



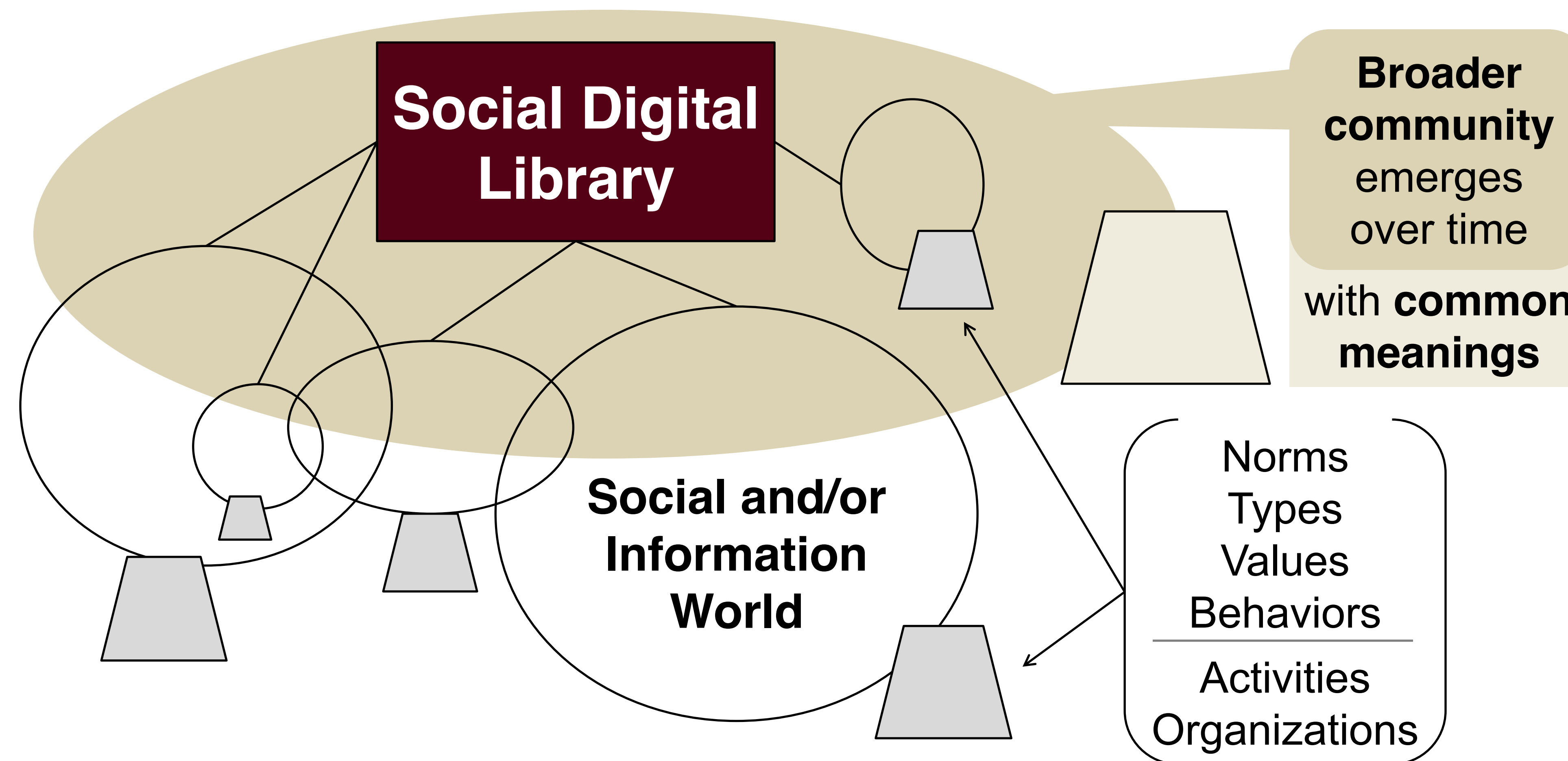
Digital Libraries as Boundary Objects Across Social and Information Worlds: A Preliminary Theoretical Framework

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Introduction

- Digital libraries should be **well-integrated** with the **communities** and **worlds** that use them **within and across boundaries**
- This poster presents a preliminary theoretical framework of **social digital libraries** as **boundary objects**
- Two lenses: **social worlds** and **information worlds**



Social Digital Libraries as Boundary Objects

- **Interface** with and reconcile **meanings** and **understandings** of multiple communities
 - Support emergent, common social norms, social types, information values, and information behaviors
 - Act as common sites and technologies
- **Encourage collaborative**, social information behavior
- **Mutually influence** and are influenced by social worlds and information worlds
- **Evolve and change** throughout their lifecycle and lifecycle of communities and worlds
- **Support** building or emergence of a **broader community** over time

Social Digital Libraries

- **Collections** of **digital content** collected on behalf of a user community
- **Services**, relating to the content, by or through the digital library **to the user community**
- Formal or informal **organization(s)** managing these content and services
- In light of various **contexts**, especially **social contexts**
- **Well-integrated** into activities of individuals, social groups, communities, societies
- Meeting places for **joint, collaborative** information behavior
- Part of a community's **ongoing conversation**

Boundary Objects *(Star)*

- **Cross boundaries** between multiple social worlds and communities
- Adapt to local needs, but also **maintain common identity** across communities
- **Interface** between communities; translate meanings, understandings

Social Worlds *(Strauss)*

- Primary **activities**
- **Sites** where activities occur
- **Technologies** for carrying out activities
- **Organizations**, in established social worlds, to further aspect(s) of activities

Information Worlds *(Burnett & Jaeger)*

- **Social norms**: What is “right” and “wrong” for a given group or community in social context
- **Social types**: How people are seen and typed within a social setting
- **Information value**: What information is valued, and to what degree, within a community?
- **Information behavior**: The use, seeking of, happening upon, avoiding, etc. of information
- **Boundaries**: Where information worlds come into contact, across which communication, information exchange may (or may not) take place

Both theories hold that communities

- **Differ** in size, shape, visibility, abstractness, permeability, structure
- **Intersect** and **overlap**
- Can **segment** into smaller subworlds

Continuing Work

- Further **develop & test** framework
- Potential **research questions**:
 - How do digital libraries act as boundary objects?
 - What role(s) do they play in interfacing and reconciling norms, types, values, and behaviors across communities?
 - How do they facilitate the emergence of new communities?