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## Google Scholar: What do you need to know?

Thomas, Chris; MacMillan, Don

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<http://hdl.handle.net/1880/44053>

Presentation

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# Google Scholar: What do you need to know?

Presented by:

Don MacMillan and Chris Thomas

Faculty Technology Days, May 9, 2005



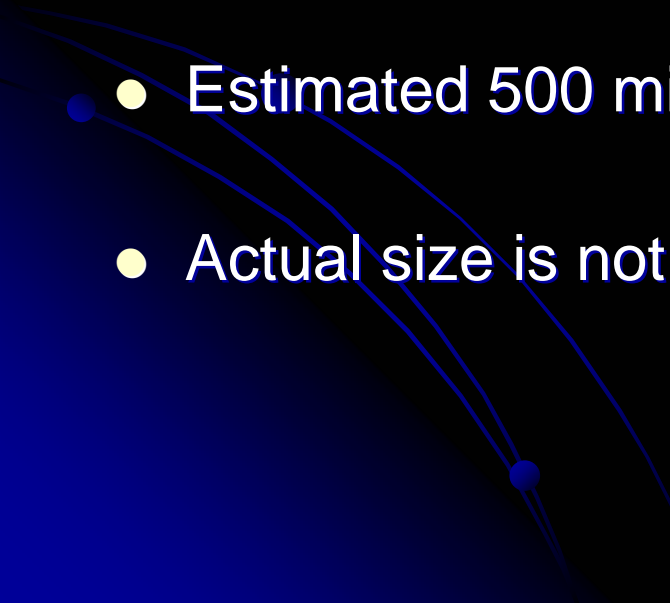
# Where could you go to answer the following?

- I have a topic and need some resources. What can I use?
  - Consequences of Exxon Valdez disaster for sea otters.
- I have a citation, does U of C have it?
  - Beninger, J.R. (1987). Toward an old new paradigm. *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 51(4), S46-S66.

# Session Objectives

- After today's session you should be able to:
  - List some of the strengths and weaknesses of Google Scholar,
  - Identify the key parts of the search results list and;
  - Explain how Google Scholar might or might not be useful to your information or research needs.

# Google Scholar: What is it?

- Google Scholar searches the web for scholarly information and provides links to library holdings
  - Retrieves peer-reviewed articles, theses, books and publications from professional associations in all disciplines
  - Estimated 500 million articles
  - Actual size is not disclosed
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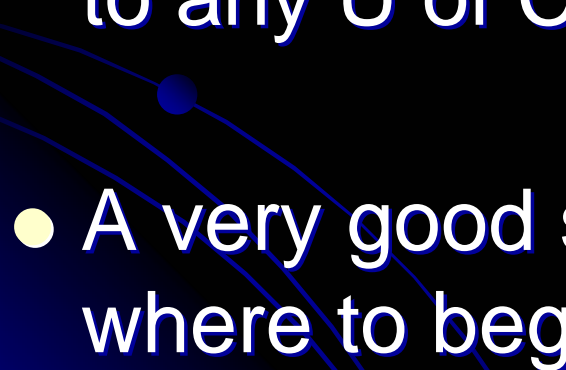
# Google Scholar: What is it contin..?

- Subject coverage includes:
  - Medicine 22%; Engineering 14%; Biology 13%;  
Sociology & Psychology 13%  
Chemistry % Physics 12% plus Humanities, Business  
& Law

Source: UBC Google Scholar Blog

<http://weblogs.elearning.ubc.ca/googlescholar/>

# Google Scholar-What's to like

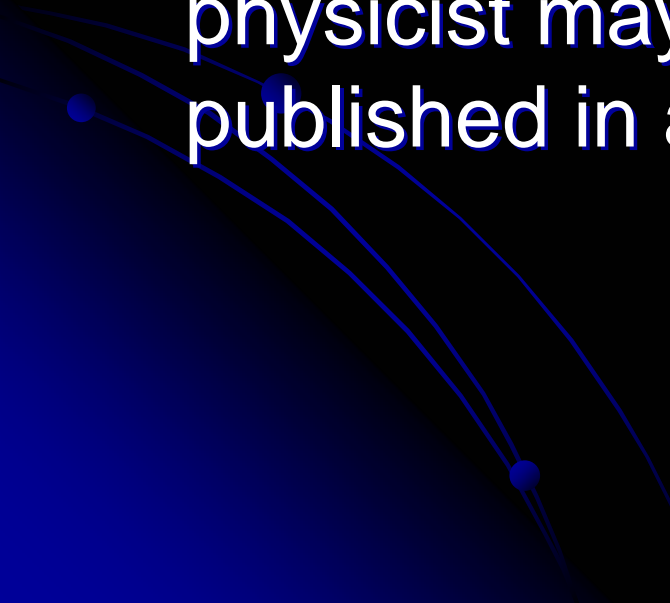
- A single easy to use interface that accesses library catalogues and indexes
  - Includes a citation tracking tool and links to any U of C print and electronic holdings
  - A very good starting point if your not sure where to begin searching
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# Google Scholar-What we don't like

- Very secretive about coverage-no idea what publishers or journals indexed
- Still using “beta” defense two years after launch
- Older articles displayed first
- Duplicates identified but not removed
- Lack of transparency regarding ranking algorithms
- Limited output options-*sorting, emailing*



# Random thoughts

- Information is not in one place
  - Users are often frustrated with traditional library databases
  - A “non-refereed preprint” by an eminent physicist may be just as scholarly as one published in a peer-reviewed journal
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# Further Reading

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- Kessleman, M. and Watstein, S.B. 2005. "Google Scholar™ and libraries: point/counterpoint", Reference Service Review, Vol.33, No. 4, pp. 380-38.
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