

# Google sued for massive copyright infringement

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## Open Access News

Here it comes. The [Authors Guild](#) has sued Google for "massive copyright infringement". It complains that the [Google Library](#) project copies books without the necessary permissions.

From the Authors Guild [press release](#) (September 20):

*The Authors Guild and a Lincoln biographer, a children's book author, and a former Poet Laureate of the United States filed a class action suit today in federal court in Manhattan against Google over its unauthorized scanning and copying of books through its Google Library program. The suit alleges that the \$90 billion search engine and advertising juggernaut is engaging in massive copyright infringement at the expense of the rights of individual writers. Through its Library program, Google is reproducing works still under the protection of copyright as well as public domain works from the collection of the University of Michigan's library. "This is a plain and brazen violation of copyright law," said Authors Guild president Nick Taylor. "It's not up to Google or anyone other than the authors, the rightful owners of these copyrights, to decide whether and how their works will be copied."...Google has agreements with four academic libraries -- those of Stanford, Harvard, Oxford and the University of Michigan -- and with the New York Public Library to create digital copies of substantial parts of their collections and to make those collections available for searching online. Google has not sought the approval of the authors of these works for this program. The complaint seeks damages and an injunction to halt further infringements. The Authors Guild ([www.authorsguild.org](http://www.authorsguild.org)), the largest society of published writers in the United States, represents more than 8,000 authors.*

From Google's [announcement](#) on the Google Blog:

*Today we learned that the Authors Guild filed a lawsuit to try to stop [Google Print](#). We regret that this group chose to sue us over a program that will make millions of books more discoverable to the world -- especially since any copyright holder can [exclude](#) their books from the program. What's more, many of Google Print's chief beneficiaries will be authors whose backlist, out of print and lightly marketed new titles will be suggested to countless readers who wouldn't have found them otherwise. Let's be clear: Google doesn't show even a single page to users who find copyrighted books through this program (unless the copyright holder gives us permission to show more). At most we show only a brief snippet of text where their search term appears, along with basic bibliographic information and several links to online booksellers and libraries....Google respects copyright. The use we make of all the books we scan through the Library Project is fully consistent with both the [fair use doctrine](#) under U.S. copyright law and the [principles underlying copyright law itself](#), which allow everything from [parodies](#) to [excerpts in book reviews](#). (Here's [an article](#) by one of the many legal scholars who have weighed in on Google Print.) Just as Google helps you find sites you might not have found any other way by indexing the full text of web pages, Google Print, like an electronic card catalog, indexes book content to help users find, and perhaps buy, books. This ability to introduce millions of users to millions of titles can only expand the market for authors' books, which is precisely what copyright law is intended to foster.*

See the growing [news coverage](#).