# Reimagining Harvard's LibGuides

Kris M. Markman, Ph.D.
Online Learning Librarian, Harvard Library
@DiscourseMarker
Presented at Computers in Libraries 2016

## What we did

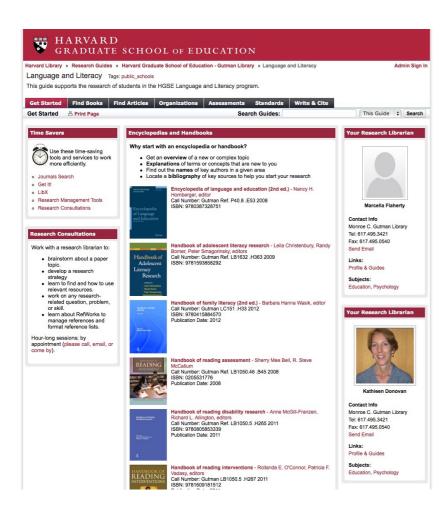
- Think-aloud usability testing before migration on v1 guides
- Eye-tracking testing on v1 and v2 guide
- Guide analytics
- Focus groups & informal interviews

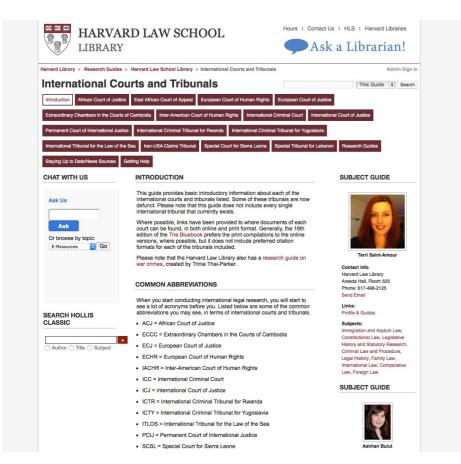
### Research Questions

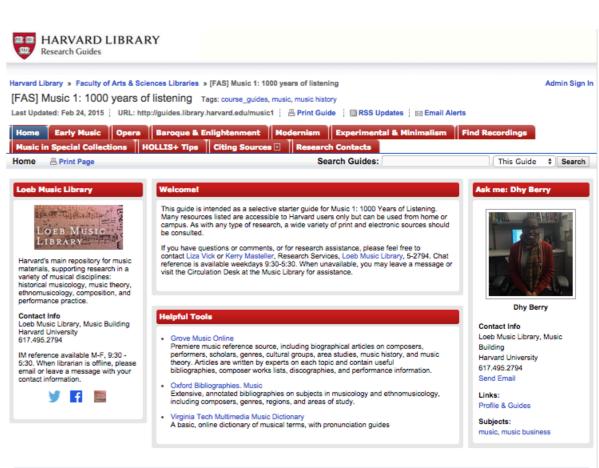
- What is the optimal way to design guides and organize content?
- Do the guides cause information overload?
- Are there jargon problems on the guides?
- How can guide content help solve student research problems?

# Usability Testing

- Undergraduate and graduate students from across disciplines, N=13
- Participants performed five basic tasks using two different v1 guides that were completely new to them and were asked to think out loud while performing the tasks.
- Qualitative data







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### Research Help

Email us your questions or schedule an appointment with us!

Susan Gilman - sgilman@fas.harvard.edu

Research Librarian & Co-Liaison to Anthropology Dept.

I can assist you with finding materials for your research, navigating library resources, and keeping your notes and sources organized.

Janet Steins - steins@fas.harvard.edu

Associate Librarian for Collections & Research Librarian

Contact me if there is an item that you would like the library to purchase. I can also assist you with finding materials for your research.

### **Related Libraries**

### **Tozzer Library**

Tozzer's collection is devoted to all subfields of anthropology, with a special emphasis on materials relating to the indigenous peoples of the Americas.

Other libraries

## Results

# 

# had never seen a LibGuide

# What do students say?

"I'm usually just looking for fast answers. I don't have time to read all this."

"I'm reading, I'm reading... I'm bored and don't want to read anymore."

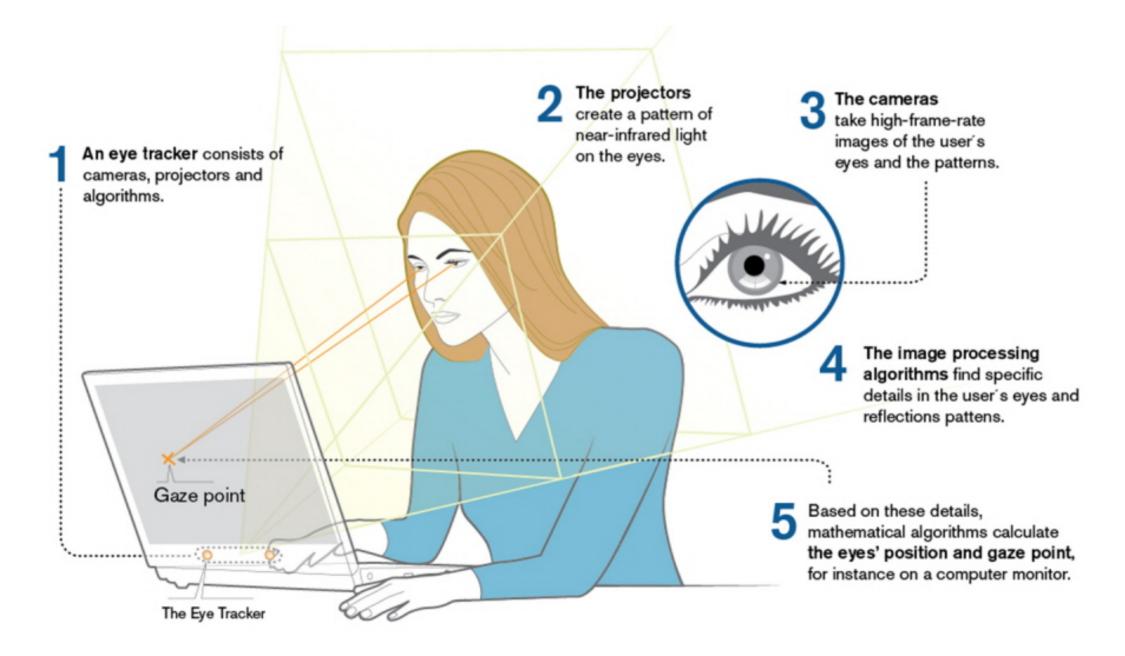
"There's sooo much information. This doesn't work for my needs."

"Need to simplify the wording so your eye isn't bombarded the minute you open the page."

"Students don't want to read about how to do research... they just want to do it!

# Eye-tracking testing

## Eye-tracking mechanics



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### **Buddhist Studies**

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### **Images**

### Artstor

ARTstor searches more than one million digital images in the arts, architecture, humanities, and sciences from museums, libraries, and archives, including Harvard. Harvard ID and PIN required.

Hint: Use buddhis\* (with the asterisk) to search both Buddhism and Buddhist.

Hint: Add a country or regional name to your search.

Hint: See especially the pb Linrothe Collection of Tibetan and Buddhist Art and the Carl Strom and Jennifer Strom Collection of Buddhist Monasteries Art.

Hint: See how Artstor come used in the classroom under "Using Artstor."

### Aard

HOLLIS+ or VIA for digital images of items in Harvard libraries.

Browse the Hedda Morrison Photographs of China from the Harvard-Yenching Library..

Search the Harvard Art Museum's illustrated online database.

Images in print can be found by looking through reference books in Ref. BL80 (etc.), Ref. BQ, and Folio BQ. For example: Herbert, Patricia. The Life of the Buddha. London: British Library; Petaluma, Calif.: Pomegranate Artbooks, 1993. [Ref. BQ882 .H47 1993; Harvard Library locations from HOLLIS+]. This work includes reproductions of the art of two Burmese manuscripts in the British Library.

Also see Finding Public Domain & Creative Commons Images, a Harvard Law School Library research guide.



- RQ: What is the optimal placement for the navigation menu in LibGuides?
- Each participant (N=26) completed same two tasks on two versions of same guide (tabs, left nav)
  - You need to find videos related to Buddhism.
  - Using the navigation menu, go back

# Tabbed navigation





# Left navigation





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**Buddhism** 

# Finding Books Finding Articles Finding Images and Videos Scriptures & Texts Regional Information Schools More ... Buddhist Studies Courses at HDS Buddhist Ministry Initiative at HDS

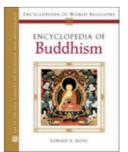
### Finding Information Quickly

Encyclopedias and dictionaries are geat sources of quick information. In addition, they will often list the more important works on the topic—the first works to consult if you want to know more. When the authors of an entry are identified, you can learn their academic credentials.

Call numbers listed are those at Andover-Harvard Library. Other copies in the Harvard Library are indicated with a link.

Note also that general encyclopedias and dictionaries of religions (Ref. BL31) and general works on religions (BL80, etc.) will also have entries on Buddhism.

### Dictionaries & Encyclopedias



Encyclopedia of Buddhism

by Edward A. Irons (Editor). New York: Facts on File, 2008.

Call Number: Ref. BQ128 .E66 2008

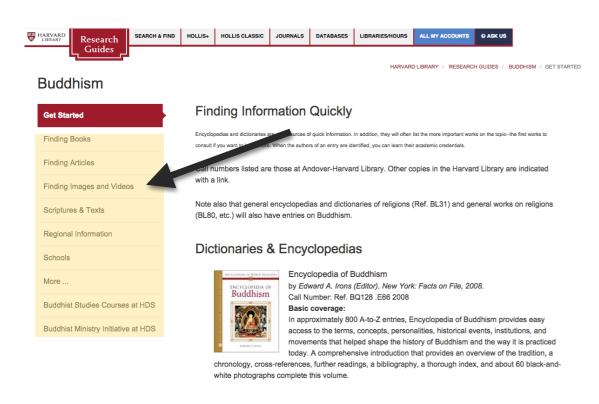
### Basic coverage:

In approximately 800 A-to-Z entries, Encyclopedia of Buddhism provides easy access to the terms, concepts, personalities, historical events, institutions, and movements that helped shape the history of Buddhism and the way it is practiced today. A comprehensive introduction that provides an overview of the tradition, a

chronology, cross-references, further readings, a bibliography, a thorough index, and about 60 black-and-white photographs complete this volume.

## Results: Find videos

# #TeamLeftNav



### Time to 1st Fixation on AOI: 1.11 sec

$$t_{TFF}(25) = 2.078, p = .05$$

Total Fixation Duration: 5.22 sec

$$t_{TFD}(25) = 2.475, p = .02$$

Total Fixation Count: 313.15

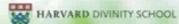
$$t_{FIXCOUNT}(25) = 2.475, p = .02$$



Time to 1st Fixation on AOI: 2.42 sec

Total Fixation Duration: 1.98 sec

Total Fixation Count: 118.81



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riptures & Texts | Regional Information | Schools | More ... Home Search Guides: This Guide Y Search

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Contact Andover-Harvard Research Librarians:



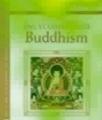
On our Ask a Librarian page

ask@hds.harvard.libanswers.com

Voice: 617.496.AHTL [2485]

Text 617.858.6187

You can also visit the research librarians on the 2nd floor, Hours: Monday-Thursday, 8:30 Au-9 PM; Friday, 8:30 Au-6 PM (except University holidays) during term time.



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A Dictionary of Buddhism, Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2003. - Damien

Call Number Ref. BQ130 K48 2003 ISBN: 9780198605607

Basic coverage and online (with updates):

This dictionary features broad-ranging entries on the history and doctrines of the major Buddhist schools, information on the spread of Buddhism in Asia and the West, and coverage of issues of contemporary concern such as human rights, abortion, euthanasia, 'engaged Buddhism', and the role of omen in Buddhist teachings.

Harvard Library locations from HOLLIS+.



Encyclopedia of Buddhism. Lond yn; New York: Routledge, 2007. - Charles S. Prebish & Damien Keown (Editors).

Call Number: Ref. BQ128 .E65 2007

ISBN: 9780415314145

Comprehensive coverage:

Reflects the current state of scholarship in Buddhist Studies, its entries being written by specialists in many areas, presenting an accurate overview of Buddhist history, thought and practices, most entries having cross-referencing to others and bibliographical references. Contain around 1000 pages and 500,000 words, totaling around 1200 entries. Authors of articles are identified.

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Encyclopedia of Buddhism, New York: Macmillan Reference USA/Thomson/Gale, 2004. - Robert E. Buswell (Editor-in-chief)

Call Number: Ref. BQ128 .E62 2004

Comprehensive coverage and online: In addition to containing entries on Buddhist scriptures, art, architecture, saints, demons, monastic

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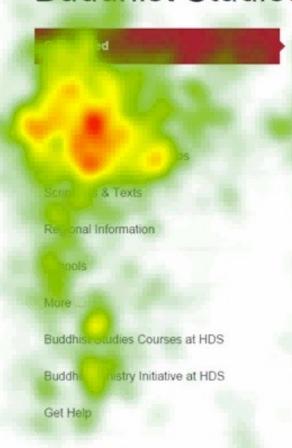
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### **Buddhist Studies**



### Encyclopedias & Dictionaries



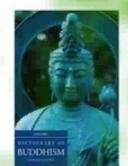
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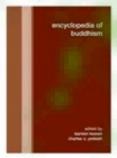
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# Overall observations & themes



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- How-to guides used significantly more than other types.
- Guide content doesn't always align with student needs.

# Making LibGuides usable & useful



- Ground-up redesign of templates
  - Increased font sizes, white space, padding
  - Minimum 16 point type for body text
  - Best practices guide for librarians

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- Make guides accessible as well as usable



• How-to guides that address specific problems may be more useful than subject guides.

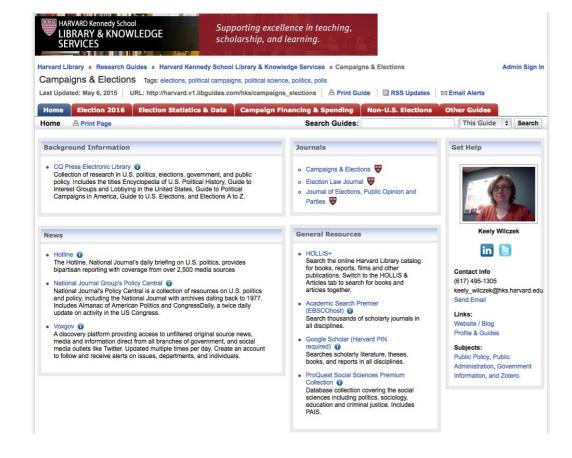
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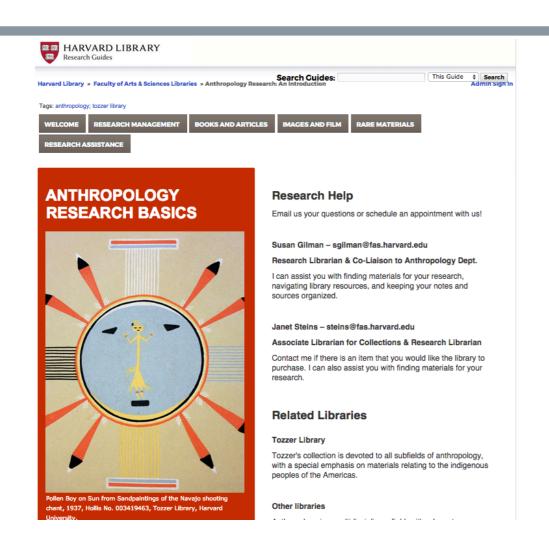
- How-to guides that address specific problems may be more useful than subject guides.
- Guides should be framed specifically and explicitly.
- Improve guide discoverability
  - 2/3 of guide traffic in spring 2015 came from organic search

## 5 tips

- ✓ Entice Users
- √ Curate Content
- ✓ Write for the web
- √ Support Searching
- ✓ Offer Clear Ways to Get Help

## Before & after







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### Google Custom Search for Campaigns & Elections

Search

Search the content of all free websites listed in this research guide. Content in Harvard subscription databases 😛 and print books 🛄 are not included.

### **Background Information**

• CQ Press Electronic Library 😈

Collection of research in U.S. politics, elections, government, and public policy. Includes the titles Encyclopedia of U.S. Political History, Guide to Interest Groups and Lobbying in the United States, Guide to Political Campaigns in America, Guide to U.S. Elections, and Flections A to Z

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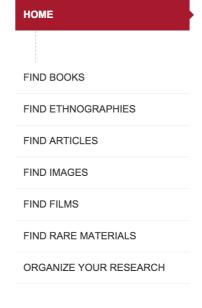
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### Anthropology Research





Anthropology Research at Harvard

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# Thank You!