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Report on Libraries and Mobile Technologies in the Age of the Visible College by Bryan Alexander

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**Libraries and Mobile Technologies in the Age of the Visible College**

*Bryan Alexander, Senior Fellow at the National Institute for Technology in Liberal Education (NITLE)*

Reported by: Mary Ellen Kenreich

**Author Supplied Abstract:** How is the mobile revolution transforming libraries? What will library services and librarians look like in the age of a ubiquitously networked civilization? We begin by surveying what changes have already hit: an expanded device universe, the e-book renaissance, the growth of new media ecosystems, nearly-always-on user access, and the initial switch from 'library as place' to 'place as library'.

Next we assess how mobility has impacted academia, from teaching to research and student life. Then we explore scenarios of the future, based on an analysis of current trends. Scenarios include: Post-Residential Academe; Open World; Silo World; Alt.Residential.

Bryan Alexander, publisher of the monthly online report, *Future Trends in Technology and Education*, gave a lively presentation on new mobile technologies related to education. Technology is changing rapidly, and with Alexander’s fast paced presentation, one might wonder what else had developed during his talk.

Personal computing has made a progression from the desktop computer, to laptop computers, and now has exploded into many handheld devices. Smartphones, for example, are used for content delivery, for social
interaction and for capturing content. Internet access is no longer confined to a stationary desktop; the smartphone is now our primary gateway to the internet. Tablets, e-book readers, and a multitude of other handheld devices are now mainstream.

Alexander discussed technologies such as clickers (http://www1.iclicker.com/) and smartpens (http://www.livescribe.com/en-us/smartpen/) used in classrooms. Clickers are used in classrooms for gathering feedback, answering quiz questions, and for assessment; the results can drive class discussion. Clickers allow a large lecture class to engage in an interactive learning environment. Alexander asked how many of us know about smartpens. They are a highly portable and multifunctional device used as a text scanner, audio recorder, and for web access. Technology is revolutionizing classroom instruction.

A few general technology changes were discussed as well. Touch screens, gesture based computer interfaces, and Google Glass may make the mouse and keyboard obsolete. Mobile devices drive the creation of micro content. Vine is an example of a mobile app designed to capture micro videos up to six seconds in length and share it with a world of people with an insatiable appetite for media.

Alexander then moved on to gaming and how it has changed the world. People of all ages, races, and genders are gamers and the games are just as diverse as the individuals playing them. Games can be serious, public, political, etc. and can have a massive audience. “Gamification” means taking game principles out of the game context to engage people and change behavior. We can use games to impact society in a positive way. Alexander doesn’t endorse it; he just knows it is happening.

ARIS (http://arisgames.org/) is open source platform for designing educational games or virtual tours to promote learning. With the ARIS app, you can go to a location, hold up your device and get more information about what you are viewing. Wikitude myWorld can be used to create an augmented reality scenario with a handheld device. iTacitus is a program developed in Europe to encourage cultural tourism. It uses augmented reality to overlay a scene or annotate a view with text and videos, and is used at museums and historical sites. Google Goggles is an app for taking a picture and searching Google. It is a visual, rather than a text search.

Bryan concluded his presentation by presenting three scenarios for 2023. It will be the world of the future, transformed by what is happening now.

1) Phantom Learning
Schools are rare and distant. Information is plentiful and we get it on demand. Institutions supplement information. MOOCs are common. Libraries are software.

2) Open World
Open access and open source is the norm. There are global conversations, with more information and more access. Creativity abounds and campus is chaotic. Authorship is hard to pin down. Privacy is fictitious.

3) Silo World
The Web is over. Information is in vertical stacks, and we love our stacks. Careers are within those stacks. “Open” was a flawed historical concept.

About the Presenter
Bryan Alexander is senior fellow at the National Institute for Technology in Liberal Education (NITLE). He researches, writes, and speaks about emerging trends in the integration of inquiry, pedagogy, and technology and their potential application to liberal arts contexts. Dr. Alexander’s current research interests include emerging pedagogical forms enabled by mobile technologies, learning processes and outcomes associated with immersive environments (as in gaming and augmented reality), the rise of digital humanities, the transformation of scholarly communication, and digital storytelling.