



## North Carolina State and Plymouth State Universities' OPACs and Dialog's PsycINFO

I have never before chosen an OPAC for this column, simply because I have not seen one that impressed me enough. Just because they show “Windows dressing” for window dressing and are accessible through the Web, functionally they are not that different from the ones in operation when I started my career 30 years ago. Now, however, I have seen two OPACs that are worthy of Picks: a spectacularly good one at North Carolina State University and another very impressive one at Plymouth State University. My pan is the Dialog version of PsycINFO. Even with DialogWeb enhanced with DialogLink 5, there is barely any extra software functionality at the intradatabase level. Things have not changed much from 30 years ago in the then-revolutionary Dialog system.



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### the picks

#### NORTH CAROLINA STATE UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES

North Carolina State University Libraries (NCSUL) has developed an OPAC ([www2.lib.ncsu.edu/catalog](http://www2.lib.ncsu.edu/catalog)) that gives hope to librarians (and patrons) that all the hard work that went into cataloging (providing metadata for) zillions of books, serials, A/V materials, maps, and government documents will finally pay off in a way that is appealing to millennial users. I am not surprised that this new OPAC is pioneered by NCSUL. It has Andrew Pace as the head of information technology and a team of systems librarians who have already proven their talent through the implementation of the NC LIVE network and their in-house metasearch engine projects. They clearly showed their competence and interest by meshing high tech with time-honored MARC records used not only in catalog records but also for records of abstracting/indexing databases. Pace's erudite and opinionated column in *American Libraries* (and in his prior columns for *Computers in Libraries*) clearly shows he can spot a good library software when he sees one—and apparently he has seen one. It is Endeca that finally turns our tools of the trade, the LC subject headings and classification codes—perceived by our patrons as intimidating, discouraging, and user-hostile—into a gold mine of user-friendly metadata.

Mind you, Endeca is not an off-the-shelf, turnkey library automation package. It's a software suite that offers very powerful tools to the system developers who

Search 'terrorism':  
We found 3756 matching items. Limit results to currently available items.

**Narrow By Call Number Range:**

A - General Works (5)	L - Education (19)
B - Philosophy, Psychology, Religion (77)	M - Music (1)
C - Auxiliary Sciences of History (4)	N - Fine Arts (8)
D - History (General) and History of Europe (206)	P - Language and literature (144)
E - History: America (125)	Q - Science (18)
F - America: local history (23)	R - Medicine (41)
G - Geography, Anthropology, Recreation (25)	S - Agriculture (1)
H - Social Sciences (739)	T - Technology (55)
J - Political Science (169)	U - Military science (General) (79)
K - Law in general, Comparative and uniform law, Jurispruden ... (68)	Z - Bibliography, Library Science, Information reso

**Narrow Results By:**

**Subject: Topic**

- Terrorism (2301)
- Prevention (1192)
- National security (530)
- Government policy (473)
- United States (423)
- Show More ...

**Subject: Genre**

- Congresses (96)
- Biography (62)
- Case studies (51)
- Rules and practice (45)
- Fiction (38)
- Show More ...

**Format**

- Book (3315)

**Brief View | Full View** **Sort By:** [Re]

- The trauma of terrorism : sharing knowledge and shared care, an international perspective / edited by ...  
**Published:** c2005.
- The new global terrorism : characteristics, causes, controls / edited by ...  
**Published:** c2003.
- Democratic development & political terrorism : the global perspective / edited by ...  
**Published:** c2005.
- The new terrorism : anatomy, trends, and counter-strategies / edited by ...  
**Author:** Workshop on the New Dimensions of Terrorism (2002 : Singapore)  
**Published:** 2002.
- Terrorism in an unstable world / edited by Clutterbuck, Richard L.  
**Author:** Clutterbuck, Richard L.  
**Published:** 1994.
- Understanding terrorism : psychosocial roots, consequences, and intervention / edited by ...  
**Published:** 2004.
- European terrorism

Multidimensional result display of catalog records combining LC classification codes and subject headings with posting information and instant drill-down options

know, like the backs of their hands, the anatomy, structure, and architecture of their data files and the search behavior of typical users. Endeca brings out the most of data content, offering a panoramic view with many options, including tools to gradually, yet swiftly, zoom in on promising subsets and also peek into their semantic or "locational" neighborhood for genuine resource discovery.

As just one example, a search for terrorism in NCSU's OPAC retrieves not only a set of 186 records, automatically relevancy ranked (which can be re-sorted by publication year, title, author, call number, and, yes, circulation popularity), but also creates a multifaceted profile of the results set with the option to filter by topic, genres, formats, regions, eras, languages, and collections—all of which appear in a sidebar with the number of records shown. This, in turn, invites the users to take samples, move on to another cluster, or drill down further within the primary cluster chosen. My short description does not do justice to this top-notch OPAC, but luckily, you can try it yourself, go through its layers, and browse the digital shelves to see the dynamism and navigational clues on your choice of topics.

### PLYMOUTH STATE UNIVERSITY LIBRARY

The complete makeover of your father's OPAC requires not only brainpower but also money. The underlying software and the time required of the many developers involved in projects such as the one at NCSUL take both. However, gradual but significant rejuvenation can be done using open source software with relatively small labor costs, benefiting from the labor of love of talented individuals who want to innovate and create a millennials-pleasing OPAC. This description easily fits Casey Bisson, an information technologist

at Lamson Library at Plymouth State University Library in Plymouth, N.H. He created a very attractive prototype for a front-end to the OPAC of PSU using the open source WordPress blog management software ([www.plymouth.edu/library/opac](http://www.plymouth.edu/library/opac)).

It makes the catalog look much more state-of-the-art, promoting resource discovery and query refinement by offering a multidimensional view of the results set by subjects, authors, and media formats. Clusters by years or 5-year ranges could also be useful, and the subject keys are a bit redundant.

Plymouth State's OPAC also incorporates, if available, on-the-fly (or meshes) into the catalog record the cover pages, some editorial book reviews, book descriptions, table of content pages from Amazon, and some of its special services such as the Search Inside This Book cell if the full text of the book is searchable. It also creates a permanent link to the book for quick lookup from a reading list or wish list.


It may not be perfect—sometimes it shows source codes; it could be more compact; and the long list of most the popular books, recent blog comments, and recent searches (unrelated to the book being looked at) are distracting and use too much space, but WPopac is a huge step forward. It makes the archaic catalogs much more appealing and is an awesome example of what a competent and motivated person can do to promote an OPAC (and a library). It has become the official alternate catalog at the Lamson Library. Bisson plans to release the source code, allowing other libraries to adapt it as a front-end to their catalogs, and provide additional open source enhancements for systems librarians or anyone else who can write WordPress plug-ins and script codes. To really appreciate the enhancements, do a side-by-side comparison by opening a new tab with the same URL minus the OPAC part to get to the traditional catalog and display the two tabs in a split-screen mode.

[*Editor's note:* Jacsó isn't the only one to appreciate Bisson's OPAC development. In December, Bisson received the Mellon Award for Technology Collaboration.]

Searched for:  
• keyword: terrorism

**Search Results:**

**Dealing With Terrorism : Stick Or Carrot?**  
2004 / book / by Bruno S. Frey  
subject keys: • Terrorism • Prevention • Economic aspects • Social aspects  
[Find more like this : more details | no comments >](#)

**Terror, Terrorism, And The Human Condition**  
2004 / book / Charles P. Webel  
subject keys: • Terrorism • History • Terror • Victims of terrorism  
  
[Find more like this : more details | no comments >](#)

**Refine Your Search**

**subjkey**

- Terrorism (146)
- United States (47)
- Prevention (36)
- History (27)
- Government Policy (24)
- War On Terrorism, 2001- (23)
- Terrorists (16)
- September 11 Terrorist Attacks, 2001 (14)
- 20th Century (13)
- Foreign Relations (10)
- Middle East (8)
- Religious Aspects (8)
- Politics And Government (8)
- Case Studies (7)
- Violence (7)
- Victims Of Terrorism (7)

**author**

- Alexander, Yanah (7)
- Laqueur, Walter, 1921- (4)
- Lodge, Juliet (2)
- Milner, Abraham H., 1940- (2)
- Wilkinson, Paul (2)
- Burton, Anthony M (2)
- Clutterbuck, Richard L (2)

Excerpt from the results display in WPopac



## the pan

### PSYCINFO DIALOG

PsycINFO is one of the most widely used databases in academic institutions, especially in the U.S. where many things are overpsychologized, even by Woody Allen standards. PsycINFO's content has been significantly enhanced since 2001 by adding about 22 million cited references to 560,000 records. There are a dozen implementations of PsycINFO on a large variety of software platforms. All make good use of the cited references by offering options to browse and search the cited reference fields. Some of them (especially Ovid) offer browsing and searching of the largest variety of subfield-specific indexes (cited author, cited document title, cited journal name, cited year, cited DOI, cited URL).

Some other versions stand out by showing in the short results list the number of cited references and/or the number of times a document was cited by articles and other documents covered by PsycINFO. The PsycINFO versions from CSA, EBSCO, and Thomson Scientific's Web of Knowledge stand out from other implementations by virtue of this. The latter also offers the option to sort the results by citedness scores—a very important but neglected feature, except for Scopus, which was born with this treat.

Some implementations also indicate how many times the cited items were cited by sources covered in PsycINFO. If the cited references have a record in PsycINFO, practically all of them have links to their PsycINFO records, typically tucked behind the title field, and are made blue for a clue.

Dialog makes *me* blue by having almost none of the features described above. Yes, it has a lump index for all the elements of the cited references, but it is a suffix index, making the cited references unbrowsable. In 2001, Dialog tried to make a variety of prefixed indexes (always using phrase indexing, which is not a smart idea for this data element), and each effort was as bad as the next one. Dialog gave up on it, settling for the /CR suffix index, as in *abu l i a /CR*. It does show the number of cited references along with the cited references themselves, but this latter field is excessively dense, especially because the PsycINFO record IDs for the cited references are spelled out instead of being tucked behind and hotlinked from their title.

There is a digital object identifier (DOI) for the full text of the cited references (when available), but these are not hotlinked either. Neither are the authors, descriptors, or journal names that, in many of the best implementations, would trigger a search for the authors, descriptors, or journals. There is only one immediately actionable hotlink in the Dialog implementation: the link to the full text of the source item through its DOI.

If the competent, charismatic, and visionary Roger Summit had not retired much too early from the helm of the company,

Cited References for: *Apathy: Why Care?*

Original Results

Cited References Citing Articles Related Records To store items added to the folder for a future session, Sign In

1-50 of 114 Page: 1 2 3 Next

To view records related to the article shown above, mark checkboxes and click Related Records.

Related Records

- 1. Aarsland, D., Cummings, J. L., & Larsen, J. P. (2001). Neuropsychiatric differences between Parkinson's disease with dementia and Alzheimer's disease. *International Journal of Geriatric Psychiatry*, 16(2), 184-91. [10.1002/1099-1166\(200102\)16:2<184::AID-GPS304>3.0.CO;2-K](http://dx.doi.org/10.1002/1099-1166(200102)16:2<184::AID-GPS304>3.0.CO;2-K). Article Citation Times Cited in this Database(11) [PDF Full Text](#)
- 2. Aarsland, D., Litvan, I., & Larsen, J. P. (2001). Neuropsychiatric symptoms of patients with progressive supranuclear palsy and Parkinson's disease. *Journal of Neuropsychiatry & Clinical Neurosciences* 13: 42-49. [10.1176/appi.neuropsych.13.1.42](http://dx.doi.org/10.1176/appi.neuropsych.13.1.42). Article Citation Times Cited in this Database(16)
- 3. Aarsland, D., Larsen, J. P., Lim, N. G., et al. (1999). Range of neuropsychiatric disturbances in patients with Parkinson's disease. *J Neurol Neurosurg Psychiatry* 1999; 67: 492-6. Article Citation Times Cited in this Database(6)

Cited references of a record in the EBSCO implementation of PsycINFO

### DialogWeb

Command Search new search databases alerts order cost logoff help

Apathy: Why Care?

Author: van Reekum, Robert (Email: [rvanreekum@baycrest.org](mailto:rvanreekum@baycrest.org)); Stuss, Donald T.; Ostrander, Laurie

Journal: *Journal of Neuropsychiatry & Clinical Neurosciences*, Vol 17(1), 7-19, Win, 2005

Book Publisher: American Psychiatric Assn--US

Digital Object Identifier: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1176/appi.neuropsych>

Cited References:

1. Aarsland, D., Cummings, J. L., & Larsen, J. P. (2001). Neuropsychiatric differences between Parkinson's disease with dementia and Alzheimer's disease. *Int J Geriatr Psychiatry* 2001; 16: 184-191 (PsycINFO Accession Number: 2001-16956-009) ([http://dx.doi.org/10.1002/1099-1166\(200102\)16:2<184::AID-GPS304>3.0.CO;2-K](http://dx.doi.org/10.1002/1099-1166(200102)16:2<184::AID-GPS304>3.0.CO;2-K))
2. Aarsland, D., Larsen, J. P., Lim, N. G., et al. (1999). Range of neuropsychiatric disturbances in patients with Parkinson's disease. *J Neurol Neurosurg Psychiatry* 1999; 67: 492-196 (PsycINFO Accession Number: 1999-11837-004)
3. Aarsland, D., Litvan, I., & Larsen, J. P. (2001). Neuropsychiatric symptoms of patients with progressive supranuclear palsy and Parkinson's disease. *J Neuropsychiatry Clin Neurosci* 2001; 13: 42-49 (PsycINFO Accession Number: 2001-14544-005) (<http://dx.doi.org/10.1176/appi.neuropsych.13.1.42>)

Cited references for the same record from the Dialog implementation of PsycINFO

Dialog probably would have been the first online service to offer elegant and efficient, link-rich implementations of its hosted databases. It hurts me to see the company (which has been so generous to library schools for decades) lagging behind its earlier competitors when it comes to unleashing the power of the Web, both Web 1.0 and Web 2.0. The current generation of library students look at the legendary Dialog much as our children, endowed with MP3 audio/video players and multifunctional wireless gizmos, look at our LPs and tape cassette players. This situation is beyond unfortunate.

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