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Book review

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Chan, L. et al (2002) *Budapest Open Access Initiative*. New York: Open Society Institute.
<http://www.soros.org/openaccess/read.shtml> (Retrieved 22 January 2007)

Miller, W. and Pellen, R.M. (eds.) (2005) *Libraries and Google*. Binghamton, N.Y.: Haworth Information Press. 240pp. ISBN 0-7890-3125-6 or ISBN-13: 978-0-7890-3125-9. £24.95. Co-published simultaneously as *Internet reference services quarterly*, 10(3/4).

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This is the first book about Google for librarians. Its 19 articles cover a wide spectrum, from *Google Print* and *Google Scholar* to the best way to keep up to date with Google's attempt to take over the world. Contributors' attitudes to Google vary from excitement through grudging assent to outright hostility. Both Mark Sandler's article, *Disruptive beneficence: the Google Print Program and the future of libraries*, and that by Rick Anderson, *The (uncertain) future of libraries in a Google world: sounding an alarm*, give disturbing views of what the future could hold. Are Google collecting information on all of us for a purpose? Once they have digitised thousands of books how freely shall we be able to access them? As an antidote to all the spin around Google, Mark Herring's contribution (*A gaggle of Googles: limitations and defects of electronic access as panacea*) is the most entertaining in the collection, and is a "must read." We may not agree with all his conclusions but his near 30 years' experience make salutary reading.

There are detailed articles about the generation of *Google Print* and concerns about what it will cover, its costs and its Anglo-centric bias. Interestingly Rodney Milne (Bodley Librarian, Oxford) feels that the Oxford University contribution will simply continue the original mission of providing access to all, begun by Sir Thomas Bodley in 1602.

There are comprehensive articles about Google Scholar, tested against sample databases. Callicott and Vaughn, in *Google Scholar vs. Library Scholar: testing the performance of Schoogle*, used a sample of five typical undergraduate research topics and rather cautiously admitted that Scholar "measured favourably" to their library databases. They concluded that it "shows great potential as a means to introduce novice researchers to library resources and scholarly literature". I agree with their view that it is "just one tool among many." Donlan and Cooke, in *Running with the devil: accessing Library-licensed full text holdings through Google Scholar*, also start from this premise. They hoped to increase Scholar's value to students by linking from Scholar to full text using Serial Solutions' *Article Linker*. However it served to highlight the lack of precision (no subject headings), lack of transparency over what is being searched, and poor presentation of the results.

Egger-Sider and Devine (*Google, the invisible web, and librarians: slaying the research Goliath*) argue convincingly for the inclusion of Google in Information Literacy teaching as a means to aid understanding of the Invisible Web, and measuring against use of our databases. Cathcart and Roberts, in *Evaluating Google Scholar as a tool for Information Literacy*, measure it against Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL) Information Literacy standards and, although finding it wanting, felt it could be usefully compared to our metasearch systems, and should be recommended among our suite of databases and resources. Krasulski & Bell's article (*Keeping up with Google: resources and strategies for staying ahead of the pack*) gives useful information about how to keep up to speed with events in Google.

Maurice York's contribution (*Calling the scholars home: Google Scholar as a tool for rediscovering the academic library*) is worth highlighting. His vision of library resources "as an orderly fortified castle on the wind-swept plains of information" appealed to me. He says

"Do we call the populace within the walls and bar the gates to protect them from the Googlezon monster or do we organise an escort to accompany them as they venture beyond the walls?"

He surveys librarians' attitudes to Google, and notes that users sometimes prefer Google for discovery, and libraries for locating and getting access. With the development of OpenURL there is great potential for partnership between libraries and Google. The gates are opening, but the students and researchers are already outside. We have to go to them, abandoning our walls and going to meet them where they are. We should become indispensable as experts. York says "the scholars are ready. The opportunity is ours to lose". I would add that the thesis could be widened to internet generation students whose world we have to enter if we are to remain relevant.

The organisation of the book can appear somewhat repetitious and it is best to cherry pick the articles which interest you. Unfortunately the index is not particularly comprehensive and should be used with caution.

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However, although most of the articles reflect practice in the United States, the material is of great interest and relevance to UK librarians.