



DIRECTOR'S COLUMN:

Will Google Make Libraries Obsolete?

With much fanfare, news of the deal between Google and five major research libraries to digitize millions of books made headlines right around Christmas time. The Chronicle of Higher Education and the New York Times covered the story, as did scores of other newspapers across the country. Faculty and staff members forwarded copies of articles to me, and one or two rather cautiously raised the topic in casual conversation, as if it were a dire forecast of the future of libraries.

Will the Google project make libraries obsolete? Not for a long time, if ever! As the Chronicle pointed out, the number of volumes to be scanned is astounding. The holdings of the five libraries involved - Harvard, Stanford, University of Michigan, New York Public Library, and Oxford - total nearly 57 million volumes. Estimates of how long it might take to complete the project range from a non-committal "many years" to a decade or longer.

What's more, there is the problem of copyright to be dealt with. Google will be able to publish the full text of only those library books that are old enough to be out of copyright. For copyrighted works (just about everything published since 1923), Google plans to digitize the entire text but will only be able to make short excerpts available online. Along with the excerpt will be information about where a book can be found, as in which LIBRARIES actually own a copy of the book. (continued on page 2)



LIBRARY HOMEPAGE GETS NEW LOOK

The Zahnow Library homepage recently got a new look as the university incorporates content management software into departmental homepages. The move allows library staff direct access to web page content so information can be quickly updated. Todd Pashak of SVSU's IT Services worked with Zahnow librarians to ensure the changes would meet the expectations and needs of library users.

Issues taken into consideration were the appropriate number of links on the main page, placement and groupings of links, ease of navigation and overall appearance. Several university library web pages from across the country were investigated for innovative ideas and visual appeal.


The new design groups web page links into a total of eight categories. The top three categories, "Library Catalogs", "E-Resources" and "Guided Search" provide links for locating books, journals and web pages, and offer assistance with finding these resources. The three middle categories group various "Help" and "Services" options, including links to unique library "Collections". The final two categories are "Zahnow Library" and "My Library". The first includes library hours, departments and research assistance and the second offers links to help users manage their personal library business.

In the box on the right margin users will find a link to library news, an option to do a quick search of CARDCAT, and links to popular pages, such as the Regional Education Resource Center (RERC) and the Student Technology Center (STC). The same "Quick Links" function, available on the former homepage, is also located on the right margin.

Comments and suggestions regarding the new look and function of the library homepage are welcome. Users may contact library staff through the "Suggestions" link or by contacting the Reference Desk, (989)964-4242.

CELEBRATE
NATIONAL LIBRARY WEEK
* Sun., April 10 - Sat., April 16, 2005 *

Join Zahnow Library Staff for free
ICE CREAM AND PRIZES
on Mon., April 11th, 1pm
at the first floor Library entrance



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(continued from page 1)

Some privacy advocates worry about Google's ability to track and retain personal information about its users' search habits. When you search and explore a library's online catalog, statutes protecting the confidentiality of library records prevail.

Ever since the Internet and the World Wide Web entered our lives on a daily basis, predictions of the demise of libraries have been circulating. Have you seen any libraries closing lately? Have those of us who work in libraries given up in defeat?

On the contrary: we have embraced the challenges technology has presented. We have sifted through the untamed web, identified authoritative web sites, organized them by subject, and made them accessible to our users through our web site. We have carefully selected and licensed online databases that support the teaching and research needs of our students and faculty. We teach students and faculty, in the classroom and one-on-one, how to choose and effectively use the most appropriate information resources for a particular topic. When people tire of getting 500,000 hits from a search on Google, we're here to help them.

Perhaps the most compelling proof of the enduring value and persistence of libraries is substantiated by the following numbers. In the past five years, 497 new library buildings have been constructed, and 566 libraries have undergone expansion and/or renovation. That amounts to over 11 million square feet of new libraries, plus over 10 million square feet added and/or renovated. Last year alone, the dollars invested in new library construction, additions and renovations topped a phenomenal \$1.2 billion. So much for Google (or the Internet for that matter) making libraries obsolete!

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LIBRARY INSTRUCTION AVAILABLE DURING SPRING & SUMMER

SVSU faculty are invited to schedule library instruction for classes during spring and summer semesters. Although time is limited during shorter semesters, help with online resources and research skills is even more vital for students.

For spring and summer instruction sessions contact Kathleen Kroll, 964-7054, kmk@svsu.edu

LIBRARY COMPUTER LAB SCHEDULING

To schedule the library computer lab (Z111) for classes with computer related assignments or online exams, contact Kathleen Kroll, 964-7054, kmk@svsu.edu



GREAT ESCAPES: NEW BOOKS ADDED TO THE POPULAR READING COLLECTION

Looking for a good read to help you get out from under the drop cloth of winter? Need an escape from the daily routine? If so, check out the Popular Reading Collection located on the 3rd floor in the Library.

New titles to choose from include:

FICTION:

The Broker, John Grisham
The Falls, Joyce Carol Oats
I am Charlotte Simmons, Tom Wolfe
Kafka on the Shore, Haruki Murakami
Life Expectancy, Dean Koontz
Lost in a Good Book, Jasper Fforde
Prodigal Summer, Barbara Kingsolver
R is for Ricochet, Sue Grafton
Waiting, Ha Jin

NON-FICTION:

Can't Stop, Won't Stop: a History of the Hip-Hop Generation
Jeff Chang
Dreams from my Father: a Story of Race and Inheritance
Barack Obama
French Women Don't Get Fat: the Secret of Eating for Pleasure
Mireille Guiliano
The Man called Cash: the life, love and faith of an American Legend
Steve Turner
Truth and Fiction in the Da Vinci Code Bart Ehrman

A complete list of titles can be found online at <http://library.svsu.edu>. Just click on the link that says "Popular Reading".

To suggest titles for future purchase, contact Jack Wood, Head of Circulation Services, 964-7097, jwood@svsu.edu.

WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH EXHIBIT "Black Women: Achievements Against the Odds"

During the month of March, an exhibit created by the Smithsonian Institution Traveling Exhibit Services and available through the Michigan Women's Historical Center, will be on display through out the Zahnaw Library.

The exhibit entitled, "Black Women: Achievements Against the Odds" contains 20 posters narrating the achievements of Black women in America. Featured are 120 women representing subjects areas including: religion, military, civil rights, art, sports, government and politics, law, music, literature, medicine, science, math and business.

A special thanks to Karen Krause, SVSU Associate Professor of Sociology, for arranging the exhibit through the Board of the Michigan Women's Historical Center.

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