LIB 3010 Spring 2018: Students Choose an Image to Represent Patent Searching

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Anyone can take some wire cutters and break the lock, they might get lucky and stumble upon a relevant patent, but the skills learned in patent searching can be used to find what you're looking for over and over - once you know the correct combination you can always unlock the lock.
I’ve included a picture of a lost game of minesweeper because searching for a patent is often a game of guessing.
This is a metaphorical representation of an individual (or small business) standing up to a big company. Having your own IP can swing the odds in your favor if you are the small man versus the large one.
This treasure chest represents the end of the patent search when you have found what you are looking for. There is no map because you must figure out for yourself how to get to what you want.
Once you understand how to correctly search for patents, your “road” looks like the one in the middle (straightforward).
I like this picture because the light bulb isn’t even a light bulb, and it shines on everyday things.
This system can be overwhelming, but it is well organized, and there are multiple ways to track down a specific book within the library, just like we discussed the plethora of ways patents can be searched in this class.
Patent searching done correctly can eliminate this overwhelming representation.
The whole process is a maze with the objective at the end of the adventure. However, along the way there are many hoops to jump through to get the patent you're looking for, or to actually find out if your idea is patentable.
A gear starts the process (the inventor) and utilizes the help of many others (lawyers, patent offices, etc.) to eventually get the desired outcome of obtaining a patent.
The spider symbolizes a lawyer waiting to strike if you infringe upon somebody else’s intellectual property or “land on the wrong web.”
Sometimes it seems like all the good ideas have already been taken but there are always new ideas out there. Expired patents are often an excellent place to start.

“I tried reinventing myself, but someone already has the patent.”
... the world of patent research is very dense and difficult to navigate, but with the right map, (patent search engines that we learned in this class), it is much easier to scale the terrain of patent research.
with modern technology, finding the correct patent is getting easier and easier, making what is relevant to you stand out much more, much like how the correct key in the image is illuminated.
The gears (represent) how the inventor sees his or her project forming in each stage of the process.
This never ending stream of information always leads to people spending a large part of their day getting lost in the world of patents or in this case, going down the rabbit hole.
Each fish is individually unique when you look close enough, but fish can be classified into species (bass, catfish, brim, etc.) similar to patents (utility, design, plant, and other classifications).
All of these saws can successfully cut through wood, though different ones have advantages based on your exact wood cutting needs. This is very similar to the tools of patent searching. All databases and techniques can successfully provide you with a successful patent search. However, just like choosing the right saw for the job, choosing the right database and search techniques can help you find patents in a more efficient and effective way.