process involved in “The Booklist Century” endeavor is admirable, especially his effort to give equal time to titles that were considered but not selected. Honesty and transparency are evident in the other essays, such as the one that apologizes for the bad review originally written for E.B. White’s *Charlotte’s Web.* Additionally, readers receive a historical perspective of *Booklist* in the column on former editor Barbara Duree. Among the entertaining stories in the final section, “Life Beyond Books” is the tale of Ott’s visit to the White House for a conference (an event that impressed even him) and the souvenir he is not ashamed to admit he took. Likewise, some readers will laugh as they discover the author’s connection between origami and psychological trauma. In yet another column, Ott shares a lesson on looking beyond obvious reality and observing it through different lenses.

The *Back Page* indeed represents some of Bill Ott’s best analyses and commentaries. He does for the literary world what Andy Rooney does for the television show *60 Minutes.* The dessert is definitely the challenge found in the “Quizzes” section at the end of the book. For loyal fans of the original column, Ott does a great service by allowing it to act as an archival memento. For people new to *Booklist* and the “Back Page” column, this book serves as both a good introduction and readers’ advisory reference tool, offering background history as well as an ample selection of titles for consideration. There is plenty of literary commentary to pique one’s interest and help plan future reading, whether or not an author is familiar to the reader. Among the noted authors are Maya Angelou, Charles Dickens, F. Scott Fitzgerald, Robert Frost, Ernest Hemingway, John Milton, Langston Hughes, William Shakespeare, and Edith Wharton. Librarians and anyone who loves literature will relish the book’s many gems.

Bill Ott invites the reader on a journey, and one is free to take as much or as little of the journey as desired. For example, in a column recounting a story from his past, he suggests that younger readers skip the column altogether if they are not interested in “the spectacle of another boomer getting misty-eyed over his lost youth” (p. 9). The journey is more than metaphorical, however, since some of Ott’s essays actually transport the reader to places such as the United States, Scandinavia, Japan, England, and Italy. Because each column is dated, perhaps some readers will remember where they were in their own life journeys when the columns originally were published. Early in the book, Ott describes the type of reading best suited to one of his vacations, indicating an interest in books that are “easy to dive in and out of” (p. 6). The *Back Page* fits that bill perfectly. And on the topic of vacations and travel, Ott makes it clear that he dislikes Mickey Mouse. As a humorous tribute and favor to Ott, readers may consider taking their copies of *The Back Page* with them anywhere they go, except Disneyland or Disney World.

**Notes**

1. Peyton Place, a novel by Grace Mattelius with a soap opera plot, was a popular best seller in the mid-1950s. “Peyton Place has become a permanent part of American culture. The name itself has become synonymous with deceit and vice.” *St. James Encyclopedia of Popular Culture,* eds. Sara Pendergast and Tom Pendergast (Detroit: St. James Press, 2000), 4:48.


**Stephanie Rosenblatt**

Generation M (Gen M), also known as Generation Y; The Me Generation; Millennials; and Native Netizens. Born in the early 1980s to mid 1990s. Described as the coddled progeny of “helicopter” parents; independent, active learners with short attention spans; and geniuses at multitasking. Or not.

The editors of *Teaching Generation M: A Handbook for Librarians and Educators* want to help you reach and teach our newest crop of patrons and begin by separating the facts from the hype. The idea that Gen Ms are early adopters of technology and continually connected to the Web is based on some fact, but this notion has been amplified by marketers who will derive great benefits by convincing a generation that it can only live up to its potential by purchasing the next new gadget or keeping current with the latest social trend; however, not everyone in this generation is conversant with many of the tools of the Read/Write Web, especially those tools which are attractive to librarians such as Delicious. A digital divide exists between members of Gen M due to socioeconomic and other factors, as well as personal preferences. This digital divide is due to more than just lack of access to computers or a high-speed Internet connection; it also refers to a lack of experience using a variety of tools and software to accomplish specific purposes.

So while this generation is comprised of individuals who have grown up with different experiences with technology, one thing the majority of members of Generation M do share is their exposure to constructivist pedagogy for much of their K-12 education. Constructivists believe that learning takes place in active and social environments; this means Gen Ms are used to group work. In fact, they may have a difficult time learning on their own. Gen M students are the products of an increasingly transparent and standards-based process for assessment. The criterion used to evaluate their class work was given to them before they began a project. Students in this generation have not been graded in comparison to their classmates; they have instead been evaluated in terms of benchmarks and standards. As long as everyone met all the criteria delineated in an assignment’s instructions or evaluation rubric, everyone got an A. This process of assessment is markedly different from what occurs in many college and university classrooms.

Many in this generation also attended schools with under-funded or nonexistent library services. Up to now, the only “place” they could go for information has been the Web where their searches always come up with results. Since these students have also had a great deal of attention paid to their affect or the feelings they have about themselves, most may regard themselves as good learners and good researchers. This perception of expertise can make it difficult to motivate students to learn what they think they already know.

As Michele Kathleen D’Angelo states in her chapter, “Gen M: Whose Kids Are They Anyway?” “The type of students that educators have been wanting for years has been created, and now many K-12 and college educators and administrators seem to be confused as to why the students act the way they do,” (p. 99).
In Teaching Generation M, Vibiana Cvetkovic and Robert Lackie set out “to offer some sociological grounding and understanding of Gen M and how to embrace new media and technologies to meet our educational plans and goals [for these users]” (p. xiv). The editors worked to ensure the book focused on this mission through every chapter. They begin with an informative introduction and end with a thought provoking conclusion, both of which were co-authored with other contributors.

Cvetkovic, a reference librarian and Web administrator at Rutgers University, has written on a variety of topics, such as plagiarism, use of media by teenagers, and children and childhood. Lackie is co-leader of the library instruction program at Rider University, in addition to serving as a liaison to the university's College of Education and as collection development librarian. Together they enlisted the help of twenty-six colleagues from the fields of library science, psychology, and continuing education to compile the nineteen chapters that make up the book.

Teaching Generation M has three sections: “Part I: Defining Gen M,” “Part II: The World of Gen M: A Culture of Technology,” and “Part III: Pedagogy—Current and Imagined.” Many of the chapters in the book may contain some information you've heard before, especially Part II with descriptions of the nifty tools, both physical and virtual, these students like to use and their possible applications for libraries. What makes this book unique is the consistent attempts to connect theory and practice in order to provide strategies that can be employed to teach this generation more effectively. Some examples of this can be found in chapters 2 and 10.

In chapter 2, “Driving Fast to Nowhere on the Information Highway: A Look at Shifting Paradigms of Literacy in the Twenty-First Century,” Patricia H. Dawson and Diane K. Campbell discuss ideas of computer and information literacy while making connections between Gen M's media experiences and their impact on the generation’s preference for independent learning with a reliance on trial and error. In a related discussion in chapter 10, “It's Not About the Game,” Nicholas Schiller and Carole Svensson unpack the mores learned by Gen M through thousands of hours of gaming. The authors describe how librarians and teachers can utilize these “laws” of the gaming world in order to develop instructional methodologies and online materials that will enable these students to learn more efficiently.

“Part I: Defining Gen M” focuses on providing the promised sociological portrait of the generation, including a research study on how these students search for information for their academic work, and expands the discussion of information literacy into the realms of computer literacy and media literacy.

“Part II: The World of Gen M: A Culture of Technology” contains information about the generation and its online life, now and in the future. This section explores the Web 2.0 landscape with an eye towards co-opting socially created resources such as Google, Wikipedia, Facebook, and YouTube for instructional purposes. In chapter 7, “Face-to-Face on Facebook: Students Are There... Shouldn't We Be?” Laurie M. Bridges cites a number of studies indicating positive correlations between social networking site use and “life satisfaction, social trust, civic participation, and political engagement;” in addition to the acquisition of social capital (p. 129)—outcomes that seem to jibe with the traditional view of the purpose behind higher education. She also addresses librarians’ and educators’ “Facebook anxiety” (p. 130), concerns about the appropriateness of engaging students in their social space.

“Part III: Pedagogy—Current and Imagined” showcases best practices for library instruction usually with case studies and descriptions of effective activities and assignments. Sometimes the topics covered in this section such as utilizing students’ familiarity with and reliance on Google and Wikipedia in order to introduce the use of tertiary sources and database search engines have already been made in other sections of the book. One of the best discussions in the book appears in this section. In “Teaching Information Ethics: The Guided Research Paper,” Joseph F. Joiner, a psychology instructor, combines reflections about teaching Gen M students with a comparison of information ethics practiced by the Baby Boomer Generation and Gen M and the implications those practices have on the prevalence of plagiarism, purchased papers, and the expectations faculty have for undergraduate work.

Each chapter in Teaching Generation M includes a list of references. Several chapters also include lists of recommended readings or resources, such as Stephen Abram’s chapter “The Emerging Gen M Ecology: What Will Their World Look Like?” which lists a number of additional articles and online materials that will help the reader further explore the impact the Web has or will have on our students and Steve Garwood’s chapter on screen casting which recommends a number of online resources that can help burgeoning creators. A preface, an index, and table of contents are also included.

There are plenty of books written to help librarians and educators learn about the tools and toys preferred by Generation M, including Meredith Farkas’ excellent Social Software in Libraries, Gibbons’ The Academic Library and the Net Gen Student, and Pletka’s Educating the Net Generation. Teaching Generation M is the only one to focus on connecting this generation’s media habits, preferred information sources, and learning styles to recommended pedagogies for supporting the acquisition of the multiple literacies required by the twenty-first century.

As Laura B. Spencer and Cvetkovic state in the Teaching Generations M’s conclusion, there is no point in worrying if the Web will be a positive or negative influence on our lives or the lives of our students. “For better or for worse new technologies and new media are parts of the evolutionary process of human development” (p. 343). The Internet and technology are here and their use has already begun to impact our society’s ideas of privacy and the ways we communicate with our fellow humans. The ubiquity of online information is already changing the way we ask questions and look for answers, thus “resistance is futile,” especially when expressed as reluctance to use Web 2.0 and 3.0 tools and syntax to communicate with and teach our users.

Notes
1. This definition of the generation is the one used by the editors and contributors to Teaching Generation M. The definition and the description of the generation’s traits is informed by the work of William Strauss and Neil Howe. Generations: The History of America’s Future, 1584 to 2069. (New York: Morrow, 1991) as well as depictions of the generation in the popular press, as described in Teaching Generation M’s preface and introduction.
2. Delicious is a social bookmarking site where users tag their favorite Web sites to describe them, and then share their lists of resources with others. For more information visit http://delicious.com/ (accessed August 14, 2010).
3. For more information about Cvetkovic, visit her Web page at http://vihus/ (accessed August 14, 2010).
5. Some examples include giving students instant feedback when they complete tasks and the practice of “gating” or requiring that students demonstrate...
mastery of particular skill (that can't be demonstrated by chance or a lucky guess) before they can move on to the next level (p. 193). This practice is a type of formative assessment.


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