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## MBooks Usability Reports

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# Personas & Scenarios – MBooks

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## Overview

This report contains the personas and scenarios devised for MBooks, also known as the Michigan Digitization Project. This project, associated with Google, provides an online access system to the University of Michigan Library's digitized collections. MBooks utilizes a "page turner" interface allowing users to either search within the text or view the full text depending on the copyright restrictions currently place for each individual resource.

While a useful tool for being able to quickly locate terms within books, potentially speeding research, it cannot deliver more than one page at a time with its interface. Because of this fact it allows for screen-viewing but can not be considered a complete surrogate for print resources. There is also a functionality issue with the PDF display. If the purpose of MBooks is to deliver resources that are no longer easily accessible in print (or accessible at all), it does not yet serve all the possible uses of a researcher.

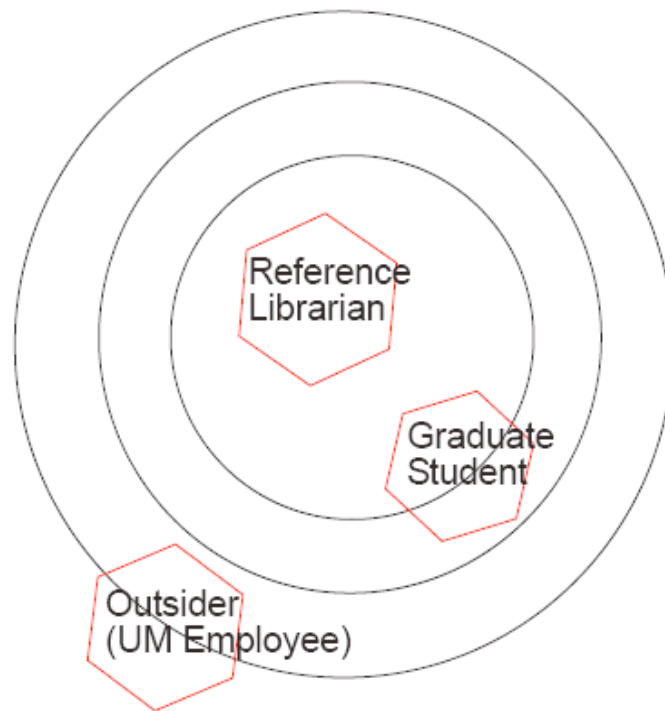
Sadly, items available through MBooks are not identifiable early in the search process and users cannot currently browse the MBooks or filter results for anything other than *all* available types of electronic resources. There are already plans for creating an MBooks portal and those things may change upon its implementation.

To better understand the users of MBooks, five different people were interviewed to determine their demographic details, lifestyle characteristics, and computer usage. Three general personas were then created to help paint a picture of what the different types of needs would be for a potential user of MBooks. Each persona was given a scenario in which MBooks was used.

- Reference Librarian
- Graduate Student
- 'Outsider'/UM Employee

The personas and scenarios only apply to the University of Michigan community, as it was determined that the primary users of this resource would fall into this category. The following diagram is a persona map, which shows the group's conclusion of the core and fringe users of MBooks. This map is important to the group's analysis and conclusions in that it depicts the main users of MBooks, and perhaps the main groups that should be catered to with this product.

## Persona Map for MBooks Users



This map represents the UM community. The center of the map represents the core user groups.

## Persona & Scenario #1: Reference Librarian



### *Persona*

Ethan Livingston is a 40-year-old librarian. He previously worked in the financial sector for Charles Schwab as a market analyst but felt unfulfilled in his position and wanted more direct contact with people. He decided to get his second master's degree at the School of Information at the University of Michigan. Ethan is now in charge of collection management for the history materials maintained by the U of M library system. He oversees student staff that assist in collection development and cataloging.

Ethan thinks it is important to always give the U of M community members good answers that also help to illustrate ways to navigate the multitude of resources available in a library. Students look up to his responses and trust his guidance, so he considers himself to be a necessary component in any good research. While Ethan admits that he must sometimes “bluff” his way through a reference interview over a subject he isn't too familiar with, he knows that he has a very intimate knowledge of the databases and catalogs that are open to him regardless of his personal feelings about their interfaces. This helps him to teach students how to use a database and find information whether he knows the subject or not. He knows that technology is the future and he adapts in order to learn the skills necessary to help people find the best information that they can get for their purposes.

When Ethan is not working at the UM graduate library, he is spending time with his family. Ethan is married with 2 children who are both in high school. He finds that for his age group and due to the technical aspects involved with his job, that he is above average in his age group when it comes to using computers and software. However, he is fascinated when watching his children use computers and other mobile devices—he thinks that it is important for libraries to embrace the technical aspects of culture because it is necessary to keep up with it. This outlook comes in handy when helping his elderly parents learn how to use the Internet for email so that everyone can keep in contact better, as well as to search for medical health information they might need. Ethan is a fan of

entertainment, particularly medical television drama shows and action movies. He enjoys reading as well and finds that his information searching skills help him to find interesting material quickly and easily.

## **Scenario**

Ethan is a subject selector for history and reference librarian at the University of Michigan. He had just graduated from the University of Michigan's School of Information and was aware of the Google book scanning and Michigan Digitization Project. He regularly runs across these resources when searching to satisfy reference questions and has to describe its workings. He finds this a good resource to use when students would like to find materials from the middle to late nineteenth century.

One day while working online chat reference, a student messaged him with a need for information about mining and miners in Michigan that she could access from home. Interested in what the perceptions of the mining industry were in the middle decades of the eighteen hundreds, Ethan did a search and came up with a number of items that had been scanned and made accessible through MBooks. He thought that would be good for someone that was at home on the internet. One interesting article that he saw had the MBooks Full Text Logo, so he gave his search terms to the student and told her about the MBooks resources. Ethan told her that she could view the full text of some of these items online as images, text, or PDFs. He then told her how you can search the text for a term like 'miners' and see where they appear in the book. She was impressed that she could look at books online like this and asked if she could save the whole book or print more than a page at a time. He mentioned that you could not, but he told her how to go back to the record to see where she could get the item in the library.

Once she returned to the record page, she asked Ethan what was at the Google Online link, since she had heard about the digitization project but had never seen Google Books. The both followed the link, and it turned out that Google had made this book available for download. The girl seemed really pleased. She asked him how she could tell which resources were electronic and which were paper only in Mirlyn. He told her about the icon for electronic resources, but noted that there was no way to tell which of these would be available through MBooks or Google. Ethan thought that it would be nice if there could be an easier way to tell which were MBooks, and also thought that it would be useful if U of M students could actually download chapters after searching for terms. It seemed that even though his most recent patron had found many useful elements in the searchable, digitized item, there was still a desire to have a printed form. Ethan understands that although digitization has its benefits and will be a necessary part of library development in the future, people will be relying on paper until technology allows a more useable and complete surrogate for traditional media. He felt there was a missed opportunity for the University that the student could not print or save a full PDF from their own interface.

## Persona & Scenario #2: Graduate Student



### **Persona**

Anna Laurinaitis is a 23 year old graduate student in the Department of Psychology at the University of Michigan. She graduated two years ago from the University of Arizona where she majored in international journalism. It is her first year at the University of Michigan, and she is currently conducting research on possible treatments for Dissociative Identity Disorder. She is very proficient with online searching, and she uses the University's subscription resources to support her research. In her very limited spare time Ann enjoys cooking and reading mystery novels and often searches Google for new and exciting recipes to try out and authors to explore. She is a very tactile person and prefers holding books in her hands to reading them from the laptop screen, so often her searches will lead her to Amazon where she will purchase new cookbooks and novels. However, for her research she finds it convenient to read journal articles from PsycINFO from the screen.

### **Scenario**

Anna has been required to write a 7-10 page paper on deviant/criminal behavior for a graduate course and must reference at least one monograph. Anna is out of town for the Midwestern Psychological Annual Meeting in Chicago, Illinois and must finish her paper to be turned in the day she gets back. Anna knows that the University Library offers electronic copies of some of their books as part of the MBooks project for students, but she has never used this service before. She plans to search the University Library website for electronic books using the Mirlyn catalog.

Anna goes to the *Mirlyn Catalog Advanced Search* page and types in the words *deviant, behavior, criminal* in 3 fields with the option to search "words anywhere". She also chooses to narrow the search by format, focusing only *electronic resources*. This



search returns 0 results. A bit frustrated, Anna then goes to Mirlyn Basic Search page and types in *deviant behavior criminal* in the search field, and with the option to match her keywords with the “words anywhere” option. This search returns 64 results. Anna browses through these results and tries to determine which are electronic resources. She finds a few studies on her topic that are available online, but none of them seem to be part of the MBooks project and there is no indication that these electronic resources are actual monograph’s (books). Anna fails to find an electronic copy of any monograph relating to her project and instead has to visit the local library in Chicago to complete her assignment.

### **Persona & Scenario #3: Outsider/UM Employee**



#### ***Persona***

Mona is a 31 year-old single female. She has a Bachelor's degree in History from the University of Michigan and obtained a job with the University Hospital upon graduation. As an administrator she spends much of her work day using her desktop PC, and although she has both a PC laptop and home desktop she is often too burnt out from her daily workload to log onto her computers at home. She considers herself somewhat average when it comes to her technical capabilities, using many different digital and online resources in her professional setting. She tries to stay up to date on current medical research so that she can inform the physicians in her program of new medical findings, and often will rely on other professionals for reference questions. As an avid lover of Civil War and Michigan history she is often torn between her demanding hospital work and her ability to find exciting resources for her personal interest, especially when such, oftentimes obscure, resources are difficult to find in simple online (Google) searches. She wishes she had more time to juggle her professional and personal interests, as well as stay up to date with new technology.

#### ***Scenario***

Mona has an intense personal interest in the cultural impact of the American Civil War upon Michigan. Working for the University of Michigan Medical Center has brought her into contact with the reference services at the U of M library when researching issues for the residents at the hospital. In one instance, the librarian had found an item that was listed as an MBook, even though it ultimately wasn't relevant to her need and was a search only item. She did get the idea that maybe she could use MBooks to satisfy some personal research

One rainy Sunday afternoon, she was browsing books about the Civil War on Amazon.com and thought to use Mirlyn to see if she could find anything interesting to read online. Mona first tried a basic search for “civil war” and “Michigan” and retrieved books in all formats. Since it was cold out and she wanted something to read right then, she went to advanced search and filtered for materials in electronic format. She wished there was some way to tell which were MBooks and which were other electronic items, but after looking through a few records she did finally locate a full text MBook that looked like it would fit her interest. She went to the title *Abraham Lincoln and the Union; a chronicle of the embattled North*, and began to browse using the interface. She liked that it was similar to other online reading interfaces, and saw that she could search within the text. She searched for Michigan, and found all the references in the text with accompanying links. She went to one, and started reading, but found reading on the screen draining. She also noticed that there was no dialog to print and that although there was a link for PDF view, it was still page at a time and it appeared as though the left hand side of the page was cut off. In the end, she clicked the link that said “return to Mirlyn record”, to go back to the record for the item she was reading. She liked that she could go back to the original record so that she could look the item up to save in her Amazon wish list.

Out of curiosity, when she was back at the record page, she clicked the Google Online link to see what Google’s interface looked like. She liked that there was a map showing locations in the book along with the pages that referenced them, but she couldn’t view the book. In the end, she wished that she was able to print the whole chapter from the book she was reading or that the PDF view would have given her the chapter. She loved to be able to search within the text to zero in on the information that interested her, but she would like to have seen more of the context. In the end, she would probably continue to view books and only infrequently read things online, perhaps on the infrequent day she doesn’t want to go out.

## Interview Script

1. Please describe yourself. (Include student, professional, etc.)
2. Do you have a PC at home? At work? Do you use a laptop or other portable devices?
3. In what setting do you do most of your information searching?
4. How much time do you spend daily searching for information online? (Include Google use and news/info browsing.)
5. What types of things interest you in your work/school/personal life that would lead you to look for information?
6. Do you borrow books in the library, how often?
7. Do you usually look for more recent or older resources?
8. What do you do if the book you needed is not in the library?
9. What do you know about electronic library resources? How do you use library website/Mirlyn? Search Tools? How frequently do you use these?
10. Have you ever used an electronic resource through Mirlyn?
11. Have you ever use Google Book Search? Can you describe it, please?
12. Can you describe what is MBooks, please? Have you ever seen MBooks while searching Mirlyn?
13. What electronic resources in general (Internet) do you use to complete your assignments?
14. Do you read books/articles from the screen? Do you print out online information you've found?
15. Do you have any specific difficulties complaints with Mirlyn? With other online databases?
16. Do you have difficulties finding info on the library website? Who do you ask for help, if you do?

## Interview Notes: Student 1

Graduate Student

Has a personal laptop that she never turns off.

For general searches she relies on Google and Baibu. For Scholastic research or for information required to write a paper she consults a number of different databases including: ProQuest, Marketline, EBSCO, IBIS, LexisNexis.

On average she spends 5 hours a day searching for information. If she knows what she is looking for she uses abstract key words and sometimes forms Boolean search strings.

She usually only borrows library books if they are reserved for classes, but not much for anything else.

She did paper on the papyrus collection and used some books from the 1500s and 1600s related to the collection. She did find an MBook when she was looking for something (not specifically an MBook), but didn't click on the book, asking "Why look online if I can get the book?"

She uses Mirlyn for her job, school and to help friends.

Notices problems with Mirlyn: sometimes has problem spelling as a non-native English speaker. Electronic Access is sometimes confusing on the library website. Sometimes she goes to an online article, sometimes she has to use SFX and enter in information again to get to the actual article. Doesn't like to have to re-choose search method when she presses back button in Mirlyn → goes back to "Words Anywhere". Search Tools is not too user friendly. It stores her own collection of databases. She does not use it for searching, just to get to 'her' databases. It requires lots of clicks to get to particular items (articles, abstracts, etc.).

She mentioned that she will use books, but will read a lot of articles online (not for official purposes), and does not print unless for class. She feels that journals are more relevant online than books.

She has never used Google Book Search and has never seen a Google Book.

Issues Raised:

If Google scanned everything, "I would still use books". She thinks books shouldn't be destroyed, because it always feels better to have a physical book in hand. She also said that paper has been around for centuries and it is still around, and feels it is more tangible. Also, it is tiring to read on a computer screen.

She mentioned the issue of copyright and how it might affect the success of a digitization project.

## Interview Notes: Reference Librarian 1

Used to substitute teach. Current job responsibilities include staffing reference desk and helping students with research needs using Search Tools (electronic journal articles) and some resources in MBooks.

Has desktops at home and work and also has a personal laptop. She likes laptop, especially the mobility. She does consultation work on the side and uses her laptop for that now—likes to type directly during client contact.

She says that the Grad library is humanities based. Undergrads need the most education on how to use the electronic catalogs and searches—how to link to an electronic article in different databases. Finds that once patrons have been walked through the process once or twice they tend to pick up on the patterns and do it on their own.

“Google is not the only way to get information.”

Uses electronic databases to “get ahead” b/c “anyone can get the info on Google.”

Personal Database use: health-related topics due to elderly parents. Is teaching her parents how to use laptop and Internet and helping them to do it themselves.

Electronic resources will not put librarians out of business. People will find 80% on their own but need librarians to find the 20% that is the “hard stuff.” Previous research required a lot of tailoring to the resources (on paper)—now we tailor the resources to the paper (electronic). Likes the benefits of this.

Sees value in both paper and electronic versions—likes search functions to see if you really want to check out the book. Think: indexes for relevant topics. You can do this at home and can easily make a list without having to go to each individual book. Saves time and effort.

Library work = uses less Google/Wikipedia (considers this casual searching). Uses DBs for more serious stuff.

Search Tools: ProQuest, African American historical materials (digitized microform), Chicago Defender, Film & Video DBs, American photographic institute

Mirlyn

Humanities

Early American Newspapers (digital collection)

News Bank

\*Biggest problem/professional obstacles = system problems prevent access.

Knows MBooks, knows the icon and understands the digitization process.

MBooks = full digital scan of the book

Google = snippets, highlight search terms. Never used Google Book Search.

Thinks scan looks good on MBooks.

Pagination is “off” in MBooks. Always off about 3-4 pages which require calculation and is a “minor inconvenience.” Patrons don’t know about this—would like a note about this in the system.

Now reads on screen, conserve paper. But used to print everything out. This way it would be hard to read a whole book on a screen, but doesn’t mind a chapter or two.

Indexes don’t all look the same—is difficult for patrons to grasp and deal with. Confusing to see different visual interfaces within the University’s system; at least w/in UM, things should be more uniform.

Serials have confusing layout—can see electronic links but access is not consistent electronically.

Library ref. desk training has helped her a lot to learn more and become a better researcher.

Answering live Q’s is the best way to learn.

Seeks help from peers.

Can “bluff way through it” but it’s not good b/c patrons truly believe that what the librarian tells them is the truth whether or not the info is good or bad.

Rates herself above average with technology, especially for her age group. Thinks the gap is an age factor. Appreciates what she sees younger people and students doing. That their rate of learning is more and more automatic—thinks that is fascinating. Sees more intuitive use (esp. on PC based usage).

Has seen women, especially, pick things like email up much faster than men (previous professional experience) because of simple things like typing. Men didn’t have to type so much b/c they had secretaries.

Views technology as promoting efficiency while still leaving ample room for the personal touch.

Libraries must get into electronic resources b/c views future as headed in that direction.

Similar services between MBooks and things like Amazon. But more comfortable with MBooks b/c uses it more.

Copyright issues—older stuff is actually requested more than the more recent stuff.

## Interview Notes: Reference Librarian 2

2<sup>nd</sup> year Graduate student; reference assistant at a library - answers questions and uses electronic databases.

Owens laptop (2<sup>nd</sup>) – PC (can use Mac if necessary but not as proficient)  
Not comfortable using shortcut keys but comfortable with ctrl function  
Compared to other more technical students at SI, doesn't feel as adept with technology; but overall better than average person out there.

Uses Internet a lot (convenient, at work online, catalogue is online)

Uses book resources occasionally.

Online resources: Wikipedia (admits it has flaws), Infoplease.com, Google (main search engine)

Online resources: DBs and Indexes (paid for by library) – uses to show students and knows that they are authoritative resources. Ex- PsychInfo/ProQuest for research paper (helped student). Occasionally send to Wikipedia for pop culture references b/c University resources doesn't always have them, but stresses that Wikipedia should be just a starting off point in research.

Spend 10-12 hours daily online (including work and personal and “multitasking”).

interests that lead to information searches: Celebrity gossip

Dan Savage (savage love: [the stranger.com](http://the stranger.com)) – newspaper with blog

“surf” for news stories (human interest, environment, politics, libraries)

American Libraries Direct (ALA email newsletter)

MySpace – blogs

Yes, she borrows books from the library

frequency:

“Books for fun” – not so much this semester, Last semester – 1-2 books per week

For school – every week (1-4 per week)

Personally prefers a hard copy (portability – cannot carry laptop everywhere); if has book then will read it while waiting for class/bus/etc but cannot do if on laptop.

\*Journal articles—doesn't want to go to stacks to look it up but prefers it online (at home).

prefers recent sources b/c she is usually writing on things dealing with “cutting edge”.

What she does if book she needs is not in the library:

if it's checked out? Puts hold on it and hopes to get it in time.

Checks Ann Arbor District Library. If no, order from Amazon.com or check Borders or Barnes and Noble (that's a last resort).

If there was an online copy, would use it instead (free).



Uses both Mirlyn and Search Tools, hates Search Tools – doesn't like the way they are connected through links ("get articles" "databases" with Mirlyn logo but it takes them to Search Tools). But the 2 are separate and so library users get confused about where they found the resources (don't write down citations, Mirlyn vs. Search Tools). Used to have 'networked electronic resources' – gave a list of databases arranged by topics, topics alphabetical. Power Search in Search Tools is supposed to do this but users get really confused and cannot do it simultaneously. Shows users how to use Search Tools more effectively. Students think Search Tools works like a search engine like Yahoo, Google, or Alta Vista but it doesn't work like that. Students get discouraged when ST doesn't act like a smart search (i.e. Google).

Issues with Mirlyn—searching for journals could be better advertised but it functions the way it should. Most resources give you more than one option to find what you're looking for. Links to newspapers.

Likes login and personal account information (can reserve things and simply click on it, but wish the search would be saved).

Likes subject headings that are hyperlinks. Handy for searches when not sure what looking for. Search the hyperlink without starting a new search.

"Ebooks" – licensing thing, U doesn't have control over it. Can "Check the book out" but only person can look at it online at a time and multiple users get frustrated when they cannot access it. Thinks it is stupid that it is an online resources and so multiple people should be able to access it at the same time. Some journals are like that.

Has only used Google book search once. B/c a student said that was how he found his resource and had to help him re-create his search. He just wanted the text. But text was available in hard copy and could check it out instead of printing it out. Thinks the idea is cool but in practice thinks it could be fixed. Thinks it is not Google's fault but trying to change a technology and takes people time to adjust to it. (History of the Book class) – more than just visual sense when using a book (tactile, auditory, weight, etc.) A 2-dimensional way doesn't engage the user in the same way and creates a disconnect. Concept of light—computer gives sense of fatigue b/c of "staring into a light."

Have you ever seen MBooks while searching Mirlyn? :

"Don't know that I have."

Doesn't think she's ever seen the MBooks logo/button on Mirlyn for electronic resources. Most books have been more recent things (1960s and current).

MBooks is not an option to search w/in Mirlyn (specifically).

Has seen digitized texts through Google but not through Mirlyn.

Generally, doesn't use public internet to finish assignments. Uses public internet to look up general info as starting point but doesn't cite them in the same way as authoritative sources. Quick, easy, mostly accurate.

For assignments, wants scholarly literature and can base own opinions on them. Caveat: project on MySpace doesn't have academic research on it so had to search broader public net to search for stats, articles, news/magazine. Non-academic topic.

“Tree killer” – enjoys the “tactile experience”. Afraid of computer crashing and not having what she needs. Computers are infallible. What if she can’t get to it? If don’t need to read in depth then no print. But if need notes, then must print it out.

Doesn’t like how Google doesn’t accommodate Boolean search. Hard to do a complex search—either impossible or craft inquiries in more complicated way. Google tries to be “too smart for its own damn good.” Most other DBs can do Boolean searches and gets better results. But Google is the first place to search. Considers it to have a function of a DB. “Popular database” – in the same way Mirlyn is a DB but Google is a database of the Internet where Mirlyn is a DB of the University of Michigan.

In general does not have difficulty finding information on the library website, b/c has had to learn where things are. Will ask fellow reference assistants if necessary—asks on occasion. Would ask a librarian—pretty much never. Peers know more tech info like wireless printing. Super complicated questions are rare.

## **Interview Notes: Student 2**

Grad student who considers herself a typical college student.

Owns PC laptop

Does not do much search online: sometimes would go to Google to search for some recipes

Accesses a number of subject related databases for classes, mostly for to look up specific drugs and not necessarily for full articles.

Uses Mirlyn to find textbooks for her classes so she doesn't have to buy them, or for general papers. But uses health system databases (through Taubman medical library) to find up to date papers, usually only relies on one or two books per semester.

Does not have difficulties using Mirlyn, she uses only basic features: search by keyword, title, author etc.

Borrows about 2-3 books per month through MelCAT (Michigan Libraries interlibrary loan)

For short articles she would like to be able to read them on the screen from her laptop, but worries that reading a big book online would tire and dry out her eyes.

Thinks it is nice to have many format options (online access and hardcopy): e.g. if it cold outside, she can access book/article online

has heard about the MBooks project, and asked her own questions about how the project is supposed to work, but has never personally used an MBook. Has not used Google Books either.

There has been a situation where she was helping her roommate find a library resource and when they couldn't find it from the website they asked a librarian for help.

## Interview Notes: Outsider/University Employee

Was an English undergrad, now a medical administrator.

PC user (no Macs) – has laptop and likes it.

Familiarity with Windows applications: GroupWise email/calendar, Dreamweaver 4 (upgrading to version 8), Acrobat Pro and Reader, Windows/MS Office (PPT, Excel a lot recently, never Publisher), no Illustrator.

Info searching online, usually at UGLI for work purposes. Used Mirlyn a lot as an undergrad but not anymore. Uses Google mostly now (doesn't like Yahoo anymore)—uses keywords and phrases for searches.

Also uses Hospital Directory on daily basis.

Estimates she spends about 1 hour per day searching for info; if add in “fun stuff” it's more like 2 hours per day.

Personal Interests include: online shopping (price comparison), celebrity gossip, news (doesn't watch TV. news) like CNN and ABC, not much research but find people will use Google, weather, Amazon to search via genre (really likes that feature), AllRecipes.com (uses reviews to help her decide).

Doesn't borrow anything from the library. Likes to own books.

Electronic Resources: “For what purpose?”

Doesn't like to read on the screen unless just checking out excerpts like on Amazon. But does search full text for the medical residents—saves the PDFs and posts on CTools (mostly journal articles). Says that people do print PDFs once they have them.

Doesn't use Search Tools, not familiar with it.

Goes to the ref desk and asks for the journal and goes right to the resource. Prefers the physical version (electronic version is not always complete), but if the PDF is available online then she'll take it.

Not familiar with Google Book Search. Would use it to look for contemporary fiction and would definitely want the full text, not to read, but to determine whether the book is worth owning. But then she would go to Amazon and order the book.

Feels she is average user of technology. Uses same stuff everyday so feels she doesn't really advance in her tech knowledge but can pick things up if necessary. In terms of info-searching, depends on what it is about, but finds that she is good at it. Medical searching keeps getting better the more her medical knowledge increases.