The Backstory

I chose this particular topic, because of a previous Actio I did on the “Little Free Library”. I saw that people were really enjoying having access to a library close by their neighborhood, in their favorite park, or other unconventional places. This lead me to want to search other libraries that thought outside of the traditional four walls. I wanted to see how libraries are growing and changing to adapt to this new world. I wanted to see if this subject area would indeed confirm that libraries, at least in the tradition sense, are obsolete.

One big problem that I face for this library was not being able to find scholarly materials on this subject. I could find scholarly articles on the concept of unconventional libraries, but I couldn’t find any scholarly materials on actually talking about an example of these libraries. I found a lot of blogs and news reporting that talked about all three of unconventional libraries. Some limitations of this approach are that this is still a fairly new idea in libraries, so there aren’t a wide variety of “credible” sources discussing examples of how libraries are changing only the concept of them changing. A strength to this approach is you get to see these library examples from the beginning. The articles that are available are only discussing the facts about the library or the librarians and not dissecting it and adding option. You can take this brand new idea of what libraries are changing into and form your own option on how this will benefit the community.
I think that there is a great need to understand that our libraries are changing. We are moving away from the traditional sense of libraries, because we are no longer in a traditional world. Libraries are trying to meet their public where they are, instead of the public coming to them. “some colleges and universities are bringing the library closer to the user by establishing satellite branches, or learning commons, right in dormitories, and even embedding librarians in various subject departments to help students access information” (Mueller, 2012). This demonstrates how the physical located library are becoming less and less important but it also demonstrates how the information is presented and the presenters (librarians) are needed just as much or more now.

A quote from R. David Lankes in “Beyond the Bullet Points: Libraries are Obsolete” on how librarians are more important than ever. “Why take amazing information professionals and saddle them with leaky roofs, security at the door, and maintaining physical artifacts in often duplicative collections just waiting to be digitized?.... Close the library and hire more librarians” (Lankes, 2012). As libraries step farther and farther back into the shadows, Librarians are starting to step into the spotlight and take on a more active role in educating the community.

“The librarians of the future will be tasked with tutoring students on their homework, teaching patrons computer basics, and other responsibilities, but this transition is a positive one, as it nurtures a heightened sense of community and destigmatizes the librarian profession, painting them as neighborly mentors instead of silencing book police” (Seth Godin, 2012).

The end product of this project only show cases a few libraries that demonstrate my argument of how traditional libraries are becoming obsolete and unconventional and librarian driven libraries are stepping into the light. These three libraries demonstrate this by all be action counterparts in the community and trying to reach people that have no access to materials or
change the way people view certain aspects in life. The tradition library may be dead, but the unconventional is more than ready to mount a donkey and meet you with library materials and a portable panic table.
References:

