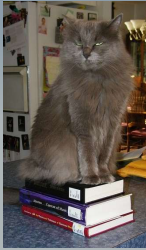


Empty Shelves at Kresge Library
After the Books Left

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Connections for Librarians

- **Embrace the change**
- NOT a library problem of the 21st century.
- Changes in the last 50 years:
 - Copy cataloging
 - Local online catalogs & shared systems
 - Expanded access (TOC, more subject headings)
 - Shared catalogs (MeLCat, etc.)
 - Discovery layers
 - Working papers management → digital repositories
 - Coffee and food in the library
- How many staff are checking in serials?



Wanda Hates eBooks

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Connections for Librarians

- **Embrace the change**
- The Library's challenge is to stay relevant and service oriented, even without all the resources and tools once at our disposal.
- Unlike lighthouses, we don't want libraries to be relegated to museums.
- Who lives, who dies, who tells your story

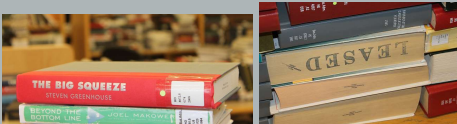


Kresge staff finishing a large collection merging project in 2013

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Future Challenges for Resource Sharing

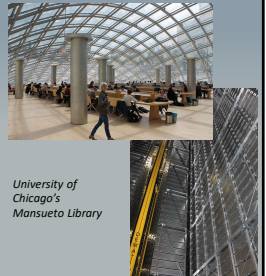
- Challenge for libraries are great both now and in the near future.
- There is almost always a higher priority for space than the retention of print resources.
- Administrator question - If something has not been scanned yet – is it valuable?
- Our community does not care where it comes from...



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Future Challenges for Resource Sharing

- Just as a lighthouse cannot protect the shore where they are not located, can libraries support research where they do not have collections?
- Mansueto Library at Univ. of Chicago is a dream that we all have. Our desire to hold on to the past while embracing the future. It is a dream that many if not most cannot afford.




University of Chicago's Mansueto Library

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Future Challenges for Resource Sharing

- Original vs. digital copy
- Do we have the rights to share?
- Squirrels at the Met (NYC)
- Bottle from Salem, NC - ca. 1790-1805.
- Snuffbox from Germany (Schrezheim manufactory), ca. 1761-1770. In Gallery 538 - closed the day I went.



Two decorative squirrels in the collection of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York City

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Future Challenges for Resource Sharing

This is my vision of collection building in libraries - we need to find the balance between these needs.

Future Use

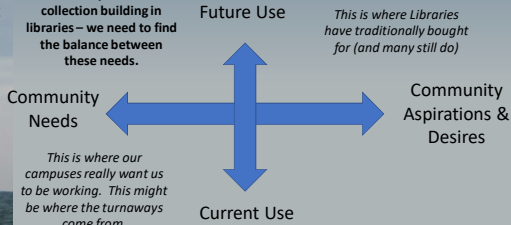
This is where Libraries have traditionally bought for (and many still do)

Community Needs

Community Aspirations & Desires

Current Use

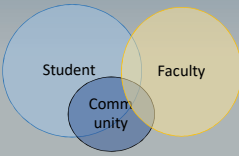
This is where our campuses really want us to be working. This might be where the turnaways come from.



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Future Challenges for Resource Sharing

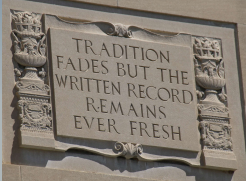
- Library challenge is that we have multiple stakeholders and they have different needs - especially for business.
- Faculty needs - scholarly journals, articles, books, datasets
- Student needs - articles, company & industry information, market reports
- Community - Mostly similar to student needs



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Future Challenges for Resource Sharing

- Many of our resource sharing models are based on items on the shelves.
- We are increasingly constrained by resources that we cannot put in a mailing envelope.
- Other challenges include:
 - Rare books
 - Electronic only resources
 - Licensing restrictions




William L. Clements Library - University of Michigan, Ann Arbor

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Future Challenges for Resource Sharing


- Building collections for use over a '10 year window' is not our future.
- Our governing bodies will not be keen on buying items that sit on a shelf just-in-case when the academy is shifting to just-in-time.
- We invest heavily in discovery platforms to get people to use these resources - the ultimate "low class problem."



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Envisioning the Library of the Future

- History has its eyes on us!
- Just as a lighthouse keeper could not turn his or her back on a storm, we cannot turn our backs on our community's needs.
- Our services must reflect our community's unique needs





Winter storm near the Ross School of Business at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor

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Envisioning the Library of the Future

- **A Physical Space**
 - Study
 - Print Materials
 - Interaction Spaces
 - Walk-in Access
 - Some of these services may be easily done by others
- **An Ethereal Space**
 - This is where we *connect* with our community.
 - This is where we *provide clarity* to a complicated information universe.
 - This is where we *contribute* as a "Value-Add."
 - This is where we do 'library' work.
 - This work cannot be done as well by others.
 - This work is not-space dependent.

The OLD Kresge Library

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Envisioning the Library of the Future

- At Kresge, the "Ethereal Library's" value proposition is:
 - Live within the restrictions of virtually no collection space.
 - Figure out new collaboration mechanisms to serve our community.
 - **Focus on what we can do vs. what we have done.**
 - **Forget the dead, take care of the living!**




Squirrel at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor

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Envisioning the Library of the Future

- "A completely re-thought Kresge Library Services, transitions from a collection of physical reference materials to a full suite of information resources and research services, guided by expert staff." – Ross Dividend, Fall 2016 (Ross Alumni Magazine)
- The library did not close, but become virtually unrecognizable.
- You do not always choose your path, but how you respond.




The NEW Kresge Library Services at the University of Michigan

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Envisioning the Library of the Future

- When changes take place all at once, it forces you to take the leap.
- Our library of the future is different and we have made mistakes...
- From the title song -
 - I made every mistake*
 - And felt the shame rise in me*
 - And even now I lie awake*
 - Knowing history has its eyes on me*
- ...but come on in, the water's fine!



Enjoying Deep Creek State Park (Western Maryland)


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Questions & Thank You

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 Corey's Web Home: www-personal.umich.edu/~cseeman/



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