

**East Carolina University**

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**From the Selected Works of Angela Dresselhaus**

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# Fact-Fiction-Future-Reality

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Available at: [https://works.bepress.com/angela\\_dresselhaus/28/](https://works.bepress.com/angela_dresselhaus/28/)



# Fact-Fiction-Future-Reality

## Vulcan Learning Pods and Massive Open Online Course (MOOC)



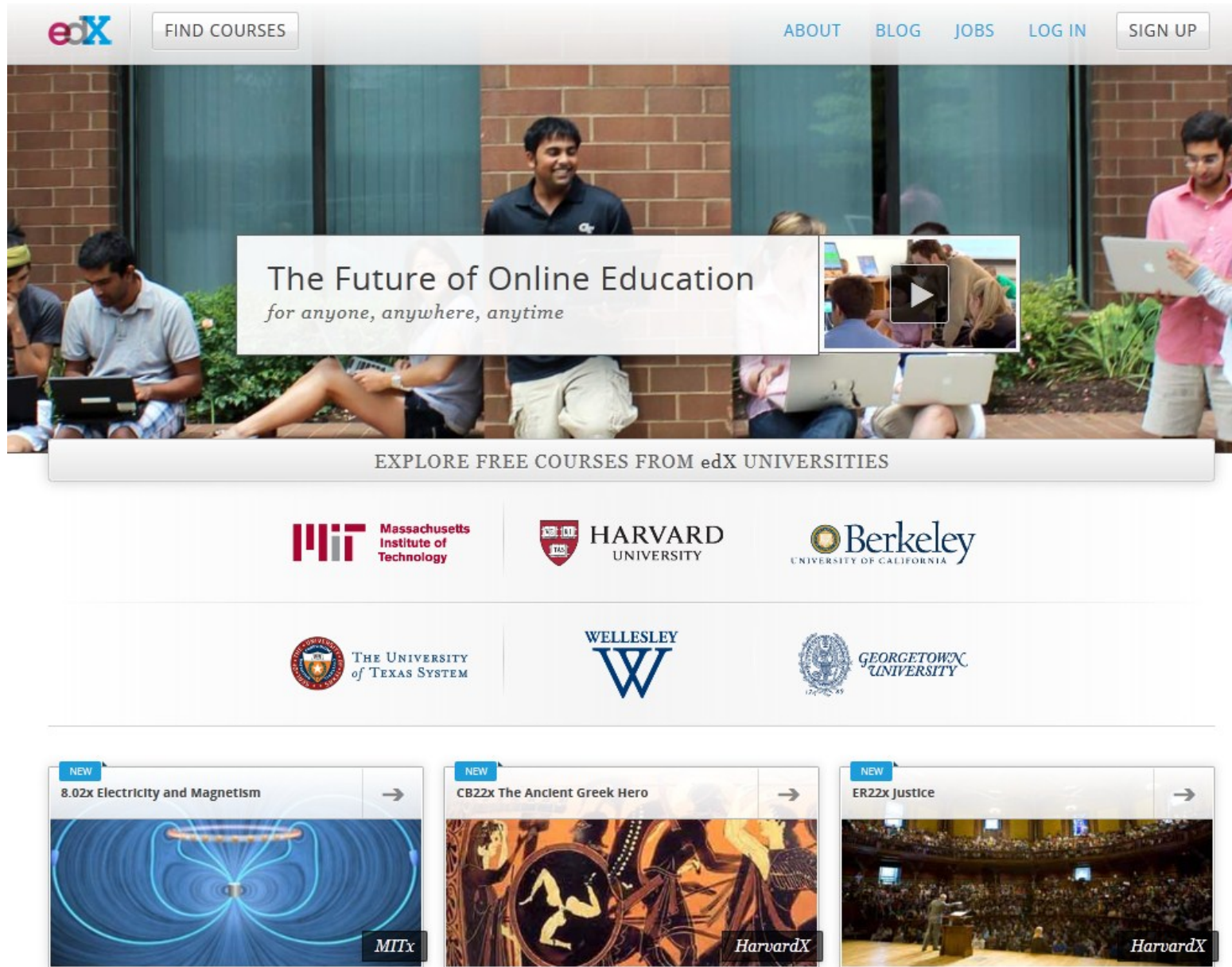
The image above is a frame from the 2009 Star Trek film produced by J.J. Abrams distributed by Paramount Pictures.

	Vulcan Learning Pod	Massive Open Online Course
Virtual Instruction	★	★
Mass Scalability	★	★
Open Access (Free)	Unknown	★

Technology is changing the way people interact with computers, professors, fellow students, and the library. Futuristic technology often takes center stage in science fiction pop culture. Should librarians take cues from science fiction?

Vulcan children, in the popular 2009 film Star Trek, were educated in pods on a mass/industrial scale. Education was delivered via holograms. Popular MOOC sites such as the KhanAcademy & edX instruct students virtually on a mass/industrial scale.

The Mansfield Library supports virtual education with 60,500 electronic journals, 326 electronic databases, 171,600 electronic books, virtual reference services, and locally digitized collections.



## Gesture-Based Computer Interfaces



The image above is a frame from the 2002 Minority Report film produced by Steven Spielberg distributed by 20th Century Fox.



The University of Montana Learning Commons at the Maureen and Mike Mansfield Library will be a gathering place for individual and collaborative learning and problem solving, bringing content, technology, and vital services within easy reach.

Gesture-based computer interfaces as depicted in the 2002 film, Minority Report, are now a reality. Will the new Learning Commons at the Maureen and Mike Mansfield Library feature this technology?



The image above is an artist's rendering of the future Learning Commons.



# Libraries in Science Fiction and Our Future Library

## Librarian Roles

- The Doctor Who librarian is a node of a massive centralized computer which controls all aspects of the library.
- The head librarian of the Jedi Archives is a gatekeeper and protector of wisdom.
- Our future librarian will serve as guide leading people to information and preserving knowledge.

## Materials

- The Doctor Who library houses every book in the universe. All knowledge is indexed in a central computer.
- The Jedi Archive contains manuscripts, artifacts, holographic books and is guarded fiercely by the Jedi.
- Future libraries will not be warehouses. Google and others are attempting to index all knowledge. Librarians will continue to protect materials and ensure access for future generations.



The image above is a frame from the 2002 film Star Wars: Episode II directed by George Lucas and distributed by 20th Century Fox.

“People never really  
stopped loving books.”  
-The Doctor

## Access

- The Doctor Who library is a nostalgic monument to the printed word in a universe where all knowledge is discoverable via “holovids, direct to brain downloads [and] fiction mist” -The Doctor
- The Jedi Archive is only open to a small group of elites who treat their knowledge as a strategic resource rather than a societal good.
- Current and future libraries will continue to make knowledge available and avoid censorship.



The image above is a frame from the Doctor Who episode “Silence in the Library” written by Steven Moffat, a BBC production. The entire planet is the library.

## The Learning Commons at the Maureen and Mike Mansfield Library