

# MINITEX

## Reference NOTES

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### Guiding as a Reference Tool

Carla Pfahl

Recently through our Reference Referral Service (<https://www.minitex.umn.edu/reference/request/>), I worked with Yvonne Johnson from Ridgewater College on a student request for information about custodial parents who receive child support payments/funding who don't use the money appropriately. After much research using the ELM databases and additional resources from the University of Minnesota, still I was not satisfied with my response to Yvonne.

However, Yvonne was already one step ahead of me. She replied back saying she met with the student and suggested she consider a topic with more readily available sources. They decided on "deadbeat dads" on which both of us had found a lot of information during our initial quests. Yvonne's comment to the student was: "This isn't your master's or PhD thesis – it's a freshman English paper. Don't make your life more difficult than necessary by choosing a topic/problem where sources are hard to locate. Give yourself a break!" The student was perfectly happy to refocus, and Yvonne was able to help her find a lot of sources. She hadn't heard back from the student in a few days so she was assuming all was going well.

I told Yvonne I thought she did an excellent job of guiding the student not only to more credible and scholarly resources but also on the topic of her paper. Yvonne mentioned this is just one of her "gems" to help guide students through the murky waters of research and information retrieval. She doesn't use the term "bibliographic instruction;" instead she calls these learning exchanges, "library orientation" because students do not know what bibliographic instruction means.

In Yvonne's own words, here are other "gems" she uses with her students:

- "My sole purpose and function is to help you! If you come to me for research assistance, you'll probably get a better grade. I know the assignments, the expectations of the teachers and will work hard to find relevant information to support your topic. (Of course I don't tell them about the dozens of other tasks I attend to in a one-person library. They need to hear that assisting them IS the most important thing I do.)"
- "I will ALWAYS facilitate your research needs whether it is six weeks or six hours before a paper, report or speech is due. With six hours to go, getting a good grade will be difficult but I will NEVER turn you away or reprimand you. My job is to help you, not to harm you."
- "I don't write your paper for you. I find good sources for you to utilize that assist you in writing a better paper."
- "My office door is always open even when it's closed!"
- "'Nothing here is carved in stone' except the Dewey Decimal System. (I have a little rock on my desk that says just that). Talk to me and engage in a dialogue, ask me questions, let me help you by sharing what I've learned in 37 years as an educator."
- "The only stupid question is the one you don't dare ask!"
- "Food and beverages are allowed in the library: be careful, respectful and tidy. If you pretend this is your mother's living room – you'll be fine!"



The MINITEX Library Information Network is a publicly supported network of academic, public, state agency, and special libraries working cooperatively to provide and improve library service to patrons in Minnesota, North Dakota, and South Dakota.

"I REALLY believe and live by all of these tenets and am definitely not here to judge or intimidate students. I'm here to guide and teach them. Although some of this might sound trite, through the years I've found that by reassuring students and treating them honorably, they become confident lifelong learners and library users." Yvonne Johnson, Librarian – Ridgewater College, Hutchinson

Thanks, Yvonne! This is great advice for us all.

## Update on RFP for Statewide Electronic Resources

Mary Parker

The Minitex Electronic Information Resources (MEIR) Task Force members attended three consecutive days of vendor presentations and Q & A on March 30–April 1. Mary Parker, Minitex Associate Director, evaluated and summarized the members' numerical ratings of the RFP requirements and written comments in a report submitted to University of Minnesota Purchasing, which had issued the RFP on our behalf. These ratings and comments form the basis of the Task Force's recommendations to Minitex. Parker presented the recommendations to the funding partners in Minnesota, North Dakota, and South Dakota during webinars this week. Next, Bill DeJohn, Parker, and Elaine Kelash, buyer for University Purchasing, will contact vendors to negotiate the final resources and prices. It is our intent to announce awards by the end of May.

## Minnesota Digital Library 7th Annual Meeting Set for June 8

The Minnesota Digital Library and the Minnesota Historical Society (MHS) are combining efforts to offer the Seventh Minnesota Digital Library Annual Meeting on June 8 at the Gorecki Center at the College of St. Benedict in St. Joseph. Registration begins at 8:30 a.m., and the sessions begin at 9 a.m.

Morning break-out sessions will be dedicated to presentations on digital collection work across the state. Topics include:

- Digitizing audio and video projects, outsourcing, and even explorations of digitizing three-dimensional objects;
- Collaboration projects across the state – organizations working together to create digital collections to share with the public;
- The "nuts and bolts" of digitization, a session where you can ask the questions that have been bugging you in your work;
- The evolving Minnesota Digital Library which is working on projects with Flickr Commons, a tagging initiative, training in Pachyderm, and more.

The afternoon will be dedicated to information and discussions on the preservation of digital collections.

John Kunze, California Digital Library, will discuss digital preservation issues in that statewide initiative. In the break-out sessions Cal Lee, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, will share his work and ideas on preserving digital collections, particularly personal, individual collections. Bob Horton, MHS, will discuss the lessons his team has learned from a state-wide survey of preservation needs.

New this year will be a conference room where people can get one-on-one answers throughout the day to questions on eight topics related to digitizing and the work of the Minnesota Digital Library. We're calling it "Bring your Questions." We've made arrangements to have people available to answer questions about: scanning, metadata, MDL initiatives, CONTENTdm, Pachyderm, preserving collections, searching in Minnesota Reflections, and our Minnesota Reflections user assessment project. If you have other questions, we'll try to find someone to answer them for you.

Thanks to the Minnesota Historical Society, the annual meeting is free this year. Registration is required. Go to <http://www.mndigital.org/> to learn more and to find the link to registration materials. Funding for this meeting is provided by the Minnesota Historical Society through a grant from the Institute of Museum and Library Services.

## Minnesota Reflections Update

Marian Rengel

Each month newly digitized projects come into Minnesota Reflections. New, this year, are plat book from Morrison, Renville and Grant county historical societies. Mower County Historical Society contributed a set of aerial photographs taken by the U.S. Department of Agriculture in 1949. The metropolitan Medical Center Historical Library contributed a collection on The Swedish Hospital and St. Barnabas Hospital in Minneapolis. Excelsior-Lake Minnetonka Historical Society and the Westonka Historical Society, both new to Minnesota Reflections, digitized large projects on popular summer attractions like the Excelsior Amusement Park and Lake Minnetonka.

Coming soon will be a set of the embroidery patterns for religious vestments designed in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century by the Art Needlework Department of the Sisters of the Order of St. Benedict. We will also be adding a collection of letters written in the 1950s by Minnesota author Sinclair Lewis contributed by St. Cloud State University Archives. Two collections of letters written by women in the late 1800s and the early 1900s, one from Stillwater Public Library and the other from Hamline University, will also join the collection this spring.

This short list represents only about one-quarter of the projects brought into Minnesota Reflections in 2008-09. Explore at <http://reflections.mndigital.org/>.

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## Reference in the Electronic Age

Beth Staats

On April 30, 2009, I attended *Reference in the Electronic Age*, presented by Bobbi Newman, and sponsored by Minnesota Library Certification. This all-day workshop was held in seven regions throughout Minnesota during that week. I attended the session at the new St. Cloud Public Library, which is a gorgeous, spacious, and bright facility. Bobbi Newman is a librarian, trainer, and teacher. She is a Digital Services Librarian and trains patrons and staff on the Social Web and other tools. You can check out her blog at <http://librarianbyday.net/>.

Reference, in the electronic age, is quite a large area to cover, so it was interesting to see what specific areas she touched on in the 6-hour presentation. She introduced me to a term I hadn't yet heard of, *cloud*, which refers to the idea that an application that exists and lives online, like Facebook, Zoho, Picnic, or Google Docs. The presentation began with some statistics on Internet use, high speed access, wireless access, and the *cloud*. Apparently in 2000, less than 10% of Internet users used the *cloud*. In 2008, *cloud* use was greater than 53%.

She covered several aspects of the reference interview but with a focus on online reference. Approachability is a key factor in online reference as well as engagement and displaying interest. If your library offers some sort of virtual reference service, place the contact information for that service in a prominent location on your site. Be sure to give a prompt response acknowledging the patrons online presence. Bobbi also spent time discussing searching and following up with patrons.

She stressed the idea that to take the reference interview online you need to have the right tools. They need to be easy to find and easy to use. In this section we discussed IM, reference forms, email, and 24/7 reference. Some pros and cons of IM were discussed. IM is fast, easy, does not require travel, and your patron can be anonymous. On the other hand, speed is required, patrons are often in a vacuum, and you need to be familiar with IM jargon. At this point Bobbi put up a slide of about twenty common online phrases. For example, L8r = later, f2f = face to face, ianal = I am not a lawyer, were just a few of them.

Bobbi took some time to highlight Minitex, AskMN, and the ELM resources.

Towards the end of the day she showed some good and bad examples of library Ask Us sites. This was a great help as it pointed out what to do and what not to do when advertising a virtual reference service online. The day ended with information on copyright, including what is and what is not copyrighted. She directed everyone to Creative Commons, a non-profit corporation that offers a place to go to get free licenses and to share work that is consistent with the rules of copyright. Creative Commons can be accessed at <http://creativecommons.org>.

## Civility in the Workplace...Civility Everywhere

Jennifer Hootman

In the middle of his lecture on Dante, a professor of Italian literature at Johns Hopkins University began to think about how much he wanted his students to know everything there is to know about Dante. In the midst of that thought, the professor asked himself a question that changed the rest of his life. He asked himself, "If my students were to know everything about Dante, but treated an elderly woman on a bus unkindly, then I would have failed as a teacher." With that epiphany, Dr. Pier Massimo Forni began a new intellectual yet very practical journey. To his audience, Dr. Forni contemplates, "In the first part of our lives perhaps we pursue beauty, and in the second part of our lives perhaps we pursue goodness."

My colleague, Matt Lee, and I were fortunate to attend Washington County Library's program "Civility in the Workplace" which was sponsored by a gift from the RAFT Charitable Foundation. Dr. Forni, co-founder of the Johns Hopkins Civility Project and co-director of "Reassessing Civility: Forms and Values at the End of the Century," now directs The Civility Initiative at Johns Hopkins. In addition to his professorial position and directorship responsibilities at Johns Hopkins, Dr. Forni has authored *Choosing Civility: The Twenty-Five Rules of Considerate Conduct* (2002) and *The Civility Solution: What to Do When People Are Rude* (2008). To learn more about Dr. Forni and the Civility Initiative, see his website at: <http://krieger.jhu.edu/civility/index.html>

At Washington County Library's Woodbury Branch, Dr. Forni shared his thoughts on civility focusing on relational competency, social intelligence, manners, rudeness, costs of incivility, and inclusivity. His words were food for thought, food for the soul, and just plain made sense. Dr. Forni emphasized that, "The good life is the connected life. Social skills strengthen bonds." Social intelligence, Dr. Forni stated, is a better predictor of success in life and school than intelligence measured by IQ. With that, he shared "four cornerstones" to a good life:

- Life is a relational experience;
- The quality of our life depends upon the quality of our relationships;
- The quality of our relationships depends upon the quality of our relational skills; and
- Civility depends upon our relational skills.

Dr. Forni defines civility as benevolent awareness of others. He stated, "We are civil when we are aware of others and weave restraint, respect, and consideration into the very fabric of this awareness. We are civil when we care about others and treat them well." In contrast to civility, Dr. Forni defines rudeness as the inability or unwillingness to be considerate of others. Thus, rudeness, not surprisingly, weakens social bonds, erodes self-esteem, adds stress, poisons the workplace, escalates into violence, and

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bruises relationships. Perhaps more surprising (or not) is the startling fact that in the United States there are approximately 1.8 million acts of reported violence in the workplace each year. The unfortunate and costly outcomes of incivility include the following:

- Of the more than 90% of workers who experienced incivility, 50% lost work time worrying, and another 13% left the company.
- More than 50% of the American workforce have high stress levels with more than 1/3 identifying “people issues” as the number 1 cause of their stress at work and “workload” coming in second.
- Approximately \$300 billion a year is spent in health care costs, missed work, and stress reduction efforts related to incivility.

Dr. Forni asks us to think about measures to take to be at our best with others. These measures include defending yourself from toxic stress, getting to know the people around you, considering the merits of an inclusive mindset, not shifting the burden of your insecurity upon others in the form of hostility, and thinking of yourself as a good and accomplished person who does not need to prove his or her worth all the time. He followed these points by stating, “You do not have to prevail over others to be successful.”

As Dr. Forni began to bring his remarks to a close, he emphasized the results of civility – strengthens bonds, reduces stress, increases the quality of work and job satisfaction, increases the quality of relationships and is good for business, and does the everyday busy work of goodness. And finally, Dr. Forni left us with a challenge to choose civility and a call to action to:

- Pay attention,
- Acknowledge others,
- Listen,
- Be inclusive,
- Speak kindly,
- Accept and give praise,
- Be agreeable,
- Respect other people’s time and space,
- Apologize earnestly,
- Assert yourself,
- Give constructive criticism,
- Accept responsibility.

Dr. Forni has spoken to many different groups and professions across the county for many years and continues to challenge us all to choose civility and exercise goodness not only in the workplace but in our everyday lives wherever we are. Whether these are new concepts or you’ve heard them before, I think that Dr. Forni’s perspective and thoughts on civility cause a healthy reflection and serve as a terrific reminder about our individual worth and place in the world and all those, just like us – civil and uncivil –, with which we share it.

## Researching Undergrads with Katie Clark and the U of Rochester, or, Papers Happen, but How?

*Matt Lee*

This year’s ARLD Day conference (from MLA’s Academic and Research Library Division) provided numerous opportunities to learn about the ways that today’s student uses his/her college library – and to discuss how that library might adapt to the needs of its students. This discussion was kicked off by the keynote presentation of Katie Clark from the University of Rochester, New York.

With the aid of an anthropologist, the Rochester Library has completed an in-depth study into the curious behaviors of undergraduate students. This study has helped the Library’s staff to get a feel for the library experience from the students’ perspective in order to better understand their actions and provide library services accordingly. The study involved several facets including: retrospective interviews of students about library research/attitudes, the distribution of disposable cameras for insight into dorm life and homework research (using the evocatively named “cultural probe” technique), daily campus activity mapping, and formal and informal student feedback generation. Insights gained from this study have already helped library staff to better identify with student needs and will inform library programming and outreach going forward. Some findings of note are:

- Students speak with their parents frequently about research projects;
- Students are very busy and struggle to keep up with their numerous daily activities;
- Students are often on the go for hours at a time, bouncing from place to place, including the library;
- There is no “one best place” for students to study; some prefer a chaotic environment, others a clean, quiet space;
- Students don’t feel they have any trouble finding information for research projects, but aren’t as confident about their ability to organize that found information;
- While students are very connected (via cell phone, laptop, etc.) many view the library as a place to disconnect, and focus on work;
- Students make no differentiation between library staff, from coffee shop barista and student worker to head librarian.

Learn more by accessing the full report, available free from ACRL: [http://www.ala.org/ala/mgrps/divs/acrl/publications/digital/Foster-Gibbons\\_cmpd.pdf](http://www.ala.org/ala/mgrps/divs/acrl/publications/digital/Foster-Gibbons_cmpd.pdf).

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## Collaborations, and Partnerships, and Minitex, Oh My!

Jennifer Hootman and Mary Parker

The Minnesota Digital Library (<http://www.mndigital.org>) is working with Sandbox Studios (<http://www.sandboxstudios.org/>) to train social studies and other teachers this summer to use Pachyderm, an easy-to-use multimedia authoring tool. Designed for people with no multimedia experience, Pachyderm is accessed through a web browser and is very easy to use.

Minitex Reference Services is collaborating with the Minnesota Digital Library's Learning Commons grant in developing "user help" tutorials to accompany Pachyderm's user manual. Before we begin work on the tutorials, we will first be observing in-person training sessions on Pachyderm for teachers and school media specialists and working closely with Marian Rengel, Minnesota Digital Library Outreach Coordinator, and Kris Wetterlund and Scott Sayre of Sandbox Studios to create the content and design of these "user help" tutorials.

Later this summer, Minitex Reference Services staff will be working with Jane Prestebak, Program Director for Media of the Robbinsdale school district, and Lynne Eberlein, Media Specialist of Robbinsdale Cooper High School. Robbinsdale Cooper High School was recently awarded an LSTA grant, *Ready for College: Lifelong Information Literacy Skills*, to improve student information literacy skills for students at Cooper High School. On August 11 and 12, a teacher cohort will receive intensive teaching on the ELM databases from Minitex Reference Services staff and, with Jane, on Web 2.0 and Google tools and Web site evaluation. Lynne will teach Research Project Calculator and Noodle tools. In all, an estimated 130 teachers and 3,900 students will benefit from additional access to resources in the school library media center.

These collaborations will be another great way for Minitex Reference Services staff to reach out to teachers and school library media specialists. Additionally, our work with MDL affords us another tool, Pachyderm, for future use in promoting other statewide resources such as the ELM databases.

For more information and to register for the Pachyderm training sessions on July 10<sup>th</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup>, check out the Minnesota Library Community Calendar of Events at: <http://evanced.info/minnesota/evanced/eventcalendar.asp>

## Library Journal's Best Sources of 2008, Ongoing

Matt Lee

Throwing off the convention of December and January as "Best Of" months, *Library Journal* is highlighting the best sources of 2008 in an ongoing series running throughout early 2009. The March and April issues provide several noteworthy lists of "must-have" titles.

The "Best Reference 2008" run-down covers serious ground, topic-wise, from Arts to Travel to Current Events to Health & Medicine. The unifying factors of the titles covered are a notable breadth and/or depth of coverage, ease of use, and impeccable creator reputation. Compare the list to your reference collection to see if you agree with the editors, and consider those that aren't reflected in your collection for your next development round. The full list, with a web-only supplement, can be seen here: Best Reference 2008 (<http://www.libraryjournal.com/article/CA6650277.html?q=best+of+2008+reference>)

At the bottom of this article, you'll find a special section on the "Best Free Reference of 2008." The twelve sites honored vary in geographic focus (from Alabama to the UN), as well as topically (from movies to economics to politics). And, a site brought to the web by the state of Minnesota is one of those highlighted – have you used it before?

With the economy attracting the obsessive interest of newscasters and business stories making the front page of newspapers with increasing frequency, you may find business to be on the top of the minds of many of your library users. If so, consider "Business Books: Best of 2008," a run-down of non-reference business books profiling companies, personalities, economic meltdowns, and financial insanity among other topics. Find "Business Books: Best of 2008" here: (<http://www.libraryjournal.com/article/CA6641646.html?q=best+of+2008>)

These lists are, of course, just one publication's picks. Why not put together your own "Best Of" lists and post them on your library's blog or reference desk for your library customers to see?

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## Genealogy E-Resources

Jennifer Hootman



When you're evaluating and reviewing your genealogy resources, take a look at *Library Journal's* March 15, 2009 issue (pg. 126-127). Barb Kundanis, Reference Librarian at Longmont Public Library in Colorado has provided a review of nine best known subscription-based genealogy e-resources. Her criteria includes

scope (range and breadth of content), writing (quality and audience consideration), design (strengths/weaknesses of interface), bells & whistles (inclusion of multimedia and interactive features), ease of use (organization and efficiency), and linking (cross-searchability/interoperability). There is a final column on the product's overall "value" which considers multiple factors including its cost – i.e., "If a product is expensive, does its comprehensiveness and quality warrant the high cost?" The e-resources that Kundanis reviews are:

Ancestry Library Edition (Generations Network)  
[www.ancestry.com](http://www.ancestry.com)

Family Tree Connection (Genealogy Today)  
[www.familytreeconnection.com](http://www.familytreeconnection.com)

Footnote.com (Footnote)  
[www.footnote.com](http://www.footnote.com)

Genealogy Bank (NewsBank)  
[www.genealogybank.com](http://www.genealogybank.com)

Genealogy.com (Generations Network)  
[www.genealogy.com](http://www.genealogy.com)

Heritage Quest (ProQuest)  
[www.heritagequestonline.com](http://www.heritagequestonline.com)

OneGreatFamily.com (OneGreatFamily)  
[www.onegreatfamily.com](http://www.onegreatfamily.com)

The Origins Network (The Origins Network)  
[www.originsnetwork.com](http://www.originsnetwork.com)

World Vital Records.com (FamilyLink.com)  
[www.worldvitalrecords.com](http://www.worldvitalrecords.com)

Importantly, this LJ article mentions that if these subscription e-resources are not affordable, FamilySearch.org can be a valuable alternative. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints is responsible for this free site and claims to have the largest collection of genealogy resources available including international data.

## The Semantic Web: Linking Data and Connecting Libraries

Carla Pfahl

In the Spring 2009, issue of netConnect, *Data in Context*, the feature articles, "Making Connections" by Karen Coyle; "Discovering Linked Data" by Fiona Bradley; and "A Sparrow with a Gun" by R. David Lankes, explore how "Linked Data will help librarians, academics, and all the users of our libraries realize much of the Semantic Web's promise."

### What is the Semantic Web?

In the February 2009 issue of Reference Notes (<http://www.minitex.umn.edu/publications/refnotes/2009/02February.pdf>), I wrote about the OCLC Symposium from ALA Midwinter Conference, from *Linking to*

*Thinking*, <http://www.oclc.org/us/en/multimedia/2009/MWSymposium.htm>. "We are beginning to move into web 3.0, the Semantic Web, where we won't see much change in front-end operations but there will be a big change in back-end programming. We will begin to see a Web OS – web-based applications where the web will begin to function like an operating system."

The feature articles in netConnect's *Data in Context* talk about how Linked Data will contextualize the web for us. For example, in a conversation with people in Minnesota, I may mention the city of Rochester, and people would be fairly certain I was referring to the city south of the Twin Cities. However, if I want to do a search in Google for "Rochester," it will bring back many results for places/objects/people named "Rochester." I would need to add another term "Minnesota" to identify what I meant because a computer, as Coyle states, does not understand context. Identifiers are what give the web context. Along with the identifiers come the relationships and rules to connect pieces of information. This is harvested from the data of documents, not the documents themselves.

### What does this mean for Libraries?

Libraries can make a real impact on how the Semantic Web takes shape. Linking data can only happen when data markup exists – the metadata. Libraries have been working with metadata for some time now. "Of all the information communities, libraries are in the best position to transition their data into Linked Data because the basic elements already exist in our catalog data. What we need to do is to transform our data into Semantic Web structures and make that data available for linking" (Coyle, p. 46)

Following this advice, a library can expand its catalog outside the library's website by using the Linked Data sources to link out to a wider range of information thus giving the information a more holistic view or context. Having the information link out and connect to other pieces of information allows for more pathways back to your library. In one example used in the second article, Fiona Bradley

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points to the University of Huddersfield in the UK which decided to share its (anonymous) patron data under an Open Data Commons license with other libraries allowing them to see what items were borrowed and when. "Comparing this type of data across libraries could be a powerful way to view reading trends in different regions, assess collection development strategies, and identify opportunities for resource sharing beyond existing networks." (Bradley, p. 50) Linked Data gives libraries limitless possibilities for growth and development.

### **Reference Extract: the experiment**

In the third article, R. David Lankes talks about the beginning of a new project, Reference Extract. Reference Extract is a "credibility engine" still in the process of being designed. It will attempt to add context to searches for well-rounded, meaningful results. Librarians give the context in the form of selected reference sites. There isn't a linear path or direct line from a term being searched to the result(s). Instead, it is more like a mesh of inter-connected objects presented in a weighted format of highly credible to least credible. From that original referenced site, any sites that the original site points to can be picked up and given a lower degree of credibility and so on producing an "ever-expanding zone of credibility where each step away from a librarian-cited resource gets a lower credibility score." (Lankes, p. 54) Other uses for Reference Extract are also being explored such as adding an application to a virtual reference service. Imagine being in a chat session with a patron and having a dynamic bed of librarian-selected sites bubbling up as the reference interview transpires in real time. The sites can then be further refined by the librarian.

It's exciting to think of the possibilities for libraries in the new Semantic Web. We have a great opportunity to be key players in how it will develop based on our history of metadata and defined languages to connect people with book, articles, music, and so on. All the pieces of information are out there on the web. We need to start working together with other libraries to extend our collections beyond the library's virtual walls to begin to make these connections.

To read the entire netConnect series of articles and explore the many topics and links used there, please visit: <http://www.libraryjournal.com/article/CA6653223.html>.

## **Minitex Reference Services is introducing a new series of webinars focusing on Online Reference Services. Look for announcements soon with dates for these upcoming webinars!**

### **Designing an Online Reference Service: One Size Does Not Fit All**

Are you thinking about setting up an online reference service for your library, perhaps reviewing the current system you have in place, or even adding to or supplementing a current service? There are many options available with online reference services, and it can be challenging to know what is out there and what may be a good fit for your library. There are many issues to consider such as size, training, funding, administration, and hours of operation. This hour-long webinar is designed to give librarians an overview of various online reference services, features of each type, what may work best for your library, and other issues such as staffing, scheduling, and training.

### **Assessing Your Online Reference Service**

For an online reference service to be successful, it must be relevant and fulfill a need. Assessing your online reference service gives your staff the opportunity to reevaluate the goals and policies of your service to keep them in line with patrons' needs. In this session, we will look at the components needed to create an assessment process that gives staff a clear view of the effectiveness of their online reference service and how to apply the results and make adjustments where needed. This one-hour webinar is geared towards libraries that have an existing online reference service.

### **Homework Help: Meeting the Needs of K12 Students Online**

"Highlight four examples of exercising foreign policy by the executive branch." "What are some ways we can help kids in Africa with AIDS?" "Where can I find info about violence in Romeo and Juliet?" "i am in 5 grade. in science i am doing a report on chinchillas. I found some info but it is about domestic chinchillas. i would like to learn more about chinchillas in the wild. Please help!" In online reference services, K12 students are looking for information in a manner that is different from adult learners. Learn some of the ways you can best guide students through the web to help them find credible information and making the process a positive experience. In this 60-minute session we will talk about different learning styles of K12 students and best ways to approach and offer assistance with their information needs.

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## Newly Recorded Webinars, Ready When You Are

Matt Lee

Reference service in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century is all about being there at your student/patron/customer's point of need. Minitex Reference Services gets that, so when you find yourself with a need for reference training at 3 a.m. (who hasn't?), we're there for you. We record our webinar sessions and post them on our archived training session page: <http://minitex.umn.edu/events/training/archived.asp>.

Recently archived webinars include:

- eBooks and NetLibrary (<http://minitex.umn.edu/events/training/archived.asp#1>)
- Google for Research: Tips and Tricks for Expert Searching (<http://minitex.umn.edu/events/training/archived.asp#213>)
- Information Management 2.0: Customized Content and Customized Delivery (<http://minitex.umn.edu/events/training/archived.asp#227>)
- Taking the Fear Out of Business Reference (<http://minitex.umn.edu/events/training/archived.asp#211>)
- These sessions are best viewed in Internet Explorer, using Windows Media Player. If you watch one, we'd love to hear your feedback: <https://www.minitex.umn.edu/reference/evaluation.aspx>.

While we'll most likely be sleeping if you're watching these in the wee hours of the morn, please drop us a line with any questions or comments they raise in terms of content: [mtxref@umn.edu](mailto:mtxref@umn.edu). We'll get back to you during *typical* working hours \*wink.\*

## Poetry 365

Matt Lee  
& Jennifer Hootman

April was National Poetry Month, but poems are good year-round. If you'd like to learn more about creating poetry programming at your library, look to the ALA Annual meeting in July. A recent note in *Programming Librarian* provides details about the conference's spotlight on poetry, including a list of visiting poets: <http://programminglibrarian.org/blog/ala-annual-conference-spotlight-on-poetry.html>.

Whether you are off to ALA Annual this year or not, check out Barbara Hoffert's Best Poetry of 2008 in *Library Journal's* April 15, 2009 (pg. 95-96) issue. Reviews are provided for the following titles that made the list:

- *American Hybrid: A Norton Anthology of New Poetry* – Cole Swensen & David St. John, eds.
- *Tyrannosaurus Rex versus the Corduroy Kid* – Simon Armitage
- *Watching the Spring Festival* – Frank Bidart
- *The Romantic Dogs* – Roberto Bolaño
- *Fire to Fire: New and Selected Poems* – Mark Doty
- *The Collected Poem of Barbara Guest* – Barbara Guest
- *Half of the World in Light: New and Selected Poems* – Juan Felipe Herrera
- *Sleeping It Off in Rapid City: Poems, New and Selected* – August Kleinzahler
- *The Shadow of Sirius* – W.S. Merwin
- *Human Dark with Sugar* – Brenda Shaughnessy
- *Blood Dazzler* – Patricia Smith
- *The Collected Poetry of Jack Spicer* – Jack Spicer
- *Red Rover* – Susan Stewart

Edgy, powerful, and rich, this Best Poetry list is sure to include a number of titles addressing your patron's interests.



In addition to all the consumer health resources you and your patrons can find in ELM (MasterFILE Premier & Academic Search Premier), are you looking for another good resource for consumer health information? The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services has made available an online resource, Healthfinder.gov. It's "coordinated by the Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion and its health information referral service, the National Health Information Center." Additionally, the website is one of the Medical Library Association's "Top Ten" most useful websites. On Healthfinder.gov you'll also find a terrific section that provides short tutorial overviews on various features of the resource and how to search the site. Furthermore, there is a 6-minute tutorial targeted to librarians touring the various features of the website at: <http://healthfinder.gov/tutorial/LibrarianTutorial/Video/index.html>

"Healthfinder.gov has resources on a wide range of health topics selected from over 1,600 government and non-profit organizations to bring you the best, most reliable health information on the Internet." Content guidelines are also provided should you wish to review their selection process.

Healthfinder.gov has a basic search feature, an A to Z browse, and a Quick Guide to Healthy Living. The Personal Health Tools include Online Checkups, Activity and Menu Planners, Health Calculators, E-Cards to send to friends and family, and a Watch and Listen section that provides videos, podcasts, and slideshows. The website can be viewed in English or Spanish.

Try using Healthfinder.gov in conjunction with Medlineplus.gov, one of my personal favorites for consumer health information. Also, remember that Minnesota is a partner in the Go Local initiative which provides Minnesotans with information on local health care providers, facilities, and services at My Health Minnesota ? Go Local: <http://medlineplus.gov/minnesota>.

[See previous article on My Health Minnesota ? Go Local in the September 2008 issue of *Reference Notes*: <http://minitex.umn.edu/publications/refnotes/2008/09September.pdf> ]

On a related note, in April, Minitex Reference Services sponsored a College of DuPage Soaring to Excellence teleconference, "An Ounce of Prevention: Health Reference Basics." If you wish to learn more about health reference resources and tips on conducting a good health reference interview, you can catch a recording of this teleconference by checking out our DVD copy at: <https://www.minitex.umn.edu/events/teleconferences/checkout.aspx>. Also, take a moment to browse through the handout packet on the teleconference website at: <http://www.dupagepress.com/library-learning-network/soaring-to-excellence-2009/ounce-of-prevention/>.

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