

# New Harvard Library Occupation

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## Lamont Library Café

### *Why occupy the library?*

The work of transforming a collection of books into a thriving space for cultivating knowledge rests on the shoulders of the communities that work behind the scenes, at the carrels, and in the classrooms, often without due recognition. To move into the technological future, the Harvard Libraries deserve a radical re-imagining of the future of education, libraries, and thought - not just digitally enhanced card catalogues and a down-sized, "more efficient" staff.

We think of the proposed Harvard library transition as a simulacrum of the University's accession to neoliberal imperatives. Occupy, whether at Harvard or Wall Street, challenges and refuses the devastating willingness of our broken society to view humans as expendable resources and systems as ultimately beholden to profit. A future cannot be imagined in the absence of its past, present, or future constituents. A library needs the workers who are its lifeblood, its circulatory system, just as a functioning democratic society needs the voices of the 99%. Systems built with profit imperatives can only serve to further perpetuate the patterns of destruction and unequal power structures that we denounce. The proposed library transition not only fails to address these systemic problems, it replicates them.

Harvard University has great possibilities and great responsibilities. From its investing policies to its tenure processes, from its contract negotiations to its innovations in infrastructure, it is time for the University to live into the reality that life-giving alternatives are not only possible, they are immanently realizable.

### *What would we like to see?*

A vision for the Harvard Libraries that cherishes the human communities and collaborative processes that make intellectual and civic engagement—on campuses and in public parks—not only possible but fruitful.

We must direct our resources more effectively to our academic and ethical priorities; we must re-imagine the nature and scope of services the Harvard libraries can provide digitally and embrace the possibilities inherent in new technologies; we must unite across the University to strengthen our collaborations and academic innovations; we must open our doors to other universities and to the greater public so that access to the thinking of centuries is not the privilege of a few, but integral to the bonds of our common humanity.

**[www.OccupyHarvard.net](http://www.OccupyHarvard.net) / [occupy.harvard@gmail.com](mailto:occupy.harvard@gmail.com)**