

Chapter Twenty-Five

Google Books

Shamed by Snobs, a Resource for the Rest of Us

Susan Whitmer

On my first day at the university library reference desk, four students requested *The Divine Nine: The History of African American Fraternities and Sororities* by Lawrence C. Ross Jr. *The Divine Nine* is suggested reading for pledges to African American fraternities and sororities at the University of North Texas (UNT). The UNT Libraries' three copies were checked out and each copy had holds on their catalog records. During my first week at the reference desk, requests for *The Divine Nine* were at the top of the frequently asked questions list.

My reference desk experience happened when I was a graduate student in library information science school where we were taught that Google is evil and Google Books is beneath us because it is easy, only used by the lazy. Google evil? Google cofounders Larry Page and Sergey Brin, created the "Don't Be Evil" corporate motto in order to advance their mission to simplify access and navigation of a confusing abundance of information on the World Wide Web (Vise and Malseed 2006, 178).

Google Books is more flexible and convenient than the library-approved options to assist patrons looking for titles that the library owns but does not have available, like *The Divine Nine*. The library options include interlibrary loan, search WorldCat for local library holdings, and contact the local Greek chapter alumni to request a copy.

Interlibrary loan could take up to two weeks to deliver the title, WorldCat could provide library locations within driving distance, but some students do not have transportation, and contacting local Greek chapters was not appealing to students. Google Books provided the solution.

Using Google Books (books.google.com), patrons can view millions of titles for free. The entire book may not be available on Google Books but an undergraduate student will be able to locate enough information needed to complete an assignment.

Google Books provides various levels of access depending on the copyright agreement Google has with the copyright holder. Books that are in the public domain are books that are no longer in copyright and the entire text is online; this is the Full View option. Limited Preview and Snippet View offer portions of the title. Even the No Preview option provides book reviews, copyright information, locations of the book in local libraries, and purchasing options. Detailed descriptions of access in Google Books follow:

- Full View—the entire book is online. Full view is available when the publisher or author allows the entire book to be accessible because the book is out of copyright or the current copyright holder allows full access. If the book is out of copyright, the patron can download a PDF copy of the book and copy and paste portions of the book.
- Limited Preview—the author or publisher authorized a certain amount of the book to be available online, usually the copyright page, title page, table of contents, and the first chapter with gaps between the pages.
- Snippet View—a few sentences of the book are available online. Books that have snippet view are in copyright, and Google does not have a deal with the rights holder.
- No Preview—basic information about the book: author(s), title, publisher, publication date, reviews, related books. No text inside the book is available in the No Preview mode.

CREATE A GOOGLE ACCOUNT

The benefits of creating a Google account include the ability to personalize Google Books privacy settings, optimize functions, and share books. To create a Google account:

1. In the browser, type: *account.google.com*.
2. Enter required information: name, username, password, current e-mail, birthday, gender, phone number, and location. If you don't have another e-mail account, it is advisable to create one. An alternate e-mail account with another provider is necessary when forgotten passwords need to be reset.
3. Read and check to agree with the Terms of Service and Privacy Policy.
4. Click on Next Step.

5. A confirmation e-mail will be sent to your current e-mail address.

After creating an account in Google, you are ready to customize your Google Books program. You can access Google Books by either going to the apps grid, located in the top-right area, and select the Books icon or type in the browser: *books.google.com*. The customize options include creating public and private bookshelves. The ability to name the bookshelves is a quick reference source when naming them by authors, course numbers, personal interests, and research topics.

HOW TO SEARCH GOOGLE BOOKS

Searching Google Books is easier than searching an online library catalog. Google Books has one search box to enter a title search or a topic search. The library catalog, on the other hand, has multiple search option tabs: Books, Media, Journals, eResources, Subject Guides, etc. The library catalog is cluttered with pull-down menu options: Keywords, Author, Title, Subject, LC call number, Other call number. Most library catalogs are too complicated and return confusing results. Google Books is focused on returning relevant results.

To search Google Books:

1. Put cursor in browser search box.
2. Type: *books.google.com*.
3. In the Google Books search box, type book title or subject information.

Entering *The Divine Nine* in the search box returns a preview copy of *The Divine Nine*. I encourage students who are looking for this title to read the preview copy even though some pages are omitted; it is free and contains the majority of the book's content.

It is important to log into Google Books in order to access the full range of book features available through this program. Simply logging into Google.com does not provide the book's features.

Google Books Search Features

The Google Books search features that are most helpful to scholars include access to book reviews, the ability to locate the book in a local library, and the ability to create a personal online Google Books library using Add to My Library.

1. Text magnification—click on the Magnifying Glass icons to increase and decrease text size.
2. View single or multiple pages—click on the Single-Page icon or Double-Page icon to view documents.
3. Make image full screen—click on the Full-Screen image, four arrows pointing to page corners, to remove menu on the left side of screen. The top toolbar is still visible, only the left toolbar goes away in full-screen view. Click the Full-Screen icon to return to menu view.
4. Create a link—click on the Link icon to paste a link in e-mail or IM, or copy and paste link into a document.
5. Add book to personal library—click on Add to My Library to insert the title into the list of books in your library; your personal library can be public or private. The default category options are: Favorites, Reading Now, To Read, Have Read. To add a bookshelf, click on the red Add a Bookshelf button, enter a name for the new bookshelf, and the new bookshelf is automatically added to the default list.
6. Write a review—click on “Write a Review” to write and publicly display a review in Google Books. All reviews are public, even the reviews of books on the private bookshelves.

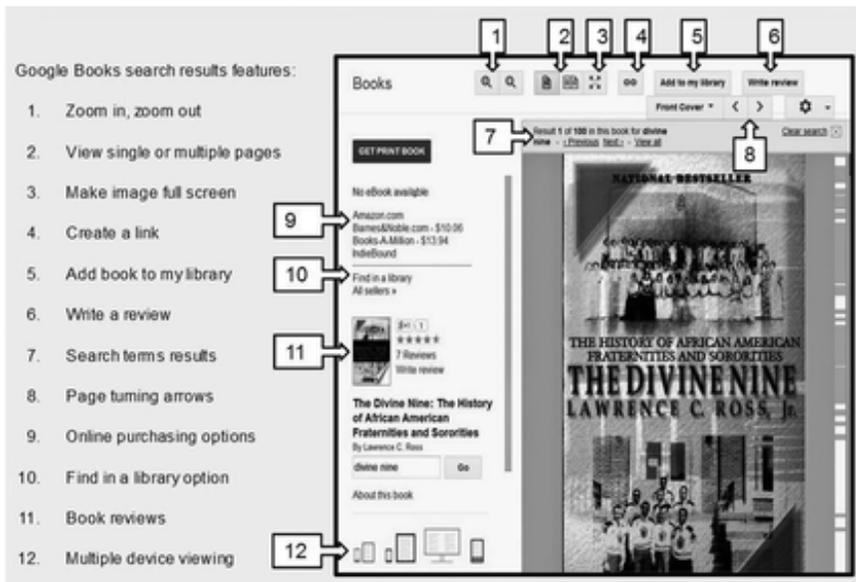


Figure 25.1. Google Books Search Features

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7. Number of pages with search terms—click on View All to see how many pages are available to view with selected search terms. The copyright holders determine the number of preview pages available.
8. Page turning arrows—click the right arrow to turn pages forward, the left arrow to turn pages backward.
9. Online purchasing options—click on a purchasing option to order full texts of books. The purchasing options for *The Divine Nine* are Amazon, Barnes & Noble, Books-A-Million, and Indie Bound. Indie Bound provides the option to enter zip codes to locate the closest independent bookstore that stocks the book.
10. Find in a library option—click on Find in a Library to locate libraries that have the title. Google Books searches the WorldCat database, WorldCat is a database that searches the catalogs of libraries worldwide. This option requires the user to enter a local zip code, which returns the holdings of libraries and bibliographic details: abstract, author, format, genre, International Standard Book Number (ISBN), related subjects, reviews, and user lists with this item. The results are listed by location; the closest locations are listed at the top.
11. Book reviews—click on Book Reviews for editorial reviews, User Reviews, and five-star system user ratings. Editorial reviews are criticisms published by professionals in established journals. User reviews are customer reviews.
12. Multiple device viewing—click on the Device icon of choice: desktop computer, laptop, phone, tablet.

Compared to searching a university library catalog, searching Google Books is easy. To search the library's online catalog, the student must find and select the correct tab for books because the current trend in library home pages is to make the article linker tab the default tab. The student then needs to either type "Divine Nine" in quotation marks to ensure that the results return the two words next to each other, the exact phrase, or select "Title" from the Keyword pull-down menu and enter "Divine Nine." These search techniques are not intuitive; the pull-down menus often hide more than they reveal.

Although it is unnecessary to include initial articles when searching specific titles, the only users who know this information are advanced researchers, Library Science students, and librarians. For the novice searcher, the articles *a*, *an*, and *the*, at the beginning of a book title are instinctively included in their search. Google Books is easy to navigate because patrons can use it with natural language, unlike the online catalog, which can feel like you need a master's degree in library science vocabulary to use it.

SEARCH WITHIN A BOOK

To search for words or phrases within a book, start at the search box located in the left column below the book title, enter search terms in the search box. A relevant search in *The Divine Nine* would be searching for Alpha Kappa Alpha, the first Greek sorority established by African American college women. Entering Alpha Kappa Alpha in the search box resulted in eighty-seven snippet results. By clicking on the page number of the snippet, the full page is displayed.

GOOGLE ALERTS

Students looking for *The Divine Nine* may want to do further research into the African American experience in higher education. The students can enter the search term *African American higher education* and receive several thousand titles. However, the students may also want future scholarship on this subject. By creating a Google Alerts for information on African American higher education, students can access titles with perspectives that differ or support *The Divine Nine*.

To set up Google Alerts:

1. Log in to Google.com.
2. Put cursor in browser search box.
3. Type: *google.com/alerts*.
4. Put cursor in Search Query box.
5. Type: *African American higher education*.
6. Select preferences in the Show Options drop-down menu.
7. Click the Create Alerts button.

Logging in to a Google account will automatically fill in e-mail information in Google Alerts. After creating the alert, Google monitors the search terms and will send an e-mail each time a new item is published with the title or subject heading *African American higher education*. The frequency options for receiving alerts are: As-it-happens, Once a day, and Once a week. The preview results are displayed immediately below the query.

GOOGLE BOOKS AND WORLDCAT

Google Books can retrieve most of the books in the world's largest catalog, WorldCat (Chen, 2012). WorldCat is an online catalog of materials from over seventy thousand libraries worldwide. Searching WorldCat requires

only Internet access. It is a free, global service, and it is not necessary to have an academic affiliation to use it.

A comparison of Google Books to WorldCat provides similar results when searching for *The Divine Nine*. To locate WorldCat, enter “worldcat.org” in the browser. The WorldCat simplified search form looks like a Google search box with its Everything default option. Entering a book title in the WorldCat search box will return the locations of libraries that own the title; the nearest location is listed first. Clicking on the first result reveals a Google Preview option. Clicking on the Google Preview option reveals the preview in figure 25.1 above.

Google Books and WorldCat share important features: easy searching, book summaries, and library locations. However, WorldCat includes more academic information than Google Books, the kind of information that scholars need for research. WorldCat entries provide detailed catalog data: abstracts, genre, international standard book number (ISBN), linked data, lists of related subjects, and subject headings.

GOOGLE BOOKS AT THE REFERENCE DESK

I frequently use Google Books as a reference source during my daily four-hour reference shift. Wednesday, July 2, 2014, was a typical day at the reference desk where I referred two patrons to Google Books.

The first reference transaction where I used Google Books was with a professor who called frustrated with not being able to access an eBook in our online catalog. After going through the eBooks troubleshooting checklist of trying different browsers, setting up an account with the vendor, and rebooting the computer, it was determined that the book had a broken link. A help ticket was turned in to our technical support staff and the electronic resources librarian. It depends on the problem as to when the link will be resolved. In the meantime, I demonstrated how to locate the title on Google Books, and the professor was happy with the Preview copy until access to the title was resumed.

The second Google Books transaction dealt with an undergraduate who requested Jean-Jacques Rousseau's *The Discourses and Other Early Political Writings*, translated by Victor Gourevitch. The patron did not know how to search the online catalog and confessed that this was her first visit to the library. I wanted to make her first visit to the library a positive experience, so I patiently demonstrated how to find the book in the catalog: start at the Libraries' home page, select the Books & Media tab, select Advanced Search, enter Title: Discourses and Other Early Political Writings, Author: Rousseau.

The one copy of *Discourses* was checked out and the patron did not want to wait for an interlibrary loan, but no local libraries had the title. The patron needed to read this title before class tomorrow. A Google Books search listed the Gourevitch translation as the first result. The patron expressed relief in being able to access this title.

The first transaction with the professor resulted in a discussion about how our Libraries' online catalog broken links make it difficult to do research. In the past, he has either looked for another source or complained to his department chair about the inefficiency of electronic journals and eBooks. This reference transaction was the professor's first exposure to Google Books. He was surprised to see how many titles are available and appreciated my taking the time to explain the navigation tools and search techniques that make Google Books such a useful research tool.

The second transaction with the undergraduate reinforced the need for all students to receive library instruction classes. The librarians have an outreach program designed to teach library skills to all students who attend orientation sessions. The University of North Texas values the research skills taught at the orientation sessions and makes a point to include all incoming groups: freshmen, transfer students, and returning students. However, if a student has no prior library or research experience, starting them with Google Books provides a familiar product as a gateway to navigate the Libraries' online catalog.

COPYING AND DOWNLOADING GOOGLE BOOKS

Only public domain books can be copied and downloaded. Public domain means that the book is not restricted by copyright. *The Divine Nine* is still in copyright, but *The Life and Times of Frederick Douglass* is available for copying and downloading. Portions of text can be copied from Google Books and pasted into a Word document.

How to copy text:

1. Put cursor in browser.
2. Enter books.google.com.
3. In search box, type *The Life and Times of Frederick Douglass*.
4. Select title by clicking once on results list.
5. Locate text to copy.
6. Select scissors icon located above the text.
7. Hold down left clicker, move cursor to select text.
8. Triple-click Selection text, this copies the text.
9. Navigate to document.
10. Hold the Control Key and V to paste text into document.

THE DOWNSIDE OF GOOGLE BOOKS

The downside of Google Books is that Google is a for-profit company that could change their policies in favor of their shareholders over students and scholars. Google Books is free as of this writing in the summer of 2014, but in the future Google's shareholders may want a policy change that is financially beneficial to them.

Another issue is that Google Books provides instant gratification. With immediate access to text, the effort put into searching a well-researched academic library catalog, might be displaced. Trying to focus on reading online text is a challenge with easy access to social media, online games, and other wired diversions. To fully engage with online text, it is necessary to close entertainment tabs or turn off other distracting options.

CONCLUSION

Google cofounders Sergey Brin and Larry Page's corporate motto is "Don't Be Evil." In contrast to my Library Information Science school edict not to search evil Google, this search engine can provide information for scholars that is otherwise unavailable in an academic library. Rare and out-of-print books are available, downloadable, and searchable at point of need on Google Books. "At point of need" means that the student who is working after library hours on an assignment, has the ability to access books that would otherwise be locked up at the library. The finite resources of an academic library can be expanded with the titles available on Google Books.

The major advantage of Google Books is that it is easy to use: book titles are easy to find, the visual aids are easy to navigate, and the site is jargon free. Jargon is a major roadblock for beginning researchers looking for information in an online academic library catalog. Dhawan (2013) argues that undergraduates who are unfamiliar with navigating databases find the process confusing. Vendors design multiple search options to help narrow search results, but these pull-down menus often hide more than they reveal.

Google Books provides an easy-to-use interface with simple navigation tools designed for the user. In comparison, the library user interface is often designed for and by librarians with advanced search skills. Frustrated library patrons need Google Books when the item they require is either unavailable at time-of-need or simply not located at the library. Library staff familiar with Google Books will endear themselves to patrons who are used to Google's user-friendly interface. Library staff who resist familiarity with Google Books will add to the frustration of novice library users and risk losing their support.

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