

# Why Libraries? Cradle of Democracy

R. David Lankes

Professor and Dean's Scholar for the New Librarianship  
Syracuse University's iSchool

# Basis of Democracy

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“The people are the only censors of their governors; and even their errors will tend to keep these to the true principles of their institution....The way to prevent these [errors] is to give them full information of their affairs through the channel of the public papers, and to contrive that those papers should penetrate the whole mass of the people. The basis of our governments being the opinion of the people, the very first object should be to keep that right; and were it left to me to decide whether we should have a government without newspapers, or newspapers without a government, I should not hesitate a moment to prefer the latter. But I should mean that every man should receive those papers, and be capable of reading them.” – *Thomas Jefferson*

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“A popular government without popular information, or the means of acquiring it, is but a Prologue to a Farce or a Tragedy; or perhaps both. Knowledge will forever govern ignorance; and a people who mean to be their own Governors must arm themselves with the power which knowledge gives.” – *James Madison*

# Democracy Arguments

Transparency

Access

Education

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