

Inspiration: Tag Clouds to the Rescue!

Leslie Whidden

A student comes to your library and wants another book just as good as the one he or she has just finished. The student tells you it Orwell's *1984*, and you can't think of a single related title because of brain overload. Struck by inspiration, you turn to a handy Internet application, a "social app" in computer parlance, called **LibraryThing.com**.

In the search field you enter a descriptive word, or tag, such as "dystopia," and up pops a list of books most often associated with the idea: *Brave New World*, *Oryx and Crake*, *Never Let Me Go*. Another section titled, "Using the Tag" provides a group of related descriptors in a "tag cloud" such as: speculative fiction, post-apocalyptic, totalitarianism, and more. These tags link to members' personal reading lists that offer a treasure trove of possibilities.

Another tab on the site, "Zeitgeist" calls itself "fire hose meets mouth" and provides links to reviews, authors, and top book ratings.

Caution: this site will not only be of great assistance when you draw a blank helping students find the perfect book, but it is also potentially addictive for librarians. The chat portion of **LibraryThing.com** has a section just for librarians who want to talk about the books they love, and once they get started... **I**

National Research Symposium Calls Canadian School Librarians to Action

Carol Koechlin

Just prior to the Canadian Library Association Conference in Edmonton, Alberta (June 2–5, 2010: <http://www.cla.ca/conference/2010/>), a National Research Symposium will be held at the University of Alberta on the evening of June 1st and all day June 2nd.

Moderated by Dr. David Loertscher, Professor at the School of Library and Information Science, San Jose State University, this first-time historic Canadian event is a call to action from Treasure Mountain Canada (TMC) to rethink, revision, and transform what we believe about student learning, school library programs, and supporting teachers. TMC is modelled after Treasure Mountain, a research retreat project created and promoted by Dr. David Loertscher and his colleagues in 1989, as a "meeting of the minds" in school library research.

Facilitators Carol Koechlin, Liz Kerr, Cindy Matthews, Ruth Hall, and Linda Shantz-Keresztes invite you to join in the discussion of the planning stages by visiting Treasure Mountain Canada's wiki: <http://tmcandana.pbworks.com>.

See you there! **I**