Reviews

Global Voices: Picture Books from Around the World
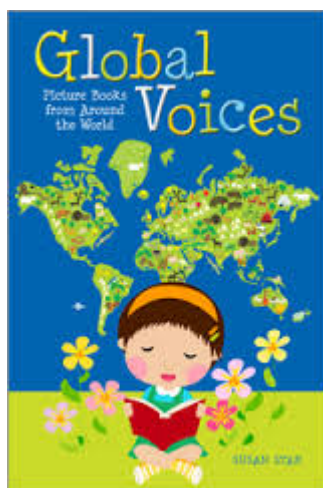
Global Voices is a treasure trove catalogue of the best children's picture books from across the world. It persuasively argues for the importance of reading books from other countries rather than focussing on the Anglo-American books that are so prolific. Susan Stan is a Professor of English at Central Michigan University and from this standpoint encourages the reader to take the time to discover other cultures and customs through outstanding books that are rarely seen in American libraries and bookshops.

Stan discusses the manipulation of manuscripts by American publishers in order to 'Americanise' the text and the illustrations rather than respecting the works original form and content. Stan explains that American children rate poorly in geographical awareness of the world beyond their borders and, she argues, that picture books provide the perfect window into life in other countries and the globalised world.

Stan looks at a range of universal themes in children's picture books and examines how the themes are dealt with across cultures. One example that she mentions is under the broad theme of family life and the 'new baby'. In most American novels this theme is often focuses on the jealousy of the older sibling when the new baby is brought home. She offers an alternative perspective in *Elizabeti's Doll* written by Stephanie Stuve-Bodeen, and illustrated by Christy Hale. The story is set in Tanzania and instead of displaying the jealously of an older sibling the main character Elizabeti embraces the idea of the new baby. Elizabeti, does not have a baby doll and chooses a rock to mother, copying her own mother in loving, parenting behaviours. The positive nature of the story leaves a powerful message for its readership. Stan discusses at length other themes and makes reference to Shaun Tan's outstanding *The Arrival* as a ground breaking book of note.

In part two of the book Stan creates an annotated bibliography of hundreds of books from across the globe. It is in this section of the book where gold is found. Accessing the titles may prove a little more complex but she has tried to include books that are accessible for the American audience. Within this section she profiles

outstanding writers and illustrators from various countries and gives background to their craft and various works that have been published. It is here that Shaun Tan is profiled.

It is also interesting to note Stan's take on children's book publishing in Australia, she suggests our publishing culture has been shaped by our historical perspective and our approach of ". . . reject all things English . . . " and our aim to create a 'classless society'. Stan sees an Australian literature 'obsessed' with a 'search for its identity.' The usual suspects are included in the bibliography and Stan suggests that Americans have typically been most interested in Australian picture books, such as Possum Magic, that feature furry native animals. Despite these generalisations Stan does explore many interesting and noteworthy books.

After reading this book I intend to create my wish list and attempt to source the books internationally. I am particularly interested in the work coming out of Canada, Asia and Africa and will endeavour to show my students that there are many universal truths to be learnt from observing life in other cultures and countries through a picture book. *Global Voices* was an enjoyable read that I would highly recommend.

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Responsive Web Design for Libraries

Matthew Reidsma (2014)
ALA TechSource
ISBN 9781555709945
$60.00
Available from ALA store
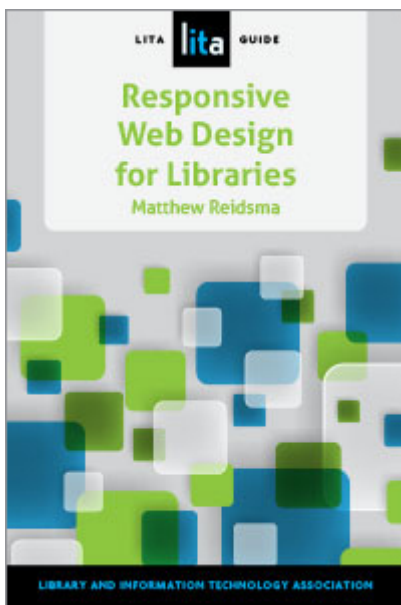
Matthew Reidsma begins by building a case for responsive web design for libraries, and gives the reader an understanding of the problems that are created by fixed-width website displays when devices and screen widths vary so greatly. He explains the need for responsive web design, particularly with the proliferation of mobile devices and touch screens, and that site responsiveness is future-friendly. Responsive web design streamlines and optimizes online services for all devices efficiently. Users expect to be able to connect to the

Internet wherever they are, and with the device that is in their pocket. They expect that the site that they are using is optimized for use no matter what the device.

The text continues with an explanation of fluid site layout. It includes detailed technical information to give the reader an understanding, and to guide the process of moving from fixed-width to fluid screen widths that scale and adapt to the changes in the viewport of the user. Reidsma explains that an advantage of this is that the screen doesn't require as much pinching and zooming for mobile or tablet users, or hide content from users visiting the site.

Website performance is also addressed in the text. Reidsma explains that website optimization to alleviate frustration is an important consideration. Will the page load quickly? It is necessary to consider this when creating new content. The limitation of old browsers is a complication that is also explored.

Building on this foundation of understanding, the second half of the text focuses on making an existing website layout responsive, improving site performance, and making vendor sites responsive. The text is supported throughout by practical technical guidance to support library site developers and designers.

The text is timely and comprehensive in content. It outlines the theory involved with creating a responsive website design for libraries, and includes practical step-by-step guidance. Even though the text is quite technical in nature, readers who do not need this depth of technicality would find the text approachable and would also benefit from considering the elements discussed in order to optimize the performance of their library website.

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The Top Technologies Every Librarian Needs to Know

Varnum, Kenneth J. (editor) (2014)
Chicago: ALA Techsource 131p.
$70.00 ISBN 9780838912287

The first impression one gains in opening this book is that it promises to introduce the reader to new and emerging technologies. The title *The Top Technologies Every Librarian Needs to Know* is catchy in that it confidently states that these are technologies that librarians *need* to know, suggesting that there is not really an option. The table of contents introduces the reader to terms such as 'convergence', 'augmented reality', 'cloud-based library systems', 'text mining' and 'open hardware'. One is immediately aware that this will be a learning journey.

In the Introduction, editor Ken Varnum, states that the book was born out of a desire to assist librarians with planning investment in resources, technology and time, 'so as to be better positioned to take advantage of whatever the future brings'. The nine chapters are contributed by professionals with backgrounds ranging from library and resource management, application development, web design and digital media. Biographical details and contact email addresses invite follow-up contact if so desired. Each chapter introduces the reader to an innovative technology or process with titles such as:

- Hands-free augmented reality: impacting the library future
- Library Discovery: from ponds to streams
- The Future of cloud-based library systems
- Bigger, better, together: building the digital library of the future.

Those employed in the library industry are aware that for some time, they have been operating in a constant state of beta. As new technologies emerge and potential for their application to libraries becomes apparent, early adopters begin to explore and try them out. This text is an ideal handbook for technology early adopters. It is exceptionally well-written in a readable manner that is accessible to the non-technical reader. Each chapter introduces the technology, explains its application to libraries and provides an overview of how it works, although not in the detail of a how-to manual. As the editor explains, 'the focus of each chapter is the impact the technology could have on staff, services and patrons'. Chapter notes direct the reader to references that will set the more serious candidate on the path to further relevant information. Content and references are current with many dated in late 2013 and it includes an index.

This book makes fascinating reading and opens the mind to a possible future for libraries. Not every advancement described is relevant to every institution, however, one can see an exciting future if embraced. I recommend this book as a source of legitimate and reliable information to support an argument for library innovation. It may be the move to a cloud-based library management system; research techniques employing data mining; the application of augmented reality or the role of the library as a place for creation and distribution i.e. a 'makerspace'. It is clear that library professionals must be diligent learners to keep pace with change. If this can be achieved, they will have a bright and rewarding future and be in a position to provide patrons with exciting, innovative services employing emerging technologies.

Highly recommended reading for: all library professionals from managers to clerks; politicians and others with library funding influence; school principals and library educators. It is exceptionally good reading.

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Mind-bending Mysteries and Thrillers for Teens: A Programming and Readers' Advisory Guide

Alessio, Amy J. (2014)
Chicago, IL: American Library Association (ALA)
140 pages
ISBN 978-0-8389-1204-1
Available from: Inbooks   email: orders@inbooks.com.au
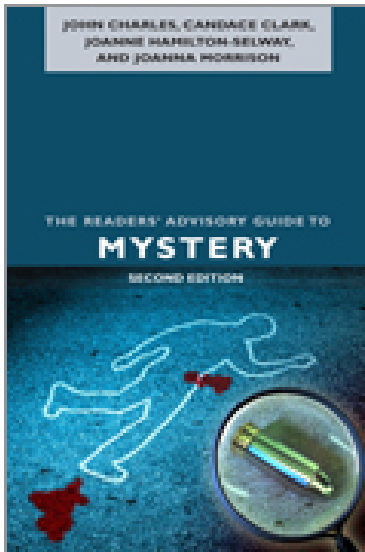
Mind-bending Mysteries and Thrillers for Teens explores the mystery genre for young adult readers and divides the genre into categories on a thematic basis. Mystery subgenres include realistic mysteries, high-tech whodunits, thrillers, fantastic and paranormal mysteries, mysteries in both time and place and finally, romantic suspense. Each of these is further subdivided into more discrete categories, often to include an interview with a best-selling author and a list of relevant titles with book annotations. To provide a quick reference, all titles are listed conveniently by subgenre and by author in Appendix One.

The author contends that there has not been a tradition of teen or young adult mystery series or easily recognised authors for this genre for the reader age group. Yet, there are exciting new directions for young adult enthusiasts of mystery and thrillers, as highlighted in this well presented and organised book. There are over twenty categories and listings of mysteries featured.

Chapter Three introduces nonfiction and true crime for teenagers who enjoy real-life mysteries and forensic science. Included is an annotated list of nonfiction and true crime titles with a question and answer interview with author and editor, Marc Aronson, The US Sibert Medal winner in 2000 for his title, *Sir Walter Raleigh and the Quest for El Dorado*. Aronson is the author of *Master of Deceit: J. Edgar Hoover and America in the Age of Lies* (2012).

The important issue is for library staff to connect mystery books to readers and the second half of the book covers programming and promotion of mystery titles. Topics include mystery clubs and activities, dinner scripts and suggestions for marketing. The final program is a complete mystery dinner with an interactive script for dinner guests or participants. These ten programs are innovative, exciting and may have environmental themes included, such as, *Spies Go Green: Electronics Recycling Drive*, a recycle drive for small or handheld electronics in conjunction with a display of spy books. Each program purpose and set up is clearly outlined in a page layout, so that the program can be efficiently implemented to encourage exposure to and reading of the mysteries and thrillers genre.

Chapter Five has ideas and activities for a teen mystery club which may well need a core group of dedicated students to help start this new venture. Club topics, such as, crucial coding, great gadgets, crime scenes, crime solving of the future and trivia contests are just a few ideas, with a mystery club being both live and on social networking sites.

Particularly useful is Chapter Six, with its book discussion questions for all the subgenres of mystery presented in the main title. Young adult readers may prefer, however, to focus on a particular aspect of a book or discuss why an ending does or does not work successfully rather than concentrate on prearranged questions. Group members in the book club may want to discuss their own books or themes, to uncover clues, all of which are incentives for student involvement and leadership.

Three thorough appendices and an index conclude the book: first, a titles and series by subgenre appendix; second, a titles and series by author appendix; and finally, mysteries in graphic and illustrated novel formats appendix.

These are fabulous reference and readers' advisory service items. *Mind-bending Mysteries and Thrillers for Teens* is an excellent addition to libraries with young adult or teenage users and importantly, fills a gap in services to this group of library clientele.

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Google Search Secrets

Christa Burns and Michael Sauers (2014)
Chicago: ALA Neal-Schuman
224 pages
ISBN 978-1-55570-923-5

Google has continued to maintain its dominance as the most used search engine since it first came onto the scene in 1999. We live in a 'Google' world and Google now offer a whole range of additional products such as Google Apps on top of their original search engine. 'Google' has even become a commonly used verb in our everyday language. The book Google Search Secrets details a range of services that Google has available which may be useful to your students and teachers.

The ability to help library patrons search the web quickly and efficiently is one of the key skills of a library professional in our contemporary era. We therefore need to ensure we are expert navigators of the Web and, in particular, expert users of this popular search tool. This publication, Google Search Secrets, is essential reading for all school library team members in the Information Age.

Chapter 1 of the book outlines the history of Google which was created by Larry Page and Sergey Brin as a more efficient way to search and organise the Web. The chapter further describes Google's other services (eg.

Google Glass, Google Driverless Car, Android, Gmail) and explains the common search elements found throughout the book.

Chapter 2 provides readers with the basics on how to do a Google web search and outlines the 'major features to show you how you can use them in your daily reference work' (p. 15). This chapter describes how web results are presented and how to manipulate the search filters to narrow the final results.

Each of the following chapters then takes a different aspect of Google and introduces a different search interface that focuses results on a different type of information, covering both the basic and advanced search interfaces, results and search filters for each topic.

Chapter 3 discusses Google Images in detail and particularly focuses on the advanced search feature allowing searching by a variety of approaches including colour and usage rights.

Chapter 4 focuses on Google News described as a news 'portal to new content from all over the web' (p. 51) that enables searching by country, headline, top stories, subject matter and edition.

Chapter 5 outlines the service, Google Videos. Google purchased YouTube in 2006 and migrated their Google video files to YouTube by 2011. Google Videos indexes videos, TV shows, movie clips, music videos, documentaries, personal productions and more on the Internet. In particular, the Advanced Video Search enables extensive filtering such as language, duration, posting date, quality, domain, site or subtitles.

Chapter 6 describes one of the most popular and widely used Google services, Google Maps. Google Maps integrates two separate searching interfaces: Google's mapping service and Google Local Search. Google Maps is the most popular local search service today and provides local directions and satellite images. Through the eyes of the yellow figure within the zooming controls called Pegman, the view is bought to street level. Google Maps also offers a variety of views or layers in addition to Maps and Satellite. These views are: Terrain, Traffic, Photos, Labels, Webcams, Weather, Videos, Wikipedia, Bicycling, 45 degrees, and Transit.

Chapter 7 focuses on Google Blog Search and enables the searching of blog posts. Google Blog Search indexes blogs by their RSS feeds which means that these search results update with new content more quickly than other types of Google searches.

Chapter 8 explains the tool for academic researchers of Google Scholar. 'Stand on the shoulders of giants' (p. 115) is the text that appears below the search field on the home page of Google Scholar. Where most Google searches focus on finding web-based content regardless of the source, Google Scholar takes a significantly different approach and mainly deals with 'scholarly' and other reviewed content such as journal articles, dissertations, book publications and other professional articles. This chapter also details the bibliography manage feature of Google Scholar which allows students and researchers to build bibliographies with ease.

Chapter 9 discusses Google Patents providing both basic and advanced searching interfaces. Burns and Sauers make the point that Google Patents cannot replace a patent lawyer who is expert in extensive patent research prior to patent filing, but the Google Patents feature does provide an understanding of manipulating this search feature.

Chapter 10 features the search interface to Google Books which enables us to do full-text searches of traditionally print-only books by finding particular words or phrases within a book to confirm this is the book sought which may then be sourced from our collection or another source. While, it is similar to an online full-text index it is far superior to a printed index in a hard copy book.

Chapter 11 focuses on a very different service entirely but one which highlights the real power of Google and this is the Google Alerts service. Google Alerts allows you to automate your searching and have the results delivered automatically. This is extremely useful for those who regularly search for content on a single subject.

Finally in Chapter 12, the authors describe many built-in Google shortcuts via web search, known as 'search features'. Hidden within Google are many different search types that reflect the relative nature of the information entered into the search box. For example, Google knows Mathematics. A mathematical formula typed in will produce the answer. A mathematical formula that results in a graph, will produce the graph as

well, sometimes in three dimensions. Similar results can be produced for money, measurements, words definitions, movies, music and a host of other examples.

The authors are highly skilled research and information professionals in academic libraries. Burns is the special projects librarian, technology and access services, at the Nebraska Library Commission. She provides organisation, training and consultation for special projects, such as the Gates Foundation grants for libraries, E-rate and Learning 2.0.

Sauers is currently the technology innovation librarian for the Nebraska Library Commission and has been training librarians in technology for almost 20 years. He has been a public library trustee, a bookstore manager for a library Friends group, a reference librarian, serials cataloguer, technology consultant and bookseller. Currently, he blogs at The Travelin' Librarian, and runs websites for authors and historical societies. He has authored and co-authored many books, including, *Semantic Web Technologies and Social Searching for Librarians, Blogging and RSS: A Librarian's Guide and eLearning in Libraries: Best Practices (Best practices in Library Services)*.

This resource provides excellent guidance to this powerful tool for research which, of course, continues to evolve. Many of the search engine's most useful features are hidden behind its famous but simple interface. The top of the page results are rarely the most beneficial for our students and teachers but this resource provides assistance on using filters to refine search results with examples such as searches for images with Creative commons licenses and searches for videos with closed captioning.

Google Search Secrets provides copious screenshots to explain each of the search interfaces in detail and reveals tips and tricks to assist us to master and ensure we get the most out of this powerful tool. In addition, to assist in keeping up to date with the constantly evolving Google, the authors have set up a website to provide updates of this book at (http://googlesearchsecretsbook.blogspot.com.au/).

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