You Gotta Go to School for “This?” — A Rave Review

by Jared A. Seay (Reference Librarian and Head, Media Collections, Addlestone Library, College of Charleston, Charleston, SC 29424) <seayj@cofc.edu> www.cofc.edu/~seay

for the days when the word “rave” merely referred to speaking or writing enthusiastically (or incoherently) about something. Yet, linguistic evolution marches on. The term “rave” now describes a wild dance party. Certainly this is not news to those among you (you know who you are) who are connoisseurs of modern party culture. But, the thought of such an event occurring in a library (one with real books in it) sends the mind reeling, especially if one’s mind tends toward reeling as mine does. A rave in an academic library? Who knew?

I was introduced to this rave library thing when my staff recently received an urgent all points bulletin of a student rave which was to occur at 11 pm in the green just outside the library. Learning that this would involve hundreds, if not thousands, of potentially riot prone) students who would actually move INTO the library for the main event, I was able to conclude that my decision to leave on time after work was a wise one. Even so, it was a literally earthshaking and exciting event for the library.

Apparently it is a common thing these days for students to blow off steam during final exams. Why one would find it necessary to “blow off steam” during this time is beyond me, since during my student days I found exam times conducive to quiet reflection and relaxation. Of course, besides the fact that I may not be indicative of the norm, my memory is fading a bit, and I sometimes lie to remember it) the rave has all the noise, chaos, and mayhem of a street riot, but with much less tear gas and much happier people. It is also over as quickly as it begins, which tends to calm the police/security who just stand to the side and grin a lot.

Across the country there are also so called “silent raves” in which everyone listens to the same music on their iPads. It’s a sort of a synchronized chaotic, silent dance thing. This removes the

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Policy Committee. Together, the two committees are responsible for the day-to-day management of ADPNet. In keeping with the network’s guiding principles, the requirements for membership are as simple and affordable as we could make them. Participating institutions must agree to install and run a LOCKSS server in the network; contribute content to the network; and join the LOCKSS Alliance for an annual fee. There is no ADPNet membership fee.

Surveys have shown that ADPNet has succeeded in raising awareness of the importance of digital preservation among Alabama libraries, archives, and state agencies. The task now is to translate this increased awareness into participation in ADPNet.

Going Forward

ADPNet’s main mission is to build and sustain a robust, inexpensive distributed digital preservation network for Alabama, but it also hopes to serve as a model for similar networks in other states and other countries who may think they can’t afford to preserve their local digital heritage. Private LOCKSS Networks offer communities a low-cost, highly customizable alternative to more expensive digital preservation solutions. If ADPNet had a motto, it might be “keep it simple and keep it cheap.” This basic approach appears to be working well for Alabama. It remains to be seen whether it will work for other states and consortia, but the signs so far are encouraging.

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